

Job Description: Senior Research Associate, Survey Unit, ASER Centre, New Delhi

Employment type	Full time
Reporting to	Survey Unit Head, Survey Unit, New Delhi
Location	New Delhi
Travel	Frequent travel to rural locations across the country
Duration	Minimum 2 years' commitment
Remuneration	CTC 8.4 lac per annum, negotiable as per experience
Deadline	10 March 2024

Organisation overview

ASER Centre generates evidence for action. It focuses on outcomes and processes in education and other social sectors. It builds the capacity of individuals and institutions to measure at scale, understand, communicate and act upon the findings of assessments and research, with the objective of improving the quality of social sector programs. It aims to create a culture where rigorous measurement of outcomes is integral to action, thus bridging the gap between theory and practice, assumption and reality. The ASER Centre approach has its roots in Pratham's work across urban and rural India to help children acquire basic skills in reading and arithmetic. ASER Centre was established as an autonomous research wing within the Pratham network in 2008.

Position overview

One of ASER Centre's main activities is the design and implementation of the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) survey. Facilitated by Pratham since 2005, ASER is the largest household survey of children's schooling and learning in India. Each year the survey is designed and implemented by the Survey Unit. The unit comprises a Unit Head, 2 Senior Research Associates (SRA), 6 Research Associates (RA), 6 Zonal Managers (ZM) and 2-4 field associates in each state. Under the guidance of the Unit Head, the Senior Research Associate is responsible for leading the design and implementation of the ASER survey as well as creation of the ASER report. In particular, the SRA will carry out the following responsibilities:

Research design and development of tools and questionnaires

- Finalise under the guidance of ASER Centre Directors and Unit Head, a framework for the ASER survey including its objectives, approach, methods and tools
- Lead the development of the survey questionnaire and assessment tools through extensive literature review and field pilots

Development of training material and plan

- Guide the creation of print and audio-visual material for training of trainers and volunteers
- Create detailed training plans for different levels of training
- Oversee the regional translations of training material

Planning and implementing at scale

- Identify resource requirements in state and allocate them adequately

- Create a plan and timeline for the survey roll-out from literature review to report launch
- Review state budgets and calendars
- Innovate to strengthen quality control processes
- Troubleshoot problems during survey implementation
- Travel to different states for 2-3 months to support in trainings and quality control

Data interpretation and report writing

- Explore different interpretations and visualisations of collected data
- Coordinate the report writing and designing process and review and edit all writeups in the report
- Ensure the accuracy of all information presented in the report

Managing a team and their capacity building

- Manage and mentor 6 RAs, 6-8 Zonal Managers and 2 Communications Associates by providing regular feedback and inputs on their work; delegate tasks on a day-to-day basis
- Work with the HR and Capacity Building team to plan for upskilling of team and employee welfare

Miscellaneous

- Work regularly with the Communications Unit to develop a comprehensive communications strategy for ASER Centre with regular check-ins on progress
- Network with government and non-government stakeholders and represent ASER Centre on internal and external forums
- Create content such as proposals, articles, research papers and evidence briefs as required
- Participate in any other research, assessment, survey project of ASER Centre on need basis

Qualifications and skills

Education

Minimum graduate in any field, post-graduate preferred; a background in the social sciences/research/education will be an advantage

Work experience

- Minimum 3 years of relevant work experience
- Exposure to research methods and field work, and/or experience in the education sector will be an advantage

Communication

- Reading, speaking and writing proficiency in English and Hindi is essential
- Strong written and oral communication skills to correspond with a diverse audience – rural, urban, faculty, students, government officials, partner organisations, donors, etc.
- Experience with research writing and editing is strongly preferred
- Knowledge of social media will be an advantage

Technical

- Advanced proficiency in MS Office – Word, PowerPoint, Excel

- Knowledge of any data analysis softwares such as Stata, R, Python will be an advantage

Organisational

- Able to work under minimum supervision
- Able to manage multiple projects simultaneously with great attention to detail
- Able to manage large and diverse teams effectively
- Able to handle work pressure and deliver under tight schedules
- Take initiative and think innovatively
- Open to rural travel for long and short durations, often at short notice and sometimes alone
- Open to living in a rural setting with basic facilities and working with diverse stakeholders

Application process

To apply, please write the job title 'Senior Research Associate – Survey Unit' in the subject line and email the following documents to recruitmentsasercentre@gmail.com

- Latest CV
- Statement of Purpose (SOP) describing your motivation to apply and how you make a good fit for this role in up to 800 words. Please give specific examples that align with the job requirements.

Incomplete applications will not be considered. Shortlisted candidates will be contacted for three subsequent rounds: telephonic/online interview, written assignments, and final interview.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted at each stage of the recruitment process.