

Union Presbyterian Seminary is searching for an **Associate Director of the Children's Spirituality Research & Innovation Hub**. Working collaboratively with the Hub Director, the Associate Director will have significant responsibility for the 'innovation' aspects of the Hub's work across the U.S.

Position Description

The Children's Spirituality Research & Innovation Hub is a major project funded by Lilly Endowment, Inc. to address the faith formation needs and experiences of children from birth to age 12 and their families. It seeks to promote cutting edge research in many academic disciplines in relation to children's spirituality, assist in translating that research into resources for effective faith formation at home and in communities, provide a central public location for curated materials for and conversations about nurturing children's faith, and support experimentation and reflective practice regarding new approaches to the formation of children's religious identity in a post-Sunday School era. The Associate Director will assist with all aspects of the Hub's work, with specific attention to organizing, supporting, and evaluating several mini-hubs for experimental faith formation models that the project plans to create.

Primary Responsibilities

- Participate as a team member to enhance, enrich and facilitate the purposes of the Hub
- Identify innovation ideas from Hub research activities and connect ideas with potential partners for experimentation
- Organize, support and evaluate small groups of faith formation innovators as they experiment
- Coordinate an annual conference of innovators and support small group gatherings between annual conferences
- Assess the scalability of new faith formation strategies
- Cultivate and maintain relationships and partnerships with denominational bodies, professional guilds, and religious organizations
- Represent the Hub at events and with the media, as designated by the Director
- Contribute to the development of faith formation resources for children and families
- Assist in the preparation of website materials and program reports
- Assist in the supervision of seminary interns who work with the project
- Assist in designing and offering courses on children's spirituality and family faith formation for seminarians and religious leaders
- Other duties as assigned by the Director

Qualifications & Skills

- Advanced theological degree (Ph.D. preferred) or advanced degree (doctorate preferred) in a field related to children's development or education with some theological training
- Values working collaboratively and creatively with a supervisor and other project participants to bring about change
- Able to think imaginatively outside sociocultural and religious assumptions about children, families, faith, and effective religious practices
- Strong organizational skills and ability to manage multiple, diverse, and geographically dispersed projects simultaneously
- Knowledgeable about digital culture and social media tools

- Knowledge of Gen X and Millennial cultures, as well as child development and diverse family cultures
- Ability to design a variety of short-term educational programs, such as workshops, seminars, conferences, and webinars
- Experience with inclusion and anti-bias assessment and activities
- Excellent communication skills (both written and oral)
- Ability to work effectively in remote and face-to-face contexts
- Willingness to travel for project events and consultations that include overnight stays

To apply, please send (a) a cover letter, (b) curriculum vitae or resume, (c) contact information for three professional references, and (d) a short (750-1,000 word) essay in response to the follow question: *What are the most significant spiritual challenges facing Millennial and Gen X families and how might religious organizations and communities support children's and parents'/caregivers' faith formation without relying on the schooling model of Sunday School?*

Email the application packet as a single document to RealKidsRealFaith@upsem.edu.

Review of applications will begin **October 1** and continue until the position is filled.

This full-time administrative appointment (exempt status) is an initial three-year contract with possibility of renewal. Members of underrepresented constituencies are encouraged to apply.

UPSem is a graduate educational institution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and an EO/AA employer committed to gender, racial/ethnic, and international and cultural diversity in its faculty, staff, and student body. Its mission is to equip people in the ways of Jesus to witness, teach, and live into the movement of God's Reign through their ministry in the church and world—a sacred vocation that requires deep learning, commitment to service, and an ability to read cultures and circumstances in the light of the rich resources of Scripture and theological tradition.