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# Innovation Lab Associate at CrossBoundary

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## **Job Description**

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CrossBoundary is a mission driven investment firm committed to unlocking the power of capital to make a strong return while creating a lasting difference in frontier markets.

#### About Job

CrossBoundary's Innovation Lab is recruiting a full-time Associate to support the Innovation Lab.

You will support the Innovation Lab's work on two principal objectives. The first is working with mini-grid developers to identify and test innovative solutions to the mini-grid business model, managing an iterative process of piloting and refining ideas. Based on the results of these experiments, your second objective will focus on identifying the most successful solutions and working with developers and technology and industry partners to scale those innovations, thereby directly changing the mini-grid business model. CrossBoundary is not a development firm and is not seeking typical development skills – the Innovation Lab will look to you for practical insights on how to improve the mini-grid business model to bring more power, to more people, at less cost.

#### Who We Are

CrossBoundary operates in frontier markets that also hold immense investment opportunities. The chosen candidate will play an important role in a unique team with the opportunity to make a large impact on bringing power to the million people who don't have power in Africa. Team members come from diverse backgrounds, but share a number of qualities: curiosity, humility, integrity, a drive for excellence, and a bias for action.

#### Who You Are

Self-starter who is passionate about creating lasting change in frontier markets

Interest in or willingness to learn about the off-grid energy sector

Belief that innovation is at the heart of finding solutions to the world's biggest challenges

Willingness to take on new types of work, even without prior experience or direct supervision

Willingness to work and live in a sometimes challenging environment

#### Primary Responsibilities

Project-manage field trials of innovative business model improvements across Africa Work directly with mini-grid developers operating mini-grid sites across Africa to field test prototype innovations that might reduce cost or increase revenuesLead workshops with mini-grid developers across the continent, to ideate new prototypes, solicit their feedback, and introduce them to technology and industry partnersDevelop creative iterations to the most promising innovations, based on early findings of business model impact and hurdles developers face in implementationAlongside the Lab Lead, oversee the deployment of \$5M of R&D funding to mini-grid developers conducting iterative, cutting-edge trials to change the mini-grid business model

Alongside the Lab Lead, assess each innovation's impact on the business model using the Lab's unique dataset of over M data points on rural customer behavior Use the Lab's financial model to evaluate the impact of each tested innovation on the mini-grid business model, incorporating analysis from the Lab Data Lead, Partner with the Lab Data Lead to identify iterations with the largest potential to improve the business model based on the analysis conducted

Develop the tools and partnerships needed to enable developers to incorporate the most promising innovations into their day-to-day operations Publish insights on the most promising innovations for the entire sector gained through the Lab's data analysis, incorporating lessons learned from developers on the groundCreate commercial frameworks for mini-grid developers to partner with leading technology and industry partnersBuild the business case for the most promising innovations tested by the Lab's community of mini-grid developers

Manage and develop relationships with the leading institutions and companies in the energy access sector, including: Mini-grid developers: 27+ leading private sector mini-grid developers across AfricaTechnology partners: companies on the cutting edge of innovation in energy accessIndustry partners: organizations building the sector and leading advocacy efforts, including the Africa Mini-Grid Developers Association and Power for AllThought partners: top tier academic institutions conducting new research on off-grid energy, including University of Massachusetts Amherst and Duke University

# Ideal candidate will have the following skills and qualifications: Qualifications

Ability to think creatively to find innovative solutions to business model gaps

Excellent analytical ability and discipline; ability to think clearly, structure problems logically, and then design and implement solutions that focus on the core issues

Strong financial modelling skills; ability to build, understand and maintain financial models that test the impact of the innovations the Lab has deployed or is looking to deploy

Strong project management skills; ability to juggle and deliver a multitude of projects across contexts, geographies, and stakeholders

Strong communication skills; ability to distil complex findings into convincing, compelling messages and present results in a clear and simplified manner

Ability to coordinate diverse range of stakeholders in challenging environments

#### **Required skills and qualifications:**

Pre-MBA/Masters candidate with 2-4 years of work experience in high impact organizations

Experience in developing countries, and a technical background (preferred)

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