

Job Title	Community Engagement Director
Reports to	Chief of Staff, County Judge

ABOUT THE HARRIS COUNTY JUDGE

The County Judge is not a judicial position. It is instead the county executive, and the head of Harris County’s governing body, called the County Commissioners Court. The County Judge and four County Commissioners oversee a \$4.3 billion budget that helps pay for key services in Harris County - from the justice system, to flood control, infrastructure, and public hospitals. Harris County is the third largest and most diverse county in the nation - with a population of greater than 4.5 million people - equivalent to the population of Colorado.

JOB PURPOSE

Judge Elect Hidalgo has a bold, new vision for what is possible through Harris County government. As the highest level elected official of the third largest and one of the most diverse counties in the US, Hidalgo holds a deep commitment to bringing the voices of those most directly impacted by the disparities and social, racial and economic disparities in the region to the forefront of problem solving and long range planning.

The Director of Community Engagement is a senior organizer in residence, responsible for developing a strategy to open pathways of participation for Harris County residents in order to carry forward a community-driven agenda to improve the quality of life for millions of families.

As a member of the County Judge’s leadership team, the Director of Community Engagement will be expected to bring deep familiarity and connection to the diverse communities and cultures that make up Harris County. The role will work in tandem with the Policy Director and other members of the Leadership Staff to ensure that authentic community input is integral to planning & decision-making in every aspect of the work of the Office of the County Judge— particularly aimed to to advance community-driven planning for establishing budget priorities, capital projects and policy-setting in Harris County government.

The Director of Community Engagement must be a courageous champion of equity and the premise that broad and diverse civic participation is a prerequisite for solving our most entrenched and systemic social challenges, and a foundational pillar for innovation in the public sector.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work with Judge Hidalgo to develop and execute her community engagement vision and strategies that aim to transform the nature of civic participation in Harris County public affairs
- Work closely with Policy Director to solicit “two-way” community collaboration that both increases community support in advancing Judge Hidalgo’s policy initiatives, and establishes authentic channels for residents to inform and shape new initiatives
- Provide supervision to a team of Community Engagement and event specialists in the Office of the County Judge
- Develop and sustain relationships with external stakeholders, including but not limited to community-based organizations, advocacy networks, and the faith-based community to further the County Judge’s community engagement strategies
- Community-driven problem-solving and innovation: Guide and inspire teams into identifying meaningful community-centered insights that drive program and policy design that deliver meaningful improvements in county services
- Pilot the use of community engagement tools that leverages technology where appropriate to encourage interaction, support networks, governing bodies, knowledge creation, and deepened connections between residents and government
- Represent the County Judge at events concerning community engagement best practices, within and outside of Harris County, and the country

QUALIFICATIONS

- At least 10 years of professional experience in a relevant field, with knowledge and vision for the future of civic participation in government, experience building campaigns and community-driven programs, and experience working with governments and community stakeholders
- A strong background in community organizing, coalition-building, and/or demonstrated track record of cross-cutting work engaging a diversity of stakeholders in a social impact arena
- Knowledge and experience with governance structures for multi-sector stakeholders and accountability mechanisms for community input; such as resident advisory boards, labor councils, community boards, collective impact models, community engagement models
- Familiarity with concepts and history of community control and self-determination, participatory planning, and open government
- Experience developing and facilitating popular education tools, training modules, civic curricula for audiences of diverse educational and experiential backgrounds, preferred
- Flexibility, adaptability, persistence, humility, inclusivity and sensitivity to cultural differences; ability to relate to a wide variety of diverse audiences with strong emotional intelligence and empathy

- Excellent oral and written communications skills in English and another major language spoken in Harris County
- Entrepreneurial spirit and creative resourcefulness in identifying solutions to complex problems, persistence in surfacing collective wisdom, and able to create direction and movement within potentially ambiguous environments
- Ability to develop and drive new initiatives, work cross-departmentally, work within multidisciplinary teams, oversee projects to completion and measure results
- Must demonstrate a strong sense of urgency and initiative; highly organized and with the ability to achieve systematic delivery under tight deadlines
- Ability to prioritize effectively; superb time management skills
- Excellent teamwork skills and ability to work autonomously with accountability
- Must possess a good sense of humor and comfort with change; must possess agility to adapt to and lead through change
- Fluency in Spanish a plus

WORKING CONDITIONS

This position will require many meetings across Harris County outside normal business hours.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Harris County is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all applicants and employees. Accordingly, the County judges applicants and employees on individual merit and qualifications, without regard to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information. The only exceptions are based on bona fide occupational qualifications.

TO APPLY

Please send cover letter and resume to HCRRecruit@hctx.net with the position to which you are applying in the subject header.

