

HOW-TO

A YOUTH FRIENDLY GUIDE ON REGISTRATIONS TO UN SPACES



**Your Guide
to UNlock
Registrations!**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PUBLISHED BY: CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality

DATE: 2024–2025

We thank everyone who contributed their insights and feedback during the development process.

GLOSSARY

ECOSOC Status

ECOSOC status refers to the consultative status that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can obtain with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). **Having ECOSOC status allows NGOs to participate fully in the United Nations system, send delegates, send and deliver statements, organize side-events, and more.** Imagine the ECOSOC status being the main ID of an organization within the United Nations (UN) system!

Indico

Indico is the main software system the UN employs to manage hybrid and online events that the UN organizes. **All the advocacy conferences can be found there!** Indico is also the system through which advocates register for UN events, regardless of whether they access the UN with UN grounds pass or a special event ticket.

UN Grounds Pass

A “**grounds pass**” is a pass or identification that allows individuals to enter and move within the UN premises. **These passes are typically issued to individuals with legitimate reasons to be on the UN premises**, such as delegates, staff, accredited media, ECOSOC-accredited NGOs, and visitors attending official meetings or events.

Special Event Ticket

The UN often hosts various events, conferences, and meetings that are open to activists (so not only to organizations with ECOSOC status), **but attendance may require special invitations or registration**, commonly referred to as special event tickets.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to another advocacy toolkit by CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality, your go-to guide for navigating registrations at the United Nations in Geneva and New York!

As an organization committed to amplifying young people's voices, we know that engaging in advocacy at the United Nations (UN) can be a powerful tool for creating change. However, the reality of accessing these spaces isn't as simple as it seems. While we are here to help you confidently navigate the registration process and make your voice heard, it's important to understand that the UN's systems are not without their flaws—especially when it comes to youth-led organizations, activists, and those from the Global South. This unequal access to information reinforces the existing challenges for young people from diverse backgrounds to actively participate in UN events and raise issues that are important to us.

LETS BE HONEST:

Access to the UN is often restricted, colonial, and incredibly difficult.

FOR EXAMPLE

Getting ECOSOC status

which grants official physical access and privileges



can take years

For example, it took CHOICE nine years to obtain it. During this process, you have to submit a mountain of documents, many of which youth-led networks and organizations may not have or simply lack the capacity to gather. These barriers are real, and the process can feel overwhelming, especially for grassroots organizations that lack the resources or institutional support to navigate it. So, while we encourage you to engage at the UN and apply for various registrations, we also want to make sure you know the full reality: it's not easy, and it's not built with young, Global South activists in mind.



Moreover, civic space within the UN is shrinking, especially as hybrid meetings become the norm and NGOs—even those with ECOSOC status—are being denied access to negotiation rooms in New York. This system isn't just about opening doors—it's about who gets to pass through those doors and who gets to set the agenda. Many NGOs, even those with ECOSOC status, do not represent the progressive values that youth-led organizations and activists fight for, which raises questions about who gets to participate meaningfully in UN processes.

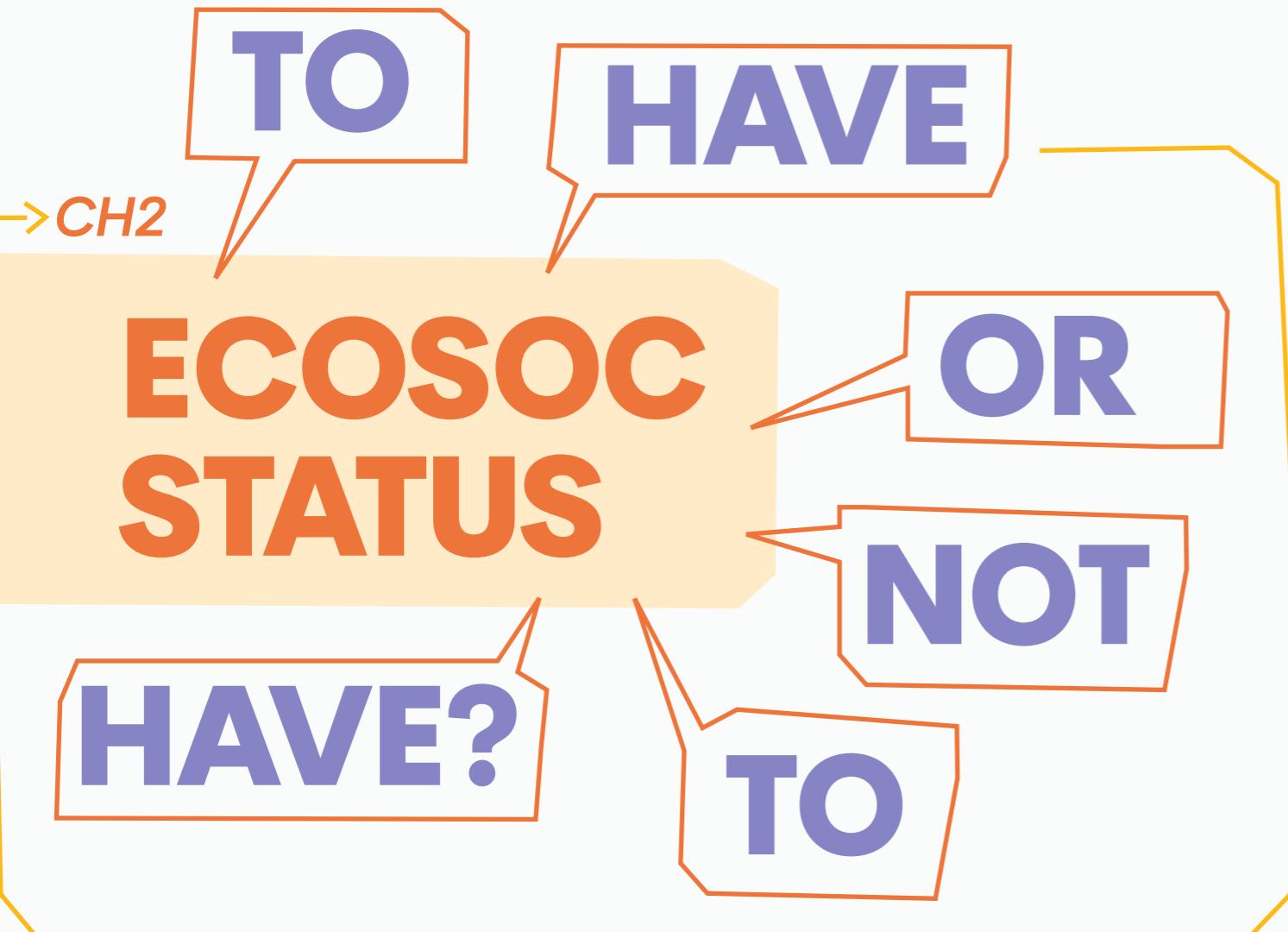
But despite these challenges, we are not powerless. This toolkit is here to equip you with the tools and resources to navigate these obstacles and break down these barriers. We provide step-by-step guides for everything from **ECOSOC status applications to grounds pass and special ticket registrations for key UN meetings and events**. We'll walk you through the process of using UN platforms like Indico to register for events and understand the digital registration system that the UN uses. Along the way, we'll also give you insights on how to access these spaces in a way that is inclusive and accessible.

