SOUTHERNERS ON NEW GROUND
REGIONAL ORGANIZER JOB DESCRIPTION

Southerners On New Ground (SONG) is a regional Queer Liberation organization made up of people of color, immigrants, undocumented people, people with disabilities, working class and rural and small town, LGBTQ people in the South. We believe that we are bound together by a shared desire for ourselves, each other, and our communities to survive and thrive. We believe that Community Organizing is the best way for us to build collective power and transform the South. Out of this belief we are committed to building freedom movements rooted in southern traditions like community organizing, political education, storytelling, music, breaking bread, resistance, humor, performance, critical thinking, and celebration.

SONG builds a beloved community of LGBTQ people in the South who are ready and willing to do our part to challenge oppression in order to bring about liberation for ALL people. We develop leadership, build our membership base, and identify and carry out community organizing projects and campaigns. All of our work strives to bring together marginalized communities to work towards justice and liberation for all people.

SONG's FREE FROM FEAR CAMPAIGNS
"What could be born in our communities if LGBTQ people and people of color were not afraid to walk our streets, lead in our towns, and fully lean into our own bodies and lives?" This is a guiding question for SONG's current political work. Free From Fear is SONG's pledge to a wider collective movement commitment to fight and defeat fear and violence our towns, cities, region, and country that stems from state and institutional violence. For the past two years SONG members, member-leaders, and staff have been building, running, and winning Free from Fear campaigns in Richmond, VA, Harrisonburg, VA, Atlanta, GA, Charleston, SC and Durham, NC. We have fought for creating community review boards to increase accountability of local police departments, to make municipal legal fines and fees based on income, to change police policy and procedure based on LGBTQ community demands, and to end the criminalization of our youth in schools. Now more than ever at SONG we believe the core issues of our time facing Black, Immigrant, Working Class and LGBTQ communities are criminalization and white supremacy. In this time, we will continue to focus on building local powers & gaining local wins & our political strategy looks like:

- Strengthening SONG's campaign muscle by fighting for policy reforms
- Build out our community defense work
- Build a united front in SONG's organizing with other communities
- Regional actions to demonstrate SONG's vision of abolition in action and our regional strength
- Support SONG's members & member-leaders to better focus our organizing work to be more effective

SONG's Regional Organizer will have both general regional work responsibilities -- base-building and

grassroots organizing responsibilities -- and Free From Fear campaign-specific responsibilities.

TITLE: Regional Organizer

HOURS: 40 Hours per week

REPORTS TO: Regional Organizing Leads

POSITION SUMMARY: Grounded in SONG'S mission, vision, and theory of change, the Regional Organizer position will work collaboratively with SONG's organizing team, members, and member-leaders to develop political strategy, coordinate, run, support, offer technical assistance, and evaluate SONG's community organizing and campaign work. This position includes support, technical assistance, and training for SONG members and member-leaders, team formation and campaign development in local communities, strategy, coordination, and evaluation of SONG's regional Free From Fear campaign, oversight of grassroots organizing (with other SONG staff, members, and member-leaders), fiscal responsibility and co-managing budgets, developing tools and political education materials, facilitation and event planning, and reporting and assessment of programmatic work.

This position will also require frequent travel to build with SONG members and member-leaders across the South, travel to SONG's Atlanta office and to other sites across the region for quarterly staff meetings, and travel to SONG convenings throughout the year.

WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR: We are looking for applicants who are visionaries and leaders and have at least 3 years of grassroots community organizing, campaign organizing and / or direct action organizing experience. We are seeking people who have a deep commitment to base building, leadership development & training, political education, building power, and a deep love for (and understanding of) oppressed and marginalized communities. We are looking for folks that are transparent and honest; strong and pro-active in communication; organized; collectively oriented and minded; open to growth and feedback; flexible; have strong interpersonal skills (meaning: know how to build relationships); friendly; and have good time-management skills. We are also seeking people who self-initiate, and work well on their own, while also knowing how to become part of a team. This is especially important because our staff is based regionally across the South and much of our work involves travel and collaboration across languages and difference.

A big part of SONG's vision is the belief that people must speak for themselves. We strive to make our staff a reflection of this: in order to be accountable to those we work with, the leaders we support must be a part of the communities we are based in. Therefore, Transgender, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Same Gender Loving, Two Spirit, Gender Non-conforming, Poor and Working class, Black people, Indigenous, Latinx communities, People Of Color, Rural, Formerly Incarcerated and Immigrant people are all strongly encouraged to apply. Also, people with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply, and we are very open to talking about co-developing an accessibility plan and work to accommodate it (based on capacity) with any applicant and potential hire with any form of disability in order to promote a positive work environment that progressively eliminates barriers to access for people with disabilities.

