

Post Title:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR SCIENCES
Post Number:	SCS 001
Grade:	ADG
Parent Sector:	Sciences Sector (SC)
Duty Station:	Paris (France)
Job Family:	Sciences
Type of contract:	Fixed-Term
Duration of contract:	2 years, renewable
Recruitment open to:	Internal and external candidates
Application Deadline (<i>midnight, Paris time</i>):	26 May 2026

UNESCO Core Values: Commitment to the Organization, Integrity, Respect for Diversity, Professionalism

OVERVIEW OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE POST

In response to the increasing interdependence of environmental, technological and societal systems, UNESCO will pursue a forward-looking process aimed at strengthening the coherence and positioning of its scientific mandate. The evolving global landscape for sciences, characterized by accelerated technological change, complex sustainability challenges and growing demands for science-informed responsible governance, calls for closer alignment between natural, basic, and social and human sciences.

The Sciences Sector will enhance UNESCO's capacity to deliver science-based, integrated, policy-relevant and ethically grounded solutions, while advancing action on innovation and capacity building. This will be done with full respect and preservation of the mandates, intergovernmental programmes and normative instruments adopted by Member States.

The Sciences Sector plays a central role in advancing UNESCO's mission to build peace and sustainable development through promotion of sciences, knowledge and innovation. Its mandate is to strengthen science, technology and innovation (STI) systems at national, regional, and global levels, promote international scientific cooperation across scientific fields, and harness the transformative power of social and human sciences, technologies and innovation to address the world's most pressing challenges and the complexity of social transformations – from climate change and biodiversity loss to water security and disaster resilience, from promotion of human rights and social inclusion to equitable access to knowledge and ethical technological advancements, including artificial intelligence.

Through major intergovernmental programmes, committees and standard-setting instruments – including inter alia Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme, the Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee (IGBC) and related scientific committees, the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP), the Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB), the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP), the International Convention for the Elimination of Doping in Sport, and the International Basic Sciences Programme (IBSP) – the Sector mobilizes global scientific networks and knowledge to shape and inform policy and action.

Under the authority of the Director-General, the Assistant Director-General for Sciences is responsible for providing intellectual leadership and strategic vision for the Sciences Sector in line with the Organization's Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 document (41 C/4) and the decisions of the governing bodies. To this end, the Assistant Director-General for Sciences is responsible for the overall implementation of Major Programme II (Natural Sciences) and Major Programme III (Social and Human Sciences), approved by UNESCO's governing bodies, including for its category 1 institute (the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics).

The mission of the Sciences Sector is to harness natural, basic, social and human sciences as a transformative force for sustainability, human rights, gender equality, peace, and equity by integrating the best and all available forms of knowledge, technology, ethical reflection, governance, and inclusive, intercultural dialogue across disciplines, knowledge systems and worldviews, and strengthening the link between scientific frontiers and societal relevance underpinned by research and supported by evidence-based policy for development.

KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Assistant Director-General for Sciences will:

- Advance UNESCO's initiatives and measurable impact across key sciences domains, including Social Policies and Inclusion; Ethics, Research and Technology; Ecological and Earth Sciences; and Water Sciences.
- Strengthen policies and governance related to sciences, technology and innovation and increase access to scientific and technological advances and knowledge-sharing, through open sciences approaches, as well as reinforced science-policy-society interface, with a view to achieving ethical, sustainable and inclusive development through knowledge production and sharing and capacity building.
- Empower Member States to manage the ethical, legal, environmental and societal implications of sciences, technology and innovation, including cutting-edge science, emerging technologies and their applications, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and neuro-technologies.
- Monitor global trends and developments in the different scientific fields and their contributions to solving global challenges and social transformations, while operating in an innovative, creative, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary manner.

