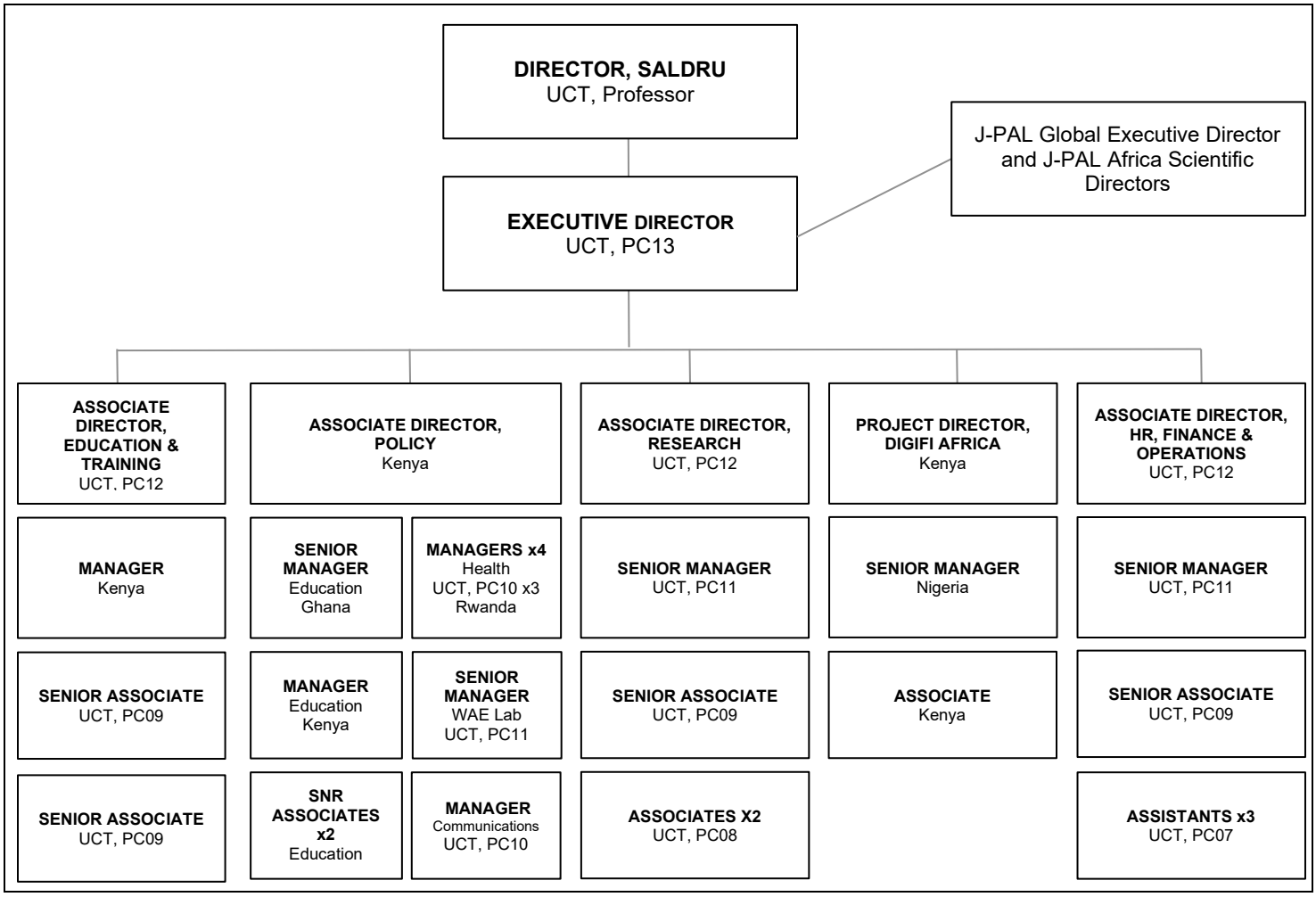
HR191	**POSITION DESCRIPTION**	UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

NOTES
- Forms must be downloaded from the UCT website: https://forms.uct.ac.za/forms.htm
- This form serves as a template for the writing of position descriptions.
- A copy of this form is kept by the line manager and the position holder.

