


VSA Assignment Description

Assignment Title	Business Development Advisor
Assignment Modality	In-Country
Assignment Number	42005
Country	Papua New Guinea
Location	Kerevat, East New Britain
Partner Organisation	University of Natural Resources and Environment (UNRE)
Duration	4 months
Sustainable Development Goals	

1. Partner Organisation Overview

The Papua New Guinea University of Natural Resources and Environment (UNRE) is a public university in East New Britain Province, Papua New Guinea. It started as the Vudal Agricultural College in 1965, became the Vudal University College, and gained university status in 1996. UNRE focuses on education and research in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, environmental science, and related fields. It offers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes that emphasize sustainable resource management, conservation, and environmental protection. The university is committed to sustainable development in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific region. Its research tackles local and regional environmental challenges such as deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate change. UNRE also works with local communities, government agencies, and non-profits to promote sustainable practices. The University operates through the Kairak-Vudal Resource Training Centre, a facility established for information dissemination, farmer training, and community development. It plays a vital role in advancing knowledge in natural resource management and environmental science in Papua New Guinea, contributing to the country's sustainable development and conservation efforts.

2. Assignment Overview

UNRE, like other higher learning institutions in PNG, faces multifaceted challenges in providing, maintaining, and improving the quality of education due to several factors. One major issue is inadequate financial resources, stemming from persistent underfunding. This ongoing financial constraint limits the university's ability to plan and invest in key educational infrastructure, research, faculty development, faculty salaries, and student support services. The success, reputation, and effectiveness of higher learning institutions depend, among other things, on the quality of their human resources. Due to financial struggles, institutions in PNG often find it difficult to attract and retain qualified and talented faculty members, resulting in a lack of expertise in certain subject areas and impacting the quality of teaching and research. Therefore, it is crucial to invest in recruiting, developing, and retaining high-caliber faculty, staff, and administrators.

This investment is essential for achieving academic excellence, driving innovation, and making meaningful contributions to societal development and well-being. Persistent under-resourcing has consequences that extend to other areas, impacting the quality of infrastructure and the learning environment. This results in suboptimal facilities such as libraries, laboratories, and IT resources, which hinder the delivery of high-quality education and research.

As the leading agricultural university dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, and community engagement, UNRE is considering the feasibility of establishing a business arm with a focus on agriculture and agribusiness. Similar to successful institutions globally, an effectively managed business arm can diversify revenue streams, support financial sustainability, and promote the university's mission. It can achieve this by generating revenue, fostering partnerships, promoting entrepreneurship, enhancing the student experience, and strengthening the local economy. Achieving financial sustainability is paramount for the University to reach its goals, including advancing agricultural science and education, and addressing challenges such as food security and climate change.

3. Goal/Outcomes/Outputs

Goal

UNRE strengthens its capacity and capability to broaden its revenue generation through the successful establishment and operation of a business arm, enabling the university to achieve financial sustainability, better support its mission, and achieve its strategic goals.

Outcome 1

UNRE has undertaken a feasibility study to evaluate the potential of establishing a business arm and has created a detailed business plan outlining the structure, operations, and revenue generation strategies for this initiative.

- Work in collaboration with university leadership, faculty, and external partners to explore the feasibility of establishing a business arm to diversify revenue streams, support financial sustainability and enhance its overall mission impact.
- Lead consultations with university leadership, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders to gather input and insights, as well as review relevant documents and literature related to business arm establishment in the higher education sector.
- Assist with assessing the university's current capabilities, resources, and infrastructure related to innovation commercialization, industry collaboration, and entrepreneurship support.
- Identify potential risks and challenges associated with establishing a business arm and develop mitigation strategies.
- Develop a detailed report outlining the findings of the feasibility study and providing clear recommendations to the university's leadership team.

Outcome 2

UNRE develops a strategic document and associated business case for establishing a business arm, ensuring alignment with the university's mission and strategic priorities.

- Collaborate with senior leaders to set strategic goals and objectives for the business arm.

- Lead the development of the strategy and business case using the Five Case Model (5CM) framework or another appropriate framework, providing expert guidance, analysis, and recommendations to the Vice Chancellor and senior leadership team.
- Develop a draft business strategy and facilitate workshops with university leadership and stakeholders to review and refine the draft strategy.
- Develop a final business strategy document incorporating feedback from the workshop and stakeholders.

4. Reporting, Working Relationships and Capacity Building

The capacity and capability building and strengthening will take place through a variety of activities, including training, hands-on experience, mentoring, coaching, collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the sharing of experiences, best practices, and lessons learned.

The volunteer will report directly to the person appointed by the Vice Chancellor to oversee this assignment and will be accountable to Pro VC Planning & Development. On a day-to-day basis, the volunteer will work with the Farm Manager, Business Management Accountant as well as the Manager, Monitoring & Evaluation and Research Officer, and Head Trainer of Kairak Centre for Sustainable Resource Development including other key stakeholders.

The volunteer and UNRE will have an ongoing relationship with the VSA Programme Manager in terms of assignment monitoring, reporting, professional advice, and personal support.

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 organization and VSA Programme Manager. By their very nature, development situations can involve significant change, so it is advisable that the volunteer periodically reviews and reflects on the Assignment Description throughout the Assignment to ensure the best development outcomes are being achieved.

5. Selection Criteria/Position Requirements

Professional Specifications

Essential

- A qualification or degree in Business, Commerce, or related field.
- Experience in business development, preferably in the academic or research sector.
- Strong knowledge of business development strategies and techniques.
- Experience in developing and implementing business plans and feasibility studies.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work well independently and in a team.
- Excellent communication, collaboration, and project management skills.

Desirable

- Experience working in developing countries.

Personal Specifications

Essential

- A positive can-do attitude.
- Supportive and understanding.
- Resourceful and sound problem-solving skills.
- Excellent relationship management skills (ability to relate well to people from different backgrounds and cultures).
- Ability to work collegially and collaboratively.
- Patient and flexible.

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 Papua New Guinea, see <https://vsa.org.nz/our-work/countryregion/papua-new-guinea/>

8. Living and Working Situation

The Vudal UNRE campus is generally a safe working environment with security provided 24/7 and even if there are security issues, measures are taken ASAP. Transport is provided according to daily transport requests and other amenities, like groceries, are available at the Kerevat township, which is a 10-15mins drive from campus. The clinic provides basic healthcare services or referrals to the Nonga hospital for specialist attention.

An air-conditioned office space and a desk will be provided as well as internet access. Note, however, that the upgrade of the internet system may cause disruption to internet connection.

Shortages of suitable housing continue to pose a challenge. If suitable housing is unavailable, the volunteer will commute from Kokopo to Kerevat.

Additional Information

ST1 assignment (fewer than 6 months)

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 is unable to support partners to accompany volunteers on assignments shorter than 6 months.

Fundraising

VSA funding stakeholders are both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and donors. We ask volunteers to fundraise to help cover the cost of sending volunteers throughout the Pacific and beyond. Fundraising can be as simple as doing something you enjoy with a group or friends, and our Fundraising team is available to help you every step of the way.

Vaccination requirements

Potential volunteers are advised that VSA's insurers require volunteers to be vaccinated, 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. The volunteer will receive a daily living allowance of NZD37 or PGK80.

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.