

Recruitment Policy and Procedures

I. Purpose and Scope

1. This Information Note sets out the Policy and procedures for the recruitment of UNAIDS staff members on fixed-term appointments under Staff Rule 420.3 and temporary appointments (Staff Rule 420.4) of a duration of more than one year, unless otherwise indicated.
2. The purpose of this Policy is to support UNAIDS' efforts to attract, select and appoint a diverse workforce of the highest calibre. The paramount consideration in the selection of staff is the need to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, with due regard to geographic diversity.
3. Unless otherwise specified, this Policy applies to recruitment for positions up to and including the D2 grade for service with UNAIDS on a fixed-term appointment or temporary appointment of more than 12 months. Special provisions, as set out in this Policy, apply to the recruitment of staff members to Director-level positions and to locally recruited positions in Regional and Country Offices.
4. This Policy does not apply to
 - a. the selection and reassignment of UNAIDS Country Directors (UCDs), which is subject to special procedures¹;
 - b. temporary appointments of periods up to 12 months, which are subject to the provisions of HRM/IN 2022-2, unless otherwise provided.
5. This Policy takes effect from its date of issue. It cancels and supersedes HRM/IN 2015-4 and HRM/IN 2015-4 Rev.1.

II. Governing Framework and Guiding Principles

6. Recruitment in UNAIDS is governed by the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules of the World Health Organization (WHO), as adjusted for UNAIDS². Reference is made to Article IV of the Staff Regulations and Section 4 of the Staff Rules, in particular. Guidance is also provided by the eManual provisions related to the recruitment, selection and appointment of staff members (section III.4), which, except as otherwise provided for or adapted by this Policy and related provisions, also apply to recruitment in UNAIDS.

¹Selection and Reassignment Process for UNAIDS Country Director (UCD) positions, HRM/IN 2020-4, as may be amended from time to time.

²The Introduction to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules for staff members of UNAIDS provides an up-to-date summary of adaptations for UNAIDS staff.

7. This Policy shall be read in conjunction with the aforementioned provisions and the Guidelines for recruitment administrators and other staff handling recruitment processes (hereinafter also referred to as 'the Guidelines').
8. Recruitment of UNAIDS staff shall be guided by the principles of competition, fairness, objectivity, transparency, confidentiality, and respect for diversity and inclusion. UNAIDS recognizes the importance of a diverse workforce, and that diverse teams bring high value to our work. Diversity is defined as acknowledging, seeking to understand, accepting, and valuing differences among people with respect to age, class, race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sex, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, HIV/AIDS status and other factors and qualities. UNAIDS is committed to including diverse demographics amongst its workforce. UNAIDS seeks to encourage diversity by giving due regard to geographical distribution for internationally-recruited professional positions, and by implementing its Policy on Diversity and Inclusion and its Gender Action Plan. UNAIDS is also committed to providing reasonable accommodation for candidates with a disability throughout the recruitment process.
9. UNAIDS is committed to including amongst its workforce people living with HIV/AIDS. Vacancy notices should contain a statement to encourage applications from people living with HIV/AIDS. There is no obligation to disclose HIV/AIDS status. Self-disclosure as a person living with HIV/AIDS in the context of the application process is entirely voluntary. Whenever such status is disclosed by an applicant, strict confidentiality must be maintained by all persons involved in the recruitment process.

Accountability

10. Hiring managers, members of selection panels and the Review Board are accountable for their selection recommendations and for their adherence to established procedures. All managers and staff members involved in UNAIDS recruitment processes are obliged to comply with the provisions of this Policy and related rules.

Mobility

11. UNAIDS is committed to the principle of geographic mobility. All staff members in the Professional and higher categories are normally expected to be geographically mobile.

Confidentiality

12. All parties must observe the highest level of confidentiality before, throughout, and after the recruitment process. Any breach of confidentiality may entail disciplinary proceedings.

III. Roles and definitions

13. The following definitions and roles apply:

Hiring manager: The hiring manager is the Departmental, Branch or Office Director under whose authority the recruitment is sought. This role may be delegated.

