

OFA FED Talk is a periodic bulletin from your HMRF OFA Leadership Team containing important information for grantees.



HIRING STAFF FOR KEY PROJECT POSITIONS

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Hiring qualified staff for key project positions in a timely manner is fundamental to your HMRF project's success. Per the HMRF Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA), all grantee organizations are expected to fill the following three-to-four key project positions: Project Director, Project Manager (optional, unless the PD is less than 50% FTE), Data Manager, and Financial Officer. These positions must be assigned appropriate levels of effort to ensure the successful operation and compliance of your grantee project; specifically, to ensure and maintain 100 percent overall project oversight, monitoring, fiscal, and day-to-day management of your federally-funded program.

Hiring the Right Employee in a Timely Manner is Critical

While it is expected that each organization will use their Human Resources department protocols when hiring HMRF-related staff, we offer this FEDTalk to provide generic information to help you with the hiring process. If you have not filled all of these key positions for your HMRF project, finding the right employee in a timely manner matters more than most other decisions you or your team will make.

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Making a desperation hire for critical positions more times than not produces poor results. Your goal is to hire high-performers that will result in low turnover so that your project can hit the ground running and keep that momentum going.

One essential step is to develop a detailed, well-written position description for each of the **key project positions**. Each position description should establish essential duties and the necessary qualifications and capabilities including education and experience.

Another important step is to decide how to conduct the recruitment, interviewing, and hiring processes in a fair, rational, and organized way. For example, you should consider:

- How you will advertise the position in order to recruit the best qualified candidates
- How the selection committee will be composed and how many interviewers will be on the selection committee
- What questions will allow you to assess the candidates who meet the essential requirements for a particular position
- How the selection committee will discuss and score candidates
- Who it is that will make the final hiring decision

These considerations should be made before recruiting or meeting with applicants, so that you get the most out of the time spent interviewing.

Qualities, Skills, and Roles for Key Staff

The **key project positions** are essential to your success. Several HMRF Project Directors have expressed interest in learning more about how to identify the best qualities and skills when hiring for these positions. We are providing the following generic information for position descriptions for **Project Directors, Project Managers, Financial Officers, and Data Managers**. This is generic information, provided as examples of what you can focus on when hiring for each position, as needed. By being familiar with some of the essential functions, minimum qualifications, knowledge, skills, and abilities, you can write your own position descriptions and focus on some of the most sought-after qualities for hiring competent individuals for these crucial positions.

Sample Job Descriptions

(Grantees are free to revise, develop, or obtain comparable descriptions.)

Project Director

As a visionary leader, the Project Director is responsible for all facets of the [INSERT HMRF GRANTEE] project. The position will have overall operational and managerial responsibility in overseeing the planning and implementation processes for this federally-funded grant. The Project Director is responsible for direct program oversight (including oversight of the performance of partner organizations), management, implementation, grantee-led evaluation (as applicable), performance management, and continuous quality improvement (CQI) of the [INSERT HMRF GRANTEE] project. The Project Director must ensure that [INSERT GRANTEE] organizations' leadership, and all community partners and stakeholders supported under this grant, are made aware of the importance of being equally invested in and committed to achieving all goals and objectives of the [FRAMEWORKS, READY4LIFE, OR FATHERHOOD FIRE program] and the approved application.

Essential Functions

- Plans, directs, coordinates, and leads activities of [INSERT HMRF GRANTEE] project to ensure that goals, objectives, and all elements of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) requirements are accomplished within the prescribed time frame and funding parameters.
- Conducts a periodic review of the ACF's Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) FOA and [INSERT GRANTEE'S] application in order to ensure that time frames, funding limitations, procedures for accomplishing performance measurements, CQI implementation, staffing requirements, and allotment of available resources to various phases of the project are compliant and on target. Establishes work plan and staffing for each part and phase of the project and arranges for assignment of key project personnel.
- Promotes organizational support and buy-in for CQI and maintains the capacity to collect, review, and use quality data to identify areas for potential improvement. Ensures that [INSERT GRANTEE'S] project uses the CQI data tools provided by the Office of Family Assistance (OFA)—or comparable CQI data tools—and that CQI efforts are guided by the program's mission, theory of change, and logic model.
- Attends and actively participates in all required events, including the Entrance Conference, Biennial Grantee Meeting, and Regional Meetings (e.g., Leadership Academies and roundtables), and ensures that other key staff attend as directed by OFA. (The Project Manager is required to attend with the Project Director if the Project Director is 50% or less on the grant).
- Schedules and participates in regularly scheduled meetings with his or her OFA Family Assistance Program Specialist (FPS).
- Maintains access to the website operated by a technical assistance contractor, FastTRAC (First-line Access System for Training and Technical Assistance, Resources, and Communications) and ensures access or key staff.

