



## LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Executive Director

Inclusive Prosperity Partnership

St. Louis, Missouri

---

The IPP's mission is to build a strong regional economy that benefits everyone. Achieving this requires input from all stakeholders in our community.

---

# The Opportunity

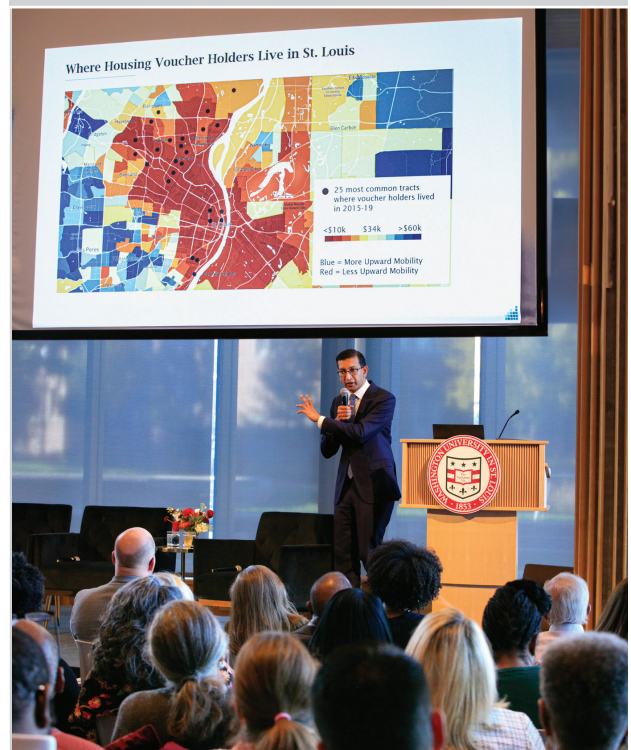
St. Louis has always known how to build. From the Gateway Arch rising above the Mississippi to the research breakthroughs emerging from its world-class universities and medical institutions, this region has never lacked ambition or ingenuity. Right now, a new generation of civic leaders is stepping forward: people committed to building a new way of working together that will promote economic mobility and success for those who have been left behind.

This commitment led to the creation of the [Inclusive Prosperity Partnership](#) (IPP). The IPP is a bold, ten-year, \$161 million initiative to develop a civic operating system for the St. Louis region, uniting public, private, and community partners to design, fund, and implement scalable solutions to the barriers preventing people from achieving economic success and mobility. The data reveals a story of unfinished work. Many working families have not shared in economic growth. Economic mobility remains out of reach. Closing those gaps, in wages, in opportunity, in regional growth, is not only possible but also exactly the work this initiative is ready to take on.

With \$48 million committed already, the work will begin across three priority areas: workforce development, early childhood education, and affordable housing. The infrastructure is already in place. Building something that endures requires a specific kind of person: someone who recognizes that meaningful change takes time, trust, and ongoing effort. Part of what makes this work truly compelling is its scope. The IPP focuses on a specific region, impacting tens to hundreds of thousands of people. It is large enough to matter and concrete enough for progress to be visible, with real accountability.

Because the initiative is still early in its life, the incoming leader will have genuine influence

Right now, a new generation of civic leaders is stepping forward: people committed to building a new way of working together that will promote economic mobility and success for those who have been left behind.



over how it develops. This is a rare opportunity for someone who thinks entrepreneurially and is drawn to building something sustainable. The IPP seeks an Executive Director who will harness this commitment into coordinated action and measurable impact.

## The Organization

The Inclusive Prosperity Partnership (IPP) is a \$161 million, ten-year pooled fund initially convened by the [James S. McDonnell Foundation](#) and housed at the [St. Louis Community Foundation](#). Its mission is to build a more resilient regional economy that works for everyone, addressing the systemic barriers to economic mobility and inclusive growth that have long challenged the St. Louis region.

The IPP is differentiated from traditional philanthropic efforts in several important ways:

- It is collaborative and cross-sector by design, bringing together business, philanthropy, nonprofit organizations, community, and civic leaders in a shared process.
- It funds the design, implementation, and evaluation of scalable solutions. The IPP is about building toward systemic, durable change.
- It uses a unique, community-informed Solution Design & Implementation cycle, in which cohorts of diverse stakeholders co-design solutions grounded in data, lived-experience, and best practice from the region and across the country.
- It invests in human capital with resources to support both the design process and the implementation of resulting strategies at scale.



