



Tribal Legal Fellow

Summary

The Infrastructure and Investment Act's \$13.4 billion in new funding for tribes and Inflation Reduction Act's \$722 million specifically for tribes (and another \$400B+ they are eligible to apply for) have the potential to drive enormous benefits for tribes by preserving and delivering clean drinking water, repairing damaged ecosystems like streams and rivers, addressing dam safety, and helping tribes develop in-house capacity for even more such projects and programs.

This level of investment in, and attention to, tribes is an opportunity to shift in the dynamics of how the federal government interacts with tribes toward collaboration and respect for tribal sovereignty and leadership.

Our goal is to help tribes and agencies integrate their priorities in new ways. EPIC serves as an intermediary, facilitator, and funding navigator. Our intent is for these solutions and relationships to provide a model for how the federal government can work with and support tribal governments and groups in a way that leverages this once-in-a-generation IIJA and IRA funding for a lasting shift in tribal power in relation to the federal agencies that should be supporting them.

About EPIC

The Environmental Policy Innovation Center (EPIC) builds policies that deliver spectacular improvement in the speed and scale of environmental progress. A nonprofit start-up, EPIC is committed to finding and highlighting the best approaches to scaling up results quickly. EPIC focuses on clean water, endangered species, environmental markets and the use of data and technology in producing environmental and public health outcomes. Our largest program is focused on delivering better, safer and more affordable water infrastructure to disadvantaged and historically underinvested communities. For more information on the restoration program at EPIC, see [this link](#).

Position Description

EPIC seeks a Tribal Legal Fellow who will work closely with the Western Restoration Program Manager and the new Tribal Partnerships Manager to build expertise on the issues surrounding applications for federal restoration funding that is most relevant to tribes in the west, and who will have the opportunity to potentially transition into a role as a federal agency detailee. The fellow will preferably come with a legal background, or perhaps a master's degree in public policy or public administration and demonstrated understanding of how federal funding programs work, and be able to quickly connect with several tribes throughout the west to understand the needs and gaps that might be addressed through improving the flow of federal funds. They should also understand federal grant administration, permitting and procurement policy. As a result of this one-year fellowship, the fellow should be well-positioned to work on detail with a federal agency, such as the Department of Interior.

Responsibilities

- Develop and draft legislative and regulatory proposals for federal, state and local use.
- Work directly with federal agency staff to identify limitations and solve, or at least identify solutions, for increased tribal participation in funding programs.
- Employ innovation and creative problem-solving skills to identify challenges and adaptive solutions.
- Coordinate directly with tribes, their respective representatives, and a diverse coalition of organizations working to advance the flow of funding to better support tribes and tribal interests.
- Regularly engage with multiple tribes and maintain communication to foster productive relationships and beneficial outcomes.
- Strategically advance federal programs and/or policy recommendations that benefit tribes by leveraging new and existing relationships, drafting recommendations, and coordinating with groups working to advance tribal involvement in federal funding programs.
- Facilitate Zoom meetings and other engagements to directly connect federal agency leaders (including those who are tribal members themselves) with tribes for better government-to-government engagements and stronger relationships.
- Continue and build upon earlier conversations between tribes, agency leadership, and non-government organizations that include a range of topics, from funding decisions to new program design.
- Work with partners to solve or at least identify solutions to tribal capacity limitations.
- Develop and draft program recommendations that advance tribal relationships with federal, state and local partners.
- Promote challenges, solutions, and successes via blog posts, website updates, and social media posts.

Qualifications

- Law degree strongly preferred, but EPIC will also consider qualified candidates who possess a master's degree in public policy, public administration, or other relevant field.
- Understanding of federal grant administration, permitting and procurement policy.
- Demonstrated understanding of US federal agency grant programs that support tribes' restoration projects and proposals.
- Ability to quickly connect with tribes throughout the west to understand the needs and gaps that might be addressed through improving the flow of federal funds for aquatic restoration, fish passage and water quality projects.
- Detail oriented with an eye toward finding lines of text in federal regulations and tribal laws that impact how federally funded projects proceed and mutually beneficial outcomes are achieved.
- Familiarity with the history of tribal-federal relationships, limitations, and challenges.
- Project management experience and ability to manage time well, set deadlines, and follow through on projects.
- Strong listening skills and ability to understand a range of detailed government and tribal permitting- and procurement-related issues.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including presenting to an audience, answering questions in real time, and facilitating discussions and panel presentations.
- Creative energy and technical acumen that allows the candidate to be a leader in developing new permitting and procurement strategies and solutions.

Salary Range

\$80,000 to \$97,000 annually, based on educational and career experience and qualifications.

Location

Western U.S. region, or remote. This position may require occasional travel to meetings, conferences, and other events. Work other than travel is done at the candidate's home office or at the EPIC office in the D.C. metro area.

Benefits

EPIC offers a generous benefits package including health, dental and vision care, 401k contributions and four weeks of paid time off.

Applying

Qualified candidates, who are also authorized to work lawfully in the United States, can apply by sending an email by **February 26, 2024** to Garrett Altmann, Western Restoration Program Manager at garrett@policyinnovation.org with an email subject of "Tribal Partnerships Manager". Please include a resume and a cover letter labeled with your last name, followed by the document type (e.g. "[Last Name]_Resume"). You may also provide any supporting documents we should consider in evaluating your candidacy (e.g., writing samples, references).

We believe that including more people from a broad diversity of backgrounds, including people of color, people from working class backgrounds, women, and LGBTQ people, is essential for achieving our vision. Applicants with tribal membership, affiliation or from historically underrepresented communities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Additionally, we know there is not one ideal candidate who has all these traits so if you have a mix of interests, skills, and experience related to the above – and a passion for this work – please don't let a gap in your strengths for this role stop you from applying or reaching out. Thanks for your interest in the position.