

Terms of Reference

Senior International expert of the thematic area “Decentralization of education at the local and regional level”

Programme: “Swedish Support to Decentralisation Reforms and Recovery in Ukraine 2024-2028”

About SALAR International & its engagement in Ukraine

SALAR International is a subsidiary of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), representing all 290 municipalities and 21 regions in Sweden. As the international branch of SALAR, we work globally to support local democracy and good governance in developing and transitioning countries. Our expertise covers areas such as capacity building in municipal management and service delivery, local and regional development planning, support for local government associations, decentralisation policies and European integration. Geographically, SALAR International’s projects cover countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, the Middle East and the Sub-Saharan Africa.

SALAR International has been engaged in Ukraine since 2014, providing support to Ukraine’s decentralisation process through three major initiatives focusing on building a robust multi-level governance system, increasing accessibility and quality of services at the local level, and enhancing international cooperation between municipalities from Ukraine and the EU. After the full-scale invasion, SALAR International has added crisis support to Ukrainian municipalities, providing them with material assistance.

Description of the assignment context

SALAR International has finalised its current projects in Ukraine (DSP and Prosto), which were initiated before the full-scale invasion. To address the changing needs of Ukrainian municipalities and national actors during wartime, a new multi-level program has been initiated, to be financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

SALAR International is currently in the preparatory phase of the new programme, with estimated activities scheduled to begin in July or August 2024. The programme is planned for four years, but activities are currently outlined for the first 24 months.

The new programme aims to work with both short and long-term focus on addressing the needs of the multi-level governance system in Ukraine and in parallel strengthen municipalities’ public service provision, as well as their direct engagement in the recovery and reconstruction process, in line with the requirements of EU accession.

The programme will consist of two components: one focusing on policy and collaboration with national actors, and the other providing direct support to municipalities. It will encompass five thematic areas: Education, Fiscal Decentralisation and Budgeting, Administrative Service Provision, Locally-led Recovery , and International Municipal Cooperation. The programme will procure material support to address the crisis needs of municipalities and coordinate with other international actors to finance the implementation of recovery plans.

Organisational set up

The programme is a joint Swedish-Ukrainian initiative with management structures in both Stockholm and Kyiv. It encourages a flat organisational structure, meaning a high degree of autonomy and responsibility for involved experts, as well as strong local ownership among beneficiaries such as national stakeholders and Ukrainian municipalities.

It is expected that more than 50 people will be working full-time in Ukraine within various thematic teams as well as support units.

The programme has its office in Kyiv but will implement activities in all regions controlled by the Ukrainian government.

Role description

The international senior expert of the thematic area Decentralization of education at the local and regional shall support the local team with delivering inputs based on international experience of education reforms, including on the role of local self-governments, on post war recovery and EU accession. The task of the international senior expert is to support Ukrainian local and regional authorities with examples from other country experiences, to develop and deliver activities aimed at increasing the institutional capacity of Ukrainian local and regional actors tasked with education management, to increase the quality of educational services provided by them.

Main responsibilities:

- Advisory support to the team with education management on local and regional level;
- Development of approaches and products aimed at education management capacity increase on local and regional level;
- Identifying, sharing and adjusting international experiences, studies, products and approaches relevant to work of thematic area;
- Developing and delivering advisory and training support on education management;
- Developing concepts and agendas for study tours to other countries, accompanying study tours;
- Providing expert support, mentoring, coaching of local and regional authorities responsible for education reforms, modernization of school networks, education quality improvement, delivery and restoration of education in war affected areas;
- Analytical support to the processes of school network re-organisation and future scenario developments;
- Participation in planning activities of the thematic group;
- Participation in training activities and events for local authorities in Ukraine organised by the thematic group;
- Contribution to processes of selection of pilot communities and oblasts;
- Contribution to analytical reports and recommendations aimed at improvement of education management on local and regional level;
- Contributing to reporting and communication efforts of the thematic group and the Programme.

Qualifications:

- Relevant university degree;

- At least 10 years experience of working with international projects aimed at capacity building on local and regional level;
- Experience of delivering strategic change management processes in area of education;
- Understanding of local self-governance and decentralization related developments in Ukraine;
- Previous work experience in Eastern European country or EU accession country in the field of education /decentralization / LSG reforms;
- Understanding of challenges caused by war in Ukraine, as well as by EU accession country status;
- Analytical and strategic thinking;
- Mentoring, training, advisory experience;
- Excellent strategic communication skills;
- Relevant contacts network in countries that have undergone post-Soviet transformation process of education system;
- Proficiency in English;
- Basic level of Ukrainian.

Merits:

- Experience of working with educational statistics and educational systems at the regional and local levels;
- Experience in implementation of advocacy campaigns for educational policy change at the regional and local levels;
- Well established contacts network of relevant stakeholders in other European countries.

Selection Criteria:

The selection of candidates will be based on the following criteria: relevant work experience; understanding of Ukraine’s education and decentralization reforms; knowledge of local governance reform processes in post-Soviet states; capacity building experience and ability to travel to Ukraine.

Diversity and equal opportunities

SALAR International embraces diversity and respects human rights in all areas of its work. SALAR International strives to create a gender-equal and diverse working environment. Team members shall respect equal rights of individuals and strive to create an atmosphere where people’s differences are accepted and valued. SALAR International supports working arrangements that enable personnel to combine work with family commitments.

Conditions

A consultancy contract will be signed between SALAR International and the expert which will outline the conditions for the position in detail. Please note this position is not an employment position, meaning that applicants must be established as consultants and will be liable to pay all relevant taxes and insurances in Ukraine.

A competitive consultancy fee will be offered to the successful candidate. Life and travel insurance is provided to those travelling within Ukraine.

Duration: 23 months (full time, with possibility of extension)

Location: Ukraine (remote and on-site)

Application: Send your application with max 3 page CV and max 1 page cover letter to ukraine@salarinternational.se. Please note **Senior International expert education local** in the subject line. The interviews will be conducted on an ongoing basis. Only shortlisted applicants will receive a response by email when the recruitment has been finalised.

For any questions or clarifications, please contact: ukraine@salarinternational.se

Personal information provided by the applicant in the recruitment process will be handled by SALAR International.

Deadline: 3 July 2024