Our mission is to coalesce, inspire and support the Head Start field as a leader in early childhood development and education.

Developing Data Capacity

Hiring Staff vs. Contracting Out

In-House or Outsourcing?

Before you go about writing job descriptions, finding room in your budget, or writing up an RFP, you need to identify whether your organization is best suited to conduct data work internally or if you should outsource to a consultant. The worksheet below can help you identify which is a better fit for your program.

With the help of your program's management team (either as a full team or with a smaller committee with a representative from each department) use this worksheet to guide your conversation and write concrete thoughts down about your program's current capacity. Hiring additional staff or working with an external contractor are both strong potential options; it just depends what is best for your program. Answering "yes" and "no" honestly will help guide you to the right answer.

Do we have the staff talent we need to do our data analysis in-house?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Do we have the technology we need to do our data analysis in-house?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Do we have the financial means to acquire additional staff talent or technology that might be necessary?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Do we have management and staff with the time and expertise to commit to leading this initiative in-house?	☐ Yes ☐ No	

If your program does not have a lot of existing capacity in-house, meaning you answered "no" to most, if not all, of these questions, working with a consultant is likely the right fit for your program. Using a consultant will require a smaller and shorter-term financial commitment (as opposed to taking on an additional salary for a new staffer) and likely fits better with the current knowledge and available time you have on staff (as opposed to assigning data responsibilities or additional management duties to an already overburdened employee.)

If your program has some or a significant amount of internal capacity, meaning you answered "yes" to most, if not all, of these questions, you might be in a good position to hire additional staff to take responsibility of your data work in-house. You could also consider using the skills and expertise of an outside consultant to assist in the implementation and adoption of your project, while you work to hire new staffers and assign new responsibilities to existing staff.