

Job basis: Full time contract

Level: Senior Management

Location: Pretoria / Cape Town / Johannesburg

Job description: Technical Director, Early Childhood Development Systems Research and Development

Basis: Full Time

Summary

Ilifa Labantwana works to secure an equal start for all children living in South Africa through focussing on early childhood development (ECD). Our mission is to ensure that all children in South Africa are developmentally on track to begin formal schooling and to fully participate in the economy and society. We do this through partnership with government, civil society and the private sector, and focus on four priority areas: 1) data for decision-making; 2) building demand for ECD; 3) regulatory, financing & operational systems design and reforms; 4) systems, products and process innovation.

We seek to appoint a Director, Systems Research and Development, to play a lead role in our organisation. We are looking for an outstanding candidate with extensive experience in systems-thinking and design to join us on our quest to transform the way ECD services are delivered in SA. The role reports to Executive Director and manages a team of three people – one Senior Manager based in Cape Town, and two Coordinators based in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape.

Role overview

The Technical Director, ECD Systems Research and Development, will be responsible for developing and driving a dynamic portfolio that focusses on the research, development and testing of the full range of regulatory, financing and operational systems required to ensure universal coverage of quality ECD services. The current operational, HR, delivery, financing and information systems for ECD inhibit large scale access to quality services and this role is focusses on a range of systems reforms to address that challenge. The candidate will work with all levels of government, the private sector and academia. They will also work closely with other actors in civil society, including grass-roots ECD organisations, in order to help design a fit-for-purpose ECD system that promotes universal access.

Core Responsibilities

- Provide strategic leadership as part of Ilifa's senior management team to achieve Ilifa's ambitious objectives
- Develop and drive Ilifa's systems R&D portfolio which includes: regulatory and legislative frameworks for ECD, quality assurance and support systems, strategic workforce planning, ECD financing, amongst other components of the ECD ecosystem
- Continuously identify new opportunities to achieve portfolio strategy goals.
- Identify strategic communication and advocacy opportunities to further the systems agenda, and work closely with the Director, Policy, Advocacy and Communications to give effect to these opportunities
- Develop the relationships and platforms to design and test ECD systems reforms
- Innovate new approaches to ECD systems and develop new initiatives to support the strategic direction of the organization.
- Design, lead and manage the in-field testing of ECD systems initiatives
- Demonstrate thought-leadership through research and publications and proactive engagement with the research and communications teams to ensure Ilifa's system work has a public identity
- Actively seek out new strategic partnerships and carefully managing existing partnerships
- Work with leadership to ensure robust financial management, reporting and governance compliance. Provide regular reporting to Executive Director as part of Management Support Committee and Board meetings.
- Support annual strategy development and ongoing engagement with Ilifa Board of Directors
- Support recruitment, management, development and support of new and existing staff.

The ideal candidate:

- Advanced degree with a minimum of 10 years of relevant professional experience.
- Excellent computer literacy is essential especially in MS Outlook, MS Word and MS Excel.
- A great communicator – verbal and written, with demonstrable evidence of both
- Independent, entrepreneurial and a team player - all at the same time!
- Experience working in the ECD sector is not necessary, but experience working in one of the ECD essential package components is desirable
- Excellent and demonstrable strategic thinking and problem solving skills
- Has a strong understanding and appreciation of human-centred design principles
- A high achiever and recognised leader yet willing to get stuck into the details
- An understanding of public policy and government systems
- Good knowledge of complex program design that involves working with multiple stakeholders including technical experts, government and civil-society partners.
- Behaves in an ethical way that is aligned with the values of the organization
- Willing to travel (mostly domestic, but very frequently)

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until 6 January, 2021, with an anticipated start date in January/February 2021.

Integration Resourcing has been tasked with handling the response to this advert. Please forward a detailed CV and covering letter to fiona@i-resourcing.co.za. Please do not contact Ilifa Labantwana directly.