



Research Specialist

Cape Town/Johannesburg/Pretoria

Background

Ilifa Labantwana is committed to quality early childhood development (ECD) for all children that supports caregivers, creates sustainable livelihoods for women, and builds an equitable and prosperous South Africa for all. Ilifa Labantwana works towards a South Africa where everyone recognises their contribution to children reaching their full potential. We use our deep understanding of government and technical expertise; alongside evidence, collaboration, and advocacy to strengthen the ECD ecosystem.

Purpose

The purpose of the role is to lead the research and learning function of Ilifa. The Research Specialist will drive Ilifa's current annual publications in addition to developing new research ideas to maintain Ilifa's thought leadership role in the ECD sector. They will work closely with the other knowledge production and management functions of Ilifa to generate ECD insights to support Ilifa's strategy.

Responsibilities

- **Strategic Leadership:** Play a lead role in building Ilifa's thought leadership role in the ECD sector, and position Ilifa as a leading ECD insights generator. Collaborate with Ilifa's partners to develop and deliver an ECD systems-change research agenda.
- **Advocacy and Stakeholder Engagement:** Manage existing research relationships and identify new research partnerships. Represent Ilifa to external audiences, articulating and advocating for Ilifa's research priorities and presenting Ilifa's research. Coordinate the Ilifa RESEP ECD Webinar Series, including identifying and securing presentations from relevant local and international researchers.
- **Knowledge production and insights generation:** Manage and contribute to the annual South African Early Childhood Review publication and the Ilifa-RESEP ECD Working Paper Series. Develop and lead new ideas for Ilifa publications. Support developing and writing case studies that deepen the understanding of ECD systems-change work. Identify and pursue new research and writing opportunities to broaden the evidence base for ECD in South Africa.
- **Organisational Support:** Provide research and writing support for the research priorities of other Ilifa portfolios, e.g. Economic and Financing Solutions, Systems Design and Development, and Impact Measurement & Learning.
- **People Management:** Manage and recruit direct reports and manage their performance and professional development. Source, manage and contract research service providers as required.

Requirements, Qualifications & experience

- Master's level degree in Economics, Public Health, Education or relevant field.
- Minimum of 10 years experience in a research, academic or policy environment
- Demonstrable experience analysing and writing on systems change and public sector/policy reforms.
- Publication track-record
- Substantial data analysis experience e.g. General Household Survey, District Health Information System, National Income Dynamics Survey, or similar.
- Demonstrable experience in the design, management and delivery of research projects, including coordinating research partners and stakeholders.

Competencies and personal qualities

- Systems-change mindset and a creative outlook on technical issues
- Excellent writing skills
- Excellent presentation skills
- Advanced quantitative data analysis skills, using statistical software such as R, Stata, Excel
- Able to design and implement primary data collection tools and approaches
- Advanced user of Office 365 suite and data management tools and software
- Able to work independently and prioritize workload
- Collaborative and engaging working style

Ilifa Labantwana strives to be a diverse and equitable organisation. Preference will be given to South African black candidates as defined by the B-BBEE Act.

Closing date: 01 April 2024

Please send your CV and 1-page cover letter to recruitment@ilifalabantwana.co.za, with the subject line Research Specialist. For further information go to www.ilifalabantwana.co.za

Please accept your application as unsuccessful if you have not heard from us by 30 April 2024.