



# Venture Philanthropy Partners

## Director, Networks and Investments

Washington, D.C.



## Background

For over 20 years, Venture Philanthropy Partners (VPP) has delivered long-term outcomes that improve life opportunities for children and young adults in Greater Washington, setting them on the path to learn, graduate, secure employment, and become successful, healthy adults. Our work began with strengthening individual non-profits across Greater Washington, which expanded to connecting them into networks. Then, we built upon those networks to include cross-sector collaborations with community members, governments, businesses, and the philanthropic community.

VPP has deployed management expertise and invested more than \$110M in capital to strengthen executive leadership. We have increased the capacity of local nonprofits, helping them expand to 80 new sites and serve on average 57,000 young people each year, resulting in healthier newborns, improved childhood development, better academic achievement, and higher graduation rates.

As we looked ahead to the next 20 years, we recognized that we needed to do more, be bolder, and act faster to make changes at the systems level for our most vulnerable youth. In April 2020, we formed a strategic alliance with Raise DC—a member of the national StriveTogether network—to build an investment organization capable of driving alignment among communities, nonprofit and business leaders, jurisdictional and regional leaders around systems change agendas.

VPP+Raise DC has always believed that all children and youth possess the capacity to succeed and thrive. More than two decades of experience investing in improving outcomes for the young people of the Greater Washington region have affirmed our belief that, most often, the impediments to our children's success are systemic. The most pernicious and intractable of these are the racist and racialized impediments that undermine the progress of young people of color, notably Boys and Young Men of Color. Accordingly, VPP + Raise DC has committed to "call out and confront policies, practices and systems that contribute to racial inequity..., and further, to "develop, institute and communicate an approach to embedding racial equity and antiracism into all levels of the organization." We approach systems change through cross-sector collaboration and direct investments, focused on early childhood education, boys and young men of color and career and college readiness to improve life opportunities for youth (0-24) in Greater Washington.

To lead this effort and to ensure VPP+Raise DC is having the impact it intends, VPP+Raise DC is looking for a talented Director of Networks and Investments.

## Position Responsibilities and Objectives

The Director of Networks and Investments will work with the Partner(s) to set and manage the scope of network and capacity building investments including management of collaborative action networks, investment landscaping and selection, and supporting thought-leadership and field-building. The position reports to a Partner for overall direction, day-to-day management, operations, and administrative matters.

The Director's responsibilities are in the following three categories: collaborative action network management, investment selection and portfolio management, and complementary activities.

### Collaborative Action and Collective Impact Network Management

- Drive, manage and support systems change agenda of networks:
  - Establish and maintain relationships with network leaders, members, and critical stakeholders
  - Collaborate with members to create a common framework for systems change
  - Convene, lead, and participate in meetings with cross-sector network partners
  - Develop and oversee the implementation of workplans
- Facilitate development of strategic focus and goals of collaborative networks
  - Generate and communicate insights from data to inform collaborative networks
  - Work with relevant partners and stakeholders to determine strategic focus; create a shared plan for investments and collective action to further a shared agenda

### Investment Selection and Portfolio Management

The Director works with the Partners to find high-quality investment opportunities that meet strict investment criteria and improve the ecosystem for delivering positive outcomes for children, youth, and families. In addition, works closely with Partners to serve as high-level strategic advisors, experts, coaches, and mentors to executives leading nonprofit organizations and cross-sector networks, helping them greatly strengthen their organizational capacity and achieve their strategic aspirations. The Director leverages VPP+Raise DC's and their own extended network of resources and relationships for the benefit of VPP+Raise DC's investments and initiatives.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Landscaping and investment selection:
  - Strategically participating in external meetings/events and with relevant organizations to support landscaping efforts. Use knowledge gleaned to help identify new investments, including cross-sector network initiatives, nonprofit capacity building investments and place-based collaborative initiatives and inform VPP+Raise DC's investment strategy.

