**UNDP Fellowship Policy**

1. The Fellowship Policy establishes and provides guidance on the UNDP fellowship programme and provides information on the administration of UNDP fellows (“Fellows”). This Policy covers both Sponsoring Entity Fellowships (as defined below) and UNDP Corporate Fellowships (as defined below). Unless otherwise specified here, the principles in this policy apply to both types of fellowships.
2. A “Sponsoring Entity” may be any institution, public or private, including a government, which is committed to core UN values and UN causes, and which may not be involved in commercial or other activities that are incompatible with UNDP’s values, mandate and reputation. Fellowships funded by a Sponsoring Entity are defined as “Sponsoring Entity Fellowships”.
3. “UNDP Corporate Fellowships” means the placement of Fellows through a fellowship programme/initiative designed, administered and funded by UNDP.

**Purpose**

1. The purpose of the fellowship programme is to:
	1. Provide students, recent graduates, mid-career professionals from diverse backgrounds, including those working in and affiliated to academic institutions, and other individuals forming part of talent groups, including under-represented groups, with exposure to development issues and first-hand experience of the day-to-day work of UNDP;
	2. Provide UNDP with additional skills and expertise to support its activities and mandate; and
	3. For fellowships sponsored by a Sponsoring Entity, provide Sponsoring Entities with insight into UNDP and its work.

**Eligibility and Selection of Fellows**

1. In the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships, Fellows will be identified through collaboration between UNDP and the Sponsoring Entity. The eligibility criteria for specific fellowship initiatives will be agreed by the Sponsoring Entity and UNDP, taking into account UNDP’s expectations and the opportunities available at UNDP. The final selection of the Fellows will be done by UNDP. UNDP may limit the number of Fellows that may be received from a Sponsoring Entity at any given time.
2. In the case of UNDP Corporate Fellowships, the selection of the Fellow will be done by UNDP based on the eligibility criteria detailed in the Fellowship Project/Programme Document governing the specific fellowship initiative.
3. Fellows will be identified from as wide a geographical basis as possible, without distinction as to race, nationality or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or disability.
4. In order to avoid real or perceived family influence or conflict of interest, UNDP’s [policy on Family Relationships](https://popp.undp.org/node/4336) applies to the selection of Fellows.

**Fellowship Agreement and Fellowship Undertaking Letter**

1. In the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships, UNDP and the Sponsoring Entity must sign a fellowship agreement (“[Fellowship Agreement](https://popp.undp.org/node/761)”) in the format attached to the procedures. If the Sponsoring Entity is a private sector entity, the Fellowship Agreement formalizes a private sector partnership and thus, the [Private Sector Partnerships](https://popp.undp.org/node/11301) Policy and Procedures to formalize partnerships with private sector entities apply, including the completion of the due diligence process and the risk management of the partnership.
2. If the Sponsoring Entity wishes to collaborate with UNDP by providing Fellows for a specific Bureau or Office, the Fellowship Agreement will be signed by the Head of the relevant Bureau or Office. In all other cases, the Fellowship Agreement will be signed by the Director, Office of Human Resources (OHR/BMS) or delegated official.
3. Both in the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships and UNDP Corporate Fellowships, prior to the Fellows taking their assignments with UNDP, each Fellow must sign a fellowship undertaking letter (a “[Fellowship Undertaking letter](https://popp.undp.org/node/751)”) in the format attached to the procedures.

**Status**

1. Fellows are not considered “staff members” nor “officials” of UNDP, nor are they otherwise employed or contracted by UNDP. Therefore, the United Nations Staff Regulations and Staff Rules do not apply to Fellows. Instead, the status, rights, obligations and duties of Fellows are governed by this policy and the Fellowship Undertaking Letter, and in the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships only, they are also governed by the Fellowship Agreement.
2. For the purpose of the Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 1946 (the “Convention”), Fellows may, at UNDP’s discretion, be considered “experts on mission” within the meaning of Article VI, [Sections 22](http://www.un.org/hr_handbook/English/sourcedocuments_/09administrativ_/02%20PRIVILEGES%20AND%20IMMUNITIES/Section%2022.doc) and [23](http://www.un.org/hr_handbook/English/sourcedocuments_/09administrativ_/02%20PRIVILEGES%20AND%20IMMUNITIES/Section%2023.doc) of the Convention when performing functions for UNDP.
3. Fellows may not be sought or engaged as substitutes for staff members and may not supervise staff members.
4. Fellows may not represent UNDP in any official capacity nor commit UNDP, financially or otherwise.
5. Fellows may not apply for, nor be appointed to, any staff position, nor may they apply to (nor be considered for) consultancies or any other type of paid engagement with UNDP during the period of their fellowship.

