

UNESCO Competency Framework

Learn • Develop • Excel



Commitment • Integrity • Diversity • Professionalism

Introduction

The fulfillment of UNESCO's role depends on the optimal alignment of staff competencies with the Organization's strategic direction and goals. To be successful in the joint pursuit of UNESCO's mission, it is crucial that staff at all levels across the Organization, regardless of culture, gender, religion, function or location, demonstrate common values and standards of behavior.

In 2015 the Bureau of Human Resources Management launched an Organization-wide project to develop a comprehensive, mission-consistent, competency model. The present Competency Framework is a result of thorough consultations with UNESCO staff and Staff Associations.

The new Competency Framework seeks to clearly articulate the expected behavioral standards required of UNESCO staff and to provide renewed clarity on the core values that should permeate those behavioral standards. It also provides UNESCO staff with a 'common language' that will facilitate dialogue and link most of the human resources processes.





What is the UNESCO Competency Framework?

The UNESCO Competency Framework provides an inventory of expected behaviors, skills and attitudes that lead to successful performance.

The UNESCO Competency Framework has three components:

- **Core Values** that are the shared principles and beliefs that unite all staff and should guide us in our actions;
- **Core competencies** that are a set of related knowledge, skills and abilities that result in essential behaviors expected from those working for the Organization;
- **Managerial competencies** that apply to staff with management responsibilities at P-4 level and above.

Each value and competency has a brief definition and a set of positive indicators demonstrating how they are measured. The values and core competencies apply to all UNESCO staff, regardless of function, level or location. Staff at P-4 level and above should, in addition to the values and core competencies, demonstrate managerial competencies that are essential in their management role.

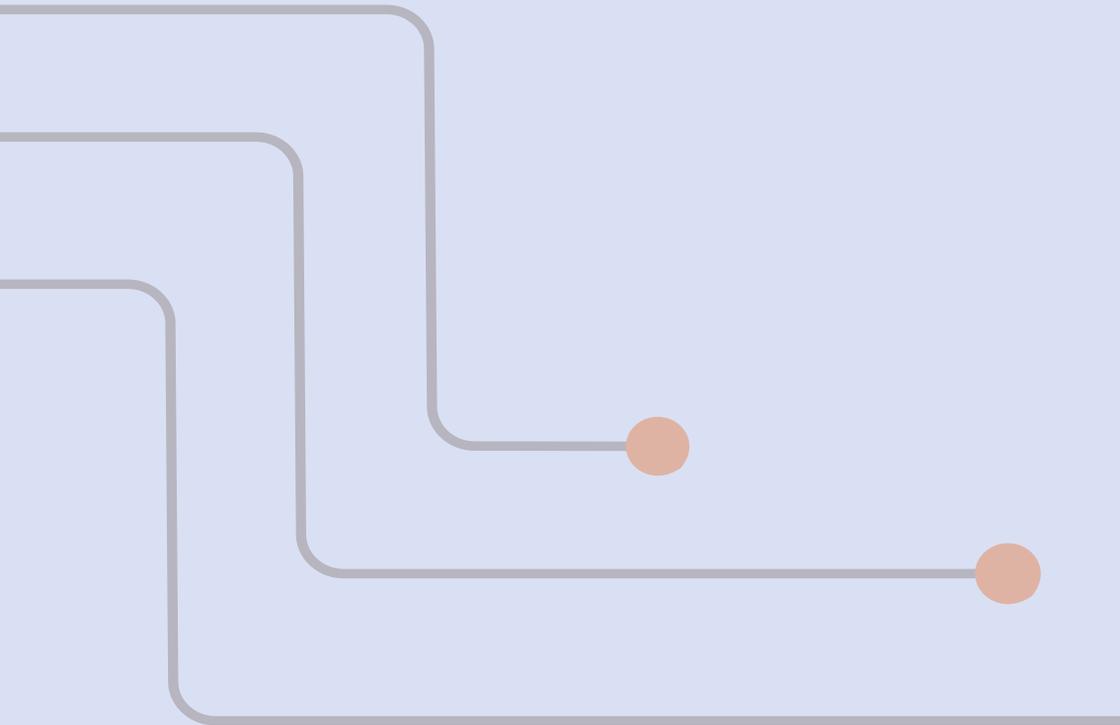
Specific functional and technical competencies, which cover different fields of expertise and are required to perform a given job, are defined in vacancy notices and complement this framework.

