



FAQs for	Chief Program Officer (CPO)
Opportunity Description	Join the Surge Team
Application Deadline	May 31, 2022
Document details	<i>Deciding to apply for a Chief Program Officer (CPO) position is an investment of your time and energy. Out of respect for your time, the Surge Institute Selection committee co-wrote these FAQs with Offor to give you as much insight into the opportunity as possible. We hope this detail will help you decide if exploring this opportunity feels right to you. If we mutually agree to move forward to the finalist stage, you will have time to engage deeply with the Selection Committee and staff to ask all of your remaining questions.</i>
How to apply	If you are interested in applying for the CPO opportunity, complete our application form here .

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Learn where this job is located, start date, salary range, travel, questions about the application process, and more.
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Learn what the requirements are, what success looks like, some of the “unwritten rules,” who your team would be, and what the non-negotiables are.
- **The Team & Organization**
Learn about some of the background that you can’t find out on the website or publicly, such as the organization’s approach to diversity, onboarding, and team exits.

THE BASICS

- **Where is this job located?** The Chief Program Officer (CPO) is a remote position. Surge is a virtual organization.
- **What is the start date?** July 2022
- **What is the salary range (and benefits) for this role?** \$170 - \$178K plus a 10% performance bonus and [benefits](#).
- **Will the organization help me with relocation expenses?** The CPO role is a remote position that does not require relocation.
- **What are my typical office hours?** A standard 9-5 workday, with encouragement to take time off for personal things. There is a culture of events and activities during the weekends.
- **How much travel is required for this role?** In the continued wake of COVID 19, Surge Institute has prioritized the health and safety of its employees. All staff travel will implement best safety practices and align with guidelines from the [Center for Disease Control](#) (CDC). The CPO should expect to travel twice per month in the first 6 months as they learn Surge programming, then once per month after the onboarding period. The CPO will also be expected to travel for board meetings, leadership sessions, and other events, at least quarterly.
- **What does the application and selection process look like?**

APPLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Complete our application form here.● Candidates will be invited to interview by mid-June.● Before completing an interview, semi-finalist candidates will complete and submit a candidate exercise. We estimate this exercise will take four hours. Candidates will be compensated for completing their exercises.
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THE ROLE

- **I didn't see any previous requirements or qualifications for the CPO role. Are there any?**
 - **Intelligence.** Learns quickly. Demonstrates ability to quickly and proficiently understand and absorb new information.
 - **Analytical skills.** Able to structure and process qualitative or quantitative data and draw insightful conclusions from it. Exhibits a probing mind and achieves penetrating insights.

- **Deep program knowledge.** Understands how to develop, execute and evaluate high-quality programs for adults.
 - **Strategic thinking/visioning.** Able to see and communicate the big picture in an inspiring way. Determines opportunities and threats through a comprehensive analysis of current and future trends.
 - **Creativity/Innovation.** Creates new and innovative approaches to problems.
 - **High standards.** You expect personal performance and team performance to be nothing short of the best. You define “best”-- upfront -- for your team and for specific projects. You do not assume. You understand the distinction between excellence and perfection.
 - **Openness to criticism and ideas.** Often solicits feedback and reacts calmly to criticism or negative feedback.
 - **You deliver results that stick through consistently inclusive practices.** You ask who is not at the table. You build time into projects to prioritize the voices that, historically, are not heard, not centered or prioritized. You do not assume that equity is something that one gets to later or something that happens by happenstance. You know that inequity is by design and have demonstrated through your work that you can redesign for equity. You seek expertise from non-dominant places. You measure bias and hold yourself accountable for interrupting it.
 - **Follow-through on commitments.** Lives up to verbal and written agreements.
 - **Flexibility/Adaptability.** You adjust quickly to changing priorities and conditions. You cope effectively with complexity and change.
 - **You are a powerful listener with high EQ.** You hear what is said and unsaid. You’ve leveraged powerful listening skills to enlist support from influential players in pursuit of a major initiative. You are aware of how your words and actions impact others.
 - **Honesty/integrity.** Does not cut corners ethically. Earns trust and maintains confidence. Does what is right, not just what is politically expedient. Speaks plainly and truthfully.
 - **Strong communication skills.** You are able to see and communicate the big picture in an inspiring way. You easily anticipate opportunities and risk, and position your organization to leverage this insight to advance your work. You are an excellent listener, communicate effectively and write with clarity to engage multiple stakeholders.
 - **Organization and planning.** Plans, organizes, schedules, and budgets in an efficient, productive manner. Focuses on key priorities.
- **What are some of the unwritten rules/requirements for success for working at Surge, and specifically as a direct report to Carmita?**
 - **Carmita believes in people.** She is unapologetic about this. She will be curious about your career and life aspirations. If you are performing in your job, you can expect Carmita to ask you what is next for you and how you envision your work and career beyond what is currently in front of you. She is an opportunity creator not a dream blocker.

