**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

**Where can I find information about current and future vacancies?**

All information about past, current and future vacancies is regularly updated and posted on the special procedures nomination web page: [http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Nominations.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/Nominations.aspx)

**What is the timeframe?**

The timeframe from the opening of the application process until the finalization of the report of the Consultative Group with recommendations to the President of the Council is approximately 12 to 13 weeks prior to the beginning of the session in which the appointments are to be made. For example, for appointments to be made at the March session the opening of the application process is in November. For appointments to be made at the June session, the opening of the application process is in February. For appointments to be made at the September session, the opening of the application process is in May.

**For how long are vacancies advertised?**

The deadline for receiving applications is usually between 6 to 8 weeks.

**Who can apply?**

Eligible candidates are highly qualified individuals who possess established competence, relevant expertise and extensive professional experience in the field of human rights. Highly qualified women are encouraged to apply.

**How can I apply?**

Candidates are requested to complete the online survey and to submit the Word application form by the deadline. Both steps of the application process are required in order for the candidacy to be taken into consideration.

**How can I take the online survey?**

You can access the online survey by clicking on the link provided on the web page on which the vacancy is advertised. Only complete surveys will be taken into consideration.

**Can I make changes to my survey after completing it?**

Yes. If you wish to make changes to your survey, you will need to complete it again before the deadline expires.

**Where can I find the application form?**

The Word application form can be downloaded by clicking on the name of the mandate on the web page on which the vacancy is advertised.

**In what language do I have to complete the application form?**

The Word application form must be submitted in English.

**How can I submit my application form?**

The Word application form must be completed and submitted by e-mail to hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org by the deadline.

**Can I submit my CV as part of my application?**

No. We only accept the Word application form.

**Do I have to provide a motivation letter?**

Yes, candidates are required to submit a motivation letter which must not exceed 600 words and which is integrated as section III of the Word application form.

**Do I have to submit my motivation letter separately?**

No, your motivation letter is part of the Word application form (section III).

**Do I have to take the online survey before submitting my Word application form?**

Not necessarily. You can complete the online survey after submitting the Word application form by e-mail. What is important is that both the online survey and the Word application form are received by the deadline.

**Can a third party submit my application?**

Yes. The system allows both for a self-nomination and for a nomination by a third party. In either case, the process of application requires that the candidate or the nominating entity (1) complete the online survey and (2) submit, by e-mail, the Word application form which includes a motivation letter. If a third party decides to nominate a candidate by filling in the Word application form, the candidate will still need to draft the motivation letter (integrated in the Word application form) and answer the questions at the end of the form in section VII. Compliance with ethics and integrity provisions and section VIII. Certify and submit application.

**Am I required to submit letters of recommendation?**

No. Candidates may submit up to three letters of recommendation by the deadline, but this is not a requirement.

**How and when should my letters of recommendation be submitted?**

Both candidates themselves and third parties can submit up to three letters of recommendation in total, as e-mail attachments (Word or PDF) to hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org by the deadline.

**Can I apply for more than one vacancy?**

Yes. If you wish to apply for more than one vacancy, you will be required to submit a mandate-specific Word application form for each of the mandates for which you want to apply.

**Will late applications be considered?**

No. Applications submitted after the deadline and incomplete applications will not be considered.

**Will my application be made public?**

Yes. The Word application forms of all eligible candidates will be posted on the OHCHR website shortly after the deadline. Surveys, on the other hand, will remain confidential.

**Will unsuccessful candidates be notified?**

No. If you do not hear from the Secretariat, it means your candidacy has not been taken into further consideration. All candidates are invited to consult periodically the OHCHR public web page where public announcements related to the selection process will be made in due course.

**What are the criteria against which candidates will be assessed?**

According to the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, the following general criteria will be of paramount importance while nominating, selecting and appointing mandate holders:

(a) expertise;

(b) experience in the field of the mandate;

(c) independence;

(d) impartiality;

(e) personal integrity and

(f) objectivity.

Due consideration should be given to gender balance and equitable geographic representation, as well as to an appropriate representation of different legal systems. Eligible candidates are highly qualified individuals who possess established competence, relevant expertise and proven work experience in the field of human rights. Also, in its decision 6/102 of 27 September 2007, the Council adopted technical and objective requirements for candidates eligible for mandate holders:

1. *Qualifications*: relevant educational qualifications or equivalent professional experience in the field of human rights; good communication skills in one of the official languages of the United Nations.

2. *Relevant expertise*: knowledge of international human rights instruments, norms and principles; as well as knowledge of institutional mandates related to the United Nations or other international or regional organizations’ work in the area of human rights; proven work experience in the field of human rights.

3. *Established competence*: nationally, regionally or internationally recognized competence related to human rights.

4. *Flexibility/readiness and availability of time* to perform effectively the functions of the mandate and to respond to its requirements, including attending Human Rights Council sessions.

**What does extensive professional experience in the field of human rights mean?**

An advanced university degree such as Masters or equivalent (minimum duration of 4 years in full-time study), and at least 7 years of relevant professional experience in the field of human rights. A minimum of 11 years of relevant professional experience in the field of human rights may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.

**How will shortlisted candidates be interviewed?**

Shortlisted candidates will be assessed by the Consultative Group through telephone interviews.

**Can telephone interviews be conducted in a language other than English?**

Yes. Candidates can request to be interviewed in any of the six official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish). To ensure quality simultaneous interpretation, candidates are required to access video conference facilities on the day of the interview, otherwise interpretation will not be provided.

**Will I be able to access information about the proceedings of the Consultative Group?**

No. The proceedings of the Consultative Group are confidential and the Secretariat will not disclose any information regarding the selection process or shortlisting of candidates until the publication on the website of the report with the list of candidates recommended to the President of the Human Rights Council for each mandate.

**When will the Consultative Group issue the report containing the list of candidates recommended to the President of the Human Rights Council?**

The Consultative Group is expected to issue its report at least one month before the beginning of the session during which the Council will consider the selection of mandate holders. The report will be made public on the OHCHR website.

**Will the Consultative Group appoint the successful candidates?**

No. The Consultative Group, after interviewing the shortlisted candidates, will only make recommendations – usually up to three candidates for each vacancy – to the President of the Human Rights Council for his or her final consideration.

**What happens after the Consultative Group has made its recommendations to the President of the Human Rights Council?**

The President of the Human Rights Council, following broad consultations, in particular through the regional coordinators and other stakeholders, will identify an appropriate candidate for each vacancy and present a letter with his or her list of candidates to member States and observers. The President's list will be made available on the OHCHR website. The appointment of the mandate holders will be completed upon the subsequent approval of the Human Rights Council, which usually takes place on the last day of the Council’s session. The names of the mandate holders appointed during the session will also be made public on the OHCHR website shortly thereafter.

**Was this information useful?**

**If you still require information, write to** **hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org**