Job Title: Senior Associate, Early Childhood and Workforce Policy
Job Type: Full-Time; Exempt
Reports to: Director of Policy & Government Affairs, Philanthropy Advocates

Purpose:

The Senior Associate, Early Childhood and Workforce Policy, is a full-time position that is responsible for the day-to-day development of Philanthropy Advocates' work on early childhood and workforce development, two systems that shape Texas students' success from their earliest years to their dream job. Working under the guidance of the Director of Policy & Government Affairs, this position serves as Philanthropy Advocates' staff lead on early childhood and workforce policy: building expertise and relationships across Texas' early childhood and workforce systems, helping develop policy recommendations, and supporting Philanthropy Advocates' engagement with state agencies, legislative offices, and partners.

About Philanthropy Advocates:

Philanthropy Advocates is a membership organization of nearly 60 Texas foundations that are deeply invested in student success in rural, urban, and suburban communities across the state. Together, we advocate for policies that give all Texas students a high-quality education, equipping them to pursue their dreams and enjoy lifelong economic mobility. Our work spans early childhood education, the educator workforce, college and career, and education finance.

We believe that every Texas student should have a great education, from their earliest years to their dream job. Funders are essential to getting there, using their resources and expertise to help shape education systems that live up to that belief.

Waco Foundation is the fiscal sponsor of Philanthropy Advocates, therefore the employer of record for Philanthropy Advocates staff.

Nature of Work:

Philanthropy Advocates is a fast-growing team that covers a broad range of education and workforce issues. This role is highly suited for a policy professional with at least three years of relevant experience who is ready to take ownership of an issue portfolio. Texas early childhood and workforce policy spans multiple state agencies, federal and state funding streams, and a statewide network of local workforce development boards. The right candidate brings working knowledge of these systems and the curiosity to keep deepening that knowledge. The Senior Associate manages their own projects independently, exercises sound judgment about when to seek input and is comfortable working with policymakers, agency and legislative staff, and advocacy partners.

This role requires an individual who adheres to our nonpartisan commitment while representing Philanthropy Advocates. The work is fast-paced, constantly evolving, and requires high degrees of discretion, adaptability, and independent judgment. Our work is best suited for individuals committed to our Philanthropy Advocates guiding principles of being student centric, systems oriented, data informed, results focused, collaborative and member driven.

This role is a hybrid position based in Austin, Texas.

Growth Opportunity:

Philanthropy Advocates is deepening our capacity in early childhood and workforce policy, and the Senior Associate will shape what that work becomes. The Senior Associate will join a small team with relationships at the Texas Capitol and across state agencies, work directly with Philanthropy Advocates' policy leaders, and work alongside Texas foundations invested in student success across the state. In the first year, the Senior Associate can expect to:

- Help establish Philanthropy Advocates as a trusted resource on early childhood and workforce policy with the Texas Workforce Commission, the Health and Human Services Commission, local workforce development boards, and legislative offices
- Help shape Philanthropy Advocates' biennial policy priorities in early childhood and workforce alongside members and the policy team
- Support Philanthropy Advocates during the Texas legislative sessions, including hearing coverage, stakeholder meetings, bill analysis, and testimony development

Essential Duties:

- Early Childhood and Workforce Policy Development
    - Serve as Philanthropy Advocates' staff expert on early childhood and workforce policy, including the child care subsidy program, Texas Rising Star, the early childhood workforce, public-private pre-K partnerships, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), registered apprenticeship, adult education, and the role of local workforce development boards
    - Identify and research policy opportunities, develop policy recommendations, and support Philanthropy Advocates policy work groups (particularly Early Childhood Education and Postsecondary Education) in the development of biennial policy priorities
    - Lead analysis of state, federal, and local data sources (e.g., TWC, HHSC, TEA, THECB, U.S. Census) to inform policy positions and member resources
    - Author policy memos, briefs, white papers, and written comments on rulemaking
- Agency and Legislative Engagement
    - Monitor and analyze the activities of the Texas Workforce Commission, HHSC Child Care Regulation, the Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative, and other agencies and boards aligned to Philanthropy Advocates priorities (TEA, THECB, SBOE, etc.), and recommend engagement strategies
    - Track, analyze, and summarize legislation, hearings, and appropriations in legislative committees with jurisdiction over child care, workforce development, and education
    - Support Philanthropy Advocates' engagement in early childhood and workforce rulemaking and the implementation of enacted legislation, including drafting and delivering public comment
    - Prepare testimony and briefings for legislative offices, state agencies, and stakeholders and deliver testimony as opportunities arise
- Relationship Management

