



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2110 W. Park Court, Suite C

Champaign, IL 61821

217-352-3536 ext. 3 www.ccswcd.com

ABOUT CCSWCD

The Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD) is a local unit of government formed in 1943. It is governed by a five-person board of directors, elected by landowners and occupants within the District. SWCDs, working in conjunction with agricultural, urban, and environmental stakeholders, have for decades played a central role in efforts to protect and sustain the viability of finite natural resources for future generations. The policy of the CCSWCD is to provide leadership and coordinate programs to help people conserve, improve, and sustain our natural resources. To learn more about CCSWCD, visit ccswcd.com.

STAR OPERATIONS MANAGER

To meet state and national agricultural and conservation goals and sustainably feed a growing world population, agricultural conservation practices need to work at the field level. Communicating how conservation solves real issues farmers face, while also providing environmental benefits, will be key to long term adoption.

The STAR Operations Manager will work closely with partners to implement and grow STAR. This will be accomplished by leading administrative and operational tasks, successfully seeking funding, and communicating the value of the STAR tool. The successful candidate will work with and provide support to conservation partners administering STAR to enhance initiative effectiveness.



The STAR Operations Manager position is funded via a two-year grant, with the possibility for extension. This position is optionally remote, with occasional travel to the CCSWCD office, committee meetings, farmer/Licensee/Affiliate check-ins, etc. The anticipated start date will occur in January 2022.

OVERVIEW OF STAR

STAR was created by the Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District in 2017 to help meet goals in Illinois' Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy. That plan, developed by the state's Department of Agriculture and Environmental Protection Agency, aims to ensure Illinois' agricultural sector continues to feed the world while better managing water quality and other environmental challenges on agricultural lands. Since then, STAR has been adopted by state-level organizations in Iowa, Colorado, and Missouri that are referred to as state affiliates, and is used in several Indiana counties. Learn more about STAR by visiting www.STARFreeTool.com.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Identify partnership opportunities and follow-up with current partners to promote and report program activities
- Serve as liaison for National STAR; coordinate national programming and alignment by enhancing communication and support for affiliates and partners
- Develop guides and frameworks that integrate STAR in landowner decision-making, conservation planning, and reporting
- Monitor and enforce data privacy and data use agreements
- Regularly communicate with STAR leadership to report on projects, budget, committee/partner updates, and prioritize work
- Manage grants; plan, develop proposals, submit, and complete reporting requirements
- Evaluate and implement goals, objectives, and operating structure and procedures for program effectiveness
- Assist with annual reporting and practice tracking, as it relates to National STAR

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- BA/BS degree along with 2-4 years of experience in conservation, agriculture or agronomy, environmental science, or similar field or equivalent combination of education and experience.

KNOWLEDGE OF AND SKILLS IN AGRICULTURE AND CONSERVATION

- Knowledge of current trends and practices in conservation and agriculture – especially nutrient management, soil health principles, cover crops, and conservation drainage practices
- A Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) certification or other agronomy/nutrient management certification is appreciated
- Established relationships with members of the agricultural community
- Ability to interpret data and communicate to non-scientific stakeholders

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE & SKILLS

- Creating and managing grants for short- and long-term funding
- Ability to foster a cooperative work environment within a complex partnership/organizational structure
- Convening, communicating, and negotiating effectively with partners and stakeholders
- Developing partnerships and leading collaborations within the private and public sectors
- Prioritizing and completing tasks independently with respect to timeline(s)
- Experience using common software applications such as Microsoft, web browsers, etc.
- Analyze and interpret financial and operational data to prepare reports, projections, and recommendations

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Flexible work schedule. The salary range is \$50,000-60,000 and will be commensurate with education and experience. A competitive insurance coverage package, along with paid vacation, sick, personal, and holiday time away will be provided.

HOW TO APPLY

Please send a cover letter, resume, professional references, and desired salary to Erin Gundy, erin.bush@il.nacdnet.net, with the subject matter "STAR OM Position". For full consideration, apply by December 14, 2021. Contact Erin for additional questions.