

Job Posting: Researcher

NOTE: Before you read on, read our [Job Opportunities page](#) for highly relevant background on our [organization](#).

Design Impact: An Introduction

Design Impact (DI) is a nonprofit social innovation firm based in Cincinnati, OH. Our mission is to build an equitable future, together. DI collaborates with community groups, social service agencies, philanthropists, and other social changemakers around the country to apply creative and inclusive approaches to complex social challenges. Our approach combines creativity, equity, and leadership practice to address system-wide inequity. We do this in part by amplifying and empowering unheard voices in the design of their own solutions. To date, DI has partnered with community leaders on over 300 social design projects that span multiple sectors, including community health, employment, early childhood education, housing, and food access. As of 2019, DI's work engaged over 7,400 nonprofit leaders, community members, and creatives.

All of DI's work is rooted in our theory of change, which outlines that sustainable social change lies at the intersection of creativity, equity, and leadership. This unique combination of perspectives is highly effective in empowering individuals and teams to develop innovative, collaborative, and inclusive practices in their work. [Read more about our theory of change.](#)

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

We believe that to create **sustainable social change** we need to...

Think and solve differently

We apply a wide variety of innovation methods that are strategic and human-centered.



Prioritize the perspective and lived experience of those most impacted by inequity

We co-create from an intersectional and racial justice lens.

Build leaders who value creativity and inclusion

We develop leaders that embrace a learning mindset, share ownership, and drive connection.

Researcher Role

The researcher serves as an essential member of our team, leading the development and implementation of DI's research capabilities. Specifically, the researcher is responsible for weaving Community Based Participatory Action research (CBPAR) methodology into the body of larger social change processes, producing deep insights into human behavior and systems that inform strategic action. The researcher also manages projects from start to finish, including leading teams, managing partner relationships, and ensuring that projects meet partners' needs and achieve equitable outcomes.

Responsibilities:

The core responsibilities of this position are outlined below. However, because we are a small team, every member must be comfortable wearing many hats, including some administrative responsibilities.

Research Design + Implementation

- Develop appropriate research strategy and methods per project goals with partners
- Conduct in-depth interviews, ethnographies, focus groups, participant observations and more
- Weave Community Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) methodologies into broader, interdisciplinary social change processes
- Apply CBPAR and other research methodologies to deepen equitable approaches
- Collect and make sense of insights, identifying opportunities for strategic action

Staff and Organizational Development

- Identify gaps in staff capabilities related to research, insights, and sensemaking practices
- Train and advise staff and others on appropriate research methods and activities; particularly best practices in CBPAR and other inclusive and creative research methodologies
- Develop new processes, tools, or practices that improve the quality of DI's research insights and practices

Facilitation + Consultation

- Work closely with DI staff to design and deliver program content
- Create engaging learning environments
- Facilitate participant growth and skill development
- Provide oversight and feedback to program participants
- Consult partners on research-related issues and processes, redirecting as necessary

Program + Process Design

- Adapt DI's current processes and content to specific organizational and community environments
- Design the content of new tools and materials including presentations, workbooks, and facilitator guides
- Develop new processes that increase the impact of work
- Co-design programs and projects with partners

Partnership Development

- Build and grow professional relationships with clients and program partner
- Deepen the trust between DI and community partners and strengthen DI's role as bridge-builders
- Identify and develop relationships with potential partners
- Participate in creating proposals outlining the scope of work and deliverables

Project Management

- Maintain clear and consistent communication with all stakeholders
- Manage multiple projects simultaneously (budget, hours, stakeholder relationships, timeline)
- Meet or exceed deliverable expectations as outlined by client
- Keep all project stakeholders on task, moving in the right direction
- Evaluate project progress on an ongoing basis, see gaps, and adjust activities accordingly
- Delegate to and engage DI staff members and volunteers effectively

All DI team members are expected to contribute to the whole, including things such as:

- Stepping in where needed, willingness to be flexible
- Building strong relationships with the rest of the team and with partners
- Maintaining clear and consistent written, verbal, and visual communication with all team members
- Actively engaging in internal learning sessions, staff check-ins, and all project-related work

Qualifications

We're looking for someone flexible, resourceful, and thrives in a fast-paced, non-traditional environment. This person demonstrates a learning mindset and the ability to receive feedback, self-reflect, and pivot. The right candidate is excited by cross-disciplinary collaborations and is comfortable working across all areas of our Theory of Change, including equity, leadership, and creativity.

