



POSITION: ESPERA Program Lead

March 2022

CONTACT INFORMATION

Send resumes and cover letter to christine@maryspence.org

Submit in English or Spanish, an English version is helpful but not required

For questions contact katherine@maryspence.org - Katherine Wojtan, Executive Director

SUMMARY

Mary's Pence is a U.S. based non-profit funding women working for social change within their communities. In the U.S. we support women through our Mary's Pence Grants program which funds organizations that are women led, community centered, working for long term social change, and focused on social justice values.

Mary's Pence is seeking a person to lead the Mary's Pence's ESPERA Program in Mexico and Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua). We work with 10 local women's organizations (ESPERA partner organizations) on issues of women's economic security and well-being. This position leads the ESPERA staff, currently two staff members who are located in El Salvador.

Our relationship with our ESPERA partners is one of solidarity, accompaniment, and trust. This type of relationship ensures that we jointly set direction for the program, and we actively partner in its implementation.

The 4 strategic goals of ESPERA are:

- **Economic Autonomy through Strong Economic Initiatives** - Women have economic autonomy and well-being, ensuring that they can enjoy their rights and make decisions about their lives.
 - Support the development of small economic initiatives by increasing business skills, supporting development of local markets, and making financial resources available.
- **Strong Women's Organizations** - Women's organizations are strong and enduring, so women have a means for interconnectedness, solidary and accompaniment that leads to economic and political power.
 - Support leadership skills and financial sustainability among our partner organizations, including a focus on member participation in organization strategy and mission.
- **Family Farming** - Women use family farming (crops and/or animals) and collaborative local production to ensure food security, producing enough food to supplement what they have to buy.
 - Provide funding, support and encouragement, and connections to support local initiatives.
- **Emotional Well-being** - Women grow in their self-awareness, confidence, leadership and empowerment so they take greater control over their lives.
 - Support women through retreats and wellness series, and funding to support access to individual psychological services.

This role is being filled due to a planned transition of the current ESPERA Team Lead.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Purpose of the Position

This role serves as the leader of the ESPERA program. It works closely with the ESPERA partner organizations, the ESPERA staff, and the Mary's Pence board to set strategy. It manages the planning and implementation of the program. Experience working with women on economic security and social and emotional wellness is a must. Understanding the context in rural Mexico and Central American countries is also essential.

Program Management

- Lead, manage and further develop ESPERA program elements – business skills and economic security, supporting strong women's organizations, development of family farming programs, and emotional wellness offerings.
- Provide “thought leadership” in gender and economic justice. Propose changes and strategies to continue the development of the ESPERA program, working closely with colleagues and partner organizations.
- Manage the process of providing grants to our ESPERA partners for projects and/or operating costs.
- Create connections between ESPERA partners in Central America and Mexico through cross-country visits, connections, and gatherings that provide opportunities for exchange of experiences and broaden women's perspectives.
- Network within countries and across countries to make connections with collaborators and resources that will enhance support for our partner organizations and support the work of ESPERA.
- Identify potential new partner organizations for the ESPERA program, and plan ESPERA structure and resources needed to support growth.
- Develop and track metrics for the ESPERA program.
- Develop and maintain program annual plan and budget, and manage cash transfers and advances.
- Document key processes and maintain organizational records.

Relationships with ESPERA Partner Organizations

- Create strong collaborative relationships with leaders of ESPERA partners organizations. Each relationship is built on strong trust and mutuality.
- Ensure a shared understanding of ESPERA strategies and programs and facilitate strong participation in ESPERA strategic focus areas.
- Provide coaching and support to leaders in programmatic topics, as well as leadership and organizational effectiveness issues.
- Identify emerging needs within the partner organizations and identify how to support those needs.

Lead and Manage ESPERA Staff

- Work with ESPERA staff members closely as a team, fostering an open and collaborative environment with clear and direct communication.
- Partner with staff members to plan and implement the ESPERA program strategies and annual plan.
- Provide work direction, coaching and needed resources to the team.
- Provide performance feedback and annual evaluations, and support employee growth and development.

Partner with Mary's Pence U.S. Staff and Board Leadership

- Participate and shape strategy development for the ESPERA program, working closely with Mary's Pence staff and board members.
- Support outreach and fund development led by U.S. staff.

- Provide stories, pictures, and updates essential to good donor relations and updating of websites.
- Provide program information critical to effective grant writing.
- Actively partner with the Executive Director on strategy and collaborate on key program decisions; report ongoing progress against plans and metrics related to program goals.
- Act as liaison between ESPERA staff and U.S. staff, ensuring understanding and collaboration, and building strong relationships.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

This position requires a highly skilled person. We acknowledge that the list of desired skills and experiences is long, and that we may need to be flexible. If you have many of the skills and experiences identified, but not all of them, we do encourage you to apply. It is very important that the person hired has a passion for the work, has values that align with Mary's Pence, and the ability to build trust and strong relationships.

Organization Leadership Skills

- 5 years in a leadership role managing teams
- Experience with project planning, implementation, and evaluation (quantitative and qualitative)
- Experience preparing and managing budgets
- Strategic thinking, and research and analytical skills
- Interpersonal conflict management skills
- Ability to act as a mediator
- Ability to coach and motivate individuals and groups
- Ability to plan and facilitate group discussions

Knowledge Related to ESPERA Program Strategies and Context

- 5 years of experience working with rural community organizations
- Experience in the field of gender and economic justice
- Experience in leadership development and organizational effectiveness
- Experience with income generating projects in rural Central America or Mexico
- Experience working in Mexico or Central America and keen understanding of the context in the region
- Demonstrated ability to work with women with varying life experiences - including women who have experienced trauma from war and domestic violence, and women with various education levels including low-income rural women with little formal education
- Knowledge and experience in the area of training, adult learning and popular education.

General Skills

- Possesses emotional intelligence and strong self-awareness
- Is flexible and adaptable, and a creative problem solver
- Good written and verbal communication skills
- Proficient in typical office software/tools

OTHER

Characteristics

- We have a preference for hiring an individual who has roots in the Mesoamerican region and either lives or is willing to live there.
- Work will be from home, and will involve travel to ESPERA partner organization locations, ESPERA's office in Suchitoto and the office in Minnesota U.S.
- Bilingual Spanish-English required, English proficiency sufficient for communication with staff and board, both written and verbal.

- Possesses a passion for women's empowerment and economic development, and a commitment to Mary's Pence values of solidarity and accompaniment.
- Ability to travel in the Mesoamerica region approximately 50% time, a U.S. visa helpful.

Hours and Reporting Relationship

- Full-time position with flexible hours.
- Position reports to the Executive Director. This role will collaborate with the Executive Director on strategy and planning, and allocating resources to manage and develop the program.

Education

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in International Development, Organizational Development, Social Work, or Women's Studies or Business.

Compensation

- Commensurate with experience, annual contract renewed/renegotiated each year. Benefits negotiable.