



PACIFIC ISLANDS  
FORUM SECRETARIAT

# **PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT**

Applicant Information Package

**RESEARCH OFFICER –  
PUBLIC FINANCE MANAGEMENT (PFM)**

**January 2021**

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## About The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

Founded in 1971, the Pacific Islands Forum is the region's premier political and economic policy organisation. The Forum Leader's Vision is *for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives.*

The work of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) is guided by the **Framework for Pacific Regionalism** (FPR) as:

*The expression of a common sense of identity and purpose, leading progressively to the sharing of institutions, resources, and markets, with the purpose of complimenting national efforts, overcoming common constraints, and embracing sustainable and inclusive development within Pacific countries and territories and for the Pacific region as a whole.*

The FPR is underpinned by the **Blue Pacific** narrative, endorsed by Forum Leaders in Samoa in 2017, which calls for a long-term regional commitment to act as one "Blue Continent" as the means to achieve its development aspirations. The Leaders vision was that it would serve as the platform to reinforce and inspire the region in its shared stewardship of the Pacific Ocean, and to reaffirm the connections of Pacific peoples with their natural resources, environment, culture and livelihoods.

For more information about PIFS visit [www.forumsec.org](http://www.forumsec.org)

## About the Position

The Research Officer-PFM position is to undertake comprehensive data and policy analysis on Public Finance Management issues as well as broader economic and governance policy.

The role provides support to the Forum Secretariat to effectively implement the *"Strengthening Public Finance Management and Governance in the Pacific Project"* in relation to the first specific objective Transparent and Effective Policies and Public Financial Systems, Data and Statistics under the third priority area: Inclusive and Accountable Governance, of the Pacific Regional Indicative Programme 2014-2020 (11th EDF PRIP).

Furthermore, the role is to provide assistance/support in the day-to-day operation of the Multi-Annual Programme Estimate (PE), as well as to oversee meeting logistics management and coordination support and advice to the Forum Secretariat in relation to the *"Strengthening Public Finance Management and Governance in the Pacific Project"* and to support the broader research activities of the Economics and Governance Unit.

The position of Research Officer-PFM encompasses the following major functions or Key Result Areas:

1. Provide research and technical assistance to PFM team (and DPI), when required, in the areas of:
  - Overall implementation of the formulation and implementation of *"Strengthening Public Finance Management and Governance in the Pacific Project"*;
  - Implementation of Multi-Annual Programme Estimate;
  - Public Finance Management issues in the region, as well as on broader economic policy issues, when required;
  - Participation in relevant meetings assigned as part of the role, through data management and dissemination at the direction of the Economic Adviser, Economic Officer, and Programme Administrator – PFM as well as Director Programmes & Initiatives;
  - Analysis on technical issues, including the analysis, synthesis and consolidation of background material and reports;
  - Developing reports, circulars, briefings and other documents for both internal use at PIFS and external stakeholders; and

- Knowledge management via proper and efficient documentation, file and database management.
2. Assist with operation of the Multi-annual Programme Estimate (PE), which includes but not limited to:
    - Support the Programme Administrator – PFM to effectively manage the daily operation, including budgets/expenditures, work plans, filing/information storage and dissemination, communication and visibility, as well as assist with expenditure verification and audit, when required
    - Effectively monitor oversight and reporting on the overall implementation of the programme
    - Effectively coordinate and oversee the implementation of the KRAs of the *Strengthening Public Finance Management and Governance in the Pacific Project*, i.e. the overall programme decision though not the specific work of the implementing partners
  3. Assist with the management of meetings, negotiations, and visibility of project
    - Support the Programme Administrator to convene the PFM Symposium, and the Project Steering Committee Meetings
    - Assist in the coordination of meeting arrangements including the preparation of circulars, agendas and issues papers
    - Oversight of meeting logistics including travel arrangements, function management and other venue arrangements
    - Oversight of meeting budgets and manage meeting finances
    - Attend to preparation, dissemination and printing of meeting papers
    - Prepare draft minutes and other meeting records for drafting committees
    - Assist in the implementation of work plans, scheduling of activities and follow up
    - Assist the Adviser/Officer to implement, monitor and follow-up on meeting decisions and related issues
    - Ensure effective visibility of the project, including through social media, internet (webpage/site), print and other appropriate mode for wide dissemination and outreach.
  4. Assist with management of meetings and negotiations and consultancies:
    - Oversight/assist with travel bookings and the preparation of budgets within the required time
    - Coordinate logistical arrangements and administrative support
    - Undertake instruction from the Economic Adviser, Economic Officer and Programme Administrator (PFM) as well as Directors to follow up on countries' nominations
    - Oversight/assist with travel documents and packages of meeting papers are compiled accurately
    - Oversight/assist with the processing of staff/consultants travel requests
    - Oversight/assist with the processing of travel documentation and other administrative issues accordingly
    - Process acquittals and other financial matters to finalise meeting costs
  5. Provide research support to the broader responsibilities of the Economics and Governance Unit in the areas of:
    - Economic statistics in the region and other regions for comparability purposes;
    - Economic issues in the region, as well as on broader economic policy issues, when required
    - Participation in relevant meetings assigned as part of the role, through data management and dissemination at the direction of the Senior Economics Adviser and Economic Officer
    - Analysis on technical issues, including the analysis, synthesis and consolidation of background material and reports
    - Developing reports, circulars, briefings and other documents for both internal use at PIFS and external stakeholders
    - Knowledge management via proper and efficient documentation, file and database management

