WestEd

Chief Talent Officer

Position Description & Candidate Profile
Chief Talent Officer

Location
San Francisco, CA (strongly preferred)

Reports to
Chief Executive Officer

Our Client
WestEd is a nonprofit research, development, and service agency whose comprehensive repertoire of programs and expertise focuses on education and human development. Its broad scope of work creates effective and lasting solutions to the challenges that arise within these complex spheres. The organization’s origins date back to 1966, when Congress created a network of Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs). In 1995, two of them, Far West Laboratory and Southwest Regional Laboratory, joined together to become WestEd.

WestEd recognizes that learning and healthy development are lifelong endeavors that go hand in hand. WestEd's work focuses not just on what goes on in school, but also in early childhood; in children's homes, after-school programs, and communities; in the training and development of those who teach and guide children; and in legislatures and other decision-making bodies whose policies touch the children, youth, and adults WestEd aims to serve.

While numbers are but a single indicator of WestEd's strengths, they do point to a vibrant, growing, and innovative agency with over 1,200 full-time staff, working from 42 states, with 13 offices across the country. WestEd's three divisions conduct diverse work, with research and assessment, technical assistance, and professional learning services all key components of its portfolio. Supporting WestEd's work are hundreds of clients and funders, including federal, state and local agencies, as well as critical partners and philanthropy. WestEd's revenue in the current fiscal year is approximately $250 million, representing work with approximately 1,000 contracts.

Recent Development and The Opportunity
In October, WestEd welcomed agency veteran Jannelle Kubinec into the role of CEO. For more than a decade, Jannelle has contributed as a valued member of WestEd's leadership team, helping its partners and clients navigate the complex environment currently surrounding education and human development.
Focused on maintaining WestEd’s commitment to equity and excellence, and recognizing that recruiting, developing and retaining talent is key to the agency’s short- and long-term strategies for growth and impact, WestEd is expanding the executive leadership team to include a Chief Talent Officer (CTO).

The Chief Talent Officer position is an extraordinary opportunity to build on the way WestEd thinks about and develops its people and, in turn, subsequently impacts the experience of all of the children, youth, and adults WestEd serves. As WestEd continues to grow, the organization aims to lead with transparency, foster its culture of inclusion and belonging, and generally create the clarity and space for a diverse, seasoned and high-performing team to attain professional and personal growth, enabling team members to leverage their considerable expertise for WestEd’s important and ambitious mission. This new leader will bring experience and perspective to challenges facing the agency from recent growth; ensure that WestEd’s values guide its efforts to attract, support, develop, motivate, and remunerate its team; and join the new leadership in developing and executing a focused strategic direction for WestEd’s future.

Learn more about WestEd at [https://www.wested.org](https://www.wested.org)!

**Position Responsibilities**

WestEd remains steadfastly committed to equity, inclusion and diversity, in no small part to advance equitable opportunities, increase well-being, and promote positive outcomes for all children, youth, and adults. To that end, WestEd has a very diverse team, and more than 25% of its staff have been with the organization for more than 10 years. WestEd has recently added Director-level roles in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Learning and Development to complement the core Human Resources team. Under the new CTO’s leadership, the work in these areas will deepen, supporting a culture of inclusion, belonging, and professional growth.

One key area for WestEd’s new CTO will be to develop a strategic plan for talent that is clearly tied to a broader, organizational strategic plan. Toward that end, the CTO will develop and implement new talent management strategies for the agency that modernize approaches to talent development. These strategies will take into consideration the challenges of recent growth (40 percent in total staff since 2020), the shift to a remote/hybrid workforce, the needs of a multigenerational and diverse workforce, and other unique institutional needs. In all, the new CTO will lead four distinct work streams, which include:

**Talent Strategies:** lead a wholesale redesign of the agency’s job architecture and management system to support increased understanding of and ensure an
equitable approach to role definition and levels, compensation, promotion criteria, and performance management that support recruitment, retention, and development of staff.

**Human Resources:** bring vision and strategic alignment to the work of the human resources department (comprising a team of 13) with functional responsibilities in recruitment, hiring, benefits management, employee engagement, and HR information systems.

**Learning and Development:** bring vision and strategic alignment to the work of the new and evolving Learning and Development function to foster a learning organization, including building on the successful implementation of the Reciprocal Mentoring, People Manager Academy, and other learning opportunities to create additional learning and development opportunities agency-wide and in specific career tracks to ensure the achievement of organizational goals, and building meaningful career supports and structures for all members of the WestEd team.

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion:** bring vision and strategic alignment to the work of the DEI function; as a part of WestEd's programmatic work and its role as a leading voice in the field, the organization has long been committed to equity and equitable outcomes. As WestEd continues to grow and learn, the organization is working to better realize this commitment through more consistent examination of its culture.

