United Nations Career Opportunities Guide

This guide includes information on the following:
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- UN National Competitive Recruitment Examination
- Junior Professional Officer Program (JPO)
- Internships
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All individuals interested in working at the United Nations should have experience working overseas, and/or offer a very specialized expertise. All applicants must have proficiency in a second language, preferably one of the operating languages of the UN: English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, or Portuguese. Each specialized agency and the secretariat have straight-forward application procedures, explained on their respective websites.

Navigating UN Job Opportunity Sites

UN hiring is decentralized, so individuals are encouraged to apply directly to the respective organization. Layers and layers of organizations list job opportunities and while there are several “comprehensive” job opportunity lists, these are by no means complete. Individuals are advised to explore agencies and departments fully to uncover potential opportunities.

UN organizational chart:  http://www.un.org/aboutun/chart.html

Click on the Official Web Site Locator for the UN System of Organizations (http://www.unsystem.org/) for a comprehensive listing and brief description of all the UN organizations.

“Employment Opportunities at the United Nations” links students to each agency’s “job opportunities” page http://www.unsystem.org/jobs/job_opportunities.htm. It serves as a portal to the international organizations that cover virtually every humanitarian, economic, political and legal field. The site also includes links to key projects and initiatives and to various joint programmes of the UN System.
**Search Opportunities by Occupational Interest**


**Local Area Hires**

Local hire positions are the jobs for residents of a geographic area where the UN is operating. Traditionally, this applies to the citizens of the local country. For example, a UN office in Namibia would hire Namibian citizens for local hire positions. They can hire other citizens but those individuals would have to prove residency. Generally, these positions are of a support nature: clerical and service type.

For example, local jobs at DPKO can also be accessed through the Peace Operations webpage ([https://jobs.un.org/Galaxy/Release3/VacancyFM/VA_Regions.aspx?lang=1200](https://jobs.un.org/Galaxy/Release3/VacancyFM/VA_Regions.aspx?lang=1200)). Individual Peacekeeping operations will also have local-hire positions, for example UNMIS ([http://www.unmis.org/English/recruitment.htm](http://www.unmis.org/English/recruitment.htm)).

The website ReliefWeb ([http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc100?OpenForm](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc100?OpenForm)) lists vacancies for UN field positions, as well as other organizations. ReliefWeb’s vacancies can be sorted by region, sector, date, and/or organization.

**UN National Competitive Recruitment Examination**

The UN hires entry-level professionals yearly through the National Competitive Recruitment Examination ([http://www.un.org/Depts/OHRM/examin/exam.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/OHRM/examin/exam.htm)). The purpose of the National Competitive Recruitment Examination is to recruit people for career posts at the Secretariat. Recruits will initially go through a two-year probationary period followed by conversion into continuing contracts, provided their performance is satisfactory. They are expected to stay on to make a career with the Secretariat as they move on to higher ranks, such as P-3 and then to P-4, etc. Individuals will not be required to take another competitive exam to become a P-3, P-4, etc., but you will have to apply for a vacant post at that level. Only candidates from participating countries in the NCRE are eligible to take the exam in the given year. The list does change from year to year, so candidates are encouraged to check the website to see if their respective country is participating this year. Additionally, you must be 32 years old or younger as of 31 December of the year of the exam.

**Junior Professional Officer Program**

The Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme provides young professionals pursuing a career in development with hands-on experience in multi-lateral technical co-operation. The JPO includes over a dozen participating UN agencies. Only a candidate who is a national of a participating country in the program is eligible to apply as a JPO. The Junior Professional Officer Service Centre ([http://www.jposc.org/content/programme/presentation-en.html](http://www.jposc.org/content/programme/presentation-en.html)) lists which countries and agencies participate in the program.
Note: The United States, through the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), sponsors qualified U.S. nationals for employment in the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) Junior Professional Officer (JPO) programs. Visit the US Department of State Junior Professional Officer Program (JPO) [website](http://www.state.gov/g/prm/jpoae/) for more information.

For additional agencies and organizations with JPO programs, please visit JPO Programs of other UN agencies [website](http://www.jposc.org/content/programme/other_programmes-en.html) for more information.

**Internships (unpaid)**
The UN Internship Programme [website](http://www.un.org/Depts/OHRM/sds/internsh/index.htm) is for internship opportunities at the UN Headquarters in New York City. This internship programme is for the United Nations Headquarters in New York only. Other United Nations offices, funds and programmes have separate internship arrangements. Students interested in internships in organizations or offices other than the United Nations Headquarters in New York should contact the respective offices directly for further information.

