



## **Position Description: Program Officer – Indigenous Communities**

**Location:** Hybrid; NC/SC based

**Reports to:** Executive Director

**Status:** Full-time, Exempt

### **About Catawba Nation Foundation (CNF)**

The Catawba Nation Foundation is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to educational advancement, cultural preservation, environmental conservation, and economic development for the Catawba Nation, Cleveland County and the surrounding region, and Native American communities across North Carolina. Funded primarily by gaming revenues from Two Kings Casino, the Foundation invests in initiatives that address community needs, leverage opportunities, and create lasting impact.

To learn more, please visit [catawbanationfoundation.org](http://catawbanationfoundation.org).

### **The Opportunity**

The Catawba Nation Foundation (CNF) seeks a Program Officer – Indigenous Communities to advance its commitment to strengthening the well-being, resilience, and self-determination of Indigenous communities. This role is grounded in respect for Tribal sovereignty and centers Indigenous leadership, community voice, and culturally rooted approaches to philanthropy. The Program Officer will focus on the Catawba Nation (SC) and Native communities across North Carolina, including the Coharie, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Haliwa-Saponi Tribe, Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, Meherrin Indian Nation, Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, Sappony, and Waccamaw Siouan Tribe.

CNF invests in community-led solutions that honor culture, advance equity, and support long-term sustainability across education, cultural preservation, health, environmental stewardship, and community development.

Guided by values of respect, reciprocity, accountability, collaboration, and cultural integrity, CNF seeks a Program Officer who is committed to advancing Indigenous leadership and community power through relationship-centered and responsive grantmaking.

### **The Role**

The Program Officer – Indigenous Communities is responsible for stewarding CNF's Indigenous-focused grantmaking portfolio through deep community relationships, thoughtful strategy, and effective internal collaboration. This role serves as both a trusted partner to Indigenous communities and a key contributor to CNF's grantmaking, learning, and organizational effectiveness.

Working closely with the Executive Director and CNF team, the Program Officer brings community knowledge and insight into Foundation strategy, supports transparent and accessible grantmaking processes and scholarship programs, and helps ensure CNF's investments reflect Indigenous priorities, values, and ways of working. The role balances community-based grantmaking with the development and stewardship of CNF's Indigenous



scholarship initiatives, ensuring both funding streams advance educational opportunity and long-term community impact.

## **Key Responsibilities**

### **Community-Centered Grantmaking & Partnerships**

The Program Officer – Indigenous Communities serves as a key relationship-builder and thought partner, working closely with Indigenous communities, organizations, and leaders. This role develops and maintains trusted relationships, supports community-informed strategies, and ensures CNF’s grantmaking reflects Indigenous priorities, values, and ways of working.

### **Grantmaking & Applicant Support**

Program Officers are primary liaisons between grant applicants and CNF. Responsibilities include reviewing proposals, meeting with applicants and grantees, conducting due diligence, and preparing clear, thoughtful analyses and recommendations for Foundation leadership and governing bodies. The role emphasizes transparency, accessibility, and respect throughout the grantmaking process.

### **Program Strategy & Scholarship Program Development**

The Program Officer contributes to the design, implementation, and continuous improvement of CNF’s Indigenous-focused grantmaking and scholarship program strategies. This includes assessing program effectiveness, learning alongside grantees, incorporating community feedback, and helping CNF adapt practices to better serve Indigenous communities. The Program Officer will also support the design, launch, and ongoing management of CNF’s Indigenous scholarship initiatives, ensuring programs are accessible, culturally responsive, and aligned with community priorities.

### **Internal Collaboration & Organizational Capacity**

The Program Officer works collaboratively with CNF staff and partners to strengthen internal systems, documentation, and practices that support effective grantmaking, compliance, and learning. The role may also contribute to cross-program initiatives, convenings, and special projects aligned with CNF’s mission.

### **Key Lived Experiences, Attributes, and Skillsets**

Successful candidates will be values-driven, relational, reflective, and strategic. They will bring a deep respect for Indigenous sovereignty, culture, and community leadership.

Preferred qualifications include:

- Lived experience as an Indigenous person and/or extensive professional experience working alongside Indigenous and Tribal communities.



- Strong understanding of issues impacting Indigenous communities, including but not limited to cultural preservation, educational advancement, environmental conservation, and economic development.
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent professional experience.
- At least 5 years of demonstrated experience in philanthropy, grantmaking, scholarship program development, nonprofit leadership, or community-based work.
- Ability to apply equity-centered, Indigenous-centered, or culturally responsive frameworks to strategy and decision-making.
- Excellent facilitation, collaboration, and project management skills.
- Proficiency with common office and collaboration tools (e.g., Microsoft Office or Google Workspace); experience with grant or CRM systems (i.e. Foundant (CSuite and GLM) a plus.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to translate community knowledge into clear recommendations.
- Comfort with technology and grants management systems.
- Humility, integrity, sound judgment, adaptability, and a collaborative spirit.
- Experience in philanthropy is beneficial but not required; deep community experience and relational credibility are essential.
- Comfort working in a small, mission-driven organization with evolving needs.

### **Work Environment & Requirements**

The Catawba Nation Foundation is a growing, mission-driven organization with a small, collaborative team. As we continue to expand our programs and impact, staff members may have opportunities to engage in shared responsibilities across different areas of the organization, fostering professional growth and cross-functional learning. Flexibility and adaptability are valued, as occasional evening or weekend events may require attendance to support the Foundation's initiatives, community engagement, and Board or grantee gatherings. This dynamic environment offers the chance to contribute meaningfully to the Foundation's mission while shaping the organization's future.

This is a hybrid position that requires two days a month in the Shelby, NC office, requires onsite visits throughout NC/SC, attendance at state and national conferences. Travel is significant and varies by grant cycle and community needs to Indigenous communities, meetings, and convenings, based on organizational needs. Flexibility in work hours may be needed to support community engagement meetings and events.

### **Compensation & Benefits**

Salary is commensurate with the requirements of the position and begins in the \$85,000 range. Benefits include dental and vision health coverage, option for a health insurance stipend or medical insurance coverage, including flexible paid time off (PTO) policy designed to support employee well-being and work-life balance and 12 paid holidays and professional development opportunities.

### **To Apply**



The Foundation is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to inclusive hiring and dedicated to diversity in its work and staff. Employment decisions are made without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable state or federal law. Catawba Nation Foundation encourages candidates of all groups and communities to apply for this position.

Send all inquiries, nominations and applications via email to [careers@catawbanationfoundation.org](mailto:careers@catawbanationfoundation.org). Applications must include a resume and customized cover letter to be considered for the role.

No phone calls please, and no applications will be accepted directly from third-party posting sites.