

LSE International Organisations Week 2021

Notes and reflections on the talks of International Organisations Week, hosted by the LSE, with limited tickets available for LSHTM students. Compiled by the Careers Consultancy team.

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The United Nations (UN) System

Many international organisations represented at International Organisations Week are part of the UN System, including UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Volunteers (UNV), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), World Food Programme (WFP), The World Bank Group.

It may be helpful to review the [UN System chart](#), which many speakers used in their slides, to show how different UN agencies relate to each other and the six main bodies (or 'principal organs') that make up the UN.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is one UN agency of interest to many LSHTM students, however they unfortunately had to withdraw from this year's event. A summary of the WHO speech from the 2020 International Organisations Week event can be found in our report on the 2020 event found on our Moodle site.

Panel discussion: Recruitment and application strategies and trends

Panel discussion on 6 November 2021. Facilitated by Barnaby Mollett and Anne Clinton from LSE Careers. Discussion title: 'The changing strategic directions and future skill needs of international organisations: how to position and sell yourself in a rapidly evolving world and market.'

- [Marialena Athanasopoulos, Deputy Head Economic Risk Analysis](#) at the European Stability Mechanism, (ESM is the crisis resolution institution for Eurozone countries). She studied Maths and Economics, receiving a PhD in the US.
- [Michael Emery, Director of Human Resources](#) at the IOM. The IOM is the newest member of UN family, joining in 2016. It is one of the biggest organisations, with 24,000 personnel in just about every country, and almost 600 offices. He started in Liberia during their Civil War and has worked with various UN organisations for about 31 years.
- [Jean-Luc Marcelin, Partnerships and Talent Acquisition Specialist](#) at the UNDP. The UNDP provide advisory services to governments on sustainable development and governance. He has been in the UN system for 21 years, and mainly deals with partnership activities, communication and recruitment.
- [Chude Ezinwa, Division Manager HR Client Services and Employee Engagement](#) at the African Development Bank. He was at the World Bank for about 10 years, before that in the private sector.
- [Matt Jackson, Director of the London Office](#) at the UNFPA. The UNFPA have over 150 offices around the world.

What are you looking for in candidates? Does HR review all CVs received or is selection done in some other way?

ESM - Each application is seen by HR first, making sure the application meets the requirements of that job posting. It's then passed to the relevant divisions/departments. Departments always work with HR on selection – department reviews the technical background, but the HR department are the experts in making sure applicant meets the requirements of the organisation as a whole.

IOM – A couple of organisations are dabbling with AI/screening at the moment (UNHCR is one of them) and it is probably coming to more of the organisations in the future. We are looking for strong emotional intelligence: how aware you are of how you navigate cross-culturally, resolve conflict in a team etc. Another important factor is humility – if you take a humble approach to the development agenda you are likely to be more successful.

ADB – We would expect the technical components to be a given in all applicants, so are looking beyond that to competencies. In addition to emotional intelligence, you must be very resilient (working in difficult places – lots of fragile states), dynamic, nimble, able to communicate well with colleagues, also drive for results.

What is your advice for making decisions about what to do in first five years after graduating?

UNFPA – In terms of career decisions for first five years, look for something you enjoy. Try and build a varied skill set – field experience, strategic thinking, problem solving etc.

UNDP – Everything above also applies at UNDP. It is valuable to have an additional UN language, we are especially looking for French speakers and Arabic speakers. Spanish is also valuable. A lot of people apply for positions they don't qualify for: you must meet the requirements (including the length of experience required, which may include specific amount of field experience). Look at what is being asked for and then in that first five years seek out opportunities to build that kind of experience.

What are the key strategic changes you see on the horizon for your organisation and the sector at large and how might this impact recruitment?

IOM – The world of unilateral work is changing, getting more complex and getting more competitive to get into. In relation to migration, migration work is very emotive: all countries are exit, transit or destination countries (or combination). We are dealing with increasing politicisation, xenophobia and criminalisation. The whole concept of migration is one of the global mega trends, along with climate and peace security. We are having to deal with governments that are increasingly sophisticated and need people who can manage complexity, build positive narrative around migration, and are resilient.

ESM – There are three main pillars bringing change – climate change, changes to architecture of eurozone, and changes to working environment (as a result of the pandemic). Climate change impacts everything so in every area it's becoming very important to understand the issue. The architecture of the eurozone involves new mandates, which change analysis, investment, funding. There is a need to continually understand how Europe works and how decisions are made. We are slowly coming back to the office, but the way people are working and interacting is changing. Showing flexibility in working methods (and your commitment and evidence of maintaining productivity and communication when not in the building) is becoming very important, and you will need to demonstrate during the interview process.

