ECHO Job Description

Job Title	Director of Research and Evaluation
Department	Research and Evaluation
Date Revised	April 16, 2024
Starting Salary Range	80,000-100,000
Position Type & FLSA	Full Time, Exempt

Job Summary:

The Director of Research and Evaluation (R&E) is responsible for leading and managing the design, development, implementation, and presentation of research and evaluation projects, with a specific focus on performance monitoring, data analysis, and continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts that support the Austin/Travis County Homelessness Response System (HRS). The Director works in partnership with R&E staff, other ECHO colleagues, and key partners to carry out evaluation and performance and quality improvement work tailored toward the needs of the system and the community to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. The Director will be tasked with managing the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and will present often on key findings and trends of HRS performance. The ideal candidate must possess strong analytical and communication skills, be an experienced team leader, and have an organized and equity-focused approach to time and people management.

Reporting Structure:

The Director has two direct reports who manage the following areas: Analytics and Performance Monitoring within the HRS Strategy Department. The position reports to the Senior Director of Research and Public Policy.

Essential Job Functions:

- Promote a collaborative vision of standardized analysis, performance monitoring, and CQI for ECHO and partners in the HRS.

- Use HRS data and tools (e.g., HIC, PIT, SPMs, CAs) to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of projects, program types, and the HRS.

- Manage and perform data queries, design analytical tools, and create reports to support the information needs of the HRS for all reporting and funding applications. This includes, but is not limited to, overseeing the HRS Dashboard.

- Oversee, with the support of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Department, community requests for data, reports, and analysis using HMIS data.

- Collaborate with ECHO staff and partners to assess and meet the data, performance monitoring, and reporting needs of ECHO and its partners.

- Manage the analysis and writing of a State of the Homelessness Response System annual report that includes HUD's requirements to analyze racial disparities and the needs and gaps of the system.

- Make recommendations and lead research and evaluation efforts that integrate metrics for HRS interventions that should be incorporated into the dashboard or

other reporting mechanisms.

- Work with the Programs and Strategy teams to suggest ongoing improvements and recommendations for HRS program types, including Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, Diversion, Outreach, Emergency Shelter, and SOAR.

- Work with the Programs and Strategy teams on the ongoing analysis of the Austin Prioritization Assessment Tool (APAT) and make recommendations on changes to address racial equity, efficiency, and effectiveness of referrals into housing programs.

- Support the work of the Goal Oriented Learning Development (GOLD) series, including attending monthly meetings with ECHO and service provider staff.

- Support the development and continuous improvement of CoC Quarterly Performance Scorecards.

- Provide support for external program evaluation projects, including the AT Home Initiative evaluation.

- Work with partner agencies and people with lived experience to create and track metrics related to community needs, especially related to racial and gender equity.

- Provide ongoing support to system governance committees and workgroups, including but not limited to: (a) Providing insights from data analysis for review in advance of meetings, and (b) Giving presentations, and (c) Making recommendations on system improvement efforts.

- Work with the Public Policy team at ECHO on public policy initiatives.

- Prepare reports and other written materials for internal and external use.

- Support or lead grant writing and submission for qualitative research grants, as needed.

- Support the HMIS Department with data quality improvement activities.

- Develop project plans, set timelines, allocate resources, and monitor progress to ensure projects are delivered on schedule and within budget.

- Stay up to date on good evaluation, performance monitoring and CQI practices.

- Model strong leadership skills within the R&E team and broader agency:

  o Demonstrate a learning mindset. Act and lead in ways that honor the expertise of all ECHO colleagues and community partners, including and especially those with lived experience and people with intersectional identities who are impacted by the HRS. Show humility as a leader, including a willingness to be curious, seek support, ask questions, and work to improve understanding.

  o Be a proactive leader with regard to staffing the team, retaining employees, and positively engaging R&E team members. Collaborate with other Directors and HR to recognize employee achievements, provide cross-teams communication about challenges and successes in ECHO's work, and otherwise drive purpose and build a culture consistent with ECHO's values and principles.

  o Provide coaching and professional development to direct reports. Within the R&E team, ensure consistent and mutually accountable performance management via prompt and self-aware follow up in instances of inadequate or incomplete performance, as defined in job descriptions, agency policy and

procedure, and program standards. Provide clear, actionable, and situation-based feedback to direct reports.

o   Maintain solid understanding of agency policies and procedures, especially as related to employee conduct, hiring, anti-discrimination, etc. Act in accordance with those guiding documents and directives. Ensure that employees are knowledgeable about their rights, are welcome to assert them, and work with the Sr. Director of R&E and the HR Director to enhance timely awareness of changes to policy and procedure.

