



MSI Integrity: Research Director

Title: Research Director (Full-Time)

Location: Flexible (Remote)

Start Date: November 2020 - January 2021 (Flexible)

About our organization

The Institute for Multi-Stakeholder Initiative Integrity (MSI Integrity) is committed to creating a global economy that centers workers and communities in the governance and ownership of businesses and economic enterprises. After a decade of research into prominent voluntary efforts by corporations to protect human rights, MSI Integrity has concluded that as long as corporations exclude workers or community interests in their governance and ownership—and instead are beholden to prioritizing profit for passive capital—they risk making decisions that harm people and the environment and increasing economic inequality. Regulating corporate behavior is not enough; the corporation itself must change. Why do workers not have a right to profit from their own labor and to democratic workplaces? Why are affected communities lacking a voice or access to benefits from companies that operate near them? It is time to debunk the myth of the “ethical corporation” and instead envision and build an economic system and set of economic entities that are accountable to, and directly benefit, workers and communities.

We are seeking a Research Director to join us in building on the lessons learned from failures of global multi-stakeholder initiatives, and to help us as we transition our organization towards this new direction and vision. For more information on our history, and our evolving new direction, please visit: <https://www.msi-integrity.org/beyond-corporations/>.

MSI Integrity was incubated by the International Human Rights Clinic at Harvard Law School from 2010–2012. We are currently funded by the Hewlett Foundation and Open Society Foundations.

Research Director: Position Overview

We are looking for a brilliant, personable and dedicated Research Director to join our small but growing team. The Director will play a central role in both collaboratively shaping our organizational transition and organizational focus, and also in designing and supervising our new research program. This position requires deep strategic thinking, excellent team management and external coordination skills, and a proven track-record of managing complex projects.

The Director will develop MSI Integrity’s strategic research priorities in collaboration with wider staff and input from those in the solidarity economy, economic justice and corporate accountability fields. To begin, the research program will likely focus on identifying key knowledge gaps about alternative business structures and worker- and community- ownership and governance, in particular: a) assessing and understanding their economic, human rights and environmental impacts on workers, affected communities, supply chain actors and beyond; b) examining how to grow and scale solidarity economy models in order to displace corporate power, such as considering technical aspects of the design and operation of models operating

in complex or scaled settings; c) researching and devising strategies for overcoming existing barriers for these models or to promote their growth (e.g. access to capital; legislative and policy proposals). Over time, the role may expand to convening and coordinating active researchers in the field—such as academics and law clinics—as well as conducting, commissioning or coordinating research internally or externally to fill outstanding knowledge gaps.

The Director will be responsible for growing and supervising a small research team, and coordinating with other actors, to achieve MSI Integrity’s research aims. The role may also include playing a key role in conceptualizing and hiring staff for a distinct education program that seeks to promote more education and understanding of alternative business structures within key constituencies, with a particular focus on reaching professionals, such as lawyers and entrepreneurs.

In addition, the Director will help collaboratively shape MSI Integrity’s own governance and internal processes to reflect cooperative, democratically accountable decision-making. This transformation will be framed by MSI Integrity’s ongoing commitment to understanding and addressing the structural forces of classism, racism, misogyny, transphobia, ableism, colonialism, and other intersecting systems that shape and have been shaped by corporate structures.

Position Responsibilities

- Shape and oversee MSI Integrity’s research programs. This includes growing and managing a small research team, with dedicated staff and summer fellows, as well as coordinating with key allies and research partners for specific projects.
- Coordinate efforts and generate interest among other organizations and researchers who are interested in challenging the corporate model and promoting people-centered alternatives. This strategy will be developed with the Executive Director and wider organization, and might include the development of a global or national research network, the creation of communities of critical practice, or other means.
- Conduct or oversee in-house research, as well as promote and facilitate external research activities by allies and partners, into key gaps in research and understanding about equitable business entities (e.g. cooperatives and other entities in the solidarity economy) and how they might grow and scale in order to displace corporate power.
- Potentially play a leading role in overseeing the design and hiring for a strong educational reform program that challenges and changes the conventional corporate orthodoxy. This might include development of open-source model curricula, teaching networks and resources, or piloting new classes.
- Nurture research partnerships, leverage academic resources and work with the support of key staff to sustain and grow funding for research and education programs.
- Contribute to the leadership, governance and development of MSI Integrity. This includes providing input into strategic planning, working collectively to develop MSI Integrity’s research agenda and developing annual work plans and research budgets. Participate in other organizational leadership, including committees and task forces, as needed.
- Provide input into outreach and advocacy strategies to ensure that research projects lead to real-world change and, as appropriate, support with the implementation of those strategies.
- Represent MSI Integrity at conferences, debates and events.

- As a small non-profit that is striving to be re-configured to ensure greater agency, decision-making power and transparency within our own governance and operations, all staff are also expected to undertake rotating operational responsibilities, such as finance and human resources, and will be trained as needed.

Qualifications

- Significant research and/or educational experience in solidarity economy, corporate accountability, corporate governance, economic justice or relevant fields. Salary will be commensurate with experience. Candidates with less than 4 years experience are encouraged to apply only if they demonstrate evidence of excellence.
- Comfort analyzing corporate governance and business legal structures is essential; familiarity with alternative business models strongly preferred. Knowledge of ESG, ethical or impact investing, as well as human rights frameworks, is desirable but not essential.
- Excellent qualitative research skills. Familiarity with community-based or community-driven research methods (or other innovative approaches that value lived experiences) as well with critical approaches to traditional research methods is strongly preferred. Mixed-methods or quantitative research skills are desirable, but not strictly necessary.
- Very strong team management and coordination skills, and a proven track-record of directing multiple complex projects. Previous experience coordinating projects with external partners preferred, but not essential.
- Exceptional written communication skills, as evidenced by a publication history (individual or collective).
- Enjoy working collaboratively in a small and driven team, as well as on independent projects. Comfortable working digitally and remotely.
- Advanced degrees in relevant fields preferred; however the only requirement is comfort and familiarity with academic settings and language. Excellent spoken and written English is essential.
- Strong interpersonal skills, empathy and evidence of a commitment to equality, justice and the empowerment of marginalized voices in decision-making processes.
- Lived experience working in cooperatives or alternative business structures, or working directly working with workers, or in communities impacted by adverse private sector conduct, is strongly valued.

Compensation and Benefits

- We strongly value our staff and offer competitive non-profit sector salaries with strong benefits, including 100%-paid health and dental insurance and generous paid leave provisions.
- Our COVID-19 workplace policy, which is currently under review, includes reduced hours (32 hrs/week), one day a week without meetings for research and reflection, a small monthly home-office stipend, flexible working hours, and unlimited paid sick leave related to the virus. Read more about of COVID-19 policies here: <https://www.msi-integrity.org/our-covid-19-policies-striving-for-a-new-normal-in-the-workplace/>

The applicant must have the right to work in the United States. Unfortunately, MSI Integrity is not able to sponsor employment visas.

Application Process

If interested, submit a cover letter, resume, a list of at least three references and at least two writing samples, ideally targeting different audiences. Applications should be sent to peoplesearch@msi-integrity.org and with the subject "Application for Research Director". The deadline is October 12, 2020. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. References will only be contacted after seeking the permission of short-listed candidates.

MSI Integrity is an equitable workplace and an equal opportunity employer that does not discriminate in its hiring practices. We seek a diverse applicant pool and strongly encourage low-income BIPOC, women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ people to apply for all our positions.