

JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title:	Assistant Programme Officer
Division:	Youth Division
Job Grade:	Y (position is reserved for Young Professionals)

Reports to:	Director, Youth Division
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Young People in the Commonwealth

Young people (under 30) constitute more than 60% of the population of the Commonwealth, and the wellbeing and development of this 1.2 billion youth cohort are essential to the success of the Commonwealth and its 53 member states.

The Commonwealth sees young people as assets to their societies, with a proven capability to contribute to and lead change. It is vital to ensure they are developed and empowered to realise their individual potential, and to contribute to their countries' development and the success of the Commonwealth.

Accordingly, under its Young Professional Programme, the Commonwealth reserves a number of junior technical positions for young people.

Youth Division

The Youth Division (YTH) of the Commonwealth Secretariat, delivers the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), working with Commonwealth member governments, youth leaders and youth professionals on the development and implementation of policy and programmes for the empowerment of young people aged 15-29.

YTH focuses on areas of major political, economic and social importance to young people, based on mandates received from Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings and the Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan.

YTH aims to support member governments, youth leaders and youth professionals to create the optimum enabling environment for young people to participate as equal partners in development and democracy. YTH also facilitates and supports representative youth leaders to build national, regional and pan-Commonwealth networks and have a voice in decision making. As well as stand-alone initiatives, YTH partners with other Commonwealth Secretariat divisions to integrate a youth perspective across all key facets of the Commonwealth (economic, political, human rights etc.).

Job Summary

The Assistant Programme Officer is responsible for providing technical and administrative support to the Director, Youth Division. The Director is responsible for pan-Commonwealth and regional youth strategy, policy, programming and research. Responsibilities will include ensuring the smooth running of the Director's office, and contributing to strategic and technical youth development programmes and special projects.

Programmatic work includes:

- Advocacy, facilitation and support of Member Governments (and others) to build strong evidence-based, youth-centred policies, programmes and environments;
- Building the capacity and profile of Youth Ministries, Youth Workers & Youth Leaders, and supporting networks and platforms for their engagement;
- Connecting and convening experts and key stakeholders to collaborate and share knowledge on youth development; and
- Developing and demonstrating innovative youth development products and thinking.

The Assistant Programme Officer role is for a two-year term, as part of the Commonwealth Young Professionals Programme (YPP). Therefore, as well as the role described above, the Assistant Programme Officer will also participate in YPP professional development opportunities and experiences. He/she will also contribute to developing and strengthening the YPP. To be considered, candidates must be no older than 27 years old as the date of close of applications.

Key Accountabilities

1. Contributes to the YTH strategic direction and operational planning, especially with respect to youth programmes, and thereby the Commonwealth Secretariat 4-year Strategic Plan.
2. Supports youth programme delivery by:
 - Contributing to the development of context-specific research papers, toolkits, resources, guidelines and training programmes, for use by / with member governments, youth leaders and youth professionals;
 - Providing technical input to the design and delivery of programme activity such as events, meetings and workshops.
 - Providing input on design and delivery of special projects and events as requested by the Director, or agreed with Section Heads.
 - Researching and maintaining a calendar of key regional and global events, and coordinating recommendations for YTH engagement with same.
 - Contributing to timely and accurate research on youth programme design, development, impact and examples of best-fit practice.

3. Representing the Commonwealth Secretariat in youth networks, forums and meetings as delegated by the Director.
4. Supports the office of the Director, Youth Division by:
 - Providing administrative support, including coordination of meetings and travel, liaison with other divisions, correspondence, procurement and payments related to the Director's work.
 - Supporting the coordination of youth programme meetings, groups, networks, communities and on-line content, and providing administrative support to programme activity such as events, meetings and workshops.
 - Contributing to development of papers, speeches, presentations and talking points for the Director and other senior staff.
 - Attendance at technical and administrative meetings with or on behalf of the Director, to take minutes and follow up agreed actions as necessary.
 - Representing the Commonwealth Secretariat in youth networks, forums and meetings as delegated by the Director.
5. Participates in professional development opportunities as a participant of the Young Professionals Programme. Contributes to development / strengthening of the programme.
6. Adheres to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy.
7. Performs other duties as may be required from time to time.

Person Specification

This role forms part of the Young Professionals Programme (YPP), so to be considered candidates must be no older than 27 years old as at the close of applications.

Education

- A strong bachelor degree or equivalent in youth development, social sciences or international development.
- A relevant post graduate qualification highly desirable.

Experience - Essential

- At least one year of demonstrated work experience in the design and delivery of youth development and/or youth-led development programmes. The work experience may be gained through a combination of paid employment, volunteer, placement or internship positions.
- Sound and demonstrated knowledge of youth and/or social development.
- Demonstrated experience in stakeholder engagement

Experience - Desirable

- It is highly desirable that candidates will be able to demonstrate experience in a number of the following areas:
 - Cutting edge youth development practice
 - Partnership building
 - Leadership level involvement in a youth-led social change initiative or representative organisation.
 - Working in a developing country.
 - Working in/with Government, intergovernmental or international NGO organisations.

Skills

- High personal standards of excellence.
- Demonstrated commitment to Commonwealth values.
- Excellent:
 - Verbal and written communication skills in English.
 - Interpersonal skills.
 - Creative thinking and solution building abilities.
 - Strategic thinking and operational planning capabilities.
 - Analysis and synthesis skills
 - Administrative and organisational abilities, including an eye for detail.
- Numerically literate.
- Technologically savvy.
- Ability to work autonomously and in teams, and in a multi-cultural work environment.
- Demonstrated drive and initiative, a self-starter with a can-do attitude.
- High personal standards of excellence

Competencies

Working with Others

Regularly shares information of value with colleagues

Shows commitment to delivering on key agreements made to colleagues

Makes an effort to view a situation from the other party's perspective as well

Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity to colleagues' pressures

Develops a wide network, including senior level contacts to facilitate activities and further own knowledge

Develops long term relationships across cultures and/or geographical boundaries

Uses relationships to identify the best people to help in the completion of tasks

Tactfully deals with difficult people to gain buy-in and manage their expectations

Communication

Interacts and communicates effectively with internal/external contacts
 Ensures information is communicated to all the appropriate people
 Provides feedback to more senior colleagues effectively, providing justification where necessary
 Uses the correct method of communication, depending on the message and the audience
 Anticipates objections in dialogues and prepares convincing responses
 Writes reports and papers that are succinct accounts of key information

Developing & Applying Professional Expertise

Proactively identifies how to develop specialist knowledge
 Takes learning from previous experience and applies it appropriately
 Demonstrates willingness to learn new skills and/or approaches

Respect for Diversity

Works effectively with people from all backgrounds
 Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally
 Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making
 Examine own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group
 Identifies biases in systems & processes

Adhering to Principles and Values

Adapts professional style to suit different situations with different individuals where appropriate
 Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines
 Ensures timely delivery of outputs within defined cost and quality standard parameters

Adapting and Innovating

Recognises opportunities for improvement and proposes change with impact and effect
 Drives forward improvements and innovations within own area of responsibility, adding value where appropriate
 Quickly grasps new concepts and how to apply them
 Demonstrates flexibility e.g. by working beyond own remit in order to achieve an objective
 Will effectively reorganise activities when faced with changing contexts and demands
 Promotes new ideas that are picked up by senior colleagues
 Adapts personal style to meet the needs of others

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