



**WORLD FEDERATION  
OF THE DEAF**

## **Terms of Reference WFD Human Rights Officer**

### **1. Title and description**

The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) is an international non-governmental organisation representing and promoting approximately 70 million deaf people's human rights worldwide. The WFD is a federation of deaf organisations from 135 nations; its mission is to promote the human rights of deaf people and full, quality and equal access to all spheres of life, including self-determination, sign language, education, employment and community life. WFD has a consultative status in the United Nations and is a founding member of International Disability Alliance (IDA). The WFD secretariat is located in Helsinki, Finland, with an additional office in the United States

Deaf people must have recognized and exercise their full human rights in an equal world where they and their sign languages are legally recognised and included as part of human diversity.

The WFD promotes and advances the human rights of deaf people through cooperation with the United Nations and its agencies, national organisations of deaf people, and other partners.

The position is full time, for 37.5 hours per week. The Human Rights Officer (HRO) must coordinate their work with:

- WFD Executive Director
- WFD President
- WFD Board Members
- WFD Administrative Secretary
- WFD Sign Language Rights Officer
- WFD Expert Groups
- Ordinary Members of the World Federation of the Deaf
- 8 Regional Secretariats of WFD
- 1 Regional Cooperating Partner
- United Nations Agencies and Funds and other intergovernmental organisations, among others.



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The HRO will mainly work to implement to **the World Federation of the Deaf (hereafter, “WFD”) Action Plan 2020-2023** and the **WFD Strategic Direction 2020-2030** with focus on **human rights issues**:

1. Strengthen the WFD’s advocacy work to the United Nations (hereafter, the “UN”), both with the WFD team and in partnership with the International Disability Alliance (“IDA”) and other key stakeholders, particularly in the areas of education and linguistic and cultural rights of deaf people, with intersectional focus, and prioritizing the Global South.
2. Strengthen the organizational capacity for human rights advocacy at the international level through:
  - a. Increased availability of data to enhance the veracity of legal argument in support of deaf and sign language perspectives.
  - b. Identifying, drafting and submitting proposals for grants on human rights projects at national, regional or international levels.
3. Strengthen the capacity of national associations of deaf people on deaf rights advocacy, monitoring and lobbying. This will be achieved by delivering training, face to face and virtually, in different regions and developing and providing tools to the respective participants.



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## **Key responsibilities include**

### **a. Networking and liaison**

The HRO will undertake networking and liaison, in collaboration with -and the support of- the WFD President and the WFD Executive Director, with WFD Secretariat, the UN and UN Human Rights Committees, IDA, National Associations of the Deaf (“NADs”), and relevant stakeholders in the matter. This collaboration includes preparing comments, statements, and guidelines related to the WFD’s Mission and WFD philosophy for the UN, the World Health Organisation (hereafter, “WHO”) and IDA; and meeting with relevant stakeholders related to the matter, in coordination with the WFD President and the WFD Executive Director (“ED”). The HRO will also facilitate the network and liaison of the WFD President and other WFD representatives related to human rights stakeholders. Serve as the primary staff point of contact for the work of the Human Rights Expert Groups, ensuring achievement of each group’s KPIs.

### **b. Research on Human Rights and Deaf rights trends.**

Research and data collection regarding Sign Language recognition and other human rights issues and trends relevant to deaf people.

### **c. Human Rights grants seeking, drafting, Implementing, and co- supervising WFD Human Rights projects**

The HRO will support the WFD in resource development and the strengthening of the WFD organisational capacity in Human Rights advocacy, promotion, and training, through the searching and identification of potential grants to apply, and through the drafting, implementing, submitting and co-supervising Human Rights Projects granted to the WFD, under the supervision of the Executive Director. The HRO will continue ensuring successful completion of the current WFD projects’ objectives: Promoting the Legal Recognition of Sign Languages; Research on access to healthcare services of deaf women in Bolivia; promoting inclusive health services in Laos and Deaf women’s economic, social and cultural rights and leadership empowerment training Program.



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**d. Drafting the CRPD General Comment on the Right of Sign Language.**

One of the WFD objectives is to achieve the UN-CRPD committee to support and disseminate a General Comment on the Right of Sign Languages worldwide. The HRO will draft the proposal for this General Comment in collaboration with the WFD Executive Director and the WFD President.

**e. Writing human rights materials related to the WFD's core mission**

The HRO, whereas there is an opportunity, will author, co-authoring, and/or collaborate, with the WFD President and Executive Director, to draft documentation, articles, guides, reports etc., related to human rights, Deaf rights, and the right to Sign Languages.