Selection panel: The members of the selection panel are responsible for assisting in the preparation of interview questions, conducting interviews in accordance with this Policy, and making recommendations on the suitability of candidates.

Review Board: The Review Board is responsible for verifying that the recruitment and selection process has complied with the applicable regulations and rules.

HRM: The Department of People Management (HRM) provides expert policy interpretation and guidance to hiring managers, members of selection panels and the Review Board; implements and/or verifies documentation and processes; and supports timely workforce planning.

Recruitment Administrator: The Human Resources representative or Regional Support Team (RST) representative (normally the Regional Operations Manager or Regional HR Business Partner) who is responsible for coordinating and implementing the recruitment process in accordance with this Policy.

Implementation responsibility: The recruitment process for the appointment of all staff members in the Professional and Higher Categories and for locally recruited staff members at the Global Centre and in Liaison Offices is implemented by HRM, in coordination with the hiring manager, in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.

The recruitment process for the appointment of all locally recruited staff members in Regional and Country Offices (RSTs and UCOs) is implemented under the responsibility of the respective RST Director, in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.

IV. Selection process

Advertisement of vacant positions & Eligibility to apply

14. Proposals to fill a vacancy are made by the relevant Departmental or Office Director (hereinafter 'Director') who will develop a specific job description or adapt the relevant generic job description, including a description of the functional duties and responsibilities, and minimum requirements for the position. A recruitment process can begin when:
 - a. a new position is approved for inclusion in the UNAIDS staffing table;
 - b. a position in the UNAIDS staffing table becomes vacant; or
 - c. a position is occupied by an incumbent who is reasonably expected to separate or to be reassigned in the following six months.
15. Prior to publication, all vacancies must be approved by Director PFA or delegate to confirm that funding is available for the position and by:

- a. Director HRM or delegate for vacancies for positions in the Professional and higher categories and locally recruited positions at the Global Centre and in Liaison Offices; or
 - b. the relevant RST Director, following consultation with Director, HRM, for vacancies for locally recruited positions in Regional or Country offices.
16. Guidance for the preparation of vacancy notices is outlined in the Guidelines for the administrative handling of recruitment. Standard minimum requirements for educational qualifications, work experience and languages are included in the Annex to this Policy and are reflected in job profiles and vacancy notices.
17. Candidates must meet all minimum essential requirements specified in the vacancy notice in order to be selected for the position. Vacancies are normally published internally and externally. Internationally-recruited positions may be advertised internally only and, in this case, are open to applications from internal candidates only. Internal vacancies may indicate that other serving UNAIDS staff members are also eligible to apply.
18. Vacancies are normally published for a period of at least two weeks.

Internal candidates

19. Internal candidates are:
 - a. UNAIDS staff members serving on fixed-term appointments who have successfully passed their probation period;
 - b. UNAIDS staff members who, at the time of application, have served on a temporary appointment for more than 12 months provided that their current appointment was the outcome of a competitive recruitment process in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.

All other candidates are external candidates.

Local recruitment

20. A locally recruited staff member may not be selected for a position in the Professional and higher categories that is located in a UCO in the country of which s/he is a national³.
21. Candidates short-listed for locally-recruited positions must be legal residents of the duty station in which the position is located, i.e. nationals of the country of the duty

³ The provisions of section III.4.2.30 - 35 of the eManual apply.

station or hold a valid residence and work permit⁴. They should also reside within reasonable commuting distance of the office⁵.

Integrity

22. A candidate is not eligible for selection if
 - a. s/he has been dismissed from UNAIDS or another employer for disciplinary reasons;
 - b. s/he resigned or otherwise separated from UNAIDS or another employer before the completion of an investigation or disciplinary process concerning allegations of misconduct against the candidate that invited, or in the absence of the resignation or separation would have invited, disciplinary measures. The candidate remains ineligible until such time as the allegations are found to be unfounded and/or unsubstantiated;
 - c. s/he is named in the Sanctions List established by the United Nations Security Council, or in the ClearCheck database; *or*
 - d. a determination is made by Director HRM in consultation, as necessary, with the Ethics Office, that the candidate does not meet the highest standards of integrity.

