



Position Title: Adviser: Virtual University for the Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

Grade: C1

Reports to: Director: Education

Duration of Contract: Three-year term

Position Location: Burnaby, British Columbia

Commonwealth of Learning (COL) helps governments and institutions to expand the scale, efficiency and quality of learning by using new approaches, appropriate technologies, and open and distance learning (ODL) methodologies. Headquartered in British Columbia, Canada, COL promotes innovation and works with Member States to facilitate learning for sustainable development. It is financed by voluntary contributions from Commonwealth governments.

Overview of the Position:

The Adviser: VUSSC develops and manages activities related to the Virtual University for the Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) to enable small states to strengthen existing tertiary institutions, develop a cadre of professionals with the skills and expertise to implement virtual and blended education systems, improve the quality of education leading to better learning outcomes, and equip learners for employability and entrepreneurship.

The Adviser is expected to support governments and key stakeholders to strengthen VUSSC to achieve scale and sustainability and advance COL's outcomes and impact. Activities will include: evidence-based advocacy for the development and implementation of ODL policy at both the national and institutional levels, technical assistance to new open universities and dual-mode institutions, development of strategies for resilient systems, promotion of quality assurance and employability, and support for the adoption and use of open educational resources (OER).

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Conceptualises, manages and implements programme initiatives related to higher education by harnessing the potential of open, distance and technology-based approaches to increase access to quality higher education; adopt innovative models; and formulate strategies and action plans to deliver concrete results and achieve value for money.
- Manages the implementation strategy for assigned activities and project(s). This involves working as a team within the Education sector and with staff to ensure a coordinated approach within the programme; identify new ideas; manage consultants; leverage other sources of support including raising additional funds; and organise logistics.
- Develops and implements a monitoring and evaluation framework for assigned activities/project(s), collects the necessary data and produces reports in accordance with COL's results-based management (RBM) framework.
- Provides domain expertise and technical assistance to a diverse range of stakeholders on the design and implementation of models/systems and policies in support of higher education.
- Contributes to COL's overall mission and corporate life in planning, stakeholder engagement and internal processes by providing advice in areas of expertise and by representing COL's interests at international forums.
- Actively demonstrates commitment to gender equality.
- Ensures direct report(s) have clear work plans and conducts performance appraisals on staff who work in the area; and
- Performs other duties related to COL's programme or activities, as required.

Direct Reports:

Programme Assistant (shared) and Consultants

Qualifications and Experience:

Qualifications	Experience
Graduate qualification in a related discipline, such as: Education, Humanities, Social Sciences Qualification in open and distance learning and/or international development is desirable.	Seven years of professional experience working in open, distance and technology-mediated learning which demonstrates strong knowledge of trends, policy issues and technical expertise. Experience in programme development, project management and reporting. Experience of relating learning to sustainable development. Some experience of working in developing countries and with a diverse range of stakeholders.

Skills and Competencies:

- **Innovation & Creativity:** injects originality into daily work through research, personal knowledge, and networking relationships; thinks "outside the box"; brainstorms and encourages new ideas and solutions; takes appropriate risks.
- **Prudence:** sets an example by consistently modelling high standards of performance, honesty and integrity especially with appropriate use of funds; ability to mobilise, prepare and manage financial budgets in an effective, efficient and judicious manner to deliver 'value for money'.
- **Professional Judgment:** possesses an in-depth understanding of the programme goals; is sought out by others for advice in an area of specialisation; has the expertise to be perceived as a thought leader and be a credible interlocutor in the field; ability to develop realistic, relevant and achievable plans including monitoring and evaluation strategies; demonstrates a "can-do" and positive approach.
- **Networking:** ability to develop and maintain a network of contacts in government agencies and institutions on issues related to education; exercises discretion and diplomacy while representing COL's interests; capable of identifying and selecting quality partners, as well as to prepare, negotiate and manage agreements consistent with COL's policies.
- **Communication, Supervisory and Team Orientation Skills:** communicates effectively in a variety of settings including to wider audiences; displays sensitivity to ethnic and gender issues in verbal and written communications; possesses the capacity and skills to manage human resources (staff, consultants, advisors, etc.); has the ability to lead teams as well as communicate and work with others, both within and outside COL, by promoting co-operation and collaboration to achieve collective outcomes; openly shares information, knowledge and expertise with the team and co-workers; appropriately gives and is open to feedback.
- **Committed to Gender Equality:** ensures that men/boys and women/girls receive targeted attention, where they are most marginalised; integrates gender considerations into programme planning, implementation, and gender disaggregated data is available as evidence.

Personal Attributes:

- Commitment to COL and its ideals, notably to the role of learning as the key to sustainable development and to the capacity of technology to enhance that role.
- Ability to work collaboratively in a multicultural environment, where integrity and respect for diversity are expected.
- Demonstrates professionalism through provision of quality services, responsiveness and compliance with organisational policies and procedures.

COL Headquarters is located at 4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500, Burnaby BC Canada V5H 4M2