



URBACT III Senior Finance and Programming Officer – July 2020

A key role within the URBACT Secretariat project and programming unit, the Senior Finance and Programming Officer will support the Head of Unit to ensure an efficient and high quality programme management specifically relating to finance and audit matters.

CONTEXT

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE URBACT III OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

URBACT is a European Territorial Cooperation programme (ETC), financed by the European Regional Development Fund and national contributions of 28 Member and 2 Partner States (Switzerland and Norway). It is a European exchange programme promoting sustainable and integrated urban development in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. URBACT enables European cities to work together to develop effective and sustainable solutions to major urban challenges.

The total eligible budget of URBACT III is 96.3 M€.

The URBACT III programme is structured around 4 specific objectives:

1. To improve the capacity of cities to manage sustainable urban policies and practices in an integrated and participatory way.
2. To improve the design of sustainable urban strategies and action plans in cities
3. To improve the implementation of integrated strategies and action plans for sustainable urban development.
4. To ensure that practitioners and decision-makers at all levels (EU, national, regional and local) have increased access to URBACT thematic knowledge and share know-how on all aspects of sustainable urban development in order to improve urban policies

The URBACT III programme promotes capacity building to enable practitioners and decision-makers in European cities to improve the design and implementation of urban development policies and to find solutions to the urban challenges they face. The programme is about sharing know-how, learning, networking and exchanging good practices for a more sustainable urban development in Europe.

The activities of the URBACT III programme are organised around 3 main strands:

- Transnational networking: To support cities with the design and implementation of integrated urban strategies, building on mutual learning and the transfer of good practices.
- Capacity building: To enhance the capacity of urban players to develop integrated and participatory approaches to the design and delivery of urban policies.
- Capitalisation & Communication: To build and share knowledge, practices and recommendations and inform the design and delivery of sustainable urban policies at local, regional, national and EU level.

THE PROJECT AND PROGRAMMING UNIT IN THE URBACT SECRETARIAT

The daily implementation of the URBACT programme is carried out by its Joint Secretariat under the responsibility of its Managing Authority (French National Agency for Territorial Cohesion) and in line with the decisions taken by the Monitoring Committee.

The Joint Secretariat is composed of three units.

The Joint Secretariat is looking for a Senior Finance and Programming Officer to join the Project and Programming unit.

This unit has a broad responsibility for programme and network management and implementation. The unit is comprised of 5 staff members (including the Head of Unit) plus this vacant position.

The position of Senior Finance and Programming Officer is a new position. The appointed person will be responsible for audit and finance tasks as well as tasks relating to programming and budget. In addition the Senior Officer will support the Head of Unit in tasks related to coordination, planning and monitoring of workflows relating to programme and project management.

LANGUAGES

The official language of the Programme is English. However, taking into account that France supplies the management of the Programme, the URBACT III programme shall also use French as a working language.

SPECIFICITIES OF THE POSITION

1. General Responsibilities

The retained candidate shall:

- Report to the Head of Unit Projects and Programming
- Ensure successful financial programming and monitoring of projects led by the Managing Authority
- Coordinate the work on audit and controls in liaison with other programme authorities
- Coordinate the work on the programme information system SYNERGIE CTE
- Coordinate the work necessary to report to programme authorities and decision makers (annual report, payment forecasts and previsions, Monitoring Committee reports etc.)
- Support the Head of Unit with general coordination tasks in the area of programme management

2. Work Area 1 – Programme Management

The Senior Finance and Programming Officer shall work as part of the Project and Programming Unit to:

- Supervise and assist in the preparation, implementation and follow up of decisions of the URBACT III Monitoring Committee, including the annual implementation report;
- Coordinate the work related to the Group of Auditors;
- Coordinate the work related to the SYNERGIE – CTE monitoring system
- Coordinate the work related to the Description of Management and Control Systems
- Support the Head of Unit with financial audit and monitoring aspects of the future URBACT IV Operational Programme

3. Work Area 2 – Budget Management

The Senior Finance and Programming Officer shall work as part of the Project and Programming Unit to:

- Assist in the preparation of budget updates at programme level in collaboration with the Head of Unit,
- Assist in the preparation of the programme updates and budget reprogramming in collaboration with the Head of Unit,
- Ensure the sound management of the programme budget in collaboration with other JS staff

