



Business Skills Development Manager Job Announcement

Job Title: Business Skills Development Manager

Reports To: Deputy Director of Operations

Department: Operations

Supervisory: Yes

Primary Office: Aptos office or hybrid

Status: Regular, Full Time

Classification: Salaried, exempt

Salary: \$75,000 - \$95,000 Annual

Job Summary

The Business Skills Development Manager (DM) will build new capacity for California FarmLink to assess client capacities during intake, streamline processes for client referral across the organization, and help clients chart a course towards identifying and accomplishing their business skills development goals. This role will oversee a staff of business skills advisors who will work one-on-one with clients, and serve as the primary liaison between the Business Services Hub (providing bookkeeping and tax preparation services) and FarmLink's other administrative and operational departments.

This role requires extensive knowledge of small business management challenges and skills, the ability to work collaboratively across multiple administrative and operational departments, and a deep dedication to the ethics of providing business advice, as evidenced by consistently delivering timely and excellent work products. The DM will oversee the development and administration of the overall client journey process and the Business Skills Advising Program. The Business Skills Advising Program is responsible for working with potential loan applicants to prepare complete and accurate loan applications ready to go through underwriting without substantial additional requests for information. The Business Skills Advising Program is also responsible for working with loan clients who have ongoing loan compliance conditions requiring periodic financial reporting and taking actions to improve basic business skills.

The Business Skills Development Manager is responsible for ensuring that BSAs are adequately supervised, mentored, and coached, that their work product is timely reviewed for accuracy, and that each receive adequate continued training in ethics and technical subjects.

This position also works closely with the lending team to constantly evaluate efficiency and quality, and with the education team to constantly evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs and identify new educational program needs. As needed the DM will participate in policy activities by providing specific feedback on how relevant state or federal programs could be improved. In addition, the DM will participate in FarmLink management activities including: strategic and annual planning, budget development and management, and supervising and evaluating staff.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Program Development

- Develop and oversee a program to provide technical assistance with basic bookkeeping and business management and compliance issues including clarifying business ownership structure, identifying issues and making referrals for assistance to resolve issues with labor law compliance, bookkeeping, federal, state or local tax filing, insurance, and other regulatory or contract issues, writing a basic business plan, and developing a cash flow budget.

Client Intake

- Develop and oversee a program to manage client intake including ensuring that a client record is initiated with appropriate documents attached, ensuring that subsequent FarmLink staff are clearly identified.

Ecosystem of Service Providers

- Develop and oversee a program to manage and expand FarmLink's ecosystem of service providers including strategies for continually seeking out new connections with service providers, developing processes and criteria for evaluating service providers, and supporting outreach for Train-the-Trainer programs.

Grant Applications

- Develop and oversee a program to have standing capacity to assist with grant applications and surge capacity to provide assistance with applications for disaster relief.

Program Evaluation

- Develop and oversee processes for continual program evaluation for quality, effectiveness and efficiency.

Outreach and Education

- Participate directly in general outreach and education activities including developing proposals to present at conferences and workshops, sharing knowledge and lessons learned directly to farmers, ranchers and fishers, and to colleagues at FarmLink partner organizations, and support and coach staff in doing the same.

Accountability and Management

- Supervise Business Skills Advisor(s) and oversee contract bookkeepers and tax preparers. Develop a process to ensure accurate client assessment and onboarding, bringing in a cross-functional team as needed for decision-making oversight.

Requirements

Required

- Outstanding communication skills, particularly the ability to translate business terminology to plain language easily understood by people with minimal formal education
- Minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in accounting, business, ag business, agronomy, finance or a related field, or a Bachelor's with additional formal business and accounting education
- Strong understanding of bookkeeping fundamentals, small business financial statements, and cash flow management strategies
- Excellent spreadsheet skills including the ability to build spreadsheets that communicate a clear and compelling analysis, and spreadsheets designed to automatically calculate with minimum user input, and to teach others how to use spreadsheets
- Minimum of 8 years experience working directly with a variety of small business bookkeeping and business management issues in roles such as: bookkeeper, staff accountant, capital readiness adviser, or SBA business adviser
- Minimum of 3 years experience as a supervisor
- Sound professional judgment and high ethical standards for accuracy and quality, evidenced by regularly reviewing BSA work product and ensuring continual improvement in the technical and analytical skills of the BSAs
- Strong systems skills with: Quickbooks, Google Suite, and MicroSoft applications
- Enthusiasm for working collaboratively in a team environment
- Curious and inquisitive
- Demonstrates patience, empathy, tenacity and high quality work ethic
- Creative thinker, with a flexible approach to solving problems

Highly Desirable

- Experience with agriculture, knowledge of agricultural business and the economic and political drivers of the agricultural economy
- CDFIs or Farm Credit lenders
- Spanish language proficiency

Other Duties

Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties, or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change over time.

Who We Are

California FarmLink invests in the prosperity and well-being of farmers, ranchers, and fishers who have limited access to financial resources. FarmLink envisions a healthy food system where farmers and ranchers have opportunities to build wealth and conserve natural resources. We strive for equitable access to opportunity, resilient working landscapes, fairness and accountability, and learning from small farmers and ranchers from all walks of life. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), FarmLink has established one of the nation's most robust economic engines to support farmers of color and invest in the success of small farms, ranches, and fishing businesses in California.

FarmLink is a growing, fast-paced organization made up of energetic professionals dedicated to making change in their communities. We strive to foster a collaborative,

team-oriented workplace that supports innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to small business development. FarmLink seeks people inspired by a passion for issues of sustainability, regenerative agriculture, and social equity in California agriculture.

California FarmLink offers a generous benefits plan, including health insurance after 30-60 days (depending on start date), employer contribution to a 403b retirement plan, paid vacation, and a family-friendly and flexible work environment. California FarmLink maintains a drug-free workplace and is an equal-opportunity employer. We seek candidates that represent the diversity of the communities we serve and strongly encourage you to apply.

How To Apply

Please use the subject line "Business Skills Development Manager" and email a thoughtful cover letter explaining your interest in the position and organization, along with your resume to:

humanresources@cafarmlink.org. No phone calls, please.

Posted: 1/23/2025

California FarmLink is an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.