

WSIPP Job Recruitment

Director

Opens: Monday, March 16, 2026

Closes: Monday, April 13, 2026

Salary Range: Starting salary up to \$178,488 annually

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) is a nonpartisan public research organization located in Olympia, the center of Washington State government. Our multidisciplinary team conducts applied policy research for the state legislature in a collaborative and intellectually engaging environment.

Founded in 1983, WSIPP is nationally and internationally recognized for the rigor, depth, and quality of its research and benefit-cost analyses. We are guided by core values of nonpartisanship, quality, and impartiality, and governed by a 16-member Board of Directors representing the legislature, executive branch, and academic community.

Position Purpose

Under the direction of the Board, the Director is responsible for advancing the mission of a nonpartisan public research organization that serves the Washington State Legislature and other policymakers. The Director provides strategic vision, organizational leadership, and oversight of research, ensuring that the agency delivers independent, objective, and policy-relevant analysis to support evidence-based decision-making.

Nature and Scope

The Director reports to the Board of Directors and oversees WSIPP's leadership team, which includes the Associate Director for Research, the Associate Director for Operations, and the Research Manager. The Director is responsible for setting the strategic direction of WSIPP, cultivating and managing relationships with partner agencies, actively engaging with the Board, and ensuring WSIPP's financial stability.

Essential Functions

- Develops and advances WSIPP's strategic direction, organizational structure, and identity. The Director ensures that WSIPP remains a valuable and trusted resource for policymakers by directing, coordinating, and engaging in high-quality research.
- In collaboration with the Board, develops and maintains a stable funding stream for WSIPP, including funding from the Legislature and external entities.
- Works closely with the Board, organizing and convening Board meetings to seek guidance on projects, budgets, and overall direction.
- Oversees WSIPP's research activities and maintains awareness of the policy research needs of the Washington State Legislature. The Director stays informed about applied research and policy studies conducted within the Legislature and state agencies.
- Establishes standards and channels for releasing WSIPP's research, ensuring credibility and policy relevance. Oversees strategy for sharing WSIPP's work through conferences, collaborations, and other venues.
- In collaboration with the Board, ensures that WSIPP's research portfolio reflects legislative priorities and supports WSIPP's mission.
- Leads with a collaborative approach, engaging staff in WSIPP's development. Promotes long-term organizational health by guiding the management team, fostering a high-performing and inclusive culture, and making final decisions on personnel matters.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Effective organizational leadership skills, including mentoring senior staff and fostering an inclusive, high-performing workplace culture.
- Demonstrated ability to secure, manage, and sustain funding to support and advance WSIPP's mission.
- Proven ability to build and maintain positive working relationships with legislators, stakeholders, and partner organizations.
- Deep understanding of social science and public policy research and its relevance to legislative decision-making.
- Capacity to adapt to evolving research methods, tools, and interdisciplinary approaches.
- Demonstrated commitment to modeling and upholding standards of nonpartisanship.
- Strong communication skills, with the ability to effectively translate WSIPP's work for diverse audiences.

Minimum Qualifications

- Master's degree or Ph.D. in public policy, economics, political science/administration, or a related field from an accredited institution of higher education.
- At least 5 years of experience in an executive leadership role, with experience overseeing staff, budgets, and operations in organizations of similar or larger sizes.
- At least 5 years of experience providing research or other decision support to legislators or other policy makers.

Desired Qualifications

- At least 10 years of experience in an executive leadership role, with experience overseeing staff, budgets, and organizational operations.
- At least 10 years of experience managing multidisciplinary teams or research programs.
- Demonstrated success in establishing collaborative relationships with Boards, policymakers, and external partners.
- Experience conducting research in a social science context.
- Strong commitment to research integrity, transparency, and the effective use of evidence in policy development.
- Familiarity with Washington State government, legislative processes, and interagency collaboration.
- Experience working in a nonpartisan setting.
- Proven experience representing an organization to senior officials and partner entities.
- Experience in establishing and executing strategic plans and guiding organizational direction.
- Experience working with government, legislative bodies, or public sector entities.

Conditions of Employment

- Must provide proof of identity and employment eligibility within three days of beginning work.
- After a conditional offer of employment is made, a background check including criminal record history will be conducted. Information from the background check will not necessarily preclude employment but will be considered in determining the applicant's suitability and competence to perform in the position.
- This is a full-time, overtime-exempt, "at-will" appointment. The position is exempt from Washington State civil service rules and the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

To Apply

Please visit <https://evergreen.peopleadmin.com/postings/4489> to apply.