NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
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Position: Director of Policy & Research
Department: Policy & Research
Reports To: NEBHE President & CEO
Date: November 2026
Salary Range: $65,000 - $90,000

General Summary

The Director of Policy & Research plays critical leadership roles in keeping NEBHE abreast of relevant policy issues, executing the organization's policy and research agenda, and serving as a trusted resource to stakeholder groups across the region. A successful candidate has a passion for higher education and public policy, thinks critically, communicates complex ideas and technical information in easy-to-understand ways, works independently as well as in a team, and elevates the voice and visibility of the organization. Specifically, the Director has expertise in state and/or federal policy, a strong research and analysis background, and the ability to engage with a cross-section of stakeholders, including legislators, higher education leaders, funders, and employers.

NEBHE Background

Established in 1955 by six visionary New England governors, the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) is a regional compact that works across New England to help leaders assess, develop, and implement education practices and policies of regional significance; promote regional cooperation that encourages efficient sharing of education resources; and strengthen the relationship between higher education and the regional economy. Based in downtown Boston, NEBHE is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization. Its mission is to advance equitable postsecondary outcomes through convening, research and programs for students, institution leaders, and policymakers. Its vision is that everyone in New England will have lifelong access to affordable, high-value postsecondary education.

Essential Job Functions

*Management & Coordination*

- Directs all activities of the Policy & Research team. Develops a timely and compelling policy agenda, executes workplans, and achieves high standards of quality to ensure all projects are of highest quality and aligned with organization's priorities.
- Works collaboratively to develop and execute focused higher education and workforce-focused policy agendas and projects, with defined outputs and deliverables.
- Builds, manages, and supports a diverse and effective policy and research team. Evaluates employee performance and works collaboratively across the organization to address identified research and policy analysis needs.
- Advises the president and other senior staff on policy, program, research, and stakeholder engagement activities.
- Cultivates, organizes, allocates, and manages financial resources of the unit and recommends and oversees consultant subcontracts and other internal and external commitments of the organization's resources.

*Policy Research and Analysis, Writing, and Information Dissemination*

- Anticipates emerging issues (state, regional, and national) of relevance to higher education; interprets policy trends, developments, and proposals; assesses their importance to the states, institutions, legislatures, and other stakeholders; and initiates research, technical assistance or other appropriate activities in response.
- Actively researches and monitors higher education, legislative, and policy developments across the New England states and nationally—with the ability to translate policy issues and topics into relevant convenings, reports, data snapshots, and other useful resources.
- Develops and authors policy and research reports and presentations, data briefs, and best practice tools for postsecondary education institution leaders, state policy makers, and the public.
- Reviews, edits, and assesses the substance and quality of research and writing assignments of team members, who are likewise tasked with analysis and research deliverables.
- Utilizes real-time labor and market data (job postings analytics, employment data, skills demand and gap analysis, occupational and wage forecasting, and employment trends) to inform analysis, publications, policy design, and engagement strategies.
- Drives NEBHE's employability, skills and workforce agenda, engaging business, government and postsecondary education through timely labor market analysis, skills initiatives and other research and collaborations. Contributes to NEBHE's innovation agenda through timely, high-quality data, and analysis.
- Works to elevate the presence, leadership voice, visibility, and relevance of NEBHE to key stakeholder groups.

*Stakeholder Engagement: Convenings, Consulting, and Technical Assistance*

- Directs and oversees primary NEBHE engagements with stakeholders, including state higher education executive officers (SHEEOs), state system heads, postsecondary leaders, state lawmakers, and their staff members. Builds and maintains strong relationships, trust, and credibility.
- Manages, delegates, or directs key meetings and convenings, coordinating the work of team members.
- Plans and coordinates complex, multistate policy-related projects, and technical assistance efforts. Demonstrates strong analysis skills, data and policy knowledge, and an understanding of complex political environments. Demonstrates a high degree of responsiveness to constituents, and a mature sense of organization priorities and interests.
- Acts as project director for grant-funded initiatives related to state policy; labor market supply and demand; changing digital skills requirements; credentialing; access, affordability, workforce alignment, attainment; and workforce outcomes. Works to ensure that deliverables are met, working collaboratively with partner organizations and funders.

*Organizational Support*

- Identifies initiates and develops resources to carry out the unit's activities and functions, including developing proposals for foundations and other funders. Manages funder relationships, grant reporting, and stewardship.

- Supports the development of important NEBHE meetings, conferences, and events.
- Provides staffing and direct support to two of the organization's board-level committees, the Policy and Legislative Advisory Committees. Manages the Legislative Advisory Committee, including member recruitment and regular meetings, developing agendas, policy analysis, model legislation, and programming.

Qualifications

**Required**

- Bachelor's degree in political science, education, public policy, economics, or related field.
- Five (5) years of relevant, progressive work experience in higher education, workforce development, state policy, federal policy, or similar fields; OR an equivalent combination of education, training, and experience.
- Demonstrated understanding of public policy processes, state and federal government structures, and stakeholder engagement practices.
- Ability to manage multiple priorities and engagement activities across stakeholders, with demonstrated experience in combining policy analysis with policy engagement.
- Experience conducting social science research, both quantitative, comparative analysis and survey research methodology and tools.
- Expertise related to key issues and challenges facing higher education and the regional economy.
- Experience in developing unit initiatives, project ideas and new services, funding opportunities, and high-impact resources.
- Strong personnel supervision skills (i.e., planning, assigning, reviewing, and evaluating work) and budget and project management
- Experience using Lightcast Analyst or comparable labor market intelligence platforms and the ability to interpret real-time job posting and skills data
- High level of familiarity with information and data sources related to P-16 education, higher education, the economy, and demographics.
- Substantial knowledge of state legislatures and intergovernmental policy processes.
- Strong ability to communicate technical, complex, or unfamiliar information to a variety of audiences through writing, visual, or oral presentation.
- Well organized, with keen attention to detail.
- High-level proficiency with Google Suite and Microsoft Office, especially Excel
- A sense of humor and ability to work collaboratively

**Preferred**

- Master's or doctoral degree in public policy, political science, higher education, education, economics, or related field.
- Experience with statistical (e.g., R, SPSS, STATA) and data visualization software (e.g., Power BI)
- Experience working with open-source, public data sources such as IPEDS, U.S. Census, and Legiscan.
- Demonstrated topical expertise in postsecondary education policy with a focus on the New England region.
- Experience supporting or participating in policy engagement with government or external stakeholders.

Supervisory Responsibility
The position will require supervision of Policy & Research staff and interns.

WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

- More than half of the time spent in a normal office setting, not subject to extremes in temperature, noise, odors, etc.
- Prolonged periods of sitting at a desk and working on a computer.
- Must be able to lift up to 15 pounds at times.
- Attendance may be required at special events during and outside of normal work week hours.
- Ability to travel overnight in and beyond the New England states and for multiple nights.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & FAIR CHANCE EMPLOYMENT STATEMENT
We are an equal opportunity employer and are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace. We do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or any other protected status under applicable law.

We are also committed to fair chance hiring and will consider qualified applicants with criminal histories, including those who have been previously incarcerated, consistent with applicable laws.

**BENEFITS**

- Medical and dental insurance
- Life and disability insurance
- Paid holidays and vacation
- Retirement plan
- Flexible work environment

**CONTACT**
Interested applicants should submit both **a cover letter and a resume/CV** on LinkedIn or via email to careers@nebhe.org using the subject line "NEBHE Policy and Research Director."

LinkedIn: Director of Policy and Research