

SECONDMENT PROGRAMME FOR TRADE LAWYERS

What is the Secondment Programme for Trade Lawyers?

The Advisory Centre on WTO Law (the "ACWL") is a public international organisation independent of the World Trade Organization ("WTO"). The ACWL provides legal advice on WTO law, support in WTO dispute settlement proceedings and training in WTO law to developing countries and least-developed countries.¹

As part of its training activities, the ACWL maintains a Secondment Programme for Trade Lawyers (the "Programme") under which up to three government officials join the staff of the ACWL for a period of nine months to gain practical experience in WTO law and dispute settlement procedures.

The Programme is intended to provide government officials entrusted with functions relating to the legal aspects of trade policy the opportunity to broaden their professional experience in the field of WTO law by temporarily joining the staff of the ACWL. The Programme aims to provide the participants with both theoretical training and practical experience in WTO law and an opportunity to participate actively in WTO dispute settlement proceedings.

Participants take an active part in the ACWL's day-to-day activities and assist the staff of the ACWL in preparing legal opinions and providing support in dispute settlement proceedings of the ACWL. The participants also follow the ACWL's regular training courses and seminars on WTO law and dispute settlement procedures.

Upon completion of the Programme, the participants are expected to resume their employment with their government.

¹The terms "country" and "developing country" include separate customs territories and countries with economies in transition.

Who may apply?

The Agreement Establishing the ACWL stipulates that the ACWL may provide training only to government officials.² Applicants must, therefore, be officials of the government of a least-developed country or a Member of the ACWL entitled to the services of the ACWL. These government officials are expected to have the qualifications required to benefit fully from their participation in the work of the ACWL.

This means that they are expected to have:

- a law degree or equivalent academic qualifications;
- an excellent command of English;
- at least two years of professional experience in the area of trade policy; and
- a demonstrable interest in WTO law.

Applicants with the following additional qualifications would have an advantage:

- post-graduate studies in international law, and/or international trade law;
- government officials who are currently working on trade policy matters and who need to obtain a wider knowledge of the WTO and its dispute settlement system; and
- applicants with knowledge of French or Spanish.

What is the application and selection process?

Interested persons are required to submit their application through their respective governments. The ACWL is unable to consider applications that are not supported by a nominating letter from the applicant's government. Each least-developed country and each Member of the ACWL entitled to the services of the ACWL may submit no more than two applications.

Applicants must provide a detailed CV and complete a personal history form, a copy of which is attached to this document. The form can also be downloaded from the ACWL website www.acwl.ch. It can also be provided electronically upon request by contacting secretariat@acwl.ch.

² See Article 2.2 of the Agreement Establishing the ACWL.

A Recruitment Board consisting of two Members of the Management Board and the Executive Director will review the applications and make a short list. The short-listed applicants will be interviewed in Geneva and given a written test.

What conditions of service does the ACWL offer?

The selected participants will become staff members of the ACWL for the duration of their stay in Geneva. As a result, they will receive work and residence permits in accordance with the ACWL's headquarters agreement with Switzerland.

Participants should note that given the temporary nature of the Programme, the Swiss authorities will not authorise permits for the family members of participants to work or reside in Switzerland for the duration of the Programme.

Participants will be subject to the same duties and obligations as the regular staff members of the ACWL and will be expected to regulate their conduct in accordance with the ACWL Standards of Conduct. In particular, the participants will be asked to sign an oath of confidentiality. Of the benefits set out in the Staff Regulations and Rules of the ACWL, those of participants in the Secondment Programme are limited to the following:

- an economy class return air-ticket to Geneva from the participant's country of residence;
- an installation grant of CHF3,000;
- a monthly stipend of CHF4,809;
- health and accident insurance for the duration of the participant's stay in Geneva; and
- annual leave at the rate of two and a half days a month.

Upon the completion of the Programme, the Executive Director will prepare a written report on the activities and performance of each participant and provide a copy to the participant and the seconding government.