



# QUNO

Quaker United Nations Office

**JOB TITLE:** Programme Assistant, Human Rights and Refugees  
**LOCATION:** Geneva, Switzerland  
**DURATION:** 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026

The Quaker United Nations Office works from a belief in the inherent worth of every individual. This leads us to work for the promotion and protection of human rights for all. This is a junior professional role for a person with an interest in international affairs and the United Nations and an alignment with Quaker values. Working primarily as an assistant to QUNO's Representative for Human Rights and Refugees the Programme Assistant will gain experience of how we work to strengthen human rights protection through the United Nations.

## **Background**

The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva and New York seeks to bring Quaker peace and justice concerns to international processes through its programmes in peace & disarmament, human rights & refugees, human impacts of climate change, and sustainable & just economic systems.

Our Human Rights & Refugees programme raises up the concerns of marginalized groups, so they are better understood by international policy makers, which leads to stronger international standards. Frontline organizations can use these strengthened international standards as a tool to limit suffering, improve lives and challenge the root causes of injustice. We are actively seeking to improve anti-racist and participatory approaches in our own work. Our current priorities are:

- human rights in the context of migration
- conscientious objection to military service

We are exploring more active work on strengthening the human rights system.

Our style of work is focusses on relationship building, dialogue and partnership, including through:

- Raising awareness and deepening knowledge on our priority issues, for example by writing briefing papers and making oral statements in UN bodies
- Providing expert technical advice, ideas and shared strategizing with colleagues and contacts in civil society, diplomatic missions and the UN system
- A quiet diplomacy approach which creates space for dialogue
- Connecting with other non-governmental organisations and convening formal and informal networks of non-governmental organisations

This role is an opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge and experience of Quaker international work, partly through substantive work on the Human Rights and Refugees Programme and linkages between programmes and partly by supporting all the members of the QUNO staff.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

The post comprises two sets of responsibilities as follows:

### **1) Programme tasks**

The work of Programme Assistants varies from year to year depending on the priorities of the programme and the competencies of the Programme Assistant. In assisting the Representative for Human Rights and Refugees the Programme Assistant's work will include:

- attending and reporting on UN, NGO and other meetings, giving presentations and representing QUNO at such meetings, as appropriate, and writing internal notes and reports;
- helping to develop programme strategy, by helping identify opportunities and sharing analysis on priorities, including following current developments and threats to the UN human rights system and multilateral processes more broadly and ongoing improvement in relation to equality, inclusion and diversity
- supporting formal and informal networks of NGOs, for example through managing mailing lists, drafting email updates, setting up meetings, taking minutes, coordinating joint positions;
- assisting in organising and participating in meetings and events at Quaker House, online and at other venues;
- collecting, reading, analysing, sorting and filing documents;
- supporting all QUNO programmes to engage with human rights mechanisms and undertaking other cross programme activities;
- writing content for and updating QUNO's website and social media channels
- responding to enquiries by letter, email, and telephone.

Depending on the priorities of the Programme and the opportunities in the year, work will probably include:

- researching and writing submissions to the UN (for example for the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants or the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) and drafting and delivering oral statements at the Human Rights Council;
- developing a particular area of work, within the programme's priority areas;
- preparing publications or briefing papers through research, writing, editing and liaison on design.

### **2) Additional Administrative and Support Tasks:**

- jointly leading the organization and the logistics and programme planning for QUNO's Geneva Summer School and taking a major role in its delivery;
- assisting with fundraising research, grant proposals and report writing;

- assisting in the arrangements for lunches and other events which take place at Quaker House or online, including providing technical support, organising catering and clearing up and other tasks around the House;
- arranging travel and other logistics for the Human Rights and Refugees Representative and visiting partners;
- working with members of staff on routine clerical duties including minute taking, dealing with filing, post, photocopying, and all aspects of hospitality;
- assisting with the maintenance of the QUNO contacts database and other tasks related to QUNO outreach activities;
- contributing to production of QUNO's *Geneva Reporter* and *Annual Review* and developing and uploading content for the website and social media
- contributing to QUNO culture and community.

Whilst 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 or from home when remote working is required or recommended.

Everyone at QUNO works as part of a small team and contributes to the work of all programmes, including exploring the connections between them. From time to time, we are all asked to assist in other areas of work.

### **What we are looking for:**

We are looking for someone who can contribute actively to QUNO's administrative and programme work. Commitment to our shared values, willingness to learn, and analytical and writing skills are more important than specialist or academic knowledge. Please use these criteria to structure your personal statement on the application form.

