



**Position Name:**  
**Senior Specialist, Research and Learning**

**Who we are:**

MSA is a socially-driven global consulting firm. We provide innovative solutions for the private sector, government and civil society to improve, measure, and communicate the economic and social impacts of their investments. We believe market dynamics have a strong impact on how people live their lives and should evolve to become more inclusive of traditionally excluded and vulnerable populations.. Our vision is to improve economic systems in order to reduce poverty. We recognize complexity and as such, use a systems approach to design solutions that work within dynamic environments. We work collaboratively with our clients, serving as brokers of creativity to help catalyze systemic change.

We take a bespoke approach to every engagement, developing tailored services for clients around action research, monitoring, strategic advisory, evaluation and thought leadership across five topic areas: market systems development, jobs and trade, economic empowerment, financial inclusion and impact investing.

Since 2009 we have worked with a wide variety of clients and partners in dozens of countries across six continents.

**Our work:**

**MSA 's VALUES**

**EXCELLENCE**

We believe in what we do – it's why we're here. Our work reflects our passion.

**DISRUPTION**

We're here to do development differently – more empowering, more systemic, with more proof.

**HUMILITY**

We see self-awareness as a prerequisite to learning.

**HUSTLE**

Good things don't come to those who wait. We drive networking and new business the same way we drive innovation – restlessly.

**COLLABORATION**

We're better together, drawing on each other's viewpoints and experiences to deliver for clients. Working in teams is core to our identity.

**CELEBRATION**

We work hard and life gets hectic – we take time to celebrate and enjoy it. Otherwise, what's the point?

At MSA, our staff build results measurement systems for development programs, social enterprises and impact investors; research power dynamics and their influence on market behaviors; train client staff to think more systemically about the problems they seek to address; generate insights from data, pitch MSA's services to new potential clients; write thought pieces; and brainstorm new approaches to old problems. Regardless of task, our focus on disrupting the status quo demands critical engagement.

### Who we want:

MSA seeks a driven professional with strong experience in promoting learning, data collection and data-driven decision making practices for economic development, private sector engagement, and/or market systems experience to join the team in the position of Senior Specialist, Learning.

The successful applicant will spend the majority of their time working directly with clients on learning, data collection and measurement practices, building client capacity for learning, promoting thought leadership around learning and measurement practices in economic development, private sector engagement and/or market systems development, and managing client and internal learning agendas in this area. This position offers incredible opportunities to work at the cutting edge of the work being done in the field, participating in influential research contracts and helping to shape on-the-ground implementation.

MSA is growing – this opportunity offers significant potential for the successful candidate to grow with us, assuming progressively greater responsibility with MSA.

### The nature of the role:

This is a full-time position that will report to a Practice Lead. The role is 85% technical with the remaining 15% spent between business development and other internal tasks. We look forward to finding someone who wants to learn quickly and grow with our firm. The role is designed to support someone's professional growth within MSA and to find someone who wants to learn and grow within our firm.

### We are looking for someone who finds fulfillment in:

- Keen interest and experience in methods.** This position is a strong fit for someone who has developed and tested out a diverse set of research methods to explore complex development challenges. We want someone who enjoys developing and improving on research design processes.
- A focus on learning and practical application.** We want someone who not only likes to learn themselves and think outside the box, but have ways to help our clients to continuously learn and utilize their data. We need people who enjoy distilling complex approaches into simple and practical activities to match on-the-ground realities. This means you see good data as a means to an end, to influence interventions, to influence policy, to change practice and a means to create more meaningful social impact for all.

