Overview of the Opportunity

Our new Consultant will be invited to join the Outstanding Educators team, one of three operational “home teams” at Education First. Consultants direct the overall work of client engagements, managing project teams and client relationships and ensuring on-time, high-quality deliverables. Candidates should bring strong project management and team leadership skills and be excited to support a variety of organizations at the local, state, national and federal levels to advance systems change. We are especially interested in candidates with experience and interest in educator diversity initiatives and/or teacher preparation.

About Education First

Education First is a mission-driven education policy consultancy dedicated to ensuring that all students – and particularly students of color and students experiencing poverty – are prepared for success in college, careers, and life. We work with organizations that are shaping the future of P-16 education across the nation, including school networks and districts, state departments of education, policy and advocacy organizations, youth empowerment organizations, talent organizations and foundations.

We help these system leaders catalyze change through our services:

- Conduct research and analysis on policies and provide contextual recommendations and strategic support to translate findings into concrete, sustainable action.
- Develop and implement visionary, coherent strategies and strategic plans by prioritizing inclusive voices, focusing on the right problems, and providing space to explore.
- Plan and facilitate meaningful convenings for organizations and individuals to learn, problem solve, collaborate, and advance their work.
- Design actionable and equitable solutions that meet client needs, achieve program goals, and implement initiatives with clarity and quality.
- Support grantmakers, funders, and foundations to develop thoughtful, high-impact investment strategies that align with their goals, interests, and resources.

We are a team of more than 60 former teachers, district and state education leaders, policy advisors, and grantmakers who live and work virtually in more than 20 states and DC. Because of our experience, we approach the challenges our clients face with humility, realistic solutions, and a commitment to follow-through. Our culture is built on genuine care for our clients and for each other. We celebrate original thinking, collaboration, entrepreneurialism, authenticity and fun.

Our Equity Commitment

We recognize that in order to pursue our own organizational mission at Education First, we must approach our work by studying gaps and inequities, asking tough questions about structural racism and more deliberately engaging diverse voices in problem-solving. We’ve been building our own skills to deliver solutions that center racial equity, with particular attention to equitable ways of thinking and working, and we are committed to
helping our clients do the same in projects that have a goal of increasing equity at their core. Within Education First, we have committed to building a race equity culture – creating the conditions to adopt antiracist mindsets and actions.

We believe:

- **Black lives matter.** We are collectively responsible to amplify and support Black students, families and leaders.
- **People are experts in their own experience.** We cannot effectively support our clients to problem solve and innovate without centering the people they aim to serve.
- **Racism and inequity were designed, and can be redesigned.** People make up the systems, policies and processes that govern our experience, and we must support our clients to explore their role in reimagining what could be possible.

For greater detail about our Equity Commitment, please visit our [website](#).

**Primary Responsibilities**

The primary responsibilities of the Consultant are:

- Develop and execute on project work plans according to client needs and budget constraints
- Produce client deliverables, working collaboratively with and coaching project team members on a range of deliverables such as presentations, strategy and program documents, policy memos, briefs and reports
- Oversee successful projects, including building capacity in and advising clients, and ensuring that project deliverables meet our excellence standard
- Build and lead inclusive project teams on which members experience positive professional growth and where constructive feedback is regularly shared and accepted
- Support project teams in creating creating and monitoring budgets, developing and managing work plans, and coordinating knowledge management across streams of work
- Adapt project plans to reflect changes in project requirements while adhering to the budget and meeting client goals and deadlines
- Develop relationships with high-profile clients in the education field and support district, organizational and state teams that may include CEOs, foundation grantee leaders, chief state school officers, district superintendents and other stakeholder group leaders as well as key implementation leads and educators
- Understand root causes, design with and for people most proximate to the problems and deliver equitable, effective and innovative solutions to address client challenges
- Lead landscape analyses and stay current on research and trends by identifying critical sources, gathering and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data
- Utilize expert facilitation skills and understanding of adult learning principles to design and facilitate effective client meetings and internal project team meetings, and to coach other team members to design, present and facilitate client and team meetings
- Capture and share project insights for clients and for the firm internally
- Collaborate on the development of tools and strategies to assess client needs, lift up research and emerging best practice
- Provide feedback and guidance to team members and clients utilizing content-specific expertise
- Work with agility and manage ambiguity for the team when work or decisions shift that impacts workplans
- Design and deploy technical assistance to clients
Experience & Qualifications

