



Job Advertisement

Coordinator (35 h/week)

for UfU Central Asia in Astana

ABOUT UfU and UfU Central Asia

The Independent Institute for Environmental Issues (UfU) is a Berlin-based, non-profit and scientifically grounded environmental institute with more than 35 years of experience in environmental protection, climate policy and sustainable development.

UfU Central Asia is being established in Astana as an independent, public-interest think tank. Its mission is to strengthen evidence-based environmental and climate policy in Kazakhstan and, in the longer term, Central Asia. The focus areas include climate change, carbon farming, soil and water management, and sustainable agriculture.

UfU Central Asia operates under the scientific responsibility of UfU Berlin and in accordance with internationally recognised standards of scientific integrity, transparency and neutrality. It is conceived as a long-term institutional structure rather than a short-term project platform.

More information: <https://www.ufu.de/en/>

ABOUT THE POSITION

Planned start: June 2026

Location: Astana

Working time: 35 hours per week

Initial contract: fixed-term, subject to applicable employment law in Kazakhstan (extension intended)

The Coordinator will lead the establishment and operational development of UfU Central Asia during its start-up phase. The position combines strategic leadership, institutional development, team supervision and external representation.

The Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the office in Astana operates effectively, in line with the contractual framework, annual work plans and budgetary provisions. The role requires strong strategic thinking, structured management skills and a clear commitment to scientific independence and public-interest orientation. In addition to organisational leadership, the position has a substantive role in shaping UfU Central Asia's analytical agenda. The Coordinator contributes to the development of research questions, ensures methodological quality in key outputs (e.g., policy briefs and analytical reports), and supports the integration of natural and social science perspectives relevant to climate, soil, water and sustainable agriculture.

The employment relationship may include a probationary period in accordance with applicable labour law in Kazakhstan.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Lead and manage the UfU Central Asia office in Astana
- Oversee the institutional set-up and consolidation of the think tank structure
- Develop and implement annual work plans in coordination with UfU Berlin
- Ensure compliance with internal policies (conflict of interest, data protection, MRV, procurement)
- Ensure smooth coordination with UfU Berlin administration, including timely provision of structured inputs for internal controlling, donor reporting and documentation standards.
- Lead the practical implementation of core organisational policies during the start-up phase, including establishing routine workflows for documentation, data handling, procurement steps, and internal approvals, in coordination with UfU Berlin.

- Supervise and support the local team (scientific and administrative staff)
- Coordinate research and policy-support activities in the fields of:
 - climate change and adaptation
 - carbon farming and soil health
 - water management
 - sustainable and regenerative agriculture
- Represent UfU Central Asia vis-à-vis public authorities, universities, farmers' associations and international partners
- Ensure proper financial management, reporting and budget monitoring in line with the annual budget and cashflow schedule
- Coordinate project management and internal financial controlling, including preparation of financial documentation and coordination of reporting inputs.
- Follow up on key internal deadlines and routines (e.g., project accounts, fund disbursement requests, progress updates, and team coordination meetings).
- Contribute to the acquisition of additional third-party funding to support long-term financial sustainability
- Develop and maintain a structured funding pipeline (donor mapping, partner coordination, concept notes and proposal development) to support the gradual diversification of UfU Central Asia's funding base beyond the core institutional budget
- Organise and moderate stakeholder dialogue formats and policy discussions

REQUIREMENTS:

- Advanced university degree in environmental sciences, geography, agroecology, sustainability studies or a related field (PhD desirable)
- Several years of relevant professional experience in environmental or climate-related fields
- Proven experience in project management and institutional development
- Demonstrated experience in working with donor-funded programmes, including proposal development and/or grant management and reporting requirements
- Leadership experience and ability to guide a small, interdisciplinary team
- Strong understanding of policy processes in Kazakhstan
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Proven ability to produce clear, structured and policy-relevant written outputs (e.g., briefs, reports, meeting minutes) in English, and to represent an institution in formal stakeholder settings
- Fluency in Kazakh and Russian; very good command of English; basic German skills desirable
- High level of organisational competence, reliability and resilience
- Commitment to scientific neutrality, transparency and public-interest principles
- Willingness to travel within Kazakhstan, Central Asia and to Germany for professional purposes

WHAT WE OFFER:

- A responsible leadership position in the establishment of a new independent think tank
- A start-up working context with a small core team, high responsibility and close cooperation with UfU Berlin, enabling meaningful influence on institutional structures from the beginning
- A structured but flexible working environment with high professional autonomy
- The opportunity to contribute to long-term institutional development in Kazakhstan
- Remuneration and benefits in line with UfU's internal pay structure, adapted to applicable employment, tax and social security regulations in Kazakhstan
- Possibility of partial remote work, depending on operational needs

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Please submit your application (motivation letter and relevant documents combined in one PDF file, max. 5 MB) by 20 April 2026 to:

Sami Çeltikoglu
sami.celtikoglu@ufu.de

Interviews are expected to take place in late April 2026.

Please note:

- employment conditions will be governed by applicable labour and tax regulations in the Republic of Kazakhstan,
- this recruitment process is subject to the required approvals by the competent authorities in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

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