# Senior Vice President for Policy and Research

## Commonwealth Fund | New York, New York

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## Background

The Commonwealth Fund is a private foundation that aims to promote a high performing health care system that achieves better access, improved quality, and greater efficiency, particularly for two groups of people: High-need and high-cost individuals – the sickest 5 percent of Americans who account for 50 percent of health care costs, and America’s most vulnerable, including low-income people, the uninsured, ethnic and racial minorities, and the elderly. The Fund carries out this mandate by supporting independent research on health care issues and making grants to improve health care practice and policy. In so doing, the Fund has become a national leader in investigation and policy development related to tracking the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, reforming the health care delivery system, international health policy and practice, cost control and Medicare. The Fund has an endowment of $700 million, and an annual budget of $32 million, approximately 60 percent if which is spent extramurally on grants and 40 percent intramurally on developing programs, conducting research, and communicating results to influential audiences.

## Job Summary

The Senior Vice President for Policy and Research (SVP-PR) reports to the Executive Vice President for Programs, who is responsible for all of the Fund’s program areas.  The position is inherently cross cutting. S/he also participates frequently in meetings of the Fund’s Executive Management Team. While strong candidates will be expected to bring expertise and a publication history in at least one of the Fund’s core program areas, the successful candidate will also be expected to add value to the organization’s work in all of its core areas. This includes participating in deliberations about the Fund’s strategic direction, and working with other Fund staff to develop the research design of grant proposals and future publications.

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## Responsibilities

The SVP-PR serves in an advisory capacity on all Fund-initiated surveys and works with senior Fund staff to develop a strategic plan for Fund surveys that support the work of the Fund programs. The position has traditionally provided thought leadership in identifying key trends and messages in Fund surveys.  S/he also contributes to Fund publications and journal articles as co-author or lead author with analyses based on findings from Fund surveys or federal databases. For example, the SV-PR is responsible for working with the International Health Policy & Practice Innovations Program to develop creative annual international health policy surveys, including the annual international health policy survey effort. Working as a team with the Vice President of the International Health Policy & Practice Innovations Program, the SV-PR develops the sample design and survey questionnaire for the annual survey and the contract with a survey firm to conduct the multi-national survey. This responsibility has included being lead author of the paper summarizing survey findings, normally published by *Health Affairs,*and presentation at the annual IHP fall symposium.

The SV-PR is responsible for leading key Fund initiatives. Historically this has included responsibilities such as having served as the research director of the Commission on a High Performance Health System and overseeing the Fund’s Scorecard and Market Analysis project and staff, a three-person research team based in Denver and Boston with responsibilities for developing and producing national, state and sub-state regional analyses on health care system performance and related insurance and care system market structure analyses.

The SV-PR participates in the Fund’s Publications Review Committee and in the Board Proposal Review meetings leading up to recommended Board-level grants. This effort includes vetting research designs for projects, bringing to bear a wide range of experience on health insurance, health care access, health care policy and quality issues. The individual in this position also serves as a crucial quality control officer for Fund reports and publications, ensuring that the information is accurate and timely and that the key issues are communicated properly.

As a frequent contributor to the Fund’s Executive Management Team, the SV-PR participates in annual review and discussion of program strategic plans and assessment of completed projects and grants.

The Fund’s philosophy regarding successful performance in the job includes the willingness on the part of all senior staff members to handle any assignment necessary to further the goals of the institution. This may include taking on responsibility for other program areas or departments or specific projects if the need arises.

## Qualifications

Successful candidates must have extensive experience as a researcher or policy analyst and must have demonstrated an ability to manage complex research and evaluation projects and to produce high quality analytic work.

Specific job qualifications include extensive experience managing a research or evaluation team, a PhD or equivalent research training, and at least ten years of experience in health policy research. Formal economics and statistics training at the graduate school level or the equivalent in job experience is necessary. This training should include demonstrated skill and experience in managing and analyzing databases.

This person will have demonstrated writing skills and a peer-reviewed publishing record as a policy analyst and researcher. The ability to work independently and creatively across a range of social and health policy issues is required, along with the expertise and familiarity with health services research and economics literature related to health and social policy issues. This person must have the ability to lead and manage team efforts, strong interpersonal and management skills, and the ability to work constructively and collaboratively with both senior and junior research staff.

The Fund has a relatively small staff, and judgment, integrity, and the ability to listen with sensitivity to others are traits that are particularly important in an organization of the Fund’s size, where teamwork is essential to effectiveness. The ability to work collegially with a variety of Fund staff is a key qualification. So too are an interest in, and strong commitment to, the Fund’s mission and grants programs.

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## Compensation

Compensation is commensurate with background and experience. The Fund offers an excellent benefits package (medical/dental insurance, life/disability insurance, pension plan, tuition reimbursement, ample vacation and lunch in staff dining room).