    - Build and expand Philanthropy Advocate's relationships with staff at TWC, HHSC, and local workforce development boards, and build relationships with legislative staff working on early childhood and workforce issues
    - Represent Philanthropy Advocates in coalitions and stakeholder meetings related to early childhood and workforce policy
    - Lead network mapping that connects Philanthropy Advocates members with local workforce boards, regional partners, and policymakers
- Project Management and Team Support
    - Independently manage multiple concurrent projects from planning through completion, including timelines, deliverables, and coordination with team members, Philanthropy Advocates members, and partners
    - Help design and maintain the team's legislative session and knowledge management systems, including bill tracking, hearing notes, relationship notes, and decision logs
    - Provide policy generalist support across the Philanthropy Advocates portfolio during the legislative session, including independent hearing coverage and bill analysis
- PA Member Engagement
    - Facilitate portions of Philanthropy Advocates policy work group meetings and prepare related materials
    - Serve as a resource to Philanthropy Advocates members on early childhood and workforce policy, including responding to member requests
    - Organize regional site visits, events, or legislative meetings with Philanthropy Advocates members and other stakeholders

Other Responsibilities and Duties:

- Coordination and support of projects with members of the Philanthropy Advocates team
- Other duties as assigned to advance Philanthropy Advocates' policy and advocacy strategies

Qualifications:

- Undergraduate degree at an accredited institution of higher education
- 3+ years of professional experience in policy, government, advocacy, research, early childhood, or workforce development
- Demonstrated knowledge of Texas early childhood and/or workforce policy, including the relevant state agencies and funding streams
- Demonstrated record of independently managing complex projects, timelines, and stakeholders through to completion
- Demonstrated record of stakeholder engagement to advance policy or program outcomes
- Demonstrated interest in early childhood, education, or workforce policy

Preferred Qualifications:

- Experience working in or around the Texas Legislature, a state agency (e.g., TWC, HHSC, TEA, THECB), a local workforce development board, or an advocacy organization, including direct experience with the legislative or rulemaking process

- Working knowledge of early childhood funding and quality systems (e.g., the federal Child Care and Development Fund, Texas Rising Star) and/or workforce programs (e.g., WIOA, registered apprenticeship, adult education)
- Experience drafting and/or delivering testimony, public comment, or presentations to policymakers
- Experience facilitating stakeholder meetings or working groups

Skills & Requirements:

- Ability to use data and research to inform policy development, and to communicate complex policy ideas in practical and accessible language for diverse audiences
- Demonstrated skill in oral and written communication
- Sound independent judgment, including the ability to anticipate and identify challenges and plan for contingencies
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail, including establishing outcomes and tracking progress with frequent job and task ambiguity
- Ability to work effectively and build relationships with stakeholders from different viewpoints and backgrounds
- Mindset of self-reflection and continuous improvement
- Highest ethical standards, honesty, integrity, professionalism, diplomacy, flexibility and the ability to appropriately protect confidential information
- Interest in working hard in a goal-oriented, dynamic, small team
- Demonstrated interest and commitment to the Philanthropy Advocates mission and strategies
- Ability to work a full-time schedule, including non-traditional hours during a legislative session

Work Hours:

Philanthropy Advocates complies with the employment policies established by the Waco Foundation. Office hours are generally Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with a 30-minute lunch outside of the legislative session or regulatory board meetings. During the legislative session or certain regulatory board meetings, the team works to ensure we have appropriate organizational representation in the Capitol or board meeting, which at times will impact a standard daily schedule, and this position frequently requires flexibility beyond normal business hours. The senior associate plays a key role in a dynamic and growing organization and should expect periods where project demands, organizational priorities, events, or operational needs require additional time and attention. Philanthropy Advocates seeks team members who are committed to excellence, take ownership of outcomes, and are willing to work hard in pursuit of the organization's mission. We value employee well-being and encourage a sustainable approach to achieving results. Schedule flexibility may be available for some positions at the discretion of the Philanthropy Advocates co-Managing Directors.

Pay Rate:

- $75,000 – $90,000
- Commensurate with education and experience.

Application Process:

- Submit resume and cover letter that specifically addresses your interest and qualifications for the role by Monday, November 16 to admin@philanthropyadvocates.org.
- Interviews will be held November 30 and December 1.

Physical Characteristics:

Strength, dexterity, coordination and vision to use a keyboard and also video display terminal on a daily basis for long hours during the day. Physical ability to frequently sit at a computer, perform repetitive movements and work in confined areas. Physical ability to travel in car, bus or airplane.

THIS JOB DESCRIPTION PROVIDES A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE DUTIES OF THE POSITION. IT IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE. MANAGEMENT HAS THE SOLE DISCRETION TO MODIFY THESE DUTIES BASED ON ITS REASONABLE BUSINESS JUDGMENT AND ECONOMIC FACTORS.