



Catalyst Program Director

A full-time position based out of the Asheville office

BACKGROUND

Mountain BizWorks (www.mountainbizworks.org) is a **non-profit community development financial institution (CDFI)** dedicated to building a vibrant and inclusive entrepreneurial community. Through tailored small business lending and peer learning services, we help small businesses in **Western North Carolina** start, grow, and thrive. When small businesses succeed, we all prosper.

ABOUT THE CATALYST PROGRAM

The Catalyst Program is a **mission-centered business development initiative** designed to:

- **Address the racial wealth gap** by creating pathways for generational wealth.
- **Reduce systemic barriers** to economic opportunity for underrepresented entrepreneurs.

Since its launch in October 2020, the Catalyst Program has supported early- and growth-stage business owners through a **comprehensive ecosystem** of resources:

- **Funding Opportunities** – Providing equitable access to capital.
- **Educational Cohort Program** – A 12-month peer-based learning model.
- **Tailored Coaching** – One-on-one business guidance.
- **Network Access** – Creating meaningful connections to accelerate growth.

The Catalyst Fund: *A Pioneering Approach to Equitable Capital*

- **\$3.6 million deployed to 102 businesses** traditionally excluded from conventional lending.
- **\$337,000 in micro-grants** awarded to emerging entrepreneurs for critical momentum.

The Catalyst Cohort: *Peer-Learning in Action*

Entrepreneurs in the Catalyst Cohort:

- Define their business goals.
- Develop actionable growth strategies.
- Forge valuable peer connections.

Program Highlights:

- 64 businesses served since inception.
- Now offered in both **English** and **Spanish**.

Catalyst Program Director: *Lead, Innovate, Transform*

The incoming Catalyst Program Director will:

- **Build on strong foundational work** to drive strategic expansion.
- **Scale the program's innovative approach** to reach more underrepresented entrepreneurs.
- **Refine methodologies** to enhance the program's impact.
- **Elevate the program's transformative potential** for addressing systemic inequities.

Ready to make a difference?

Join Mountain BizWorks in ***empowering entrepreneurs and shaping a more inclusive economy***. Keep scrolling to discover job details and application instructions.

PURPOSE

The overarching goals of the Catalyst Program Director include:

- Provide entrepreneurial and collaborative leadership for the Catalyst Program, delivering highly-effective and empowering small business financing and training services for area entrepreneurs of color
- Provide strategic direction for MBW to further its goals of responsibly and effectively increasing the deployment of loan capital and integrated technical assistance to diverse entrepreneurs
- Work closely with the MBW management team to guide and develop the Catalyst program in a high-impact and financially sustainable manner

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Provide strategic and entrepreneurial leadership for the Catalyst Program including:**
 - Establish and provide clear direction towards bold and achievable annual Catalyst goals and programmatic plans aligned with MBW's overall strategic objectives
 - Manage the Catalyst budget, ensuring the responsible and effective use of funds
 - Provide effective supervision for Catalyst team members and contractors
 - Serve as lead for MBW's MBDA Capital Readiness Program (CRP) grant including meeting or exceeding established metrics, ensuring compliance with grant requirements, budget adherence, and timely reporting
 - Review program progress and priorities regularly with the Director of Entrepreneurship
- **Lead the continued expansion of the Catalyst Fund portfolio and its entrepreneurial success outcomes**
 - Prepare and deliver a steady pipeline of qualified Catalyst Fund applicants through regional outreach, prospective client intakes, and proactive loan readiness support including co-creating tailored client TA plans
 - Support existing Catalyst Fund borrowers in reaching their business growth milestones through ongoing tailored client TA, regular check-ins, and the timely delivery of Catalyst's wrap-around services; additional attention and client support should be focused on the 3, 6, and 12 month periods immediately following a new Catalyst loan

