

JOB OVERVIEW

POST TITLE	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Manager
HOURS OF WORK	Full-time - 35 hours per week
PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT	5 Years
LOCATION	Ghana or Kenya Applicants must have the right to work in their location.
TRAVEL	20 – 30%
REPORTING TO	Head of Research - African Centre for School Leadership Research
DIRECT REPORTS	No planned direct reports
SALARY	Competitive - dependent on experience

ABOUT ESSA

ESSA improves education using evidence and data from Africa in research, advocacy and programme design. We take a systems approach by identifying challenges and co-designing solutions in partnership with local education researchers, higher education leaders, policymakers, funders and employers to improve education outcomes for young people. We support research that generates actionable insights to inform decisions, policies and practice and strengthen education systems. This is an exciting opportunity to join a small but passionate and driven team based in Africa and Europe, to play a key role in advancing our work, impact and partnerships in sub-Saharan Africa and beyond.

ESSA's values are at the heart of everything we do, and they are:

- Evidence-driven: We are driven by data and evidence to find what works best, building an evidence alliance for education in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Solutions-focused: We seek the highest impact for young people and educators in sub-Saharan Africa with the cost-effective funds we invest.
- Strengthening Trust: We strive to create supportive environments, building trust with the communities we work with.
- Always learning: Everyone's opinion is valuable; we develop solutions through teamwork.

To find out more about ESSA, visit essa-africa.org

ABOUT THE AFRICAN CENTRE FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP (ACSL)

The African Centre for School Leadership (ACSL) is a coalition of partners in Africa, committed to the promotion of effective school leadership by bringing together partners that offer professional development services, research, and policy advice on effective school leadership.

The vision of the ACSL is that every learner in Africa benefits from quality education that prepares them for a bright future, and it achieves this through partnering with governments and other stakeholders to strengthen school leadership systems that strengthen teaching and improve learning outcomes and well-being for all. [Read more about the ACSL here.](#)

With growth funding from the Mastercard Foundation, the ACSL will be directly supporting school leadership initiatives in Tanzania, other Leaders in Teaching expansion countries as well as providing broader pan-African support to interested partners across the continent. The Centre has ambitions to further grow its funding and implementation partnerships to meet high levels of demand.

ABOUT THE ROLE

In 2025 ESSA is kicking off an exciting new programme of work in partnership with VVOB and ADEA to scale the ACSL. ESSA will be taking the lead on the research component, ensuring that the Centre is making use of the best existing research on school leadership from Africa and commissioning new African-led research into effective school leadership. The emphasis will be on increasing the effectiveness of policy and practice relating to school leadership, through demand-driven research.

The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Manager is, therefore, an important and exciting new role that will bring this area of ESSA's work to life, to help us achieve our vision for education in Africa. With guidance from the Head of Research - ACSL, the successful candidate will lead in establishing the monitoring, evaluation, and learning function of the ACSL. As such, the MEL

manager will collaborate and consult the Senior Research Evaluation and Impact Manager at ESSA and ACSL partner organisations namely VVOB and ADEA to develop MEL frameworks (Theory of change (ToC), Results framework etc.), collect data, analyse data, and produce reports for the programme. The post-holder will be an active member of the ACSL Team providing support in target countries as well as at the pan-African level. Specifically, the candidate will be responsible for designing, implementing, and overseeing systems that track and evaluate the effectiveness of programs and projects, as well as provide strategic insights and recommendations based on evaluation findings to inform decision-making and enhance program performance. Ideally, we are looking for a strategic thinker who enjoys working across a broad portfolio, across the project lifecycle and is excited by the challenge of understanding the impact of research, communications, and advocacy.

RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Oversee the development and implementation of ACSL MEL Strategy and systems that capture ACSL project-, programme- and ESSA Organisation level Key Performance Indicators at the levels of outputs, outcomes, and impact on research and policy.
- Collaborate with all ACSL partners to ensure their input and buy-in to MEL frameworks and processes.
- Responsible for planning and initiating MEL tasks, as well as review and refine ACSL ToC and Results Framework (where applicable) to ensure the programme/project is responsive to contexts in achieving the overall programme/project goal.
- Support the ACSL project team in collecting, analysing, and interpreting data and trends, and feedback regularly to the organisation and its partners (e.g., via communication monitoring reports, quarterly MEL analysis, staff surveys, project/annual reports, etc.).
- Develop data collection tools, prepare data quality standards and procedures, and data analysis reporting and dissemination.
- Undertake monitoring visits to project-specific countries/sites under the guidance of the Head of Research - ACSL.
- Ensure that the ACSL project team engages with other programmes/projects in education space to utilise lessons learned from the project and programme evaluations to influence future project design, fundraising, and implementation.
- Collaborate with the ACSL team to ensure evidence-based contributions to funding proposals.
- Use of complexity-aware monitoring approaches (such as Outcome Mapping, Outcome harvesting, Most Significant Change Stories etc) to support research and evidence uptake on the ACSL programme.
- Liaise with and support the Senior Research Evaluation and Impact Manager at ESSA and ESSA's partners as needed, to ensure that ESSA's work is delivered on time, to quality expectations, and within budget.
- Collaborate with ESSA MEL team to achieve ESSA's vision and mission.
- Undertake other tasks as may be required at ACSL programme and ESSA (e.g., attending project and/or stakeholder events that may take place virtually or in-person), commensurate with experience.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL

- Trained to master's degree-level in education or a relevant subject such as international development or other social science.
- At least five years' professional experience of using evidence-based learning to improve the research life cycle for impact.
- 3 to 5 years' experience of implementing MEL approaches across multiple partners bringing together diverse perspectives
- Practical experience of understanding and tracking the impact of research on policy and/or practice.
- Significant experience of developing and testing theories of change.
- Extensive experience developing indicators and supporting teams to monitor and document outcomes.
- Passionate about the role of education in development.
- A strategic-minded, imaginative, and innovative thinker who can see the bigger picture and envision how multiple components of the project can come together to achieve an impact on research and policy in education.
- Experience of overseeing and training a team to develop best practices in the generation, measurement, and use of qualitative and quantitative evidence, as well as the verification of the impact of such evidence.
- Strong analytical skills - capable of overseeing the processing of large amounts of information, followed by critical analysis and generation of relevant insights.
- Ability to proactively engage in information gathering, synthesis, critical thinking, and reflection.
- Excellent communication skills: can engage with education stakeholders and explain research findings to a non-specialist.
- Proactive, creative, and collaborative problem-solver who is confident about taking own initiative and meeting tight deadlines.
- Self-motivated with strong interpersonal, organisational, facilitation, project/people/stakeholder management skills.
- An independent worker but also a team player; able to thrive in an internationally dispersed team; respectful of diversities and can demonstrate commitment to ESSA's values.
- Computer literate, able to use Microsoft Office suite to prepare logical, coherent, and consistent documents. (S)he should be capable of developing and/or using information databases and be keen to pursue responsible data management and storage.

DESIRABLE

- Educated to PhD level in a relevant discipline (see above).
- Experience of working in a cross-functional team, or with a large employer in education in Africa.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) underpins our mission and values at ESSA. We prioritise inclusion and celebrate the breadth of knowledge and experience working across diverse cultures brings to the organisation.

EDI at ESSA is embodied in the current composition of our Board of Trustees and our workforce, which strongly reflects the communities we work in, and we actively encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and cultures.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Please ensure your CV and cover letter are saved using your given name and surname. For example, firstname.surname CV. The closing date for applications is the **14th of April, 2025** at 0900hrs GMT.