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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

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Strategic Leadership for Women in Diplomacy

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: 16 4□ 2026

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Workshop

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Geneva, Switzerland

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20 4□ 2026 to 24 4□ 2026

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5 Days

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Multilateral Diplomacy

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<http://www.unitar.org/immersionprogramme>

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US\$2,300.00

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Women remain underrepresented in senior diplomatic and decision-making roles globally. Research conducted by Dr. Karen E. Smith and Marta Kozielska at LSE IDEAS has identified key structural and institutional barriers that hinder women's advancement in the field.

Building on these findings, this joint programme translates research into applied learning, focusing on how institutions and individuals can address persistent gender imbalances and support systemic change. The collaboration between UNITAR and LSE IDEAS reflects a shared commitment to promoting inclusive leadership and evidence-based policymaking.

For more than six decades, UNITAR has been a leading provider of diplomatic training for UN Member States, international organisations, and government officials. Through its Division for Multilateral Diplomacy, UNITAR offers programmes that combine practical learning, policy relevance, and direct engagement with the UN system. Its workshops are known for their interactive design, expert-led facilitation, and the ability to connect participants with practitioners at the highest levels of multilateral diplomacy.

In particular, UNITAR's Geneva-based location enables close collaboration with UN entities, Permanent Missions, and international organisations, providing participants with unique access to senior female leaders within the United Nations and diplomatic community. This approach ensures that the Women in Diplomacy Programme is not only informed by research, but also grounded in real-world leadership experiences within the UN context.



The Women in Diplomacy Programme is a 5-day, in-person training in Geneva for mid-career professionals in diplomacy and international policy. It focuses on strategic leadership and institutional impact, equipping participants with the skills, knowledge, and networks to influence decision-making and advance gender equality within national ministries, diplomatic services and international organisations.

A joint initiative between UNITAR and the LSE IDEAS Women in Diplomacy project, the programme translates research on women's representation in diplomacy into practical, policy-relevant strategies. Participants will gain direct engagement with LSE IDEAS researchers, senior women diplomats, UN officials, and policy leaders, applying lessons in realistic diplomatic scenarios to strengthen their leadership and effect systemic change.

By combining academic insight, applied training, and institutional access, the programme prepares participants not only to strengthen their own leadership, but to advance women's representation and influence in international diplomacy.



The *Strategic Leadership for Women in Diplomacy Programme* equips participants with a substantive understanding of the diplomatic system while sharpening the skills required to lead and influence within it. The programme builds advanced knowledge of global governance, develops core competencies essential to diplomatic practice, and facilitates engagement with senior practitioners and Geneva-based institutions.

The Women in Diplomacy Programme seeks to:

- Support the translation of academic research into actionable institutional reform.
- Strengthen the capacity of women leaders to influence and implement policy.
- Contribute to more inclusive, effective, and representative diplomatic systems.

By the end of the programme, participants will be able to:

- Identify and analyse systemic barriers affecting women's participation and leadership in diplomacy.
- Strengthen leadership, communication, and negotiation skills for diplomatic and multilateral settings.
- Develop strategies for institutional reform aligned with research-based frameworks.
- Engage effectively with peers, senior practitioners, and researchers working on gender and diplomacy.



Hosting 35 international organizations and more than 250 NGOs, Geneva offers an unparalleled environment for high-impact learning in diplomacy and international affairs. UNITAR hosts the programme at the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and delivers a balanced curriculum built around expert input, practical training, and high-level engagement. The programme combines lectures, workshops, simulations, and policy dialogues, delivered by UNITAR trainers, LSE IDEAS researchers, and experienced practitioners in diplomacy and

international relations.

Expert Lectures and Policy Dialogues

UNITAR's network across Geneva enables a series of focused sessions in which participants engage directly with UN personnel, senior diplomats, and policy experts. These include joint dialogues with LSE researchers on the latest findings from the *Strengthening the Representation of Women in Diplomacy* report and related studies.

Interactive Workshops and Simulations

As a core element of UNITAR's mandate, the programme includes practice-oriented workshops delivered by seasoned diplomats and trainers. These sessions build leadership, negotiation, and influence skills through targeted exercises and simulations.

Mentorship Circles

Participants engage in structured mentorship circles designed to support career progression, strategic leadership development, and institutional navigation. These include both peer-led exchanges and guidance from senior practitioners with experience in diplomatic and multilateral environments.

Extras

The programme integrates optional social elements to help participants build their professional networks, including a welcome package.



Given the complexity of contemporary multilateral diplomacy, the programme adopts a thematic methodology centered on domains where strategic leadership is most critical. The curriculum integrates issues such as peace and security, human rights and humanitarian action, global health, trade and technology governance, and environment and sustainable development, with a consistent focus on how these arenas shape and constrain women's leadership in diplomacy.

The methodological approach is intentionally interactive and experiential. Participants engage in lectures, workshops, simulations, and policy dialogues that

prioritize direct exposure to practitioners, real-world decision-making settings, and evidence-based frameworks. This structure enables participants to analyze multilateral processes while actively developing the leadership and negotiation capacities required to influence them.

All activities are conducted in English.



UNITAR welcomes a range of professional backgrounds and experiences, and this programme is specifically tailored for women seeking to strengthen their strategic leadership capacity in diplomacy and international affairs. It is designed for mid-career professionals working in diplomatic services and foreign ministries, multilateral and intergovernmental organizations, and international policy or development roles.

Participants should typically have 5–10 years of relevant professional experience. Applicants holding a Master's degree in International Relations or a related field may also be considered with a minimum of 3 years of relevant experience. All candidates must demonstrate a clear commitment to advancing women's participation and leadership in diplomacy.

To maintain a high standard of learning and meaningful peer exchange, registration is limited to 30 participants and places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Each participant will receive a UNITAR certificate of completion at the end of the programme.



UNITAR will be responsible for the overall design, coordination and implementation of the *Strategic Leadership for Women in Diplomacy Programme*. It will liaise with participants on a regular basis prior to the start of the activity to ensure smooth and efficient organization for all involved.

Participants are responsible for purchasing their own travel tickets to and from Geneva, as well as for securing any required visa for entry into Switzerland. UNITAR can support this process by issuing an official visa invitation letter. Participants are also expected to arrange their own accommodation and daily meals.

UNITAR will sponsor a welcome package including relevant training materials and entry tickets for scheduled institutional visits. As part of your application, please upload your CV demonstrating your level of professional experience in diplomacy or a closely related field to [rebecca.kelly \[at\] unitar.org](mailto:rebecca.kelly@unitar.org) ([rebecca\[dot\]kelly\[at\]unitar\[dot\]org](mailto:rebecca[kelly@unitar.org])).

Please read this before registration: ***“I understand that the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) does not insure participants in the above-described activity, and I am advised to arrange at my own expense insurance against sickness, accident, permanent or temporary disability, death, and third-party risk for the period of the meeting, including travel time.”***