Research Associate / Sampling and Survey Expert

Role: Research Associate / Sampling and Survey Expert

Job code: SRA1116
Location: Southampton, UK
Duration: 2 year contract (renewable). Full-time position
Start date: Immediate
Salary: 38,500-58,000 GBP per year
Reporting to: Executive Director, Flowminder

Context

The Flowminder Foundation is a non-profit organisation registered in Stockholm, Sweden with a large part of its staff in Southampton UK. Flowminder’s mission is to improve public health and welfare in low- and middle-income countries. The data Flowminder provides are global public goods. We work with governments, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs.

Much of the work in Flowminder takes place in close collaboration with University of Southampton and the successful applicant will work closely together with researchers in the WorldPop Project at University of Southampton.

The Position

De-identified data from mobile operators, remotely sensed data, GIS layers and other new data types can provide information on population behaviour and welfare. By themselves these data sources provide limited information but has a high potential to support estimation of population dynamics and characteristics if combined appropriately with valid survey data.

The Flowminder Foundation and the Worldpop Project are seeking to appoint a Research Associate (or, for exceptional candidates, a Senior Research Associate) to lead the organisation’s efforts in the development and implementation of analytical and survey methods for quantifying bias and improving estimation procedures based on large-scale mobile operator data, combined with remote sensing/GIS data as well as phone and household survey data. Due to Flowminder’s and WorldPop’s strong ties to the University of Southampton, this position has the potential to be an academic post.

The successful candidate will be comfortable in developing estimation procedures from novel and traditional types of data as well as in leading field survey work in low and middle-income
countries. He or she will have proven ability or potential to independently manage projects. The successful candidate will be expected to take a major role in strengthening and growing organisational competencies in this area. The successful candidate will have a experience in statistics, survey design, survey implementation and analysis of survey data (or a strong willingness to learn if any of these elements are lacking). He or she probably has a Ph.D. in Demography, Epidemiology, Statistics or a related area. The successful candidate’s work has been largely focused in low- and middle-income countries.

The Flowminder Foundation

Flowminder collects, aggregates, integrates and analyses household survey data, anonymous mobile operator data and remote satellite. Our analyses aim to map the distributions, movements and characteristics of vulnerable populations in low- and middle-income countries. We help save lives and improve welfare by providing analyses and decision support to all relevant parties based on the latest academic advances. Our work includes both research and operational projects, always aimed at having a concrete impact on vulnerable populations. Our funders include BMGF, Rockefeller Foundation and UN Foundation. We are a rapidly growing organisation with a great team of highly skilled staff, who have a great time together and find meaning in what we do.

Read more about Flowminder at www.flowminder.org and about Flowminder in the media: www.flowminder.org/news

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Survey methods development (45%):

- Design mobile phone and household surveys to quantify and decrease bias and uncertainty in existing analyses aimed at estimating population characteristics from mobile operator, remote sensing data and phone surveys
- Provide technical contributions to development of new project proposals

Field responsibilities (30%):

- Supervise implementation of household and phone surveys
- Evaluate quality of collected survey data
- Travel internationally (5%-25%)
- Work collaboratively with mobile network operators, UN agencies, NGOs, governments, and other key partners

Communication and writing responsibilities (25%)

- Write scientific articles
- Write project reports
- Communicate and provide capacity building for colleagues
Further information

- Travel to major UN headquarter cities and to low-resource settings will be part of the role
- This position provides the flexibility to work outside normal business hours and occasionally on weekends
- The position allows for a high level of independence, initially within a core set of research topics

PROFILE REQUIREMENTS

Professional skills & requirements

Essential:

- Genuine interest in, understanding of, and commitment to the mission of Flowminder/WorldPop
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively in cross-cultural and multi-lingual situations, particularly in resource-limited environments
- Experience working with local groups, country institutions and international agencies
- Strong analytical, problem-solving and decision-making capabilities, with ability to articulate questions as they arise
- Sufficiently strong mathematical background to independently be able to create and evaluate new sampling strategies and estimation procedures
- Understanding of implementation challenges of surveys in low resource setting and how these may affect estimates
- Ability to work independently and manage projects on a daily basis at times with minimal supervision
- Strong social and communication skills

Technical skills & requirements

Essential:

- Graduate-level training in sampling strategies, sampling bias, and methods for sample adjustment
- Experience collecting, managing and cleaning large data sets
- Demonstrated knowledge of a statistical analysis software such as STATA, SAS, or R for population survey data analysis

Desirable:

- Experience designing and implementing complex surveys in low-resource settings
- PhD in Social statistics, Demography, or related field
- Knowledge of Python
- Knowledge of Bayesian statistical methods
**Language**

*Essential:*

- High level of written and spoken English
- French, Arabic, Spanish, or other major languages

**Desirable:**

**PLACE IN THE ORGANISATION**

The Research Associate:

- Reports hierarchically to the Executive Director
- Reports functionally to the Executive Director and Senior Operations Manager

Deadline for applications: Until position filled

Please submit all applications only by email to “careers@flowminder.org” stating “SRA1116” in the title.

Please submit your CV and cover letter in ONE .pdf and name the file with your LAST NAME.