Job description: Data Steward at University of KwaZulu-Natal WASH R&D Center

Research Scientist Grade 8 Position

2024-09-16

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Job Title: Data Steward (Research Scientist Grade 8 Position)

Workstation: Durban, South Africa

Application due date: 25th October 2024

Ref No.: WASH 9/2024

Note: Carefully review the submission requirements. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Project background

The openwashdata community was established in 2023 with the vision for an active global community that applies FAIR principles to data generated in the greater water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector. The project is managed by the Global Health Engineering group at ETH Zurich and in its first 1.5 years developed a 10-week "data science for openwashdata'' training programme and established a clear and efficient data publishing workflow for datasets and code that follows FAIR principles and highest standards for computational reproducibility and version control.

The UKZN WASH R&D Centre at UKZN is a strategic partner for a follow-up project on data stewardship. However, over the years, the WASH R&D Centre has amassed a significant amount of data on WASH related topics, including data from the Sanitation Engineering Field-Testing (EFT) Platform and the broader research community.

The goal of the project is to publish this historical data for wider use of the community. The openwashdata team will provide supervision and training for aspects of data management,

including data management plans, data privacy, data ethics, and data publication. The training will cover aspects of file organization, file types, and different pathways for collaboration and task management. The outcome is an increase in WASH related data that is published openly.

The funded proposal and more information are available at this website: https://openwashdata.org/pages/gallery/proposal-02/

Job description

We seek a data steward for a 1-year position, with potential renewal for a 2nd year, who will work with researchers at the WASH R&D Centre and the openwashdata team on data stewardship. The candidate will be responsible for:

- identifying current data management practices and developing a draft data management strategy for the WASH R&D Centre.
- publishing at least 10 datasets of two different types that are available to the UKZN WASH R&D Centre
- supporting data science trainings in varying style with several different focus topics and for a variety of audiences

Your desired profile

Minimum requirements

1. Experience using data science tools (e.g. Git, GitHub, R, Python, RStudio IDE, VS Code, etc.).

2. Experience in developing curriculum, facilitating, coordinating, and conducting training sessions.

3. A Master's degree or equivalent, approved qualification in Computer Science, Data Science, Engineering, Media and Communication, Statistics, Development Studies, or related.

4. An understanding of the need for innovative and creative teaching strategies that ensure inclusiveness.

Advantages

1. Experience working in South Africa, working with a diverse range of stakeholders, and a commitment to increasing the number of African scholars

2. Experience in cleaning, visualizing, and communicating data using R, and ideally, the collection of R tidyverse packages

3. Experience managing and conducting interdisciplinary (research) projects in environmental and social sciences, engineering, and international development.

4. An understanding of the need for reproducible research and open science principles.

5. A willingness to challenge and change institutional practices that present barriers to different groups.

6. Strong networking and relationship-building skills and an interest in building broad collaborations.

Dates

- 2024-10-25: due date for submission of application
- 2024-11-08: notification about passing first selection round (three selected candidates)
- 2024-11-11 to 2024-11-15: a week reserved for a personal and a technical interview
- 2024-11-20: final notification about selection
- 2025-01-15: estimated start date

Interview panel

- Randir Rawatlal, Acting Director, UKZN WASH R&D Centre
- Susan Mercer, Project Manager, UKZN WASH R&D Centre
- Researcher (to be identified), UKZN WASH R&D Centre
- Representative, allocated by the Head of Discipline of Chemical Engineering, UKZN
- Lars Schöbitz, Project Management, Global Health Engineering, ETH Zurich

Submission requirements

Please send applications to Ms Lungile Ndlela on email ndlelal1@ukzn.ac.za and Mr Lars Schoöbitz on email lschoebitz@ethz.ch

The subject line must clearly indicate the position's reference number (WASH 9/2024).

1. A link to an online portfolio of previous work that shows programming code for a data analysis project (if no public portfolio exist, a script with programming code can be submitted with the application package).

2. An updated CV in your current format.

3. A cover letter (maximum 500 words) that addresses the following statement: "The data we generate belongs to us as individual researchers and I don't see the benefits of sharing it openly. I feel concerned that people will use my data in ways that I did not intend to and that they may find flaws in my work."