

Group

Practice Adjusting Positions

Closing MDLS21 Small Group Activity

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1.0 Sample position description

This language is pulled from a real data-related position posting from 2019-2020. Institution name and other identifying information have been removed for this activity.

Research Data Management Librarian

The University is committed to advancing its research priorities and transforming ideas into innovations. We seek a dynamic leader to build library research data management services that are responsive to these emerging research needs.

Responsibilities

The Research Data Management Librarian will lead the planning, implementation, and assessment of research data management services. Such services may include instruction, consultations, and partnerships with faculty and researchers on data management plans, data management tools and strategies, and metadata standards. Reporting to the Head of Liaison Services within the University Libraries, this position is part of the Liaison Services Department and will collaborate with subject librarians to integrate data management best practices across disciplines, in research labs, and research centers. This position also will collaborate with the Data Services Librarian to expand and promote research support and data-related services across campus. An important component of this responsibility will be staying up to date on funding agencies' data management policies and contributing to the ongoing training of library staff on research data management fundamentals and services.

The Research Data Management Librarian also will collaborate with colleagues in the Digital Research Services department to promote research data sharing and curation services related to data repositories. Additionally, there are opportunities to collaborate with colleagues in Metadata and Digitization Services on promoting best practices for accessibility, archiving, assessment, attribution, and resource sharing as it relates to the grant process. Based on the emerging needs and collaborative nature of this position, the incumbent will have opportunities to develop expertise in these areas.

The Research Data Management librarian is a librarian position. Librarians hold academic rank pursuant to the University Libraries' Bylaws. They are expected to develop a record of service, scholarship, and professional development. The University Libraries support the ongoing professional development of librarians, and our goal is to recruit librarians committed to continuous learning.

Qualifications

Required:

- Master's degree from an ALA-accredited program
- Knowledge of the research data lifecycle and research processes
- Ability to work strategically and collaboratively with stakeholders to build programs and initiatives
- Demonstrated excellent communication skills

Preferred:

- Experience with data management components of the grant process
- Knowledge of metadata standards and formats used in research (e.g. Dublin Core, DDI, ORCID, DOI)
- Awareness of issues related to digital preservation
- Familiar with aspects of copyright and licensing relating to the deposit, discoverability, sharing and reuse of research data
- Familiar with institutional or subject based data repository systems and tools
- Strong teaching and presentation skills

Salary:

\$62,000 to \$64,000 expected hiring range, depending on qualifications. Comprehensive benefits package; choice of retirement programs including TIAA-CREF; tax-deferred annuity program available; release time to take a class up to 3 hours/week.

2.0 Considerations for positions and position descriptions

Brown & Leung (2018) on specific areas for improving the workplace for current and future librarians of color:

- Hiring, including recruitment and retention, particularly in leadership roles (p. 343)
- Support programs “that directly benefit librarians outside centers of whiteness, able-bodied-ness, neurotypical-ness, and others” (p. 344)
- Accountability for upper administrators “for moving beyond acceptable diversity performances” (p. 344)

Ferretti (2020) on areas of focus for building a critical culture in LIS workplaces, as opposed to confining critical thought to information literacy:

- Ongoing development in critical culture for management and leadership (p. 146)
- Community codes and norms in the workplace (pp. 146-147)
- New hires buying into an established critical culture (p. 147)
- Transparent pay and promotion (p. 147)

Advice from Thielen & Neeser (2020, p. 122) about writing position descriptions and position postings for data professionals:

- Write each sentence using DEI&A (diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility) principles and practices
- List a quantitative salary or salary range
- Consider which degrees are required or preferred
- Include DEI&A as a required qualification
- Write the job description the candidate will perform

3.0 Considerations regarding space for bodies

This is a place to bring in your personal reflection and writing if you want. From the first writing period, consider the places where your position has constrained your movement, become too big for you to fill yourself, no longer fits you, or never fit you. Think about areas of adjustment that you identified during the second writing period.

In addition, consider other labor(s) that people might be performing and what space their bodies might need at work. Some non-exhaustive possibilities:

- Continuing education
- Sole head of household responsibilities
- Child and/or elder care
- Physical distance from the workplace
- Health issues

- Past and present traumas, e.g.:
 - Experiences of being marginalized for one or more identities
 - Distance or isolation from support networks
 - Unsafe home environment

It would be impossible to know these factors ahead of time for every candidate or position incumbent. Instead, a goal is to remember that these and other possibilities exist and to build space for adjustments into positions. Another goal is to create opportunities for fostering and building trust between employees and other representatives of the organization. Formal and informal mentors can help build trust and advocate for the employee, but employees and mentors cannot do all the work of making space.

What alterations do you want to build into the next data and information position posting you see?

4.0 Space for your adjustments

5.0 Sources for this activity

Many thanks for the work of Jennifer Brown, Jennifer Ferretti, Sofia Leung, Sylvia Lin Hanick, and Jorge Lopez-McKnight. These writers informed my thinking on making space for bodies in the workplace.

Brown, J., & Leung, S. (2018). Authenticity vs. Professionalism: Being True to Ourselves at Work. In R. L. Chou & A. Pho (Eds.), *Pushing the Margins: Women of Color and Intersectionality in LIS* (pp. 329–347). Library Juice Press. <https://hdl.handle.net/1721.1/121971>

Ferretti, J. (2020). Building a Critical Culture: How Critical Librarianship Falls Short in the Workplace. *Communications in Information Literacy*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.15760/comminfolit.2020.14.1.10>

Leung, S. (2018). Letter to New People of Color in LIS. In T. Y. Neely & J. R. López-McKnight (Eds.), *In our own voices, redux: The faces of librarianship today* (pp. 257–263). Rowman and Littlefield. <https://hdl.handle.net/1721.1/121972>

Lin Hanick, S. (2018). “The Shoe Is Too Small and Not Made for You!”: Racial “Covering” and the Illusion of Fit. In T. Y. Neely & J. R. López-McKnight (Eds.), *In Our Own Voices, Redux: The Faces of Librarianship Today* (pp. 83–92). Rowman and Littlefield. https://academicworks.cuny.edu/lg_pubs/91

Thielen, J., & Neeser, A. (2020). Making Job Postings More Equitable: Evidence Based Recommendations from an Analysis of Data Professionals Job Postings Between 2013-2018. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*, 15(3), 103–156. <https://doi.org/10.18438/eblip29674>