Critical Hire Justification Application Guidance

Explain the Critical Need
1. Clearly articulate how the position directly impacts critical areas of student success, patient/life safety, or contractual requirements/regulatory compliance.
   a. Explain how the critical area will be impacted if the role is not filled.
2. When compliance is cited as a reason for posting, clearly state what regulatory or external compliance requirement or auditable factor would be impacted.
   a. Note: Departmental practices and policies may not be viewed as meeting the regulatory compliance criteria intended by the State.

Give the Appropriate Context
1. Since Georgia Tech and USG reviewers will not be deeply familiar with the positions or business needs of your unit, it is important to:
   a. Provide context. Be sure that the narrative includes a brief description of your unit and the position. Ensure that readers can objectively understand the purpose of this role and how it specifically contributes to one of the critical criteria.
   b. Explain the position in context of your team/unit. This is particularly important for units with multiple submittals in a short period to help reviewers understand how the different positions fit together or complement each other.
      i. Example: If you request two of the same type of role, there needs to be an explanation as to the impact of each individual position not being filled and what impact there would be if only one is filled.
   c. Provide data. Wherever possible, objectively state the impact of a position through metrics or measures.
2. If a position has been vacant for a while or is a new position, special attention should be paid to explaining why the position must be filled now and how any interim solution is or is not tenable for the longer term. The negative impact of not filling the role should be explained in detail.
3. When addressing what alternatives have been considered, requestors should directly address whether they could support the workload in the short term through leveraging other resources (collaborative sharing with other units, etc.), managing workload among existing resources, or hiring temporary resources.

Communicate Effectively
1. Follow grammar and spelling standards.
2. Answer each question thoroughly and clearly, but also concisely. Sometimes more is just more and the business case for the role can get lost in lengthy narratives.
3. Spell out any acronyms the first time they are used.
4. Responses to the three critical questions should contain a clear and persuasive narrative. Assume the preference is to not fill the role and you need to provide enough facts and data to overcome that preference.

5. Upload any additional information that helps paint the picture. Additional items might include organizational charts, job descriptions, budgets, or metrics supporting the criticality of and business need for making a hire.

6. To keep consistency in a process where all USG institutions are making submittals, please use the phrase “Georgia Tech” consistently in your narratives. Please avoid using informal names such as “GT” or “the Institute” as these may not be as quickly recognizable by a system-level committee reviewing a high volume of submittals.

**Provide Thorough and Thoughtful Answers**

1. The justification narrative should include the clear statement of the critical need for this role based on State-provided criteria, along with any data or supporting materials that help to paint the picture for reviewers at all levels.

2. When describing the last review, change or restructure of this role, you can share recent official and informal reviews of the position.
   a. When an opening is expected, the hiring manager should informally review the role to understand:
      (a) how the workload can be covered during a short gap; and
      (b) how they would like to focus this position in the future.
   b. Articulating the essential points from this type of thoughtful review along with any formal GTHR actions can create a more complete picture for reviewers.

3. When considering organizational strategies or alternatives, a similar approach should be taken to articulate both formal and informal reviews of roles.
   a. Information regarding recent reorganizations and reassignments of workload, automation of processes, or review through the lens of CAR guidance can be helpful to show the thoughtful review of this position.
   b. In assessing temporary resources as an alternative, discussion of the feasibility, risks, and costs/benefits should be objectively included.
   c. Turnover, learning curves, expert knowledge, and other factors play into whether temporary resources are a viable alternative for the short-term (ex., six months).

**Observe Best Practices**

1. Provide your draft application to an employee unfamiliar with the position. Their feedback can help ensure that others can easily understand the role and the justification for it being critical.

2. Include metrics and measures that are helpful in building a persuasive and informative narrative. For example, describing “without this role there will be a backlog of work” is not as powerful as a statement such as: “There are three <job title> handling purchases for all of campus. Without this role filled, there is a backlog of X transactions per week.”
Review the Following Examples

Strong Responses

1. **Explaining compliance requirement for a sponsored research support role:**
   The position plays an important role in compliance related to the research enterprise at Georgia Tech under the Federal requirements established in 2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (commonly referred to as “Uniform Guidance”). Georgia Tech is audited to these standards by individual sponsors, Federal agencies, the Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA), and under the annual Federal Single Audit.

2. **Additional information uploaded and referred to in a justification narrative:**
   This position focuses heavily (70%-80%) on review and approval of purchasing transactions in the new Workday system. The role is critical in ensuring orders are placed, and that equipment, materials and services that support the academic, research student, and administrative missions are made in a timely way and in compliance with State DOAS purchasing regulations. Please see the attached job description for a full listing of the duties of this role.

3. **Describing the impact of not filling role:**
   To not fill this vacant position in a timely manner has a significant negative impact on department personnel and creates financial risk to Georgia Tech. The result would include existing personnel assuming some of the workload; under the significant volume of research awards noted above there would be delayed establishment of sponsored contractual award initiations and modifications in Georgia Tech’s accounting system. Delays have a negative impact on the timely posting of allowable transactions which then results in delays in billing sponsors, leading to delays in payment receipts and potential non-payment. Delays throughout the sponsored award lifecycle could also lead to audit findings related to allowable costs, billing, and collections. Adequate staffing is paramount to meeting the financial compliance requirements expected when accepting Federal funding.

Response Recommendations

1. **Explain the impact of not filling the role:**
   Response: There will be a detrimental impact to other staff who have to take on additional workload.

   Suggestions:
   - This statement could be quantified in terms of the impact on specific workload or compliance requirements.
   - The impact of staff absorbing workload is important but may not be persuasively critical to external reviewers.
   - Quantifying the amount of overtime or the workload/capacity challenges this creates, along with any compliance risks, would be helpful.
2. **Share when the position was last reviewed, changed or restructured:**
   Response: *The position was last reviewed in 2005. OR 06/01/17*

   Suggestions:
   - It may be more helpful to articulate how the opportunity created by turnover was used to rethink or reaffirm the need for and focus of the position.
   - Some level of context should be articulated beyond the date of the last HR review of the role.

3. **Describe what alternatives have been considered:**
   Response: *There are no other alternatives.*

   Suggestions:
   - This needs to be expounded on so that an external audience would trust a thoughtful review was done and alternatives truly were not viable.
   - What were one or two options considered, and why are they not sustainable or viable?

4. **Avoid any blank responses:**
   Response: *Not applicable.*

   Suggestions:
   - It is always better to provide a thoughtful answer or to articulate why this particular question does not apply to the request.