THE INSTITUTE FOR POLITICAL INNOVATION (IPI)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

www.political-innovation.org/

This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to lead a national movement for political transformation, as The Institute for Political Innovation (IPI), a cross-partisan, not-for-profit organization founded by business leader, entrepreneur, author, and political innovator Katherine M. Gehl, seeks its first Executive Director (ED) to restore healthy competition in American elections and legislation, at federal and state levels, in service of real results for real people.

IPI is the culmination of a multi-year period of scholarship and research – a pivot toward investment and action – with an immediate, laser-focus on Final-Five Voting™, a system wherein the top five candidates are selected from the primary ballot and ranked-choice voting is used in the general election to ensure that politicians are held accountable for delivering results.

In 2016 Katherine Gehl and Prof. Michael Porter co-authored the seminal Harvard Business School report, Why Competition in the Politics Industry is Failing America: A strategy for reinvigorating our democracy, which reshaped the national conversation on political reform. Katherine and Michael have subsequently broadened that work into a book, The Politics Industry: How Political Innovation Can Break Partisan Gridlock and Save Our Democracy, which was released on June 23, 2020. To support action, Katherine and Michael are donating all proceeds of the book to IPI.

IPI’s Executive Director will be a transformative leader accountable for the success of the organization. Above all else, that success will be measured by passage of Final-Five Voting™ legislation in multiple states across the country, and substantive changes to Congress’s partisan legislative machinery.

A critical – if secondary – goal is the establishment and furthering of IPI as a thought-leading institution and producer of new research and scholarship.

For more information about IPI, Ms. Gehl, Prof. Porter, the organization's mission and work, please see the attached addendum and visit https://political-innovation.org.

The Role:

Location:

Chicago, IL (remote work with regular trips to Chicago will be considered)

Reports to:

IPI Board of Directors
Key Responsibilities:

**IPI Strategy, Systems & Sequence:** The ED will shape the mission and vision of IPI, in partnership with Ms. Gehl and IPI’s Board of Directors, and build a disciplined approach to keeping, protecting, and creatively improving it.

**IPI Organization:** Build and manage a high-performing, data-driven approach to—

- advocating public policy;
- budgets, finances, compliance;
- staffing and human resources;
- establishing a culture of excellence, accountability, and growth;
- establishing core set of supportive competencies;
- branding and external communications;
- leveraging Gehl-IPI network and assets;
- creating and optimizing a nationwide network of influencers;
- managing and optimizing Board of Directors and Advisory Council.

**IPI Fundraising:** In partnership with the IPI Board and Venn Innovations, perfect the approach to managing the already available start-up capital, and drumming up and converting new political philanthropy via our partner fundraising vehicles.

**IPI Advocacy:** In partnership with IPI’s Deputy Director and Marketing & Communications Director, build the start-up cookbook for state-level FFV campaigns, act as the leader of the consulting team with these campaigns.

**IPI Audience:** Support and guide the Marketing & Communications Director in building and perfecting the IPI universe and funnel.

**IPI External:** In partnership with the Deputy Director and Marketing & Communications Director, produce and approve a game plan for external relations, and execute that plan in a highly-organized fashion. Appear as a public/front face, in media/events/meetings, as needed.

**IPI Platforms & Content:** Oversee the Marketing & Communications Director’s building, designing, optimizing and managing of IPI website, social media channels, email, audio-visual, printed materials, the master CRM and key databases, along with other adjacent tools and services.

**IPI Relationships:** Develop the “leadership-raising” strategy; build and manage relationships around the country, with a keen eye toward “network-effect opportunities” and through active collaboration with other organizations in the field.
**Network Support:** As a member of a network of common cause cause political innovation organizations, IPI and the ED will work in close collaboration with Venn Innovations and Democracy Found, among others.

**In-House Expertise:** Bring to the table, and perpetually hone, a best-in-class base of knowledge, creative instincts toward and execution of political innovation.

**The Person:**

This role calls for an experienced, exceptional, multi-faceted individual. Those highly qualified candidates will also share the IPI team’s commitment to mission and will embody the organization’s core values.

