



**U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF THE INTERIOR**
INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Short Term Assignment
Ambassador's Water Experts Program (AWEP)
Kiribati & Tuvalu
(Summer 2023/Winter 2023)

OPPORTUNITY

The U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOI) International Technical Assistance Program (ITAP) is seeking one or more experts to provide water security asset management and equipment operation technical assistance in Kiribati and Tuvalu.

BACKGROUND

DOI-ITAP provides assistance to countries on subjects of U.S. expertise on a reimbursable basis. The program is currently operating across the globe with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the State Department, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation. DOI-ITAP has managed short- and long-term multi-partner projects in over 60 countries since 1995.

Under an agreement with the State Department's Office of International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES), DOI-ITAP has been tasked with organizing short-term deployments of U.S.-based hydrologist and water resource subject matter experts to support the implementation of the U.S. Global Water Strategy in priority countries. In 2018-19, DOI-ITAP sent experts to Armenia, Colombia, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Uganda, Ukraine, and Vietnam. Since 2021, due to travel restrictions imposed by COVID-19, DOI-ITAP launched virtual programs with Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Morocco, Belize, Brazil, Pakistan, and the Philippines. As travel restrictions have lifted, DOI-ITAP is supporting hybrid programming that includes both virtual and in-person components.

Kiribati and Tuvalu - small atoll nations in the Pacific - frequently experience droughts, especially during meteorological conditions prevalent in La Nina years, but these natural declines in rainfall are now increasing in frequency and length due to the impacts of climate change in the Pacific. The ongoing droughts in each country, which began last year, are the worst in recent memory, severely straining already limited water resources. Kiribati declared a State of Disaster due to drought in June 2022, while Tuvalu declared a State of Public Emergency due to drought in November 2022. The situation is especially acute on the outer islands of each country, which have fewer resources and have received less donor attention than the main population centers of Tarawa in Kiribati and Funafuti in Tuvalu.

ASSIGNMENT

Kiribati and Tuvalu need assistance on water security asset management and the proper operation, maintenance, and repair of water infrastructure and equipment, including portable desalination units,

solar pumps, reticulation systems, rainwater harvesting systems (especially repairs of gutters), storage tanks, water sanitation infrastructure, and early warning systems. Additional training may focus on improving coordination between national and outer island officials on water security initiatives. While both Kiribati and Tuvalu have benefited from desalination units and other equipment provided by various donors, their officials have limited training on how best to deploy and maintain such equipment, especially in outer island communities. As both Tuvalu and Kiribati are facing similar water security challenges, it may be possible to combine officials from both countries into a single set of trainings.

During July 2023, the Pacific Community ([SPC](#)) is hosting a steering committee meeting for water security officers in Fiji that will bring together water officials from many of the Pacific Island nations, including Kiribati and Tuvalu. Due to logistical challenges of travel to and within Kiribati and Tuvalu, the technical expert(s) may be asked to attend this meeting to take advantage of key personnel being gathered in one place. Expert(s) will provide an initial trip report summarizing their experiences and identifying specific priority needs for potential further training.

Further training will then be scheduled around an SPC outer island water technician training event in Tarawa, Kiribati. This is likely to take place towards the end of 2023 or early 2024.

Expert(s) will be recruited based on the identified skills needed and it is likely that more than one expert will be needed to cover the range of expertise identified. In particular, applicants with hands-on experience in the operation and maintenance of water infrastructure and equipment as previously identified in this announcement are strongly encouraged.

SCHEDULE

This assignment is expected to consist of a one-to-two-week trip to Nadi, Fiji in July 2023 and/or a follow-up trip to Tarawa, Kiribati towards the end of 2023. DOI-ITAP will provide funding for all travel, including local travel, but the U.S. Embassy and its partners will coordinate the specific in-country arrangements. The U.S. Embassy in Fiji is supporting this project in its role as a regional hub.

PRE- AND POST-TRIP DUTIES

The expert(s) will work in close collaboration with DOI-ITAP project managers, counterparts at the U.S. Embassy in Suva, Fiji, regional water organizations and local officials throughout the development and implementation process. Planning and implementation will include consulting with DOI-ITAP, the State Department, and the relevant representatives to develop the program agenda, format, and schedule. DOI-ITAP will facilitate planning calls/videoconferences with the expert(s) and in-country counterparts to ensure strategic alignment of any technical and diplomatic objectives. Technical experts will be responsible for delivering the relevant subject matter and engaging in reasonable follow-up activities.