- Supervises the agreements with and performance of all subrecipients and partners, to ensure they are delivering high-quality services on schedule and within budget.
- Prepares and reviews required project reports for accurate and timely submissions to [INSERT GRANTEE] board and/or executive committee and to ACF/OFA.
- Reviews data and data analysis to address any program quality issues, as needed and for promoting data-driven decision-making and CQI.
- Oversees preparation and timely delivery of all required reporting to ACF/OFA.
- Ensures that the Authorizing Organizational Representative (AOR) maintains access to GrantSolutions and any other necessary systems in order to monitor and facilitate communication and initiate or execute grant-related actions—e.g., fiscal and administrative actions to the Office of Grants Management (OGM).
- Confers with project staff to provide advice and resolve problems. Coordinates with the marketing staff and leadership team on public outreach, press releases, public presentations of the work, website content, and social media development.
- Oversees budget and ensures financial accountability.
- Supports and oversees local evaluation (if applicable).
- Recruits, hires, and oversees training and orientation of all staff members.
- Develops and implements a system to evaluate the skill, experience, and professional development needs of all staff.
- Implements a professional development program to address employee experience and skill gaps.
- Works with staff to develop objective performance measurements across all sites to ensure all employees have consistent, high-quality evaluations, and goal setting procedures.
- Instills a sense of pride and accountability among team members by modeling oversight of individual and {INSERT GRANT PROGRAM'S} performance standards.

Minimum Qualifications

(Education and Experience)

- Minimum bachelor's degree, master's preferred, in an appropriate field, such as business administration, public administration, organizational leadership, social work, or related field.
- At least five years of experience in a management role implementing data-driven solutions.
- Demonstrated success in developing and evaluating program models and successfully implementing innovative programs.
- Experience managing paid and voluntary staff, including recruiting, hiring, termination, and team development.
- A combination of equivalent education and work experience may be substituted for the above requirements.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Strong organizational, problem-solving, and decision-making skills; accuracy and attention to detail.
- Ability to devise short- and long-term plans and implement them.
- Experience delegating duties, supervising staff, and implementing internal communications.
- Expertise in project management.
- Experience in managing budgets and overseeing subrecipients and partners.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills and ability to share information in a compelling way about [INSERT GRANTEE] project's mission and programs.
- Ability to collaborate with diverse groups, both internal and external.
- Self-motivation with an attitude toward work that is resourceful and innovative.
- Long-term commitment to and passion for [INSERT GRANTEE] work and mission.
- Proficient in using technology as a management reporting tool and experience working with Data Manager and other staff to develop and implement program evaluation systems.
- Strong performance-based project management skills that result in measurable successes, CQI implementation, and program growth.
- Strength in hiring, recruiting, managing, developing, coaching, and retaining individuals and teams; empowering them to elevate their levels of responsibility and performance.
- Experience dealing with human resources, employee performance improvement plans, and corrective action policies.

Project Manager

The Project Manager is responsible for supporting the Project Director. This includes responsibility for the quality of service, coaching, training, development, and work production of all assigned staff of the [INSERT GRANTEE]. He or she will be invested in and committed to achieving all programmatic goals and objectives as were outlined in the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) and the approved application for this grant. He or she will ensure that [INSERT GRANTEE], partners, and subrecipients (if applicable) provide high-quality services and that the program is in alignment with [INSERT GRANTEE] mission. The Project Manager will make certain that federal and state laws as well as Administration for Children and Families (ACF)'s Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRP) grant requirements are adhered to throughout the grant period. Day-to-day collaboration will be required with all members of the staff to ensure [INSERT GRANTEE ORGANIZATION] is able to achieve its objectives. The Project Manager will develop and implement solutions to staff and client challenges as they arise. He or she will work closely with the master facilitator(s) to ensure curriculum fidelity and that the required number of primary workshop hours are delivered and completed by [INSERT GRANTEE] clients. The Project Manager will ensure that high-quality support services (e.g., case management) are being delivered and will establish follow-up processes to document whether clients accessed referral services. He or she will maintain good working relationships with the clients, staff, partners, subrecipients (if applicable), volunteers, and the public.

