

WIPO INDIGENOUS FELLOW

One year Fellowship (mid-October 2024 – mid-October 2025), renewable for one further year

NEW CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) seeks expressions of interest from suitably qualified Indigenous individuals for the WIPO Indigenous Fellowship.

THE BACKGROUND

The law and practice of intellectual property is of increasing interest to Indigenous Peoples, stemming from concerns that Indigenous cultural heritage and knowledge systems should be recognized and protected in conformity with the needs, expectations and customary practices of their custodians.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007, provides that Indigenous Peoples “have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions”.

The WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (the IGC) is undertaking negotiations with the objective of finalizing an agreement on an international legal instrument(s), without prejudging the nature of outcome(s), relating to intellectual property, which will ensure the balanced and effective protection of genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.

In parallel, WIPO’s capacity-building program for Indigenous Peoples aims to enhance their knowledge about the existing intellectual property-related tools, as options to protect their traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, and to facilitate discussions on relevant intellectual property issues among Indigenous Peoples on how they could use those existing tools, in line with their own objectives and for their own development.

WHY AN INDIGENOUS FELLOWSHIP?

The WIPO Indigenous Fellowship builds on a series of initiatives to ensure that Indigenous Peoples are actively and effectively involved in the work of WIPO on issues that matter to them. It also seeks to foster legal expertise and skills within Indigenous Peoples, and offers a professional opportunity to an Indigenous person to work within the WIPO Secretariat.

The Indigenous Fellow will work in the WIPO's Traditional Knowledge Division and be involved in a program of activities that is directly relevant to issues of concern to Indigenous Peoples, including the IGC process, WIPO's outreach to Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities, WIPO's capacity building activities, and WIPO's cooperation with other United Nations bodies and mechanisms, such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Fellowship Program was approved by WIPO Member States in December 2008 and started in August 2009. Having an Indigenous fellow as part of the Traditional Knowledge Division has greatly enriched and reinforced its work.

THE ROLE: WHAT WILL THE INDIGENOUS FELLOW DO?

The Fellow will work under the supervision of the Director of the Traditional Knowledge Division of WIPO, or his/her delegate, to:

1. assist in the conceptualization, development, organization and undertaking of outreach, awareness-raising and capacity-building activities with Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities related to intellectual property and biodiversity, cultural heritage, agriculture, life sciences, human rights, health, climate change and sustainable development;
2. contribute to and participate in the Secretariat of the IGC and related meetings, with a particular emphasis on the facilities and mechanisms that ensure representation and participation of Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities in the IGC process;
3. assist in planning and undertaking WIPO's activities relevant to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
4. carry out relevant research, draft and prepare relevant WIPO documents, WIPO publications, and other outreach and awareness-raising materials, as part of WIPO's work program; and,
5. perform such other tasks that may be required in the context of the work of the Division.

The Indigenous Fellow will not be expected to work as an independent scholar, advisor or analyst, but will operate, on a full-time basis, within the WIPO Secretariat and will directly participate in the delivery of core program outputs.

THE REQUIREMENTS: WHAT QUALIFICATIONS ARE SOUGHT AFTER?

The Indigenous Fellow is expected to meet the following requirements:

- 1) Be a recognized and active member of an Indigenous community;
- 2) Have proven experience in Indigenous outreach and in participation in Indigenous organizations and networks, including in an international context;
- 3) Hold a University degree. Legal education components related to intellectual property law would be an advantage;
- 4) Show ability to work effectively in English; the ability to work fluently and prepare documents suitable for publication in at least one other UN language (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish) would be an advantage.

Having a record of relevant publications (general awareness-raising, formal legal analysis or scholarly publications) would be an asset.

The Indigenous Fellow will be selected on the basis of a demonstrated capacity to contribute directly to the approved program outputs established in the WIPO Program and Budget.

The Fellow will need to be available to commence the Fellowship **in mid-October 2024**.

THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS: WHAT DOES THE FELLOWSHIP SCHEME PROVIDE FOR?

- a) Term of fellowship: up to 12 months, with the possibility to be renewed up to additional 12 months, for a maximum of two years.
- b) Anticipated Start Date: mid-October 2024.
- c) Location: WIPO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland.
- d) Stipend: is set in accordance with the level of qualifications and experience of the Fellow.
- e) Travel expenses: WIPO shall provide one economy class ticket (return) from/to the Fellow's place of residence by the most direct and economical route to/from Geneva. If necessary, WIPO may provide assistance in obtaining an entry visa to Switzerland.
- f) WIPO contributes toward the cost of medical insurance and provides professional accident insurance coverage during the course of the fellowship.
- g) WIPO will request a "*carte de légitimation*" for the Fellow, which serves as a residence and work permit, from the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office and to the other international organizations in Geneva. Family members of the Fellow are not eligible for a "*carte de légitimation*."
- h) Tax and social security: Fellows shall be solely responsible for meeting any taxation and social security obligations that may arise directly or indirectly from their contract with WIPO.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fellows are not staff members of WIPO and the position does not lead to any employment rights and entitlements beyond the terms of the fellowship.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST: HOW DO I REGISTER MY INTEREST?

Expressions of interest should be formulated through a written statement by the candidate indicating his or her interest for the fellowship and addressing each of the "Requirements" set out above.

The statement should be complemented only by a comprehensive *curriculum vitae* (résumé) that includes a precise chronology of the candidate's work experience, including in the field as described in the second requirement.

Expressions of interest should not include any other attachments or enclosures (such as copies of publications and other materials).

This statement and *curriculum vitae* should be sent by email (grtkf@wipo.int)

before Sunday August 25, 2024, midnight, Geneva time.

Only short-listed applicants will be contacted. Short-listed candidates may be interviewed remotely and/or invited to complete a written assignment as part of the selection process.
