Senior Economist  
Position Description

Heartland Forward is seeking a skilled research professional to join the organization as a Senior Economist in Bentonville, Arkansas.

Summary

The Senior Economist will work collaboratively to conduct applied regional economic research focused on the American Heartland. This individual will have a sophisticated understanding of how to find and interpret economic data and will help to construct regional data sets and execute econometric estimation. Familiarity with federal and commercial sources of regional economic, industry, financial, and demographic data is important.

This position will report to the Chief Research Officer and play an integral role in fulfilling the research agenda of Heartland Forward. The research will concentrate on transformative changes that are impacting the nation’s and heartland’s economies in the importance of human capital formation and labor force skills training (especially in STEM areas), research, development, and commercialization (universities, small and large firms and federal labs), entrepreneurship, access to early-stage risk capital and quality of place issues. This could be categorized under knowledge-based or technology-based economic development. The critical role of entrepreneurs to regional economic development will be analyzed. Research on how national economic trends are impacting the American heartland is a key focus.

Additionally, research will investigate how more traditional factors (tax rates, wage rates, energy costs, regulatory structure, international trade, foreign direct investment, business climate and other costs of business, demographics) influence the geographic distribution of economic activity in space and migration patterns.

This research will deploy standard and novel industry, occupational, demographic, and other data at both the state and regional levels to depict how large global and national trends have been affecting particular states, places, and groups in recent decades.

Specific duties will include the following:

- Recommend research topics, develop methodological approaches and conduct research
- Build, maintain, organize and update data sets
- Participate in the development and execution of econometric techniques that can be integrated into a wide range of projects
- Write up findings and recommendations that can be shared with stakeholders and disseminated to impact public policy
- Participate in developing presentations for conferences and forums
- Make presentations and participate in discussions with the media and stakeholders
- Perform a number of research, and analytical tasks, including reviewing and recommending changes to initiatives; analyzing data; drawing conclusions and recommending changes.

Who we are looking for:

The Senior Economist must possess the following professional qualifications and personal attributes:

- Must be a self-starter who takes initiative
- Ability to meet deadlines, prioritize assignments, and juggle multiple tasks simultaneously
Basic qualifications required for the role:

- Master's degree in economics or related field (e.g., geography or sociology, if undergraduate degree is in economics) with 7-plus years of experience
- Ability to understand and work with complex regional economic and demographic data
- Expertise in quantitative analysis using longitudinal datasets
- Demonstrated research experience in a think tank, corporate, government or university setting
- Statistical estimation and model-building skills, including econometrics using statistical software such as STATA, SAS, R or EViews.
- Experience in developing PowerPoint presentations and managing complex data with Excel spreadsheets
- Outstanding written and oral communication skills. Must be able to translate complex economic and financial issues for an educated lay audience

Additional helpful experience includes:

- Ph.D. in economics or related field (e.g., geography or sociology, if undergraduate or master's degree is in economics)
- Knowledge of geographical information system software packages such as ArcGIS a plus
- Research experience in labor markets including occupational, post-secondary degrees and career technical education
- Familiarity with publicly available government data sets both on the state, and federal level is a strong plus.
- Entrepreneurial and/or start-up research experience a plus

Heartland Forward has retained the services of INSIGHT EXECUTIVE SEARCH to assist in the recruitment. Anyone interested in applying should contact:

Ari Ayares, Vice President
INSIGHT EXECUTIVE SEARCH
Ari.Ayares@insightexecutivesearch.com

About Heartland Forward

Heartland Forward is a 501 (c) (3) nonpartisan, nonprofit “think and do tank,” focused on improving the economic performance in the center of the United States by advocating fact-based solutions to foster job creation, knowledge-based and inclusive growth and improved health status. Most research and policy efforts by existing think tanks in the Heartland are focused on their individual state or metro areas within a state. We think a cross-cutting view is critical to solving the region's challenges, and Heartland Forward will fill this void. While recognizing the differences between places in the center of the country, we will analyze the region holistically to identify common issues and solutions.

The Institute will pursue its mission through independent, data-driven research, action-oriented convenings, and impactful policy recommendations. Its flagship convening is the Heartland Summit, a two-day summit where policy leaders, entrepreneurs, elected officials, and economic development officials come together to meet in the middle and pursue solutions to strengthen the Heartland’s economy.

Heartland Forward is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to building and maintaining a culturally diverse workplace. We encourage women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans to apply. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, status of protected veteran, among other things or status as a qualified individual with a disability.