

Alphington Community Food Hub

Position Description – Food Hub Manager

April 2018

Sustain: The Australian Food Network is seeking applications from suitably qualified individuals for the position of Food Hub Manager at the Alphington Community Food Hub.

Background

A collaboration between Sustain and Melbourne Farmers Markets, supported by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, the Alphington Community Food Hub will be a place for everyone to connect to a healthy and flourishing local food system.

In the face of continued downwards pressure on prices from the supermarket duopoly, the Food Hub will provide small-to-mid sized producers with access to larger markets to increase their viability. It is also a place for individuals and groups to learn new food skills as well as to grow, share, buy, cook and make healthy, fair food.

Features of the Alphington Community Food Hub will include an accredited weekly farmers market, commercial kitchen, co-working offices, farmers' depot, aggregation and distribution network, marketing and branding services, urban agriculture, and a workshop and events space.

The Food Hub will be established at Melbourne Innovation Centre, directly opposite Alphington train station, and will kick off operations in June 2018. We are looking for a dynamic, highly organised and self-motivated individual with strong networks in the hospitality and food sector and demonstrated project management experience. Experience in start-ups and social enterprise is highly desirable.

With this project, we want to drive the creation of a collaborative multi-functional, multi-stakeholder exemplar site of a sustainable, healthy, and fair food system in Melbourne and Victoria. We aim to establish a transformative economic and social model for food distribution that can be adapted and replicated across Victoria and nationally, sustaining waves of positive food system change for decades to come. Like other pioneering initiatives such as CERES, it will provide inspiration for organisations and communities around the country.

We hope its success will strengthen the case to local, state and federal governments, as well as the impact investor sector, for the potential of these emerging and innovative models to tackle the root causes of the food system crisis. Our goal is to contribute to the creation of an enabling rather than an inhibiting policy and regulatory environment.

The start-up phase of the Alphington Community Food Hub has been financed with a two-year Innovation Grant from the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation.

Project philosophy

This initiative has been funded as a *Collective Impact* project, with Sustain as the *anchor* or *backbone* organisation, working together with MFM and multiple other key partners around a shared vision for change to achieve powerful results. Collective Impact requires collaborative working amongst all partners with five conditions for success:

- **A common agenda / shared vision for change**
- **Shared measurement systems** – documenting how we will measure and report on success
- **Mutually reinforcing activities** – each partner does what they do well to support and coordinate with each other within the agreed overarching plan
- **Continuous communication** – building trust, confidence and joint working
- **Backbone support organisation** – to coordinate the project as a whole and the multiple relationships within it

Purpose of the Food Hub Manager role

The role of the Food Hub Manager is to work with the Project Coordinator, Business Development Manager, Communications Manager and the MFM leadership team to create a successful and viable multi-functional and multi-stakeholder community food hub in Alphington over the medium-to-long term.

The Food Hub Manager is responsible for assisting in the establishment of food hub activities, partner and customer relationships and managing the day to day operations of the food hub activities.

This is a part-time position (0.6 FTE, equivalent to three days), **starting the week of May 14, 2018**.

The Food Hub Manager will report directly to the Directors of Sustain and MFM.

Key Responsibilities and Deliverables

Relationship Management

- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with collaborators, partners and customers (buyers / suppliers) of the ACFH.
- Work closely with MFM management team and Sustain in delivering the objectives of the ACFH.
- Enact the initiatives developed by the ACFH Business Development Manager
- Work closely to co-ordinate with ACFH Urban Agriculture Facilitator and Communications Coordinator.
- Act as primary point of contact with ACFH customers and partners, including fielding and resolving customer/partner issues.
- Maintain accuracy of customer information in database system

Hub Activities

- Develop systems and processes of the ACFH activities, including documentation to capture agreed project impact measures
- Actively and concurrently manage several portfolios of ACFH daily operations and activities (i.e. commercial kitchen schedule, food box distribution system, CSA pick up logistics, management of space available for hire)
- Keep accurate financial records of ACFH purchases; manage invoicing and invoice adjustments and accounting in the online commerce site; manage records of distribution;
- Inventory management: customers (suppliers / buyers), online system, orders and agreements
- Customer communications regarding purchasing / produce supply and availability

Reporting

- Track and report on ACFH activities to the project governance group and external stakeholders.
- Attend scheduled meetings with the MFM / Sustain Joint Venture Management team.

Business Development

- Develop and identify ways to improve ACFH activities, and through direction of MFM, implement these strategies into action
- Develop a workplan and budget for the Food Hub Manager role, to identify resourcing and revenue requirements going forward and to support the Project Coordinator and the Business Development Manager in securing additional funding
- Assist the ACFH Communications Coordinator and MFM Communications Coordinator in developing and implementing a social media strategy for the ACFH.
- Assist the ACFH Hub Business Development Manager with prospective partnerships and customers, meetings, events, workshops etc.
- Represent the ACFH in opportunities for education, outreach and further funding.
- Collaborate with ACFH Business Development Manager on projects to improve logistics, accounting, data management, and distribution systems.
- Collaborate on business planning, fundraising efforts, grant proposals and reports, software testing, etc. as needed

Additional Responsibilities

- Create and maintain a work plan and solicit feedback from staff at regular staff meetings.
- Other duties as assigned

Required Qualifications / Experience:

- Minimum of 5+ years' relevant experience with proven track record
- Ability to develop and implement sound systems and processes
- Commercial business management background, in particular with start-ups and social enterprises
- Familiarity with Customer Relationship Management systems
- Project Management experience involving budgets in excess of \$100,000
- Brand and business development, and marketing and sales experience
- Experience managing and working to a financial budget, cash handling
- Familiarity with cloud-based online storage systems
- Excellent interpersonal skills including written and verbal communications
- Proven customer service expertise and attention to detail
- Ability to work independently, and as part of a team
- Ability to problem solve and 'think on your feet'
- Demonstrated understanding of the farmers' market sector, Victorian seasonality and food/farming related issues
- Sound understanding of, and proficiency in, Microsoft programs (Word, Excel, Access) and online filing/storage systems (i.e. SharePoint)
- Demonstrated commitment to occupational health and safety and understanding of relevant legislation
- Understanding of small business and not-for-profit dynamics
- Excellent organisational skills
- Current Driver's Licence

Preferred Qualifications / Experience:

- Understanding, awareness and ability to engage with diverse communities
- Experience in food systems, food wholesale, food retail and/or farming
- Experience in event management and coordination
- Existing relationships or networks with local food producers or organisations
- Familiarity with the Victorian agricultural or local food sector
- Commercial kitchen experience (infrastructure / components / registrations and regulations required of a commercial kitchen operation)
- Current Provide First Aid & CPR certificate

Remuneration:

This part-time role is currently funded at \$42,000 per annum over two years (\$70,000 per annum pro rata), plus the compulsory 9.5% superannuation and four weeks' paid annual leave. As Sustain is a registered health promotion charity, there will be opportunities for salary packaging. We have already begun to seek additional funding to expand and continue this key role and the time allocation available.

To apply for this position

Send your CV (two references) with a cover letter setting out your interest in the project, how your experience matches the essential and desirable criteria, and telling us how you would propose to make this exciting project a success that can serve as a model for replication elsewhere in Victoria and nationally, to Nick Rose, Executive Director of Sustain: The Australian Food Network, by 20 April 2018: nick@sustainaustralia.org

Sustain: The Australian Food Network is committed to the provision of equal employment opportunities for all members of the community, regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or ethnicity.