RESEARCH ASSOCIATE: J-PAL AFRICA
(Payclass 08, T1, 1 year, Soft Funded)
J-PAL Africa in the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit
School of Economics,
Faculty of Commerce

J-PAL Africa is seeking a Johannesburg-based Research Associate to support its mission of reducing poverty by ensuring policy is informed by scientific evidence. We are looking for aspiring researchers with strong technical skills, a dedication to quality and a passion for working with diverse communities on poverty alleviation strategies.

J-PAL Africa, the Africa hub of J-PAL Global, is based at the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) in the University of Cape Town School of Economics. However, this position is based at our satellite office in Johannesburg to be close to our study partner organisations, programme beneficiaries and the rest of J-PAL Africa's research team.

The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) consists of a global network of academics who specialise in conducting randomised evaluations of social policies/programmes in order to generate scientific evidence about what works in the fight against poverty. J-PAL's research associates work closely with these leading academics and partner organisations (often NGOs and governments) to design and implement these studies.

The Research Associate will be expected to lead the implementation of one of our ongoing studies, closely working with the Research Manager, Principal Investigators, partner organisations and other members of the J-PAL team to oversee the implementation of the research study. This role provides an excellent opportunity to work at the frontier of rigorous research and evidence-based policymaking, contributing to knowledge that can improve the lives of citizens in South Africa and beyond.

Responsibilities include:

- Contributing to study design
  - Working closely with Principal Investigators to scope the feasibility of randomised evaluations and helping to design study implementation methods
  - Conducting literature reviews or consulting related literature to inform study design.
- Managing the project and its stakeholders
  - Coordinating and cultivating relationships with study partners.
  - Managing finances and contributing to donor reporting.
  - Supporting funding proposals for full study
- Leading data analysis
  - Cleaning administrative data for analysis
  - Working closely with Principal Investigators to analyse data for needs assessments, study design or computation of results (in Stata and/or R).
  - Performing cost-effectiveness analysis
- Designing and managing data collection
  - Coordinating data collection efforts including hiring, training and managing teams of field staff.
  - Designing survey instruments, focus group discussions and other data collection tools and methods to achieve study objectives in partnership with academics.
  - Programming surveys, real-time checks and data cleaning processes (often in Stata and/or R).
  - Leading focus group discussions with potential recipients of the intervention
- Training others on research practices and contributing to J-PAL's global knowledge repositories and external capacity building efforts.

Requirements for the job:

- A minimum of an Honour's degree in economics, social sciences or other Honour's level degrees involving training in statistics or coursework in quantitative research methods. Candidates with a bachelors degree who have MITx Micromasters in Data, Economics and Designing Policy credentials are encouraged to apply.
- Demonstrated strong quantitative skills, including proficiency in Stata/R and Microsoft Office suite
- Strong oral and written communication skills in English
- Excellent management and organizational skills, attention to detail and ability to work under pressure
- Creative and effective problem-solver, self-motivated and independent
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Familiarity with and interest in randomised evaluations and experimental methods
- Right to work in South Africa (citizenship, permanent residency or critical skills visa). Please note that J-PAL Africa cannot sponsor work permits.

Advantageous

- Prior experience in field research
- Experience with data cleaning, merging and management using Stata/R programming.
- Survey programming experience in SurveyCTO or equivalent.
- Proficiency in an official South African language other than English (e.g., isiZulu, isiXhosa).
- Valid driver's license

The annual cost of employment is between R393,399 and R462,822 depending on qualifications and experience.

To apply, please complete [this short application form.](#)
As part of the application, you will be required to attach a single PDF file containing the following documents:
- UCT Application Form HR201 (download [here](#))
- A letter of motivation clearly addressing your qualifications for the various responsibilities listed above
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) (no more than 3 pages)
- Transcripts of your university degrees. Note this is required even though it is not called for in the HR201.
- Please ensure that the PDF is named "Yourname_JPALRA".

An application which does not comply with the above requirements will be regarded as incomplete. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and we encourage you to apply early. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and will likely be required to undergo an assessment process before interview rounds.

As the cost of employment is being paid for from externally derived funds, this appointment is subject to the availability of funding. Recruitment will follow UCT's hiring procedure and remuneration is commensurate with UCT pay-scales.

Contact:	chofmeyr@povertyactionlab.org	**Website**:	www.povertyactionlab.org
Reference number:	E23911	**Closing date**:	02 October 2023

UCT is a designated employer and is committed to the pursuit of excellence, diversity and redress in achieving its equity targets in accordance with the Employment Equity Plan of the University and its Employment Equity goals and targets. Preference will be given to candidates from the under-represented designated groups. Our Employment Equity Policy is available at www.hr.uct.ac.za/hr/policies/employ_equity

UCT reserves the right not to appoint.