Curriculum Developer / Instructional Designer / Technical Writer

Opportunity Summary

Picture Impact is seeking a curriculum developer / instructional designer / technical writer for the development of learning programs and materials (in short, a magical unicorn—is this you?). This position will primarily work on client projects, for example, upcoming projects include the development of a 12-module entrepreneurship program for rural women in Rwanda, and materials for a community-based nutrition program delivered in Zambia.

Picture Impact will look to this person for first drafts—taking in and sorting through multiple sources of input, pulling out key concepts and shaping lesson outlines, filling in gaps through desk research, and developing content. This role will then take in internal feedback, shaping the curriculum further, moving toward an external feedback process with the client team that includes refining concepts, standardizing layout, and editing fine details. This person will move fluidly from curriculum development to instructional design, from shaping the content to designing the delivery of the materials in collaboration with graphic designers, technical experts, and Picture Impact leadership.

Strong research and writing skills, expertise in curriculum development, instructional design and development, creation of associated course materials and formulation of activities for instructors and adult learners are foundational to this role. This individual will enjoy working both collaboratively in idea generation and individually in executing on ideas using their synthesis, design and writing skills, attending to detail, and concluding work on what are often tight client timelines.

+ Job Type: Part-time, contractor
+ Project types: Instructional design inclusive of curriculum writing and other associated materials such as worksheets, guides/manuals, and reference materials (handouts, facilitator guides).
+ Expertise/interest: writing for adult audiences for whom writing is not the primary or preferred way to interact with information (lower literacy, cross-cultural, Language

Picture Impact is a U.S.–based women–owned small business

Learners), cross-disciplinary writing, low-resource audiences (analog or low-tech), international development, health communications, harvesting and synthesizing research in ways that convey the experiential tone needed to guide facilitation of trainings, social and behavioral change communication (SBCC)
+   Language fluency: English
+   Closing Date: rolling, open until January 8, 2022
+   Hours: 20 hours/week, ideal start date Jan 10, 2022 with contract through mid-March 2022, with possibility that this position will be extended as new projects are secured.
+   Work does not need to be done during the U.S. work day (8-5, M-F) , but often has to turn around on a 24 hour timeline.
+   Pay range: $35-$65/hour depending on location and experience.
+   Location: We are based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA (CST) and happy to have someone join us periodically in our office. However, this position need not be co-located with us. We encourage anyone within UTC +3 to -7 time zones to apply. Stellar applicants located East of UTC +3 will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Who we are

Picture Impact is a collaboration between evaluators, designers and strategists. We are a small, nimble, women-owned company with a global network of partners whom we draw on to build the right team for each project. Our approach is complexity-aware, people-centered and utilization-focused. We look at people and behavior, think in systems, and find ideas and perspectives across silos and sectors. We apply this approach in a diverse array of contexts, subjects, and purposes.

We are Minneapolis-based, working globally, most often with projects and teams in sub-Saharan Africa. Picture Impact's portfolio is wide-ranging in subject matter—from HIV/OVC case management, to smallholder agriculture, to highlighting and scaling program innovations, to supporting child and maternal health. What ties this work together is how we intentionally activate and support the change process while enhancing the capacity of program users and implementers.

Who we are seeking

The role

We need an experienced and confident curriculum developer / instructional designer / technical writer who not only excels in the adult-learning design space, but has detailed research skills and the wisdom of crafting a product that reflects the context of the end user.

What is distinctive about Picture Impact's end products is a user- and radically use-centered approach to design. Our work is driven by psychology as much as beauty (though there's significant overlap). We design based on an awareness that comes from a range of fields: instructional design, UX design, behavioral economics, health literacy, data visualization, low literacy communication, universal and accessible design, neurophysiology.

If you are interested in finding the vibrant spaces that co-exist between research, writing, and experiential curriculum use, this role will be a good fit for you.

Ways you might know this is for you:
+ You can naturally piece different content and large data sources together in simpler, alternative and meaningful ways. A succinct literature review, for example, is in your skillset.
+ You are excited by the challenge of making issue-specific technical expertise available to a wide range of audiences through design and content development.
+ You understand that great content is only as effective as the learning experience where it is delivered. You have experience bringing content to life through participatory, interactive, creative and engaging facilitation.
+ You like iterating something, refining it and willingingly changing it based on new information and feedback. Fourth and fifth drafts? No problem.
+ You are self-directed and well organized while staying connected to a team.
+ You can start with the big picture while seeing things through to the details.

Within the team
We are a creative team seeking the balance of a detail-oriented doer and maker. Finishing and executing on things is satisfying to you, all the way down to the final details. You delight in the research process, producing simple and elegant content, and designing with the end user in mind. You are able to realistically estimate and communicate timing and level of effort on work, coordinating and executing along with a larger team and client expectations. You like to work in a systematic way, bringing work to completion—meeting your own high standards.

Core skills
Design for learning / instructional design
+ Expertise in instructional design and development, creation of associated course materials and formulation of activities for instructors and learners.
+ Skilled at taking complex technical language and simplifying it, shaping it for a specific user, use and delivery.
+ Insight in seeing connections across and within content: chunking, parsing, sequencing, prioritizing in order to arrive at clarity and meaning.

