

JOB DESCRIPTION

Head of Secretariat: EU Human Rights Defenders mechanism

ProtectDefenders.eu is the EU Human Rights Defenders mechanism, established to protect Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) at high risk and facing the most difficult situations worldwide. The mechanism is implemented by a Consortium of 12 international NGOs with the support of the European Commission. The EU HRD mechanism began its operations on 1st October 2015 for a duration of 36 months, this project has been extended by another year, with the possibility of renewal for 3 years in 2019.

ProtectDefenders.eu is seeking to recruit an experienced manager to run the Secretariat of the mechanism in Brussels and to ensure coordination of the project implementation and all related financial and narrative reporting. This is an exciting opportunity for a experienced manager with strong communication skills who will play a crucial role in the successful implementation of the project.

The mission of ProtectDefenders.eu is to:

- operate a permanent and rapid response mechanism to provide emergency support and material assistance to human rights defenders in danger;
- manage a support programme of temporary relocation for human rights defenders at risk to relocate inside their country, within their region or abroad in case of urgent threat;
- support and coordinate an exchange platform for organisations and stakeholders working on temporary relocation for human rights defenders including through the EU Temporary Relocation Platform;
- provide training, support and capacity-building to human rights defenders and local organizations;
- monitor the situation of human rights defenders and advocate for a protection agenda for Human Rights Defenders at local, regional and international level;
- promote coordination between organizations dedicated to support for human rights defenders, EU institutions and other relevant actors.

The members of the Consortium are: Front Line Defenders, Reporters Without Borders (RSF), World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Network (ESCR-Net), International Gay and Lesbian Association (ILGA), Urgent Action Fund for Women Human Rights Defenders (UAF), Protection International, Peace Brigades International (PBI), Euro-Mediterranean Foundation of Support to Human Rights Defenders (EMHRF), Forum Asia and East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP). Front Line Defenders, RSF, OMCT and FIDH form the Board of the Consortium. In order to implement the EU HRD mechanism the Board has formed an independent Secretariat for the project which is managed by the Head of Secretariat and has four other staff members. The management of the tasks by the HoS play a central role in the implementation of the project.

Tasks & General Responsibilities:

The HoS reports directly to the Chair of the Board of ProtectDefenders.eu. She/He works under the supervision and management of the Board with the assistance of other Secretariat staff members: she/he coordinates effectively all elements of the mechanism so as to help deliver the commitments of the Consortium in an efficient and effective manner; provides overall representation of, and coordination between, Consortium members; ensures liaison with the EU Commission, EEAS, EP and other external actors; manages the Secretariat and its staff.

Programme and financial management

- Oversee effective coordination and implementation of the programme and ensure compliance of all Consortium Members with EC rules and regulations;
- Ensure the overall coordination of the HRD mechanism, regularly updating plans for each sector of activity, based on the input from relevant Consortium members;
- Prepare plans, guidelines and strategies in close coordination with the Board, so as to ensure their smooth approval by the Board and ensure they are communicated to all members;
- Make proposals to the Board to maximise the value, impact, organisation, scope of the Consortium and of the programme;
- Supports the Board and Consortium in the new application process for continuation of the project with the EC;
- Is responsible for the financial oversight and implementation of the Consortium budget in close coordination with the Finance Officer to ensure appropriate control and compliance of the overall financial reporting.

Monitoring and reporting

- Oversee the technical, administrative and financial reporting; ensure that the programme is fully designed and implemented according to the approved project proposal and in accordance with the requirements of the EC;
- Coordinate the monitoring, review, evaluation and sharing of lessons learnt from the activities of Consortium members to support the achievement of outcomes and impact;
- Report to the Consortium members on activities, especially the fulfilment of project objectives, and the early warning of areas and activities needing strengthening;
- Monitor and review performance of partners and staff, holding partners accountable for meeting the success criteria and delivering any improvement goals which have been identified;
- Upon mandate of the Board, conduct any activity necessary to ensure the success of the programme, including visits to monitor Consortium Members' activities on all aspects of the programme.

Coordination:

- Provide secretariat support to the Board for its monthly meetings; makes recommendations to the Board (and, following Board approval) to Consortium members for changes to mechanism and Consortium procedures, systems and processes.
- Support the virtual convening of the steering groups by 'sector', under the respective chairs' leadership;
- Facilitate twice-yearly Consortium meetings and enable an effective cooperation culture across partners;
- Identify strategic opportunities for sharing the workload among Consortium members; facilitates strategic coordination and reflection among members;
- Explore the scope for further possible partnerships between the Consortium and other stakeholders as appropriate for the effective implementation of the project.

Institutional representation and visibility:

- Represent and communicate about mechanism activities to the EU Commission in particular through coordination meetings with DG DEVCO, reporting back on the outcomes;
- Develop and maintain relationships with key actors (DEVCO, EU institutions, Member States as appropriate, other NGOs, participants in the Shelter Programme and other relevant stakeholders...);
- Identify and participate in relevant events to ensure the visibility of the project;
- Organise in close coordination with the Communication officer an annual series of meetings with partners and beneficiaries in Brussels together with other relevant actors supporting HRDs

(National Human Rights Institutions, regional mechanisms, etc)..

Management of the Secretariat:

- Manage all staff employed in the Secretariat, supervise and support them to ensure that the team fulfil their responsibilities;
- Is responsible for the Secretariat's human resources: conduct recruitment and appraisal processes as necessary;
- Answer for the internal organisation and overall structure of the Secretariat which is a legal entity under Belgian Law; in close coordination with the Finance Officer, provide any necessary logistic or administrative support to allow the structure to operate smoothly.

Experience/knowledge:

- Masters Degree in International Relations, Human Rights, Law or other related field
- Minimum of five years of successfully managing the implementation of complex projects, ideally EU funded projects, preferably with an international NGO
- Demonstrated experience in developing and managing large budgets, with preference for previous experience with a Consortium or a network.
- Experience in working on projects funded by major international donors, with preference for previous experience with EU.
- Strong coordination/negotiation skills with the ability to effectively coordinate among partner organisations and with diverse partners and stakeholders
- Understanding of the security and protection of human rights defenders around the world.

Skills:

- Excellent oral and written English language skills, French or Spanish requested
- Strong management skills
- Strong analytical skills
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills.

This position will be available to begin from November 2018. The initial contract is a fix-term contract up to December 2019.

The Head of Secretariat will be based in ProtectDefenders.eu Secretariat in Brussels. The Head of Secretariat should have the necessary permit to work in the EU. The gross monthly salary for the position is €4.100 with lunch vouchers, transportation costs, health insurance coverage and retirement plan.

Applications comprising a CV with at least two references and a cover letter should be sent by email to recruit@protectdefenders.eu by October 15th 2018. Interviews will be planned in the week of the 22nd of October.