UNFPA – As well as the above, shifts in geopolitics are a major source of change. We have the sustainable development goals – our overarching framework - but politics can affect donor funding. Technology brings opportunities and threats. Opportunities – we have been using drones to get contraceptives and maternal medicines to communities, and there is a lot of talk about tele-medicine to

get health advice where it's needed. Threats – we have seen that digital gender-based violence has rocketed during pandemic. Climate change is a threat multiplier – it is multiplying existing vulnerabilities and inequalities so response to it needs to reflect everything else we're doing. The inter-linkages are going to be the big deal moving forward. Big organisations can tend to work in silos but it's the inter-linkages and intersectionality of what people experience on the ground that is going to be very important.

UNDP – Agree with all above. UNDP is facing a critical phase. Covid-19 has had dramatic socio-economic impact and has set some countries back years or even decades. UNDP will have to try and tackle that, and we will need lots of economists. Recent events in Myanmar and Afghanistan have shown how volatile things can be and how vulnerable countries and progress may be. We have to be extremely sensitive in negotiating and working with people. From the talent viewpoint, UNDP has worked on accelerator labs to find new solutions to problems and to be more agile in meeting needs. Candidates need to be able to demonstrate they've worked on innovative solutions; new ways of addressing challenges will always be a plus in the coming years.

ADB – The bank's focus is even more important now - feed Africa, light up and power Africa, also improving the livelihoods of people in Africa. Covid-19 has tested health systems around the world and especially on the African continent, so going forward there will be a lot of emphasis on health. We are looking for candidates who bring in resilience, problem-solving, especially innovative solutions, and humility to listen and learn and make sure local voices are integrated into solutions. You need to be a collaborator, work in partnership with local governments. We need people who will be able to work independently at a distance – you need to self-manage, self-report.

What is the best way to pivot in your career and will you need to start again at the intern level?

ADB– Development is actually very diverse, so it isn't always so much of a career switch as you think. Different areas are all interlinked (economics, health etc.). But if trying to switch, make sure you understand the business you are trying to move to. Show you can learn new skills, have the humility to recognise you need that.

IOM – Think of a quadrant – on one axis there is the type of organisation on the other axis the functional area of work. Moving type of organisation but working in the same function or changing type of function but in same type of organisation are both possible. Moving across both axes at the same time is difficult. And always build your narrative around the transferable competencies

UNFPA - Think about 'career anchors' – multilateralism as an 'anchor', international development as an 'anchor'. Rather than pivoting think about expanding 'anchor'...

Do requirements for years of 'professional experience' count internships and volunteering? And does national rather than international work count?

ESM (not HR professional) – I would consider internships and volunteering add to your learning, but HR doesn't always count these years when there's a specific requirement of professional experience.

UNFPA – You must meet the requirements of the job: if you don't have the years they require then you need to get that experience first.

UNDP - It varies a great deal between the agencies. UNDP do not count internships or voluntary work (except long stints in UNV). But it's not a waste of time – you gain experience and knowledge, and it feeds into your narrative.

Ed - Generally speaking across international organisations, "professional experience" is usually defined as competitive paid experience. If a UN internship has a stipend and a competitive recruitment process (which most do) and then it would usually count. UN volunteering usually does not. Each International organisation or agency can set their own definition, so it's worth checking.

What defines 'field work'?

UNDP – It is having worked as closely as possible to the local populations, governments or institutions that the international organisations would interact with. It could include being in HQ with a lot of travelling to projects but the closer you are to the populations the better. We would value a stint in an unknown NGO in a remote area above being a desk officer in a very known organisation.

What requirements for a CV and cover letter? How do you stand out? What do you like to see?

UNDP – It's not about you, it's about the job. We are trying to hire the person who is the best fit for the position. Identify the key technical and behavioural competencies and tailor your documents to showcase these.

What is your final piece of advice on positioning yourself as candidate in this rapidly changing world?

UNFPA – Build your transferable skills. Make sure you know about the organisation you're applying to. At interview help the interviewers see you in the job already by using your understanding do you talk about how your skills translate to the role. You can follow the money (where investment is happening), follow the need (where is the greatest need), follow a niche (becoming a specialist), follow your drive.

IOM – Be targeted, be realistic, build your professional network, manage your reputation, find out what your values are, and make sure you align these pieces to create the conditions for luck to happen to you. Be authentic.

ESM – Do your homework for every application: study the position, the institution, the division of that institution, try to understand what is motivating the people to target your cover letter to the people who will be reading it. Be humble, be open-minded, open to learn, be honest when you don't know something but be eager to learn. Convey your passion for the job – write it professionally but with your heart too.

UNDP – Also use social media to follow your ideal organisations to see trends and better understand their work.

ADB – Also keep learning, keep preparing, try to gain experience wherever you can, work out how to tell your story effectively.

