



CONSULTANCY - TERMS OF REFERENCE

Innovation Specialist: Integration and Nodes Implementation

Division: Office of Innovation

Duration: 12 months (part-time, 200 days in a 12-month period)

Duty Station: Remote

Advertising summary

UNICEF's Office of Innovation seeks an experienced and technically skilled Innovation Specialist to engage with pioneering research institutions with the aim to explore, synthesize and disseminate cutting-edge research in new areas of innovation with potential impact for children and young people at scale.

Child Safeguarding

Is this project/assignment considered as "Elevated Risk Role" from a child safeguarding perspective?

☐ YES ☒ NO

If YES, check all that apply:

Direct contact role ☐ YES ☒ NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

NONE

Child data role ☐ YES ☒ NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

NONE

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](#) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](#)

UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. To save their lives. To defend their rights. To help them fulfill their potential.

Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, every day, to build a better world for everyone.

And we never give up.

For every child...innovate

UNICEF has a 70-year history of innovating for children. We believe that new approaches, partnerships and technologies that support realizing children's rights are critical to improving their lives.

The **Office of Innovation** is a creative, interactive, and agile team in UNICEF. We sit at a unique intersection, where an organization that works on huge global issues meets the start-up thinking, the technology, and the partners that turn this energy into scalable solutions.

UNICEF's Office of Innovation creates opportunities for the world's children by focusing on where new markets can meet their vital needs. We do this by:

- Connecting youth communities (or more broadly -- anyone disconnected or under-served) to decision-makers, and to each other, to deliver informed, relevant and sustained programmes that build better, stronger futures for children.
- Provoking change for children through an entrepreneurial approach -- in a traditionally risk averse field -- to harness rapidly moving innovations and apply them to serve the needs of all children.
- Creating new models of partnership that leverage core business values across the public, private and academic sectors in order to deliver fast, and lasting results for children.

The Office of Innovation specifically looks to form **partnerships around frontier technologies** (like drones and UAVs, blockchain, 21st century skills, urban technologies, new banking tools, wearables and sensors, or 3D-Printing) that exist at the intersection of \$100 billion business markets and 1 billion person needs – and to identify how they can grow and scale profitably and inclusively.

Our team

We're an interdisciplinary team around the world tasked with identifying, prototyping, and scaling new technologies and practices. With our partners, we focus on convening and collaborating on new and different solutions, low- and high-tech, by:

- **Looking** at the 2-5 year horizon to evaluate emerging and trending technologies and to see how UNICEF can work with the private sector on doing better business while improving essential services for children;
- **Investing** in early-stage solutions that show great potential to positively impact children in the 02 year future including the Venture Fund that invests in open source technology solutions from start-ups based in UNICEF's programme countries;
- **Identifying** proven solutions that can be implemented at national scale in multiple countries – taking the ideas that help thousands in one country, bringing them to dozens of countries across multiple sectors, and impacting the lives of millions of children."

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How can you make a difference?

UNICEF has embarked on a major initiative to reimagine its innovation function and ambition to achieve the SDGs for children. [UNICEF Global Innovation Strategy and Framework 2.0](#) sets the direction and outlines the deliberate choices that align innovation with UNICEF's strategic goals. The Office of Innovation (OOI) is accountable for implementing the strategy.

This strategy explicitly recognizes the role of an ideation phase, which is characterized by discovery, exploration and engaging with the research and development process and you can be part of the team that realizes this:

“Ideation Insights from this phase of the process will identify gaps and opportunities, and expose unproven approaches and technologies to be explored. Potential solutions will be co-created or discovered through scanning the horizon for new and existing ideas. Research and development will be undertaken to meet clearly defined requirements and gain an understanding of current and future demand.”

[Innovation Nodes](#) have been established as part of a new business architecture to enable UNICEF to engage with and learn from cutting edge research, ideas and networks that will contribute towards delivering better outcomes for children and achieving the child-related SDGs and goals beyond 2030. These are new types of collaborative arrangements that connect/embed UNICEF in locations with a critical gravity of research, development and deep expertise in key new and emerging technologies and other critical areas of knowledge.

Innovation Nodes are collaborative spaces that illuminate, probe, reflect and generate novel ideas and research in new and unknown areas of potential innovation for children. Node collaborations are with pioneering pre-eminent organizations with deep expertise and transdisciplinary capabilities.

Your main responsibilities will be:

The Innovation Specialist (Integration and Implementation) will provide intellectual and technical guidance on the identification, sourcing, coordination and amplification of Innovation Nodes; map and test innovative approaches to conducting (and facilitating transdisciplinary) research for innovation; harvest insights and measure impact, and produce high quality research and knowledge products for diverse, non-expert audiences that add value to UNICEF work as well as contributes to the global community of practioners in the development, humanitarian and social sectors. This work will contribute to growing UNICEF's global network of innovation collaborators. S/he will work directly with and under the overall supervision of the Senior Adviser on Innovation (HQ & Nodes).