Whether you're aiming for ECOSOC status, seeking alternative routes for access, or simply trying to navigate the complex registration systems, this toolkit provides you with the know-how to take action. We want to ensure you have all the tools to go beyond the current restrictions and engage with the UN, whether physically or virtually, in a way that's equitable and impactful. Together, we can push for a future where young people's voices are heard, where spaces are accessible, and where the UN is truly inclusive of all those fighting for change.



IN SUMMARY, THIS TOOLKIT IS YOUR PASSPORT TO EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY AT THE UNITED NATIONS, WHETHER YOU'RE AN ECOSOC-ACCREDITED NGO OR AN ADVOCATE EXPLORING DIFFERENT AVENUES FOR CHANGE.

WE WILL TAKE YOU THROUGH ALL-THINGS-REGISTRATION!



01

Ever heard of ECOSOC status?

It's like a special permission slip for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to join in on the events, conferences, and talks happening at the United Nations. It's important to mention ECOSOC status in this guide, because this is how you can get a UN grounds pass and register in UN advocacy events. With ECOSOC status, NGOs can do a lot of things within the UN. They can ask questions, be part of UN meetings, and even host their own events. It's like getting an (almost) all-access pass to the UN world.

Back in 1945, only 41 NGOs had ECOSOC status but now there are over 6,000 of them!

02

If an NGO wants to have ECOSOC status, they have to meet certain criteria. They need to be around for at least two years, have existing headquarters, a fair way of making decisions, and democratic values. Also, they can't be set up by governments – they have to be independent.

But if an NGO doesn't have ECOSOC status, their participation within the UN can be limited and often relies on partnerships with other NGOs that do have ECOSOC status. They may not be able to ask questions, attend UN sessions (unless they get a special ticket!), or organize events in their own name.

03

Applying for ECOSOC status follows certain procedures. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations¹ looks at these applications twice a year. Here's the tricky part, though: a lot of applications get put on hold, and many NGOs have to wait for a long time. For example, it took CHOICE 9 years to obtain ECOSOC status!

Some people think that certain countries are using sneaky tactics to keep out NGOs that criticize them. In fact, some folks, like the Human Rights House Foundation, have called ECOSOC a "21st-century censorship bureau."² They believe that certain countries in the committee are playing games to delay applications, asking lots of questions that don't really matter just to make things difficult for NGOs.

So, ECOSOC status is a big deal for NGOs who want to be part of the UN action, but sometimes it feels like getting that status is harder than it should be.

USEFUL

Click here you can find the latest updates in regard to ECOSOC: [Follow this link](#)

RESOURCES

¹ The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) is a permanent part of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), created way back in 1946. This Committee is in charge of giving NGOs their official status with ECOSOC at the United Nations. Want to learn more? [Just follow this link](#)

² Article of the Index on Censorship, May 30, 2014, [Follow this link](#)

HOW DO I GET ECOSOC STATUS?

As we previously mentioned, having ECOSOC status opens some valuable doors, especially if you're looking to get involved in the UN system! In the next section, we'll walk you through how to obtain ECOSOC status for your organization so you can make the most of these opportunities!

To get ECOSOC status for your organization, you need to meet some specific requirements. Let's look at what those are:

→ **REGISTRATION**

Your organization must be officially registered as a non-governmental, non-profit organization and should have been active for at least two years at the time of application.

→ **HEADQUARTERS**

You should have a permanent headquarters.



CONSTITUTION

03

Your organization needs a constitution that has been adopted democratically.

REPRESENTATION

04

You must have the authority to speak on behalf of your members.

STRUCTURE

05

Your organization should have a representative structure that includes various voices.

ACCOUNTABILITY

06

There should be clear mechanisms for accountability and decision-making that are democratic and transparent.

