

March 14, 2019

Luke McGowan

Community Economic Development Office
Burlington, Vermont

To Whom It May Concern:

I appreciate your consideration of my application to join the team as the Director of the Community Economic Development Office. My prior experience makes me uniquely suited for this role and I'd be honored to join an organization committed to bringing to life a vision for Burlington that is livable and connected, respectful of its past but eager to embrace the future.

I'm passionate about cities, community organizing, and systems change. I've worked with diverse communities in places as far flung as Des Moines, Iowa and Cairo, Egypt. I've worked with mayors in Manchester, New Hampshire and Seattle, Washington to develop programs and craft policies that support small business owners and economic growth. My academic studies included a focus on cities and how to engage citizens in creating innovative solutions to the problems unique to cities like Burlington. I know that Burlington, with its blend of progressive community inclusion and a commitment to justice, is a model for other communities around the world. I look forward to furthering this progress by bringing to bear my experience managing large political campaigns--including dozens of field staff and hundreds of volunteers--which taught me that setting and meeting goals is only possible when you keep the end voter, or constituent, at center. Lessons like these are not only translatable to the community development work, but necessary.

I've also worked at the center of fast-growing, "customer-first" tech startups like Thumbtack. I managed teams and built innovative processes to understand our customers, which included our

250,000 active small business users. I led and collaborated with cross-functional technical teams to design and implement features in our online product to better serve our customers.

Since moving to Vermont, my consulting business has given me a way to learn about and appreciate Vermont's people and our unique set of challenges. In providing leadership to non-profits, government organizations, and small companies, I've deployed the skills I learned in graduate school to diagnose organizational problems, encourage stakeholder engagement, and ultimately arrive at solutions to problems that teams can be proud of. And the more I get to know the community in Burlington, the more I want to support and be a part of it.

I love working on big, important issues with diverse, passionate people. It's where I'm most effective. From what I know of CEDO, yours is just that sort of team and I would be honored to join you.

Sincerely,

Luke McGowan

LUKAS MCGOWAN

Education **HARVARD UNIVERSITY, John F. Kennedy School of Government** Cambridge, MA
Master in Public Administration, May 2017
Expert Evaluator, Ash Center Innovations in American Government Award

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY New York, NY
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, May 2007
Concentration: Portuguese language and literature

Experience

2017-PRESENT **MCGOWAN CONSULTING**
J Launching U.S. fund for Mustard Seed, a London-based VC fund geared toward social good.
J Provide strategic management, operations and communications support to Vermont-based small businesses and nonprofits, including the Center on Rural Innovation.
J Led Dyson Capital's venture team to scope startup investments in the on-demand economy.

2017-PRESENT **PLUS 1** Montreal, Canada
Interim Chief Operations Officer
J Manage strategic planning to establish working partnerships with touring artists to generate and grant \$4MM+ to partner organizations working on the world's most critical challenges.
J Assist CEO in all aspects of management and decision making, including hiring, budgeting, and program implementation.
J Secured a \$300,000 grant to scale Plus1's activities from 50 signed artists to 300.

2014-2016 **THUMB TACK** San Francisco, CA
Head of Public Policy and Small Business Advocate
J Led efforts to establish Thumbtack as an advocate for small businesses at the national level.
J Managed a team of 10 to conceive and implement an engagement strategy—including Thumbtack's first Presidential Candidate Town Hall with fmr. Governor Jeb Bush, a Small Business Policy Roundtable at the White House, ongoing working sessions with the Governor of Utah and the Lt. Governor of Rhode Island, and ongoing collaboration with the National Women's Council on issues affecting women-owned small business—garnering front-page coverage in the *New York Times*.
J Coordinated external communications and brand marketing efforts, including the drafting, publication, and distribution of state-specific and national op-ed columns and emails sent to more than a million small businesses.
J Collaborated with Silicon Valley companies and national policymakers—including Sen. Mark Warner, White House economic advisors, and the startup team of the Obama Foundation—to connect private and public sector interests.
J Testified at regulatory hearings, such as the Small Business Administration, on matters of small business policy, including tax compliance and licensing requirements.

2012-2014 **Product Marketing Manager**
J First employee hired to focus on the small business user community (more than 270,000 professionals at the time), responsible for onboarding, engagement, community management and retention.
J Designed and led comprehensive, on-going survey of small business user community to learn about the challenges facing businesses and the ways Thumbtack can help, the results of which informed company product strategy and employee orientation.
J Worked with product and engineering teams to develop new website features, including a “questions” tool that resulted in over 150,000 interactions with small businesses, and redesigned the onboarding flow to better educate and retain the professional user community.

- J Implemented first proactive communications strategy to the small business user community, maintained the consistency of messaging across departments, and was the public face for all communication with service pros, including product announcements, newsletters and blog posts.
- J Designed and implemented the first “Elite” loyalty program for our most valuable business owners.
- J Worked directly with leadership to spearhead changes based on service pro’s feedback (both on and offline), and to position Thumbtack as a national Advocate for Small Businesses, resulting in changes to pricing, social marketing strategy, and key product flows.

2012-2013 **POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE ASSOCIATION** Point Reyes, CA
Trails Coordinator

- J Led fundraising efforts for trails maintenance program
- J Collaborated with National Park Staff, Association Board, and local volunteers to develop and implement the Point Reyes Trails Challenge.

2010-2012 **WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS** Washington, DC
Assistant to the House Liaison and Legislative Assistant

- J Prepared briefing documents for the President, including his weekly report on the House of Representatives.
- J Managed internal White House strategy for official outreach to Members of Congress.
- J Promoted to assist the House Liaison in management of the twelve-person House team.
- J Managed the Congressional notification process and served as liaison to Executive departments for Administration initiatives.
- J Staffed the President at political events and fundraisers, coordinated and traveled on international trips, and prepared political briefing memorandums.

2009-2010 **OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT** Washington, DC
Deputy Director of Correspondence and Speechwriter

- J Drafted and conducted research for the Vice President’s speeches and remarks.
- J Coordinated the receipt of Vice Presidential correspondence and managed the production of responses; prepared policy language for issues relating to the Recovery Act, and Legislative, Intergovernmental, and Foreign Affairs.
- J Developed hundreds of custom language clarifications for the Administration’s agenda and policy–initiatives.

2008-2009 **PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION TEAM** Washington, DC
Policy Assistant, Energy and Environment Group

- J Worked as personal assistant to Carol Browner, performing scheduling duties, researching material and facilitating meetings and events for the Energy and Environment Policy Working Group.
- J Assisted Policy Group in research to produce briefing materials for the President.

2008 **OBAMA FOR AMERICA** IA, NC, OH, WY, CA, PR, VA
Regional Field Director, General Election - Northern Virginia

- J Managed a fulltime staff of 30, 7 field offices, and coordinated roughly 5,000 volunteers to win by a margin of 20%.

2007-2008 **Deputy Field Director, Primary Campaign - IA, NC, OH, WY, CA, PR**

- J Managed winning field programs in key cities and counties across a diverse cross section of the country.
- J Directed the opening and financing of campaign field offices, coordinated the purchase and dissemination of campaign literature, and acted as primary liaison between campaign and endorsed labor unions.
- J Coordinated field activities in Iowa for 7 months, organizing events with the candidate and high-ranking surrogates, managing volunteers and delivering a win in an important swing county.

Skills

Languages: Fluent in Portuguese; proficient in French and Spanish.

Other Activities: Member NRDC & Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance; Big Brothers, Big Sisters; restaurant investor (20 Spot, wine bar in San Francisco); potato farmer.