Job Title: Senior Researcher – (On Site – Colombo, Sri Lanka)

We are looking for a policy researcher to monitor, analyze, and translate developments in AI, data governance, cybersecurity, and digital public infrastructure into timely, policy-relevant insights for South and Southeast Asia.

What we offer:

Competitive remuneration, the opportunity to engage directly in regional and global debates, work alongside regional policymakers, practitioners, and researchers, potential foreign travel, a supportive work environment, the opportunity to learn new skills, and develop your own brand.

In this role, you will:

- Conduct technically grounded, policy-relevant research on AI, data governance, cybersecurity, and digital public infrastructure across economic, legal, and institutional dimensions.
- Lead end-to-end delivery of multi-country research projects, ensuring analytical quality, timeliness, and coordination across teams distributed across the region.
- Provide intellectual leadership by shaping research questions, analytical frameworks, and how technical findings are interpreted for policy relevance.
- Synthesize research findings into clear written outputs and oral briefings tailored to policymakers and non-technical audiences.
- Contribute to proposal development, partnership building, and fundraising aligned with the organization's strategic priorities.
- Design and convene regional dialogues, workshops, and training programmes to strengthen policy communities of practice.

What you will need:

Behaviours and Competencies

- Strong interest and experience in public policy research, with a working understanding of AI systems and data governance in practice.
- Self-motivated, intellectually curious, and able to independently build understanding in unfamiliar technical and policy domains.
- Excellent attention to detail
- Equally effective both independently, as well as within a team
- Comfortable with ambiguity: able to find solutions, without precise instruction on how to get there
- Ability to undertake a wide range and variety of tasks with conflicting deadlines and manage changing priorities

Skills and Experience

- Minimum 4 years' experience in research and/or consulting, including work in AI and data governance
- Able to produce excellent, well-structured, clear, and concise written work in English
- Strong verbal communication skills in English, any other language will be an advantage
- Able to work with Microsoft Office
- Bachelor's degree with a minimum 2.1 or a GPA of 3.5 in computer science, economics, statistics, public policy, or any other relevant degree

To apply

- Email hr@lirneasia.net on or before 15 January 2026
- SUBJECT: Senior Researcher
- Detailed CV (Max four pages with contact details of two non-related references)

What we do

LIRNEasia (www.lirneasia.net) is a think tank based in Sri Lanka and active across emerging Asia-Pacific. We conduct in-depth, policy-relevant research on infrastructure industries including the Digital sector. Our work often extends to other areas such as labour, education, energy, disability, and social protection. We collect robust data, document regional good practices, and disseminate independent, actionable knowledge, to policy makers, regulators, private sector, and media, with the view of benefiting the poorest citizens in Asia.

Please note that LIRNEasia will only contact applicants that have been shortlisted for interviews.