

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

QUAKER UNITED NATIONS OFFICE GENEVA

JOB TITLE: Programme Assistant, Quaker United Nations Office
LOCATION: Quaker UN Office, Geneva, Switzerland
ACCOUNTABLE TO: QUNO Representative, Human Rights and Refugees
REMUNERATION: See Conditions of service below
DURATION: August 2006-July 2007

General Summary

The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) located in Geneva and New York, represents Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers), an international non-governmental organisation with general consultative status at the United Nations. QUNO works to promote the peace and justice concerns of Friends (Quakers) from around the world at the UN and other global institutions. It is supported by the American Friends Service Committee, Britain Yearly Meeting, the worldwide community of Friends, other groups and individuals.

QUNO Geneva is a partnership between Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW) of Britain Yearly Meeting and Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). The QUNO Committee – Geneva which comprises Friends appointed by both QPSW and FWCC – oversees the work of QUNO and sets the priorities for the programme work.

Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO)

The work of QUNO arises out of a concern for the Quaker peace testimony and for building the institutions of peace. The office in Geneva, which is based at Quaker House, is concerned with work at the UN and other international institutions on trade and development, disarmament and peace, and human rights and refugee issues. The office is run by a small team who share in varying degrees the work of the programme, as well as the administration and catering - including cooking, serving and washing up - at Quaker House.

This is an opportunity for a single young person with an interest in international affairs and in the United Nations to experience a range of United Nations work, while working primarily as an assistant to the Representative for Human Rights and Refugees.

The appointment provides a genuine opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge and experience of Quaker international work, partly through working directly on the programme and partly by supporting all the members of the QUNO staff.

Duties and responsibilities

The post will comprise two sets of responsibilities as follows:

1) Programme work (approximately 50% of time)

Assisting the Representative for Human Rights and Refugees on her programme of work, including

- attending UN, NGO and other meetings;
- assisting in setting up and participating in meetings at Quaker House;
- writing internal notes and reports;
- collecting, reading, analysing, sorting and filing documents;
- undertaking small research and writing assignments;
- helping to prepare submissions to the UN, and other materials;
- responding to enquiries by letter, email and telephone.

2) Administrative tasks (approximately 50% of time, half with the Human Rights and Refugee Programme and the other half QUNO general)

- assisting with the Geneva Summer School
- assisting in the arrangements for lunches and other events which take place at Quaker House, including cooking and clearing up and other tasks around the House
- working on general routine clerical duties including dealing with filing, the post, photocopying, and all aspects of hospitality
- assisting with the maintenance of the QUNO data base and other tasks related to QUNO outreach activities
- assisting with managing and editing a newsletter (the Geneva Reporter) and maintenance of a web site.

Applicants should be aware that while the work focuses on the United Nations and other international organisations in Geneva, much of the day to day work is administrative and takes place in the Quaker UN Office.

Everyone in the QUNO office works as part of an extended team, and will, from time to time, be asked to assist in other areas of work.

Qualities and Qualifications

A key feature of the post is the Programme Assistant's ability and willingness to contribute actively to QUNO's administrative, corporate and programme work. There is no insistence on any particular qualification, but the post would suit a young Friend or person with an understanding of the Quaker approach to the work. Interest, enthusiasm and proven analytical and writing skills are more important than specialist/academic knowledge.

- Applicants will hold a degree or equivalent, or be pursuing further study. They should have a genuine interest in international affairs and the work of the United Nations in general, and in human rights and refugee issues in particular.

- English is the working language of the office. Knowledge of French is desirable, as Geneva is a French speaking environment, and knowledge of Spanish will be an advantage.
- Computer skills (Word, Excel, Outlook) required.
- The ability to get on well with all kinds of people, a willingness to help the rest of the team and a sense of humour!
- Age range preferably 21 - 30 years.
- Appointment to this post requires the postholder to be legally eligible for employment within Switzerland or member states of the European Union. For an exceptionally suitable candidate with strong Quaker connections not eligible to work in EU/Switzerland, we would be willing to make a case for their employment to the Swiss authorities. However, since there is no guarantee of success, any offer would be made subject to a successful application for a work permit.

Conditions of Service

Salary: Swiss Francs 1,360 per month plus a housing allowance. In addition, QUNO pays the social costs and benefits required under Swiss law.

Holidays: 27 days per annum, in addition to Geneva public holidays. The days in which the office is closed, other than public holidays, will count as part of the leave allowance. Timing of vacations is to be agreed in advance with the Human Rights and Refugees Representative.

Working hours: QUNO follows Swiss custom of a 40 hour work week. Time worked over and above that, if agreed in advance with the Human Rights and Refugees Representative, is compensated by time off in lieu, to be taken within two weeks at times agreed in consultation with the Representative.

Travel costs at the start and end of the appointment: The costs of a return ticket from the appointee's home base will be paid for.

Closing date for completed applications: 21 April

Starting date: 8th August for two week preparation period in the UK, with travel to Geneva on 28th August.

The successful applicant will be expected to complete a medical questionnaire.

Please return completed application forms to: The Personnel Office, Friends House, 173-177 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ.