



## Director of Research & Policy

Founded in 1867 as the George Peabody Education Fund, the Southern Education Foundation's (SEF) mission is to advance equity and excellence in education for all students in the South, particularly low income students and students of color. SEF uses advocacy, leadership development, research, and partnerships with likeminded organizations to improve outcomes from early childhood to early adulthood. Our core belief is that education is the vehicle by which all students get fair chances to develop their talents and contribute to the common good.

To learn more, visit [www.southerneducation.org](http://www.southerneducation.org)

### Position Description:

This role will lead SEF's research and policy analysis activities. The Director of Research & Policy will inform internal strategic decision-making and help elevate SEF's posture as a thought leader externally. They will also possess a robust understanding of federal, state, and local education policy across the P-20 pipeline. They will work collaboratively with SEF leadership to promote and support an organizational culture that values research in a way that is both actionable and useful for improving overall effectiveness and driving impact across the education policy and advocacy landscape.

Broadly, they will lead both internal and commissioned research and policy analysis initiatives, as well as provide technical assistance for research and policy components embedded within specific projects. They will bolster SEF's legislative agenda by generating empirical research-based policy solutions to improve P-20 outcomes for students in the South. They will work collaboratively across the organization at all levels as well as directly with partner organizations.

### Specific Responsibilities Include:

#### *Research and Policy Strategy*

- Partner with SEF's senior leadership to develop and execute a strategic plan for research and policy initiatives that advance SEF's mission to raise the achievement of all students in the South and close achievement gaps;
- Lead the design and implementation of action-oriented research and policy analysis in support of SEF's legislative and advocacy activities;
- Collaborate with the Government Affairs and Advocacy Directors to develop policy recommendations on our core issue areas and generate ideas for new policy areas that promise to improve outcomes for students;
- Partner with the Director of Government Affairs and Director of Communications to monitor

and respond to federal, state, and local policies and research relevant to students in the South, including serving as a media spokesperson on those issues;

- Partner with Director of Leadership Development to ensure leadership curriculum and programming are informed by research and policy, as well as support in evaluation of leadership programming;
- Forge new partnerships with a range of research and policy experts, institutions and other stakeholders to further leverage knowledge generation activities;
- Engage in conferences, convenings, working groups, speaking engagements and other activities that reinforce SEF's role as a thought contributor;
- Build staff and partner capacity to understand, manage and/or undertake rigorous, ethical and impactful research and policy analysis; and
- Identify new grant opportunities, contribute to grant writing, and manage relationships with grant officers, including tracking and communicating our impact in grant reports.

#### Qualifications:

- Possession of a doctorate degree in education, education policy or a law degree combined with experience in matters of law and education equity;
- Five or more years of experience managing and/or conducting research, evaluation, and/or policy analysis;
- Deep commitment to educational equity and high achievement for all students, particularly for students of color and low-income children;
- Deep knowledge of state and federal education policies;
- Understanding of the needs and complexities of schools and districts within the Southern region;
- Expertise in Microsoft Excel preferred; preferred experience in statistical analysis packages such as STATA or SPSS;
- An organizational learning and effectiveness orientation, with a proven record of developing and implementing processes that advance rigor and learning across an organization or team;
- Demonstrated capacity of translating ideas into action;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills; ability to distill and explain complex information, data, and technical details to a multiplicity of audiences and partners;
- Strong project management skills; ability to facilitate the work of multiple teams and prioritize competing demands in a changing, highly collaborative environment;
- Sense of humor, exhibiting grace under pressure;
- Comfort with ambiguity; and
- Ability to travel

**Compensation:** Excellent non-profit employee benefits and competitive salary commensurate with position and experience.

Application Instructions: Please email your resume and cover letter explaining your interest in the position to Human Resources, at [hr@southerneducation.org](mailto:hr@southerneducation.org) indicating "Research Director" in the subject line of your email. Applications due by Monday, June 10, 2019.