



Quaker United Nations Office

JOB TITLE: Programme Assistant
LOCATION: Geneva, Switzerland
DURATION: 1 September 2014 to 31 August 2015 (preceded by ten days preparation in UK from mid-August 2014)

This is an opportunity for a person with an interest in international affairs and in international organizations to experience a range of international work, while working primarily as an assistant to QUNO's Representative for Food & Sustainability in her work relating to agricultural trade and investment and on intellectual property of plants. The work also includes a support role to QUNO's Bonn-based Representative for Climate Change, especially in preparation for the international climate change negotiations and in maintaining strong linkages between QUNO's work in Geneva and in Bonn.

Background

The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva and New York seeks to bring Quaker peace and justice concerns to international processes in the areas of peacebuilding and disarmament, human rights and refugees, climate change, natural resources and food & sustainability.

Our style of work is focussed on "quiet diplomacy" – especially through providing intellectual and physical space for building understanding, exploring alternatives, providing information and helping change attitudes through off the record informal small-group conversations among diplomats, UN staff, NGOs and those in the field. We also use our general consultative status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council and our observer status in several other international bodies to make oral and written statements based on our research and experience and that of others.

QUNO's work on food and sustainability is concerned with supporting and promoting a sustainable and equitable global food system. Our work has two main themes at its centre. One looks at the impact of intellectual property rules on agriculture and food security. The other explores what a new policy framework for agricultural trade and investment should look like, to make food trade fair for people and good for the planet.

Within the first area we seek to increase available information and analysis of

alternative and more flexible intellectual property (IP) options since many officials are not aware of the flexibilities inherent in existing international agreements that can greatly benefit smallholder farmers, among others. We also seek to increase the capacity of developing countries to craft IP policies that respond to national food security and rural development priorities.

Within the second area, we aim to place food security in the centre of the objectives of agricultural trade and investment, and, taking account of new global challenges, to explore a new framework of agricultural trade and investment rules that would better enable countries to meet their food security needs and objectives.

QUNO views climate change as a peace and justice issue. Our work is twofold. We hold quiet diplomacy initiatives at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, with the aim to support progress toward a fair and sufficient agreement. We also explore how the challenge and consequences of climate change are integral to our work in food and sustainability, human rights, and peace.

This appointment provides an opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge and experience of Quaker international work, partly through working directly on programme work, 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 60% of time. 70% of the programme work is estimated to be on food and sustainability and 30% on climate change)

Assisting the Representatives Food and Sustainability and Climate Change. .This might include

- assisting with and supporting QUNO's work relating to agricultural trade and investment;
- assisting with and supporting QUNO's work relating to intellectual property in agriculture;
- assisting with and supporting QUNO's work relating to climate change;
- acting as active link person between the Representative Climate Change in Bonn and Geneva based staff, including facilitating her participation in virtual meetings, making arrangements for her presence in in-person meetings and generally supporting a high level of integration.
- attending UN, NGO and other meetings;
- representing QUNO at such meetings, as appropriate;
- assisting in setting up and participating in meetings at Quaker House;
- writing internal notes and reports;

- collecting, reading, analysing, sorting and filing documents;
- helping to prepare submissions to the UN, and other materials;
- responding to enquiries by letter, email and telephone.

2) Administrative tasks providing support to QUNO as a whole (approximately 40% of time)

- assisting with the organization and the logistics of QUNO's 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 with members of staff on general routine clerical duties including dealing with filing, the post, photocopying, and all aspects of hospitality;
- assisting with the maintenance of the QUNO database and other tasks related to QUNO outreach activities;
- assisting with managing and editing QUNO's *Geneva Reporter*

Applicants should be aware that while the work focuses on the United Nations and other international organizations 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. While there is no insistence on any particular qualification, the post would suit a Quaker member or attender or another person with an understanding of the Quaker approach to the work, and who has taken a demonstrable interest in one of the specified work areas, e.g. through voluntary or other activities. 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 demonstrable interest in international affairs and the work of the United Nations and other international organizations in general, with a particular interest in issues relating to food policy, agriculture, trade, environmental policy or climate change.
- English is the working language of the office. Knowledge of French is desirable, as Geneva is a French-speaking environment, and knowledge of another language is an advantage.
- Computer skills 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!
- 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: The salary will be 1460 Swiss Francs per month. In addition, QUNO pays for a furnished self-catering studio for a single person in a student hostel, a bus pass providing free public transport in Geneva, and covers the social costs, benefits and basic health insurance required under Swiss law.

Holidays: 27 days to be taken during the contract period, in addition to Geneva public holidays. The days in which the office is closed between Christmas and New Year are not charged to the leave allowance. Timing of vacations is to be agreed in advance with the Global Economic Issues Representative.

Working hours: QUNO follows Swiss custom of a 40 hour work week. Office hours are normally 9am to 6pm with a one-hour lunch break. Time worked over and above that, if agreed in advance with the Representatives, is compensated by time off in lieu, to be taken within one month at times agreed in consultation with the Representatives.

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.

Closing date for completed applications: 16 March 2014

Interviews: Expected in London on 8 or 9 April 2014

Starting date: 1 September 2014, with a mandatory preparation period in the UK expected to be of ten days and to begin 19 August, for which a small allowance will be paid.

TO APPLY

All applications must be made on the QUNO Programme Assistant application form available on-line on the QUNO webpage. Your completed form should be sent by

email to qunjob1@quno.ch with "Programme Assistant" in the subject line.

All applications will be treated in confidence. Your application will be automatically acknowledged by the email system. While we are grateful for all applications, we regret that beyond that, we can only respond to shortlisted candidates.