



UN JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER (JPO) - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PROGRAM INFORMATION

DO JPOs WORK FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT?

Though sponsored by the U.S. Government and funded by USAID/OFDA, once selected, American JPOs are employees of UNOCHA.

WHAT TYPE OF WORK DO JPOs DO?

JPOs, under the supervision of UNOCHA officials, have exposure to UNOCHA's work of humanitarian coordination. Job responsibilities vary by assignment but positions sponsored by USAID/OFDA often entail disaster coordination, financial tracking, coordination with donors, reporting, etc.

HOW LONG DO JPOs SERVE?

It is expected that JPOs will serve a complete 2-year term (JPOs are assigned for an initial period of 1 year, and then extended for a second year, subject to their satisfactory performance).

WHAT COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS DO JPOs RECEIVE?

JPOs supported through USAID/OFDA, enter into service directly with UNOCHA at the P-2 or P-3 Step 1 level on the UN scale. JPOs are employees of the UN, not the U.S. government.

WHAT PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES DO THE JPO PROGRAMS PROVIDE?

JPOs are not guaranteed continued employment with UNOCHA after their program completion. However, some JPOs successfully compete for permanent positions in UNOCHA, as well as in other international agencies.

APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

MUST I BE A U.S. CITIZEN TO APPLY?

Yes, U.S. citizenship is required to participate in the JPO programs sponsored by USAID/OFDA. Non-U.S. citizens, including legal permanent residents (green card holders) may not apply.

IS THERE AN AGE REQUIREMENT TO APPLY TO THESE PROGRAMS?

The JPO programs are entry to mid-level professional positions. Candidates with the appropriate level of experience typically are in their late-20s to mid-30s. However, there is no specific age requirement to apply and all applicants possessing the relevant experience are considered.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS SHOULD AN APPLICANT HAVE?

JPO program selection is very competitive. Qualifications for JPO positions vary by assignment, but a graduate degree in a relevant discipline (i.e. often, but not limited to, international relations, human rights, disaster management, public policy international development, or humanitarian assistance), and a strong working knowledge of a second UN language (French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, or Russian) in addition to English is highly desirable. Competitive applicants generally possess two or more years of



work experience in a developing country. Previous overseas experience working in humanitarian assistance is especially valuable. Familiarity with the UN system is also an asset. Applicants with a Bachelor's degree may be competitive if they have multiple years of overseas experience, especially in disaster relief or humanitarian response work. All candidates must have the ability to establish and maintain good working relationships in cross-cultural settings and be willing to live and/or serve in hardship locations as required.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Once USAID/OFDA decides to support a JPO position, the JPO job description and qualifications (terms of reference) are posted on the USAID/OFDA website along with the application deadline.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

All applicants must complete a United Nations Personal History form (UN P-11) and submit it electronically to the USAID/OFDA JPO Program Coordinator by the deadline indicated on the JPO vacancy announcement. Given that applications must be submitted electronically, USAID/OFDA will accept a UN P-11 form without a signature, along with a cover letter/letter of interest, and a general resume.

Please specify the position for which you are applying in the subject line of the email (i.e., Junior Program Officer, P2). You must send a separate email with the appropriate application for each position for which you are qualified and wish to be considered. All applications must be emailed to JPOCoordinator@ofda.gov.

IS THERE A DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS?

Yes. Applications typically are accepted for 3 weeks after a JPO position is posted on USAID/OFDA website <http://www.ofdajobs.net/portal/jpo.aspx>. The application deadline is clearly noted on individual JPO vacancy announcements.

WHAT IS THE SELECTION PROCESS?

Once the deadline has passed, USAID/OFDA reviews all applications and contacts the most qualified candidates for interviews. Based on candidate interviews and reference checks, USAID/OFDA forwards a short-list of finalists to UNOCHA. UNOCHA may or may not interview all finalists before making a decision. USAID/OFDA notifies successful candidates of their selection by UNOCHA. Once the offer of employment is accepted, all other applicants are informed via email by USAID/OFDA that the position has been filled. It often takes a minimum of 3 months from the time a JPO opening is posted until a candidate is selected.

WHAT IF I HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS?

General program inquiries should be sent to the USAID/OFDA JPO Coordinator at JPOCoordinator@ofda.gov and will be answered as promptly as possible.