

VSA Assignment Description

Assignment Title	Strategic Business Adviser
Country	Cook Islands
Location of Partner Organisation	Rarotonga
Partner Organisation	The India-Cook Islands Centre of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT)
Duration	12 months
Sustainable Development Goals	
Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Goals	 #2 Economic opportunity #5 ICTs #8 Education and lifelong learning #15 Sustainable development

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1. Partner organisation overview

The India-Cook Islands Centre of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) was established in September 2019, under a bilateral agreement between the Governments of India and the Cook Islands. The CEIT is the Cook Islands' 4th private tertiary education provider, with a specialty focus on delivering computer and IT based vocational training.

The CEIT contributes to the Cook Islands national development outcomes, and strategic goals and objectives in ICT, Education, sustainable populations, and economic development.

“CEIT Vision: To create a pool of knowledge workers and generate employment opportunities by producing world class IT Professionals to attract investment into the Cook Islands and generate revenues through software export.”

The original Memorandum of Understanding ensured the Government of India's support in providing all necessary equipment, teaching and learning resources, trainers, scholarships and certifications for two years.

The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) and The University of the South Pacific Cook Islands were designated to implement the agreed project over a two-year period, with financial assistance from both Governments.

Counterpart assistance ended in May 2021, after which the Cook Islands must now take full ownership of the Centre and continue to provide ongoing management, delivery, maintenance and oversight. This includes revising the vision and mission to better align to the needs of its key stakeholders as articulated in the aforementioned national policies and plans.



2. Assignment overview

The CEIT has evolved its mission in response to the demands of its local stakeholders, and the changing priorities of the Cook Islands Government since the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to providing advanced specialised computer courses to IT Professionals, CEIT now delivers basic and intermediate computer training to end users i.e. office workers with basic or intermediate computer skill levels.

However, there are significant organisational and operational capacity gaps that need to be addressed in order for CEIT to effectively achieve its vision.

This assignment requires a VSA volunteer to help strengthen CEIT as a tertiary education provider by focusing on building capacity and developing, improving and reinforcing strategies, structures, and processes.

3. Goal/outcomes/outputs

Goal

Fit for purpose strategic and business plans enable improved service delivery and continued growth, and fit for purpose policies and procedures support the operational capacity of CEIT as it grows and matures as an independent tertiary education provider.

Outcome 1

CEIT has a clear and achievable strategic plan which reflects its vision and purpose

Outputs

Working alongside current staff:

- Conduct a review of information which will inform the development of a strategic plan including:
 - a review of the objectives and expected outcomes set out in the 2019-2021 MOU between the Governments of India and the Cook Islands
 - a review of the training needs and priorities for key public and private sector stakeholders, as per CEIT's recent stakeholder analysis
- Develop a strategic plan which reflects the vision and purpose of CEIT

Outcome 2

CEIT has a clear and achievable business plan for the 2021/22 period which informs its day-to-day operations

Outputs

Working alongside current staff:

- Conduct a review of information which will inform the development of a business plan including:
 - A review of the priorities identified in the above stakeholder analysis
 - A review of the Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Plan 2021+
- Develop a Business Plan with clear targets and effective ways to engage clients which reflects the priorities of CEIT's stakeholders and the changing priorities of the Government since the COVID-19 pandemic

Outcome 3

CEIT has a fit for purpose Policy and Procedures manual

Outputs

Alongside current staff:

- Review the current operational policies and procedures (some of which have come from USP)
- Adapt existing, and develop new (as required) policies and procedures which are fit for purpose for CEIT
- Mentor and assist staff to work with the new policies and procedures



4. Reporting and working relationships and capacity building

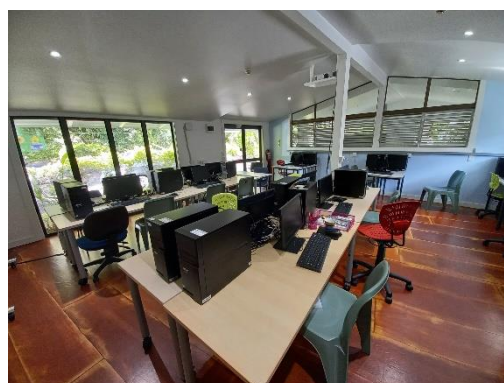
The volunteer will report to, and be directly accountable to, the Director of CEIT.

