The Young Professionals Programme 2011

HUMAN RESOURCES INFORMATION SHEET

11 July 2011 marks the launch of the Young Professionals Programme (YPP), a new HR initiative approved by the General Assembly in December 2010 (GA resolution 65/247). The programme has two objectives – to bring fresh talent to the United Nations from un- and under-represented countries, and to recognise talent already in the Organization among staff members in the General Service and related categories, as well as in the Field Service category (FS-5 and below).

Through a competitive examination candidates will be placed at the P-1 or P-2 level with access to a range of training and career progression opportunities. The same examination is sat by Secretariat staff and external applicants. YPP replaces the NCRE, ‘G to P’ and ‘G to N’ initiatives, and involves a faster placement process (with no rosters) and more opportunities for field experience than the earlier schemes.

As before, the examination is offered in different subjects each year, depending on the needs of the Organization. In 2011, the YPP examination will take place on 7 December 2011 in the following job families:

- ADMINISTRATION
- HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS
- PUBLIC INFORMATION
- STATISTICS

All information about YPP and the examination is now on the UN Careers Portal at http://careers.un.org/ypp in English, or http://careers.un.org/yppfr in French. Interested candidates must apply for YPP online between 11 July and 10 September 2011. Beginning with the 2011 examination, YPP updates and results will also be listed on the portal as they become available.

READ ON FOR DETAILS OF...

- the objectives of the programme
- YPP eligibility criteria
- the format of the examination
- the selection and placement of YPP candidates
- YPP career development
Bringing fresh talent to the Organization: external candidates

For young, high-calibre professionals across the globe, the YPP examination is a platform for launching a career with the United Nations. The new programme builds upon the National Competitive Recruitment Examination (NCRE, or NCE) which was held for the last time in 2010. As with NCRE, a key objective of YPP is to redress geographic representation within the Secretariat. For external candidates, only those from un- or under-represented countries can apply for YPP. The nationality of candidates invited to sit the examination will change year to year, depending on geographic balance in the Secretariat workforce.

Recognising excellence within the Organization: Secretariat staff

Staff members of the United Nations in the General Service and related categories, as well as in the Field Service category (FS-5 and below), are also given the opportunity to participate in the YPP examination for recruitment into the Professional category. A reserved portion of 10% of YPP posts will be filled by staff who pass the YPP examination. There is no cap on the number of staff members who can sit the examination – all those who meet the criteria below may take the examination if they wish.

Eligibility for YPP

The eligibility criteria differ for external candidates and staff in the General and related categories as well as in the Field Service category (FS-5 and below).

**EXTERNAL CANDIDATES WHO WISH TO SIT THE EXAMINATION MUST:**

- be 32 years or younger at the end of the examination year;
- be a national of a participating country (the list of participating countries is published annually and varies from year to year, go to careers.un.org/ypp or /ypfr for clarification);
- hold at least a first-level university degree, relevant to the job family in which you would like to take the examination;
- be fluent in either English or French (knowledge of other official United Nations languages is an asset).

**STAFF IN GS AND RELATED CATEGORIES PLUS FIELD SERVICE FS-5 AND BELOW MUST:**

- have five years of continuous service in the Secretariat (short breaks in service of up to six months may be allowed);
- have fully successful performance in last two performance appraisals;
- have a UN appointment valid until at least six months after the date of the examination (7 December 2011);
- and meet the minimum educational criteria – in 2011 this means a first level university degree relevant to the job family in which you would like to take the examination.*

*An exception is made for staff members who had served the Secretariat for at least five years by 31 December 1989.

If you are a Secretariat staff member and meet the ‘external candidates’ criteria above, you can apply to participate in the young professionals programme as an external candidate. To do this you must register and create an external account in inspira, and apply using this external account.
As a UN Secretariat staff member, are you eligible to take the 2011 YPP exam?

Follow the flow chat to find out

Are you interested in starting a Professional career with the United Nations in one of the following job families?
- Administration
- Humanitarian Affairs
- Public Information
- Statistics

Yes

Check if you meet the eligibility criteria below

EITHER

Are you in the General Service category, a related category, or the Field Service category (FS-5 and below)?
- Do you five years of continuous service in the Secretariat at the time of application? (short breaks in service of up to six months may be allowed)
- Do you hold at least a first-level university degree, relevant to the job family in which you would like to take the examination?*
- Do you have a UN appointment valid until at least six months after the date of the examination (7 December 2011)?
- Do you have a fully successful performance in last two performance appraisals?

Yes to all the above

You can apply to take the YPP examination as a Secretariat staff member

Log in to inspira.un.org and search for the job opening that corresponds to the job family you would like to apply for. The job openings are all marked ‘YPP EXAmINATION (for UN Secretariat Staff)’. Further details of how to apply are here: careers.un.org/YPPInternalStaff [in English] and careers.un.org/YPPpersonnelInterne [in French]

The deadline for applications is 10 September 2011

No

Maybe YPP is not for you this year.

Why not check out http://careers.un.org for other options?

Will you be 32 years or younger at the end of 2011?

