



Job Title: Vice President / Senior Director of Business Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Reports to: CEO

Strategic Goal:

The Vice President of Business Innovation and Entrepreneurship will serve as the visionary driving the roadmap of innovation, strategic initiatives, and alliances for the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County (EDC). This position will directly be responsible for driving the innovation strategy for the region with a focus on technology, entrepreneurship and entertainment. The Vice President of Business Innovation and Entrepreneurship will manage both executive and working level relationships with internal and external stakeholders to drive buy-in and deliver results.

Job Summary/Purpose

To create, grow, and attract jobs and investment by advancing Sarasota as a location for creative, technical, and innovative businesses.

To maximize the intellectual capital, resources, and assets of the regional colleges and universities, as well as the creative and technical ecosystem in the Sarasota region.

Essential Functions/ Responsibilities:

- Understand the conditions, assets, and infrastructure that would attract, grow and sustain creative and technical enterprises and work to advance them. Stay connected with the entrepreneurial community, understanding factors that support or hinder its advancement, and work to address issues as necessary.
- Develop and implement an aggressive, proactive marketing and business development action plan that attracts, retains and grows creative production, design, and technology business in Sarasota.
- Develop and maintain close working relationships with other organizations involved in or essential to this industries-focused business attraction effort.
- In conjunction with the VP of Business Development and CEO, set the overall strategic direction of the region's innovation, entertainment, and technology sectors.
- Develop strategic partnerships with companies (from startup to enterprise) across a variety of industries relating to innovation in technology, entrepreneurship and entertainment to execute the goal of Fostering the Region's Next Fortune 500 Company.
- Facilitate, plan and host virtual or on-site prospect and/or lead-generation visits.
- Participate in business development events, conferences, trade shows.
- Track information to ensure a timely response and follow-up.
- Work with appropriate EDC staff to ensure the database of industry lists, demographics, and data collected



about identified target industries.

- Ensure diversity and inclusion is emphasized to positively impact community connections.
- This position will work with the business development team to consult on a variety of projects including but not limited to technology, digital media, animation, XR, television, film and new media.
- Serve as an EDC subject matter expert on all topics relating to innovation, technology, entrepreneurship and entertainment including speaking opportunities and interviews.
- Contribute to communications and branding to advance the strategic direction of the EDC.
- This position will consult on the EDC's programming efforts across the organization to streamline key messaging needed to execute strategic goals.
- Work with leaders from across the organization to execute the EDC's goal to build a brilliant region in the development of the future-focused initiatives, aligning stakeholders, building the necessary underlying technology resources and positioning Sarasota County as a leader in the field of Creative Economy.
- Help business stakeholders to support the region's entrepreneurial community with possible corporate venture programs and mentor programs.
- Facilitate workshops and brainstorming sessions with various client stakeholders and teams to identify key business challenges and define potential solutions and/or initiatives.
- Understand all the conditions, assets and infrastructure that would attract and sustain creative and technical enterprises and work to advance them as necessary for success. Stay in touch with the entrepreneurial community, understanding all the factors that support or hinder its advancement and work to address issues as necessary.

Job Requirements and Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in related fields.
- Minimum of 5 years of successful marketing, sales, and project management experience in economic development organization and/or in the targeted industries.
- Extensive network base of professional contacts within the targeted industries..
- High energy and able to work in a fast-paced competitive environment.
- Proficiency in a second language a plus.

Skills Requirements:

- Effectively communicate in writing and engage with public officials, clients, and colleagues in a professional, articulate manner.
- Ability to lead a team.
- Ability to engage volunteers.



- Experienced public speaker.
 - Create and execute a highly effective sales and marketing program.
 - Analyze and evaluate reports, forms, and data.
 - Interpret government regulations and other complex written documents.
 - Oversee and conduct effective meetings and maintain focus in an environment of changing priorities.
 - Ability to determine, understand, and communicate clearly.
 - Ability to resolve disputes and maintain confidentiality.
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- Proficient in computer hardware and software including, but not limited to, Microsoft Office (Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Salesforce) and contact management databases.
 - A willingness and determination to learn and understand all the factors affecting business location decisions, including real estate, workforce, permits, regulations, costs and construction.
 - Excellent communication and project management skills.
 - Cooperative team player.

Experience:

- Past experience with Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, and other community-related organizations and activities preferred.
- Economic development experience in creative, entertainment, and technology industries is a plus.
- Past experience in managing a team.

Other Information:

- Requires frequent evening, weekend, and early morning activities.
- Overnight travel required.
- Must be proficient in all manners of virtual working and communicating.
- While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally required to drive, walk, sit, use hands and fingers or feel objects, tools, or controls; reach with hands and arms; balance; stoop; talk or hear.

Success Factors:

- Ability to hire, motivate, and manage team performance.
- Takes initiative, works independently, and makes responsible decisions.
- Self-sufficient and highly organized.
- Possess cultural awareness and sensitivity.



- **Demonstrate sound work ethics and flexibility.**
- **Must be able to come to work promptly and regularly.**
- **Must be able to work with urgency, often under the stress of deadlines.**
- **Must be able to work independently, as a member of a team, and lead a team, all in the same day for different topics.**