01 BACKGROUND

Thrive Chicago (www.thrivechi.org) creates collaborative networks of people and data that drive innovation so all of Chicago’s young people can Thrive.

Thrive deploys a set of four key capabilities:

- Convening and connecting public and private partners in the youth sector
- Elevating research and data that identifies the city’s areas of greatest need and best practices to address those needs
- Co-designing innovative solutions with community partners
- Strategizing to systemically fund the most impactful solutions

02 THE DIRECTOR OF POSTSECONDARY STRATEGIES WILL LEAD THRIVE IN:

Being a Valued Thought Leader for Postsecondary Partners

As a senior member of Thrive Chicago’s dynamic and growing team, the Director of Postsecondary Strategies will engage a broad group of Thrive Chicago’s executive and programmatic stakeholders to inform strategy development and lead day-to-day operationalization of Thrive’s Postsecondary Portfolio.

This role is responsible for developing and maintaining key executive level relationships to ensure that collective strategies are successfully executed, for ensuring that the strategies are data- and research-informed, and for broadly communicating successes and challenges to continuously refine collective strategies. The start-up mode demands an entrepreneurial staff that thrives in creating something new and ambitious and celebrates the power found when human, financial and institutional resources and leadership are rallied toward a common goal. This role will report to Thrive’s Chief Strategy Officer.

Driving Collective Action

This role will convene key stakeholders engaged in the Thrive Postsecondary Action Team that meet monthly to identify data-informed focus areas, co-design collective solutions, raise funding and test and scale effective solutions. There are currently two areas of focus that the Action Team has committed to:

Thrive Chicago seeks to hire a thought leader to serve as the newly developed, executive level Director of Postsecondary Strategies role to use the levers of collaboration and data to drive Chicago’s college enrollment and persistence rates higher and to strengthen the pipeline to career.
Driving Collective Action Continued...

- **Postsecondary Enrollment:** Thrive, in partnership with Chicago Public Schools and the Postsecondary Action Team, is leading a collective strategy to mitigate summer melt, the phenomenon when college-intending students fail to enroll in college in the fall after high school. In Chicago, close to 5,000 Chicago Public Schools college-intending students did not arrive for college in the fall, representing over 30% of all college-intending seniors. This figure was stagnant for at least three years prior to 2017, when Thrive, CPS, and partners developed a collective impact strategy to address this challenge. In 2017, the summer melt rate decreased to 27%, meaning that 1,000 additional students matriculated to college that fall. In 2018, Thrive engaged the Postsecondary Action Team, which now includes more than 40 partners, to expand this collective impact strategy to further drive down summer melt rates.

- **Postsecondary Persistence:** Youth who have the required supports to develop the postsecondary plan that is the right match and fit for them are more likely to persist in that postsecondary plan. In addition to coordinating supports to ensure that youth can successfully transition to college, the Postsecondary Action Team is developing its next set of innovative solutions, just as it did with summer melt, to remove systemic barriers to college persistence.

Additional work streams may be undertaken over time, including strategies that more explicitly focus on improving access to career pathways, and the Director will work closely with stakeholders and the Thrive Chicago team to ensure that all of Thrive Chicago’s postsecondary-focused work is data-informed, outcome-driven, implements a continuous improvement process, and aligns with the overall organizational mission.

03 QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

In any start-up enterprise, staff must excel in a fluid environment, innovate on the fly, and be willing to flex between high level strategic work and the nuts and bolts of day to day execution. Thrive Chicago is no exception. Successful candidates will have the following qualifications and characteristics:

- A passion for systems change, community organizing, coalition building and strategic work
- Exceptional analytical skills with an ability to draw insightful conclusions from large amounts of quantitative and qualitative data and apply continuous improvement practices to the work of the Action Team
- Excel in a fast paced, challenging and shifting landscape of challenges
- Demonstrated ability to manage the scope, requirements, deliverables, timeline, and resource needs of complex, multi-stakeholder projects
- Proactive leadership in being able to make the position ‘your own’ and contribute beyond the job requirements
- Excellent writing and verbal communication skills, with an ability to communicate complex information clearly and effectively
- Demonstrated ability to facilitate strategic conversations among diverse groups of stakeholders to achieve a common outcome and agreed upon results
- Able to quickly and creatively solve problems with incomplete information
- Advanced skills in Microsoft Excel, Word, and PowerPoint required
- Strong interpersonal skills, with the ability to develop productive relationships with stakeholders across functional and organizational lines
- Experience with data visualization techniques and applications preferred
- Able to keep many priorities in motion, constantly seeking out information to advance key projects and tasks forward with a deep focus on details and accuracy
- Bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university required
04 COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS
Salary and benefits will be competitive and commensurate with experience.

05 APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS
Please submit a resume/CV and cover letter to info@thrivechi.org with YOUR LAST NAME and “Director of Postsecondary Strategies” in subject line. We will review applications on a rolling basis, so it is to your advantage to apply as soon as possible.

Thrive Chicago believes in equal employment opportunities for all, regardless of color, religion, sex, national origin, disability or any other legally protected classification. Thrive’s policy is to hire and promote the most qualified applicants and to comply with all federal, state and local equal employment opportunity laws.