



The Lightning Jar is the entrepreneurial hub of Southwestern Vermont. Launched as part of a portfolio of projects to revitalize the regional economy and build community, the Lightning Jar has developed a strong brand and is poised to accelerate regional entrepreneurship, economic growth, and Bennington’s professional and creative community.

The Chief Entrepreneurial Director (CED) should have an appreciation for the current challenges facing rural economies, and clearly see how building a vibrant hub and support for entrepreneurs is integral to revitalization. The CED must bring hustle and the ability to inspire collaborators, harness momentum and take decisive action towards the Lightning Jar’s central role in building a pipeline of regional entrepreneurs and engaged professionals, and connecting them with support and skill-building that leads to their success in business creation and growth.

The CED will be immersed in a network of thought leaders, including those from other entrepreneurial hubs and ventures and an active local network of professionals. In addition to expanding the membership network, a primary attribute and focus of the CED must be astute skill in building value and success for entrepreneurs and professionals by connecting them with others and fostering relationships.

Since the Lightning Jar is a non-profit funded by a blend of revenue sources, it is essential that the CED have experience and skill in securing, managing, and growing complex funding streams, including writing and managing foundation and government grants, reporting to funders, and advocating for private sector funding.

Statement of Purpose

To realize a vibrant Bennington community by supporting creative people in enterprise development.

Summary Job Description: Chief Entrepreneurial Director- CED

The CED is the key management leader that will realize the future for The Lightning Jar and the people and businesses it supports. The CED is responsible for overseeing operations, programs, and adapting and executing the strategic plan. Other key duties include assisting with fundraising, marketing and brand advancement, advocating for the creative economy, and community outreach. The position reports directly to The Lightning Jar’s Board of Directors.

Primary Responsibilities:

In leadership and administration, the CED will:

- Adapt and execute the organization's long-range strategy to achieve its mission
- Provide leadership in developing program, organizational and financial plans with the Board of Directors and staff, and carry out plans and policies authorized by the board
- Make consistent and timely progress on annual Lightning Jar goals
- Maintain official records and documents, and ensure compliance with federal, state and local regulations
- Jointly, with the Board of Directors, conduct official correspondence of the organization, and jointly, with designated officers, execute legal documents

In program development, the CED will:

- Build a pipeline of regional entrepreneurs and engaged professionals
- Promote active and broad participation by members and volunteers in all areas of the organization's work
- Maintain a working knowledge of significant developments and trends in the field
- Manage events schedule and work with staff to execute events according to prescribed best practices
- Develop membership recruiting tools and programs
- Maintain and enhance relationships with tenants of The Lightning Jar co-working space
- Establish cooperative arrangements with area businesses and organizations

In communications, the CED will:

- Be responsible for communicating effectively with the Board and provide, in a timely and accurate manner, all information necessary for the Board to function properly and to make informed decisions
- Publicize and promote the activities of the organization, its programs and goals.
- Be responsible for the enhancement of The Lightning Jar's image and brand by being active and visible in the community and by working closely with other professional, civic and private organizations
- Represent The Lightning Jar to agencies, organizations, and the general public
- Develop and enhance collateral marketing materials
- Develop and enhance web marketing presence
- Lead the process of branding and messaging
- Leverage opportunities to lecture, teach and collaborate with local colleges and educational institutions
- Communicate regularly with funding and institutional partners on The Lightning Jar's metrics and performance, ensuring strong collaboration is maintained

In budget, finance, and fundraising, the CED will:

- Be responsible for developing and maintaining sound financial practices
- Be responsible for fundraising and developing other resources necessary to support The Lightning Jar's mission and ensure the financial health of The Lightning Jar, including to identify and apply for grants and sponsorship for operating, programs, events, and other needs.
- Establish and implement reporting systems and timelines associated with funding partners
- Be responsible for the fiscal integrity of The Lightning Jar, to include submission to the Board of a proposed annual budget and monthly financial statements, which reflect the financial condition of the organization
- Be responsible for fiscal management that generally anticipates operating within the approved budget, ensures maximum resource utilization, and maintenance of the organization in a positive financial position

In relations with staff, the CED will:

- Be responsible for the recruitment, employment, and release of all personnel, including paid staff and volunteers
- Ensure job descriptions are developed, regular performance evaluations are held, and sound human resource practices are being followed
- See that an effective management team, with appropriate provision for succession, is in place
- Encourage staff and volunteer development and education, assisting staff and volunteers in relating their specialized work
- Maintain a climate which attracts, keeps, and motivates a diverse group of top quality staff and volunteers
- Develop a CED succession plan, when appropriate
- Develop written Procedure Manual to streamline training of volunteer staff, ensuring continuity in execution

Hours and Location:

Full-time salaried position located at The Lightning Jar in Bennington, VT. Occasional after-hours and weekend responsibilities during events and off-site meetings. Travel within Vermont and to neighboring states is required and will be compensated.

Benefits:

- Compensation commensurate with experience
- Potential for annual or special-cause bonuses based upon performance
- Health Insurance, single person or family
- Three weeks paid vacation per year including bank holidays as paid time

What's a Lightning Jar, anyway?

The Lightning jar is located in downtown Bennington, Vermont. Bennington was the home of Henry W. Putnam, one of Vermont's greatest entrepreneurs. Much of Putnam's business success came from manufacturing, particularly one product - a small mason jar with an easy-to-close lid that used a clasp which Putnam had patented early in his career. He called the product: The Lightning Jar.

Putnam used his success in business to build up those around him, leaving lasting marks on the Bennington community, including: the local hospital, the public water system, and some of the area's most iconic buildings.

The Lightning Jar is continuing Henry Putnam's tradition of supporting Bennington's entrepreneurs.

JOB POSTING:

Chief Entrepreneurial Director (CED)

Are you an entrepreneur seeking the next challenge and adventure? Become the Chief Entrepreneurial Director and inspire and coach the next generation of entrepreneurs at The Lightning Jar, Southwestern Vermont's entrepreneurial hub and coworking space. Launched four years ago to advance regional economic development and innovation, The Lightning Jar has developed a strong brand and is poised to accelerate regional entrepreneurship, and economic and community revitalization with you at the helm. This position requires the standard portfolio of skills ("GO" attitude, organizational and collaborative excellence, operations management ability, know-how cultivating and securing non-profit braded funding sources, etc.). The most important characteristics of the successful candidate are an ability to clearly see a future that others can't imagine, develop an executable path to realize that future, and then deliver. If you have these skills and want to join a stellar team of creative economy thought leaders, send your resume and cover letter to jobs@lightningjarvt.com. Your cover letter should explain how you would create programming and activities to effectively attract and engage a creative economy audience. The Lightning Jar embraces and encourages diversity and equity. To learn more about the position see the full job description [here](#), or contact James Trimarchi at 802-440-4051, or visit The Lightning Jar's website at www.lightningjarvt.com.