

Terms of Reference

International Geneva Peace Fellowship Programme

Title: International Geneva Peace Fellow

Duty Station: Geneva, Switzerland

Background

The International Geneva Peace Fellowship Programme is a partnership between Interpeace and the Geneva Graduate Institute, with the generous support of the Foundation for the Adaptation of International Geneva, that fosters the next generation of leadership in peace and humanitarian diplomacy.

Responding to the growing challenges facing multilateralism, the Programme empowers emerging and mid-career professionals with the skills, networks, and practical experience needed to drive innovative solutions for peace.

Over an initial pilot phase, the Programme will support 10 fellows selected from recent graduates and junior to mid-career professionals, for a 9-month residential programme in Geneva. The programme aims to expand Geneva's peace support capacities while building foundations for a brain trust of peacebuilding leaders and a mechanism to reinforce Geneva as a global hub for peace.

To this end, the programme aims to strengthen Geneva's connectivity to key global centres by bringing together an international cohort of Fellows and providing them with access to research and field operations on peace and humanitarian diplomacy, along with an enabling environment within International Geneva — through a host of partners, and networks including the Fabrique de la Paix — the Geneva Graduate Institute's research and student innovation and co-creation hub, Interpeace's global partner network as well as the broader ecosystem of platforms and hubs of International Geneva.

Core Pillars

The programme is structured around three core pillars:

1. **Residential Programme:** A group of 10 International Geneva Peace Fellows will be housed at the historic Domaine Barton, on the shores of Lake Geneva, working on critical, future-oriented, and practical projects addressing pressing global challenges in peace and humanitarian diplomacy. Throughout the programme, Fellows will participate in visits, convenings, collaborative platforms, and learning exchanges across International Geneva.
2. **Institutional collaboration and placements:** Fellows are embedded within partner institutions from leading organisations working in peace and humanitarian diplomacy, while developing projects and immersing themselves in professional networks, knowledge and expertise emerging from International Geneva for a nine-month

placement aligned with their expertise and institutional needs. Fellows are mentored by experts from designated partner organisations and benefit from mentoring support, regular learning sessions, and access to professional networks and forums across Geneva. The Fellowship is designed to provide meaningful institutional exposure, operational experience, and long-term career development opportunities within the peace and humanitarian ecosystem.

3. **Co-creation, research, and leadership:** Fellows build on their existing expertise and learn from the themes of the partners they work with. The Fellowship begins with a week-long intensive training course designed to strengthen the knowledge, analytical capacities, and practical skills required for leadership in peace and humanitarian diplomacy.

Over the course of the fellowship, fellows will also be expected to work on cutting-edge practical projects with partner institutions while drawing on Geneva's unique ecosystem and developing their own strategic ideas within the relevant themes.

Thematic Areas

The Programme is structured around thematic areas defined with partner institutions, reflecting emerging priorities in peace and humanitarian diplomacy. Each Fellow is selected against a specific thematic focus, ensuring alignment between individual expertise, institutional needs, and the bridging of policy and practice.

Fellows will be expected to work with partner organizations on practical projects as well as develop their own strategic ideas in one of the following themes:

1. **The new frontier of peacemaking:** This thematic area focuses on bringing greater visibility to under-addressed and neglected conflicts, while strengthening mediation approaches that respond to how conflicts are changing today. It also engages with identifying entry points for dialogue, ceasefires, and inclusive peace processes in protracted conflicts. This theme promotes context-sensitive approaches to mediation that take into account climate change, environmental pressures, illicit economies, and digital dynamics, while ensuring that gender and inclusion remain central to efforts towards peace mediation.
2. **Health and peace:** This thematic area is grounded in a holistic understanding of health as closely linked to environmental, social, and security dynamics, recognising that siloed approaches to health are no longer effective. It explores how health, as a central entry point, intersects with peace and security in contexts shaped by conflict, climate pressures, and technological change, treating these factors as part of health systems rather than external to them. In response to gaps in how knowledge production on health is siloed, the theme adopts an integrated approach that connects health and peace within broader multilateral efforts.
3. **Ecumenical peacebuilding and faith-based diplomacy:** Advancing the concept and practice of ecumenical peacebuilding through engagement with global church networks and interfaith partners to support dialogue, reconciliation, and social cohesion in diverse country contexts. This thematic area explores how religious actors and institutions contribute to peace processes, including through mediation,

community-level engagement, and moral leadership, while examining the role of faith-based diplomacy in shaping international policy discussions in Geneva. It also engages with efforts to connect locally grounded experiences of peacebuilding with multilateral processes, leveraging the ethical influence and convening power of religious leaders to promote inclusive and sustainable peace outcomes.

4. **Youth leadership, participation, and peacebuilding:** This thematic area focuses on strengthening pathways for meaningful youth participation and leadership across peacebuilding, policy, and civic processes, positioning young people as agents of change and partners in dialogue, conflict prevention, and social cohesion, particularly in contexts affected by conflict, political transitions, and democratic backsliding. It advances youth-led and youth-inclusive approaches through community engagement, local peace initiatives, policy innovation, and advocacy, while promoting humanitarian values through education and strengthening understanding and respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL).
5. **Protection of civilians and contemporary conflict dynamics:** Strengthening programmatic, policy, and humanitarian diplomacy efforts on the protection of civilians through applied, field-informed analysis of evolving conflict risks. This thematic area engages with priority issues in conflict dynamics, including the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, emerging technologies such as drones and artificial intelligence, humanitarian access constraints, displacement dynamics, and civilian harm mitigation practices, with particular attention to risks affecting vulnerable populations, including women and children.
6. **Women, peace and security and inclusive peacebuilding:** Advancing gender-responsive approaches to peacebuilding by strengthening the meaningful participation and leadership of women in conflict prevention, mediation, and peace processes. This thematic area explores how inclusive and gender-sensitive strategies can contribute to more sustainable and equitable peace outcomes, including through support to women-led initiatives, local peace infrastructures, and community-level engagement. It also engages with the structural barriers that limit women's participation, examining pathways to enhance protection, representation, and access to decision-making spaces.

