



## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Strategic Learning Officer**

November 2020

#### **About College Futures Foundation**

At College Futures Foundation, we believe there is nothing more transformative for individuals, our economy, and our society than educational opportunity, and that the pathway to a college degree should be clear and open to the diverse students of California.

Right now, that is not the case. Not all hardworking young people are getting a fair shot at a better life. The vast majority of our state's K–12 students are of color and low-income, yet when it comes to graduates from our public universities, they are in the minority. At every step, they face roadblocks. We are working to change that.

Established in 2005, the College Futures Foundation is a private foundation that partners with organizations and leaders across the state to catalyze systemic change and close equity gaps so that this vision of a seamless, student-centered educational path to opportunity becomes a reality—and one that's available to every student, regardless of zip code, skin color, or income.

We believe that ensuring the college success of students facing the most formidable barriers will help all of us thrive—our families, communities, economy, society, and state.

#### **How We Work**

Our program, communications, and learning teams work collaboratively with one another to ensure the respective relevant functions are integrated into the work we undertake and support. Consequently, working in teams is a key feature of our operational structure. Another key aspect of the Foundation's work is our assessment and learning. It is one of our core strengths and therefore central to our organizational growth, positioning, and identity. We use quantitative and qualitative data to document progress, assess our impact, and inform the Foundation's strategic focus and ground communications to our target audiences.

The Strategic Learning Officer (SLO) will work collaboratively across these teams to achieve the Foundation's goals through the following interdependent and aligned strategy areas: student-centric practices, leadership, and finance and affordability. For more information on our strategy and programmatic initiatives, visit <https://collegefutures.org/our-strategy/strategy/>.

The SLO, in collaboration with program, policy and communications staff, will foster greater use of measurement and learning to assess the impact of our work to serve both internal and external audiences and apply results and learning to strategy development, implementation, and adaptation. The SLO will be a key player in strengthening our learning organizational culture.

## **Position Summary**

Reporting to the Chief Program and Strategy Officer (CPSO), the SLO brings a learning and growth mindset to managing our practice to leverage different forms of data and insights from a variety of sources—including formal evaluation, funded research, staff and grantee insights—to assess impact, inform decision making about strategy refinement and execution. The officer supports staff in prioritizing their learning agendas and develops tools to capture and distill both formal and informal learning to meet our learning objectives. The officer works directly with program staff to develop clear outcomes, milestones and learning questions for grantmaking portfolios, and to develop and implement plans for tracking, reflection, and reporting progress. Lastly, the officer will also provide support on projects like developing strong annual strategic and budget planning approach and landscaping projects for new areas of work. The Foundation is looking for an SLO who combines strong interpersonal and process skills, with learning, data, and evaluation skills. This is a full-time position.

### **Specific responsibilities include:**

#### **Primary: Promotes Strategic Learning through development and operationalizing of Measurement Learning and Evaluation (MLE) Plan**

- In partnership with program, policy and communications staff, develops and refines MLE plan for strategies and specific areas of work, for example:
  - Works with designated strategy leads to frame, develop and update the research questions for each strategy, its associated bodies of work and for the Foundation's overall strategy. Helps identify appropriate methods and data for answering these questions – e.g. third-party evaluations for large initiatives.
  - Partners with program staff and CPSO and CEO to define strategic learning questions at the grantmaking portfolio and foundation-wide levels, respectively. These questions relate to assumptions and hypotheses about impact, foundation role, grantmaking and implementation approaches.
- Designs and executes a set of learning and reflective activities in collaboration with program staff to assess real-time learning, progress – these may include Board learning sessions, team reflection sessions that utilize pertinent qualitative and quantitative data as appropriate (e.g. evaluations, research and internal analysis of grantee reports, trip reports, grantee and other sources of information). These activities can include engaging our grantees and partners in learning sessions.
- Works with Grants Management, Communications teams and other relevant staff to develop internal systems to make our knowledge assets accessible internally to staff and when appropriate, funded research findings available externally.

#### **Secondary: Helps develop and manage research and evaluation projects to meet foundation-wide learning priorities**

- Supports program officers, Director of Communications, Director of Public Policy and CPSO, in identifying research and evaluation needed to advance the foundation's strategic learning priorities, and helps design, contract, and manage such projects.

- In consultation with program officers, CPSO, Director of Communications, and Director of Public Policy, synthesizes results and learning from research and evaluation efforts, and develops related reports to the Board, staff, and grantees through diverse communications channels.

### **Other**

- Work collaboratively and participate in cross-disciplinary teams with colleagues or on special assignments, as requested by the CEO or CPSO. Examples may include
  - Providing consultative support to Leadership Team on maximizing effective professional development approaches and curriculum in service of building a learning culture and supporting [foundation's values](#) of equity, courage, community and curiosity.
  - Supporting project teams in developing and executing effective team meetings, design sessions to ensure actionable feedback and outcomes.

### **Qualifications and Competencies:**

- Excellent interpersonal and collaboration skills with demonstrated experience in working with a diversity of learning styles, personal backgrounds and building relationships and managing projects involving a variety of stakeholders.
- A minimum of 7 years of relevant work experience of collecting, organizing, analyzing and synthesizing various types of qualitative and quantitative data in the social sector, supporting strategy development, execution and informing organizational learning.
- Promotes both rigor and relevance in service of a learning organizational culture including utilizing learning frameworks, methodologies appropriate to diverse project goals, audiences, etc.
- Appreciation for how to reflect and promote the foundation's values of equity, courage, community, and curiosity.
- Ability to lead constructive and engaging meetings.
- Ability to thrive in a dynamic environment with multiple priorities.
- A sense of humor, flexibility, and the ability to contribute to a collegial, respectful, and supportive office environment.
- A Master's degree in the social sciences, public policy, education or related discipline is a plus, but not required
- Demonstrated ability to process complex information and present ideas in a clear, pragmatic and compelling manner, strong analytic and critical reasoning skills.

- Exceptional project management skills with good judgment, attention to detail, resourcefulness in problem-solving, ability to prioritize and manage multiple assignments and responsibilities, and overall, a results orientation.
- Strong oral and written communications and presentation skills.
- Strong technical evaluation skills in both quantitative and qualitative methods and in all aspects of the evaluation lifecycle: design, implementation, and use of results is a plus
- Proven skills in using diverse software tools to analyze different types of data and information.

**Compensation:**

This permanent, full-time position located in Oakland, California, offers competitive compensation and excellent health, commuter, and retirement benefits. Some in-state travel will be required. Salary range is \$120,000 to \$140,000, commensurate with experience.

**To Apply:**

- Please submit application materials—a cover letter and resume—via email to [jobs@collegefutures.org](mailto:jobs@collegefutures.org). Preferred subject line: “Application: Strategic Learning Officer”. No calls, please.
- Please note: While the foundation will be accepting candidate submissions on a rolling basis, we will not be scheduling first round interviews until the week of January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Learn more about our work at [www.collegefutures.org](http://www.collegefutures.org).