

Poverty & Race Research Action Council (PRRAC)

Executive Director

The **Poverty & Race Research Action Council** (PRRAC) is a civil rights law and policy organization whose mission is to promote research-based advocacy strategies to address structural inequality and change the systems that disadvantage low-income people of color. Its advocacy work focuses primarily on housing and education policy, but also touches on land use, and the interconnections between housing policy and education, health, and transportation. PRRAC fully supports place-based policies to redress the history of discrimination and disinvestment but believes that creating opportunities for stable integration in housing and schools is also essential to meaningfully address racial inequity and oppression. Thus, PRRAC is unique in its focus on policies such as housing mobility and school diversity, which reduce structural segregation directly. More information on PRRAC can be found at: <https://www.prrac.org>.

PRRAC has established a name for itself by issuing comment letters on and conducting “in the weeds” research, analysis, and advocacy regarding key federal policy programs that can promote housing integration, such as Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing and the Housing Choice Voucher program. More recently, PRRAC has helped expand awareness about social housing, working in partnership with several groups that employ more place-based approaches to fair housing. PRRAC provides thought leadership and coordination support related to housing/school policy intersections. The organization was recently awarded a grant to pursue this work in more depth.

In addition to federal law and policy research, analysis, and advocacy, PRRAC provides technical assistance and support for local partners working on innovative, inclusive policies. We believe in strong coalition and partnership models. Our work is informed by an extensive national network of researchers, organizers, attorneys, educators, and public health and housing professionals. PRRAC is a founding member of the National Coalition on School Diversity and currently serves as its fiscal sponsor.

The Executive Director is a full-time position and reports to the PRRAC Board. The Executive Director supervises seven staff members (including NCSD’s staff of two), as well as several technical consultants. This position requires that the Executive Director be present in the Washington, D.C. office on average for three days a week.

The ideal candidate is grounded in racial justice policy, understands the role of law, policy, and social movements in advancing structural change, is dynamic and innovative, and is an excellent collaborator.

CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES

The departure of a long serving accomplished Executive Director with deep subject matter and technical legal expertise in PRRAC's areas of focus is a key moment to reflect on the state of the organization. PRRAC's board, and staff, have done so. We aim to explore the ideas outlined below in a candid and mutual dialogue with serious candidates for the Executive Director position, and to forge a mandate for our new leader, the board and organization.

- We are focused on developing research-based advocacy strategies and actionable policies to address structural inequality and to change the systems that disadvantage low-income people of color. PRRAC's substantive analysis of how historical and contemporary policies and practices shape racial inequity is critical to the work of movements, advocates, academics and policy makers, public policy organizations and coalition partners. These partners look to our analysis and content expertise to inform and shape their strategies.
- Our retiring Executive Director has been a highly effective public face of the organization, bringing his legal expertise, thought leadership and our analysis of the evolving forms and systems of inequality and segregation to those who join with us in this work. Our staff is talented and committed to PRRAC's mission and vision and is eager to work with an incoming Executive Director who can leverage and cultivate their individual and collective strengths, build out the staffing for key projects, and provide strong direction and support on PRRAC's operations and fundraising.
- We also recognize the need to adapt our communication strategies and branding to better connect with emerging movements and activists through social media and other contemporary platforms. We will look to our new leader to build on these tactics, many of which we are already adapting in nascent form.
- Our board has tremendous subject matter expertise, credibility, advocacy expertise and diversity, with multiple generations of leaders in this space and a unity of purpose. The board has concentrated primarily on contributing its considerable expertise to PRRAC's efforts to challenge structural segregation through law, policy and advocacy.
- Whomever we hire as Executive Director, the board recognizes it needs to strengthen its contribution to development and fundraising and commits to partnering with our new Executive Director to shape and execute a strategy for this initiative.
- Our premise is that as we strengthen the overall capacity of the organization it allows for a variety of possible approaches to build on our work and impact. For example, an Executive Director who is a subject matter and/or technical legal expert and effective communicator might continue with the model now in place, focusing on public leadership while forming an in-house management team that will concentrate on fund raising, professional development, innovation and performance improvement. Conversely, an Executive Director who is an accomplished and well-rounded manager, fund raiser and mentor, aligned with

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our values and goals but not a subject matter expert, might focus on overall management and development activities while staff subject matter experts assume more of the public advocacy and communication role. This approach would necessitate establishing and facilitating an ongoing, internal team, including the necessary subject matter expertise, to take up the vital strategic and tactical conversations and analysis necessary to accomplish the vision and mission of the organization.

- In the wake of several Supreme Court rulings that have fundamentally altered the landscape of the federal administrative state, it is of particular importance that, as an organization, we retain and strengthen our authoritative knowledge of the rule of law and the role courts will now play in federal policy making and enforcement.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Guide the overall vision, mission, strategy, and priorities for PRRAC's work through a housing and schools integration lens

Policy & Advocacy

- Continue and strengthen PRRAC's research and policy priorities, including development of policy ideas, in step with the changing forces and forms of racial segregation
- Ensure that PRRAC is at the forefront of policy innovation advancing racial equity in housing and education
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with key partners and coalitions engaged in legal, policy, research, and advocacy efforts

Development

- Fundraise to sustain existing staff and programs, and to support smart growth in the medium and long term
- Represent PRRAC to funders
- Assure continued and effective production of grant proposals and timely grant reporting

Management & Supervision

- Work collaboratively with colleagues and staff on policy, research, and development
- Work with staff to oversee the budget, human resources, and general administration of PRRAC. Assure effective financial management with appropriate input from PRRAC staff, its Treasurer, and consultants
- Oversee implementation of strategic plan and DEI plan
- Oversee, mentor and develop PRRAC staff and legal interns
- Oversee onboarding and training of new staff
- Maintain open communications with PRRAC board

REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS

- JD preferred, or PhD or Master's degree and equivalent experience
- At least 10 years of experience on issues relevant to PRRAC's mission
- At least 10 years of experience leading teams and as a direct supervisor to multiple staff preferred
- Demonstrated understanding of statutory and regulatory interpretation
- Demonstrated commitment to and experience with racial and social justice issues, including poverty and inequality issues
- Demonstrated skills and experience with fundraising and budget management
- Established relationships and networks in economic justice and racial equity space
- Excellent writing and communication skills, including public speaking experience
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity within the workplace using a personal approach that values all individuals and respects differences in regard to race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, disability and socio-economic circumstance
- Experience leading teams, supervising and mentoring staff, and managing projects and programs
- Demonstrated commitment to lead and work collaboratively
- Excellent strategic, organizational, problem-solving, interpersonal, and critical thinking skills
- Ability to make timely, informed decisions using judgment and considering the facts, goals, constraints, and risks

COMPENSATION

Annual salary for this position is in the range of \$190,000 to mid-\$200,000, depending on the experience and background of the successful candidate. Benefits include 20 days of vacation and 10 days of sick leave per year. We also provide health and dental insurance, a 403b retirement plan with a 2% employer contribution and long-and short-term disability insurance.

PRRAC seeks to foster a workplace that reflects our organizational mission and values, and that promotes diversity, inclusiveness, and growth among our staff and in our role as a platform for other voices. Our organizational plan sets forth PRRAC's internal commitment to antiracism, racial equity and racial diversity, along with support for other aspects of identity and diversity, including but not limited to gender/sex, LGBTQ status, disability, and experience with poverty.

APPLICATION

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Resumes and a cover letter may be submitted in confidence to:
PRRAC@fordwebb.com

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