



VACANCY: Research Officer - Freedom of Information Programme - October 2015

SAHA is looking for a dynamic professional with an interest in practice-based research and using access to information as a tool for social justice to join its Freedom of Information Programme (FOIP).

SAHA is an independent activist archive committed to documenting and raising awareness of past struggles against apartheid, as well as ongoing struggles in the making of democracy in South Africa. In line with this central mission, SAHA's Freedom of Information Programme (FOIP), launched in 2001, is dedicated to using the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (PAIA) to extend the boundaries of access to information in South Africa, by:

- increasing compliance with, and the use of, PAIA, through practice-based research and advocacy;
- empowering individuals and organisations to understand PAIA as a strategic advocacy tool; and
- creating awareness of the right to access to information an enabling right, fundamental to the realisation of other human rights both within South Africa, and across the continent, in order to invigorate citizen demand for the right to know.

For more information about FOIP, please visit <http://foip.saha.org.za>

QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Summary of key responsibilities:

- Contributing to the submission and management of PAIA requests for records made on behalf of members of the public, partner organisations and SAHA itself, and preparing related correspondence, appeals against refusals of access to information, and complaints to relevant authorities;
- Overseeing ongoing maintenance and expansion of the SAHA PAIA Tracker System, in line with grant agreements;
- Producing statistical analysis of FOIP data in support of various SAHA projects, and identifying opportunities for compliance case studies, further research, etc.
- Investigating and testing emerging data journalism techniques and tools for incorporation into SAHA outreach and advocacy work;
- Keeping abreast of developments in freedom of information within South African and globally.
- Writing research reports, case studies, news stories, press releases related to FOIP's work;

Freedom of Information Programme

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Trustees: D Ntsebeza (Chairperson), L Callinicos, V Harris, S Hatang, H Kleinschmidt, MN Nieftagodien, P Pigou, M Powell, C Rassool, R Saleh, A Manion (*ex officio*)

Non-Profit Trust No. 2522/93 – Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) No. 031-807-NPO – Public Benefit Organisation (PBO) No. 130002891

- Prepare documents released under PAIA for physical and digital archiving at SAHA, in conjunction with the SAHA archival teams;
- Contribute to FOIP and SAHA's work plans and reports;
- Support the work of the FOIP Coordinator, and the learning of FOIP interns & other project workers.

Required qualifications and skills

- Excellent research and computer skills, including experience in compiling and analysing statistics, and working with web content management systems; and
- Excellent critical thinking and communication skills, with interest and / or experience in repackaging data into accessible stories for both internal and external audiences.

Preferred qualifications and skills

- Understanding and experience working on access to information and related issues.
- Experience in preparing publications.

The role will be based at the SAHA offices at Constitution Hill in Johannesburg and will report to the FOIP Coordinator. This is a contract post: 1 year fixed period post, starting January 2016, renewable depending on funding and performance.

Application process

To apply, please prepare a 1 – 2 page letter of motivation (no more than 500 words) that addresses the following three questions:

- What are some of the barriers to the right of access to information in South Africa today?
- Provide an example of how you think PAIA could be used to challenge corruption and combat impunity in South Africa.
- Provide an example of how you think practice-based research can forward the right of access to information.

Submit this letter of motivation, along with 1) your 2 – 3 page CV, 2) a writing sample of no more than 1000 words (preferably previously published) that demonstrates ability to tell a story using data, and 3) up-to-date contact details for at least 2 professional referees **by email to recruitment@saha.org.zw**. NOTE: The subject line of your email must include the following: FOIP Research Officer Application 2015/10 – [Your Name].

Closing time and date for applications: **5pm, Friday 6 November 2015.**

Starting date: **Monday 4 January 2016**

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Interviews will be conducted at the SAHA offices in Johannesburg in week of 16 – 20 November 2015.