



Head of Business Operations

Candidate Pack
January 2024

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in this role.

Mokoro is a niche not-for-profit business providing international development consultancy that contributes to sustainable economic and social development. We have a longstanding reputation for the high quality and utility of our work. Through our global network of consultants, Mokoro provides values-driven consultancy and research for a variety of clients including governments, multilateral and bilateral aid agencies and NGOs.

We are looking to appoint a new Head of Business Operations (equivalent in some respects to Managing Director) to oversee the day-to-day operations, business development and people management of this small consultancy firm. The new post holder will also play a lead role in company strategy and business planning.

The appointee will be joining a small but impressive team, working closely with the Mokoro Council (Board of Directors), Principal Consultants, staff and associates. The new Head of Business Operations will manage the office and will be happy shifting between overseeing day-to-day consultancy operations and looking more broadly at business development. Critical to the success of the role will be strong relationship skills, as will the ability to negotiate with clients, and to coordinate the team. The appointee will be passionate about international development and the work Mokoro does.

This is an exciting opportunity to join a unique organisation, one that has continued to work effectively toward its mission for more than 40 years. We are looking for a leader who is grounded, ethical and brings personal warmth to the role. Ideal candidates will be experienced in project management, relationship development and broader administration. The experience may be gained through a range of different sectors. The role offers an exceptional opportunity



for a dynamic, passionate leader who wants to make a positive difference while working alongside a group of bright people who work to a high ethical standard. Whilst being the most senior management role within the organisation's staff team, critical to success is bringing an ethos of service and facilitation.

We hope the information in this pack is useful and look forward to your application.



About Mokoro

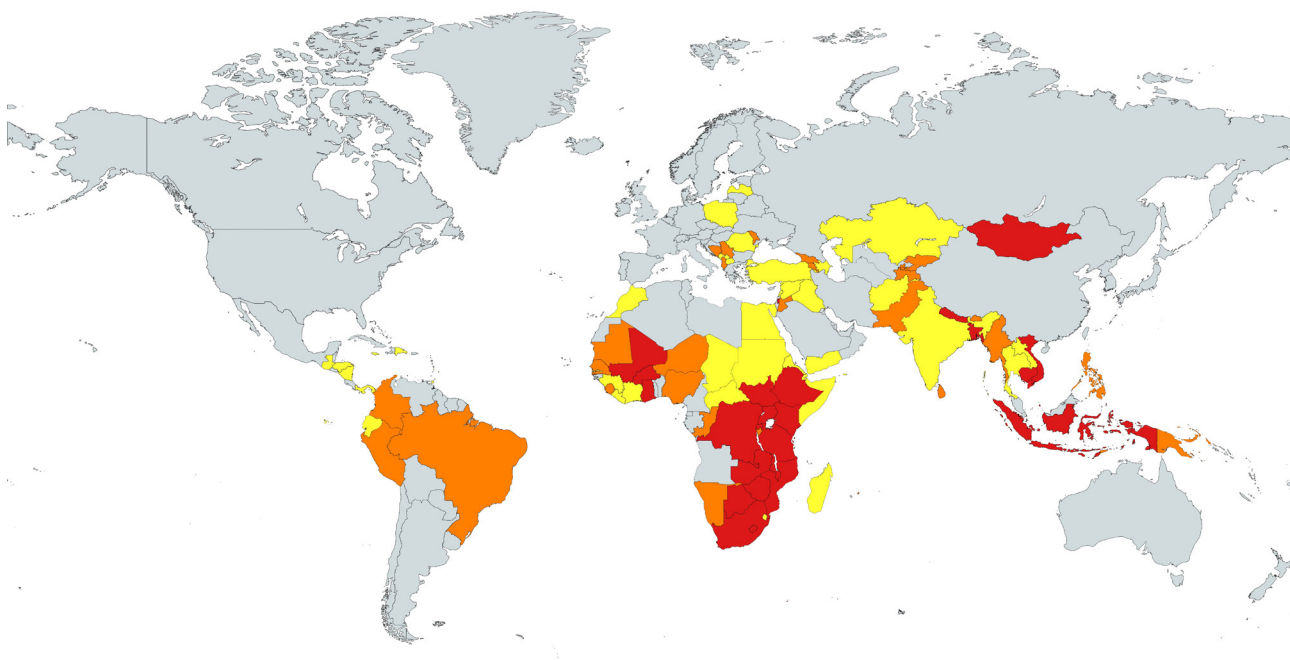
Company

Mokoro is a successful international development consultancy and research company, with a high reputation for quality and innovation in a number of fields. Professionally, it operates as a partnership of consultants and staff who are committed to collaboration. It aims for technical and ethical excellence by applying high professional and personal standards.

