



Position Description

Vice President, Policy & Advocacy

FULL TITLE: Vice President, Policy & Advocacy

SUPERVISOR: Executive Vice President, Policy

PURPOSE: The Vice President, Policy & Advocacy (VP) works closely with the Executive Vice President, Policy (EVP) as a key leader and strategic advisor with responsibility for operations to support the Forum for Youth Investment's youth policy efforts. The person taking on this position will be a keen strategist and skilled tactician with a deep commitment to racial and social equity and expertise in advancing federal and state youth policies. The VP will be a trusted advisor to the EVP and a senior leader within the Forum's Policy Unit. The VP will also provide oversight and direction to high-profile and strategic initiatives that position the Forum as a leader in the youth policy field. At the same time, the VP will roll up their sleeves and handle a wide range of day-to-day activities that support staff, leaders, and the organization to thrive.

Organization & 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. The Forum connects leaders to ideas, services, and networks that can help them make more intentional decisions that are good for young people, even in the face of limited resources. It helps leaders who are trying to improve & align policies, plan & partner for impact, and/or strengthen programs & adult practice across all the systems and settings where young people spend time. The Forum is currently working to more clearly define and live into our commitment to be an anti-racist organization and focus on dismantling structural racism in youth-serving systems.

The Forum is a thriving organization with a budget of \$11 million, a staff of 40, and headquarters in Washington, DC. The Forum overall is funded by a mix of foundations, corporations, and a fee-for-service contract base. For more information on the Forum, please visit www.forumfyi.org.

Position Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- Advance our policy agenda to ensure all young people are ready for college, work, and life, leading three core functions, including policy development and alignment, advocacy, and coalition-building.
- Stand up a new coalition-building function, establishing a national youth development policy coalition across sectors and youth-serving systems.
- Oversee unit's project management, ensuring that we complete all deliverables on time and with the highest levels of quality and customer/stakeholder satisfaction.
- Lead a committed team, supervising three directors, to maximize unit performance and produce results aligned with the organization's strategy and impact metrics. Using a continuous improvement framework, develop strategies to support a collaborative culture, shared accountability, and efficiency.
- Partner with the EVP of Policy to define unit and staff goals and performance expectations that align with the organization's strategic plan, providing guidance and conducting regular performance evaluations.
- In partnership with the EVP of Policy, serve as key relationship manager for funders, aligning unit's resource development approach to the organization's strategic plan, priorities, and unit's core functions. Oversee the unit's grant reporting.
- Collaborate effectively with other units and organizational functions, including Cross-Systems Consulting, Strategic Communications, and Youth Program Quality.

Performance/Character Requirements

We are looking for a leader with experience building exceptional staff teams and organizational systems that drive growth. In this role you will contribute to the creation of a unit roadmap in partnership with the EVP and other unit leaders. Then it's time to get results through exceptional implementation of the plan. Characteristics of successful candidates include:

- **Manages Self** – You ask for feedback on impact of your behavior on others. You identify and follow through on actions in response to constructive feedback. You honestly assess your own strengths and know what weaknesses need support.
- **Leads Courageously** – You act courageously to make changes that will improve the organization. You consistently drive to successful outcomes and stay composed and positive in challenging situations.
- **Communicates Effectively** – You communicate (both in writing and verbally) clearly, succinctly, and in a timely manner. You provide information people need to know to do their

jobs, make accurate decisions, and to feel part of a team. You are able to engage an audience and achieve the desired effect in a variety of formal presentation settings.

- **Builds High-Performing Teams/Develops Others** – You form and lead teams capable of getting results. You create a learning environment of creativity and engagement. You can effectively raise and resolve conflict with the team. You provide frequent and timely developmental feedback to others and construct compelling developmental plans. You take personal responsibility for mentoring high-potential employees.
- **Makes Quality Decisions** – You clearly state where you stand on issues, even if it is unpopular. You seek input from appropriate parties before making decisions, and still make timely decisions.
- **Demonstrates Strategic Agility** – You anticipate future consequences and trends accurately. You're able to align your goals to the overall organizational strategy. You can create breakthrough strategies and plans.
- **Demonstrates Business Acumen** – You understand and create opportunities to cultivate and support exceptional partnerships. You are able to make the case for decisions and initiatives. You adapt strategies and tactics to create successes defined by metrics.
- **Influences and Negotiates** – You influence others by building coalitions or alliances among diverse groups. You effectively adapt the influence strategies depending upon the situation. You're skillful at removing barriers that get in the way of effective collaboration among groups.
- **Manages Vision and Purpose** – You inspire commitment to a compelling vision and shared values. You create a climate in which people want to do their best. You're able to champion change and lead the organization through a transition.
- **Thinks Strategically, Executes Skillfully** – You can see the forest through the trees and know how to craft strategic short- and long-term programs that are aligned with organizational goals. At the same time, you can't wait to roll up your sleeves and get the work done.
- **Is Goal Oriented** – You are a doer, with doggedness, with a determination and commitment to reach a goal and a strong bias toward action. You always find a way to make it happen.
- **Demonstrates Creativity** – While there are tried-and-true tactics in your toolbox, you explore new ways of thinking and continually strive to create best-in-class programs that move your organization and field forward.
- **Handles Ambiguity** – You can effectively cope with change and lead others through it.
- **Communicates Assertively** – As a senior-level communicator, you express opinions directly, confidently, and accurately. You can also be very persuasive and influence the way others think, feel, or behave.
- **Collaborates & Values Relationships** – You can quickly gain the respect and trust of your direct reports, peers, and leadership team. You understand the importance of listening, asking probing questions, and allowing others to be heard.
- **Takes Risk** – The entrepreneurial spirit shines through in your willingness to experiment with new approaches and act even though the outcome is uncertain.
- **Models Diplomacy** – You have worked in diverse settings and understand the cultural sensitivities of doing business with partners and clients around the country. You are tactful in dealing with diverse people or situations.
- **Exhibits Professional Acumen** – You demonstrate confidence, experience, and poise under pressure.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in related field, such as public policy or political science; advanced degree (MPP, JD, etc.) preferred.

- 10+ years' experience in leading youth policy efforts across K-12 education, workforce development, and youth-serving systems (i.e. juvenile justice, child welfare), ideally with experience working both inside government and in advocacy organizations.
- Deep relationships with federal policymakers in Congress, the White House, and Federal Agencies.
- 8+ years management experience.
- Proven track record in advancing youth policies securing legislative and/or executive branch changes.
- Successfully secured annual or multi-year grants and contracts in the range of \$200,000 - \$1m, providing subject matter expertise in policy and advocacy.
- Demonstrated experience leading, participating in, and executing against strategic and operational planning with the ability to ensure clarity around performance expectations, both at the organizational and individual levels.
- Proven experience providing strategic counsel and guidance to leadership team members.
- Solid judgment / temperament in dealing with confidential and sensitive information and issues.
- Willingness to travel, as needed.

Working Environment

Flexibility is required to adapt to the dynamic work environment of a non-profit "action tank" that has national clients and exposure. Excellence is valued in every position. The Vice President, Policy & Advocacy will be based in our Washington, DC Office and lead a hybrid team some working in the office, others remotely outside of the DC area.

Position & Compensation

The salary range, duties and responsibilities of this position meet the requirements of Section 13 (a) (1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act and therefore qualifies as an "exempt" position. The starting salary for this senior leadership position is targeted between \$117K and \$148K, dependent upon experience and qualifications, with a comprehensive benefits package. Please send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to: jobs@forumfyi.org. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. If your application is selected for an interview, you will be contacted directly. No telephone calls or inquiry emails, please.

**

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.