**Location of Fellowships**

1. Fellows may be assigned to UNDP’s headquarters offices or to any UNDP country or regional office in a location that is not designated as a non-family or high-risk duty station.

**Administration of Fellowships, Responsibilities and Obligations of Receiving Offices and Supervisors**

1. In the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships, the administration of Fellows is decentralized and managed by the receiving country, regional or headquarters’ office, subject to oversight by BMS/OHR. UNDP Corporate Fellowship are designed and administered by BMS/OHR.

1. The receiving office and the Fellow’s supervisor will create a working environment conducive to the Fellow’s substantive learning and professional development. The receiving Office must:
	1. Prepare [terms of reference](https://popp.undp.org/node/746) describing the tasks of the Fellow;
	2. Ensure that a Fellow’s assignment is at the appropriate level of complexity and variety;
	3. Provide the Fellow with office space, office support, office, security and communications equipment and other resources necessary for the performance of the Fellow’s tasks;
	4. Provide guidance and constructive feedback to the Fellow regarding the Fellow’s performance; and
	5. Ensure that the Fellow is included in the security arrangements of the duty station, including security plans and briefings.

**Responsibilities and Obligations of Fellows**

1. Fellows must:
2. Observe all applicable regulations, rules, policies, procedures, instructions and other directives, including all security guidance, standards and other safety and security arrangements;[[1]](#footnote-1)
3. Although Fellows are not “officials” of UNDP, comply with the standards of conduct set forth in the Secretary General’s Bulletin ST/SGB/2002/9 of 18 June 2002, entitled “Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials, and Experts on Mission”;
4. Comply with the standards of conduct set forth in the Secretary-General’s Bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13 of 9 October 2003, concerning “Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse” and with UNDP’s Policy on “Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Abuse of Authority”;
5. Upon completion of the fellowship, provide the receiving office with all materials prepared or collected by them during their fellowship. UNDP shall be entitled to all property rights, including, but not limited to, patents, copyrights and trademarks, with regards to material that bears a direct relation to, or is made as a consequence of, the activities conducted during the fellowships. At the request of UNDP, the Fellows shall assist UNDP in securing such property rights and transferring them to UNDP in compliance with the requirements of the applicable law;
6. Respect the impartiality and independence required of the United Nations, UNDP and the receiving office and not seek nor accept instructions regarding the activities conducted under the fellowship from any Government or from any authority, organization or body external to UNDP;
7. Refrain from communicating at any time to the media or to any institution, person, Government or any other party external to UNDP any information that has become known to them by reason of their association with the United Nations, UNDP or the receiving office unless otherwise authorized by the receiving office. Fellows may not use any such information without the written authorization of the receiving office, and such information may never be used for personal gain. These obligations also apply after the end of the fellowship with UNDP;
8. Refrain from any conduct that would adversely reflect on the United Nations, UNDP, or the receiving office and from engaging in any activity which is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations or UNDP; and
9. Comply with their personal obligations, local laws and customs, including any taxation requirements.

**Liability and Third-Party Claims**

1. UNDP will not be responsible for loss or damage to property and personal effects of the Fellow that may occur during the fellowship, except if caused by the gross negligence or willful acts of UNDP.
2. UNDP will not be responsible for any claims by any parties for loss of or damage to their property, death or personal injury caused by the actions or omissions of the Fellows during their fellowship.
3. In the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships, the Sponsoring Entity must indemnify UNDP and its officials against all claims arising out of acts or omissions of the Fellow as further specified in the Fellowship Agreement. The Sponsoring Entity remains responsible for all costs, liabilities and other obligations related to or arising from the fellowship, as described in this policy and as elaborated in the Fellowship Agreement.

