



How to join the United Nations and apply successfully

ICD, Lucerne, March 2023

UNDP Office of
Human Resources,
Bureau for
Management Services



The United Nations System

UN Principal Organs

General Assembly

Security Council

Economic and Social Council

Secretariat

International Court of Justice

Trusteeship Council⁵

Subsidiary Bodies

Main and other sessional committees

Disarmament Commission

Human Rights Council

International Law Commission

Standing committees and ad hoc bodies

Subsidiary Bodies

Military Staff Committee

Peacekeeping operations and political missions

Sanctions committees (ad hoc)

Standing committees and ad hoc bodies

Functional Commissions

Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Narcotic Drugs

Population and Development

Science and Technology for Development

Social Development

Statistics

Status of Women

Sustainable Development

United Nations Forum on Forests

Regional Commissions

ECA Economic Commission for Africa

ECE Economic Commission for Europe

ECLAC Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

ESCAP Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

ESCWA Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Other Bodies

Committee for Development Policy

Committee of Experts on Public Administration

Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

Other sessional and standing committees and expert, ad hoc and related bodies

Departments and Offices

EOSG Executive Office of the Secretary-General

DESA Department of Economic and Social Affairs

DFS Department of Field Support

DGACM Department for General Assembly

DM Department of Management

DPA Department of Political Affairs

DPI Department of Public Information

DPKO Department of Peacekeeping Operations

DSS Department of Safety and Security

OCHA Office for the Coordination

OHCHR Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

OIOS Office of Internal Oversight Services

OLA Office of Legal Affairs

OSAA Office of the Special Adviser on Africa

OSRSG/CAAC Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children

UNODA Office for Disarmament Affairs

UNOG United Nations Office at Geneva

UN-OHRLS Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

UNON United Nations Office at Nairobi

Programmes and Funds

UNCTAD United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

- ITC** International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/WTO)

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

- UNCDF** United Nations Capital Development Fund
- UNV** United Nations Volunteers

UNEP United Nations Environment Programme

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

UN-HABITAT United Nations Human Settlements Programme

UNHCR Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

UNODC United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

UNRWA¹ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

UN-Women United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

WFP World Food Programme

Research and Training Institutes

UNICRI United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute

UNIDIR¹ United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

UNITAR United Nations Institute for Training and Research

UNRISD United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

UNSSC United Nations System Staff College

UNU United Nations University

Other Entities

UNAIDS Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNISDR United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

UNOPS United Nations Office for Project Services

Related Organizations

CTBTO PrepCom Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

IAEA² International Atomic Energy Agency

OPCW Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

WTO³ World Trade Organization

Specialized Agencies⁴

ILO International Labour Organization

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WHO World Health Organization

World Bank Group

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

IMF International Monetary Fund

ICAO International Civil Aviation Organization

IMO International Maritime Organization

ITU International Telecommunication Union

UPU Universal Postal Union

WMO World Meteorological Organization

WIPO World Intellectual Property Organization

IFAD International Fund for Agricultural Development

UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization

UNWTO World Tourism Organization

NOTES:

¹ UNRWA and UNIDIR report only to the General Assembly.

² IAEA reports to the Security Council and the General Assembly.

³ WTO has no reporting obligation to the General Assembly (GA) but contributes on an ad-hoc basis to GA and ECOSOC work inter alia on finance and developmental issues.

⁴ Specialized agencies are autonomous organizations working with the UN and each other through the coordinating machinery of ECOSOC at the intergovernmental level, and through the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) at the inter-secretariat level. This section is listed in order of establishment of these organizations as specialized agencies of the United Nations.

⁵ The Trusteeship Council suspended operation on 1 November 1994 with the independence of Palau, the last remaining United Nations Trust Territory, on 1 October 1994.

Good news: there is probably a UN job for you!



UNDP's example

Programmatic profiles

- Rule of Law & Governance
- Climate & Environment
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Poverty Reduction
- Private Sector Development
- Urbanization
- Youth, Gender



Thematic profiles

- Communication
- Partnerships & Advocacy
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Procurement
- Legal Services
- Project Management
- Monitoring and Evaluation

UN Career entry points



Staff Contracts

- Internationally-Recruited (IP)
 - UN/UNDP/etc. job sites - Vacancies
 - Entry and Mid-Level Professional Programmes
 - Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme
- Locally-Recruited staff /National Officers
- Fixed-Term and Short/Temporary -Term Contracts (FTA-TA)

