Research Scientist

Position Summary

A research scientist at IPA is an internal principal investigator (PI) and will be part of IPA’s Applied Research & Methods group. The individual in this role will function as a PI or co-PI for a range of studies that contribute to IPA’s mission of addressing problems of global poverty. They will collaborate with internal and external PIs to pursue this research agenda and will also have opportunities to pursue a more independent program of research based on the individual’s ability to obtain grant funding for their ideas. Scholarly publication and presentation of research at conferences and meetings with policymakers are supported and encouraged.

Currently, ARM group researchers work together on three initiatives: Path to Scale Research, Research Methods (joint with Northwestern University’s Global Poverty Research Lab), and Poverty Measurement, but there are opportunities to work on related and new initiatives. Besides working on research projects as PI or co-PI, research scientists at IPA provide internal consulting, training, and mentoring to sector teams, the Right Fit Evidence (advisory services) unit, and country offices. The team is supported by program associates and research associates.

This position can be based in any of the following countries: Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Cote D’Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia, and Tanzania. The person will also support IPA’s LMIC Researcher Initiative by mentoring and training researchers and by supporting research projects in the region. Internal candidates are encouraged to apply.

- The deadline to submit your application is October 31st, 2023
- As part of your application, we require a writing sample of an original research paper.

Responsibilities

- Contribute to and eventually lead* research relevant to IPA’s mission, from conceptualization and study design to oversight of data collection and analysis, interpretation, and presentation of findings to technical and non-technical audiences
- Contribute to and eventually lead* development of research proposals
- Contribute to and eventually lead* training on running randomized trials and topics of the individual’s areas of expertise
- Produce academic-quality research papers and present work at applied research and evidence conferences
• Contribute to IPA’s efforts to maintain high standards of research and data quality, and research ethics
• Review and provide constructive feedback on study designs and manuscripts, similar to academic peer review
• Advise research teams on best practices for running field trials, including questionnaire design and methodology.

*“Contribute to or lead” activities based on level of experience, with promotion tied to independence and success in developing a research agenda

Qualifications

Required

• Ph.D. or equivalent experience in economics, political science, sociology, statistics, epidemiology, public policy, public health or a related field
• Demonstrated expertise in one or more of the following sectors: agriculture, health, education, financial inclusion, social protection, women’s empowerment, and climate change
• Knowledge of relevant research in one’s area of methodological or subject matter expertise
• Ability to publish research in peer-reviewed journals and present research in an academic seminar format
• Experience directing the work of junior members of a research team
• Experience winning research grants or contracts Strong written and oral communication skills
• Commitment to strong values of research quality and integrity, including the protection of human subjects of research
• Demonstrated ability to work across cultural contexts including Global North academics and African country contexts

Preferred

• Master or Ph.D. in Statistics, or similar expertise with sampling designs and weights
• Expertise with Bayesian modeling and inference
• Expertise with machine learning, social media analysis, natural language processing, and general techniques for working with big data
• Experience and expertise with rigorous methods for conducting qualitative and mixed-methods research
• Working knowledge of the systems used by IPA for research, including Stata and SurveyCTO
• Working proficiency in French

Reports to

Chief Research & Methodology Officer
Location

Any country in Africa where IPA is registered (Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone)

Application Instructions

Apply Now

About IPA

Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) is a research and policy nonprofit that discovers and promotes effective solutions to global poverty problems. IPA brings together researchers and decision-makers to design, rigorously evaluate, and refine these solutions and their applications, ensuring that the evidence created is used to improve the lives of the world’s poor. In recent decades, trillions of dollars have been spent on programs designed to reduce global poverty, but clear evidence of which programs succeed is rare, and when evidence does exist, decision-makers often do not know about it. IPA exists to bring together leading researchers and these decision-makers to ensure that the evidence we create leads to a tangible impact on the world. Since its founding in 2002, IPA has worked with over 600 leading academics to conduct over 900 evaluations in 52 countries. This research has informed hundreds of successful programs that now impact millions of individuals worldwide.

IPA’s Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)

As an organization, IPA is dedicated to improving the lives of the world’s most vulnerable populations through evidence and policy. We also recognize how important it is for our staff to reflect the diversity of the places where we work and the communities we work with. As such, IPA is committed to hiring from a diverse pool of candidates, from a range of backgrounds, beliefs, experiences, and perspectives. We know that this makes our work stronger and more responsive to the challenges faced by those we work with and for and we encourage people from historically underrepresented groups to apply. Click here to learn more about IPA’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Innovations for Poverty Action is an affirmative action-equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, or any other protected class. IPA will endeavor to make a reasonable accommodation to a qualified applicant with a disability unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of our business. If you believe you require such assistance to complete this form or to participate in an interview, please contact us at jobs@poverty-action.org or via phone at 1-202-386-6200.
The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of the work to be performed by the specified position. The statements are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all possible duties, tasks, and responsibilities. Management reserves the right to amend and change responsibilities to meet organizational needs as necessary. Please note that IPA will never request any form of payment from an applicant. Applicants are encouraged to confirm the information listed above with IPA prior to releasing any extensive personal information to the organization. Please direct questions to jobs@poverty-action.org. Please note that only qualified applicants will be contacted by the hiring manager.