

Vacancy announcement

Junior Data Consultant

UNU-WIDER Consultant Contract (CTC)

Station: South African Revenue Service, Pretoria, South Africa

Background

United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) is implementing, together with its partners, a programme titled *Southern Africa – Toward Inclusive Economic Development (SA-TIED)* over the period 2017–20, with the aim of enhancing economic research, capacity-building, and policy dialogue.

The recent availability of administrative tax data on enterprises and jobs in South Africa provides a valuable resource for policy-relevant academic research. This allows for a deeper understanding of the functioning of the private sector, the labour market and public revenue. The goal is to create well-documented longitudinal datasets with key variables that can be augmented with research topic-specific variables. This serves as a basis for not only tax research but also for other research strands that require micro-level administrative data. In this programme, researchers from UNU-WIDER, National Treasury (NT) and SARS will build and expand the administrative tax and other microdata available to researchers in South Africa. Policies that promote development need to be built on reliable facts, and administrative data offers an inexpensive way for this.

The Junior Data Consultant will be responsible for providing technical support to ensure the integrity of the administrative tax data. This will also include assistance in the process of extracting data from the South African Revenue Service (SARS) to be used at the National Treasury Secure Data Facility (NT-SDF). The position is under the SA-TIED programme and is based at the premises of SARS in Pretoria, South Africa.

Duties and responsibilities

Under the supervision of a UNU-WIDER Research Associate based in Pretoria, the Junior Data Consultant will perform the following duties:

- Work with colleagues at SARS on the SQL database.
- Produce metadata for the various databases at SARS.
- Ensure the timely delivery of data extractions from SARS to the NT.
- Write up and update data description documents linked to extractions.
- Seek, within SARS, answers to data anomalies raised by researchers.
- Work with the UNU-WIDER data team based at the NT to upload the data in the NT-SDF.
- Consider new databases at SARS that can be useful for policy-relevant research.
- Subject to the approval of SARS, actively explore new microdata sources of relevance to SA-TIED researchers that can be matched with the existing firm and individual panel datasets (e.g. a dataset of higher education results or wealth tax data).



- Participate in data projects that involve the comparison of data from tax records with data from other sources.
- Work with the SARS team to develop and implement the SARS secure research data centre and develop and train SARS employees to adequately run a secure centre.
- Assist the Senior Data Consultant and SARS team to produce metadata on the tax data at SARS.

Required qualifications and experience

- M.Com degree in economics, statistics, data science or equivalent with at least two years of relevant work experience. Enrolment in a PhD programme would be an asset.
- Knowledge of SQL, SAS and Stata are required
- Basic knowledge of R and other statistical software packages would be an asset
- An attention to detail in the data is a key requirement
- Excellent analytical and drafting skills
- Strong ability to establish priorities, multi-task and work within tight timelines
- Ability to work under minimal supervision and with high level of resilience
- Possess a valid work permit for South Africa

Terms

This is a locally-recruited position and no relocation allowance applies. The position is limited to persons residing in South Africa, including persons holding a valid work permit.

The Junior Data Consultant will be issued a consultant contract with UNU-WIDER for full-time work (18 working days per month of 7.5 hours per day excluding lunch break) at SARS that follows the [UNU Conditions of Service for Consultant Contracts](#).

The successful candidate will not hold international civil service status nor be a 'staff member' as defined in the UN Staff Rules and Regulations. The contract type does not include medical insurance or unemployment insurance and there is no pension fund for CTC holders. There is further not entitlement for annual leave or sick leave.

The Junior Data Consultant will receive a monthly income of ZAR39,500 for the contract period to supplement living expenses while stationed in Pretoria, South Africa. No extra payments for housing or living expenses will be made. Project-related travel costs will, however, be covered by the project.

The contract will run as soon as the position is filled until 31 December 2020, when the current SA-TIED programme will conclude.

Starting date: As soon as possible.

Application procedure

Interested applicants should submit their applications online using [this form](#) by 17 December 2019 and must upload the following:

- A cover letter setting out how the qualifications and experience match the requirements of the position (max. 1 page)
- An up-to-date CV (max. 2 pages)
- A copy of the highest educational degree obtained
- A sample of originally written SQL script or Stata Do-file.

Further questions should be addressed to consultancy@wider.unu.edu.