Other Contracts

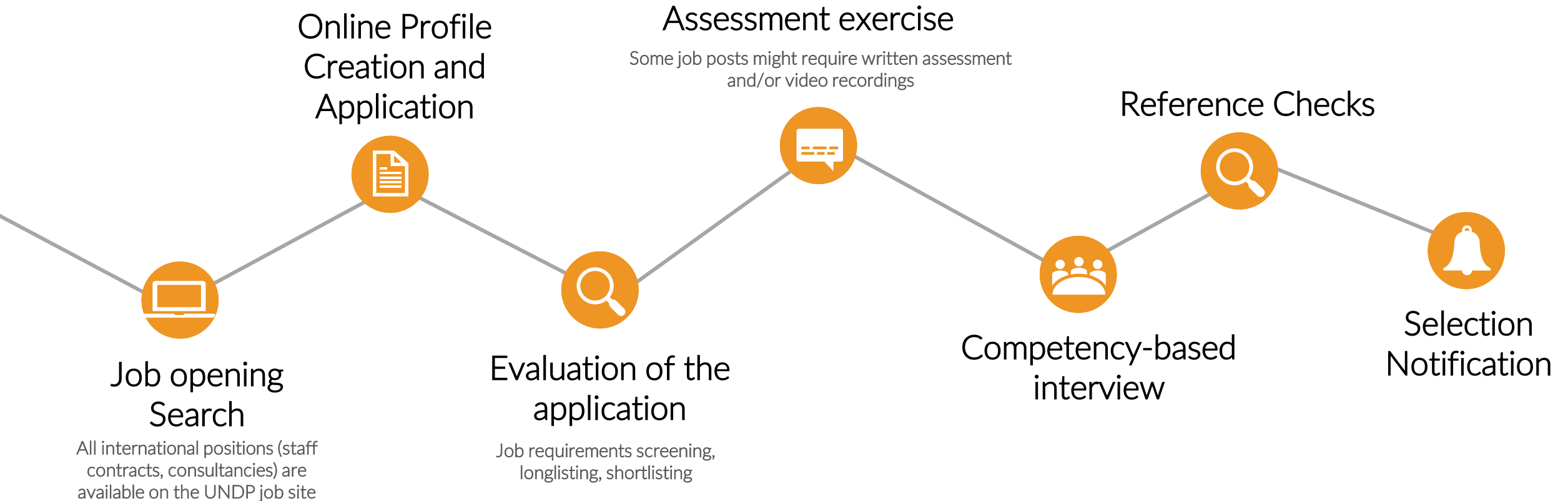
- Consultants and Contractors
- United Nations Volunteers (UNV)
- Fellowship programmes
- Internships

What the UN looks for in candidates



- Motivation and drive
- Innovative mindset, teamwork
- Multicultural interest
- Educational & Professional requirements must be met
- Various core and job-specific personal competencies
- Language requirement: English + another UN working language an asset (French, Spanish, Arabic)
- Prior field and development experience a strong asset

Typical recruitment process



UNDP Job Requirement Overview



Work Experience

Level	Years of Experience
D-2	Over 15
D-1	Min 15
P-5	10
P-4	7
P-3	5
P-2	2

Core Competencies

- Achieve Results
- Think Innovatively
- Learn Continuously
- Adapt with Agility
- Act with Determination
- Engage and Partner
- Enable Diversity and Inclusion

Cross-Functional Competencies

- Strategic Thinking
- Business Acumen
- Entrepreneurial Thinking
- System Thinking
- Effective Decision Making
- Negotiation and Influence

Education

Usually requires advanced degree or bachelor degree with 2 years working experience or above

Language

Working proficiency on English and/or French. Knowledge of other UN languages is an asset

Technical Competencies

Job/function specific skills and competencies

Business Development and Management

Values

Exemplifying Integrity, Demonstrating Commitment, Embracing Diversity, Embracing Change

Selection process in the UN



- Internship / consultancy / regular position advertised OR
- Call for applications to a talent roster advertised
- No unsolicited applications
- Computer screening (based on must-have requirements)
- First Human Resources screening (longlisting) based on must-have and nice to have requirements
- Second HR or hiring unit, considering cover letters, and video interviews at times (2nd longlisting or shortlist)
- Eventually, written test to finalize the shortlist, or as part of final scoring
- Competency-based interview (3-4 candidates) to choose final candidate, subject to positive reference checks



Preparing to apply



- Know yourself & your competencies: is this the position for me?
- Do I meet the qualifications and experience requirements?
- What do I know about the organization?
- What do I know about this particular job?
- Have I considered all the implications if I am given the position?
(Moving abroad, leaving family, culture shock)
- Will I actually take the job if I am selected?

Writing your CV



- Be careful with acronyms
- Make sure there are no date or spelling mistakes
- Develop a result-oriented CV: what did you achieve?
- Use figures, volume, impact indicators
- Build a “story thread” in your CV
- Make the connection between your qualifications and job competencies
- Adapt your CV each time – no “one size fits all” CV

Writing your application letter



- Identify key words related to knowledge, qualifications and competencies
- Tailor motivation letter & application form to the vacancy announcement
- Think about what message you want to send, and try to stand out
- Keep the layout and formatting simple and clear
- Be careful with acronyms & make sure there are no mistakes
- Make the connection between your qualifications and job competencies

Preparing for the interview



- Find out as much as you can about the organization and duty station
- Understand the position: reference the vacancy announcement and look at the required competencies
- Prepare real examples matching your accomplishments to the competencies and practice beforehand
- Be aware of non-verbal communication
- If possible, do a mock interview, record and review it!
- Dress on the side of conservative
- For phone/remote interviews, find a private location, check your background, check IT equipment beforehand

**Homework
pays off!**

Competency-Based Interviews: CARL



- **Context:** briefly describe the context, the “what”. Do not go into too many details.
- **Action:** explain your role in addressing whatever issue in question, the “how”.
- **Result:** what was the outcome? (Negative outcome can be fine if you learn from it)
- **Learning:** what did you learn from this experience? What would you do differently today?

Final thoughts: the importance to plan ahead



- Building a logical thread in your CV
- Planning two jobs ahead
- Flawless and result-oriented cover letter and CV
- Do your homework when applying: job content, selection process, etc.
- Know yourself and your competencies: is this the position for me?
- Have I considered all the implications if I am given the position?