Our technical services include evaluations and reviews, research, training, programme design, policy analysis and advice, in the areas of: aid effectiveness; public policy and management; and land, livelihoods and natural resources. Our experience cuts across sectors, issues and disciplines including: agriculture, capacity strengthening, child protection, climate change, education, emergency response, food security, gender, health, land rights, nutrition, resilience, and social protection.

We carry out consultancy and research globally, and have in-depth and long-term experience in many countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Pacific and Caribbean, and Central and South America. We have conducted more than 750 assignments in over 80 countries worldwide. Our reputation for global or multi-country strategic and policy-related evaluations and reviews is particularly strong with certain key clients such as UNICEF and WFP. Other multilateral agency clients include the World Bank, UNHCR, UNDP and FAO. We also work with bilateral aid and development agencies such as those of Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland and Ireland as well as the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Government clients have included Ministries of Finance, Education and similar in countries such as South Africa, Cambodia, Ethiopia and Malawi. Mokoro's registered office is in Oxford, UK, but it has members and associates across the globe.

Further information on our background and current consultancy portfolio is [here](#).



Heatmap of areas where Mokoro work, according to frequency of engagement

People

The company draws its consulting competence from its Principal Consultants; salaried staff team; and associates (consultants who provide services on a more ad hoc basis for specific assignments). Our Principal Consultants are based in the UK, France, Belgium, Spain, Ethiopia, South Africa, USA and Australia. Our network of skilled and experienced associates consists of consultants based globally whom we have worked with often over a long period of time on a range of assignments. As well as individual freelance consultants, we also partner with like-minded organisations, and we have long-standing working relations with several small consultancy networks in Europe and Africa.

The staff team, who are overseen by the Head of Business Operations, consists of ten employees (9 FTE) including two salaried Principal Consultants. The functions of the team include research, business development (including bids and proposal writing), assignment, contract and financial management, and administration. Half the team work from the Oxford office, others have hybrid or home-working arrangement. We offer a friendly and inclusive working environment with a cooperative working style and sense of belonging. The office is accessible and located within easy reach of Oxford public transport.

Although we work hard, we also find time to get to know each other through social activities, professional development and learning events.

Governance

Mokoro was established in 1982, is a Company Limited by Guarantee and as such has no shareholders entitled to dividends, and all Members can participate equally in its governance. The company is thus ‘not for profit’; but it is run as a business that has to cover its costs. Any profits are retained to finance the operations and development of the company.

Principal Consultants are normally Members of the company. Salaried employees are usually invited to become Members once they are well established in their roles. Members also include people who are not (currently) active as consultants but who retain an affiliation with Mokoro (including former staff members and others with an affinity to Mokoro). These Members are a valued part of the Mokoro community.

Mokoro’s Council (the Board of Directors) are elected from the Members.



Values and approach

All those in Mokoro have a shared commitment to improving the well-being and opportunities of poor and vulnerable communities, high quality of professional outputs, participatory governance, mutual support and learning. Mokoro also aims to contribute towards professionally and personally fulfilling livelihoods for its Principal Consultants. Recognising that they are stronger together than separately, Mokoro consultants and staff work continuously to improve their knowledge, and share their practice openly with each other.

Mokoro’s approach is based on core values of mutual trust, respect and support; ethical and professional integrity; collegiality; fair and equitable practice; and flexibility and adaptability. We, and our clients, value our commitment to high standards in all that we do, maintained through our quality support approach which ensures that we have designated quality support personnel to advise on every assignment we undertake.

Our Expertise



Evaluations and Reviews

Mokoro has an extensive track record in reviews and evaluations. We have undertaken numerous assessments of major global initiatives, of cross-sectoral and interagency interventions, and of country level strategies and programmes. We have a particularly strong track record in complex, global evaluations. Recent and current examples include the evaluation of the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) First Emergency Response Fund; Evaluation of Bilateral and Multilateral funding effectiveness for DANIDA; Mid Term Evaluation of the WFP Strategic Plan.



Aid Effectiveness

Mokoro's consultants are established experts in aid effectiveness and related issues of aid management and coordination. Our evidence-based approach is based on years of experience working with partner governments, donors and NGOs in a wide range of

developing countries, as well as donor headquarters and partner government and agency networks.

We work on aid effectiveness at the policy level, such as the revision of EC sector-wide approach guidance and DAC good practice guidelines on sector programming, as well as at the practical level where much of our evaluation work concerns aid effectiveness. We regularly undertake regional, country-level and programme evaluations that include both accountability and learning components.

