



UN Career Preparation Programme • Online + Macau

The dedicated pathway into a United Nations career — a postgraduate immersion for candidates preparing serious applications to the UN system

Entering the United Nations system is not like entering any other career. The application processes are distinctive, the competency frameworks are specific, the timelines are long, and the field is competitive at a scale that few candidates fully understand until they attempt it. Many capable applicants fail not because they lack the substance but because they lack strategic preparation.

The UN Career Preparation Programme • Online + Macau is designed for postgraduate candidates who are serious about pursuing a UN career and want structured, expert-led preparation before they begin applying. Delivered over three weeks — with an online preparation phase and a concentrated on-site immersion in Macau — the programme provides delegates with substantive engagement at the United Nations University Institute in Macau, direct instruction on UN recruitment mechanics, and structured practice on the writing, interview and competency-based assessment formats the UN actually uses.

This is a dedicated career-preparation track within the GYLDC portfolio — distinct from thematic immersion programmes. It focuses on outcomes: successful UN internships, Junior Professional Officer applications, Young Professionals Programme candidacies, and graduate-level positions across the UN specialised agencies.

PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

TRACK	UN Career Preparation Track
PRIMARY TIER	Postgraduate & Early Career
AVAILABLE FOR	All tiers (separate cohorts)
DURATION	3 weeks (online + on-site)
NEXT ITERATION	August 2027
LOCATION	Online + Macau
LANGUAGE	English
COHORT SIZE	20–30
CERTIFICATION	GYLDC + GSLDC
FEE	On application



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

©The Career Moment

The United Nations system employs approximately forty thousand international civil servants across dozens of agencies, funds and programmes. Every year the system recruits at all levels — from internships through Junior Professional Officer postings, the Young Professionals Programme, and direct entry to Professional posts. Yet the majority of qualified candidates never successfully navigate the application process, not because they are unqualified but because the process itself is opaque to first-time applicants. Structured preparation before applying is the strongest predictor of successful entry.

©What Participants Experience

The programme runs over three weeks. Weeks one and two are online and cover: the architecture of the UN system, the specific mechanics of UN recruitment across agencies, the competency framework the UN actually assesses, and the written and interview formats used at each stage. Week three is on-site in Macau at the United Nations University Institute — providing delegates with direct engagement with a UN entity, structured mock interviews and assessment sessions, career-strategy consultations with UN specialists, and a defended career development plan reviewed by expert panellists.

©Why GYLDC

Most UN career preparation is generic — a lecture series on "working at the UN" that provides orientation but not preparation. GYLDC's programme is structured for actual outcomes: at the conclusion, every delegate has a completed portfolio (CV, motivation letter, competency-based responses), practical experience of the interview format, a defended career plan, and an introduction to the GYLDC pipeline of internship and placement opportunities across UN agencies.



©WHO THIS IS FOR

This programme is designed for postgraduate candidates and early-career professionals who are seriously preparing to apply for UN system positions within the next twelve to twenty-four months. It is not an exploratory programme — delegates should already know that a UN career is what they want, and want structured expert preparation to significantly improve their odds of success.

Suitable participants typically include: master's and doctoral students in international relations, development studies, public policy, law, economics, public health, environmental studies, humanitarian affairs or adjacent fields; early-career professionals currently working in government, international NGOs, consultancies or academia who want to transition into the UN system; participants preparing for specific UN recruitment tracks — internships, Junior Professional Officer postings, the Young Professionals Programme, or direct entry Professional positions; and candidates who have applied to UN positions unsuccessfully and want to substantially strengthen their approach. English working proficiency is required; a second UN language is welcomed.

©LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the conclusion of the programme, participants will have:

- Developed a working knowledge of the architecture of the UN system — how agencies differ in mandate, culture and recruitment practice, and how to match personal strengths to specific agency portfolios.
- Completed the full application portfolio required for UN recruitment — CV in UN format (P11 or Inspira profile), motivation letter, and competency-based written responses reviewed by expert panellists.
- Practiced the UN interview format under expert observation — including the competency-based interview structure that the UN uses across all recruitment — and received structured feedback on performance.
- Produced and defended a personal Career Development Plan that identifies specific target agencies, target roles, application timeline and preparation milestones over the next twelve to twenty-four months.
- Established direct professional relationships with United Nations University Institute specialists in Macau, and entered the GYLDC pipeline for structured internship and placement opportunities.

©COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The programme is structured against the six global-competency dimensions of the United Nations Youth Leadership Development Programme, with particular emphasis on the UN's own core and managerial competencies used in recruitment:

CREATIVITY	LEADERSHIP	DECISION-MAKING
COLLABORATION	COMMUNICATION	EXECUTION

© CURRICULUM ARCHITECTURE

The programme unfolds in three sequenced phases across three weeks. The first two weeks are online, building substantive foundations and completing the initial application portfolio. The third week is on-site in Macau, converting preparation into practical assessment and career strategy. Every element of the programme feeds directly into the delegate's actual UN applications.

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
<i>Online Foundations (Week 1)</i>	<i>Online Application Portfolio (Week 2)</i>	<i>On-Site Career Immersion (Macau, Week 3)</i>
▶ The UN system architecture — agencies, funds, programmes ▶ How UN recruitment actually works — process and timelines ▶ The UN competency framework — core and managerial ▶ Language requirements and the UN language framework ▶ CV, motivation letter and portfolio construction ▶ Delivered by former UN recruitment specialists and current staff	▶ P11 form and Inspira profile construction ▶ Competency-based written response practice ▶ Draft motivation letter — one-on-one expert review ▶ Career pathway identification — matching to target agencies ▶ Peer feedback and portfolio refinement ▶ Preparation for on-site immersion	▶ Engagement at the United Nations University Institute in Macau ▶ Structured mock interviews with expert observation ▶ Competency-based assessment practice ▶ Career-strategy consultations — individual and group ▶ Career Development Plan defence ▶ Introduction to GYLDC internship and placement pipeline



©SIGNATURE INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

Note — Named partners are indicative. Delivery partners are curated on a case-by-case basis per cohort.

The programme is anchored in direct engagement with the institutions that shape UN system recruitment and career development. Every partner below hosts substantive engagement — instruction, assessment or career consultation — designed to produce measurable improvement in delegate readiness for actual UN application.



United Nations University Institute in Macau

The programme's on-site institutional anchor; a UN entity dedicated to research and training. Delegates receive direct engagement with United Nations University specialists, providing both substantive expertise and legitimate UN entity contact time.

[LOGO]

UN Recruitment Specialists (Guest Faculty)

Former UN recruitment staff, current serving Human Resources specialists and Junior Professional Officer alumni deliver the programme's instruction on recruitment mechanics — sharing insights that are unavailable in any published UN guidance.

[LOGO]

UN Junior Professional Officer Alumni Network

Sitting UN Junior Professional Officers and recently-hired Professional staff provide direct testimony and career-strategy insight — the practical intelligence on what actually worked in successful applications.



UNITAR Global Training Network

GYLDC's institutional academic partner; delegates gain access to UNITAR's global training network — including CICAL centres worldwide — as a delivery resource.



GYLDC Internship & Placement Pipeline

GYLDC's structured relationships with UN agencies, funds and programmes provide graduates of the career preparation programme with introductions to specific internship and placement opportunities.

[LOGO]

UN Agency Career Development Officers

Career development officers from selected UN agencies participate in the on-site week, providing agency-specific career strategy input beyond generic system-wide guidance.

©FEATURED FACULTY

Note — Named faculty are indicative. Delivery faculty are curated on a case-by-case basis per cohort and confirmed approximately 60 days prior to commencement.

The programme's faculty combine former UN senior leadership, current UN Human Resources specialists, and sitting Junior Professional Officers and Professional staff whose recent successful applications are the most relevant possible reference material. Named faculty may vary between iterations; the profiles below are representative of the calibre confirmed for each cohort.

[PHOTO PENDING]

Former UN Senior Human Resources Officer

GYLDC Faculty — UN Recruitment Systems

A former UN senior Human Resources officer delivers the programme's core instruction on UN recruitment mechanics — the actual internal processes, competency assessments and decision criteria that shape hiring decisions. This is material unavailable in any published UN guidance and provides delegates with a decisive edge in application preparation.

