

## IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH SPECIALIST

### Job Overview

The implementation research specialist will work closely with Institute directors, a strategic planning consultant, grant partners, and community stakeholders to coordinate internal and external grant activities. This position will support projects to enhance the development of Nebraska early childhood systems. The work requires knowledge and/or experience in systems change, implementation science methods, and early childhood systems.

This position demands the ability to take initiative, work as a member of a team, yet operate independently when necessary, and thrive in an entrepreneurial environment. The incumbent must demonstrate proficiency with database management and analysis software; be detail-oriented and accurate; able to prioritize effectively, multitask, and quickly respond to shifting priorities; possess strong research skills including the ability to collect, compile, and analyze facts, draw conclusions, and recommend solutions; and have a willingness to learn and utilize new technologies and train others, when needed.

This position is currently grant funded through 12/2019, with potential for extension or future permanency. <https://buffettinstitute.nebraska.edu/>

### Job Responsibilities

#### *Project Coordination (70%)*

- Coordinate grant activities using project management tools (e.g. Excel, Gantt Charts, etc.); track and report progress on milestones, identify and mitigate risks, and execute a communication plan for each grant project.
- Collaborate with cross-disciplinary research and evaluation partners at the university, local, and state levels. Activities will include survey design, and data collection and analysis, providing timely feedback using reports and presentations.
- Convene and assist meetings with university, state, and local partners to plan and implement a needs assessment and strategic plan for early childhood systems transformation.
- Plan and convene meeting and focus groups with stakeholders across Nebraska.
- Collaborate to ensure ongoing development and implementation of the evaluation plan.
- Serve as a notetaker and/or facilitator for meetings.
- Coordinate and manage research and evaluation activities.
- Analyze evaluation issues and demonstrate creative problem solving.
- Facilitate communication and planning of project activities with external sub-contractors.
- Conduct administrative activities of projects, including scheduling project meetings, conference calls, and webinars.

### *Implement Data Collection, Management, and Reporting (30%)*

- Oversee the development, quality, and reliability of data collection, management, and analysis.
- Lead data collection and analysis for needs assessment activities and program performance evaluation (e.g., interviews, focus groups, online stakeholder feedback mechanisms, observations).
- Develop and maintain analytic datasets, conduct analysis, and generate reports.
- Integrate data from multiple internal and external data sources, using Excel and other data management and statistical software.
- Work closely with Buffett Institute personnel to plan and prioritize current and future grant needs.
- Contribute substantially to deliverables, including writing and editing briefs, reports, and presentations.
- Performs other duties as assigned.
- Some travel required (primarily in-state).

### **Required Qualifications**

- A bachelor's degree in education, psychology, research methodology, or a related discipline that includes coursework in research methods, PLUS 4 years' experience in relevant research work
- Experience working in early childhood systems
- Experience with project management
- Knowledge of research methods, including some combination of experience conducting interviews, focus groups and/or observational methods; data management; and basic analysis

### **Preferred Qualifications**

- A master's degree in education, psychology, research methodology, sociology or a related discipline that includes coursework in research methods
- Experience in using appropriate software programs to manage and analyze data

### **Minimum Competencies (Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities):**

- Ability to work with a cross-disciplinary team
- Ability to work collaboratively with a diverse group of stakeholders, including academic researchers and community leaders
- Respect for local community culture; responsive to local community priorities
- Ability to integrate and synthesize information
- Possess initiative, good follow-through, and ability to work without supervision
- Good communication skills, demonstrate effective spoken and written communication
- Some in-state travel required
- High-level competence with MS Office, including Excel