



Small Business & Innovation Events Manager

Hiring Details

Department	Small Business & Innovation
Reports To	Jazmin Anderson, VP of Small Business & Innovation
Location	LEAP's office is located in a historic redeveloped building in the heart of the REO Town district with free parking, immediate access to the River Trail and within a short walk or bike ride to downtown Lansing.
Position Type	Exempt (Full-time)
Salary Range	\$56,000 – \$60,000 commensurate on demonstrated skills and experience.
Benefits	• Competitive health insurance offering, including dental and vision • 401(k) program with 1:1 employer match up to 6% and immediate vesting • Additional ancillary benefits such as annual performance pay bonuses • Best-in-class paid time off and paid holidays • Health savings account • Fully paid life, short- and long-term disability insurance
Application Deadline	Interviews are expected to begin in early October. Open until filled.
To Apply	Upload cover letter, resume, and three professional references at: www.purelansing.com/about-leap/careers/

Job Overview

LEAP's Small Business & Innovation department is seeking a Small Business & Innovation Events Manager to lead the planning and execution of 517 Entrepreneurship & Innovation (E&I) Week, LEAP's flagship annual event connecting entrepreneurs, partners, sponsors, and the broader Lansing innovation ecosystem. This role will own E&I Week end to end, from developing and securing sponsorship opportunities and managing sponsor relationships to kickoff event coordination, hub programming, and volunteer management. The role will also take responsibility for other department events throughout the year, including The Connect and other events as assigned.

A key component of this role is developing and executing a sponsorship strategy that generates financial support for E&I Week while building strong, long-term relationships with businesses and ecosystem partners. This is an opportunity to shape and grow a signature regional event, build lasting relationships across the Lansing region's entrepreneurial community, and help expand the resources available to support entrepreneurship and innovation.

Roles & Responsibilities

- Plan, coordinate, and execute 517 E&I Week, including the kickoff event, week-long hub programming, and coordination with partner-hosted sessions
- Develop and execute an annual sponsorship strategy for 517 E&I Week, including identifying prospects, conducting outreach, developing sponsorship opportunities, soliciting and securing financial support, and managing sponsor deliverables

- Build and maintain relationships with current and prospective sponsors, businesses, and ecosystem partners to grow sponsorship revenue and long-term engagement
- Develop sponsorship materials, proposals, presentations, and customized partnership opportunities aligned with sponsor goals and E&I Week priorities
- Track sponsorship commitments, payments, benefits, and fulfillment to ensure a strong sponsor experience
- Secure and manage relationships with keynote speakers for E&I Week
- Design and oversee small activations within the hub to engage attendees between sessions
- Recruit, train, and manage event volunteers
- Plan and execute The Connect
- Manage event budgets, timelines, and vendor relationships
- Coordinate with internal teams (marketing/communications, the SmartZone, program staff) to ensure aligned messaging and logistics
- Manage a contractor supporting event planning and execution
- Evaluate event outcomes and gather feedback to continuously improve programming
- Build and maintain relationships with entrepreneurs, sponsors, and ecosystem partners

Qualifications

- 3+ years of experience in event planning and management, ideally including large-scale or multi-day events
- Demonstrated experience securing sponsorships, fundraising, cultivating business relationships, or generating financial support through partnerships
- Experience managing sponsor and/or vendor relationships
- Strong project management skills, with the ability to manage multiple events and timelines simultaneously
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Experience managing contractors, volunteers, or direct reports
- Ability to work independently and problem-solve under tight deadlines
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent professional experience

Preferred Skills

- Familiarity with programming and events within an entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Experience with event budgeting and financial tracking
- Comfort with event management or project management tools
- Existing relationships within the Lansing business or innovation community
- Cultural awareness and experience building trust with entrepreneurs and partners from diverse backgrounds and communities
- Strong strategic thinking, problem-solving, and resourcefulness in setting priorities and proposing new efficiencies
- Ability to organize and meet deadlines across a wide variety of ad hoc requests in a fast-paced, demanding environment
- Ability to quickly adopt new technologies
- Strong working knowledge of web-based tools and proficiency in Microsoft Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Canva
- Marketing or brand strategy experience
- Capacity for creative planning and implementation
- High level of self-direction and orientation toward achieving results
- Ability to maintain confidentiality of highly sensitive information

About LEAP

The Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) is a leading economic development organization recently named by *Site Selection* magazine as one of the nation's top 20 economic development organizations. LEAP proudly represents the tri-county Lansing region, including Clinton, Eaton and Ingham counties and has an annual contract with the region's urban core city (Lansing) to act as the

City's economic development department. LEAP is considered a cutting-edge leader in incorporating diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) into its economic development programming and organization. LEAP is a private-public 501(c)6 nonprofit partnership governed by a board of directors, including business and municipal leaders from across the tri-county region. Read more about LEAP's work, and DEI and economic development values and philosophy on our website at www.purelansing.com/about

Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status. In addition to federal law requirements, LEAP complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the company has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfers, leaves of absence, compensation and/or training.