People in St. Louis will be rooting for you. The infrastructure is there. The relationships are being built. The question is: who has the skill, the heart, and the will to land the plane?

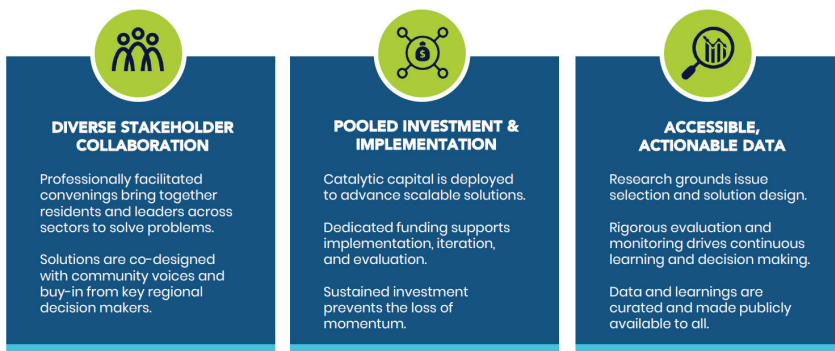
*St. Louis Civic Leader*

The IPP's first three focus areas reflect the most urgent barriers to economic mobility in the region:

- Quality Jobs for People with Low Incomes (current focus)
- Early Childhood Education
- Affordable Housing

The IPP channels bold, coordinated giving into community-informed, co-designed strategies.

Over the next ten years, the IPP will address key barriers to economic mobility through:



With a target budget of \$25 million per focus area and an operating budget designed to stay at or below \$3 million, the IPP is built to maximize dollars going directly into community solutions. The organization is backed by a committed Steering Committee that includes some of the region's most respected civic, corporate, and philanthropic leaders, as well as a network of national consultants and implementation partners.

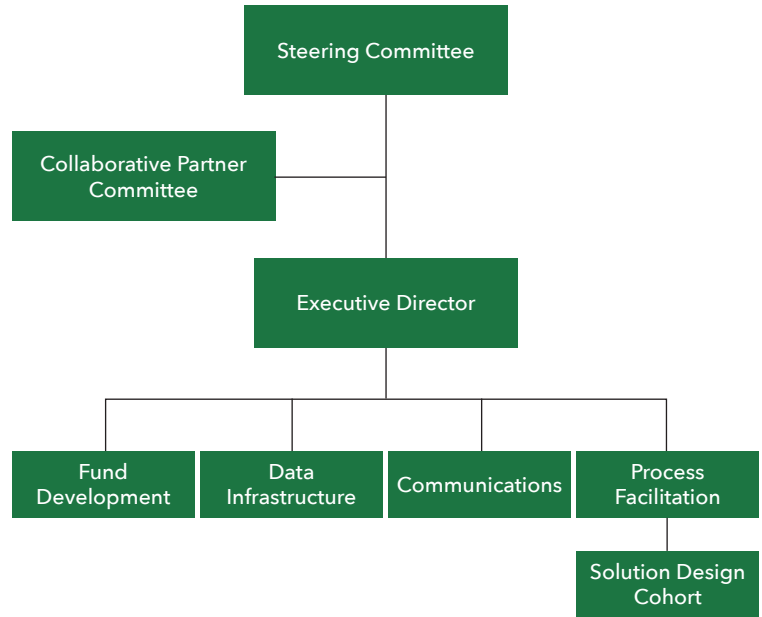
The IPP is still in its building phase, and that is precisely what makes this moment so important and this role so consequential. The organization has the ideas, the resources, the partners, and the urgency. What it needs is an Executive Director who can translate vision into execution and build upon the incredible work that has begun.

The organization has the ideas, the resources, the partners, and the urgency. What it needs is an Executive Director who can translate vision into execution and build upon the incredible work that has begun.



The Executive Director will shape and execute IPP's long-term strategy to advance inclusive economic growth and economic mobility across the St. Louis region.

