

## JOB DESCRIPTION

# SENIOR PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)

Full-Time | Bhubaneswar, Odisha

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Senior Program Associate - ESG</b>
<b>Employment Type</b>	Full-Time
<b>Grade / Level</b>	Senior Associate / Mid-Level Professional
<b>Remuneration</b>	Commensurate with qualifications and experience (to be disclosed to shortlisted candidates)
<b>Number of Openings</b>	1 (One)
<b>Reporting To</b>	Director - Programs
<b>Works Closely With</b>	Program Teams, M&E/MEAL Team, Partnerships & Fundraising Team, Communications
<b>Key External Links</b>	CSR Donors, Corporate Partners, Climate Platforms, Government Bodies, Research Institutions
<b>Location</b>	AJSA India Head Office, Bhubaneswar, Odisha (with field travel)
<b>Last Date to Apply</b>	30 April 2026
<b>Apply To</b>	jobs@ajsaindia.org   Subject: Application for Senior Program Associate - ESG

## 1. About AJSA India

AJSA India has been facilitating community-led development initiatives since 1989, working with rural and marginalised communities in Odisha to address the root causes of poverty and vulnerability. As a non-government, not-for-profit organisation, AJSA promotes sustainable development through a holistic, participatory approach that strengthens local institutions, improves livelihoods, and enhances resilience to social, economic, and environmental challenges.

Our programmatic focus spans climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management (NRM), gender equity and social inclusion (GESI), and strengthened local governance. We work closely with Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), community-based organisations (CBOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and government departments to co-create long-term, locally owned solutions.

As AJSA India deepens its engagement with the sustainability and ESG ecosystem – including CSR-funded programmes, climate finance mechanisms, and global frameworks such as the SDGs and the Paris Agreement – we are seeking a motivated, technically grounded professional to lead our ESG programming, knowledge work, and climate action platform.

## 2. The ESG Opportunity at AJSA India

The integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles into development programming represents a transformative opportunity for organisations like AJSA India. As

corporates, investors, and governments increasingly demand ESG accountability, development organisations with deep community roots are uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between ESG commitments at the institutional level and tangible, measurable impact on the ground.

AJSA India's existing programmes in climate-resilient agriculture, watershed management, women's livelihoods, tribal development, and PRI strengthening already align closely with all three ESG pillars. This role will formalise that alignment, build ESG-compliant reporting and knowledge infrastructure, and establish AJSA India as a credible partner for ESG-linked funding and climate action.

The ESG pillar alignment with AJSA India's existing mandate is illustrated below:

ESG Pillar	Focus Area	Relevance to AJSA India's Mandate
<b>Environmental (E)</b>	Climate action, biodiversity, NRM, carbon sequestration, clean energy, water stewardship	Climate-resilient agriculture, watershed management, afforestation, community-based adaptation
<b>Social (S)</b>	Gender equity, GESI, social inclusion, community health, labour rights, livelihood security	SHG strengthening, women's empowerment, tribal welfare, food security, MGNREGS convergence
<b>Governance (G)</b>	Institutional accountability, transparency, PRIs, community governance, anti-corruption	Panchayati Raj strengthening, community-based organisations, participatory planning, social audit

### 3. Position Overview

The Senior Program Associate - ESG is a specialist professional role responsible for leading AJSA India's Environmental, Social, and Governance programming, knowledge management, and stakeholder engagement. The incumbent will serve as the organisation's internal ESG anchor – ensuring that all ongoing and new programmes are systematically mapped, aligned, and reported against recognised ESG frameworks (GRI, BRSR, SDGs, IFC Performance Standards, and others).

A central mandate of this role is the design, establishment, and operationalisation of a Community-Led Climate Action Platform – a structured, inclusive platform that brings together grassroots communities, CSR partners, government agencies, research institutions, and civil society actors to co-create, implement, and scale solutions for climate resilience and environmental sustainability in Odisha.

The Senior Program Associate - ESG will also drive the development of ESG-oriented knowledge products, build organisational capacity on ESG concepts and reporting, support fundraising from ESG-linked CSR and climate finance sources, and represent AJSA India in relevant sustainability forums and networks.