FUNDING

07

Most of your organization's resources should come from contributions by national affiliates, other components, or individual members.

FYI

Unfortunately, these requirements can be difficult for young people's initiatives and grassroots movements to meet, making it challenging for them to obtain ECOSOC status.

But don't worry! You can still attend and participate in UN events with either a UN grounds pass or a special ticket.

for your info

YOU CAN
FIND MORE
INFORMATION
IN THIS PAGE



If you do meet those requirements, and can apply for ECOSOC status, here's more information on the type of status you can get:

GENERAL STATUS

Imagine a big international NGO. Organizations with General Status address a wide range of issues related to ECOSOC. These organizations are usually well-established and work in many countries. An example could be Plan International!

SPECIAL STATUS

This one's given to smaller NGOs that focus on specific areas within ECOSOC's activities. These organizations are often newer and have a more specialized mission. CHOICE is registered with special consultative status, as many NGOs are, so you might consider this option too!

ROSTER STATUS

If the organization doesn't fit into either of these categories, it might be placed on the Roster. These organizations aren't directly part of ECOSOC's main work, but they're still cool. They can go to UN conferences and share their thoughts by writing statements, even though they're not super involved in ECOSOC's everyday stuff.

If you're still confused that's totally fine!

You can also see the list of all the organizations that have ECOSOC status, as of 2022 here



You might find NGOs with focus areas similar to those of your organization, and that can help you understand which status suits you best!

But keep in mind, the Committee on NGOs makes the final determination on whether your organization is eligible for ECOSOC status and what level of consultative status it will receive.

READY TO APPLY FOR ECOSOC?

LET'S DO IT STEP-BY-STEP

STEP 1

Profile Registration

- Register your organizational profile via this [link](#). It takes about 10 minutes, and you'll get an email when it's approved.
- Make sure your organization is not already on the list. If you are unsure, check out this [link](#)

STEP 2

Online Application

FYI: You can find more information about the application form on the UN website; via this [link](#)

- After approval, you need to fill out the online application form in English or French.
 - Login [here](#) to submit your application online.
 - Click on the Consultative Status tab to start filling out the application form (comprised of 22 questions!).
 - Supporting documents can be uploaded by using the Documents tab. The documents are comprised of your NGOs constitution/charter, registration certificate, recent financial statement, and optional publications.

IMPORTANT DATES

Make sure your complete application (which includes answers to all 22 questions and all required documents) is submitted by June 1st of the year before you want to be considered for consultative status

FOR EXAMPLE: if you submit your application by June 1, 2024, the **Committee will review it in 2025**. Applications submitted between June 2, 2024, and June 1, 2025, will be reviewed in 2026.

STEP 3**NGO Branch Screening**

- Between June 2 and the next Committee meeting³, the NGO Branch reviews all applications they received. During this time, they might reach out to you if they need extra information or any clarifications. After they finish the review, they'll let you know when they plan to send your application to the NGO Committee.
- When your application is added to the NGO Committee's agenda, you'll get a letter inviting you to attend the session. You can send up to two representatives to be present while your application is being reviewed, but attending is optional, it won't impact the outcome. Keep in mind that if you do attend, your organization will need to cover all travel costs.

STEP 4**Committee on NGOs**

- The Committee meets twice a year to decide which NGOs to recommend for consultative status. During these sessions, the Committee might ask your NGO some additional questions, which will come through the NGO Branch. To avoid delays, it's best to reply to any questions quickly so your application doesn't get postponed to future sessions.
- After the session, you'll get an official notification about the Committee's decision on your application. The Committee also publishes these recommendations in an official report, which goes to the next ECOSOC meeting for final approval. If more information is needed, your application might be deferred to the next session until all questions are answered.

³ | The ECOSOC NGO Committee typically meets twice a year to review applications for consultative status, with sessions held in January and May or June. The January session is the "regular" session, while the May/June meeting is the "resumed" session. Each session lasts around two weeks. Between these meetings, the NGO Branch conducts a review of applications and may contact applicants for additional information or clarification, which usually happens between early June and late May of the following year.

After an application is reviewed and scheduled for a session, the applicant organization is notified. If the NGO Committee defers a decision, the application is carried over to the next session. Overall, the process from initial submission to final decision can take several months, sometimes up to a year, depending on the timing of submission and any additional information requests from the Committee.

STEP 5

ECOSOC Final Decision

Once the Committee recommends, Economic and Social Council makes the final decision.

If your application is approved, you'll receive an official notification from the UN Secretariat.

Congratulations!
You're officially
part of the
ECOSOC crew,
which is a huge
achievement! Yay!

FYI **NGOs WITH ECOSOC STATUS MUST SUBMIT TO THE COMMITTEE ON NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, EVERY FOURTH YEAR, A BRIEF REPORT OF THEIR ACTIVITIES, REGARDING THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS (QUADRENNIAL REPORT).**

You can find the complete step-by-step guide formulated by the UN for ECOSOC registration [here](#), including walkthrough videos.

You can also find more information on ECOSOC status in general [here](#).

WHAT IS THE

INDICO SOFTWARE?

Different events may have different requirements for participation. Some may be open to a wider audience, while others are restricted to specific groups or those with certain credentials. At the UN, registering for an event starts with Indico!

Indico is the mastermind of event planning in the UN world. It's a software that helps organize events and sign up to UN events, whether they're happening in person, online, or a mix of both.

You can use Indico to register for advocacy events, like the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), or the Human Rights Council, but there are specific requirements to keep in mind.

