

International Organizations

To those who intend to find employment at an international organization and get involved with various support activities and aid programs, the details below will provide a solid foundation. It is mandatory that you start planning your career from an early stage and ensure that you are qualified and experienced in order to apply for many of the international organizations. Usually, completing a Master's degree will be required in order to join as full-time personnel or apply for internships. Make sure to research in advance and look for opportunities that could enhance your experiences.

1. List of Main International Organizations

- **United Nations (www.un.org)**
- **Organizations established under the United Nations General Assembly**
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations University (UNU), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UNWOMEN), World Food Programme (WFP), etc.
- **Specialist Organizations**
International Labour Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), World Health Organization (WHO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Universal Postal Union (UPU), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- **Other International Organizations**
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), World Trade Organization (WTO), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), etc.

2. Types of Jobs

UN staffers can be categorized into professional staff and general staff.

- **Professional staff**
Professional-level (P-level) staff members engage in operations relating to their special knowledge and skills. In addition to these position levels are also managerial posts ranked director level (D-level), along with director-general positions for international organizations. Job applications are invited internationally when vacancies occur. Candidates employed are those who are already capable of fully performing the vacant positions. Responsibilities undertaken by staff members on these levels can be broadly divided into: (i) direct operation/ management of various programs (regarding development, economy, the environment, etc.) implemented by respective organizations, and (ii) secretariat operations (finance, personnel, general affairs, public relations, etc.) to indirectly support the programs.
- **General staff**
General staff (GS) members engage in general administrative jobs under the directions of P- and D-level officials in the headquarters and field offices of international organizations. In principle, new GS members for each organization are locally hired. Those seeking jobs for these organizations need to make inquiries and apply for them in person. Check whether the offices of the international organizations that interest you are based in the country or region you are from.

3. Qualifications and Abilities Required to Join International Organizations

In addition to a good academic record, you will also need to improve on language & communication, leadership, organizational, research and other skills, along with internship experience and a flexible and passionate attitude towards working in a diverse environment. It is said that the average age of people working for the United Nations Secretariat is 45.9 years, and that the average age of people entering level P-2 jobs (positions requiring the least experience) is still 37 years old.

- Language proficiency...Business level English, French and another United Nations official language (Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, or Russian)
- Academic degree...Master's degree or higher in the field related to the position that you are applying for
- Professionalism...Work experience and the like in the field in which the candidate holds an academic degree

* Bachelor's (BA) degree holders are eligible to apply for GS and P1 positions.

4. Main Methods of Applying for Positions (Professional/Director Level) in International Organizations

● Application for vacancy announcements

International organizations invite job applications only when vacancies occur, and recruitment is conducted internationally. Vacancy announcements by these organizations specify job responsibilities for the open posts and qualifications required of applicants. This job opening information is posted on the organizations' websites, and distributed from the organizations to governments of member states. Basically, these recruitment activities are conducted irregularly, and in most cases, are for mid-career applicants.

● Competitive examinations (national competitive recruitment exams and other tests)

Competitive examinations are conducted to hire staff members by nationality, to promote GS members to P-level positions, and to hire members for language-related posts, such as translators. In principle, these exams are conducted on a yearly basis. Successful candidates are selected through documentary screenings, written exams, and interviews.

5. Main Application Methods for Japanese Nationals

① Apply for an advertised vacancy

If there is a position you wish to apply for, and you are eligible to apply, obtain the prescribed application documents from the international organization's website, complete the documents, and lodge your application online. You can search for advertised positions on organizations' websites under titles such as "Jobs," "Career," "Employment," "Recruitment," and "Vacancies."

② Apply for AE (Associate Expert) or JPO (Junior Professional Officer) positions

AE, JPO and YPP (Young Professional Program) positions are government sponsored positions for a fixed term (usually two years), for persons wanting a career in the UN or one of the UNs related organizations. These positions aim to foster the necessary knowledge, expertise and experience required to work in an international organization and open up the path towards a full-time position. People applying for one of these positions will need proficiency in the UN designated languages for their written documents and interview.

③ Apply for the Young Professionals Program (YPP)

The Young Professionals Program for the United Nations Secretariat is a recruitment initiative for hiring young professionals within the United Nations for participating countries. It consists of an entrance examination that is held once a year, and those who pass are offered a two-year fixed-term contract. After the two years are over and you have given satisfactory performance in your work, you may then be granted a continuing contract for hire. The type of open job positions and the participating countries vary year by year for this program. However, besides the United Nations Secretariat, other international organizations, such as the FAO and OECD, are also implementing similar programs for hiring young professionals.