- Provide staff support and direction for the Catalyst Advisory Committee
- Work closely with the Lending and Credit teams on Catalyst loan pipeline coordination and ongoing portfolio performance management
- **Support Catalyst founder growth through high-quality peer learning programs**
 - Direct the Catalyst Cohort peer learning program for early-stage entrepreneurs of color in a manner that yields consistent participants outcomes and is well integrated with MBW's lending and other services
 - Maintain a current understanding of MBW's overall learning programs and be opportunistic with connecting Catalyst clients with aligned resources
 - Work closely with the Business Growth Specialist to plan and link Catalyst clients with our growth programs sponsored by the MBDA Capital Readiness Program
- **Deliver an responsive, entrepreneur-centric, and empowering Catalyst client experience**
 - Build and maintain lasting relationships with clients so that MBW can be a trusted partner throughout our clients' progression from idea to startup to growth
 - Cultivate and elevate an interconnected Catalyst founder community through direct connections, Catalyst events (program kickoff & completions, showcases), invitations to other MBW events, email newsletters, or other means
 - Continually seek out feedback from clients and prospective clients including through periodic roundtable discussions
- **Bring an entrepreneurial approach to continuous program improvement and creating new offerings where needed to meet program goals and shifting client opportunities**
 - Be the lead for Catalyst Micro-Grant funding cycles (as funding allows) and ensure strategic alignment with overall Catalyst program goals
- **Discover and help cultivate opportunities that can contribute to the Catalyst program's sustainability including grant/donor/investor partners and program income**
- **Support community engagement and program marketing efforts by:**
 - Work with the MBW communications manager on program marketing and storytelling efforts, including raising the visibility of successful entrepreneurs of color across WNC.
 - Maintain strong regional partner relationships that can help connect MBW services with diverse and underserved communities
 - Ensure strong attendance/participation in Catalyst programs through direct client outreach, marketing through the MBW team, and through referral and community partners
 - Serve as the point person for cultivating relevant strategic partnerships.
- **Support the organization's continual growth in cultural competence, respect, and sensitivity.**
 - Help identify persistent barriers faced by diverse clients and opportunities to improve or extend services offered (lending, learning, etc.) to better meet client needs; work with the MBW team to plan and implement improvements
 - Serve as a key member of the SEED inter-departmental working group focused on advancing racial equity within the local economy and MBW services

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Build and maintain relationships with key funder representatives, community leaders, and private sector partners

- Represent MBW and Catalyst/MBDA initiatives at national and regional conferences, forums, and meetings.
- Maintain client records as needed for effective client relationship management, grant reporting, and other documentation requirements.
- Assist with annual and ongoing collection and tracking evaluation of program effectiveness and organizational community impact data.
- Other learning and organizational responsibilities as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- A demonstrated commitment to Mountain BizWorks' Vision, Mission, and Values.
- Five years+ of direct small business leadership experience as a founder/owner, top executive, advisor, and/or other comparable role.
- Keen understanding of the stages, needs, and challenges of starting and growing a small business
- Small business financials and financing experience, or a strong working knowledge
- A track record of successful program development and building effective partnerships
- Experience with coaching and cultivating other entrepreneurs is a plus
- A background in understanding systemic and institutional barriers to economic opportunities and best practices in addressing them.
- Experience in and commitment to working in a team-oriented environment.
- Self-driven initiative and performance of the highest quality, with keen attention to detail.
- Ability to work with clients and partners from various backgrounds.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills; the ability to effectively communicate in one-on-one and in group settings; and experience communicating to diverse communities and stakeholders.
- Superb interviewing and active listening skills.
- Strong Technical proficiency including Google or Office suite, email, CRM, or similar database tools.
- Experience in program measurement & evaluation.
- Demonstrated success in building and maintaining strong partner relationships.
- Ability to work independently and to effectively manage time.
- Flexibility to manage the variety of tasks and responsibilities of the position.
- Proficiency in Spanish is highly desirable.

Reporting Relationship: Reports to Director of Entrepreneurship

Pay: Full-time, Salary

FLSA Classification: Exempt

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Anticipated starting salary of \$75,000 with the opportunity for a higher base salary depending on skills and experience.

- Medical insurance plans
 - 80% of employee medical paid by employer
 - family coverage paid by employee
- Dental, vision & supplemental insurance options
 - 100% employee paid
- Retirement plan
- 9 paid holidays & 1 day of service
- Paid Time Off (PTO):
 - Earn 18 days/year the 1st year of employment
 - Earn 24 days/year after 1st year of employment
- Professional Development Fund
- Sabbatical Leave Program
- Self-Care Fund
- Flexible schedule opportunities, as permitted by the role and workload

HOW TO APPLY →

Qualified/interested candidates should **email** their resume and cover letter (optional) to careers@mountainbizworks.org with **"Catalyst Program Director"** in the subject line.

Applications are now being accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis. Early submission is recommended to ensure full consideration.

Mountain BizWorks values and respects all types of diversity and strongly encourages applicants from traditionally marginalized groups to apply. We prohibit discrimination and harassment and provide equal employment opportunity without regard to, and not limited to, ethnicity, religion, race, national origin, abilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or genetic information.