You can access Indico [here](#).



**STEP 1****Visit the Indico Platform**

- + **For UNHQ:** Go to the UN Indico platform for New York at <https://indico.un.org>.
- + **For UNOG:** Visit the UN Indico platform for Geneva at the same URL, <https://indico.un.org>. You can use the same site for both locations, but they may have different registration requirements for each office.

STEP 2**Create a New Account**

- + Click on the "Login" button in the top right corner.
- + Then, select "Create a new Indico account" if you don't already have one. If you already have an account, simply log in.

STEP 3**Fill in Personal Details**

- + Complete the form with your full name, email address, and organization details.
- + If you're associated with a specific UN program or event, make sure to specify these in the comments or organization fields if prompted.

STEP 4**Verify Your Email**

- + After submitting your details, you will receive a verification email. Open this email and click the link to confirm your account.
- + If you don't receive the email within a few minutes, check your spam/junk folder.

STEP 5**Request Access to UNHQ or UNOG Events**

- + For UNHQ: If you are attending events at UNHQ in New York, you may need to submit additional documentation based on event requirements, which could include official invitation letters, identification, or organizational affiliation.
- + For UNOG: For events at UNOG in Geneva, they may also require specific documentation. Always check with the event organizer or the specific event page for details on any additional requirements.

STEP 6

Await Account Approval

- After completing your registration, it may take a few days for your account to be fully approved, especially if additional verification is needed for specific events.

STEP 7

Log In and Register for Events

- Once approved, you can log into your Indico account at <https://indico.un.org>.
- Go to the specific event page you wish to attend and complete any necessary registration forms. Each event might have unique registration steps, including document uploads or confirmation of organizational affiliation.

Important Notes

- This process creates a single Indico account that can be used for both UNHQ and UNOG events.
- The same account creation process applies regardless of whether you're registering for events in New York or Geneva.
- Your Indico profile is personal and should not be shared with others.
- Each participant must register individually; group registrations are not possible.

Remember that creating an Indico account does not automatically grant you access to UN events or premises. Each event has its own registration and approval process, and you may need additional credentials (like ECOSOC status or a UN Grounds Pass) depending on the specific event and your role.

WHAT IS A UN GROUNDS PASS AND A SPECIAL EVENT TICKET?

As we explained in the previous section, Indico is used to register for events, regardless of whether you have a grounds pass or need a special event ticket. But then, if you want to physically enter the UN, you need either a grounds pass, or a special event ticket!

What is the UN Grounds Pass?

A UN grounds pass is an official identification card that grants regular access to UN premises. It's typically issued to Representatives of organizations with consultative status, UN staff members, and diplomats from member states.

Key points about UN grounds passes:

- They are valid for extended periods (often annually).
- They allow entry to UN buildings without additional registration for most events (not for all).

What is a special event ticket?

A special event ticket is a temporary access pass for specific UN events. It's usually for: one-time visitors, participants in short-term conferences or meetings, people without regular UN access.

Key points about special event tickets:

- Valid only for the duration of a specific event.
- Often issued after registering through Indico.
- May require additional approval or documentation.





To recap, the link between grounds pass, ECOSOC and special event tickets:

Earlier in this guide, we took you through the process of getting ECOSOC status and why it can be useful. Having ECOSOC status impacts your access to the United Nations, and therefore is linked to grounds pass and special event tickets (which grant you physical access to the UN!)

- If you are an ECOSOC accredited organization, to apply for a grounds pass, and/or a Special Event Ticket, you need to use Indico.
- If you are not an ECOSOC accredited organization, you cannot get a grounds pass.
 - ✚ You need to become an ECOSOC accredited organization first, and then try to get grounds passes! But, there are other ways to get into the UN premises and attend high-level events.
- If you're not an ECOSOC accredited organization, a partner organization which has an ECOSOC status can request a special ticket for you through Indico. This way, even if you don't have ECOSOC status, you can still attend UN events. So, just find an organization that can approve your Indico ticket, and you'll be all set to join.
 - ✚ Keep in mind that each NGO has a limited number of spots when requesting special tickets, so try to reach out in advance! Usually, it does not take long. We, at CHOICE, did it a couple of times with our partners to grant them access to the UN premises!

PRO TIP

Always keep an eye on your email to know which documents to bring to the UN

Once your registrations are approved (your special event ticket or your ground pass), you will get an email about their decision, and what documents to bring with you at the UN.

But... I don't know any organization with an ECOSOC status who can help me get a special events ticket.

How do I proceed?

No worries! There are still ways you can attend high-level events, even if you don't know anyone with ECOSOC status. Here are some tips to help you connect with organizations that might sponsor you or even find events you can attend without ECOSOC status.

→ CHECK OUT THE UN NGO DIRECTORY

The UN keeps a directory of all organizations with ECOSOC status, organized by field and region. You can search for organizations that work on topics you're passionate about—like climate change, human rights, youth empowerment, etc.

Once you find some groups that align with your interests, try reaching out and let them know why you'd like to attend the event, and if they can help you with getting a pass or special ticket.

You can find the list [here](#)



→ REACH OUT TO NATIONAL AND LOCAL NETWORKS

Many countries have networks or coalitions of civil society and youth organizations. Some of these groups have ECOSOC status and may be attending the event or willing to sponsor young people.

You can find these organizations by doing a quick search for youth networks or civil society organizations in your country, or globally. Even if they aren't accredited, they might be able to introduce you to someone who is.

REACH OUT TO NATIONAL AND LOCAL NETWORKS

Some UN programs have platforms and groups that work specifically with young people and civil society, like the UN Major Group for Children and Youth.

