

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Research Operations Coordinator

Reports to: Director of People Group Data

Date Created/Revised: 8/12/2026

Position Summary:

The Research Operations Coordinator leads the day-to-day research operation of the Joshua Project People Group Data team, supervising Research Associates and owning the process by which field and desk research becomes verified, documented, and database-ready. This position keeps research moving: assigning and pacing work, maintaining the documentation and evidence repositories that make findings defensible, surfacing where data is thin or contested, and setting priorities for proactive data gathering so the team closes the most strategic gaps rather than reacting to whatever arrives. The Coordinator's work directly determines how quickly accurate people group information reaches the global Church for prayer, planning, and mobilization.

Essential Roles and Responsibilities:

Team Supervision and Development

- Supervise Research Associates: assign work, set expectations and deadlines, hold regular one-on-one meetings, and conduct performance reviews.
- Onboard and train new Research Associates in Joshua Project research methods, data standards, and submission processes.
- Coach associates in source evaluation, ethnographic reasoning, and cross-cultural correspondence, and build a peer-learning rhythm across the team.
- Recruit, orient, and steward research volunteers and interns as team capacity allows.

Research Process Facilitation

- Own the intake-to-decision workflow for research: triage incoming Change Requests and field submissions, confirm evidence sufficiency, and route completed evidence packets to appropriate channels.
- Maintain a visible research queue with a clear status, owner, and due date for every active item.
- Run the research team meeting rhythm, including agendas, documented decisions, and follow-through on action items.
- Resolve bottlenecks between the research team, Regional Coordinators, national representatives, and the data processing and technology teams.
- Escalate contested people group identity and taxonomy cases with a documented recommendation.

Documentation and File Storage

- Own the research team's documentation standards, including naming conventions, folder structure, version control, and retention in SharePoint and related systems.
- Ensure every accepted change carries source citations, provenance, and a source-quality rating.



- Maintain current written procedures, method guides, and training materials so the work is transferable and the team is not dependent on any one person.
- Safeguard sensitive source information and honor security protocols for restricted-access contexts.

Gap Identification and Research Prioritization

- Systematically audit the database for gaps: missing profiles and images, stale records, unverified or conflicting figures, people groups absent from the database, and thin coverage in specific countries or regions.
- Translate gap findings into a ranked research agenda tied to organizational priorities, including unreached and frontier peoples, groups with the largest estimated workers needed, and known inaccuracies.
- Set and publish quarterly priorities for proactive data gathering, including targeted surveys, Delphi consensus efforts, and focused field studies where no reliable source exists.
- Track progress against the research agenda and report movement to the Director of People Group Data.

General

- Report monthly to the Director of People Group Data on team activity, research throughput, and progress toward goals.
- Participate in virtual team meetings and contribute to cross-functional projects with the data, mapping, technology, and communications teams.
- Participate in additional work training as deemed appropriate.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Ability to supervise, coach, and develop a geographically distributed team of researchers.
- Project coordination skills sufficient to hold many concurrent workstreams with clear status and no dropped items.
- Ability to give direct, constructive feedback and hold teammates accountable to standards and deadlines.
- Understanding of people group concepts, ethnographic research, survey design, source bias, and data collection methodologies.
- Strong ability to evaluate source reliability and reconcile conflicting data.
- Strategic thinking in identifying information gaps and setting research priorities.
- Strong database management and spreadsheet skills.
- Familiarity with artificial intelligence (AI) tools for summarization, data validation, and translation.
- Exceptional organizational skills and attention to detail in documentation and file management.
- Strong written communication and cross-cultural email etiquette.
- Ability to write clear procedures that another person can follow without supervision.
- Ability to simplify and communicate complex data effectively.
- Willingness to learn and adapt to changing technologies.

Qualifications:

- Demonstrates a mature walk with God as a follower of Christ, as verified by lifestyle and references.



- Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the Bible.
- Evidences God's calling to play a role in his mission to spread the gospel among all peoples of the world.
- Has the ability to work closely with a team and can set aside personal interests for what is best for the team.
- Can graciously submit to those in authority.
- Is age twenty-one or older.
- Aligns with [Joshua Project's statement on marriage, gender, and sexuality](#).
- Shows evidence of good emotional, physical, financial, and mental health.
- Demonstrates a healthy relationship with a local evangelical church.
- Agrees with the [Lausanne Covenant](#), [World Evangelical Alliance statement of faith](#), and [Joshua Project's core values](#).
- Demonstrates relational skills to network with partners for raising salary and ministry support.
- Previous experience supervising or leading a team, preferably in a research, data, or missions context.
- Has a GED, high school diploma, or equivalent outside the United States.
- Is legally able to work in the country of operation.
- Has no credit card debt and all other loans (student, mortgage, etc.) are manageable.
- Preference toward workers with previous cross-cultural missions experience.
- Ability to work with ever-changing technology applications for internal processes and internal/external communications.

Minimum Physical Requirements:

- The duties of this job frequently require the worker to sit for extended periods of time.
- Must have the ability to type written communication, speak and hear with clarity to facilitate good communication in virtual meetings.
- Can work remotely, not required to be in the Joshua Project office.

