

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Chapter 1. General Guidelines**

#### **Background and Mandate**

The African Policy Innovation Fellowship was established by General Assembly Resolution A/RES/78/263 in response to the call to address the structural inequalities plaguing Africa's development trajectory, as outlined in the Secretary-General's reports A/75/917, A/77/644 and A/79/226 S/2024/550.

The Fellowship envisions a future where Africa's youth are active architects of change. Through collaborative learning, mentorship, and exposure to best practices, it seeks to foster a generation of public servants who are adept in policy analysis and implementation and deeply committed to advancing the values of accountability, transparency, and inclusivity.

This vision is rooted in the belief that by investing in Africa's youth today, we sow the seeds for a more prosperous and equitable tomorrow, where every individual can meet their potential and meaningfully contribute to society.

#### **Objective and Purpose**

The purpose of the fellowship is to provide young African civil servants with the opportunity to leverage the United Nations' intangible assets to design specific policy proposals to advance sustainable development in their countries. Thus, the fellowship seeks to support the strengthening of institutional capacities in African countries to enhance country systems' lead of development efforts through the development of skills in policy analysis, formulation and monitoring.

The fellowship programme aims to support fellows identify the interlinkages between different areas of sustainable development and peace to help activate a multiplier effect, transforming their policy proposals into triggers of sustainable development and durable peace. In particular, the fellowship will contribute to deepening the understanding of the four-pillar framework to achieve sustainable development and peace:

1. Durable peace requires sustainable development;
2. Sustainable development requires nationally owned sustainable financing;
3. Sustainable financing requires control over economic and financial flows; and
4. Control over economic and financial flows requires strong and effective institutions and governance.



## **Expected Outcomes**

Upon completion of the fellowship, participants are expected to have applied the knowledge and skills acquired to design a policy intervention that tackles development challenges in their area of work. UN entities will support fellows in advancing the implementation of their proposals under the coordination of the UN RC system.

The fellowship is not intended for the pursuit of academic studies leading to degrees or diplomas. It is intended to give civil servants the opportunity to broaden their professional knowledge and experience, particularly with regard to leveraging the UN intangible assets. This will enable them to participate more actively in supporting the economic and social development of their countries.

## **Structure**

The African Policy Innovation Fellowship programme is administered by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA). Fellows are hosted by different entities, depending on the area of specialization of their project proposals.

This proposal should reflect a clear understanding of national priorities and connect one or more of the UN Six Transitions for sustainable development, which include:

1. Food Systems
2. Energy Access and Affordability
3. Digital Connectivity
4. Education
5. Jobs and Social Protection
6. Climate Change, Biodiversity Loss, and Pollution

During their stay, fellows are expected to develop a policy intervention based on the initial proposal presented in their application. In parallel, they get exposure to UN frameworks and discussions on their area of focus. Fellows are also expected undertake capacity development activities and participate in seminars and sessions tailored to their experience.

## **Application and selection modality**

The fellowship is granted through a competitive process based on the application submitted by qualified candidates.



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## Duration and Modality

The fellowship consists of three components:

1. Parent Organization Phase (at least 1 Month – Conceptualization)
  - Fellows engage in virtual training and mentorship while still delivering responsibilities in their parent organisation to refine their project proposals into actionable conceptual frameworks.
  - Interactive sessions with UN experts, policymakers, and data analysts focus on leveraging national data for policy innovation.
2. UN Headquarters Phase (at least 3 Months – Development )
  - Fellows work with a UN Secretariat host entity linked to their selected transition area.
  - Engage in high-level policy discussions and networking opportunities.
  - Receive guidance on integrating data analytics into policy solutions.
3. UN Country Team Phase (at least 2 Months – Application with UN RCO Support)
  - Fellows return home to implement their refined project within their national policy environment.
  - Receive support from the African UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) in their home country for practical application.
  - Present outcomes and impact assessments to national stakeholders.

Fellows are expected to complete it in its entirety.

Fellows may terminate the fellowship for legitimate causes and upon agreement by OSAA. In the same manner, OSAA may revoke the fellowship without the fellow's conformity for justifiable causes, such as the failure by the fellow to participate in the fellowship activities or the violation by the fellow of applicable UN rules and regulations.

Termination of the fellowship for non-legitimate causes might result in the obligation by the fellow to reimburse the costs incurred until the termination.