COSTS

DOI-ITAP will cover all travel costs associated with this assignment. This includes round-trip airfare, lodging, meals, medical insurance, immunizations, etc.

NOTE: U.S. Government employers will still be responsible for paying the salaries of expert(s) for the duration of the international assignment. A daily honorarium of up to \$250 is available to compensate members of the private sector or retirees. The honorarium can cover preparatory time, online and in-country engagement, and any follow-up reporting (billing and reporting requirements for honoraria will be discussed with the DOI-ITAP Project Manager during selection for the assignment).

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Competitive applicants for this assignment will:

- Have significant academic and/or professional expertise in a field closely related to the subject matter of the assignment;
- Have working knowledge of water resource management;
- Be able to work with and adapt to the needs and abilities of professional peers, agencies, and stakeholders of diverse ethnic or cultural affiliations;
- Have strong communication skills;
- Be able to convey technical material to a broad audience, including non-experts;

Preference will be given to applicants with:

- Experience working with U.S. embassies or a demonstrated knowledge of the structure of U.S. embassies and the general purpose of key positions
- Familiarity with inter-agency coordination and managing the strategic priorities of multiple government stakeholders
- International experience, can include voluntary positions and/or field work

HOW TO APPLY

To receive consideration for this assignment, individuals must:

- Send a resume and cover letter summarizing direct, relevant work experience to AWEPP Project Manager, Claire Shields (Claire_Shields@ios.doi.gov). The materials should be sent as one document, preferably a PDF. Please use the subject line "FULLNAME BUREAU KIR-TUV AWEPP".
- Applications should be submitted as soon as possible, preferably prior to **May 29, 2023**.

All DOI employees must secure prior approval from their supervisors to apply for an ITAP assignment. Supervisors will ultimately adhere to office-specific requirements for any further approvals. For DOI employees, applicants should contact their bureau-level International Affairs points of contact (see table below). USG personnel from other agencies should similarly contact their International Affairs office for Department-specific travel guidance.

Bureau	Contact	Email	Telephone
BIA	Joaquin Gallegos	Joaquin_Gallegos@ios.doi.gov	202-208-7163
BLM**	David Howell	Dohowell@blm.gov	503-884-6626
BOR**	Jeff Morris	Jmorris@usbr.gov	303-445-3373
FWS	Tasha Harris	Tasha_Harris@fws.gov	703-358-1904
BSEE	Julie Fleming	Julie.Fleming@bsee.gov	703-787-1681
BOEM	Emily Lindow	Emily.Lindow@boem.gov	202-513-0825
NPS**	Rudy D'Alessandro	Rudy_dalessandro@nps.gov	202-354-1805
	April Brooks	April_Brooks@nps.gov	202-354-1808
OSMRE	Sterling Rideout	Srideout@osmre.gov	202-208-2596
USGS**	Kevin Kunkel	Kkunkel@usgs.gov	693-648-6206
ONRR	Chris Mentasti	Chris.Mentasti@ONRR.gov	202-513-0614
ONF	Amy Krause	Amy_Krause@ios.doi.gov	202-570-2233

****All NPS, BOR, BLM, and USGS applicants must copy their International Affairs POCs when they submit their applications to ITAP.**

Please note that ITAP travel does not require the use of a field office credit card and travel will not count towards “travel caps”.

APPLICATION PROCESS

DOI-ITAP reviews applications on a rolling basis. Due to project needs, the selection process will be expedited and is likely to take 2-3 weeks. Short-listed candidates will complete a brief virtual interview, after which DOI-ITAP will notify all applicants of final selection results by e-mail. **The position is open to anyone that meets the stated requirements.** Recipients of this notice are encouraged to forward the announcement to any individuals or agencies that may be interested. If you believe you have received this in error or would like to be taken off the distribution list, please inquire with the Project Manager. Applicants not selected for this announcement will have their resumes retained for consideration for future ITAP projects.

Please direct any questions to AWEPP Project Manager, Claire Shields at: Claire_Shields@ios.doi.gov.