



PERMAMENT SECRETARIAT RECRUITMENT

Call for a long-term contract

AUDIT AND CONTROL OFFICER

In Lille (France)

Reporting to: Finance Coordinator

1. General tasks

To assist the Permanent Secretariat, Managing Authority, Certifying Authority/Accounting Function, the European Commission and External Auditors¹ in setting up, maintaining and following up the financial control and audit system of the Initiative according to EU regulations and more specifically:

- To develop and maintain the control and audit procedures and monitor all related issues at Initiative level
- To coordinate the Initiative internal control procedure
- To support the entities mentioned above for all audit and control issues

2. Initiative Implementation

- Assistance to the External Auditors in the audit tasks of the Initiative
- Ensuring project audit trails, the process for selection of independent project auditors and follow up of individual project audits
- Organisation and update of the management and control system description
- Organisation and follow-up of projects' second level controls with all involved parties (external audit company and audited bodies)
- Follow up of the annual reporting to the EC
- Follow up of quality controls carried out by the Entrusted Entity
- Follow up of audits carried out by the European Commission and other EU bodies
- Follow up of recovery procedures, suspensions of payments and OLAF notifications
- Follow up of the Initiative closure procedure
- Contribution to the development of Initiative methodologies, processes, tools and templates
- Completion of audit trail by documenting audit tests and findings
- Communication of audit findings and discussion of findings with auditees
- Preparation of special audit and control reports by collecting, analysing, and summarizing operating information and trends
- Preparation of relevant items for the Initiative Supervisory Board and Steering Group
- Provision of aggregated information from the Initiative Monitoring System

¹ The First Level Control is responsible for ensuring that the expenditure declared by the beneficiaries (Project Partners) complies with the Initiative, EU, national and partner rules. The main aim of these controls is to provide a guarantee that costs co-financed under the Initiative are accounted for and eligible. Currently the First Level Control is centralised and sub-contracted to a private company directly managed by the Permanent Secretariat. The Second Level Control is responsible for carrying out regular system audits and yearly audit of projects on the basis of an appropriate sample (10% of reported project expenses). The purpose of these checks is to ensure that no mistakes are made in the accounting records at the level of projects and, on that basis, to obtain an overall picture of whether the management and control procedures set up at Initiative level are being applied. Currently the Second Level Control is centralised and externalised to another private company directly managed by the Permanent Secretariat.

3. Prevention of errors

- Development and update of the Initiative internal control, audit trail and handbook of procedure
- Interpretation of the Initiative eligibility rules (ex.: eligibility project expenses)
- Ensuring compliance with established internal control procedures by examining records, reports, operating practices, and documentation
- contribution to development of anti-fraud measures (identification, assessment, mitigation measures)

4. Support to the Officers of the Permanent Secretariat, projects and other Initiative bodies

- Assistance (and training) to the PS team on the above points
- Update and dissemination of Initiative/EU control and audit information
- Support and advice to the project independent auditors
- Assistance to projects on financial control matters including review of project financial claims (ex.: audit reports), advice on eligibility of expenditure and public procurement
- Organisation and implementation of seminars on finance and control for running projects and independent auditors
- Assistance in the coordination and exchange with other programmes and networks
- Maintenance of professional and technical knowledge by attending educational workshops, reviewing professional publications and content, and participating in professional networks

5. Additional tasks

- Other additional tasks of relevance to the position if required

Basic Requirements

- Master's degree or equivalent professional qualification in a relevant field with minimum 3 years demonstrated experience in relation to the job ;
- Knowledge and experience of EU financial management, developing and implementing audit and control strategies and methodologies;
- Knowledge of EU institutions and policies, in particular Cohesion Policy;
- Knowledge of the European Structural Funds Regulations;
- Good team player with capacity to work in a multi-cultural / international and multilingual environment;
- Ability to translate strategies into actions;
- Excellent communication, facilitation and drafting skills;
- Computer literate;
- Integrity and objectivity;
- High level of proficiency and fluency in English with French as an asset;
- Flexible approach to work; prepared to travel and work irregular hours.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

