Frequently Asked Questions

**World Press Freedom Conference (WPFC) – general**

**For whom is the World Press Freedom Conference (WPFC)?**
The World Press Freedom Conference is open to everyone, including journalists and news media, policy-makers, NGOs, members of the judiciary, students, artists, businesses, academics and many others from all over the world who work in or for journalism. Registration is mandatory.

**Who is organizing the World Press Freedom Conference in 2020?**
In 2020, the Kingdom of the Netherlands is proud to host the World Press Freedom Conference. The Conference is jointly organized by UNESCO and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

**Where does the World Press Freedom Conference 2020 take place?**
The venue is the World Forum in the city of The Hague in The Netherlands.

**Is the World Press Freedom Conference the same thing as World Press Freedom Day?**
The annual World Press Freedom Conference (WPFC) is the global celebration of World Press Freedom Day - a worldwide commemoration day that takes place annually on 3 May. In addition to the WPFC, other events will take place around 3 May across the globe. This year, the World Press Freedom Conference on 22-24 April is the kick-off of celebrations leading up to World Press Freedom Day on 3 May. More information about the day and the conference on [https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/worldpressfreedomday/](https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/worldpressfreedomday/)

**What is World Press Freedom Day about?**
World Press Freedom Day celebrates the fundamental principles of press freedom, takes stock of press freedom around the world, aims to defend the media from attacks on their independence and to pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the exercise of their profession. World Press Freedom Day was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 1993 following a Recommendation adopted at the twenty-sixth session of UNESCO's General Conference in 1991.

**What is the World Press Freedom Festival and how it is different from the WPFC?**
In 2020 the first-ever World Press Freedom Festival will be held on 24 April. This is an integral part of the World Press Freedom Conference. World Press Freedom Festival will give a dedicated platform to a broader audience, targeting more particularly youth/students, the wider public, netizens, and everyone interested in the state of press freedom in 2020. The purpose of this event is to encourage these groups to participate in World Press Freedom Day celebrations, acquaint them with topical issues surrounding press freedom and explore ways they can contribute to the future of free and independent media.

**Can I publish about WPFC on our (social) media channels?**
We invite everyone to spread social media content to draw attention to the WPFC. Please use #WorldPressFreedomDay and/or #PressFreedom.
Do I have to register to attend the World Press Freedom Conference (WPFC)?
Yes, you have to complete a two-step registration process online. Please go to the pre-registration portal.

How can I register to attend the WPFC?
Please go to the pre-registration portal and follow the steps there.

Why do I have to pre-register and also register?
With pre-registration you indicate your interest in participating in the WPFC. If your pre-registration is in order, you will receive an invitation to register all necessary personal credentials as well as your interest in specific break-out sessions on a secure platform.

When is my registration complete?
Your registration is complete if you have received the information on how to collect your badge at the World Forum. You receive this information after you have conveyed your identification information via the registration platform and these have proved correct.

Where can I find practical information about participating in the WPFC?
All registered participants will receive an information note with practical information about the conference and the Netherlands (accommodation, climate, travel etc.) as part of the registration process.

Do I have to pay to participate in WPFC?
No, participation in the Conference is free of charge. You do have to cover your own transportation to the Netherlands and accommodation in the Netherlands.

Can I invite other people to attend the WPFC?
You can invite people by directing them to the pre-registration portal.

How do I know whether my (pre)registration has been approved?
You will be notified automatically when going through the pre-registration and registration portal. If you are sure you have entered the correct e-mail address and have not received a message, please check your Spam-folder or contact the registration helpdesk.

What are the deadlines for (pre)registration?
Pre-registration will close on 6 March, 2020. Registration will open on 10 February, 2020 and close on 10 April, 2020. You are advised to (pre)register as soon as possible. Participants who require a visa to enter the Netherlands should (pre)register well in advance and take into account the time needed to complete a visa application. Please consult https://consular.mfaservices.nl/schengen visa to see if you require a visa.

Do I need a visa to travel to the Netherlands and participate in the WPFC?
Visa requirements depend on your nationality. Please consult the information provided by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to see if you require a Schengen visa. You can also apply for a visa via that website.

When should I apply for a visa?
You should apply as soon as possible. Find up-to-date information here.

I want to cover WPFC 2020 as a journalist. Do I have to register?
Yes, you have to register as a journalist. This possibility will open on 10 February, 2020. A media note with all information for journalists who want to cover WPFC 2020 will then be published as well.
Can I register both as a journalist to cover the event and as a participant of the WPFC?
Yes, you can be present both as press and as participant. In this case it is sufficient to only register as a journalist covering the conference. A media note with information for journalists who want to cover WPFC 2020 will be published in February via the UNESCO WPFD 2020 website. Journalists will also get the opportunity to register from that date onwards. WPFC 2020 organizers do not sponsor travel arrangements for media.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Where can I submit my proposal?
Please refer to the call for proposals on the UNESCO website. The online Proposal Form can be accessed directly here.