Are you a national of a participating country?
(see careers.un.org/ypp or careers.un.org/yppfr for clarification)

Do you hold at least a first-level university degree, relevant to the job family in which you would like to take the examination?

Are you fluent in either English or French?

Yes to all the above

You can apply to take the YPP examination as an external candidate

To apply as an external candidate, you must register and create an external account in inspira, and apply using this external account. For further details, see: careers.un.org/YPPapplicationprocess or careers.un.org/YPPderoulementdelaselection

No

Sorry, you are not eligible for YPP as an external candidate

Sorry, you are not eligible for YPP

*If you had you served the Secretariat for at least five years by 31 December 1989, post-secondary qualifications may suffice.
The examination

As in previous years, the selection process consists of a written examination – with a general and a specialized paper – and an oral examination. Each component is eliminatory.

**Written examination**

*(85% of the total marks)*

- The General Paper, which is the same for all job families, tests candidates’ knowledge of international affairs and their drafting abilities. Responses to this part can be written in either English or French. The General Paper is eliminatory.

- The Specialized Paper, tests analytical thinking and substantive knowledge corresponding to the job family of the examination; it can be taken in any of the six UN official languages.

- The written examination lasts a total of four and a half hours. Candidates are required to manage their own time for the different parts of the examination.

- All responses are marked anonymously by a panel of markers for the General Paper and by the Specialized Board Members for the Specialized Paper.

If candidates are successful, based on the results of the written portion of the examination, they will be invited to take part in the oral examination which consists of a competency-based interview. Those who are not successful will be informed at the appropriate time (please note that the time of notification may vary from one job family to the next, depending on the number of examinees).

**Oral Examination**

*(15% of the total marks)*

The oral examination is conducted to find out more about candidates’ combination of skills, attributes and behaviors which are directly related to successful performance on the job. The interview will be conducted by the Specialized Board members in either English or French, the two working languages of the Secretariat.

For further information about the application process, please see careers.un.org/yppapplicationprocess (or /YPPderoulementdelaselection in French).

For sample examination papers, please go to careers.un.org/yppsampleexaminations (or /YPPexemplesdepreuves in French).

**Selection and placement**

As in the past, successful candidates will be placed in entry-level Professional posts in Secretariat duty stations worldwide. **All regular budget P-1 and P-2 posts** in the Secretariat will be filled by the YPP, with greater use being made of the P-1 level for those with limited or no professional work experience. In addition, for the first time in 2011, YPP candidates will **also fill 15% of extra-budgetary P-1 and P-2 positions**, meaning a **greater variety of jobs and more opportunities for field experience and international exposure**. It is estimated that for the four job families available in 2011, around 85 regular budget posts and 10 extra-budgetary positions will be filled by YPP candidates who pass the examination.
One distinct improvement to the new YPP system is that the number of candidates who pass the YPP examination will be more closely aligned to the number of P-1 and P-2 job openings available. This means that there will no longer be a lengthy roster process and the time between application and placement should decrease. Only the number of candidates needed in a given year, plus ten per cent, will pass the examination. Candidates not recruited within two years will be removed from consideration and must retake the exam if they wish to join YPP.

All successful candidates must accept the first post offered to them. Failure to do so will mean that they are removed from the list of successful candidates. Duty station preferences will be taken into account where possible, but this is by no means guaranteed.

Successful candidates will receive a fixed-term appointment of two years upon placement. After two years, they will be granted a continuing appointment, subject to good performance.

Career development

YPP includes greater opportunities for professional development than NCRE/ G to P. There will be:

- An expanded, two week orientation programme which will be offered to new YPPs at the start of their UN careers, before they report for duty. This will include learning about working in the field and producing a Career Development Plan, which will be shared with the programme manager and reviewed annually.

- Mentoring from a more senior member of staff who will provide further guidance to ensure successful and accelerated integration into the Organization.

- Enhanced learning opportunities, including on-the-job training and a designated training budget for YPPs.

- A more structured approach to placement and rotation including mandatory rotation to a different duty station after the first two year assignment (for example, a YPP candidate may serve first in Kabul and then in Vienna, or first in New York and then in Addis Ababa).

  » N.B. Generally, staff from General Service and related categories, as well as in the Field Service category (FS-5 and below), who pass the examination will not be required to move internationally, but are encouraged to do so and will have to move to a different function after two years.

  » However, staff recruited as external candidates will be subject to duty station rotation.

- Opportunities for progression:

  » Successful candidates who are placed at the P-1 level for their initial assignment will be promoted to a post at the P-2 level after two years, subject to good performance.

  » Candidates whose initial assignment is at the P-2 level may apply for posts at the P-3 level after completing their first assignment of two years. Hiring Managers will be encouraged to give ‘priority consideration’ to YPP staff. Once candidates reach the P-3 level, their formal involvement with the YPP scheme ends.

To find out more about YPP refer to:

» The Secretary-General’s report on YPP: A/65/305/Add.4
» The AI and SGB on YPP will be available soon, check itsforreal.un.org for updates