

POSITION PROFILE

Executive Director, Mekong Institute

1. Location: Mekong Institute, Khon Kaen, Thailand

The Mekong Institute (MI) was established on August 28, 1996, by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Thai Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation (subsequently, Thailand International Cooperation Agency) to promote economic development and cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS).

Since 2009, under a Royal Decree signed by the King of Thailand, MI has grown into a recognized intergovernmental organization (IGO) represented by all six GMS countries, namely Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

Throughout the years, MI has played a transformative role in capacity development and multi-stakeholder partnership in the region, focusing on human resource and learning programs to enhance regional development, cooperation, and integration. The institute provides training, conducts research, offers advisory services, and facilitates policy dialogues on topics that matter to the GMS.

2. Position Statement:

The Executive Director is the chief executive of the organization, providing strategic and organizational leadership to establish MI as the pre-eminent center of excellence in research and knowledge dissemination that serves the development needs of the GMS.

The Executive Director is highly knowledgeable of the broad economic and management principles underpinning the MI's work program and has the ability to effectively present these principles and expound MI's work program and services to prospective development partners.

3. Purpose of Position:

- a. To lead and develop MI as a center of excellence through the provision and facilitation of trainings, research studies and policy dialogues in regional cooperation and integration as guided by MI's Strategic Plans.
- b. To ensure that MI's mission, objectives and values, as set out in the MI Charter and established by the Council and Steering Committee, are fulfilled in a cost-efficient, timely and professional manner
- c. To manage MI staff, assets and resources to ensure that the organization provides sustainable, cost-effective and quality training services that meet the priority development needs of the GMS
- d. To provide leadership in marketing MI's services to governments within and outside GMS, as well as other bilateral and multilateral development organizations
- e. To be a catalyst in developing and implementing new ideas and strategies—in compliance with the Council's policies and the MI Charter—to ensure the continuing financial viability of the organization

- f. To coordinate and facilitate the Quarterly Executive meetings, as well as oversee the organization and implementation of high-level regional activities such as the bi-annual Governing Board meeting and annual Mekong Fora
- g. To lead and regularly organize the Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings and provide guidance on strategic planning and directions on organizational development and management.
- h. To seek financial and technical support from development partners for the implementation of new initiatives in accordance with MI's Strategic Plans

4. Responsible to:

- a. Mekong Institute Council
- b. Mekong Institute Steering Committee

5. Responsible for:

- a. The management of MI staff, assets and resources
- b. The fulfillment of requirements and partnership agreements between MI and donor organizations or agencies
- c. The accomplishment of MI's financial, academic, legal and other contractual obligations and responsibilities
- d. The protection and promotion of MI's Charter and Council policies
- e. The engagement with other third-party representatives in promoting MI services

6. Qualifications:

- a. Strong and documented management skills and experience to guide a large and diverse organization, including demonstrated ability to attract, retain and deploy the best possible staff. He/she must be able to set clear standards for accountability, probity, and risk management to ensure sound and transparent financial management and deliver continuing improvement of MI's technical services
- b. Strong knowledge and understanding of the socioeconomic and geopolitical landscape of the GMS, with focused expertise on regional cooperation and integration and/or sustainable economic and social development in relation to the GMS Economic Cooperation Program
- c. Excellent communication skills to fulfill MI's responsibility of accountability and transparency to members of the Council, Steering Committee and donor partners
- d. Strong advocacy skills to be utilized in public speaking, media interviews and presentation of MI's services to international and regional bodies.
- e. Holds a minimum of 15 years of relevant work experience, of which at least 8 years were in executive/senior management positions, preferably with a background of leading large-scale development projects and/or training and research organizations
- f. Applicants must be under 60 years of age as of September 1, 2026.
- g. Master's degree in economics, trade, business, management, international relations, education, or other related fields. A Ph.D. is considered an advantage.
- h. Formerly or currently a resident of any GMS member countries and is willing to relocate to the MI Headquarters in Khon Kaen, Thailand.