Public Policy and Management

Mokoro has been supporting governments and development institutions in policy development and systems reform for over forty years. Our approach recognises that effective reform is context-sensitive, and that reforming systems is necessarily both a technical and a political process; specialists can support technical processes but political processes must be driven by local actors. A current example of this is work on Climate Budget Tagging for the National Treasury in South Africa, and rolling this out at sub-national level, funded by the World Bank.

Our consultants have broad expertise in all aspects of public financial management (PFM), including the design and implementation of medium-term expenditure frameworks, sector-based and performance-oriented programme budgeting, and expenditure management and oversight. Recent examples include an assessment of the level of integration of national and sectoral policies on ending child marriage (ECM) in government budgets of selected African counties; an assessment of the Education Services Joint Fund, Malawi; a Nutrition Expenditure Review for the Government of Zambia, all funded by UNICEF.

Land, livelihoods and natural resources

Mokoro provides technical, social, legal and economic advice on land, livelihoods, agriculture and natural resources. Our consultants work in research and training, advice and support to reform, institutional and capacity development, and programme planning and evaluation.

We have broad experience in land policy and reform, including urban and peri-urban land issues, dispute resolution, land rights for women, pastoralists and indigenous peoples, community land management, land and agricultural investments, and governance of tenure. Gender issues are integral to all our work on tenure rights and access to natural resources. In our portfolio, the WOLTS programme is long-term action orientated research. An example of other on-going work is the provision of Technical Assistance on Land, Customary Tenure and Gender in Cambodia, Mongolia, Pakistan and Timor-Leste, with FAO as the client.

We are committed to contributing to the global land rights dialogue, including on key issues of women's land rights, good governance of land tenure, and impacts of large scale land acquisitions. We manage and host the Land Rights in Africa website.



Business Support

The expertise in the staff team includes our cadre of in-house researchers, who themselves are very knowledgeable about regular clients, highly experienced in assignment coordination, skilled in quantitative and qualitative research methods, and with particularly areas of thematic expertise. They are allocated on to the assignment teams and are typically involved in several assignments at any one time. Bid writing and coordinating proposals are key skills of team members focussed on the business support side, along with finance and contract management, administration and communications. Across the team, particularly in the face of multiple deadlines, everyone pitches in; being a “jack of all trades” is an asset.

As a small company, having efficient and effective business systems is important. Some recent and on-going initiatives include: moving to the Xero accounting package in 2021; transitioning from an office-based server to cloud-based systems and databases to overcome obsolescence and improve remote/hybrid working arrangements; and website improvements (due in mid-2024) to update content, modernise presentation, improve navigability and be more representative of the wider network of Mokoro.

The Role

Post Title:	Head of Business Operations
Responsible to:	Mokoro Council, as the governing body, through the Chair
Location:	Oxford, UK with possibility for some flexible working
Contract:	Permanent, full time (possibility of part-time 80% open to discussion)
Reporting to this post:	All Mokoro staff, currently a team of ten (9 FTE): salaried Principal Consultants, Finance Manager, Programme Coordinators, Business Development Coordinator, Researcher, Research Officers and Business Administrator
Working internally with:	Mokoro Council and staff as above, Principal Consultants, Associates and Company members
Working externally with:	Broad range of clients, funders, partners and consultants

Overall objective of the post:

To oversee the day-to-day operations, business development and people management.

Purpose and Key Responsibilities:

- Lead on business and project management, and client/partner relationship development, making a key contribution in developing company strategy in collaboration with our Council and Principal Consultants.
- Responsible for overseeing the day-to-day running of the company, managing our staff team (many Oxford-based) of financial, research, project management and administrative personnel.

Business development, operations and people management

- Drive the identification and pursuit of relevant new business opportunities, working closely with Principal Consultants in strengthening our consultancy portfolio in priority areas
- Ensure support to Principal Consultants and others in proposal preparation, supervising submissions and setting/maintaining highest standards in this area
- Oversee company resources, budget(s) and expenditure allocations and the effective project and financial management of our consultancy portfolio
- Manage the staff team including overseeing staff workloads, tasks and responsibilities, performance management and well-being
- Lead on recruitment, people management and staff development, including coordinating the company's duty of care to consultants in the field
- Oversee implementation, updates and review of company policies including new policies as required, (for approval by Council)
- Ensure the maintenance and development of systems and procedures to improve and monitor company performance.

Strategy and business planning and development

- Lead the preparation of Mokoro's annual Business Plan, budget, and Annual Report, establish objectives and financial, thematic, and other performance targets
- Facilitate and contribute to the preparation and implementation of our long-term strategy, in collaboration with our Council, Principal Consultants and staff
- Support networking of Mokoro's Principal Consultants and facilitate the identification of potential future Principal Consultants and new associates
- Identify, establish and maintain key strategic relationships with clients, partners and consultants
- Ensure and contribute to the development and implementation of our communications, marketing and networking activities.

