

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER REQUEST

General Information

Post Title: JPO - Associate Programme Officer – Greener Cities
Partnership/Integrated Urban Planning
Office/Division/MEA UNEP Climate Change Division/ Mitigation Branch
Unit Cities Unit
Location: Paris, France
Duration: Two years

Background information on UN Environment Programme and the requesting Unit

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the United Nations system's designated entity for addressing environmental issues at the global and regional level. Its mandate is to coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action. UNEP works to encourage decision makers in government, local authorities and industry to develop and adopt policies, strategies and practices and technologies that promote efficient use of natural resources, circularity in different economy sectors and in cities, climate adaptation and mitigation, sustainable patterns of consumption and production. UNEP also promotes the development, use and transfer of policies, technologies, economic instruments, managerial practices and other tools that assist in environmentally sound decision making and the building of corresponding activities.

The UN Environment Programme's Cities Unit works to increase the number of decision makers, city planners, and city practitioners that identify, develop, and implement actions that are influenced by research and science-based policy making and prioritize integrated approaches for sustainable urban planning and management, including using nature-based solutions. This approach which is reflected in the UNEP Greener Cities Partnership which was established in 2018 jointly with UN-Habitat. The Greener Cities Partnership supports cities in their efforts to become more resilient to disasters and climate change.

The UNEP Greener Cities Partnership also supports implementation of the Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025 that highlights approaches to addressing challenges related to the "triple planetary crisis" related to the climate change, loss of biodiversity and pollution. The Greener Cities Partnership supports therefore cities in their efforts to promote low-carbon, resilient, and resource efficient city planning and design.

Support to nature-positive, net zero, resilient cities through the UNEP Greener Cities Partnership provides an opportunity to empower communities in taking action to achieve climate goals and localise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and support implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The Cities Unit through the Greener Cities Partnership programme is promoting integrated approaches to urban planning and people-centered and sustainable neighbourhood design. This work is supported through the GEF-funded UrbanShift programme and Generation Restoration project funded by the Government of Germany.

Since its establishment, the Partnership was in its pilot phase to test the approaches in a few cities of the UrbanShift programme. At the COP-28, the Member States expressed the need to further strengthen cooperation with cities globally on greener, nature-based solutions for better quality of life of people; and on stronger integration of the resilient cities approaches in all cities. There is a need to expand the partnership to a larger group of cities and partners (UN agencies, national governments, experts) and therefore there is a need to strengthen the offer of the UNEP Cities Unit to cities across the globe to support the “greener cities” solutions.

There is also a need to strengthen partnerships with other existing workstreams and activities.

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The work on strengthening of the UNEP Greener Cities Partnership builds on and leverage several workstreams, including:

- Walking, cycling and e-mobility (Mobility Unit)
- Urban food systems and urban and peri-urban agriculture (Cities Unit)
- Nature-based solutions and ecosystems restoration (Cities Unit; Ecosystems Division)
- Ecosystem based adaptation and cities (Adaptation Unit/Ecosystems Division)
- District Energy and Cooling (Cities Unit)
- Net-zero buildings (Cities Unit / Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction)
- Circular Economy and food waste prevention (Cities Unit; R&M Branch)
- Lifestyles (Resources and Market Branch)

Beyond UNEP, the Cities Unit also works closely with partners such as UN Habitat, FAO, ICLEI, C40 Cities, the World Resources Institute, as well as a broader group of NGOs and private sector representatives.

Tapping into the expertise within these existing work streams, the Cities Unit is building an integrated offer for cities to tackle the opportunity to promote cities resilience and climate neutrality.

Why is the Junior Professional Officer requested/needed?

The Associate Programme Officer will support efforts of the Cities Unit on strengthening the Greener Cities Partnerships by conducting a survey of cities that participated in the Cities Unit projects so far, based on the survey formulating an integrated offer for greener cities and neighbourhoods; and organizing a campaign to invite many more cities and partners to the UNEP Greener Cities Partnership. He/she will focus on engaging cities, other teams within UNEP, other UN agencies, partners, and private sector stakeholders to further development the UNEP Greener Cities Partnership to promote integrated approaches for low-carbon, resource efficient, and resilient cities.

Supervision

The Associate Programme Officer will be working under the direct supervision of Sharon Gil, Programme Manager (Cities Lead), Cities Unit, Industry and Economy Division. The Associate Programme Officer's performance will be appraised through the organization's e-Performance system. Additional details are provided in the section below.

First reporting officer:

Sharon Gil Programme Manager
Industry and Economy Division
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Second reporting officer:

Gulnara Roll, head of Cities Unit
Industry and Economy Division
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Additional reporting officer

Jessica Troni, Head of Adaptation Unit
Ecosystems Division
jessica.troni@un.org

Content and methodology of the supervision

With support from the second reporting officer as needed, the first reporting officer will:

- Introduce the Associate Programme Officer to the work of the Cities Unit and the Branch, especially its cities portfolio, and the specific elements for which he or she would be responsible.
- General objectives, desired results and anticipated problems will be discussed beforehand with the JPO. A workplan will be discussed and established within the first three months of the assignment.
- Meet weekly with the Associate Programme Officer to assess progress regarding the duties assigned to him or her, review problems encountered, gauge his or her job satisfaction, professional development, and learning objectives.
- Meet twice a year with the Associate Programme Officer for a more formal discussion and evaluation of work progress.
- Provide regular feedback, guidance and mentoring about work-plan development and project implementation.
- It is expected that the supervision provided will be more frequent in the first year of the JPO assignment to consider the needs for the JPO to get used to his/her new working environment. The JPO will be supported by a Buddy and a Mentor who will be identified within the Unit Team prior to the beginning of his/her assignment.

