

Digital Agriculture Manager

Starting Date: As soon as possible

Contract type: 2 Years, with possibility of extension

Salary: £49,000 / 5,215,000 PKR / EUR 48 000

Location: London, UK, Lahore, Pakistan or Nairobi, Kenya

Application closing date: Midnight 17.04.2022 GMT – Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis with interviews scheduled throughout. Early submission is recommended.

Background

Better Cotton is the world's largest cotton sustainability programme. Our mission: to help cotton communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment. In challenging times, we are meeting the challenge head on. Through our network of field-level partners we have trained over 2.5 million farmers - from the smallest to the largest - in 23 countries in more sustainable farming practices. Nearly a quarter of the world's cotton is now grown under the Better Cotton Standard. We have united the industry's stakeholders behind our efforts, from ginners and spinners to brand owners, civil society organisations and governments. Everyone who cares about cotton and its sustainable future can now be part of something better.

Better Cotton has grown from start-up to working at scale in just over 10 years and is at the beginning of a new strategic phase focused on deepening impact at scale. Better Cotton collects data about cotton farming from thousands of farmers every year, much of it manually entered into Excel by field staff. Data about project activities and cotton sales remain paper-based - difficult and time-consuming to analyse. Our approach to data collection needs to support our commitments to impact reporting but also be optimised for farmer and field staff benefit to support change on the ground. We need to update our approach to data collection – making sure we are collecting no more than is needed and freeing up field staff time to focus on farmer outreach and training on sustainable practices. Better Cotton and its Programme Partners have been trialling various tools in recent years, and we are now ready to consolidate the learning and invest in a step change to our field data management approach.

About this role

We are looking for a Digital Agriculture Manager to lead the effort to digitalise Better Cotton's approach to field data. The project will include the coordination of updating data collection requirements, and testing and rolling out digital data collection tools in close collaboration with Better Cotton country teams and Programme Partners. The digitalised approach to field data will aim to improve data quality, lessen burdens on Better Cotton and Programme Partner field staff time spent in data collection and cleaning, add value for key stakeholders including cotton farmers, and maximise process efficiency.

This role joins Better Cotton's Data and Traceability team, reporting to the Senior Manager of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning and matrix reporting to the Senior Manager of IT and Data. The

position holder will work closely with teams across the organisation. The role will not include line management initially but instead focus on matrix and project working relationships.

The Manager will deliver a step change in the way Better Cotton and its partners collect and ultimately gain insights from the critical field data collected at scale in a variety of farming contexts globally. This challenging role offers excellent opportunities for personal and professional development, together with a competitive benefits package. This is a 2-year contract, with possibility of rolling over to a permanent role.

Responsibilities

We are looking for a highly proactive project manager who is passionate about delivering technology adoption and contributing to Better Cotton's mission to help farmers survive and thrive. Key responsibilities include:

Overall project management.

- Lead on overall project management, oversight, and administration
- Devise a strategy and plan for delivery of the required project components
- Work cross-functionally, both with staff who are tech-savvy and not
- Manage relationships with any endorsed tool provider(s)
- Monitor budget approvals and expenditures
- Develop strong relationships with team members, stakeholders, vendors, and Programme Partners
- Manage financial and human resources, ensuring timely delivery of project activities
- Supervise and coordinate activities of the project team and other stakeholders
- Prepare progress reports and updates for senior stakeholders
- Proactively manage risk and resolve issues as they arise
- Identify the project's critical success factors, and ensure successful delivery

Help determine what data Better Cotton will collect in the future at field level.

Field-level data needs to be useful in supporting change in sustainable cotton production practices, possible to be shared back to field staff and farmers, align with Better Cotton's needs to report against its 2030 targets, and incorporate landscape approaches and geospatial data where relevant.

- Use digital data management expertise to provide critical thinking to Better Cotton teams about what field data is collected for the various use cases of the organisation and its stakeholders.
- Create a standardised cross-functional data collection template(s) to ensure consistent data collection, especially important should multiple tools be implemented.

