



The San Diego Association of Governments invites applications for the position of:

## **applied research/ criminal justice research analyst**

A job at SANDAG is guaranteed to stimulate your mind, expand your skills, and accelerate your professional development. We are committed to recruiting highly talented individuals who are dedicated to working on important issues and passionate about making significant contributions that impact the lives of people all around the region. We look for people that have extraordinary leadership and vision; people that drive change and produce results; people who take ownership of projects and never settle for "good enough."

SANDAG values and rewards continuous improvement. We offer a fulfilling work environment that will challenge your capabilities. And it is place where you can take ownership for the next steps in your career while being supported with opportunities, tools, and resources that will allow you to be successful.

**Applications due by February 11, 2011**  
**Expected start date: April 2011**

**This is a Limited Term Employment Opportunity.**



## **Applied Research/Criminal Justice Research Division**

SANDAG's Applied Research Division provides technical support to the region's policymakers, agency leaders, and service providers by evaluating data and making recommendations that lead to informed decisions and increased program effectiveness. Examples of recent and upcoming projects include evaluations and cost/benefit analyses of services provided to ex-offenders that lead to lower rates of recidivism; partnering with local law enforcement agencies to document and evaluate effectiveness of efforts aimed at reducing gang- and gun-related crimes in the San Diego region; surveying the region's residents to get public input into the upcoming Regional Transportation Plan (RTP); and creating performance measures to evaluate policies and efforts aimed at reducing family homelessness. Results of such research studies and evaluations are shared with decision-makers and stakeholders on a regular basis and lead to more informed decisions about investments in funding, resources, and programs that will have the greatest positive impact on the San Diego region.

### **Research Analyst Role**

As part of the 16-person Applied Research/Criminal Justice Research Division, the Research Analyst will assist with the design, implementation, and analysis of various studies that support a broad range of agency projects, programs, and policy initiatives in the areas of criminal justice, public safety and health, transportation, land-use planning, economics, and demographics.

Three positions currently are available – these are limited term employment opportunities. Two positions will work on research efforts related to criminal justice and public safety projects. The third position will have an emphasis on regional transportation, land-use, and demographics studies that support numerous agency programs and projects. The positions will be funded for one to two year periods depending on resource needs for projects. Limited Term Employees are considered to be “at-will” and receive many of the benefits of regular employees.

### **Job Responsibilities**

These positions are ideal for research professionals with one to three years' experience and a strong interest in furthering their expertise in the application of research methods to public policy decision-making. We anticipate career development will occur while completing the types of duties and responsibilities described below and through mentoring and close collaboration with senior staff. Examples of primary responsibilities include:

- Participate in the development of research methodologies designed to assess the feasibility of proposed regional plans or policy alternatives or measure the effectiveness of programs and services in areas such as criminal justice, public safety and health, transportation, land-use, economics, and demographics; assist with determining the appropriate statistical methods for evaluation projects, research studies, and grant proposals.
- Participate in the design of survey and data collection projects including sample and instrument design and the development of research procedures and quality-control standards; provide input on project timelines and project budgets; assist in the preparation of project implementation documentation.
- Coordinate and participate in the collection of primary and secondary research data from numerous sources; train data collectors, interviewers, and temporary employees assigned to projects; ensure data collection methods are followed and survey instruments are used correctly to maintain high quality-control standards.
- Research, identify, gather, and compile various types of demographic, economic, social, crime, public health, geographic, transportation, and other quantitative data from interviews, surveys, various local, state, and federal agencies, the Internet, government publications, and other sources; extract data from various databases demonstrating a thorough understanding of issues that could affect the validity and reliability of information.
- Code data for computer input; enter data and update files as required; review data for quality and accuracy and resolve data inconsistencies; maintain data documentation.
- Participate in the maintenance and documentation of comprehensive computerized databases in SPSS, Excel, and Access formats.
- Use descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze and interpret data, identify trends, answer policy-related research questions, and make appropriate interpretations.
- Assist with the preparation of project reports, technical documentation, and written, oral, and visual reports and recommendations to the Board of Directors, committees, member agencies, community groups, and members of the public; participate in the communication of Applied Research/Criminal Justice Research Division findings to local, regional, state, and federal decision-making agencies; prepare tables, graphs, charts, and Geographic Information System (GIS) maps to display information for written reports and presentations.

- Complete tasks in an efficient, responsive manner; participate as a team member in project coordination.
- Respond to requests for data from member agencies, grant agencies, the public, and the news media.
- Develop productive working relationships with other agencies and collaborate with the staff of outside agencies to coordinate tasks and accomplish project goals.

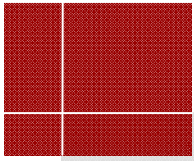
## Experience and Qualifications

Numerous factors contribute to an individual's ability to be successful in any given role. For this position, we are searching for candidates with an aptitude for analytical thinking and problem solving who are organized, flexible, and can be relied upon to meet deadlines while working on multiple projects. Excellent communication skills, the ability to work collaboratively, and the use of sound judgment are important.

The minimum education, training, and experience qualifications include a bachelor's degree with major course work in criminology, sociology, regional planning, demography, economics, or a related field, and one to three years of data compilation and/or research experience, preferably in an applied research environment.

The following information describes the specific types of career experiences that are most relevant to these positions.

