



**Building  
Communities.  
Empowering  
Readers.**

**Who We Are:**

WITS (Working in the Schools) is the leading provider of literacy programming and corporate volunteerism to Chicago Public Schools (CPS), having affected the literacy development of 65,000 students since its founding in 1991. We are an integral part of the literacy culture of 35 elementary schools and activate 700 volunteers from 30 corporations.

WITS believes that literacy is the foundation on which all other learning develops. Our mission is to empower Chicago elementary students to discover themselves through reading while developing foundational literacy skills. We do this by creating community through literacy-based mentorship, enabling teachers to build diverse classroom libraries, and promoting book ownership at home.

WITS recognizes that structural racism, housing discrimination, and resource disparities prevent school communities from reaching their full potential. We strive to use our funding, energy, and time to support students and educators in achieving their literacy goals. Each year, our combined volunteer and teacher investments in CPS are valued at \$3.4 million.

WITS connects people across real and perceived boundaries. Cultivating relationships between diverse groups of people builds empathy and understanding. Together, we are a community of readers who find strength in sharing stories, and perspective.

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**Job Title: Chief Program and Strategy Officer (CPSO)**

**Classification: Full-time**

**Department: Program**

**Reports to: Chief Executive Officer**

**Pay: \$80,000 - \$87,000**

We know there are great candidates who might not check all these boxes or who possess important skills of which we have not thought. If that is you, do not hesitate to apply and tell us about yourself. WITS encourages members of traditionally underrepresented communities to apply, including people of color, LGBTQ+ people and people with disabilities.

**Purpose of Role:**

The CPSO will lead program innovation and design initiatives for both student mentorship and teacher programs while positioning WITS as a leader in leveraging the collective power of corporations and community members in Chicago to support literacy development of CPS elementary students.

This role marks a unique opportunity for an entrepreneurial individual to steer WITS toward 30 years of continued success. They will utilize the findings from WITS' exploratory evaluation by Marzano Research in 2023-2024 to redefine our student mentorship model, focusing on its most impactful aspects.

Having proven staff management skills to develop an exceptional team will be pivotal, fostering initiative-taking analysis, guiding decision-making, and cultivating a culture centered on supportive learning and achieving results. This approach is essential to achieving our ambitious goal of delivering top-notch literacy enrichment programming to thousands of CPS elementary students by 2027. The CPSO should adopt a systems-level approach, understanding how WITS' involvement in the education and corporate ecosystems can enhance reading performance outcomes for a broader student base.

## **Individual Accountabilities**

### STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- Develop annual targets for literacy achievements, mentor involvement, and social-emotional growth.
- Stay abreast of current data and emerging trends in literacy, technology, civic engagement, education, and volunteerism to establish WITS as a frontrunner in literacy and corporate engagement.
- Implement insights from the exploratory evaluation by Marzano Research (2023-2024) to reshape the program model, emphasizing key design elements, and establishing systems for our unique evaluation methods.
- Embrace an integrated approach to elevate WITS' role in educational and corporate environments, enhancing reading outcomes for a wider student demographic.
- Cultivate strong ties with Chicago Public Schools and allied organizations.
- Identify both internal and external resources and opportunities that align with WITS' long-term strategy for advancing growth in programmatic outcomes.
- Collaborate with the CEO and CDO to elevate and advocate for WITS' mission to potential investors.
- In partnership with community manager, strategize and implement how the Rochelle Lee Teacher Award book granting program best supports and grows the WITS mission.

### TEAM MANAGEMENT

- Ensure comprehensive supervision of all program models – Workplace Mentoring, Mid-Day Mentoring, WITSKindergarten, and the Rochelle Lee Teacher Award.
- Directly manage Student Programs Director and Community Manager. Provide guidance and leadership to all program delivery staff.
- Lead by setting clear success metrics, monitoring progress, and assessing yearly program goals while nurturing the unique abilities of team members.
- Cultivate and oversee a high-performing team focused on proactive analysis, informed decision-making, and a culture of growth and achievement.
- Establish and maintain WITS protocols throughout all program aspects in collaboration with staff and leadership teams.
- Supervise program development, planning, data management, and evaluation efforts.
- Continuously evaluate program performance, adjusting strategies to meet established objectives.
- Develop and oversee a robust onboarding process for program staff.

