

JOB DESCRIPTION

Junior Professional Officer, Access to Finance and Investment

Category / Staff Rules	Junior Professional Officer / P-2
Division / Section	Division of Enterprises and Institutions / Sector and Enterprise Competitiveness Section (DECI/SEC)
Duty station	Geneva
Comments	1 Year with possible extension

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT AND ORGANISATIONAL SETTING

The International Trade Centre (ITC) assists developing and transition economy countries to take advantage of expanding trade opportunities in an increasingly complex global environment. ITC supports Trade Impact for Good, promoting sustainable and inclusive development goals through trade.

This position is located in the Sector and Enterprise Competitiveness Section (SEC), Division of Enterprises and Institutions (DECI). SEC delivers market-driven solutions for SMEs' trade competitiveness by providing a full-service highly specialized portfolio of technical offerings focusing on international trade development. Its four pillars of delivery include:

- Strategy: Enterprise diagnostic, strategy and export management development that help SMEs "design for export"
- Operations: Quality, logistics, packaging services that help SMEs "produce to export"
- Markets: Marketing, branding, and e-solutions that help SMEs "connect to export"
- Resources: Talent management, access to finance and technology and linking with resources within ITC to optimize the technical assistance portfolio to "enable exports".

SEC leverages partnerships and networks to help scale-up and achieve broad-based outreach. This includes making better use of e-learning channels for delivery.

The goal of this job function is to support ITC' efforts in promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth by facilitating SME access to finance and investment opportunities in developing countries and underserved communities.

The role involves contributing to the design and implementation of programs and initiatives aimed at improving access to financial services, such as microcredit, small business loans, and investment opportunities. This includes conducting research, analysis, and assessments to identify barriers and challenges faced by individuals, households, and businesses in accessing finance and investment opportunities.

The role requires the JPO to work closely with various stakeholders, including governments, financial institutions, private sector entities, and civil society organizations, to develop and implement strategies and policies that foster an enabling environment for financial inclusion and responsible investment practices. The JPO's efforts will contribute to the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to poverty reduction, economic growth, and sustainable development. By facilitating access to finance and investment, the JPO will play a crucial role in empowering individuals,

communities, and businesses to unlock their economic potential, create employment opportunities, and drive sustainable development.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the overall guidance of the Senior Advisor, Access to Finance and Investment, and direct supervision of the Team Lead, SME Performance, the Junior Professional Officer will work on four key areas:

Strategic evolution of the practice area:

- Assist in the strategic repositioning of the practice area and contribute to developing implementation plans.
- Support networking and partnership initiatives with local and international business and investment communities.
- Participate in conferences, networking events, and webinars to promote access to finance initiatives.
- Assist in resource mobilization efforts for project implementation.

Implementation of projects:

- Contribute to the design of proposals and projects aimed at improving access to finance.
- Support project management and delivery across areas like green finance, fintech, and startup financing.

Update and upgrade of the technical portfolio:

- Assist in incorporating the innovations and developments in access to finance for SMEs into ITC's portfolio. This includes assisting with new lending and equity funding initiatives, innovative financing structures and instruments, new proxies for credit information, and changes in the legal and regulatory infrastructure.
- Support expanding services in sustainable finance, startup support, and financial technology.
- Assist in developing position papers and technical documents on new approaches to help enterprises build their financial resilience and recovery.
- Contribute to creating training materials for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), financial institutions, Business Support Organizations (BSOs), and policymakers.

Communication and visibility:

- Maintain the online presence of the Access to Finance and Investment sector, including ITC's website and social media platforms.
- Draft speeches and communications for senior management's public engagements.
- Perform any other related duties as required.

REQUIRED COMPETENCIES AND KNOWLEDGE

ITC'S VALUES are: Integrity, Professionalism, Respect for Diversity

ITC'S CORE COMPETENCIES are: Communication, Teamwork, Planning & Organizing, Accountability, Creativity, Client Orientation, Commitment to continuous learning, Technological awareness.

