WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

WIPO INDIGENOUS FELLOW

One year Fellowship (November 2026 / October 2027), renewable for one further year

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

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

BACKGROUND

WIPO undertakes a large set of activities that are of direct interest for Indigenous Peoples.

WIPO's capacity-building programs for Indigenous Peoples aim to enhance their knowledge about the existing intellectual property tools as options to protect their traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, and support their tradition-based entrepreneurship.

In parallel, WIPO Member States are undertaking negotiations in the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC), with the objective of finalizing an agreement on an international legal instrument(s) relating to intellectual property, which will ensure the balanced and effective protection of traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.

In 2024, WIPO Member States adopted by consensus a milestone Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge, with the active participation of representatives of Indigenous Peoples. This is the first intellectual property-related Treaty of the kind and the first addressing Indigenous Peoples.

- More information about the activities of WIPO in this field can be found in https://www.wipo.int/en/web/traditional-knowledge.

PURPOSE

The WIPO Indigenous Fellowship is hosted by the Traditional Knowledge Division. The Division facilitates international negotiations on intellectual property and genetic resources (GRs), traditional knowledge (TK) and traditional cultural expressions (TCEs) and undertakes a wide range of complementary capacity-building and technical assistance projects and activities for the benefit of Member States, regional organizations and Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

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.

The WIPO Indigenous Fellowship offers a **unique opportunity** to highly motivated and suitably qualified young Indigenous persons to work within the WIPO's Traditional Knowledge Division and within a multi-lingual and multi-cultural environment. By so doing, WIPO Indigenous Fellows foster their organizational skills and knowledge on issues of interest for Indigenous Peoples, with a focus on intellectual property.

The Indigenous Fellowship Program started in August 2009.

- For more information regarding the recipients of the WIPO Indigenous Fellowship in the past and present : https://www.wipo.int/en/web/traditional-knowledge/indigenous/fellowship/

The 2026-2027 WIPO Indigenous Fellow will be involved in activities that are directly relevant to issues of concern to Indigenous Peoples, including the IGC process, WIPO's programs for Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities, WIPO's Community Entrepreneurship Program, and WIPO's cooperation with other United Nations bodies and mechanisms, such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

REPORTING LINES

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

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Indigenous Fellow will perform the following principal duties:

1. assist in the conceptualization, development, organization and undertaking of outreach and awareness-raising activities, as well as activities related to the Community Entrepreneurship Program, with Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities, related to intellectual property;

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, and the like, as applicable;

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.

REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Indigenous Fellow must meet the following first four requirements:

1) Be recognized as an 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;

5) Show 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;

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

JOB-RELATED COMPETENCIES

It is expected from the Indigenous Fellow that he/she possesses the following:

a. Good analytical and organizational skills;

b. Good drafting skills;

c. Ability to work on one's own initiative as a member of a team;

d. Competency in using Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint);

e. Good communication, time-management and interpersonal skills, as well as ability to maintain effective partnerships and working relations in a multi-cultural environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity;

f. Awareness of the field of intellectual property in relation to GRs, TK and/or TCEs.

SELECTION

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

The Indigenous Fellow will need to be available to commence the Fellowship **on November 2, 2026.**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

a) Term of fellowship: up to 12 months, with the possibility to be renewed up to an additional 12 months, for a maximum of two years.

b) Anticipated Start Date: November 2, 2026.

c) Location: WIPO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland.

d) Stipend: set in accordance with the level of qualifications and experience of the Indigenous Fellow.

e) Travel expenses: WIPO shall provide one round-trip economy class ticket 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) Medical insurance: WIPO contributes toward the cost of medical insurance and provides professional accident insurance coverage during the course of the fellowship.

g) Residence and work permit: WIPO will request a *"carte de légitimation*" for the Indigenous 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 Indigenous Fellow are not eligible for a "*carte de legitimation.*"

h) Tax and social security: Indigenous 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

Indigenous 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:

Expressions of interest should be formulated through a written statement by the interested person

a) **expressing and motivating** his or her interest in the fellowship;

b) **explaining how each of the first four requirements are met (see above from #1 to #4)** for the WIPO Indigenous Fellowship;

c) complemented only by a **comprehensive *curriculum vitae* (résumé)** that includes a **precise chronology of the applicant's work experience**, including in the field as described in the second requirement (see above)**.**

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

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

before Sunday July 12, 2026, midnight, Geneva time (Switzerland).

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

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