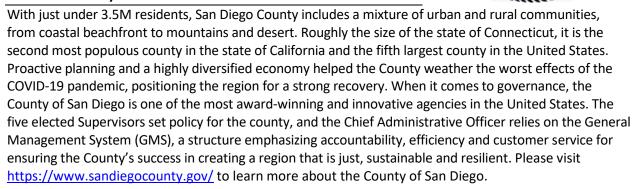# County of San Diego

Chief Evaluation Officer

Reports To: Chief Administrative Officer
Anticipated salary range: $190,000 - $220,000
Status: Full-time / Exempt

About the County

With just under 3.5M residents, San Diego County includes a mixture of urban and rural communities, from coastal beachfront to mountains and desert. Roughly the size of the state of Connecticut, it is the second most populous county in the state of California and the fifth largest county in the United States. Proactive planning and a highly diversified economy helped the County weather the worst effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, positioning the region for a strong recovery. When it comes to governance, the County of San Diego is one of the most award-winning and innovative agencies in the United States. The five elected Supervisors set policy for the county, and the Chief Administrative Officer relies on the General Management System (GMS), a structure emphasizing accountability, efficiency and customer service for ensuring the County's success in creating a region that is just, sustainable and resilient. Please visit https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/ to learn more about the County of San Diego.

Employees hired on or after October 15, 2021, are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before beginning employment. Requests for exemption to the vaccine requirement may be considered.

Position Summary

As part of the County's focus on efficacy and outcomes, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the creation of the Office of Evaluation, Performance and Analytics (OEPA), under the leadership of the new Chief Evaluation Officer (CEvO). This is a high-profile position, working across a complex enterprise of over 20,000 staff, 40+ offices and an annual budget of $7B. The CEvO will report directly to the Chief Administrative Officer and will devise and own the County's strategy around data and evaluation, building and leading a team of specialists who will build capacity and drive innovative data analytics and collection to assist departments throughout the enterprise.

The OEPA's strategic focus will be on three core elements:
1. Ensure the most appropriate data is collected from each program.
2. Connect research with performance, operations, and budgeting.
3. Translate evaluation into concrete recommendations for improving current programs and shaping policy.

The CEvO's potential impact is immense. They will help ensure the County's client-centric focus remains consistent by tracking participants as they move through and across various County programs and services, working to identify interventions that increase both the efficacy and cost effectiveness of County services. Their team will work collectively with departments to infuse best practices into enterprise-wide strategies, with a focus on optimizing both outcomes and the overall client experience.

At the most fundamental level, their work will help the County better understand residents' needs through an emphasis on data at the participant level:

- How are residents using County services?
- Are these services meeting their needs?
- Is the County achieving the impact goals established in its Operational Plan?
- Is the County balancing equity with efficacy and cost efficiency?

The OEPA team will work on a huge range of issues from homelessness and behavioral health to economic development, public safety, environment and climate justice. While the County has already made significant investments in data collection evaluation, the CEvO will pull everything together under one executive, taking the County's efforts to a much higher level. This will also include more thoughtfulness in terms of how the enterprise presents data and communicates recommendations.

This is an exciting time to join the County of San Diego, as the current Board of Supervisors embarks on an ambitious and fast-paced agenda. The opportunity for impact is enormous: no other local government entity has ever made this scale of investment in data analysis and evaluation – the nation is watching.

Implementation & Approach

The County seeks an experienced leader with a history of using a strengths-based approach and proven track record in program evaluation to tackle big issues and make highly innovative and impactful recommendations. The CEvO will facilitate evidence-based decision and policy making, leveraging data collection and analytics to help the County identify issues and trends and get ahead of them. They will partner closely with other existing data teams embedded within various departments and programs to promote data-driven performance at all levels within the organization. The CEvO will support and enhance what is currently being done at the departmental level, not dictate a top-down command and control strategy. Indeed, their effectiveness will be largely determined by their ability to establish authentic relationships and collaborate at all levels within the organization.

With an annual budget of $4.5M, the CEvO will oversee the creation of a brand-new team and department, with up to 22 positions. While some roles will likely be filled with internal candidates, it is expected the new CEvO will also bring or recruit talented individuals from outside the County to join their team as well. The OEPA's work will be supported by an Evaluation Advisory Committee, consisting of highly experienced data and evaluation professionals, who will review, analyze, and make recommendations on the County's Annual Strategic Research plan, and provide on-going strategic advice on evaluation activities, program designs, data sources, and data collection methodologies.

Priority areas for this position in year 1 include:

- Take time to develop a deep understanding of the County's organizational structure and culture, both at an enterprise level and down to the individual department and program levels.
- Partner with the County's consultant to shape and implement a new framework and strategy around data collection, integration and evaluation at the enterprise level.
- Develop organizational structure and begin staffing the new Office of Evaluation, Performance and Analytics; ensure staff are onboarded effectively.
- Carefully evaluate the County's current strengths and capabilities around data collection and analysis; make recommendations for additional enhancements using current evidence-based research.

- Inventory the County's current programs, identifying those which are currently under evaluation and the effectiveness of those evaluation efforts; begin compiling a list of additional programs for future evaluation.
- Create an Annual Strategic Research Plan that includes identifying relevant policy questions and key services areas and/or program models to focus program evaluation efforts.
- Determine protocols for how data collection and evaluation will be conducted, including development of enterprise-wide standardized definitions, common terminology and levels of evaluation and evidence.
- Look for areas of overlap and duplication around data collection and evaluation; make recommendations for streamlining and simplification.
- Establish and maintain robust lines of communication across departments.
- Establish a County-wide data infrastructure and governance, with data sharing agreements across law enforcement, jails, health, and social services.
- Begin integrating an ethos of data sharing, evaluation, and action into the County's culture to include shared language and commitment.
- Establish membership and convene the Evaluation Advisory Committee.

