

CLIMATE SURGE

Executive Director

Washington State · Climate Policy & Market Acceleration · Full-Time

ABOUT CLIMATE SURGE

Climate Surge is a lean, high-impact project built to accelerate the deployment of climate policies and market solutions in Washington State. We work across sectors — government, corporate, heavy industry, utilities, developers, philanthropy, and advocates — to identify where clean energy and climate policy and market forces are struggling, and to unblock them. We are early-stage, fast-moving, and focused on tangible outcomes over process. We are led by a strategic partnership between Climate Solutions, Stolte Foundation and Earth Finance and bring a multi-disciplinary approach to the work of executing on climate policy and market challenges and opportunities.

Washington has passed some of the nation's most ambitious climate legislation and simultaneously has robust private sector climate leadership to transition to a thriving decarbonized economy. However, the state has struggled to build clean energy and effectively implement many solutions in practice on the ground. Permitting complexity and delays, diffuse agency accountability, political tensions between levels of government, and a gap between state programs and the clean tech companies ready to deploy have bottlenecked project deployment.

Surge is a rapid-response taskforce built to fix that. We work across government agencies, energy developers, utilities, clean tech, industry, and capital — harnessing deep networks at leadership and staff levels — to identify the bottlenecks and move fast to unblock them. We focus on outcomes over process. In year one, we drove a Governor's Executive Order to fast-track clean energy tax credit deadlines and sped up a \$130M trucking electrification incentive program after two years of stall. Washington's problem is not unique — states across the country face trouble in executing on strong climate laws — and Surge is built to get WA on track and demonstrate how it's done.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Washington has the policy ambition. Climate Surge exists to close the gap between ambition and execution. The Executive Director will drive that mission.

This is a rare role: part strategist, part operator, part relationship broker. You will set the agenda for what Climate Surge works on and why, own the relationships that unlock progress, and personally drive execution alongside a small, high-performing team and a

comprehensive network of advisors. You will report to the Climate Surge Executive Committee and serve as the organization's primary day-to-day leader and external face.

WHAT YOU'LL DO

Set Strategy and Priorities

- Own the answer to “what should Climate Surge work on next, and why.” Prioritize using rigorous, data-driven, and strategic inputs that weigh high impact potential and Climate Surge's realistic ability to move the needle.
- Surface and evaluate the next pipeline of high-leverage deployment opportunities. Make the call on what belongs in the queue.
- Adapt Climate Surge's focus as the policy and market landscapes shift. Climate action in Washington is dynamic and evolving; your job is to keep the organization pointed at the highest-leverage work.

Drive Execution

- Manage and push the Climate Surge team and advisors to deliver, and dig into execution yourself. This is a player-coach role: you get the work done as part of the team, not just oversee people who do.
- Drive rapid execution and results on current priority tracks while running parallel analysis of what's next. Both matter simultaneously.
- Diagnose what's stuck across the deployment ecosystem and broker solutions, working directly with agency leads, utilities, project developers, corporate partners, NGOs, legislators, and other key stakeholders.

Build and Leverage Relationships

- Navigate the complex stakeholder landscape across relevant public agencies, the energy sector, utilities, other industries, and NGOs, elevating high-priority issues to top state and corporate leadership.
- Develop and maintain senior relationships across the climate-relevant private sector, government, and advocacy communities. Tech companies, energy developers, real estate, utilities, and investors need to take your call.
- Engage comfortably outside the traditional climate NGO world. Surge's leverage depends on cross-sector credibility.

Lead the Team and Support Fundraising

- Hire and manage two additional staff to support Climate Surge's mission and work and partner with a consultant network.
- Design and lead Climate Surge meetings with the executive team, staff, and close partners. Set the agenda, drive toward decisions, and hold the executive committee accountable as a strategic sounding board.

- Serve as a credible, compelling voice for Climate Surge’s work in front of major donors and funder meetings. Primary fundraising relationships are held and supported by the Executive Committee; your role is to amplify and reinforce them, as well as develop supporting brand marketing materials.

WHO YOU ARE

You have a well-informed point of view — and the credibility to defend it.

You bring practical insight into how to get clean energy and climate solutions built and deployed, not just how to convene stakeholders around a problem. You enjoy learning new and complex topics. You’re comfortable pushing back on a room full of strong opinions — including funders and executives — when the evidence points another direction. You listen carefully, adjust when warranted, and then act with conviction.

You are a driver of impact.

You are a self-starter who comes to the table with recommendations, not just options. You proactively raise issues when progress stalls instead of waiting for direction. You operate comfortably at both strategic and operational levels without losing effectiveness at either.

You excel at driving cross-sector success.

You’ve managed or led work that crosses organizational and sector boundaries, and you understand that execution in this environment means navigating bureaucratic friction, not just coordinating willing partners. Your network and comfort zone extend well beyond the traditional climate advocacy world.

You thrive in the ambiguity of a start-up environment.

You’re comfortable in a startup-stage organization where systems and structures are still being built. You are innovative and nimble. You can hold yourself and others to clear outcomes even when the path isn’t fully mapped.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Demonstrated track record of driving complex, cross-sector initiatives to tangible outcomes, not just facilitating them.
- Senior relationship capacity across at least two of the following: state or local government, energy sector (utilities, developers, investors), major corporate or clean tech, climate/environmental advocacy.
- Experience managing teams, advisors and external consultants in fast-moving, resource-constrained environments.
- Deep knowledge of climate, energy, or clean tech issues, relationships, challenges and opportunities.

- Strong communicator who can translate technical, regulatory, or policy complexity for diverse senior audiences.

Minimum Experience: This is a senior-level Executive Director position. A minimum of 10 years experience in climate, energy, clean tech, economic development, or another relevant field is required.

Travel: This is a hybrid role, based in Seattle, WA, with a combination of remote and in-person meetings (at least once/week). Occasional travel within the region for key meetings and events should be expected.

CLIMATE SURGE STRUCTURE

Climate Surge is governed by an Executive Committee with three current members representing the three co-founders of the project — Reuven Carlyle (Earth Finance); Karen Laughlin (Stolte Family Foundation); and Gregg Small (Climate Solutions). The Executive Director reports to the Executive Committee. Climate Surge is fiscally sponsored by Climate Solutions.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The salary range for the role is \$180,000–\$220,000.

- 100% employee premium coverage for medical, dental, and vision insurance
- Six weeks of paid time off plus 14 flexible holidays
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP), healthcare FSA, and dependent care spending accounts
- Voluntary life insurance
- 401(k) retirement plan (eligible after 3 months) with a 5% employer contribution
- 100% employer-paid short- and long-term disability insurance and life insurance

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply, please submit your cover letter and resume to gregg.small@climatesolutions.org. Applications will start to be reviewed on May 7.

Surge is an equal opportunity employer committed to building a team that reflects the diversity of Washington State and the communities we serve. Climate Surge is committed to equal opportunity in employment for all qualified persons without regard to race, color, age, religion, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, military or veteran status, the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, pregnancy and childbirth, family responsibilities, or any other basis protected by applicable laws, regulations, or guidelines relating to discrimination in employment.