



THE CRISIS

We are in the midst of an unprecedented narrative battle over the public’s basic intuitions about crime and punishment, and what it will take to achieve public health and safety. Yet for decades, lawmakers and the media have listened to police and prosecutors,

overlooking the perspective, voice, and expertise of those closest to mass criminalization. As a result, misinformation spreads, fear wins out over reason, and the status quo prevails. Zealous aims to right this historic imbalance.

OUR MISSION

Zealous is a national advocacy and education initiative dedicated to challenging and transforming unjust legal systems through media, storytelling, and the arts. Zealous trains and supports local coalitions of advocates, public defenders, artists, and

the people and communities directly impacted by the legal system in their pursuit of justice. **The ultimate goal:** To achieve enduring policy change to end mass criminalization.

CURRICULUM:

Zealous designs and implements trainings, law school courses, and toolkits on media, storytelling, communications, and policy advocacy for public defenders and future social justice leaders.

CAMPAIGNS:

Zealous supports local partners to develop cutting-edge social justice advocacy campaigns that harness technology, arts, media, and firsthand storytelling strategies.

THE WORK

MEDIA SUPPORT:

Zealous builds relationships between journalists and public defenders, social justice advocates, and directly-impacted people to ensure their perspectives and insights influence media coverage of legal issues. We help pitch stories, find sources, influence reporting, and draft commentaries.

THE IMPACT

In just the last two years, Zealous **has trained** over 1,000 public defenders and reached hundreds of **law students** with our original curriculum and programs, supported local partners in the launch of over a dozen **cutting edge, story-driven media advocacy campaigns**, and driven **reporting** and **commentaries** on **crime** and **policy** by connecting journalists to local sources that are often overlooked. Our partners include defender offices and the communities they

serve, artists and storytellers, technologists and coders, organizers, journalists, arts and civil rights organizations, and academic institutions. The issues we have worked on include pretrial detention in Chicago and Texas, to solitary confinement in Michigan, non-unanimous juries in Oregon, court accountability in Prince George’s County Maryland, and fines and fees in Louisiana.

THE POSITION

This position will oversee and expand all of Zealous’ impact communications, messaging, and media strategy work. This includes supporting media and communications strategy for local partner campaigns, developing and nurturing a robust and interactive national community of journalists and overlooked sources (defenders, other frontline practitioners, and people with direct experience), co-leading our work

with partners on commentaries for national and local news outlets, managing and growing Zealous’ own social media and communications strategy and presence, and developing and facilitating media trainings. This position will work closely with other members of the Zealous team to coordinate consistent messaging and support communications efforts on campaigns and in partner jurisdictions.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

CONCEPTUALIZING, developing and implementing cutting edge new media, communications, messaging, and storytelling strategies for Zealous and Zealous partners.

DEVELOPING and nurturing a robust and interactive national community of new sources (defenders, other front line practitioners, and people with direct experience) and journalists.



**ESSENTIAL
DUTIES**

SUPPORTING the authorship of OpEds and commentaries by often overlooked voices, including people with direct experience (free world and inside jail and prison), public defenders, academics, organizers, and other practitioners for national and local publications.

COLLABORATING with Regional Leads to lead messaging and framing for partner campaigns and initiatives, including websites.

DEVELOPING and maintaining relationships with reporters by consistently pitching stories, leading briefing sessions on current criminal legal issues, building source lists, and supporting local partners in building relationships with reporters.

ESTABLISHING and overseeing Zealous’ organizational social media pages, including Twitter and Instagram, and conceptualizing how Zealous media can best be used to support local efforts and causes and uplift our partners’ perspectives.

**KNOWLEDGE AND
SKILLS**

BA preferred.

5+ years experience in journalism or experience working with and/or interfacing with journalists.

Experience managing, developing, and implementing communications strategies for advocacy causes, cases, and/or campaigns is preferred.

You have outstanding communication and writing skills, particularly the ability to translate complex legal and policy speak into digestible, powerful, and actionable advocacy messaging. You can look at a blank page and “get words down” even if they aren’t perfect, to spark collaboration with your team.

You hold deep knowledge of the criminal “justice” system.

You are a bold visionary, a creative thinker who is not afraid to introduce “crazy” or “bad ideas” in service of new ideas and concepts, a “super connector” who can see and forge unexpected relationships between people and projects for impact. You are a “bridge builder.”

You understand our current carceral approach to public health and safety as fundamentally flawed, cruel, and racist, and desire to transform it, not just “Reform” it.

You believe — if done ethically and effectively — that public defenders have an important role to play in supporting the movement for racial and social justice by speaking out in a range of media, including social by partnering with communities and the people we represent, and by leveraging defender expertise and perspective for good.

You are both exceptionally entrepreneurial, profoundly collaborative and are excited about working at the axis of media and justice, committed to cultivating diversity and lifting up under heard voices..

You share a commitment to the importance of transformative legal and policy change through excellent advocacy, media, and storytelling.

You embody strong work ethic and dependability, including demonstrated ability to be self-directed, take initiative, and work independently, all in a remote workspace.

You feel good about working remotely, in a creative, energetic start-up environment with a team based in various states around the country.

You are willing to work in a creative, energetic start-up environment.



COMMUNICATIONS

TITLE TBD*

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Willingness to work nights and weekends when necessary, and travel occasionally.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

May live anywhere in the U.S.

SALARY AND BENEFITS:

Competitive

APPLICATION
PROCESS

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

January 28, 2022

To apply, please send resume and letter of interest stating clearly which position(s) you are interested in to careers@zealo.us.

PLEASE
NOTE

*This position's exact title is TBD and will be based on experience.

We are in the process of a complete overhaul of our [website](#). The information on our site does not reflect the full scope of our work. For the most current information on Zealous' past, present, and future work and impact, [please see this appendix](#) and [our latest video on what we've been upto this past year](#).