Screening and assessment of candidates

Shortlisting and Priority consideration

23. The Selection Panel (hereinafter: Panel) should be established at the outset of the selection process. A preliminary screening of all applications based on the requirements as reflected in the vacancy notice is performed by the Recruitment Administrator. Screening questions may be used, as appropriate.
24. The Recruitment Administrator provides the hiring manager with a list of candidates who meet the minimum essential requirements outlined in the vacancy announcement.
25. In consultation with the Panel, the hiring manager prepares a shortlist which should normally include at least three of the most qualified candidates. Shortlisted candidates must meet all minimum essential requirements of the vacancy notice.
26. Shortlisting should take into account gender balance and diversity considerations. The shortlist of candidates should include representation of different groups and demographics to the greatest extent possible, including age, class, race, gender identity, sex, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, and HIV/AIDS status.

⁴ If a selected candidate is a national of more than one country, their recognized place of residence shall be considered as relevant for the purposes of this provision (section III.4.4.190 of the WHO eManual refers).

⁵ No travel, relocation or related costs are payable to locally recruited staff on appointment.

27. Subject to candidates being equally qualified, priority consideration shall be given to candidates in the following order:
 - a. internal candidates participating in a reassignment process⁶;
 - b. internal candidates due for mobility applying for a position in the same grade in a different duty station (lateral move);
 - c. internal candidates due for mobility within twelve months of applying for a position in a different duty station;
 - d. other internal candidates; *and*
 - e. external candidates from under-represented demographics.

Without prejudice to the above, priority consideration for senior Professional vacancies (grades P5 through D2) shall be given to internal female candidates. Hiring managers are required to provide written justification for not including internal candidates in shortlists.

Testing

28. Competency assessment will normally include a two-tier process and consist of a testing exercise, which may be eliminatory, and an interview.
29. Unless otherwise provided, a written test and/or presentation should normally be conducted as part of the selection process. Other appropriate support documentation can be requested (such as a 'clean driving record'). Testing and presentation requirements as well as the related assessment criteria shall be determined by the hiring manager prior to screening and shortlisting.
30. The hiring manager is responsible for developing the written test, if used, in consultation with the Panel, with guidance from the Recruitment Administrator⁷.
31. Testing is normally conducted by electronic means, but may be administered by email or on-site, depending on local conditions. All written tests must be submitted without indication of candidate name and scored anonymously under the guidance of the Recruitment Administrator.
32. Presentations may be required as part of, or before, the interview process. In this case, the hiring manager decides on the subject matter, preparatory time and maximum duration of the presentation, in consultation with the Panel.
33. Adequate written records of all testing exercises must be maintained.

Selection Panels

⁶ as per HRM/IN 2013-10.

⁷ reference is made to the Guidelines for Recruitment Administrators.

34. The Selection Panel shall evaluate shortlisted candidates who have been successful in the testing stage (qualified shortlisted candidates). The Panel may determine how many candidates to interview for the position, in accordance with the Guidelines.
35. Panel members are required to participate in and assess qualified shortlisted candidates through an interview and prepare recommendations in a selection report for review and verification by the Review Board.
36. The Panel composition should reflect diversity and gender balance principles to the extent possible. Unless otherwise stipulated in this Policy, the Panel shall normally comprise:
 - a. The hiring manager (Chair);
 - b. A technical subject matter expert from any UNAIDS Department or Office or from another UN common system entity;
 - c. A staff member acting as a neutral party; and
 - d. A representative of the Department of People Management or Recruitment Administrator (ex-officio).

For Director level positions, the Panel should include two senior staff members at the grade D1 or above.