How is the Competency Framework applied in the Organization?

The Competency Framework enables the Organization to clarify expectations and to set standards for performance throughout UNESCO. It is a guide to help managers and staff understand the behaviors and skills expected of them and what they should strive to achieve.

The Competency Framework underpins the following HR processes:

- **Job profiling:** job descriptions will include a list of competencies that are essential for each position.
 - **Recruitment:** using competencies for recruitment ensures that any selection process is focused on the behaviors that are important for success in the role. It also ensures that new staff share UNESCO's values. Interview panels will include questions around competencies, enabling evaluation of candidates against common, specific indicators. A competency-based interviewing guide will be provided to the members of interview panels.
 - **Performance Management:** staff members should agree on a competency development plan with their supervisor, focusing on the competencies to be strengthened or developed to achieve key expected results, and to anticipate future Organizational and individual development needs.
 - **Learning & Career Development:** the performance discussions may identify specific learning needs to develop certain competencies. Staff members may also express their interest in developing particular competencies, for further career and personal development. Competencies will be incorporated into our training and development activities.
- 





Core Values

are the guiding and shared principles that unite all staff and are important for the way we work and behave

Commitment to the Organization

We are proud to work for UNESCO's mission and for the wider United Nations system, and are dedicated to making a significant and lasting contribution to the Organization by enhancing its impact and delivery.

- Align own work with the principles, priorities and objectives of the Organization.
- Act in accordance with and defend the best interests of the Organization.
- Uphold and protect the image of the Organization.
- Build an awareness of UNESCO's work among different audiences and support its vision.
- Promote the inter-sectoral approach to strengthen UNESCO's comparative advantage.

Integrity

All our actions and decisions are guided by honesty, fairness and transparency. We abide by the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service and uphold and place the Organization's interests before our own; remain impartial and unbiased in the performance of our functions.

- Maintain high ethical standards.
 - Treat others in a fair, transparent, respectful and objective manner; do not abuse power or authority.
 - Do not allow personal social/economic/political views or inappropriate pressures to influence decision-making.
 - Take prompt and effective action to deal with unprofessional or unethical behavior.
 - Act within and with respect for UNESCO's rules and regulations.
- 

Respect for Diversity

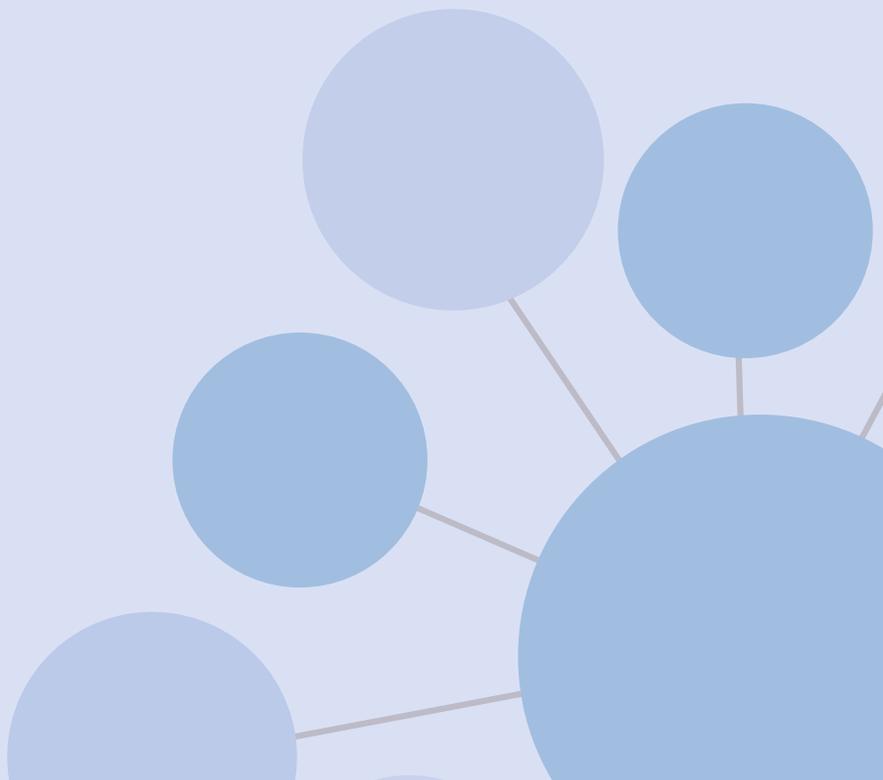
We treat all individuals with respect and dignity regardless of their differences, embrace and build upon the unique richness presented by the diversity that characterizes the Organization and its staff, and promote gender equality.