- Knowledge of and experience with fundamental applied research principles and methods preferably related to conducting studies to support feasibility analyses, evaluation of policy alternatives, and measuring the effectiveness of programs and services for criminal justice, public safety and health, regional transportation, land use, demographics, economics, and related areas; familiarity with survey design, evaluation studies, establishing performance measures, and focus groups is highly desirable.
- Knowledge of data acquisition and quality control methods used for gathering and compiling various types of information; knowledge of factors that contribute to the reliability and integrity of collected data.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and experience extracting data from sources typically used in criminal justice, public safety and health, regional transportation, land use, economic, and demographic research studies; knowledge of UCR crime definitions is highly desirable for criminal justice and public-safety related projects.
- Experience designing and testing data collection and survey instruments, training data collectors, and ensuring overall quality of collected data.
- Ability to independently compile and document data with speed and accuracy; ability to identify and resolve data inconsistencies and other problems; experience compiling data for large databases is highly desirable.
- Ability to perform complex mathematical and statistical calculations, including descriptive and inferential statistics, to analyze data and identify and forecast trends; experience analyzing data using advanced statistical methods such as regression, ANCOVA, factor analysis, and/or multilevel modeling is highly desirable.
- Experience coordinating research studies, either independently or as part of a larger team; experience with survey projects is highly desirable.
- Experience updating and maintaining project databases, files, and records, including data documentation.
- Ability to draft and prepare reports that document research procedures and present research results and recommendations including the preparation, analysis, and interpretation of maps, charts, and tables.
- Demonstrated understanding of the need to maintain confidentiality and act with diplomacy when working with personal records, documents, and other sensitive information and materials.
- Demonstrated ability to establish rapport with study respondents and other staff members; ability to establish, maintain, and foster positive and harmonious working relationships with those met in the course of work.
- Strong computer skills and proficiency with the Windows operating system and Microsoft Office applications especially Word and Excel; experience with relational database management (Access), statistical analysis (SPSS), mapping (GIS), and presentation software (PowerPoint) is highly desirable.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.
- Effective time management and organizational skills and the ability to prioritize multiple tasks in a fast-paced environment; ability to exercise good judgment and work independently.
- Possession of a valid California driver's license or the ability to obtain one.
- The final candidates selected for these positions must successfully pass a pre-employment criminal background investigation and driving record check. Periodic re-checking of criminal background and driving record history will be a condition of employment.



## About SANDAG

SANDAG is one of the most recognized regional agencies in the nation with responsibilities that cover a broad range of complex, interrelated program areas connected by a Quality of Life theme. We are best known for our efforts related to transportation and this role continues to expand as we push beyond traditional boundaries to deliver a state-of-the-art transportation system for the region. In recent years SANDAG's leadership in areas such as comprehensive land use and environmental planning, public safety, and state-of-the-art modeling and data systems, also have earned us much acclaim. With an employee group about 200 strong, we work for our Board of Directors - mayors, councilmembers, supervisors, and other leaders representing the jurisdictions within the San Diego region and neighboring areas. They play the important role of making policy decisions that shape the future of the region. Our collaboration with stakeholders, partners, and the community, the precision of our data, the completeness of our reports and studies, and our sound recommendations are essential components of the regional decision-making process.

## Salary and Benefits

SANDAG rewards the efforts of its employees with a comprehensive compensation package. Competitive salaries are supplemented with a flexible and generous offering of health, financial security, and time-off benefits to meet the work and life needs of employees and their families.

The limited term Research Analyst positions will be filled at the Analyst I, II, or Associate level depending on qualifications and experience of the selected candidates. The annual salary ranges are: Analyst I - \$39,871 to \$63,793 per year; Analyst II - \$43,958 to \$70,332 per year; Associate Analyst - \$48,463 to \$77,541 per year.

The benefits we offer include traditional health, dental, and vision insurance as well as employee assistance, wellness, and work/life balance programs. To support the need to rest and rejuvenate, employees are provided with a bank of paid time off in addition to paid holidays. And contributions to financial security are provided through a pension plan and deferred compensation program.

## How to Apply

We encourage all interested candidates to apply for this position by completing a SANDAG Employment Application form. Resumes, cover letters, and work samples may be submitted in addition to the Employment Application but are not a substitute for this document.

The Employment Application can be downloaded in PDF format from the SANDAG Web site. Alternatively, a copy can be requested by calling (619) 699-1900 or e-mailing [hr@sandag.org](mailto:hr@sandag.org). Completed

applications and related materials can be submitted via e-mail, fax, regular mail, courier, or delivered by hand. See our *Careers / How to Apply* Web page for additional information.

**Applications for the Research Analyst positions will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Friday, February 11, 2011.**

Applicants requiring an accommodation due to a disability should state their needs in writing when submitting an application.

## Application Supplement

To help us further evaluate the skills and experience of individuals interested in this position, applicants are asked to respond to the three Supplemental Questions below. The responses can be up to 300 words per question and should be submitted with the Employment Application. This is considered a required component of the application; applications received without a response will be screened out of the selection process.

### Supplemental Questions

1. Summarize the various crime, public health, social, demographic, economic, geographic, transportation, and other sources of data you are familiar with. How do you ensure the information gathered from these sources is reliable?
2. Briefly describe the role you have played as part of a research team that illustrates your knowledge and skills as they relate to the positions described in this announcement.
3. Briefly describe a research project challenge you have encountered and the steps you took to overcome this?

## Candidate Selection and Notification

Following the close date for applications, all candidates will receive written confirmation that their application has been received. The hiring manager will begin reviewing and evaluating applications within a few days of the close date. Based on this evaluation, the best qualified candidates will be invited to continue in the selection process. All candidates will receive written notification as to the final outcome of their application.

## Further Information

The SANDAG Web site contains a wealth of information about our various project and program areas. The Careers section of the site lists all of our current Job Openings as well as information on how to apply for positions and Frequently Asked Questions about our recruitment process.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, applicants hired by SANDAG must show acceptable proof of identity and evidence of authorization to work in the United States.