

May 2007

THE URBAN MARKETS INITIATIVE
The Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program

Director

The Urban Markets Initiative (“UMI”) was launched in 2004 by the Brookings Institution, with strong intellectual and financial engagement from Living Cities (The National Community Development Initiative), due to the core belief that information and new information tools are critical to increasing market and public investment in urban neighborhoods. Today, UMI’s mission remains the same: to improve the quality of the information available on urban communities and use it to unleash the full power of those markets while connecting them to the economic mainstream.

UMI’s work focuses by facilitating the widespread use of data, tools and methods by market actors, be they community development corporations or large retail companies, to help them make better or more accurate decisions about the market potential of urban neighborhoods. UMI intends to aggressively deploy these existing and new data, tools, and other resources to enable visible and fundamental improvement in urban neighborhoods and in the lives of urban residents. One key vehicle under development is a web and community portal, called the Urban Market Collaboratory (www.urbanmarketslab.org), which will serve as a one-stop shop for data tools and resources to bridge information in urban markets. UMI also convenes key market actors about how to fill specific information gaps. UMI hopes to build a wider and more integrated field of data providers, community practitioners and private sector leaders who care about the economic vitality of urban neighborhoods.

The Brookings Institution’s Metropolitan Policy Program has served as an effective incubator for UMI during its first three years. In the next phase, UMI will evolve into an independent entity, giving it greater freedom to innovate and build the kind of partnerships that will allow it to further excel in the field. Located in Washington DC, it has an annual budget of over \$1M and current staff of six.

BASIC FUNCTION

The Director will provide the leadership, vision, and direction for the Urban Markets Initiative. The Director will assume overall management responsibility for all operations and activities. Reporting to the Director of the Metropolitan Policy Program, he/she will develop and communicate a coherent vision for UMI, refine its programmatic objectives and provide the leadership to implement these programs. The Director will be expected to serve as an external presence and spokesperson – collaborating successfully with current funders, attracting new and more diverse sources of revenue, representing UMI’s mission and purpose and raising the visibility of UMI.



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UMI has achieved a great deal in its first three years of existence, and the next three years will build on that success. As it enters the next phase it will focus on identifying critical information gaps affecting investment in urban markets and the opportunities of urban residents; assembling existing tools and incubating tools to fill market information gaps and improve capacity in the field; and facilitating the widespread adoption of data, tools and methods that result in large-scale change.

In addition to the day-to-day leadership and management of the organization, the Director will serve as a change-agent, developing strategic and operational plans that ensure UMI's preeminence in the marketplace and to fuel its growth and expansion. As part of its next phase of growth, the Director will engage in business planning to determine the program's best organizational structure for the future, including determining funding strategies, partnership models, and a proper transition plan for UMI to evolve into a strong, reputable, self-standing program.

IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

The Director's immediate priorities are to:

- Thoroughly understand the Urban Markets Initiative – its history and culture, funders , key committee and advisory board members, programs, finances and funding, and its recently completed goals for 2007; from a marketing perspective, assess and evaluate the organizations activities and programs; understand what the market is and what the users want;
- Secure the trust and confidence of the Director of the Metropolitan Policy Program and, with UMI's current funders, keep them informed on a regular basis;
- Set the strategic direction for UMI; review, access and write strategic business and marketing plans;
- Launch a review/assessment process for creating a new institutional or not-for-profit home for UMI, create a new institutional model for the program, and ultimately implement a transition;
- Lead the organization and staff; work closely with the Deputy Director, who is responsible for the day-to-day operations, and ensure that UMI is financially sound;
- Develop meaningful, substantive relationships with funding sources, increasing the number of organizations and companies that support UMI, either financially and/or as collaborators and partners.



SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director will be responsible for the following on an ongoing basis:

- Serve as an articulate and effective spokesperson, both in person and in writing, to reinforce and build a understanding of and reputation of UMI as the leader in using information for social change;
- Review the goals and purposes of programs that UMI supports and bring an increasingly sharp *market* focus to all UMI activities; aggressively position the advantage of public private collaborations to increase the accessibility, availability, and accuracy of information in urban markets with the various end users, i.e. builders, banks, retailers, credit bureaus, mortgage industry and individuals, among others;
- Build solid relationships with the steering and advisory committee members, as well as, current and future funders, maximizing their talents and resources;
- Reach out and consult regularly with representatives of key constituency groups, including private sector entities, community-based organizations, federal and local governments agencies, policy makers, national nonprofits, and others to ensure UMI is guided by outside expertise and input;
- Work with the Deputy Director to supervise, motivate and evaluate staff and to ensure that they are well-suited to address the challenges facing UMI; provide day-to- day oversight of all product development and project activities;
- Proactively cultivate relationships with key decision makers throughout urban markets, articulating the vision for UMI, informing others of the benefits of collaboration and galvanizing others around the programs, especially among the constituents of its high priority areas for impact such as retail and commercial development, access to capital and credit scoring, and the informal economy;
- Revise and refine the UMI's business and strategic plans as needed; determine how to best promote the plans and covert them into reality; (note: there is not a business plan for UMI today, that needs to be developed);
- Ensure the ongoing financial credibility and accountability of UMI, ensuring that reporting systems are accurate; ensure the adequate financing of UMI's future growth;



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- Organize convenings and other activities aimed at bringing people together and broadening the field in neighborhood markets and neighborhood assets.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

The Director will be a creative and entrepreneurial leader with the following experience and qualifications:

- At least 10 years experience establishing, growing and managing organizations, or major projects, in either the profit or not-for-profit sector;
- Demonstrated experience in starting up a new business or program, and/or taking a nascent program to full-scale and the next level of effectiveness;
- Senior-level managerial, problem solving and strategic planning capability; history as a risk taker with the substance to convert vision into a fully-operational venture; success as a change-agent who can work effectively in a changing environment;
- A clear understanding and commitment to UMI's mission, priorities and goals; knowledge and understanding of the importance of using data for social change; committed to improving conditions in low- and moderate-income communities;
- Substantive knowledge or expertise in information technology/innovation as it relates to markets be they builders, bankers, retailers, credit bureaus, the mortgage industry, or other individuals, or groups, that make investments in small business;
- Highly developed business, marketing and leadership skills along with the interpersonal skills required to lead a participatory, collegial organization; demonstrated ability to be a self-starter and a builder;
- A successful track record in attracting financial and other support from foundations, businesses and/or government sources; a high comfort level with developing collaborations and partnerships and cultivating alliances;
- Able to build and sustain networks and work effectively with and influence a broad range of people, including foundation leaders, bankers, builders, policy makers, the media, community development leaders, politicians, business leaders, government officials, academicians;
- Excellent communications skills, both in writing and verbally, with the ability to represent UMI to a wide variety of constituents.



PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Ideally the individual should be the following:

- Committed to and enthusiastic about the mission, goals and programs of the Urban Markets Initiative;
- Thoughtful, creative, entrepreneurial and insightful, aware of the impact of UMI as change agent;
- Open and responsive to the ideas of others; willing to take intelligent and responsible risks; able to build consensus, educate and motivate;
- Adept at planning, prioritizing, organizing and following through; a team player who can skillfully coordinate strategies and activities with a variety of partners;
- Outgoing, straight forward and self-possesses; one who shares information readily, listens as well as gives advice and respects the ability of others; able to work effectively within a larger organization; possesses a high tolerance for ambiguity;
- Energetic and willing to work hands-on in developing and executing a variety of activities ranging from the routine to the highly creative;
- Credibility, good judgment, honesty, integrity and trust; emotionally mature with a sense of humor and the ability to work well and with a group of autonomous personalities.

Please send nominations or applications, including all contact information to:

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We strongly encourage qualified women and minorities to apply.

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