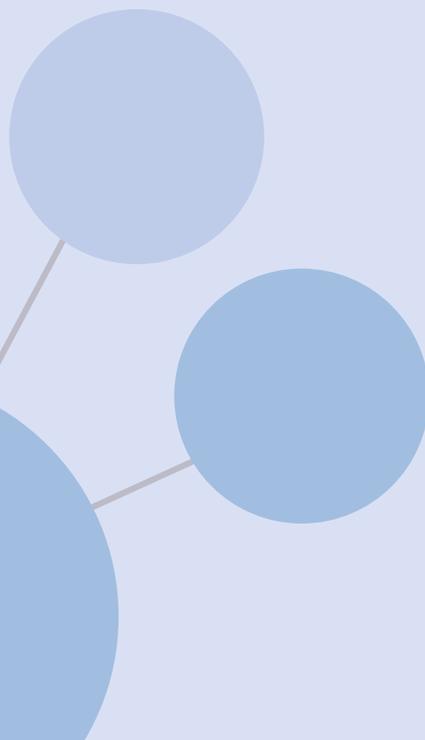
- Respect and work effectively with people of all backgrounds.
- Are open-minded and seek to understand and empathize with those different to ourselves.
- Examine own biases and behaviors to avoid stereotyping.
- Challenge prejudice and intolerance in the workplace.
- Promote diversity to strengthen own/team work and achieve results.

Professionalism

We sustain and invest in UNESCO's mission by wisely handling the Organization's resources, pro-actively seeking opportunities to contribute to the Organization, within and beyond our professional role and exercising careful judgment in meeting day-to-day challenges.

- Demonstrate professional competence and mastery of subject matter; build on strengths.
- Anticipate key issues in work and identify creative and practical solutions.
- Adapt quickly to change and are decisive and versatile in face of uncertainty.
- Provide quality services through commitment and responsiveness.
- Work collaboratively with others and build upon partnerships, thereby contributing positively to UNESCO's delivery.





Core competencies

*are a set of related
knowledge, skills and
abilities that result in
essential behaviors
expected from those
working for the
Organization*





Accountability

Demonstrates dependability in all aspects of own work and takes responsibility for own words and actions and can be relied upon consistently.

- Takes ownership for actions and decisions.
- Fulfills all commitments made to colleagues and partners.
- Operates in compliance with UNESCO's rules and regulations.
- Is transparent and honest in all actions and decisions.



Communication

Effectively conveys and shares information and ideas with others, listening carefully, clarifying understanding and taking into consideration different viewpoints.

- Adjusts communication style, content and tone to suit the audience.
- Is able to process and filter diverse information appropriately.
- Disseminates information appropriately and in a timely manner.
- Seeks and encourages two-way communication.
- Shares relevant information with others.
- Uses communication channels, tools and options effectively.



Teamwork

Works effectively with and supports colleagues, fostering a positive and collaborative environment.

- Builds trust-based relationships within and across Sectors/ Bureaux/Field Offices and with UNESCO's partners.
- Builds consensus with others to achieve common goals.
- Always shows respect and consideration for others.
- Solicits input by valuing others' ideas and expertise.
- Works proactively with others to identify solutions to issues.



