

# **JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER (AI ETHICS AND GOVERNANCE)**

Post Number : JPO\_US 01 SHS

Grade : P-2

Parent Sector : Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS)

Duty Station: Paris

Job Family: Social and Human Sciences

Type of contract : Junior Professional Officer

Duration of contract : The initial appointment is for 1 year, renewable based on satisfactory performance

Recruitment open to : **Candidates who have U.S. citizenship**

Application Deadline (Midnight Paris Time) : 31-JAN-2025

UNESCO Core Values: Commitment to the Organization, Integrity, Respect for Diversity, Professionalism

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

With its unique mandate, UNESCO has led the international effort to ensure that science and technology develop with strong ethical guardrails for decades. The rapid rise in artificial intelligence (AI) has created many opportunities globally, from facilitating healthcare diagnoses to enabling human connections through social media and creating labour efficiencies through automated tasks. However, these rapid changes also raise profound ethical concerns. These arise from the potential AI systems have to embed biases, contribute to climate degradation, threaten human rights and more. Such risks associated with AI have already begun to compound on top of existing inequalities, resulting in further harm to already marginalised groups.

UNESCO produced the first-ever global standard on AI ethics – the “Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence,” which was adopted by all 193 Member States in November 2021. The protection of human rights and dignity is the cornerstone of the Recommendation, based on the advancement of fundamental principles such as transparency and fairness, always remembering the importance of human oversight of AI systems.

The Ethics of AI Unit has been established directly under the Assistant Director General for Social and Human Sciences to advance the implementation of the Recommendation globally. The implementation is pursued through a comprehensive and multifaceted programme, which involves:

- Deployment of various tools and methodologies (Readiness and Ethical Impact Assessments, AI Governance Disclosure Initiative for Private Sector, and others);
- Capturing and disseminating the ensuing knowledge and experience through the Global AI Ethics and Governance Observatory,
- Harnessing global expertise on AI governance and its multiple aspects through specialized network such as the AI Ethics Experts without Borders, Women 4 Ethics of AI, and the global Network of Supervisory Authorities.
- Facilitating high-level global policy dialogue on lessons learned and approaches to effective AI governance through the annual Global Forum on the Ethics of AI, as well as Policy Dialogues and other events organized by UNESCO.
- Multiple other elements.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE POST**

The Junior Professional Officer (JPO) will be closely integrated within the Ethics of AI (EAI) Unit. The EAI unit is directly under the supervision of ADG/SHS. Therefore, the JPO’s direct supervisor will be

the head of the EAI unit, under the overall supervision of ADG/SHS. The Unit also works closely with the Executive Office and the other sections and units of the Sector.

Within this context, the JPO will be responsible for:

The JPO would be involved in a wide range of activities under the EAI unit, with the gradual increase of workload and responsibilities. These activities will include:

1. Implementation of the ongoing projects related to assisting Member States in the implementation of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI, including:
  - a. projects funded by the European Commission (DG-Reform) targeting EU Member States as they try to a reform domestic AI supervisory/governance arrangement to bring them in line with the EU requirements (Dutch and Belgian Authorities currently, additional projects with other countries may follow).
  - b. projects funded through bilateral (Japan, exploring opportunities with others), multilateral (EC), and private (McGovern Foundation) donors to assist countries with building effective institutions for ethical governance of AI. These projects have a geographical focus on Africa and SIDS.
2. Development, piloting, revision, optimization of different policy tools, approaches, and methodologies related to AI governance. The currently used examples include Ethical Impact Assessment and Readiness Assessment Methodology, while we are currently working with partners to develop AI governance disclosure initiative for private companies. Such tools are usually developed in close consultation with expert bodies set up for this purpose, but with significant input from the Secretariat.
3. Managing expert networks, including the AI Ethics Experts without Borders (AIEB) network and the Women for Ethics of AI (W4EAI) coalition, and optimizing their engagement towards the achievement of the relevant objectives, such as providing capacity-building or policy guidance to member states.
4. Organizing and delivering events – ranging from specific workshops to the Global Forum on the Ethics of AI and everything in between in terms of size, visibility, and impact.
5. Contributing to the work of external bodies working in the domain of AI governance:
  - a. Within the UN system, assisting EAI team with the tasks of co-chairing (with ITU) the UN Interagency Working Group on AI, a formal coordinating body under CEB, including with producing substantive contributions and the logistical coordination of interagency efforts.
  - b. Outside the UN system, assisting EAI team with contributing to and participating in such platforms and initiatives as G20 presidency (digital economy track), G7 (Hiroshima Process), GPAI, and the AI Safety/Action Summits.
6. Production of new knowledge products in the domain of the ethics Resource mobilization – writing proposals, liaising with the potential and existing donors, and assisting with various reporting, monitoring and evaluation tasks carried out by the unit across the ongoing projects.