Panel discussion: Tips on developing a successful career in an International Organisation

Panel discussion on 6 November 2021. Facilitated by Catherine Reynolds, LSE and Rachel Power, LSE. Discussion title: 'Career success: insider tips on how to start and develop a successful career in an International Organisation'

Panellists

- [Ilaira Caetani, Principal Financing Partnerships Specialist](#), Asian Development Bank (ADB)
Ilaira works for the ADB European Office and has a career background working for the Italian government and NGOs following graduation from her Masters at LSE.
- [Paul Lam, Strategy and Policy Officer](#), Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank
Paul was previously an Investment Officer with the AIIB in SE Asia (as a member of the Young Professional Programme) and previously worked at the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and CDC Group (development finance and investment company owned by the UK government). Prior to this Paul was an investment banker at UBS.
- [Shweta Trivedi, Head of Talent Management and Analytics](#), OECD
Shweta moved to the OECD from a small educational NGO, and prior to that worked in consulting.
- [Gustavo Araujo, Head of Partnerships and Outreach](#), UNHCR
Gustavo has a Masters in Public Health and a Masters in Clinical Psychology. From a background in clinical research, and project management, moved into recruitment, working for PwC, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), UNDP and OSCE before moving to the UNHCR.

Can you tell us about your career at the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB)?

Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank is a multi-lateral development bank, and our core business is providing development financing to developing countries and frontier markets. A lot of operations are about finance. Any experience from consulting/banking/risk management is very relevant. Alongside that you need to have a heart for development – genuine intention. Paul started as a sales trader, then M&A side of investment banking, enjoyed the financing side, wanting to use financial skills for 'augmented' purpose – to have a positive impact. You need financial experience to do these roles – they cannot recruit someone good and train them to be a banker, you need to bring training and experience first. Do your learning in the developed setting first, learn finance and then move.

Can you tell us about your career at the Asian Development Bank (ADB)?

We have very diverse operations, but similar activities to Asian Infrastructure and Development Bank. We run an internship programme during your studies (6-8 weeks), but we really hire fresh out of uni. A Master's not a requirement if you have a lot of experience but earlier in career it can be hard to get in without it. Our YP (Young Professionals) programme requires two years' experience. You need to be

committed to development, to contributing to something that is bigger than you. You also need to embrace a very diverse environment with people from all cultures/backgrounds. It is usual to have done other things first to build your CV and your experience. Career growth isn't a straight line/ladder even once you are in. You bring change to the organisation not only through your regular work, but also through getting involved in contributing to the organisation in other ways (e.g., staff council etc.).

Can you tell us about your career at the OECD?

OECD is a policy, research and analysis organisation. We recruit for specialist technical skills. We have an internship programme aimed at students currently enrolled in a degree (must take place during degree and last between one and six months) and take 600 interns per year. We also have a Young Associates programme (for people coming out of undergrad) – we receive around 3000 applications for 8 positions. We mainly hire into our A1 position – our entry level job. For that job we are looking for 2-3 years' relevant work experience plus a Master's degree and specialist technical skills for that policy area. The work is different to the private sector with many layers for sign off and approval. Negotiating and influencing skills are really important: you may be needing to convince people from 38 member countries at times.

Can you tell us about your career at the UNHCR?

UNHCR's primary purpose is to protect the rights and wellbeing of people forced to flee (refugees, stateless and displaced people). Our work is with partners. We recruit people from many backgrounds – we have risk management teams, data analysis teams, as well as more operational staff. 87% of our people are in field operations, 42% in emergency duty stations (hardship duty stations). You must be willing and excited to deliver in those locations. A lot of the work is done via smaller organisations, that's where you gain the experience that gets you into the larger organisations. You need to be open to move to different countries, deal with ambiguity (especially when working with many different cultures) and be aware change does not take place quickly in the international arena. There is a JPO programme for certain nationalities (not currently UK). Beyond that, if you are in your early career, look for jobs elsewhere where you can gain the experience required by the job vacancies we post.

What is your advice for students applying to these organisations?

OECD – Read the job description really carefully, and make sure you fulfil the requirements. At the OECD we use a competency framework (available online); think how you can give examples that meet those. Do the research on the policy area: show your awareness of it and any work you've done in that area (they will ask that). The cover letter is read first. Be really transparent, concise (carefully proof-read), and really home in on the requirements. Apply as early as possible – recruitment typically takes 4-6 months for jobs, 4-6 weeks for internships. It is typically an online application, then online interview (speaking to the screen, not a person, although your responses are reviewed by a person, not a machine), written test, then panel interview. At the OECD even if you don't get the position, you're applying for you could be cleared for a position at certain level and then be considered for other roles, so it can worth applying even if you don't meet every requirement because of that chance of being considered for other opportunities.

