



FLSA Classification: Non-exempt	Reports to: SOFSA Executive Director
Compensation: \$24-26/hour + modest benefits	Schedule: 20-24 hours/week
Effective Date: November 30th, 2026	End Date: Ongoing, subject to funding availability
Work Location: 70% remote / 30% in-person activities throughout Onondaga County, NY	Supports: Fellow, Community Connectors, community partners

Background

SOFSA is where people across our region's food system come together to build relationships, share ideas and resources, and act on what none of us can change alone.

Since 2019, the Syracuse-Onondaga Food Systems Alliance has grown into a network of more than 500 changemakers across Syracuse, Onondaga County, and Onondaga Nation. Our role is connective: we bring people together across sectors and lived experiences, develop community leadership, strengthen a shared vision, and create opportunities for collective action toward a more just and sustainable food future.

Our work is grounded in transformative justice and reciprocity. We believe that people most affected by food injustice should have meaningful power in shaping the decisions, strategies, and investments that affect their communities. That commitment shows up in how we govern, how we listen, how we build leadership, and how we work together.

SOFSA is now at an exciting point in our growth. We've built a broad network. The next challenge is helping more people find meaningful ways into it, deepen their relationships with one another, grow their leadership, and see themselves as part of a collective effort to transform our food system.

About the Role

If you're the person who leaves a gathering thinking about who should meet whom, who seemed ready to step into leadership, and which conversation deserves a follow-up, you may see yourself in this role.

The Community Leadership & Engagement Organizer helps turn a network of people and organizations into a community that is connected, participatory, and capable of acting together.

You'll build relationships across SOFSA's network, help Community Connectors and Fellows grow as leaders, create meaningful pathways for people to become more deeply involved, coordinate opportunities for SOFSA to listen to community members, and help steward our commitments to equity, inclusion, accessibility, and accountability.

We think of community engagement as organizing, not simply outreach. The goal is to foster authentic relationships over time, connect people with one another and with opportunities to lead, and make sure what we're hearing across the network helps shape SOFSA's direction and collective work.

How the Work Happens

A typical week might include meeting one-on-one with a community leader, facilitating a Community Listening Session, connecting two partners who should know one another, and welcoming people at an evening event alongside focused computer-based work preparing agendas, writing follow-up emails, documenting what you heard, coordinating logistics, tracking commitments, coordinating with SOFSA staff and leaders, and keeping projects moving.

The right person for this role will enjoy the people-facing parts of the work and be efficient and self-directed with the behind-the-scenes work that makes strong relationships and programs possible.

Core Responsibilities

Community Leadership & Network Participation (60%)

- **Cultivate an active and connected network.**
Build authentic relationships with SOFSA members, community leaders, grassroots groups, neighborhood organizations, and other partners across Syracuse, Onondaga County, and Onondaga Nation.
 - Identify people, organizations, ideas, and emerging leaders who could become more deeply connected to SOFSA, and develop meaningful ways for people to move from initial engagement toward participation, leadership, and collective action.
 - Pay attention to what is emerging across the network (recurring concerns, missing voices, new energy, promising connections, and opportunities for collaboration) and bring those observations into staff planning and organizational decision-making.
 - Connect people with one another and experiment with new approaches that strengthen relationships and participation across the network.
- **Coordinate Community Listening Sessions.**
SOFSA uses listening sessions to build relationships, understand community priorities, and make sure community knowledge informs our work.
 - Coordinate approximately 3-5 Community Listening sessions each year in partnership with Community Connectors, Fellow, partner organizations, and other SOFSA staff.
 - Help turn what we hear into stronger relationships, organizational learning, recommendations, and opportunities for collective action.
- **Strengthen and steward the Community Connectors program.**
Community Connectors are compensated community leaders who help bridge SOFSA and communities most affected by food injustice while exercising meaningful leadership and co-governance alongside SOFSA's Board.
 - Serve as the primary staff partner to four Community Connectors, including one Lead Community Connector, and maintain strong structures for recruitment, onboarding, communication, reflection, accountability, and leadership development.

