

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### POSITION TITLE

MERL Project Officer, KwaZulu-Natal

### LOCATION

Durban, KwaZulu-Natal

### SUPERVISOR

Programme Manager, KwaZulu-Natal

### ABOUT INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FOUNDATION (IYF®)

For 30 years, our sole focus has been to help young people succeed. Together with partners around the world, we've invested in ensuring that youth develop the leadership, technical, and life skills to earn a livelihood. Whether it's landing a first job, growing a business, or driving social change, every young person deserves the opportunity to realize his or her full potential. Rooted in the belief of youth as problem-solvers, change-makers, and leaders, our initiatives are catalysts for change. For more information please consult [www.iyfnet.org](http://www.iyfnet.org).

In South Africa, IYF partners to strengthen education and training systems including public TVET colleges and employer-led learnerships for unemployed youth so that they better equip young people to access and expand economic opportunity. We work with national government and TVET leaders to align courses with industry needs; we equip employers to deliver more impactful life skills training within their learnerships; and we create mutually beneficial partnerships between industry and education systems that improve young people's lives while also delivering business benefits.

### PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

#### BE PART OF A UNIQUE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

IYF South Africa recently launched **High Gear**, a partnership with the National Association of Automotive Component and Allied Manufacturers (NAACAM) and the Department of Higher Education & Training (DHET) that is advancing South Africa's public TVET college system. High Gear draws on industry knowledge and skills imperatives—along with IYF curricula enhancement tools—to strengthen the market relevance of select public TVET college courses. Ultimately, High Gear aims to demonstrate a model for greater industry involvement in TVET course design and delivery that generates positive returns for both young people and employers.

The UK Government's Skills for Prosperity Programme is funding High Gear implementation in KwaZulu-Natal Province, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation are funding project implementation in Eastern Cape Province. All three funding partners are supporting High Gear's national stakeholder engagement and learning efforts.

***IYF needs a Measurement, Evaluation, Research & Learning (MERL) Project Officer*** to: 1) lead implementation of the High Gear MERL plan in KZN province (particularly eThekweni); and 2) to provide targeted project implementation support.

## CORE JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

The MERL Project Officer will support High Gear learning and success in the following ways:

### *Measurement, Evaluation, Research & Learning (75% of position focus)*

- **MERL Plan Implementation:** The Officer will lead implementation of the High Gear MERL plan in KZN, including leading on data collection and analysis for select indicators, working with the external evaluator to coordinate data analysis, and supporting the project learning strategy. The Officer will inform ongoing updates to all elements of the MERL Plan (e.g., theories of change, logical frameworks, risk management frameworks, performance monitoring plans, evaluation strategy, and data collection tools).
- **Data Management:** The Officer will support the establishment of record guidelines, procedures, and tools for maintaining data integrity. The Officer will enter and manage performance data through IYF's cloud-based data management system, and assist with data storage, cleaning, tabulation, and verification.
- **Risk Management and Value for Money (VfM):** The Officer will support tracking of High Gear risk register and VfM indicators, to enable early detection of any obstacles for reaching project milestones, and to ensure IYF is implementing cost effective programming.
- **MERL Technical Support:** The Officer will provide ongoing technical and data management support to colleagues and partners in KZN, to ensure the quality implementation of the High Gear MERL plan, including through regular coaching, data quality audits, monitoring visits, and problem solving.
- **Project Reporting & Dissemination:** The Officer will support quarterly donor reporting, including reporting on key performance indicators, and support dissemination of project learning to provincial industry and TVET colleges, both through reports and presentations.
- **Adaptive Management:** The Officer will collaborate with the national High Gear MERL team—including the external evaluator—to support High Gear project management staff to regularly use High Gear data and learning to inform strategic shifts.
- **Institutional MERL Support:** Serve as a technical resource for IYF as part of the global MERL team and support institutional MERL priorities such as implementing the institutional learning agenda, contributing to the performance measurement framework, and facilitating sharing of MERL best practices and learning to internal and external audiences.

### *General Project Implementation Support (25% of position focus)*

- **Project Support:** The Officer will provide coordination for select project activities—as assigned by the Programme Manager (KZN)—such as scheduling, records management, contract approvals and management, and workshop/event logistical support.
- **Compliance:** In collaboration with all High Gear team members, develop and maintain familiarity with donor rules/regulations to ensure compliance, including adherence to donor reporting guidelines and timelines.
- Other duties as assigned to achieve High Gear objectives.

## REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's degree in a related field (e.g. economics, mathematics) or a social science with demonstrated monitoring, evaluation and learning training or specialized coursework.
- Minimum of 3 years of work experience in a related field, including two or more years of experience using quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies in measurement,

evaluation, and learning (MEL) activities for program performance. Prior experience with supporting performance monitoring for USAID or DFID-funded projects an added advantage.

- Experience conducting assessments and using qualitative and quantitative tools (focus group discussions, surveys, interviews).
- Strong data management and analytical skills, with the ability to synthesize information to inform planning and strategy.
- Excellent computer skills and demonstrated experience using advanced Excel skills. Familiarity with statistical software (e.g. SPSS, R, STATA); data visualization software (e.g. Tableau, PowerBI); and cloud-based data management systems (e.g. Salesforce, MySQL) is strongly preferred.
- Prior experience providing general project support, such as implementation planning, event/workshop logistics, and contract management.
- Exceptional oral and written English communication skills.
- Adept at leading surveys and/or presentations with diverse audiences, including in the public sector and in the private sector. The candidate must be comfortable in external-facing roles.

#### **OTHER HIGHLY-VALUED SKILLS**

- A polished and resourceful style, with the ability to work both independently and as a team player
- An entrepreneurial approach, where tenacity, taking initiative, executing methodically, and proactively solving problems come naturally
- A balance of confidence, humility, and empathy
- Commitment to IYF's mission

#### **YOU WOULD LOVE THIS ROLE IF YOU...**

- Want to be part of a new initiative that you can help to shape and grow
- Believe industry and government partnerships are key to unlocking South Africa's talent
- Identify solutions as quickly as you spot challenges
- Thrive in a culture of high-performance and high-integrity
- Would like to work in a global organisation, within its South Africa "innovation hub"
- Like surrounding yourself with really smart, motivated, mission-driven people

#### **TO APPLY**

Please send your CV, cover letter, and completed [Action Appointments bio summary form](#) in word format to: [melissa@actionappointments.co.za](mailto:melissa@actionappointments.co.za).

**For your cover letter**, rather than summarizing your CV, please answer the following in 1-2 pages:

- Imagine a project that has the ideal MERL structure, in terms of plans, resources, processes, and/or commitments (i.e. your "dream" MERL project structure).
- Describe what you consider to be the key elements that makes this the ideal MERL project structure.

***Only applicants without work restrictions in South Africa should apply.***