



SOULARDARITY

Organizing for Infrastructure in Highland Park, MI

We're growing our team for energy democracy - will you join us?

Soulardarity is hiring two new full-time positions to start by June 1st 2021 as part of a major period of organizational growth and transformation. This packet has everything you need to know to apply. You can reach out to our current Executive Director, Jackson Koepfel, with questions: director@soulardarity.com

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Background

Soulardarity started out of necessity, when Highland Park residents were left in the dark by DTE Energy's repossession of over 1000 streetlights in 2011. When we came together, it was with the simple goal of restoring light to the darkness. 10 years later, we have become a locally and nationally recognized leader in energy democracy.

Since 2012, Soulardarity has achieved tremendous impact with minimal resources. Some of those impacts include having:

- ❖ Restored 18 streetlights to Highland Park, and created a [citywide solar street lighting plan](#)
- ❖ Deployed \$30,000 of solar lighting and emergency generation in Highland Park and Detroit.
- ❖ Grown numerous community initiatives in Highland Park, such as Avalon Village and Parker Village, through public lighting and solar projects and via formation of the [Highland Park Community Crisis Coalition](#) in response to COVID-19.
- ❖ Conducted education projects for hundreds of youth, students, and community members of all ages on energy democracy and DIY energy saving skills.
- ❖ Created and organized around the [Blueprint For Energy Democracy](#) as guide to achieve sustainability and self-determination in Highland Park
- ❖ Became a leading [advocate with the Michigan Public Service Commission](#) on behalf of low-income communities and communities of color, seeking affordability, health, and community ownership of clean and renewable energy.
- ❖ Co-launched the Work For Me, DTE! Campaign to advance those goals through organizing, media, and movement building.
- ❖ Co-authored a national policy proposal for a [Community Ownership of Power Administration \(COPA\)](#) to empower communities that are being underserved by the investor-owned monopolies.

In the last year our staff team has more than doubled in size, entirely in frontline programmatic staff on membership, community organizing, and fellowship programs. Soulardarity is also in the process of leadership succession from our founding Executive Director, Jackson Koeppel, to current Deputy Director, Shimekia Nichols. The positions we are hiring for are aimed at increasing operational capacity and supportive infrastructure for our frontline staff, solidifying capacity for the new ED, and enabling Soulardarity overall to rise to the task before us - helping to lead the transition from an extractive fossil fuel economy to a racially and economically just energy democracy.

Hiring Process and Guidelines

In order to apply, please do the following:

Send end email to director@soulardarity.com and communications@soulardarity.com with subject line [YOUR FULL NAME]: Application for Narrative/Deputy Director Position. The email should include:

- A cover letter in PDF form answering the following questions:
 - Why do you want to work with Soulardarity?
 - Why are you qualified for this position and what do you bring to it?
 - Why are you excited to hold this position?
- A resume or CV clearly highlighting your qualifications
- 3-4 options for an interview time in the week of May 3rd-7th, preferable during regular business hours. If you are unable to do an interview during regular business hours please share evenings that work best for you.

Overview of Projected Timeline

- Preferred deadline for Applications is April 30th at the latest. We will be considering applicants on a rolling basis.
- Applicants will be scored and interviewed by the Soulardarity staff team. Primary contacts during the hiring process will be the Executive Director (Jackson Koeppel) and Deputy Director (Shimekia Nichols) whose emails are noted above.
- For applicants who proceed to an interview, first round interviews will be held the week of May 3rd. For applicants who proceed to a second interview, those interviews will be held the week of May 10th. Applicants can expect a response or offer no later than May 21st, with a start date of June 1st. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated to applicants.

