



JOB DESCRIPTION

Assistant for the Transition to Higher Value Agriculture Project

The Public Institution “Millennium Challenge Account Moldova”, intends to recruit an experienced candidate for a long term position of Assistant for the Transition to Higher Value Agriculture (THVA) Project financed through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), a United States Government institution.

The THVA Project Assistant is a position that reports directly to the Transition to Higher Value Agriculture Project Director and is responsible to provide administrative support to Project Director and the THVA Project team in implementation of the project activities during all phases of the project life cycle. Under the direction of THVA Project Director the Project Assistant will help move project activities towards completion by performing project and office administrative tasks, which typically include production and distribution of materials, file management, data collection, report creation, proofreading, research, project activities’ logistics and team collaboration.

More information about the Compact and THVA Project can be found at: <http://mca.gov.md> and <http://www.mcc.gov/mcc/countries/moldova/index.shtml>

Background of the THVA Project

Agriculture has been the backbone of the Moldovan economy, with Moldova formerly serving as an important exporter of high value agriculture to the rest of the Soviet Union. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Moldova lost its position as a key exporter of fresh produce, and its extensive irrigation systems and post-harvest cold chain fell into disrepair. Reforms necessary to attract private and donor investment in agriculture have been slow. As a result, Moldovan agriculture suffers from low productivity, contributing to high rates of rural poverty. However, with its fertile soils, relatively long growing season, and proximity to both European Union and former Soviet markets, Moldova has many of the necessary conditions to regain competitiveness in high value agriculture.

The THVA Project consists of four reinforcing and integrated activities that, when implemented together, address the key constraints facing Moldovan producers: lack of reliable water, lack of long-term financing, lack of access to markets and technologies, and lack of know-how. The THVA Project will increase the ability and willingness of farmers to make the transition to higher value fruit and vegetable production. By addressing infrastructure and institutional/market constraints, the THVA Project will break the vicious cycle of poor water service, low water tariff revenue, underinvestment in irrigation system maintenance, and low investment by farmers in high value agriculture (resulting in low agricultural incomes). The THVA Project provides the first opportunity to pilot a set of institutional and management reforms, together with much needed infrastructure rehabilitation that will set the stage for future

investment and enable Moldova to benefit from its natural comparative advantage in agriculture.

The THVA Project through its four activities will: (1) rehabilitate up to 11 irrigation systems covering a command area of up to approximately 15,500 hectares (***CISRA – Centralized Irrigation System Rehabilitation Activity***); (2) provide technical assistance and capacity building to support legal transfer of management and operations of MCC-rehabilitated systems from the Government to Water User Associations (WUAs) to ensure the legal and institutional framework needed for private and/or donor investment in the irrigation sector and improved water resource management, including: reform of water policy sector requiring the establishment of a modern water rights system, modernization of water management through development of a GIS monitoring platform, and formation of councils to develop participatory river basin management plans (***ISRA -the Irrigation Sector Reform Activity***"); (3) provide term financing and technical assistance to support high value agriculture-related investments by farmers and rural entrepreneurs (***AAFA - Access to Agricultural Finance Activity***); and (4) provide market development support and technical assistance and training to help producers and agribusinesses better access high value agriculture markets and support the shift to high value agriculture at the production and post-harvest level, and promote sustainable agricultural practices (***GHSA - Growing High Value Agriculture Sales Activity***), the latter to be undertaken jointly with, and administered by, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of its Agricultural Competitiveness and Enterprise Development (ACED) program.

Position Duties

The position of THVA Project Assistant is subordinated and reports directly to the THVA Project Director. The incumbent is in charge of giving clerical and administrative support to Project Director and project team, as requested, in implementation of the project activities during all phases of the project life cycle. The project assistant specific responsibilities are as follows:

