Full-time SENIOR RESEARCHER

February 2020

Organization: Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre
Reports to: Director of Research and Training / Executive Director
Salary: Competitive salary
Starting date: Asap
Contract: Full time contract until 31 August 2020 (with high possibility of renewal based on performance)
Duty station: Freetown, Sierra Leone

Closing date for applications: 3rd March 2020

Application to be submitted electronically to Andrea Klingel: aklingel@slurc.org

THE SIERRA LEONE URBAN RESEARCH CENTRE

Based in Freetown, the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC) is a globally connected research centre created through a partnership between the Bartlett Development Planning Unit (University College London) and the Institute of Geography and Development Studies (Njala University). It’s mission is to improve the wellbeing of urban informal settlement dwellers through: strengthening the research and analysis capacities of urban stakeholders in Sierra Leone; significantly improving the quality and quantity of available knowledge on the informal settlements in Sierra Leone; making urban knowledge available and accessible to those who need it, prioritizing residents of informal settlements; and delivering world leading research in order to influence urban policy and practice.

SLURC is building a research network integrated with Freetown’s informal settlements and their organisations, a research and training agenda relevant to the needs of these communities and their organisations. By building on the legitimacy that these NGOs had developed over many years, SLURC is now accepted by local governance actors, including local chiefs, Community Disaster Management Committees as well as the structures of the Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor (FEDURP). SLURC is now well-positioned as an institution trusted by communities, NGOs, government and international organisation and is therefore capable of brokering partnerships that can transform urban development paths in Sierra Leone.

THE ROLE

The Senior Researcher will play an important role in planning, coordinating and overseeing the activities on a multitude of research projects across a range of SLURC’s research themes with a particular focus on health. The Senior Researcher will also provide guidance to other research staff in terms of research methodologies, analysis, report writing, and further capacity building. The post holder will develop and foster relationships with SLURC’s stakeholders and urban actors and work in partnership with other organisations involved in the research as well as with DPU/UCL and Njala University.

A key role will be the support of the Executive Director and the Director of Research and Training in their research responsibilities and generally contributing to achieve the following strategy goals outlined in SLURC Strategy plan for 2018 - 2023:

SIERRA LEONE URBAN RESEARCH CENTRE (SLURC)
17a Hill Cot Road, Freetown, Sierra Leone.
Tel: +232 80 110183, Website: www.slurc.org
1. Improved research to increase knowledge on informality in urban settlements
2. Greater policy engagement, advocacy and communication to improve the wellbeing of informal settlement dwellers
3. Increase the quantity and quality of urban knowledge
4. Building capacity to meet urban development challenges
5. Improved access to resources to implement the plan

Other areas you will be required to contribute to directly are:
1. Increased stakeholders' access, understanding and use of quality research and data
2. Improved policies towards informal settlements

RESPONSIBILITIES

The appointment includes the following responsibilities:

Core responsibilities:

1. Independently undertake advance research on relevant SLURC’s research thematic areas using/developing the appropriate methods/techniques and managing the affiliated assistants to the project
2. Lead the production of high-quality research outputs (publications, reports, briefs etc.) as required by funding bodies and for wider dissemination
3. Lead and promote activities planned to develop collaborative research with research colleagues/institutions internally and externally and to develop appropriate contacts and networks for relevant future research collaborations
4. Lead/Support bids for major research and/or consultancy projects
5. Guide and supervise research staff in designing research methods and tools as well as undertaking research activities and conducting analysis
6. Writing reports, briefs and other publications and produce effective research outputs meeting deadlines and guide other research staff in their writing efforts

Other areas to provide support in:

7. Support the development of project work plans and ensuring implementation of project activities, deliverables and timelines
8. Support research staff in the development of budgets for certain projects and keep oversight
9. Provide support in collecting, compiling, and analysing quantitative and/or qualitative data
10. Work collaboratively with the team including the Directors
11. Build and maintain strong trusted relationship with relevant stakeholders
12. Attend, participate and help facilitate meetings, training, workshops and other capacity building activities or SLURC events
13. Prepare and deliver presentations to partners, stakeholders or events
14. Generally build the capacity of the SLURC staff and transfer skills
15. Any other ad hoc responsibilities as may be required by your supervisor
16. Contribute to team-wide communications and knowledge management and participate in organisation-wide events as requested by the SLURC Management
At all times following SLURC and relevant DPU and Njala University policies including Equal Opportunities, Race Equality, Safeguarding, Health and Safety etc. as well as all the laws in Sierra Leone.

Note: this job description reflects the present requirements of the post. As duties and responsibilities change and develop, the job description will be reviewed and be subject to amendment in consultation with the postholder.

PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

ESSENTIAL

- MPhil/PhD degree in a relevant social science discipline (e.g. development studies, urban studies, health sciences, public health or related field)
- Demonstrate experience with and thorough knowledge of research approaches and methodologies (quant and qual), especially participatory research methodologies
- Demonstrates excellent analysis and writing skills
- Demonstrate experience and knowledge of project planning including project cycle, work plans and budgeting
- Track record of academic and other publications on urban development and public health related issues, including first author (submit pdf copies via email)
- Demonstrate good people management skills supporting capacity building
  - Demonstrate ability to work as part of a team and to form effective and collaborative working relationships across the whole organisation and wider networks
  - Demonstrate good interpersonal skills and capacity to negotiate complex relationships with academic partners, government officials, urban professionals, local and international NGOs, communities and development donors
  - Demonstrate the awareness and experiences necessary to work in a multi-cultural setting involving sensitive group dynamics
  - Motivation and skills to build capacity and transfer skills to SLURC staff and other actors as appropriate to ensure long-term sustainability of SLURC

- Understanding of knowledge management issues including production, dissemination and training in the global South with demonstrated experience of working with national and/or local government, development partners and/or communities and/or civil society.

- Excellent communication and presentation skills
  - Demonstrate good listening and clear communication skills adaptable to different target groups, from policy makers to community members and funders
  - Excellent presentation skills and concise in presenting key learning
  - Proactive, regular and clear communication with key contacts
  - Excellent written and spoken English
• Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of confidentiality, freedom of information, data protection and equal opportunities

• Good knowledge of MS Office including MS excel, PowerPoint, also SPSS and coding software

DESIRABLE

• Knowledge of urban development, public health and community governance

APPLICATIONS FROM FEMALE SENIOR RESEARCHERS

SLURC seeks to recruit a diverse workforce, we therefore encourage applications from female candidates.

CONTRACTUAL DETAILS:

The appointment will be made from the nearest possible date for an initial period up to 31st August 2020 with a high possibility for extension depending on performance.

APPLICATIONS PROCEDURE:

Please submit a CV (max 4 pages) and a covering letter (max 2 pages) explaining your motivations to apply for the post and how your experience and skills fulfil the person specifications. Also provide contact details for two recent referees (we will not contact them without your permission).

Applications need to be submitted by email to: aklingel@slurc.org with subject line ‘Senior Researcher, Freetown’. Deadline for applications is Tuesday 3rd March 2020.

The candidate will need to be available for interview in w/c 9th March in Freetown (possibly via Skype if abroad).