



Position Title: Lane County Venture Catalyst
(Contract, not employee)

Estimated Contract Dates: October 2021 — June 2023 *(potential to expand)*

Contractor Fee: \$5,000 – \$6,00 per month + approved expenses

Position Description: Provide “Venture Catalyst” support on behalf of RAIN (www.oregonrain.org) to the entrepreneurial community in Lane County. This is an independent contractor position, not an employee position. Venture Catalysts have experience starting or scaling a company and/or significant experience in the startup ecosystem.

Regional Focus: Rural Lane County, with a focus on the following 7 rural cities: *Coburg, Cottage Grove, Creswell, Florence, Lowell, Oakridge, and Veneta*. Additional focus cities may be added over time.

Location: This is a remote position, but work will be performed in the communities named under “Regional Focus.”

Travel: 60-70% travel to communities in region focus; 5-10% travel to the broader Oregon region. Access to your own reliable transportation is required.

Ideal Candidate Description: Are you an entrepreneur, innovator, or small business owner who enjoys starting or creating new things, being a part of something important, and making an impact in your community? Do you get excited about the idea of helping other entrepreneurs pursue their dreams? Have you ever been called a “connector” because you enjoy referring people to resources to help them advance and grow? Are you looking for a meaningful role that will allow you to help build/grow an entrepreneurial hub/culture in Rural Lane County? Are you a self-starter with a strong work ethic who feels like you accomplish more in a day than most do in a week?

If you can answer “yes” to all of these questions, RAIN wants to meet with you. RAIN is hiring a Venture Catalyst (a community-based entrepreneurial ecosystem-builder) to help catalyze entrepreneurial efforts in Rural Lane County. This person will work closely with RAIN’s CEO, Development & Operations Director, RAIN’s remote team, and RAIN’s Lane County economic development and community partners to continue to build upon the entrepreneurial ecosystem that is growing in Oregon.

Contractor Responsibilities: Fulfill the contracts that RAIN has with the communities named in “Regional Focus” (above), including:



#1: Ecosystem Leadership & Growth:

- Study and implement the elements of an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Participate in the Lane County entrepreneurial community
- Champion the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation economy
- Engage in fundraising and sponsor-onboarding
- Assist in activating and elevating pools of capital to advance the region's ecosystem
- Track and update the entrepreneurial assets in the Lane County region, identify gaps for startups and innovators, make recommendations for closing those gaps, and collaborate with regional partners to help fill gaps
- Advocate on behalf of entrepreneurship and innovation (E&I) to ensure barriers are reduced and the playing field is leveled for startups and small businesses

#2: Ecosystem Activation:

- Host relevant events that support the region's entrepreneurs and innovators
- Develop, lead, and grow programs to support entrepreneurs and innovators in the Lane County region
- Identify and connect startups to needed resources: *people* (mentors/employees), *programs* (accelerators/workshops), *physical assets* (equipment, labs, office space), and *capital* (investment capital, grants, loans, crowdfunding)
- Travel around Rural Lane County to meet with entrepreneurs and community partners (most travel will happen in the rural communities named above in "Regional Focus")
- Enlist community members to serve as champions of the E&I ecosystem
- Identify and onboard new startup mentors who have "been there, done that"
- Identify and educate potential startup investors

#3: Team Management:

- Manage the Entrepreneur-in-Community™ (EIC) Program in the rural Lane County region where a local entrepreneur in some of the cities supports the Venture Catalyst's entrepreneurial ecosystem-building work. We currently have (4) EICs: (2) in Florence, (1) in Veneta, (1) in Creswell, and soon-to-hire (1) in Cottage Grove ([see EIC position description here](#))
- Communicate vision, calendar of events, program map and other relevant important info to EICs
- Help EICs plan and host monthly events in their respective cities
- Train EICs in updated systems and organizational culture
- Hold EICs accountable to programs they host and/or attend
- Build team spirit and collaboration
- Grow the EIC program throughout Lane County in partnership with RAIN's CEO & Development Director



#4: Ecosystem Partnerships:

- Partner closely with E&I ecosystem partners to sustain and expand programs (e.g., *city, county, and state leaders; economic development officials; Small Business Development Centers, universities and colleges; business support organizations; service providers; chambers of commerce; etc.*)
- Interact with partners in the ecosystem and seek-out opportunities for collaboration that elevate the entire ecosystem
- Work with regional partners and RAIN to provide thought-leadership regarding the local startup community and to identify, prioritize, and develop strategies around key regional entrepreneurial needs

