



Position Description: Researcher/Writer – Regional Development

The Regional Development Researcher/Writer will implement a workplan of qualitative research, writing, and training activities in support of the [Economic Development District Community of Practice \(EDD CoP\)](#), led by the [NADO Research Foundation \(NADO RF\)](#) and funded by the [U.S. Economic Development Administration](#). Through the EDD CoP, NADO RF and its partners will provide tools, resources, and networking opportunities for EDD staff to strengthen organizational capacity and better guide regions towards becoming more competitive, resilient, and equitable.

[Economic Development Districts \(EDDs\)](#) are multi-jurisdictional planning and economic development agencies federally designated by EDA. There are nearly 400 EDDs across the country that encourage economic development planning and project implementation in distressed urban, suburban, and rural regions. EDDs open the door for local communities to grant and loan funding opportunities, administrative and technical assistance, and access to data and technology resources.

Among other responsibilities, the Regional Development Researcher/Writer will be responsible for researching and writing case studies, issue briefs, reports, and more for a broad audience on topics that may include, but are not limited to: rural-urban connections; rural economic development strategies; data access and analysis in rural communities; broadband; housing; wealth creation strategies; entrepreneurial ecosystems, deploying federal COVID-relief funding and other economic revitalization funding; tribal-EDD partnerships, economic and climate resilience; equity and inclusion strategies; organizational capacity building strategies; plan alignment and integration; workforce development; improving EDD-University Center collaboration, supporting regional economic development through higher education/community college partnerships; and more.

With guidance from the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director, the Regional Development Researcher/Writer is under direct supervision from the Associate Director.

Specific Responsibilities

- Researches, synthesizes information, and writes a variety of written materials and documents in support of the EDD CoP, including case studies, issue briefs, blog posts, reports, and other assignments for a wide audience of economic development practitioners, local elected officials, federal/state partners, and others.
- Presents findings on webinars, at in-person events and workshops, and through other in-person and remote platforms.
- Develops and maintains a general understanding of Economic Development Districts, their programs, and their partnerships with federal, state, and local governments and others.
- Assists the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, and Associate Directors with NADO Research Foundation projects and programs related to rural and small metro economic development, regional planning, and other research and professional development programs of NADO and the NADO Research Foundation.
- Communicates by phone, email, in-person, or virtual platforms with EDD professionals, other professional staff and members of other associations, federal agency partners, and other stakeholders.
- Follows project research plans to identify and collect information on programs, policies, and projects related to regional economic development; recommends additional research and analysis activities.
- Analyzes documents and conducts interviews with stakeholders to collect information; documents research

activities, findings, and sources.

- Prepares or contributes to the preparation of materials that describe programs, policies, and projects and may draw conclusions or make recommendations based on analysis.
- Develops, writes, and contributes content for NADO publications, reports, and information resources, including *NADO News*, the NADO and *CEDS Central* websites (www.cedscentral.com), special reports, issue briefs, and other research and information resources.
- Assists with coordinating national and regional in-person, virtual, and hybrid events that cover regional economic development and related program issues. As appropriate to the event, leads or assists with developing draft agendas; identifies and communicates with potential trainers, speakers, or facilitators; works with other staff to determine event logistics; and markets to appropriate audiences.
- Assists with the maintenance of the project's online tools, including as needed, planning and implementation of webinars and web meetings, development of professional peer networks, website and social media post content, and other technology-based information sharing forums.
- Other duties as assigned.

Required Skills/Experience

- General knowledge of regional and local planning, workforce development, transportation, environment, and/or community and economic development issues in order to analyze programs, policies, and projects for research, writing, and training deliverables.
- Strong understanding of issues related to regional economic development, in particular those affecting small urban and rural communities, in order to contribute to research and training deliverables.
- Strong writing and verbal communication skills to gather information, communicate with management and other staff, and effectively represent NADO and the NADO Research Foundation to other organizations.
- Experience or capability in developing resources that are accessible for wide-ranging audiences
- Basic skills with Microsoft Office products, such as Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, and Excel, as well as Adobe Acrobat Pro, required. Successful candidates will also have a level of proficiency with various virtual meeting and training platforms including Microsoft Teams, Zoom, the GoToMeeting suite of training programs, and others.
- Familiarity with or willingness to learn basics of publishing content to websites using a content management system.
- Must be a team player and have research experience in following a research plan to identify sources, collect and analyze information, and present findings.

Educational Requirements

Bachelor's degree required. Minimum two years of work experience or Master's degree in fields of planning, journalism, social sciences, economic development, transportation, environmental studies, public administration, public policy, or related subject. Work experience may substitute for preferred educational background.

Supervisory Controls

The Researcher/Writer works under the daily general supervision of the Associate Director who will assign tasks, monitor progress on projects and provide guidance, information, or editorial review, and project assignments. The Researcher/Writer coordinates and carries out successive steps in completing projects.

Complexity

The Researcher/Writer's assignments can be varied in scope and complexity. The position must react to changing situations and design comprehensive solutions to satisfy management objectives and project deliverables. The Researcher/Writer is expected to exercise tact and sound judgment in day-to-day activities and contacts with other organizations and is expected to promptly notify supervisor or senior staff of potential problem areas.

Physical Demands

The work is generally sedentary, although some slight physical effort may be required. The work requires frequent computer and telephone use. Occasional domestic travel is required to attend conferences, events, or other locations for production of project deliverables. This is a full-time position. The NADO office is located in Washington, DC, and is designed to offer a hybrid work experience with staff working from home and in the office as needed or desired. A successful candidate can be located in the DC area or elsewhere in the US.

Compensation and Benefits

Competitive salary commensurate with experience and qualifications. Full benefits include medical, dental, vision, retirement, and annual leave.

Application Process

Please submit the following items to Brett Schwartz at bschwartz@nado.org with the subject line “[First and last name] – Regional Development Researcher/Writer Application”:

- 1-page maximum cover letter explaining why you are interested in the position and working at the NADO Research Foundation, and how your skills and experiences meet the position requirements outlined above
- Resume
- 2 to 3 writing samples that showcase your ability to research, write, and share information with a wide-ranging, non-academic audience of economic development professional. These may include a short case study, blog post, brief, or report. *Please consolidate all writing samples in one single attached document (PDF preferred).*

About NADO and the NADO Research Foundation

The [National Association of Development Organizations \(NADO\)](#) is a membership association that represents the network of Regional Development Organizations (RDOs) across the country that includes about 400 federally funded Economic Development Districts (EDDs) that encourage economic development planning and project implementation in distressed urban, suburban, and rural regions. NADO advocates for federal policies and programs that promote equitable community development, economic competitiveness, rural development, economic mobility, and quality of place. The [NADO Research Foundation \(NADO RF\)](#), NADO’s non-profit affiliate organization, provides technical assistance, education, research, and training to support and strengthen the national network of RDOs. NADO RF provides thought leadership, conducts research, and produces publications focused on promising practices and innovative approaches that promote regional community development.

NADO and the NADO RF are committed to incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of our work and seek to build a staff that reflects this commitment.