+ Able to take complex, sometimes mixed messages from multiple stakeholders and transform them into simple, clear ideas. Skill in taking writing from multiple contributors and applying a consistent style, voice and tone tone across a set of materials. the materials.
+ Able to take in feedback from multiple reviewers, prioritize revisions determining how and why a change is necessary, and integrate comments into a new draft.
+ Skill in writing for adult low literacy, cross-cultural, and Language Learner audiences (3rd-6th grade reading levels)..
+ Keep track of sources throughout work and use a consistent style for citations, including familiarity with APA, MLA, Chicago style.

Research

+ Experienced desk-researcher with an ability to scan across a high number and variety of information sources and see similarity, difference, gaps, and what needs to be brought forward or explored further.
+ Adept synthesis skills within a scope of highly technical information outside of your expertise.
+ Abie to pull out and utilize core concepts in a way that most simply expresses the message.
+ Find patterns and apply their meaning.

Experiential integration

+ Able to utilize language and research to describe facilitation in ways that make instructional design content come alive for a particular audience.
+ Experience in teaching or facilitation that showcases skill in envisioning the end product's use and threading this throughout the development and creative process.

Collaboration

+ Understand how work is informed by and integrates with colleagues' work on the project to create a collective whole—workbook layout, project management and creative briefs, for example.
+ Strong problem-solving skills and ability to respond or pivot when clients make last minute requests.
+ Use and collaborate in Microsoft and Google platforms, documents and presentations.
+ Able to execute with attention to timing. Manage and give love to all the details.

We recognize that this contract position covers research, synthesis, curriculum development, instructional design, and technical writing. Although related, these components draw from different skill sets. If you feel you have strengths in one or more of these skill sets, we encourage you to apply as relevant cross-over may exist and be useful within this contract position.

Commitment to working on anti-racism

As a design and learning studio owned by two white, educated women working internationally—practicing in many different contexts across Africa—it is abundantly clear that we must fearlessly and critically interrogate ourselves and the systems in which we operate.

Anti-black racism, colonialism, white supremacy culture, occupation of native lands, and many intersecting axes of oppression are intimately intertwined with our work. We recognize that dismantling these systems and beliefs, re-imagining right relationships and wholeness, and catalyzing transformation is the work of a lifetime.

As a company it is important to us that all team members are open to these conversations, walking their own journey and interrogating how these issues show up and influence their own lived experiences. We find value in working hard to show up in new ways together.

Lived experience

We do not feel the need to specify what your background is—there are many ways people may have acquired the core skills for which we are looking.

Maybe you graduated 5-10 years ago and are looking to engage in exciting (and potentially somewhat new to you) subject matter while practicing your core competencies.

Maybe you are a parent seeking some hours of nourishing professional time for yourself.

Maybe you have a less traditional CV and this sounds like the next right step to give your gifts to the world.

Some of the more traditional paths that lead to the necessary skills for this position sound like:
+ 5+ years of experience working within a team environment
+ 5+ years of content writing for training, learning, curriculum, or something similar.
+ Education or experience in curriculum development or instructional design, and learning theories.
+ Education or experience in teaching or facilitation.
+ Experience in desk research, editing, proofreading, synthesizing, and pattern finding.
+ Identifiable track record of self-directed time management and product completion.
+ Experience doing freelance, project-based work, or independent contractor type engagements.
+ Can identify ways in which you interact with, live between, or regularly engage across cultures

How to apply

Join us!

Have you read this and said, "Yes!" sign me up to play my magical unicorn role on this superstar team.

To apply please send us:

1. A letter of interest sharing with us how you rock the details named in this opportunity and delight in executing on ideas, how working with us will contribute to your thinking and perspective, and how your lived experience/field/discipline makes you a great fit for this work.
2. An abbreviated resume/CV (no more than 2 pages), OR a portfolio of work, OR a link to your own website, OR your LinkedIn profile (truly, we are happy with just a link, we don't need to create more work for you). Choose the medium you think best represents your experience and the expertise you are looking to apply to this work.

Please send files in PDF format to connect@pictureimpact.co with the subject line: Curriculum Developer and Instructional Designer.

We will be setting up interviews and making decisions on a rolling basis with a goal of starting by January 10, 2022.

Our hiring process

We will conduct initial 30 minute phone/zoom/skype conversations with applicants that have the lived experience and core skills we are seeking, and seem to be a good overall fit for our company.

We will invite up to 3 finalists for a second—longer and more interactive—interview.
At this point we will ask for contact information for 2 professional or academic references, and one reference of your choosing from your greater community (friend, peer in volunteer work, faith leader, neighbor). This should be someone who can speak to who you are in the world beyond how you show up at work. Please let these people know we may be reaching out to them.

We are a quirky and high touch / high relationship team. As part of this contract role and work, we will create spaces to reflect together on the fit-to-role, fit-to-culture, and fit-to-values over the duration of the contract.