



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

In close collaboration with the Zealous leadership team, this position will project lead strategic partnerships, coalition building, organizing, communications and messaging, and movement building strategies for Zealous work in particular priority states and localities to maximize legal, policy,

and narrative wins, help train and build capacity in local partner organizations, and strengthen local coalitions for the ongoing work they will do. Current states and localities where we are looking for heavy leadership and support include: Louisiana, Mississippi, Pennsylvania and California.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

SERVING as primary ongoing point person with local partners to ensure and enhance short and long-term impact and support their capacity building.

LEARNING from local partners – which include public defenders, community organizations, people with direct experience, journalists, lawmakers, and academic institutions, among others – and assessing the legal and policy landscape and power dynamics.



**ESSENTIAL
DUTIES**

PROVIDING organizational and communications support to innovative local campaigns.

WORKING to support and train local partners to develop new media, traditional, and social media advocacy strategies, write op-eds, pitch stories to press, give testimony in the halls of power, and create on-the-ground activations.

CO-DEVELOPING and co-facilitating Zealous local defender trainings, media labs, and university and law school clinics, classes, and curricula.

COLLABORATING with the Zealous team to translate legal and policy issues and causes into engaging, impactful, and humanizing campaigns, articles, and experiences.

WORKING in collaboration with the head of Defender Initiatives to support the establishment and implementation of office-wide processes around storytelling, collaboration, and media advocacy in local defender offices.

WORKING with the Director of Collaborative Advocacy to ensure that all campaigns, partnerships, and projects are ethical, effective, and based on mutual and participatory leadership.

**KNOWLEDGE
AND SKILLS**

BA preferred.

You have 5+ years experience managing, developing, and implementing advocacy work in partnership with grassroots movements and people directly impacted by criminal legal systems.

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.

A deep knowledge of the criminal “justice” system from personal experience working within it and driving policy and strategy outside of it is preferred.

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 are both exceptionally entrepreneurial and collaborative, and are excited about working at the axis of media and justice. .

You ideally have a deep working knowledge and relationships with advocates inside of particular jurisdictions where you will be leading.

Ideally, you live in or near at least one of your geographic focus areas.

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

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.



**KNOWLEDGE
AND SKILLS**

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 are committed to cultivating diversity and lifting up under heard voices.

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

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](#).