

Job Description – Madison Economic Development Planning

DRAFT – VERSION 8/20/24 - DRAFT

Project Title: Planning for the Future of Economic Development in Madison

Background: The City of Madison seeks a student intern who can help guide the next chapter of the city’s economic development strategy. The City of Madison’s current economic development plan “Connect Madison” was approved by the Common Council on March 7, 2017. While some elements of the plan continue to hold true today, a lot has changed since the plan’s approval. The legacy of the COVID-19 Pandemic has perhaps necessitated a shifting focus, while a rapidly growing economy overall continues to present opportunities and challenges. Despite near full employment, many Madison families struggle to make ends meet, exasperated by the current housing crisis. Disparities in the economic condition of historically advantaged and disadvantaged residents persist. The City of Madison as an organization is facing financial challenges not seen in a generation despite being a critical driver of growth in the State’s economy.

The City wants a student to help start the process of identifying what specifically the City of Madison should be doing over the next ten years to support its business community and residents. The question to be answered is: What does a 2024-2026 economic development plan for the City of Madison look like? What are other communities, similar to Madison, doing that represents the future of economic development (policies, programs, or other efforts). Also, how would the next iteration of this plan intersect with existing plans that the city has? Students may also be analyzing data to drive the discovery of new strategies. Students do not need to be data experts, but an interest in and familiarity with data analysis is useful.

About UniverCity Alliance:

UniverCity Alliance is a coalition of faculty, staff, and students across University of Wisconsin-Madison to ensure the university is responsive to the needs of local governments. UCA brings UW-Madison and Wisconsin communities together to address local challenges through engagement, university research, and state-of-the-art problem-solving approaches. Launched with the Wisconsin Idea in mind, this program bridges university resources with community knowledge to improve sustainability, resilience, livability, and the general well-being of Wisconsin communities.

Responsibilities:

- Interview key economic development staff and stakeholders about their thoughts on the future of economic development planning in the City of Madison
- Conduct research on existing and next generation economic development strategies being used by other cities in the US and make recommendations based on that information
- Analyze economic development data to drive the discovery of new economic development strategies
- Offer recommendations about how new economic development strategies could align with existing City of Madison plans

Minimum Qualifications:

- At least junior standing
- Strong practical writing and communication skills, including documentation of flow charts
- Demonstrated ability to work in teams and on collaborative efforts
- Demonstrated commitment to continuous learning
- Demonstrated interview skills and comfort interviewing people from many backgrounds
- Comfort in analyzing quantitative and qualitative data

Preferred Qualifications:

- Interest in economic development and local government
- Experience working with off-campus clients from a past class-based or employment-based experience
- Documented ability to conduct literature reviews that will be read by policymakers and city staff
- Ability to establish and maintain collaborative relationships with faculty, staff, students, and community leaders.

Compensation: Students will receive a \$2000 stipend/scholarship at the conclusion of the Project

Commitment: Hours are flexible, and work can be done remotely. We anticipate that this project will take 5 - 10 hours per week and could be done over the semester.

To Apply: Submit a resume and a cover letter explaining related experience doing policy research and why your experience makes you the best fit for this opportunity to Gavin Luter, luter@wisc.edu.

Questions: If a student has questions about the role, please direct them to Gavin Luter, luter@wisc.edu.

Priority Deadline: Applications received by September 6, 2024 will be given priority, though students can still submit after this deadline.