On a day-to-day basis the volunteer will work alongside key personnel at the CEIT office, in particular the CEIT Office Administrator and teaching staff.

The volunteer and CEIT will have an ongoing relationship with the VSA programme manager in terms of assignment monitoring, reporting, professional advice and personal support.



CEIT Office & Library



CEIT Training Facility / Computer Lab

As needs on the ground may change over time, the volunteer is encouraged to review and update the Assignment Description on arrival in consultation with the partner organisation and VSA Programme Manager. By their very nature, development situations can involve significant change, so it is advisable that the volunteer periodically review and reflect on the Assignment Description throughout the Assignment to ensure the best development outcomes are being achieved.

5. Selection criteria/position requirements

Person specifications (professional)

Essential

- Experience developing operational processes and policies, preferably for a tertiary education institution
- Organisational development experience
- Strong communication, administration and organisational skills
- Experience in training and mentoring

Desirable

- A strong interest or background in IT and Education

Personal specification (personal)

Essential

- Ability to work collaboratively in a small team
- Flexible nature
- Able to work in ambiguous and dynamic work environments
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Cheerful and relaxed nature



6. VSA Essential Attributes

- Commitment to volunteering, to VSA and to the partner organisation
- Cross cultural awareness
- Adaptability and a willingness to approach change or newness positively
- Able to form good relationships, both personally and professionally, with work colleagues and in the community
- Resilience and an ability to manage setbacks
- Initiative and resourcefulness
- An ability to facilitate learning through skills exchange

7. Country Context

For more information about the Cook Islands, see <https://vsa.org.nz/about-vsa/countryregion/cook-islands>

Additional information

Residency status

VSA volunteers must be New Zealand citizens or have New Zealand permanent residency status, and currently living in NZ.

Pre-departure briefing

As part of the volunteer's contract, successful candidates will be required to take part in a pre-departure briefing course run by VSA in Wellington and complete all required pre-reading.

Final appointment

Final appointment will be subject to satisfactory medical and immigration clearances (costs covered by VSA), partner organisation acceptance, and successful completion of the pre-departure briefing course.

Family status

VSA supports partners to accompany volunteers on assignments of six months or longer. However volunteers with accompanying dependents will not be considered for this assignment.

Fundraising

Volunteers are encouraged to fundraise at least \$1000 with the support of VSA's fundraising team. Accompanying partners are encouraged to raise the same amount. All funds raised will help VSA keep its programmes in action and support future volunteers.

Vaccination requirements

Potential volunteers are advised that VSA's insurers require volunteers to be inoculated, prior to departure, in accordance with the instructions of VSA's medical adviser. VSA covers the cost of any required vaccinations.

Children's Act

While on assignment, VSA volunteers may be required to work with children and/or may choose to participate in informal activities in their own time that involve interactions with children (such as coaching teams or teaching English). VSA is committed to the protection of vulnerable children and adults, which also includes meeting our commitment under the Children's Act 2014.

The information requested during the application process is necessary to assist VSA to determine applicant suitability to work and/or interact regularly with children, and is part of a series of pre-selection checks undertaken on all applicants for VSA assignments.



Volunteer package

The volunteer's package includes the following:

Reimbursements and grants

1. Volunteers will receive an establishment grant of NZ\$750 to help them set up in their country of assignment. For volunteers with an accompanying partner (whether or not that partner is also a VSA volunteer), VSA will pay an establishment grant of NZ\$1,100 per couple.
2. For two year assignments, the volunteer will receive a rest and respite grant of NZ\$1,000 on completion of the first year.
3. A resettlement grant of NZ\$200 will be paid for each month the volunteer is on assignment. This is payable on completion of the assignment.
4. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of NZD \$1,300

Accommodation

Basic, comfortable furnished accommodation will be sourced by VSA. In some circumstances volunteers may be asked to share accommodation.

Airfares and baggage allowance

VSA will provide the volunteer with economy airfares to and from New Zealand for their assignment plus a baggage allowance.

Insurance

VSA will provide travel insurance to cover baggage and personal property, and non-routine medical expenses for the duration of the assignment. Further details of the insurance cover will be provided during the volunteer pre-departure briefing.

Utilities

VSA will reimburse volunteers reasonable expenses for household utilities while on assignment.

Final terms and conditions relating to the specific volunteer assignment will be confirmed in a personalised volunteer contract.

