

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Assistant Research Officer

Directorate: Economic, Youth & Sustainable Development Directorate (EYSD)

Grade: Y (Young Professionals Programme)

Reports To: Office of the Senior Director E&SD Directorate

General Information

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 56 independent and equal sovereign states. Its unique strength lies in the combination of its diversity and shared inheritance. Spanning five regions globally, it includes some of the world's largest, smallest, richest, and poorest countries; 33 of its members are small states, many of them island nations. The Commonwealth is home to 2.5 billion citizens, of which 60% are under the age of 30.

The Commonwealth Secretariat in London is the principal intergovernmental agency of the Commonwealth and its backbone, promoting democracy, rule of law, human rights, good governance, and social and economic development. Reflective of its membership, it is a voice for small states and a champion for youth employment. The Secretariat convenes summits and high-level meetings; executes plans agreed by the Commonwealth Heads of Government; promotes Commonwealth values and principles; and facilitates the work of the Commonwealth family of organisations.

EYSD Directorate

The Economic, Youth & Sustainable Development Directorate (EYSD) is responsible for the Secretariat's technical programmes on global, regional, and national economic and sustainable development. The Directorate plays a key role in helping to identify solutions to economic, environmental challenges encountered by Commonwealth member countries, through evidence-based research analysis, policy influence and impact. Its approach emphasises country ownership and engagement by delivering demand-driven technical assistance. The Directorate excels with its work related to small and other vulnerable states, sovereign debt management, climate resilience and access to finance.

The Directorate comprises of following three divisions: (1) Debt Management Unit; (2) Economic Policy and Small States; (3) Climate Change.

The Directorate also promotes international dialogues, debate, and consensus on key international development issues through global advocacy. It works effectively in partnership with key international development as well as financial institutions and participates in various global fora. Under the leadership of the Senior Director, the EYSD Directorate delivers the annual ministerial Commonwealth Finance Ministers, the triennial Commonwealth Small States Conference, and other strategic high-level engagements.



The Commonwealth

Young People in the Commonwealth

Young people (under 30 years) constitute over 60% of the population of the Commonwealth and our young people as seen as assets with a proven capability to contribute to and lead change for their communities and countries. Therefore, ensuring the sustainable and inclusive development of these 1.5 billion youth across its 56 member states is an important priority for the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Accordingly, the Commonwealth Secretariat Young Professionals Programme (YPP) offers some technical positions for its young people.

Job Summary

The Assistant Research Officer in EYSD Directorate provides research, analysis, and programme support, to the Senior Director's Office.

The post-holders will be responsible for providing the Senior Director's Office with technical and administrative support. The candidate should engage with complex realities in a changing world, undertake in-depth and high-quality research and draft presentations and documentation of project reports. You would support the organisation of high-level meetings, technical and capacity building programmes.

The post-holders will assist with sensitive and confidential matters and liaise at all levels.

Task Description

1. The Assistant Research Officer's duties include but are not restricted to:
 - Carrying out in-depth research on current economic, environmental and international development issues as directed which affect the world in general and member states in particular;
 - Summarizing in-depth research for possible follow-up actions/activities
 - Assisting in the preparation of internal and external meetings by writing briefing notes as well as minute taking
 - Drafting talking points/opening remarks
 - Supporting events coordination with administrative and logistics tasks
 - Providing administrative support for official travels, ministerial meetings, high-level events
 - Assisting in drafting, reviewing and editing of correspondence, publications, presentations, etc.
 - Supporting development and maintenance record of the programmes and events in the Directorate;
 - Working in coordination with the staff in EYSD Directorate and support in relevant tasks that may be required.
 - Communicating with relevant stakeholders related to follow-up on tasks as directed

2. Undertake stand-alone or ongoing project work including:
 - Research and presentations;
 - Monitoring the delivery of results against planned outcomes;
 - Reporting of results.
3. Performs other duties as may be required from time to time.

Person Specification

Education:

Essential

- A strong first degree in Economics, Environment, International Development, Public Health, Public Finance, Public Policy or a related discipline

Desirable

- Post-graduate qualification or a relevant master's degree.

Experience:

Essential

- Evidence of ability to carry out in-depth research;
- Impeccable English writing skills;
- Lateral thinking and love for innovation;
- At least one year of demonstrated work experience in the area of Economics/International Development/ Public Policy/ Public Finance/ Environmental policy/ or related fields. The work experience may be gained through a combination of paid employment, post-graduate research, and placement or internship positions.
- Proof of knowledge in two or more of the following areas: economics; technology and innovation; climate change, land and biodiversity.

Desirable

- At least one year experience working for a research focused institution or as a Research Associate.
- At least one article published in a reputable publication (evidence of authored publications must be submitted).

Skills:

Essential

The post-holder should be able to demonstrate:

- A high level of discretion and tact in handling sensitive and confidential matters;
 - An ability to organise, anticipate, plan and prioritise workload, and work under high pressure to tight deadlines;
 - An ability to interpret and follow complex information and instruction;
 - Effective written and oral communication and interpersonal skills; An ability to undertake research, analyses and writing (advanced level);
 - An ability to be creative and use own initiative;
 - An ability to work effectively as part of a team;
 - Demonstrated ability to use Office 365 products, Prezi, Apple Keynote, Pages and Numbers, to deliver high executive-level products;
 - Availability to work flexibly, including traveling when required;
 - Demonstrated commitment to working effectively and sensitively in a multicultural environment.
-
- This position is reserved for Young Professionals, and to be considered, candidates must be 27 years or younger at the date of close of applications;
 - Candidates must be a citizen of a Commonwealth country.



Competencies

Respect for Diversity
<p>Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.</p> <p>Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally.</p> <p>Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision-making.</p> <p>Examines own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.</p> <p>Identifies biases in systems & processes.</p>
Working with Others
<p>Regularly shares information of value with colleagues.</p> <p>Shows commitment to delivering on key agreements made to colleagues.</p> <p>Makes an effort to view a situation from the other party's perspective as well.</p> <p>Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity to colleagues' pressures.</p> <p>Utilises networks to ensure similar goals are achieved collaboratively.</p> <p>Develops long term relationships across cultures and/or geographical boundaries.</p> <p>Uses relationships to identify the best people to help in the completion of tasks.</p> <p>Tactfully deals with difficult people to gain buy-in and manage their expectations.</p>
Adapting & Innovating
<p>Recognises opportunities for improvement and proposes change with impact and effect.</p> <p>Helps others evaluate and strengthen ideas.</p> <p>Quickly grasps new concepts and how to apply them.</p> <p>Demonstrates flexibility e.g. by working beyond own remit in order to achieve an objective.</p> <p>Will effectively reorganise activities when faced with changing contexts and demands.</p> <p>Welcomes and adapts to new ideas and/or approaches.</p> <p>Adapts personal style to meet the needs of others.</p>
Developing and Applying Expertise
<p>Takes advantage of opportunities to develop an area of expertise.</p> <p>Takes learning from previous experience and applies them appropriately.</p> <p>Demonstrates willingness to learn new skills and/or approaches.</p>
Accountability
<p>Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.</p> <p>Ensures timely delivery of outputs within defined cost and quality standard parameters.</p> <p>Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.</p> <p>Ensures timely delivery of outputs.</p>

March 2023