- Promote knowledge and building of human and institutional capacities as regards natural, basic, social and human sciences, fostering responsible technological advancements and scientific research across social, human, environmental, water and Earth sciences.
- Foster international scientific cooperation at the service of society to address the complexity of social transformations, Earth systems, biodiversity, disaster risk reduction, climate change mitigation and freshwater security.
- Develop comprehensive and integrated actions with UNESCO's global networks of designated sites (biosphere reserves, UNESCO Global Geoparks and ecohydrology sites), UNESCO centres and Chairs in both major programmes.
- Reinforce links with global and regional scientific associations and institutions.
- Promote the integration of a human rights-based approach in all of UNESCO's programmes and activities.
- Support youth-policy development, youth action, and civic engagement.
- Promote intercultural dialogue.
- Advance intergovernmental cooperation and building multi-stakeholder public policies in the field of sports and anti-doping.
- Strengthen the philosophy and humanities programme, the debate of ideas, as well as the General History of Africa, as well as the Routes of Enslaved Peoples, and Silk Roads programmes.
- Mobilize partnerships and extrabudgetary resources, fostering collaboration with Member States, international organizations, academic institutions, civil society, and the private sector.
- Foster innovation and foresight in the sciences, ensuring UNESCO remains a global laboratory of ideas in response to emerging challenges.
- Represent the Director-General and UNESCO in high-level international fora and intergovernmental meetings, strengthening UNESCO's visibility, influence, and thought leadership.

For further information on the specific above-mentioned programmes, candidates may consult our website: <https://www.unesco.org/en>, and/or the following documents: [41 C/4](#) (UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029) and [43 C/5](#) (Draft UNESCO's Programme and Budget for 2026–2029 quadrennium).

COMPETENCIES (Core/Managerial)

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| • Communication (C) | • Building partnerships (M) |
| • Accountability (C) | • Driving and managing change (M) |
| • Innovation (C) | • Strategic thinking (M) |
| • Knowledge sharing and continuous improvement (C) | • Making quality decisions (M) |
| • Planning and organizing (C) | • Managing performance (M) |
| • Results focus (C) | • Leading and empowering others (M) |
| • Teamwork (C) | |
| • Professionalism (C) | |

For detailed information, please consult the [UNESCO Competency Framework](#).

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Education

- Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in a discipline related to the field of sciences.

Work Experience

- At least fifteen (15) years of progressively responsible relevant professional experience from senior leadership/executive positions in areas directly related to UNESCO's Sciences Programme, including assignments at the regional/international levels, with particular emphasis on experience in managing global scientific programmes and institutions.
- Demonstrated capacity to conduct complex negotiations and managing politically sensitive normative processes at the international level, preferably in the context of multilateral scientific cooperation and the United Nations system.
- Demonstrated experience in leading large, diverse teams and managing organizational transformation, including change management and strategic planning.
- Substantial experience representing an organization and engaging effectively with high-level government/international officials.
- Extensive relevant professional experience in scientific research and cooperation.

Skills & Competencies

- Knowledge of, and commitment to, the Organization's mandate, vision, strategic directions and priorities.
- Strong and innovative leadership, capable of articulating a compelling vision for the role of sciences.
- Strong political acumen and diplomatic skills to represent UNESCO effectively and engage high-level stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to lead institutional transformation, manage change and foster a culture of accountability, diversity and performance.
- Strong ability to interact effectively at the highest governmental levels, as well as with leaders of the private sector and civil society, and to mobilize resources and to build collaborative partnerships and networks with and between a wide variety of stakeholders.
- Excellent communication skills with strong representational abilities.

Languages

- Excellent knowledge and drafting skills in one of the working languages of the Organization (English or French).

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

Education

- A Ph.D. level degree in the field of sciences or one of its sub-disciplines.

Work experience

- Awareness and knowledge of UNESCO's strategic objectives and of wider administrative and programmatic processes within UNESCO and the United Nations system.

Languages

- Working knowledge of the second language (English or French).
- Knowledge of other official languages of UNESCO (Arabic, Chinese, Russian or Spanish).

BENEFITS AND ENTITLEMENTS

UNESCO's salaries consist of a basic salary and other benefits which may include if applicable: 30 days annual leave, family allowance, medical insurance, pension plan etc.

The approximate annual starting salary for this post is US \$249,178.