④ Apply for a Field Mission

To try and increase the number of Japanese staff at the International Organization, the head of human resources and other recruitment officials are sent to Japan to hold recruitment interviews. Japanese staff are then employed based on a screening of written documents and an interview exam.

⑤ Using the Vacancies Roster

People interested in working for an international organization, who already have some relevant work experience, can register for the vacancies roster put out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' international organization HR center. The center sends registered persons information about any open vacancies for positions that meet their experiences and qualifications.

To register, you need to meet several requirements; be a Japanese national, hold a master's degree (in a field other than linguistics, languages, arts and physical education), and have at least 2 years of experience in a relevant field. The center does not send out information on vacancies at international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

6. Other Organizations Not Related to the United Nations

NPO・・・【Non-profit Organization】

NPOs are set up by ordinary citizens, and are established independent of assistance from governments, municipalities or private enterprises. NPOs are organizations or groups that carry out public interest activities based around providing assistance to local citizens and the private sector. They don't aim to make surplus revenue.

*Recruitment criteria differ by organizations.

NGO • • • [Non-governmental Organization]

NGOs are set up by ordinary citizens, and are private organizations established with the help of an international body. They work mainly in international cooperation.

*Recruitment criteria differ by organizations.

7. Preparations You Can Get Started With

● Research and understand requirements and possibilities

Different international organizations specialize on different areas of expertise. NGOs and NPOs provide various types of support and differ by countries and regions too. Research heavily about each and every such organization and gather important information to understand which ones may suit you and your future goals.

● Deepen your topic of focus

As mentioned above, international organizations require at least a Master's degree or above to be able to work there. Furthermore, non-governmental (NGO) or nonprofit (NPO) organizations also require a high level of specialized knowledge. However, rather than trying to gain that specialized knowledge from the beginning, first build a strong foundation of knowledge in international politics, law, economics, etc. through classes during university. Then among the current issues that are happening all over the world, decide which one that you would like to be involved with and become your own specialization. You can then achieve that by doing off-campus study programs like study abroad, field study, etc. off-campus activities like internships, and participating in lecture events, international cooperation events, etc. that may be held on and off-campus.

● Internships

Having experienced an internship at your preferred organizations would give you the first hand experience and knowledge you require, in understanding their specialty, area of support provided, etc. All international organizations may not be open for interns or may not offer short term internships that support your class schedule at APU, but contact them, show your interests and be determined. Carefully research the websites and other online sources to understand your options. Volunteering experiences will also contribute towards building that experience.

● Study Abroad

Consider utilizing the study abroad program and going on exchange. When going on exchange, you should not do it for the sake of studying English, but use the opportunity to develop the needed skills and knowledge from researching international relations in English. Furthermore, you can look forward to building many personal connections that cross borders.

8. Events held on campus (last academic year)

- "Global Career Seminar -What it takes to work in an int'l organization-" (Recruitment Center for International Organizations, Foreign Policy Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
- Guidance on Dispatched Staff of MOFA Overseas Diplomatic Missions (Spring/Fall semester)
- "Working in International Cooperation -What it Means to Work as a Development Consultant-" (Engineering and Consulting Firms Association (ECFA))
- Guest Lectures from various international organizations' Japanese Representative Offices

9. Useful Websites

- **UN Careers** <https://careers.un.org/lbw/home.aspx>
- **The Ministry of Foreign Affairs International Organization Recruitment Center** <https://www.mofa-irc.go.jp/>
- **PARTNER** <http://partner.jica.go.jp/>
- **International Cooperation Station** <https://www.idj.co.jp/>
- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs list of int'l organizations** http://www.mofa.go.jp/about/emb_cons/protocol/organization.html
- **International Hospitality and Conference Service Association (general incorporated association)** <http://www.ihcsa.or.jp/>
- **Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center (HPC) (general incorporated association)** <https://www.peacebuilderscenter.jp/>
- **United Nations Forum** <http://www.unforum.org/>
- **Engineering and Consulting Firms Association (ECFA) (general incorporated association)** <http://www.ecfa.or.jp/japanese/index.html>
- **UN Volunteers** <https://www.unv.org/> <https://unv.or.jp/>
- **International Organizations Careers** <https://iocareers.state.gov/Main/Home>