Title: Portfolio Director  
Reporting To: Senior Research Director  
Start Date: ASAP

Who We Are

In cities across the country, people face high rates of gun violence, under-resourced schools, and social harms associated with the criminal justice system -- all of which disproportionately impact people of color. These inequalities have profound consequences on public safety and opportunity. As a society we have failed to address these challenges, in part, because of our lack of understanding of the most effective and cost-effective solutions that can have a real impact on people’s lives. We believe that rigorous research can help.

The University of Chicago Crime Lab and Education Lab partner with cities and communities to use data and rigorous research to design, test, and scale programs and policies that enhance public safety, improve educational outcomes, and advance justice. Our mission is to combine world-class data science and research, in partnership with government agencies, to substantially improve the effectiveness of the public sector and achieve impact at scale.

To learn more about the Crime Lab and Education Lab, visit https://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/labs/crime.

The Role

The Education Lab seeks a full-time Project Director to serve in a cross-functional role that oversees Education Lab operations, mid-level external partnerships, and strategic initiatives with Chicago Public Schools to support a portfolio of research and data analysis projects related to personalized learning and student reengagement. The Project Director will work under the direction of the Senior Research Director, the Associate Director of the Education Lab, and other UChicago Crime Lab and Education Lab leadership.

Responsibilities

- Provide support across the Education Lab research portfolio, identifying key milestones and critical interdependencies between workstreams. Work with research staff on specific tasks related to execution of Education Lab projects at the request of the Senior Research Director for Education.
- Support organizational financial management by monitoring project budgets and
spending, identifying fundraising priorities, and writing grant proposals as needed. Work with the Public Affairs team to create and execute a development strategy and external engagement activities.

- Manage stakeholder relationships within Chicago Public Schools, working with project teams and the Senior Research Director to produce high quality deliverables for projects throughout the Education Lab portfolio.
- Ensure compliance with data sharing agreements as well as other legal and grant-specific requirements.
- Support special projects and initiatives that help research staff grow their understanding of education-related topics by organizing activities including but not limited to Lunch & Learns, documentary screenings, and partner roundtables.
- As needed, support the Executive Director of the Crime Lab and Education Lab, as well as the Senior Research Director in building strategic partnerships and spearhead special projects and initiatives with government agencies, non-profit organizations, and community organizations.

Education and Experience

- Bachelor’s degree in public policy, education, social science, social work, or a closely related field required; a master’s degree is preferred.
- A minimum of five years of full-time work experience in a professional setting, including at least three years of experience managing full-time employees, required.
- Strong project management skills, including demonstrated success navigating various stakeholder interests to achieve a common goal, required.
- Experience working with budgets and contracts required.
- Demonstrated ability to manage a large portfolio of projects with multiple partners required.
- Knowledge of, or experience working with, high needs or vulnerable populations preferred.
- Previous experience working with a research study preferred. Strong preference for experience in a similarly-positioned research organization or academic research setting.

Competencies

- Outstanding interpersonal skills and the ability to develop and maintain positive
relationships with a broad array of partners required.

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to present complex ideas in a simple and straightforward way for non-technical audiences required.
- Demonstrated ability to exercise sound judgment required.
- Demonstrated ability to work both independently and as part of a team required.
- Demonstrated ability to problem-solve even when directives might be ambiguous or changing required.
- Understanding of research methods, quantitative and qualitative research techniques, and the implementation of public policy-related research required.
- Knowledge of urban policy, social policy, education policy, or workforce development preferred.
- Strong knowledge of or interest in rigorous research including econometric methods preferred.

To Apply

We seek a diverse pool of applicants who wish to join an academic community that places the highest value on rigorous inquiry and encourages a diversity of perspectives, experiences, groups of individuals, and ideas to inform and stimulate intellectual challenge, engagement, and exchange.

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, protected veteran status or status as an individual with disability.

The University of Chicago is an Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity / Disabled / Veterans Employer.

The University of Chicago requires all students and employees be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 unless they have applied for and have been granted a medical or religious exemption. Compliance with this requirement is mandatory within six (6) calendar days of starting employment with the University. Employees who have not taken the steps required for compliance may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. More information regarding the University’s COVID vaccination requirement and exemption process may be found at the UChicago GoForward webpage. If you would like to complete a medical or religious exemption request, please follow the steps outlined in the Employee Vaccination Information section under Frequently Asked Questions.

Please submit a resume, cover letter, writing sample, and reference contact information to UChicago’s Workday system. Within the Workday system, this listing can be found by the position title or by the requisition number, JR14770.
If you have an active UChicago Workday account, you will need to complete the Internal Candidate application process. Simply log in to Workday and select the career worklet to begin.

External candidates should apply at https://uchicago.wd5.myworkdayjobs.com/External.

If you have questions about the Workday system, please contact our Shared Services department at https://services.uchicago.edu

Job seekers in need of a reasonable accommodation to complete the application process may contact the Shared Services Office by calling 773-702-5800 or by emailing sharedservices@uchicago.edu with their request.