[PHOTO PENDING]

United Nations University Institute Specialist

United Nations University Institute in Macau

A senior United Nations University Institute specialist provides the on-site institutional anchor for the Macau immersion — delivering sessions on United Nations University's research and training mandate, and serving as an expert panellist for the Career Development Plan defence.

[PHOTO PENDING]

UN Junior Professional Officer Panel

Sitting UN Junior Professional Officers

A rotating panel of sitting UN Junior Professional Officers — whose applications succeeded within the past three years — provides the most practical possible career strategy input. Panellists include JPOs across regional and functional portfolios, giving delegates direct engagement with the recruitment pathway they are actively pursuing.

©SAMPLE SCHEDULE

Note — Schedule shown is illustrative. Actual programme is curated on a case-by-case basis per cohort.

The schedule below is illustrative. The exact 2027 programme will be released three months prior to commencement. Delegates receive a fully detailed handbook upon confirmation of enrolment.

DAY	FOCUS	SIGNATURE ACTIVITIES
Week 1	Online Foundations	UN system architecture and recruitment overview; competency framework introduction; CV and portfolio construction; introductory expert lectures; peer cohort formation.
Week 2	Application Portfolio	P11 form and Inspira profile completion; motivation letter drafting and expert review; competency-based written response practice; peer feedback sessions; target agency identification.
Day 1	Arrival — Macau	Arrival in Macau; check-in; welcome briefing and orientation; introduction to the United Nations University Institute; opening dinner.
Day 2	United Nations University Institute	Full-day engagement at the United Nations University Institute in Macau; introduction to the Institute's mandate and research portfolio; institutional context for UN career pathways.
Day 3	Recruitment Mechanics	Deep-dive sessions on UN recruitment across agencies; JPO panel with sitting Junior Professional Officers; individual portfolio review consultations.
Day 4	Mock Interviews I	Competency-based mock interview practice with expert observation; individual feedback sessions; peer observation and reflection; interview technique refinement.
Day 5	Assessment & Strategy	Written assessment simulation; group exercises replicating UN assessment centre formats; individual career strategy consultations.
Day 6	Mock Interviews II	Second round of mock interviews — final observation; complete review of interview performance; feedback integration; Career Development Plan drafting.
Day 7	Defence & Closing	Career Development Plan defence before expert panel; certification ceremony; GYLDC pipeline briefing on internship and placement opportunities; closing dinner.

© WHAT PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE

Every delegate completing the programme leaves with a defined package of credentials, application-ready materials and pathways into structured UN career development. These are structured for measurable improvement in application outcomes.

Formal Certification

Certificate of Completion co-signed by GYLDC and GSLDC, valid for academic and professional credit recognition — particularly relevant for UN application portfolios.

Complete UN Application Portfolio

Every delegate leaves with a completed P11 form or Inspira profile, motivation letter, and competency-based written response bank — reviewed and refined by expert faculty.

Career Development Plan

Every delegate leaves with a personal Career Development Plan — target agencies, target roles, application timeline and preparation milestones over 12–24 months.

Mock Interview Experience

Direct experience of the UN competency-based interview format under expert observation, with structured feedback that informs actual future application performance.

GYLDC Placement Pipeline

Introduction to structured internship and placement opportunities across UN agencies through GYLDC's institutional relationships, subject to individual performance and match.

Alumni Network Membership

Automatic entry into the GYLDC global alumni network — with particular emphasis on the UN career track alumni cohort actively pursuing and securing UN positions.



© APPLICATION

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis until each cohort fills. Selection prioritises candidates with genuine near-term intent to apply for UN positions rather than exploratory interest. Cohort places typically fill three months prior to commencement of the online phase.

Eligibility

Master's or doctoral students, or early-career professionals within five years of postgraduate qualification. Working English required; a second UN language welcomed.

Cohort

20–30 delegates, curated for genuine intent and diversity of target agency and functional area.

Fee

On application. Fee covers online phase delivery, on-site programme in Macau, expert consultations, materials and certification. International travel to Macau and accommodation are separate.

Contact

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