



World Health  
Organization

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### WHO Global Internship Programme

October 2022

#### **Preliminary reflections**

- Interns are expected to come to the office. Do we have office space for an intern?
- Do we have the time, and can we commit to supervising and mentoring an intern? Interns require in-person and regular guidance and supervision.

#### **How can I hire an intern?**

- Develop terms of reference providing duties, responsibilities and learning objectives.
- Identify department funds to cover the financing of the internship – a PATEO is required.
- Submit a draft requisition in Stellis, that will be advertised for three weeks.

#### **What is the cost of an intern?**

In Geneva, the monthly cost is approximately CHF 2,100 and may fluctuate depending on per diem rates. The PTAEO needs to be provided before advertisement. The PTAEO will be charged upfront to cover the entire duration of the internship when the selected intern reports to duty.

#### **Can we hire an intern without advertisement in Stellis?**

All internship opportunities must be published in Stellis as individual requisitions. Offline applications are not accepted.

#### **How long will the recruitment process take?**

The recruitment process usually takes up to three months.

**How long is a WHO internship?**

The duration of WHO internships is between a minimum of six (6) weeks and up to a maximum of 24 weeks. These weeks must be consecutive. The total duration of each individual internship will be determined by the technical unit, according to the needs of the work and other factors.

**Can we hire an intern part-time?**

No. Only full-time internships are permitted.

**Will WHO help in finding suitable accommodation?**

The Organization does not assist intern candidates in identifying accommodation. However, information and tips on finding accommodation is provided within the official “WHO Welcome Guide for Interns” or briefing notes, depending on the duty station. When identifying accommodation, we recommend abstaining from making advance payments or providing “guarantee sums” in advance of arrival (and advise NOT to wire funds to Western Union or banks outside the duty station).

**Can we recruit interns as a WHO staff member after their internship?**

No, WHO interns are not eligible for appointment to any non-staff position within WHO for a period of three months following the end of their internship unless an intern has been selected through a competitive selection process.

**Students interested in submitting an internship application completed their formal qualification a few months ago. Are they still eligible to apply?**

Individuals are eligible to apply up to six months following the completion of their formal qualification.

**Can doctoral (PHD) students apply for an internship?**

Yes, doctoral (PHD) students are eligible for internships.

**Can students enrolled in an undergraduate degree apply?**

An undergraduate degree is acceptable provided that candidates have completed at least three years of full-time study towards the completion of the degree prior to the start date of the internship.

**What type of visa or other permissions does an intern need?**

Please note that an intern cannot, under any circumstances, undertake an internship in the host country of the duty station on a tourist visa. It is the responsibility of the intern to obtain necessary visas. When selected, intern candidates are provided with a letter confirming their internship and can also request a specific visa support letter from their WHO Office. Both letters can be used as support documents for a visa application.

**Candidates applying to Swiss internships:**

Please note that internship activities with an International Organization that take place within Switzerland are considered to fall under the category of gainful employment by the Swiss authorities. Intern candidates must check with the Swiss Embassy in their country about the type of visa that will be required for them to undertake an internship with WHO in Switzerland. Everyone has a unique personal travel history, and sometimes combination of passport(s) and nationalities and will need to see what will be required for them specifically. All costs for visas are borne by the intern candidate.

**Provisions for WHO interns****Is an intern entitled to days off during the internship period?**

Interns are entitled to take personal time off during the WHO internship, which is the equivalent of 2.5 days per month. Interns may choose to use these each month, or to accrue days over the period of the internship, in agreement with the supervisor.

**Is an intern entitled to sick leave?**

An intern is not expected to work if they are unwell, but it is important that the Organization is informed of any absences. Notification requirements follow the same standard practice as is required by staff members.

**Does WHO provide medical and accident insurance for interns?**

Yes, WHO provides all interns with medical and accident insurance for the duration of their internship period. Confirmation is included in the TORs of the Internship Offer Letter.

**Will WHO provide meal vouchers?**

Depending on the duty station location and facilities, interns may be provided with specific meal vouchers to be used during the business days (Monday – Friday), or with a cash amount to be used towards lunch meals on business days. Interns based in Geneva receive CHF 15 for each working day to buy lunch. For other duty stations, the arrangements and amounts will be communicated to interns during the interview process.

**Will travel expenses to and from the duty station be covered by WHO?**

WHO will cover the approved travel cost for some interns from low- and middle-income countries ([LMICs](#)) interning at the WHO headquarters and the regional offices for Africa, South East Asia and Western Pacific (noting that support is available from 2022 to 2024). Please refer to the SOPs for Internships for details on the approval process for travel costs.

**Where can I find information on the programme?**

Please consult the [eManual](#) (with SOPs and annexes) and the [Internship Programme](#) intranet page for full information on the programme.