

## **Position Description Senior Research Associate**

Research for Action (RFA) is seeking an experienced quantitative researcher to lead the development and expansion of RFA's capacity to design and conduct mixed-methods policy and evaluation studies in urban educational settings.

RFA is a non-profit organization engaged in education policy studies and evaluation research focused on issues of equity and democratic participation in urban education. Based in Philadelphia, RFA conducts studies locally, regionally and nationally. RFA works with public school districts, educational institutions, foundations, and cultural and community organizations to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for urban youth.

RFA is nationally recognized as an organization with an outstanding reputation for rigorous policy-focused research on issues related to teaching quality, school governance, high school reform, literacy and civic engagement. Its current staff has exceptional expertise in qualitative research methods and is experienced partnering with other researchers and research organizations to conduct multi-method research projects with major quantitative components. Evaluation studies, with a particular expertise in formative evaluation are another core competency of the organization.

RFA seeks to build an internal capacity to conduct complex quantitative research, including but not limited to rigorous longitudinal data analyses, value-added studies, and intervention studies using quasi-experimental designs. Its aim is to have an outstanding, full-service education research capacity that would allow the organization to engage simultaneously in a variety of rigorous research projects that address critical information needs to guide policy and practice at the local, state, national, and international levels. The senior research associate will play a central leadership role in shaping and accomplishing this goal.

### **Essential Functions/Responsibilities**

- Design and direct complex multi-method policy research and evaluation projects in urban educational settings that involve a multi-disciplinary staff and require data collection, analysis and reporting
  - Develop close working relationships with school districts to gain approval for research projects and obtain relevant datasets for longitudinal analysis
  - Work with local, state and national audiences including foundations, districts, education reform support organizations and other decision-makers to develop relevant evaluation and policy studies
  - Author major reports, journal articles, and papers for professional conferences.
- Take a leadership role within RFA including:

- Building staff with strong quantitative research skills
- Creating project teams from inside and outside the organization
- Ensuring quality control of quantitative research design, analysis and reporting across the organization
- Working closely with organization leadership to develop long-term organizational priorities and vision
- Serving as an intellectual partner in shaping new areas of inquiry

## **Skills & Experiences**

- Ph.D. in relevant field such as education, sociology, psychology
- Five to ten years of experience conducting quantitatively-oriented applied research in education
- Experience working on research projects that include integration of qualitative and quantitative research methods
- Experience working with school districts to secure district approval and datasets highly desirable
- Research interests in one or more of RFA's core areas;
  - Teacher Quality
  - School Governance Models
  - High School Reform
  - Literacy
  - Civic engagement
  - Youth Development
- Advanced statistical analysis skills such as multi-level modeling, growth modeling, and causal analysis
- Experience with secondary data analysis and managing large data sets
- Fluency with statistical software, including one or more of the following: SAS, STATA or SPSS
- Good written and oral communication skills

Compensation: Competitive salary and excellent benefits. Research for Action is an equal opportunity employer. Please send resume and cover letter to [info@researchforaction.org](mailto:info@researchforaction.org).