### LEADERSHIP LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

- Collaborate on fiscal management alongside the CEO and CDO for WITS. Including taking a lead role in foundation and corporate cultivation.
- Provide expert counsel to the CEO in making programmatic vision decisions.
- Aid in marketing and communications tasks as required.
- Assist staff and the governing Board in crafting short and long-term strategic plans.
- Offer strategic and operational guidance, leadership, and coaching to staff.
- Contribute to the formulation of HR policies, language, and procedures with staff leadership.
- Support Board development and engagement activities, as necessary.

### **Indicators of success**

- Meet yearly programmatic goals.
- Coach program team to meet their indicators of success.
- Effective collaboration with counterparts; CEO and CDO.
- Development of thorough timelines with at least 3-month lead times before start of all projects.
- Actively support revenue goals

### **Key Collaboration Network**

#### **Key Shared Accountabilities**

- Work in partnership with CEO and CDO on organization strategic goals.
- Partner with Program Director on management of successful volunteer program delivery.
- Partner with Community Manager to develop a robust community activation plan that supports all program models.
- Guide program team in creation of program content and evaluation.
- Collaborate with Marketing Director on communication projects for program as needed.

#### **Key Collaborators**

- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Development Officer
- Program Director
- Community Manager
- Marketing Director
- Operations Manager

### **Key Capabilities and Leadership Behaviors**

- Exhibits confidence in presenting and executing ideas.
- A self-starter and finisher who can see a plan through from conception to completion.
- Strong project management skills.
- Ability to give directions to and synthesize information from multiple individuals.
- Management level organization/business acumen.
- Agile working style and willingness to adapt.
- A strong ability to develop compelling and grammatically accurate written communication across various mediums.
- Team player and team builder. A clear record of working across departments and multiple levels within and outside of the organization. Including presenting to C-level fortune 500 individuals
- Creative. Passionate. Entrepreneurial.
- Strong ability to work independently and identify next steps to accomplish organizational goals.
- Understanding of and commitment to the mission, vision, values, and goals of WITS.

### **Skills or Experience**

- Ability to manage while balancing close-knit culture with achievement of key indicators of success.
- Proficient in Google Suite, Microsoft Office, Salesforce or a similar CRM platform and willingness to learn new digital tools (e.g., LMS)
- Preferably a minimum of five years coaching and managing staff.

- Understanding of how to use data and evaluation tools to design programs.
- 7 to 10 years of mid-level to senior level program management and/or, development and/or, school experience.
- Not necessary, but preferred, graduate degree in business, education fields, or research and evaluation.

### **Decision Rights**

- All decisions connected to organization program strategy and priorities.
- All decisions about program evaluation.
- All decisions for hiring and management of program team.

### **Organization-wide requirements**

WITS is a small organization doing big work that requires team members to take on projects outside of the department or role-specific expectations. Examples of the type of work you will do include but are not limited to:

- Writing blogs and creating content for WITS marketing and communications.
- Supporting the WITS team in coordination of, and attending, after-hours events every year. Signature Events - Required Attendance -Blackboard Affair, Community Celebration, Corporate Recruitment Event, WITS Talks, one Study Hall, December Board Meeting, one Thank-a-thons
- Regularly updating and maintaining assigned WITS data and metrics.
- Participating in professional development.
- All staff are required to be in the office a minimum of three days per week ~9:30 a.m. to ~3 p.m., unless otherwise determined by the CEO. Mondays are mandatory for all staff; the other two days are determined by business needs.

### **Physical Demands**

- Must be able to bend, squat, and climb stairs.
- Must be able to lift 30 lbs.

### **WITS staff must adhere to our core values: Mission Focused, Accountability, Teamwork, Communication, Leadership:**

- Team members acknowledge that WITS is the sum of our parts and work holistically across program and development departments to ensure the success of the organization.
- Team members set clear expectations, adhere to deadlines, deliver high-quality work, and provide and accept honest feedback; they take ownership of their own performance.
- Team members support their colleagues on projects by understanding their role and being organized, prepared and proactive.
- Team members communicate with timeliness, clarity, and appropriate frequency.
- Team members assert and champion their own expertise.