

# **How to obtain Consultative Status with ECOSOC**

## **Application package:**

application form.  
appendix (summary).  
constitution/charter.  
statutes/by-laws.  
certificate of registration.  
recent financial statement.  
publications samples.

Please submit applications in English or French only.  
Supporting documents in other languages must be translated.

If a document is too long a translated summary may be accepted.

Publications can be submitted in their language of origin.

## **1. First a letter of intent:**

To begin the process of applying for consultative status, an organization must submit a letter of intent to the NGO Section, of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), also known as the Secretariat. The letter should be on the organization's letterhead and signed by its secretary-general or president.

This letter of intent is important!

## **2.The Application: Questionnaire + Summary + Supporting Documents:**

Once the NGO section receives the letter of intent, it will mail the application package containing the questionnaire and all the background materials to the organization. The application and questionnaire is then completed by the NGO applying for status. Questions regarding the correct completion of the application and questionnaire should be directed to the NGO Section. The applications forms are also available for download at the documents section of this site.

Applications are only accepted in one of the UN Secretariat working languages: English or French.

Completed applications must be received by the first day of June of the year preceding the year the NGO wants to be considered for recommendation by the Committee. For example, complete applications, (which include a completed questionnaire and all the required supporting documentation) received by the NGO Section before 1st June 2004, will be taken up by the Committee on NGOs in the year 2005. Applications received between the 1st June 2004 and 1st June 2005 will be taken up in the year 2006.

## **3.NGO Section screening of applications:**

The period between 1st June and the date the Committee meets is dedicated by the NGO Section to review the applications. During this time the NGO may be contacted and asked for more information or clarifications. Only after reviewed by an officer and considered complete, an application is submitted to the NGO Committee.

When an application becomes part of the agenda of the NGO Committee a letter is sent to the NGO informing

them of the upcoming session and inviting to send no more than two representatives to be present during the session. The presence of NGO representatives in the room is in no way mandatory and it does not imply any advantages. NGOs simply have the right to be present when their applications are being considered. Considering the cost involved in traveling to New York most NGOs do not attend the first time they are being considered. If the application raises many questions from member countries and gets deferred to another session, NGOs might consider useful to be present at the following session in order to be able to reply in person and avoid being deferred again.

Among other requirements for obtaining consultative status are the following:

- Applying organization's activities must be relevant to the work of ECOSOC;
- The NGO must have been in existence (officially registered) for at least 2 years in order to apply;
- The NGO must have a democratic decision making mechanism;
- The major portion of the organization's funds should be derived from contributions from national affiliates, individual members, or other non-governmental components.

#### **4.The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations:**

The Committee meets twice a year to decide which NGOs applying for consultative status it will recommend to the ECOSOC Council. At any time, the Committee may ask questions to the NGO. Such questions are immediately faxed to the NGO by the Secretariat and should be replied by the NGO as fast as possible in order to help the Committee make a decision and avoid getting deferred to future sessions.

The main tasks of the Committee are:

- The consideration of applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification submitted by NGOs;
- The consideration of quadrennial reports submitted by NGOs in General and Special categories;
- The implementation of the provisions of Council resolution 1996/31 and the monitoring of the consultative relationship;
- Any other issues which the ECOSOC may request the Committee to consider.

### **5.The Committee only recommends:**

The Committee recommendations are published in a report and submitted to the next ECOSOC meeting for final approval. Official notification is sent to all reviewed NGOs, informing them about the Committee's recommendation.

The Committee may recommend a different category than the status requested by the NGO. Also, the Committee may decide to defer an application review until the next session, waiting for clarifications and answers to questions asked to the NGO.

### **6.ECOSOC final decision:**

When the Council finally approves the Committee recommendation to grant consultative status to an NGO, official notification is sent by the Secretariat. NGOs granted General or Special consultative status must submit to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, every fourth year, a brief report of their activities, in particular regarding their contribution to the work of the United Nations (Quadrennial Report).