In addition to research capabilities, ideal candidates will also bring a deep skill that is relevant to our theory of change and adds value to our approach and practice (ex: evaluation, socially engaged art and design, organizational change, process facilitation, leadership development, etc.)

Finally, we're seeking a teammate that strives towards equitable systems, more connected communities, and relationships with people from various economic and geographic backgrounds.

Ideal candidates have:

- A minimum of 8+ years of relevant, professional experience
- A master's or doctoral degree with a focus on community-based research
- Significant fieldwork completed in community-based research practice
- Deep working knowledge of systemic inequity and/or social change practices
- Experience working with nonprofits, philanthropy, policymakers, and/or communities affected by poverty
- A passion for change at community, organizational, and systems levels
- Experience in facilitating creative learning environments with large and small groups
- Experience consulting and/or advising groups on change processes
- Excellent written communication skills; fluency in Spanish is a plus
- Strong verbal communication skills with large groups and interpersonal
- A genuine and demonstrable interest in interdisciplinary work and intercultural collaborations
- Ability to lead diverse teams
- Ability to work independently; self-motivated and responsible with minimal supervision
- A positive attitude with the desire to work with people from various backgrounds
- Ability to work through conflict honestly and openly
- Ability to provide and accept clear, direct feedback

Location

DI is based in Cincinnati, Ohio, the first sign of freedom along the Underground Railroad, and a city full of history and progress, as well as setbacks. It's a big city with a small town feel. *Travel and Leisure* named Cincinnati one of its top 50 places to visit in 2017, and honestly, we're not surprised. Get outdoors and discover our great parks system, enjoy cocktails at the area's most eclectic bars and taste one-of-a-kind flavors at great restaurants throughout the city's 52 neighborhoods. Learn more about the city [here](#).

At the same time, there is also a definite opportunity and need to address inequity. In some ways, there are two very different stories of our hometown (for example, read the [State of Black Cincinnati](#)). We are at a pivotal moment and position in today's divisive climate. We have been and will continue to be committed to rolling up our sleeves to bridge these two stories for everyone. Join us.

While most of the position's responsibilities are conducted in Cincinnati, occasional (monthly) travel will be required. Regional travel will require access to reliable transportation.

Timing, Compensation, and Benefits

The position would begin in mid-March 2020 and is a full-time position. This position currently pays \$60-70,000 per year, depending on experience. Selected candidates are eligible for health, vision, dental, and retirement benefits upon the start date. DI takes pride in cultivating a healthy and balanced work culture, including a 36-hour, 4-day workweek, a casual and collaborative office environment, and yearly professional development funds.

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

DI is an equal opportunity employer. We enthusiastically accept our responsibility to make employment decisions without regard to race, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, religion, disability, veteran/military status, citizenship status, pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions, lactation/breastfeeding, genetic information all as defined by applicable law and or any other classification protected by applicable federal, state, and local laws and ordinances. Our management is dedicated to ensuring the fulfillment of this policy with respect to hiring, placement, promotion, transfer, demotion, layoff, termination, recruitment advertising, pay, and other forms of compensation, training, and general treatment during employment.

Apply

Visit d-impact.org/jobs for instructions on submitting your application. Candidates with lived experience of those most impacted by inequities strongly encouraged to apply. We look forward to hearing from you.

Note: Design Impact cannot sponsor applicants for work visas at this time

***“If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time.
But if you have come because your liberation is bound up
with mine, then let us work together”.***

— Lilla Watson