- 6+ years designing, implementing and/or advocating for successful education policies designed to improve P-20 education outcomes for young people, in settings including school districts, education reform organizations, foundations, governor’s offices and state boards/departments of education
- 2+ years of strong, inclusive project management experience, including demonstrated ability to juggle several complex projects at once, develop work plans, maintain project budgets, manage risks, and meet deadlines and targets
- Professional experience working for change from at least two different vantage points in the education sector (e.g., school districts, philanthropy, state departments of education, nonprofit organizations, technical service providers)
- Ability to synthesize complex ideas from technical literature and qualitative research into a clear storyline for reports and presentations; ability to identify the key and relevant “so what” findings and advice for clients from data and research
- Demonstrated experience managing people, especially those at different points in their careers and from a mix of diverse cultural identities, and working with diverse communities
- Demonstrated understanding, experience and content expertise in one or both of these issue areas preferred: (1) policies and practices that increase the numbers of teachers and school leaders of color; (2) policies and initiatives that improve quality preparation of teachers
- Experience working collaboratively in diverse team environments that require strong interpersonal skills and high emotional intelligence
- Ability to write clearly and concisely
- Facilitation experience with a range of stakeholder groups and clients
- Skill at building well-organized and creating compelling client-facing PowerPoint presentations
- Bachelor’s degree (required). Advanced degree in public policy, public administration, business, education or a related field, or equivalent experience (preferred)

Who You Are

- You are committed to the vision of a more equitable education system in the U.S., including a willingness to examine the role of privilege, structural barriers, and inclusion in changing the trajectories of students furthest from opportunity
- You are a strong, inclusive project manager
- You have a history of bringing varying groups of stakeholders together to help them seek strategic common ground
- You are self-motivated and results oriented
- You can lead through ambiguity to create clear structures that deliver high-quality results to clients
- You take initiative to resourcefully solve problems while anticipating and adjusting for the unexpected
- You take ownership of your own development and derive satisfaction from supporting others to grow professionally
- You provide and receive feedback with ease
- You lead by influence – establishing open lines of communication and understanding and including the perspectives of others

Location, Travel & Compensation

All positions are 100% remote and employees can live anywhere in the United States. You should be able to travel for in-person client meetings as needed (roughly 20% of the time) once it is safe to do so from a public health perspective.
Education First offers a market-based competitive salary, comprehensive benefits package (including PPO medical/dental/vision/life insurance), four weeks of paid time off, 11 paid national holidays, paid leave (disability/parental), teleworking subsidy, matching 401(k) plan, work-life flexibility and professional development opportunities.

The salary range for this position is $82,000 - $116,000 (with 20% of the offer supplemented by local market trends if that market is higher than the national market). We typically set initial starting salaries between the minimum and the 25th percentile of the pay range ($82,000 - $90,000) to ensure there is room for growth over time. Exceptions can be made for significantly more-experienced hires (e.g., if the position requires a minimum of 10 years of relevant experience, and the selected finalist has more than 18 years of relevant experience, or if the specialized skills demanded for the role and the market analysis recommend a higher starting salary).

**COVID-19 Vaccine Policy**

Education First requires all employees to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 unless they have an approved medical/religious exemption. Although we are a virtual firm, there are mandatory in-person retreats for all staff twice a year and our consulting team travels regularly to client meetings, many of whom are also instituting a mandatory vaccine policy. Proof of vaccination will be required upon acceptance of any offer of employment. We take the health of our employees, families, and clients very seriously, and are taking all necessary precautions to promote public health and safety.

**Application**

We are excited to receive applications from a broad range of applicants as we grow our team to better reflect the diversity of the communities our firm is committed to serve. Enthusiastic candidates should apply [online](#) to submit their resume and their responses to each of the following prompts within the application portal, in lieu of a cover letter:

1. What brings you to Education First and how does this role fit within your short term career goals?
2. Tell us about a time when you were responsible for managing resources (e.g., people, time, money) for a project. What resource adjustments did you make? How did you communicate forecast updates?
3. Tell us about a project that you managed that involved overseeing others’ work. How many people were on the project team and what were your responsibilities in relation to the other project team members? What challenges came up during the project and how were they addressed? What was the final result of the project?
4. Education First is committed to RIDE (Race, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity) principles in how we operate internally and our work with clients. What are your reflections on how our RIDE commitment is reflected in your own personal values?

We do not expect you to spend a lengthy amount of time completing each question. Instead, we are looking for succinct responses (no more than 1-2 short paragraphs per question). Please submit all completed application materials by June 17, 2022.

We plan to conduct screening interviews on a rolling basis and share performance tasks with select candidates. Ideally, we’d like our new Consultant to start in August. Please, no phone calls, emails or other inquiries.

*Education First actively engages our team with a robust [Race, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (RIDE)](#) strategy to build our staff and organizational capacity to lead on issues of equity and to increase diversity, equity and inclusion at all levels of the firm. As a proud equal opportunity employer, we strongly encourage applications from*
candidates of all races, national origins, ages, religions, creeds, veteran or disabled statuses, sexual orientations, gender identities or gender expressions.