

EXEMPT RECRUITMENT

Director of Research Research Division

Reports to: Executive Director
Classification: Exempt
Salary Range: \$105,000 - \$115,000

Agency Profile

The Washington Student Achievement Council links the work of the secondary schools, higher education and state education agencies to achieve the mission of improving educational outcomes for students at all levels. Supported by a cabinet-level state agency, the Council proposes improvements and innovations needed to adapt the state's educational institutions to evolving needs, and advocates for increased financial support and civic benefits it provides. The agency also conducts research and analysis, protects education consumers, manages the Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) college savings program, and administers state and federal financial aid programs.

About the Division

The Research Division leads statewide and agency planning efforts and provides information and analyses that guide the Washington Student Achievement Council's efforts to represent the public interest and advance higher education attainment in the state.

In support of the mission and goals of the Washington Student Achievement Council, the Research Division endeavors to conduct innovative research and analysis of higher education issues and play a key role in formulating, implementing, and assessing progress toward State's 10-Year Roadmap and corresponding Strategic Action Plan.

About the Position:

The Director of Research leads staff and external partners in the development of the State's higher education research and planning activities and the evaluation of current trends and practices in higher education. This position ensures that timely, relevant and accurate information is presented to the Council, Legislature and executive branch policymakers, thereby advancing the State's Roadmap for increasing educational attainment in Washington (<http://www.wsac.wa.gov/the-roadmap>).

The Director is also responsible for serving as one of the agency's lead policy analysts; expanding cooperative research efforts; overseeing implementation, governance, and stewardship of the agency's data; and developing, coordinating, and monitoring internal and statewide planning processes. As a direct report to the agency's Executive Director and a member of the agency's Executive Leadership Team, the Director is responsible for actively supporting the agency's mission, vision, values, and internal strategic plan.

Essential Functions:**Strategic Direction – 45%**

- Prioritize and connect projects in ways that support long-term statewide and agency goals.
- Direct and conduct research and analysis on a broad range of higher education issues.
- Play a key role in the development and monitoring of the State's 10-Year Roadmap and corresponding Strategic Action Plan.
- Participate in the development and monitoring of the agency's internal strategic plan.
- Serve as one of the agency's lead policy analysts.

Management – 45%

- Oversee the development and use of an agency-wide infrastructure to support research and analysis.
- Supervise the secure transmission of data and coordinate and monitor data sharing agreements, policies, and procedures with agencies and third parties.
- Provide oversight of the research staff in the development of accurate and reliable data analysis protocols and in the design, conduct, and presentation of research projects.
- Prioritize requests to meet critical deadlines while providing accurate information and analysis.
- Manage the agency's financial aid data in collaboration with the financial aid division.
- Supervise staff and assess employees' performance, recognize good performance, and intervene appropriately when performance is not acceptable.
- Manage the unit budget.

Other Duties - 10%

- Respond to inquiries from the Governor's office, legislature, media, and others on research and planning issues.
- Track and analyze legislation that impact areas of responsibility.
- Prepare and present information for legislative activities, council meetings, and stakeholder events.
- Other duties as assigned.

Required Qualifications:

- Master's degree in business, social science, public policy, education, statistics, or other related field from an accredited institution of higher education.
- A minimum of five years of experience in a senior management position with demonstrated achievements.
- Proficiency in quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Demonstrated ability to understand and represent a statewide viewpoint while maintaining an understanding and respect for local issues.
- Strong project management experience and demonstrated success in the implementation of tactical or strategic plans.

- Ability to convene and work effectively in a collegial and professional manner with agency staff and diverse groups of stakeholders.
- Experience preparing reports for publication and delivering professional presentations to various audiences.
- Experience conducting research and analysis that inform and support a variety of policy issues.
- Ability to excel in high pressure, deadline oriented environment while managing multiple projects.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Doctoral degree in business, social science, public policy, education, statistics, or other related field from an accredited institution of higher education.
- Experience conducting research and analysis that inform and support statewide planning.
- Experience conducting research and analysis of policy issues in higher education.
- Experience working in a highly visible, political environment.
- Working knowledge of higher education, state government, and the legislative process.
- Demonstrated ability to operate and thrive in a political environment with little explicit authority.

Application Procedures:

To be considered for this position, you must possess the required qualifications listed above and submit a complete application package, which must include the following:

1. Letter of Application. A letter of application that addresses how you meet the required and preferred education and experience described in this announcement. Applications with generic cover letters will be considered nonresponsive and may eliminate the application from further consideration.
2. Resume. A chronological resume including your education and professional experience.
3. Two writing samples.
4. References. A list of names, titles and current telephone numbers of three (3) employment references.
5. Authorization to Release information form.*
6. Affirmative Action Form (optional)*

*These forms can be found on our website at: <http://www.wsac.wa.gov/employment>

This position will remain open until filled. The Agency reserves the right to close the recruitment at any time once a qualified pool of application is received. For best consideration, please apply by Wednesday, February 17, 2016.

Electronic application packages are encouraged and should be sent in **MS Word format or as a .pdf only** with "Director of Research" in the subject line. If your submission is in a PDF file format, please put the optional affirmative action form in a separate file.

Fax: (360) 704-6202 | **Email:** HumanResources@wsac.wa.gov

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Please note: The quality and completeness of the required application materials will be considered in determining whether candidates will move to the next phase of the screening process.