



23 September 2019

Administrative instruction

Use of space at Headquarters in New York for meetings, conferences, events and exhibits

The Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, for the purpose of setting out the arrangements concerning the use of United Nations premises at Headquarters in New York, promulgates the following:

Section 1

Scope of application

The present instruction provides guidelines for the use of United Nations premises at Headquarters in New York (“United Nations premises”) for meetings, conferences, events and exhibits.

Section 2

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purpose of the present instruction:

(a) *United Nations entity*: a department or office of the Secretariat, including an office away from Headquarters; a special political or peacekeeping mission; a regional commission; a United Nations fund, programme or specialized agency or other entity of the United Nations system; or any other unit tasked with programmed activities;

(b) *Organizer*: the United Nations or non-United Nations entity, or organization or group that is convening the meeting, conference, event or exhibit taking place on United Nations premises. When a United Nations entity is the organizer or a co-organizer, it shall also be the sponsor;

(c) *Co-organizer*: when the meeting, conference, event or exhibit is organized by more than one organizer, each organizer will be referred to as a co-organizer;

(d) *Sponsor*: the United Nations entity, permanent mission or permanent observer mission to the United Nations responsible for making necessary arrangements with the organizer or co-organizer and the managing entity, as defined below. The United Nations Staff Recreational Council in New York and the United Nations Staff Union in New York have the same functional status as United Nations entity sponsors in the present administrative instruction;

(e) *Liaison*: a representative of the sponsor responsible for coordinating with the managing entity;



(f) *Managing entity*: the United Nations entity that is responsible for managing booking requests and scheduling a specific space on United Nations premises for meetings, conferences, events and exhibits.¹

Section 3

Managing entities

3.1 Spaces used for meetings, conferences, events and exhibits are managed by different entities at United Nations Headquarters, as set forth below:

(a) The conference facilities are managed by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management;

(b) Publicly accessible gallery areas² are managed by the United Nations Exhibits Committee;

(c) Meeting rooms and specific spaces assigned to specific entities are managed by those entities;

(d) All other spaces are managed by the Division of Administration of the Department of Operational Support.

3.2 The conference facilities and services at United Nations Headquarters are intended to be used primarily for meetings and conferences scheduled in the calendar of conferences, meetings approved by the General Assembly and, on an as available basis, meetings of regional or other established groups of Member States at the request of the Chair of the group, in accordance with established procedure.

3.3 Specific instructions and procedures, including a code of conduct for requesting, organizing and conducting meetings, conferences and events in the conference rooms at United Nations Headquarters may be issued from time to time by the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management.

3.4 Exhibits in publicly accessible gallery areas at United Nations Headquarters are subject to review and approval by the Exhibits Committee, in accordance with the guidelines and procedures contained in the Secretary-General's bulletin on the Committee³ and the administrative instruction on exhibits in publicly accessible gallery areas at Headquarters in New York.⁴

3.5 Specific entities manage specific spaces on United Nations premises according to the procedures set out by those entities in support of their specific mandates.

3.6 Specific instructions and procedures, including a code of conduct for requesting, organizing and conducting meetings, conferences, events and exhibits in other locations at United Nations Headquarters, including general Secretariat meeting rooms and designated catered spaces, may be issued from time to time by the Director of Administration of the Department of Operational Support.

Section 4

Criteria for the use of United Nations premises

4.1 In using United Nations premises, due respect must be maintained for the dignity of the Organization. Meetings, conferences, events and exhibits must be

¹ For the purposes of the present administrative instruction, the United Nations Exhibits Committee functions as a managing entity in relation to publicly accessible gallery areas (see section 3.1 (b)).

² Publicly accessible gallery areas shall be defined by agreement between the Division of Administration of the Department of Operational Support and the Exhibits Committee.

³ [ST/SGB/2008/6](#), or any administrative issuances superseding it.

⁴ [ST/AI/2008/1](#), or any administrative issuances superseding it.

consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations and must be non-commercial in nature. The managing entity reserves the right to reject booking requests, request changes to materials presented for approval or cancel previously authorized bookings should it determine that a meeting, conference, event or exhibit is not consistent with the foregoing.

4.2 The content of meetings, conferences, events or exhibits shall be the sole responsibility of their sponsor or sponsors, and any questions or concerns pertaining to meetings, conferences, events or exhibits should be referred to the sponsor or sponsors.

4.3 Authorization to use the conference facilities will be granted on the understanding that meetings and conferences of the General Assembly and other organs of the Organization take precedence over other meetings or events. The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management reserves the right to cancel previously authorized bookings at any time prior to the event in case of unforeseen changes in the schedules and/or programmes of the Organization. In such cases, the sponsor will be expeditiously informed and will be responsible for finding an alternative venue.

4.4 Other than meetings and conferences scheduled under the calendar of conferences, meetings approved by the General Assembly and meetings of regional or other established groups of Member States, meetings, conferences, events and exhibits that may be sponsored on United Nations premises include:

- (a) Those requested by a United Nations entity;
- (b) Those of non-United Nations entities sponsored by a United Nations entity as part of its work programme;
- (c) Those requested by permanent missions or permanent observer missions to the United Nations, including those of non-United Nations entities sponsored by a permanent mission or permanent observer mission;
- (d) Those sponsored by the United Nations Staff Union in New York and related to the Staff Union's activities;
- (e) Those held by the clubs of the United Nations Staff Recreational Council in New York.

4.5 Non-United Nations entities, including non-governmental organizations, should not hold meetings, conferences, events or exhibits on United Nations premises to conduct their own organizational business or to advance their own purposes or aims, except in the designated catering spaces which can be reserved for private functions, in which case the sponsor of the meeting, conference, event or exhibit must specifically indicate in the information for all participants that the venue at Headquarters is the catering space.

