

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

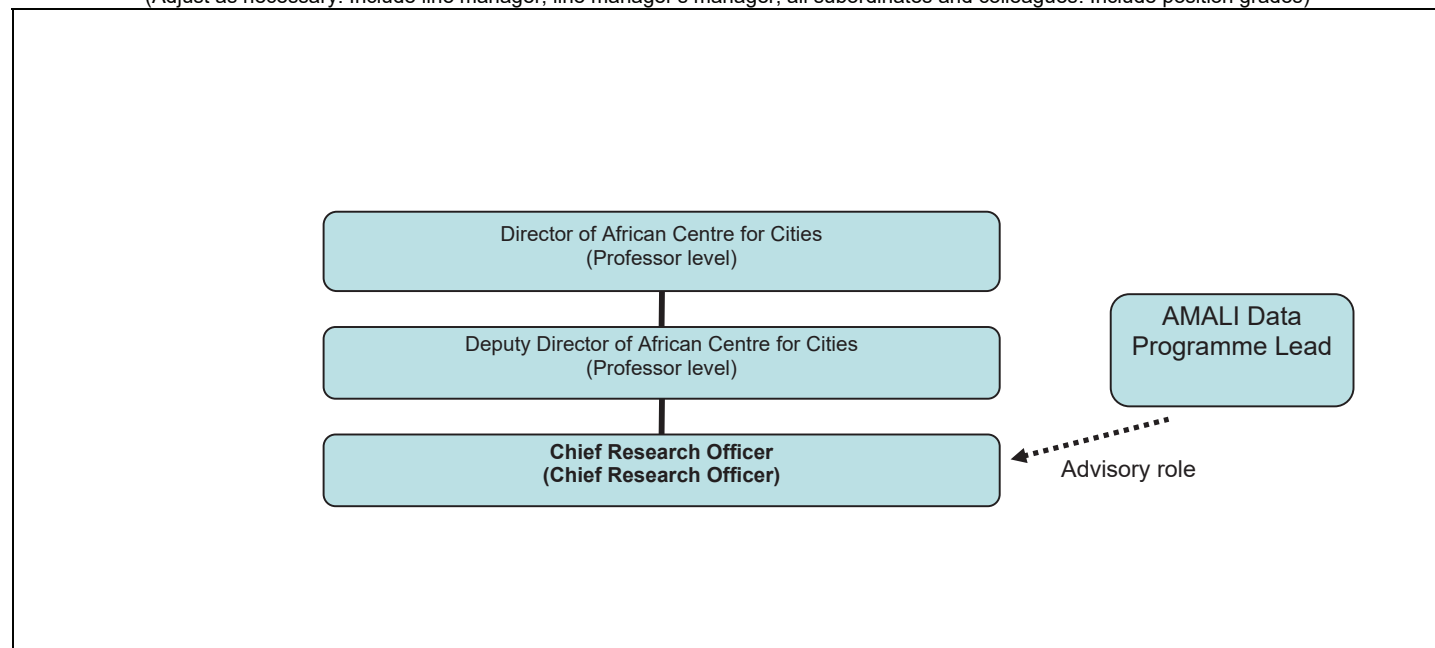
- Forms must be downloaded from the UCT website: <https://forms.uct.ac.za/forms.htm>
- This form serves as a template for the writing of position descriptions.
- A copy of this form is kept by the line manager and the position holder.