Wider leadership

- Ensure the monitoring of and appropriate responses to Principal Consultant work commitments, plans and professional aspirations
- Prepare and provide written/ oral inputs to Council meetings, and contribute to company governance matters as appropriate
- Contribute to the maintaining and strengthening of Mokoro's culture, values and reputation internally and with clients, funders, and partners
- Represent Mokoro at external events and meetings with partners, consortia and clients
- Contribute to, and ensure others' inputs towards, internal and external events including Mokoro Seminars and Quarterly Meetings, internal meetings, planning and monitoring processes
- Any other reasonable task commensurate with the post.

Person Specification

Experience

Education, ideally to Master's level

Relevant field (e.g. social sciences, business administration, economics, international development).

Proven senior leadership

Demonstrable, progressive management experience, likely but not necessarily in the international development/consultancy sector or comparable field, ideally with previous experience in a senior management, leadership or governance position working with a Board, combined with experience developing and implementing strategy.

Client relationship management

Demonstrable experience in client relationship management, building and sustaining partnerships, and successful resource mobilisation and management.

People management

Demonstrable experience in managing people, including recruitment and performance management

Business and budget management

Solid track record of effectively managing resources and budgets, with experience in delivering long-term financial sustainability. Hands-on experience with HR policies and procedures and a broad understanding of basic employment and commercial /contract law.

Familiarity with accounting and business governance would be beneficial.

Safety and Security

Experience of the needs and provision of relevant, appropriate support to individuals and teams working short-term in developing or transitional country contexts or volatile environments.

Sound understanding of the aid and development sector and/or consultancy

Ideally working knowledge and understanding of the aid and development sector (including key agencies, themes and issues relating to one or more of Mokoro's core thematic areas of work).

Experience working for a consultancy firm or as an independent consultant an advantage.

Competence & Skills**Sound judgement**

Proven capability to work effectively and proactively with a high degree of autonomy and independence, demonstrating the ethos of the company and sound judgement in decision-making

Personal Effectiveness

Strong organisational, multitasking and prioritisation skills, ability to oversee multiple projects, manage timelines, allocate resources and ability to manage, and support others' management. Resilient, capable of handling wide, varied and demanding workloads whilst maintaining quality and successful project outcomes.

Leadership and relationship building

Adaptable and supportive leadership style, suitable for both leading teams and leadership in a context where Principal Consultants are peers, outside line management.

Proven ability to forge and nurture partnerships and collaborative relationships with a range of stakeholders.

Commercial Acumen

Demonstrable commercial acumen and entrepreneurial approach in handling risk, with ability to identify and develop new business opportunities for Mokoro.

Professional skills

Proven capability to work effectively and proactively with a high degree of autonomy and independence, demonstrating sound judgement in decision-making.

Strong organisational, multitasking and prioritisation skills, and ability to manage – and support others in their management of – a wide and varied workload whilst maintaining quality.

Excellent oral and written communication skills, with a sound ability to work effectively and empathetically with a diverse and geographically dispersed team.

High level of numeracy and experience of developing, managing and monitoring organisational and project budgets.

Strong IT competency for all standard MS packages.

Commitment to Mokoro culture

Demonstrable capability for collaborative working, strong supportive relationships among Company members, and a commitment to producing high quality consultancy work.

Other attributes (desirable)

Networks	Established networks with relevant organisations and individuals in the sector
Contexts	Experience of working in developing and transitional country context/s
Languages	Ability to work in other language(s) relevant to Mokoro's work

General Terms and Conditions

Base

Mokoro offices, Oxford.

Hours

Full-time position, based on 37.5 hours per week. We are open to discussing flexible working hours.

Leave

Annual leave entitlement is 25 days, as well as all English public holidays, plus an additional 3 days usually to be taken in the period between Christmas and New Year or around a similar observance such as Eid.

Salary

Circa £50,000-55,000 p.a. paid monthly in arrears by credit transfer. Mokoro operates a contributory pension scheme.

Probationary period

There will be a six month probationary period for this post, with a review carried out after three months, and again at the end of the probationary period.

Notice

One month's notice during the probationary period; three months' notice upon satisfactory completion of probationary period and confirmation into post.

Benefits

In addition to a friendly and supportive working environment, Mokoro offers: a pension scheme with 8% employer contribution; enhanced holiday entitlement; possibility of flexible working arrangements.



How to Apply

The closing date for all applications, which should be in the form of a CV and cover letter addressed to mokoro@minervasearch.com, is 12 February 2024.

Interviews will be held w/c 11 March (date TBC).

MINERVA

mokoro