



**Job Title:** Director of Hostage Advocacy & Research

**About the James W. Foley Legacy Foundation:** The Foley Foundation (JWFLF) is the leading advocate for Americans held hostage or wrongfully detained abroad. Established after the brutal murder of conflict journalist and humanitarian James Foley by ISIS in 2014, the Foundation seeks to further Jim’s legacy. JWFLF successfully drove a wholesale transformation of the U.S. Government’s (USG) approach to the national crisis of hostage-taking. Establishment of the USG “hostage enterprise” and the government’s increasing prioritization of bringing home Americans held unjustly captive abroad have been the Foundation’s seminal achievements. To underpin this critical work, the Foundation conducts research about hostage-taking and publishes an annual report, *Bringing Americans Home*, that is regarded as an independent and authoritative source of data and policy recommendations that guide government policy and public discourse. The unique value of this research is based on the Foundation’s role in advocating on behalf of families as they seek to bring their loved ones home. JWFLF compassionately and confidentially supports families throughout the horrific experience of hostage-taking.

**Job Description:** The individual selected for this role will perform two critically important duties - conducting authoritative and independent research about hostage-taking of Americans abroad and leading the Foundation’s engagement with families of American captives.

**Research:** To conduct JWFLF research, the employee will interview families of hostages and wrongful detainees, returned hostages, government officials, and third-party experts to gather insights. This research is informed by current and historical trends regarding the scourge of hostage-taking and unlawful detention. In addition to producing (starting with the 2025 edition) the Foundation’s flagship *Bringing Americans Home* report, the employee will also write supplemental policy research notes to inform public advocacy and discourse to ensure it is grounded in empirical and quantitative data.

**Advocacy:** This role involves regular touchpoints with families, being responsive to case developments, and advocating side-by-side with (or on behalf of) individual families before government officials. This work is done confidentially and requires a high degree of emotional intelligence, empathy, and compassion as described below.

**Key Responsibilities:**

- Regularly engage with the families of hostages and wrongful detainees to understand their unique needs, the particulars of their loved one’s case, and advise them of potential courses of action, while confidentially documenting those interactions and follow-up action items.
- Support families’ advocacy on behalf of captives through private engagement with the government and third-party experts.
- Gather information and insights from all stakeholders and thoroughly and confidentially document case information in a secure manner.
- Maintain a database of open and privately sourced information on the number, type, and characteristics of the hostage-taking of Americans.



- Produce high-quality research on Americans held hostage abroad or wrongfully detained by foreign governments to include relevant facts, context, captor behaviors, and the effectiveness of the U.S. government's response.
- Based on that research, recommend legislative and hostage-taking policy reforms to include resourcing, organizational structures, oversight, and processes that would bring more Americans home more quickly and ultimately deter hostage-taking.
- Help disseminate JWFLF research through public forums, engagement with media organizations, Administration officials, and members of Congress.
- Support JWFLF fundraising for its research and hostage advocacy program.

**Qualifications:**

- Undergraduate degree (or equivalent work experience) in a relevant field such as political science, international relations, national security, or human rights.
- At least five years of relevant work experience in related fields such as foreign affairs, federal law enforcement, or NGO human rights advocacy.
- An aptitude for international affairs (e.g., international conflict, rogue nations, and violent extremists).
- Strong interpersonal skills including patient listening, demonstrating compassion, and an ability to work with individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds.
- Helping those experiencing distress to identify their most critical needs and guiding them to appropriate services and support.
- Experience in conducting research using relevant methodologies including:
  - Conducting interviews, capturing, and coding qualitative data;
  - Analyzing open-source intelligence and maintaining in a structured and organized way qualitative and quantitative data; and
  - Drawing inferences, themes, and sound conclusions.
- The capability to interact successfully with government officials including policymakers to explain research conclusions, recommend policy options, and respond confidently to policymakers' questions including acknowledging when sufficient data does not exist to support a conclusion.
- An ability to work independently and collaboratively as part of a team.
- Experience working successfully in professional environments that require responsiveness, occasionally outside of traditional work hours.
- Preferred skills include:
  - Master's degree in a relevant field such as political science, international relations, national security, or human rights.
  - Experience in human rights advocacy
  - Prior federal work experience, specifically relevant military, intelligence, or foreign service roles.
  - Direct experience working for or with non-profit organizations
  - Experience in non-profit fundraising