POSITION DETAILS

Position title	Chief Research Officer: Data Advocacy		
Job title (HR Business Partner to provide)			
Position grade (if known)	Associate Professor	Date last graded (if known)	
Academic faculty / PASS department	Engineering and Built Environment		
Academic department / PASS unit	School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics		
Division / section	African Centre for Cities		
Date of compilation	September 2025		

ORGANOGRAM

(Adjust as necessary. Include line manager, line manager's manager, all subordinates and colleagues. Include position grades)



PURPOSE

The main purpose of this position is to lead an Africa-wide research and advocacy programme to help create an enabling environment within which national statistical organisations in Africa mainstream new urban data collection instruments that will be of greater use for city-level decision-making. This role will include: (1) planning and managing a multi-faceted research and policy advocacy programme on urban data collection in Africa, in close collaboration with the broader work of the African Centre for Cities (ACC), the African Mayoral leadership initiative (AMALI) and Bloomberg Philanthropies. (2) Undertaking research on urban data collection tools and practices (particularly in Africa), identifying good practices and reasons for their success, identifying obstacles to reforming urban data collection (by national statistical organisations in Africa and other relevant organisations), and identifying key pathways for improving urban data collection and the use of urban data in Africa. (3) Engaging with key stakeholders to develop and implement protocols for the collection of urban data in Africa that will assist in decision-making by city leaders/ policy makers. (4) Ensure that initiatives to transform urban data collection in Africa are documented and reflected on, and that key lessons are disseminated to city leaders/ policy makers elsewhere. (5) Engaging with regional and global processes to create a more enabling environment for better urban data collection in Africa, for example, through the development of public discourse and policy recommendations.

CONTENT

Key performance areas		% of time spent	Inputs (Responsibilities / activities / processes/ methods used)	Outputs (Expected results)
1	Strategic leadership and project management	15%	- Planning and managing a multi-faceted research and policy advocacy programme on urban data collection in Africa, in close collaboration with the broader work of the African Centre for Cities (ACC), the African Mayoral leadership initiative (AMALI) and Bloomberg Philanthropies. - Ongoing project management to ensure the urban data research/advocacy project deliverables are met in agreement with the project funders (Bloomberg Philanthropies). - Undertake regular reporting on the urban data research/advocacy project. - Contribute to the broader work of the African Centre for Cities and AMALI programme wherever possible.	- Research and policy advocacy programme is effectively implemented and has a measurable impact on changing urban data policy and practice in Africa. - Outputs as per the project plan agreed with Bloomberg Philanthropies are delivered on time.
2	Research	40%	- Plan for and undertake relevant primary and secondary research on urban data collection tools and practices, particularly in Africa. Develop and document best practices in the field of urban data collection. - Document and analyse good practices in the field of urban data collection, including reasons for their success. - Undertake research on identifying obstacles to reforming urban data collection in Africa, and identify key pathways for improving urban data collection and the use of urban data in Africa - Prepare appropriate terms of reference for consultants as required. - Maintain an understanding of trends in urban data collection tools and practices, particularly in Africa. - Write up research in various outputs (including at least one in-depth report per year, at least one policy brief per year, and at least one journal article per year) - Publish research outputs in ISI journals and scholarly books - Present research findings at seminars and conferences at local, national and/or international events - Serve as an internationally recognized thought leader for data management, performance management and urban development	- Relevant publications that contribute to the body of knowledge on urban data, especially in urban development in Africa. - Relevant presentations that further discussion and intellectual engagement on urban data, especially in urban development in Africa.

