



## The European Union's ENPI Programme for Ukraine

### Support for the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement / A4U Project

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### **Open Letter to UA Governmental Leaders and Leaders of Units in Governmental Institutions on the A4U FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM AND ITS UTILISATION**



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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

This letter advises you about the **Fellowship Program of the Association4U Project** ('A4U'), and how our Project Fellows can help you to implement the responsibilities of your Directorate concerning EU Integration.

### **Background to the Fellowship Program**

The Association4U Project ('A4U') has, during the past 18 months, provided the services of **Project Fellows** to Ministries and other Government Institutions including the Government Office of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration (GOOEI). This support will continue until the end of 2018 and the conclusion of the A4U Project.

Limited availability of skilled and motivated staff in ministries, agencies and other public bodies continues to be a serious challenge in successful implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement/DCFTA, and a well-organised and purposeful implementation of reforms in Ukraine. **The EU Fellowship Program**, a key element of the A4U Project, has been designed and launched to contribute to sustained and effective implementation of AA/DCFTA, and develop widespread expertise on EU integration through the active involvement of Ukrainian people not employed as Civil Servants. This includes experienced professionals (including staff from universities, research institutions and think-tanks) as well as young graduates with little or no work experience but who are committed to the reform process and the development of their own professional skills and careers. Many Fellows have been placed within governmental institutions, to enable the provision of targeted technical assistance. They therefore address short-term capacity gaps in these institutions, while becoming part of a new generation of professionals with expertise in EU integration.

Alongside the Program, following the entry into force of the Law on Civil Service of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016, the Government of Ukraine foresees implementation during the period to 2020 of a strategy and action plan on Public Administration Reform (PAR) including staff competency development and improvements in working conditions. PAR, as a critical component of the overall reform process, will enhance the efficiency and transparency of working systems, and provide an indispensable platform for the minimization and gradual elimination of the conditions for corruption and fraud. The EU Fellowship Program supports implementation of the PAR, in particular where it can enhance implementation of the Association Agreement/DCFTA.

### **Objectives and Key Tasks of EU Fellowship Program**

The overall objective of the Program is **to establish a new generation of reform-oriented Ukrainian citizens who can work with the public service in support of change and**

**modernisation, specifically regarding implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement/DCFTA.**

This includes support at the level of both the Cabinet of Ministers and central governmental executive authorities through provision of targeted technical assistance, while contributing to development of a new generation of cadres with skills in EU integration.

The Fellowship Program specifically delivers:

- **Additional resources** to implement priority tasks in the Government's and the Central Authorities' Action Plans on implementation of the Association Agreement/DCFTA, with Fellows working jointly with Civil Servants on related tasks. Fellows with different profiles and experience levels provide targeted support in implementing AA/DCFTA. Civil Servants therefore benefit from a strengthened capacity and an accelerated pace in the reform process through the deployment of motivated and qualified Ukrainian professionals.
- Contribution to the **development of a new future cadre of civil public sector professionals in the field of AA/DCFTA**, with the body of Junior Fellows being made up by motivated graduates and post-graduates of Ukrainian and foreign universities and the National Academy of Public Service (NAPA).
- **Attention to specific gaps and priority tasks** in the reform agenda through the deployment of experts with high-level professional and sectorial skills acquired from experience in academia, think tanks, the private sector and Civil Society. Substantial mutual benefit can be obtained by the utilization of existing and available Ukrainian expertise. The creation of effective systems of knowledge exchange will be important elements contributing to progress.

The concept of the Fellowship Program envisages short to medium-term placements with Fellows working alongside civil servants in Ministries/Agencies and other Government Units. The Fellowship Program will not replace civil servants, but will provide additional expertise and support in the implementation of AA/DCFTA.

All appointed Fellows undergo an intensive induction training program, following which they are placed within governmental units that have prepared and submitted detailed Terms of Reference and a work plan regarding the tasks to be fulfilled, and nominated a reporting officer responsible for the Fellow's work.

### **What is a Fellow?**

The A4U Project employs Ukrainian experts and recent graduates as Fellows, who are placed within Government Institutions to assist in the process of implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and enhance the capacities of Ukrainian Government Institutions concerning legal approximation, sectorial policies and public communication. Our Fellows are

actively engaged in growing a ‘new wave’ of professionals on EUI-related issues for the Ukrainian Civil Service and the business community. Specifically, our Fellows can provide support in the following areas:

- EU law-making and EU legal approximation,
- Policy-making and inputs to strategic planning,
- Sectorial policy development,
- Public and business communications (e.g. ‘help desks’ providing key information to the business community).

Our Project Fellows have become a cadre of Ukrainian professionals (non-public servants) funded by the EU through the Project, who provide targeted technical support and assist governmental units and public services/agencies in the design and implementation of EU integration and AA/DCFTA related tasks, filling capacity gaps in the design and implementation of priority tasks regarding AA/DCFTA strategies and programs.

There are several distinct working groups of Fellows, including:

- Legal Approximation Fellows: based in OVPM, GOEII or line Ministries, responsible for the analysis of Ukrainian legal documents in relation to corresponding EU legal documents.
- Sectorial Policy Fellows: based in OVPM, GOEII or line Ministries, responsible for preparation and analysis of proposals concerning specific sectors where approximation to EU laws/standards is proceeding.
- Communications Fellows: based in the Project Office, OVPM, GOEII or line Ministries, responsible for communications and visibility of activities in the field of AA/DCFTA.