- **Do what you say you will do when you say you will do it.** This means do not be late for meetings. This means if you say you will turn something in at 5pm CT, it should come in early. If for some reason you cannot meet an agreement, let Carmita know immediately. Carmita sees missing deadlines as a lack of integrity. Know this and act accordingly.
- **Carmita is still the face of Surge.** People love her. This shouldn't scare you, though it could feel intimidating. Know that if we mutually select each other it will be because you deeply believe in Surge and Carmita deeply believes in you.
- **Carmita cares about aesthetics and how things look, especially when they are going in front of an external audience.** This means our writing and visual communications need to maintain our standards of excellence. This doesn't mean Carmita will want to look at every single thing you do, but she does expect a clearly outlined review process to ensure multiple sets of eyes are seeing the external-facing work before it moves forward.
- **Results matter a great deal to Carmita.** This shouldn't need to be said, but it is worth noting. During the goal setting process, you will set and agree upon goals. Carmita is direct with feedback and will provide both feedback and support to help you achieve your goals. She is also very open and often shows staff where she has met her goals and where she has not.
- **What you see is what you get with Carmita.** She is the same person in the office as she is in a donor meeting. If you ask, she will share. Do not be afraid to be your full self. This isn't lip service. This is actually who Carmita is. It is also the power of Surge.
- **Carmita has a bias towards a demonstrated and visible hustle.** What working hard looks like is different for everyone. Be sure to understand what hustle and working hard looks like to Carmita and align/match your expectations.
- **Carmita deeply appreciates when you make the implicit, explicit.** She does not naturally read between lines so if there is something that you need to say to her i.e. critical feedback, bad news, good news, say it plainly and directly. Don't expect her to dig for a lead that you've buried.
- **Carmita defaults toward trust.** The decision to hire you is a decision to trust you and Carmita adheres to that belief. While she may ask questions about decisions you make it is typically to gain clarity and not to poke holes or subtly critique you. You do not have to worry about whether Carmita thinks you can do your job. You were hired because she knows you can.
- **How big of a team will I manage? How many people will I need to hire?**
 - Currently, the National Program team consists of 2 Directors - Director of National Programs and Director of Program Talent and Impact. There are 3 program-specific Executive Directors that will also report to the CPO: Chicago Fellowship, Black Principals Network, and Surge Academy.

- We do not anticipate new hires in FY '23
- **What are the top 3 things that your newly matched leader will spend their time doing in their role in their first year?**
 - Establishing credibility across the program team and developing a deep understanding of Surge programming
 - Establish the standard and the vision for all programming, ensuring a standard of professional fidelity that aligns with the expectations of the Board, President and senior team.
 - Scaling the learning curve of our practices, processes, and systems to identify necessary changes, opportunity areas, and new/innovative practices.
- **How will my success be measured a year into joining Surge as CPO?**
 - You led a unified, motivated, and inspired program team to deliver high-quality programming across sites and program areas with fidelity, as measured by an external evaluation.
 - You set a clear strategic vision and guiding philosophy that informs Surge's programming goals and seamlessly integrates new programming into the established program portfolio.
 - You live and model the values and ethos of Surge in their work and work relationships.
 - You established yourself as a self-starter with an entrepreneurial spirit who will act and make decisions decisively.
- **What are the non-negotiables in terms of what I can change (or cannot) as the new CPO?** Here is what is non-negotiable:
 - We will always adhere to our ethos. See more [here](#).
 - We are an unapologetic movement supporting African American, Latinx and Asian Pacific Islander communities.
- **What are the greatest opportunities I'll have in this specific role?**
 - The CPO will have the opportunity to build on well-established and highly regarded programming, to develop a unified and strategic vision for existing and new programs.
 - Surge is a highly regarded national organization that is driving real results for black, brown, and API folks in our sector. Demand for our work and expertise is high and our community of fellows and alumni continue to laud Surge as the greatest leadership development experience they've had.
- **What are some of the challenges I may encounter?** This is a new role for Surge, we are on a steep growth trajectory, and are experiencing all the growing pains of a small, fast-growing organization, which includes some skepticism and resistance to change.

- **What is the organization's budget?** The FY22 budget is approximately **\$5.7MM** (budgeted) **\$6.2MM** (currently projected).
- **Is there any information you can share about the strategic direction of the organization?** Yes. Please visit [here](#) to view the Surge Ahead Strategic Plan.

THE TEAM + ORGANIZATION

- **Where is the Surge Institute located?**
 - Surge is a virtual organization
- **What results has Surge shown?** Please review our impact report [here](#).
- **How much will I interact with the Board of Directors?** You will meet with the board quarterly at a minimum and as much as required to be successful in your role. For example, if/when the board can support your work or bring clarity to the strategy/direction of the organization, they will do so. You may present information to the board to help the board approve new systems and processes as needed.
- **Who are Surge's major donors?**
[Here](#) is a summary of Surge's donor network.
- **What will my onboarding process look like?** You will have an orientation to get the basics covered, then will meet with Carmita regularly. The National Directors and EDs are preparing for knowledge transfer and support of the new CPO as well. The other senior team members - Chief Advancement Officer, Chief Operating Officer, and Chief of staff will actively support the new CPO's transition.