



Kern County Children and Families Commission

Job Description - Strategic Initiatives Specialist

Vision Statement - All Kern County children will be born into and thrive in supportive, safe, loving homes and neighborhoods and will enter school healthy and ready to learn.

Mission Statement - To strengthen and support the children of Kern County prenatal to five and their families by empowering our providers through the integration of services with an emphasis on health and wellness, parent education, and early childcare and education.

Position Goal: Develop early childhood system change initiatives building on existing infrastructure and relationships while incorporating new funding, new partners and innovative methodologies to achieve the intended result.

Primary Responsibilities: Under the general supervision of the Executive Director, the Strategic Initiatives Specialist will support the Commission's long-term strategic vision by:

- Working collaboratively with First 5 Kern staff, community partners and local communities throughout Kern County to research, promote, build and sustain innovative early childhood initiatives that will support life-long health, education, employment opportunities and achievement for Kern County children
- Researching emerging trends, federal, state and local funding opportunities, internal and external collaboration opportunities and providing advice to facilitate decision making about potential new collaborations
- Identifying best practices and developing new projects, pilots, strategic initiatives and partnerships to support First 5 Kern's strategic priorities by drawing on evidence, leading-edge approaches to social innovation and collaborative work with community agencies, civic institutions, donors, staff and other key stakeholders
- Building strong relationships across internal and external partnerships to facilitate collaboration on strategy-led projects
- Working with community partners to identify cross-functional challenges, critical gaps in service, project roadblocks and find resolution to various issues and communication concerns
- Conduct technical assistance with community-based organizations, providers and public agencies to effectively implement programs and initiatives
- Encourage community-wide data capture and data sharing allowing for more effective evaluation of programs and initiatives



Kern County Children and Families Commission

Additional Responsibilities:

- Collaborate with staff to support existing grants, relationships and collaborations
- Help create contracts and grant agreements for complex documents
- Partner with the Executive Director, other staff and Commission members to continuously work to refine and advance the intended impact of First 5 Kern's grantmaking
- Advocate the Commission's values and priorities in the community and with the general public
- Travel as required to research prospective funding opportunities, programs and events, which may include evenings
- Perform other duties and responsibilities assigned by the Executive Director

Qualifications:

- A Master's level degree recipient from an accredited institution, preferably in Early Childhood Development, Social Science, Education, Public Administration or a closely related field
- Five years of professional experience working in a social service agency or division preferably involving the provision of services to children and families
- An experienced public speaker and facilitator who is comfortable researching, preparing and presenting before professional and community audiences
- A seasoned professional with ten or more years of overall professional experience and five or more years in a programmatic role in a grantmaking organization, including another First 5 entity, foundation, university or as a development professional for a non-profit organization
- Effective working in a team environment and able to drive decision-making processes among diverse partner organizations
- An understanding of the political, economic and social contexts of communities and interest areas where the Commission focuses its investments, as well as the desire and skills to promote systems change.
- In addition, will have a commitment to social justice and be passionate about developing innovative approaches to investing in high-impact and promising nonprofits ranging from small grassroots organizations to large complex institutions

Desired Skills

- Bilingual in speaking and writing in both English and Spanish
- Highly energetic, self-motivated and entrepreneurial individual who can work independently with confidence, and seeks out opportunities to collaborate
- Curious and eager to explore and learn new ways to achieve exceptional results in building the capacity of nonprofit organizations



Kern County Children and Families Commission

- Strong interpersonal skills, including excellent verbal and written communications skills, as well as a pleasant and professional manner
- Knowledgeable about grantmaking accountability requirements necessary to analyze and ensure grantees are in legal and fiscal compliance
- Experienced and comfortable traveling to meetings and other assignments requiring in-person attendance at locations away from the office
- Competency with grantmaking database management software, customer relationship management databases, and Microsoft Office
- Experience using social media in a professional capacity