37. A staff member acting as a technical subject matter expert should be familiar with the functions of the position and should not be assigned to the same office or Global Centre's Department as the hiring manager.
38. Panel members who are UNAIDS staff members should be serving on a fixed-term or temporary appointment of one year or more and, with the exception of the representative of Human Resources or the Recruitment Administrator, should be of a grade not lower than that of the position being filled.
39. All Panel members are required to act impartially and should not have any conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest related to any candidates for the position. A panel member with an actual or perceived conflict of interest shall report such conflict and recuse himself or herself without delay. All Panel members should ordinarily have completed training in, or have been briefed by the Recruitment Administrator on, competency-based interviewing, and understand the confidentiality of the process and the roles and responsibilities of the Panel.
40. Panel members may participate in interviews and deliberations in person and/or by virtual means.

Interviews

41. Qualified shortlisted candidates will be invited by the Panel to attend an interview which shall normally be competency-based. For senior-level vacancies at the D1 and D2 grades, other customized assessment methodologies may also be used.

42. While interviews may be conducted in person or by virtual means, the same method should be applied to all candidates.
43. Each candidate is asked the same questions. Subject to the language capacity of the Panel, at least one question will normally be included in each language specified as required in the vacancy announcement in order to ascertain whether the candidates meet the language requirements set out in the vacancy notice.
44. The Recruitment Administrator shall ensure that appropriate and complete interview records are kept for accountability purposes.

Selection Report

45. Upon completion of all tests and interviews, the Panel members prepare a selection report with relevant comments on the candidate[s] recommended for appointment. If more than one candidate is considered appointable, the Panel shall indicate a ranking of candidates in order of suitability. The Panel members shall aim to reach a consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached, the Panel shall reach its recommendation by majority. The Panel may also recommend that the competition be declared unsuccessful and be cancelled.
46. The selection report shall include the following information:
 - a. number of applicants and list of all shortlisted candidates' names;
 - b. approved job profile and corresponding vacancy notice;
 - c. brief description of the steps undertaken in the recruitment process;
 - d. evaluation of each candidate against the assessment tools used;
 - e. justification for the exclusion of any internal candidate from the shortlist for testing and/or interviews;
 - f. Personal History Forms of all recommended candidates;
 - g. justification for the ranking of each interviewed candidate, as applicable; and
 - h. justification for the recommended candidates.The selection report is signed by all Panel members.
47. For positions in the Professional and higher categories, National Professional Officer positions heading UCOs and for locally recruited positions in the Global Centre and Liaison Offices, the selection report is submitted to the Review Board for review and transmission to the decision-maker in accordance with paragraph 50 below.
48. For all other locally recruited positions in RSTs and UCOs, the selection report is submitted to the relevant RST Director for approval and will be shared with the Review Board for information.

Review of proposed appointments and decision-making authority

49. The Review Board shall submit the Panel's selection recommendations, together with its advice and recommendations for the approval of
 - a. the Executive Director (EXD) for positions at the D1 grade and above and positions of Head of a UNAIDS Office;
 - b. the Director, Department of Management for all positions in the Professional category up to and including P5 grade, with the exception of positions of Head of a UNAIDS Office;
 - c. Director HRM for all locally recruited positions in the Global Centre;
 - d. the RST Director for all other locally recruited positions in RSTs and UCOs.

Appointment

50. Following approval of the appointment, HRM or the Recruitment Administrator as applicable notifies the successful candidate and informs the members of the Panel.
51. Appointment is subject to satisfactory verification of references and educational qualifications, and medical clearance. HRM or the Recruitment Administrator as applicable shall conduct reference checks for any recommended external candidate⁸.

V. Provisions governing selection to senior and local positions

Senior positions (Director level, D1 and D2)

52. The selection process for positions at the D1 and D2 grades may deviate from the process outlined in this Policy as follows:
 - a. The EXD, a Deputy Executive Director (DXD) or the Director, Department of Management may designate a senior staff member at grade D1 or above to act as hiring manager for the selection process.
 - b. Specialized outreach and assessment services by an external specialized recruitment agency may be used to identify qualified candidates and support the recruitment process. The services of an external agency may be used in lieu of, or concurrently with, the vacancy announcement process. Advertisement, screening, long- and shortlisting may be conducted and/or coordinated by the external agency⁹.
 - c. Screening by the agency, which may be undertaken in concurrence with HRM, may include preliminary interviews with longlisted candidates to establish a shortlist.

