

## Position Description

### Senior Research & Evaluation Analyst

David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

Forum for Youth Investment

**FULL TITLE:** Senior Research & Evaluation Analyst

**SUPERVISOR:** Senior Director, Research & Evaluation

**PURPOSE:** The Senior Research & Evaluation (R&E) Analyst will lead research, evaluation, and measurement projects to advance strategic priorities in partnership with internal and external stakeholders. Internally, provide technical assistance on the capture and management of programmatic and organizational health metrics aligned to the Forum's strategic plan and best practices in organizational performance management. Externally, facilitate the collection and use of data in support of research and evaluation projects with youth-serving organizations who are designing, implementing, evaluating, and sustaining continuous quality improvement systems, and with system leaders working to strengthen policy and practice in youth-serving ecosystems to advance racial equity and improved outcomes for youth. The Senior R&E Data Analyst uses their technical expertise to develop data systems and reporting capabilities that enable the Forum and our clients in youth-serving systems to confidently leverage data for decision making and impact.

## 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](http://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 Research and Evaluation Analyst is a critical leader in the Forum's work to leverage research, evaluation, and data to strengthen youth-serving systems and ecosystems and support internal and external stakeholders to build data-driven cultures of continuous improvement. Working across the Forum, this role is a good fit for someone who can anticipate and alleviate data snares that occur in applied research, and who can enable key quantitative insights beneficial to both researcher and non-researcher audiences alike.

### **Data Analytics for Applied Research & Evaluation Projects:**

The Sr. Analyst is an essential leader of the Forum's Research and Evaluation projects through their design of data systems to retrieve, analyze, and summarize large amounts of data. Responsibilities include (1) leading the development of data collection mechanisms that optimize procedural efficiency and data quality; (2) the production and maintenance of Forum databases, housing information from primary and secondary data sources, and (3) the generation of accurate, compelling reports that are utilizable by multiple audiences, including internal colleagues, practitioner audiences and external clients, the research and policy communities, and other external stakeholders, as well as (4) the provision of training and technical assistance to these audiences on the appropriate use of such reports. Further, the Sr. Analyst (5) collaborates with members of the Research and Evaluation team to answer research questions through mixed-methods analytical practices, bringing a quantitative acumen that generates results with an emphasis on utilization – i.e., ensuring the statistical technique and summary of analysis is appropriate for the given research question and interpretable for a given audience so that it may drive action.

### **Data Visualization and Dashboarding:**

The Sr. Analyst will lead the integration of data visualizations and dashboards into everyday practice at the Forum. This includes the use of visualization techniques to (1) identify, analyze, and interpret trends or patterns in complex data sets; (2) isolate data inconsistencies and support data cleaning; and (3) provide compelling visual supports to analytical findings. Importantly, the Sr. Analyst will be responsible for coaching and providing ongoing technical assistance to Forum staff that facilitates the use of new data visualization software to drive data-driven decision making, as well as for external clients choosing to engage with data dashboards and other data visualization services.

### **Research Synthesis and Reporting:**

The Sr. Analyst will effectively support organizational and field learning about youth-serving ecosystems that advance positive youth development and racial equity by synthesizing quantitative findings within and across projects to elevate insights for the organization and the field. They will partner with internal

colleagues to prepare and present research summaries, briefs, and other non-technical publications for practitioners, policymakers, funders, and other national audiences. Their research will enable the Forum to better advocate for evidence-based practices related to continuous quality improvement in youth-serving settings, including Out-of-School Time, education, youth workforce development, human services, child welfare, and juvenile justice. They will leverage evidence-based insights to support new opportunities for the Forum's work, aligned to the strategic plan.

The Senior Analyst will assume responsibility for other projects and new assignments related to the scope of this role and contribute 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 professional experience, with three or more years spent managing data in support of research and evaluation projects in applied settings in youth-serving systems or organizations. A bachelor's degree in the social sciences, education, or related fields is required (Masters preferred).

In addition, the successful candidate will have:

- Demonstrated expertise in constructing, managing, and analyzing large, messy datasets, and translating results into concrete and practical applications for non-research audiences
- Applied experience facilitating data capture and generating reports for external clients based on predefined, contractual performance metrics
- Authored and led training on all aspects of the data life cycle, beginning with data collection procedures through to the use of dashboards and static reports, as well as with data governance protocols.
- A track record of designing and implementing research and evaluation projects in ways that reflect an understanding of the effects of place-, race-, policy-, and systems-based inequities on marginalized communities.
- Proficiency with statistical analysis software, SPSS preferred
- Proficiency with online survey design and data collection tools, such as Qualtrics
- Experience generating reports using business intelligence software, like Tableau or Power BI

Preferred candidates will also have:

- A track record of automating data capture and other examples of structuring data efficiency, or of managing contractors to create technical infrastructure that accommodates improved data productivity.
- Direct experience facilitating data use in youth-serving systems or settings, including designing learning content and/or developing supportive resources to promote evaluation capacity building and data use.
- Successful history identifying and responding to grant proposals for research and evaluation projects.

- Knowledge of the Weikart Center’s Youth Program Quality Assessment, Youth Program Quality Intervention, social and emotional learning resources, and/or low-stakes quality improvement policies and systems

*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. Occasional travel is expected for in-person team meetings and client/partner meetings (estimated 5-10% time).

## 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 position is targeted between \$60,000-\$80,000 based upon experience and qualifications, with a comprehensive benefits package. Please send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to: [jobs@forumfyi.org](mailto: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](mailto:jobs@forumfyi.org) if you require a reasonable accommodation to complete your application.*