## Methodology

The fellowship curriculum is designed to support applicants in developing their policy research and analytical skills through a data-driven policy design process. The final output of the fellowship will be a policy paper developed by the fellows on a policy challenge/opportunity relevant to the context of their home country. Applications must



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include a project proposal for a policy intervention in the candidate's area of work, to be submitted in the template provided.

Applications must include an endorsement letter from their supervisor for participating in the fellowship, following the template provided.

## **Qualifications**

### *Age*

The programme is open to current public administration officials of an African Member State who are not older than 40 years old at the time of application.

### *Education*

An advanced university degree (Master's or doctorate or their equivalents) linked to the area of specialization of the project is required. A first-level university degree (Bachelor's degree or equivalent) in similar fields in combination with two additional years of relevant work experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.

### *Skills*

The fellowship programme is focused on policy research and analysis. Thus, applicants are expected to have strong analytical, research, data, communication, and interpersonal skills.

### *Experience*

Applicants are expected to be current civil servants in their home countries with proven work experience related to the proposed area of specialization. This can include experience in research/analytical work in socio-economic and political development, trade and investment, natural resource management/law, regional integration, infrastructure development including transportation, logistics and energy, governance, peace, and related areas in the context of Africa.

### *Language Proficiency*

English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. Fluency in either language is required for the fellowship, and working knowledge of the other is an advantage.



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## **Chapter 2. Fellowship Preparation**

### **Pre-departure**

#### **Offer Letter**

The successful candidate will receive an Offer letter from OSAA indicating that a training programme is being offered at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Offer Letter shall stipulate the following:

- (a) Exact dates of the fellowship with reference to arrival and departure dates;
- (b) Office or person to whom the fellow must report on arrival in New York;
- (c) Amount of the stipend and other allowances;
- (b)
- (d) Details concerning the fellow's travel New York.

#### **Acceptance of Fellowship**

The fellow shall signify acceptance of the fellowship award by countersigning on the Offer letter. Fellows are encouraged to seek confirmation that his/her government will continue to pay for his/her salaries while undertaking the fellowship.

Fellows should read these documents carefully and ensure they understand their contents thoroughly. They must arrange their departure so that they arrive in New York on the indicated date. They should keep the Offer letter in their possession throughout the duration of the fellowship programme.

#### **Visa**

OSAA will facilitate filing a G-4 visa for the fellow upon submission of all required documents.

#### **Certification of Good Health**

Fellows should submit a statement of good health from their doctor stating that they are in good health and fit to work. The fellow shall take full responsibility for the accuracy of that statement, including confirmation that he or she has received the inoculations required for the United States. Fellows shall assume all costs that may occur in relation to the medical certificate.

#### **Information Concerning Host Country**

It is suggested that, before leaving home, fellows familiarize themselves with the general conditions in New York, particularly the weather, transportation system, the culture and the way of life.



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**Clothing**

Fellows are reminded that the climate in New York may be very different from that in the home country. This applies particularly to fellows from tropical or subtropical countries who will be going to the northern hemisphere during the period of October-April. It is essential that they provide themselves with suitable clothing.

**Travel**

The travel of fellows is subject to the provisions set out in the United Nation's administrative instruction on Official Travel ( ST/AI/2013/3 Rev.1)

Fellows' official travel begins and ends in the capital of their home country or the city nearest the fellow's home, which has an international airport.

Travel at the United Nation's expense must be arranged by the most direct and economic route. Fellows are required to travel by air, in economy class.

Travel arrangements other than those specified by OSAA will not be accepted unless agreed to in advance and in writing by OSAA.

If the fellowship programme involves visits to more than one host country, fellows should not, for the initial travel, make reservations beyond the first host country. Reservations for subsequent travel can be made in due course, after the fellows' arrival in the first host country, and when the date of departure for the subsequent host country is known.

**Baggage**

The baggage allowance will be the same as the allowance specified in the air ticket. The United Nations does not provide an excess baggage allowance for inbound travel. All excess baggage must be shipped at the fellows' expense .

Upon completion of the fellowship, in lieu of an excess baggage allowance, fellows will be provided with a termination allowance of \$100 upon completion of the fellowship.

