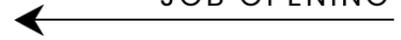




TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONSULTANT

JOB OPENING



The Tennessee Higher Education Initiative (THEI) is a nonprofit organization working to disrupt systems of harm and create opportunities for autonomy and success by providing college access to people inside Tennessee prisons, preparing students for skillful re-entry, and reducing barriers to continued education and achievement. THEI is a grassroots, community organization committed to principles of harm reduction, healing, and centering the lived experiences of the people we serve. We engage in reimagining and building towards the world we want to see through systems work and direct service.

Tennessee Higher Education Initiative (THEI) seeks a full-time **Technical Assistance Consultant** to serve as a subject matter expert within its newly established Technical Assistance (TA) portfolio — a growing strategic priority aimed at supporting Higher Education in Prison (HEP) programs nationally. This position is funded in part by a three-year grant that will serve as the formal launch of the TA portfolio and help shape its long-term direction.

Under the grant, THEI's TA team will take a breadth-and-depth approach, developing and disseminating practical resources drawn from THEI's proven model while also providing hands-on, individualized support to select college programs. Grant-funded activities are focused on three critical areas of the HEP student continuum: college preparation, reentry bridge support, and student advising. Over three phases, the team will produce shareable resource collections, deliver direct technical assistance and coaching to partner programs, and convene targeted collaborative gatherings across the field.

As a subject-matter expert, this role is the backbone of the TA team's content and practice. The TA Consultant brings deep expertise in higher education program development and student success to bear on the quality and credibility of THEI's TA offerings. The ideal candidate will bring deep knowledge of higher education systems, strong experience working directly with colleges and institutional partners, and a demonstrated ability to translate complex program models into practical, actionable guidance. This role requires someone who is intellectually curious, highly collaborative, and able to build trust quickly with diverse institutional partners — bringing both expertise and humility to every engagement.

This full-time, exempt position may be based in THEI's Nashville office or performed remotely, with a requirement to travel to Nashville monthly for all-team gatherings in addition to other travel required by the role. For the right candidate who wishes to relocate to Nashville, a one-time moving assistance will be considered. The anticipated start date is May 2026. Priority will be given to applicants who demonstrate a strong commitment to providing educational opportunities to at-risk populations and understand the mission of THEI to be located within a larger social-justice movement. **We encourage people who have been impacted by the criminal justice system to consider applying.**

ESSENTIAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Subject Matter Expert

- Serve as a subject matter expert on higher education in prison (HEP), including program design, implementation, and development of tools and resources to support effective delivery
- Serve as subject matter expert for research, writing, design, revision and distribution of clear, accurate, engaging, and effective resources for programs offering higher education in a prison setting
- Provide insight regarding the field of higher education in prison, starting and maintaining higher education in prison programs, and troubleshooting common issues in facilitating a high-quality college program in a prison setting
- Conduct policy and program analysis to inform improvements in postsecondary education in the carceral setting and reentry systems
- Maintain fidelity with the THEI brand and mission while meaningfully contributing to the field of higher education in prison on key topics related to Technical Assistance
- Demonstrate a deep understanding of the challenges and needs of incarcerated college students
- Assist with the dissemination of resources to higher education in prison programs and students through diverse mechanisms, including in-person presentations and meetings at prison facilities, secure digital distribution, and mail correspondence

Content Development

- Translate research into actionable tools and guidance, producing briefs, toolkits, and training materials that help practitioners implement evidence-based strategies for higher education in prison and reentry success
- Employ creativity to develop materials that are accessible, informative, and empower programs to offer high-quality support for higher education in prison
- Adhere to quality control processes for outsourced deliverables, ensuring consistency and excellence
- Ensure the accuracy and precision of all in-house developed resources, maintaining a high standard of quality

Technical Assistance & Liaison Services

- Work with partner campuses to provide outreach and support to address specific needs or emerging strategies to develop or improve their college in prison program
- Identify staff at partner institutions who will help formerly incarcerated people access and fully participate in college programs, either on campus or online
- Network with the broader field of higher education in prison to share best practices and center the student voice in program development and improvement

REQUIRED CAPABILITIES, SKILLS, & KNOWLEDGE

- Master's degree in Higher Education, Public Policy, Social Work, Nonprofit Management, or a related field preferred; Bachelor's degree with a minimum of 5 years of substantial relevant experience will be considered
- 5+ years of direct experience in higher education in prison, with a demonstrated focus on program development, student success, or institutional capacity building — experience in adjacent fields alone will not be considered sufficient for this role
- Deep subject matter expertise in at least one of the three core focus areas of THEI's TA portfolio: college preparation, reentry bridge support, or student advising
- Strong working knowledge of higher education in prison systems, institutional structures, and the programmatic landscape of college in prison programs nationally
- Ability to navigate and build credibility within college ecosystems, working effectively with faculty, academic administrators, student services staff, and institutional leadership
- Experience delivering technical assistance, consulting, or capacity-building support to HEP programs, public agencies, colleges, or community-based organizations
- Demonstrated ability to translate complex program models into practical, accessible tools, guides, and resources for varied audiences
- Strong facilitation skills, with experience leading convenings, workshops, or peer learning sessions
- Proven ability to build trust and maintain collaborative relationships with diverse stakeholders across a variety of organizations and institutional contexts, including academic institutions and government partners
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to advocate effectively and represent THEI's work with credibility and clarity

- Experience providing a trauma-informed, human-centered, strength-based approach to working with students and justice-impacted populations
- Emotional intelligence and the ability to engage with sensitivity, professionalism, and appropriate boundaries across diverse partner and student populations
- Proficiency in Google Suite, particularly Google Calendar, Sheets, Docs, and Slides, as well as project management or collaboration tools used for resource development and partner communication
- Timeliness and professionalism in all correspondence and communications
- Strong commitment to THEI's mission and demonstrated cultural competence and humility in working with historically underserved or marginalized populations, including justice-impacted individuals
- Thoughtfulness and critical understanding of the social and historical context of THEI's work and the broader movement for educational equity
- Energy for creative problem-solving and navigating ambiguous situations with intentionality and sound judgment
- Ability to work effectively with diverse individuals and groups, balance competing needs, and employ objectivity in both independent and collaborative settings
- Flexibility to meet evolving project needs and organizational changes, with comfort taking appropriate initiative, including availability for occasional evenings or Saturdays as needed
- Ability to follow guidelines from Departments of Correction
- Valid driver's license and ability to travel periodically for site visits, partner convenings, and national events

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

This is a full-time, exempt position with a salary of \$85,000 plus travel reimbursements, comprehensive medical/dental insurance, a monthly wellness stipend, Simple IRA with employer match, professional development opportunities, generous paid leave and holidays, and flexible work arrangements. One-time relocation assistance may be available.

THEI is an equal-opportunity employer; all applicants will be considered for employment without attention to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, veteran or disability status.

Interested applicants should submit cover letter and resume to work@thei.org with "TA Consultant" in the subject line.