ADB -Show how you meet the requirements in application, then it's panel interview. At the interview you have to prepare a presentation (10 minutes). Stick to the 10 minutes, be clear, create interest (don't have to fit everything in – you can allow for follow up questions): it's usually on a topic related to the position. Make sure you've researched what the organisation does.

UNHCR – Don't focus just on minimum requirements in your application. Look at the terms of reference, look at the job description, look at the tasks and responsibilities – work out what you've done before that demonstrates transferable skills. Be able to articulate how you add value. Remember, International Civil Service does not necessarily hire for potential – you need to have done your learning first. Look for opportunities that will enable you to develop those skills and fulfil your purpose regardless of whether in the end it leads to an international organization.

Further advice for students:

Paul: Remember what you do is a function, but what's important is your purpose – his function is as a banker and his purpose is to apply that in development. Be aware that when you live the ex-pat life you can start to lose touch (not the same in a field operation office). Really important not to let good intentions fade as you work in that ex-pat environment. Remember this is about what purpose do you want your function (banker, lawyer etc.) to serve.

There's no formula for how to get there – be the best you can wherever you are, regardless of whether you are going to get into one of these organisations or not. Your goal should be your contribution to what matters to you, not a goal to get into one of these organisations.

2021 International Organisation webinars

OECD

Speaker was [Nadav Shental, Talent Management and Analytics](#)

Background and context

The OECD mission is 'Better policies for better lives'. OECD works with 38 member countries, 70 partner countries (including Brazil, India, China) and their work covers 80% of world trade and investment and 70% of the world economy. Their HQ is Paris, with centres in Berlin, Busan, Istanbul, Mexico City, Tokyo, Trento and Washington DC. These centres are mostly communication hubs promoting work and engaging communications. Their roots are in 1948's OEEC (a European focus), but outlook is now more global.

Their approach:

- Collecting data and analysis (e.g., PISA exams – conducted in over 80 countries around the world)
- Discussion and consultation (aims at a multilateral and consensual process)
- Standard setting and policy guidance (sharing insights and providing guidance)
- Implementation support (“Our secretary general says we need to see ourselves not as a think tank but as a do tank”)

Roles they recruit to

Their professional roles are graded as 'A1, A2 etc.' rather than P1, P2 as is common in other agencies. They have 4,000 staff members, and majority are professional (A grade) staff. Average age of an A1 staff member is 31 (male) and 29.9 (female). A2 average age is 34.6 (male), 36.2 (female). A3 is 39.7 and 38, A4 is 44.6 and 49 respectively.

28.7% of staff are French, but mainly because of the HQ location in Paris and because there are greater numbers of French applicants. You don't have to speak French – it's French OR English as a main language.

Main recruitment channels:

- External recruitment (jobs posted on vacancy page on a daily basis – you can get email alerts)
- Young Associates programme – for recent undergraduates, with the expectation that they'll pursue a graduate degree after 2 years on the programme. Not relevant to postgraduate students.
- OECD Internships – full time students only, 1 – 6 months – you have to be enrolled throughout. Student either take it up at the end of their studies, or during an 'internship semester' or aligned with a study project. Could be relevant to postgraduate students – both undergraduates, Masters and PhD students can apply. Paid a stipend.
- YPP programme – under review and currently no positions available. Many hiring managers that might have used the YPP are now just advertising an A1 role.

In 2020 recruited 367 interns, 274 staff (72% of which were policy analysts). The recruitment process takes 4-6 months, a little less for internships.

Requirements

For A1 roles you need at least 2 years' experience (on top of any postgraduate course), each role has selection criteria plus alignment with the [OECD competency framework](#).

For internships, you apply and then hiring managers pick through applicants when they need someone and invite them to interview as required.

Key tip: Read OECD reports and evaluations – you will understand the terminology we use and the challenges we address. Produce 3 or 4 questions and try writing your own answers, linked to the reports/evaluations? We are looking for those who are familiar with the area, can write well and whether you have innovative ideas/approaches.

UNDP

Background and context

Speaker is [Jean-Luc Marcelin, Partnerships and Talent Acquisition Specialist @UNDPJPOCentre](#)

HQ is in New York, with offices in Copenhagen, Geneva, Brussels, Bonn. Work is mainly based in the field. Three main pillars of the UNDP: Political, peacekeeping and development. Now the majority of their work is advisory and shaping countries to find integrated solutions which have a long term managed sustainable development impact (before it was centred more around economic growth).

Six signature solution areas:

- Poverty and inequality
- Gender equality
- Governance
- Resilience
- Environment
- Energy

Some roles are specialised to one of the signature solution areas.

Roles they recruit to

There are programmatic role profiles and thematic profiles.