### 4. Reporting Structure and Work Relationships

The Senior Program Associate - ESG reports directly to the Director - Programs and is a key member of AJSA India's Programme Team. The role will work collaboratively across functions:

- Director - Programs – for strategic direction, ESG programme approvals, and donor engagement
- Thematic Program Managers – for ESG alignment of existing agricultural, livelihood, NRM, and governance projects

- MEAL Team – for ESG indicator development, data collection, and impact reporting
- Partnerships & Fundraising Team – for ESG-linked proposal development and CSR donor engagement
- Communications – for ESG knowledge product development, platform visibility, and thought leadership

Key external relationships:

- Corporate CSR teams and ESG officers of partner companies
- Climate finance institutions and green fund managers (NABARD, GEF, Green Climate Fund intermediaries)
- State and national government bodies (Forest Department, Agriculture Department, MNRE, MoEFCC)
- Academic, research, and standards institutions (TERI, ICLEI, academic universities, UNFCCC focal points)
- Civil society networks, coalitions, and platforms focused on climate, sustainability, and ESG

## 5. Key Responsibilities

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### 5.1 ESG Programme Strategy and Framework Alignment

- Develop and maintain a comprehensive ESG Programme Strategy for AJSA India, outlining the organisation's approach to integrating ESG principles across all programmatic work and institutional operations.
- Conduct a systematic ESG audit of AJSA India's existing programme portfolio – mapping all interventions against the E, S, and G pillars and identifying gaps, alignment opportunities, and areas for strengthened ESG integration.
- Establish ESG alignment frameworks and indicators for each of AJSA India's thematic programme areas (agriculture, livelihoods, NRM, governance, GESI), ensuring correspondence with globally recognised standards including GRI Standards, BRSR (Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting), IFC Performance Standards, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- Advise the Director - Programs and thematic teams on how to design new projects with ESG compliance and reporting readiness built in from the inception stage.
- Develop and maintain an ESG Master Matrix – a living document mapping each AJSA India programme indicator to corresponding ESG framework disclosures – for use in donor reporting, impact assessments, and fundraising.
- Ensure all ESG alignment work reflects the lived realities and priorities of the communities AJSA India works with, avoiding tokenistic ESG compliance in favour of substantive, community-centred integration.

### 5.2 Climate Action Platform – Design and Establishment

- Lead the conceptualisation, design, and establishment of AJSA India's Community-Led Climate Action Platform (CLCAP) – a multi-stakeholder platform for aggregating, amplifying, and scaling community-based climate action in Odisha.
- Develop the Platform's founding architecture, including its governance structure, membership criteria, operating protocols, partner engagement model, secretariat functions, and annual work plan.

- Conduct a landscape analysis of existing climate action platforms, CSR-climate coalitions, and community adaptation networks at state and national levels to identify positioning opportunities, synergies, and differentiation for AJSA India's platform.
- Identify, recruit, and onboard founding members and partners for the Platform, including CSR-active corporations, government departments (Forest, Agriculture, Water Resources, Energy), research institutions, community federations, and peer civil society organisations.
- Design the Platform's knowledge and learning infrastructure, including regular convenings (quarterly thematic roundtables, an annual Climate Action Conclave), a shared knowledge repository, and community-to-community learning exchanges.
- Develop the Platform's digital presence – website/microsite, social media channels, newsletter – in collaboration with the Communications team, to build visibility and attract new partners and funders.
- Establish a Community Climate Action Fund mechanism within the Platform framework, enabling corporate and philanthropic partners to channel resources to community-led climate initiatives identified and endorsed by Platform members.
- Track Platform outputs and outcomes – number of partners, initiatives supported, communities reached, funds mobilised, and policy engagements – and prepare periodic Platform progress reports for AJSA India leadership and external stakeholders.
- Ensure the Platform remains firmly community-owned and community-accountable, with meaningful representation of community voices, women, and marginalised groups in Platform governance and decision-making.

### **5.3 ESG Knowledge Products and Thought Leadership**

- Lead the development of a robust pipeline of ESG-focused knowledge products for AJSA India, including ESG Baseline Reports, Thematic Briefs, Community ESG Scorecards, Impact Narratives, ESG Case Studies, Policy Briefs, and an Annual ESG Impact Report.
- Design and develop a Community ESG Scorecard tool – a simple, visual, participatory instrument that enables community-level assessment of environmental, social, and governance conditions – and pilot it with selected project communities.
- Produce AJSA India's Annual Sustainability and ESG Impact Report, synthesising programme data, MEAL evidence, and community testimonies into a compelling, standards-aligned report for corporate partners, donors, and the public.
- Develop ESG communication materials (factsheets, investor briefs, donor pitches, infographics) that translate AJSA India's community development work into language and metrics accessible to the ESG and corporate sustainability audience.
- Contribute to policy advocacy by preparing evidence-based inputs to government consultations, regulatory reviews, and inter-governmental processes on climate, ESG, and sustainable development.
- Publish op-eds, blog posts, and practitioner articles under AJSA India's brand on platforms such as Climate Action Network India, India CSR, Business Standard Sustainability, etc., to build the organisation's thought leadership.
- Present AJSA India's ESG work at national and international conferences, workshops, and forums, positioning the organisation as a credible voice on community-led ESG and climate action.

