State Editor

June 10, 2024
The Illinois Answers Project seeks a State Investigations Editor who will oversee projects with state-wide focus.

The Illinois Answers Project is a nonprofit investigative news outlet published by the Better Government Association. As a member of our Pulitzer Prize-winning newsroom, you’ll shape the strategic vision for state coverage and edit investigative journalists diving into topics within Illinois Answers four key topic areas: criminal justice, government accountability, equity and economic opportunity and education.

The ideal editor for this role will have some data analysis skills, strong news judgment and experience leading a team through high-impact investigations and enterprise. Your team will include three state investigative journalists and two others focused on other coverage areas.

We want someone who can work with media partners and manage all aspects of the statewide program, including its budget and tracking story impact. This is a senior position in the newsroom that works directly with other editors to carry out our strategic vision. The position reports to the Editor-in-Chief.

Minimum qualifications:

- At least 5 years of journalism experience editing investigations or substantial enterprise.
- A proven ability to generate investigative and enterprise stories that drive change.
- Experience editing reporters of various skills sets.
- Excellent planning, organizational and time management skills
- Strong interpersonal skills
- A bachelor’s degree in journalism or related field or equivalent combination of education and experience.

Preferred qualifications:
- A strong background in Illinois issues and news
- Experience editing Solutions Journalism stories or projects or an openness to learn.
- Interest in audience strategy

**Location:** Illinois Answers is a hybrid newsroom (two to three in-office days per week) based in downtown Chicago.

**Compensation and Benefits:**

The salary range for this position is $120,000 to $125,000, contingent on experience and other job-related factors. The position includes medical and dental insurance; vision and transit benefits; a comprehensive paid time off package; and a 401(k) with an employer match.

*We are looking for a talented, high-potential colleague who can contribute to the success of this enterprise. So please apply even if you don’t meet all the listed job requirements.*

*We also encourage applicants from traditionally underrepresented communities, including people of color, LGBTQ+ people and people with disabilities. The Better Government Association is an equal opportunity employer. We’re committed to cultivating and preserving a culture of inclusion and connectedness for all employees. We welcome the unique contributions you can bring in terms of education, opinions, culture, ethnicity, race, sex, gender identity and expression, nation of origin, age, languages spoken, veteran status, color, religion, disability, sexual orientation and beliefs.*

**How to Apply**

Apply via [our application form](#). Select “State Editor” from the drop-down menu.

**About Illinois Answers:** The Illinois Answers Project is an investigations and solutions-focused nonprofit and nonpartisan newsroom published by the Better Government Association, [winner of the 2022 Pulitzer Prize in local reporting](#). The Illinois Answers Project seeks to inform, engage and mobilize residents, civic leaders and public officials to generate and implement changes that build a state of Illinois in which all communities can prosper. The Better Government Association also publishes [BGA Policy](#), which advocates for more transparent,
accountable and equitable government through public policy reform. The newsroom staff and BGA Policy staff operate independently.

Investigative Reporter

June 10, 2024

About the organization

The Illinois Answers Project is an investigations and solutions-focused nonprofit and nonpartisan newsroom published by the Better Government Association, winner of the 2022 Pulitzer Prize in local reporting. The Illinois Answers Project seeks to inform, engage and mobilize residents, civic leaders and public officials to generate and implement changes that build a state of Illinois in which all communities can prosper. The Better Government Association also publishes BGA Policy, which advocates for more transparent, accountable and equitable government through public policy reform. The newsroom staff and BGA Policy staff operate independently.

About the role

The Illinois Answers Project, a nonprofit award-winning news organization published by the Better Government Association, is seeking an investigative reporter with data skills.

Illinois Answers has four concentrated areas of coverage, including stories on equity and economic opportunity. The ideal candidate will show a track record of generating original, deeply reported stories in that area.

The candidate also will know Illinois public records laws and how to use FOIA requests to create data sets, and can assist other reporters with data brainstorming and analysis.

