**VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Partnership with Academia: Mapping of Feasible Opportunities**

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| **Job title** | Researcher |
| **Duty Station** | Sofia, Bulgaria |
| **Start Date** | 18.11.2019 |
| **Contract Length** | Until 31.12.2019 |
| **Contract Type** | Individual contractor  |

**Background**

One of UNHCRs primary objectives in Bulgaria is to create a more welcoming and understanding environment for asylum-seekers and refugees. In large parts this consists of closely monitoring possible violations of their rights and ensure legislation meets European standards. It also includes creating more awareness about the experience of refugees, why they flee and what support they need.

Universities and other academic institutions in Bulgaria are centres of learning, of innovation, of ideas and activism. They are a meeting point of young ambitious and curious people who represent most walks of life in Bulgaria. They are ideal places where discussions can he conducted and ideas shared in a relatively safe and protected environment, where ideas, opinions, perspectives are not yet as set as with adults and an open mind is stimulated.

This combination of UNHCRs objective and the universities’ characteristics has already generated multiple discussions about how to engage more effectively and meaningfully with students on issues involving refugees and asylum. It also led to the establishment of the Academic Council for Refugee Issues.

We have so far identified four main areas of interest:

1. Inform students on issues related to asylum and refugees
2. Encourage students’ activism in issues related to asylum and refugees
3. Promote the integration of issues related to asylum and refugees in academic programmes
4. Facilitating access for refugees to higher education

**Purpose and Scope of the Assignment**

In order to identify concrete activities and initiatives that will allow UNHCR to increase the awareness among and engagement of students on issues related to asylum and refugees UNHCR has identified the need to conduct a mapping of opportunities within academic structures to develop such activities.

**Outputs**

Concretely the mapping should provide answers to the following questions:

1. How do students inform themselves about current affairs?
2. Are there tools especially designed to enhance information sharing among students?
3. How well are they informed about and/or interested in refugee issues?
4. What student initiatives exist of self-organization around certain themes or interests?
5. What social, academic or professional benefits do students already (or can be developed/promoted to) perceive in learning more about refugees and asylum?
6. How supportive are Universities in getting students engaged in extra-curricular activities? How supportive are Universities in facilitating academic credits for volunteer work or other such activities?
7. What existing academic programmes include issues on asylum and refugees?
8. What existing academic programmes could benefit from inclusion of issues related to asylum and refugees?
9. What specific initiatives in the area of asylum universities recommend as feasible?
10. How can UNHCR support universities in their initiatives on improved academic training and mobilization of students on the topic of asylum?
11. Are there specific programmes or incentives created by some universities which support the access of beneficiaries of international protection to higher education?

**Key Deliverables**

* List of existing academic programmes that include issues on asylum and refugees
* List of existing academic programmes could benefit from inclusion of issues related to asylum and refugees
* List of specific measures (if existing) facilitating access of beneficiaries of international protection to higher education
* List of specific short-term initiatives for cooperation between UNHCR and the academic institutions
* Report analysing the findings to include recommendations on improved and better targeted communication with students, professors, short- and long-term opportunities for cooperation.

**Requirements and Experience**

**Qualifications**

The following qualifications are required for the research project:

* Good knowledge of the higher education system in Bulgaria;
* Scientific experience in conducting research of similar nature;
* Excellent writing, analytical, data processing skills;
* Excellent command of spoken and written Bulgarian and English.

**Supervision**

The researcher will be under the direct supervision of UNHCR Senior Protection Assistant - Integration, while his/her work will be closely coordinated with the Representative.

**Duration of research** – 18 November – 31 December 2019

**Application**

Interested applicants should submit their [Personal History Form (P11)](https://www.unhcr.org/ceu/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2018/09/UNHCR_Personal_History_Form.docm) to bulso@unhcr.org in an email titled ‘Application for Individual Contractor – Partnership with Academia Mapping’ by 17 November. Shortlisted candidates only will be notified. No late applications will be accepted.