4. Work Area 3 – Audit and Control

The Senior Finance and Programming Officer shall work as part of the Project and Programming Unit:

- Advising the Member and Partner States on the identification of first level control bodies and setting up their first level control system; gathering the first level control system descriptions (and their updates)
- Coordinating the development and implementation of a training plan for first level controllers to discuss and to improve control and audit systems in the EU
- Coordinating the advice provided to First level controllers on eligibility of expenditure, public procurement and budget flexibility, use of standard control documents in close collaboration with the Project and Finance Officers
- Coordinating the assistance to the Audit Authority in the audit tasks of the programme, and in particular:
 - procurement of an external audit firm to carry out the system audits and sample checks on operations
 - definition of the audit strategy
 - organisation, preparation and follow up of Group of Auditors (GoA) meetings
 - assistance in the identification of GoA members coordination of and support to the network of GoA Members, gathering second level audit descriptions
 - coordination of sample checks with all involved parties (external audit company, Audit Authority, GoA members, audited body), organisation of follow-up procedure with these actors,
 - follow-up of the external auditors' tasks in compliance with service contract, time schedule and GoA's rules of procedure
 - follow-up on action plans in case of errors with potential systemic impact
- Coordinating the assistance to the audited project partners before and during the contradictory phase
- Coordinating support to EU-MS for OLAF declarations, when needed
- monitoring the recovery of irregularities in close cooperation with the Project and Finance officers
- Coordinating the assistance provided to projects selected for operation audit (including anti-fraud checks)
- Coordinating the Managing Authority Quality Checks on projects annually
- Coordinating all tasks linked with the work of the Certifying Authority

5. Work Area 4 – Support to Head of Unit

The Senior Finance and Programming Officer shall work as part of the Project and Programming Unit to support the Head of Unit with a variety of tasks linked to the coordination of the programme. These tasks include contributing to the planning of workflows, contributing to the drafting of guidelines and monitoring progress towards programme goals in the field of programme management.

6. Basic requirements

- A degree in a relevant field
- Knowledge of EU law, institutions and policies, in particular the general and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Regulations, European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) Regulations, State aid Regulations, European Commission's Delegated Acts and Implementing Acts
- At least 7 years' experience, in particular in the following fields:
 - in EU-funded projects or programmes, preferably on Structural Funds and/or cross-border, transnational or interregional cooperation;
 - in a local / regional public authority or any organisation involved in audit or financial management
- Some management/coordination experience desirable
- Excellent organisation, communication, diplomacy and interpersonal skills
- Advanced excel skills
- Excellent writing and editing skills
- Fluency in English, and proficiency French, other EU languages; appreciated
- Capacity to work in an international environment;
- Knowledge of European Affairs and the Structural Funds preferably through practical experience
- Willing to travel in Europe (infrequently)

Other important skills:

- Accuracy and assertiveness
- Sense of initiative; ability to anticipate, propose and implement solutions
- Open-mindedness; independence, but good team working abilities

Additional information

Confidentiality

Candidates are reminded that the selection process is confidential. All enquiries or requests for information or documentation in relation to the selection should be addressed to the address referred below. Candidates are asked to report any potential change of contact information in writing without delay.

Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunities policy without distinction on the grounds of sex, origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation will be applied.

Salary

The employment is foreseen on a full-time basis. The contract will be a private law contract under French law.

The salary shall be fixed according to the professional experience of the candidate starting from EUR 36 000 € gross per year. Meal vouchers + complementary health insurance and other social benefits.

Working place

The working place will be Paris

Contract's starting date and duration

The contract is a full-time permanent work contract starting as soon as possible in 2020. The trial period is 4 months.

Submission of Applications

Interested candidates are invited to send their applications in English, including a Curriculum Vitae (the CVs must be drafted using the European CV format), and a covering motivation letter.

Supporting documents such as diplomas might be requested on demand.

Interested candidates should send their application to Adele BUCELLA, Head of Unit Projects and Programming a.bucella@urbact.eu and Thierry PICQUART, Head of Unit Administration and coordination t.picquart@urbact.eu

Applications closing date and recruitment process

Closing date for applications: 14th August 2020 midnight (CET)

Depending on the number and quality of applications, online or face to face interviews will be organised with short-listed candidates week commencing 31st August 2020.