- **Being a research and data nerd.** We want someone to join the team who loves qualitative and/or quantitative research and enjoys analyzing this data. This person loves research methods, designing surveys, good interview and focus group discussion guides, collecting data in-country, and all of the deep analysis that follows. Knowing how to do all of this from a market systems perspective is a major bonus.
- **Versatility and learning.** Clients will bring you new problems, and you will draw from different experiences and perspectives to solve these emerging issues. We see your ability to be versatile and wear multiple technical hats across the MEL space as a key strength in succeeding in this role. This position is not for someone who wants to highly specialize in one aspect of MEL. Instead, it is for someone who understands mixed methods approaches to learning and thrives in applying new ideas to help clients learn in order to implement better programming.
- **Embracing complexity and adaptation.** We work on a lot of projects that measure changes at the systems level. We love this work. In order to actively do this work, you likely enjoy seeing the bigger picture of your work, thrive in complex environments, but have the ability to quickly distill complexity into useful tools and systems in order to get things done. You also enjoy helping those around you to digest complexity and help them navigate how they can practically play their part in achieving project goals.
- **Thought diversity.** We are mission-driven and love applying systems-thinking to our work. Yet, we are not dogmatic and tailor our approaches to solutions that work best for our clients and draw from various development fields and perspectives. A great fit for the team is someone who can apply creative solutions from a diversity of approaches such as from market systems, private sector development, resilience, economic growth, social inclusion, etc.
- **Workshopping and co-creation.** We do not do research for research's sake. We like action research that leads to better decision-making, project performance and eventual social impacts. All MSA technical team members enjoy working with our partners and clients to get better results. This means we need to be good listeners, get our partners' buy-in and always think about how to engage with them in a process of co-creation.
- **Driving forward client relationships.** This person enjoys working with the internal team, but will spend significant time engaging and collaborating with clients. Being communicative, diplomatic and having the ability to navigate people-dynamics is critical to succeed in this role. Previous experience having led on an assignment including leading the client relationship aspect is important.
- **Time and budget management.** We believe in what we do. And we know our clients rely on us to use our time wisely. This role will manage projects, meaning guiding a team of people including MSA team members and subcontractors to complete high quality work. Being organized and understanding project management practices like tracking level of effort and budgets is key to success in this role.

- **Working in a rapidly expanding company.** Our company is small, but we are growing rapidly. If you enjoy fast-paced working environments and engaging in strategic discussions, we are a good fit. If you are looking for a place to work with the same daily checklist and regular work, this is not the position for you.

## Requirements:

- A passion for facilitating social change in global development
- Degree in economics, finance, international development or other related social science field
- At least 5 years of significant experience in market systems, private sector engagement, trade, economic growth, impact investing and/or inclusive business programming in emerging economies
- Strong capabilities in primary and secondary research experience including applied research design and implementation
- Experience providing technical support and/or managing international development projects – preferably with large bi-laterals including but not limited to USAID, UK FCDO, and/or multi-lateral organizations
- Experience designing and implementing mixed method learning and monitoring systems
- Demonstrated capability to mentor and comfort building the capacity of teams
- Experience with project management functions, such as managing budgets, managing local consultants, and following donor rules and regulations
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including experience drafting reports
- Strong interpersonal skills, including the ability to work and build relationships with team members and clients from diverse backgrounds

## Other desired characteristics:

- Graduate degree in economics, finance, international development or another relevant social science
- Experience with leading private foundations, DFID, or USAID in market systems development, economic development or private sector development projects
- Experience supporting or leading MEL work on USAID-funded projects
- Experience working for a consulting firm and managing consulting projects
- Experience designing and leading trainings
- Proficiency in another language, preferably written and oral Arabic, French, Spanish, and/or Portuguese
- Experience working and living in developing countries

## Other information:

This is a salaried, full-time position that will report to a Practice Lead. It will require approximately 25-35% travel. The position will be based in either Denver, Washington DC, Nairobi, London, Toronto or Ottawa.

For reference, the salary range for this position is \$60,000 – \$90,000 USD if Denver based. Salary is based on previous experience, capability and location.

### Application Details:

Deadline to apply is March 24, 2022 Applications will be considered on a rolling basis. To apply, please send your current CV to [opportunities@marketshareassociates.com](mailto:opportunities@marketshareassociates.com), indicating the position title "Senior Specialist" in the subject line. If you have not heard back within 2 weeks after the application deadline, please send a follow up email to [opportunities@marketshareassociates.com](mailto:opportunities@marketshareassociates.com). We want to make sure no emails get lost in cyberspace!

Please include your salary expectations in a separate PDF file.

Please also include a cover letter (maximum one page) explaining your interest in this role and answering the following questions:

- 1) What do you see as the most important recent innovation in Learning?
- 2) List the three things, in order of impact, that you would bring to MSA to take us to the next level.
- 3) Which of our values most resonates with you, and why?
- 4) What professional achievement are you most proud of?
- 5) Are you legally authorized to work in the United States? If not, where are you authorized to work?
- 6) What is your location preference?
- 7) Where did you learn about this role?