

# A BETTER CHICAGO

**POSITION: Chief External Affairs Officer**

## **ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION**

A Better Chicago is a nonprofit venture philanthropy fund that focuses on fighting poverty and inequity in Chicago by improving opportunities for Black and Latinx youth from low-income backgrounds. We approach this work by harnessing best practices to invest financial and intellectual capital in our expanding portfolio of high impact, high-potential local nonprofits as they work on the front lines to empower young people from cradle through career. Since our founding in 2010, we have provided more than \$40 million in support to dozens of Chicago nonprofits serving over 30,000 young people annually. Through our approach to selecting and supporting outstanding organizations, A Better Chicago seeks to build a more equitable city for young people while setting an example of how philanthropy can drive compelling results at scale.

### **Key elements of A Better Chicago's model include:**

- **Rigorous due diligence:** A Better Chicago carefully screens organizations and only funds those that have strong leadership, a compelling program model and a demonstrated commitment to outcomes measurement
- **Adding value:** It takes more than just money. A Better Chicago provides strategic support in areas like business planning, executive search and leadership development—all of which are critical to building strong organizations and achieving meaningful outcomes
- **Results:** A Better Chicago's team works tirelessly so that every dollar raised has the maximum possible impact. The organization openly shares its performance because it believes in accountability. It's part of how A Better Chicago is transforming philanthropy
- **100% impact:** A Better Chicago's board of directors and leadership council cover all of our administrative costs, so 100 percent of all donations are supporting our portfolio of outstanding nonprofits

### **Since launching in 2010, A Better Chicago has made compelling progress:**

- Raised over \$43 million to invest in Chicago's most effective nonprofits
- Built a board, leadership council, impact council and high-performing staff
- Reviewed 800+ organizations and built a portfolio of 18 high-performing organizations
- Developed partnerships with leading professional services firms to help grantees tackle their most pressing strategic and operational challenges
- Created an Emergency Relief Fund that has accumulated nearly \$2.5 million to support 46 local initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information, please visit [www.abetterchicago.org](http://www.abetterchicago.org).

## **ABOUT THE POSITION**

A Better Chicago seeks an experienced, strategic, and passionate Chief External Affairs Officer. The Chief External Affairs Officer is a senior leadership role overseeing the development, communications, and public

affairs functions of A Better Chicago. This role is accountable at the highest level for the stewardship of A Better Chicago's brand at the local and national levels, strategic and timely communication with internal and external stakeholders, maintaining and cultivating new partnerships to elevate A Better Chicago's brand, and ensuring we garner the resources required to achieve our ambitious yet achievable mission. Working closely with the CEO and Chief Investment & Strategy Officer, the Chief External Affairs Officer will help set the annual vision and objectives for the organization and collaboratively ensures goals are met as part of the Executive Leadership Team.

### **Why this is your dream job**

This role is the ideal opportunity for a highly motivated and deeply experienced communications and partnerships professional who is ready to lead during an exciting period of growth and evolution. Celebrating our 10-year anniversary this year, we look ahead to the future with a new strategy and vision for the organization grounded in impact and innovation. Under this new mandate, you will lead the creation and implementation of a strategy for A Better Chicago's local and national presence, solidifying A Better Chicago as a thought-leader and problem-solver in the fight against poverty. As we understand the new fundraising landscape amid COVID-19, you will work in collaboration with the Director of Development and Director of Communication & Engagement to shape our future fundraising and communication strategies and cultivate new strategic partnerships. You are ultimately held responsible for ensuring A Better Chicago secures the funds and resources required to achieve our bold mission. You have a deep passion for fighting poverty and inequality in Chicago and beyond, extensive executive leadership and relationship-building skills, and a deep commitment to the work you do.

### **Why this is a challenging job**

This is a demanding, senior leadership role. A Better Chicago is a lean, entrepreneurial organization with high standards and ambitious targets. You should expect to work hard and roll-up your sleeves to accomplish the work required. You will work with a highly accomplished and ambitious team. The right person will be excited about these aspects of the role and will have a track record of outstanding leadership in demanding environments.

