

The Shia Imami Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Boards for Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique and Uganda

REGIONAL ACADEMIC DIRECTOR

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Regional Academic Director is a senior staff member of the ITREBs. Under the supervision of the Executive Officer, this individual plays a pivotal role in assisting the ITREBs to fulfil their Constitutional mandate to provide religious education to all levels of the Jamat, train and upgrade religious education teachers and waezeen, engage in research, prepare materials and publications, be a point of reference and consultation for Mukhi/Kamadia in matters of religious practices, and to work in close collaboration with the Institute of Ismaili Studies.

The Regional Academic Director is responsible for the academic direction, quality and management of the religious education system at all levels, paying specific attention to the (a) early childhood (ECD), (b) primary (Talim), (c) secondary (STEP), (d) post-secondary / youth and (e) young adult segments.

The Regional Academic Director reports to ITREB Tanzania's Executive Officer (EO) in collaboration with the respective EO's of relevant jurisdictions. The ITREB Tanzania EO will oversee administrative and reporting matters.

The position is based at Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, with some travel to the relevant jurisdictions in the region. The initial focus is to support RE strategic implementation across all ages in ITREB Tanzania (70%), while supporting the secondary RE delivery across other jurisdictions via teacher mentorship (30%). This will entail support via face-to-face and online interactions. The scope of work will be evaluated after the first year.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Contribute to the development of the religious education (RE) strategy for all age levels.
2. Prepare and manage the RE programme budget and operations (including staff and volunteer deployment), and the RE system's performance to attain targets and benchmarks of quality and access and ensure that it is functioning efficiently and effectively.
3. Analyse the RE programmes, activities and performance in partnership with the Executive Officers to identify gaps and opportunities and organise their periodic evaluations.
4. Oversee the implementation of a quality assurance framework for RE at all levels, ensuring that it is in accordance with the curricular goals established by the IIS for materials developed by the Institute and IIS-specified quality assurance frameworks.
5. Conceptualise, design and develop programmes and/or alternative delivery approaches to strengthen, enhance and/or make more effective the RE offering to the Jamat.
6. Stay abreast of external and internal issues, trends and techniques concerning education and teaching, including as they relate to the teaching of religion and the humanities in the secular system, religious instruction in faith community contexts, etc.
7. Support the recruitment and induction of volunteer teachers, teacher educators, camp facilitators, seminar instructors and other educational personnel for RE programmes by working with the Executive Officers, Board's members, volunteers and staff.

8. Organise teacher orientation and initial and ongoing training programmes, drawing on experts in age-specific pedagogy and content. Oversee the continuing professional development of volunteer waezeen and teacher educators.
9. Working with the IIS to oversee the tasks that ITREB is responsible for recruiting STEP teachers including managing the application process, providing feedback on applications and mentoring candidates through their pre-programme and field research practicum. Serve as the primary contact for STEP trainee teachers while they are at the IIS and induct them upon their graduation.
10. Foster a professional learning environment by supervising, mentoring and coaching ITREB's education professionals. Make recommendations for their professional growth: in coordination with the Executive Officer, evaluate their performance, identify their needs and propose development plans. Facilitate their continuing professional development, including in liaison with the IIS.
11. Implement strategies to ensure that the ITREB's education professionals and volunteers have the requisite conceptual understanding, content knowledge, and age-specific pedagogy to effectively teach the curricula. Organise a structured approach to regularly refresh their knowledge, drawing on authorised subject matter experts (e.g. ITREB staff, TKN volunteers, IIS graduates, AKDN agencies and external institutions [with prior agreement with the Executive Officer and Board for onward consultation to the DJI and IIS]).
12. For age-groups and programme formats (e.g. camps) where IIS-developed curricula have not yet been prepared, under Executive Officer's supervision and in coordination with the DJI and the IIS, work with the ITREB's members, academic staff, and volunteers to prepare instructional content.
13. Enhance and monitor strategies for parental involvement in the RE system.
14. Prepare regular reports for onward transmission.
15. Serve as a dialogue partner on behalf of the ITREB with the IIS on matters requiring academic input.
16. Make proposals concerning his / her own continuing professional development.
17. Undertake assignments and duties as directed by the Executive Officer and in added coordination with relevant members of the Board.

PROFILE: QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND ATTRIBUTES

The candidate should be a STEP professional with a minimum of 5 years of experience in teaching in a school setting, and who has played education leadership roles. Familiarity with the secular, secondary-level education system is highly desired.

Experience with the Jamati system, either as a volunteer or professional, would be highly desirable. Awareness of the provisions of the Constitution of Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims and prior exposure to the Jamati religious education system would be an asset but not a prerequisite.

A Master's degree in education, preferably in education management, education leadership or teacher education, or a related field is a minimum requirement with an added background in Islamic and Ismaili studies and Secondary Teacher Education Programme (STEP) of the IIS.

The following attributes and skills are essential:

1. Familiarity with and empathy for the Jamat, including cultural diversity within the Jamat.
2. Deep sense of responsibility, sound judgement and discretion.
3. Strong interpersonal skills in dealing with senior leaders, volunteers and staff in the system. Capacity to effectively build, lead and motivate teams, fostering **collaboration** and teamwork.
4. Demonstrated experience in successfully managing teams, staff, and/or projects.
5. Well-organised, self-motivated, able to multi-task, pays attention to detail, a “can do” attitude, a problem-solving mindset, and creativity in educational contexts.
6. Excellent written and verbal communication and presentation skills. An ability to articulate papers / reports that are concise and coherent.
7. Ability to demonstrate resilience, adaptability and agility.
8. A proven ability to identify best practices that can be integrated into the key priorities and ensure high quality outcomes.
9. Comfort in working with computing, information and communication technology.

A willingness to travel from time to time within the jurisdiction, other regions within Africa and internationally as necessary. Fluency in English is essential. Knowledge of Kutchi and Gujarati languages would be an asset, but not a prerequisite.