



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Evaluation Project Director

First Things First (FTF), also known as the Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board, is a public agency that exists to increase the quality of, and access to, the early childhood development and health system that ensures a child entering school comes healthy and ready to succeed. Passed by voter initiative in 2006, First Things First operates through a tax on tobacco products. Governed by a state board and Regional Partnership Councils, First Things First is a decentralized organization that engages diverse constituencies to accomplish its mission. Organizational values include a focus on accountability, transparency, coordination, collaboration and on the outcomes that will ensure young children start kindergarten ready for school and life. First Things First acts in accordance with our Beliefs, Actions and Performance statements, which are attached.

Job Summary

The Evaluation Project Director works under the direction of and in collaboration with the Senior Director of Research and Evaluation division at First Things First. Primary areas of responsibility include: 1) Conceptual and technical support to all research, evaluation and data efforts and programmatic activities of the organization; and 2) management of divisional project workflow and supervision of evaluation and project specialists.

Distinguishing Characteristics

The ideal candidate will enthusiastically support the vision and mission of First Things First and possess the personal qualities of integrity and credibility. She/he will have the proven ability to work within teams to accomplish multiple tasks and keep multiple projects organized and progressing towards successful completion. She/he will have evidence of notable contributions to the field of research and evaluation, including project direction. This is a key position within the FTF Research and Evaluation team, and her/his work is critical to the successful management and delivery of services by the unit.

Typical/Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Under the supervision of the Senior Director of Research and Evaluation:

- Provide project direction to FTF research and evaluation efforts including management of FTF strategy implementation data, studies identified in the FTF evaluation plan, and projects identified in the strategic operational plan.
 - Assist the senior director in ensuring FTF strategy implementation data and research and evaluation studies are effectively planned, implemented, and managed and that findings are disseminated and used for ongoing program improvement, as well as board and regional council decision making/strategic planning.
 - Develop research and evaluation scopes of work including methodology/design, and determine deliverables for studies undertaken by First Things First in conjunction with external research and evaluation vendors to evaluate programmatic and system-wide

progress (e.g. Statewide and Regional Needs and Assets study, regionally funded strategy evaluations, and program evaluations).

- Serve as a partner and expert resource to regional councils and regional staff to identify and develop scopes of work for regional studies based on regional needs.
 - Coordinate with the FTF Tribal Affairs team to plan tribal regional studies and/or evaluation efforts that incorporates data related to tribal populations in compliance with FTF Tribal Consultation Policy.
 - Assess issues relevant to FTF's system approach and create an analytic framework that will continuously improve FTF outcome data.
 - Organize and facilitate meetings with key FTF councils, staff and local stakeholders to elicit input into FTF research and evaluation activities under the guidance of the senior director of research and evaluation.
 - Effectively communicate progress and impediments to the senior director on all assigned projects.
- Assume primary responsibility for the analysis of statewide and regional data as well as population level or programmatic early childhood data as part of FTF projects to identify trends that have program and policy implications.
 - Use statistical software (e.g. SPSS, MySQL, Strata) to manage data sets (including codebooks; syntaxes) and conduct analyses ranging from descriptive analysis to multivariate analyses (including trend analysis), and conduct analyses of qualitative data.
 - Summarize analysis results in written format suitable for consumption by various audiences including FTF board, regional councils, staff, and stakeholder groups (e.g., technical reports, summary reports, data presentations, graphical outputs and policy briefs). Create public reports in coordination with communications division staff.
 - Work with FTF procurement staff to release request for proposals (RFPs/RFQs) for research and evaluation studies, review and select competent external consultants/vendors.
 - Manage research and evaluation studies— provide technical assistance to contractors/vendors, manage vendor performance, review project deliverables towards meeting expectations, and finalize reports.
 - Work with evaluation team members to report data and evaluation study findings and offer interpretation support for internal and external audiences.
 - Travel to the regional areas of FTF to make public presentations and meet with staff, councils and grantees.
 - Represent research and evaluation team in internal cross-divisional planning and update meetings such as Regional Area Teams, Statewide Area Team and Strategy Implementation Teams.
 - Maintain regular communication with First Things First regional staff regarding research and evaluation projects, and serve as a resource to provide updates and technical assistance to regional councils.
 - Coordinate with the senior director and evaluation teammates on professional development trainings for FTF staff.
 - Plan, lead and manage multiple projects (including cross-divisional projects), establish project goals with the research and evaluation senior director, set time lines and effectively communicate priorities to teammates.
 - Represent FTF in state and county-wide data development and data sharing efforts.
 - Work with state partner agencies and other partners on data sharing protocols and processes towards accessing data as part of FTF evaluation efforts (e.g. Needs and Assets studies, School

Readiness Indicators/ benchmarking project, Kindergarten Readiness Assessment) and building the FTF early childhood integrated data system.

- Effectively collaborate with IT, finance and external affairs (e.g. communications, tribal affairs) teams in FTF to handle data exchange/sharing agreements (e.g. MOUs), data security and maintenance protocols, as well as policies related to public dissemination of data.
- Undertake other duties as assigned by the Senior Director of Research and Evaluation. The duties listed above are typical examples of the work performed; not all duties assigned are included, nor is it expected that all similar positions will be assigned every duty.

