



Position Description

Senior Learning & Development Specialist

David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

The Forum for Youth Investment

FULL TITLE: Senior Learning & Development Specialist

SUPERVISOR: Director of Design & Innovation

PURPOSE: The Senior Learning & Development (L&D) Specialist provides leadership in the development, deployment, and management of training, coaching, and related technical assistance across the Forum for Youth Investment's programs to support equitable continuous quality improvement (CQI) systems and youth-serving ecosystems that advance positive youth development. The Senior L&D Specialist is an expert facilitator and coach who uses active participatory approaches to works directly with program and system leaders and staff, using their knowledge of youth development and management practices, to create learning experiences that support change management and impact. In addition, the Senior Learning & Development Specialist provides leadership and oversight to the other Learning & Development Specialists, Field Consultants, and certified trainers, including advanced training, mentorship, training, coaching, and support.

SALARY: 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 position is targeted between \$56,500 - \$79,000 based upon knowledge, skills, experience, and geographic location, with a comprehensive benefits package.

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 a thriving organization with a budget of \$11 million, a staff of 50, and headquarters in Washington, DC. The Forum is working to advance racial equity in youth serving systems, bridging that work with our internal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. 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 forumfyi.org.

In 2008, the Forum created the **David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality** to strengthen programs and adult practice by building the capacity of public and private agencies to implement quality improvement and performance systems that simultaneously foster professional learning and whole-child

development. 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 helps youth-serving systems build the safe, supportive, interactive, and engaging environments that are foundational to youth development. From data-driven tools to expert trainings, we equip leaders who serve young people with the positive youth development and SEL-informed resources they need to create a culture of continuous improvement for staff and for youth.

Position Responsibilities

The Senior Learning & Development specialist is a critical leader in the Forum’s work to design and deliver training and coaching services for clients in youth serving systems that embed an active participatory approach and understanding of the science of learning and development. Working primarily within the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, and collaborating with colleagues across the Forum, this role is a good fit for someone with deep experience as a coach/trainer who can support others’ coaching, training design, and facilitation practice.

(1) Training and Coaching Delivery to Address Youth Development Practice Challenges

- Facilitate training, engage in coaching, and deliver technical assistance in support of continuous quality improvement to advance youth development, including program self-assessment, data-based goal setting, and youth development instructional and management practices.
- Support and mentor learning & development specialists in their ability to effectively facilitate training, coaching, and technical assistance.
- Engage and monitor field consultants who deliver training and coaching to Forum clients and partners in the youth development field.
- Demonstrate a coaching approach that leverages strong working relationships with leaders and teams to surface organizational strengths and weaknesses, develop improvement goals, and scaffold behaviors necessary for successful action.
- Support leaders in multiple types of roles with Forum clients and field partners, including system leaders, site leaders, and program staff.

(2) Active Participatory Training Design on CQI & Youth Development

- Create learning experiences rooted in an active-participatory approach leveraging the science of learning and development for adult, young adult, and youth learners.
- Lead training design projects and contribute to the creation of content and learning experiences for internal and external stakeholders, including but not limited to professional learning communities, formal and informal training workshops, conference presentations, and resource documents.

(3) Collaboration & Thought Partnership to Build Capacity for CQI Implementation

- Deliver existing and develop new capacity building models (Training Of Trainer models, assessor endorsement) to maximize client/partner ability to sustain, tailor and refine CQI in their contexts.
- Engage and support certified trainer and assessors in successfully delivering training and administering quality assessments in their networks, and use insights to inform new supports and approaches that may help other clients.
- Assume leadership in translating practice knowledge into stronger training/coaching tools.

- Create, refine, and ensure consistent use of internal systems to support and manage staff projects, field consultants, and certified trainers, coaches, and assessors in the field.
- (4) Assumes responsibility for **other projects and new assignments** related to the scope of this role. Contributes to unit and organization-wide priorities and special projects as appropriate.

Performance/Character Requirements

We are looking for colleagues eager to be on a career path that involves continuous learning and growth. Team members across all levels of the Forum engage with one another and foster the development of others to achieve a high level of competency in these characteristics and leadership qualities:

- **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 a success defined by metrics.
- **Influences and Negotiates** – You influence others by building coalitions or alliances among diverse groups. You effectively adapt 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** – We want someone who is a doer, with doggedness, 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 peers, colleagues, 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 teams 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

Six or more years of experience leading youth programs, facilitating trainings, coaching, and/or supporting continuous quality improvement efforts. A degree (or equivalent life/work related experience) in youth development, social work, education, or related fields is required. Preference for candidates who are endorsed as trainers of Weikart Center workshops (e.g. graduates of Youth Work Methods TOT and Youth Work Management TOT); and who have experience in project and/or grant management.

In addition, the successful candidate will have:

- Direct experience working with youth-serving professionals, youth, staff, families, or communities.
- Demonstrated expertise in designing and facilitating adult learning experiences for youth work professionals and/or related human service audiences, including writing agendas and supporting materials for training participants, in ways that reflect an understanding of the effects of place-, race-, policy, and systems-based inequities in communities.
- Established track record as a project team leader, motivating and supporting others to successfully accomplish goals and improve performance over time.

This is not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, skills, efforts, or requirements or working conditions associated with the job. While intended to be an accurate reflection of the current job, management reserves the right to revise the job or to require different tasks. This description does not constitute a contract of employment and The Forum may exercise its employment-at-will rights at any time

Working Environment

Flexibility is required to adapt to the dynamic work environment of a non-profit “action tank” that has national clients and exposure during a key inflection point in the organization’s development. Ability to lead and advise on change management initiatives is essential. The Forum’s Weikart Center team transitioned

to be fully remote during the COVID-19 pandemic and is hiring staff to join our fully remote team. Travel is expected for in-person team meetings and client/partner meetings, including training facilitation (estimated 20-30% time).

How to Apply

Please send resume and cover letter 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.

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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, gender identity, 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.