



Assistant Director, Research & Evaluation

Position Announcement

The Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) at the University of Nebraska is seeking applications from qualified individuals for the position of Assistant Director, Research & Evaluation to lead research and evaluation efforts for the NSWERS organization.

The Assistant Director will work closely with the Executive Director and NSWERS partnering organizations to plan, organize, and execute research and evaluation functions. This includes both conducting and providing oversight for the technical quality of data analysis. Additional responsibilities will include providing in-house research design and quantitative measurement expertise and creating a robust research dissemination approach to inform public policy and educational practice in alignment with NSWERS research priorities, the NSWERS Strategic Approach and Plan.

NSWERS Profile

The Nebraska P-20W data initiative, known as NSWERS, is a partnership of the Nebraska prekindergarten, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educational systems to use data and information to further evidence-based policy and practices. The NSWERS partners also work in affiliation with the Nebraska Department of Labor to examine the intersection of education and the workforce with the goal of providing research-based insight to meet Nebraska's current and future workforce needs. More information is available at <https://nswers.org>.

Job Responsibilities: (In addition to periodic unique tasks, the following describes major responsibilities)

- Lead multiple technical, operational, and research projects. Providing oversight for the planning and implementation of the NSWERS research and evaluation program; participate in and promotes cross-partner work activities; convenes and manages committees and task forces to address issues and make recommendations related to research and evaluation.
- Determine needs and make requests for staff and funding required to carry out research and evaluation program objectives.

- Oversee the preparation of research grant applications, advises, and consults with the Executive Director and NSWERS leadership resulting grant funds; oversees evaluation of grant funded activities.
- Conduct and provide expert guidance regarding the technical quality of research designs, program evaluations, and statistical analysis for basic and complex projects or work assignments. Including, but not limited to, designing, developing, and documenting technical and operational procedures and statistical guidelines for assigned areas, including peer review processes.
- Represent NSWERS position on technical issues to stakeholders, vendors, external boards and panels, professional associations, and other entities.
- Work independently on most phases of statistical analysis and provide guidance to less experienced research associates, as needed.
- Provide guidance and oversight to project staff on technical aspects of their work, for methodological accuracy and quality control of research and evaluation deliverables.
- Accountable for basic and complex statistical design and analysis decisions such as variance estimations (weighting), sample design, statistical modeling, and machine learning algorithm selection.
- Assist with project development and monitoring project budgets.
- Other duties as assigned.

Minimum Qualifications

Ph.D. and eight (8) years of experience demonstrating increased responsibility in statistics, educational measurement, psychological measurement, or research methodology. Must demonstrate excellent oral and written communication skills.

Preferred Qualification

Advanced training in research methodology and statistics, including item response theory models (Rasch, 2PL, 3PL, rating scale), scaling and equating, growth models, Monte Carlo methods, sample design and computer programming. Experience with formal statistical modeling and machine learning approaches to data analysis. Experience analyzing data from large-scale administrative data systems. Understanding of and experience working with (or in) education and workforce development systems.

Equivalent combination of education, experience, that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities may be considered.

How to Apply:

This position works in Lincoln, NE. Submit an applicant profile at <https://careers.nebraska.edu>. Along with your application, attach a cover letter, resume, and contact information for three professional references. Direct questions about the position and the on-line application process to: humanresources@nebraska.edu or call (402) 472- 3701.

The University of Nebraska is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and participates in E-Verify. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or protected veteran status.

Competencies for Assistant Director, Research and Evaluation

Nature/Complexity of Work

This position requires an individual who works with considerable independence, energy, initiative, strong work ethic, and sound judgment in a complex day-to-day environment. The ability to lead technical and operational research and evaluation initiatives, reason logically and accurately, communicate complex and technical concepts effectively to information users, both verbally and in writing; and lead staff, partners, and peers is essential. Strong attention to detail, accuracy, professional discretion, and sensitivity to confidential information, a record of effective teamwork and relationship building across a stakeholder network is required.

Problem Solving/Decision Making

Problem solving and appropriate decision making are required in every element of this position. Key duties involve independent judgment regarding analysis of issues and actions required to support day-to-day research and evaluation administration. Actions are governed by broad objectives, professional ethics, university procedures and/or business acumen.

Strategic Input

This individual is required to be proficient and conscientious when representing the NSWERS consortium and its member organizations at all times. Operational review of desired objectives is often necessary to ensure the research and evaluation administration of the data is accurate. This individual should be mission-driven and deeply committed to the values of NSWERS.

Know How

Knowledge of modern developments, trends, and theories in statistics, research methodology, program evaluation, and educational research. Knowledge of and ability to analyze and interpret standardized educational assessment results, promising educational research and curricular practices. Ability to plan data collection, reporting, and analysis systems for the evaluation and assessment of education and workforce development programs. Ability to analyze and interpret test results and communicate findings to stakeholders. Ability to evaluate program-grant applications relating to evaluation, research, and assessment designs and make recommendations accordingly. The individual must follow Board of Regents By-laws and policies and interpret and apply state statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures.

Technical Know How

Knowledge and skills in advanced statistical and data analysis software programs such as SAS, Stata, MPLUS, HLM, LISREL, R, etc. Knowledge of and ability to navigate the tensions between theoretical purity and practical constraints of applied research using large-scale administrative data systems.

Interactions

This position will be expected to manage and collaborate with individuals and their projects. The ability to advocate ideas, identify and address obstacles is expected, along with the judgment to seek supervision and/or input from others when necessary. This position must have the ability to work as a member of a team, as well as independently, in a complex environment, and with respect for confidential and sensitive information. The ability to work collaboratively and cooperatively with business executives, educational administrators, not-for-profit leaders, and others to achieve organizational objectives is essential. Ability to conduct workshops relating to NSWERS work. Ability to work with vendors to ensure intentions are implemented. The individual in this position should be an optimistic, positive, resilient, insightful, and performance-driven decision maker, problem solver, and consensus builder.

Supervision & Leadership

This position reports to the Executive Director for NSWERS. This position is responsible for building and maintaining internal and external partner relationships and will develop and implement procedures for broad-scope data initiatives while motivating others around complex project parameters.

The physical requirements and work conditions described here are representative of what an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Physical Requirements:

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is routinely required to speak, hear, have vision for up close and far away, and use hands to touch, feel, handle, and operate routine office equipment. The employee is occasionally required to stand, walk, climb stairs, bend, reach, twist, and lift, carry, or move up to 10 pounds. The employee is required to occasionally travel to and participate in meetings and conferences which may require the ability to drive a motor vehicle and/or stay overnight.

Work Conditions:

The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate and there may be frequent interruptions as staff conduct business in cubicles, walled office space and conference rooms.

Classification Information:

Job Family: Research & Agriculture

Job Code: 49364300 RA Senior

Salary Range: RA32:

FLSA: Exempt

Position Number:

Org. Unit Number: 50011475

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