Section 5

Coordination of services

For approved meetings, conferences, events and exhibits involving multiple internal service providers, if additional technical services and equipment are required, the Division of Administration of the Department of Operational Support will coordinate with the appropriate departments and offices in order to provide them.

Section 6**Criteria and role and responsibilities of sponsors***Entities acting as sponsors*

6.1 For meetings and conferences covered under section 3.2 above that require services beyond those normally provided, the substantive secretariat of the meeting bodies will act as a sponsor and will be fully responsible for raising service requests and for all costs associated with the requests.

6.2 For meetings, conferences, events or exhibits covered under section 4.4 above, a permanent mission or permanent observer mission to the United Nations or a United Nations entity must act as the sponsor of the meeting, conference, event or exhibit.

6.3 All meetings, conferences, events and exhibits conducted in spaces at Headquarters that are managed by the Division of Administration of the Department of Operational Support must have a sponsor that is a United Nations entity, unless the meeting, conference, event or exhibit is sponsored by a permanent mission or permanent observer mission.

Roles and responsibilities of sponsors

6.4 The roles and responsibilities of a sponsor include the following:

(a) An official representing the sponsor must attend and preside over the event in its entirety. When a permanent mission or permanent observer mission is acting as a sponsor, an official of the mission must also act as the liaison;

(b) The sponsor will be fully responsible for ensuring that the programme content is consistent with the principles and purposes of the United Nations, in accordance with sections 4.1 and 4.2 above;

(c) The sponsor will be fully responsible for, inter alia, vetting the list of participants and all information disseminated, publicly or otherwise, relating to the meeting, conference, event or exhibit, including those organized by non-United Nations entities, liaising with the participants on any issues relating to the meeting, conference, event or exhibit, for the content of the announcement in the *Journal of the United Nations* and for any and all costs associated with servicing the meeting, conference, event or exhibit;

(d) The United Nations Staff Recreational Council, as the sponsor for its member clubs, must make a request and ensure that meetings, conferences, events or exhibits are compliant with the purpose of staff recreation and the stated objectives of the member clubs. The Council will be responsible for the programme content. Any and all costs associated with servicing the meeting, conference, event or exhibit are to be paid for by its member clubs;

(e) For use of the conference facilities, the sponsor will liaise with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and other relevant service providers as needed for the coordination of all organizational and financial arrangements;

(f) For use of specific spaces under the management of a specific entity, the sponsor will coordinate with the managing entity and other relevant service providers for the coordination of all organizational and financial arrangements;

(g) For use of publicly accessible gallery areas, the sponsor will coordinate with the Exhibits Committee, and other relevant service providers as instructed by that Committee, for the coordination of all organizational and financial arrangements;

(h) For use of all other spaces, the sponsor will coordinate with the Division of Administration of the Department of Operational Support and other relevant service providers for the coordination of all organizational and financial arrangements;

(i) The sponsor must provide all relevant information about any non-United Nations co-organizers to the managing entity;

(j) It is the sponsor's responsibility to ensure that the facilities are returned to their original condition immediately after use;

(k) The sponsor should be aware that any significant unannounced deviation from the purpose, agenda or content of the programme as previously approved will necessitate a new review and approval process.

6.5 Organizers of meetings, conferences, events or exhibits in conference rooms must ensure that their use of conference rooms ends on time to allow time to prepare for subsequent meetings.

6.6 Should it be determined that a sponsor is acting only in title in order to facilitate an outside organization's use of United Nations premises, approval for the meeting, conference, event or exhibit will be withdrawn.

Section 7

Costs of meetings, conferences, events and exhibits

7.1 The sponsor is ultimately responsible for covering any and all costs related to meetings, conferences, events and exhibits, including those specified in sections 7.2 to 7.4 below, except for the standard services for meetings and conferences covered under section 3.2 above.

7.2 If a meeting, conference, event or exhibit requires that United Nations staff or contractual staff be diverted from their regular functions to provide requested services, or if overtime costs are incurred because the services are performed either during the lunch hour or outside of normal working hours, the sponsor will be charged for those costs.

7.3 The sponsor will also be charged for all costs related to the provision of all additional services necessary for the conduct of the meeting, conference, event or exhibit.

7.4 The sponsor will also be responsible for all costs necessary for the repair of any damage caused to United Nations property during the meeting, conference, event or exhibit by the organizer that it has sponsored or the organizer's personnel and its invited guests.

7.5 Should a sponsor fail to meet the final costs of a meeting, conference, event or exhibit, future requests will be refused until the amount owed is paid.

7.6 If a meeting, conference, event or exhibit must be cancelled in the case of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance, the United Nations shall not be held liable for any additional costs incurred by the sponsor or any co-organizers.

Section 8

Insurance

For most meetings, conferences, events or exhibits that are held for or with the involvement of a non-United Nations entity, when the non-United Nations entity is either an organizer or co-organizer pursuant to a written agreement such as a contract or memorandum of understanding, it is necessary for the sponsor to receive clearance from the Risk Management and Compensation Section of the Finance Division of the

Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance. To receive clearance, the sponsor must provide the Division of Administration of the Department of Operational Support with a certificate of insurance in accordance with the insurance requirements stipulated in the contract or memorandum of understanding. The Division of Administration will forward the certificate of insurance to the Risk Management and Compensation Section for review and clearance. Such a certificate must be furnished to the Risk Management and Compensation Section two weeks prior to the scheduled event.

Section 9
Final provisions

The present instruction supersedes administrative instruction [ST/AI/416](#), entitled “Use of United Nations premises for meetings, conferences, special events and exhibits”. It should be read in conjunction with administrative instructions [ST/AI/387](#), on security arrangements for admission to United Nations Headquarters, and [ST/AI/2019/5](#), on the authority of United Nations security officers.

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