Instructional Designer, Pardee Institute

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Type: Adjunct/Part-Time
Salary: $40 - $55 per hour
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Application Due: 01/05/2026
Category: Instructional Technology and Design



Instructional Designer, Pardee Institute

Job No: 498540
Work Type: Staff Part-Time
Location: Denver, CO
Categories: Instructional Support, Business Operations / Services, Admin / Executive / Office Support

Organizational Summary

The Frederick S. Pardee Institute for International Futures is home to International Futures (IFs), an open-source, integrated assessment and forecasting platform. IFs uses systems dynamics, econometrics, and other quantitative techniques to analyze and explore hundreds of interconnected, macro-level variables across human, social, and natural systems through the end of this century and beyond.

We use IFs and other bespoke data tools to inform real-world policy debates and decisions about long-term global trends-from climate change and conflict to development and security. Our work supports a global community of multilateral organizations, governments, and practitioners who are tackling today's most consequential issues.

The Institute maintains 17 full-time staff members, employs approximately 100 students annually, and conducts an average of $1.6 million in sponsored research each year. We are housed within the University of Denver's Josef Korbel School of International Studies, a world-class academic setting focused on training the next generation of global leaders.

Position Summary

The Pardee Institute seeks a **part-time, temporary Instructional Designer to design and build fully asynchronous, high-impact learning experiences** that help professionals apply the International Futures (IFs) modeling tool in their own work.

This role is a good fit for someone who:

- Enjoys turning complex, technical content into clear, practical learning for busy professionals.
- Is comfortable working with subject-matter experts (SMEs) and asking probing questions.
- Cares about accessibility, clean UX, and data-informed iteration.
- Wants a flexible, remote, project-based role with meaningful global impact.

You will translate SME content into **job-relevant microlearning** with clear objectives, purposeful interactivity, knowledge checks with feedback, and a clean, low-friction user experience that works across bandwidth and devices. The ideal partner balances rigor and accessibility, embraces systems thinking and transparency, and designs primarily for mid-career strategists in the private and social sectors while maintaining credibility with the Institute's policy-engaged audiences.

This is a non-benefited position not to exceed 1,000 hours in a calendar year.

Essential Functions

- Analyze and plan
    - Conduct a rapid needs analysis with SMEs.
    - Clarify learner profiles, workflows, and success criteria.
    - Convert high-level goals into measurable, module-level learning objectives and assessment plans (backward design).
- Design learning architecture
    - Sequence modules to manage cognitive load and build progressive complexity.
    - Create storyboards/outlines for 3-5-minute micro-lessons.
    - Define interaction patterns (e.g., click-throughs, diagrams, lightweight animations), reflection prompts, and practice activities.
    - Apply a toolkit of learning strategies to create engaging eLearning experiences.
- Develop content and assets
    - Build SCORM/xAPI-compliant modules (e.g., Articulate 360/Rise/Storyline).
    - Write scripts, on-screen text, and alt text.
    - Create simple motion/diagram assets (Vyond-style or equivalent).
    - Develop knowledge checks with targeted feedback and authentic tasks (case snippets, mini-projects) tied to IFs use cases.
- Quality assurance and accessibility
    - Apply universal design for learning (UDL) and accessibility practices (color/contrast, keyboard navigation, captions/transcripts, descriptive alt text).
    - Use multimedia learning principles (e.g., signaling, coherence) and cognitive load checks.
    - Coordinate and incorporate peer/SME reviews; refine UX for clarity and ease of use.
- Implementation and iteration
    - Package and publish modules to the LMS/LRS; verify tracking and reporting.
    - Set up simple dashboards for completion, time-on-task, and item analysis.
    - Run lightweight pilots, analyze data, and deliver revisions to improve clarity, engagement, and performance.
- Collaboration and project management
    - Maintain project schedules and track risks and issues.
    - Facilitate asynchronous reviews and communicate trade-offs clearly (quality, time, scope, cost).
    - Document key decisions to preserve transparency and responsible interpretation of forecasts.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Generative AI use | Experience using AI in eLearning workflows (e.g., avatar-based presenter videos, AI-assisted whiteboard/animation) and ability to script, storyboard, and refine outputs (voice consistency, pacing, lip-sync, gestures, visual timing) to feel natural and non-distracting.

