



Requirements for Strategic Advisor - Disaster Recovery Programs

Updated Apr 14, 2026

Contract | Travel required | Rapid activation for 2026 disasters

Purpose

Connective is building a bench of experienced disaster recovery leaders who can step in quickly if a major disaster strikes in 2026. We are seeking a Strategic Advisor to serve as the primary liaison between Connective and community institutions in the disaster impacted community, such as place-based foundations and local government entities.

This role is designed for someone who can be first into a community after a disaster: the strategic lead who establishes the relationship with the local community institution, sets the operating rhythm, brings the right partners to the table, and helps local leadership understand what effective disaster recovery looks like before the complexity of implementation sets in.

Note: This is a contingency role. Prior to deployment, there is no active work commitment. When Connective enters a community following a disaster, the role activates as a full-time engagement for the duration of that recovery effort. Contract length will vary based on the scale and nature of the disaster, available funding, and community need, and will be defined at the time of activation

Background

Connective is a nonprofit committed to transforming social services into a more connected, empathetic, and accessible system. We design and build human-centered programs, lead the collective improvement of social services, and share our knowledge to help communities magnify their impact.

We specialize in streamlined programs and technology solutions for complex, high-stakes problems: building infrastructure that strengthens whole ecosystems rather than isolated interventions. Our work spans disaster recovery, housing and economic stability, and crisis-driven financial assistance.

Governments, nonprofits, and philanthropic intermediaries choose us as their advisory and implementation partner when the stakes are high and the systems are broken. Our disaster recovery work includes supporting the Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country after the July 4, 2025 floods in Kerr County (designing and running coordinated housing recovery programs across case management, home repair, temporary housing, and unmet needs) as well as ongoing work following Hurricane Helene in Asheville, North Carolina and Hurricane Harvey, COVID-19, and Hurricane Beryl in Houston.



About the Work

Following these disasters, Connective has translated recovery funding into outcomes by building clear program rules, reliable workflows, and strong documentation and compliance controls.

Disaster recovery with Connective is cross-functional. You would coordinate with Connective staff and vendors, and work closely with the local community institution and local and national recovery stakeholders. Core Connective team members typically include:

- **Elena White**, CEO
- **Aidan Sarazen**, Associate Director of Partnerships & Policy
- **Melissa Langston**, Director of Product & Data

Depending on the disaster, the Strategic Advisor may also help identify whether surge staff are needed (for example, disaster case managers, additional program managers, intake staff, construction managers).

How Connective Uses Technology in Recovery

Connective pairs recovery program design with a practical technology approach that helps communities manage complexity.

- **Needs and damage assessment:** Connective tailors and launches a needs and damage assessment in the affected community, then works with local community institutions to interpret what the data is showing (who was impacted, what they need, and where gaps exist) so that early resource decisions are grounded in evidence.
- **Case management and recovery CRM:** Connective's data and systems team manages the CRM day to day, tracking each recovery case from start to finish and making it easy to see where bottlenecks are forming and whether the current program mix is producing results.
- **Privacy and responsible data use:** Connective champions responsible data practices with local community institutions, ensuring that data sharing agreements, consent processes, and information security controls are in place before data collection begins.

Role Summary

The Strategic Advisor is the relationship owner and strategic lead for Connective's work with a local community institution during disaster recovery. This role establishes trust, aligns leadership, shapes recovery direction, and ensures the local community institution has the strategic clarity to lead and the practical coordination it needs to execute.



Key Responsibilities

1) Local community institution relationship leadership and trust-building

- Serve as the primary liaison between Connective and the local community institution's leadership.
- Establish working norms, decision pathways, and an operating cadence with the local community institution early.
- Build durable relationships across the local ecosystem (local government, nonprofits, funders, state and federal partners, and community leaders).

2) Recovery strategy and leadership support

- Help the local community institution define a clear recovery direction: priorities, sequencing, tradeoffs, and what success looks like.
- Provide best-practice guidance on disaster recovery programming, governance models, and funding strategy.
- Translate complex recovery systems (federal, state, local, philanthropic, and insurance constraints) into actionable strategy for local leadership.

