Vacancy notice

Operations Research Consultant

The WHO Department of Reproductive Health and Research (RHR) seeks an experienced Operations Research Specialist to appoint in this newly created position. The consultant will support the Postpartum family planning (PPFP) research team in a two-year operations research project taking place in two countries in francophone Africa under an agreement with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (“Muskoka grant”). The consultant will report to the Muskoka Grant Manager.

The Consultant will be accountable for providing expert advice and skill in protocol development and operations research project management and analysis. The candidate will have extensive experience in policy and programming related to family planning and in particular PPFP and a sound understanding of operations research entailing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies and analytical skills. The position also requires excellent scientific communication skills and ability to work in French and English. The candidate will work as a part of a team of experienced staff dedicated to family planning and contraception for the improvement of global sexual and reproductive health.

The consultancy requires a high level of judgement, integrity, and accuracy. Broad experience in conducting international research projects would be an asset.

This position is based in Geneva, Switzerland and salary will be commensurate with experience.

Please submit (i) a letter of motivation, and (ii) your curriculum vitae to reproductivehealth@who.int, indicating “Operations Research Consultant” in the subject line. All applications received will be acknowledged. Closing date for applications is 12 April 2015.

Terms of reference

Organizational Background

The Department of Reproductive Health and Research (RHR) works to enable people to protect their own health as it relates to sexuality and reproduction and to receive quality health care in matters related to sexual and reproductive health. To achieve this, the Department advocates and promotes sound public health strategies, sets norms and standards, engages in technical cooperation activities, and supports research. RHR’s overall strategic framework is provided by the WHO Global Reproductive Health Strategy approved by the 57th World Health Assembly in 2004. More information about RHR can be found at http://www.who.int/reproductive-health

RHR includes the UNDP/UNFPA/UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP). HRP is the main instrument within the United Nations system for promoting, conducting, evaluating and coordinating interdisciplinary research on sexual and reproductive health; for collaborating with countries in enhancing national capacities to conduct this research; for promoting and facilitating the use of research results in policy-making and planning for sexual and reproductive health care; and for the setting of standards and guidelines, including technical and ethical guidelines, in the field of sexual and reproductive health research. More information about HRP can be found at http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/hrp
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Summary of duties:

The Operations Research work is located in the Human Reproduction Team (HRX) which is specifically responsible for country support, normative work, and research focusing on thematic areas within a consolidated and comprehensive approach to sexual and reproductive health such as: Contraception; Infertility; Sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS; Women’s health including reproductive tract cancers.

Under the guidance of RHR/HRX Muskoka Grant Manager, the Consultant will:

1. Lead the crafting of responses to questions and comments from the RHR protocol review panel (RP2) and Ethical Review Committee regarding the submitted PPFP operations research protocol.
2. Assist the RHR/HRX team in the implementation and follow up of activities related to and outlined in the approved protocol.
3. Participate in regular meetings with RHR/HRX staff involved in the project to discuss and follow up on issues related to the PPFP operations research project.
4. Undertake site visits when necessary to meet with the PIs and verify and follow up that the project is implemented correctly and take appropriate action in collaboration with the RHR/HRX team to address issues as they may arise.
5. Prepare and contribute to updates, presentations and other documents as necessary.

The individual will work as a part of a team of experienced and talented staff and consultants dedicated to the improvement of global sexual and reproductive health.

WHO Competencies

1. Producing results
2. Communications
3. Building and promoting partnerships across the organization and beyond.

Essential knowledge and skill

1. Faultless written English and French.
2. A demonstrated ability to understand complex scientific matters related to sexual and reproductive health
3. Exceptional analytical skills.
4. Strong planning and organizational skills, demonstrated ability to manage converging priorities and deliver high-quality products under tight deadlines.
5. Ability to establish and maintain good working relations with colleagues, with senior WHO staff and with the international constituency with which the project relates.
6. Tact and sensitivity in dealing with sensitive topics.

Essential educational qualifications

Ph.D. or Medical degree and post graduate training in SRH and community health and research

Desirable educational qualifications

Acquired training in medical epidemiology and biostatistics
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Essential relevant experience
At least 10 years of experience combining:
1. Proven competencies in designing and conducting complex-design studies entailing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies including analyses
2. Proven communications skills and scientific publications
3. Experience working in reproductive health, particularly international family planning programmes

Desirable experience
Experience conducting international research projects

Language Skills
Essential: Excellent knowledge of French and English

Other Skills
Skills required to use e-mail, PowerPoint, Excel, and word processing software independently and efficiently.