

## JOB AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

---

**Job Title:** Head of Technical Assistance Unit

**Division:** Technical Assistance Unit

**Grade:** E

---

**Reports To:** Deputy Secretary-General, Corporate Affairs

---

### General information

The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) is the principal means by which the Commonwealth Secretariat delivers targeted development assistance to member countries. To address specific development challenges, the CFTC provides capacity-building and institutional strengthening assistance to member countries, particularly the 32 countries classified as small states, many of whom make up the 21 least developed and low-income countries across the Commonwealth. The CFTC works to enhance socio-economic progress by advancing democracy, good governance, human rights and the rule of law, human development, gender equality, youth empowerment, education, health and sport, among others.

The provision of assistance, through the provision of technical expertise from around the Commonwealth, is recognised as a key strength of the organisation. The timely and flexible delivery of this assistance in response to member states' needs and capacity development priorities is a key outcome within the Secretariat's current strategic plan.

The Technical Assistance Unit is responsible for management of long term technical assistance projects across all programmatic areas of the Secretariat. Working closely with all divisions of the Secretariat, TAU has responsibility for: Delivery of all long term technical assistance projects ensuring a results based management approach through robust project design, management, monitoring and reporting; advising divisions on technical assistance approaches and design; advising senior management on technical assistance policy; liaising with member country officials regarding Commonwealth assistance and their requirements; promoting good practice within the development assistance work of the Secretariat; and supporting the promotion of the Commonwealth's technical assistance work.

### Job Summary

The Head of the Technical Assistance Unit leads a flexible and responsive team of six specialist development practitioners and support staff and up to 50 field based technical experts. The Head also has responsibility for overseeing the development and implementation of a wide range of projects covering all the key areas of Commonwealth assistance, including: Rule of Law, Trade, Debt, Governance, Health, Education and Human Rights.



## The Commonwealth

The Head of TAU is responsible for one of the largest programme budgets (approx. GBP4 million per year) and is required to manage this budget transparently, equitably and efficiently to ensure full disbursement.

S/he is also responsible for overseeing the appraisal, design, execution, monitoring and, in consultation with the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division (SPED), the evaluation of technical assistance interventions.

The post holder will be required to advise and regularly update the Senior Leadership of the organisation, particularly the Deputy Secretaries-General on development assistance policy formulation, systems processes and procedures to ensure that the programmes of the Secretariat are delivered effectively and achieve evidence based results.

The job combines requirements for effective leadership and management skills, the ability to work closely and build relationships with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders at all levels, and a vision to implement and advance the Commonwealth's development objectives.

The Head reports directly to the Deputy Secretary-General, Corporate Affairs Group.

### **Task Description**

The post holder will be expected to perform the following roles:

#### *Senior Management of Secretariat*

- Is a member of Senior Management Group of the Commonwealth Secretariat, under the chair of the Secretary-General.
- Participates in the development of wider Secretariat strategies and policies
- Represents the Secretariat externally at a senior level, including from time to time be called upon to play a representational role on behalf of the senior leadership of the organisation.
- Provides advice to the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretaries-General on technical assistance interventions, policies and strategies.
- Performs other duties as assigned by the Secretary-General or Deputy Secretaries-General.

#### *Lead and Manage Technical Assistance Unit*

- Leads the delivery of results related to technical assistance and referrals under the Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan ensuring that interventions are undertaken in line with established principles, directives and expectations provided by the membership;
- Manage the resources of the Unit, including the strategic planning, budgeting, and financial management to ensure prudent utilisation of allocated resources and accountability for results;
- Oversee the design of appropriate interventions which are sustainable, measurable and compatible with principles of Results-Based Management;

- Lead the review and evaluation of requests and proposals submitted for consideration, as well as quality assure project documentation prepared within the Unit, analysing the technical soundness of each proposal including appropriateness of design, suitability of organisational structure and human resource capability necessary to achieve project objectives;
- Lead missions to review the effectiveness of the Secretariat's technical assistance interventions, including undertaking political economy analysis, progress assessments and mid-term evaluations.
- Develop and maintain effective working relationships within the Commonwealth Secretariat and with Member States in order to advance and sustain institutional development and capacity-building efforts;
- Establish and maintain strong working relationships with major donors and demonstrate value of CFTC through evidence based project results and effective programme performance.
- Oversee and encourage documentation of good practices and successful case studies and contribute to building the profile of the organisation;
- Lead the Unit and create an environment in which staff and experts in the field can achieve professional and personal goals, and in which they are motivated to contribute to the Secretariat, the implementation of its programmes and the development of its membership.
- Advise member governments and user institutions, the Secretariat and other senior colleagues regarding access to and implementation of CFTC.
- Develops strategic partnerships with multilateral and bilateral agencies, and Commonwealth professional associations.
- Advise senior management regarding appropriate improvements to the technical assistance policies and procedures, preparing draft policy papers and guidelines for consideration of Management from time to time;
- Adhering to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy; and
- Performing any other duties that may be required from time to time.

### **Person Specification**

#### **Education**

- A minimum of a Master's Degree in Development Studies/Management, Economics, or a related Social Science discipline, including proven specialist knowledge in the field of technical assistance and/or project management;

#### **Experience**

- A minimum of ten years experience with at least 8 years directly related and progressively senior work experience in international development, including



## The Commonwealth

a proven track record of working at the senior management level in a national civil service, international or non-governmental development organisation providing strategic advice and/or technical assistance in a developing country context.

- Proven track record of team-building, managing technical specialists and leading teams to produce high quality development results.
- Substantial expertise in project design, development, management and evaluation of technical assistance projects across a wide range of specialist areas.
- Effective management and leadership skills with the ability to plan and manage work and resources. People management skills with the ability to motivate staff, monitor and review performance and address poor performance
- Substantial experience working in developing countries and significant prior field-based experience.
- A broad understanding of development issues and good working knowledge of developing country governance systems.
- The capacity to work effectively with colleagues as well as senior officials and civil society partner from member countries, other international organisations, universities and strategic development institutions.
- Ability to effectively communicate complex issues and positions in writing and orally.

### Competencies:

#### 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.

Challenges others to rectify biases in behaviour, systems & process

#### Communication

Mentors a number of employees at a senior level

Recognises the talent in the Commonwealth Secretariat, seeking to develop, support, and grow it

Directs the energy of the organisation towards a common goal



## The Commonwealth

Provides an example to others by demonstrating moral courage in the face of challenging circumstances

### Planning & Analysis

Effectively assesses and advises on major programmes/activities at a divisional level

Balances focus in order to deliver both Commonwealth Secretariat and member states' goals

Ability to interpret incomplete and/or ambiguous information

Effectively analyses and assesses new or uncertain critical situations

### Adapting & Innovating

Identifies opportunities to improve divisional operations and effectively gains buy-in

Evaluates impact of improvement initiatives

Remains receptive to and encourages innovative ideas from more junior colleagues

Initiates change that will enable programme/team to fulfil objectives in light of changing circumstances

### Adhering to Principles & Values

Sets example and embodies Commonwealth Secretariat principles and values

Demonstrably protects the reputation of the Commonwealth Secretariat

Interprets and implements Commonwealth Secretariat principles and values

Ensures that division/programmes operate in a manner aligned to the values and principles of the organisation

### Leadership & Development

Mentors a number of employees at a senior level

Recognises the talent in the Commonwealth Secretariat, seeking to develop, support, and grow it

Directs the energy of the organisation towards a common goal

Provides an example to others by demonstrating moral courage in the face of challenging circumstances

Provide top level professional advice in strategic issues at management committee, board of governor & EXCO level. Lead on strategic issues.