Position Title: Startup Support Manager
Location: Remote/National
Supervisor: Director of Programming
Supervisees: N/A
Employee Status: Exempt / Full-time
Standard Hours: Flexible around normal days/business hours, 40 hours per week
Starting Salary: $70,000-80,000 annually
Comprehensive Benefits: including generous paid time off, retirement, funding for purchasing health care, office, phone, and internet stipends; current benefits summary available at fci.coop/employment

Position Summary

As the Startup Support Manager, you will play a crucial role in FCI's technical assistance for startup food co-ops. Organizing and opening a food co-op is multi-faceted and FCI's technical assistance programs help startups navigate all aspects of their development, from community organizing to business planning to fundraising. You will build your expertise on startup food co-op development, and will help startups utilize emerging and best practices to make decisions that will be right for their co-op and their community. In this role, you will provide technical assistance support to startup food co-ops, including through leading our FCI Peer Learning Groups program. You will also manage FCI's database on startups, and have the opportunity to develop new systems for data collection and management. Alongside your FCI colleagues, you will help shape and support the organization's educational and technical assistance programming. FCI is in a period of evolution and growth, and as your experience and expertise grows, we expect this position to evolve as well.

Working at FCI

Food Co-op Initiative is a nonprofit organization that partners with communities to build a more just food system, providing critical support as they organize and open community-owned grocery stores. We are a small but mighty organization that has helped over 180 new food co-ops open since our founding in 2005. In early 2024 we launched a new vision, mission, and five-year strategic plan that guides our priorities and our organizational culture. Within our plan is a commitment to centering equity in all aspects of our organization, and that includes our role as an employer.

Our positions deliberately involve collaboration within the organization and with external partners; the belief that diverse perspectives lead to more equitable and effective outcomes is core to FCI's culture. We value open and direct communications. We place a high value on the well-being of our staff and everyone we work with, and support each other in managing work demands within our full lives.

We are a rapidly evolving organization and are committed to creating ways for all staff members to contribute to its evolution. We expect all staff to be participants in setting and implementing priorities and cultivating an inclusive workplace.

Focus of Position

- You will lead FCI's Peer Learning Groups program, the organization's signature cohort-based technical assistance and support program. In this role you will manage and administer the program throughout its annual cycle, manage contracted facilitators, and facilitate groups yourself. Along with the FCI Directors team, you will have shared decision making authority, to continuously reflect on and evolve the program. This program will likely be about 50% of the Startup Support Manager's role.
- You will be responsible for FCI's intake of potential startups by responding to inquiries and providing initial resources and support as individuals consider organizing a food co-op in their community.
- With support from colleagues, you will provide technical assistance to early-stage startup food co-op, answering questions, connecting them with other experts, and serving as a coach.
- FCI is currently reflecting on the structure of its technical assistance offerings to make them more effective and sustainable. You will be a lead voice and visionary in this exploration and program redesign in 2025.
- You will be responsible for managing FCI's database (Civi CRM) of information about current startups, gathering information from startups and other FCI staff to ensure key data points and contact information is maintained. You will have a leadership role in managing what data we collect and how it is collected to create more effective and efficient systems.
- With colleagues, coordinate internally to keep staff informed on startups' status, needs; lead conversations about emerging needs, gaps, and best practices among startups.
- Regularly communicate and collaborate with external partners who provide support to startups to best serve startup food co-ops
- Play an active role in supporting other critical FCI education programs like the Up & Coming Startup Food Co-op Conference and FCI Live, including designing and presenting trainings.
- Be an active participant in the broader cooperative development community as it relates to your role.
- Other duties as assigned.

Important Perspectives, Knowledge, and Skills
We encourage all candidates who can demonstrate a fit with the role, even if you don't match every qualification listed below, to apply. We do not expect that candidates will have all of the qualifications listed below. We value lived experience, embrace "nontraditional" paths, and appreciate different learning styles and the ways different perspectives help challenge and make our work better.

- Demonstrated interest in working with others to make change in a system or institution to advance and promote economic, social, and racial justice.
- Proven ability to connect with a wide variety of people and partner organizations through meetings, one-on-one conversations, group presentations and collaborative projects, with a combination of warmth and directness, so that you are able to be of service and advance FCI's priorities.
- A solid understanding of the cooperative model, and an interest and aptitude to learn and expand your expertise.
- 2-4 years experience in any of the following: cooperative development, small business development, community organizing, and/or board service. Direct experience starting a food co-op is a welcome plus.
- 2-4 years experience with group facilitation, coaching, and/or training in a remote setting.
- Strong communication skills and the ability to be a curious and active listener.
- Proven ability to work both cooperatively and independently, manage complex projects, and build positive relationships with other staff and external partners.
- Experience with working remotely and knowing your ability to thrive working in remote roles.
- Ability to read, write, & communicate in English. The ability to communicate in other language(s) is a welcome plus.
- Ability to operate basic computer and internet programs like Google Suite and Zoom, and a willingness to learn new systems, applications, and technologies on the job. FCI utilizes CRM (Customer Relationship Management software) and this specific role will utilize it extensively, so experience with CRM systems and CiviCRM specifically, is a plus, but not required.
- Ability and willingness to travel occasionally. We estimate this position will require 3-5 trips per year, each ranging from 2-8 days.

Expertise You Don't Need to Apply
Operational grocery experience is welcome, but is not required for this position and will not be heavily utilized in this role. The startup food co-ops you will be supporting are generally not yet operating a grocery store and will rely on consultants and FCI partner organizations for much of this expertise when it is needed.

Working Conditions & Physical Demands
FCI will make reasonable accommodations to enable individuals to perform the essential functions of their work to the degree we are able to do so.

- Internal Work Conditions: Except for occasional travel, FCI work is performed remotely, either from your home or another appropriate location of your choosing.
- External Work Conditions:
  - Occasional travel is required; most trips will include at least one night away from home and may require travel by plane or train.
  - Some availability outside of normal business hours is also required.
- Physical Demands:

- Reliable attendance at regularly scheduled meeting times is required.
- Ability to work on a computer for extended periods of time during the work day is required. As our organization functions remotely, nearly all of your work is conducted on a computer.
- You will occasionally support an on-site event or meeting where boxes and tabling supplies weighing up to 20 pounds will need to be transported and unpacked. If these physical activities are a barrier, we are able to make accommodations to relieve you of this duty.