



Non-State Actors in Official Relations with the Pan American Health Organization

The **Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)**, the specialized health agency for the Americas, works throughout the region to improve and protect people's health. To advance these goals, PAHO promotes technical cooperation between countries, and **works in partnerships** with ministries of health and other governmental agencies, as well as with non-state actors.

PAHO engages with **non-State Actors (NSA)** for the advancement and promotion of public health and to encourage non-State actors to use their own activities to protect and promote public health.

At the 55th Directing Council, the Member States of PAHO adopted the **Framework of Engagement with non-State Actors (FENSA)**. The Framework endeavors to strengthen PAHO engagement with NSAs (defined in FENSA as non-governmental organizations, private sector entities, philanthropic foundations, and academic institutions) while protecting PAHO's work from potential risks such as conflict of interest, reputational risks, and undue influence.

One of the ways in which PAHO engages NSA is through official relations status.

What does being in official relations with PAHO mean?

"**Official relations**" is a **privilege** that the PAHO Executive Committee may grant to **eligible** NSA that have had, and continue to have, sustained and systematic engagement with PAHO, which is assessed by both parties as being **mutually beneficial**.

This privilege includes, among other things:



A special agreed **collaborative arrangement** of three-years with PAHO, supporting PAHO's work



Possibility to participate in sessions of **PAHO's Governing Bodies**

How do NSAs in official relations contribute to PAHO?

NSAs in official relations contribute significantly to PAHO's mission to **promote equity in health, to combat disease, and to improve the lives of the peoples of the Americas** by:

- Extending the reach of PAHO's action by **developing joint activities and materials to support PAHO's policies and goals**
- Helping **disseminate and mainstream PAHO's policies and technical directives** through NSA activities and their networks
- Strengthening PAHO's advocacy actions**

These actions may lead to **knowledge exchanges and expertise to support PAHO's objectives and goals.**

Are all NSAs eligible for official relations?

"Official relations" may only be granted to **non-governmental organizations, international business associations and philanthropic foundations**. NSA considered to be **private sector**, except for international business associations, and **academic institutions** are not eligible for official relations.

In order to be eligible for admittance, the NSA must have had, and continue to have, a **sustained and systematic engagement with PAHO for at least two (2) years** (participation in each other's meetings alone is not considered to be a systematic engagement). The aims and activities of the NSA must be in conformity with the spirit, purposes, and principles of the PAHO Constitution, and shall center on health or health-related fields. Finally, the NSA should be **regional** in membership and/or scope and should have a **constitution** or similar basic document, an established **headquarters**, a **governing body**, and an **administrative structure**.

How do NSAs apply for official relations?

The NSA should first explore with a PAHO technical department, with which it has had a sustained and systematic engagement for at least two years, whether there is an interest in pursuing official relations status from PAHO's side.

If so, and if the NSA considers it may be eligible, it should apply as described below. The application, review and renewal process begin in mid-August and the cycle is fully completed at the end of June of the following year, after the PAHO Executive Committee decides on the applications or renewals.

Applications are reviewed by the PAHO Secretariat to ensure that established criteria and other requirements of FENSA appear to be satisfied. This includes PAHO Secretariat conducting a due diligence and risk assessment based on information provided by the NSA and other sources. If the applicant appears to qualify, the Secretariat submits the application to the PAHO Subcommittee on Program, Budget and Administration (SPBA) in March, which considers the applications and makes recommendations to the PAHO Executive Committee (EC).

The EC makes the final decision.

How does the application process work in practical terms?



1 - BASIC INFORMATION

Online questionnaire aimed to collect and update the non-State actor’s basic information, including: Contact information, short description of the NSA, mission (or purpose, objectives), main fields of work, main types of activities, corporate governance, financial information (annual income, assets report, financial report), funding (private sector, not-for profit, government entities), membership, country profile, fraud or corruption.

Who should provide it? The NSA



2 - WORKPLAN ACHIEVEMENT’S REPORT

Online questionnaire aimed to document and analyze the NSA/PAHO collaboration over the last three years.

For each of the collaborative activities, describe the type of activity, results- outcomes, assessment, difficulties encountered and the contribution to PAHO program. In addition, provide a good practice(s) derived from the collaboration with PAHO.

Who should provide it? The NSA following discussions and agreeing on a joint work plan with their PAHO focal point



3 - NEW PROPOSED WORK PLAN

Online questionnaire aimed to present the proposed NSA/PAHO collaboration work plan for the next three years.

For each of the collaborative activities included in the propose joint work plan, describe the type of activity, duration, responsible official, expected outcomes and results, evaluation indicator, dissemination of results and the contribution to PAHO program.

Who should provide it? The NSA following discussions and agreeing on a joint work plan with their PAHO focal point



REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Mandatory list of documents to be uploaded by NSA in order to move forward with the application, including:

- Signed Information requested from NSA Non-State actors for Engagement with PAHO/WHO form.
- Signed Tobacco/Arms-related Disclosure Statement for NSAs
- Official letter requesting admission/renewal as an NSA into official relations with PAHO and certifying the accuracy of the information surveys submitted online.
- Basic documents of the entity, such as constitution, by laws or equivalent.
- Authenticated copy of the proceedings in which the directors were elected and of the authorization of the assembly to establish relations with PAHO.
- Latest audited financial statements, annual report or equivalent report.
- List of current board members with details (affiliation, short bio).
- Other relevant information e.g. (wherever applicable, certified copies of the charters and by-laws of its affiliates in the Hemisphere)

Who should provide it? The NSA

How does the application process work in practical terms?

JULY

The non-state actor must submit a **letter** expressing interest in admission into official relations, on the NSA letterhead, addressed to PAHO Director and sent to ERP-NSA@paho.org (*only new applicants*).

AUGUST

PAHO sends **instructions to interested applicants on how to process the application** for admission into official relations to NSA and PAHO technical focal points

END OF SEPTEMBER

NSA must submit the **completed application for admission/renewal** to official relations status (online questionnaires and upload required documentation).

PAHO Secretariat conducts an **internal review and due diligence/risk assessment of the NSA applications**, submitting those that appear to meet all eligibility criteria to the PAHO Governing Bodies for consideration

MARCH

PAHO's **Subcommittee on Program, Budget and Administration (SPBA)** reviews applications for admitting NSA into official relations

END OF JUNE

PAHO Executive Committee reviews SPBA recommendations and decides whether to grant official relations status to applicants

For more information

If your organization wants to become an NSA in official relations with PAHO, please email us at ERP-NSA@paho.org and we will assign your organization a contact for further instructions.