



PART-TIME RESEARCHER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position title: Part-Time Researcher

Positions reporting to occupant: None

Position reports to: Research director and President, Wisconsin Policy Forum

About the Wisconsin Policy Forum: WPF was created in January 2018 with the merger of Wisconsin's two most respected public policy research organizations: the Public Policy Forum and Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance. WPF is dedicated to providing informed, objective, and nonpartisan analysis of policy and fiscal issues that impact state and local government and school districts. The organization maintains a healthy endowment and enjoys strong financial stability. It is led by an engaged 14-member Executive Committee and a 75-member Board of Directors made up of business, government, and community leaders from across Wisconsin.

Position description: The Researcher will play a key role in furthering the organization's commitment to researching, monitoring, and improving the quality of public policy decision-making at the state and local level. His or her work will include serving as a primary or secondary investigator on research projects (including data collection, analysis, and communication of findings); researching and writing briefs and lengthier reports for publication on the organization's web site and distribution to elected and civic officials; assisting in the creation and design of policy research projects that are consistent with the organization's broader goals; and using numerous strategies – including regular posts on the Forum's policy blog and Viewpoint luncheon panel discussions – to disseminate the Forum's research and further community-wide discussion of important public policy issues. While all areas of policy research potentially will fall under the position's purview, a particular emphasis on education, state and local government finance, social services, economic and workforce development, and related policy areas can be expected.

Responsibilities include:

- Monitor the financial activities of the state and local government budget and finances as assigned by accessing financial documents, attending government committee hearings, and maintaining regular contact with fiscal officials.
- Design, plan, and implement fiscal research projects and write research briefs and reports.

- Contribute regularly to WPF’s public policy blog with posts on financial and policy issues and insights related to state and local governments and school districts.
- Design qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments and conduct data and statistical analysis.
- Prepare charts and graphs that describe and interpret findings of analyses.
- Contribute to editing and proofing of WPF publications.
- Clearly communicate each project’s purpose and objectives to members, potential funders, and other stakeholders.
- Staff advisory and policy committees consisting of WPF members and other stakeholders.
- Use communication skills to interact with WPF members and key policy audiences, including the media, elected officials, and government agency staffs.
- Represent the WPF in a professional manner as an attendee and presenter at community events, public meetings and hearings, and conferences.

Qualifications:

- Master’s degree in a related field. Preferred fields include public policy, public administration, public finance, accounting, statistics, and journalism. Substantive work experience may be substituted.
- 1–3 years of related experience; direct experience in government or school district finance or public sector administration strongly preferred.
- Demonstrated knowledge of basic research principles and research design.
- Demonstrated knowledge of public sector finance issues.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills including the ability to produce concise, high-level summaries and briefings.
- Knowledge of various analytic software, such as SPSS, Excel, and Microsoft Access.
- Ability to work with a variety of stakeholders and audiences.
- Ability to work independently, as a member of a team, and as a leader and manager. WPF values and works hard to maintain a productive, respectful, and collegial staff culture. All positions require a positive, “can-do” demeanor.
- Commitment to the Forum’s mission as a reliable, objective, nonpartisan research organization.

Compensation: A rate of \$25 to \$30 per hour will be offered based on the qualifications and experience of the successful applicant. It is anticipated that the position will require an average of 20 hours per week, though hours may vary somewhat depending on the needs of the organization and the availability of the successful applicant. The Wisconsin Policy Forum is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

How to Apply: Interested applicants should send a resume and cover letter via e-mail to Jason Stein, research director, at jstein@wispolicyforum.org.