



Legal Seat – Helsinki, Finland

WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF

An International Non-Governmental Organisation in official liaison with ECOSOC, UNESCO, ILO, WHO and the Council of Europe. WFD was established in Rome in 1951.

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27 April 2016

Dear WFD Members

We seek OM cooperation to:

- disseminate this information to all members in your country; and
- assist with providing letters of support to any applicants in your country wishing to apply for this program as set out below.

Re: **Minorities Fellowship Programme 2016 – Call for applications** (English and Russian streams)

This letter is available in International Sign [here](https://vimeo.com/164251639) (<https://vimeo.com/164251639>)

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is part of the United Nations.

It launched a program in 2005 called The Minorities Fellowship Programme (MFP).

The MFP aims to give people belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities an opportunity to gain knowledge on the UN system and mechanisms dealing with international human rights in general and especially minority rights.

The MFP is held every year in English, Arabic and Russian.

This year the English program and the Russian program will both be run **from 7 to 25 November 2016**, in Geneva, Switzerland, and fellows will be able to participate in the 9th Session of the Forum on Minority Issues.

WFD is making members aware of this opportunity to apply to participate, on the basis that sign language is a minority language, and deaf people are a linguistic minority.

The deadline for application for the English and Russian components is Sunday 22 May 2016.

What is the program about?

People chosen for this program are called 'Fellows'. The Fellows are based at the OHCHR Geneva, Switzerland. The MFP is interactive and includes briefings on several topics (e.g. the UN system, OHCHR work, human rights mechanisms and instruments). Fellows also undertake individual and group assignments.

At the end of the MFP, the fellows should have a general knowledge of:

- the United Nations system,
- international human rights instruments and
- mechanisms to protect and promote human rights in general and those relevant to minorities in particular; and
- be capable of further training their communities/organizations.

The Programme furthermore serves as an opportunity for human rights activists working towards the protection and promotion of minority rights to expand their networks by building a strategic dialogue with fellow activists from across the globe, the United Nations, relevant Geneva-based NGOs, amongst other partners.

Who can apply?

1. The candidate must belong to a national, ethnic, linguistic or religious minority group (e.g. a deaf person who uses sign language)
2. A lack of formal education should not be a limitation to participation in the Minorities Fellowship Programme, if you can demonstrate relevant experience.
3. Candidates should have ability, willingness and possibility to train other persons belonging to minorities upon return to their respective communities/organisations and should agree to do so.
4. The candidates must have a good working knowledge of the language in which the programme is imparted (English) or (Russian) depending on which stream is chosen.
5. The candidate should be proposed and his/her candidacy supported by his/her organisation and/or community. It is desirable that the sponsoring organisation has a firm constituency or membership, is representative, undertakes work on minority issues and is composed of persons belonging to minorities.

WFD asks applicants to contact the national Deaf Association in their country to obtain a letter of support. WFD will not provide letters of support.

6. The overall goal of the Minorities Fellowship Programme is to offer persons belonging to minorities the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills in the field of international human rights so that they can assist their organizations and communities in protecting and promoting human and minority rights. So it is important that the candidate proposed and nominated by a minority organization or community (e.g. a Deaf association) be someone who will return to his or her NGO to work in this field.

Selection process

The selection will try to make sure there is even gender and regional balance. The general human rights situation in the respective regions/countries is also taken into consideration as well as the situation of the minority community to which the applicant belongs to.

The selection of successful candidates is undertaken by an advisory group composed of OHCHR staff.

In view of the large number of applications, only successful candidates will be contacted.

How do I apply?

Fellowship application forms can be downloaded from the following links: [English \[http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Fellowship/2016/2016Applicationform_EN.doc\]](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Fellowship/2016/2016Applicationform_EN.doc) | [Russian \[http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Fellowship/2016/2016Applicationform_RU.doc\]](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Fellowship/2016/2016Applicationform_RU.doc)

Both parts I and II of the application form must be filled in and signed.

ALSO, all application forms must be accompanied by an official recommendation letter from the nominating organization or community (e.g. a National Deaf Association or provincial deaf association). Applications must be fully completed or they will not be considered.

Submit your application titled “**Application to the 2016 Minorities Fellowship Programme**” one of 3 ways:

1. by e-mail* to minorityfellowships@ohchr.org,
(* E-mailed applications must be signed, scanned and submitted as a single PDF file.)
2. by fax to the number [+41 22 917 90 08](tel:+41229179008) OR
3. by post to:

Application to the 2016 Minorities Fellowship Programme
Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Section
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNOG-OHCHR
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland

What expenses are covered for successful fellows?

Fellows are entitled to the following: a return ticket (economy class) from the country of residence to Geneva; basic health insurance for the duration of the Programme; a stipend to cover modest accommodation and other living expenses for the duration of the Programme.

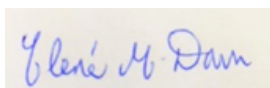
If you have a question about the Minorities Fellowship Programme please contact: minorityfellowships@ohchr.org

Please note that applications received after the closing date of 22 May 2012 will not be considered.

This information is also available at www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Minorities/Pages/Fellowship.aspx

WFD would love to see some deaf people participate in these programs- Good luck!

If you are selected, please do let us know.



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World Federation of the Deaf

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Skype: wfd_HRO (by appointment only)



Colin Allen
President

About the World Federation of the Deaf

The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) is an international non-governmental organisation representing and promoting approximately 70 million deaf people's human rights worldwide. The WFD is a federation of deaf organisations from 132 nations; its mission is to promote the human rights of deaf people and full, quality and equal access to all spheres of life, including self-determination, sign language, education, employment and community life. WFD has a consultative status in the United Nations and is a member of International Disability Alliance (IDA). (www.wfdeaf.org) Email: info@wfdeaf.org