International Service for Human Rights

VACANCY
Full-time Programme Internship
ISHR (New-York)

Dates: 11 January 2027 – 09 July 2027
Length: 6 months
Work percentage: Full-time (37.5 hours/week)
Based in: New York (if US citizen or valid study/ work permit)
Reports to: Programme Senior Officer and Director
Applications deadline: 30 November 2026 (Midnight NYC time)

About ISHR

ISHR is an independent, non-profit organisation with offices in Geneva and New York. This internship offers a unique opportunity to view the United Nations human rights system at work in New York. It provides hands-on experience working for an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) as well as the opportunity to contribute to our work supporting human rights defenders, strengthening human rights systems, building and leading human rights coalitions, and responding to significant and systemic human rights concerns. For more information, consult our website https://ishr.ch/.

Internship position

The Intern will work closely with Programme Officers/Managers and Directors, contributing to our work supporting human rights defenders, strengthening human rights systems, building and leading human rights coalitions, and responding to significant and systemic situations of concern.

Working in a small team, the Intern will have the opportunity to learn at close hand what it means to work for an international human rights advocacy organisation. The Intern will also have the opportunity to collaborate with ISHR staff in all locations and gain hands-on experience on the application of international human rights law in a multilateral human rights system, including advocacy on normative and policy advances for the protection of human rights defenders.

Training and Opportunities

Our Interns are fully included as part of the team, including in staff meetings, which provide a comprehensive understanding of the work of an international human rights NGO. Interns also have opportunities to interact and network with human rights defenders, diplomats or other UN and NGO professionals both at the United Nations and at ISHR's office (or remotely) during meetings.

Where appropriate or necessary for their work, ISHR staff will provide practical sessions and guidance, for example, on monitoring UN mechanisms, drafting reports and advocacy documents, utilising communications technologies, etc. Interns will be supervised by one or two experienced programme managers and supported in achieving their learning objectives through regular check-ins with the Intern Coordinator.

Key tasks

- Providing support to programme staff in the implementation of project activities, across ISHR's strategic programme areas including improving civil society engagement at the UN, addressing reprisals, as well as other projects seeking to enhance protection for human rights defenders;
- Contributing to ISHR's outreach and communications, including regular online publications;
- Monitoring and reporting on UN human rights meetings, including the ECOSOC's Committee on NGOs and General Assembly's Third Committee;
- Approximately 15-20% of the work will be administrative in nature, including assisting with the organisation and preparation of events, training and meetings.

Internship modalities

The internship will be in person, in ISHR's New York Office and will start on 11 January 2027. It is a 6-months full-time (37.5 hours per week) position with no possibility of extension.

Stipend

Internships will be compensated with:

- a stipend of USD700/month.
- 25 annual vacation days per calendar year, pro-rated based on start/departure date (12,5 days for six months)

Requirements

We expect the successful candidates to:

- be an advanced undergraduate student or graduate student in international relations, law, international public law, human rights or a related field, or have recently completed such studies;
- be motivated to pursue a career in human rights and have a particular interest in the UN and regional human rights systems;
- have **an excellent level of written and spoken English;**
- be detail-oriented and attentive to nuance, in particular in diplomatic environments;
- be motivated, autonomous and a self-starter, and comfortable occasionally working with limited supervision;
- be able to work as a member of an international and multicultural team and willing to participate in a variety of tasks, as required;
- **be authorised to work in the U.S.**

Additional particularly appreciated skills:

- **Advanced to fluent Spanish and/or French and/or Arabic language; Mandarin is also an asset.**
- interest or background, including activism in, corporate accountability, women's rights, and/or LGBTI rights;
- legal drafting and research including on treaty body jurisprudence;
  interest or background in training/capacity building, including online learning, logistics, travel and event planning;
- be proficient with Google Suite and/or Microsoft tools.

Equal opportunity

ISHR is firmly committed to the principle of equal employment opportunity and aims to have a diverse team. ISHR's policy is to practice fair and non-discriminatory recruitment and selection procedures and strive for diverse, international and multicultural personnel. We welcome all kinds of diversity.

Applications are encouraged from all qualified candidates without distinction including on grounds of race, colour, national origin, age, religion, disability status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or sex characteristics, pregnancy, genetic information, protected veteran status, socio-economic status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

We particularly welcome applications from systematically, historically and/or traditionally discriminated against under-represented groups, including women, persons of colour, LGBTIQ+ persons, persons with disabilities and other groups.

To request reasonable accommodation to participate in the job application or interview process, please contact ISHR's Human Resources department at hr@ishr.ch

How to apply

Interested candidates should apply by sending **a cover letter, a CV (no profile picture please) and a writing sample here**. In their cover letter, candidates should demonstrate their commitment to human rights and social change.

Application deadline: 30 November 2026 (midnight, NYC time). Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Please kindly note that due to the high volume of applications, only short-listed candidates will be contacted. All applications will be handled in accordance with ISHR's Privacy Policy.
