

About RPPL

The [Research Partnership for Professional Learning](#) (RPPL, pronounced “ripple”) is a collaborative of professional learning (PL) organizations, researchers, school systems, and funders. RPPL works to advance educational equity and student achievement by studying and sharing the specific features that make some PL programs more effective than others.

Guided by the [learning agenda](#) we jointly wrote in summer 2021, RPPL seeks to:

1. Uplift the current evidence base
2. Generate faster and better research on PL
3. Create the research and collaborative infrastructure so we can get that better research into practice in thousands of districts, schools, and PL orgs across the nation
4. Change who sets the research agenda

Since February 2020, RPPL has been a coalition of interested PL organizations, researchers, and funders who spent 2021 planning for our long-term work and writing our shared learning agenda. In 2022, we entered our first three-year chapter of research and collaboration. We have been led by Chair Emily Freitag, Vice Chair Sarah Johnson, and three Senior Researchers from the Annenberg Institute at Brown University. We are now seeking to hire an Executive Director to lead RPPL.

Executive Director Position Description

The founding Executive Director of RPPL is a leader in the professional learning space who is passionate about generating practical relevant, high-quality research in community. The RPPL ED is empowered to work across audiences (academics, practitioners, educators, thought leaders, etc.) to inspire and bring people together to improve PL and is also excited to dig into the weeds of research design and problem-solving to help organizations design work for learning. They believe in transforming teacher learning and practice to ensure that students in priority groups learn rigorous content and thrive in equitable schools.

The Executive Director will lead RPPL as its first full-time employee, building on the base formed by two years of collaboration and burgeoning relationships. They will work with RPPL’s leadership team, including the research team at the Annenberg Institute at Brown University, the Chair, and the Vice Chair, to support the design and management of quality research, including running multiple types of studies across member organizations each year. They will personally lead RPPL’s fundraising efforts, working with large foundations and federal funding sources to match interest in research to member studies interest and building a sustainable organization. They will collaborate with and oversee contractors for communications, project management, operations, learning engineering, data collection, and more, to ensure RPPL meets its goals. In collaboration with this rich and growing community, the ED will chart the course of RPPL’s work to come.

The ED is able to manage a large variety of workstreams and stakeholders. They are an adaptive problem-solver, enjoy the prospect of building RPPL as a new type of research-practice partnership, and are excited to build this organization.

This is a remote position; the ED can work anywhere, with availability on CT/ET hours. Quarterly travel to the Annenberg Institute at Brown (Providence, RI) and other limited trips as needed are expected. This position is considered exempt for overtime status.

The Executive Director will report to the advisory board and particularly the Chair, Vice Chair, and Research Chair. They will work closely with research partners, RPPL's fiscal sponsor New Venture Fund, member organizations, and funders.

Responsibilities

Organizational Leadership and Team Management

- Serve as RPPL's leader; accountable for all goals and plans informed by deep engagement of stakeholders including PL orgs, researchers, funders, district, and state leaders
- Run RPPL leadership team meetings; coordinate across research & org leaders to ensure planning and execution of work
- Hire and manage contractors across RPPL functions, including communications, project management, operations, learning engineering, data collection, and more
- Over time, hire and directly manage FTEs or contractors on operations, internal planning, etc.

Governance & Membership

- Lead RPPL member meetings and board meetings
- Oversee new member and affiliate recruitment, applications, and onboarding
- Ensure RPPL member and affiliate engagement and experience; problem solve and troubleshoot where additional support is needed
- Manage the RPPL ecosystem, including coordination among members, affiliates, researchers, funders, districts, and states

Fundraising

- Fundraise for RPPL's work aligned to research plans
- Oversee grant applications and reporting

Research and R&D Infrastructure

- Partner with lead researchers at the Annenberg Institute, on the Research Advisory Council, and study PIs to execute RPPL's research plans
- With RPPL members and the Annenberg team, creatively work through barriers to conducting relevant, high-quality research in PL
- Lead data infrastructure work, including working with learning engineers to improve the way RPPL members collect, house, analyze data, and instrument platforms, and expand open data access to researchers
- Determine opportunities for RPPL member organizations and affiliates to improve their data infrastructure through innovative technology
- Determine RPPL data infrastructure innovations that can be uplifted, shared with and/or adopted by other organizations

Communications & External Affairs

- Oversee RPPL communications, including emails, newsletters, publications, website, etc.
- Partner with and manage communications contractors on strategy and execution
- Represent RPPL in media and events; write op-eds, lead annual RPPL event, speak on webinars

Budget & Fiscal Management

- Create RPPL budgets and personally conduct budget management
- Serve as project director with RPPL's fiscal sponsor; meet regularly with fiscal sponsor team and coordinate on HR, finance, legal, grant management, etc.

Candidate Qualifications & Traits:

- 10+ years working in K-12 education roles in equity-focused research and practice organizations, including 2+ years leading professional learning and 2+ years leading or overseeing research in some capacity
- Master's degree or higher in education, data analysis, program evaluation, statistics, policy, or related field
- Some teaching experience (can be K-12 or higher ed) required
- High bar for and experience with generating practical, relevant, equity-oriented, rigorous research; thorough knowledge of current educational best practices and theory related to research and evaluation methodology
- Relationship-driven, experienced leader; can articulate a vision and help groups navigate different approaches to achieve a practical path forward
- Experience fundraising or working in development, raising \$4M+ annually from both institutions (i.e., Walton Family Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) and federal funding sources (i.e., IES, NSF)
- Experience publicly representing an organization
- Experience with and enjoys managing/navigating many entities/workstreams that may pull in different directions
- Adaptive and flexible; can create standard operating procedures and systems in a fast-moving, growing, new environment
- Quick study and learner; thrives when building from the ground up in a start-up environment alongside high-level leadership

Hiring Process & Timeline

- Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis and will close once finalists are selected. Please apply as soon as possible if interested.
- First round interviews will be conducted in April and May.
- Second round interviews will be conducted in early to mid-June.
- Finalist interviews will be conducted in mid- to late June.
- Offer extended in late June/early July.
- New hire starts in July.

Compensation & Benefits

The salary for this position is \$180,000-\$220,000. Generous benefits (healthcare, 401k, PTO) are offered through RPPL's fiscal sponsor New Venture Fund, who will be the official employer for this role.

How to Apply

Please email your cover letter, resume, and links to any research you have been involved in conducting (if relevant) to RPPL leadership at team@rpplpartnership.org.

New Venture Fund Hiring Statement

The Research Partnership for Professional Learning is a project of New Venture Fund (NVF), a 501(c)(3) public charity that incubates new and innovative public-interest projects and grant-making programs. NVF is committed to attracting, developing and retaining exceptional people, and to creating a work environment that is dynamic, rewarding and enables each of us to realize our potential. NVF's work environment is safe and open to all employees and partners, respecting the full spectrum of race, color, religious creed, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, political affiliation, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, and all other classifications protected by law in the locality and/or state in which you are working.

COVID-19 Policy

To center the safety and well-being of its employees, New Venture Fund requires that any employee who is required to conduct in-person activities for their job must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 within four weeks of their start date. This position may require candidates to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Accommodations may be sought and approved in accordance with the law by contacting human resources at HR@newventurefund.org.