## 5.4 ESG-Linked Fundraising and CSR Partnerships

- Identify, research, and map potential ESG and CSR funding opportunities aligned with AJSA India's programme areas, including Schedule VII CSR obligations of corporates, sustainability-linked grants from foundations, climate finance instruments, and green bonds or blended finance mechanisms.
- Develop high-quality ESG-focused concept notes, expressions of interest, and full grant proposals in response to identified funding opportunities, ensuring proposals are framed in ESG-compliant language with appropriate indicators and reporting commitments.
- Build and maintain a CSR and ESG donor engagement database, tracking corporate partners, their ESG/CSR strategy priorities, annual report disclosures, and relationship status.
- Lead proactive engagement with CSR teams and ESG officers of corporates operating in Odisha and nationally, presenting AJSA India's ESG programme offerings and co-creating partnership proposals.
- Develop standard ESG partnership packages for corporate donors – ranging from project-specific CSR partnerships to broader platform memberships and ESG advisory relationships.
- Ensure all CSR partnerships are formalised through appropriate MoUs, grant agreements, or partnership deeds with clear ESG performance targets, reporting timelines, and impact accountability frameworks.
- Support the Director - Programs and Executive Director in high-level donor stewardship, including preparing briefings, presentations, and site visit itineraries for corporate ESG partners.

## 5.5 MEAL Integration for ESG Programming

- In close coordination with the MEAL team, develop an ESG-specific MEAL framework for AJSA India – defining ESG indicators at the output, outcome, and impact levels across the E, S, and G pillars.
- Ensure AJSA India's existing MEAL systems (logframes, indicator tracking tools, data collection forms) are updated to capture ESG-relevant data including carbon sequestration estimates, biodiversity indicators, women's empowerment indices, and governance quality scores.
- Lead the design and implementation of community-level ESG baseline assessments in new project areas, establishing reference data for measuring ESG progress over time.
- Develop and apply an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening protocol for all AJSA India project interventions, ensuring activities are assessed for potential adverse environmental impacts and appropriate mitigations are built in.
- Oversee the collection, validation, and analysis of ESG performance data on a quarterly basis, preparing ESG performance dashboards for internal management review and external stakeholder reporting.
- Commission or support periodic third-party ESG impact assessments and audits of AJSA India programmes to ensure credibility and rigour in impact claims.
- Ensure all ESG data and impact claims are traceable, verified, and defensible, particularly for use in corporate ESG disclosures, BRSR reports, and investor-facing materials of partner companies.

## 5.6 Capacity Building and Internal ESG Mainstreaming

- Design and deliver an ESG Capacity Building Programme for AJSA India staff, covering foundational ESG concepts, global frameworks (GRI, SDGs, BRSR, Paris Agreement), ESG reporting tools, and practical application to AJSA India's programme contexts.
- Develop and maintain an internal ESG Resource Library – a curated collection of frameworks, toolkits, training materials, and reference documents – accessible to all AJSA India staff and partners.
- Conduct ESG orientation workshops for community-level programme participants and CBO leaders, using simplified, vernacular-language materials to build grassroots understanding of climate and sustainability concepts.
- Support Program Managers in integrating ESG considerations into annual work plans, field activity designs, community mobilisation strategies, and reporting templates.
- Build the capacity of field staff to collect ESG-relevant data, conduct participatory environmental and social assessments, and facilitate community-level ESG discussions.
- Facilitate cross-learning between AJSA India programme teams and external ESG practitioners, including organising peer exchanges, webinars, and study visits.

