



Terms of Reference for Joburg UrbanBetter Cityzens Run Leaders

Location: Johannesburg, South Africa

Organisation: The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)

Project: Joburg Cityzens for Clean Air Project

Reports to: UrbanBetter Joburg Cityzens Hub Coordinator

Type: Part-time (initial one-year contract, renewable)

Start date: As soon as possible

About SAIIA

SAIIA is a leading public policy think tank committed to promoting informed and constructive engagement on global, regional, and domestic issues. Through its Youth@SAIIA programme and dedicated Youth Policy and Action Hub, SAIIA empowers young people to contribute to healthier, more climate-resilient communities. SAIIA supports youth-led research, policy advocacy, and community projects, equipping emerging leaders with the knowledge, skills, and platforms necessary to address environmental and social challenges, including air quality and pollution, gender equity, and climate action, at both local and global levels.

About UrbanBetter

UrbanBetter is an Africa-led global Institute built from the ground up around youth-powered citizen science and civic action. It exists to transform urban places and spaces by tackling health and climate risks shaped by the air we breathe, how we move, and what we eat. We cultivate hope as infrastructure — investing in skills for agency,



nurturing futures-oriented mindsets, and building evidence and coalitions with pathways for healthy, sustainable urban transformation.

About UrbanBetter Cityzens

UrbanBetter Cityzens is a youth-led, data-driven movement that turns everyday experiences into evidence and evidence into policy influence for healthy, sustainable development. We equip and connect youth to use data-driven advocacy, leveraging citizen science and physical activity, to increase civic demand for healthy places and influence decision-making for healthier, more sustainable urban environments.

The UrbanBetter Joburg Cityzens Hub is hosted by SAIIA, and the mission of the UrbanBetter Cityzens initiative is to equip and connect a youth-led movement, increasing the demand for healthy public spaces and promoting the meaningful engagement of youth in urban decision-making.

Powered by physical activity, our precision data-driven advocacy and citizen science digital infrastructure is used to:

- increase awareness and demand for clean air and healthy, climate-resilient public spaces
- enfranchise youth with knowledge and advocacy tools/skills to act as effective change agents to design solutions and work with policymakers, civil society and the private sector to make the urban better.

UrbanBetter Cityzens Run Leaders

As part of the next phase of scale-up, we are recruiting 10 Run Leaders to participate in the Joburg Cityzens for Clean Air Project for 12 months.

UrbanBetter Cityzens Run Leaders are citizen scientists who organise and lead community-based running and walking activities to collect environmental health data and advocate for healthy, climate-resilient public spaces.



Project Overview

The Joburg Cityzens for Clean Air Project aims to empower young people in Johannesburg to use citizen science and advocacy to promote cleaner urban environments. Building on the UrbanBetter Cityzens Hub and Precision Advocacy Model. The project aims to raise awareness, foster youth leadership, and establish the Johannesburg Cityzens Hub as a space for training and green work experience and ultimately amplify youth voices in shaping healthier, more equitable cities.

Key Activities and Deliverables

To stand a chance to be part of the project, Potential Run Leaders will have to:

- Complete all modules for BOTH the Run Tracker and Run Leader training on the online [Cityzens Training Platform](#) BEFORE they apply for the role. These modules provide training on:
 - the links between air quality, climate and health
 - use of Cityzens' digital platform for collecting data and organising campaigns
 - story-telling and community mobilisation, public engagement and advocacy training
 - distilling findings from activations to inform recommendations and solutions

At the start of the project, Run Leaders will;

- Participate in:
 - Designing and organising an activation and campaign around the Soweto Marathon planned for 29 November 2025
 - Analysis and interpretation of data from air quality sensors

During the project, Run Leaders will;

- Participate in the
 - Model Y20 event/ Youth Convening, helping deliver youth engagement and awareness activities aligned to clean-air messaging.



