

Job Profile

# Programme Officer – Science Innovation & Entrepreneurship

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## ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

The **Science for Africa Foundation** is a non-profit, public charity organisation that supports and promotes science innovation in Africa. The goal of the SFA Foundation is to address the continent's most pressing developmental needs by generating scientific knowledge that solves problems and informs decision-making.

We serve the African research ecosystem by funding excellent research and innovation ideas; enabling interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers, building and reinforcing environments that are conducive for scientists to thrive and produce quality research that generates new, locally relevant knowledge.

The SFA Foundation takes a holistic approach to the development of science. Our programmatic initiatives are crafted to cater to the entire science ecosystem and span across the value chain from early discovery sciences to translation sciences and target cross-cutting gaps.

Our commitment to strengthening the entire research ecosystem is reflected in the creation of major science and innovation programmes implemented through a well-established grant-making scheme, advocacy and promotion of scientific excellence, emphasis on intra-Africa collaboration and evidence-based policy-making mechanisms.

One of these programmes is the Grand Challenges Africa programme implemented under the Science Innovation and Entrepreneurship platform.



## INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

The **Grand Challenges** family of initiatives engages innovators from around the world to solve science, technology and innovation, health and developmental challenges. Grand Challenges initiatives are united by their focus on fostering innovation, directing research to where it will have the most impact, and serving those most in need. The challenge also encourages partnerships that bring together investigators from diverse organisations, including for-profit institutions, non-governmental organisations, academic and health research institutions, foundations, and civil society groups. Today, a variety of funding partners use “Grand Challenges” to accelerate research, creating an expanding network of funding and research partnerships spanning diverse topics.

The **Grand Challenges Africa (GC Africa)** programme promotes Africa-led scientific innovations to help countries better achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by awarding seed and full grants to the continent’s most impressive solutions. It supports big, bold impactful innovative ideas that have a potential for impact, scale and sustainability. Previous areas of work include but will not be limited to maternal and neonatal health, antimicrobial resistance, drug discovery, data sciences, water sanitation and hygiene, including food security and nutrition.

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## POSITION OVERVIEW

<b>Position Title</b>	Programme Officer – Science Innovation and Entrepreneurship
<b>Department</b>	Programmes
<b>Reporting To</b>	Programme Manager
<b>Direct Reports</b>	None
<b>Position Location</b>	Nairobi, Kenya



## Position Overview

The overall aim of the **Programme Officer (Science Innovation and Entrepreneurship)** role is to deliver work within the Science Innovation and Entrepreneurship Platform including the Grand Challenges Africa programme. The work entails doing activities within the strategy through the full programme cycle and making sure that they achieve impact.

The Programme Officer has as his/her primary responsibility to deliver project activities within this portfolio, support research networks and consortia, liaise with comparative research networks, as well as special initiatives and projects.

This may include but is not limited to the following aspects:

- Leveraging sector-specific knowledge and skills in the effective implementation of programmes and the development of new initiatives
- Supporting the development and implementation of pre-award, award and post-award processes related to programme activities
- Including institutional strategies like gender equity diversity and inclusion; monitoring, evaluation and learning; risks assessment and management; good finance grant practice; budget control and reviews, open access publishing; community and public engagement
- Organise and participate in environment scanning and scientific meetings related to the projects they implement and be involved in internal and external capacity development interventions/ promote contacts with researchers, professional associations and regional organisations
- Deliver through matrix reporting and work culture with other colleagues in the organization - financial and programmatic reporting, impact measurement and reporting, due diligence reviews on budget holding institutions
- Support the preparation of research and funding proposals on themes connected to his/her areas of expertise as may be requested by the line manager
- Where appropriate, liaise with funding organisations under the direction of the line manager and any other senior executive management team member.

The post holder will also be expected to work in close collaboration with other SFA Foundation-managed programmes through the provision of operational and research support in order to achieve the overall strategic goals.

## Key Responsibilities

We are looking for a self-driven individual capable of delivering the below under the supervision of the line manager;

### Scientific and technical abilities

1. Participate in the programme management cycle by contributing to;
  - Planning and budgeting
  - Ensuring that technical outputs throughout the program cycle including reports are of high quality and respond to donor guidelines and requirements
  - Promoting and marketing, this may include social media, website page management and/or article writing, working in collaboration with the SFA Foundation communications team;
  - Support in identifying, tracking and mitigating programme management risks and issues;
  - Participate in identification of experts for peer review and selection panels;
  - Planning and delivery of large-scale events, potentially including events in other countries on the continent
  - Monitoring and evaluation of scheme outcomes and impacts, and communicating outcomes and learnings to key stakeholders
  - Preparing consolidated technical and financial reports from grantees. This involves reviewing reporting templates, liaising with grantees M&E teams during reporting periods to support their reporting needs, consolidating the reports for internal use and for sharing with relevant funders; and data mining from reports to prepare outcomes and impact reports
  - Support the management of relationships with key stakeholders (other SFA Foundation funding and delivery partners, relevant steering groups, partners throughout the continent)
  - Contribute to the management of scheme activities and awards.