#5: Ecosystem Culture & Communications:

- Develop marketing, communications, and public relations campaigns to promote entrepreneurial activities in the region (in partnership with RAIN's Marketing & Communications Lead)
- Record video and photos of activities and events, as well as testimonials from entrepreneurs
- Pitch important entrepreneurial stories to local press in each community
- Communicate regularly with RAIN's CEO, Development & Operations Director, Accelerator Director, Marketing & Communications Lead, and RAIN's other contractors to continue building the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Lane County
- Communicate with elected officials about the economic impact of RAIN's activities in the region, including bringing regional entrepreneurs, innovators, and partners to meetings to elevate messaging
- Attend City Council, County Commissioner, and other public meetings to provide program updates
- Deliver updates to RAIN's board of directors
- Track and report key metrics, as required by contracts with communities served
- Ensure all approaches align with [RAIN's Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion statement/philosophy](#)
- Serve as a mentor to entrepreneurs, as needed, and abide by [RAIN's Mentor Manifesto](#)

Contractor Qualifications:

- **Must reside in Lane County**
- Able to work remotely and travel within the Lane County region
- Entrepreneurial background and network
- Extreme bias toward action
- Self-starting ability; willing to innovate and adapt
- Able to pivot quickly without being flustered
- Excellent mentor and motivator to others
- Able to manage others and communicate priorities
- Able to confidently deliver workshops on topics related to early-stage entrepreneurship
- Strong communication, leadership, facilitation, organizational, and interpersonal skills
- Experience running online meetings and workshops



- Able to manage multiple tasks simultaneously, remain professional and organized, and prioritize follow-up
- Detail-oriented and excellent project manager
- Able to build bridges and turn difficult conversations into win-win outcomes
- Inclusive and diplomatic approach at all times
- An understanding of startup nomenclature and what it takes to start and grow a business in Oregon
- Stay up-to-date on best practices for startups and business management
- Able to coach entrepreneurs on business pitches and make introductions to potential funders
- Self-motivated and able to work collaboratively with individuals from various backgrounds
- Strong technology skills and an ability to easily learn/use new software and web programs
- Ability to hit the ground running with the following technologies: **Google Suite, Zoom, Slack, Mailchimp, Hubspot CRM, Eventbrite**, Expensify, Canva, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram

To Apply: Please email a proposal that includes the following information about yourself:

1. A **3-5 minute video** that addresses your:
 - a. Knowledge about RAIN
 - b. Knowledge about entrepreneurial ecosystem-building
 - c. Knowledge about the Lane County entrepreneurial ecosystem
 - d. Background in entrepreneurship and/or innovation
 - e. Cultural fit for this position (leadership, partnership, and work styles)
 - f. Why you're the right person for this role
2. A **document (3-page limit) outlining:**
 - a. Your experience and approach regarding the 5 ecosystem responsibility areas in the "Contractor Responsibilities" section above
 - b. The tools/technologies you use to stay organized and productive
 - c. At least 3 references who can speak to your qualifications:
 - i. *Someone you've mentored*
 - ii. *Someone you've supervised or managed*
 - iii. *Someone who has managed you*
3. **Resume** that includes a link to your updated **LinkedIn profile**

Application Deadline: September 27, 2021

Send with the subject "**Lane County Venture Catalyst Position**" to:
Caroline Cummings, RAIN's CEO | caroline@oregonrain.org

RAIN is committed to building a diverse team and strongly encourages applications from women, people of color, LGBTQ+, those living in Rural Lane County, and veterans.



About RAIN: RAIN (Regional Accelerator & Innovation Network) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is run by experienced entrepreneurs and angel investors and exists to reduce barriers to entrepreneurship and innovation. Since 2014, RAIN has been invited to serve 23 cities across 5 counties in Oregon to help them build inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems and innovation economies.

RAIN's Mission: To partner with communities to catalyze entrepreneurial ecosystems, connect entrepreneurs to resources—including overlooked entrepreneurs— and contribute to the creation of prosperous economies.

RAIN's Vision: Communities support, value, and celebrate entrepreneurs; regional leaders recognize entrepreneurs are a primary creator of net new jobs; small and rural communities have thriving economies; and a culture of possibilities is embraced.

Visit www.oregonrain.org to learn more.