Follow these groups on social media, join their events, and introduce yourself in their online communities. Many young people have connected with sponsoring organizations through these platforms, which are especially focused on getting youth voices into high-level spaces.

Following these steps can help you find the right support for your UN event journey, even if you don't know anyone with ECOSOC status right now. Just remember, networking takes time, so start reaching out as early as possible!

03

To recap, the link between grounds pass, Indico and special event tickets:

You can apply for both a ground pass and a special event ticket on the Indico platform

- If you have a grounds pass, you are technically allowed to enter UN anytime during the said year. But sometimes, for events, you need to also register for a Special Event ticket, even if you have a ground pass. It's confusing, we know, but UN rules can be a bit tricky!
- For those without a grounds pass, completing Indico registration (with a partner organization that has ECOSOC status) is typically the first step towards obtaining a special event ticket.
 - After Indico registration, those without grounds passes usually receive instructions on how to obtain their special event ticket, which may involve picking it up at a designated UN office.

Grounds Pass or Special Ticket? Let's compare and recap!



GROUND PASS

- Typically, only available for NGOs with ECOSOC status.⁴
- Grants access to UN spaces for general purposes.
- Usually valid for a longer term (e.g., months or years).
- Can be used multiple times during its validity.
- Limited number per organization.
- Longer processing time.



SPECIAL EVENT TICKET

- Available even if you don't have an ECOSOC status. Open to wider range of participants.
- Grant access to specific UN high-level meetings and events.
- Applications are usually processed through dedicated, online registration portals for each event, (easier!).
- Access is limited to a specific event only.
- You might need special tickets for some events and conferences, like the ICPD regional review, on top of having grounds pass.
- Available to more attendees.
- Typically faster to obtain.

In general, if you can have a grounds pass: that's great, because it makes your access to the UN easier!

PRO TIP: To be safe, **ALWAYS check if the UN event you are attending requires a special ticket, or if your ground pass is enough!**

⁴ | Exceptions: Some organizations with special partnerships or affiliations may also be able to request grounds passes for their members. For example, ACUNS (Academic Council on the United Nations System) can provide grounds passes to its members for scholarly research purposes, even if the individual members don't represent ECOSOC-accredited NGOs

SO, YOU WANT TO GO TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN GENEVA?

If you want the freedom to access the UN Office at Geneva (UNOG) throughout the year without relying on special event tickets, you can apply for a grounds pass! A grounds pass lets you move around the UNOG premises as needed, making it easier to attend meetings, network, and join events.

In this section, we'll walk you through the steps to get a UNOG grounds pass. Keep in mind, the process for getting a grounds pass is a bit different for UNOG and for the UN in New York (UNHQ). So here, we're focusing exclusively on how to apply for the UNOG grounds pass. If you want to get a grounds pass for both locations, you'll need to apply separately for each one – but don't worry, we'll also cover the steps for applying for the UNHQ grounds pass in another section!

AND JUST A REMINDER:

You must be part of an ECOSOC-accredited organization to be eligible for a grounds pass, and you must be 18 (not very youth friendly!)

But don't worry – you can refer back to the earlier section on how to obtain an ECOSOC status in PAGE 9 of this toolkit!



A note on UN grounds passes for the UNOG:

- An NGO can request up to seven annual grounds passes per year. These are valid until December 31 of the current year. The organization must designate at least the President/CEO or Executive Director as the first representative.
- After designating the President/Executive Director, the organization can apply for passes for up to six additional representatives. These roles are typically for staff such as advocacy officers, or other personnel.
- + NGOs may also request temporary grounds passes (valid for up to 3 months). A total of 9 temporary passes can be issued per year, with a limit of 3 months per pass. These passes are for individuals who require shorter-term access

Follow the steps below to apply for your Grounds Pass!

- 01 To get things sorted, first, log in to the iCSO database.
- 02 Click on the links for Consultative status, Designations, then Geneva.
- 03 Next up, fill in the details for the President/CEO/ Executive Director of your NGO ahead of time (even if they are not traveling to Geneva, they need to receive an annual pass).
- 04 Do the same for other NGO representatives (be aware they will ask some personal questions, so if you are filling it in on someone else's behalf make sure you can ask them about this).
- 05 After filling in the details in the online database, now, here's the crucial step: send a proper letter (in your organization's letterhead) saying who's going to engage at the UN and a copy of the person's passport to the NGO Liaison Unit. It's best to do this by email at unog.ngo@un.org. The President/Executive Director or CEO of the NGO must sign this letter.

FYI! Make sure to do it at least a few months (or even longer) before you plan to go to the Palais des Nations.

You will find more information [here](#) on the format of the letter:

SAMPLE LETTER FOR REQUESTING NGO GROUNDS PASSES AT UNOG
OFFICIAL LETTERHEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

ADDRESSED TO:

Ms. Sophie Torelli Chironi
Chief, NGO Liaison Unit
H Building
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
E-mail: unog.ngo@un.org
Fax no: (41) 22 917 05 83

DATE:

Dear Madam,

The [PLEASE ENTER THE NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION] is a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since [YEAR].