- Programmatic profiles include Rule of Law & Governance, Climate & Environment, Disaster Risk Reduction, Poverty reduction, Private sector development, Urbanisation, Youth, Gender
- Thematic profiles: Communications, Partnerships & Advocacy, Finance, HR, Procurement, Legal Services, Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

Entry points:

- Staff – including their main professional staff (P levels – so P1, P2 etc.)
- Consultants – short term assignments
- Service Contractors – development project personnel
- JPO – Junior Professional Officer. Masters and a minimum of 2 years relevant work experience needed, must be under 32. Nationality driven as funded by donor countries (none for UK at the moment as UK is no longer funding this)
- UNV – UN Volunteers
- Internships. Usually 6 months. Must be enrolled in a degree programme or graduated within a year. Paid a stipend. Advertised on a demand-driven basis (year-round)
- NEW graduate scheme – relevant for Masters students with maximum of 1-year relevant work experience. The first round has just recruited – 38,000 applications for 22 positions! They're just assessing the process now – watch this space.

Requirements

In all roles

- Education and professional requirements must be met (if it says 2 years' experience, that's what you need!)
- Each role has specific competencies and requirements
- Both specialists and generalists are needed
- Dynamic, flexible, passionate people – you need to believe in the potential to make a difference!
- Languages: English. Another UN working language (French, Spanish, Arabic) is a big asset.
- For professional roles you need prior field *and* development experience, typically 2 years' experience after a Masters.

- The UNDP doesn't count unpaid or volunteer experience in the years of experience required (this varies with other UN agencies). It has to be paid work through a competitive selection process.

UNFPA

Background and context

Speaker was [Matt Jackson, Director, London Representation Office](#) @MattJacksonUK,

Highlighted the UNFPA Mission statement and its three transformational goals

- Zero preventable maternal deaths
- Zero unmet need for family planning
- Zero harmful practices and gender-based violence

As well as key statistic for what they do: life saving help for pregnant women – 1 million a year, 20 million contraceptives provided a year, 40,000 maternal deaths averted in 2020, 14.4 million unintended pregnancies averted, 4.1 million unsafe abortions averted...

Roles they recruit to

The main entry points into the UNFPA are:

- Paid internships for 2-6 months, sometimes remote.
- UN Volunteer Programme Officers – advocacy and programme management
- Junior Programme Officers (JPO) - sponsored by host governments (UK has withdrawn hosting for this so no JPO roles for UK only citizens).
- External Recruitment (i.e., Individual job adverts) – involving online application, written tests, competence-based interview (usually targeted at those with professional experience)
- Consultants – for specialists, analysts, or executive work
- Service contractors – development project personnel
- Leadership Pool Initiative – assessment for international leadership roles at senior level for those moving into the sector after leadership roles elsewhere

In terms of the roles, they recruit to

- Technical roles
 - Population and Development
 - Gender Youth and GBV
 - Health Economics
 - Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS
 - Programme Managers e.g., FGM
 - Data, Technologies, Innovation
- Representation and leadership
 - HQ and regional management
 - Representation/diplomatic
 - Advocacy and Campaigns (example of the Noi character used to advocate for girls' rights in SE Asia)

- Operational and corporate roles
 - HR
 - Communication and media
 - Finance and budgeting
 - Procurement (example given of UNFPA Supplies, which represents 40% of the global market for contraceptives)
 - Resource mobilisation
 - Partnership managers (example of work with Johnson & Johnson and The Baby Box Company in Haiti)
 - Audit/Monitoring and Evaluation

Requirements

For internships, you need to be an enrolled student (or just at the end of your studies, but still enrolled).

For an entry-level professional officer roles (e.g., P1) you need 2-3 years relevant working experience. Individual roles have individual selection criteria based on required skills and competencies. With greater experience you could apply for higher ranks.

UNHCR

Background and context

UNHCR is the UN High Commission for Refugees: 'Building better futures for people forced to flee'. Mandate from 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention – ensuring the international protection of people forced to flee.

Speaker: [Gustavo Araujo – Head of Talent and Partnerships](#)

Present in over 130 countries and 18,000 staff. Many staff stay for a long time – a career organization. 13% are in HQ roles, but 87% field operations. At the end of each HQ rotation, it's back to the field. 42% of roles are in the field in hardship locations – where people are being forced to flee.

61% of staff are men: keen to improve gender parity at all levels.

UNHCR supports refugees, stateless individuals, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons and returnees. 1 in 95 people on Earth has fled their home due to conflict or persecution. Currently there are an estimated 20.7 million people who are refugees, 4.1 million who are asylum seekers, and 48 million people who have been forcibly displaced.

Three stages of UNHCR support- responding with life-saving support, safeguarding fundamental human rights, and helping people build better futures.