Responsibilities Include:

Grassroots Organizing & Campaign Development

- Working closely with SONG's regional organizing team to develop political strategy and coordinate Free From Fear campaigns across the South; serve as a liaison between SONG's staff and members and member-leaders in local organizing sites.
- Regional Organizers will be primarily responsible for the external coordination and communication of SONG's political strategy, goals, opportunities, challenges, and victories.
- The Regional Organizer will support local sites in planning and developing campaign strategy, tactics, outreach & mobilization.
- Coordinating local, statewide, and regional Free From Fear campaign organizing. Regional Organizer will primarily work with chapters and SONG members and member-leaders to build out local Free From Fear campaigns; recruit and sustain local and statewide SONG membership; strengthen local organizers' knowledge and skills in social justice grassroots organizing; and coordinate and communicate opportunities for local and regional impact.
- Participate in regional and national alliances and coalitions as appropriate
- Facilitate logistics for meetings, actions, etc.
- Develop and maintain relationships with movement leaders and other relevant community organizations
- Rapid response mobilization and support to SONG's membership as needed

Base-Building, Leadership Development & Training

- Develop individual and organizational relationships with local SONG members and member-leaders through ongoing communication (in-person, email, phone) that grows their capacity to organize (including leadership development, membership recruitment, database and other communication technology, fundraising).
- Support the leadership development of SONG members through developing skills-based organizing trainings, regular check-ins, and facilitating membership convenings
- Planning large scale events & trainings
- Develop and facilitate relevant organizing tools and political education curriculum for internal and external trainings related to SONG's community defense, anti-criminalization, and abolition work
- Coordinate and develop outreach/recruitment plan for new SONG members

Administrative Responsibilities:

Internal Coordination:

- Organizing team calls and weekly staff calls
- Internal correspondence – reading and responding to emails
- Staff meetings
- Update organization calendar with days off/vacation etc.
- Board reports
- Work planning and adherence
- Staff evaluations
- Staff development & co-development

Operations:

- Administrative paperwork [Benefits, Expenses, Childcare, Invoices, Member Expenses]
- Database Work – tracking work, relationships and development of membership and leadership in our base from Membership and Campaign work.
- Evaluation and Documentation

Membership / Regional + Local

- Membership Drive
- Supporting planning for regional convenings from between 20-120 people (coordination, logistics, recruitment, on-site work)
- Membership retention and tracking in database

Fundraising (responsibilities vary among SONG staff members)

- Developing content and progress reports on moving work for grant reports
- Donor communication, cultivation, maintenance, & meetings
- Donor cultivation events
- Fundraising events
- Documentation / centralized recordkeeping
- Monthly Donor Drive

Qualifications:

Ideal applicants have a demonstrated ability to mobilize grassroots communities to confront power, an understanding of issues impacting Southern LGBTQ, Black, Latinx, poor and working-class, and immigrant communities, experience organizing with poor and working class people, an enthusiasm for travel and excellent communication skills.

- Understanding of and commitment to SONG's organizational mission, vision, history, theory of change, political strategy, and issues affecting the lives of LGBTQ, Black, immigrant, poor & working-class, and Latinx Southern communities
- Proven ability to work within and across multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-gendered, and intergenerational communities
- Experience developing and leading grassroots community organizing public pressure campaigns
- Excellent interpersonal and communications skills and comfortable navigating with public officials, media, and community leaders with various beliefs and backgrounds.
- Strong conflict-resolution skills
- Event and action planning skills
- Strong facilitation skills for small to large groups
- Experience in leadership development, skill transfer and decision-making among community members
- Interest/experience in movement-building strategies.
- Experience in program development, implementation and evaluation – including the development of popular education trainings and tools
- Able to use computers for word processing, computer literacy preferred
- Ability to work flexible hours, including evenings and weekends

Desired But Not Required :

- Supervisory and managerial experience within a community-based organization,
- Coalitional experience
- Direct action planning experience
- Strong public speaking skills
- Skills in fundraising (especially grassroots/community-based fundraising)
- Skills in communications and media relations
- Skills (and experience in) working in small towns and rural communities around the South (we are particularly open to applicants who may have grown up in and/or currently live in rural or small town Southern communities)

- Skills in cultural work, healing work, and art-making as connected to social change
- Multilingual (more than one language) skills in interpretation and facilitation, especially Spanish to English

SONG's Commitment to & Expectations of New Hires: SONG's commitment to the new hire is, at its core, a political commitment. We believe that in order to support broad-based social justice movements for the long haul, we must continually develop new leaders and build SONG to get the work completed. Intentional and hands-on work with staff, fellows, and interns is one way we work towards these political goals. We are committed to a working exchange between SONG and new hires that are useful for both parties. The Regional Organizer will work as part of an organizing staff team where each person has a direct supervisor, intense leadership development as an organizer, and on-going support. *We see this as a key opportunity of this job: the opportunity for organizers to be mentored, gain strong support from fellow organizers, and gain opportunities to use their creativity and experience in a working atmosphere that encourages and engages new ideas and approaches.*

Compensation: SONG's Full Time Employee rate at $57,500/year, with full health and dental benefits. This is a permanent position, however the starting contract agreement is for the first six months to ensure the hire is a good fit for SONG and the person hired. We would also like a minimum a two year commitment, as resources allow. Meals & travel are covered for staff while on the road. SONG provides laptops and communications stipends as needed for staff.

To apply: Please send cover letter, resume, and three professional references to hiring@southernersonnewground.org by Sunday, February 9, 2020. Please put **REGIONAL ORGANIZER POSITION** in the subject line.

SONG is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender/ gender identity/ gender expression, age, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, HIV status, disability, background, having been incarcerated or marital status.