



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Research Scholar - Digital Tools and Resources

Posted on April 27, 2023

Background

84000's mission is to translate all of the Buddha's words into modern languages, and provide open and free access to over 230,000 pages, creating an essential new resource for primary-source scholarship, independent study, and personal practice.

But 84000's vision does not stop there. 84000 continually works to innovate the ways in which the collection is presented, providing interactive tools and intertextual linkages to deepen the understanding of its wisdom for everyone, so that people of all ages and backgrounds, from all walks of life—academics, practitioners and the simply curious—can find a way to directly connect with the wisdom of the Buddha's teachings.

Introduction

84000 is seeking an individual to research and document digital tools and resources for translators and editors. The research is an essential objective that will inform how 84000 invests in technology to enhance the efficiency of translation and publication. The research will be documented in a report. The final report should include a loosely costed and realistically timed proposal to significantly enhance the quality and efficiency of the work of 84000 translators and editors. The proposal should be clearly supported by the findings of the research.

Scope of Research

Evaluate Existing Tools and Resources for Tibetan & Related Languages

The Research Scholar will conduct a survey of 84000 translators and editors, creating a comprehensive list of tools and resources currently in use, including hard-copy resources that could potentially be digitised.

Tools should include in-house resources such as 84000 Glossary and translation memory search and external tools such as BDRC, Princeton Dictionary, and CAT tools. This list should be comprehensive, indicating tools commonly used and those which are peripheral.



The Research Scholar should also consider private resources such as private data sets, old translations and Microsoft Word spell checker files, in a word, everything that translators and editors utilise to support their work.

The research should also consider scholarly research projects that may have some value if the content or functions were made accessible through a user interface or included in a workflow, as well as tools in development by other organisations in the field, which are important to evaluate for their potential impact.

A key facet of the research will be to investigate the role and function of using artificial intelligence, machine learning, natural language processing and large language models in translating Indo-Tibetan works. Working in collaboration with the internal team at 84000, the Research Scholar will be the point person with external research groups involved in developing Large Language Models for Tibetan. The work would involve evaluating the output of such LLMs and develop a set of requirements for utilising the technology in current workflow.

Evaluate Tools and Resources Used by Professional Translators in General

Additionally the Research Scholar should evaluate tools used by professional translators in general, such as:

- CAT (Computer Aided Translation) tools that provide a digital environment for translation work e.g. SmartCAT, Transifex, etc.
- Services like Automated Machine Translation e.g. DeepL
- Scholarly research tools
- Complete translation solutions like ParaText (<https://paratext.org>)
- Writing tools like Scrivener (<https://www.literatureandlatte.com/scrivener>) or Living Writer (<https://livingwriter.com>)
- Evaluate the rapidly growing field of using LLM tooling for translation; connect an LLM into a CAT Tool like Transifex

Requirements

We are looking for a practising translator, experienced in translating Indo-Tibetan texts, preferably canonical literature. The candidate should have experience in finding, using, and/or creating digital tools and resources to support their translation work. Ideally, the candidate will have more than five years of experience as a translator, with advanced knowledge of Tibetan language, and is experienced in a living tradition.



Terms and Conditions

The duration of the position is approximately 8 months starting as soon as practicable, with the possibility of extension from January 1, 2024.

The location of the position is flexible, and the Research Scholar will be expected to work from home.

Compensation is commensurate with experience, skills, and geographical location.

The Research Scholar will report to the Editorial Director and will additionally consult with key core team stakeholders, the Editorial Director, the Technology Lead, Publications Lead, and the Technology Planning Consultant, on a bi-weekly basis.

At the conclusion of the project the researcher will deliver a written report that they will also present in-person to 84000 stakeholders beyond the core team.

How to Apply

Please submit via email to recruitment@84000.co a written personal statement of interest along with your CV. Please be sure to indicate to the hiring committee your suitability for the position by identifying specific work experience as it relates to the scope of the research.

The research should address the following guiding questions:

- What needs do digital tools and resources address for the translators and editors? What problems or limitations do they have? What potential do they offer?
- What involvement by 84000 could have a decisive impact on their usefulness or productivity? E.g. contribution to open source projects, funding for academic projects, user feedback from experienced translators.

And similarly for questions related to professional translation:

- What productivity tools are available to translators in general? Are they suitable, or adaptable for use by 84000 translators? Do they explicitly address the needs and wishes of the 84000 translators and editors as expressed in the first part of the research?
- What investment would be required to make similar resources for 84000 translators and editors? How would the return on investment be measured? E.g. negating existing costs, or improved productivity.

In support of your application, please comment on how you might approach these questions.

Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.