Roles they recruit to

- Talent Pools: Talent pools are run for a variety of areas of expertise including Contraception and Sexual Health (CASH), Gender Based Violence (GBV), and Project/Programme Management. If you apply for a Pool your application is reviewed, and if accepted your profile can be looked at by hiring managers looking for short term, last minute/urgent, or temporary appointments.
- Internships: 2-8 months hands on experience for recent graduates (within a year) from a graduate or undergraduate university programme. Small stipend offered to cover food and local

transportation. Interns cover their own costs to travel to the duty station, medical insurance and visa.

- JPO: Liaising with donor countries who sponsor individuals to start their careers in the organization. 2-year role, with a retention rate of 70%+. UK currently not a donor country and so the JPO programme is inactive for UK students and graduates.
- International Professional Staff: Fixed term jobs in the field or at headquarters for international professionals. Includes some in Public Health.
- Temporary appointment: Up to 2 years to support emergencies
- Consultancy: for those with high level technical knowledge
- General service staff / National Officer: Local support for UNHCR work. Field Service Position: Gaining experience in an international role via work in the field.
- Volunteering: Via UN Volunteers.

Requirements

Across all roles they are looking for staff who are passionate about the mission, willing to work in hardship locations and thrive in diverse multicultural environments. Rotations into different regions and hardship locations are vital parts of a career in UNHCR: staff need to go wherever it takes to get the job done. They want staff who bring innovative ideas, skills and solutions, and are determined to make a difference. Minimum of 3 years' experience (if without this, look at smaller non-profits, smaller humanitarian organisations or work that brings you into contact with people forced to flee). Relevant work could be clinical work depending on the relevance to the role. Fluency in English is vital, but Spanish, French or Arabic are a big asset (or local languages in regions of concern).

www.unhcr.org/careers -> How to apply video -> Register your profile -> Select positions that match your skills and experience -> Complete the letter of interest -> Complete all mandatory fields -> Submit application.

Competitive recruitment process. Once applications received: screening for eligibility and shortlisting -> Invitation to test -> Assessments (language test and/or functional assessments) – anonymous marking -> Invitation to competency-based interview (sometimes simultaneously with the testing stage -> Reference Check -> Candidate Nurturing (keeping in touch while the process is running) -> Offer letter

Note that criteria are a minimum – look at the duties of the job and consider the evidence you possess to prove your ability to do this role!

Tips!

- Use the letter of interest – There are three targeted questions e.g., ‘how have your achievements and experience to date prepared you for this position. Please refer to the job description and to the essential requirements therein and the operational context’. SHOW them that you’re the right person for the job, highlight talents, motivation and experience, heavily tailor your responses to the role you’re applying for!
- Enter contact details carefully including your country code in your phone number and alternate email address.
- Show how your education aligns with your career path – use links to allow hiring managers to view your publication if relevant. Provide EXACT details of your institutions and qualifications for reference check purposes.

- Don't just look at the minimum requirements – look at the job description and highlight how you can add value. Show how your skills and competencies have evolved over time.
- List part time and volunteering work as well.
- Make sure you include your mother tongue as well as other languages.

UN Volunteers

Speaker was [Manuel Brakaj, Talent Pool Associate](#)

Background and Context

UNV is part of the UN's commitment to embed volunteerism into international development. They have been in operation since 1971 and take talented professionals from 18-84 years. 84% of UNVs were from Global South in 2020. Majority of assignments were at national level (in the Global south) so only national citizens can apply. If you have already completed a UNV assignment, it might make it more competitive to apply again. However, it depends on the specific post and the contribution you have made previously. UNV experience gives good insight from inside to understand how UN works and could help you to progress within UN.

Roles They Recruit To

UNV categories:

- UN expert volunteers: 35+; min 15 years' experience; Master's; 3-48 months assignment
- UN Specialist volunteers: 27+; 3-15 years' experience (from age 27, no exception to needing experience unless a specific instance); 3-48 months assignment
- UN youth volunteers :18-26 (must be within the age range when selected); 0-2 years' experience I.e. don't always need prior experience and can have up to 2 years' experience and still apply. It doesn't matter when you got the experience. 6-24 months assignment
- University volunteers: 18-26; 0-2 years' experience; 3-6 months assignment; Students or recent graduates.
- Online volunteers: task based; 18+ years; 1–26-week assignment; Get certificate of appreciation.

Entitlements (half if assignment is 6 months or less)

- Entry lump sum \$4000 to allow you to set up in new country
- Travel tickets
- Monthly living allowance (including for rent). Have to find accommodation.
- Insurance (medical, life, disability, malicious acts)
- Annual leave (2.5 days per month of service)
- Access to training platforms
- Home visit if longer term assignment
- Exit allowance to help re-settle in own country.

The roles that are currently most in demand include Project Management (Programme Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation, Environment, Gender, Youth) and Health Care (General Medicine, Specialty Doctors, Public Health, Nurse/Midwife).

