



Position Title: Rural Venture Catalyst

Contractor Fee:

\$3,500 - \$4,000/month (contracted position: providing direct services in John Day, Prairie City, and Canyon City at least 2.5 days/week) + reimbursable pre-approved monthly expenses (e.g., events, printing, marketing, etc.). Travel expenses are not included.

Position:

12-month contracted position filling the “Rural Venture Catalyst” role for RAIN’s (Regional Accelerator & Innovation Network) Grant County partners: www.oregonrain.org. This is a remote “ecosystem-building” position requiring the Rural Venture Catalyst to spend **time in the Grant County communities mentioned below at least 2-3 days/week**, interacting with entrepreneurs/innovators/creatives, hosting events and activities, and engaging with partners (city, county, & community) and other supporters and service providers working to build/elevate Grant County’s entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Target Region:

Grant County, Oregon – *with emphasis on the Cities of John Day, Prairie City, and Canyon City (though outreach should happen throughout the county).*

Description:

Are you an entrepreneur, innovator, or small business owner who enjoys starting or creating new things, being a part of something important, and making an impact in your community? Do you get excited about the idea of helping other entrepreneurs pursue their dreams? Have you ever been called a “connector” because you enjoy referring people to resources to help them advance and grow? Are you looking for a meaningful “side hustle” that will allow you to help build/grow an entrepreneurial hub/culture in Grant County? Are you a self-starter with a strong work ethic who feels like you accomplish more in a day than most do in a week?

If you can answer “yes” to all of these questions, RAIN wants to meet with you. RAIN is hiring a Rural Venture Catalyst (a community-based entrepreneurial ecosystem-builder) to help catalyze entrepreneurial efforts in Grant County. This person will work closely with RAIN’s CEO, Development & Operations Director, Resiliency Program Director, RAIN’s remote team of Rural Venture Catalysts, and RAIN’s Grant County economic development partners to continue to build upon the entrepreneurial ecosystem that is growing in Oregon.

Contractor Responsibilities:

Ecosystem Activation & Support:

- Identify and connect startups to needed resources: *people* (mentors/employees), *programs* (accelerators/workshops), *physical assets* (equipment, labs, office space), and *capital* (investment capital, grants, loans, crowdfunding)
- Develop, lead, and grow programs to support entrepreneurs and innovators in the Grant County region
- Host relevant events that support the region’s entrepreneurs and innovators:
 - Startup Weekends, PubTalks, Meetups, Pitch Competitions, etc.
 - Manage and host fall/winter Bizarres, and entrepreneur Holiday Showcase
 - Lead and manage the John Day Farmers Market and website to help catalyze it as an incubator for entrepreneurs creating/selling new products
 - Host a Grant County Pre-Accelerator in partnership with the RAIN team and other partners
- Provide 1:1 technical assistance support to entrepreneurs and innovators based on the phase of their idea or business (e.g., business planning, marketing, sales, etc.) and referring to the right experts as needed
- Partner closely with RAIN’s Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR) by referring entrepreneurs to the EIR in need of coaching, leadership, and other strategic business needs
- Travel around the region to meet with entrepreneurs and community partners
- Enlist community members to serve as champions of the entrepreneurship & innovation ecosystem
- Identify and onboard new startup mentors who have “been there, done that”
- Identify and educate potential startup investors (in partnership with RAIN’s leadership team)
- Fulfill all other ecosystem activation activities according to grants secured by RAIN to serve the region’s entrepreneurial economy

Ecosystem Partnerships:

- Partner closely with RAIN’s entrepreneurial ecosystem partners and economic development and education partners, including (but not limited to): Grant County Economic Development, Canyon City, John Day, Prairie City, Business Oregon, OSU Extension Service, the Governor’s Regional Solutions team, Oregon Technology Business Center (OTBC), Oregon’s Small Business Development Center (SBDC), K-12 school districts in the region, higher education, regional Chambers of Commerce, regional economic development organizations, etc.
- Interact with partners in the ecosystem and seek-out opportunities for collaboration that elevates the entire ecosystem.
- Refer business owners to the right partners based on their growth goals (e.g., business expansion of existing businesses to Business Oregon and Grant County Economic Development)
- Work with regional partners and RAIN to provide thought-leadership regarding the local startup community and to identify, prioritize, and develop strategies around key regional entrepreneurial needs.

