Project Officer – Latin America

Are you passionate about development in Latin America, have strong language and communication skills, and possess an entrepreneurial spirit that will allow you to manage programs while building partnerships and exploring opportunities to do more? This Project Officer position is much more than a desk job. It’s a chance to work with amazing colleagues, impact lives of vulnerable people with big dreams, and craft a collaborative strategy for humanitarian response and development in the region.

AVSI-USA (www.avsi-usa.org) is seeking a full or part-time new hire to be based at our DC area office, located in Silver Spring, MD. This position will be for 12 months, with the possibility of extension.

AVSI-USA is a small non-profit organization whose mission is to promote human dignity through long-term development projects and partnerships in contexts of vulnerability and poverty around the world. AVSI-USA works through and with the AVSI network which is present in 30 countries both directly and through partnerships with hundreds of local, community-based organizations. AVSI-USA leverages US based resources, both financial and technical, to further this mission.

As Project Officer for Latin America you will provide management support and technical oversight for at least one USAID or State Department funded project implemented by AVSI Foundation in Latin America and will support additional efforts to gain additional funding for projects in the region.

At least 70% of your time will be to support a new project to be implemented by AVSI Foundation in Brazil with funding from the US State Department’s Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM). The project, “Promoting integration through employment of Venezuelan refugees and migrants and other vulnerable persons in Brazil”, will be a two-year initiative beginning on October 1, 2019. In this role you will be AVSI’s primary Point of Contact for the Contracting Officer at PRM’s HQ in Washington, DC ensuring timely, professional and complete responses to requests and fulfillment of reporting tasks.

In addition, the Project Officer for Latin America will work with other staff members at AVSI-USA and in the AVSI regional office for Latin America to identify, examine and pursue other funding opportunities for projects in the region.

Integration of Venezuelan Migrants in Brazil (70%)

- Maintain close communication with the Project Manager and other key staff in Brazil to stay abreast of implementation progress, delays, and challenges, through weekly calls and frequent email exchange;
- Review all publications and reports before submission and provide editing support as needed to ensure high level of professionality and accuracy;
- Maintain schedule of required reports, including tracking approvals and timelines to prepare reports, and ensure that the entire team is working together to meet all deadlines;
- Keep Technical Advisor at AVSI-USA abreast of the developments of the project, in particular any challenges or problems, and pro-actively facilitate problem solving when challenges arise;
- Become familiar with PRM’s reporting and data entry system and support data entry on quarterly and annual basis;
- Coordinate and lead as needed the coordination meetings for project team, connecting AVSI’s HQ in Italy, the Technical Advisor at AVSI-USA and the team in Brazil on a regular basis; maintain schedule of calls, prepare agenda, take and share notes, and oversee follow-up on emergent action points;
- Ensure that communication with the Partner organizations and with AVSI HQ is fluid and that all key stakeholders are kept informed of key dates, planning processes and other needs as they come up;
- Participate in DC based meetings and conferences of relevance to the project, share notes with project team, and follow-through with relevant contacts;
- As needed, facilitate the collaborative work on communications activities and external outreach among AVSI offices as well as with partners; and
- Take on special projects to support the Project Manager and key staff as they arise.

Other projects (30%)

- Research other funding sources for AVSI and partner programs and initiatives in Latin America, stay abreast of funding trends, and contribute this information to relevant stakeholders in the AVSI Latin America network on a regular basis;
- Maintain and expand contacts among peer implementing organizations active in the region and among donors and increase the visibility of the AVSI Latin America network;
- Contribute to information sharing and capacity building initiatives of AVSI-USA towards partners and colleagues in the AVSI Latin America network;
- As assigned, support the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the AVSI Latin America network, including the preparation of the Annual Regional Meeting.

Travel to Brazil at least twice a year for an estimated 10 days per trip, with additional travel to the region likely.

Profile and Skills Required:

1) Excellent English and Spanish writing and communication skills, including critical thinking and ability to synthesize information; familiarity with Portuguese highly desired.
2) Masters degree in relevant field, with experience related to economic and social development, human rights, and/or education highly desired.
At least 2 years of experience in a project management or technical backstopping role highly desired; field experience in Latin America would be an additional benefit.

Experience with budget monitoring, preparation and analysis, and keen attention to detail with planning and invoicing.

Personal characteristics such as openness to understand, learn and collaborate with others, enthusiasm to communicate the AVSI mission and experience, and seriousness in front of work.

Excellent verbal presentation and inter-personal skills which enable development of positive relationships built on trust and foster exploration of new relationships and partnerships;

Pro-active and energetic personality, ability to ask good questions, seek information and answers independently, and exercises prudent judgement about when to seek input before making decisions.

Self-confidence to openly discuss problems or concerns and to receive constructive criticism. Eagerness to learn new skills.

Solid work ethic expressed in the willingness to take on tasks which may not necessarily be spelled out in the job description and to support the overall mission of AVSI-USA and special projects as needed.

Supervision: Initial supervision and training will be provided by the AVSI-USA Managing Director.

Remuneration and Benefits: To be determined based on salary history, full or part-time contract and past experience.

Length of Commitment: 12 months (start-date October 1, 2019), with possibility of extension.

Application Process: Interested candidates should email Jackie Aldrette, Managing Director and Focal Point for USG Relations, (Jackie.aldrette@avsi.org) with a letter of interest and a resume, including at least 2 professional and 1 personal references. Your one-page letter of interest should indicate your knowledge, skills, and abilities specific to the position. You should also indicate if you are seeking a full-time or part-time position. Please also enclose a resume, that includes the following information at a minimum:

- Your education history, areas of study, and degrees.
- Your work history
  - Highlights of relevant work experience and job training.
  - Licenses, certificates and language skills

Applicants will be contacted for an interview if they meet the desired qualifications and if the position is still open.

Applications will be received and reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.