

CENTRE FOR MICRO FINANCE – PROGRAMME HEAD

Introduction

The IFMR Centre for Micro Finance (CMF) in India has quickly grown since its inception in 2005 to become one of the largest organizations in the world dedicated to research on access to financial services for the poor. Through rigorous empirical research, knowledge dissemination and outreach to policy makers and practitioners, CMF's aims to:

- Inform practice: The microfinance sector is evolving rapidly, and practitioners experiment with new products and new programmes. Through research, CMF provides evidence on what works and what does not.
- Inform policy: The policy environment for microfinance has important implications for its expansion and its impact. CMF documents and informs policy debates with empirical data and analysis, and provides further insight to policymakers from its field experience. Towards these goals, CMF facilitates a process where research questions emerge from the local policy context, and policy and programmatic decisions are guided by research outcomes.

Duties and Responsibilities

The CMF Programme Head manages a portfolio of 4-6 research projects with our partners—India's leading microfinance institutions such as SKS and Spandana and top academics at universities such as MIT, Harvard, and Yale. The Programme Head will:

Be responsible for a broad research portfolio

S/he initiates and supervises multiple projects relating to access to financial services for the poor, which involves designing research projects, preparing research proposals, identifying sources of funding, and designing program interventions for partner organizations. As part of this task, the Programme Head is responsible for managing a dynamic team of Research Associates working on these projects.

Be responsible for dissemination and policy outreach

The Programme Head is responsible for ensuring that research results are effectively translated into practice and policy decisions. This involves conducting workshops, producing innovative dissemination material and actively engaging with practitioners, policy makers, banks and international organizations involved in the sector.

Contribute to the Centre overall strategic visioning

The Programme Head will work closely with the other Programme Heads at CMF and the Executive Director of the Centre on overall management and strategic visioning for the Centre. S/he will participate in developing potential research ideas, identifying funding sources, and partner organizations. The Programme Head will be responsible for representing the Centre at seminars, conferences, the press, and meetings with various key sector stakeholders. While taking complete ownership of a sub-unit within the Centre, the Programme Head is an integral part of defining the direction of the organization.

Involvement with the Centre overall management activities

The Programme Head is expected to participate in management functions such as interviewing potential employees and the training of new staff, regularly update accounts, and maintain clear lines of communication with Principle Investigators, the Executive Director, and our partner organizations. S/he is also responsible for ensuring the research associates on projects in his/her portfolio follow proper research procedures, maintain accurate accounts, and clearly monitor and report all project activities.

Qualifications and Skills

- A graduate degree or higher in economics, finance, international development or related fields.
- Strong analytical skills and a solid understanding of quantitative research methodology
- 3 to 5 years of management and/or research experience in international development or related fields.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English. Indian language skill is preferred.
- Independent worker; takes initiative to lead and manage multiple tasks and propose solutions with minimal supervision.
- Can maintain an organized and structured work style in a fast-paced environment
- Willing to translate research into practice for highest impacts on the ground.
- Motivated to travel to various places in India.
- Strong interpersonal skills, and willingness to interact with a wide range of individuals ranging from MFIs and NGO leaders to bankers and finance regulators.
- The ability to work in a multicultural environment

Preferred Qualifications and Skills

- Econometric Analysis
- Knowledge of an Indian language
- South Asia regional experience
- Academic research experience
- Familiarity with experimental research design and varied data collection methods
- Project management and financial management

This position is based in Chennai with frequent travel throughout India. The start date is flexible and we ask for a minimum commitment of 2 years.

Compensation

CMF provides a highly competitive salary in the industry.

To Apply

Please send your resume, cover letter, and a writing sample to cmfhr@ifmr.ac.in. Please use the subject line CMF_Programme Head_2011_WS. We will contact you shortly after submission if we are interested in interviewing you