Description of assignment

S/he will:

- Initiate and facilitate activities that enable collaborative engagement with pre-eminent research institutions and knowledge organizations, including identification and prospecting of entities and scanning for potential institutions and potential areas of investigation;
- Provide coordination support and technical guidance on the design, establishment and management of five (5) Innovation Nodes that focus on frontier research and emerging technologies (typically non-digital);

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- Engage with Node collaboration teams throughout the collaboration, including regular meetings with individuals and groups that may range from concepting to active exploration to brainstorming to guidance on programme of work and its project management, and providing substantive feedback.
- Undertake research/knowledge synthesis and generation and turn learnings and insights into compelling knowledge products suitable for UNICEF and the broader humanitarian and development community.
- Identify opportunities and creative ways to share knowledge products to inspire action, inform decision making and to amplify the value of Nodes.
- Promote and socialize transdisciplinary problem-solving and research methods.
- Monitor the results and impact of Innovation Nodes and support their review, and
- Advance and maintain the development of the Nodes alumni network across themes to demonstrate the value add of the Node network to generate novel collective learnings which are relevant to UNICEF.

| | Tasks | Deliverables/Outputs | Delivery deadline <small>Can be invoiced if deliverable completed to UNICEF's satisfaction in advance of delivery deadline</small> | % of payment |
|---|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Plan of work and KPI review and update | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and update Node plan of work, adopt rolling format with 12m-horizon - Update M&E KPI data | #1 End month 1 | 5% 10 days |
| 2 | Identify and support engagement of prospective Node collaborators and areas of exploration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify prospective collaborators - Examine substantive background of prospective entity, researchers and areas of connection on 2nd and 3rd innovation time horizon - Active engagement in exploratory meetings - Co-concepting, draft concept notes, potential plan of work, and other documentation that reflects the proposed Node collaboration | #2a Round 1 by end of month 2 #2b Round 2 by end of month 6 | 15% 30 days 15% 30 days |
| 3 | Research translation, knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active engagement with Node collaborators on their production of expert content for reports | All 5 to be completed by end of Month 12. | 60% (Total 120 days) |

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|---|---|--|--|---|
| | synthesis, generation and coproduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coproduction to draft and edit content sections e.g. summary - Turn learnings and insights into compelling knowledge products for UNICEF and the broader humanitarian and development community e.g. blogs, LinkedIn articles, reflections pieces, journal publications, case studies, infographics - Bring content together into one report and design template – Insight Report (~60-80 pages) and Insight Briefs (multiple 2 pagers accompany Reports) - Undertake quality assurance against UNICEF Stylebook, and relevant policies and processes (OOI will provide relevant reference documents.) - Project management and facilitate revision and review process | Estimated completion in months 4 (#3a), 7 (#3b), 9 (#3c), 10 (#3d), 11 (#3e). Deliverables should be invoiced upon completion to UNICEF's satisfaction of Insight Report or analogous format for each. | (12% invoiceable for each of the 5 Reports representing 24 days of work for each of the 5 product packages 12% x 5 = 60%) |
| 4 | Monitoring, value add and lessons learned | Draw together brief report reflecting on approach, results including KPIs, constraints, lessons learned and future improvements. | End month 12 | 5% 10 days |

To qualify as an advocate for every child you will have...

- An advanced university degree (PhD is preferred due to the level collaborators, applicability of previous advisory and research experience that this role requires) in humanities, social sciences, international development, innovation, business or other relevant field.
- A minimum of 8 years of relevant professional experience that preferably includes a mix of both direct experience working in development or humanitarian role(s) in a developing country context, as well as research and development experience in either academia or private sector lab.
- Experience and knowledge of innovation highly desirable
- Developing country work experience and/or familiarity with development and/or humanitarian contexts is considered an asset.
- High level of fluency in English required, in particular demonstrated expertise in research translation and science communication in English in a variety of formats is required. Knowledge of another official UN language (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish) or a local language is an asset.

Travel:

- No travel is planned for this consultancy. This is a part-time, remote consultancy.
- Should travel become necessary in the course of this consultancy, this contract will be amended and the consultant would be responsible to arrange his/her own travel, including visa and travel insurance.

Payment details and further considerations

- Payment of professional fees will be based on the submission of agreed deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant.

How to apply:

- Interest applicant is required to submit a financial proposal with all-inclusive fee. Please see the financial proposal template.
- Financial proposal must include travel costs (economy class) and daily subsistence allowance, if travel is required as per TOR and any other estimated costs: visa, travel/health insurance.
- **Applications without a financial proposal will not be considered.**

For every Child, you demonstrate...

UNICEF's values of Care, Respect, Integrity, Trust, Accountability, and Sustainability ([CRITAS](#)).

To view our competency framework, please visit [here](#).

UNICEF is here to serve the world's most disadvantaged children and our global workforce must reflect the diversity of those children. The UNICEF family is committed to include everyone, irrespective of their race/ethnicity, age, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, socio-economic background, or any other personal characteristic.

UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants/individual contractors with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.

UNICEF has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UNICEF, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination. UNICEF also adheres to strict child safeguarding principles. All selected candidates will be expected to adhere to these standards and principles and will therefore undergo rigorous reference and background checks. Background checks will include the verification of academic credential(s) and employment history. Selected candidates may be required to provide additional information to conduct a background check.

Remarks:

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and advance to the next stage of the selection process.

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures, and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

The selected candidate is solely responsible to ensure that the visa (applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.