BACKGROUND

EDUCATION GLOBAL PRACTICE

Education is central to achieving the World Bank Group’s (WBG) twin goals: it is a reliable route out of poverty and a prime vehicle for promoting shared prosperity. The main challenge in the education sector is to achieve “learning for all, learning for life” by ensuring that all children and young people acquire the knowledge and skills they need for their lives and livelihoods. The developing world has achieved great advances in education in the past two decades, most notably in enrolling and keeping children in school and in addressing gender equality. But challenges remain—among them are how to overcome educational barriers faced by the poorest people and those living in fragile states and how to improve the quality of education so that schooling leads to real learning.

The WBG and the broader education development community are increasingly shifting focus to helping improve learning outcomes for all. Because traditional input-driven programs often fail to promote learning, the WBG’s education strategy highlights the need for a more comprehensive “systems approach” to education reform. This approach is about increasing accountability for results as a complement to providing inputs. It also requires strengthening the knowledge base on education to highlight where systems are achieving results, where they are falling short, and what the most effective solutions are targeted to each country context or situation. These efforts are increasingly guided by the need to invest early; invest smartly; and invest for all. Through high-quality analytical work, collection and curation of evidence, and practical know-how in these areas, the WBG is helping its partner countries accelerate their educational progress.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIT

The Education Global Practice is seeking a Junior Professional Officer to be based in WBG Headquarters in Washington DC to support the work of the Global Practice in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Region. The ECA Region comprises 30 diverse client countries with a total population of nearly 500 million. The region spans 13 time zones and a broad range of economic development levels. It includes low-income, middle-income, and high-income clients facing a wide variety of policy challenges. Our Country Partnership Frameworks (CPF) reflect this diversity with substantial variation in the modes of engagement across the different countries—from portfolios full of lending engagements to those dominated by Advisory Services and Analytics (ASA) and Reimbursable Advisory Services (RAS).

Staff in the ECA Education Team typically engage with clients in in-depth technical assistance and policy discussions; design, supervise and evaluate education sector projects; and lead and contribute to
analytical products, such as Education Sector Policy Studies, Public Expenditure Reviews, Impact evaluations, Country Economic Memoranda, Social Assessments, Institutional Assessments, and flagship Regional Studies. They also lead and contribute to multi-sectoral lending operations and knowledge products in collaboration with other Global Practices and units. Policy dialogue is often centered on topics dealing with impact evaluation, economics of education, skills for competitiveness, and education sector service delivery—including quality, relevance, efficiency, access, and financing of education. The ECA Education portfolio also includes a significant number of country-financed Reimbursable Advisory Services (RAS) where quality and timeliness of delivery are crucial.

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Junior Professional Officer will be based in Washington DC and will work under the supervision of the Education Practice Manager for ECA. S/he will be expected to perform the following duties:

- Be an active member of task teams working on education projects, technical assistance and reimbursable advisory services being implemented and prepared in the region.
- Support analytical work in the education sector on specific topics as assigned by the Practice Manager.
- Contribute to written work, such as policy notes, reports, newsletters, etc.
- Interact with government counterparts, local education stakeholders, and other partner organizations on project-related issues as a member of the relevant task teams.
- Participate in visits to client countries to support the preparation or implementation of education projects and engage in policy dialogue.
- Work together with colleagues within diverse multi-cultural multi-disciplinary teams.
- Perform other duties and tasks as specified by the Practice Manager and the relevant project Task Team Leaders.

Note: The selected candidate will not be assigned to programs involving his/her own government such as donor coordination and trust fund management.

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

- At least a Master’s Degree in education, economics, public policy, business administration, or a related field.
- A minimum of 2 years of work experience in international development, education policy, economic or business consulting, research, or a related field.
- Understanding of education and economic policy in developing and developed countries.
- Strong client orientation and proven ability to work with government agencies or similar clients.
- Ability to work as part of a team and independently in a diverse multi-cultural environment, seeking guidance when needed on complex issues from senior staff.
- Ability to juggle numerous competing demands and priorities, respond quickly to management requests, organize, prioritize and manage time flexibly and effectively.
- Strong results orientation, persistence, patience, positive attitude, enthusiasm and commitment to international development work.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English.
- Knowledge of one or more Eastern European language would be a plus.
- Willingness to travel to client countries, sometimes on short notice.
- Strong analytical and data management skills, including econometric analysis.
- Proficiency on all standard operational software packages (including Excel and PowerPoint) and statistical software packages such as STATA, SPSS, R, etc.