

Position Description

Program Associate

David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

The Forum for Youth Investment

TITLE: Program Associate

SUPERVISOR: Director, Statewide Quality Improvement Systems

PURPOSE: The Program Associate is a pivotal member of the Forum’s Youth Program Quality Improvement team, providing planning, coordination, and logistics-related expertise that supports our system-building, training, coaching, and technical assistance efforts focused on continuous improvement and youth program quality. The successful candidate will have excellent attention to detail, display initiative, and follow through on a range of tasks that support organizational efficiency and excellence.

Organization & Background

Founded in 1998, the **Forum for Youth Investment** is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan “action tank” with the mission of advancing equitable youth opportunities and outcomes through quality improvement capacity-building and policy action across systems and sectors. Our vision is that all young people reach their fullest potential – in education, work, and life.

The Forum is a thriving organization with a budget of \$11 million, a growing staff of nearly 50, and headquartered in Washington, DC. The Forum overall is funded by a mix of foundations, corporations, and a fee-for-service contract base. Please visit www.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. Through the evidence-based Youth Program Quality Improvement (YPQI) approach, 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 training workshops, 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 Program Associate will work closely with members of the Equitable Continuous Quality Improvement Teams to support our customers and field facing projects focused on improving youth program quality in youth development systems. The role is primarily focused on project support and coordination with specific responsibilities including but not limited to the following:

- Work closely with project leaders to manage a range of project management and logistical tasks that support the delivery of high-quality consultation, technical assistance, coaching and training workshops for our field partners and customers.
- Utilize project management tools to build individual customer project plans and support project management throughout duration of contracts through tracking of service delivery tasks.
- Collaborate with the operations team to coordinate logistics for online trainings, learning communities, and meetings through the online training portal, Teams, and Zoom.
- Coordinate between staff leads, Weikart Center trainer/coaches, and customers to support execution of project deliverables.
- Support management of internal and external data systems, such as Scores Reporter and MiRegistry, including monitoring and responding to help desk inquiries, opening courses for registration, and supporting customers' Scores Reporter accounts.
- Maintain, update, and disseminate records related to customers, projects, and trainings, ensuring that they are up-to-date and accessible.
- Contribute to research, evaluation, and record keeping projects through data entry and basic data summary with a high attention to detail.
- Complete online training audits for statewide, regional, and local customers.
- Collaborate with operations team and project leads to ensure that audits are completed in a timely and accurate manner for contract-based deliverables.
- Support directors and/or project leaders with scheduling and task management, including customer and stakeholder outreach and follow-up, and contract management support.
- Contribute to unit and organization-wide priorities and special projects

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 customers 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

At least two years of professional office experience, including administrative support for programs, with advanced-level skills using Microsoft Office tools (e.g. Outlook, Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Teams, Sharepoint)

required. A bachelor's degree, experience with project, client, and/or data management systems, and an interest in youth development strongly preferred.

In addition, the successful candidate will:

- Have direct experience in coordinating team-based projects, and the ability to identify challenges and propose solutions to advance to successfully meet collective goals.
- Possess knowledge of the Weikart Center's Youth Program Quality Assessment, Youth Program Quality Improvement approach, 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, 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 customers and exposure during a key inflection point in the organization's development. 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 customer or field meetings (estimated 5% 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 \$42,500-\$50,500 based upon knowledge, skills, experience, and geographic location, with a comprehensive benefits package.

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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.