## Inclusive Prosperity Partnership Structure



## Key Responsibilities

### Strategic Leadership

- Shape and execute the IPP's long-term strategy to advance inclusive economic growth and economic mobility across the St. Louis region.
- Help define the IPP's theory of change, working with the Steering Committee and key stakeholders to clarify what success looks like, set measurable goals, and establish a credible 10-year roadmap.
- Ensure alignment across governance structures, including the Steering Committee and Collaborative Partner Committee, and across all active workstreams.
- Oversee the design and implementation of Solution Design Cohorts (SDCs), ensuring all key stakeholder groups are meaningfully integrated.

- Represent the IPP as an active, visible, and credible leader across St. Louis's civic, philanthropic, nonprofit, and business communities.

## Coalition Building & Stakeholder Engagement

- Serve as the IPP's primary spokesperson and relationship anchor, building trust and credibility with a wide range of stakeholders, from grassroots community organizations to corporate boards and national foundations.
- Grow the tent, actively recruiting new co-funders, partners, and advocates into the IPP's network and expanding the coalition of organizations committed to inclusive growth.
- Navigate complex interpersonal and organizational dynamics with skill, helping disparate stakeholders find common ground.
- Represent the IPP at regional and national forums on economic mobility, inclusive growth, and civic infrastructure.
- Steward key relationships with donors, civic leaders, and implementation partners to sustain commitment over the full ten-year journey.

## Operational Excellence & Team Leadership

- Build and lead a high-performing, mission-driven team, with strong coaching and people-development practices.
- Manage a network of external consultants, facilitators, data partners, and implementation contractors ensuring coordinated, accountable execution.
- Oversee data infrastructure, communications, and evaluation systems to track progress and demonstrate impact.



We seek a leader who will represent IPP at regional and national forums on economic mobility, inclusive growth, and civic infrastructure.



The ideal Executive Director is a curious builder. Someone with the humility to listen deeply, the intelligence to understand what's actually happening on the ground, and the courage and drive to move bold ideas from concept to implementation at scale.

- Maintain an operating budget at or below \$3 million while ensuring that the bulk of raised funds flow directly into community solutions.
- Model the agility and continuous improvement mindset that the IPP asks of its partners, working with a sense of urgency and a spirit of innovation and continuous improvement.

## Fund Development & Financial Stewardship

- Lead fundraising efforts to meet, and ultimately exceed, the IPP's \$161 million pooled fund goal.
- Cultivate relationships with St. Louis-based major donors, corporate partners, and philanthropic institutions, as well as national foundations.
- Articulate a compelling case for investment, grounding the IPP's value proposition in data, community voice, and demonstrated early wins.
- Ensure transparent, compliant financial management and reporting that builds confidence among all funders and stakeholders.

## The Ideal Candidate

The ideal Executive Director is a curious builder. Someone with the humility to listen deeply, the intelligence to understand what's actually happening on the ground, and the courage and drive to move bold ideas from concept to implementation at scale.

## Humility & Learning Orientation

Humility will be a defining attribute for the Executive Director. They must demonstrate the ability to listen first, understand the landscape, honor the relationships that already exist, and resist

the gravitational pull toward “small-ball” thinking. This leader will balance not-knowing with action orientation: deeply inquisitive, willing to learn, but not constrained by the need for certainty.

## Master Coalition Builder

The Executive Director must be skilled at combining enlightened self-interest with social mission, helping a wide range of actors see why the IPP’s success is also their success. This means building a very big tent: working with corporate CEOs and grassroots community leaders, and convincing unusual coalitions that inclusive growth is good for everyone. The ability to inspire (while staying grounded) and to own the room with knowledgeable competence (rather than ego) will be essential.

## Action Orientation & Execution Discipline

The region has done enough studying. The IPP is about execution. The ideal candidate is someone who has demonstrated success taking bold concepts from idea to implementation, and who understands both the long game and the short-term wins necessary to keep stakeholders engaged. They will think like an urban planner or a general contractor: clear about the end goal, disciplined about milestones, and willing to get into the details when necessary. This is a start-up environment. The leader who will thrive here is entrepreneurial in spirit and purpose-driven in practice.