**f. Training Ordinary Members, with a focus on the Global South, along with other key stakeholders and government authorities**

The HRO, in collaboration with and support of the WFD Executive Director and the WFD Secretariat, will organize and implement training workshops and events -both, face to face and virtually- to bring awareness about attitude change, create and disseminate knowledge, and build the advocacy capacity of both the WFD and national associations of deaf people across the globe, especially those from the Global South as well as, key decision-makers, stakeholders and government authorities regarding deaf rights and the right to sign languages. This will include developing partnerships, information sharing between national associations of the deaf, the WFD Secretariat, the WFD Expert Groups, Regional Secretariats, the UN, and IDA; responding to various inquiries related to Human Rights, co-organizing COSP's side events, and training in language concordant environments.



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### **g. Developing tools and research on human rights for training and development on Deaf leadership for human rights**

The HRO, in collaboration with the WFD Board's Human Rights Steering Committee, the Secretariat team and the WFD experts groups, will develop several tools and research on latest trends regarding human rights, and the right to sign languages, creating visual and written language accessible training materials in the matter.

The HRO will propose updates of existing WFD policies, statements, and materials related to human rights advocacy, with possible supplemental materials.

The HRO will work with our national associations of the deaf members in preparing parallel reports and submitting information to several human rights bodies to mainstream the inclusion of deaf people and sign languages.

Additional tasks not mentioned here can be given to the HRO by the WFD Executive Director.

## **2. Products – Deliverables**

- A Draft for the UN-CRPD General Comment on the Right to Sign Language developed.
- At least 1 RS from the Global South training developed annually
- At least 3 capacity building workshops developed annually
- At least 1 new training module for the WFD Campus (virtual platform) on human rights developed annually
- At least one Side Event planned and implemented at the UN annually
- At least 1 new grant on Human Rights secured annually
- At least two position paper draft developed annually related to WFD human rights advocacy annually.
- At least three submission to UN agencies related to human rights treaties annually.
- At least one toolkit on human rights developed annually.
- At least one standard/statement developed annually.



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### 3. **Expected results**

- At least 4 OMs from the Global South with more knowledge and skills to monitor processes and lobby at the national level for their human rights.
- OMs participants are equipped to foster a cooperative relationship with their local, national coalition of organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs). The partnership would enable them to contribute and provide a unifying consultative role in providing UN treaty bodies information.
- OMs strengthened their capacity to advocate for deaf rights and the right to sign language.
- Stronger relationship and partnership between the WFD and the UN-CRPD Committee, the UN-SRRPD, IDA, UN-DRR initiatives and other key stakeholders in the human rights advocacy efforts.
- Increased partnerships and network with government authorities and key decision-makers seeking advice from the WFD as unique referent on human rights and social inclusion of deaf people worldwide.

### 4. **Qualifications and Experience**

#### **Education**

- Advanced university degree or equivalent preferable in law, political science, international relations or other disciplines related to human rights.
- A first-level university degree in combination with qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.
- Work experience: at least 2 years in relevant human rights related or UN work experience.
- Knowledge about WFD's principles, vision and mission preferred.
- General knowledge about the field and previous experience working on human rights of deaf people would be an asset.

#### **Languages**

- Excellent fluency in writing English is required. Working knowledge of International Sign.
- Knowledge of other UN languages would be an asset.



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**Other skills:** Good computer skills, including proficiency in MS office and other commercial software packages.

**Professionalism:** Good knowledge of and exposure to a range of human rights issues, good knowledge of institutional mandates, policies and guidelines related to human rights.

**Communication:** Strong communication in sign languages and deaf culture. Excellent written and presentation skills, including ability to produce a variety of written reports and documents in a clear concise style.

**Planning and organizing:** Ability to establish priorities and to plan work assignments, juggle competing demands and work under pressure of frequent and tight deadlines.

**Team work:** Proven interpersonal skills and ability to work in a multi-cultural environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity, sound judgment and good team spirit, communication and teamwork.

**Commitment to continuous learning:** Ability of adapt and learn from the context and circumstances, and to build new knowledge in interaction with the communities.

**Compensation and benefits:** Subject to location and experience. Managerial responsibilities may be considered for especially qualified candidates.

**Length of the position:** This position is full-time and permanent, with a 6 month trial period.

## HOW TO APPLY

- Interested applicants should send an updated CV, and a letter of motivation to [employment@wfdeaf.org](mailto:employment@wfdeaf.org) indicating in the subject line: "WFD Human Rights Officer Position".
- **Deadline for application: April 30, 5:00 pm EST**

Only selected candidates will be contacted.