2. Contribute, as required, to the development of evidence-based positions on research and innovation policy issues linked to the core work.
3. Assist in the provision of secretariat support to relevant steering or expert groups
4. Assist in utilising the outputs, networks and relationships created through the Science Innovation and Entrepreneurship programme to further the organization's strategic objectives

### Research

1. Perform programme-relevant research to inform the development, implementation and delivery of the projects falling within the portfolio
2. Work in close collaboration with the M&E team to identify, collate, track, assess quality, analyse and validate, and report on programme-related data
3. Identify and build relationships with relevant stakeholders involved in relevant areas of research and research leadership, capacity development but not limited to universities and other research institutions. This may include relevant African government departments and policymakers, Africa-based and international Think Tanks, and intergovernmental organisations etc
4. Prepare reports, articles and presentations during programme inception meetings, annual grantee meetings and site visits.
5. Track and perform relevant analyses on various aspects of programme implementation to identify and address important challenges to ensure effective and efficient programme delivery

## Key Responsibilities

### Programme Support

1. Represent SFA Foundation programmes at internal and external meetings when required.
2. Work in close collaboration with SFA Foundation Communications Manager to ensure all content (reports, images, videos, social media posts) is relevant and updated on a timely basis according to what is happening in the projects.
3. Deliver administrative team duties in support of the projects within the portfolio e.g. work with SFA Foundation Procurement team to monitor deliverables (including supplies), and being the contact person for projects within the programme.
4. Plan and organise relevant workshops and other activities in furtherance of the objectives of the projects within the portfolio.
5. Maintain a risk register for the programme and a system to document, track and ensure programme issues and challenges are resolved in a timely manner.

6. Support other SFA Foundation programmes and departments in the delivery of their mandate especially for cross-cutting programmatic activities when requested

### Key Results and Outcomes Area

1. Benefits of all assigned activities delivered within budget, to time and consistent with commitments to funders and agreed to targets;
2. Schemes delivered following best practices in scheme management, steering group secretarial support, and effective use of the Agaseke electronic Grants Management System.
3. Strong working relationships with all key stakeholders including staff, other delivery partners, and beneficiaries;
4. Maintaining an attractive and accurate outward profile of activities through the website and other materials;
5. Strong knowledge of SFA Foundation policies and procedures, and their application in grants management

## Qualifications and Experience



- A Masters degree in a relevant Science/Biomedical/Biosciences/Health research field obtained over the past 5 years; or an MD with proven research leadership qualities and experience of carrying out key research work for priority health agendas
- At least 3 years' experience working in research/research leadership capacity development programme design and implementation on the African continent
- A professional qualification and relevant experience in large scale programme/project management or training in research administration, ethics, leadership or related will be an added advantage.

## Knowledge and Skills

- Excellent presentation and public speaking skills
- Ability to interact with and to manage multiple stakeholders with diverse interests
- Proficiency in standard office and collaboration tools such as Microsoft Office, SharePoint
- Possess well-developed interpersonal skills and the ability to network and communicate across different levels of the organisation and with external partners;
- Able to perform work independently with minimal supervision, but also participate as a team member;
- Possess strong attention to detail and maintain a timely and efficient work-flow;
- Have strong planning, organisational skills and ability to work under pressure;
- Ability to multi-task and prioritise work amidst competing demands;
- Have unquestionable integrity, confidentiality and respect for self and other team members.
- Project/Programme management skills (essential)
- Risk management
- Financial management and financial governance
- Team working.

Should you meet the above requirements, please submit a cover letter and a current Curriculum Vitae not exceeding 5 pages including three professional referees to [recruitment@scienceforafrica.foundation](mailto:recruitment@scienceforafrica.foundation)

The cover letter should be no more than two pages long and explain why you are interested in this post and how your skills and experience make you a good fit. The documents should be saved in MS Word or PDF in the following format: **Your First Name-Your Last Name-Document Name-Date (mmyy)** e.g., **Deus-Wan-CV-092022-SFA Foundation** or **Deus-Wan-CoverLetter-092022 -SFA Foundation**.

All applications should be submitted by **Friday, 30 September, 2022**.

## HOW TO APPLY