## General Capabilities

The *Forum Secretariat* has undergone an organisational restructure, with a view to achieve greater consistency across the organisation in the way workforce capability is developed, and capability gaps are identified and addressed. As such, PIFS has produced a Capability Framework (CF) that provides a common platform to clarify performance expectations and job behaviours required for roles at various levels. Details of each CF Competency may be different for the position's Band Level.

### CORE CAPABILITIES:

Planning & Prioritising	"Developing and committing to personal, team, KRA and organization wide plans"
Communicating with Purpose and Effect	"Clear communication while knowing your target audience and the outcomes you are seeking"
Leading and Collaborating	"Actively leads self, others and organization to establish a positive and productive organization culture"
Applying Critical Thinking	"Gathering, organizing and analyzing information for effective decision making"
Developing and Strengthening Relationships	"Working cooperatively and establishing, developing and maintaining business relationships"
Delivering Value	"Deliver Outcomes that meet agreed quality and timeliness measures"

### SUPPLEMENTARY CAPABILITIES:

Supplementary Capabilities required include: building for the future, promoting effective workplace practices, managing and coordinating projects as well as using systems, tools and technology.

## Position Accountabilities

The position reports to the Director Programmes & Initiatives through the Economic Adviser and Programme Administrator-PFM. He/She will work closely with the Public Finance Management Team to advance the responsibilities of the unit. However, within this divisional context, the work of the Secretariat at the operational level is driven by an annual Key Result Framework (linked to the Budget), which sets out the organization's core deliverables.

Thus, at any given time, the Research Officer will be required to assist on one or more of these key result areas – some of which may sit within the responsibilities of other Directors within the organization. Similarly, the Research Officer-PFM will be required to support a team of both policy and technical staff that may not necessarily sit within the PFM project team.

This matrix management structure allows for greater staff collaboration and teamwork – resulting in robust policy options.

Note: The above performance requirements are provided as a guide only. The precise performance measures for this job will need further discussion between the jobholder and supervisor as part of the performance development process

## Position complexities

Most challenging duties typically undertaken:

- Researching complex documents and analysing data
- Management of multiple databases
- Management of meeting logistics and budgets
- Preparation of discussion / issues papers, meeting papers and circulars, pertaining to management and implementation of the programme, as well as on broader PFM issues in the Pacific
- Preparation of minutes and records of meetings
- Preparing research reports and knowledge products

### Qualifications and experience required for the role

This section is designed to capture the expertise required for the role at the 100% fully effective level. (This does not necessarily reflect what the current jobholder has.) This may be a combination of knowledge/experience, qualifications or equivalent level of learning through experience or key skills, attributes or job specific competencies:

#### Qualification

- University Degree in Economics, Trade, Development studies, international relations other related discipline (postgraduate degree in development economics, international relations, development studies and/or related areas, with experience in Public Finance management issues would be desirable)

#### Knowledge/Experience

- Relevant work experience in Public Finance Management (PFM) space, including support work in project management
- Excellent research and analysis skills
- Excellent meeting and logistics management skills
- Excellent computer skills including word processing, spreadsheet applications such as excel, and data tools
- Good analytical skills and the ability to master new materials quickly
- Ability to work with a small team of professional staff
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- An interest or background in Pacific issues and policies