⁸ Reference checks shall also include relevant checks of the ClearCheck database, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the eManual. Reference is also made to the relevant provisions of the Guidelines for Recruitment Administrators.

⁹ Paragraphs 18 and 23-25 do not in this case apply.

- d. The EXD, the DXD or the Director, Department of Management should normally appoint a selection panel to evaluate the suitability of candidates for the position. The Panel should comprise, at a minimum, the hiring manager; a senior staff member at grade D1 or above; an HRM representative (ex officio). The EXD, the DXD or the Director, Department of Management may decide to chair the Panel or request the hiring manager to do so.
 - e. The EXD, the DXD or the Director, Department of Management may also personally conduct an interview with one or more of the shortlisted candidates prior to making a final decision. Other senior staff members may be requested to join the interview.
 - f. In the event that an external specialized recruitment agency is used in the selection process, the agency will submit the selection report to the EXD and to the hiring manager. The selection report will also be shared with the Review Board for information.
53. Unless otherwise stipulated, any external specialized recruitment agency shall operate in accordance with the applicable provisions and principles of this Policy¹⁰, as well as any other related UNAIDS policies.
54. The EXD may decide to appoint candidates to Senior positions by direct selection, in accordance with Staff Regulation 4.3.

Locally recruited positions in UCOs and RSTs

55. The selection process for locally recruited staff members in RSTs and UCOs is implemented under the responsibility of the respective RST Director, in coordination with the hiring manager, in accordance with the provisions of this Policy. The Regional Operations Manager or the Regional HR Business Partner will normally act as recruitment administrators in these cases.
56. Selection reports for locally recruited positions in RSTs and UCOs are shared with the Review Board for information and monitoring purposes.

VI. Prequalification and multiple vacancies (Roster)

57. Candidates identified as suitable following a recruitment process under this Policy (prequalified candidates) may be retained on a roster for consideration against current and projected vacancies for a period of two years.
58. Multiple vacancies for positions with an analogous job profile, grade and duty station may be filled from the roster without re-advertisement of a vacancy notice for a period of two years from the date of approval of the selection recommendations.

¹⁰ See Paragraph 8 of this Policy.

59. In the event that a fixed-term position becomes vacant within two years of approval of the selection recommendation, at the discretion of the hiring manager it may be offered to the next candidate recommended for that position without re-advertising, provided that:
- a. another candidate was recommended and approved in the original selection process; and,
 - b. the appointment is in accordance with the priority considerations outlined in paragraph 27 above.
60. Prequalified candidates should be presented by the Recruitment Administrator to the hiring manager for consideration when a suitable vacancy is identified within two years of approval of the original selection recommendation. If appointment of a prequalified candidate is not possible, the hiring manager may request approval from Director HRM to issue a vacancy notice.
61. Prequalification does not imply any obligation or commitment for UNAIDS to appoint, reassign or promote a candidate to a similar position.

VII. Final provisions

Cooperation with other United Nations organizations or donors

62. For positions that are funded through special arrangements, the Director HRM may authorize deviations from this Policy, provided that such deviations are justified and fully documented.

Notification of candidates & Publication of results

63. All candidates will be notified individually of the outcome of a recruitment process in which they have participated.
64. Any internal candidate may request written feedback on his/her performance during the process and on areas of possible development. Such feedback may be provided in oral or written form by the hiring manager or an HRM/RST representative, as appropriate.
65. HRM will publish all appointments, transfers and promotions made in accordance with the provisions of this Policy on the Intranet periodically.

Recruitment records

66. The Recruitment Administrator shall ensure that appropriate and complete records of each recruitment process are kept for accountability purposes.¹¹

False statements

¹¹ Records are to be maintained in accordance with the WHO Record Retention Policy for Recruitment Records. Records for recruitments after 2017 are to be maintained permanently in electronic format. For recruitments prior to 2017, records are to be maintained for five years after the vacancy is filled for fixed term vacancies.

