



Position Description Guide

Figuring out what a fellow should do:

One of the most important aspects of a fellow's success is having a clearly defined role that fills a gap in your organization's capacity. We encourage you to think critically about the role the fellow will play and writing the position description in a way that will attract the highest quality candidates – sometimes the areas of work that would suit fellows best are not immediately clear. It is helpful to think through your organization's vision and goals to identify the gap in capacity that would most benefit from having additional brainpower and be most suited to attracting top-quality talent.

Some questions to consider:

- 1) What gaps in human resources do you currently have that you need filled?
- 2) What programs/research/implementation of programs do you wish you could do, that you just currently don't have the capacity to carry out?
- 3) What are the areas where a GHC fellow – a committed, energized, collaborative systems thinker – can make the most helpful and lasting impact over the course of one year?

You may not even realize that this is something your organization wants or needs, so take time to gather feedback and discuss internally in an effort to identify key gaps that need filling. At the end of this document you can find several examples of particularly strong position descriptions from former years. You can find all the final position descriptions for the previous class on the GHC website at: <http://ghcorps.org/fellows/apply/through-placements/>

Writing a good position title:

Once you've figured out what focus you want your fellow to have, you need to develop a position description. This is one of the most important parts of the entire process. A great position description will attract the best applicants and lay groundwork for a strong match between the fellow and your organization, and ultimately the most effective and meaningful fellowship experience.

Things to make sure you focus on when developing your fellow position descriptions:

Give them an interesting and REAL title: Make sure the title is something that will be attractive and interesting to applicants. The more obscure a title, the less applicants that position will get. Also, make sure that it is a real title that exists in the work world; otherwise, it won't make sense to people who look at their resume later.

Examples of effective titles:

- "Program Officer/Manager" or specify "Maternal and Child Health Programs Officer/Manager" – this is a good title because Program Officer/Manager is concrete and prestigious role and when there are more specifics, like maternal and child health, it gives a specialization/focus that applicants can understand.



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- "Monitoring and Evaluation Fellow/Coordinator/Officer" – this is a good title because it is very clear what the role of the fellow will be working on.

Examples of less effective titles:

- "Health Fellow" – this is very ambiguous, it does not tell the applicant what they will be doing, nor would it illustrate to a future employer what their role was.
- "Quality Assurance/Improvement Specialist" – this title is extremely technical and sounds high level, so it may only draw in a few applicants. If Quality Assurance/Improvement is not the sole responsibility of the fellow, encourage the partner to come up with a more well-rounded title and include the quality assurance/improvement component within the position description.

How to write a successful position description

1. Be as clear and comprehensive as possible, but remain open-ended

Remember that these position descriptions are being developed nearly nine months before the fellows actually begin their placements. While we want to have a general idea of the type of work they will be doing (health promotion, M&E, supply chain management), the more specific the position description, the more chance that the position may change by the time the fellow gets to their placement. If you are very confident that the role isn't likely to shift you are welcome to provide greater specificity, but if not then don't be afraid to use more open-ended language. For example, instead of listing the responsibilities of the role, consider framing the list as "possible ways the fellow will support this team".

2. Don't get too technical

The more technical a position description, the less applicants are likely to apply to the position. Fellows are able to learn many of the skills and programs they need to know in the position, and requiring them to know these beforehand can inhibit great applicants from applying to those roles.

3. Consider required vs. preferred skills

Position descriptions that have a long list of required skills – which may not all actually be necessary – will drastically reduce the number of potential applicants, probably unnecessarily.

Things we suggest you leave off your required skills list, and maybe even off your preferred skills list:

- Master's degree
- # of years of experience in the field
- Specific computer programs (unless completely essential for the position and something they cannot learn in the role)
- Fluency in a language (unless completely essential for the position and something they cannot learn in the role)



Sample Position Description

Advocacy Officer, Save the Children, Malawi

Placement Organization: Save the Children

Placement Location: Lilongwe, Malawi

Eligible Citizenship: Malawian

About Save the Children

Save the Children is the world's leading independent organization for children, working in over 120 countries and comprised of 30 members organizations. In 2013, Save the Children reached over 143 million children through their work, including over 52 million children directly. Save the Children works to save children's lives, fight for their rights, and help them fulfill their potential. They provide various services that function to better the lives of children through education, health care, and economic opportunities, as well as offer emergency aid in natural disasters, war, and other conflicts. Our mission is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives. Save the Children understands a breakthrough as a remarkable shift from the current trend and a sustainable change in the way the world treats children as experienced by the majority of affected children in the world. We have a clear Theory of Change on how to make this happen, which is to be the Innovator and develop evidence based breakthrough solutions to problems facing children; be the Voice for and with children by advocating for best practices and policies to fulfill children's rights and to ensure that children's voices are heard (particularly those children that are marginalized or live in poverty); Achieve Results at Scale by supporting effective implementation of best practices, programmes and policies for children, leveraging our knowledge to ensure sustainable impact at scale; and Building Partnerships by collaborating with children, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), communities, governments and private sector to share knowledge, influence others, and build capacity to ensure children's rights are met.