POSITION DETAILS

Position title	Executive Director: J-PAL Africa		
Job title (HR Business Partner to provide)	Director		
Position grade (if known)	PC13(5)	Date last graded (if known)	2018
Academic faculty / PASS department	Commerce		
Academic department / PASS unit	Economics		
Division / section	SALDRU		
Date of compilation	17 April 2025		

ORGANOGRAM



PURPOSE

The main purpose of this position is to lead the J-PAL Africa Programme ensuring projects operated across Africa are delivered to the highest global standards. This involves overseeing the Research, Policy, Education & Training and Operations functions. The role includes working with J-PAL's global network of researchers and offices and contributing to international thinking about evidence informed policymaking.

CONTENT

	Key performance areas	% of time	**Inputs (Responsibilities / activities / processes/ methods used)**	**Outputs (Expected results)**
1	Develop the strategy and oversee the day-to-day operations of the J-PAL Africa programme	**45%**	Provide strategic oversight and day-to-day operational support to all teams within J-PAL Africa, with a particular focus on leading the overarching strategy for the office and for managing the finance, HR and operational functions: • Coordinate with J-PAL Africa Scientific Directors, J-PAL Global leadership (especially the Global Executive Director), and J-PAL Africa Senior Management Team to formulate organisation-level goals and strategy to execute them. • Oversee vertical leads and quality delivery for Policy, Education & Training, Research and Operations functions • Ensure sound grant & financial management • Actively fundraise and build strong donor relationships • Human resource management: Ensure staffing needs are identified and positions filled with capable team members. Oversee performance management. Ensure staff are productive, happy, and able to grow professionally	• Clear and well-articulated strategy for J-PAL Africa • Provide clear direction and leadership to the Senior Management Team • Create effective financial reporting and management structure for both internal vertical-wide reporting as well as aggregate reporting to the Global office • Timely submission of progress reports to all donors • J-PAL funds in sound financial position • New donors identified and secured as necessary • Staff are satisfied and performing well as per development review inputs • Effective and adequate staffing in place • Systems continually improving • Strong relationships with J-PAL's global leadership (including Global Executive Director, Scientific Directors), SALDRU and UCT
2	Oversee the implementation of J-PAL Africa research projects	**15%**	Provide strategic leadership and supervision to Associate Director of Research (ADR) in all areas pertaining to J-PAL Africa's research portfolio, including but not limited to: • Developing and reporting on strategy to expand portfolio of research projects implemented by J-PAL Africa • Ensuring high quality implementation of research projects in South Africa and, in the future, other countries in Sub Saharan Africa • Ensuring sound financial management of research project budgets • High level engagement coordination with Principal Investigators (PIs) • Contributing to high-level design and planning for prospective research projects. • Coordinating with and supporting the South African academic community through partnership building and project development • Troubleshooting challenges to integrity or execution of research projects and elevating to the necessary levels for resolution.	• Research projects successfully implemented from start to finish to the satisfaction of PIs and to J-PAL's standards • Effective and proactive In-person and virtual meetings with PIs working with J-PAL Africa, local organisations implementing promising projects, and policy makers to seed research possibilities • +- 4 RCTs supported by the office at any one time • +- 2 pilots supported by the office at any one time

