

Position Description

Research Assistant/Research Associate

David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

TITLE: **Research Assistant/Research Associate**

Note: This job description describes two levels of research positions: the Research Assistant and the Research Associate. Candidates largely meeting both the required and preferred qualifications will be considered for the research associate role. Candidates largely meeting only the required qualifications will be considered for the research assistant role.

SUPERVISOR: **Research & evaluation management**

SUMMARY:

The research associate and research assistant support Research & Evaluation team activities, such as coordination and oversight of data collection (including survey administration and data entry), production and quality control of research & evaluation reports, qualitative and quantitative analyses, and maintaining positive client relationships. The ideal candidate will possess strong administrative and organizational experience, basic project management and data analysis skills and a background in and a passion for the youth development field. The position is based in Ypsilanti, MI.

Organizational Background

Founded in 1998, the **Forum for Youth Investment** is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan “action tank” committed to changing the odds that all children and youth are ready for college, work and life. It provides ideas, services and networks that leaders need in order to make more intentional decisions that are good for young people. The Forum helps leaders increase their capacity to more effectively make the case for and manage the collaborative efforts that are needed to change the odds for youth; improve the alignment and appropriateness of child and youth policy agendas and investments; and strengthen programs’ and practitioners’ capacity to create environments in which youth thrive, across all the systems and settings where young people spend time.

In 2008, the Forum created the **David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality** to build the capacity of public and private agencies to implement quality improvement and performance systems that simultaneously foster professional learning and whole-child development with the purpose of improving social-sector outcomes. The Weikart Center’s research-based core products and services are currently used in over 4,500 out-of-school time settings nationally and form the basis for quality improvement systems in over 140 publicly and privately funded systems. The Weikart Center empowers education and human service leaders to adapt, implement, and scale best-in-class, research-validated, quality-improvement systems to advance child and youth development.

The Forum is a thriving organization with a budget of over \$10 million, a staff of 48 and headquarters in Washington DC. This position is based in Ypsilanti, Michigan, at the headquarters of the Weikart Center. The Center has an annual budget of over \$4 million and a staff of 24. While the Forum overall is funded by a mix of foundations and corporations with a growing fee-for-service contract base, the Weikart Center’s budget is funded predominantly (80+%) by fee-for-service contracts. For more information, please visit <http://www.forumfyi.org/>.

Required Responsibilities

- Maintain positive client relationships and communicate effectively with external and internal stakeholders, collaborators and staff.
- Construct, clean and maintain organized data sets of program quality and program evaluation data according to data management and data security protocols.
- Maintain and update data and spreadsheet management systems.
- Support the preparation and quality assurance of evaluation reports for internal and external clients as needed.
- Provide helpdesk support to Weikart Center clients using various data collection technologies and other online supports, attaining high levels of client satisfaction.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Advanced Responsibilities

- Manage the day-to-day administration and utilization of *Scores Reporter*, a custom-built online data collection platform.
- Coordinate and oversee data collection and entry, including online and paper survey administration and observational assessment data. Includes establishing and managing data collection timelines and following procedures for data collection, entry, tracking and auditing.
- Prepare/present research findings, proceedings, etc. to public audiences at conferences or convenings of field partners.
- Plan and facilitate meetings, focus groups, etc., with stakeholders and partners in our research agenda.
- Prepare evaluation reports for internal and external clients.
- Deliver technical assistance to a variety of clients regarding data submission and the use of various online interfaces.
- Assist in implementing new technology and systems.
- Conduct and report on qualitative and/or quantitative analyses.

Required Skills & Educational Background

- Bachelor's degree with at least one year of professional and/or volunteer experience
- Interest in youth development
- Demonstrated ability to deliver superior client service.
- Effective and courteous verbal & written communication skills (must employ proper spelling, grammar and punctuation in all written correspondence).
- Excellent time management, organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Proficiency with a variety of technologies, including: the advanced features of Microsoft Office Suite (i.e., Outlook, Excel, Word, and PowerPoint), as well as communication products, such as meeting schedule portals (e.g., Doodle) and web-based conferencing tools (e.g., Zoom).
- High integrity and strict adherence to organizational policies when dealing with access to restricted and/or highly confidential information.

Preferred Skills & Educational Background

- Master's degree with at least 2-3 years of professional and/or volunteer experience
- Coursework in research methods and statistics.
- Experience with survey design and administration using Qualtrics or similar platforms.

- Familiarity with at least one widely used statistical analysis software program (e.g., SPSS) and some familiarity with database queries (e.g. SQL).
- Experience developing and utilizing Excel macros.
- Experience conducting analyses of quantitative and/or qualitative data.

The successful applicant will be a highly motivated, organized, technologically and statistically savvy and client-focused person who meets deadlines and is very effective in time management and attention to detail.

Working Environment

The position will be based in the Weikart Center's Ypsilanti, Michigan office. Flexibility is required to adapt to the dynamic work environment of a small non-profit research and consulting organization that has national clients and exposure. The climate is informal but mission-driven. Excellence is valued in every position.

Position & Compensation

The salary range, duties and responsibilities of this position meets the requirements of Section 13 (a) (1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act and therefore qualifies as an "exempt" position.

To Apply

Please send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to: jobs@cypq.org. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. If your application is selected for an interview, you will be contacted within three weeks. No telephone calls or inquiry emails, please.

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The Forum for Youth Investment is committed to creating a diverse work environment and is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer and drug-free workplace, and to comply with ADA regulations as applicable. All applicants are considered for all positions without regard to race, religion, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, national origin, ancestry, physical/mental disability, severe/morbid obesity, medical condition, military/veteran status, genetic information, marital status, ethnicity, alienage or any other protected classification, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws. We encourage individuals of all backgrounds to apply. If you are a qualified candidate with a disability, please email us at jobs@forumfyi.org if you require a reasonable accommodation to complete your application.