**Stipends, Insurance and other Expenses**

1. Fellows are paid a monthly stipend. Stipends are neither a salary, remuneration nor an honorarium.
2. In the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships:
3. The stipend rates will be stipulated in the Fellowship Agreement. If the Sponsoring Entity so desires, the “[UNDESA Stipend Rate for Fellows and Scholars](https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2025-03/fellowship-stipends-jan-25.pdf)” table, effective as of 1 January of the year in which the fellowship is conducted may be used by the Sponsoring Entity as a reference to set the stipend rate;
4. The payment of stipends and other costs related to the fellowship are the responsibility of the Sponsoring Entity. In no case will UNDP pay the stipend directly to the Fellows nor will it be responsible for the payment of any costs related to the fellowship (other than costs incurred by Fellows while undertaking official travel at the request of UNDP);
5. The Sponsoring Entity must secure, or ensure that the Fellows secure, adequate medical insurance coverage for the duration of the fellowship. If the Sponsoring Entity so requests, UNDP may help the Sponsoring Entity identify a suitable medical insurance provider. UNDP will bear no responsibility for medical insurance nor for any other costs arising from accidents and illness incurred during a fellowship assignment, which will be the responsibility of the Fellow unless such costs arise from the gross negligence or willful acts of UNDP; and
6. The medical coverage secured by the Fellow or the Sponsoring Entity as per paragraph 25 (c) above, must be proper for the duty station in which the Fellow will be based, and proof of coverage must be submitted by the Sponsoring Entity to UNDP before the start of the fellowship assignment. For Fellows who are neither nationals nor residents of the duty station to which they are assigned, the medical coverage scheme must include adequate coverage in the event of an injury or illness during the fellowship which:
7. Requires transportation to the home country or country of residence for further treatment;
8. Results in death and requires preparation and repatriation of the remains to the home country, or country of residence.
9. In the case of UNDP Corporate Fellowships:
10. The stipend will be paid by UNDP in accordance with the rates set in the “[UNDESA Stipend Rate for Fellows and Scholars](https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2025-03/fellowship-stipends-jan-25.pdf)” table, effective as of 1 January of the year in which the fellowship is conducted; and
11. UNDP will be responsible for obtaining proper medical coverage for the Fellow.
12. Fellows must provide a medical certificate of good health prior to starting the fellowship.

**Travel**

1. In the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships, arrangements for travel and obtaining visas and passports, and their costs are the responsibility of the Sponsoring Entity.
2. In the case of UNDP Corporate Fellowships, arrangements for travel and for obtaining visas and passports, and their costs are the responsibility of UNDP.
3. Both in the case of UNDP Corporate Fellowships and Sponsoring Entity Fellowships, the costs incurred by Fellows while undertaking official travel at the request of UNDP will be reimbursed by UNDP on the same basis as costs reimbursed to staff members, including payment of daily subsistence allowance, if applicable.

**Duration and Conditions of the Fellowships**

1. Fellowships must not exceed twelve (12) months.
2. In the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships, the exact length of the fellowship will be agreed by UNDP and the Sponsoring Entity, within the limitation set forth in Paragraph 31.
3. The fellowship assignment may not be foreshortened for the purposes of allowing a Fellow to apply for a staff position, a consultancy or any other type of paid engagement with UNDP.
4. Fellowship assignments are available on a part-time and full-time basis. The fellowship may be performed using flexible working arrangements if:
5. The receiving office agrees in writing to such arrangements; and
6. The Fellow agrees to work the equivalent of a minimum of at least two (2) months on a full-time basis during the whole period of the fellowship.
7. In the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships, leave entitlements will be granted in accordance with what is stipulated in the Fellowship Agreement, subject to a minimum of one and a half (1.5) days of leave per month.
8. In the case of UNDP Corporate Fellowships, Fellows will accrue annual leave at the rate of one and a half (1 ½ ) days per month.
9. Any accrued leave days not used by the end of the fellowship will be forfeited.
10. Leave plans must be submitted by the Fellows to and for approval by their UNDP supervisor.
11. Fellows will be granted sick leave at the rate of two (2) working days per month. A medical certificate must support absences of more than seven (7) consecutive days.
12. The Fellow will be entitled to time off for official UN holidays observed by the receiving office.

**Termination**

1. A fellowship assignment may be terminated by either UNDP, the Fellow or, in the case of a Sponsoring Entity Fellowships, by the Sponsoring Entity for any reason, upon giving two (2) weeks’ notice, except that UNDP will be entitled to terminate a fellowship assignment without notice if the Fellow breaches any of the responsibilities or obligations set forth in the section on “Responsibilities and Obligations” of this Policy as contained in the Fellowship Undertaking Letter and, in the case of a Sponsoring Entity Fellowship, the Fellowship Agreement.

**Recording, Evaluation and Certification**

1. Once the Fellowship Undertaking Letter is signed, the personal information of the Fellow will be entered into ATLAS.
2. At the end of the fellowship, the Fellow’s supervisor will prepare a written evaluation of the Fellow’s performance and organize a meeting with the Fellow to provide feedback.
3. In the case of Sponsoring Entity Fellowships, the receiving office will also provide to the Sponsoring Entity other evaluations and reports of the assignment and/or conduct of the Fellow, subject to any confidentiality requirements of UNDP, as agreed in the Fellowship Agreement.
4. Upon completion of the fellowship, the Fellow may receive a certificate of completion from UNDP/the receiving office upon request.

**Subsequent Employment**

1. There is no expectation of employment with UNDP following a fellowship.
1. [Security Policy and Procedures](https://popp.undp.org/policy-page/security-policy) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)