Job Posting – Senior Policy Associates

CSW Teams: Competencies & Credentials; Federal, State & Local Systems Change; and Improving Practices & Outcomes

Full Time | Remote

For more than 30 years, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW) a national 501(c)(3) workforce policy and systems change non-profit organization, has been on the forefront of catalyzing change in educational and labor market systems, policies, and practices to increase economic mobility, particularly for people of color and others historically excluded from advancement opportunities. CSW focuses on achieving scalable improvements in worker skills, lifelong learning, and job quality. CSW collaborates with change makers to develop strategies, identify evidence to inform strategies, build the capacity of organizations, manage initiatives, and evaluate lessons learned.

Position Summary
CSW is seeking three candidates to fill Senior Policy Associate roles within three of our strategy teams. The Senior Policy Associate has experience with and expertise in the workforce system; public and privately funded innovation initiatives; and policy and practice at the national, regional, or community levels. The Senior Policy Associate will use their experience to co-develop leading-edge ideas and fundable high-impact initiatives focused on equitable results for job seekers. Each of these roles will focus on transforming workforce systems, policy, and practice to reduce poverty, increase economic mobility for low-wage workers, and address racial disparities. This position reports to and works closely with the CSW Director for the specific team and will work across the organization on various projects. Additional position details for each strategy team are summarized below:

Competencies & Credentials Team
This team’s work centers on dramatically expanding the use of competencies and non-degree credentials within learning and talent management systems to increase economic mobility for low-wage workers and close racial disparity gaps. The Senior Policy Associate has experience with competency-based education, competency-based talent management systems, and/or competency-based credentialing systems. The Senior Policy Associate will use their experience to co-develop leading-edge ideas that diffuse the use of competencies and credentials which improve educational and employment choices and pathways. This strategy area’s focus includes:

Expanding the use of competencies

- Improving alignment of educational programs and job requirements, using competencies as a common language.
- Building competency-based talent systems within organizations, infusing competencies into job descriptions, hiring, performance feedback, and professional development.
- Assessing learner/job seeker competencies so they understand what they know and can do and can see how to apply their competencies to diverse educational and career paths.

**Building system(s) of incremental credentials**

- Working with colleges, universities, and state postsecondary systems to develop and offer at scale shorter-term credentials in addition to degrees, so that learners get credit for smaller modules of learning for which they get no recognition currently.

*Ensuring competencies and credentials are used to increase equity and economic mobility, especially for Black, Indigenous, and Latinx workers.*

- As new methods, tools, and systems are built to use the power of competencies and shorter-term credentials, CSW’s work focuses on how to ensure those strategies increase inclusion and equity.

We are particularly excited about two trends in the workforce-higher education ecosystem. The first is greater acceptance and implementation of skills-based hiring. Companies such as IBM and Accenture, the Federal Government, and the state of Maryland have all entered the scene. Related and equally important, is the increasing recognition of non-degree and incremental credentials as signals of skill attainment. Both trends have the potential to create greater opportunities to increase equity and economic mobility for Black, Indigenous, and Latinx workers and others traditionally left out of the labor market.

CSW is engaged in several projects to advance this work. The first is our work co-leading the Credential As You Go initiative, which is designed to increase the development and adoption of incremental credentials. As a part of that work, we are producing playbooks to help colleges, state systems of higher education and other credential providers build and launch these programs. Another example is CSW’s work leading Advancing Community Equity for Upward Mobility (ACE-UP). This initiative is focused on strengthening the capacity of community colleges to address equity gaps and meet the skill development needs of employers in in-demand industries and career pathways, as well as the skill development needs of marginalized and underrepresented workers. This work matters more than ever, as communities across the nation seek to increase access to relevant credentials and skills that lead to economic sustainability.

**Federal, State & Local Systems Change Team**

This team works with stakeholders to challenge the way systems operate and to co-design approaches that strip away outdated assumptions to make them more culturally and economically relevant. The Senior Policy Associate has experience and expertise in systems change and transformation within the workforce development sector and generates and uses knowledge and skills to co-develop leading-edge ideas. This strategy area’s focus includes:

- Redesigning federal, state, and local workforce systems.
- Reframing strategies for key services and introducing new services and tools.
- Building cross-system interconnections including organizations within workforce, community development, human services, and education.
- Conducting promising practices research, developing metrics and scorecards, and evaluating strategies.

For example, CSW has worked for several years with the state of California and local workforce boards to adopt a regional approach to their work and collaborative partnerships with community colleges. Within the state of Michigan, CSW is working on initiatives with state government, local workforce boards, and business leadership groups to research and make recommendations on key issues and to facilitate coalitions for change. Additionally, CSW is engaging with the Detroit area CEOs group to facilitate definition of the scope and structure of a regional workforce strategy and structure. CSW is also working nationally with community colleges to assist them in leveraging the Ability to Benefit provision of Pell grants to expand access to federal student financial aid for adult students who have not yet earned a high school diploma or equivalent. We believe it is important for workforce systems to collaborate with partners such as postsecondary education, TANF, and economic development, to strengthen services and systems for workers and job seekers.

