

Terms of References Communication Specialist

Polaris Programme: Support to multi-level governance in Ukraine

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) has 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).

Polaris Programme aims to work with both short and long-term focus, addressing the needs of the multi-level governance system in Ukraine and in parallel strengthening municipalities' public service provision, as well as their direct engagement in the recovery and reconstruction processes, in line with the requirements of Ukraine's EU accession.

The Programme's support is provided 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.

Communication is a cross-cutting function of the Programme and is being implemented in line with the principles of transparency, inclusiveness, and results-based communication applied by Sida and SALAR International. It contributes to a clear, consistent, and accessible presentation of the Programme's activities and results for different target audiences.

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 Programme has its office in Kyiv but the support and activities target local self-government in all regions of Ukraine and will be implemented in all regions controlled by the Ukrainian government. The support is provided on demand, in most cases through open calls.

Role description

The Communication Specialist is part of a communication team consisting of three members. The work will be conducted under the supervision of the Communication Lead and in collaboration with the Communication Specialist and will include collaboration with Ukrainian and international experts from all thematic areas as well as with other Programme units, to ensure that communication activities are aligned with the communication strategy, enhance Programme visibility and achieve good coverage among the target groups.

Main responsibilities:

- Contribute to and implement the Programme's communication strategy,
- Manage the webpage and social media of the Programme,
- Draft and manage content development (e.g. press releases, articles, visual and video materials, etc.),
- Plan and organise communication events (e.g. press conferences, briefings, etc., both off- and on-line formats),
- Support thematic teams in external communication during their events, including visibility, drafting, editing, and sharing related news,
- Manage and develop designated thematic areas,
- Identify and manage vendors for various communication activities,
- Contribute to analysing media reach out to various target groups and reporting upon request,
- Work closely with the administrative and logistics unit to ensure high quality production of visibility materials,
- Ensure gender-sensitive external communication in cooperation with a gender expert.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in journalism, communications or equivalent (Master degree is a strong asset),
- At least 2 years of relevant professional experience of performing tasks similar to the responsibilities described for this position,
- Proficient in developing efficient and engaging content,
- Experience in liaising and co-operating with vendors, media, government officials, NGOs and the private sector,

- Proven ability to use creative and effective communication tools,
- Excellent communication skills, including storytelling and report writing,
- Experience of managing webpages/social media,
- Fluency in Ukrainian,
- Good level of English.

Merits:

- Knowledge of and interest in local self-governance and national reform processes in Ukraine,
- Experience of working in international organisations/companies.

Selection Criteria: The selection of candidates will be based on the following criteria: professional experience, communication skills, ability to work in the office in Kyiv and travel in Ukraine.

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.

Location: Kyiv. The ability to be physically present at the programme office is required. Travel within Ukraine is required.

Duration: part-time or full-time until May 2026, with the possibility of extension for one more year.

Application: Send your application with max 3 page CV and max 1 page cover letter (in PDF) to ukraine@salarinternational.se. Please include a portfolio of relevant work samples (as links or a PDF). Note "Communication Specialist Polaris" (ENG) in the subject line.

Only shortlisted applicants will receive a response by email once the recruitment process has been finalised. Applications will be considered on a rolling basis.

For any questions or clarifications, please contact: ukraine@salarinternational.se.

Personal information provided by the applicant in the recruitment process will be handled by SALAR International.

Deadline: 1 February 2026.