Position Overview

The Advocacy Officer will work closely with Save the Children colleagues on the Advocacy Team and Health Department. S/he will work on a range of health and nutrition-related advocacy initiatives. These may include: Health budget tracking and analysis, and related advocacy for additional resources for MNCH in Malawi; Collaboration with external partners to raise the profile and understanding of nutrition as a public health priority; Implementation of a social and behaviour change communications (SBCC) strategy specific to newborn health; and Support on other advocacy and external communications initiatives. While the focus will be on health and nutrition, there will be opportunities to support Save the Children's advocacy work in other, related thematic areas, including education and child protection.

Responsibilities

- Assist Save the Children Malawi to more effectively use programme-based evidence in its advocacy work
- Make a significant contribution to the development and implementation of an effective health and nutrition advocacy strategy for Save the Children Malawi
- Collaborate on, and where appropriate lead, discrete health and nutrition-related advocacy initiatives
- Build effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders



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Required Skills and Experience

- Demonstrated experience working in a public health role within a national or international organization
- Demonstrated ability to work as an effective and collegiate team member
- Skills in designing and coordinating effective learning meetings and events
- Self motivated with a strong ability to identify and develop relevant areas of work

Preferred Skills and Experience:

- A tertiary (MSc or equivalent) qualification in Public Health or a related discipline
- Good understanding of Malawian media
- Understanding of key policies and stakeholders in the fields of public health and specifically MNCH in Malawi
- Knowledge of children's health and rights issues
- Knowledge and/or demonstrated experience with health-specific SBCC initiatives

Living Conditions

Fellows will be provided with housing, health insurance and a living stipend of \$650/month. Fellows will receive an award of \$1500 upon successful completion of the fellowship year. Flights to and from the placement site and all other costs associated with GHC programming are included, including \$600 in professional development funds.

*Note: the living stipend and completion award may be paid out in USD or local currency, as determined by the placement organization

Global Program Associate, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, New York, United States

Placement Organization: Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Placement Location: New York, NY

Eligible Citizenship: American

About

For nearly 100 years, Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) has advanced its mission to provide comprehensive reproductive health care services; to advocate for public policies which guarantee essential rights of each individual and ensure access to such services; to provide educational programs which enhance understanding of human sexuality; and to promote research and the advancement of technology in reproductive health care. And for over 40 years, PPFA has helped bolster nascent and growing sexual and reproductive health and rights movements in developing countries. PPFA's international division, Planned Parenthood Global, provides partners on the ground with technical and financial support and shares lessons learned from the organization's storied history working to provide care and empower women to plan their families in the U.S. Planned Parenthood Global currently supports 44 partners in Africa and Latin America to provide health services, maintain direct



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education, and provide contraceptive services. Last year, with Planned Parenthood Global support, these partner organizations provided direct education and information to over 102,000 people and provided contraceptives to nearly 40,000. Recognizing that reducing barriers to sexual and reproductive health services also requires supportive laws and policies, Planned Parenthood Global helps partner organizations develop the advocacy skills they need to educate policymakers and the general public, in addition to monitoring and countering the tactics of opposition groups.

Position Overview

Both fellows will be placed in the Planned Parenthood Global Division of PPFA. While completing most projects within their "home" division of Planned Parenthood Global, they will also have the opportunity to work with other divisions of PPFA and Affiliates as special projects can be arranged. The fellows will also jointly complete a long-term project to be determined. Examples of potential projects include:

- Working with the communications team on writing up success stories from the field
- Helping market Planned Parenthood Global's innovative program models
- Working with field teams on evaluating capacity of various program partners

Responsibilities

- Work with team to support program design, implementation, evaluation, and/or management of selected projects
- Work on selected special initiatives with other divisions of PPFA
- Data collection and entry; management of data bases
- Build staff and partner support for fellow projects by fostering genuine stakeholder buy-in and engagement
- Support existing organizational goals and deliverables
- Complete other "home" division projects as assigned
- Adhere to PPFA code of conduct and policy

Required Skills and Experience

- Some experience in international reproductive health or other related health field
- Excellent written and verbal English communication skills
- Ability to multi-task
- Ability to navigate complex organizations with a smile
- Self-directed and comfortable working independently
- Interest in international health service delivery and advocacy
- Ability to manage a multi-faceted project and keep numerous channels of communication going at once
- Knowledge of diverse groups and the ability to work with a multicultural workforce
- Proven computer skills and knowledge of Microsoft software (including MS Word and Excel spreadsheets) and email programs
- Exemplary professional etiquette



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Preferred Skills and Experience

- French or Spanish language ability (spoken and written fluency)
- Knowledge of PPFA and our activities
- Robust understanding of program and policy design, project analysis, evaluation and support
- Field-based knowledge of technical issues related to delivery of reproductive health programs and monitoring and evaluation, including research and building civil society capacity
- Experience living/working in the developing world
- A sense of urgency necessary to drive change within an advocacy organization paired with the patience to understand that not all demands are equal
- A team player with exceptional communication skills along with interpersonal savvy
- Passion for the role of health provision and advocacy that translates into an unflinching commitment to an exceptional work product

Living Conditions

Fellows will be provided with housing, health insurance and a living stipend of \$1100 (net/take home amount)*.

Fellows will receive an award of \$1500 upon successful completion of the fellowship year. Flights to and from the placement site and all other costs associated with GHC programming are included, plus \$600 in professional development funds.

*Note: Both international and national fellows will receive a monthly living stipend of \$1100, take home amount, but because of each fellow's individual visa or tax status, fellows may owe different amounts of tax