

## Made in Cuyama Program Manager



**To apply:** Email CV/resume & letter of interest to [hello@blueskycenter.org](mailto:hello@blueskycenter.org)

**Type:** Part-time employee (potentially full-time if interested)

**Compensation:** \$30/hr

**Hours:** 25 hours per week, average (at the start, with ability to expand over time)

Must speak Spanish and English

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### OVERVIEW

Blue Sky Center's mission is to *build models for resilient, thriving, and inclusive rural economies in the Cuyama Valley*. A key part of our work is to support local entrepreneurs build homegrown businesses, and we're looking for a resourceful, diligent, and outgoing individual to help neighbors turn ideas into businesses. There's a lot of work that goes into launching a business, from finances, to budgeting, inventory, procurement, sales, taxes, marketing, and more. It can get overwhelming, and so we make it a priority to help aspiring Cuyama entrepreneurs along the way.

In order to support this, we are hiring a part-time\* **Made in Cuyama Program Manager** to oversee these community economic development efforts. (*\*If applicants desire a full-time position, we have the option to combine this role with another part-time role to make it full-time.*) This Program Manager would be responsible for these efforts, and we're looking for someone with an ability to coach local entrepreneurs, a mind for budgeting and numbers, and most of all, the grit, flexibility, and outgoing personality to work through any small task that a business owner will encounter.

One of the primary things we expect for the person in this role to do will be to facilitate our "Start, Grow, Revive Your Business" training program, using existing curriculum, as well as our own version designed specifically for local food entrepreneurs. This includes setting dates and times that work for participants, securing a location, receiving training on the curriculum so that you can teach it, recruiting participants, and following through to ensure participant success.

Secondly, and just as importantly, this person will provide technical assistance and support for any business owner that calls or walks through the door. This does require someone with existing relationships in or to the local community and an understanding of the unique needs and challenges of rural communities. While it would be ideal for this person to live in the Cuyama Valley, we are open to applicants from across the region, provided they can make a commitment to be onsite in Cuyama 1-3 days a week. Because of the demographic of our community, this person must be conversationally fluent in *both* Spanish and English.

If you're someone that knows how to focus on the details, has ambition to run a training program, thrives on working with others, and has an interest in how to run a business and to help others do the same, we'd love to hear from you.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Job responsibilities of the Program Manager will include:

1. Providing technical assistance, training tools, and resources to individual entrepreneurs to facilitate private sector business development/expansion.
2. Coordinating and facilitating ongoing communication with individuals working in this grassroots effort to strengthen the economy of Cuyama Valley, CA and surrounding rural areas.
3. Providing one-on-one and/or classroom-based Technical Assistance on business development/expansion/retention techniques; and assisting with launching or expanding new businesses founded by community members.
4. Reporting all required projects activities and impact information to ensure compliance with federal grant reporting requirements under the USDA's RBDG as well as federal reporting for grants which BSC may receive.
5. Holding Monthly meetings with entrepreneurs to gather feedback and support to drive rural economic opportunity strategies forward.
6. Working with Blue Sky Center Executive Staff to implement economic development strategic plans and identify opportunities for investment and attracting resources to Cuyama Valley.
7. Helping liaise and manage relationships with Blue Sky Center shop tenants.

## DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

We realize this work is very specific to this place and our community and may have interested applicants that are not fully qualified on the myriad of skills and experienced with the full breadth of the work we undertake. We seek first a cultural fit (to the Valley and to Blue Sky) and then the technical skills fit of applicants. Applicants qualified with at least 80% of the desired experience metrics will be considered. We provide one-on-one orientation and training — both in shadowing experienced staff and mentorship — for the last 20%.

We are looking for individuals with experience/interest in most, if not all, of the following areas:

- Experience developing community-centric business plans
- Experience in teaching or coaching adults, facilitating workshops and implementing curricula
- Experience working with small manufacturers (specific experience with printmaking/welding fabrication/automobile renovation/other craftsman businesses is a plus)
- Experience working with new food ventures
- Experience working with rural communities
- Interest in resilient local food systems
- Interest in impact investment or collaborative investment strategies

We have the following requirements:

- Must live in the Cuyama Valley or be willing to spend 2 days minimum per week in the Cuyama Valley
- Must be conversationally fluent in English and Spanish; beyond verbal, written fluency in both Spanish and English is a plus
- There are no educational attainment (college) requirements for this position; relevant life/work experience is valued equally
- Be 18 years or older
- Exhibit collaborative team player experience, effective communication, and consistent follow through

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Cover letter with statement of interest, qualifications, and experience
- Resumé, CV, or other equivalent representation of relevant work experience
- Two professional references with name, title, contact information (email and phone), and relationship
- Submit all materials as one (1) combined PDF emailed to [hello@blueskycenter.org](mailto:hello@blueskycenter.org) with subject line “Made in Cuyama Program Manager Application”

## ABOUT BLUE SKY CENTER

Blue Sky Center is a rural nonprofit located in New Cuyama, California, in the Cuyama Valley, with the mission to strengthen our rural communities in the Cuyama Valley by supporting entrepreneurs and building our regional creative and economic resources. The Cuyama Valley is home to a unique high-desert landscape in inland Central California, just north of the Los Padres National Forest and south of the Carrizo Plain National Monument. One of our core focus areas is supporting entrepreneurs and small business development in our community through our Made in Cuyama Initiative. We provide space and support for several small businesses utilizing our repurposed buildings and shop spaces as well as small businesses and entrepreneurs throughout the Cuyama Valley. We actively support the development of social ventures that lead to hiring locally, job training, and advance social and environmental community initiatives as partners and collaborators.

## REMUNERATION

- \$30/hour as an employee
- Paid time off (vacation and sick leave) earned per hour performed
- If full-time and after an introductory period, option for employer-paid health insurance benefit
- Other benefits TBD including mileage reimbursement, professional development, personal equipment use stipend, performance bonuses, and others

## ADDITIONAL REFERENCE MATERIALS

--[Blue Sky Center Strategic Plan](#)

--[Blue Sky Center 2023 Annual Report](#)

--[Cuyama Valley Food Action Plan & Opportunity Matrix](#)

--More information on Blue Sky Center can be found on our [website](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).

## NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Blue Sky Center is committed to provide equal opportunity without regard to race, color, sex, age, disability, religion, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, ancestry, citizenship status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law.