- Applications should reach the Permanent Secretariat by **Thursday 28 April 2022** at 12 noon CET. We will not consider any application sent beyond that deadline.
- A cover letter should be emailed along with your CV to the following email address only: recruitment@uia-initiative.eu. Those documents should be in English and/or French. Please indicate in the subject line of your email the job position for which you are applying.
- An individual email will be sent to all short-listed candidates. Candidates will be expected to confirm their participation to interviews by email return. Due to the large amount of applications expected, if candidates have not heard anything by **Friday 13 May 2022**, they should consider they have not been shortlisted. We will not be able to provide further individual feedback at that stage.
- Interviews will either take place by video conference or in our offices located at: Les Arcuriales, 45/D, rue de Tournai – 59000 Lille – France, and are foreseen on the week commencing **Monday 16 May 2022**. Transport and accommodation costs will be reimbursed in compliance with the Initiative rules.

Confidentiality

Candidates are reminded that the selection is confidential and that all requests for information in relation to the selection should be emailed to: recruitment@uia-initiative.eu

Equal opportunities

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

Terms and conditions of employment

- The working place is located at the office based in Lille, France
- The position is based on a **contract under French law**.
- Contract will be made between the individual and the GECOTTI-PE (employer), on behalf of the Région Hauts-de-France, Entrusted Entity (EE) of the Initiative.
- The corresponding assignment is based on long-term contract and is expected to start **as soon as possible**.
- The jobholder will be offered a gross monthly salary starting from **€ 3922** (around € 3029 net before income tax).

THE INITIATIVE

1. Background

One of the aims for the delivery of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) for the period 2014-2020 is to promote sustainable urban development. In particular, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) may support innovative actions in this area. The Urban Innovative Actions Initiative has been set up to identify and test innovative new solutions to the many challenges faced by urban areas in Europe and draw lessons and share the knowledge captured from the experiments with other urban authorities across Europe. For the period 2021-2027, the urban dimension of Cohesion policy has been strengthened. The new Policy Objective 'a Europe closer to Citizens' has been introduced to the main policy framework as an enhanced commitment to integrated territorial development and includes a specific objective to foster sustainable urban development. The Pact of Amsterdam, signed in 2016, launched the Urban Agenda for the EU in the frame of intergovernmental cooperation on urban matters. The New Leipzig Charter adopted in November 2020 puts forward a revised vision for sustainable urban development in Europe. In this context the Cohesion policy legislative package for 2021-2027 includes the establishment of a European Urban Initiative (EUI).

2. The UIA & EUI Initiatives

The Urban Innovative Actions initiative has a budget of € 372 million for the period 2014-2020. Projects were selected through calls for proposals for urban areas representing more than a 50 000 population. The ERDF contribution is up to € 5 million per project and 80% of the project budget. In general, the project duration is 3 years, with call topics defined by the European Commission for each call. Projects were selected against the following criteria: the level of innovativeness, quality, partnership, measurability of results, and transferability at the EU level. A Knowledge Management Strategy is delivering thematic capitalisation, operational knowledge – capacity building and transfer activities.

For the period 2021-2027, a new European Urban Initiative (EUI) will be set-up, to support cities with innovative actions, capacity and knowledge building, policy development and communication on sustainable urban development.

The overall objectives of the EUI are to strengthen integrated and participatory approaches to sustainable urban development, and to provide a stronger link to EU policies, and in particular to Cohesion policy and investments in urban areas as part of the funding earmarked for these areas under Article 11 of the ERDF/CF Regulation and beyond. The initiative aims to offer coherent support to cities to overcome the current landscape of manifold initiatives, programmes and instruments in support of cities under Cohesion policy, and in particular, by maximising synergy and complementarity with the interregional cooperation programme URBACT IV. The EUI will also support the multi-level working of the Urban Agenda for the EU and intergovernmental cooperation on urban matters.

THE ROLE OF THE SECRETARIAT

The Entrusted Entity of the Initiative is the Région Hauts-de-France based in Lille. The Permanent Secretariat assists the Entrusted Entity in the implementation of its tasks and responsibilities and acts as the first entry point for all urban authorities and stakeholders involved in the Initiative activities.