Helen Keller

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Director, Advocacy

(DC Metro area)

Helen Keller Intl is a global health organization dedicated to eliminating preventable vision loss, malnutrition and diseases of poverty. Co-founded by Helen Keller – and guided by her fierce optimism and belief in human potential – the organization delivers life-changing health and food security solutions to build resilience of vulnerable families where the need is great but access to care is limited. In the US, Africa, and Asia, Helen Keller’s proven, science-based programs empower people to create opportunities in their own lives and build lasting change.

Helen Keller overcame tremendous obstacles to her health and wellbeing – and helped millions of others to do the same. Guided by her remarkable legacy, Helen Keller Intl partners with communities that are striving to overcome longstanding cycles of poverty. By delivering the essential building blocks of good health, sound nutrition and clear vision, we help millions of people create lasting change in their own lives. Together with a global community of supporters, we are ensuring that every person has the opportunity – as Helen did – to reach their true potential.

We seek a collaborative and strategic thinker to help lead Helen Keller Intl’s advocacy efforts that takes advantage of our unique positioning as a key implementer of nutrition programs and leverages our field experience to make a compelling case for ending malnutrition and building a healthier world.

Scope of the Position
The Director will launch Helen Keller’s first advocacy department and, with Helen Keller’s CEO and other key team members, build a grass-tops advocacy strategy to leverage our on-the-ground experience in more than 20 countries to affect policy outcomes for vulnerable children and families around the world. The Director will be a visionary leader with a practical attitude, helping the organization to envision and steer a strategy that leverages our health care implementation experience, our research and data, and expertise in order to affect change for millions of people around the world. The Director will be a passionate advocate themself and also leverage the organization’s staff and volunteer leaders to advocate in Congress, with key UN agencies, with fellow humanitarian and global health organizations and actors, and within the countries in which Helen Keller works. The Director will be a strong communicator, working with the organization’s Marketing and Communications Director, to convey powerful stories, data, and experiences to educate key decision-makers. The ideal candidate will be an experienced leader, with the ability to strategize as well as execute tactically, who can align the pursuit of short-term wins with long-term vision and values.
Key Responsibilities

Strategy Development
- Conduct landscape analysis and internal assessment of staff, Board, and organizational strengths that can be brought to bear for effective advocacy actions.
- Craft an advocacy agenda, with short- and long-term goals, short- and long-term possible wins and priorities, and aspirational goals.
- Leverage staff and Board relationships and other organizational assets such as stories from communities in which we work, research and data, program expertise, communications, and relationships with elected officials and other influential people, media, and organizations.
- Stay abreast of political developments nationally, internationally, and at the UN and among key funders, in order to identify opportunities and threats.
- Work collaboratively across the organization to develop Helen Keller’s advocacy potential, tactics, and actions.
- Build a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees to lead the volunteer arm of our strategy.

Implementing strategy
- Initiate relationships and meetings for CEO and other key leaders and staff with Congressional offices, USAID leaders, funders, fellow advocacy leaders, and other influencers toward our agenda.
- Convene coalitions or represent Helen Keller within already formed coalitions to advance the power of groups toward shared advocacy goals.
- Identify learning needs across Helen Keller and conduct advocacy training for Board and senior staff.
- Develop key performance indicators and report to staff, Board, and funders on outcomes, actions, threats, and opportunities.
- Represent Helen Keller in meetings with Congressional staff, within coalitions, at conferences, and in strategy meetings.

Messaging
- Develop story ideas with Marketing and Communications team to demonstrate how nutrition, health, and vision interventions work with policy decision-makers.
- Develop thought leadership ideas and strategies, media relationships, key messages, talking points, opinion pieces, briefing documents, and media advisories with Marketing and Communications team.
- Convey messages powerfully and clearly at key opportunities and with fellow advocates.

Management and Internal Leadership
- Hire and build the organization’s first Advocacy unit, including recruiting an associate within the first half year. Create and oversee annual work plans and performance reviews for Advocacy team members.
- Mentor, supervise and evaluate direct reports and contribute to an atmosphere conducive to professional growth and development.
- Consult with and guide staff to achieve goals and ensure accountability to beneficiaries, partners, colleagues and donors by providing ongoing feedback in a context of mutual respect.
- Work with Business Development and External Relations to identify and support fundraising opportunities to sustain and grow Helen Keller’s advocacy agenda.
Required Qualifications/Competencies
The ideal candidate will have:

- Bachelor’s Degree required (Master’s Degree preferred), along with a minimum of 7-10 years in advocacy and/or government relations in a nonprofit organization, or equivalent combination of skills and experience.
- Demonstrated ability to think strategically while executing on a tactical level.
- The ability to work effectively with a broad range of diverse groups as evidenced by excellent listening and communication skills, balanced and reasoned approaches to problems, ability to inspire trust and confidence, and flexibility and openness to differing points of view.
- A persuasive oral and written communication style, rooted in keen interpersonal sensitivity and openness.
- The ability to make decisions in a dynamic environment, with an appreciation for how future needs may affect those decisions: a willingness to iterate a strategy and approach, with the ability to recognize the need to course-correct as necessary.
- Outstanding organizational skills with demonstrated ability to maintain oversight of the range of communication activities.
- In-depth knowledge of state and federal legislative processes and knowledge of developing and participating in effective campaigns.
- Ability to digest, analyze, and translate policy documents.
- Preferred prior experience in launching an advocacy team or managing campaigns as part of a larger advocacy strategy.
- Preferred experience in health advocacy or global health organizations.
- An ability to maintain balance when under stress and to see through challenges to find solutions.
- Highly computer literate including high proficiency in Microsoft Office 365.
- Demonstrable respect for all persons regardless of religion, ethnicity, class or gender, with a high comfort level working in a diverse environment with a demonstrated commitment to high professional ethical standards.
- Willingness to travel nationally and globally.
- Helen Keller Intl requires all US-based staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, whether or not they have had COVID. For the time being, Helen Keller also requires all staff to wear masks while providing program services and when in any open or public space in the office and to observe social distancing.

To Apply
Qualified candidates should submit a cover letter and resume to hki.recruitment@hki.org
Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

In the spirit of our founder and namesake, Helen Keller is dedicated to building an inclusive workforce where diversity is fully valued.

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer where all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, disability, or protected veteran status.

We are committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual with a disability and need to request an accommodation during the application or interview process, please contact us at the email above or call: +1 646-356-1789.