



Position Description

Senior Continuous Quality Improvement Specialist

David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

Forum for Youth Investment

FULL TITLE: Senior Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Specialist

SUPERVISOR: Director, Equitable Quality Improvement Systems

PURPOSE: The Senior CQI Specialist will co-design, deploy, and manage comprehensive continuous quality improvement (CQI) services to advance equitable opportunities and positive youth development outcomes for a range of youth-serving systems and organizations, including 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC), statewide out-of-school-time (OST) networks, and/or youth development agencies across education, human services, and youth workforce development. Working directly with leaders in youth serving systems, the Senior CQI Specialist uses their knowledge of positive youth development and management practices, ability to collect and interpret data, and demonstrated experience in equity and systems-level change to provide coaching support and collaborative learning communities to support leaders in implementing transformational quality improvement systems that work to increase access to high quality supports and dismantle structural inequities. This role will further support cross-unit collaboration and thought partnership to further the organization's strategic priorities, including designing transformative, equitable, and just programs and services with and for young people, families, and communities.

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 \$9 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. 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 CQI specialist is a critical leader in the Forum's work to build and strengthen equitable continuous quality improvement systems to advance positive youth development in youth-serving systems (e.g., statewide out-of-school-time networks, education and human service agencies, and other national or local youth serving organizations). 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 who can be a thought partner and implementer with youth-serving system leaders to build and sustain statewide continuous quality improvement systems that can reach to the daily experiences of the young people they serve – while making connections across systems that elevate best practices for the field.

(1) Lead Projects that Advance Equitable CQI System Building:

Lead the development of project plans, client contracts, and work products that support youth-serving systems and organizations to develop, implement, and sustain equitable continuous quality improvement systems that advance positive youth development. Maximize impact through leadership in the consulting/coaching relationship and assuring the fit of training and technical assistance services. Provide oversight to administrative staff to manage logistics and support project and contract management. Provide leadership to and make connections across a cohesive set of statewide client projects and support the development of CQI specialists within the team.

(2) **Coaching, Technical Assistance, & Thought Partnership with System Leaders**

Develop strong working relationships with external stakeholders, including leadership teams in youth serving systems, government agencies, and non-profit organizations, to surface organizational strengths and weaknesses, and provide technical assistance in support of equitable continuous quality improvement. Create opportunities to convene leaders across youth-serving networks and systems for shared learning and collaboration to strengthen program quality and organizational improvement efforts.

(3) **Collaboration and Knowledge Management:** Create content and learning experiences for internal and external stakeholders in partnership with staff in the Coaching & Training function, including but not limited to professional learning communities, formal and informal trainings, conference presentations and resource documents.

- With other leaders and staff across the organization, collaborate and work to align efforts to support the organization's strategic priorities.
- Represent the Forum at conferences and other public events. Disseminate key ideas and innovations via presentations, publications, and other channels.

(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); who have experience in project and/or grant management; and who have experience working within or in support of 21st Century Community Learning Centers, or other youth-serving state agency programs.

In addition, the successful candidate will have:

- Direct experience working with out-of-school-time (OST) professionals, youth, staff, families, or communities. Additional experience within other youth-serving systems (e.g. juvenile justice, foster care, K-12, etc.) is preferred.
- Demonstrated knowledge of equity and social justice principles and practices, and understanding of the effects of place-, race-, policy, and systems-based inequities on communities.
- Knowledge of the Weikart Center's Youth Program Quality Assessment, Youth Program Quality Intervention, professional learning community model, 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. 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 10-15% 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 \$68,000-\$80,000 based upon experience, qualifications, and geographic location, 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.

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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.