3	Policy advocacy	15%	- Engage with key stakeholders to develop protocols/recommendations for the collection of urban data in Africa that will assist in decision- making by Mayors and urban policy makers, - Work with selected national statistical organisations and other key stakeholders to implement proposals to transform and improve urban data collection practices in multiple African countries. - Ensure that all processes to implement recommendations for improving urban data collection are written up as case studies and the lessons are widely disseminated through publications and events.	- Collaboratively-produced protocols/ recommendations for the collection of urban data in Africa - Adoption/piloting of urban data protocols/ recommendations within Africa - Case studies written and disseminated
4	Networking	10%	- Identify and build relationships with key organisations and individuals of importance to transforming urban data collection practices in Africa, including international organisations (e.g. UN-Habitat), regional organisations (e.g. STATAFRIC, African Development Bank, UNECA), national organisations (e.g. national statistical organisations, national open data NGOs) and local organisations (e.g. local government bodies that have made significant strides in the collection and use of urban data). - Build a coalition of interested parties to be involved in the urban data research/advocacy work, including organising regular meetings and disseminating relevant information. - Build the long-term sustainability of a network of key urban data organisations and individuals in Africa	- Regular engagement with key stakeholders with regard to urban data issues in Africa - Well-functioning network of key urban data organisations and individuals in Africa - Regular network meetings held
5	Teaching and learning	10%	- Give lecturing inputs in teaching/capacity development (for example, the African Mayoral Leadership's Initiative City Leadership Forum or ACC courses) where required - Help prepare relevant teaching materials based on research work - Supervise student dissertations where possible	- Teaching materials developed - Student throughput – number of successful students graduated
6	General ACC	10%	- Attend strategic planning meetings, ACC staff meetings, ACC cluster meetings, relevant events related to data advocacy, and other relevant events. - Provide regular progress reports on project status, - Ad hoc involvement in ACC activities as identified by the Director or Deputy Director of the ACC.	- Progress reports distributed on time, to standard - Attendance and participation at meetings

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Minimum qualifications	PhD in a discipline of relevance to urban data.			
Minimum experience (type and years)	A minimum of five years relevant work experience in research and/or policy work related to urban data.			
Skills	• Ability to develop, manage, and thrive in relationships with public sector executives and senior staffers • Ability to work in and lead teams in a result-driven workplace • Evidence of academic writing ability • Excellent verbal, written and presentation skills. • Computer literacy –skills in website development/maintenance and statistical software (such as GIS and SPSS) would be an advantage • Excellent time management skills and the ability to work autonomously in a pressurised and results-oriented environment. • An ability to interact successfully with individuals from a wide range of professional and non-professional backgrounds, including internal (UCT) and external stakeholders. • Commitment to a collegial workplace • Fluency in French would be an advantage.			
Knowledge	• Extensive knowledge of the collection and analysis of quantitative urban data, especially national censuses and national household surveys • Good knowledge of urban issues in Africa • Extensive familiarity with government stakeholders in Africa • Understanding of and ability to communicate stories about the impact data usage has on the public sector • A strong understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methods, and the ability to work with, and understand, complex datasets • Familiarity with presenting complex quantitative and qualitative research and analytical findings • Knowledge of how to create data visualizations in, e.g., RStudio or Tableau, would be an advantage. • Experience with Microsoft Office, G Suite, and project management applications.			
Professional registration or license requirements	Not applicable			
Other requirements (If the position requires the handling of cash or finances, other requirements must include 'Ability to handle cash or finances'.)	Not applicable			
Competencies (Refer to UCT Competency Framework)	Competence	Level	Competence	Level
	Analytical thinking / problem solving	3	Professional knowledge and skill	3
	Conceptual thinking	3	Results focus	3
	Information management	3	Facilitating change	3
	Planning and organizing / work management	3	Teamwork/ collaboration	3

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Functions responsible for	Leadership, Management and Administration; Research; Teaching and Learning; Social Responsibility
Amount and kind of supervision received	Line Manager is the Deputy Director of the ACC, with the AMALI Data Programme Lead in an advisory role.
Amount and kind of supervision exercised	Will need to manage consultants
Decisions which can be made	Responsible for the Data Advocacy component of the AMALI Data Programme
Decisions which must be referred	Decisions that impact on AMALI or ACC as a whole

CONTACTS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Internal to UCT	ACC academic and support staff
External to UCT	Bloomberg Philanthropies; Mayors and city teams from across Africa; national and sub-national governments; multi-lateral agencies (as UN-Habitat and the African Development Bank)

AGREED BY

	PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE	CONTACT NO.	DATE
Position Holder				
Direct Line Manager/Supervisor	Prof Andrew Tucker		2881	31.10.25
Area Line Manager				
HOD	A/Prof A Steenkamp			30.10.2025
Dean / ED				
HR Business Partner				