DATA INNOVATORS

Senior MERL Officer

May 2022

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About Data Innovators (DI)

Data Innovators (DIs) is a Social Enterprise led by a team of young Africans who are passionate about making systemic change in development through data. Data Innovators team is passionate about **helping organizations push data boundaries to create positive futures.** We are experienced in testing innovative and fit-for-purpose approaches to M&E.

Our team has both digital data solution expertise and are experienced in conducting technical assistance for various sectors including Education, Social Sciences, public health, Enterprise Development, Climate Change. The team includes statisticians, data analysts, platform developers, demographers, public health and education specialists, M&E practitioners.

Calling all MERL Innovators

DI is looking for a solution-oriented, self-starter Senior Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) Officer to primarily support a Learning Through Play pilot project. The position is offered on a one year, renewable fixed-term contract basis dependent on continued funding by the project and performance.

The Senior M&E Officer will manage Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) framework to monitor implementation and facilitate rapid learning for the client projects. This will include ensuring that processes and tools are in place and adhered to for the recording, capturing, analysis, and verification of accurate data for the client projects. The Senior M&E Officer will also coordinate learning and action with programme leads. They will report directly to the MERL Manager. The appointed candidate will join an existing project team, providing on site and virtual support to senior management. Detailed information about the Senior M&E Officer duties are listed at the end of this posting.

Minimum Qualifications & Experience

* At least an NQF Level 8 qualification in development, economics, sociology, data management, information systems or another relevant field is an essential requirement.
* Minimum of (5) five years of progressively increasing responsibility in MERL and at least (2) two of those years in MERL for education programmes specifically.
* Demonstrable ability to articulate technical information clearly and effectively to both technical and non-technical audiences is an essential requirement.
* Demonstrable experience in developing M&E frameworks/plans paired with a good understanding of M&E systems.
* Demonstrable knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies is required.
* Proven ability to promote a culture of data use for planning and accountability, as well as facilitating decision-making among senior stakeholders will be a distinct advantage.
* Working knowledge of sector management and information systems (such as SA-SAMS and DDD in education), policies, and standard operating procedures in South Africa; and
* Proven knowledge on strengthening M&E systems to improve the availability and use of data for decision-making is strongly preferred.
* Proficiency in writing, speaking, and reading English AND at least one of the other South African official languages.
* Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills.
* Awareness and understanding of the National Evaluation Policy Framework.
* Proven ability to analyse and write reports (may be asked to submit a sample of previous work).

Qualities of Preferred Candidates

* Conducts complex problem solving in terms of alignment to plan, methods, and detailed data interrogation.
* Performs decision making to support team members.
* Facilitation skills to effectively used to engage audience, present for impact and to achieve the desired outcome.
* Solid interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to communicate and build rapport with colleagues and clients.
* Supports and encourages positive team-working behaviours in others.
* Thinking in opportunities instead of barriers.
* Takes risks and innovates.

Contract Conditions

* The position is offered on a one year, fixed-term contract basis that is renewable (dependent on continued project funding and performance)
* Remote working with a central office available for team sessions
* Based in Johannesburg, willing to travel within Southern Africa
* Competitive market remuneration
* Performance-based bonus

Duties

The duties of the Senior MERL Officer will include, but are not limited to:

Technical Responsibilities:

* Develop and maintain a comprehensive framework that suits the context and intends to address the needs of pilot.
* Oversee the development and implementation of the Performance Monitoring Plan to capture project performance and results, including coordination of periodic evaluations, baseline and end-line assessments, and all programme monitoring.
* Participate in programme strategic planning and progress management meetings.
* Develop and oversee data flow pattern for the programmes that will ensure timely data collection and reporting, including development of appropriate instruments.
* Lead results reporting to Programme team by providing written documentation on MERL activities and programme progress as appropriate.
* Provide leadership and direction on MERL to ensure the program achieves its goals and corresponding objectives and targets.
* Ensure high-quality implementation, consistent with DI MERL philosophy and guidelines, protocols, information, and reporting systems.
* Lead efforts to monitor and evaluate project interventions, document results, and provide feedback to stakeholders to guide decision-making.
* Lead efforts to utilise digital platforms to track and monitor trainers and participants on virtual and in-person training to facilitate follow-up and record-keeping.
* Conduct targeted assessments and operations research, including design, data collection, management, and analysis as needed.
* Ensure quality of data through data verification procedures, including routine data quality audits.
* Cultivate and maintain strategic MERL relationships and alliances with other projects and represent MERL activities in public and professional circles through meetings, conferences, and presentations.
* Ensure relevant data is entered into Asana, DI’s organisation-wide project management system.
* Promote and support the dissemination of project information among the project team.
* Work with project and financial staff and management to prepare and track progress of project and activity budgets.
* Supervise junior M&E professionals, including fieldworkers.

Proposals and Business Development:

* Assist with developing proposals for submission to prospective clients.
* Participate in networking events related to DI practice areas.