## 5.7 Policy Engagement, Networking, and Representation

- Monitor and track relevant national and state-level policy developments on climate change, ESG regulation, BRSR, CSR law, environmental governance, and sustainability reporting, and brief AJSA India leadership on implications for the organisation and its communities.
- Represent AJSA India in relevant coalitions, networks, and working groups on climate action, ESG, sustainable development, and community-based natural resource management at state and national levels.
- Engage with state government departments – particularly the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA), the Department of Forest & Environment, and the Department of Agriculture – to align AJSA India's ESG and climate work with state climate action plans and convergence programmes.
- Contribute to AJSA India's inputs to inter-governmental processes including National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) consultations, State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) reviews, and SDG Voluntary Local Reviews.
- Develop and maintain relationships with academic institutions and think tanks working on ESG, climate justice, and sustainable development in India (e.g., TERI, CEEW, CPR, IIM Ahmedabad Centre for Management in Agriculture).

## 6. Qualifications and Experience

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### 6.1 Educational Qualifications

- Master's degree (Essential) in Environmental Studies, Environmental Management, Sustainability, Climate Science, Development Studies, Social Work, Public Policy, Natural Resource Management, or a closely related discipline.
- Candidates with a postgraduate qualification or certification in ESG, Sustainability Reporting (GRI Certified Training), Climate Finance, or Corporate Sustainability will be given strong preference.
- Certifications in ESG frameworks (GRI Certified Professional, SASB FSA Credential, CDP reporting, ISO 14001 Lead Auditor) are a significant advantage.

## 6.2 Professional Experience

- Minimum 5–7 years of progressive professional experience in the development sector, sustainability consulting, corporate ESG, or climate programming – Essential.
- Demonstrated experience in ESG programme design, implementation, or reporting with development organisations, corporates, consulting firms, or research institutions – Essential.
- Proven experience in developing ESG knowledge products – reports, scorecards, frameworks, or toolkits – of publishable quality – Essential.
- Experience in managing or contributing to multi-stakeholder platforms, coalitions, or networks on sustainability, climate, or development themes – Strongly Preferred.
- Track record in fundraising and proposal development for ESG/CSR/climate finance-linked funding – Strongly Preferred.
- Experience working with or on behalf of rural communities in the context of climate adaptation, sustainable livelihoods, or natural resource management – Preferred.
- Familiarity with Odisha's development landscape, government programmes, and environmental governance context – Preferred.

## 7. Key Skills and Competencies

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### Technical and Domain Competencies

- Deep knowledge of ESG frameworks and standards: GRI Standards, BRSR (SEBI), IFC Performance Standards, UN SDGs, Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework, TCFD, Science-Based Targets (SBTi)
- Climate change science, community-based adaptation (CBA), and loss and damage frameworks
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Social Impact Assessment (SIA) methodologies
- Carbon accounting principles, greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory basics, and co-benefit quantification
- CSR law and practice in India (Companies Act 2013, Schedule VII), corporate sustainability reporting, BRSR compliance requirements
- MEAL for sustainability programmes – indicator development, data collection, impact verification
- Proposal writing and concept note development for ESG and CSR funding
- Knowledge product development, research synthesis, and science communication
- Multi-stakeholder platform design and facilitation

### Digital and Analytical Skills

- Proficiency in MS Office Suite, particularly PowerPoint (for ESG presentations and donor pitches) and Excel (for data analysis and ESG dashboards)
- Familiarity with data visualisation tools (Power BI, Tableau, Canva, Adobe) for ESG reporting and knowledge products
- Experience with digital collaboration and knowledge management platforms (SharePoint, Notion, Google Workspace)
- Basic GIS or remote sensing literacy for environmental mapping – an advantage

## Interpersonal and Leadership Competencies

- Strong written and verbal communication in English; proficiency in Odia and/or Hindi strongly preferred
- Ability to translate complex technical ESG concepts into accessible language for community, government, and corporate audiences
- Strong facilitation, negotiation, and stakeholder engagement skills
- Self-starter with the ability to work independently, manage multiple workstreams, and meet deadlines
- Collaborative team player with cross-functional working experience
- Deep commitment to environmental justice, social equity, and community agency

## 8. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Senior Program Associate - ESG will be assessed against the following performance indicators during six-monthly and annual performance reviews:

