



Director of Racial and Social Justice Somerville, Massachusetts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The [City of Somerville](#) seeks a **Director of Racial and Social Justice**. Reporting directly to the Mayor, the Director of Racial and Social Justice works to eliminate institutional and structural racism and its intersections with other forms of oppression, including sexism, heterosexism, classism, and ableism. The Director is responsible for organizing community-led processes to identify strategies to dismantle systemic racism and social inequality and for working with residents, community organizations, elected officials, and City staff to implement those strategies. The Director will work within the City to establish operational, management, and leadership structures rooted in racial and social justice. The Director will build a business plan for creating and ultimately leading an Office of Racial and Social Justice (RSJ), which will work within the City and the community to change the institutional and structural systems that create racial and social disparities and to achieve racial and social justice.

Somerville is a city located in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, just two miles north of Boston. Occupying slightly over 4 square miles, its population of almost 79,000 and a myriad of immigrants from all over the world make Somerville the most densely populated community in New England, and one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the nation. Rich in both history and culture, the city houses numerous intriguing sites, businesses, and restaurants for every style. Somerville has received national recognition as a model of innovation and efficiency for their 311-customer service helpline, and “SomerStat” – a data-driven style of managing government services. Somerville has been recognized as “the best run City in the Commonwealth.”

This is an excellent opportunity for an individual looking to make a difference through innovative government service. The new Director will define a role that has only been recently created. They will have the opportunity to collaborate with leaders across key City departments. The successful candidate will be collaborative in nature, and work with City leadership to implement a vision for the future that is consistent with the community’s values. The Director of Racial and Social Justice will have proven experience supervising staff and leading programs that build racial and social equity and inclusiveness. The Director will be a strong relationship builder; be able to effectively communicate at all levels of the organization; hold confidentiality; and be accessible and approachable.

The City of Somerville is being supported in this search by Tamar Datan, Catherine Seneviratne, and Andres Marcuse-Gonzalez of [NPAG](#). Application instructions can be found at the end of this document.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various type of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

- Builds a business plan for creating and leading the Office of Racial and Social Justice (RSJ).
- Provides vision and coordination to the Mayor, City Council, and City departments on racial and social justice.
- Organizes community-led processes to identify strategies to dismantle systemic racism and social inequality.
- Oversees implementation of policies and programs to advance racial and social justice, including the RSJ Fund, a dedicated funding source for implementing community-identified strategies to redress the impacts and deconstruct the underlying causes of racial and social injustice.
- Works with the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Manager, the Human Resources Director, and others to build a network within City government to shift internal practices and develop decision-making skills that eliminate racial and social injustice and to transform the culture of the City toward one rooted in racial and social justice.
- Strengthens relationships with Somerville communities most impacted by structural racism and social inequality and aligns City racial and social justice efforts with priorities identified by these communities.
- Works with national, regional, and local racial and social justice leaders from all communities and sectors to advance racial and social justice.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

While no one candidate will embody all the qualifications enumerated below, the ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes, and experiences:

Education and Experience

Bachelor's Degree in public administration, ethnic studies, social work, political science, or a related field and five to seven (5-7) years' experience in a government, non-profit organization, or related setting with at least two (2) years of experience supervising staff and leading programs that build racial and social equity and inclusiveness; or any equivalent combination of education, training, experience, demonstrated investment and measurable performance that provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job.

Knowledge

- Knowledge and understanding of the history of systemic racism and the institutions and structures that uphold it.
- Knowledge of and experience developing and managing programs to deconstruct the underlying causes of racial and social injustice.
- Experience managing a high-powered team using an anti-racist, pro-equity, collaborative decision-making approach.

- Experience working with and developing partnerships between communities of color and government, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and grass-roots community groups.
- Experience working in a variety of multicultural and multilingual settings.
- Experience working with local or state government preferred.

Abilities

- Ability to analyze situations with a racial and social justice lens.
- Ability to listen deeply to communities of color, synthesize knowledge, integrate into work plans, and to facilitate the integration of various community groups.
- Ability to identify systemic racism and social inequality, address issues at their source, and lead organizational change.
- Ability to develop collaborative, productive, and respectful relationships with leaders and other institutions and groups, including but not limited to communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities, businesses, and philanthropies.
- Ability to synthesize complex information.

Skills

- Strong interpersonal skills, including humor and compassion.
- Outstanding administrative skills, including the ability to produce, track, and manage multiple deliverables with overlapping deadlines in a high-performing environment.
- Excellent oral and written communication. Able to communicate effectively and persuasively in writing and in public speaking and presentations.
- Excellent meeting facilitation skills. Proven ability to foster effective community conversations and address racial and social justice issues in a clear and direct manner.
- Demonstrated humility and commitment to continual personal and professional growth in cultural awareness and understanding.
- Anti-racist work.
- Bilingual language skills in Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian-Creole or Nepali a plus.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment involves everyday discomforts typical of offices, with occasional exposure to outside elements. Noise or physical surroundings may be distracting, but conditions are generally not unpleasant. Employee may be required to work beyond normal business hours in response to attend evening meetings or complete work assignments.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL REQUIREMENTS

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the position's essential functions.

Physical Skills

Few physical demands are required to perform the work. Work effort principally involves sitting to perform work tasks, with intermittent periods of stooping, walking, and standing. May also be some occasional lifting of objects such as office equipment and computer paper (up to 30lbs.)

Motor Skills

Duties are largely mental rather than physical, but the job may occasionally require minimal motor skills for activities such as moving objects, operating a telephone, personal computer and/or most other office equipment including word processing, filing and sorting of papers.

Visual Skills

Visual demands require constantly reading documents for general understanding and analytical purposes.

DETAILS

Hours: Full Time

Salary: \$102,000 annually, plus benefits

Application Start Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2020

TO APPLY

More information about the City of Somerville may be found at: <https://www.somervillema.gov/>

Due to the pace of this search, candidates are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Applications including a cover letter describing your interest and qualifications, your resume (in Word format), and where you learned of the position should be sent to: **somerville-drsj@npag.com**. *In order to expedite the internal sorting and reviewing process, please type your name (Last, First) as the only contents in the subject line of your e-mail.*

**The City of Somerville is an equal opportunity employer and proudly values diversity.
Candidates of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.**