67. Candidates shall provide complete, accurate and truthful information and documentation in the context of the recruitment process and in support of their application. Making false statements in an application may lead to the institution of disciplinary proceedings, and/or the cancellation of the appointment.

ANNEX - Standard minimum educational qualifications, professional experience and language requirements

Professional and educational requirements

1. Job profiles and vacancy notices reflect the following standard minimum guidelines for educational qualification, work experience and languages:

Grade	Educational qualifications	Years of work experience relevant to the position¹²	For internal candidates¹³, equivalent of educational qualification and years of relevant work experience¹⁴
P1	Advanced university degree at the Master's level or equivalent	0	First university degree and 2 years
P2	Advanced university degree at the Master's level or equivalent	2	First university degree and 4 years
P3	Advanced university degree at the Master's level or equivalent	5	First university degree and 7 years
P4	Advanced university degree at the Master's level or equivalent	7	First university degree and 9 years
P5	Advanced university degree at the Master's level or equivalent	10	First university degree and 12 years
D1/D2	Advanced university degree at the Master's level or equivalent	15	First university degree and 17 years

Grade	Educational qualifications	Years of work experience relevant to the position	For internal candidates¹⁵, equivalent of educational qualification and years of relevant work experience¹⁶
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¹² Experience in low- and middle-income countries an asset.

¹³ In exceptional cases, consideration may be given to applying this guideline to external candidates.

¹⁴ While two years of work experience relevant to the vacancy notice or job profile, plus a first university degree, may be substituted for an advanced university degree at the Master's level, these years cannot also be included in calculating required relevant work experience.

¹⁵ In exceptional cases, consideration may be given to applying this guideline to external candidates.

¹⁶ While two years of work experience relevant to the vacancy notice or job profile, plus a first university degree may be substituted for an advanced university degree, these years cannot also be included in calculating required relevant work experience.

NO-A	Advanced university degree or equivalent	0	First university degree and 2 years
NO-B	Advanced university degree or equivalent	2	First university degree and 4 years
NO-C	Advanced university degree or equivalent	5	First university degree and 7 years
NO-D	Advanced university degree or equivalent	7	First university degree and 9 years
NO-E	Advanced university degree or equivalent	10	First university degree and 12 years

Grade	Educational qualification(s)	Years of work experience relevant to the position
GS-1	Completion of Secondary School, or relevant technical or vocational training	0
GS-2	Completion of Secondary School, or relevant technical or vocational training	2
GS-3	Completion of Secondary School, or relevant technical or vocational training	3
GS-4	Completion of Secondary School, or relevant technical or vocational training	4
GS-5	Completion of Secondary School, or relevant technical or vocational training	5
GS-6	Post-secondary paraprofessional training or certification in work related areas	6
GS-7	Post-secondary paraprofessional training or certification in work related areas	7

2. International work experience¹⁷ is mandatory for the international professional and higher-grade categories. For internal candidates to positions in the Professional and higher categories, work experience as a National Professional Officer will be considered as equivalent to international experience. In certain circumstances, the Director HRM may authorize, at his or her discretion, waiver of international experience requirements for entry-level positions.

¹⁷ Unless otherwise provided, international experience means relevant experience gained outside the applicant's home country.

3. Where practical work experience comprises a mandatory element of a professional qualification (e.g., articling periods for attorneys, internship periods for medical doctors), such practical experience shall be recognized and credited as professional work experience up to a maximum of one year, provided that it is relevant to the position.
4. Full-time consulting experience, formal volunteer work (e.g., through the United Nations Volunteer Programme) and/or internships with an organization of the UN common system, governmental or non-governmental institution may be counted at a rate of 100% of the time served, provided that it is relevant to the position.

Language requirements

5. Staff members in the Professional and higher categories shall be proficient in at least one official language of UNAIDS. Knowledge of additional official languages of UNAIDS and/or the local language of the duty station is desirable or may be required.
6. All other staff members shall possess a working knowledge of at least one official language of UNAIDS. Locally recruited staff members shall additionally possess a working knowledge of the local language of the duty station.