



Director of Environmental Health ((NYC))

ABOUT US

West Harlem Environmental Action a/k/a WE ACT for Environmental Justice is a non-profit, community-based advocacy organization that works to build healthy communities by ensuring that people of color and/or low-income residents participate meaningfully in the creation of sound and fair environmental health and protection policies and practices. **WE ACT is a nationally recognized leader in the environmental justice (EJ) movement and is known for its work in the areas of children’s environmental health; government accountability; and climate, energy and environmental justice.**

WE ACT is the only national EJ organization with a permanent presence in Washington, DC. Our federal policy strategy includes advancing and reforming new national policy, practices and regulations; supporting policy implementation and regulatory efforts of existing policy to ensure accountability; convening coalitions, organizations and researchers to drive a shared national EJ agenda; building a powerful narrative to catalyze a national EJ movement; and serving as a connector, re-grantor and technical assistance provider to build the capacity of EJ organizations into a powerful, cohesive national movement.

WE ACT prioritizes the voices of longstanding community members, communities of color, lower-income communities and, most importantly, those who have been historically marginalized and subjected to environmental and other forms of racism and exclusion. In accordance with the Jemez Principles, we believe that communities must speak for themselves. We work at the intersection of community engagement and activation, policy, research and education. WE ACT leverages our place at the table to push system actors, including elected officials, Big Greens, coalitions and allies to center racial justice and equity.

ABOUT THE ROLE

WE ACT is seeking a Director of Environmental Health with a demonstrated passion for justice and equity issues for our Northern Manhattan headquarters. This individual reports to the co-founder and executive director and will lead WE ACT’s efforts to improve quality of life and environmental health outcomes in communities of color and low-income communities at the local, state and federal levels. The individual in this position will oversee the Environmental Health Department and the organization’s environmental health-related activities and campaigns.

The Director of Environmental Health will also help to define, develop and communicate the environmental health components of WE ACT’s policy agenda and promote public health awareness, coalition building and advocacy amongst WE ACT’s constituencies. They will lead WE ACT’s research and education efforts, and alongside their staff, ensure the presence of an environmental justice perspective in the environmental and public health arena. The director will be responsible for designing and implementing all aspects of WE ACT’s environmental health program.

Key responsibilities include:

*West Harlem Environmental Action (WE ACT for Environmental Justice) is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization.
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Program Development & Direction

- Oversee WE ACT's research portfolio, which includes major themes of air monitoring, cumulative impacts, and Beauty Justice
- Direct WE ACT's Health Campaigns.
- Works with the Development and Operations teams to Manage the department budget and help develop, fundraise for new environmental health projects within the scope of the organizational strategic plan and report regularly to funders.
- Oversee the evaluation of all of WE ACT's environmental health work.
- Collaborate with WE ACT staff to analyze environmental health, justice and housing policies (citywide, statewide and national) and to contribute to the development of more effective and accountable policy, including the incorporation of health considerations into land use planning and economic development.
- Represent WE ACT, as necessary, at public hearings, meetings, conferences and press events.

Research and Dissemination of Health Information to Communities

- Liaise with university academic partners.
- Develop and support the organization's work related to community driven and participatory action research.
- Coordinate community outreach and engagement and translational research with academic research centers.
- Direct WE ACT's Beauty Inside Out Campaign that is focused on banning toxins in cosmetics, hair products and skin lighteners marketed to women of color. toxic chemicals from personal care
- products, with an emphasis on products marketed to women of color (e.g., skin lighteners and hair straighteners)
- Co-Direct the National Beauty Justice Coalition, a coalition of beauty justice advocates and researchers around the U.S.

Supervision and Department Management

- Supervises the Environmental Health Department staff, including Environmental Health Managers, Coordinators, Fellows, and part-time staff and interns.
- Provide support, guidance and performance appraisal and build the environmental health and health policy expertise and leadership skills of staff members.
- Assist in WE ACT resource development activities, including identifying potential sources of revenue to support the organization's environmental health activities and/or health policy strategy and objectives.
- Addresses urgent environmental health policy issues as they arise and perform research in response to community members, government stakeholder, policymaker, press and staff inquiries.



ABOUT YOU

The incoming Director of Environmental Health is driven by their belief in and commitment to WE ACT's vision and mission. Through their track record as a program manager, the successful candidate oversees WE ACT's environmental health program. The director builds authentic and lasting relationships inside and outside the organization with academic, community and coalition members, engaging with them as partners in WE ACT's mission and vision.

The successful candidate is entrepreneurial and self-directed, bringing policy and political savvy to prioritize an ambitious agenda for maximum impact. This role requires a deep commitment to the principles of environmental justice and the ability to influence the development and implementation of federal, state and local public health policy. The optimal candidate has worked in an advocacy environment and understands the movement context, possessing a strong grasp of the economic, social and political forces that shape environmental policy in the U.S.

The selected candidate will also possess most of the following *Core* and *Preferred* qualifications:

Core

- Strong commitment to the mission and goals of WE ACT and a strong passion for solving the climate crisis through environmental justice.
- At least 5 years of increasing responsibility in policy, advocacy, organizing and/or community outreach work, with a proven track record of accomplishments designing and executing strategies that generate strong coalitions and successful campaigns.
- Demonstrated experience working across lines of race, class, gender and geography and an analysis of how climate change and energy-related issues intersect with historically marginalized communities.
- Demonstrated understanding of how organized movements create change and accomplish policy objectives.
- Outstanding oral and written communications skills in order to:
 - Translate complex data and analysis into persuasive narratives;
 - Communicate WE ACT strategies passionately and without jargon.
- Strong project management abilities to ensure effective collaboration and projects that advance on time and on budget.
- Innovation, creativity and an ability to balance planning and visioning for the program with the need to complete project tasks.
- Outstanding relationship-building skills with a wide range of diverse external constituencies, diplomatic abilities and authentic leadership skills that build the trust-based relationships necessary for stakeholders to buy in and share accountability for our collective work.
- Demonstrated ability to prioritize and be flexible in a fast-paced, constantly evolving and collaborative environment, where working on a team and working individually are required.



Preferred

- Master's degree: MPH, MSW, MS, or background in science, environmental, climate, energy, transportation or civil rights policy.
- Published research or other peer-reviewed articles.
- Experience with Institutional Review Boards.
Experience with quantitative research methods, qualitative research methods, and / or social sciences and data software.

SALARY & BENEFITS

WE ACT offers competitive nonprofit compensation and is committed to justice in salary transparency and wage equity. The salary range for this position is \$110,000 - \$115,000 based on experience and qualifications. WE ACT offers a generous suite of benefits, including comprehensive health care (medical, dental and vision), flexible spending account, life insurance, pre-tax transit program, retirement programs and paid holidays and vacation. WE ACT follows a hybrid work policy. All staff are fully vaccinated.

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

WE ACT is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from people of color, women, persons with disabilities and LGBTQ communities. We are committed to transparent and equitable recruitment, hiring and promotion processes that foster inclusion and belonging. If you've read this job description, are excited by it and can see yourself in this role, we hope you apply. If you need a reasonable accommodation during the application or interview process, please email Shanell Reyes at Shanell.Reyes@weact.org.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply or nominate a candidate, please send to Shanell.Reyes@weact.org with "**Director of Environmental Health (NYC)**" in the subject line a resume and cover email or letter answering the following:

1. Why are you passionate about environmental justice?
2. Share an example of a research effort or public health campaign you played a key role in that generated a significant win for communities disproportionately impacted by injustice.