CRITICAL JOB-SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

- **Professionalism:** Knowledge and understanding of theories, concepts and approaches relevant to particular sector, functional area or other specialized field. Ability to identify issues, analyze and participate in the resolution of issues/problems. Ability to assist with data collection using various methods. Conceptual analytical and evaluative skills to conduct independent research and analysis, including familiarity with and experience in the use of various research sources, including electronic sources on the internet, intranet and other databases. Ability to apply judgment in the context of

assignments given, plan own work and manage conflicting priorities. Shows pride in work and in achievements; demonstrates professional competence and mastery of subject matter; is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; is motivated by professional rather than personal concerns; shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges; remains calm in stressful situations. Takes responsibility for incorporating gender perspectives and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in all areas of work.

- **Communication:** Speaks and writes clearly and effectively; listens to others, correctly interprets messages from others and responds appropriately; asks questions to clarify, and exhibits interest in having two-way communication; tailors language, tone, style and format to match audience; demonstrates openness in sharing information and keeping people informed.
- **Client Orientation:** Considers all those to whom services are provided to be “clients” and seeks to see things from clients’ point of view; establishes and maintains productive partnerships with clients by gaining their trust and respect; identifies clients’ needs and matches them to appropriate solutions; monitors ongoing developments inside and outside the clients’ environment to keep informed and anticipate problems; keeps clients informed of progress or setbacks in projects; meets timeline for delivery of products or services to client.

Knowledge and skills

- Knowledge of financial modelling and forecasting.
- Knowledge of accounting principles and practices.
- Knowledge of non-traditional financial players and financing instruments including equity, quasi equity, SAFE
- Understanding of credit risk analysis techniques.
- Knowledge of credit policies and lending criteria.
- Familiarity with credit scoring models.
- Knowledge of risk management principles and practices
- Knowledge of loan application processes.
- Understanding of loan products and structures.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Education

Advanced university degree in business administration, management, economics or a related field such as finance.

Note: A first level university degree with a relevant combination of academic qualifications and professional experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.

Experience

A minimum of two years of progressively responsible, relevant professional experience in project or programme management.

Experience in supporting MSMEs access finance and investment desirable.

Experience in carrying out analysing SME lending markets and diagnosing problems to effective lending and proposing technical solutions is desirable.

Experience in blended finance desirable.

Experience setting-up or managing grant schemes desirable.

Experience setting-up or managing loans or mini-loans schemes desirable.

Languages

Fluency in English (both oral and written) is required; knowledge of French and/or Spanish is desirable. Knowledge of another UN official language is an advantage.

LEARNING ELEMENT

The JPO in the Access to Finance and Investment team at ITC will gain invaluable hands-on experience working on initiatives that facilitate access to finance and investment opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing economies. The JPO will gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by SMEs in accessing finance and the strategies employed by international organizations to address these barriers.

He or she will have the opportunity to work closely with experts in the field, learning from their knowledge and expertise in areas such as financial inclusion, responsible investment, and sustainable development. Through this exposure, the JPO will develop a deep understanding of the various financial instruments, investment models, and policy frameworks that can be leveraged to support SME growth and economic development.

Additionally, the JPO will gain practical experience in conducting research, data analysis, and project management, as you contribute to the design and implementation of ITC's programs and initiatives. This hands-on involvement will allow the JPO to develop essential skills in project planning, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring and evaluation.

Furthermore, as part of the ITC team, the JPO will have the chance to collaborate with a diverse range of stakeholders, including government agencies, financial institutions, private sector entities, and civil society organizations. This cross-sectoral collaboration will provide the JPO with valuable insights into the different perspectives and approaches to addressing financial and investment challenges, fostering a holistic understanding of the complex ecosystem.

Throughout the assignment, the JPO will also benefit from professional development opportunities, such as participating in training sessions, workshops, and mentorship programs designed for beneficiary SMEs, which will enhance his or her technical and soft skills, paving the way for a successful career in international development and finance.

Overall, the JPO experience at ITC's Access to Finance and Investment team will equip the JPO with a unique combination of theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and a global perspective, positioning him or her as a well-rounded professional in the field of access to finance and investment for sustainable economic growth.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The JPO will join the Access to Finance and Investment team within the SME Performande Unit of the Sector and Enterprise Competitiveness Section (SEC). The Access to Finance and Investment JPO will work closely with other SEC experts, including experts in supply chain management, packaging, quality, continuous improvement, export strategy and startup development.

Based on the JPO's prior experience, knowledge, and command of languages, he or she will be involved in various projects across anglophone and francophone Africa, Asia, and Latin America.