



Research Director

With its reputation for actionable research and award-winning innovative solutions, Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO) is a growing and dynamic organization. AEO is the leading voice of innovation for microfinance and microbusiness. Our mission is to create economic opportunity for underserved entrepreneurs throughout the United States. We engineer transformational change through research, convening, incubation, and advocacy to foster a robust and inclusive marketplace. Now, in its 30th year, AEO and our 1,700+ member organizations have helped millions of entrepreneurs support themselves and their families while contributing to their communities through business ownership.

AEO is seeking a seasoned researcher with superior quantitative and analytical skills, along with an ability to design and conduct cutting-edge qualitative or mixed methods research projects. Research for AEO encompasses a broad range of topics, including but not limited to inclusive entrepreneurship, access to capital, products and services, and their impact on low-wealth business owners, business owners of color, and aspiring entrepreneurs.

The Research Director must possess the ability to quickly develop deep knowledge of sector specific issues and priorities, and produce compelling applied research initiatives that will drive engagement and add value to AEO's research, program, and policy priorities. The Research Director will promote diverse data collection and analysis of AEO's internal programs to measure our impact and provide insights into program performance.

The Research Director will supervise AEO's Research Associate and Interns, and reports to the Senior Director of AEO's Department of Data and Analytics. The position gives a qualified research professional an extraordinary opportunity to see the impact and results his/her research has on public policy and across our industry. The Director is expected to collaborate with local and national colleagues on research, convene and participate in coalitions, make presentations and conduct communications, media, and advocacy outreach.

The ideal candidate will drive impact by leveraging trends and data in AEO's data warehouse to scope new research while being part of a fast-paced collaborative team. Furthermore, the candidate will serve as an ambassador and expert on behalf of AEO's research to relevant decision makers—policymakers, funders, and non-profit leaders—as well as communities of influence, including academia, the tech sector, and the media.

Professional Experience/Qualifications

- Advanced degree (MA, MPP, PhD) (preferred) or the combination of academic and professional experience along with relevant social policy research
- Demonstrates excellent qualitative and quantitative research skills along with the ability to think strategically about a research agenda, interact with staff at all levels, and to work both independently and on team projects
- Ability to create a hypothesis and subsequently prove/disprove their accuracy (or truthfulness) using data and statistical analysis
- Experience analyzing big data (e.g., 1,000,000+ data points)
- Champions the appropriate use, access, storage and retention of confidential data
- Significant understanding and awareness of various types of data biases and how to mitigate the risks those biases pose to accurate findings/results
- Proficiency in statistical analysis and analyzing data using one or more of analytical tools: SPSS, Microsoft Excel, R, and Python.
- Experience or familiarity with Tableau strongly preferred.
- Excellent writing, public speaking, and presentation skills.
- Superior ability to write, edit, and publish research reports and related policy recommendations.
- Commitment to economic justice issues.
- Familiarity with entrepreneurship research or racial justice research
- Knowledge and awareness of the community development finance industry desired

We Offer

- Competitive compensation based on experience including retirement matching.
- Fully paid medical, dental, and vision coverage.
- A collaborative and high-performing work environment.
- Headquarters in downtown Washington, D.C., this position is remote.

TO APPLY

Interested applicants should send a cover letter and resume to careers@aeoworks.org. Include a brief writing sample and salary requirements.

AEO is clear of its vision to be a place where a diverse mix of talented people want to come, to stay, and do their best work. We are proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, or veteran status.