

3 July 2024

Excellency,

We have the pleasure to inform you about the UN-Portugal Ocean Fellowship – Capacity Building Program on Sustainable Ocean Governance and Blue Economy, that the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, together with the Portuguese Government (through the Camões I.P.) and in partnership with the Oceano Azul Foundation will convene. The first edition of the Ocean Fellowship will take place in Lisbon, **from 14 to 18 October 2024**, for which we hereby solicit nominations from your country. Up to a maximum of 25 (twenty-five) Ocean Fellowships will be awarded for the 2024 iteration.

The purpose of the UN - Portugal Ocean Fellowship Program is to:

- Provide high-level ocean policy officials from UN Member States classified under UN-DESA's methodology, as published annually in the statistical annex of the WESP, as Developing economies with access to a capacity-sharing program tailored to the needs of decision-makers, as well as empowering a new generation of leaders with the knowledge and skills to address pressing Ocean-related issues.
- Build capacity in developing countries with the view to assisting in the driving of innovative solutions to protect and preserve our marine ecosystems, while promoting economic growth and equity.
- Equip participants with further expertise to be an effective ocean policy decision-maker at the national and international level via a unique inter-disciplinary curriculum integrating the key domains of Ocean Governance, Marine Conservation, Sustainable Blue Economy and the Continental Shelf regime.
- Facilitate international cooperation and information sharing on ocean-related issues by providing a platform for national high-level officials to network and build relationships with their foreign counterparts, leveraging the expertise of both Portuguese and international experts.
- Support the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water.

The UN-Portugal Fellowship is open to heads/deputy heads of national agencies overseeing and responsible for Ocean Policy and/or Ambassadors or their equivalents holding decision-making responsibility in the areas of ocean policy, governance and economy. Given their special relationship with the ocean, as well as the myriad of challenges stemming from their geographical specificities, priority will be given to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the first iterations of this program. Further guidelines for the selection of the Fellows are provided in Annex II.

In this regard, all Member States from developing countries, in particular from Small Island Developing States, are invited to nominate one candidate to participate in the Fellowship. Completion of nomination requires the submission of the nomination form (see Annex III) and the accompanying Note Verbale from the respective Permanent Mission.

Please submit a completed nomination form provided in Annex III and accompanying *Note Verbale* by email to desa-ocean-fellowships@un.org, copying oceanfellowship@mne.pt. Nominations must be received no later than **Friday 16 August 2024**. Nominations received after this date will not be considered.

Participants are required to attend the whole duration of the Fellowship as the sessions will build on each other. Nominations should only be submitted for candidates who are available for the entirety of the Fellowship.

Participants will be provided with a sponsorship package to cover travel to/from the location of the Fellowship, all in-country transportation, hotel accommodation and official lunches and dinners planned as part of the program. Further details of the package will be communicated upon selection.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.



LI Junhua
Under-Secretary-General
for Economic and Social Affairs



H.E. Mr. Rui Vinhas
Permanent Representative
of Portugal to the United Nations