Performance Area	Key Indicator
<b>ESG Framework Audit</b>	100% of active AJSA India projects mapped to ESG pillars within 6 months of joining; ESG Master Matrix developed and operational
<b>Climate Action Platform</b>	Platform governance structure and founding partner MoUs in place within Year 1; minimum 10 partner organisations onboarded; first Platform Conclave held
<b>ESG Knowledge Products</b>	Minimum 4 knowledge products published per year (including 1 Annual ESG Impact Report); Community ESG Scorecard tool piloted in at least 2 project areas
<b>CSR &amp; ESG Fundraising</b>	Minimum 2 ESG/CSR proposals submitted per quarter; at least 1 new ESG-linked donor partnership established per year
<b>MEAL Integration</b>	ESG indicators embedded in 100% of new project logframes; quarterly ESG performance dashboards produced and shared with management
<b>Capacity Building</b>	ESG orientation conducted for 100% of AJSA India programme staff annually; at least 2 community-level ESG workshops per project district per year
<b>Policy &amp; Network Engagement</b>	AJSA India represented in at least 3 national/state ESG or climate networks; minimum 2 policy submissions or conference presentations per year
<b>Platform Community Fund</b>	Community Climate Action Fund mechanism designed and operationalised within 18 months; first round of community grant disbursement completed
<b>Corporate Partnerships</b>	Minimum 3 corporate CSR/ESG partnership MOUs signed per year; zero compliance issues flagged by corporate partners
<b>Thought Leadership</b>	Minimum 6 external publications or presentations per year attributable to AJSA India's ESG work

## 9. Key ESG Frameworks and Standards – Reference Landscape

The Senior Program Associate - ESG will be expected to work fluently across the following frameworks and standards, contextualising their application for community development and civil society organisations:

- GRI Standards (Global Reporting Initiative) – universal sustainability disclosure standards

- BRSR (Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting) – SEBI-mandated framework for listed Indian companies
- IFC Performance Standards – environmental and social risk management for development finance
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – particularly SDG 1, 2, 5, 6, 10, 13, 15, and 17
- Paris Agreement and NDC (Nationally Determined Contributions) framework – India's climate commitments
- TCFD (Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures) – climate risk reporting framework
- Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi) – emissions reduction target alignment
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 – community resilience and DRR
- NABARD Climate Change Framework and NABARD-funded NbS (Nature-based Solutions) programmes
- Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Adaptation Fund – climate finance frameworks relevant to India
- CSR Schedule VII, Companies Act 2013 – India's mandatory corporate social responsibility framework
- ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems) and ISO 26000 (Social Responsibility)

## 10. Working Conditions and Travel Requirements

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- Primary workplace: AJSA India Office, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- Field travel to project districts across Odisha expected at approximately 25–35% of working time, for community ESG assessments, platform partner engagement, and field learning.
- National travel for donor meetings, conferences, network engagements, and partner visits – approximately 4–6 trips per year.
- Occasional international travel for global sustainability forums or donor meetings – as opportunities arise.
- Flexible working approach required during periods of proposal development, platform launch activities, and annual ESG report production.

## 11. Remuneration and Benefits

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- Remuneration will be commensurate with the candidate's qualifications, experience, and demonstrated ESG expertise. Specific compensation details will be shared with shortlisted candidates.
- Benefits include: Provident Fund (PF), Gratuity, Group Health Insurance, and Leave entitlements as per AJSA India's HR Policy.
- Professional development support: access to ESG training programmes, certification sponsorship, conference participation, and relevant subscriptions to standards and knowledge platforms.
- Opportunity to build and lead a flagship organisational initiative (the Climate Action Platform) with significant scope for professional growth, creative ownership, and sector-level visibility.
- Performance-linked increment subject to annual appraisal outcomes.

## 12. Equal Opportunity Statement

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AJSA India is an equal opportunity employer committed to building a diverse, inclusive, and representative team. AJSA India strongly encourages applications from women candidates, persons with disabilities, and individuals from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and other marginalised communities. All applications will be treated in strict confidence. Diversity of perspective and lived experience is considered a professional strength in candidates for this role.

## 13. How to Apply

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Interested candidates who meet the above criteria are invited to submit the following:

- Updated Curriculum Vitae (CV) – not exceeding 4 pages
- Cover Letter – explaining suitability for the role, with specific reference to ESG experience and vision for the Climate Action Platform (not exceeding 1.5 pages)
- One writing sample – an ESG report, concept note, policy brief, knowledge product, or proposal you have authored or substantially contributed to (PDF, not exceeding 10 pages)
- Contact details of two professional references

### **Submission Details:**

- Email To: [jobs@ajsaindia.org](mailto:jobs@ajsaindia.org)
- Subject Line: Application for Senior Program Associate - ESG
- Last Date to Apply: 30 April 2026

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted for a two-stage selection process: an online technical interview followed by a presentation/case study exercise with a panel. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Telephone enquiries will not be entertained.

For any queries regarding this position, please write to [jobs@ajsaindia.org](mailto:jobs@ajsaindia.org).