He or she will work closely with the Data Manager to ensure proper and timely data collection and reporting. As part of [INSERT GRANTEE] leadership team, the Project Manager is responsible for regular reviews of data and addressing program quality issues, as needed and for promoting continuous quality improvement (CQI).

Essential Functions

- Oversees and manages day-to-day operations of [INSERT GRANTEE] project.
- Supports Project Director to develop objective performance measurements across all sites, to ensure all employees have consistent, high-quality evaluation, and goal setting procedures.
- Observes and manages partner organizations and subrecipients (if applicable) to ensure high-quality services are being delivered and are consistently adhered to and in compliance with all state and federal laws, as well as the ACF requirements for federally-funded HMRP grants.
- Collaborates with Data Manager to ensure quality data collection and input; reviews data analysis to identify needed improvements.
- Instills a sense of pride and accountability among team members by modeling oversight of individual staff and [INSERT GRANTEE] performance standards.
- Recruits, hires, and oversees training and orientation of all staff members.
- Attends and participates in all required meetings, such as the Entrance Conference, Biennial Grantee Meeting, and other national or regional meetings (e.g., Leadership Academies, roundtables, and/or summits) as directed by the Office of Family Assistance (OFA). (This position is required to attend with the Project Director if the Project Director is 50% or less on the grant.)
- Assists the local evaluator (if applicable) and Data Manager in their evaluation efforts.

Minimum Qualifications

(Education and Experience)

- Bachelor's degree, master's preferred, in an appropriate field, such as organizational management, social work, business administration, or related field.
- At least five years of experience with project management and supervisory roles.
- A combination of equivalent education and work experience may be substituted for the above requirements.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Personal qualities of integrity, credibility, and a commitment to and passion for [INSERT GRANTEE] mission.
- Strong organizational, problem-solving, and decision-making skills; accuracy and attention to detail.
- Ability to devise short- and long-term plans and implement them.
- Experience delegating duties, supervising staff, and implementing internal communications.
- Expertise in project management.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including public speaking experience and ability to share information in a compelling way about [INSERT GRANTEE] project's mission and programs.
- Experience managing budgets and overseeing subrecipients and partners.
- Ability to collaborate with diverse groups, both internal and external.
- Self-motivator with an attitude toward work that is resourceful and innovative.
- Strength in hiring, recruiting, managing, developing, coaching, and retaining individuals and teams; empowering them to elevate their levels of responsibility and performance.
- Experience dealing with human resources, employee performance improvement plans, and corrective action policies.

Data Manager

The Data Manager will monitor and analyze data on [INSERT GRANTEE] project operations and clients to support required reporting to the funder, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and the Office of Family Assistance (OFA), and to promote continuous quality improvement (CQI). The Data Manager will be responsible for developing a comprehensive data collection plan, which will ensure systematic data entry, protection of Personally Identifiable Information (PII), and adherence to Privacy Act and human subjects protections as appropriate. The Data Manager will be responsible for monitoring data collection and entry into the required Management Information System (MIS) for this grant, which is called Information, Family Outcomes, Reporting, and Management (nFORM) and must be used by all grantees. The Data Manager is also responsible for [INSERT IF APPLICABLE OTHER DATA SYSTEM(S) USED BY GRANTEE PROJECT]. The Data Manager will assess data quality and address quality issues, as needed. Working with the HMRF grant team, the Data Manager will regularly analyze data in nFORM and from other sources to assess program quality issues, as needed. He or she will summarize the data required for quarterly reporting to ACF. The Data Manager, working with the grant team, will regularly analyze data in nFORM and from other sources to assess program operations and areas for improvement. He or she will also be responsible for communicating the results in an accessible way and participating in strategic planning to identify, implement, and track solutions.

Essential Functions

- Maintains an active nFORM user account and develops proficiency in using nFORM, including but not limited to analysis using nFORM-produced quarterly performance progress report (QPR) and the semiannual performance progress report (PPR), query tool, operational reports, and data exports.
- Develops and maintains [INSERT GRANTEE] data collection, monitoring, reporting, and security plans and procedures, and ensures that the plan and procedures align with [INSERT GRANTEE] nFORM data sharing and user agreement, as well as other applicable security and human subjects' protection requirements.
- Trains and supervises others to ensure procedures are implemented as intended by [INSERT GRANTEE] staff.
- Regularly assesses data quality, including timelines, completeness, and accuracy.
- Analyzes data for quarterly reporting to ACF and for CQI efforts to identify areas for improvement.
- Attends the Entrance Conference for HMRF grantees.

Minimum Qualifications

(Education and Experience)

- Bachelor's degree, master's preferred, in an appropriate field, such as math, statistics, operations research, business administration, public administration, public policy, government, economics, accounting, or other field relevant to data analysis.
- At least two years of academic, internship, or work-related experience relevant to data analysis and statistical software packages, project management, business analysis, or evaluation of operations of government projects or programs.

- A combination of equivalent education and work experience may be substituted for the above requirements.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Strong organizational and decision-making skills; accuracy and attention to detail.
- Advanced understanding of mathematics and descriptive statistics, with experience in the manipulation and quantitative analysis of data.
- Knowledge of data requirements, documentation, and analysis methods.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills and ability to share findings with technical and nontechnical audiences and respond to inquiries.
- Knowledge of federal, state, and organizational data security requirements and procedures for safeguarding personally identifiable information (PII).
- Ability to comprehend technical materials in tabular or statistical form.
- Ability to work effectively in Excel, Word, Adobe Acrobat, and other software, including especially statistical packages such as SPSS, SAS, and Stata, to extract, analyze, and present data.
- Ability to train and supervise others on data collection and security, as well as data extraction, analysis, and presentation.

Financial Officer

The Financial Officer should have familiarity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). This position is responsible for oversight of all accounts payables (including payroll) and receivables (including billing) for the [INSERT Grantee] project. He or she is responsible for ensuring that financial transactions are recorded accurately and that all record keeping conforms to best practices in financial management. The Financial Officer is responsible for making certain that expenditures using federal grant money are in compliance with Administration for Children and Families (ACF) policies. This individual will provide information and support required for reporting to the funder, ACF, and working with the [INSERT GRANTEE] project's leadership team to provide information that promotes continuous quality improvement (CQI). The Financial Officer will participate in all planning period tasks that pertain to performance measurement data and will be an integral part of the [INSERT GRANTEE] project's leadership team. He or she will work closely with [INSERT GRANTEE] Project Director to conduct a risk assessment of any subrecipient that is being proposed and will assist in preparing the prior approval request before entering into a relationship with any subrecipient. The Financial Officer, as part of the [INSERT GRANTEE] project leadership team, will monitor subrecipient(s) and make sure that all are complying with ACF requirements for subawards.

Essential Functions

- Develops and monitors budgets with other members of the [Grantee] leadership team.
- Manages records and receipts.
- Reconciles daily, monthly, and yearly transactions.
- Oversees cash flow management and invoice processing and tracks expenses.
- Creates monthly reports and analysis of trends in spending and accounts receivables.
- Provides analysis of costs for current and future programming.
- Supports the Project Director and keeps him or her and key stakeholders informed of financial status.
- Ensures that all financial operations comply with internal controls, GAAP, federal, and state laws.
- Prepares and presents monthly, quarterly, and annual financial statements to Project Director, Project Manager, and board of directors.
- Coordinates financial compliance and operational audit activities.
- Represents the organization to supporters and public officials.
- Trains and supervises others to ensure financial procedures are implemented as intended by Project Director and board of directors and that they are in compliance with ACF federally-funded HMRF grant requirements.
- Participates in conducting a risk assessment for any subrecipient, completes prior approval documents for subawards, and tracks expenditures associated with subrecipients.
- Provides information to the Data Manager and leadership team to ensure CQI and will address quality issues as needed.
- Attends the Entrance Conference for HMRF grantees.

Minimum Qualifications

(Education and Experience)

- Bachelor's degree, master's preferred, in appropriate fields such as finance, accounting, business or business administration, economics, or mathematics.
- At least two years of work experience as a Financial Officer, with knowledge about data analysis, risk management, and forecasting methods.
- A combination of equivalent education and work experience may be substituted for the above requirements.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Strong organizational and decision-making skills; accuracy and attention to detail.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills and ability to share financial information with others in the finance field, with audiences who are not familiar with financial terms and processes, and to respond to inquiries.
- Ability to work effectively in Word, Excel, Adobe Acrobat as well as [INSERT OTHER DATA SYSTEM(S) USED BY GRANTEE].
- Ability to extract, analyze, and present financial data.
- Knowledge of GAAP and ACF/OFA federally-funded grant requirements for subawards and monitoring of subrecipients.
- Ability to train and supervise others on financial processes and requirements for federally-funded grant compliance.
- Hands-on experience with accounting and financial management software (e.g., SAP)
- Excellent analytical skills.
- Ability to explain financial terms in simple language.