



Who We Are

We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform Central Indiana by how we rebuild the I65/70 Inner Loop. The North Split of the highway reached the end of its useful life and is currently under reconstruction. The rest of the Inner Loop is also nearing the end of its life and will need to be replaced in the next 10 to 15 years (a short timeframe for highway planning and construction).

Rethink Coalition, a nonprofit partnered with the Indy Chamber, Central Indiana Community Foundation, and Indiana Landmarks, is pursuing this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. We believe that we can rebuild the highway to catalyze inclusive economic development, enhance neighborhood connectivity, improve our environment, drive job creation, and address past injustices caused by the original highway construction. To accomplish this, Rethink works to facilitate stakeholder engagement in the visioning, designing, and planning for rebuilding the Inner Loop to address (1) local and regional development interests, (2) historic impacts of the original highway, and (3) expanded criteria for infrastructure design.

Over the next three years, we will be conducting research and hosting community conversations to determine the most effective ways to fund, develop, and incorporate recessed highways into surrounding communities. Broad stakeholder engagement and collaboration are central to Rethink's work and will be key to Rethink's research every step of the way.

Position Summary

The Fellow will work the Rethink Coalition President/CEO and Executive Team to (1) conduct research on the economic, environmental, health, and social benefits of rebuilding the Inner Loop differently, (2) help analyze opportunities and strategies for Indianapolis, and (3) participate in community conversations. The primary research deliverable will be an inventory or "toolbox" of land use strategy recommendations and resources for equitable growth, sustainable development, and vitalization of areas around the Inner Loop. Based on the timing and interests of the applicant, opportunities also exist to assist with the development of art and cultural engagement experiences and a "shovel ready" proof of concept project.

Duties will include:

- Providing research and analysis support in the following:
 - Urban highway infrastructure development in cities around the US
 - Economic, environment, health, and equity benefits of recessed highway construction – includes talent attraction, equitable development opportunities, climate change mitigation and adaptation, crime reduction impacts, placemaking and cultural development, social infrastructure, environmental justice, and community health

- Land use analyses to determine uses best suited to growth and revitalization – includes analysis of retail, civic centers, green space, incubator space, residential, office, industrial, and other spaces
- Determining necessary actions and policies to ensure inclusive, equitable development and to reduce displacement
- Helping to design and implement “community conversation” experiences to facilitate stakeholder engagement in the visioning and planning of the Inner Loop rebuild.
- Depending on the Fellow’s interest, participating in the development of art and cultural experiences for community engagement and possibly the development of an “infrastructure game” to tell the story of the Inner Loop’s past and teach about its potential in the future
- Also depending on the Fellow’s interest, assisting the Rethink Team in working with local development entities to advance “proof of concept” projects to a “shovel ready” stage around the Inner Loop – such as a Virginia Ave. capping concept
- Working with the President/CEO and Executive Team to strategize other efforts to educate, advise, and engage stakeholders and decision-makers in the rebuild visioning and planning
- Attending the Bootcamp May 16 – 20, 2022
- Attending weekly (virtual) “Lunch and Learns”, Wednesdays from 12:00pm-1:30pm
- Submitting weekly Canvas reports over the course of the fellowship

Qualifications

Interested in sustainable development, urban design, and equity issues

Excellent research, analysis, and writing skills

Interpersonal skills necessary to communicate with diverse groups in person, by email, by phone, and through Zoom

Self-motivated and able to prioritize and manage multiple projects and tasks while working collaboratively

Proficient in Microsoft Office; familiarity with GIS, data analysis, and graphic design tools is a plus

Willing to work a flexible schedule

Willing and able to learn quickly

Compensation

Compensation will be in the form of a scholarship through the Environmental Resilience Institute. The Fellow will work full time for 10 weeks, beginning mid-May and end mid-August (the start and stop dates are flexible and can set based on the Fellow’s availability). There may be an opportunity to continue working beyond the 10 weeks.

Feedback and Evaluation

The Fellow will be given regular feedback from the Rethink President/CEO and Executive Team on progress and performance. Success in the fellowship will be determined by the completion of specified projects in a professional and timely manner and participating thoughtfully in strategy development discussions. The Fellow will learn how a non-profit provides collaborative leadership in complex public problem-solving; how infrastructure impacts community health, wellbeing, and the environment; how sustainability priorities and opportunities in highway infrastructure design can achieve economic, environmental, health, and social benefits; how to communicate and engage with a range of stakeholders; and how to develop and maintain professional relationships necessary for systems-change.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The McKinney Climate Fellows Program supports the continual advancement and development of diverse, inclusive, and equitable spaces. Indiana climate change solutions should be equitable in implementation, and projects with equity considerations are encouraged to reduce climate change impacts on marginalized communities in the state.

Application Instructions

To apply for this position, complete an application on the Environmental Resilience Institute's website. If you have questions about the program or any of the positions available, email Danni Schaut, MCF Program Manager, at danmcphe@iu.edu, or Sarah Miller, MCF Project and Outreach Coordinator at sjm8@iu.edu. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis (first come, first serve) until Monday, February 14, 2022.