- AI literacy | Ability to design prompts, iterate thoughtfully, and apply guardrails to manage hallucinations, bias, and style drift-including knowing when to step away from AI and craft content manually.
- Tools & tech | Proficiency with Articulate 360 (Rise/Storyline), Vyond-style animation or equivalent tools, basic image/video editing, SCORM/xAPI packaging, and LMS workflows.
- Accessibility & UX | Practical understanding of UDL; WCAG-aligned habits (captions, transcripts, alt text, color contrast); mobile-first, low-bandwidth design.
- Content translation | Ability to turn complex modeling concepts (systems, scenarios, uncertainty) into clear, applied learning for busy professionals without overclaiming or oversimplifying.
- Writing & visualization | Concise microcopy, plain-language narration, and instructional graphics that reduce cognitive load.
- Collaboration & PM | Structured storyboarding, version control, review cycles, and stakeholder facilitation; comfort working asynchronously and transparently.
- Data-informed iteration | Ability to use basic analytics (e.g., completion rates, item difficulty, distractor analysis) to drive revisions.
- Learning science & methods | Familiarity with adult learning theory, cognitive load, backward design, constructive alignment, microlearning, scenario-based learning, and authentic assessment design.

Required Qualifications

- Current enrollment in a master's-level Instructional Design, Learning Sciences, Educational Technology, Human-Centered Design, or related program or a completed bachelor's degree in these or related fields.
- Or 3-5+ years of experience developing asynchronous eLearning for adult professionals, including measurable outcomes and knowledge checks.
- Demonstrated portfolio that showcases microlearning, scenario-based activities, assessment alignment, accessibility practices, and clean UX and interaction design.

Preferred Qualifications

- Master's degree in Instructional Design, Learning Sciences, or a related field.
- Experience designing for data/modeling tools, analytical software, or technical platforms.
- Familiarity with-or interest in developing familiarity with-International Futures (IFs) or systems-thinking education.
- Experience with xAPI analytics dashboards, light motion graphics, and diagram-first explanations.
- Background collaborating with research institutes, think tanks, or policy audiences.

Working Environment

- Status | Part-time, temporary (contract or hourly).

- Time commitment | Estimated 20 hours per week at project start, averaging closer to 15 hours per week as the project progresses, with occasional surges during key review periods.
- Location | Remote, with occasional meetings during Denver (Mountain Time) business hours.
- Flexibility | Schedule is generally flexible as long as agreed-upon milestones are met and availability during review windows is maintained.

Reporting and Collaboration

- Reports to | The Pardee Institute Director of Operations, with a dotted line to the Pardee Institute Director.
- Collaborates with | IFs SMEs, project manager, LMS admin, and QA reviewer(s).

Physical Activities

Ability to work in front of a computer for extended periods of time.

Work Schedule

The instructional designer can set their own work schedule but must be available to meet at least twice a week and have real-time conversations with their collaborators and supervisor(s). Outside of regularly scheduled meetings and windows of availability, the instructional designer must also respond within the next business day to questions and prompts from collaborators and supervisor(s).

Hourly Range:

The hourly range for the position is $40.00-$55.00 per hour (target), commensurate with experience and portfolio; exceptional candidates up to $60.00.

The University of Denver has provided a compensation range that represents its good faith estimate of what the University may pay for the position at the time of posting. The University may ultimately pay more or less than the posted compensation range. The salary offered to the selected candidate will be determined based on factors such as the qualifications of the selected candidate, departmental budget availability, internal salary equity considerations, and available market information, but not based on a candidate's sex or any other protected status.

Benefits:

The University of Denver offers some benefits for non-benefited employees. The University of Denver is a private institution that empowers students who want to make a difference. Learn more about the University of Denver.

Application Deadline

For consideration, please submit your application materials by **11:00 p.m. (MST) January 4, 2025.**

Special Instructions
Candidates must apply online through jobs.du.edu to be considered. Only applications submitted online will be accepted.

Please include the following documents with your application:
1. Resume
2. A brief cover letter describing your interest in this project and relevant experience

3. A portfolio or sample of relevant eLearning work (links or files)

The University of Denver is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression), marital, family, or parental status, pregnancy or related conditions, national origin, disability, or status as a protected veteran. The University of Denver does not discriminate and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, religion, creed, disability, sex (including sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression), marital family, and parental status, pregnancy, genetic information, military enlistment, or veteran status, and any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under federal, state, or local law, regulation, or ordinance in any of the University's educational programs and activities, and in the employment (including application for employment) and admissions (including application for admission) context, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Americans with Disabilities Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; the Equal Pay Act; the Colorado Equal Pay for Equal Work Act; the Colorado Protecting Opportunities and Worker's Rights ("POWR") Act; and any other federal, state, and local laws, regulations, or ordinances that prohibit discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation. For more information, please see the University of Denver's Non-Discrimination-Statement.

All offers of employment are contingent upon satisfactory completion of a criminal history background check.

To apply, visit https://jobs.du.edu/en-us/job/498540

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