

II. OHCHR FELLOWSHIP AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES

The fellowship and training programmes discussed in this chapter have been created by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to increase civil society's role and participation in human rights mechanisms. The contribution and active engagement of civil society contributes to a stronger realization of human rights. This chapter sets out the main information that civil society actors need to participate in OHCHR fellowship programmes and training workshops.

Consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is not a requirement for NGOs and other civil society actors to participate in or access the programmes and workshops discussed in this chapter.

A. Fellowship programmes

Fellowship programmes give selected individuals an intensive learning opportunity about human rights mechanisms and international institutions.

OHCHR administers four fellowship programmes. These aim at strengthening the capacity of particular groups or individuals in human rights work:

- The **Indigenous Fellowship Programme** supports members of indigenous groups to participate in a programme of human rights training;
- The **Minorities Fellowship Programme** supports persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities to participate in a programme of human rights training;
- The **Human Rights LDC Fellowship Programme** supports graduate students from the least developed countries (LDC) to participate in training on the United Nations and human rights; and
- The **Fellowship for National Human Rights Institutions Staff** supports staff members from NHRIs in a programme of training on international human rights and the work of OHCHR with NHRIs.

The Handbook is available in digital format on the OHCHR website at:

<http://www.ohchr.org/civilsocietyhandbook/>

There you will find the Handbook's chapters available for download, as well as links to all the references contained in the publication.



Fellowship contact details

Indigenous Fellowship Programme Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Unit

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
8–14, avenue de la Paix
CH–1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland
Fax: +41 (0)22 917 90 08 or +41 (0)22 928 90 66
E-mail: fellowship@ohchr.org

Minorities Fellowship Programme Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Unit

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
8–14, avenue de la Paix
CH–1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland
Phone: +41 (0)22 928 98 45
Fax: +41 (0)22 928 90 10
E-mail: minorities@ohchr.org

Fellowship for Students from Least Developed Countries United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

Palais des Nations
8–14, avenue de la Paix
CH-1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland
Phone: +41 (0)22 917 86 40
Fax: +41 (0)22 917 80 47
Website: <http://www.ohchr.org> or <http://www.unitar.org/diplomacy>

Fellowship for NHRIs Staff National Institutions Unit

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
8–14, avenue de la Paix
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1. Indigenous Fellowship Programme

The **Indigenous Fellowship Programme** began in 1997 as an OHCHR initiative to implement the goals of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995–2004), with the primary objective of empowering indigenous representatives and their communities by strengthening their knowledge of and capacity to access the United Nations human rights system.

The Programme aims to give indigenous women and men the opportunity to gain knowledge of international human rights in general and indigenous rights in particular, in order to help their organizations and communities better protect and promote their rights. At the end of the Programme fellows should be capable of giving training within their communities and organizations on international human rights in general and indigenous peoples' rights in particular, and be able to disseminate the information and knowledge gained during their fellowship. The Programme aims to yield benefits for the individuals themselves, for their organizations, but most importantly for their communities.

The Indigenous Fellowship Programme exists in four languages: **English, French, Russian and Spanish**. Each year approximately five fellows are selected for each linguistic version of the Programme:

- The Geneva-based Programme (in **English**);
- The Deusto-based Programme (in **Spanish**);
- The Dijon-based Programme (in **French**); and
- The Moscow-based Programme (in **Russian**).

The **Geneva-based Programme** is implemented by OHCHR in Geneva. Starting in May each year and generally four months in duration, it is an intensive course on human rights mechanisms and institutions. The Programme is interactive and consists of briefings on various topics and individual and group assignments.

The **Deusto Programme** is a joint initiative of the University of Deusto in Bilbao, Spain, and OHCHR. It is generally four months in duration and consists of two parts: a first session held at the University of Deusto and a second session at OHCHR in Geneva. It has a similar structure to the Geneva-based Programme, while also trying to encourage an exchange between the fellows and the other organizations involved, such as Basque NGOs and the Basque Government.

The **Dijon Programme** is a joint initiative of the University of Bourgogne in Dijon, France, and OHCHR, and is intended for indigenous people who have French as their first or second language. The Programme lasts 10 weeks (4 weeks at the University in Dijon, 4 weeks at OHCHR in Geneva and 2 weeks at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris).

The **Moscow Programme** is a joint initiative of the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) in Moscow and OHCHR. The Moscow session consists of four weeks of training with RAIPON, the OHCHR Moscow Office and other United Nations offices in Moscow, followed by four weeks at OHCHR in Geneva.