#### *Other Desirable Knowledge/Experience:*

- Professional experience writing reports and policy documents;
- Knowledge PIFS role and programme of work in the area of economics, trade, social or climate policy
- Exposure to policy issues in a regional and multilateral context;
- Demonstrates initiative and drive.
- A good level of inter-personal skills and cultural sensitivity
- Smart work practice
- Committed to team work

### Functional relationships & Relationship skills

The role will need to liaise with many stakeholders, key contacts and typical nature of their relations are:

#### External:

- Forum officials,
  - Other CROP and regional and sub-regional organisations
- Conversations during regional meetings to build understanding of issues
  - Support meetings on topical issues

#### Internal:

- Secretary General and other members of Senior Management team
  - Other KRA Advisers
  - Other Admin staff and Officers
  - Staff in other reporting lines
- Receive organisation updates, instructions and general information
  - Regular group meetings to share information
  - Informal one-on-one conversations
  - Emails and correspondences and/or seek inputs for admin work
  - Collaborative Inputs to reports and meeting papers

### Direct Reports

The position has no staff reporting line.

### Level of Delegation

The position cannot authorize any cost or sign standard letters on Secretariat letterhead or approve any contractual matters.

### Additional Information

- PIFS promotes environmentally sustainable practices and champions health & well-being for its staff
- Incumbent is physically fit and able to travel frequently
- A current passport valid at least 6 months

### Change of Position description

This position description may be subject to change from time to time in response to the changing nature of our work environment – including technological requirements or statutory changes. Such change may be initiated as required.

This Position Description may also be reviewed as part of the preparation for performance planning for the annual performance cycle.

### Summary of Conditions, Benefits & Entitlements

The Forum Secretariat is part of the participating agencies of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) that have agreed through their governing councils to standardise employment conditions. Outlined in this section are the conditions, benefits & entitlements that accrue to the position of the Research Officer – PFM

#### Contract Term

- *Principle:* To ensure recruitment and retention of the best person for the position
- *Practice:* The successful candidate will be entitled to a contract term that is subject to a satisfactory medical examination, performance during a six-month probation period, funding, and the need for the position.

### Working hours

- *Principle:* To ensure that the minimum legal standard is met.
- *Practice:* Normal working hours are 37 hours per week with the official office hours being:  
Monday – Thursday: 8:30am – 5:00pm  
Friday: 8:30am – 4:30pm.

### Salary

- *Principle:* To ensure relative worth of similar positions across CROP agencies is maintained and consistent with the market, a sample of positions across participating CROP agencies are validated and sized to ensure equivalent salaries are paid for equivalent jobs.  
Salaries for all Secretariat positions that are advertised locally, are assessed annually and compared to organisations that pay staff at 10% above the upper quartile of the Fiji All Organisations market.
- *Practice:* This position is placed at Band 7 and the starting salary is at **FJD30,293** per annum.

### Superannuation

- *Principle:* To provide the minimum legal requirement of the host country.
- *Practice:* This entitlement amounts to the minimum Employer Contribution rate as provided in the Fiji National Provident Fund Act, which will be paid to the Fiji National Provident Fund.

### Health/Life Insurance

- *Principle:* To provide standard health insurance.
- *Practical:* Health insurance covering local medical consultation, pharmaceutical benefits and overseas medical treatment (subject to certain conditions) and term life insurance equivalent to three times the base salary is provided for staff.

### Annual Leave

- *Principle:* To provide for recuperation and recreation.
- *Practice:* The entitlement for annual leave is 18 working days per annum.

### Sick Leave

- *Principle:* To provide for leave for illness or accident.
- *Practice:* The allocation for sick leave is 21 days per annum.

### Tax Status

- *Principle:* To meet the minimum legal requirements as agreed through the Establishment Agreement between the organisation and the host government.
- *Practice:* Remuneration is taxable for Fiji nationals.,

### Other Benefits

Other benefits include family leave, maternity leave and special leave at the Secretary General's discretion.

## Administrative Information

The closing date for applications is **5 February 2021**. Applications should contain full information on education and career background. Applicants must also provide the names, addresses (postal & e-mail), fax and telephone numbers of three employment referees.

Interested applicants are encouraged to apply through our website: [www.forumsec.org](http://www.forumsec.org) where an information package containing the job description and remuneration details is also available.

General information on the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is also available on the website.