I am requesting the following Grounds pass(es) for the representatives of our organization for [YEAR]:

Annual Grounds passes

- [Mr/Ms] [First name, last name], as [President/Chief Executive Officer]
- [Mr/Ms] [First name, last name], as [Chief Administrative Officer]
- [Mr/Ms] [First name, last name], as [Geneva Main Representative]
- [Mr/Ms] [First name, last name], as [Geneva Additional Representative]
- [Mr/Ms] [First name, last name], as [Geneva Additional Representative]
- [Mr/Ms] [First name, last name], as [Geneva Additional Representative]
- [Mr/Ms] [First name, last name], as [Geneva Additional Representative]

Temporary Grounds passes

- [Mr/Ms] [First name, last name], as [Geneva Additional Representative] from [1 day up to 3 months]

I hereby confirm that I have pre-registered the above-mentioned representatives in the iCSO database of the www.csoonet.org website.

I hereby confirm that the temporary Grounds pass(es) will not be used to attend a specific meeting for which an online registration page exists on the UNOG's registration platform [Indico](#) and I understand that registration requests for a specific meeting will be handled by the secretariat of the meeting of interest via [Indico](#).

I am aware that holders of UNOG grounds passes are subject to relevant UN rules and regulations and must fully comply with the [processes and directions](#) set forth by UNOG Security and Safety Service and the NGO Liaison Unit.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,
NAME, TITLE
SIGNATURE (as shown in passport)

specifically, a sample letter for annual and temporary grounds passes.

**PRO
TIP**

If you encounter any issues or have specific questions during the process, look for a "Help" or "Contact Us" option within the online system of the UN for assistance.

**Once your request is approved...
you can book your flight to Geneva!**

- Once you are in Geneva, to begin your visit to the Palace of Nations, the first step is obtaining your badge. Head to the Pregny Gate for this process.
- Ensure you have your passport or ID card and the email containing the QR code (or UN Event Pass) or confirmation email (approval of your Grounds Pass).
- Present these documents to the security officer at the door, who will verify their validity.
- Once cleared, proceed to the I.D Help Desk to receive your badge.

keep in mind

- **Check the weather!** You may be waiting outside for a while before getting your ground pass; indeed, the waiting lines can be quite long... Don't forget to bring some water and snacks in case you have to wait for a while. Moreover, bringing luggage and suitcases is not allowed when picking up your pass; so make sure to drop them at the hotel or check if someone can keep it for you. Finally, should you have special needs (e.g., disability, pregnancy, medical condition), please let the Officer at the entrance know.



SO, YOU WANT TO GO TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK?

To obtain a UN Grounds Pass at the United Nations headquarters in New York City, you typically need to follow a similar process. **But first, let us give you the basics on grounds passes for the UN headquarters in New York:**

- Your organization must have consultative status with ECOSOC.
- You must be at least 18 years old to apply for a grounds pass (Not very youth-friendly, but that's not a surprise!)
- Passes are super useful for organizations that need to travel to New York multiple times a year and/or are based there, as they provide access to the UN all year round.
- You can ask for up to 7 annual passes a year.
 - + The first pass must be for the head or Executive Director/President/CEO.
 - + After the President is approved, you can ask for passes for 6 more representatives.
- Grounds passes are usually valid from January 3 to December 31 of the said year.

HOW DO I GET MY PASS?

01 Log in to the UN's online system

02 Once logged in, **navigate to the “Designations” section**. This is usually found in the menu on the left side of the screen.

03 In the Designations section, you'll first need to designate the head/President/CEO/ Executive Director of your organization. **Look for an option to “Add New Designation” or similar.**

04 **Fill out the required information for the CEO or ED.** This typically includes their name, title, contact information, and the duration of their designation.

05 **Submit this designation and wait for approval.** This step must be completed and approved before you can request passes for other representatives.

06 **Once the CEO or ED designation is approved**, you can request annual passes for up to 6 additional representatives.

07 To do this, return to the Designations section and look for an option to add new designations or request passes.

08 For each representative, you'll need to provide:

- + Their full name
- + Title or position in the organization
- + Contact information
- + The duration of their designation (**for annual passes, this would be from January 3 to December 31, 2024**)
- + After filling out the information for each representative, submit the requests.

09 The system will likely ask you to confirm the submissions. **Make sure all details are correct before final submission.****10** After submission, **the NGO Branch, DESA will review your requests.** You can usually check the status of your requests in the same Designations section of the online system.**11** Once approved, you should receive email confirmations for each approved pass.

- + After approval, log back into the system and print the security form or any relevant documents.

12 Collect Your Pass:

- + Visit the UN Pass and ID Office at **320 East 45th Street, New York, NY 10017, Ground Floor.**
- + **Hours:** Monday through Friday, between 9:00 am and 2:00 pm.
- + **Bring:**
 - ♥ The printed security form
 - ♥ A valid photo ID issued by a governmental authority (**e.g., passport or driver's license**)

13 Personal Collection: Each representative must collect their own grounds pass!**keep in mind**

Check the weather! You may be waiting outside for a while before getting your ground pass; indeed, the waiting lines can be quite long... Don't forget to bring some water and snacks in case you have to wait for a while. Moreover, bringing luggage and suitcases is not allowed when picking up your pass; so make sure to drop them at the hotel or check if someone can keep it for you. Finally, should you have special needs (e.g., disability, pregnancy, medical condition), please let the Officer at the entrance know.

**PRO
TIP**

If you encounter any issues or have specific questions during the process, look for a "Help" or "Contact Us" option within the online system of the UN for assistance.

Important Notes!