Supervisory Responsibilities

The Evaluation Project Director will be responsible for direct supervision of two research and evaluation staff members (an Evaluation Program Specialist and a Project Specialist). She/he will carry out supervisory responsibilities in accordance with the organization's policies and applicable laws. Responsibilities include interviewing, hiring, and training employees; planning, assigning, and directing work; appraising performance; rewarding and disciplining employees; addressing complaints and resolving problems. Specifically, works with and supervises evaluation specialist and project specialist on statewide and regional level FTF strategy implementation related work and research and evaluation studies, as identified in the FTF evaluation plan and strategic operational plan.

Qualification and Experience

Doctoral degree (PhD) or Master's degree in early childhood development/education, developmental psychology, research methodology, public health, social welfare, public policy, public administration, educational psychology or related field. Doctoral degree (PhD) is preferred.

- For those with a doctoral degree (PhD), a minimum of three years of experience in research, evaluation, and data analysis in a public agency, health, education, or non-profit organizational environment is required.
- For those with a Master's degree, a minimum of five years of experience in research, evaluation, and data analysis in a public agency, health, education, or non-profit organizational environment is required.
- A minimum of two years of experience in a managerial role is required.

Essential Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Demonstrated proficiency and experience with statistical databases/software packages (e.g. SPSS, MySQL).
- Strong statistical and analytical skills (quantitative and qualitative), including ability to independently develop an analysis plan, analyze data and create summary reports.
- Proficiency in data management, data quality assurance, including maintaining detailed and accurate data files, codebooks and syntaxes.
- Proficiency in MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook).
- Extensive knowledge and experience with effective practices of research and analysis design/ methods and evaluation research, theory and practice.
- Knowledge of early childhood development research and evaluation.
- Knowledge of culturally responsive research and evaluation approaches.
- Ability to create data reports, develop procedure manuals and business requirements for IT.
- Ability to effectively communicate data findings to a wide variety of constituents (e.g. staff, FTF board, regional councils, stakeholders, general public, professional conferences).
- Proficiency with using large nationally representative data sets (e.g. Census)

- Proficiency in maintaining data integrity /confidentiality following organizational data security policies.
- Proficiency and experience in writing grant proposals, including developing scope for research and evaluation studies.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, especially the ability to interact successfully with staff members from various levels of the organization, including leadership.
- Strong communication skills, including the ability to write and speak clearly, succinctly and in a manner that appeals to a wide audience.
- Strong leadership, creative problem solving and analytical skills.
- Experience leading, conducting and managing educational research and evaluation projects that require multiple research designs and methodologies.
- Fluency in English is required.
- Reliable, regular and punctual attendance at work during core business hours.

Core Competencies

- Impeccable integrity, positive attitude, mission-driven and self-directed with a demonstrated passion for First Thing First's mission and commitment to working collaboratively with FTF management team and colleagues.
- Ability to participate in a team as well as lead a team, manage multiple and often simultaneous tasks, and create a work environment that is recognized for a high level of ethical integrity, organization, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, accuracy, and results.
- Demonstrated ability to work independently, meet deadlines, and coordinate with colleagues at varying organizational levels.
- Adaptable and reliable in the face of conflict, crisis, or changing priorities.
- Politically astute and tactful; attentive to the perspectives and competing interests of various internal and external stakeholders; and deals effectively with situations requiring tact, judgment and composure.

Other Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Knowledge of policy trends in early childhood development, including best practices in prevention and/or intervention research is preferred.
- Knowledge and experience in extracting data from data cubes/data warehouses, structured query language, and query reporting is preferred.
- Experience working in the education sector and a demonstrated familiarity with the policy issues and challenges of public Pre-K, K-12 education is preferred.
- Knowledge of data regulation policies (e.g. HIPPA, FERPA) is preferred.

Review of resumes will begin on 11/3/2014, and continue until the position is filled. For first consideration, please submit your cover letter, comprehensive resume/CV and three professional references by the close of business on 11/2/2014 to:

AZSTATEJOBS.GOV

In the AZ State Personnel System, the position is classified as a Grade 25 with a salary range of \$70,000 to \$85,000 dependent upon education and experience. The position is not covered under the State of Arizona Merit system rules. The State of Arizona offers an outstanding comprehensive benefits package.

OUR BELIEFS, ACTIONS & PERFORMANCE

We Believe, in order for First Things First to live our Vision, Mission and Values, we:

- Respect diverse contributions and perspectives as being fundamental to our success;
- Demonstrate individual and collective responsibility by fulfilling our commitments and excelling in our performance; and,
- Conduct ourselves with personal and professional integrity, acting at all times in ways that bring respect and honor to each other, our work and our organization.

We Act on our commitment to create positive outcomes for Arizona's young children through:

- Efficient and effective stewardship of resources;
- Comprehensive systems approach and organizational planning that focus on clear priorities, realistic expectations and vigorous assessment;
- Open, honest and clear channels of communication that foster trust;
- Continuous inquiry, learning and reflection;
- Coordination and leadership by volunteers, state, local and tribal partners and advocates; and,
- Acknowledgment of and honor for the sovereignty of tribal governments in our work.

We Perform in a manner that:

- Empowers employees' mutual respect, teamwork and ethical behavior;
- Encourages innovation, promotes excellence and creative problem solving;
- Cultivates staff development, provides feedback and reflection on performance, and celebrates success;
- Responds to the evolving nature of our work with flexibility and adaptability; and,
- Creates a positive atmosphere and promotes a healthy work environment and life balance.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.