

Excel by Eight Initiative
Communities Consultant
Scope of Work

Excel by Eight (E8) is a statewide initiative that has been developed in partnership with Arkansas Community Foundation and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation and in collaboration with over 20 statewide entities. Our vision is a state where all children have access to quality health care and education that maximizes their full potential, regardless of gender, income, race/ethnicity, disability, or geography.

The array of resources children and families need to thrive operates like a power grid. Some parts may be incomplete or malfunctioning, or the connections may be frayed or broken altogether. Resources such as high-quality learning opportunities, healthy food, physical and mental health services, safe housing, and supportive relationships help children reach their full potential. An unreliable or patchy flow of resources can result in a range of child development delays, with long-lasting consequences for children's health and well-being. Creating a reliable grid, one in which all families and communities are equally plugged in, will help ensure all children have what they need to thrive.

The Communities Consultant will support E8 to design and implement a strategy that organizes and engages individuals and organizations in E8 communities to build strong resource grids and make the E8 vision a reality. E8 will support this work at the community level by identifying and addressing policy barriers that make it difficult for communities to build and strengthen their grid of resources. E8 will also work with communities to build public understanding of early childhood development and public will to build strong resource grids statewide.

Specific deliverables include:

Communities

1. Develop and maintain relationships with community leaders in two to three E8 communities around the state.
2. In partnership with community leaders, build a base of community members who demonstrate a commitment to the E8 vision and principles. The base should include individuals and organizations that are engaged in and/or affected by the systems we seek to change. Key stakeholders include parents and families, early childhood educators, schools, health care professionals, business leaders, and elected officials. Members of the base should engage in the decision making and work of the local coalition.
3. Meet regularly with E8 community coalitions to facilitate and/or coach them to collect and analyze data; learn about innovative programs and strategies; set goals and objectives; develop plans; develop funding proposals; implement plans; track data on goals and objectives; evaluate; and update plans as needed.
4. Plan and execute webinars, phone calls, and in-person meetings of the E8 learning community.



5. Initiate and/or facilitate connections between E8 communities and technical assistance, data analysis, grants, and other resources offered by E8 steering committee members and other partners.
6. Coordinate with the other Communities Consultant on the tasks above, to take advantage of relative skill sets and provide support for all E8 communities.
7. Document the planning and implementation process that has been developed in the E8 communities and update it as it evolves.

Policy

1. Document policy barriers identified by communities, and work with communities and other AR-GLR consultants to identify potential solutions.

Public Will

1. Facilitate E8 communities' participation in the implementation of the E8 Foundations Collaborative communications campaign, in partnership with other E8 consultants.

Backbone

1. Participate in regular meetings including the E8 local team, the E8 management team, the E8 steering committee, and the E8 Foundations Collaborative.
2. Document progress and challenges in each community, in writing and through photos and video, to help tell the story of the E8 initiative.
3. Contribute to the development of grant reports and funding proposals.

As the initiative develops, other deliverables may be added to the scope of work.

Weekly Hours: The consultant will work, on average, up to 20 hours per week.

Travel Requirements - The consultant can expect to spend up to 20 percent of time on this project traveling the state to work with E8 communities. Travel requirements will be reassessed as the pandemic threat lessens and communities feel more comfortable with face to face meetings.

Resumes and letters of interest should be submitted to Angela Duran, aduran@ar-qlr.net.