- Annual passes are valid from January 3 to December 31, 2024.
- The process may change depending on the health situation in New York.
- During the UN General Assembly High-Level Week (usually in September), access with regular grounds passes may be suspended.
- Always check the official UN ECOSOC website for the most up-to-date information before applying.
- Note that if UN grounds pass request is denied by the NGO Branch, which may be due to incomplete, incorrect or inconsistent information, it is the responsibility of the NGO to re-submit a corrected request online for their approval.
- Any leadership changes should be told to the NGO Branch. It's super important for your organization to keep its email address updated on your profiles. That way, they can send you important info whenever you need it.
- Familiarize yourself with the UN's rules and guidelines, including security protocols and behavior expectations while on the UN premises. Failure to comply with these rules can result in the revocation of your pass.

ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY

Accessibility and inclusivity at the UN GENEVA

Welcome to the Accessibility and Inclusivity Corner of our UN Registration Toolkit! Ever wondered how easy it is for everyone to navigate the halls of the United Nations? In this section, we're diving into the world of accessibility at the UN. We'll explore how inclusive the UN spaces really are, share some tips and tricks to make your experience smoother, and give you the lowdown on who to contact if you need help.

As of 2024, the ongoing liquidity crisis at the United Nations is having a serious impact on accessibility for people with disabilities, especially in the offices in Geneva and New York. **This financial strain is leading to problems that make it harder for staff, delegates, and visitors to navigate and work in these important spaces.**

- In Geneva, the Palais des Nations is undergoing renovations as part of a big plan to modernize the building. However, budget cuts have slowed down improvements that would make the space more accessible. One major issue is that escalators are frequently out of service, which is a problem for anyone who relies on them to get around. This not only makes it difficult for staff with disabilities but also affects visitors who need these facilities to participate in meetings and events.
- The situation is similar at the UN Headquarters in New York. Here too, escalator outages are becoming more common, making it tough for everyone to move around the building easily.
- The liquidity crisis has also delayed important upgrades and enhancements to assistive technologies that could help make meetings and public spaces more accessible.

Accessibility should never be seen as an optional extra; it's a fundamental part of creating a fair and inclusive workplace for everyone. While the UN premises haven't progressed as far as they should have, there are still mechanisms and arrangements in place for people with disabilities!

We'll kick things off with the UN Office in Geneva (UNOG) and then move on to the UN Headquarters (UNHQ) in New York. Whether you use a wheelchair, have visual or hearing impairments, or just want to know more about inclusivity at the UN, this section (hopefully!) has you covered.

Pregny Gate

© Image by Thatchwebsite



View of the Pregny Gate at the United Nations Office at Geneva, with its main building visible. A road with cars and motorcycles is in the foreground, surrounded by greenery.

Visual Guide for Accessibility (UN Geneva)

Map of UN Geneva showing priority access points, accessible doors, elevators, bathrooms, and conference rooms. The map uses color codes to represent different buildings (marked with letters) and icons indicating important services like medical care, restaurants, and accessible routes.



Hey! So, if you're like me and need some extra support, there's priority access for people with disabilities at the Pregny Gate. There's also this really handy visual guide that shows you where all the accessible spots are – things like doors, elevators, bathrooms, and parking. The guide uses icons and color codes, making it a lot easier to get around, especially if you have visual impairments or learning disabilities. *(guide is pasted above)*

When you're heading in or out through the Pregny Gate, here's how to make things go smoothly:

- + **Look for the Left-Side Ramp:** When you get close to the gate, head for the ramp on the left side of the building. It's made for easy wheelchair and mobility access, so you can get through without any hassle.
- + **Need Help? Use the Intercom:** If you need assistance, there's an intercom right by the gate. Just press the button, and security will help you open the gate or assist you with anything you need.
- + **Navigating the Gate:** The gate opens automatically, but it opens toward you. So, after you press the intercom, take a small step back to make sure you have enough space to pass through safely.

If you want to know the current opening hours and get more info about accessibility, check out the accessibility guide and other details here: [UN Geneva Accessibility Information](#)

02

Super cool, thanks for sharing! I'll definitely pass this info along. Just wanted to mention, the UN in Geneva also supports people with hearing impairments. Here's what they offer:

- + **Sign Language & Captions:** Most panel discussions have sign language and captions, but to be sure about other events, you can contact the Accessibility Focal Point at the Human Rights Council Secretariat. Just email HCRCouncil@ohchr.org with 'Accessibility Focal Point' in the subject line.
- + **Hearing Loops:** They also provide hearing loops for meetings. If you need this or any other accommodations, check out the Accessibility Guide for Persons with Disabilities, specifically page 15, for how to request it."



01



Thanks for all the tips, guys!

The UN has also specific language disability guides outlined in the [Disability Language Guidelines](#): [Annex 1](#) and [Annex 2](#)! This strategy is like a roadmap, showing the UN how to include people with disabilities in everything they do. It's all about breaking down barriers and making sure everyone, regardless of ability, can be part of UN action.

One good thing to keep in mind in the strategy is Indicator 15, which is like a special rule about communication. It says that when the UN talks or writes stuff, like speeches, social media posts, or even internal notes, they should use words that respect people with disabilities.

As someone who speaks Chinese, I was surprised to learn that even though the UN has five official languages, English and French are the go-to languages when it comes to security issues. This is something I had to figure out, and it really hit home how important it is to be fluent in both English and French if you want to stay updated on security-related stuff at the UN.

03

Accessibility and inclusivity at the UN NYC

© Image from the UN Accessibility Centre website



A display screen shows "Accessibility Centre Services" inside a room. A person stands nearby, facing away. A banner and brochures are visible.

 **Maya**
(wheelchair user)

Hey Alex! How's your experience been at the UN HQ so far?

It's been interesting, Maya. The Accessibility Centre has been a game-changer for me. How about you?