Fellows are encouraged to insure their baggage for the duration of their absence from the home country. The necessary arrangements can be made through any worldwide travel agency. The cost of such insurance is not covered by OSAA.



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**Accommodation**

Fellows are responsible for securing their own accommodation. The Induction Handbook provides information on possible accommodation arrangements.

Fellows must choose accommodation within the tri-state area (New York, New Jersey, Connecticut) to enable them the ability to commute to UNHQ within a reasonable time.

**Health insurance scheme**

Fellows automatically participate in the UN medical insurance scheme, to be facilitated by OSAA and paid for by the United Nations

**Liability to third parties for damage to persons or property**

OSAA assumes no liability to third parties for damage to persons or property caused by holders of OSAA fellowships.

## **Chapter 3. Stipends, Allowances and Other Payments**

### **A. Stipends**

**General principles**

A stipend paid to fellows while outside their home country is a monthly allowance intended to cover the cost of lodging, board, and other essentials such as laundry and local transport.

A stipend is not a salary or honorarium. It is not intended to cover the fellows' continuing expenses at their home country nor their families. During the fellowship period, their governments are encouraged to continue payment of their salaries or allowances at home.

A stipend is due from the date the fellows depart from their home countries and ends on the date of completion of the fellowship, including a maximum travel time of up to two days by the most direct air route.

**Stipend rates**

Stipend rates are established by the United Nations

The stipend is normally established at two different rates for each country: the travel rate and the residential rate. Stipend rates established for United Nations fellows are maximum rates. The United Nations reserves the right to pay stipends at a lower rate when conditions of the fellowship programme so warrant.



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The stipend is paid at the travel or residential rate in accordance with the following principles:

- Stipend is paid at the travel rate for the first month spent in the host country, regardless of the nature of the training programme; the residential rate is paid on a monthly basis thereafter.
- Fellows, who for some reason must return home before the date on which their fellowship is scheduled to end, are reminded that payment of their stipend is due only until the date on which they arrive in their home country by the most direct air route.

### **Methods of payment**

The stipend will be paid in US dollars. The first month stipend will be made available to the fellow before commencing travel to the host country, and deposited to the fellow's designated bank account. The succeeding stipend payments will be, made available on a monthly basis and credited to a debit card issued in the name of the fellow.

### **Allowances**

#### **Termination allowance**

Towards the end of the award, fellows will receive with their last stipend payment in the currency of the last host country a termination allowance in the amount of \$100.

## **Chapter 4. Arrival in New York**

### **Briefing**

Upon arrival in New York, fellows will be briefed on all aspects of the fellowship, particularly the training programme.

### **Supervision of the Training Programme**

While training at UNHQ, fellows are under the overall supervision of OSAA but under the direction of the mentor designated by a UN Secretariat host entity relevant to their area of fellowship.

### **Badge**

Upon arrival at the reporting office in New York, fellows will receive a UN badge valid for the duration of the fellowship.

Loss of the badge should be immediately reported to the Pass and ID office.



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## **Time and Attendance**

Fellows are expected to be in the host entity country for the duration of their fellowship.

## **Obligations of Fellows**

Fellows must:

- (a) Complete all prescribed online training before commencing travel
- (b) Conduct themselves at all times in a manner compatible with their status as holders of international fellowships and as representatives of their country.
- (c) Carry out their training in the manner and within the period prescribed by the United Nations.
- (d) Refrain from engaging in political activities (disclosure of such involvement by fellows will result in termination of the award and immediate repatriation);
- (e) Return to their home countries at the end of the fellowship and continue to in their current functional area, unless they are sponsored by another organization for further training.

## **Chapter 5. Reporting**

### **Submission of Reports**

At the conclusion of the training programme and before returning home, fellows must submit to their the OSAA Head of Office the final report relevant to their initial proposal for the fellowship.

### **Publication of Reports**

If fellows wish to publish any of the reports that they have prepared for the United Nations as holders of the African fellowships, they must obtain the approval of OSAA, which will seek the agreement of the Government concerned. The published report must be prefaced by the following statement:

*"The views expressed in this report are those of the author and not necessarily those of either OSAA or the authority of the country or countries whose facilities were made available for use by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa"*

## **Chapter 6. Communication**

All correspondence relating to fellowships should be addressed to [osaa-fellowship@un.org](mailto:osaa-fellowship@un.org)



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