

RESEARCH MANAGER (DATA), ESSA

JOB OVERVIEW

POST TITLE: Research Manager (Data)

HOURS OF WORK: Full time (as a Consultant)

PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT: Initially six months from January 2021, with potential for extension

LOCATION: Nairobi, Kenya (other countries in sub-Saharan Africa could be considered)

TRAVEL: 25%

REPORTING TO: Head of Research and Insight

DIRECT REPORTS: None

ABOUT ESSA

ESSA's vision is to transform education: increasing employment for young people in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). We bring together a network of young people, educators and decision makers. Together, we use evidence to improve the tertiary education system, hence equipping millions of young people in sub-Saharan Africa with the skills they need for work. This is a great opportunity to join a small but driven and enthusiastic team that works remotely in SSA and Europe, and to play a key role in expanding our work. To find out more about our work, visit our website essa-africa.org.

ROLE PURPOSE

The Research Manager (Data) role is an exciting new position within the ESSA team that will help us to ensure that the right data and evidence are made readily available and in appropriate formats that can be used to support the needs of those seeking to improve the impact of tertiary education in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in relation to youth employment. The successful applicant will also ensure that ESSA develops mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships with these external stakeholders/decision-makers (e.g. young people, educators, funders, employers, and policymakers).

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead and/or support the development and management of ongoing as well as new data-focused tertiary education research projects at ESSA (e.g. the African Scholarship Hub). Conduct background research, quantitative and qualitative analyses, and ensure the effective use of the data and evidence generated by ESSA, to enable positive impact in SSA and beyond.
- Prepare compelling tertiary education data briefings, papers, reports, messages, blogs, infographics, and other tools for use by decision-makers when needed.

- Organise, contribute to, and represent ESSA at data-focused surveys, interviews, focus group discussions and events such as webinars, to communicate ESSA's work and increase its impact.
- Build ESSA's knowledge and understanding of data availability, sharing and use in tertiary education and employment in SSA and identify other priority areas for obtaining further research data. In addition, identify and grow a network of influencers and partners for ESSA to engage with to increase use of research data and evidence, and to leverage additional funding.
- Collaborate with ESSA's research team, other staff members (including interns and external consultants), and with partner organisations.
- Contribute to the production of data- and evidence-based funding proposals and other material for ESSA's donors, in line with our organisational strategy and goals.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Knowledge, Experience, Skills and Personal Qualities

- A degree and post-graduate degree in education, data science, economics, statistics, international development, social science, or a related discipline.
- Significant experience (>5 years) of working with data/databases in a research, academic, government, industrial or non-profit organisation, ideally in a developing country.
- Experience in designing strategies and tools for expert collection and management of large amounts of research information/data (e.g. from platforms or surveys), its quantitative and qualitative analysis using relevant statistical software/functions, and the extraction of critical insights for appropriate organisational use (e.g. reports and funding proposals).
- Proven ability to communicate research data and evidence into practical guidance, planning tools, information briefs, papers, and reports to diverse audiences through excellent writing, and speaking, to raise awareness of important issues and influence social and political events.
- Demonstrable ability to organise and/or participate in conferences, workshops, and webinars, engaging with people at all levels from different backgrounds and with different viewpoints.
- Ability to build and manage work relationships internally, as well as with external agencies.
- A team player who has cultural awareness/sensitivity, is committed to respecting and valuing equality, diversity, and inclusion, and understands how these apply to their own area of work.
- Comfortable working independently with accuracy, using own initiative and judgement.
- Excellent attention to detail, commitment to high standards and able to meet tight deadlines.
- Proactive, efficient, creative, collaborative, ethical, entrepreneurial and a problem-solver with strong communication, excellent interpersonal, organisational and project management skills.
- Computer literate, including familiarity with information databases and Microsoft Office suite.
- Comfortable working in a remote and internationally dispersed team.

Desirable Experience, Skills and Personal Qualities

- Knowledge of research in international education, particularly tertiary education, in Africa.
- Educated to PhD level in a relevant discipline.
- Resident in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Experience of working in a cross-functional team, and/or with large employers of youth in SSA.
- French speaking.
- Willingness to embrace use of technology and automation in education research and translation.