Requirements / Recruitment

Process: advertise for 2 weeks > 1 week to sift > 2-3 weeks to get to selection. Can take longer at times. Could be 2-3 months from application to deployment. Letter of motivation is not required. Best to apply 1-2 months ahead of expected start date.

UVP <http://app.unv.org> is one stop shop for entire volunteer journey – launched 1 October. Complete your profile and keep updated. Present summary of qualifications, skills, experience. Check regularly for matching assignments. Will soon have tailored email alerts. Explore section has useful resources, including a calculator to assess entitlements.

Very competitive process – 50 applications per opportunity – so describe everything clearly to aid sift. Use key words associated with roles that interest you. Describe tasks completed, results and achievements.

The World Bank

Speaker [Iman Kedir, Communications and Outreach Specialist](#)

Background and context

The World Bank has a global mission to make a difference, aiming to end extreme poverty (get it below 3% by 2020) and build shared prosperity, increasing the income of the bottom 40%. It is one of largest sources of funding and knowledge for developing countries, in health, education, public administration, infrastructure and more. Its value is the ability to work at the nexus of global and local, public and private sectors.

The World Bank Group consists of:

- IBRD (The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) – that's its formal full name. Its work is financial development and policy financing to middle-income countries.
- IDA (The International Development Association), which gives zero to low interest loans and grants to low-income countries.
- IFC (The International Finance Corporation) – it gives private sector investment and advice to foreign and local investors.
- MIGA (The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency) – it does political risk insurance (guarantees) for foreign and local investors.
- ICS (The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes).

There are 189 member countries, a board of 189 governors and a board of 25 directors (plus a president and the management and staff).

Why work with them?

Impactful work, multicultural workplace, global opportunities, 12,000+ staff, 170+ nationalities, 140 country offices, shared goal of reducing poverty.

Roles they recruit to

Recruitment pathways:

- Internship

- JPA (Junior Professional Associates) Program
- YP (Young Professionals) Program
- Consultancy
- Staff.

First two are for early career professionals. JPA Program relaunched this year. Short and longer term consulting contracts – they're posted on the career websites of the different institutions.

Requirements

Internships available at different times of year (varies by which part of the organisation) 1-4 months long. Apply October 1-31 for World Bank Winter Term internship, then Dec 1 – 31 Jan for summer term. Must be currently enrolled and expecting to continue being enrolled in study after the internship (so these have to be during degree). No specific degree needed.

IFC internship is only Summer (applications open in Feb), need to be a graduate student in MBA or Finance (with 3-6 years' work experience). Financial analysis skills a plus (also languages), given automatic pre-selection for YPP.

JPA you have to be under 28, can be a good opportunity before higher study. Applications are year-round, 2-year contract (full time consulting contract), no opportunity to renew that contract afterwards. It's expected people will go back to study afterwards. Can still apply with a master's – analytical and research skills are a plus when applying. Don't have to have prior experience.

YPP is flagship programme – leadership pipeline for the institution. Need to be under 32. Rotations across WBG, fieldwork opportunity (working on the ground – should be willing to relocate to field-based assignments, especially those supporting client countries experiencing fragility, conflict and violence (FCV) and other challenging environments), lots of training and development opportunities.

More information on the different routes here:

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/about/careers/programs-and-internships>

Applications open next June for the next application cycle of YPP more information here.

For World Bank Placement – 'relevant' master's needs to be relevant to one of the business areas. Work experience requirement - need 3 years at least of relevant professional experience (three years of PhD can count).

Application window – 15 June to 15 July, process takes about 15 months before you start.

They value diversity and inclusion and promise they have a disability-inclusive process, with a 'safe space' in application process for disclosing disabilities etc.

You can also apply to jobs (as well as these various schemes).

How important is it to have a PhD?

2020 60% PhD holders and 40% Master's (for YPP). Don't look at nationality for suitability to YPP but there is a slight preference for member countries.

World Food Programme

Speaker was [Tanvinur Rahman, Senior Human Resources Officer](#) Based in HQ, Rome
<https://www.wfp.org/careers>

Background and Context

The World Food Programme is the world's largest humanitarian agency. It is funded by donations (governments, NGOs, institutions, private companies and others). HQ is in Rome with 88 country offices, 6 regional bureaux (decentralised from HQ so 6-10 country offices linked to each) and 14 offices in world capitals. It has 19,000 employees, mostly recruited locally. There are very few opportunities in London as it is staffed by 2-3 people who mostly manage donor liaison.

Large part of work is countering pending emergencies (early warning systems, analysis, developing community resilience).

Nobel Peace Prize 2020 – recognized that food security, peace and stability go hand in hand.

People are at the centre of everything. WFP values: People, purpose, partnership, performance.