More specifically, the new Chief Talent Officer will be responsible for:

- Conducting a strategic review of WestEd’s policies and procedures across human resources and people management functions – including compensation, incentive programs, benefits, performance management, incorporation of DEI values and priorities, employee satisfaction, learning and development, recruitment and retention, and maintaining career development supports and structures
- Managing department directors in Human Resources, Learning and Development, and DEI, overseeing a total team of approximately 20 staff
- Collaborating with WestEd’s executive leaders to develop and implement initiatives for continuous improvement in operations
- Collaborating with three executive-level program leaders to ensure people needs are met in their areas of work, through effective and modern approaches to recruitment and retention
- Participating in developing organizational strategy with the CEO and executive leadership, and ensuring talent initiatives and decision-making are aligned with emerging strategy
• Leading annual planning and budgeting around salary, incentive compensation, and benefits, with deep understanding of agency’s fiscal resources and institutional funding, working in tandem with the Chief Financial Officer
• Working with the CEO to ensure the Board of Directors is informed on talent and human resources matters, collaborating with the Director of Human Resources
• Ensuring ongoing understanding and shared knowledge throughout the agency’s people managers of all applicable laws and regulations governing WestEd’s role as an employer in more than 40 states
• Ensuring full compliance with WestEd’s federal, state, and local contracting requirements and its obligations for hiring, staffing, and any other commitments
• Working with executive leadership and WestEd’s DEI director to champion diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging
• Creating an accessible workplace for all employees
• Leading the problem-solving and decision-making processes for management issues that arise in the course WestEd’s work
• Ensuring that a high-performing culture continues and thrives at WestEd through strategy and implementation of necessary initiatives
• Monitoring and reacting to the evolution of the workplace, through leading WestEd in its hybrid work program, and recommending new programs and policies when they will facilitate additional success for the agency
• Collaborating with finance, accounting, and information technology leadership to ensure highly functioning human resources information systems that are best-in-class, and that are effective for the agency’s needs
• Collaborating with the CEO and communications team to build a cohesive workforce, and to keep all employees informed of important information regarding their employment, the direction of the agency, and other issues as needed

Profile of the Successful Candidate
Above all, WestEd is seeking a mission-driven leader who will balance innovation, change management, and the strengths of WestEd’s existing culture, climate and practices to achieve strategic objectives for a robust talent function and the agency overall. Strong candidates will possess some combination of the following:

• Experience establishing a clear vision and strategy for talent and people development, developing metrics/goals for measuring progress, and evolving the vision in response to opportunities, challenges or changes in the environment
● An existing knowledge base of frameworks and models related to various talent operations (e.g.: hiring, DEI, performance management) that position the CTO to support continuous improvement efforts in the agency’s administrative operations

● Capacity to be a vocal, high-profile leader and practitioner in WestEd’s ongoing work to examine, enhance and integrate progressive DEI practices across the agency as a thought leader in the field

● Ability to build relationships, garner trust and influence action by demonstrating appreciation for and understanding of WestEd’s expertise-driven culture

● Ability to envision and manage the design and implementation of projects that will bring diverse teams together and foster a collaborative approach to achieving agency-wide goals

● Capacity and inclination to convey a deep belief in people; furthering the growth and development of others through regular feedback, coaching, mentoring, and encouraging learning opportunities; ultimately shaping culture and results through team leadership

● Analytical thinking skills that support strong, collaborative decision making and the ability to communicate effectively about the associated rationale

● Strong written and verbal communication skills

● High tolerance for ambiguity

● Big picture perspective

● A sense of humor that seeks (and finds) joy in the workplace

WestEd has a small executive leadership team of seven people, which, in addition to the CTO, includes the CEO, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Development Office and three Division Directors who lead programs and participate in executive decision-making. The executive leadership team is centered in the San Francisco office. This team works together effectively through regular check-ins, monthly meetings and ongoing collaboration, and connects with the broader leadership team through a series of quarterly meetings. WestEd has large offices in southern California and Washington D.C., as well as a presence in over 40 other states, and the CTO will work with them closely.

Start Timeframe
We seek to have someone in place by the first quarter of 2024.

Compensation
The salary range for this position is $305,000 to $350,000. WestEd offers an annual incentive compensation plan, based on the organization’s performance against
annual revenue goals, and on individual performance; the amount and proportion of total compensation may vary from year to year. WestEd provides a generous benefits package and additional information will be made available during the interview process. We actively welcome all candidates from a wide range of backgrounds who have the skills to fulfill this role – regardless of compensation history.

To Apply
All applications are held in strict confidence. Please submit your credentials and a letter of interest through our private applicant portal to The 360 Group at:

https://the360group.us/portal

Applications should be directed to the attention of Monica Rodgers, Senior Consultant. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Earlier applicants may receive priority consideration. To be considered, The 360 Group encourages all interested candidates to submit their applications promptly, via the confidential applicant portal linked above.

At The 360 Group, we know that a richly diverse mix of professionals makes organizations more effective. Using that principle as our “North Star,” we make diversity a hallmark of our firm, and all of our search engagements.

Learn more about The 360 Group at the360group.us.