## **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Education:**

Advanced university degree (master's degree or equivalent) in artificial intelligence, computer science, data sciences, or other relevant technological field, ethics of science and technology, society and technology, law, social and human sciences, political science or related field. A first-level university degree in combination with additional two years of relevant experience may be accepted in lieu of an advanced university degree.

### **Work experience:**

- Preferably a minimum of 2 years of professional experience in one or more of the following: ethics, social and human sciences, human rights, law, political science, science and technology, life sciences, international relations, or related areas.
- Good understanding of artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, or the broader AI ecosystem (i.e. Internet of Things, big data, etc.), and related ethical, legal and social implications.
- Experience in project and/or programme management desirable, preferably at the international level.

- Experience in conducting quantitative research is desirable, particularly within the social sciences domain.

### **Competencies and skills:**

- Excellent analytical and drafting skills;
- Excellent communication skills (written and oral) in English and able to exchange information on complex issues;
- Proficiency in both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, with the ability to analyze data, interpret findings, and apply them in relevant contexts;
- Strong problem solving skills;
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships in multicultural environment with external and internal partners;
- Excellent organization and planning skills, including the ability to organize own work priorities and deadlines. Discretion and maturity of judgement are required;
- Ability to work under pressure;
- Solid computer skills including advanced knowledge of office software such as Word and Excel.

### **Languages:**

- Excellent knowledge of English; knowledge of another UNESCO official language, especially French or Spanish, is an asset.

## **LEARNING ELEMENTS**

Acquire in-depth knowledge about and experience with UNESCO's work on promoting ethical governance of AI through the implementation of the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence.

Acquire hands-on experience in delivering complex projects in different parts of the world.

Gain familiarity with UNESCO as an organization and with the broader ecosystem of UN agencies and other actors joining forces in the domain of the Ethics of AI.

Learn about the ethical implications and challenges related to scientific progress and new technologies, in particular on artificial intelligence; learn about the global perspective on these ethical implications.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Note: This post is opened in the context of the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme sponsored by the Government of United States of America and is addressed **exclusively to candidates who have U.S. citizenship who have not already completed a Young Professional (YPP) or Junior Professional (JPO) contract.**

To apply for the JPO Programme of the United States of America, the candidates should meet the following criteria:

1. Nationality: Candidates should have U.S. citizenship.
2. Age: 32 years maximum (born before 31 December 1992)
3. Diplomas: Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) with three (3) years of relevant working experience or, a Bachelor's degree with five (5) years relevant working experience.
4. Languages: Fluency in English (oral and written) and knowledge of another UN official language is an asset.

The candidates should directly apply through the UNESCO Career Website.

*UNESCO recalls that paramount consideration in the appointment of staff members shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, technical competence and integrity. UNESCO applies a zero-tolerance policy against all forms of harassment. UNESCO is committed to achieving and sustaining equitable and diverse geographical distribution, as well as gender parity*

*among its staff members in all categories and at all grades. Furthermore, UNESCO is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Candidates from non- and under-represented Member States ([last update here](#)) are particularly welcome and strongly encouraged to apply. Individuals from minority groups and indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality. Worldwide mobility is required for staff members appointed to international posts.*

*UNESCO does not charge a fee at any stage of the recruitment process.*

Please note that UNESCO is a non-smoking Organization.