- Conduct research, compile data, and prepare papers for consideration and presentation by project director and team members;
- Manage and retrieve project documents, including records and reports, maintain and update the project file or information management system;
- Open, sort and distribute incoming project correspondence, including faxes and emails;
- Support the project team to initiate/develop/process/finalize invoices, reports, memos, minutes, letters, agreements, presentations and other documents, using word processing, spreadsheet, database and/or presentation software;
- Translation into/from Romanian/English/Russian and content proofing of various project team documents, including reports, articles for newspapers and important outgoing emails;
- Answer phone calls and direct calls to appropriate parties and take and distribute messages.
- Prepare responses to correspondence containing routine inquiries and when necessary support team members to prepare responses to specific inquiries;
- In collaboration with the project team prepare the weekly project agendas and make the necessary arrangements. Manage and maintain Project Director and team members' schedules;
- Make meetings' and travel arrangements for project director and team members and coordinate them with MCA Office Manager for internal and Human Resource officer for external travels;
- Assist the project team in arranging programs/schedules and agendas for in-coming official

MCC missions, make appointments with project stakeholders/implementing entities/partners/government authorities/actual and potential THVA project beneficiaries, including logistical arrangements and secretarial assistance, if necessary;

- Provide logistical support for all training courses, seminars, workshops, conferences, meetings and other project outreach events organized by the THVA project team;
- Prepare tracking documents for meetings and update tracking tools regularly. Attend meetings to record minutes. Compile, transcribe, finalize and distribute minutes of meetings;
- Assist the project team in developing THVA project related outreach materials;
- Assist the project team to cooperate/liaise with management and/or staff members, stakeholders/implementing entities/partners, if needed or requested, on THVA Project matters.
- Perform other tasks and responsibilities as requested by THVA Project Director or other position appointed to substitute his responsibilities.

Qualifications and Experience

Minimum qualifications required

- Education: Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, Management, Economics, Legal studies or other related fields
- Experience: 3 to 5 years of secretarial experience preferably with international projects or organizations. Previous experience in development assistance or related work for a donor organization will be an advantage.
- Experience with international agriculture development projects will be a great advantage

Computing skills

- Computer literate. Proven ability to use standard MS Office (*Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, Power point, etc*), Internet and other software applications tools to support the day by day office activities.
- Ability to use digital copying, scanning, recording devices, and edit and upload digital content

Attitudes

- Demonstrates commitment to organization's mission, vision and values.
- Exerts strict adherence to rules, regulations and procedures.
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

Language

- Fluent in written and oral communication in Romanian and English; good proficiency in Russian.

Development and operational effectiveness

- Excellent interpersonal skills are essential part of the job. Good personality, dynamic and responsive, and ability to use initiative and work as a part of a team or independently are other essential qualities.
- Ability to work under pressure and to maintain deadlines

The applicant also must:

- Be a citizen of the Republic of Moldova, or a resident of the Republic of Moldova holding an appropriate work permit.

- Be of outstanding character and integrity.
- Be free of all conflicts of interest and committed to protecting the integrity of the Program.

Instructions for Submission of Applications

To be considered, applicants must submit the following information:

- 1) **Cover letter** (maximum three pages) addressing applicant's ability to perform duties and responsibilities as stated in the position description above.
- 2) **Curriculum Vitae**, not to exceed five (5) pages, showing at a minimum, the applicant's educational background including degree(s) obtained, professional experience in reverse chronological order, language proficiency, and any other relevant professional information.
- 3) **Professional References**: Names and contact information (telephone number(s) and email address) of three professional references in addition to anyone already listed in Item (2) above. Please clearly state the relationship of the professional reference to the applicant (e.g., supervisor, former colleague, other).
- 4) **Deadline for receipt** of the aforementioned information is July 19, 2012 at 17:00 in Chisinau, Moldova. Complete application packages must be expedited to:
Mail to: MCA Moldova
Iorga 21, Office 4
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova
(fax: +373 22 85 22 94)
Email to: office@mca.gov.md
- 5) **An email application** should specify the position name for which you are applying in the subject line of the email message. The application materials should be submitted as attachments in PDF format.
- 6) **If the applications are sent by mail**, the application package must be sent in an A4 envelope that is marked with a reference. This reference can include the name of the applicant or any other single reference chosen by the applicant. Applications submitted by fax will not be accepted.
- 7) **The cover letter and curriculum vitae must be submitted in English.**
- 8) **Short-listed applicants** will be contacted for interviews. Questions and/or phone inquiries from applicants prior to formation of the short-list will not be accepted.
- 9) **MCA-Moldova reserves the right** to contact applicant's listed references and any other relevant references that may aid MCA-Moldova in evaluating the applicant's qualification and suitability for the position.