3) Partner and ecosystem development

- Identify and bring high-value partners to the table: nonprofit implementers, technical experts, government counterparts, and philanthropic partners.
- Support partner selection and onboarding in coordination with program and operations leads.
- Align stakeholders around shared goals, roles, expectations, and operating rules to reduce friction and delays.

4) Coordination with Connective program, data, and systems teams

- Ensure Connective's program design, operations, data, and technology work aligns with the local community's goals and capacity.
- Maintain clear two-way communication: what the local community institution needs, what partners are experiencing, and what Connective must adapt.
- Use data and on-the-ground information to inform strategic decisions and course-correct when recovery efforts drift.

5) On-the-ground presence and representation

- Be present in the disaster-impacted community during activation and early ramp.
- Represent Connective professionally and credibly in meetings with local leaders, funders, and recovery stakeholders.



- Maintain situational awareness and surface emerging risks, political dynamics, and community sentiment early.

Reporting and Authority

This role reports to the CEO of Connective. During a new activation, the Strategic Advisor will have significant flexibility and authority to establish the local community institution relationship, set early operating structure, and drive progress in coordination with Connective leadership. When a Project Manager is also activated for the same disaster, the Strategic Advisor serves as the senior lead and primary relationship owner, with the Project Manager responsible for day-to-day program and operations management. The two roles coordinate closely but have distinct lanes, with significant decisions escalated to Connective's CEO.

Travel

Travel to the disaster locale is likely, especially early in implementation. Travel expectations will depend on the site and activation needs.

Qualifications

To succeed in this role, you likely have:

- 7+ years of experience in disaster recovery, strategic philanthropy, housing recovery, human services, community development, or related fields, across government and/or nonprofit contexts.
- Experience managing or overseeing a grant portfolio, including monitoring compliance, reporting, and ensuring funds are deployed effectively toward recovery outcomes.
- Demonstrated ability to build and manage senior client relationships under pressure, with high trust and high expectations.
- Strong judgment and strategic thinking, paired with the ability to translate strategy into action in fast-moving, ambiguous environments.
- Experience navigating cross-sector ecosystems (local government, nonprofits, philanthropy, and state/federal recovery systems).
- Strong communication skills: facilitation, writing, presenting tradeoffs, and managing difficult conversations.
- Ability to use data to inform decision-making and understand what is feasible given real-world data quality, staffing, and system constraints.
- Comfort working alongside program, operations, and technology teams, and a practical understanding of how technology can enable service delivery and recovery programs.



Nice-to-haves

- Experience working directly with community foundations or local philanthropic intermediaries.
- Familiarity with FEMA IA/IHP, SBA, state recovery programs, or housing recovery program design and implementation.
- Experience building or working with multi-partner governance structures (LTRGs, recovery coalitions, cross-agency steering groups).
- Managed a program or project with a significant CRM or other technology component for all or most of its full life cycle, from design to implementation to outcomes analysis.
- Experience utilizing human-centered design methods, collective impact models, and change management approaches for social impact.

How to Apply

If you are interested in applying, email Aidan Sarazen at asarazen@connectivetx.org with the following information:

- The position title you are interested in.
- A short paragraph (max 200 words) explaining why you are interested in the Strategic Advisor position.
- A current resume or CV.

Based on the information shared via email, Connective may contact candidates for informational interviews with the Connective team. If, after these interviews, joining the bench of professionals for 2026 is mutually agreeable, Connective will then negotiate and draft a scope of work and contract with the candidate that can be easily activated in the event of a disaster.

Activation & Compensation

The position and the final scope of work will be activated only upon the occurrence of a disaster and Connective's engagement in the recovery. When Connective begins disaster recovery support, the team will contact recovery professionals on the bench to confirm their availability. If a candidate agrees to join the project, both parties will confirm the contract and begin work.

The anticipated compensation for the Strategic Advisor is \$100-\$150 per hour, depending on experience and qualifications. Candidates should be prepared to discuss their compensation requirements during informational interviews with Connective so that the agreed-upon rate can be included in the scope of work and contract negotiations.