Innovation

Demonstrates initiative and creativity, developing new ideas and approaches and taking initiatives, when required.

- Seeks actively to improve projects, activities, work methods and processes.
- Offers new and different options to solve problems or meet client needs.
- Encourages and convinces others to consider new ideas and approaches.
- Thinks “outside the box”; takes calculated risks on new and unusual ideas.
- Takes an interest in new ideas and new ways of doing things.



Results focus

Focuses on and assumes accountability for the delivery of agreed results, and demonstrates an understanding of how these contribute to the goals of the Organization.

- Sets quality standards and realistic target dates for activities.
- Manages time and resources effectively, monitoring progress and making adjustments, when necessary.
- Consistently maintains focus and perseveres in the face of obstacles, inspiring others to the same.
- Quickly identifies issues in own work and is able to generate creative and practical solutions.
- Adapts to changes and ambiguity appropriately.



Planning and organizing

Establishes a realistic and systematic course of action to accomplish objectives, and determines priorities and allocates resources effectively.

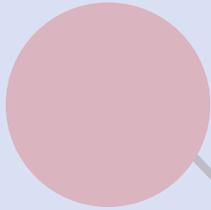
- Foresees risks and obstacles and allows for contingencies when planning.
- Allocates appropriate time and resources effectively for completing work.
- Involves and communicates appropriately with others in own planning.
- Considers the larger picture in developing and implementing plans.
- Consults with relevant parties to ensure that tasks and time frames are realistic and resources are available.
- Uses appropriate systems and tools to track and monitor progress.

