



Position brief for the position of Senior Executive & Director, Institute for Youth, Education, and Families National League of Cities

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Opportunity Overview

A unique leadership opportunity to join the nation's premier resource and advocate for America's cities, towns and villages and lead its efforts to strengthen the capacity of municipal leaders to meet the needs of children, youth and families in their communities.

The Position

This critical role is responsible for leading strategy development, program implementation, member engagement and fundraising for the largest center under the National League of Cities (NLC) umbrella, the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute). The Senior Executive and Director will have a high degree of autonomy in the YEF Institute's development and operations while also contributing to NLC's broader management and leadership as a member of its Senior Executive Team.

The Senior Executive and Director will lead and manage a staff of nearly 30 committed professionals, including five core program teams, and report to the NLC's Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer. The ideal candidate will be a visible leader within city government or in the not-for-profit or philanthropic community who has deep knowledge of issues related to children, youth and families, and is adept at representing the YEF Institute within influential policy and funding circles.

As the YEF Institute celebrates its 20th year, NLC seeks a Senior Executive and Director who can build upon Institute's strong reputation and track record for practical, on-the-ground assistance to further help municipal leaders in cities of all sizes improve outcomes for children, youth and families.



About the National League of Cities

The National League of Cities is the voice of America's cities, towns and villages representing more than 200 million people across the country, working to strengthen local leadership, influence federal policy and drive innovative solutions.

Created in 1924, the National League of Cities is a highly respected and far-reaching membership organization that provides education, research, support and advocacy to local leaders across America. NLC continues to grow its membership, expand its research and programming, form new partnerships and strengthen existing relationships.

NLC's Guiding Principles include:

- **Inclusive:** a nonpartisan organization that embraces diversity of thought, perspectives and experiences.
- **Focused:** concentrating on what matters most to their member cities, towns and villages, and municipalities nationwide.
- **Valuable:** a resource and advocate for their members, and a key partner to the state municipal leagues.
- **Influential:** recognized as powerful and reliable partners and respected by federal policymakers.
- **Visible:** a strong impact on our members, in Washington, D.C., and in the news.
- **Relationship Driven:** dedicated to building personal connections between local leaders, local governments and NLC staff.
- **Forward Leaning:** with compelling engagement opportunities and cutting-edge technology, they are innovative at every turn.
- **Financially Solid:** with a diversified revenue model that reflects the nation's modern economy.

In addition to the YEF Institute, NLC has major centers focused on City Solutions, Federal Advocacy, Member and

Partner Engagement, Finance and Operations, and Digital Engagement, Communications and Marketing. With this robust capacity, NLC addresses the full spectrum of issues that confront municipal leaders across the nation and works in close partnership with state municipal leagues to help cities build stronger communities.

NLC is governed by a board of directors that is comprised of four officers (president, first vice president, second vice president, and immediate past president), all past presidents still in local government service, eight state league directors, seven advocacy committee chairs, and a total of 40 at-large members.

The president, first vice president, and second vice president are elected to one-year terms during the annual business meeting, and 20 local elected officials are elected each year to serve two-year terms as at-large members of the board. An elected official must currently hold elected office in an NLC member city to serve in a leadership position.

Institute for Youth, Education, and Families:

The Institute for Youth, Education, and Families is the go-to place for city leaders seeking to improve outcomes for children, youth and families. It has deep expertise in five core program areas: early childhood success, education and expanded learning, health and wellness, youth and young adult connections, and economic opportunity and financial empowerment. The YEF Institute reaches cities of all sizes and brings together local leaders to develop effective strategies via technical assistance projects, peer learning networks, communities of practice, and Mayors' Institutes.



The Position

The National League of Cities seeks a candidate with significant credibility in non-profit policy and program leadership to lead the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families. The Senior Executive and Director must have an in-depth understanding of the policy issues addressed by the YEF Institute as well as a deep passion for helping municipal leaders improve outcomes for children, youth and families.

In close coordination with a strong and diverse YEF leadership team, the Senior Executive and Director will be chiefly responsible for the Institute's strategic growth and development, overall management and program leadership.

Duties & Responsibilities

- Serve on the organization's executive leadership team, working with the CEO and other Senior Executives to provide strategic direction and insight in support of expanding NLC's membership base, designing and delivering high-quality resources and services for municipal leaders, strengthening funding partnerships and building a strong internal collaborative culture.
- Maintain a keen focus within the YEF Institute on strategy development and implementation while overseeing grant management and the cultivation of strong funder relationships.
- Represent the YEF Institute in various policy, philanthropic, foundation, and research communities, further enhancing its visibility and stature on core issues and stepping up as a public leader in policy circles related to children, youth and families.
- Continue to raise the brand recognition of NLC and the YEF Institute in the philanthropic community and build relationships with key third-party stakeholders and foundation leaders nationally.
- Promote NLC member engagement by creating proactive solutions, thought leadership, and policy recommendations to advance the efforts of mayors and other city leaders to improve outcomes for children, youth and families nationally.
- Cultivate and establish partnerships with current and future members, state municipal leagues, leading public policy organizations, national and regional foundations, and private sector partners.
- Manage financial and human resources within the YEF Institute effectively to ensure maximum impact and accountability, ensuring a high level of stewardship for grant and NLC funds while also supporting YEF Institute staff in their efforts to contribute to desired outcomes and achieve their full potential.
- Serve as the YEF Institute's leader and most senior point of contact for NLC's Council on Youth, Education, and Families, a permanent member council of the National League of Cities that guides and oversees the YEF Institute's work.



The Candidate

Areas of Expertise

- Minimum of 15 years of experience in non-profit, think tank, and/or state and municipal policy roles. Strong preference given to candidates that have a passion and a track record of advocacy for children, youth and families.
- Expertise in non-profit policy and program leadership.
- Experience in managing non-profit development, grant funding and foundation relationships.
- Strong connection to the mission and personal investment in the idea that city leaders need a place to get practical advice on children, youth, and families.
- Well-versed in people management and leading large teams.
- An undergraduate degree is required. An advanced degree in public policy or a related field is highly desirable.
- Specific municipal or local government experience is an asset.

Competencies

- Enthusiastic and mission-driven leader who brings a passion for advocacy on behalf of children, youth and families.
- Exceptional leadership skills, including the ability to set clear, meaningful, challenging and attainable group goals and expectations that are aligned with NLC's mission.
- Significant relationship and stakeholder development experience along with executive presence and gravitas.
- High-level business acumen paired with a strategic approach to creating a vision and opportunities for the growth of NLC and the YEF Institute.
- Exceptional communications and presentation skills along with the ability to influence various government, private-sector and philanthropic communities.
- Sophisticated internal and external client management skills.
- Demonstrated track record of delivering measurable outcomes through policy and program development.
- Collaborative in nature, politically savvy, and builds trust at all levels of organizations.

Location & Remuneration

The Senior Director and Executive Director, Institute for Youth, Education, and Families will be based in National League of Cities Washington office. A competitive salary and benefits package will be offered to attract serious candidates.



How to Apply

To apply, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a cover letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria. Please include the names and addresses of three references. References will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.

The preferred method of application is by email to NLC@odgersberndtson.com.

Contact Details

For a conversation in confidence, please contact:

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About Odgers Berndtson



Odgers Berndtson Executive Search is a leading global executive search firm, assisting private and public sector organizations find the highest caliber people for senior management appointments across North America and internationally.

Our reputation at the top of the executive search profession is over 50 years old. With offices in over 60 cities worldwide, our experienced executive search specialists operate with absolute discretion, integrity, and care, and are expert in finding exceptional individuals for challenging roles.





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