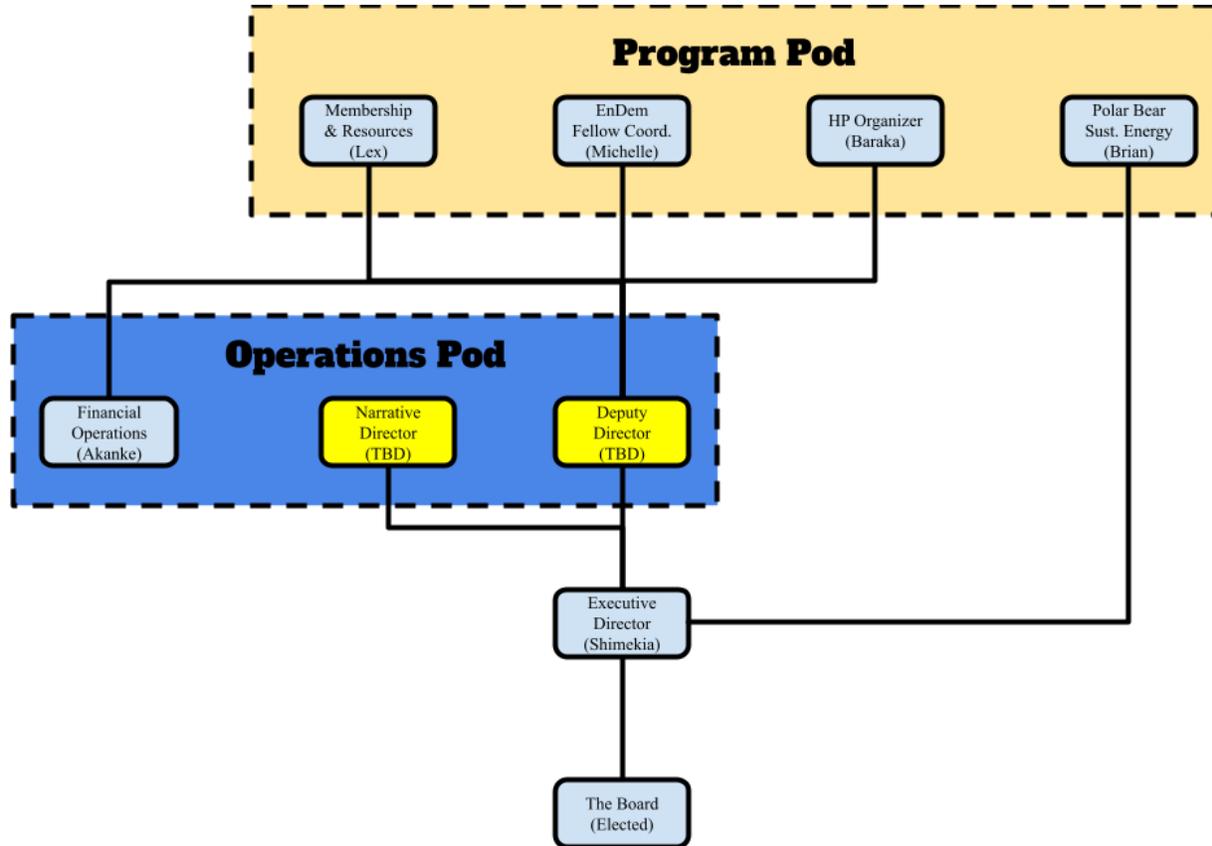
Supporting Visual

The diagram on the following page shows the staffing structure these positions are nested in. The two positions we're hiring for are highlighted in yellow.

The boxes and lines show the staff management structure. It is presented as an inverse hierarchy, in reflection of the fact that Soulardarity operates from a framework of supportive management. While we value decision-making that engages members and different cross-sections of staff, board, and membership, we also value clarity and the ability for staff to know who their primary point of support and accountability is at any given time. As you can see in the chart, the Board is the manager of the Executive Director. The Executive Director in turn manages the Deputy Director and Narrative Director, as well as the Polar Bear Sustainable Energy Lead. The Deputy Director manages the remaining staff - Financial Operations, Membership & Resources, Energy Democracy Fellowship Coordinator, and HP Organizer. The Deputy Director role is management-centric while the Narrative Director role is not.

The boxes with dotted lines cluster staff into a program pod and operations pod. You can see that most current staff are in the program pod, and these two positions are in the operations pod. You can think of the program pod as consisting of frontline staff with bottom line goals that are external in nature - growing membership, achieving organizing victories, installing solar panels, getting attendance at events. The operations pod, by contrast, is oriented more towards internal goals - having equitable hiring practices, strong financial management, best practices documents. While goals in both pods cross the internal/external line, you can think of the operations pod as being the support infrastructure for the program pod to succeed. The Executive Director's role is at the intersection of the two, ensuring that internal operations and public programming are working in mutually supportive alignment.

We hope this offers to those considering these positions clarity on where you will fit into the team structure of the organization. We also hope they demonstrate Soulardarity's dual commitment to clear accountability structure *and* collaborative decision-making.



Position: Deputy Director

Scope: Full-time Employee

Salary Range: \$50K-\$60K commensurate with experience

Benefits: Up to \$675 per month in healthcare stipend and access to [Extended Advance Program](#)

Reports to: Executive Director

Overall Description:

Soulardarity is seeking an experienced Deputy Director to lead the growth and development of staff, programs, operations to grow our collective power in alignment with the Jemez Principles, internally and externally. The Deputy Director will work closely with the Executive Director, Operations Pod, and Program Pod to operationalize our values with radically just human resources, efficient and democratic organizational management, and robust, user-friendly systems for tracking progress towards our visions and goals.

