

Job Title: WFD Program Specialist

Department: IE & WFD

Reports To: IE & WFD Manager

Updated: 9/2/2026

Organization Profile:

PODER empowers individuals with the necessary academic tools to promote human dignity, increase employment potential, and facilitate participation in the larger community.

Since 1997, PODER's objective has been to empower Spanish-speaking adult immigrants to create successful and fulfilling new lives in the United States. Through a deep commitment to the needs of the immigrant communities on Chicago's southwest side, PODER provides critical societal and workforce integration services with both immediate and long-term impact for families, communities, and employers throughout the City of Chicago.

Position Summary:

PODER's WFD Program Specialist will play a central role in delivering high-quality workforce programming for adults and young adult participants. This role supports the full participant journey from recruitment and intake coordination through training, advising, job placement, and follow-up. The Specialist provides classroom instruction, individualized participant support, employer engagement, and program reporting to help participants build skills, explore career pathways, and move toward employment and economic mobility.

The WFD Program Coordinator is a full-time, salaried position and reports to the IE & WFD Manager.

Primary Responsibilities:

Program Operations

- Schedule and coordinate all program classes and cohort timelines across program stages (recruitment, intake, training, placement, and follow-up)
- Collaborate with Enrollment and WFD teams to support all aspects and stages of the program
- Monitor day-to-day program operations and resolve scheduling, staffing, or logistical issues as they arise
- Collaborate closely with Enrollment Specialists on participant intake, enrollment targets, and case coordination by providing information and supporting the orientation process

Training & Classroom Instruction

- Deliver instruction as sole teacher or in team teaching formats depending on cohort schedule
- Facilitate instruction across core content areas, including digital skills and technology use, financial literacy and money management, career exploration and workplace readiness, and customer service training
- Create an engaging, supportive, and structured classroom environment that promotes participation and skill-building
- Incorporate interactive activities, real-world scenarios, and project-based learning into instruction

Employer Engagement & Job Placement

- Lead employer relations and engagement efforts to build a pipeline of job opportunities for program participants

- Track job openings and opportunities relevant to program graduates
- Oversee job placement efforts, connecting graduates with employer partners and monitoring placement outcomes
- Build and maintain relationships with employer partners, industry contacts, and referral sites to support ongoing placement
- Coordinate with employer partners on job fairs, hiring events, and guest speaker opportunities

Program Evaluation & Reporting

- Report program progress, outcomes, and evaluation data to the funder and to internal PODER management on a regular basis
- Track program metrics — enrollment, completion, job placement, retention, and wage outcomes — and prepare related reports
- Collaborate with Grants and Data staff to compile data for funder compliance reports
- Submit periodic and annual reports summarizing program results, key takeaways, and recommendations

Qualifications and Skills:

- Experience working with youth and/or adult participants in an educational, workforce, or community-based setting
- Experience with employer engagement, business development, or partnership building
- Strong instructional and facilitation skills
- Strong data tracking, program evaluation, and reporting skills
- Strong organizational and time management skills to oversee multiple program stages simultaneously
- Ability to build rapport and trust with participants from diverse backgrounds
- Experience with career coaching, advising, or mentoring preferred
- Strong communication and organizational skills
- Bilingual in Spanish a plus
- Commitment to equity, inclusion, and culturally responsive practice

Competencies:

- Customer focused
- Instills trust
- Communicates effectively
- Values differences
- Develops talent
- Builds networks

Physical Requirements:

- Prolonged periods of sitting at a desk and working on a computer.

Salary commensurate with experience. Benefit package includes health insurance subsidy and simple 401(k) company match. Generous holiday schedule and flexible accrued PTO for vacation, personal and sick days.

**Equal Employment Opportunity Statement**

It is the policy of PODER to provide equal employment opportunity (EEO) to all persons regardless of age, color, national origin, citizenship status, physical or mental disability, race, religion, creed, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, genetic information, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. In addition, PODER will provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities.

Please send resume and cover letter to msmierciak@poderworks.org