Across all thematic areas, the Fellowship emphasises a balance between analytical, research-based and practical engagement, ensuring that Fellows contribute both to knowledge generation and to tangible operational outcomes within the respective themes.

Duties and Responsibilities

Programme Engagement

Fellows will:

- Develop and work on a strategic idea or initiative aligned with the thematic priorities defined for each fellowship cohort.
- Engage with Geneva-based institutions, experts, and practitioners working on innovation in peace and humanitarian diplomacy.
- Build a community of International Geneva Peace Fellows.
- Contribute to collaborative partnerships and research initiatives.
- Strengthen Geneva's visibility and connectivity as a global peace hub.

Institutional Placement

During the fellowship period, Fellows will be placed within partner institutions including:

- Interpeace
- The Geneva Graduate Institute
- The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
- The Kofi Annan Foundation
- Centre for Civilians in Conflict
- World Council of Churches

The placement will ensure complementarity between the Fellow's expertise and the operational needs of the host institution.

Participation in Fellowship Activities

Mandatory participation in Fellow programme activities, including:

- Monthly fellows' meetings for joint reflection and learning.
- Quarterly learning and exchange sessions.
- Mentorship sessions with senior practitioners.
- A mid-term Fellowship Assessment conducted by the Geneva Graduate Institute and Interpeace.
- Programme-wide discussions and strategic exchanges with Geneva stakeholders.

Mentorship and Peer Learning

Fellows will work closely with designated mentors who accompany and guide them throughout the programme, strengthening their leadership and innovation capacity through mentoring and peer exchange.

Expected Outputs

By the end of the fellowship, Fellows are expected to deliver a Fellowship report detailing the following outputs:

- Contributions to peace and humanitarian diplomacy initiatives within their host institution.
- Practical outputs such as research contributions, policy insights, dialogue initiatives, or innovation projects.
- Top 25 network contacts made during the fellowship across the Geneva peace ecosystem and beyond.
- Participate in building a community of International Geneva Peace Fellows.

Duration and Duty Station

The fellowship is awarded for a duration of **nine (9) months**.

Fellows will be based in Geneva, Switzerland, with primary working locations in partner institutions (see above).

Fellows may also participate in field visits, conferences, and other programme activities related to their fellowship projects.

Eligibility

Eligible candidates must fulfil at least one of the following profiles:

- **Recent Graduates:** MA programme graduates (in peace-related studies, social or political science, international relations or other relevant fields) who completed their studies within 12 months of applying, or advanced PhD candidates transitioning into policy and practice-oriented careers.
- **Junior (1-4 years' experience) professionals** at early stages of their career development.
- **Mid-career (5-10 years' experience) professionals** preparing for the next step in their professional development in peace and humanitarian diplomacy.

Candidates must demonstrate:

- Exceptional leadership potential in policy and/or practice — particularly in areas such as peace and humanitarian diplomacy, international affairs, and social movements;
- A balance between analytical and practical experience and/or strong research skills are considered an advantage;
- Excellent writing and communications skills in English and/or French; additional languages are an asset;
- Proven ability to work in a multicultural team;
- Ability to be flexible and adapt to different contexts and working environments;

- Availability to commit to a 9-month residency program in Geneva from September 2026 to June 2027.

The Fellowship is not a postdoctoral programme. It is a hands-on, practice-oriented experience combining policy engagement, operational exposure, and applied research. The Fellowship aims to identify, attract, and retain high-potential global talent within International Geneva's peace and humanitarian ecosystem. Candidates will be selected through a written application based on the quality of their potential for leadership and alignment with the Programme's themes and objectives.

Employment Conditions

Fellows will benefit from:

- A monthly stipend (subject to applicable Swiss social security contributions);
- Administrative support in obtaining the necessary work authorisation and permit documentation;
- The possibility of accommodation at Villa Barton, subject to availability.

Supervision and Reporting

Fellows will work under the supervision of the relevant host institution within the Fellowship Programme and will engage with mentors and programme coordinators throughout the fellowship period.

How to apply

Candidates will be selected through a written application process based on the demonstrated quality of their leadership experience and potential, as well as their alignment with the Programme's themes and objectives.

To apply for the Fellowship, candidates are required to submit the following through the application portal:

- A curriculum vitae (maximum 2 pages);
- A cover letter (maximum 1 page/approx. 500 words) clearly outlining:
 - the candidate's preferred thematic area;
 - the candidate's relevant leadership experience and why they would be a strong fit for the Fellowship; and
 - the strategic idea or initiative the candidate would ideally seek to develop over the course of the Fellowship.

Candidates can apply for the fellowship through [this link](#).

The applications for the International Geneva Peace Fellowship will close on 7 June 2026 at 11:59 pm CET.

In case of any questions, candidates can reach out to us at peacefellowship@interpeace.org