The successful candidate will possess a range of skills and experience that will include, but not be limited to:

**Experience:**

- At least 10 years working in professional environments through roles of increasing responsibility, with a demonstrable track-record of driving measurable results and successes.
- Prior direct experience in politics and/or academia is one avenue, but substantial mission-alignment and relevant experience from the private sector will be very positively considered/preferred.
- A seasoned, innovative and inquisitive political mind with second-to-none advocacy chops (instincts, approaches, networks, successes).
- A deep familiarity with and/or a gravitational pull toward nonpartisan political innovation – in theory and toward building campaigns – particularly around structural change to elections and lawmaking.
- Experience and comfort with fundraising and development work (high-net-worth individuals, foundations).
- Experience and excellence in media management, both strategically (toward setting agendas) and actively (social media, longform writing and appearances).
Qualities:

- A natural leader who gravitates toward problem-solving at a grand scale.
- A preternatural ability to build buy-in around a plan, and drive to completion.
- A dynamic personality who can engage effectively with grasstops and grassroots audiences, both one-to-one, and one-to-many.
- A manager who identifies and hones talent and creates exceptional environments.
- A strong backbone; ability to work at a fast pace and manage coolly through a crisis.
- An entrepreneur in spirit and is steadfastly passionate about nonpartisan political innovation, i.e., transforming the system in service of real results for real people.
- Intrinsically motivated; a self-starter who seeks out and thrives in fast-paced environments with the highest expectations for accuracy and efficacy.
- Unbreakably organized with demonstrated ability to simultaneously balance deadlines and projects in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial environment.
- Ability to assess opportunities and create systems to execute on strategic priorities.
- A collaborator, a phenomenal written and oral communicator, an excellent strategic thinker, and an outstanding project manager.
- Adept at engaging stakeholders with through external relationship management.
- Exhibits a positive attitude and executes tasks with ease and a calm demeanor.
- Willingness to engage at all levels, doing whatever it takes to get the job done.

Education:

- Bachelor's degree is required.

Additional Requirements:

- Currently able to work legally in the United States without sponsorship.
- Willingness to travel as required for the position.
- English proficiency.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Constant Contact, Mailchimp, CRM, databases and various social media platforms, WordPress (CMS).
- Willing to take post-offer pre-employment psychological profile and, if requested, a drug screen.
While this profile is intended to be an accurate reflection of the most significant duties of the current position, it is not necessarily exhaustive of all responsibilities, duties, efforts, requirements or expectations. Other duties may be assigned as necessary, in discussion with the IPI Board of Directors.

***

IPI is an equal opportunity employer. All employment decisions are based on business needs, job requirements and individual qualifications, without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, veteran's status, citizenship status or any other protected status under applicable laws or regulations.

We encourage individuals of all political backgrounds to apply. IPI's mission is deeply rooted in cross-partisanship, which makes a diversity of political ideologies an asset.

If you are a qualified candidate who needs reasonable accommodations to apply for this position, please contact us.

***

To learn more about this opportunity, please contact:

**Ryan Whitacre**  
Partner, Bridge Partners  
ryan.whitacre@bridgepartnersllc.com

**Tory Clarke**  
Partner, Bridge Partners  
tory.clarke@bridgepartnersllc.com
IPI: MISSION, VISION & FOUNDING

The Institute for Political Innovation (IPI) was founded in February 2020 by business leader, entrepreneur, author and political innovator Katherine M. Gehl, as a nonpartisan not-for-profit organization. It is managed under Venn Innovations, Katherine's umbrella business organization.

The mission of the Institute of Political Innovation (IPI) is to contribute theory, scholarship and strategy that catalyzes model, modern and nonpartisan political change in America.

IPI's vision is a restoration of healthy competition in American elections and legislation at federal and state levels, in service of real results for real people.

IPI, along with “The Politics Industry” represents a culmination of a multi-year period of scholarship and research, and a turning toward investment and action.

***

In 2013 Katherine Gehl was refining the competitive strategy for her $250 million high-tech food-manufacturing company in Wisconsin. With more than a century of innovation under its belt, Gehl Foods found itself faced with precipitously declining fortunes. Like most CEOs, Katherine utilized trusted tools for competitive analysis, like Harvard Business School Professor Michael E. Porter's Five Forces framework, to lead the turnaround effort.

Professor Michael E. Porter & The Five Forces:

The Five Forces is a framework for understanding the competitive forces at work in an industry, and which drive the way economic value is divided among industry actors.

First described by Michael E. Porter in his classic 1979 Harvard Business Review article, Porter's insights started a revolution in the strategy field and continue to shape business practice and academic thinking today. A Five Forces analysis can help companies assess industry attractiveness, how trends will affect industry competition, which industries a company should compete in—and how companies can position themselves for success.

Professor Porter is the Bishop William Lawrence University Professor at Harvard Business School. He was one of the founders of the consulting firm The Monitor Group (now part of Deloitte) and FSG, a social impact consultancy.

***
While working with Michael Porter at Gehl Foods, Katherine was simultaneously running a parallel competitive analysis - of American politics. “It was a lightbulb moment for me,” remembers Katherine. The industry competition lens shed new light on the root causes of dysfunction in our political system, and the most powerful – and nonpartisan – solutions.