Priority areas for this position in years 2-5 include:
- Ensure the Evaluation Advisory Committee is up and running effectively to set the learning agenda and formally select programs for evaluation.
- Continue working to ensure data collection and evaluation have become infused into the fabric of County operations at every level.
- Complete high-quality, large-scale program evaluations identified by the Annual Research Plan which can be held up for review and replication, in addition to smaller evaluation projects completed on an as-needed basis.
- Adjust the team structure to ensure it is optimized to continue delivering high impact projects.
- Position the County of San Diego as a nationally recognized leader and innovator around research and evaluation, and its integration into policy making and governance.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities
- Regularly visit departments and programs, maintaining a visible presence across the organization; establish a reputation as the go-to leader for anything related to data collection, evaluation, analysis and research.
- Provide leadership, coaching and mentoring to OEPA team members; take a genuine and active interest in their personal and professional growth and development.
- Partner closely with other teams across the County working on data capture and evaluation.
- Ensure best practices from leading initiatives within the County are leveraged and dispersed across the enterprise.
- Continually monitor the external environment and latest research to identify new ideas the County may wish to consider adopting; ensure strategies and tactics around data and evaluation remain current and effective.
- Analyze the County's Operational Plan and make recommendations for enhancing elements related to data and evaluation.

- Collaborate with outside partners and resources as required from across different disciplines such as business, academia, healthcare, etc.
- Ensure linkages are in place to facilitate data sharing across the entire organization; serve as a bridge between offices, departments and teams for the exchange of information and ideas.
- Update data sharing strategies and protocols to ensure they remain current.
- Manage the County's portfolio of third-party data and evaluation consultants.

Requisite Skills & Experience

- **Leadership experience** – hands-on experience building and managing a team of skilled professionals; proven ability to manage in a highly-networked environment.
- **Communications** – easily conveys complex ideas and concepts in non-technical terms; ability to lead across multiple offices and departments, without formal reporting authority.
- **Program Evaluation** – experience in the use of randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity designs, and propensity score matching.
- **Strategic planning** – ability to envision the future and set goals to achieve it; an effective communicator who can build support at the individual, departmental and enterprise levels.
- **Operations** – exceptional business acumen and change management skills.
- **Coaching and mentoring** – ability to engage staff and develop each team member to their fullest potential; experience developing effective, collaborative and diverse teams.
- **Culture Building** – prior experience creating work environments that are inclusive, productive, healthy and positive.
- **Collaboration** – proven ability to create lasting and impactful relationships at all levels.
- **Managing complexity** – demonstrated success working within complex organizations and managing multiple, competing projects and deadlines.
- **Compliance and Quality Assurance** – experience ensuring organizational compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, standards and best practices.

Leadership & Management Style

- Perspective: genuinely appreciates and will never lose sight of the balance between efficacy and equity; understands the interplay between data, evaluation and policy; focused on seeing the people behind the numbers.
- Passionate: brings a sense of purpose and excitement to the work; has a true appreciation for public service with a deep commitment to making lives better for all San Diegans.
- People: employs a relationship-based approach to everything they do; a connector of people and ideas with a proven track record for developing partnerships.
- High emotional intelligence: listens, absorbs and reflects before acting; actively seeks input and welcomes difference of opinions.
- An inclusive, consensus-building leadership style with a focus on communication.
- Highly developed change management skills.
- Exceptional follow-through and attention to detail.
- Charismatic: warm and personable, a true people person.
- Transparent and open to feedback and constructive criticism; skilled at having tough conversations when necessary.
- Politically astute: demonstrates tact and diplomacy at all times.

Qualities & Attributes

- Executive presence: poised and polished, comfortable making high level and technical presentations to executive leadership and the Board of Supervisors.
- Positivity: a solutions-based thinker with a strong focus on evidence-based outcomes.
- Confidence: ability to make thoughtful, well-research recommendations and defend them.
- Unbiased: ability to serve as a true neutral convener and evaluator.
- Patient: someone who recognizes that there will be a steep learning curve and applies a positive mindset, allowing them to embrace the challenge and grow with the role. A strategic leader who takes the long view, focusing on the relational, not the transactional.
- Focused: comfortable diving down into the intricacies of data and evaluation, but never loses sight of the goals, strategy and vision; keeps coming back to the "why".
- Grounded: takes a practical approach, ability to separate the academic and theoretical from operational and human reality.
- Humble: possesses a self-deprecating sense of humor; a people person who enjoys a good laugh and doesn't take themselves too seriously.

Qualifications

- Ph.D in Economics, Data Science, Public Administration, Sociology or a closely related field required.
- Minimum of 5 years of management level experience in research, program evaluation, performance management, and public policy making.
- Prior government experience a major plus; cross sectoral experience including business, healthcare or academia extremely helpful.
- Proven ability to build and manage a high-performing, highly networked team from the ground-up.
- Experience taking on big issues in complex, data-heavy environments.
- Proven track record of coming up with creative solutions based on heavy analysis across multiple, complex datasets.
- Experience drafting and implementing data sharing protocols.
- Experience working within large, complex organizations including public sector boards, commissions, and/or committees.
- Experience and demonstrated commitment to improving equity and outcomes through evidenced-based practices and decision making.

For more information or to apply, please contact:

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