



### **Job Description: Research Director**

The Research Director serves as an integral policy leader for the organization, working with the President and policy team in shaping and executing NJPP's policy vision. The position is primarily responsible for overseeing and coordinating the policy research of the organization, supervising the policy staff, leading quality control efforts, developing policy reports on topics not covered by other members of the policy team, and assisting organizational leadership in the development and execution of NJPP's research and advocacy agenda.

The Research Director must be adept at research and analysis and possess excellent writing, editing and oral communication skills. The director must be organized, a problem solver, self-directed, and demonstrate leadership and initiative, while at the same time being a committed team player. The position requires political savvy, a keen understanding of major public policy issues facing the state and strong leadership and project management skills.

**Supervisor:** The Research Director reports to the President.

### **Duties & Responsibilities**

1. Policy Research Coordination and Quality Control
  - a. Coordinates development of NJPP's policy research agendas and work plans, working in conjunction with the the President and policy staff.
  - b. Develops and maintains systems to support research coordination and goals. Manages the research process and keeps products on track for release dates determined in partnership with NJPP leadership.
  - c. Reviews and edits all policy reports and fact sheets produced by policy staff, as well as other materials such as blogs, testimony and talking points as needed.
  - d. Reviews all materials developed by policy staff to ensure methods and findings conform to NJPP standards for qualitative and quantitative research, asking for changes or additional documentation from policy staff when needed.
  - e. Works with NJPP leadership to identify new research and analysis opportunities and to further develop the NJPP policy agenda.
2. Public Policy and Advocacy
  - a. Provides technical assistance and support when need is identified and/or requested.
  - b. Assists the President in developing and executing NJPP advocacy and legislative agenda.
3. External Relations

- a. Takes a leadership role in work with partner organizations around key policy issues, primarily but not limited to issues not covered by other policy staff members.
  - b. Serves as a leading resource and liaison to local, state and national partner organizations.
4. Other Duties
- a. Provides technical and other assistance for other NJPP staff members in general and for newly hired policy analysts.
  - b. Participates in various NJPP internal meetings, including those related to program planning, resource utilization, and scheduling.
  - c. Performs other duties as assigned related to the mission of NJPP or to support coalition partners, funders, or other stakeholders.

### **Core Competencies**

1. Staff Management and Mentoring
  - a. Builds meaningful partnerships with analysts, interns and other staff.
  - b. Nurtures relationships with diverse backgrounds, value systems, needs and wants.
  - c. Assists, supports, and encourages others in identifying difficulties, prioritizing tasks, defining goals and producing positive results.
  - d. Shares expertise and provides informal advice and developmental feedback.
  - e. Supports NJPP's team environment.
  - f. Maintains a genuine interest in facilitating the personal and professional growth of team.
2. Strategic Leadership and Agility
  - a. Holds a clear vision of policy agenda and goals that is shared by leadership and staff.
  - b. Demonstrates ability to lead policy team toward those goals.
  - c. Anticipates trending issues and potential opportunities and consequences accurately.
  - d. Can juggle complex and occasionally shifting timelines.
  - e. Works constructively with NJPP leadership and board.
3. Quantitative/Qualitative Skills
  - a. Analyzes and clearly documents data to make comparisons and draw conclusions.
  - b. Identifies cause and effect relationships to solve complex problems.
  - c. Identifies opportunities to visualize data and/or present analysis creatively to expand potential reach and impact.
  - d. Effectively reviews work of policy analysts to probe for data discrepancies, logical inconsistencies or suggest alternatives approaches to analysis.
4. Written Communications and Editing
  - a. Prepares written documentation to transfer technical information about concepts, situations, products, services or results to diverse audiences.
  - b. Is able to organize, express and communicate ideas in a clear, succinct, accurate

- and convincing manner through a variety of communication settings and styles.
- c. Improves reports, fact sheets and other written materials developed by policy team through substantive suggestions and light copy editing.
5. External Communication and Presentation Skills
    - a. Clearly and effectively conveys information, both verbally and visually.
    - b. Is effective in a variety of formal presentation settings: one-on-one, small and large groups, with peers, direct reports and to the media.
    - c. Is effective both inside and outside the organization on both cool data and hot and controversial topics.
  6. Interpersonal Communications
    - a. Demonstrates adaptive and effective communications suitable for a wide range of audiences.
    - b. Actively listens to seek clarification and understanding.
    - c. Open to considering other viewpoints.
    - d. Uses diplomacy and tact.
    - e. Can be counted on to hold things together during tough times, can handle stress.
  7. Priority Setting and Problem Solving
    - a. Spends time on what's important.
    - b. Quickly zeros in on the critical few and puts the trivial many aside.
    - c. Eliminates roadblocks and creates focus.
    - d. Probes all sources for answers, looks beyond the obvious.
    - e. Re-prioritizes projects to incorporate additional demands without difficulty.
  8. Internal and External Political Savvy
    - a. Understands the political environment, management priorities, staff roles and responsibilities and grasps external factors impacting the organization.
    - b. Identifies when issues need to be shared and discussed with other members of policy team, NJPP leadership and/or external partners.
    - c. Perceives organizational and political sensitivities and acts accordingly.
    - d. Understands different people's attitudes about power and politics and adapts personal approaches for optimal influence.
  9. Networking/Relationship building/Collaboration
    - a. Works cooperatively with others, inside and outside the organization, to accomplish objectives to build and maintain partnerships, leverage information, and achieve results.
    - b. Identifies, organizes, facilitates and /or sustains mutually beneficial partnerships and alliances with internal and external stakeholders.
    - c. Maintains positive and productive relationships.
    - d. Works with others to share information and achieve goals.

**Compensation:** Salary range is \$80,000- \$90,000 commensurate with experience; benefits including health care, retirement, and generous vacation leave, sick leave and holiday schedules.

**To apply:** Please submit a cover letter and resume to [nelson@njpp.org](mailto:nelson@njpp.org) with “Research Director” in the subject line. No calls, please.

**Organization Overview:** New Jersey Policy Perspective drives policy change to advance economic justice and prosperity for all New Jerseyans through evidence-based, independent research, analysis and advocacy.

We are a “think-and-do tank:” Once our analysis is done, our communications and outreach teams gets it into the hands of the policymakers, advocates and partners best positioned to use it to improve lives and bolster the state’s economic prospects. Since 1997, NJPP has played an essential role in advancing progressive state policies.