

Terms of reference

Job Opening number: *UNOPS IICA-2 (International Individual Contractor Agreement, Level 2)*

Job Title: *Programme Specialist*

General Expertise: *Housing, Urban Development*

Category: *Housing Policy*

Department/Office: *United Nations Human Settlements Programme*

Organizational Unit: *UN-Habitat EO NYO Montreal Office*

Location: *Montreal*

Background

UN-Habitat is the agency for human settlements. It is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.

The Canada Office of UN-Habitat strengthens the organization's mission by serving as a focal point for partnerships, applied research, and policy engagement in Canada and across North America for the implementation of UN-Habitat's 2026-2029 Strategic Plan. Operating from the City of Montreal, the Canada Office plays a central role in four domains: partner engagement and resource mobilization; research-policy-action interface; advocacy and communication; and the advancement of sustainable urbanization agendas within the Canadian and North American context.

The Canada Office places particular emphasis on knowledge and innovation with a view to accelerating housing solutions that are affordable, adequate, resilient, and compatible with national and global commitments.

In alignment with its housing and urban development priorities, the Canada Office also contributes to UN-Habitat's global efforts to strengthen intergovernmental dialogue and cooperation on housing in close cooperation with UN-Habitat's Land, Housing and Shelter Section in Nairobi, Kenya, and the UN-Habitat Office at UN Headquarters. This includes supporting the work of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All (OWEG-H), which aims to advance a shared understanding and actionable recommendations for realizing the right to adequate housing within the framework of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. Through evidence-based research, policy engagement, and partnership-building, the Canada Office helps ensure that global innovations and lessons inform and enrich the deliberations and outputs of the OWEG-H, General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as relevant.

UN-Habitat Canada Office is seeking a motivated, highly skilled, and experienced professional to join the team on a full-time basis in their office in Montreal, Canada.

Reporting line

This position is under the overall guidance of the Director of the New York Liaison Office (NYLO) and reports directly to the Head of Office, Canada.

Duties and Responsibilities

Working closely with the UN-Habitat Canada Office team, the Programme Specialist will provide strategic advisory support to advance the Office's housing and urban development portfolio, with a focus on resource mobilization, effective project implementation, and strengthening technical cooperation and partnerships.

Specifically, the consultant will:

1. Provide strategic advice to support the design, implementation, and delivery of housing and urban development initiatives, ensuring alignment with UN-Habitat's mandate and the Canada Office's programmatic priorities.
2. Contribute to the identification and development of opportunities for resource mobilization, including supporting the preparation of concept notes, proposals, and engagement strategies with public, private, and multilateral partners.
3. Support the effective implementation of ongoing projects by providing technical guidance, quality assurance, and strategic inputs to ensure timely and high-quality delivery of outputs.
4. Strengthen technical cooperation by facilitating knowledge exchange, promoting the application of international best practices, and supporting the adaptation of global frameworks to national and local contexts.
5. Contribute to the development and consolidation of partnerships with key stakeholders, including governments, financial institutions, academia, and international organizations, to advance housing and urban development priorities.
6. Provide high-level technical inputs on housing systems, including housing finance, market dynamics, governance frameworks, and policy instruments, to inform programmatic activities and advisory services.
7. Support the development of knowledge products, policy briefs, and technical outputs that contribute to evidence-based decision-making and strengthen the visibility of the Canada Office's work.
8. Contribute to stakeholder engagement processes, including consultations, expert dialogues, and intergovernmental discussions, to support programme delivery and partnership-building efforts.
9. Provide strategic insights to strengthen linkages between national-level initiatives and UN-Habitat's global normative and operational work, including contributions to intergovernmental processes and global knowledge platforms.
10. Support the Canada Office in positioning itself as a hub for innovation, partnership, and applied research in housing and sustainable urban development.

Ultimate result of service

The Programme Specialist will contribute to strengthening the UN-Habitat Canada Office's capacity to mobilize resources, implement high-quality housing and urban development initiatives, and advance technical cooperation and partnerships.

Through strategic advisory support and technical inputs, the consultant will help ensure the effective delivery of programmatic activities, the development of relevant and impactful knowledge products, and the expansion of partnerships with key stakeholders. The assignment will enhance the Canada Office's ability to position itself as a leading platform for advancing housing solutions, supporting evidence-based policy dialogue, and contributing to UN-Habitat's global mandate on adequate, affordable, inclusive, and sustainable housing and urban development.

Travel

The Programme Specialist may be asked to travel to the locations or territory related to the services indicated in these Terms of Reference. Prior authorization of the Head of Canada Office and Director of NYLO is required, and travel request should be in accordance with current United Nations travel regulations.

Qualification Requirements/Evaluation Criteria

Education:

An advanced degree in Economics, Urban Studies, Housing Policy, Public Policy, Urban Planning, International Development, or a related field with a focus on housing policy research is required. A first-level university degree in combination with two (2) additional years of qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.

Language:

English and French are the official working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For this position, fluency in spoken and written English is required. Proficiency and/or fluency in French is desirable, and knowledge of another official UN language is considered an additional asset.

Experience:

- A minimum of 5 years of progressively responsible experience in housing, urban development, economics, finance, public policy, or a related field, including experience supporting programme design and implementation.
- Demonstrated experience contributing to the development and implementation of projects or programmes, including providing technical inputs, ensuring quality assurance, and supporting delivery of outputs for diverse stakeholders.
- Experience supporting resource mobilization efforts, including the preparation of concept notes, project proposals, donor engagement materials, or partnership frameworks.
- Proven ability to engage with and build partnerships with governments, international organizations, financial institutions, academia, and other stakeholders in the housing and urban development space.

- Strong experience in producing knowledge products such as policy briefs, technical reports, analytical papers, or other outputs that support evidence-based decision-making.
- Demonstrated capacity to translate technical and analytical information into clear, actionable insights for policymakers and practitioners.
- Experience contributing to technical cooperation initiatives, including facilitating knowledge exchange, supporting policy dialogue, or applying international best practices to national or local contexts.
- Familiarity with housing systems, urban development challenges, and/or sustainable urbanization agendas in national and/or international contexts is desirable.
- Experience working within the United Nations system or other international organizations is an asset.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates must submit an email quoting in the email subject **the post title and the duty station** to the UN-Habitat Canada email address:

Natalia.Chalaeval@un.org

with the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

1. **Cover letter** addressing precisely how the applicant meets the qualifications and requirements.
2. **Completion of a CV in P11 Form** which can be downloaded at: <https://t.ly/pdZjU>

The CV shall include information on the past experience in similar projects and at least 3 references.

3. **Diplomas and copy of Passport or ID Card**

Deadline for applications: 21 June, 2026

Please note that applications received after the closing date stated below, will not be given consideration. Only short-listed candidates whose applications respond to the above criteria will be contacted for an interview.

