

Open call – various experts to support Locally-Led Recovery in Ukraine

Polaris: Supporting Multilevel Governance in Ukraine 2024-2028

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

To address the changing needs of Ukrainian municipalities and national level stakeholders during wartime, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) in 2024 initiated a broader programme in support of multilevel governance and recovery. This programme is called **“Polaris: Supporting Multi-level Governance in Ukraine”**. It is implemented by SALAR International and planned for four years (July 2024-May 2028).

The programme aims to work 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 processes, in line with the requirements of EU accession.

The programme's support is channelled through two operational components: one focusing on policy and collaboration with national stakeholders, and the other providing direct support to municipalities. The support encompasses five thematic areas: Education, Fiscal Decentralisation and Budgeting, Administrative Service Provision, Locally-Led Recovery, and International Municipal Cooperation. In addition, the programme will provide material support to meet short-term material crisis needs of municipalities. For more long-term material support and funding of implementation of recovery plans, the programme will coordinate with other international actors and funding institutions.

To uphold previous gains in Ukraine's decentralisation process, it will be important for Municipalities to demonstrate that they can lead local recovery and reconstruction efforts, in dialogue with their respective communities, as well as regional and national authorities. However, many Municipalities in Ukraine do not possess adequate spatial or strategic planning capacity. To overcome this gap,

technical assistance is needed to support local planning processes, including the identification of bankable recovery and reconstruction projects.

The work within the Polaris Programme's thematic area "Locally-Led Recovery" will focus mainly on recovery planning in 12 selected partner municipalities directly affected by the Russian aggression. A strong emphasis will be placed on:

- Local ownership of the process by Municipalities
- Evidence-based formal spatial planning and strategic recovery planning drawing from a range of data sources
- Holistic and integrated planning
- Sustainability perspectives and future-oriented scenario planning
- Establishment of synergies between local and regional planning

Based on the recovery planning process, Municipalities will be supported to identify projects that address specific service delivery and infrastructure priorities. Projects should be catalytic by nature, with the aim of stimulating local recovery, as well as further recovery financing. SALAR International will assist Municipalities to follow, and ensure mechanisms to report back to the community on, specific project implementation.

The pilot methodology will be iteratively developed, based on internationally recognised approaches to resilience, recovery and sustainable urban development, tailored to the Ukrainian context and taking account of Ukrainian urban planning and local development legislation, in coordination with the Ministry for Development of Communities and Territories of Ukraine. Based on the pilots, SALAR International and partners will also engage in national policy dialogue on the framework for recovery and reconstruction, also considering the requirements of Ukraine's EU integration process.

The support to selected municipalities will be ongoing from April 2025 to June 2026.

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.

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 thematic team for Locally-led Recovery currently consists of 6 people, but the team will be expanded through recruitment of thematic experts as well as supported by procurement of implementing partners as needed.

The Polaris programme has its office in Kyiv but will implement activities in all regions controlled by the Ukrainian government.

Role description

This open call is for experts within the fields of recovery and spatial planning, capacity development in the context of recovery, environment, local economic development, data management and analysis and any other field related to local and municipal recovery.

As part of the implementation of the Locally-Led Recovery programme, we are seeking both experts that will contribute in the development of local spatial and recovery documents, as well as provide

overall thematic input on specific thematic areas helping to shape both methodology, analysis and planning outcomes.

We are seeking experts for both short- and longer-term engagements in Ukraine.

Qualifications

- University degree in architecture, urban planning and design, urban or land management, economy, geography, regional planning, sociology, public policy or a related field;
- Strong analytical, communication, and project management skills, enabling successful execution of complex, multi-stakeholder initiatives.
- A minimum of five years of relevant professional work experience in urban development, spatial planning, local economic development, environmental assessments, strategic planning on municipal level, urban data analysis, recovery planning or a related field;
- Strong command of Ukrainian as working languages, ability to deliver documents and professional discussion.

Merits

- Knowledge of and interest in local self-governance and decentralisation reform processes in Ukraine;
- Knowledge of Ukrainian legislation in the field of strategic planning at the local level and spatial planning;
- Proven experience in producing rigorous analysis, including with visualisation.
- Experience of capacity building processes targeting Municipalities;
- Experience in elaboration urban planning documentation on local level, Comprehensive Recovery Programmes, Concepts of Integrated Urban Development in Ukraine;
- Experience of data-driven urban planning projects/processes, including software for urban planning (e.g. GIS, data analysis, visualization and production of maps);
- Previous work for Municipalities and programmes of international technical support.
- Experience in supporting Municipalities with analysis and planning within the fields of local economic development, environmental assessments, housing, land and property issues, data management and other related fields.
- Command of English as working language

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.

Conditions

A consultancy contract will be signed between SALAR International and the expert which will outline the terms of reference for the work. Please note this tender is not for an employment position, meaning that applicants must be established as consultants and will be liable to pay all relevant taxes and insurances in Ukraine.

A competitive consultancy fee will be offered to successful candidates.

Duration: to be deemed based on identified needs, and expertise

Location: Ukraine

Application Instructions: Interested and qualified candidates should send their CV, motivation letter and sample of relevant project experience to: ukraine@salarinternational.se. Please indicate in the subject line "Open Call Locally-Led Recovery".

Deadline: this is an open call which will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

If you have any questions or clarifications, please contact ukraine@salarinternational.se.

Personal information provided by the applicant during the selection process will be processed by SALAR International.

www.polaris.org.ua