### **Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:**

- *Development and Fundraising*
  - Ensure a strategic and data-driven fundraising strategy is implemented which secures the funds required for, and evolves with, the growth and mission of A Better Chicago
  - In partnership with the Director of Development, oversee the development function of the organization, fundraising for both investment opportunities and the annual operating budget of the organization
  - Make certain the development function is best in class at donor cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship for a range of individual and institutional donors
  - Manage the portfolio and relationship of a core set of top level prospective and current donors
- *Strategic Positioning and Communications*
  - Define and implement a new approach strategically positioning A Better Chicago on the local and national stage as thought-leaders and problem-solvers in the fight against poverty

- In partnership with the Director of Communication & Engagement, oversee the daily execution of internal and external communication, brand positioning, and public relations differentiated by audience and reach
- Ensure A Better Chicago is represented as an organization with integrity and impact in all that we do
- *Partnership Cultivation and Growth*
  - Facilitate a long-term partnerships strategy to benefit the organization and grantees that we support
  - Lead the team in executing external engagements and events that support our partnerships and positioning objectives
  - As a core responsibility of every role at A Better Chicago, be a champion and face of our organization, identifying and cultivating relationships and partnerships with key individuals and businesses that believe in our mission
- *Cross-Organizational Leadership*
  - As a member of the Executive Leadership Team, provide senior leadership to the organization and be held accountable by the Board of Directors to our success
  - Lead and develop direct reports and oversee people management for the development, communications, and public affairs functions
  - Own the development and execution of the development, communications, and public affairs related annual OKRs, ensuring cross-team engagement and collaboration in execution

**REPORTS TO: CEO**

**CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS**

The ideal candidate may bring experience from the private, public, and/or nonprofit sectors and will possess the following qualifications and attributes:

- Deep commitment to A Better Chicago’s mission to drive socioeconomic change through investing in organizations creating high-quality opportunities for Chicago students
- Skills and experience:
  - 10+ years of communications, partnerships, and fundraising experience working in fast-paced environments, experience working with federal, state, local policymakers, philanthropic and/or nonprofit leaders preferred
  - Experience setting and meeting fundraising targets and strategies, recognizing the nuanced approach required for a diverse set of opportunities and prospective investors
  - History of collaborating with a diverse group of stakeholders to develop impactful partnerships across private, public, and nonprofit sectors
  - Outstanding track record of creating, implementing, and scaling the brand and voice of an organization on the local and national stage – understanding the role that thought-leadership and positioning plays in supporting an organization’s mission
  - Bachelor’s degree required; Master’s degree preferred

- Strong project management skills, ability to prioritize tasks and meet deadlines in a fast-paced environment for both yourself and your team
- Outstanding and versatile verbal and written communication skills
- Excellent interpersonal, relationship building and teamwork skills
- Deep experience leading team and a commitment to developing talent
- Ability to adapt to changes in work assignments, deadlines and team environment
- Tech savvy and proficient in Outlook, PowerPoint and Excel, experience with Salesforce preferred
- Demonstrated commitment and track record of excellence across A Better Chicago's values:
  - **Courage:** *We proactively step up to challenges, make tough decisions and act decisively. We say what we believe, even if it's unpopular*
  - **Empathy:** *We respect and seek to understand a diverse range of perspectives from our teammates, partners and the communities we serve*
  - **Judgment:** *We make wise decisions despite ambiguity. We cut through noise to focus on the most important issues*
  - **Drive:** *We bring an ownership mindset and hold ourselves accountable to delivering results. We have a bias toward action*
  - **Innovation:** *We develop creative solutions that enable us to overcome obstacles and achieve more for Chicago's youth*
  - **Stretch:** *We get better every day through feedback, reflection and growth*
  - **Self-awareness:** *We work to understand our abilities, our growth opportunities and the impact of our actions on others*
  - **Positive attitude:** *We bring energy, optimism and a sense of possibility to our work, especially in difficult times*
  - **Teamwork:** *We support our colleagues to be their best. We work collaboratively to solve problems. We put our team above ourselves*

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience. A Better Chicago offers an excellent benefits package, which includes:

- Medical, dental and vision insurance
- Short-term and long-term disability insurance
- 401K plan with company contribution
- Significant paid time off, including two weeks of vacation, five sick days and 16 days off for public holidays and office closure

**APPLICATIONS DUE BY:** January 3, 2021

**TARGETED START DATE:** March 2021

**LOCATION:** Chicago, IL

**TO APPLY, SEND COVER LETTER AND RESUME BY JANUARY 3, 2020 TO: [CAREERS@ABETTERCHICAGO.ORG](mailto:CAREERS@ABETTERCHICAGO.ORG)**

*A Better Chicago is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes candidates from diverse backgrounds.*