


VSA Assignment Description

Assignment Title	Eco-Tourism Advisor
Assignment Modality	Standard, in-country
Assignment Number	42056
Country	Timor-Leste
Location	Dili
Partner Organisation	Hotel Owners of Timor-Lorosa'e (HOTL)
Duration	12 months
Sustainable Development Goals	

1. Partner Organisation Overview

The Hotel Owners of Timor-Lorosa'e (HOTL) Association was started in 2018. It started with the vision by hotel owners to help grow the tourism sector. Over the years, the organisation has become the leading hospitality and tourism umbrella association for the tourism industry. HOTL's role is to partner with other tourism and hospitality stakeholders toward achieving the vision of Timor-Leste becoming a significant tourism destination. HOTL implements activities, training, promotion and marketing campaigns both domestically and internationally.

2. Assignment Overview

Tourism is one of the key sectors of Timor-Leste's diversification strategy, with a government 2030 goal of 200,000 visitors annually, compared with a peak of 75,000 in 2019. The National Tourism Strategy "states that public bodies, private enterprises and civil society must ensure that social, economic and environmental sustainability is central to Timor-Leste's tourism offering in order to maximise the future competitiveness of the country as a visitor destination. It also recognises that Timor-Leste's cultural heritage and natural environment is delicate and integral to the country's tourism offering and endorses the protection of natural and built heritage in a manner that is sustainable from an environmental, economic and societal perspective." This is also called eco-tourism and is an approach that has gained traction with donors, NGOs and the private sector in Timor-Leste.

The private sector has an important role to play in delivering the National Tourism Strategy, but they need support. The vast majority of tour operators in Timor-Leste are Timorese owned and operated, and are motivated to attract overseas visitors, and ensure that they have a memorable time exploring the country. Tourism is a relatively new sector though and there is limited training and support to help tour operators grow their businesses, and therefore the tourism sector in Timor-Leste. They need capability building in a wide range of areas, including marketing (websites, social media, print), tour design and development (working with local community partners), and people skills (English language, tourist expectations).

The volunteer will support private sector Timorese owned and operated tour operators and tourism associations to grow their capability and capacity through mentoring and training. To avoid perceptions of favouritism in the private sector, and to help develop the overall sector, the volunteer will work with multiple partner organisations on the basis of need and engagement.

3. Goal/Outcomes/Outputs

Goal

Private sector Timorese owned and operated tour operators have improved capabilities in marketing, tour design and development, and people skills to help grow the tourism sector in Timor-Leste.

Outcome 1

Improved marketing skills and materials.

- Training and mentoring activities
- Review existing marketing materials and offer suggestions
- Understand potential marketing channels and which would have the greatest impact for the partner organisations

Outcome 2

Improved tour design and development skills and experience.

- Training and mentoring activities
- Review existing tours and offer suggestions
- Share experience of tour design in other countries and what international visitor expectations are.
- Work with partner organisations and their partners in local communities to ensure that eco-tourism principles and the National Tourism Strategy goals are being met.

Outcome 3

Improved people skills for those working for the partner organisations

- Training and mentoring activities
- Review current people capabilities and identify opportunities to address areas in need of further development.
- Raise understanding and awareness of eco-tourism principles and approaches

4. Reporting, Working Relationships and Capacity Building

The volunteer will work closely with Timorese owned and operated tour operators and tourism associations to understand their specific needs in relation to the assignment outcomes described and develop appropriate approaches. These may include formal and informational training and mentoring, and review and co-development of materials such as social media content.

The volunteer and Hotel Owners of Timor-Lorosa'e (HOTL) Association 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 organisation 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

- Experience working in or developing tourism businesses or associations
- Knowledge of internationally recognised eco-tourism principles and practices
- Experience providing training, mentoring or awareness raising for tourism providers
- Experience promoting tourism destinations and activities

Desirable

- Experience developing marketing material, collateral and promotion strategies including using social media for tourism

Personal Specifications

Essential

- Ability to establish and maintain effective and friendly working relationships across a diverse range of stakeholders
- Flexible approach to the unpredictable nature of tourism as a developing industry in Timor-Leste
- Flexible and friendly
- Have a sense of humour
- Willingness to travel around the country to help develop tourism materials
- Open mindedness towards the diverse culture, challenging economic conditions and difficult history experienced by individuals in Timor-Leste

Desirable

- Ability and willingness to learn Tetun
- Experience living in a developing country or with other cultures

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 Timor-Leste, see <https://www.vsa.org.nz>

8. Living and Working Situation

HOTL have modern offices in the Timor Plaza complex, just to the west of central Dili. There are plenty of shops, restaurants, and even a cinema in the complex. The volunteer may also work from the offices of Timorese tour operators and other tourism associations, who are generally based in central Dili in reasonable facilities.

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

VSA funding stakeholders are both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and donors. We ask volunteers and accompanying partners 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 may be entitled to an establishment grant to help them set up in their country of assignment, and a rest and respite grant after a specified period of active service in-

country to encourage the volunteer to take a break away from the immediate assignment location. These grants depend on the length and location of the assignment. The volunteer's contract will specify any grant entitlements.

2. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of USD 960.

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.