 **Alex**
(visually impaired)

 **Maya**
(wheelchair user)

I've had mixed experiences. The wheelchair charging stations are great, but I've noticed some areas are still challenging to navigate. What's been most helpful for you at the Centre?

The screen readers and Braille displays have been fantastic. I can actually participate fully in meetings now. But I've heard some criticism that the Centre's hours are limited. What do you think?

 **Alex**
(visually impaired)



Maya
(wheelchair user)

Yeah, the 9 to 5 hours can be restrictive, especially for evening events. I wish they'd extend them. Have you tried contacting Dr. Elizabeth Lockwood? I heard she's super helpful with accessibility issues.

Not yet, but that's a great tip! I'll definitely reach out. By the way, have you noticed any improvements in the general attitude towards accessibility here?



Maya
(wheelchair user)

It's getting better, but there's still work to be done. I've had to advocate for myself a lot. Like, reminding people to use the microphone so I can hear from my position.

I get that. I've had to remind speakers to verbally describe visual content. It's exhausting sometimes, isn't it?



Maya
(wheelchair user)

Absolutely. But I've found that being proactive helps. I always email ahead to check on accessibility features for specific meetings.

Smart move. I've started doing that too. Oh, and have you tried the bone-conduction headsets at the Centre? They're amazing for people with hearing impairments.



Maya
(wheelchair user)

No, but that's good to know! I'll pass that on to other activists. Speaking of which, have you connected with other youth with disabilities here?



Alex
(visually impaired)



Alex
(visually impaired)



Alex
(visually impaired)

Yes, and it's been eye-opening. We're thinking of starting a youth disability caucus to push for more inclusive practices

Alex
(visually impaired)

 Maya
(wheelchair user)

Count me in! We could use our experiences to advocate for improvements, like better signage for visually impaired people and more accessible restrooms

Definitely. And maybe we could push for more disability representation in UN panels and decision-making processes.

Alex
(visually impaired)

 Maya
(wheelchair user)

Absolutely. It's about time our voices were heard more prominently in these spaces.

Agreed. Let's grab coffee later and brainstorm some ideas for our caucus?

Alex
(visually impaired)

 Maya
(wheelchair user)

Sounds great! Meet you at the accessible café near the Accessibility Centre at 3?

Perfect. Looking forward to it!

Alex
(visually impaired)



Contact Box:

01 Contact the Accessibility Centre

Before heading to the UN, it's always a good idea to reach out to the UN Accessibility Centre for more information on available services, especially if you have specific needs. You can contact them at: Email: accessibilitycentre@un.org

They can provide information on:

- + Assistive technologies available (screen readers, Braille displays, hearing aids, etc.)
- + Wheelchair charging stations and other mobility aids
- + Accessible routes and entrance details

02 Contact Dr. Elizabeth Lockwood

For those specifically looking for information about the inclusion of people with disabilities in UN meetings or broader accessibility efforts, Dr. Elizabeth Lockwood is the UN Accessibility Focal Point for the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities.

Email: elizabeth.lockwood@cbm-global.org

03 Contact Dr. Elizabeth Lockwood

Location: The Accessibility Centre is located at S-1B032 (near the meeting rooms at UN Headquarters).

Hours: Open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays.

Available Assistive Tools:

- + Screen readers, Braille displays, portable DAISY players, hearing aids, bone-conduction headsets, Braille note-takers, and more.
- + They can help you get familiar with using these devices if you're not sure how

COVID RULES



Whether you're gearing up to visit the UN Headquarters in New York or planning to join an event at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, it's super important to know how to get the most out of your visit. Accessibility, health measures, and making sure you have the right resources can make all the difference in having a smooth and enjoyable experience. Let's dive into everything you need to know, including some tips on staying safe in light of COVID-19 measures.

At the Palais des Nations in Geneva:

Stay Home If Sick: If you've tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 5 days or feel sick (even with mild symptoms like a cold or flu), don't go to the Palais des Nations. Instead, you can join the meetings remotely—organizers will share the link with you.

Masks and Hygiene: You're not required to wear a mask, but if you want to, feel free to! Everyone is encouraged to keep up with hygiene measures like washing hands and maintaining some physical distance.

If you have any questions regarding health protocols and COVID-19 regulations at the Palais des Nations (such as entry rules for those with COVID-19 symptoms), you can contact: hrcouncil@ohchr.org They can provide you with the latest health and safety guidelines before you arrive.





At the UN Headquarters in New York:

Health Guidelines: The UN follows health protocols from the World Health Organization, the CDC, and local guidelines. It's a good idea to be fully vaccinated, but you don't need to show proof.

Masks Optional: You don't have to wear a mask, but they're suggested for anyone who prefers extra protection.

Stay Safe: If you're feeling sick, it's important to stay home! The UN can't guarantee a COVID-free environment, so it's on visitors to take precautions.

If You Get Sick at the UN: If you start feeling unwell while at the UN Headquarters in New York, you should head to the walk-in clinic on the 5th floor of the Secretariat Building (open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.). For any urgent support during business hours, you can call 212-963-7080.

SOURCES

- 1|** United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). "Consultative Status with ECOSOC." <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/ngo/consultative-status>
- 2|** United Nations Department of Global Communications. "Civil Society Unit." <https://www.un.org/en/civil-society>
- 3|** United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth. "Youth Engagement at the UN." Accessed November 14, 2024. <https://www.unmrgcy.org>
- 4|** United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG). "Palais des Nations Access Procedures." <https://www.ungeneva.org/en/palais-des-nations/access-procedures>

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