- Partner with the Lead Community Connector to strengthen that role, including leadership of affinity groups and deepened participation in SOFSA governance.
- Support Connectors in building community relationships, bringing community knowledge into SOFSA spaces, developing recommendations, and taking increasing ownership within SOFSA and the broader food system.
- **Help Fellows grow as leaders.**
SOFSA's paid Fellowship gives emerging food-system leaders hands-on experience, relationships, learning, and opportunities to take on increasing responsibility.
 - Coordinate a lightweight cohort-wide learning and leadership-development structure in collaboration with the staff members who supervise individual Fellows.
 - Build and maintain a practical cohort framework including onboarding, learning goals, monthly cohort connection, reflection, exposure to local food-system leaders, and opportunities for increasing responsibility.
 - Directly supervise the Fellow supporting Community Engagement & Equity work.
 - Create periodic opportunities for Fellows to connect their day-to-day work to food justice, systems change, community power, and SOFSA's larger mission.
 - Help Fellows identify relationships and opportunities that can support continued leadership in Central New York beyond the Fellowship.

Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility & Accountability Stewardship (25%)

Equity and accountability are shared organizational responsibilities at SOFSA. This position plays an important stewardship role but is not expected to serve as the organization's sole source of equity expertise or accountability.

- Convene and facilitate SOFSA's Equity, Inclusion & Accountability Committee, generally meeting about 6 times per year, and lead the continued evolution of SOFSA's Equity & Justice Action Plan.
- Pay attention to barriers related to participation, identity, accessibility, power, or belonging and bring forward observations and practical recommendations for strengthening SOFSA's practices.
- Support the Lead Community Connector in planning LGBTQ+ and Global Majority affinity gatherings and help create other opportunities for learning, dialogue, and reflection when there is a clear need.
- Maintain and strengthen accessibility practices for SOFSA events and convenings.
- Raise concerns constructively when organizational practices may not align with SOFSA's commitments, while recognizing when outside expertise or facilitation would strengthen the work.

Convening & Engagement Support (15%)

SOFSA brings people together throughout the year, from small community conversations and celebrations to our day-long annual Food Justice Gathering convening over 200 attendees. This position helps make those spaces welcoming, accessible, and well organized.

- Coordinate practical logistics for recurring SOFSA gatherings in collaboration with the staff member or partner leading each event, including supplies, food, materials, accessibility supports, volunteers, and other details.
- Build reusable checklists, timelines, inventories, and systems that make recurring events easier to produce well.

- Support planning and implementation of the annual Food Justice Gathering as a member of the broader event team.

Who Thrives in This Role

You may be a strong fit if:

- **You're an organizer and connector at heart.** You genuinely enjoy meeting people, building relationships, making connections, and helping others move from interest toward participation, leadership, and action.
- **You notice what's happening and turn insight into action.** You spot emerging energy, recurring concerns, missing voices, and opportunities for collaboration, and you bring forward ideas, questions, and thoughtful next steps.
- **You think about systems, power, and people together.** You can help groups navigate disagreement, identity, power, and competing perspectives with care and purpose, while staying attentive to how systems and inequities shape who participates, whose voices carry weight, and what becomes possible.
- **You bring warmth and energy to shared spaces.** You're comfortable initiating conversations, welcoming people in, drawing others out, and helping people feel connected to one another and to the larger purpose of the work.
- **You pair strong relational instincts with strong execution.** You communicate clearly, work efficiently with digital tools, turn ambiguity into useful structure, and reliably follow through on the writing, coordination, logistics, and details that sustain good relationships and programs over time.

Desired Experience & Qualifications

There are many pathways to being successful in this position. Relevant experience may come from paid employment, community leadership, grassroots organizing, advocacy, public service, volunteer leadership, or other settings.

Strong candidates will demonstrate many of the following:

- Experience in community organizing, coalition-building, leadership development, community engagement, or a closely related practice.
- Experience building relationships and working effectively across differences in race, class, age, identity, neighborhood, language, lived experience, and professional or community roles.
- Experience facilitating groups, including conversations involving disagreement, identity, power, or competing perspectives.
- A demonstrated grounding in racial and economic justice, power, and systemic inequity.
- Strong project management skills, including organizing complex work, creating useful systems and structures, and reliably following through.
- Strong everyday written communication skills, including emails, agendas, summaries, meeting materials, and partner communications.
- Strong digital fluency and comfort managing information, calendars, project plans, records, and collaborative tools in a largely computer-based work environment.

Applicants should generally bring at least three years of substantial relevant experience or an equivalent combination of professional, community, organizing, and leadership experience.