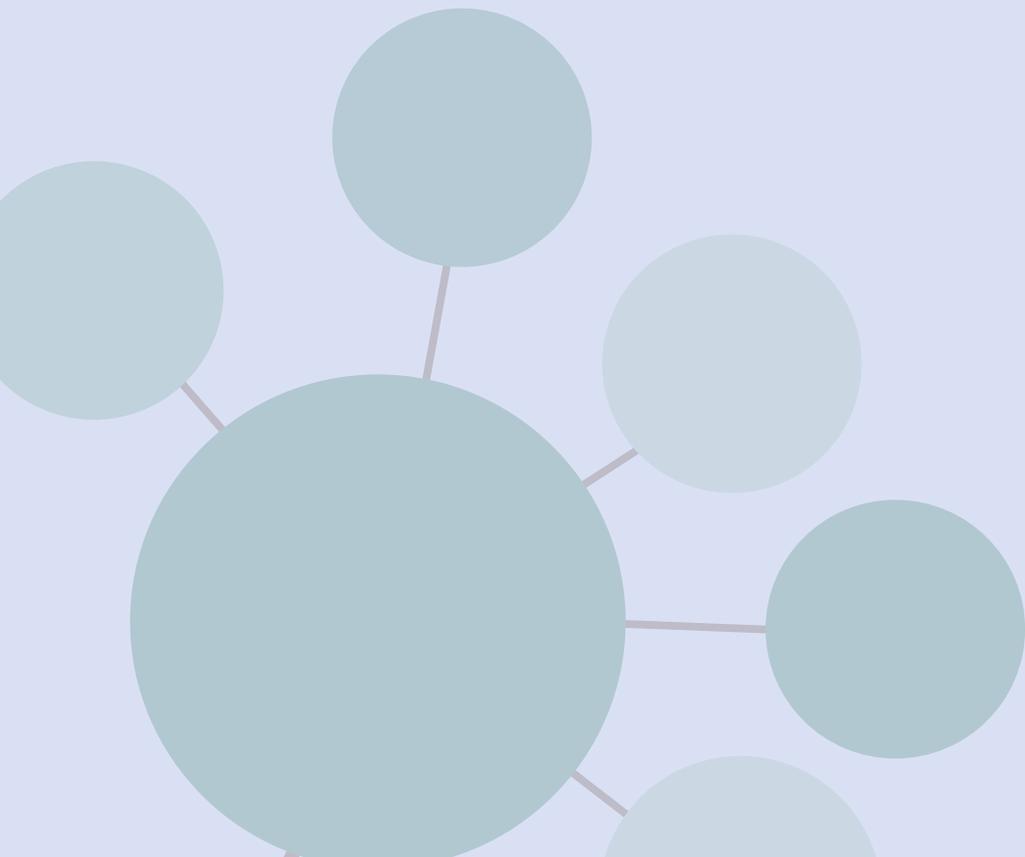


Knowledge sharing and continuous improvement

Keeps abreast of new developments in own field of competence and promotes knowledge management and a learning culture.

- Demonstrates technical competence, job knowledge and ability to add value to the core job function and beyond.
- Draws constructively on own and others' experiences as opportunities to learn.
- Shares knowledge with colleagues and partners to enhance performance and foster knowledge transmission.
- Identifies own development needs and pro-actively seeks new challenges and opportunities to develop.
- Solicits feedback and identifies ways to improve.





Managerial competencies

*are a set of skills and
abilities essential for
staff with management
responsibilities
at P-4 level and above*



Driving and managing change

Instigates needed change. Shows a positive, open attitude towards change.

- Takes ownership of the change process.
- Leads and manages change effectively.
- Is able to mobilize the team towards change, and encourages and empowers people to implement change.
- Identifies potential resistance to change and deals with it effectively.
- Identifies potential opportunities for improving ways of working.



Strategic thinking

Supports, promotes and ensures alignment with the Organization's vision and values.

- Understands the internal and external influences that require organizational changes.
- Considers multiple possible causes and risks and anticipates consequences of situations.
- Is able to translate strategies into action.
- Looks beyond the immediate and considers long-term impact and consequences.
- Places issues in the broader context of the Organization's priorities and plans.



Making quality decisions

Forms sound, evidence-based judgments, makes choices, assesses risks to delivery, and takes accountability for results.

- Proactively seeks relevant information before making decisions.
- Understands complex information and quickly identifies key issues.
- Commits to a clear course of action and takes decisions that are consistent with it.
- Takes decisions that optimize the impact on the Organization and others.
- Is able to make sound decisions quickly and takes balanced risks associated with them before committing to action.
- Is accountable for own decisions.
- Makes tough and difficult decisions, when necessary.



Building partnerships

Builds and maintains effective long-term partnerships and networks to achieve organizational goals.

- Identifies key internal and external stakeholders and maintains open and trustworthy relationships with them.
- Initiates new partnerships and builds alliances that facilitate the achievement of organizational goals.
- Actively supports and promotes inter-sectoral alliances and activities.
- Understands the complexity of the environment and creates mutually beneficial relationships.
- Encourages and supports others in building partnerships and networks.



Leading and empowering others

Inspires others toward a common vision and fosters trust and ethical behavior.

- Inspires and motivates others to follow their ideas and vision.
- Knows team's strengths and areas for development.
- Builds upon and nurtures the potential of individuals.
- Ensures staffing decisions are fair and transparent.
- Is visible and available to colleagues.
- Delegates effectively and fairly.
- Acts as a role model by demonstrating strong leadership skills.
- Persuades and encourages others to adapt to changes.



Managing performance

Creates a positive work environment in which individuals are enabled to perform to the best of their abilities.

- Ensures that performance issues are dealt with fairly, constructively and expediently.
- Aligns own and team performance with organizational goals and objectives.
- Champions employee development for career growth and mobility.
- Provides objective and regular feedback.
- Encourages feedback to enhance performance.
- Recognizes and acknowledges efforts as well as achievements.

Core Values

- Commitment to the Organization
- Integrity
- Respect for Diversity
- Professionalism

Core Competencies

- Accountability
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Innovation
- Results focus
- Planning and organizing
- Knowledge sharing and continuous improvement

Managerial Competencies

- Driving and managing change
- Strategic thinking
- Making quality decisions
- Building partnerships
- Leading and empowering others
- Managing performance