The Participation Challenge

What? The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN OHCHR) is inviting Under 18s to be part of a UN conference on education and human rights, the “Social Forum” of the Human Rights Council. This is an exciting opportunity to have an active role in the work of the UN and Human Rights Council in Geneva, by publicly sharing your thoughts about how education can help to realize human rights and remain relevant in a changing world.

How? UN OHCHR is looking for a small group of Under 18s to be “rapporteurs” at the Social Forum. The group will attend Day 1 of the Social Forum (1 October, 10am – 1 pm; 3 pm – 6 pm) and listen to the panel discussions. Then on Day 2 (2 October, 4.45 – 5.30 pm), they will be part of a public conversation with youth rapporteurs and Ms. Kate Gilmore, the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, to give their views about the conference and ideas for how education can help to realize human rights and remain relevant in the future. UN OHCHR staff will help the group with their task and attendance.

We want to apply! Send us a motivational statement of max. 300 words per group (3-4 students per group) explaining why you think your group should be the rapporteurs. Please send applications to hgriffiths@ohchr.org by 16 September.
* We recommend participation from ages 14-18 years.
* Please note that attendance on Day 1 can be divided up between group members.
* Questions? Contact Helen Griffiths at OHCHR: hgriffiths@ohchr.org / +41 22 9289310

Other ways to participate

1. Submit a 60 second “video selfie” to be screened at the Social Forum, on how education leads to positive change and how it needs to change to be useful in the future: see more info here.

2. Attend as a group: We warmly encourage groups of students to attend any parts of the Social Forum that interest them. Groups can simply come as spectators, or can contribute to the debates by making statements from their seats during the open discussion sessions. Groups are especially encouraged to attend the Opening Session on Day 1 (10 am - 12 pm), or the closing session on Day 2 (4:45 pm – 6 pm). Please get in touch to arrange group attendance and registration –this will require personal data and photos in advance for security purposes.

* We recommend the event will interest ages 14-18 years. * UN OHCHR staff will help with group registrations! * Please contact Helen Griffiths at OHCHR: hgriffiths@ohchr.org / +41 22 9289310 to arrange attendance or to get a guide to the programme!