



## Director of Research

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 activities. The Director of Research will inform internal strategic decision-making and help elevate SEF's external posture as a thought leader. 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 drives impact across the education policy and advocacy landscape.

Broadly, they will manage both internal and commissioned research initiatives, as well as provide technical assistance for research, policy and evaluation 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 Strategy*

- Partner with SEF's senior leadership to develop and execute a strategic plan for research that advances SEF's mission to raise the achievement of all students in the South and closes racial disparities in academic outcomes;
- Commission original research papers, briefs, fact sheets, and other collateral on topics aligned to SEF's mission and values;
- Collaborate with the Director of Government Affairs to develop policy recommendations informed by rigorous research;
- Partner with the Director of Leadership Development to ensure leadership curriculum and programming are informed by research;
- Lead all program evaluation research and activities within SEF;

- Forge new partnerships with a range of research experts, higher education institutions and other stakeholders to further leverage knowledge generation activities;
- Engage in conferences, 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;
- Extract raw data from numerous data sources and aggregate it into cohesive data sets ensuring its accuracy.

**Qualifications:**

- Possession of a doctorate degree in education, education policy or a law degree combined with experience in matters of education equity;
- Five or more years of experience managing and/or conducting research, and evaluation;
- Deep commitment to educational equity and high achievement for all students, particularly for students of color and low-income children;
- Knowledge of state and federal education policies;
- Understanding of the needs and complexities of schools and districts particularly 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;
- Knowledge of historical challenges in educational opportunities for African-Americans in the Southern states;
- 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 "Director of Research" in the subject line of your email. Applications accepted until position is filled.