CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN CONSULTING:
DEVELOPMENT

Description of the Field
Development consulting firms are for-profit agencies, which enter into contracts to support and supply expertise to international development projects coordinated by larger agencies such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and The World Bank. According to James Fay, Ph.D., in Guide to Careers in World Affairs, "Over 4,000 international consulting firms are registered with The World Bank. USAID maintains records on 1,000 U.S. consulting firms." Regardless of their firms' sizes, development consultants generally address two broad areas: technical services, such as agriculture and engineering; and social services, which include such areas as education and healthcare. For example, some development consulting organizations may manage projects geared toward financing small businesses; others teach and train indigenous people in nutrition and healthcare, agricultural and livestock methods, and community planning.

Career Paths and Entry Salaries
In the field of development consulting, positions for research, administrative or associate project assistants, interns, or procurement specialists, as well as project monitors will offer the greatest opportunity for entry. After one or two years, larger organizations allow for movement into research associate and program assistant positions. Other firms regard recruitment managers or directors, directors of Offices of Human Resources, or junior development staff as middle-level positions. With five to ten years of experience and a Master's degree, development consultants typically hold positions at the officer level for financial, evaluation, and project positions. There are typically no senior-level positions for generalists, and specialists require a Ph.D. or MBA/MPA/MPH.

As this work often is contracted through the government, expect starting salaries to be modest to low, typically in the high 30s. The range goes up to approximately to low $40's to $82,000 or more after one to two years.

Because most organizations in the field have a hierarchical management structure, if you are not experienced (see qualifications), be prepared to work your way up from an entry-level administrative position. Stay in the system; everyone starts with grunt work, but entry-level positions can be grown into technical ones. "Get your foot in the door, and make yourself indispensable," says Rachel Peterson, recruitment manager of Development Alternatives, Inc.

The first-year development consulting employee can expect to be conducting research or writing and editing reports/proposals. Expect to spend two to three years writing proposals; however, there may be opportunities for short-term field assignments after one's first year.

Overseas assignments are possible with significant prior overseas experience. Consultants typically have more than 10 years of experience in a specific technical area or are Ph.D.s with overseas research experience. After five years, long-term assignments abroad are possible.

Demand
Development consulting firms have a small permanent staff. Additional hiring is based exclusively on new and anticipated contracts in the field of development consulting. "But if you do your homework, you can find out where the money is going to get your foot in the door early," says Ms. Peterson. USAID's annual budgets are published in book form, stating the types of projects they are funding for the coming year, as well as where they are located. For example, the Consumer Business Daily lists USAID's requests for proposals (RFPs) for all

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upcoming project work. If you know someone in the country, ask them to find out who is bidding for the project and write to them.

Because organizations usually promote from within, there is a great deal more accessibility at the entry level. For positions that hire in the $30,000 - $55,000 range, there is limited opportunity for entry at this mid-career level. Beyond this, however, it is extremely unusual to be hired from outside of the firm.

**Qualifications Necessary to Enter the Field**
The basic expectations for people entering the field are that they will have strong analytical and writing abilities. Development consulting firms also look for skills in computer systems, media, statistics, administration, and management. A foreign language, overseas experience in a developing country, and experience in the private sector are three big pluses.

Two or more years of overseas experience, or a Ph.D. with overseas research, are required for people who desire assignments abroad early in their careers. Some organizations require technical experience in agriculture, architecture, public health, hydrology, economics, or engineering as a hiring prerequisite, even at the entry levels.

**Sample Group of Employers – worldwide**
- Altair Asesores [https://www.altairasesores.es/](https://www.altairasesores.es/)
- Bannock Consulting [http://www.eldis.org/go/home&id=6614&type=Organisation#VXsOSbE3Y8E](http://www.eldis.org/go/home&id=6614&type=Organisation#VXsOSbE3Y8E)
- Chemonics International Consulting [http://www.chemonics.com/Pages/Home.aspx](http://www.chemonics.com/Pages/Home.aspx)
- Clapp & Mayne Inc. [http://www nbrbd.org/nbrweb/support/supportPage1.htm](http://www nbrbd.org/nbrweb/support/supportPage1.htm)
- ECIAfrica Consulting [http://www.eciafrica.co.za/about.php](http://www.eciafrica.co.za/about.php)
• GFA Management of GFA Luso http://www.gfa-group.de/
• GRM International http://www.grminternational.com/
• International Science & Technology Institute https://istiincorporated.wordpress.com/
• Institute for Sustainable Communities http://www.iscvt.org/
• IDBC http://www.idbc.com/en/
• International Management and Communications Corporation http://intcomcorp.com/form.html
• IRG (International Resources Group) http://www.irq.net/
• J.E. Austin Associates http://jeaustin.com/
• Kilimanjaro International http://www.kilimanjaro-usa.com/
• K&M Advisors http://www.km-advisorsllc.com/
• Land O'Lakes International Development Division http://www.idd.landolakes.com/
• Lincoln International http://www.lincolninternational.com/
• Lloyds TSB Bank http://www.lloydsbank.com/
• Louis Berger Group http://www.louisberger.com/
• Management Systems International http://www.msiworldwide.com/
• Nathan Associates http://www.nathaninc.com/
• OFT Group http://www.ofgroup.co.za/
• PA Consulting http://www.paconsulting.com/
• Padco Inc. http://www.padco.com/
• POHL Consulting & Associates http://www.pohl-consulting.org/
• Prosperity Strategies http://prosperitystrategies.com/
• PWA International http://www.pw.utc.com/PWA_International
• TCG International http://www.tcgi.com/
• The IMC Group http://www.the-imcgroup.com/
• The Mitchell Group http://the-mitchellgroup.com/
• TSG http://www.tsgconsumer.com/

The Pragma Corporation http://www.pragmacorp.com/

Nonprofit Organizations that do Development Consulting
• ACDI-VOCA http://acadivoca.org/
• Bellanet http://www.bellanet.com/
• CHF International http://www.globalcommunities.org/
• Concern Universal http://www.concern-universal.org/
• Enterprise Works http://researchpark.illinois.edu/enterpriseworks
• Institute for Public-Private Partnerships http://www.ip3.org/
• International Relief and Development http://chc.tbe.taleo.net/chc06/ats/careers/jobSearch.jsp?org=IRDDC&cws=1
• MEDA – Microfinance http://www.meda.org/inclusive-financial-services-psd-ifs
• RTI International http://www.rti.org/
• Strategies for International Development http://www.sidworld.org/
• SNV Netherlands Development Organization http://www.snvworld.org/
• Technoserve http://www.technoserve.org/