- Developing relationships with nonprofit organizations and cross-sector network leaders to
  - a) learn about their aspirations, cultures, and programs;
  - b) assess their success in achieving meaningful social outcomes for children;
  - c) help gauge their leadership and management strength;
  - d) assess their capacity for participating in a network investment, as appropriate; and
  - e) assist in determining their potential to grow in scale and impact, ability to achieve their goals, assess their economic sustainability, and their willingness to work in an engaged partnership with VPP+Raise DC.
- Providing analysis and recommendations to scale, innovate, and improve delivery of service to children to raise the bar in the field.
- Conducting essential due diligence to confirm prior analysis and representations.
- Engaging teams on multiple capacity and/or cross-sector network investments:
  - Building relationships and interfacing with executives, senior management, and boards
  - Developing and maintaining select nonprofit partner or cross-sector team member relationships, as needed, to support the achievement of milestones.
  - Coordinating and participating in peer review in the management of investments and initiatives.
- Preparing investment analysis documents, investment materials, and conducting or coordinating research.
- Increasing the organization's overall capacity to support investments:
  - Supporting a specific "domain expertise" that has application to VPP-Raise DC investments (e.g., strategic planning, educational attainment (early childhood (pre-K3- 3rd grade), K-12 with focus on boys and young men of color, youth development, public health, older youth (18-24), community development, postsecondary readiness and success, career readiness and preparation, outcomes assessment, or cross-sector collaborations).
  - Contributing to the strategic direction by having a high-level understanding of key issues, strategic leverage points and major pitfalls to avoid.
  - Teaming with Partners to develop and strengthen the nonprofit partner organizations in assisting with the development of the investment approach and strategy for nonprofit partnerships.

## Complementary Responsibilities

Directors engage in a variety of other activities to advance the mission of VPP+Raise DC, demonstrate the value of the VPP+Raise DC investment approach to a wide variety of audiences, and help to develop VPP+Raise DC's long-term strategies.

- Representing VPP+Raise DC publicly as a thought-leader in your particular area(s) of expertise.
- Developing expertise in area(s) relevant to the mission and goals of VPP+Raise DC
- Engaging with other tables, working groups, events, and conversations with critical stakeholders, and thought leaders in your area(s) of expertise.
- Capturing VPP+Raise DC's experiences and insights, as well as those of the nonprofit partner organizations and cross-sector networks, to ensure that valuable lessons are learned and contributing to research, the development of methodologies, and other systems and tools to support the investment approach.
- Developing and maintaining supportive relationships within the regional philanthropic and nonprofit communities and conveying VPP+Raise DC's mission and goals to these groups.
- Leveraging his or her own contacts and the existing VPP+Raise DC network to advance the mission and goals of VPP+Raise DC.

## Qualifications Include:

- Commitment and understanding of capacity-building, systems change, and racial justice.
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in a related field.
- At least 5 years' experience in managing and building teams and managing and building new projects.
- A risk-taker, outcomes driven, and ability to "think outside the box."
- Experience as a thought leader and strategic thinker.
- Experience across multiple youth development issues areas such as education, health, housing, and safety – is preferred.
- Ability and experience building partnerships and bringing partners together to work on collective goals and have collective impact.
- Strong communication skills (both written and verbal) and experience producing research reports, messaging, framing, and talking points.
- Experience working with a variety of organizations (government agencies, school districts, nonprofit organizations, etc).
- Experience working with organizations and government agencies in the DC/MD/VA area is plus.
- A positive, solution-oriented attitude, and an ability to be flexible and work under pressure.
- Demonstrated ability to work as a self-starting member of a team.
- Well-organized, hard worker, with good time management skills and an ability to work well under pressure and meet shifting deadlines.



- Ability to deal with ambiguity, appreciation of the value of all kinds of diversity, and great interpersonal skills.

## Location

VPP+Raise DC is committed to supporting employees' maximizing productivity while managing the requirements and constraints of our work, and simultaneously navigating life's demands outside of work (e.g., family, and other life-related issues, responding to external shocks such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic/endemic). VPP+Raise DC's work requires significant collaboration, internally among team members and externally with investment partners, investors and funders, and members of our networks throughout the Greater Washington area. Much of this highly relational work is performed in person. VPP+Raise DC recognizes that while in-person work is frequently optimal in our work, the opportunity for Remote Work in some instances offers advantages for VPP+Raise DC's employees. Such potential advantages include increased productivity and performance, crisis response (including but not limited to COVID-19 or other health and safety responses), office space flexibility, employee work-life balance, and increased job satisfaction.

## Compensation

The salary range for this role is \$112,000 - \$140,000 and a generous benefits package is available to all staff.

*VPP + Raise DC is committed to leading systems change that delivers better outcomes for the children and young people of the Greater Washington region. In pursuit of this important mission, VPP is dedicated to ensuring an inclusive workplace, which values the diverse identities, backgrounds, experience, expertise, and contributions of all employees.*

To apply for this position, please click [HERE](#).

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Shaquile Coonce, Talent Consultant