Specific Responsibilities:

- **Staff Management:** Act as direct manager for Highland Park Organizer, Energy Democracy Fellowship Coordinator, Membership & Resources Organizer, including establishing program goals and evaluation metrics and annual evaluations.
- **Human Resources:** Maintaining an up-to-date employee handbook, records of staff evaluations, and contracts for staff and contractors in docuSign. Supporting staff with HR concerns as they arise.
- **Policy Governance:** Support Executive Director with data gathering and writing for monthly policy reports to the Board of Directors.
- **Finance:** Act as primary contact for Financial Operations contractor to ensure all monthly reconciliations and transaction logging, annual and quarterly tax reporting and paying, and payroll processing are being met. Work with the Financial Operations contractor to problem-solve when new developments require updates to our financial practices and policies and ensure all changes are properly documented, and brought for board approval when necessary.
- **Tracking & Evaluation:** Work with program staff to develop and track metrics on all program areas to inform collective strategy and decision-making. Ensure reporting systems on metrics are user friendly and train/support staff to utilize them.
- **Database and Website:** Maintain and update our collective policies and protocols on uploading and updating contacts in our database, and utilizing database for making contact on programs. Train and support staff in use of the database, providing direct support when necessary but primarily supporting skill building and confidence in use of these tools.
- **Administrative Systems:** Develop and train staff on new admin systems as needed for HR and program administration (Slack, for example).

- Emergency Succession: In the case of sudden loss of Executive Director service, be prepared to take on ED responsibilities on an interim basis per emergency succession protocol.

Desired Qualifications

- Experience working in grassroots organizations engaged in community organizing work
- Multiple years of staff management experience, preferably in the above mentioned organizational context or in any other context that prioritized supportive management and bottom-up leadership
- Cultural competency working with an intergenerational, predominantly Black working class staff, board, and membership
- Background in and commitment to environmental and/or energy justice and democracy
- Strong command of and experience working with CRM systems, preferably Nationbuilder which we use for website and backend database purposes.
- Experience in HR and operations roles and demonstrated experience practicing intersectional racial and economic justice in internal organizational practices
- Working knowledge of Quickbooks Online to allow troubleshooting with Finance Director
- Excellent written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills
- Experience developing training tools and skilling up teams to meet ambitious goals

Position: Narrative Director

Scope: Full-time Employee

Salary Range: \$50K-\$60K commensurate with experience

Benefits: Up to \$675 per month in healthcare stipend and access to [Extended Advance Program](#)

Reports to: Executive Director

Overall Description:

Soulardarity is seeking an experienced Narrative Director to tell the story of our work to our community, funders, donors, and the media in alignment with the Jemez Principles and our movement allies. The Narrative Director will work closely with the Executive Director, Operations Pod, and Program Pod to shape our narrative and build a communications strategy and infrastructure that builds our organizational power and the power of the movements we're a part of.

Specific Responsibilities:

- **Narrative:** Update and maintain a meta-narrative for Soulardarity through input from staff, board, members, and allies that informs all communications work, to include participation in regular meetings of the Michigan Alliance for Justice In Climate and other formations to maintain alignment of Soulardarity's narrative.
- **Media Management:** Act as primary contact and coordinator for all media requests to Soulardarity and external pushes, including drafting/editing press releases, identifying and supporting messengers with talking points and logistical support, correcting inaccuracies in press coverage, drafting and approving quotes for joint releases, and developing relationships with local and national media.
- **Email & Texting:** Act as final approver for all communications going out through our database, including ghost-writing and formatting regular emails from Program Pod staff to our distinct mailing lists and training/supporting staff to do so directly, scheduling and drafting text blasts, maintaining a calendar of communications, and tracking outcomes in terms of open, click, and unsubscribe rates to continually update practices.
- **Social Media Management:** Post regularly to our Facebook, Twitter, and potentially Instagram accounts with program updates, news articles, member updates, and any other relevant content to grow our social media presence and increase engagement with our front-facing programs.
- **Communications Materials:** As requested by program staff, create flyers, event descriptions, and other public facing materials that achieve program goals and align with our core narrative and assist with printing and distribution logistics.
- **Digital Event Infrastructure:** For all Soulardarity events, create and link events on website, social media, and other platforms as needed with clear email and text RSVP

options. Over time, train staff to do these tasks directly and create training tools for doing so.

Desired Qualifications

- Experience working in grassroots organizations engaged in community organizing work
- Cultural competency working with an intergenerational, predominantly Black working class staff, board, and membership
- Background in and commitment to environmental and/or energy justice and democracy
- Multiple years of work experience in a communications role, preferably in the contexts noted above
- Experience working with databases for communications, preferably Nationbuilder which we use for managing email newsletters and text blasting
- Excellent graphic design skills
- Experience managing organizational social media accounts, especially numerous accounts through a platform such as Hootsuite
- Excellent written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills
- Experience developing training tools and skilling up teams to meet ambitious goals