All fellowship programmes provide a monthly subsistence grant for modest accommodation, travel, health insurance and other living expenses.

Eligibility criteria

- Candidates must be members of an indigenous group and should be supported by their indigenous communities or organizations;
- Although age is not a limitation, preference is given to candidates between 25 and 35 years of age;
- Lack of formal education is not a limitation to participation in the Fellowship Programme given the socio-economic barriers to such education confronting many indigenous peoples;
- Candidates should have the ability and willingness to train other indigenous persons after their return to their communities/organizations;
- It is desirable that the sponsoring organization has a firm constituency or membership;
- The selection of fellows should reflect a gender and regional balance; and
- The candidates must have a good understanding of the language in which the Fellowship Programme will be conducted.

The four linguistic versions of the Programme are held annually and the deadlines for application vary. Only fully completed fellowship applications will be taken into consideration. Applications must be faxed or sent by regular post. Applications sent by e-mail will not be considered, unless both parts I and II of the application are signed and scanned.



Where to submit an application

Indigenous Fellowship Programme

Indigenous and Minorities Unit

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Palais des Nations

8–14, avenue de la Paix

CH-1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland

Fax: +41 (0)22 917 90 08 or +41 (0)22 928 90 66

E-mail: fellowship@ohchr.org

To learn more about the **Fellowship Programme** and to obtain application forms in all four languages visit OHCHR's website.

2. Minorities Fellowship Programme

Through the **Minorities Fellowship Programme**, OHCHR aims to give persons belonging to **national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities**, particularly young women and men, an opportunity to gain knowledge of international human rights in general and minority rights in particular. It is expected that by the end of the Programme the minority fellows will gain general knowledge about the United Nations human rights mechanisms as they relate to issues of relevance to minorities, and be capable of giving training within their communities and organizations on the information and knowledge gained during their fellowship.



Community-led training in Bulgaria by former minority fellow

OHCHR supported a project submitted by a former minority fellow from a Roma community in **Bulgaria** to organize a training course in the municipality of Polski Trambesh in December 2006. The project enabled his organization, Roma Together, to organize a training workshop to

engage and equip the local Roma community to put into practice the 2005-2015 “Decade of Roma Inclusion”, as designated by nine countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe. Participants devised a strategy to enhance Roma participation in official decision-making, especially in areas where their rights

and daily lives are most affected. They proposed that the Municipal Council should set up a standing body of local minority representatives to provide policy input concerning minority issues, and this was accepted by the Mayor and Head of the Municipal Council.

At present OHCHR runs two Minority Fellowship Programmes, one in English and one in Arabic. The English-language Programme is held each April for three months with approximately five participants. The pilot Arabic-language Programme was held for the first time in 2007 with four participants taking part in training at OHCHR in Geneva for one month. The Fellowship Programmes provide a monthly subsistence grant to cover modest accommodation and other living expenses, travel to and from Geneva, and health insurance.

Eligibility criteria

- Candidates must belong to a national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minority;
- Although age is not a limitation, preference will be given to candidates between 25 and 35 years of age;
- Lack of formal education is not a limitation to participation in the Minorities Fellowship Programme, if relevant experience can be demonstrated;
- It is desirable that the sponsoring organization or association undertakes work on minority issues and is composed of persons belonging to minorities;
- Candidates should have the ability and willingness to train other persons belonging to minorities upon their return to their communities/organizations;
- Candidates should have the written support of their communities or organizations;
- Candidates must have a good working knowledge of the language in which the Programme is conducted (Arabic or English).

Only fully completed fellowship applications will be taken into consideration. Applications must be faxed or sent by regular post. Applications sent by e-mail will not be considered, unless they are signed and scanned.



Where to submit an application

Minorities Fellowship Programme Indigenous and Minorities Unit

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
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E-mail: minorities@ohchr.org

To learn more about the **fellowship programme** and to obtain an application form visit OHCHR's website.

3. Human Rights LDC Fellowship Programme

The **Human Rights Fellowship Programme for students from least developed countries** (LDCs), carried out for the first time in 2007, is administered jointly by OHCHR and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). The purpose is to increase the LDC fellows' understanding of current human rights issues at the international level and give them an insight into the work of the United Nations and OHCHR, as well as to provide OHCHR and the United Nations human rights mechanisms with the assistance and contribution of outstanding students or graduates from LDCs.

The Programme takes place at OHCHR in Geneva and is conducted in English. It consists of both training and practical exposure to the work of OHCHR in the form of seminars and practical skills exercises, followed by an assignment with a branch of OHCHR. The continuation of this Fellowship Programme in future years will depend on available funding.

The Human Rights Fellowship Programme is open to candidates from LDCs.³ Candidates must be graduate students or holders of a graduate degree in a discipline related to the work of the United Nations (e.g., international law, political science, social sciences or history). Candidates should be under 30 years of age when they apply.

The fellows' travel costs are covered by the Programme and fellows receive a stipend to cover their living expenses in Geneva. Visa arrangements, accommodation, health and accident insurance are also provided.

As the continuation of this Programme depends on the receipt of adequate funding, interested individuals are encouraged to check the OHCHR and UNITAR websites regularly for information.



How to contact the Human Rights LDC Fellowship

United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

Palais des Nations
8–14, avenue de la Paix
CH-1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland
Phone: +41 (0)22 917 86 40
Fax: +41 (0)22 917 80 47

³ To learn more about the criteria used by the United Nations to designate a least developed country visit <http://www.unohrrls.org/>

4. Fellowship Programme for National Human Rights Institutions Staff

The **Fellowship for National Human Rights Institutions Staff**, carried out for the first time in 2008, is administered by the **National Institutions Unit** of OHCHR. The Programme aims to provide participants with the opportunity to gain knowledge and practical experience with the United Nations human rights system, OHCHR work with and for NHRIs, and technical and substantive issues relating to NHRIs. It is expected that the fellows will return to their NHRIs and thereby strengthen their organizations' capacity in international human rights.

The Programme takes place at OHCHR in Geneva. Two fellows are selected per year for a six-month period, with one starting in January and the other in July. The fellows receive periodic briefings on the human rights system and relevant thematic issues, and undertake assignments and are involved in projects.

Candidates must have at least three years' direct experience working in a NHRI which meets the internationally adopted standards—the Paris Principles⁴—and extensive experience working on NHRI-related issues, nationally, regionally and, ideally, internationally.

The candidates should have a supporting letter from their NHRIs and be committed to imparting the knowledge and experience obtained during their fellowship to colleagues within their NHRIs upon their return. They should furthermore be fluent in English and/or French. OHCHR provides financial support in the form of a monthly stipend during the fellowship.

Candidates should submit their applications (motivation letter, curriculum vitae, letter of support from their NHRIs) directly to OHCHR. The National Institutions Unit selects candidates in consultation with the Bureau of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC).



Where to submit an application

National Institutions Unit

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

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Fax: + 41 (0)22 928 90 18

E-mail: niu@ohchr.org

For current information on the **NHRIs Fellowship Programme** visit OHCHR's website.

⁴ See General Assembly resolution 48/134, annex.

B. Training workshops

Training workshops give civil society actors the opportunity to learn about specific human rights mechanisms and how to strengthen their engagement with them.

Training workshop on follow-up to human rights treaty body recommendations

The **training workshop on follow-up to treaty body recommendations** is for national civil society actors and aims to build their capacity to engage with the treaty bodies.

OHCHR organizes workshops and seminars for national actors in their own countries to strengthen their capacity to contribute to the treaty reporting process and follow up on the recommendations of treaty bodies. OHCHR engages with NHRIs, NGOs and representatives of the media at the national level in these workshops to build capacity and encourage the creation of networks of national actors to support the implementation of the respective human rights treaty body recommendations.

Since 2003, OHCHR has carried out training workshops on follow-up in every region of the world. The training programme serves as a framework for the establishment of national civil society network groups to follow up the human rights treaty reporting process and sustain a constructive national dialogue on issues related to the work of the human rights treaty bodies. OHCHR also provides training directly to interested Governments through workshops and seminars, and encourages civil society to take part in these activities.



For further information on the follow-up training workshops, contact:

Human Rights Treaties Branch Treaties and Follow-up Unit

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
8–14, avenue de la Paix
CH–1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland
Fax: +41 (0)22 917 90 22

In addition to the training programme mentioned above, OHCHR, through its many field presences, regularly conducts national training and capacity-building workshops and seminars for civil society on international human rights issues and mechanisms.



For detailed information on the **human rights treaty bodies**, please refer to **chapter IV (Human rights treaty bodies)** of this Handbook.