

World Customs Organization

94th WCO FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

(16 February – 3 April 2026)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

1. The WCO Fellowship Programme targets high-potential middle managers aiming to develop their skills, abilities, and knowledge so that they can actively contribute to **organizational development and modernization process within their Administration.**
2. During the Programme, the Fellow shall undertake his/her study and research, supervised by a WCO tutor, in one of the main areas of the Secretariat's activities. **Each candidate should select an area of strategic interest to their administration and choose a relevant topic from the list of topics provided in the nomination form.** The application should include, as precisely as possible, the description of a practical problem that the applicant might hope to solve within the framework of the Programme.
3. The Program lasts seven weeks:
 - Component 1: online, **full-time**, for three weeks
 - Component 2: 2-week in-person workshop, **full-time**, at WCO Headquarters in Brussels
 - Component 3: 2-week practical field trip in a partner customs administration, **full-time**.

The following administrative provisions govern the WCO Fellowship Programme:

Conditions and selection procedure

4. Candidates should be Customs officials **fully proficient in oral and written English**, under **45 years old**, with a university degree or equivalent qualification and in good health. They should have at least four years of service in Customs, during which they have risen to a mid-management rank and should have the assessed potential of rising to higher management positions. They should have a thorough knowledge of one of the technical areas and the **capacity to articulate practical recommendations for their Administration's modernization initiatives.**
5. The appended nomination form should be received by the WCO Secretariat via email, **duly completed in English**, by **29 October 2025 at the latest**. It is anticipated that the selection of Fellows for the 94th WCO Fellowship Programme will be finalized by the end of December 2025.
6. Please note that applications for the Fellowship Programme proposing a modernization topic that was already chosen recently by a former Fellow from the same administration, will not be considered for selection. **To be considered valid, the project proposal must make precise reference to the WCO standard or instrument that is considered for implementation within the framework of the future modernization project, while ensuring its strategic alignment with national priorities.**
7. In accepting a Fellowship, the candidate undertakes to work **full time** on the assigned study programme. It will not be possible to undertake other activities unrelated to the Fellowship Programme.
8. The candidate also agrees to actively participate in all meetings, sessions, and activities organized as part of the Fellowship Programme. The candidate commits to following the guidance and instructions provided by the assigned tutor and submitting draft versions of the

project in a timely and professional manner. **Failure to comply with these expectations may result in exclusion from the Programme.**

9. Furthermore, since some of the WCO's work is of a confidential nature, the candidate must fully comply with the rules in force in the WCO and respect its professional ethics. In particular, the Fellow is obliged to exercise discretion and professional confidentiality. Any non-compliance with these rules could result in the Fellowship being curtailed immediately on a decision by the WCO Secretary General.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SELECTED FELLOWS

10. The WCO Fellowship Programme provides a grant covering travel, subsistence and other approved expenses.

Accommodation and living allowance

11. An allowance¹ for the period in which the participant resides in Brussels will be granted by the sponsor to cover the cost of meals, accommodation and incidental expenses (Component 2). The WCO will arrange accommodation in Brussels.
12. Should the field study trip be confirmed, an additional allowance will be provided².
13. Fellows should note that the allowances would not be sufficient to cover the expenses of accompanying dependants. Fellows are therefore strongly discouraged from bringing dependent persons with them to Brussels and to the field study trip location.

Health and medical expenses

14. Applications must be accompanied by a **certificate** issued by a licensed physician attesting that the candidate is in good health. This certificate will enable the Fellow to be covered by the WCO's basic insurance scheme for the duration of the Programme. Cover is limited to medical treatments required either as a result of an accident during the insurance period, or for reasons other than an accident, but requiring urgent attention.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Travel costs

15. An economy-class air ticket will be provided to the selected candidate. The cost of travel (return trip) between the Fellow's place of residence and Brussels will be borne by the WCO, as well as the travel to the hosting administration. It should be noted that the routing **cannot be modified.**

¹ Exact amount to be specified at the moment of the confirmation of the participation.

² Details to be communicated at the selection stage.

Insurance

16. No insurance coverage is provided by the WCO in respect of personal accidents or damage to or loss of personal effects during transport to or from Brussels. Each fellow must ensure they are covered by a personal insurance.

Passports - Visas - Health regulations

17. Persons entering Belgium must hold a valid passport. Visa and vaccination requirements depend upon nationality, and the Fellow is personally responsible for complying with them. The WCO Secretariat will provide the selected candidate with a letter certifying enrolment in the WCO Fellowship Programme so that they may apply to the Belgian Embassy in their home country for a **multi-entrance/-exit Schengen Visa**, authorizing temporary residence in Belgium for the duration of the Programme (Component 2). The WCO Secretariat will make arrangements for travel to the country of their field study trip (if confirmed). **The Fellows are, however, required to obtain a Visa for that country in their home countries before leaving for Brussels.** Visa fees will not be reimbursed separately, as the allowance which the Fellow will receive includes a supplement for this type of cost.

END OF FELLOWSHIP

18. Fellows are expected to complete the Fellowship Programme as scheduled; early repatriation may be authorized only on medical grounds or for other similarly important reasons. If a Fellow withdraws from the Programme before its scheduled completion, he/she shall not be entitled to repatriation and other benefits.
19. At the end of the Fellowship Programme, the WCO will pay travel costs, as described above, for the Fellow's return journey to the point of first departure.

SCHEDULE OF THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