Many of the other UN programmes, funds and agencies have internship programs, but potential candidates are encouraged to apply to those internships directly via the organization’s respective website. A thorough, but not conclusive, listing of additional internships within the UN is available on the Youth at the United Nations website [website](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/internships.htm).

Internships with the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) are available through the UNOV/UNODC Internships website [website](http://www.unvienna.org/unov/job/internship_general_info.html).


**Volunteers (paid)**
A great way to share expertise and skills while gaining the international experience the UN seeks is to volunteer. The United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) is the volunteer arm of the United Nations. It is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and works through UNDP's country offices around the world. For volunteer opportunities, visit the UN Volunteers home page [website](http://www.unv.org/) and click on the corresponding area you would like to volunteer in (ex. Home country, abroad, etc.)

Another great listing is the World Volunteer Web [website](http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/take-action/be-a-volunteer.html). It lists dozens of international organizations that provide opportunities based on region, mission, and skills.
Agencies of Interest to Maxwell graduate students

**UNDP**
The [UNDP vacancies webpage](http://jobs.undp.org/) lists jobs for UNDP around the world. There are quite a few listed.

UNDP also participates in the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) program. You can visit the [JPO Service Center](http://www.jposc.org/content/programme/how_to_become_a_JPO-en.html#2) to find out more about it. The JPO program is for entry-level employment.

UNDP has internships that are for grad students that are enrolled and will come back to school after their internship is complete. See the UNDP internship page for more info.

**UNHCR**
[UNCHR’s main vacancies page](http://www.unhcr.org/admin/3ba1d4794.html) lists external recruitment opportunities. UNHCR also has a [JPO program](http://www.unhcr.org/admin/3ba1d4794.html). JPO positions are filled through a competitive process through participating governments. These countries are as follows: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and USA.

UNHCR has internships at its [internship page](http://www.unhcr.org/admin/3b8a31f94.html).

**World Food Programme**
[WFP](http://www.wfp.org/contact_wfp/vacancies/professionals.html) lists vacancies on its website. WFP asks that you select a [professional profile](http://i-recruitment.wfp.org/olcv/positions.jsp?pg=profile&user=ext) that most closely matches your experience and education.

WFP has an internship program as well. See the [WFP internship page](http://www.wfp.org/contact_wfp/vacancies/interns.asp?section=8&sub_section=5) for more info.

WFP has a [JPO program](http://www.wfp.org/contact_wfp/vacancies/jpo.html).

**UNICEF**
[UNICEF’s careers page](http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_currentvacancies.html) lists short-term and career vacancies. UNICEF has a [JPO program](http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_jpp.html) and well as a [Young Professionals Program](http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_ypp.html).

UNICEF has internships as well ([http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_internship.html](http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_internship.html))
UN ACRONYMS

Secretariat Departments and Offices:
- **UNOG** UN Office in Geneva
- **UNOV** UN Office in Vienna
- **UNON** UN Office at Nairobi
- **OSG** Office of the Secretary General (New York)
- **OIOS** Office of Internal Oversight Services
- **OLA** Office of Legal Services
- **DPA** Department of Political Affairs
- **DDA** Department for Disarmament Affairs
- **DPKO** Department of Peacekeeping Operations

General Assembly Programmes and Funds:
- **UNCTAD** UN Conference on Trade and Development
- **ITC** International Trade Centre
- **UNDCP** UN Drug Control Programme
- **UNEP** UN Environmental Programme
- **UNICEF** UN Children’s Fund
- **UNDP** UN Development Programme
- **UNIFEM** UN Development Fund for Women
- **UNV** UN Volunteers
- **UNCDF** UN Capital Development Fund
- **UNFPA** UN Population Fund

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
- Functional Commissions on: Narcotic Drugs; Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; Science and Technology for Development; Sustainable Development; Status of Women; Population and Development; Social Development; Statistics.

Specialized Agencies linked to ECOSOC include:
- **FAO** Food and Agriculture Organization
- **UNESCO** UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- **WHO** World Health Organization
- **IMF** International Monetary Fund
- **IMO** International Maritime Organization
- **ITU** International Telecommunication Union
- **WMO** World Meteorological Organization
- **WIPO** World Intellectual Property Organization
- **IFAD** International Fund for Agricultural Development
- **UNIDO** UN Industrial Development Organization
- **WTO** World Tourism Organization
- **UNHCR** UN High Commissioner for Refugees
- **UNRWA** UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
- **UNHABITAT** UN Human Settlements Programme
- **UNICEF** UN Children’s Fund
- **UNDP** UN Development Programme

World Bank Group
- **IBRD** International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- **IDA** International Development Association
- **IFC** International Finance Center
- **MIGA** Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
- **ICSID** International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes

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