For full information on benefits and entitlements, please consult our [Guide to Staff Benefits](#).

Please note that UNESCO is a non-smoking Organization.

SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Please note that all candidates must complete an on-line application and provide complete and accurate information.

To apply, please visit the [UNESCO Careers website](#). No modifications can be made to the application submitted.

The evaluation of candidates is based on the criteria in the vacancy notice, and may include tests and/or assessments, as well as a competency-based interview.

UNESCO uses communication technologies such as video or teleconference, e-mail correspondence, etc. for the assessment and evaluation of candidates.

Please note that only selected candidates will be further contacted and candidates in the final selection step will be subject to reference checks based on the information provided.

UNESCO recalls that paramount consideration in the appointment of staff members shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, technical competence and integrity. UNESCO applies a zero-tolerance policy against all forms of harassment. UNESCO is committed to achieving and sustaining equitable and diverse geographical distribution, as well as gender parity among its staff members in all categories and at all grades. Furthermore, UNESCO is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Candidates from non- and under-represented Member States ([last update here](#)) are particularly welcome and strongly encouraged to apply. Individuals from minority groups and indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality.

Worldwide mobility is required for staff members appointed to international posts.

UNESCO does not charge a fee at any stage of the recruitment process.

**Representation of Member States in posts subject
to geographical distribution as at February 2026**

Representation above range	Representation within range	Representation below range	Not represented
Algeria	Afghanistan	Andorra	Antigua and Barbuda
Argentina	Austria	Angola	Albania
Australia	Azerbaijan	Armenia	Bahamas
Belgium	Benin	Bangladesh	Bahrain
Brazil	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Barbados	Bhutan
Cameroon	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Belarus	Brunei Darussalam
Canada	Bulgaria	Belize	Central African Republic
Colombia	Burkina Faso	Botswana	Dominican Republic
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Burundi	Cabo Verde	Equatorial Guinea
Egypt	Cambodia	Chad	Guatemala
Ethiopia	Chile	China	Guinea-Bissau
France	Congo	Cook Islands	Guyana
Greece	Costa Rica	Croatia	Iceland
Italy	Côte d'Ivoire	Cyprus	Kiribati
Kenya	Cuba	Czechia	Kuwait
Lebanon	Denmark	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Latvia
Mexico	Ecuador	Djibouti	Maldives
Morocco	El Salvador	Dominica	Malta
Nepal	Estonia	Eritrea	Marshall Islands
Senegal	Finland	Eswatini	Micronesia (Federated States of)
South Africa	Gabon	Fiji	Monaco
Spain	Gambia	Grenada	Nauru
Tunisia	Georgia	Hungary	Niue
Türkiye	Germany	Iraq	Oman
Ukraine	Ghana	Ireland	Palau
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Guinea	Lesotho	Panama
	Haiti	Liberia	Qatar
	Honduras	Libya	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
	India	Malawi	Samoa
	Indonesia	Montenegro	San Marino
	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Mozambique	Solomon Islands
	Jamaica	Myanmar	South Sudan
	Japan	Namibia	Suriname
	Jordan	North Macedonia	Timor-Leste
	Kazakhstan	Papua New Guinea	Tonga
	Kyrgyzstan	Peru	Tuvalu
	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Russian Federation	United Arab Emirates
	Lithuania	Sao Tome and Principe	Vanuatu
	Luxembourg	Saudi Arabia	
	Madagascar	Seychelles	
	Malaysia	Slovakia	
	Mali	Tajikistan	
	Mauritania	Thailand	
	Mauritius	Trinidad and Tobago	
	Mongolia	Turkmenistan	
	Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	United States of America	

New Zealand
Nicaragua
Niger
Nigeria
Norway
Pakistan
Paraguay
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Korea
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Rwanda
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Lucia
Serbia
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Slovenia
Somalia
Sri Lanka
State of Palestine
Sudan
Sweden
Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic
Togo
Uganda
United Republic of
Tanzania
Uruguay
Uzbekistan
Venezuela (Bolivarian
Republic of)
Viet Nam
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe