Opportunity with the Office of Evaluation Sciences:
Support agencies in the development of Learning Agendas and Evaluation Plans

The Office of Evaluation Sciences (OES) is currently accepting applications from Federal employees for six-month full-time details, beginning in January 2020 in Washington, D.C.

Based at the General Services Administration (GSA), OES is a team of interdisciplinary experts that works across government to help agencies build and use evidence. Team members work alongside agency collaborators to apply behavioral insights, make concrete recommendations on how to improve government, and evaluate impact using administrative data. OES is uniquely situated at the center of government to share leading practices, develop resources and build skills in the Federal workforce on evidence and evaluation.

To date, OES has completed over 70 randomized evaluations with dozens of agency partners. OES follows the best practices in social science research to build evidence in order to be a leader in transparency and accountability. OES forms innovative partnerships to tackle some of the most pressing challenges in the United States and abroad, such as opioid prescribing, access to healthcare for Veterans, reducing energy use and costs, and improving government efficiency.

OES is expanding its capacity to provide government-wide resources and implementation support around evidence-building activities and evaluation, in support of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 ("Evidence Act"). The Evidence Act requires agencies to undertake a number of activities related to building and using evidence including the establishment of an Evaluation Officer (EO) position, the development of multi-year Learning Agendas, the development of Annual Evaluation Plans, and the completion of the Capacity Assessment. In addition to improving how agencies use evidence, the implementation of the Evidence Act offers an opportunity to better align performance, budget, strategic planning, policymaking, data, and evidence-building activities across the Federal government.

In FY19, OES began to design materials specifically for use by Evaluation Officers as they onboard, stand up their teams, work across their agencies to engage stakeholders, and begin to implement requirements. OES will provide these toolkits on Learning Agendas, Annual Evaluation Plans and Capacity Assessment, with an associated training, in January 2020.

In FY20, OES will support selected pilot agencies coordinate Evidence Act implementation efforts, focusing on developing a draft Learning Agenda, Annual Evaluation Plan and Capacity Assessment. These efforts will inform government-wide resources regarding modes and means of coordination across agency functions (e.g., programs, evaluation, research, data, performance, and budget offices) and processes to meet the requirements of the Evidence Act. The OES team will:
- Work with three pilot agencies to provide direct and intensive support to the Evaluation Officers / designated officials as they meet the FY20 requirements of the Evidence Act
- Provide intensive support around the coordination and development of the interim Learning Agenda, due in September 2020, in coordination with Strategic Planning preparation efforts

- Provide additional support around the coordination and the development of the Annual Evaluation Plan and Capacity Assessment, in coordination with the interim Learning Agenda and the FY22 budget process
- Translate lessons learned into government-wide resources that can inform OMB and other agencies' efforts.

OES aims to help facilitate an integrated effort in the pilot agencies to better deliver on the desired outcomes of the government's planning process. OES will build and provide capacity and assist in institutionalizing efforts to coordinate across performance, budget, evaluation, and program offices to align and coordinate Evidence Act requirements, Strategic Plans, and related activities. OES will communicate lessons learned to OMB, GSA, and the broader evidence community to inform future resources and support related to the Evidence Act.

Fellowship Details

OES will establish a reimbursable detail program to leverage Federal employee talent to support Evidence Act implementation. Detailees on rotation with OES will be paired with one agency and Evaluation Officer to provide intensive full-time support from January-July 2020, based full-time in Washington, D.C. These individuals will be supported by the OES central team that both conducts evidence-building activities and evaluations, as well as provide government-wide support to implement this work. OES will establish an Inter-Agency Agreement to reimburse the home agency.
The Evidence Detailees will:
1. Coordinate directly with the Evaluation Officer and designated officials to support the implementation of the FY20 requirements of the Evidence Act;
2. Apply the Learning Agenda and Evaluation Plan toolkits to facilitate intra-agency discussions on the Evidence Act and gather inputs from internal stakeholders;
3. Support coordination with relevant stakeholders and development of draft materials for September 2020 Evidence Act requirements (prioritizing the interim Learning Agenda and supporting the Evaluation Plan and Capacity Assessment);
4. Plan and execute workshops, meetings, or other efforts to integrate Agency data, strategic, performance, evaluation, and learning planning processes; and
5. Connect the EO or other relevant stakeholders with successful approaches from other government entities, as well as leverage external expertise from OES or academic affiliates network, as needed.

Applicant Profile

The individuals selected for this detail must possess a unique set of technical and professional skills. This includes technical skill and experience conducting either or both Federal evaluation and performance activities; the ability to link program, performance, and evaluation activities to ultimate agency strategy and mission; experience mapping stakeholders and convening discussions of priorities; the ability to independently design and manage complex projects; and exceptional oral and written communication, including with senior leadership and management. The individual must be eligible for a full-time Detail to GSA from January-July 2020, based in Washington, D.C.

Applicants should possess:
- Knowledge of Federal government financial, performance and evaluation systems and processes
- Curiosity and willingness to learn about a Federal agency's approach to the development of priority questions to better deliver on multiple aspects of its mission and operations
- Knowledge of evaluation methods and design and analysis strategies
- Ability to effectively explain technical concepts to broad audiences, orally and in writing
- Ability to work effectively across multiple components (i.e., program offices, budget offices, etc.) of a Federal agency
- Strong and concise writing skills under tight deadlines. Excellent project management and organizational skills
- Flexibility, self-motivation, and the ability to manage multiple tasks efficiently in a team

Application Details

Applicants may apply by emailing their resume and a cover letter describing their qualifications and interest to oes@gsa.gov with the subject line "Last Name, First Name, Evidence Detail Application." The deadline to submit is 11:59 pm EST Sunday, November 20, 2019. Finalists will be invited to interview with OES in November 2019.