

Position Description

Acquisition and Assistance Specialist (FSNPSC - 09)

BASIC FUNCTION OF THE POSITION:

The Acquisition and Assistance Specialist (Trainee) is located in the Office/Regional Office of Acquisition and Assistance, USAID/Nepal. The function of the Office is to provide Acquisition and Assistance (procurement) support to Mission Technical Offices and Development Objective (DO) and Assistance Objective (AO) Teams in the Mission, and in any Regional Offices that may be supported by the Mission. The primary purpose of this position is to perform a variety of acquisition and assistance duties including writing grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and other procurement instruments and preparing amendments in support of the Mission. The Specialist (Trainee) reviews and recommends approval or revision of requisitions in the Global Acquisition and Assistance System (GLAAS); reviews and recommends approval or revision of scopes of work (SOW); drafts requests for proposal or quote; performs cost and price analysis; analyzes proposals or quotes received; drafts contracts and contract modifications; analyzes contractor-proposed budgets; recommends revisions to various contract provisions; writes Memoranda of Negotiation; and, prepares other required documentation. The Specialist (Trainee) maintains contract files and records up to date, prepares Contractor Performance Reports (CPRs), and supports award closeouts. The Specialist (Trainee) provides guidance related to administrative award modifications. The Specialist (Trainee) is responsible for carrying out day-to-day activities under the mentorship of more senior Office employees.

This position is a part of an established career ladder, which provides for the potential to progress to the FSN-10 and, subsequently, to the FSN-11 grade level. There is no potential for the Job Holder to become a permanent FSN-09 in this work assignment. Attainment of higher grade levels is contingent upon the Specialist (Trainee) successfully completing required training, meeting agree-upon objectives and milestones, and performing in a Fully Successful (or equivalent) manner. Promotion to the FSN-10 and to the target FSN-11 grade levels is not mandatory, and failure to achieve those high levels of performance may be the basis for dismissal.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. The Specialist (Trainee) is responsible for providing basic project acquisition and assistance support to USAID/Nepal Technical Offices, DO and AO Teams, and any designated Regional clients. USAID programs are diverse and multi-sectoral. The Specialist (Trainee) is required to provide basic and limited acquisition assistance to designated Technical Offices, DO, and/or AO Teams, and to support a variety of programs/projects/activities. These programs/projects/activities are implemented through complex Government contracting and grant mechanisms, including but not limited to purchase orders, competitively negotiated technical assistance agreements, contracts, cooperative agreements, Participating Agency Service Agreements (PASA), and sole source contracts, requiring the Specialist (Trainee) to become familiar with the full range of USAID procurement instruments.

b. The Specialist (Trainee) is assigned work in such a manner as to provide training and the basis for independent selection of appropriate procurement instrument types for the situation at hand, and to

accurately apply USG procurement laws, regulations, policies, and procedures governing each type of instrument. The developmental nature of the assignment provides exposure to the acquisition of goods and various types of services. The Specialist (Trainee) will become equally familiar with the procedures for acquisition of goods, and for managing personal service and non-personal service contracting actions.

c. The Specialist (Trainee) is expected to work with higher-level Specialists/Officers, and with technical specialists/activity managers in DO and AO Teams throughout Mission and/or the Region, assisting in the preparation of annual procurement plans, clear and concise statements of work, and supporting documentation. The Specialist (Trainee) will develop the ability to provide authoritative technical guidance to technical specialists/activity managers pertaining to their procurement-related responsibilities and procedures. Specific developmental duties include:

Pre-Award Duties – the Specialist (Trainee) participates in meetings on procurement planning; collates data, and prepares and updates tracking tools in order to monitor pending procurements; works with clients to assist in the preparation of justifications, waivers, and other necessary approvals, as needed; and, reviews GLAAS Requisitions (REQs) for completeness and clarity before endorsing them to higher-level Specialists/Officers. Prepares solicitation documents in GLAAS, and the electronically posts Simplified Acquisitions and Personal Services Contracts; and, works with higher-level Specialists/Officers to ensure compliance with FAR and AIDAR advertisement requirements, including publication of synopses and solicitations, as prescribed. The Specialist (Trainee) works with higher-level Specialists/Officers to prepare Requests for Proposal and Requests for Application. The Specialist (Trainee) assists higher-level Specialists/Officers in pre-award activities for competitive solicitations, and with pre-award assessment surveys of potential contractors or recipients, in order to ensure eligibility prior to an award being made.

