

Position Description

Instructional Design Specialist

David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

TITLE: Instructional Design Specialist

SUPERVISOR: Director, Design & Innovation

PURPOSE: The Instructional Design Specialist will play a crucial role on the Forum for Youth Investment's Coaching & Training Team, which delivers powerful professional development training programs to organizations and systems that support youth development. The successful candidate will work closely with subject matter experts to design, develop, and implement innovative and engaging instructional materials that prepare participants to build and implement systems to support continuous quality improvement (CQI) for youth development organizations.

Organization & Background

Founded in 1998, the Forum for Youth Investment is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan "action tank" committed to improving outcomes for youth (ages 5-24) in education, 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 \$8 million and a staff of 40, 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 for more information about our work.

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 Instructional Design Specialist is a member of the Coaching & Training team, which designs and delivers the Forum's learning assets to our clients in the youth development field. Our training workshops and coaching systems provide youth development professionals the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to implement quality practices in programs that serve young people, and the tools to implement continuous quality improvement processes in their corner of the ecosystems that support youth. The Instructional Design Specialist will coordinate design projects and bring instructional design expertise and technical skills to a team of coach/trainers who excel at delivering and facilitating training workshops.

Manage Learning Content Design Projects

- Plan and implement content design projects in alignment with organizational and programmatic priorities.
- Work closely with subject matter experts and trainers to ensure that new and existing instructional materials are aligned with program goals and objectives and are effective in supporting learner experience.
- Utilize instructional design principles and best practices to create effective learning experiences that meet the diverse needs of adult learners.

Design, Update, and Maintain Existing Learning Assets

- Create engaging instructional materials, including training modules, slide decks, print materials, online courses, manuals, guides, and multimedia presentations.
- Apply instructional design principles, technology, and interactive elements to enhance a variety of learning experiences that increase participant engagement.
- Stay current on emerging trends, technologies, and methodologies in instructional design and adult learning, and bring this expertise to bear on design and delivery goals of the team.
- Provide guidance and support to trainers and facilitators in delivering effective training sessions.

Coordinate Dissemination and Evaluation of Learning Assets

- Develop assessment strategies to measure the effectiveness of training programs and make recommendations for improvements.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to review and revise training materials based on feedback and evaluation data.

- Manage field collateral materials as assigned, including sales aids, presentation materials, and other field support.
- Provide support for distribution of learning modules via existing learning management systems (LMS) and other training platforms as needed.

Contributes to unit and organization-wide priorities and special projects as appropriate, assuming responsibility for other projects and new assignments related to the scope of this role.

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

- Bachelor's degree in instructional design, education, or a related field.
- Proven experience in instructional design and curriculum development, particularly in designing professional development training programs.
- Strong knowledge of adult learning theory, instructional design models (e.g., ADDIE, SAM), and assessment strategies.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office and Articulate 360, or other similar e-learning authoring tools.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to effectively present complex information to diverse audiences.
- Strong project management skills, including the ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously and meet deadlines.
- Collaborative mindset with the ability to balance working independently within a team-based environment.
- Have direct experience in coordinating team-based projects, and the ability to identify challenges and propose solutions to advance to successfully meet collective goals.

- Experience working in the education or youth development field is a plus.
- 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 a plus.

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 \$60,000-\$65,000 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.