Each quarter, selected Run Leaders will:

- **Meet at the Cityzens Hub** to co-design each quarterly activation, informed by Hub priorities, community context, lived experiences, and/or data from static air quality sensors across the city. Activations may, for example, explore why certain parts of the city have higher or lower air quality, identify pollution sources, or examine how air quality changes at different times of day.
The number of runs conducted during each activation will be determined by the Run Leaders based on the problem framing.
- **Implement the running activations** to collect dynamic air quality data using wearable sensors, and use the Cityzens App to document features of the built environment that support or hinder physical activity, health, and climate resilience.
- **Recruit a minimum of 10 Cityzens per Run Leader** to participate in the project.
- **Reconvene at the Cityzens Hub after each activation** to review findings and to develop key messages for public and policy engagement. This process will be supported by local knowledge partners and/or the UrbanBetter team. Messages will inform in-person or social media campaigns that raise awareness and strengthen public demand for healthy public spaces.
- **Draft an Activation Insights Brief** summarising findings and recommended actions for key decision-makers. A template will be provided, along with support in refining messages and identifying appropriate stakeholders.
- **Write at least one blog post** (individually or jointly) reflecting on health and climate risks in public spaces—drawing from lived experiences and/or citizen science data. UrbanBetter will support the development of the blog to strengthen written communication skills. Posts will be published on the UrbanBetter website.
- **Share project activities and experiences on social media** (Instagram, X/Twitter, Facebook, etc.), tagging UrbanBetter and partner organisations to amplify visibility. A resource toolkit will be provided to optimise messaging and engagement.
- **Where possible, engage local government representatives, influencers, community organisations, entertainers, or other public figures** to expand reach and strengthen impact across communities.

Timelines

Activity	Timeline
Completion of Run Tracker & Run Leader Training Modules	Week of 11 November 2025
Run Leader Applications Close	16 November 2025
Run Leader Recruitment & Onboarding	Week of 17 November 2025
1st Activation (Soweto Marathon)	29 November 2025
1st Data Review Workshop	1st week of December 2025
1st Data-Informed Campaign	December 2025
2nd Activation (Community-based)	Between February and April 2026
2nd Data Review Workshop	Between February and April 2026
2nd Data-Informed Campaign	Between February and April 2026
3rd Activation (Youth Convening)	Between May and June 2026
Youth Convening / Model Y20 Event	Between May and June 2026
3rd Data Review Workshop	Between May and June 2026
3rd Data-Informed Campaign	Between May and June 2026
4th Activation (Campaign wrap-up)	Between August and October 2026
4th Data Review Workshop	Between August and October 2026
4th Data-Informed Campaign (Final Push)	Between August and October 2026

Joburg UrbanBetter Cityzens Hub support to Run Leaders

- Providing air quality sensors and other items that will be needed for each Run Leader to organise their run. The sensor library will be based at the Hub and available to be loaned to Run Leaders for their activations
- Covering costs related to the campaigns, including refreshments, mobile phone data for Cityzens collecting data, merchandise for Cityzens (to be produced by the Hub only)
- Curating a WhatsApp group for Run Leaders for two-way communication
- Providing training on using the air quality sensors and the Cityzens platform
- Support Run Leaders with mentoring on blog writing and advocacy skills to optimise their blog writing, mobilising other Cityzens and engagement with stakeholders.

Eligibility

- Applicants must be between 18–35 years old
 - Reside in Joburg and be available for field activities across the city
 - Applicants must have completed all modules for BOTH the Run Tracker and the Run Tracker Training on the online [Cityzens Training Platform](#)
 - Provide the Run Leader training certificate as proof of completion
 - Applicants must confirm they can dedicate time to deliver these activities within the timelines outlined.
 - Recognise that remuneration for Run Leader activities will be retrospective on completion of deliverables.
 - Applicants must be passionate about climate, environment, urban health and transformation, physical activity, and data
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Remuneration

A stipend will be awarded per quarter upon successful completion of deliverables, and additional allowances may be provided for optional activities.

Important to note

- Only selected Run Leaders receive the quarterly stipend
- Applicants must recognise that remuneration for Run Leader activities will be retrospective on completion of deliverables.
- Additional trained Cityzens may participate voluntarily
- Run Leaders may borrow sensors for approved independent community activations
- UrbanBetter reserves the right to project media and data outputs
- Use of UrbanBetter branding requires prior approval
- All communication and logistics go through the Joburg Cityzens Hub Coordinator

How to Apply

Application Deadline: 16 November 2025, 20:00 SAST

Interested candidates should complete BOTH the Run Tracker and Run Leader Training on the [UrbanBetter Cityzens Training Platform](#), and upon receipt of the certificate, fill in the Google [form](#)

Enquiries:

For any inquiries regarding the role or application process, please contact johannesburgcityzenshub@urbanbetter.science

