

Recruitment Advertisement

Position: **Senior Programme Officer (SPO)**
Maternity Leave cover (anticipated duration 1 year)

Programme: **Commonwealth Civil Society**

Reports to: **Senior Programme Manager (SPM)**
Commonwealth Civil Society

The organisation

The Commonwealth Foundation was established by Heads of Government in 1965, reflecting the commitment of Member States to ensuring that the Commonwealth family would be as much an association of peoples as of governments. As one of the three intergovernmental pillars of the Commonwealth, the Foundation operates within that critical space between government and civil society. Our future focus is to:

- **Support** the active and constructive participation of Commonwealth citizens in all aspects of their governance
- **Nurture** the growth of vibrant and free civil societies in all Commonwealth countries
- **Advance** the principles and ideals of the Commonwealth.

The Foundation's work is delivered through three core programmes: Commonwealth Civil Society, Creative Commonwealth and People of the Commonwealth.

Commonwealth Civil Society

The Commonwealth Civil Society (CCS) programme works to contribute to vibrant and free civil societies across the Commonwealth by enabling citizens to constructively engage in core aspects of their governance in pursuit of the values and principles of the Commonwealth Charter.

The programme combines flexible grant-making with capacity development approaches, applying both rigour and flexibility to widen access, especially for civil society groups in small and vulnerable States.

The programme has two streams:

CCS Grants continues the current competitive open call, offering grants to civil society organisations (CSOs) for projects that seek to advance Commonwealth ideals and principles within the broad framework of 'participatory governance'. CSOs will be supported to advance their organisational advocacy priorities and constructively engage in multi-layered policy processes.

CCS Capacity Development works to strengthen civil society organisations in small and vulnerable Commonwealth States and their capacity to influence policy processes through a combination of grant-making and tailored assistance.

Summary description

The Senior Programme Officer (SPO) will have responsibilities to the two CCS programme streams alongside duties to manage the legacy grants. Working under the supervision of the SPM, the SPO will be involved in refining existing systems and processes and shaping new ones to ensure the programme contributes to the Foundation's vision and mission.

Responsibilities of the role will include (but not be limited to) managing a portfolio of grants projects, participating in grant application review and selection processes, and contributing to all aspects of monitoring and evaluation procedures.

Establishing and maintaining strong working relations with partners, and with collaborating individuals and organisations, will be a key part of the role.

The SPO will be involved in other areas of the Foundation's work relevant to their experience and expertise and organisational requirements.

Key responsibilities

1) Programme, grant and activity management

- Participate in the grants review and selection, ensuring it is carried out in a manner that is responsible, professional, financially sound, participatory, sensitive to local needs, culture and politics and in accordance with Foundation policies and procedures.
- Manage a portfolio of grant projects and other specific elements of the CCS portfolio as requested, supporting the SPM and other programme officers as required.
- Contribute to all planning processes for CCS including annual planning.
- Prepare and write progress and annual reports, annual workplans, project reports and other documents that may be requested by the Directors or Grants committee.

- Assume responsibility for delegated elements of the programme budget: monitoring budget allocation and expenditure.
- Build and maintain cooperative relationships with grant partners and other key external partners to advance the objectives of the programme, including supporting partners to develop monitoring documents and plans that are aligned to the Foundation's requirements.
- Ensure that Foundation cross-cutting priorities – most especially gender and inclusion – are appropriately integrated into all aspects of programme work and procedures including MEL systems and reporting.
- Contribute to the design, development and running of workshops/webinars, such as MEL workshops for grant partners, including facilitation of specific sessions or components.
- Represent the Foundation at meetings, functions, and events, some of which may occur outside normal office hours and may involve travel.

2) Internal collaboration and cooperation

- Contribute to the Foundation's MEL in compliance with the organisation-wide approach and in close collaboration and coordination with the Senior Programme Officer, MEL.
- Identify opportunities to collaborate with the other programmes to maximise efforts towards the Foundation's vision and mission.

3) Whole-of-Foundation support

- Contribute to whole-of-Foundation initiatives as requested. A time and effort commitment of around 20% of the role is factored into the workplan.
- Actively and creatively contribute to strategic and long-range planning.
- Perform any other reasonable duties and tasks as requested by the Foundation.

The individual

The SPO will possess all of the competencies set out in the attached annex under the 'officers' column.

The SPO will also demonstrate an understanding of, and commitment to, the Foundation's vision, mission and values.

The SPO will have the following skills and assets:

- Extensive experience in project, programme or grants portfolio management gained within a comparable field (grant-making, civil society capacity development) and a comparable operating environment (international non-governmental or intergovernmental).
- Appropriate tertiary qualifications or additional experience in lieu of such qualifications.
- Excellent communication skills: particularly in pitch, negotiation and persuasion and presentation.
- A sound understanding of MEL methodologies and their practical application.
- Capacity to think and plan strategically.
- A practical, solutions-based mindset.
- Solid knowledge of international development issues, trends and approaches.
- Understanding of civil society organisations and the field of advocacy/participatory governance.
- A well-organised, resourceful approach with good planning and problem-solving abilities.
- An appreciation of diplomacy and its operation in the context of the work of the Foundation.
- Advanced computer skills, particularly MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and databases.

Closing date:

Monday 20 September 2021, 1pm GMT

Interviews:

Week of 1 October 2021

Proposed start date:

Week of 18 October 2021

Salary / Benefits

Salary — £35,000 pa

15% of gross salary in a tax-free gratuity payment, payable at end of contract

Holiday allowance of 30 days (plus 8 bank holidays and 4 privilege days) per 12 months

Learning opportunities at the Foundation