

Who we are:

Transportation is so basic that many of us overlook its overwhelming importance in our daily lives. Practically everything used in our homes, offices, or schools across Tennessee – from furniture to food items to clothing – requires a large and complex transportation network. The Tennessee Department of Transportation provides citizens of Tennessee and travelers with one of the best transportation systems in the country. TDOT is a multimodal agency with responsibilities in building and maintaining roads, aviation, public transit, waterways, railroads, cycling and walking. Our involvement ranges from airport improvements to funding transit buses to planning for river ports. The Department of Transportation has approximately 3,500 employees with four statewide region facilities in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, and Jackson.



Research and Innovation Team Lead

Strategic Planning, Research, and Innovation Division – Research and Innovation Section
Nashville, TN
\$103,848 annually

Job Overview

The Research and Innovation Team Lead will lead, mentor, and train the Research and Innovation Team through empowerment, communication, and delegated authority. This position will develop work plans that align with TDOT's strategic vision and will effectively delegate authority and responsibility while ensuring the availability of resources for the Research and Innovation Team to be successful.

This Research and Innovation Team Lead will lead the development and implementation of department policies, discipline-specific technical guidance, procedures, and manuals related to performing research and identifying innovations for incorporation into TDOT's programs and projects. The position will ensure the implementation of the quality assurance program to achieve program efficiency and effectiveness. The Research and Innovation Team Lead will supervise technical staff and implement performance plans, schedules, and budgets, ensuring the expected outcomes, performance, and accountability of each team member. The Research and Innovation Team Lead will research national best practices to drive innovation and efficiency within TDOT.

Essential Job Responsibilities

Manage resources and staff utilization and assist the Research and Innovation Team in performing their roles effectively and efficiently, optimizing the Team's ability to successfully administer TDOT's Research Program and other transportation research initiatives to systematically identify new and improved processes and technologies.

Communicate, coordinate, and effectively facilitate the implementation of improved processes and technologies into programs and projects with TDOT Divisions, TDOT regions, local agencies, and other stakeholders.

Establish and ensure there is a direct relationship between quality and work outcomes by developing and implementing quality control and quality assurance processes for the Research and Innovation Team with respect to administering, planning, conducting, monitoring, reviewing, and coordinating research and innovation activities.

Assist with the management of policy level direction for the Research and Innovation Section as part of a matrix structure, creating policies, procedures, guidelines, and performance metrics that support adherence to federal and state requirements, incorporate best practices, and improve research and innovation administration and implementation processes. Develop and manage the financial performance for the Research and Innovation Section in alignment with TDOT financial processes to ensure transparency and accountability.

Manage change, clarify the vision, take ownership of the change, communicate effectively, remain transparent, and hold yourself and others accountable throughout the process.

Manage research program contracting by providing leadership, guidance and direction to the Research and Innovation Team for developing contract scopes of work, executing contracts, managing contract tasks, approving invoices, and approving final research products.

Lead the Research and Innovation Team in providing exceptional customer service to both internal and external customers, exercising effective listening skills, providing prompt responses, maintaining complete and accurate documentation, and communicating effectively. Continuously improve Research and Innovation Team processes based on feedback provided by TDOT's internal and external stakeholders.

Ensure the Research and Innovation Team remains current on national and TDOT best practices as it relates to the Research and Innovation programs; incorporate best practices into the Research and Innovation programs to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, reliability, sustainability, and the safety of Tennessee's transportation network; and integrate federal and state requirements into TDOT's guidance documents, processes, and procedures. Participate in peer exchanges related to research and innovation with State and local governments and applicable industry partners for key insights and collaboration.

Provide oversight in the development of Research and Innovation Team deliverables to ensure they are consistent, predictable, and repeatable to provide consistently high levels of achievement, mitigation of risk, and an established track record of success.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree
- 5 years of demonstrated competency in Urban, Environmental or Transportation Planning, Business or Public Administration, Environmental Science or Engineering, Data Science or Statistics, Library Science, or a related field.

Ideal Candidate

The Research and Innovation Team Lead possesses strong innovative problem-solving skills needed to support the advancement of cutting-edge ideas in transportation systems and experience managing people, contracts, and projects. With exceptional leadership and interpersonal skills, they effectively manage and inspire a diverse team, fostering collaboration and excellence. Excellent communication skills enable them to engage effectively with various stakeholders. The Research and Innovation Team Lead is a strategic thinker ensuring they stay ahead of industry trends, driving TDOT's innovation forward.