Who is eligible to submit a proposal?
Organizations in the Netherlands and in other countries who are active in the fields of journalism, media development and freedom of expression, including freedom of artistic expression, can submit a proposal. Submitters can be civil society organizations, intergovernmental organizations, media, private sector, Internet intermediaries, policy and public affairs institutes, and universities and other knowledge institutions. Joint proposals are particularly encouraged.

What is the deadline for submitting a proposal?
The deadline to submit a proposal is 10 January, 2020.

What are my responsibilities as session organizer?
- Covering costs of travel, accommodation and other travel related expenses of moderators, speakers and required facilitations of your session.
- Contacting the moderator and speakers to address logistical matters.
- Identifying a rapporteur to produce a one-page report on the session, based on a template to be provided by the conference organization.
- Regularly liaising with the conference organization in preparation of your session.
- Ensuring all contributors are properly registered and accredited for participation.

What are the selection criteria for the proposals?
Proposals are judged on the following criteria, as well as on general grounds of relevance and appropriateness, and balance in the overall conference programme:
- Overall relevance to the conference theme and goals. Proposals are judged on their relevance to the theme / subthemes, aims and general spirit of the conference.
- Proposed speakers and moderators. Applicants are encouraged to carefully select appealing speakers and moderators and pay attention to balance in [panel]discussions. For panel sessions, only panels of maximum 4-5 persons are accepted. Persons able to share their own [field] experience are welcomed.
- Innovative format. Out-of-the-box ideas and innovative formats are encouraged (storytelling, team debates, lightning talks, etc.) to ensure interactive and engaging discussions with participation of the audience.
- Diversity. In compliance with UNESCO’s policy, the choice of panelists/ speakers must respect gender balance and diverse geographic representation in all sessions.
- Youth participation. It is strongly recommended to have at least one speaker < 35 years old in each session.

Can I request a particular room at the World Forum for my session or will the organizers allocate a room where the session will potentially take place?
You can indicate your preference via the call for proposals-portal. The organizers aim to accommodate your preference but cannot guarantee you will be allocated the room of your choice.
Do I need to have a valid visa for the Netherlands in order to be allowed to submit a proposal?

You can submit a proposal even if you do not yet have a valid visa for the Netherlands (Schengen-visa). However, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are able to organize the session you propose. All persons who require visa to enter the Netherlands need to apply for this well in advance.

The working language of my organization is not English. Am I allowed to submit my proposal in another (UN)-language?

We kindly ask everyone to submit their proposal in English and to have one English-speaking contact person available for the WPFC-organization to communicate with.

Will translation services be available during the WPFC?

The working language of the WPFC is English. There will be limited possibilities for English-French, English-Spanish and English-Arabic translation in selected sessions. Please contact the organization if you have specific requests considering translation in these or other languages.

When do we find out if our proposal has been accepted or denied?

You will receive a notification on or before January 25th, 2020.

If our proposal has been accepted, does that mean I can also participate in the conference?

Once your proposal has been accepted, you will receive an invitation to register as a participant for the WPFC.

Does your (pre)registration and call for proposals systems operate in line with the EU data protection and privacy regulations?

Yes. Your information will be saved up to a maximum of three months after the conference. Within these three months, your data will be destroyed under supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs privacy statement can be read at: https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-foreign-affairs/privacy.

I want to collaborate with other partners. Can the WPFC-organization introduce me to other relevant organizations and speakers?

Please submit your proposal first and contact the organization with your specific request.

What are the most important topics during the WPFC 2020?

You can read about the topics for WPFC2020 in the concept note and the call for proposals.

My organization has limited funds available. Without sponsoring we cannot attend the WPFC. Would you recommend to submit a proposal despite this?

Session organizers are responsible for covering costs of travel, accommodation and other travel related expenses of moderators, speakers and facilitations of their session. In case organizers cannot cover those costs, they should try to find opportunities themselves. You can submit your proposal even if your funding is still pending (please indicate this fact in your proposal).

VISA

Will the WPFC team help me with applying for a Schengen visa (i.e. visa for the Netherlands)?

Please consult https://consular.mfaservices.nl/schengen-visa for all necessary information on visa applications. This website also contains information on the application process and supporting documents you will have to present when applying for your visa. The WPFC team will provide you with an invitation letter. Other than that, the WPFC team cannot influence the visa application process.
I need an invitation letter to apply for my visa. Can the WPFC team provide me with one?
Yes. The WPFC project team provides you with an invitation letter. This is part of the online registration process.

Will the costs of my Schengen visa be covered by WPFC?
No. The costs for your Schengen visa will not be covered by the WPFC team and you are responsible for covering all related costs. It is not possible to apply for financial assistance from the Dutch government to cover your visa costs.

Can I come earlier and extend my stay in the Netherlands to see the country and travel around?
Yes. A short term Schengen visa will allow you to stay in the Netherlands for a maximum of 90 days. You will need to apply for the total number of days you wish to spend in The Netherlands/Schengen area.