From this analysis, Katherine concretized the four foundational principles of “Politics Industry Theory,” which are as follows:

- First, although people tend to think of the American political system as a public institution based on high-minded principles and impartial structures and practices derived from the Constitution, it’s not. Politics is a private industry. It behaves according to the same kinds of forces that shape competition in any industry.
- Second, the dysfunctions of the politics industry are perpetuated by unhealthy competition that secures the duopoly’s position.
- Third, our political system will not correct itself. There are no countervailing forces or independent and empowered regulators to restore healthy competition.
- Fourth, certain strategic, precise changes to the rules of the game in elections and legislating would alter incentives in ways that create healthy competition, innovation, and accountability.

After selling her company, Katherine – believing business leaders were “missing in action” – used her theory to develop the business case for nonpartisan political innovation, with a laser-focus on targeted structural changes that will change the incentives that dictate decision making in politics.

In 2016 she asked Prof. Porter to join as co-author on the seminal 2017 Harvard Business School report, Why Competition in the Politics Industry is Failing America: A strategy for reinvigorating our democracy, which reshaped the national conversation on political reform. Katherine and Michael have broadened that work into a book, The Politics Industry: How Political Innovation Can Break Partisan Gridlock and Save Our Democracy, which was released on June 23, 2020. To support action, Katherine and Michael are donating all proceeds of the book to IPI.
IPI will become a leader in national “nonpartisan democracy reform,” a community in which Katherine is deeply connected. She is a board member of Unite America, Business for America, and New America. She is also co-chair, along with Prof. Porter, of the National Association of Nonpartisan Reformers and co-founder of Democracy Found, a Wisconsin organization pursuing Final-Five Voting.

The goal is to “create lightbulb moments for millions of people across the country, and in so doing catalyze a primetime movement for political innovation the likes of which we haven’t seen for 100 years.” The immediate focus of IPI is “Final-Five Voting,” the principal solution brought to light through Politics Industry Theory.

**IPI’s Immediate Focus: Final-Five Voting**

IPI is laser-focused on catalyzing a grasstops-led movement toward state-level legislative action around Final-Five Voting, a two-step innovation as follows:

- **Step one:** Replace party primaries with a single *nonpartisan* primary in which the top five finishers, regardless of party, advance to the general election. This eliminates the “eye of the needle” conundrum, allowing legislators much more leeway to deliver results in the public interest without constant fear of getting “primaried.” It also creates dynamic competition in the general election with a broader field of candidates and space to debate a diversity of ideas instead of the same-old, binary, wedge issues.

- **Step two:** Replace single-candidate voting in the general election with “Ranked-Choice Voting,” which allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference. This system eliminates the main barrier to new competition in politics, and, finally, injects accountability into our politics.

Final-Five Voting is a wise investment with a big return: healthy competition that delivers innovation, results and accountability—the best of what we call “free market politics.” Final-Five Voting isn’t designed to force people to abandon their ideological views, or to change *who* wins; it’s designed to change *what* the winners are incentivized to do on behalf of the American people.
IPI: PRACTICE

The Institute for Political Innovation will bring a targeted universe of powerful leaders - civic, business, philanthropic, not-for-profit - to a point of action. IPI is committed to lead a nationwide movement to further elevate Politics Industry Theory (and subsequent scholarship) and develop and support state-level and nationwide innovation campaigns.

IPI deploys three tactics toward achieving its mission and vision. Each tactic is geared around action - this is not centrally about clicks and hits, likes and shares - and each tactic flows from Gehl's academic work, and is accelerated by her work as an influencer, connector and funder.

A key asset at IPI is Gehl's access to leaders and influencers across key American institutions—business, politics, academia, technology, and beyond. In order to break political gridlock and dysfunction and achieve real results for real people, an ongoing campaign of awareness building and enrollment is required. IPI will lead this campaign and leverage Gehl's ability, access and influence.

1. **Political Innovation Research & Publication**: IPI is the home for Gehl's academic practice, which currently revolves around Politics Industry Theory. IPI will pursue continued research and publishing opportunities to perfect and socialize this work and extend it. IPI will aspire to a long-term partnership with a university, as well.

2. **Re-engineering Electoral Machinery**: IPI is the action center for actualizing the primary solution to unhealthy competition in the politics industry: Final-Five Voting (FFV). IPI will target upwards of a dozen states to engage, incubate and drive political philanthropy around locally led campaigns—primarily legislative campaigns—to pass the FFV package within the next 3 to 10 years. IPI will also support grasstops engagement in ballot-initiative campaigns for FFV.

3. **Legislative Machinery**: Still in a theoretical stage, the Legislative Innovation Commission (LIC) is the second step toward injecting healthy competition in the politics industry. The Institute will create an interdisciplinary coalition of experts and leaders to create a zero-based approach to the rules and practices of lawmaking and Congress, and then work collaboratively with elected officials to make the prescribed changes, legislatively.