Job Description – Project Officer – TIDE

About the Role

This is an exciting time to work for the International Development Office as we develop challenging and transformative international projects the Open University. The Postholder will have a chance to shape the future of Higher Education in emerging market economies and support the Open University to address global challenges.

The postholder will contribute to the delivery of the Transformation by Innovation in Distance Education (TIDE) project. One of nine partnerships supported by Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR). SPHEIR was established by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to deliver systemic and sustainable change within higher education systems. TIDE aims to catalyse Higher Education reform in Myanmar, through innovation and international collaboration in Distance Education that builds capacity in Open Distance Learning, focusing on Education for Environment and Sustainable Development; thereby supporting Myanmar progress towards Sustainable Development Goals.

The post holder will play a key role in the team in ensuring operational delivery of the project to time, specification and budget. This will include:

➢ Project managing events and workshops for large number of attendees both in the UK and ‘in country’.

➢ Contributing to overall project communications strategy and responsibility for implementing specific areas to audiences both in UK and ‘in country’.

➢ Creating, implementing and reviewing project-related processes and procedures.

➢ Supporting project Monitoring Evaluation and Learning.

Key Responsibilities

Project management/process set-up

1. To be responsible for constructing appropriate project processes and procedures in agreement with Project Manager and in compliance with IDO and OU systems, and the requirements of the relevant donor(s).

2. To ensure that specified project management tasks are completed. Anticipating future project issues; assessing impact if there is deviation from milestones and recognising when to escalate accordingly.

3. To be responsible for setting up electronic, and where required, hard copy, systems for filing and archiving and ensuring these procedures are used consistently at all times in compliance with OU, IDO and donor requirements.

4. To define international travel protocols in accordance with donor policies and using personal judgment to resolve issues.

5. To undertake procurement in accordance with OU and donor policies.
Monitoring Evaluation and Learning

6 To support the project's Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) activities, including planning, the development of data collection instruments, sampling, data analysis and report writing.

7 To monitor and evaluate progress and coherence with and contribution towards indicators of success, and set milestones.

8 To ensure the systems used to collect data on indicators and to generate relevant MEL reports comply with established quality standards.

9 Develop and use simple and value-adding monitoring strategies and tools.

10 Lead on the analysis, interpretation and reporting of MEL results, ensuring coherence with existing reporting requirements.

Communications strategy

11 To provide strategic input into planning of an overall project communications strategy.

12 To implement the project communications strategy.

13 To prepare reports and presentations to a high standard, ensuring that information is presented succinctly and is appropriate in style and tone for the intended audience.

14 To ensure OU and external stakeholder brand compliance for all materials, reports, presentations etc.

15 To write copy, for press-releases, newsletters and websites.

16 To undertake research about events and publications to establish whether project team should attendance and/or contributions would raise the profile of the project.

Financial and reporting:

17 To monitor project budget expenditure in liaison with the Senior Project Manager and IDO Accountant.

18 To provide training, guidance and support for the Project Coordinator in relation to the financial aspects of that role.

19 To set-up and oversee external consultancy contracts.

20 To support the management of 'in country' sub-contractors and other entities involved in the development and delivery of the project.

21 To contribute to the development of bids/proposals for potential funders. Collate and present financial data for reporting cycle to DfID appropriate for audience.

Delivering workshops, events and travel arrangements

22 To manage the planning and execution of events and workshops, which may include senior managers, senior university and government officials, both in UK and 'in country'. This will include venue research, negotiating preferential rates with suppliers, hotels etc., liaising with speakers and preparation of relevant documents/materials to schedule and budget, overseeing the work of the Travel Assistant with regard to international travel arrangements.

23 To manage visits to the OU involving senior managers and high level government officials etc.

Team working
To collaborate effectively with other team members and take responsibility for own contribution to team performance.

To build effective working relationships with internal colleagues and external stakeholders.

To adopt a flexible approach to task boundaries, but recognising where it is necessary to seek the expertise of others.

To provide cover if other team members are absent or unavailable, in order to ensure timely completion of tasks.

Carry out other tasks as specified from time to time by the TIDE Senior Project Manager.

To carry out other tasks as specified from time to time by the Director of International Development.

Other duties
All members of IDO staff are required to:

➢ Have a strong commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity.
➢ Take reasonable care of the Health and Safety of themselves and that of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
➢ Attend appropriate staff development events.

Skills and Experience

Essential

➢ First degree or equivalent
➢ Excellent IT skills with the ability to use a range of software including MS Office packages, websites and the internet
➢ Proven experience of working on projects; including having taken personal responsibility for planning and monitoring and evaluation of complex projects
➢ Strong administrative skills including experience of setting up new processes
➢ Budget management experience
➢ Relevant international work experience - experience in a MEL position responsible for implementing MEL activities of international development projects
➢ Excellent oral and written and IT communication skills
➢ Ability to digest new information quickly and to think logically and creatively to solve problems
➢ Ability to communicate clearly and appropriately to a wide range of audiences
➢ Ability to take initiative, makes sound judgment and create synergies.
➢ Ability to work autonomously and calmly under pressure
➢ Evidence of strong team working
➢ Excellent and flexible organisational skills; ability to manage a large and complex workload to a professional standard
➢ High level of accuracy with good attention to detail
➢ Awareness of and sensitivity to cultural diversity and customs
➢ High level of interpersonal skills to build strong working relationships with internal and external stakeholders

Desirable

➢ Ability to edit, update and maintain a website with links to other internet sources
➢ Experience of working on international development projects
➢ Experience in evaluation of higher education programmes.
➢ Experience of social networking in a professional context
➢ Experience of organising external events