Determine Better Cotton's approach to data collection – identify, test, and roll out solution(s)

- Operationalise digital data and information collection from field-level. Likely this will not take the form of one tool, but many, depending on context. Existing tools used by Programme Partners are to be incorporated into the approach to enable localised technology solutions (mapping of this in larger programme countries is ongoing and will be provided to the incoming manager)
- Ensure data collection tools can feed into a central analysis point supported by the current Better Cotton cloud-based data warehouse

- Ensure data collection tools follow good practice in data governance, including clarifying the processes of obtaining informed consent from data owners
- Enable reporting or feedback loop to Better Cotton Growth & Innovation Fund (GIF) and donors (as relevant)

The Manager will work with various Better Cotton teams to ensure success. Illustrative examples follow of the kind of coordination and engagement expected:

Country Teams - Field level coordination between Better Cotton Programme teams and Programme Partners to identify relevant tools and approaches that respond to national-specific issues: languages, locally relevant project information, specific rollout plan.

Global Programme Team – Build feedback loops to IPs, field staff, and farmers to improve programme delivery and to add value for farmers. Also, enable effective oversight of Better Cotton-funded programme activities.

Global Assurance Team – Collecting data around compliance with the Standard and continuous improvement objectives.

Global MEL Team – Provide Data Analysts with information that enables the development of technical requirements to link to the Cotton Cloud, Better Cotton’s cloud database. In coordination with the Data Quality Coordinator, develop technical requirements to check data quality as live data is coming in. And with MEL team, ensure the data collection approach aligns with plans for global and localised indicators.

IT-Data Team – Together with the Data Services Manager, ensure adequate data governance and compliance. With the Senior Manager of IT & Data, ensure proposed solutions are in line with Better Cotton’s IT & Data enterprise strategy.

Traceability Team – Explore whether farm-level data needed for the identified traceability solution(s) can be managed via the same tool(s) as for other field-level data.

Profile

The selected candidate will have the following skills, knowledge, and experience:

Skills, Knowledge and Experience
Essential
Proactivity and passion to deliver change and technology adoption
Demonstrated ability to manage complex projects across multiple countries
Experience implementing digital data collection tools for international development programmes
Strong IT skills, in particular with Excel and databases, and business intelligence and analytics tools (PowerBI in particular)
Strong capability to train non-technical people on technical concepts and tools
Experience managing IT service providers, keeping to schedule and within budget
Fluency in English, written and spoken
Demonstrated understanding of agricultural production and value chain data, especially in the smallholder farming context
Experience working in one of Better Cotton’s production countries
Degree in environmental science or social science; data science; or related field
Desirable
Experience with geospatial data and associated collection and analysis tools
Familiarity with advanced agricultural technologies used in large scale farming contexts
Experience managing interdisciplinary project teams in an international, multi-cultural setting

Knowledge of French, Portuguese, Hindi, Urdu, or Russian

Working arrangements

The position is full-time (40 hours per week) and will be based in the London, England, Lahore, Pakistan or Nairobi Kenya. Better Cotton offers flexible working, with core hours being 10am – 4pm and the option to work from home on an agreed basis.

Travel of 10-20% will be required, pending lifting of any corona related restrictions.

Applications

Interested applicants with the required attributes are asked to send, in English, a detailed CV and a brief cover letter (2 pages maximum) to Better Cotton by applying via [this link](#).

Application deadline: 17th April 2022

We thank all applicants for their interest; however, only candidates short-listed for a telephone interview will be contacted. Better Cotton is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to good practice and transparency in the management of natural, human, and financial resources.

Better Cotton has a zero tolerance approach to any attitudes or behaviours that put children or adults at risk of harm. Safeguarding incidents are acts of serious misconduct and are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal and referral to relevant authorities for criminal prosecution.