Strong Start to Finish: Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation Specialist

STATUS: EXEMPT

Who You Are

The Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation Specialist for the Strong Start to Finish (SStF) project at Education Commission of the States manages monitoring and research efforts that help the project meet its mission and goals. This position reports to SStF’s Director.

Who We Are

**Strong Start to Finish (SStF)** is a network of higher education leaders and philanthropists, working together to address inequities in education. We address injustices in higher education by ensuring that every student is set up to pass credit-earning courses in English and math in their first year of college. By doing this, we aim to reform traditional developmental education (DE) practices which can be a barrier for student success. We are committed to the success of every student in college and place a particular focus on students who are racially minoritized, poverty affected and adults returning to college.

SStF works with higher education systems (sites) and national organizations that are committed to advancing developmental education reforms. In addition to supporting systems and institutions to adopt and implement these reforms, we have funded research projects that address reform efforts and developed new resources (e.g., original research, best practice reports, implementation toolkits, etc.) for the field at-large and deliver technical assistance services to institutions in the SStF Network. SStF is based at Education Commission of the States.

**Education Commission of the States** partners with education policy leaders nationwide to address issues by sharing resources and expertise. We are proud to serve both the people who develop and implement education policy and the students who directly benefit from effective policy change. Every day, we provide education leaders with unbiased information and opportunities for collaboration because informed policymakers create better education policy.

We have been named by The Nonprofit Times for six consecutive years as one of the Top 50 Best Nonprofits to Work For. In the surveys conducted, Education Commission of the States’ employees expressed the strongest satisfaction in the categories of leadership and planning, role satisfaction, work environment, relationship with supervisor, pay and benefits, and overall engagement. We are an equal opportunity employer offering competitive salaries and an outstanding benefits package. Education Commission of the States provides an exciting intellectual environment, a collegial workplace, flexible hours and an organizational structure that encourages teamwork.
Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Data Collection and Evaluation

- Develop, implement and monitor all learning and evaluation activities focused on reforming developmental education policies and practices to advance racial and socioeconomic equity for students who are racially minoritized, poverty affected and adults returning to college.
- Lead the collection, organization and analysis of data from state and system-level public higher education stakeholders.
- Design a comprehensive measurement framework to assess and report outcomes and progress on SStF’s strategic plan, unified across the project, including research and affiliates.
- Build and implement dashboard for reporting project outcomes.

Coordinate research and evaluation efforts internally and with external partners

- Engage with Director and partner with Advisory Board to identify learning topics and research questions based on data from the sites and trends in the field. Identify and develop contracts with external researchers to address these topics and questions. Lead internal review of research projects with Advisory Board members.
- Manage an RFP process (in collaboration with Site Strategist) to identify an external partner who will conduct an evaluation study for SStF; manage research consultant engagement.
- Manage external research project calendar.

Disseminate research findings for internal and external audiences

- Support SStF team to ensure that learning and evaluation results are considered and integrated into ongoing efforts, as well as future strategy and program planning.
- Review publications to ensure alignment with equity principles.

Engage in SStF/ECS Team Activities

- Participate in creation and implementation of convenings.
- Perform other ECS and SStF duties as required (e.g., attend ECS-wide meetings and convenings, participate in stakeholder engagements, etc.).

Skills and Qualifications

Required

- Bachelor’s degree.
- 3+ years of experience designing and implementing measurement and evaluation tools, approaches and frameworks that have been successfully implemented by mission-driven organizations.
- Experience analyzing survey and other previously collected data.
- Demonstrated content knowledge of data visualization tools.
- Experience accessing, cleaning, manipulating and analyzing federal, state and local datasets (IPEDS, SHEF, Census data, etc.)
• Demonstrated content knowledge of levers for change and challenges regarding implementation of developmental education reforms.
• Demonstrated commitment to racial and socioeconomic equity in higher education.
• Excellent oral and written communication, management skills, and teamwork capabilities.

Preferred
• Master’s degree.
• Experience with state and system-level public higher education policy and governance.
• Experience developing qualitative data collection protocols and analyzing qualitative data.
• Experience illustrating and communicating research findings to a variety of audiences, including policymakers, funders, practitioners and internal stakeholders.
• Historical, cultural and contextual knowledge of community colleges and minority-serving institutions (i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Hispanic-serving institutions (HSI) and/or Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU)), but not limited to these types of institutions.
• Proficient in use of digital software and technology, including teleconference platforms, and Microsoft Office.

Compensation and Benefits

Education Commission of the States offers competitive compensation and benefits, including health, dental, life, long term disability, vision insurance, a flexible spending account, a health reimbursement account and a yearly contribution to your 403b retirement plan. This position is located in Denver, CO or Washington DC. Salary for this position begins at $93K.

Applying for the Position

Please prepare a resume and cover letter. In your cover letter, please be sure to address: How does attention to racial equity and socioeconomic equity play a role in monitoring, learning and evaluation?

E-mail your resume and cover letter to Kate Haggerty/ khaggerty@ecs.org. Please include “Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation Specialist” in the subject line.

Research suggests that racially minoritized individuals and women may self-select out of opportunities if they don’t meet all job requirements. We encourage individuals who believe they have the skills necessary to thrive at Strong Start to Finish/ Education Commission of the States to apply for this role.

All applications must be received by close of business Friday, August 26, 2022.

_Education Commission of the States is an equal opportunity employer that believes in developing and supporting a diverse workforce._