## Exceptional Emotional Intelligence

Navigating a fragmented, multi-stakeholder civic environment, where turf battles are real, where some actors will resist change, and where community trust must be earned rather than assumed, requires off-the-charts emotional



The Executive Director must be skilled at combining enlightened self-interest with social mission, helping a wide range of actors see why IPP’s success is also their success.



Demonstrated experience and qualifications include familiarity with economic mobility, workforce development, early childhood education, housing, or adjacent content areas; ability to engage credibly across multiple domains.

intelligence. The Executive Director must be able to move fluidly between rooms, speak authentically about working with communities, and build the kind of durable relationships that sustain a ten-year effort. They will need to be able to call people forward rather than calling them out.

## Demonstrated Experience & Qualifications

- Minimum 10 years in senior leadership within philanthropy, nonprofit management, community development, or public-private partnerships.
- Demonstrated success leading large-scale, multi-stakeholder initiatives with measurable outcomes, ideally at a regional or national level.
- Familiarity with economic mobility, workforce development, early childhood education, housing, or adjacent content areas; ability to engage credibly across multiple domains.
- Experience with capital deployment, CDFI models, or large-scale philanthropic campaigns, with a track record of successful fundraising.
- Data-informed decision-making skills; familiarity with economic analysis, impact evaluation, and community-level metrics.
- Comfort in a start-up or early-stage organizational environment; ability to build systems and culture while delivering results.

## Preferred Attributes

- Demonstrated ability to quickly build deep local relationships in a close-knit civic community, or strong ties to or credibility within the St. Louis region is a plus.
- Track record of securing multi-year and major gifts from national funders. Strong connections to national philanthropic networks are a plus.

- Experience working across racial, economic, and political lines to build durable coalitions.
- Someone with long-term commitment who wants to stay and see the work through.

## The Relationships

The Executive Director will initially report to the CEO of the St. Louis Community Foundation, which currently houses the initiative, and receive strategic direction from the IPP Steering Committee, with the St. Louis Community Foundation CEO serving as a member.

The three committees below will be key partners and instrumental to the IPP’s success.

- The Steering Committee drives decision-making and is responsible for governance, fund development, and the IPP’s long-term success.
- The Collaborative Partner Committee champions the IPP by sharing expertise, forming new partnerships, and informing the selection of funding focus areas.
- Solution Design Cohorts develop interventions for each priority area through a professionally facilitated process.

The plan is to staff the IPP with a project manager, stakeholder manager, and administrative coordinator.

## The Location

[St. Louis is a city with a rich cultural heartbeat](#) and a quality of life that is hard to match. From its renowned arts institutions, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the Pulitzer Arts Foundation, and the Contemporary Art Museum, to its vibrant neighborhood festivals, expansive park system, and one of the most affordable urban lifestyles



The Executive Director will initially report to the CEO of the St. Louis Community Foundation, which currently houses the initiative, and receive strategic direction from the IPP Steering Committee, with the St. Louis Community Foundation CEO serving as a member.



in the country, the region offers both depth and accessibility. It is a place where historic architecture meets a growing innovative ecosystem, where world-class universities sit alongside beloved local businesses, and where community pride runs deep. For leaders who value authenticity, creativity, and connection, St. Louis offers a compelling home base.

At the same time, St. Louis is experiencing a powerful civic awakening. A new generation of collaborative, impact-driven leaders is stepping forward, and cross-sector partners are aligning in ways that reflect a shared belief that the region can, and must, chart a more inclusive economic future. The momentum is real, and the Executive Director of the IPP will step into a community eager for bold action and ready to rally behind a shared vision. In St. Louis, this role is not just about leading an organization; it is about helping shape the future of a region poised for transformation.

---

For potential consideration or to recommend a prospect, please email [IPP@BoardWalkConsulting.com](mailto:IPP@BoardWalkConsulting.com) or call **Crystal Stephens, Demeika Wheaton,** or **Michelle Hall**, at 404-262-7392.

---

For the current status of this and other searches, please visit [www.BoardWalkConsulting.com](http://www.BoardWalkConsulting.com).

The Inclusive Prosperity Partnership is committed to building an inclusive search process and welcomes candidates of diverse backgrounds, identities, and experiences.