Post-Award Duties – the Specialist (Trainee) assists higher-level Specialists/Officers in monitoring performance as required by the terms and conditions of the award, through reviews of performance and reviews of financial reports. The Specialist (Trainee) manages the assigned developmental portfolio, assuring that funding is available when required; and, under the guidance of higher-level Specialists/Officers works with AO Teams/CORs/AORs to assure targets/milestones are set and being met (or that remedial action is taken), and that the overall goals of the program/project/activity are met. As assigned, the Specialist (Trainee) conducts site visits and attends meetings. The Specialist (Trainee) provides guidance to technical personnel, and assists in programmatic duties as required to avoid contractual/legal improprieties, seeking guidance from higher-level Specialists/Officers as required. The Specialist (Trainee) assists in researching and resolving issues that may arise during contract performance, including changes, work stoppages, disputes, implementation problems, defaults, cost overruns, unacceptable performance, and payment problems.

d. The Specialist (Trainee) assists in the conduct of closeouts of contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements after completion. These include ensuring contract audits are conducted in a timely manner, preparing performance documentation, and resolving outstanding issues noted in audits.

Performs other duties as assigned or required.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE:

- a. Education: Possession of a Baccalaureate Degree or the equivalent of a four-year US college/university (or equivalency accreditation if a non-US institution) degree in accounting, law, business, finance, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, economics, organizational management or a social science is required. NB: Additional education may NOT be substituted for Experience.
- b. Prior Work Experience: Three or more years of progressively responsible experience in acquisition and assistance, development assistance, or a closely related field is required. One year of this experience must have been gained working in a position equivalent to no less than the next lower level of FSN responsibility in this or a related occupation, within a USG organization the Host Government, the private sector, or within an international or donor organization, in an English-language work environment. NB: Additional experience may NOT be substituted for Education.
- c. Post Entry Training: The Specialist (Trainee) will be provided formal training; successful completion of all mandatory Federal Acquisition Certification courses leading to successful completion of Contracting (FAC-C) Level I, in accordance with a formal individual development plan (IDP), is required for progression to the FSN-10 level; along, with at least a Fully Successful or equivalent performance evaluation. In addition, the Specialist (Trainee) will be provided formal and/or on-the-job training in the ADS, FAR, CFR, OAA-Intranet, the AIDAR, and Mission and Office operating and administrative procedures. Formal training, other than FAC-C Level I, will be provided based on availability of course offerings, and availability of funds.
- d. Language Proficiency: Level IV (Fluent) English and Nepali, both oral and written, is required.
- e. Job Knowledge: Knowledge of public and/or private-sector business processes, or the ability to quickly gain such knowledge, is required. An understanding of US Federal and USAID Acquisition Regulations, and/or knowledge and understanding of how to execute and administer a complex acquisition portfolio, and/or the ability to quickly gain such understanding, is required, particularly as it relates to acquisition through methods of negotiation, sealed bidding, small purchase procedures, and that result in standard and established contract types. A basic understanding of markets pertaining to program/project/activity requirements for services and commodities, and a good knowledge and understanding of US market and pricing methods is desirable.
- f. Skills and Abilities: The potential to acquire the ability to plan and administer acquisition activities, and provide acquisition assistance and support for Agency programs and projects in a timely manner, is required. The potential to gain the ability to apply contracting regulations, procedures, and policies to individual acquisition and assistance programs is required. And, an ability to deal effectively with high-level representatives of the US and Regional business community, and with colleagues in USAID Missions and/or host governments throughout the Region is required. Skill in the use of most elements of the Microsoft Business suite is desired. Good analytical, negotiating, and time management skills, along with strong proofreading skills and attention to detail, are required. The ability to work calmly, tactfully, and effectively under pressure is essential, as well as the ability to maintain strict CONFIDENTIALITY, and meet all STANDARDS OF CONDUCT/ETHICS STANDARDS in accordance with US law throughout all phases of acquisition and assistance procurement processes.