### **Relationship to Quakerism**

- It is not necessary to be a Quaker member or attender to apply but understanding of Quaker values and sympathy with a Quaker approach to the work are essential. If you are not familiar with Quakers please read some introductory information and consider how Quakerism relates to your values. This is a good starting point: <https://www.quaker.org.uk/about-quakers/our-faith>

### **Knowledge and experience:**

- An active interest in international affairs and the work of the UN is essential (this could be demonstrated through study, work, volunteering or other activities)
- An active interest in human rights is essential (this could be demonstrated through study, work, volunteering or other activities)
- Study, work, volunteering or other activity in relation to one or more of the

- programme's areas of focus is not essential but is an advantage
- Lived experience of any of the issues the programme covers is not essential but is an advantage

#### Qualifications and Skills:

- An undergraduate degree or equivalent is essential, further study is an advantage
- Strong writing skills in English are essential (for example essays, briefing papers, articles, social media content (including for blogs) or advocacy materials)
- Strong verbal communication skills in English are essential (for example making presentations, putting your ideas across in meetings, building relationships with people)
- Research and analysis skills are essential (for example essays, briefing papers, articles, advocacy materials)
- Ability to work as part of a small team is essential, being able to get on well with all kinds of people, readiness to share common tasks, and willingness to ask for help can contribute to this
- Spoken French is an advantage, as is knowledge of another UN language
- Experience of any of the following is an advantage: proof reading/copy editing, publication layout, preparing and posting social media content (Twitter and Facebook), writing news updates for websites, image research
- Experience of donor research and working on funding proposals is an advantage
- Voluntary or paid work experience in catering is an advantage
- Voluntary or paid work experience in an office is an advantage

#### Eligibility to Work in Switzerland

Due to strict immigration regulations in Switzerland, employees at this level would usually need to be Swiss or EU or EFTA Member State nationals or to already have permission to work in Switzerland. For an exceptional candidate from a country in the Young Professionals Programme<sup>1</sup> we would be willing to apply to the Swiss authorities for the relevant visa.

Regrettably, we are unable to obtain permission to employ Programme Assistants who are not nationals of Switzerland, an EU or EFTA Member State or a country participating in the Young Professionals Programme or already have permission to work in Switzerland. Please note that for this reason we currently cannot accept applications from candidates who have only UK nationality.

#### Salary and Benefits

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<sup>1</sup> Countries presently participating with Switzerland in the YPP are: Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Indonesia, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, Philippines, Russia, South Africa, Tunisia, Ukraine, USA

The gross salary is CHF 4,455.36 per month. From this we deduct the following benefits and costs: Swiss social charges and tax; a modest pension contribution. The estimated net income for 2025 after these deductions is approximately CHF 3,620 per month<sup>2</sup>. You will have to pay for compulsory health insurance for Switzerland.

Whilst you may wish to secure your own accommodation; QUNO has reserved individual studio accommodation at the [Grand Morillon residence](#).<sup>3</sup>

The costs of a return ticket from the appointee's home base will be paid. In addition, QUNO offers a limited budget for French language classes for Programme Assistants.

Paid Holiday: 27 days to be taken during the contract period, in addition to Geneva public holidays. The office is closed between Christmas and New Year; these days are part of the leave entitlement for staff in addition to annual leave. Timing of vacations is to be agreed in advance with the Representative for Human Rights and Refugees.

### **Working Hours**

QUNO operates on a 40-hour work week in line with Swiss custom. Office hours are normally 9am to 6pm with a one-hour lunch break. If agreed in advance some flexible working (i.e. adjusted hours or remote working) may be possible. There is no paid overtime. If agreed in advance time worked in addition to the 40 hours is compensated by time off in lieu.

### **Supervision**

Line management is provided by the Representative for Human Rights and Refugees. The Representative is responsible for guiding you and reflecting with you on your learning and experience throughout the year, including through regular supervision and quarterly review meetings.

**Closing date for completed applications: Sunday 11 May 2025**

**Interviews: Expected to be held in person or virtually at specific times in the week of 26 May or 2 June.**

**Starting date:** 1 September 2025. The successful candidate will be encouraged to participate in the virtual QUNO Geneva Summer School (7-18 July 2025 four hours a day on ten weekdays).

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<sup>2</sup> Slightly less for those over 25 years of age.

<sup>3</sup> Since accommodation can be difficult to find at short notice, QUNO may be able to help the candidate secure an individual studio accommodation at the Grand Morillon residence, at a cost of approximately CHF 1431 per month for rent and bills. This is considered good value in terms of quality and convenient facilities. If an appointed candidate prefers to find their own accommodation, they must advise QUNO by 22 July 2025. After this date, the candidate would be responsible for any cancellation charges.

## **TO APPLY**

All applications must be made on the QUNO Human Rights and Refugees Programme Assistant application form (this is available on the QUNO website). Please save this file with your name and the initials HRR as the filename (e.g. George Fox HRR). Your completed form should be sent by email [qunojob1@quno.ch](mailto:qunojob1@quno.ch) with “Programme Assistant, Human Rights and Refugees” in the subject line.

If you decide to apply for more than one Programme Assistant position, you must apply for each one separately using the relevant form for that post. Please do not send CVs, cover letters or other documents that have not been requested, these will not be forwarded to those who are shortlisting.

All applications will be treated in confidence. Your application will be automatically acknowledged by the email system. We are grateful for all applications; however, we regret that beyond this automated acknowledgement we can only respond to shortlisted candidates. If you have not been invited to interview by 2 June, please consider that your application has not been successful on this occasion.