7. MI Dimensions:

MI consists of 70 staff representing both GMS and non-GMS countries. The organization operates with an annual budget of US\$5–8 million. Additionally, the position oversees regional cooperation funds amounting to approximately US\$8 million per year.

8. Coordination with:

International and Regional	National (Thailand)
a. Key government and private sector agencies in GMS countries, including	a. Government agencies
b. GMS coordinating agencies	b. Embassies and consulate-general offices
c. Bilateral and multilateral development agencies	c. Academic institutions and think tanks
d. UN, UNESCAP, ASEAN, ADB, Global Fund and other international and multilateral	d. Relevant line ministries
e. ACMECS, the GMS Program, ASEAN, and the Lancang Mekong Cooperation	e. Ministry of Foreign and Affairs

9. Principal Tasks and Accountabilities:

- Provide leadership in the review, preparation, presentation and implementation of MI's five-year strategic plans, annual work program, operational plan, budget framework, strategic direction and monitoring and evaluation of operational programs
- Mobilize resources and funds (Financial Sustainability) required to support MI's programs and projects
- Provide leadership in the formulation and staff compliance of administrative and operational policies, procedures and practices.
- Develop institutional capacity and quality assurance for the alignment of MI's thematic areas with the MI strategic plan
- Lead MI's efforts in building relationships with other regional international organizations, think tanks, research institutes and bilateral agencies in the region and beyond
- Review MI's organizational structure and operational manual when needed and recommend changes and realignments to the MI Council where necessary to ensure efficient operations through optimum allocation of available staffing resources
- Develop and recommend institutional and programmatic policies and objectives for consideration by the Council
- Ensure that all approved plans and programs are fully implemented by directing and coordinating all MI activities
- Enhance MI's status and visibility through attendance and presentations at international, regional and national conferences, workshops, policy dialogue meetings and other similar fora

- j. Monitor current and emerging trends in the region to ensure that MI programs remain relevant and responsive to capacity building needs and development initiatives
- k. Oversee the cost-effective and sustainable management of MI's financial resources. This includes the presentation of MI's annual budget for Council approval
- l. Provide advice to the Steering Committee on the appointment of external auditors, and ensure that all sound recommendations of the auditors are fully complied
- m. Ensure that all services delivered by MI are of high quality and meet all its legal and contractual obligations. S/he must also ascertain that all activities comply with the laws of the country in which they take place
- n. Foster good relations and maintain close liaison with all key stakeholders, including Council and Steering Committee members, as well as representatives of GMS government agencies, bilateral and multilateral development agencies and donors, Khon Kaen University and other universities and training/research institutions
- o. Organize and participate in the Council and Steering Committee meetings and any other sub-committee meetings
- p. Perform other tasks as requested by the Council or Steering Committee

10. Terms and Conditions:

The successful candidate will be offered an initial contract of three years. The possibility of re-appointment will be contingent on the results of the performance evaluation at the end of the three-year period with eligibility for reappointment for a further term of up to three (3) years, subject to the decision of the Council.

MI offers a competitive remuneration package in the same standing as other international organizations. The salary and other benefits, which will be negotiated between the selected candidate and the Director of Finance and Operations, will be based on MI's salary structure. This position is expected to join MI on September 1, 2026.

11. Application Requirements:

Interested applicants must submit the following:

- (a) expression of interest, which should include a one-page attachment detailing the applicant's viability for the position, as well as proposed strategies to promote MI services, fortify financial standing and reinforce resource mobilization;
- (b) curriculum vitae; and
- (c) three letters of references to recruitment@mekonginstitute.org no later than **Saturday, February 28, 2026**.

The documents must be addressed to: The Mekong Institute Selection Subcommittee, Mekong Institute, 123 Mittraphap Road, Khon Kaen, Thailand 40002. Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for an interview.