Duties, responsibilities and output expectations*Terms of reference*

Under the supervision of the Cities Lead at the Cities Unit, the Associate Programme Officer will support UNEP's sustainable urban development portfolio and will strengthen UNEP's capacity to address the transversal issues around integrated urban planning, such as mobility, food, energy, lifestyles. Activities to achieve this objective will include the following:

Research and tool development

- Under the supervision of respective project managers, liaise with organizations, universities, industry partners, national and local governments, and research institutions around the world to develop knowledge products and tools, and pilot practical examples to support the emergence of green and thriving neighborhoods.
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- With the support of both Nature for Climate Branch and Mitigation Branch make contributions to the normative framework of the Loss and Damage fund as cities are by virtue of population concentration, heavily exposed both to Economic and non-economic losses and damages.

Networking and coordination

- Support the organization of conferences designed to advocate for integrated approaches at city level and green and thriving neighbourhoods. Tasks will include but are not limited to preparing inputs to briefings and presentations, draft concept papers and event agendas.
- Work with C40 and UN Habitat on scaling up the Greener Cities Partnership, including through fundraising efforts
- Support the set-up of a secretariat for the Green Cities Partnership
- Ensure alignment of the work with other UNEP teams and networks, such as for the urban food systems, urban agriculture and food waste prevention with the One Planet Sustainable Food Systems Programme and Urban Food Systems Coalition.

Project management

- As appropriate and relevant, support project development work led by the Cities Unit and Adaptation Teams and liaise with other teams within UNEP; sister agencies active in this space, particularly UN-Habitat; and city networks, particularly ICLEI, C40 and WRI
- Support to project management, awareness raising and administration for related projects
- Undertake any other duties and responsibilities within the incumbent's expertise that can be expected to help maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the inter-agency response to sustainable urban development issues.
- Assist in other Unit activities deemed necessary.

Output expectations

- National and local governments, international and national buildings and construction companies are aware of and engaged in UNEP-led programmes working towards low-carbon, resilient, and resource efficient cities.
- Knowledge products and case studies developed; key messages disseminated.
- Additional cities are supported to pilot integrated planning approaches,
- Sustainable urban planning and climate resilience solutions are mainstreamed into the projects, such as urban gardens and green infrastructure.

Travel

Missions and travel envisaged during first year of assignment

Two to four missions

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Two to four missions

Training and Learning Elements

Training

The Associate Programme Officer will be provided with training (language, computer, gender equality, and security training as well as support for specific professional development areas) depending on specific personal needs considering work requirements. Training will also

include technical components of climate change mitigation issues and energy efficiency related to cities and buildings, as well as urban energy systems, depending on needs. In addition, the UNESCO staff training unit in Paris offers a wide variety of courses available to UN staff.

Learning elements

After one year the Junior Professional Officer will:

- Have a comprehensive overview of UNEP's urban portfolio as well as multi-level governance and public private partnerships, as well as key challenges and opportunities faced by developing countries and emerging economies in meeting the UNFCCC climate objectives, objectives under other key multi-lateral environmental agreements as they intersect with the portfolio, and national and sub-national government's own commitments.
- Have a deep understanding of the role of UNEP within the UN system and have gained familiarity with UN rules and regulations.
- Have a good understanding of efforts by international organizations, NGOs, and industry groups working towards a low carbon, resilient, and resource efficient cities.
- Enhance his/her negotiating, editing, writing, reporting, organizational, and evaluation skills.

After two years the Junior Professional Officer will have:

- Gained experience working with the many actors and partners in the sustainable urban development space, especially in sustainable buildings and construction and urban energy.
- A deep comprehension of the various policy, technology, and investment mitigation options as well as of best practices, opportunities, and challenges for achieving low-carbon, resource efficient, and resilient cities, buildings, and integrated urban energy systems.
- Acquired knowledge on and contributed to the cutting-edge area of integrated urban planning, contributing to UNEP's resource efficiency and climate sub-programmes, with the overall objective of enhancing the scope, relevance, and efficacy of UNEP's activities.

Qualifications and experience

Educational qualifications

- Graduate degree(s) in urban planning, architecture, law, environmental management economics, physics, chemistry, or engineering. Other academic fields of relevance to the position will be considered.

Skills

- Excellent analytical, communication, planning and organization skills.
- Fluency in English, both written and spoken is required; a working knowledge of French and/or other UN languages would be an asset.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relations within a multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary working environment.

Work experience

- Relevant work experience of not less than three years at the national level or two years at the international level in sustainable cities, circular economy, urban planning and

implementation of environment-related programmes, projects and activities. Prior experience in climate change, circular food systems and/or resource efficiency issues is advantageous.

- Experience in working with emerging economies and in developing country contexts would be an advantage.

Competencies required

- *Professionalism* Shows pride in work and in achievements; is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges and remains calm in stressful situations.
- *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; demonstrates openness in sharing information and keeping people informed, Excellent drafting ability and communications skills, both oral and written; proven ability to communicate complex concepts orally; ability to prepare written reports that are clear, concise and meaningful
- *Teamwork* Works collaboratively with colleagues to achieve organizational goals; is willing to learn from others; places team agenda before personal agenda; supports and acts in accordance with final group decision, even when such decisions may not entirely reflect own position; shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings.
- *Planning and organizing* Able to develop clear goals that are consistent with agreed strategies; identifies priority activities and assignments; identifies priority activities and assignments; allocates appropriate amount of time and resources for contingencies in planning; monitors and adjusts plans and actions as necessary; uses time efficiently.