A college degree is not required.

Previous food-systems experience is welcome but not required. We are more interested in hiring an excellent organizer who is eager to learn the food system than requiring sector expertise at the expense of strong organizing practice.

Technology

SOFSA is a small, fast-moving organization that relies heavily on digital tools for communication, coordination, documentation, and project management. Candidates should be comfortable working independently in a digital environment and learning new systems as needed. SOFSA currently uses Google Workspace, Zoom, Canva, and monday.com, among other tools.

Schedule & Work Environment

This is a 20-24 hour/week position.

SOFSA operates with a flexible hybrid schedule. In consultation with their supervisor, employees structure their hours in ways that support their own needs and working style while maintaining a high-functioning collaborative team.

At least half of weekly working hours should generally fall Monday through Thursday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. The employee will also participate in SOFSA's shared in-office staff day and attend in-person community meetings and events throughout Onondaga County.

Some evening and weekend hours are required. Staff are expected to manage their schedules so that these responsibilities generally occur within the position's regularly allocated hours.

Extended working days are required the day before and day of the Annual Food Justice Gathering, generally held on a Saturday in October.

Work takes place in home office, office, and community settings including libraries, neighborhood spaces, schools, farms, farmers markets, food-access organizations, and other partner locations. A majority of the role's working time will generally be computer-based, with in-person engagement concentrated around meetings, relationship-building, listening sessions, and events.

Compensation & Benefits

The compensation range for this position is \$24-26/hour. SOFSA uses an organization-wide compensation framework to determine starting pay within the advertised range.

The calculation of the successful candidate's exact compensation within the advertised range will be based on numerous factors including: 1) years of directly and indirectly relevant prior work experience, 2) lived experience; 3) additional language proficiencies beyond English; and 4) advanced degrees beyond a Bachelor's level. We expect that most candidates for this role will begin in the lower third of the advertised range with the higher end of the range reserved for individuals who demonstrate prior experience with all or nearly all of the competencies outlined in the job description as well as many of the additional determining factors listed above.

SOFSA offers a meaningful benefits package to regular part-time employees, including:

- Paid vacation, sick/wellness, personal, holiday, and bereavement time off.

- Up to \$200 per month toward health and family benefits through SOFSA's cafeteria plan, which may be applied toward eligible benefits offered by our professional employer organization, Staff Leasing.
- \$37.50 monthly home-office stipend.
- Professional development opportunities based on organizational budget and employee goals.
- A highly flexible schedule and accommodations designed to support employee success and wellbeing.

Physical Demands

Job is mostly sitting; however, candidate may need to stand for extended periods and/or lift up to 30lbs on occasion. Accommodations are available as needed.

Travel Required

Yes, candidate must have reliable transportation to attend activities throughout Onondaga County and Onondaga Nation. Candidate may have opportunities for occasional travel to other locations across the state and/or country.

Other Duties

Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

Work Authorization and Security Clearance Requirements

SOFSA does not sponsor employment visas. No security clearance is needed.

Affirmative Action/EEO statement

It is the policy of SOFSA to provide equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information or any other protected characteristic under applicable law.

How to Apply

To apply, candidates should complete the application available at <https://wkf.ms/3UIC1lb>. As part of the application, candidates will be asked to submit a resume as well as a sample work product relevant to the role. Priority deadline is **Sunday, October 25th, 2026**. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

In addition to building its network across sectors of the food system, SOFSA is committed to expanding representation among its leadership, membership, and workforce across dimensions of race, language, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status. Candidates are encouraged to include experience building connections across these dimensions in their application materials.

What to Expect from the Hiring Process

We are committed to transparency and aim to minimize the stress and uncertainty of our application and hiring process. By the end of the process, we hope final candidates will have had a chance to meet with between 3-5

individuals connected to SOFSA. We aim to complete the hiring process by mid-November with an anticipated start date in late November or early December.

1. A Zoom interview with a panel of 2-3 SOFSA leaders (45 min)
2. An in-person interview with 3-4 SOFSA leaders (1 hr)
3. Professional reference checks for the final candidate(s)

While we aim to complete the hiring process within the timeline outlined above, we are committed to finding the right individual to fill this key position on our team. The position will remain open until filled and adjustments to the timeline may be required. We strive to be communicative and inclusive throughout our hiring processes.