We are looking for a collaborative, enterprising journalist who wants to combine these data and technical skills with investigative and solutions storytelling.
Reporting to: Steve Warmbir, investigations editor

As a reporter for Illinois Answers, a successful candidate will:

- Pitch and execute original story ideas that fall within our key topic areas, with a focus on equity and economic opportunity.
- Be comfortable juggling multiple short, medium and long-term investigative and solutions stories both independently and as part of a team.
- Establish sources by spending time in Chicago neighborhoods across the city, with an emphasis on the South and West sides, which have traditionally been undercovered by local media.
- Have experience with or an openness to Solutions Journalism.
- Be a self-starter with excellent time-management and organizational skills.
- Have a collaborative mindset and an eagerness to partner both internally and externally.
- Have a strong grasp of key issues affecting communities across Illinois.

Candidate requirements:

- 7 years of reporting experience with demonstrated impact
- Bachelor's degree in journalism or other relevant discipline
- Data literacy and experience with Excel and/or Google Sheets
- Familiarity with Illinois public records laws
- Experience with version control or collaborating on data projects
- Familiarity or interest in SQL, R and/or Python
- Experience with making data more accessible for readers with graphics or interactives
- Applicants must be eligible to work in the United States

Location:

Illinois Answers is a hybrid newsroom (two to three in-office days per week) based in downtown Chicago.
Compensation and Benefits:
The salary range for this position is $85,000 to $95,000, contingent on experience and other job-related factors. The position includes medical and dental insurance; vision and transit benefits; a comprehensive paid time off package; and a 401(k) with an employer match. This position is represented by SAG-AFTRA.

How to Apply
Apply via our application form. Select “Investigative Reporter” from the drop-down menu.

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Prospect Development and Systems Manager
June 10, 2024
Founded in 1923, the Better Government Association is a nonpartisan, nonprofit news organization and civic advocate working for transparency, equity and accountability in government across Chicago and Illinois.

With philanthropic contributions accounting for nearly 100% of the budget,
partners and supporters ensure the full scope of the BGA’s multifaceted strategy, which encompasses Pulitzer-Prize-winning investigative and solutions-focused reporting, incisive and potent policy reform initiatives and civic engagement work ranging from the halls of power and corporate towers to overlooked and disinvested communities across Chicago and Illinois.

**About the Role**

The Prospect Development and Systems Manager, a new role, will be an integral development team member, providing a dynamic opportunity to help guide and facilitate development and portfolio systems while serving as the primary manager of the BGA’s WealthEngine and RelSci platforms and donor database, Raiser’s Edge.

We seek an exceedingly meticulous, self-starter who can define this role at a time of growth and innovation for the organization—in a competitive environment in both our news and policy realms. This valued colleague will work closely with the vice president of development, senior manager of major and individual giving, senior manager of institutional giving, and events Manager while sometimes coordinating with the CEO and executive assistant.

This role has two core tenets of responsibility:

1. As the primary manager of Raiser’s Edge daily operations and functionality, they will prioritize data integrity and help inform efficient data-informed fundraising strategies. They will implement and functionalize our systems, mailed appeals and the department’s broader stewardship and engagement plans to support the BGA’s 2024 fundraising goals and tactics.

2. Focusing on the BGA’s prospect pipeline development and new portfolio system, they will supercharge philanthropic outreach by identifying and tiering WealthEngine and RelSci data lists, appropriately folding in, and tracking board member contacts for optimal portfolio moves management.

**Prospect Development and Portfolio System Management**
• Collaborate closely with the Development team to align portfolio program operations with overall fundraising objectives. Co-lead bi-monthly portfolio meetings, tracking needed moves and activities across budget line prospects and supporters up for renewal.
• Lead the strategic implementation and optimization of WealthEngine and RelSci’s comprehensive wealth and philanthropic screening data and relationship mapping.
• Analyse WealthEngine data to provide actionable insights and recommendations for fundraising plans.
• Leverage data insights to identify, prioritize, and segment potential donors and institutional partners to properly populate the development team’s portfolios, ensuring alignment with organizational goals.
• Generate comprehensive reports and analysis of portfolio performance, larger fundraising and engagement plans, and wealth screening outcomes. KPIs could include donor acquisition and renewal rates, ROI analysis of appeal and engagement activities, qualification indicators and outreach (typically four points of contact per new prospect), etc.
• Provide in-depth prospect research as needed.

