

Call for proposal

European Integration and Local Governance Expert

About SALAR International & its engagement in Ukraine

SALAR International is a subsidiary of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), representing all 290 municipalities and 21 regions in Sweden. As the international branch of SALAR, we work globally to support local democracy and good governance in developing and transitioning countries. Our expertise covers areas such as capacity building in municipal management and service delivery, local and regional development planning, support for local government associations, decentralisation policies and European integration. Geographically, SALAR International's projects cover countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, the Middle East and the Sub-Saharan Africa.

SALAR International has been engaged in Ukraine since 2014, providing support to Ukraine's decentralisation process through three major initiatives focusing on building a robust multi-level governance system, increasing accessibility and quality of services at the local level, and enhancing international cooperation between municipalities from Ukraine and the EU. After the full-scale invasion, SALAR International has added crisis support to Ukrainian municipalities, providing them with material assistance.

Description of the assignment context

SALAR International has finalised its former projects in Ukraine (DSP and Prosto), initiated before the full-scale invasion. To address the changing needs of Ukrainian municipalities and national actors during wartime, a new multi-level program is ongoing, financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The programme **"Polaris: Supporting Multilevel Governance in Ukraine"** - is planned for four years (July 2024-May 2028), but activities are currently outlined for the first 24 months. The programme works with both short and long-term focus on addressing the needs of the multi-level governance system in Ukraine and in parallel strengthen municipalities' public service provision, as well as their direct engagement in the recovery and reconstruction process, in line with the requirements of EU accession.

The programme consists of two components: one focusing on policy and collaboration with national actors, and the other providing direct support to municipalities. It encompasses five thematic areas: Education, Fiscal Decentralisation and Budgeting, Administrative Service Provision, Locally-led Recovery, and International Municipal Cooperation. The programme will procure material support to address the crisis needs of municipalities and coordinate with other international actors to finance the implementation of recovery plans.

Organisational set up

The programme is a joint Swedish-Ukrainian initiative with management structures in both Stockholm and Kyiv. It encourages a flat organisational structure, meaning a high degree of autonomy and responsibility for involved experts, as well as strong local ownership among beneficiaries such as national stakeholders and Ukrainian municipalities.

The programme currently has around 45 long-term experts and it is expected that more than 50 people will be working full-time in Ukraine within various thematic teams as well as support units.

The programme has its office in Kyiv but is implementing activities in all regions controlled by the Ukrainian government.

The **European Integration and Local Governance Expert** is a position within the thematic team “International Municipal Cooperation” which consists of 3 long-term consultants and additional short-term support personnel. The team of this thematic area is primarily done under the framework of the initiative “Cities4Cities” of which SALAR International is a co-founder. Cities4Cities has its office in Lviv, thus it is preferable that the expert is able to work from Lviv a majority of the time.

Role description

The role **European Integration and Local Governance Expert** will work to strengthen the capacities and increase the opportunities of Ukrainian municipalities and their associations to engage in international, primarily EU-level, activities, and for long-term relations with EU-peers. The role entails working on the Polaris programme while specifically focusing on the 'Cities4Cities' initiative www.cities4cities.eu, facilitating the development of municipal partnerships between Ukrainian and other European municipalities and supporting Ukrainian municipalities in their international collaboration efforts.

SALAR International seeks someone with deep knowledge of EU decision-making processes and regional policies, capable of actively engaging with EU institutions and stakeholders involved in Ukraine’s EU integration. The expert will facilitate communication between Ukrainian local governance leaders and EU institutions, ensuring the prominent role of Ukrainian local governance in the EU negotiation and accession process. The role also includes promoting EU funding opportunities and territorial cooperation initiatives.

Main responsibilities:

- Create tailored activities to address the needs, challenges, and opportunities of Ukrainian local governments in the EU integration process effectively giving particular attention to Local Government Associations (LGAs).
- Support the development of long-term partnerships between Ukrainian and EU municipalities within the Cities4Cities initiative.
- Organise meetings, trainings, and mentorship sessions for Ukrainian municipalities on EU integration-related topics. In particular develop and implement capacity building activities such as online courses on EU integration tailored for Ukrainian municipalities.
- Follow developments in the EU integration of Ukraine and analyse their impact on local self-governments. Prepare analytical materials and advocate on the role of local self-governments in the EU integration process.
- Promote increased contacts between Ukrainian local governments, European local governments and EU institutions using relevant events to bring together local governments and highlight their particular experiences and role in EU integration.

- Follow the Committee of Regions' Alliance for the reconstruction of Ukraine and represent the project in relevant forums.
- Promote EU funding opportunities for Ukrainian local governments and provide advisory support in application processes.
- As possible, share knowledge with and include other thematic areas of work of the POLARIS programme in a joint approach to EU integration.

Qualifications:

- University degree in relevant academic field; for example political science, international relations, public administration or law;
- Experience from ministries, public administrations, EU institutions or international organisation. In particular experience working with Ukrainian or EU legislative or governance processes;
- Familiarity with EU accession negotiation frameworks;
- Familiarity with local self-governments;
- Experience in policy analysis and advocacy;
- Previous experience of working with donor-funded projects;
- Good oral and written communication and public presentation skills;
- Previous experience in organising events or online courses;
- Fluent Ukrainian;
- Fluent English, ability to communicate with international experts without the intermediary of an interpreter.

Merits:

- Knowledge European cooperation frameworks and programmes will be considered an asset;
- Previous experience of EU funded projects on local governance or civil society level;
- Established working contacts with EU institutions;
- Project management skills;
- Strong facilitation skills;
- Knowledge of other foreign languages besides English.

Selection Criteria:

The selection of candidates will be based on the following criteria: understanding of Ukrainian municipalities' role in EU integration, previous work experience, networking and communication skills, motivation.

Diversity and equal opportunities

SALAR International embraces diversity and respects human rights in all areas of its work. SALAR International strives to create a gender-equal and diverse working environment. Team members shall respect equal rights of individuals and strive to create an atmosphere where people's differences are accepted and valued. SALAR International supports working arrangements that enable personnel to combine work with family commitments.

Duration: 12 months part-time (75%). This position is a temporary role to cover responsibilities during a maternity leave. Extension of contract is possible.

Location: Lviv, Ukraine with possible travels within EU.

Application: To be sent to ukraine@salarinternational.se by 9 March 2025.