



**UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY**

Call for submissions: Access to information in international organizations

The United Nations University (UNU) does not have a specific and uniform access to information policy.

However, disseminating knowledge and information is one of the main purposes set forth in the Charter of the University¹. The dissemination principle is also embedded in the UNU Statute on Dissemination, which lists “information on the University and its activities (institutional public information)” as one of the contents of UNU’s dissemination efforts².

The UNU Charter also states that the University must keep Member States of the United Nations updated on its activities through reports distributed annually³.

According to their Statutes, the advisory board of each of the 14 UNU institutes shall submit to the UNU Council an annual report detailing all activities carried out in the current year and other relevant information, which may be summarized as follows: key stakeholders/audiences for the institute’s activities, projects that have been initiated in the current year, a description of UN and other policy links that the institute has developed, publications and academic outputs, events the institute organized or participated in, and fund-raising trends for the institute.

Such reports are then compiled into a final report which is submitted to the General Assembly as stipulated in the UNU Charter. UNU Annual Reports are also downloadable from the UNU website⁴.

¹ Article I.1 of the UNU Charter: “The United Nations University shall be an international community of scholars, engaged in research, postgraduate training and dissemination of knowledge in furtherance of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.”

Article I.4: “The University shall disseminate the knowledge gained in its activities to the United Nations and its agencies, to scholars and to the public, in order to increase dynamic interaction in the worldwide community of learning and research.”

² Section 3: “The content of dissemination shall be: (a) results of UNU research and related activities; (b) results of research or activities from other organizations or individuals that relate directly to topics of UNU research; (c) information on UNU principles, approaches, and reflections; (d) information concerning the pressing global problem of human survival, development, and welfare, drawn from all available sources, in particular international organizations, universities, research institutes and other academic institutions, development-oriented and non-governmental organizations; (e) information on the University and its activities (institutional public information).”

³ Article IV.4 (h) of the UNU Charter: “The Council shall Report annually to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the Executive Board of UNESCO, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of UNESCO, respectively, on the work of the University.”

⁴ <http://unu.edu/publications/annual-reports>

As to information relating to matters discussed and decided by the UNU Council, the UNU makes the proceedings of each Council session available to Member States, the United Nations and other interested parties, as needed.

Furthermore, the UNU Intellectual Property Rights Policy is currently under revision with the intent to strengthen the dissemination efforts of the UNU (the revised Policy will be submitted to the UNU Council for its approval in 2017). One of the major changes envisaged is the introduction of the Open Access Policy, which allows free and unrestricted access to UNU's works and publications.

Although the new Policy is not yet in place, starting from 2014 the UNU has been providing free online access to its materials through UNU Collections⁵, which is the publicly accessible institutional repository of the UNU. This service allows the public to access relevant scientific and academic publications and information on an open access basis. As of September 2016, UNU Collections holds close to 5000 records.

Finally, any enquiries for information are managed by the UNU Office of Communications, which ensures that any external request for information is channeled to the competent office at UNU and answered. This service is provided through the 'Contact us' page on the UNU website⁶.

The UNU Charter can be found here: <http://unu.edu/about/charter#overview>.

⁵ <https://collections.unu.edu/>

⁶ <http://unu.edu/about/contact-us#overview>