

Systemic approaches to poverty reduction advisor

HEADLINE:

Want to put your ideas and skills in international development into practice? Join Agora Global – a social enterprise focused on sustainable development – and use your skills to affect real, lasting change.

Position(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-doctoral Consultant
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide advisory services to clients (INGOs, funders, contractors, private firms) on intervention for sustainable poverty alleviation Conducting evaluations, programme monitoring, and reviews Training professionals in how to improve effectiveness with a systemic approach to development Publishing research and advocacy papers Conceptual development Business development
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible Frequent global travel
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PhD in internationally focused field
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical thinking Likeable Multi-tasker Entrepreneurial Qualitative/quantitative research skills
Essential requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent spoken and written English
Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiable depending on experience and client readiness 10% OTE annual salary growth. Share options Equity options
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible/home working Part time working available Generous holiday entitlements Variable travel up to 100 days per year

WHO ARE YOU?

There's no archetype that makes you good at this type of work. The only mandatory skill is excellent written English. While most job adverts might say that, we really mean it. Being able to communicate complex concepts to a range of different audiences requires excellent written and presentation skills. Typically, people who are good at this job are required to be confident, entrepreneurial, ambitious, and intellectually rigorous with good presentational skills. That's all the measurable criteria, but we really want you to study these qualitative criteria and we only want to hear from you if you genuinely feel they describe you. Besides this you must be:

- **Critical thinker:** Do you naturally question the things you hear, the things you read, and the received wisdom that shapes people's decisions? Many education systems don't encourage this but it's essential that you're intellectually curious and challenge yourself and others with an evidence-based approach.
- A PhD in social sciences with an international focus is desirable for a number of reasons including both knowledge of harder research skills and also acts as evidence of critical thinking.
- **Likeable:** there's no point being right if you can't get people to agree with you. You need to be able to bring people with you, whether they're policymakers, business people, colleagues on development programmes or the disadvantaged people who our work hopes to benefit.
- **Multitasker:** The nature of the work, with no project being a full time engagement, means that we might be working on several projects at once. You need to be on top of all of them and able to switch between them at short notice.
- **An appetite for travel:** While we use technology to the best of our ability, infrastructure in some of our workplaces and the nature of learning mean that, often, in person engagement is more effective. If you're not the type of person who enjoys travelling to new places then this probably isn't the job for you.
- **Entrepreneurial and ambitious:** this doesn't mean it's all about money. It's an attitude. You should be the type of person that seeks out opportunity and wants to make something of it. That could be a new project, a new concept, a new method, or something else, but we need the type of person who thrive on innovation.
- **Experience:** Having lived, worked, or conducted research in developing countries is important to give you some understanding of the work we do. There is an aspect of the business that's based on a CV, so experience that looks good to a client is useful. But if you're not the right fit in terms of the rest of the requirements, our conversation won't get that far. Conversely, if you don't have any experience in market systems development or even development in general, that won't preclude us taking the discussion further. Further summarised desirable criteria include:
 - Economics and behavioural economics backgrounds have proven to be an advantage but are not essential.
 - Quantitative and applied qualitative research methods
 - Excellent communication and presentation skills
 - Experience in a non-academic environment – perhaps you've conducted consultancies during your academic work or worked in the private sector in a previous life
 - A rich and diverse personal profile
 - Experience managing people and projects

WHO ARE WE?

Agora Global is social enterprise which has grown rapidly to become a leading voice in taking a systems approach to development. We provide consulting, training, and research services to development funders, implementers, and private companies with the universal aim to make development impact more inclusive, more sustainable, and impact on more people.

We believe development should be transformative. All of our work is trying to improve the systems that help poor and disadvantaged people to get the goods, services, jobs, and incomes that they need to improve their lives without the need for development assistance. This is the essence of sustainable development impact which unites everything we do. In practice that means analysing the way systems comprised of private, public, and civil society organisations work and developing innovations led by these local actors in products, services, and relationships which ultimately benefit poor people.

We design programmes, provide long term implementation support, help programmes to design and operate monitoring systems, and conduct complex evaluations. We run training programmes aimed at giving those involved in different roles within development the skills to do their jobs better. We're also fiercely independent. We work with a wide variety of clients and partners meaning we're able to continue to conduct research and advocacy work with objectivity in pursuit of better development.

Sectorally and thematically, we work across a broad spectrum focusing particularly on areas at the innovation frontier where programmes have the most to gain from a systemic approach. We work in agriculture and finance, but we've also been leading much of the innovation in urban development, education, health, informal sectors and labour markets, as well as the humanitarian-development nexus with substantial work in taking a market systems approach to engagement in refugee contexts.

We want you to take a role in all parts of the business but you may want to specialise your areas of interest or experience.

THE WORK:

In the early stages of your work, it will be important that you use your existing skills and interests to be useful to the business as you can. This might include **elearning, administration and organisation, writing and marketing of research outputs, or web design**. As you're learning about our technical approach and the business, it's important to look holistically at how you can help us do more and better with what you already know.

As a consultant, you will work with development programmes, government, NGOs, and philanthropic foundations to help them contribute to the objective of sustainable development. This will involve travelling and spending time in developing countries – about 100 days per year but this varies a lot. You will spend much of your time analysing markets and systems: how they work and what the constraints are to achieving better outcomes for poor people. But more than this, you will seek to affect change within these systems. This will involve coaching and mentoring project teams, catering to different abilities and levels of understanding to change their behaviour.

As a researcher, you will work on a broad range of research outputs. At one end, you will produce working papers and journal articles to formalise concepts and empirical research conducted and developed as part of consulting tasks. At the other end, you'll contribute to our blog posts, voicing often controversial views on development. We are also involved in more formal research through project evaluations and longitudinal impact assessments. Here, you'll be expected to use your knowledge of research methods to introduce innovation to the way we measure change within systems.

As a trainer, having developed your knowledge and experience through research and consulting, you'll contribute to our internationally-recognised training programmes. You'll guide participants from development projects and funders through key concepts and frameworks. You'll help develop, refine and deliver new materials which emerge from your experience and thinking across your work with Agora.

THE TERMS:

A job is perhaps not the right term as what we're seeking are bespoke partnerships with talented people to meet their personal and professional needs as well as those of Agora. That is to say

we're interested in building Agora and want you to want to be part of it. That sounds like marketing speak, but it is genuinely how we want to build the business. If we share principals and objectives and you have the right skills, then we're open as to how we make it work on a case by case basis. This might include:

In the longer term all positions are expected to be fulfilled based on remote working, while we aim to meet physically as regularly as possible. We have people across four continents and it can be a real advantage to keep travel time down.

Things like holiday entitlements are flexible too. Obviously, the more holidays you have, the less you'll be working and we can build our partnership around that.

Beyond this, if there's a way of working you have in mind, we're open to the conversation.

NEXT STEPS

Please provide a CV, covering letter and a written response to this question of at least two pages:

What's wrong with development and what can we do about it?

Submit via email: recruitment@agoraglobal.org

We have live and pressing opportunities and so the sooner you reach out and we see whether there might be a good fit, the better.

CLOSING DATE

15th May 2022