Required Qualifications & Experience:

- Seven (7) years of combined education, volunteer, and/or work experience conducting systems change work in the nonprofit or public health sector, or comparable, and/or lived experience of homelessness.

- Four (4) years of experience providing individual supervision that included collaborative professional development and growth, as well as constructive feedback and routine performance evaluation.

- Strong working knowledge of research and evaluation methodologies and tools, including different methods and the strengths and weaknesses of each method.

- Fluency with the R statistical software, including the tidyverse suite of packages and dashboarding/interactive graphing packages (e.g., plotly, highcharter, ggiraph, leaflet).

- Demonstrated ability to manage qualitative research projects, including experience with qualitative data analysis software such as Atlas.TI.

- Strong demonstrated track record of strategic thinking and relationship building.

- Understanding of Racial Equity and Gender Equity principles and how they apply to systems.

Preferred Qualifications & Experience.

- At least five (5) years of experience working on research, program evaluation, and performance monitoring projects.

- Experience conducting analysis in Excel and dashboarding in Tableau.

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.

- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail.

- Experience collaborating with community-based organizations and/or actively providing support to HRS committees, stakeholder groups, or committees.

- Strong, demonstrated track record of relationship building with external stakeholders, including homelessness advisory boards.

- Knowledge and mastery of systems that serve people at risk of and experiencing homelessness and understanding of principles and implementation of practices that apply evidence based and innovative solutions to homelessness.

- Willingness to learn new things, strive for ongoing individual and team improvement, and enhance psychological safety in the R&E team.

- Demonstrated, practical understanding and application of antiracist/racial equity principles within various settings (agency, community, and system levels).

Work Environment:

This job operates in office settings and is currently hybrid. Employees are required to use their personal cell phone for business purposes. Some activities will be conducted in the community, including in other offices, libraries, and other community-based settings. This position does require commuting throughout Austin/Travis County for various stakeholder meetings, when applicable. Proficiency in using Microsoft suite, including Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, and the ability to adapt and commit to using other software or technology is needed.

Physical Demands:

Physical demands include the use of standard office equipment, including computer, copy machine, phone, etc. The ability to communicate clearly and appropriately with co-workers and community partners.

Reasonable Accommodations:

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform the principal duties satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the principal duties of the job, except where to do so would cause undue hardship on ECHO operations. Contact human resources (HR) with any questions or requests for accommodation.

Position Type and Expected Hours of Works

This is an exempt full-time position working 40 hours a week; typical work days are Monday through Friday. Agency meetings occur on business days between the hours of 8:00 AM and

5:00 PM (Central Standard Time). Occasional evening and weekend work may be required as job duties demand. A high degree of flexibility can be anticipated by ECHO staff when conducting most independent and/or administrative work. Some travel is expected for this position, both locally and to national conferences.

Compensation and Benefits:

ECHO offers competitive wages and a generous benefits packet with employer contributions for full time employees including medical, dental, 401K, HRA, PTO, 8 paid holidays, 4 paid work/life wellness days and opportunities for educational and professional development.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Statement:

The Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) values diversity, equity, and inclusion in every aspect of our work, including our internal operations and external activities to support our mission. We are committed to cultivating a culture of respect for the dignity and value of each individual and family accessing the Homelessness Response System. These values are essential to our mission focused on leading and aligning a coalition to administer an effective Homelessness Response System, centered in racial equity, informed by the needs and expertise of people experiencing homelessness, and accountable to systemically marginalized communities. We welcome all. ECHO does not discriminate against any employee or job applicant because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, physical or mental disability, or age. Women, minorities, veterans,

people with lived experience of homelessness, and other diverse populations are encouraged to apply.

Research and Evaluation Department Values

- The stories and experiences of people experiencing homelessness cannot be fully captured with quantitative (HMIS) data.

- Explanations matter more than just data.

- Our work relies on the expertise and perspectives of others, including ECHO staff and external partners.

- Transparency, not just of the data but of the data collection process—including its flaws and limitations—is important.

To Apply:

Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to:

- Tonya Thomas, HR Director: tonyathomas@austinecho.org

- Akram Al-Turk: akramalturk@austinecho.org

To be considered, candidates must submit a (max 1-page) cover letter that references this position and highlights work experience and expertise that matches the technical and non-technical aspects of this job description. As part of the interview process, candidates will be asked to complete a technical skills exercise (in R) and put together and deliver a short presentation. Position will remain open until filled.

Acknowledgement:

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Employee Signature   Date

_____   _____

HR Director Signature   Date