Roles They Recruit To

Many functional areas (e.g., programme and policy; nutrition; communications).

- Professional staff (P1, P2 grade etc.) including fixed term roles. WFP has a medical unit to apply as doctor. Also, if you have a nutrition background, there are opportunities in this area.
- JPOs (Junior Professional Officer) - JPOs spend 2-3 years with WFP working in the field / at HQ / in Regional Bureaux, gaining a rich, hands-on experience in different functional areas. They receive training, mentoring and coaching. Opportunities are advertised on donor websites. Deadlines vary by location / donor country. <https://www.wfp.org/careers/jpo>
- Consultants
- Internships - <https://www.wfp.org/careers/internships> - These are open to applicants from any country as long as eligibility is met. Internships might take place in HQ, Regional Bureaux or country offices. They are open to UG / PG students or recent graduates (within 6 months). They last 2-8 months. You must have attended class within the last 12 months. You must be fluent in English and be intermediate level in one other UN language. Opportunities are advertised internally and externally on the WFP website. They could be posted at any time of year, depending on operational need. Internships are paid a stipend connected to the specific duty station. Currently, the maximum amount is \$1000 per month. Field experience is valued / desirable for internships, but this shouldn't stop you applying if you don't have it. Some projects will look for this but there are others which don't. This is a good option if you have limited experience. During COVID, people were allowed to complete internships remotely but as people return to work, that might change.
- Future International talent (FIT) pool - This is an initiative to enable faster deployment of fixed term professionals. You apply to join the pool when advertised on WFP website by a functional area and then you are pre-assessed ready for later deployment. Assessed by written test and selection panel. The FIT pool is like a rota of people available for roles. Each duty station in WFP lasts a set period so when that period ends and the person moves on, they will take someone

new from FIT pool to that fixed term position if no internal candidate is suitable to move into post. Potential applicants will need to check whether they can apply to be in pool.

Requirements

International mobility is important. This means that once you join WFP you commit to be sent anywhere. Field placements duty rota depends on country. Rome is HQ duty station so 4 years. Depends on code – C is 3-4 years before can apply for transfer.

All candidates need to embody the values: integrity, fair, impartial, honest.

Recruitment process takes variable amount of time. For example, Consultancy roles take 4-6 weeks, fixed term positions 2+ months, internships 2-3 weeks

Main requirements:

- Relevant professional experience. Amount of experience is determined by the grade of the role. e.g., P1 -1 year; P2 -3yrs; P3 - 5years all the way up to D13, 13 years. This is important: academic qualifications are not enough without this. Consultancies at various grades require similar variable levels of experience: junior level 1,2,3 (one year) then level 1 (P1 / P2) consultant (3 years) and so on. In terms of what counts as professional experience it depends on the type of experience and level. For a professional staff role experience as a doctor might count in full. More 'technical' clinical experience, might count 50%, (suggested that nursing might be in this category)
- Many roles require field experience, and the requirement for this has not changed. There are still opportunities available in the field in some countries, and it is viewed as an important skill set. Field experience as part of academic study does not count, it has to be working for a typical partner organisation or NGO.
- Skills: Ability to work in a team in a diverse environment, dynamic and adaptable, creative thinkers, proactive, flexible, responsive. Other technical skills as relevant to individual roles. Both research skills and project management skills are valued.
- Education: University degree and advanced university degree e.g., Master's. Second Masters or not necessarily given any additional value, unless it compares relevant technical knowledge for the role.
- Languages: fluency (level C) in English plus intermediate (level B) in another official UN language (Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish) or Portuguese. Language skills are tested at interview. You are welcome to append certificates to applications. Preference is for UN languages even if based in a country where those languages are not used as much e.g., Prefer Spanish to Italian for Italy. However, if you speak Burmese, for example, you can work in the regional office (which doesn't count as an overseas posting).

For JPO:

- Age limit is 32
- Minimum of 2 years of international experience
- Relevant Master's
- Fluent in English, plus intermediate in 1+ other UN languages.
- You have to be a citizen of one of the donor countries (UK is currently not a donor country)

Internship programme selection process: automated pre-screening questions then an additional screening stage. There is a written assessment (some technical questions defined by functional area and some competency questions.) Those short listed are invited to virtual and panel interviews.

Recruitment tips: Review the job description to find requirements. Tailor your CV and cover letter to the specific requirements. Include your international experience and mobility. International experience can be either work outside home country or international work you are doing based at home. Be clear and concise in your answers on the application form at interview, use CAR (context, action, result) to answer skill / competency questions (this is similar to STAR, and there is more advice on this method in the application section of our LSHTM Careers Moodle site). Show how your values align to WFP's core values: People, purpose, partnership, performance. Connect to their mission. Come prepared and do ask questions when invited during the interview.