**Improving Practices & Outcomes Team**

This team’s work centers on strengthening the capacity of workforce professionals and organizations to develop more effective services and policies to increase economic mobility for low-wage workers, particularly for workers of color. The Senior Policy Associate has strong experience with workforce service provider strategies and implementation practices focused on a variety of job seeker populations, service delivery models, and business sectors. This member of our team will demonstrate a good understanding of adult learning, instructional design, and be skilled at engaging multiple stakeholders through facilitated trainings. The Senior Policy Associate will use their background with both quantitative and qualitative data to co-develop leading-edge ideas that are practical for organizations and practitioners, and impactful. This team member should be experienced in coaching individuals and teams to explore and expand behaviors, beliefs, and tactics as part of a process that leads to a change in practice. This strategy area’s focus includes:

- Supporting community-based organizations to improve their services and practices with the use of data and feedback, through a racial equity and inclusion lens as currently supported in two Workforce Benchmarking Network (WBN) cohorts in Dallas and Detroit. The WBN cohorts infuses peer forums with technical assistance to advance data acumen of participating organizations and supports their capacity to dig deeper into data to advance participant outcomes.
- Facilitating peer learning and skills development through regional and national learning cohorts, including a cohort of reentry workforce program grantees working to more intentionally center the experiences and expertise of formerly incarcerated adults.
- Expanding the use of the work of the WBN National Survey which collects data from workforce programs and provides field-wide performance benchmarks with program and worker outcomes disaggregated by demographics. This includes the integration of job seeker success measures and economic mobility indicators.
- Supporting the development and elevation of workforce practitioners through the Aspen Workforce Leaders Academy’s and other similar fellowship programs or peer learning communities.
• Developing tools, practice guidelines, and strategy recommendations to inform and support workforce training providers, industry sector leaders, and workforce intermediaries in making continuous program and practice improvements that accelerate worker equity and advancement, and more intentionally center worker voice in their work.

CSW is committed to building a diverse staff and strongly encourages applications from candidates of color.

**Essential Responsibilities**

**Knowledge and Expertise:**

**Competencies and Credentials team:** Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the role of short-term and incremental credentialing, competency-based learning, and skills-based hiring in the workforce development ecosystem.

**Federal, State & Local Systems Change team:** Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the various aspects of the US workforce system, innovative and evidence-based initiatives, particularly those in our current areas of focus as mentioned above, and public policy. Identifies and recommends how best to implement federal, state and local system change projects.

**Improving Practices & Outcomes team:** Understands research, policy, and practice within the field—especially those related to service provider strategies and practices. Skilled at coaching, engaging multiple stakeholders through facilitated trainings and creating innovative workshops and other opportunities for participants to engage, reflect, and participate using virtual and in-person tools and strategies.

**All teams:** Stays informed about research, policy, and practice within the field and provides thought leadership for team members, clients, and funders. Identifies and recommends how best to implement competency data analysis, tool development, and workforce strategy design projects. Delivers through various entry points such as the development of promising practices, front-end assessment, evaluation, strategy development, reporting, facilitation and advising. Uses expertise, research, data, and information to generate and share knowledge, insights, and learning internally and externally with a variety of audiences.

**Market & Business Development and Sales:** Co-develops concepts and proposals to promote and expand/build on existing or to generate new projects. Identifies potential products or processes that fill a client/community need within and across projects and/or the workforce system. Contributes material (blogs, thought pieces, webinars) to support CSW and strategy area development.

**Racial Equity and Inclusion:** Assesses the degree to which privileged and marginalized status affects program initiatives. Participates in strategies to increase equity. Threads social justice into program, projects, and goals. Uses reflective thinking to gain insight into assumptions, world views, bias, and beliefs. Engages in racial equity and inclusion professional development opportunities and supports workforce practitioners and organizations REI integration into their own practices

**Project Management:** Works with Director to establish project teams, roles, and responsibilities. Leads client projects as required. Monitors and ensures client satisfaction and project successes.
Delivers projects on time, on spec, and on budget. Ensures project learning is articulated and shared within and across CSW teams and programs.

**Organizational Development:** Promotes the health and vitality of CSW to embody its mission, vision, and values. Works within a whole system and contributes to the development of inclusive strategies for organizational change, transformation, and alignment. Participates in one or more of CSW’s strategy teams as part of overall organizational development efforts. Identifies ways for CSW to engage in continuous innovation grounded in mission and values. Participates as a positive, open-minded, and supportive team member.

**Compensation**
Employee compensation includes: 1) *competitive salaries*; 2) *benefits*, which can include health, dental, vision, life and disability insurances, a 403(b)-retirement savings plan, a Section 125 Cafeteria plan, and a flexible spending account; and 3) *other non-monetary benefits*, such as flexible work schedules, flexible sick time, supportive work culture, an informal work environment, and the ability to work from home.

**Work Location**
Flexible work location. CSW is headquartered in Ann Arbor, MI but CSW team members are located around the country, with most working from home offices. Staff travel is resuming post-pandemic and staff members are encouraged to limit travel to situations in which it is crucial to the work involved. We anticipate up to 20% travel will be needed in this position.

**Salary**
The entering salary range is $90,000 - $110,000 and is commensurate with the qualifications and experience of the selected candidate.

**Full/Part Time:** Full-Time

**FLSA Status:** Exempt

**Posting Dates:** December 2 – December 21, 2022 at Noon EST

**To Apply**
Submit a resume and cover letter identifying the specific team(s), addressing your specific interest in the position(s), and outlining your skills and experience that directly relate to the position(s). Please email materials to: Debbie Charlton, Senior Support Specialist, *dcharlton@skilledwork.org*, with the specific position(s) in the subject line.