3	Oversee J-PAL Africa's policy outreach and funding initiatives across sub-Saharan African countries	**30%**	Provide strategic leadership and supervision to Associate Director of Policy (ADP) and the DigiFI Project Director (PD) in all areas pertaining to J-PAL Africa's policy and funding initiative portfolios, including but not limited to: • Supporting the Associate Director of Policy (ADP) to develop and track J-PAL Africa's evidence-informed policymaking strategy across South Africa and other Sub Saharan African countries • Supporting the ADP and DigiFI PD in ensuring the teams are adequately staffed and managed. • Working with the ADP and DigiFI PD on key policy outreach projects including coordinating with global policymakers, practitioners and funders at the highest level to initiate new projects, developing strong partnerships to run programmes with quality and spin out new programmes as necessary. • Representing J-PAL Africa at events worldwide such as donor convenings, conferences, policymaker engagements and workshops • Leading or supporting high level policy engagement as needed.	• Well targeted programme for policy outreach that creates awareness of J-PAL findings with relevant stakeholders in Africa • Evidence to scale and other policy projects in and across different African countries: - Being established with sufficient quality staffing and support - Being implemented at high quality - Developing and maintaining strong partner relationships - Tracking and reflecting on learnings for continued improvement and to contribute to global lessons • Evidence events successfully held and contributed to • J-PAL Africa research initiatives well supported and well run
4	Oversee J-PAL Africa's Education and Training programmes to build research capacity amongst local research and policymakers in Africa	**10%**	Provide strategic leadership and supervision to Associate Director of Education & Training (ADE&T) in all areas pertaining to J-PAL Africa's training portfolio, including but not limited to: • Supporting the ADE&T to identify and execute opportunities for training courses or institutional partnerships that support the goals of the Policy and Research verticals • Supporting the ADE&T in ensuring the team is adequately staffed and managed. • Contributing to J-PAL Africa's education and training work by presenting at Executive Education Courses and African researcher capacity building and network building events	• Comprehensible and actionable E&T strategy • Well-engaged stakeholders at J-PAL Africa, J-PAL Global and within the network of J-PAL researchers committed to advancing the representation of African institutions and researchers in the field of RCTs. • E&T events successfully held and attended • Increased # of African scholars supported to conduct RCTs

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Minimum qualifications	A Masters in Public Policy, or Economics, or another similar social science including graduate level (Honours and up) courses in econometrics/ statistics, microeconomics or development economics
Minimum experience (type and years)	• At least 10 years work experience with minimum 5 years relevant research management, operations or policy outreach experience. At least some of this experience should have been gained in sub-Saharan Africa. • Proven track record of leadership and management, and supporting teams in achieving results, especially in overseeing day-to-day operations, HR, and understanding financial management/reporting. • Demonstrated ability to understand and communicate findings from rigorous quantitative research. • Experience leading policy outreach including strategically identifying and mobilizing appropriate policymakers and developing and maintaining these relationships • Experience preparing policy outreach materials, including written memos and formal presentations • Experience presenting at training/ dissemination events • Experience writing and managing budgets • Experience fundraising, managing grants and donor relationships • Proven ability to handle multiple diverse assignments at one time, successfully complete assigned tasks and meet deadlines while conducting high-quality work
Skills	• Strong skills in Excel, Word, and PowerPoint • Advanced writing and oral presentation skills in English, particularly the ability to communicate technical research to policymakers in a non-technical manner • Excellent communication skills • Excellent programme and people management skills • Excellent financial management and reporting skills • Strategic thinking through to quality programme execution
Knowledge	• Development economics • Understanding of randomised evaluations of social policies/ programs • Financial management, operations and reporting
Professional registration or license requirements	N/A
Other requirements (If the position requires the handling of cash or finances, other requirements must include 'Ability to handle cash or finances'.)	Honesty to authorize payments Willingness to travel extensively

Competencies (Refer to UCT Competency Framework)

Competence	Level	Competence	Level
Individual Leadership	4	Building Partnerships	4
Strategic Leadership	3	Resource Management	3
Facilitating change	3	People Management	3
Analytical skills/ problem solving	3	Communication	3

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Functions responsible for	All functions within the J-PAL Africa Programme
Amount and kind of supervision received	Relevant and regular strategic and operational support and direction from SALDRU Director, J-PAL Africa's Scientific Directors, and J-PAL Global Executive Director
Amount and kind of supervision exercised	Direct line management of vertical leads
Decisions which can be made	All decisions related to J-PAL Africa day-to-day functioning
Decisions which must be referred	If decision has major impact on SALDRU/ UCT/ J-PAL globally, relevant others should be consulted

CONTACTS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Internal to UCT	SALDRU, Research Contracts, Finance, Foreign Payments, Human Resources
External to UCT	J-PAL Offices worldwide, J-PAL researchers at universities around the world, international donors, policymakers across African countries, NGOs