Ecosystem Culture & Communications:

- In partnership with RAIN’s Marketing & Communications Lead, develop marketing, communications, and public relations campaigns to promote entrepreneurial activities in the region
- Record video and photos of activities and events, as well as testimonials from entrepreneurs
- Provide consistency of communications, including calendar of events
- Communicate regularly with RAIN’s CEO, Development & Operations Director,

Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR), and RAIN’s other regional partners to continue building the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Grant County

- Communicate with elected officials about the economic impact of RAIN’s activities in the region, including bringing regional entrepreneurs, innovators, and partners to meetings to elevate messaging
- Attend City Council, County Commissioner, and other public meetings to provide program updates
- Deliver updates to RAIN’s board of directors
- Track and report key metrics, as required by contracts with communities served
- Ensure all approaches align with [RAIN’s Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion statement/philosophy](#)
- Serve as a mentor to entrepreneurs, as needed, and abide by [RAIN’s Mentor Manifesto](#)

Ecosystem Leadership & Growth:

- Study and implement [the elements of an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem](#)
- Participate in the Grant County entrepreneurial community
- Champion the region’s entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation economy
- Engage in fundraising and sponsor onboarding in partnership with RAIN leadership team
- Assist in activating and elevating pools of capital to advance the region’s ecosystem
- Track and update the entrepreneurial assets in the Grant region, identify gaps for startups and innovators, make recommendations for closing those gaps, and collaborate with regional partners to help fill gaps
- Advocate on behalf of entrepreneurship and innovation (E&I) to ensure barriers are reduced and the playing field is leveled for startups and small businesses in Grant County

Contractor Qualifications:

- Must reside in the Grant region**
- Able to work remotely and travel within the Grant County region
- Entrepreneurial background and network
- Extreme bias toward action
- Self-starting ability; willing to innovate and adapt
- Able to pivot quickly without being flustered
- Excellent mentor and motivator of others
- Able to confidently deliver workshops on topics related to early-stage entrepreneurship and/or find experts to deliver content
- Strong communication, leadership, facilitation, organizational, and interpersonal skills
- Experience running online meetings and workshops
- Able to manage multiple tasks simultaneously, remain professional and organized, and prioritize follow-up
- Detail-oriented and excellent project manager
- Able to build bridges and turn difficult conversations into win-win outcomes
- Inclusive and diplomatic approach at all times
- An understanding of startup nomenclature and what it takes to start and grow a business in Oregon
- Stay up-to-date on best practices for startups and business management
- Able to coach entrepreneurs on business pitches and/or connect them to mentors who can help with this
- Self-motivated and able to work collaboratively with individuals from various backgrounds
- Strong technology skills and an ability to easily learn/use new software and web programs
- Experience with the following technologies: **Google Suite, Zoom, Slack, Mailchimp, Hubspot CRM, Eventbrite**, Expensify, Canva, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Understands Oregon’s Contractor Laws

To Apply: (Deadline = Midnight (Pacific), July 7th, 2021)

Please provide a **proposal** (including your resume) that includes the following:

- Your interest/fit for this position.
- What you know about RAIN.
- Your strengths and areas for growth from the “Contractor Responsibilities” and “Contractor Qualifications” lists above.
- 3 references who can vouch for your ability to fulfill this contract.

Send to: Caroline Cummings, RAIN’s CEO caroline@oregonrain.org

Please send using the following subject:
“Grant County Rural Venture Catalyst Position”

RAIN is committed to building a diverse team and strongly encourages applications from women, people of color, LGBTQ+, and veterans.

About RAIN:

RAIN (Regional Accelerator & Innovation Network) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is run by experienced entrepreneurs and angel investors and exists to reduce barriers to entrepreneurship and innovation. Since 2014, RAIN has been invited to serve 23 cities across 5 counties in Oregon to help them build inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems and innovation economies.

RAIN’s Mission: To partner with communities to catalyze entrepreneurial ecosystems, connect entrepreneurs to resources—including overlooked entrepreneurs—and contribute to the creation of prosperous economies.

RAIN’s Vision: Communities support, value, and celebrate entrepreneurs; regional leaders recognize entrepreneurs are a primary creator of net new jobs; small and rural communities have thriving economies; and a culture of possibilities is embraced.

Visit www.oregonrain.org to learn more.