Within each of these working groups, there are three levels of Fellow:

- Senior Fellows: who have a significant level of general and specific professional experience in relevant areas (e.g. legal drafting or a specific sectorial area),
- Associate Fellows: who also have previous relevant experience and are capable of providing professional advice and support,
- Junior Fellows: graduates who may have little or no previous work experience, but have an interest and enthusiasm for supporting strategic development in a practical context.

We have so far provided more than 140 Fellows to Government institutions, many of whom have renewed their initial one-year contracts at their own request and the request of their Governmental host institutions / beneficiaries.

The detailed job profiles for each of the above category of Fellow (by level/working group) are published on the Association4U EU Project web site (<http://association4u.com.ua.>)

Fellows are generally located within the organisational structure of the relevant beneficiary institution for the duration of their contracts with the A4U Project. Each beneficiary institution will be encouraged to gradually integrate Fellows to become part of their services, subject to these individuals meeting the terms and conditions as required by the Law on Civil Service.

### **Our experience to date**

Experience to date has proved that in almost all cases our Fellows have made a significant contribution to the work of their beneficiaries, and have enhanced their beneficiaries' progress concerning EU Integration and related areas. We have received many verbal and written reports praising the inputs of Fellows, who in many cases have brought a new and fresh perspective to complicated issues and have successfully helped Government Institutions in advancing and enriching their areas of activity.

In some cases, Fellows have successfully applied for posts within their beneficiary institutions (including Directorates General for Strategic Planning and European Integration). This demonstrates the level of impact they are able to make, and that they will be able to continue contributing to the process of Public Administration Reform even after the A4U Project ends at the beginning of 2019.

### **How can You obtain the services of a Fellow for your institution / unit?**

**All Government institutions with a responsibility for tasks related to AA/DCFTA may submit requests for Fellows to the A4U Project. The pre-requisites for the provision of Fellow support are the following:**

#### **GENERAL:**

Commitment to the reform process of the specific ministry or public body and a detailed and updated ministerial (institutional) Implementation/Action Plan and timeframe for implementation of the tasks included in the Association Agreement/DCFTA.

#### **SPECIFIC:**

1. Confirmation of the necessary institutional, organizational and supervisory preconditions, including:
  - access to the premises of the institution,
  - suitable working space within the premises,

- required facilities and equipment including a desk, stationery etc.
- information concerning rules, rights, obligations and standards while at work,
- appointment of a responsible **Liaison Officer and Work Supervisor** – the official in the institution who will allocate and monitor work and sign the Fellows' periodic reports and monthly timesheets.

2. Preparation and submission to the A4U Project of a detailed **Terms of Reference** regarding the tasks to be fulfilled by the specific Fellow, **including a Work Plan** for the period of the planned assignment that specifies the priority tasks of the Fellow for each month of the assignment. These should be interconnected and referenced to the respective AA/DCFTA Implementation Plans of the beneficiary institution. The ToR and the Work Plan serve as planning documents and as background for verification by the A4U Project and the EUD of the periodic Reports and monthly timesheets submitted by each Fellow.
3. Commitment to an effective **performance assessment and monitoring system** of work of Fellows involving the Liaison Officer/Work Supervisor. This Officer will hold overall responsibility for all aspects of the work of assigned Fellows, and will have the right and obligation to justify the performance of the Fellows by signing their reports and timesheets on behalf of the beneficiary. The Liaison Officer/Work Supervisor must be appointed by the Head of the Institution at a sufficiently high and responsible level, authorized to represent the institution's interests in the field of EU integration.
4. The beneficiary institution must commit to **ensuring that the work of assigned Fellows is in accordance with the objectives** of the Fellowship Program and the institution's commitment to AA/DCFTA.
5. The beneficiary must also **enable Fellows to participate** in training programs or implementation of specific tasks organised / requested by the A4U Project from Fellows and Civil Servants.

### **Training and Management of Fellows**

All contracted Fellows benefit from an induction training program organised by the A4U Project, in most cases of two to three weeks' duration. In most cases, this program is delivered before the Fellow starts work, and forms the first period of his/her contract. The subjects covered vary according to the different working groups of Fellows, but typically include understanding of EU institutions, procedures and laws: understanding of AA/DCFTA: understanding of public administration: planning and monitoring skills: EU legal approximation: introduction to specific sectorial policies: communications, negotiation and other 'soft' skills.

Further training programs are organised by the A4U Project on topics of relevance to AA/DCFTA and where Fellows can benefit from enhanced skills and knowledge to help them perform their assignments to a high standard of professionalism.

**The management of Fellows includes:**

- Allocation and monitoring of work by the Liaison Officer/Work Supervisor. Work performed must be in accordance with the ToR and work plan as prepared in advance of the Fellow's assignment,
- Submission by the fellow to the A4U Project of reports on work performed. These reports must give details of work performed and how this relates to the sectorial plans or other AA/DCFTA commitments of the beneficiary.
- Submission of a monthly timesheet to the A4U Project, duly signed by the Liaison Officer/Work Supervisor. This timesheet is coupled with monthly and six-monthly reports in the case of senior and associate fellows.

Fellows' contracts are drawn up between the A4U Project and each individual Fellow. The monthly salaries of Fellows are paid based on the number of days recorded in the timesheet, once signed by all parties including the EUD.

**If you would like more information about the Fellowship Program and how to obtain the services of one or more Fellows, please contact the A4U Project office, look at the A4U Facebook or web-site or write to [izakonyi@gmail.com](mailto:izakonyi@gmail.com).**

**We suggest and hope that You will utilise the resources of the Fellowship Program in setting up your ministry units and making your work more effective and efficient!**

Kiev, 28 November 2017

With the best regards,

Dr Janos Zakonyi  
Team Leader of the A4U Project