



Innovations for Poverty-Action (IPA)

Job Description

Job Title: Business Engagement Assistant

Division/Department: Research

Work Location: Kigali

Length of contract: 5 to 7 Months (Short-Term Contract)

Desired Start Date: ASAP

Number of Positions: 10

Reports to: Senior Research Associate

Innovations for Poverty Action was established in Rwanda in 2013 as an International Non-Government Organization. IPA Rwanda has ten active projects spanning across Education, Agriculture, Finance, and Health. With 36 full-time staff, a network of part-time field enumerators of over 300, IPA Rwanda predominantly implements Randomized Controlled Trials in collaboration with leading Rwandan and international academics, the Government of Rwanda and other development NGOs to evaluate the impact of new development concepts to help inform future government policy and development projects.

Project and position summary

Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) Rwanda seeks qualified and motivated **Business Engagement Assistants** to support a new research project aimed at understanding financial constraints to exporting in Rwanda. This project is led by Jie Bai (Harvard Kennedy School), Lauren Bergquist (Yale University), Christian Lippitsch (International Growth Centre), and Ignacio Marra de Artinano (Université Libre de Bruxelles).

About the Project

The project will conduct an impact evaluation on the loan program for exporters and potential exporters managed by the Development Bank of Rwanda (BRD). The objective is to understand the role of financial constraints to exporting in Rwanda. The Business Engagement Officers will be engaged in a large-scale firm outreach campaign to provide targeted marketing and application support to potential clients.

Key Responsibilities

- Engage with firm owners daily as part of the outreach campaign.
- Clearly explain the project's purpose and the potential benefits of participating.
- Introduce firms to the available financial support opportunities.
- Guide firms through loan application processes, including eligibility checks, required documents, and submission procedures.
- Report on barriers encountered by firms in accessing finance or completing applications.

- Follow up with firms regularly to monitor progress and troubleshoot challenges.
- Schedule firm visits efficiently and manage travel/logistics to meet daily and weekly targets.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with stakeholders, including private firms and government agencies.
- Keep track of outreach materials, documentation templates, or support tools provided by IPA.
- Maintain a network of contacts within firms for future follow-up or project phases.
- Liaise regularly with the IPA research team and Principal Investigators (PIs) to report progress, share challenges, and provide updates from the field.
- Ensure that outreach and facilitation activities are conducted according to project protocols and research standards.
- Protect firm confidentiality and handle sensitive information with integrity.
- Represent IPA in a professional and respectful manner during interactions with firms, banks, and any government counterparts.
- Performing other office and project-related tasks as needed.

Education and/or Work Experience Requirements:

- A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Economics, Finance, Business Administration, or a related field.
- Experience in **community or business outreach**, especially in a structured campaign.
- Professional experience in a financial institution, such as a bank or microfinance organization is an added advantage.
- Strong oral and written communication in **Kinyarwanda and English**.
- Demonstrated experience working with private sector actors and/or government officials is an added advantage.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work independently under minimal supervision.
- Attention to detail in documenting interactions and following up on (firm) interactions.
- Understanding of **loan application processes**, credit analysis, and financial documentation is a plus.
- Capable of working independently and proactively with minimal supervision.
- Basic proficiency in using MS Office (Word, Excel) or Google Workspace.
- Experience using mobile data collection tools (e.g., SurveyCTO, ODK, KoboToolbox) is a plus.
- High level of integrity, professionalism, and cultural sensitivity.

- Ability to represent IPA and the project positively in external engagements

Preferred Attributes

- Experience conducting outreach or fieldwork with firms.
- Ability to explain complex financial products or processes in simple terms.
- Familiarity with SME challenges, especially in accessing finance.
- Ability to assess a firms' readiness or eligibility for financial services

INTERESTED APPLICANTS MEETING ALL THE REQUIREMENTS SHOULD FILL OUT AN ONLINE APPLICATION FORM AND ATTACH THEIR COVER LETTER, CV AND ACADEMIC CERTIFICATES THROUGH THE FOLLOWING LINK: https://poverty-action.formstack.com/forms/iparw_business_engagement_assistat_job_application_may_2025

APPLICATIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED ON A ROLLING BASIS, ALL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED PRIOR TO **5 PM RWANDA TIME FRIDAY MAY 30TH, 2025** WILL BE CONSIDERED. APPLICATIONS AFTER THIS TIME WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. DUE TO THE VOLUME OF APPLICATIONS ONLY SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE NOTIFIED.