Raiser’s Edge & Systems Administration

• Manage daily Raiser’s Edge data entry and operations, including instituting and upholding ongoing thorough measures that ensure its integrity, accuracy, and donor information security.
  • Responsible for gift entry and processing, working with the BGA finance team and external accounting firm to manage, process, and accurately record all donations of checks, credit cards, stock, and electronic funds transfers.
  • Responsible for drafting, preparing, and sending acknowledgment letters weekly, emphasizing timeliness, accuracy, and record-keeping.
  • Provide weekly reports and track fundraising progress towards fiscal year goals and Board impact (give/get). Respond quickly and accurately to data retrieval requests such as mailing lists, event RSVPs, and proposal status queries.
- Manage the Raiser’s Edge (RE) database by assessing existing procedures, implementing optimal business solutions to maximize its potential, and integrating best data practices and action tracking to meet future reporting and analysis requirements.
  - Partner with the senior manager of major and individual giving to manage all large-scale appeals and department engagement mailings, from timelines to building segmented lists, project pricing, and final fulfillment with printer and mail house.
  - Create and manage segmented lists and reporting of critical engagement touchpoints (e.g., gift receipts, phone call logs, thank you notes, etc.), appeals, and other tactical requests.
  - Systemize collecting and updating actions, notes, proposals, and constituent information.

- Support development events by standardizing events to database integration, ensuring data collection, relationship tracking, and reporting.

- Support the development team with various administrative duties, including answering the phone, scheduling meetings, communicating with donor offices, and preparing weekly donor reports.
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

While preference will be given to candidates who meet all listed qualifications, we encourage applicants who possess a strong combination of relevant skills and experience to apply. We value diverse perspectives and recognize the potential for individuals to contribute significantly to our team.

- Passion for fundraising and the BGA’s mission. A commitment to valuing diversity and a desire to contribute to an inclusive and teamwork-oriented working environment is required.
- Three to five years of experience in prospect pipeline development and portfolio systems with in-depth knowledge of screening methodologies and relationship mapping.

- Working knowledge of philanthropic capacity platforms, i.e. Wealth Engine. Knowledge of or interest in Asana or other cross-functional project management platforms.

- Three years + experience working with Raiser’s Edge or comparable database experience, including queries, exports, imports, reports, and data analysis. Working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite, OLX, and Google is essential.

- Strong orientation to customer service; utmost discretion in handling confidential data. Dependability, accuracy, an aptitude for planning, and attention to detail are required.

- Able to work in a high-energy environment, meet deadlines, multi-task, and provide effective follow-up with staff and external partners.

- Excellent written and oral communication skills with a demonstrated independent work ethic.

- Ability to occasionally work evenings or weekends to attend cultivation events as needed.

**Compensation and Benefits**

This role is a full-time position with a salary range of $70,000. Benefits include health and dental insurance, vision benefits, a comprehensive paid time off package, a commuter spending plan, 401K retirement plan, remote work opportunities, and more.
Work Location

BGA staff work remotely two to three days a week and from the office the remainder of the time. Each employee receives a BGA laptop and a $50 monthly stipend toward cell phone expenses.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion

The BGA is committed to providing a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace where all employees, regardless of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education, or disability, feel valued and respected. We are committed to a nondiscriminatory approach and provide equal employment and advancement opportunities in our departments, programs, and policies. We’re committed to cultivating and upholding a culture of inclusion and connectedness for all employees. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages and actively work to ensure that all voices are valued and heard.

How to Apply

Please email your cover letter or writing sample and resume to jobs@bettergov.org. The subject line should read Prospect Development and Systems Manager: [Your Name].

We will begin reviewing submissions immediately and consider applicants while the posting remains on our website. Candidates selected for an interview will be notified via email. Please note that incomplete submissions will not be considered. We look forward to reviewing your materials. Thank you!