ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

The Terms of Reference outline the objectives, conditions of participation, eligibility criteria, selection procedures and the rights and obligations of the programme beneficiaries.

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR))
Young Graduates' Professional Immersion Programme (YGP)
2027 Cohort

CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

In a context characterized by high rates of unemployment and under-employment amongst young graduates in West Africa, the issue of labour market integration remains a major challenge for the member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). With increasing levels of academic qualifications, many young people struggle to enter the labour market due to a lack of professional experience, a mismatch between training and market needs, and insufficient support schemes to promote employability.

In response to this challenge, ECOWAS has put in place the ECOWAS Nnamdi Azikiwe Academic Mobility Programme (ENAAMS Programme), one component of which is the professional immersion programme within its institutions and agencies, with the aim of offering young graduates from across the region a practical opportunity to enhance their professional skills and employability.

This programme aims to foster the acquisition of practical experience, an understanding of regional issues and the active participation of young people in the implementation of ECOWAS programmes. It also serves as a strategic lever to encourage regional integration by strengthening the sense of belonging to the West African community and promoting the mobility of skills within the ECOWAS region.

The 2027 cohort of the immersion programme is open to recent graduates from ECOWAS Member States (**Benin, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo**) aged between eighteen (18) and thirty-two (32) years (18 to 32 years).

GENERAL OBJECTIF

This programme's overall objective is to contribute to the professional integration and employability of young graduates by offering them the opportunity to gain a better understanding of ECOWAS programmes, whilst enabling them to contribute to making their implementation more effective.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

i. To provide a high-quality first work experience.
ii. To strengthen technical and soft skills.
iii. To promote regional integration and the professional mobility of young people within institutions.
iv. To contribute to improving the performance of host departments and agencies.
v. To develop a culture of regional public service by working in a multicultural environment.
vi. To make programme participants young ECOWAS ambassadors.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

The official languages of ECOWAS are: **French, English and Portuguese**. Applicants to the programme must be proficient in at least one of these languages.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Young graduates acquire professional experience through their involvement in ECOWAS programmes;
- Young graduates contribute to the implementation of ECOWAS programmes

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The applicant must :

- Be a national of an ECOWAS Member State (Benin, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo);
- Be aged between 18 and 32 on the closing date;
- A Bachelor's degree Holder, a Master's degree Holder, a PhD holder or an equivalent qualification.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES (HOW TO APPLY)

- Applications must be submitted exclusively via the programme's official platform.
- Each applicant may apply for a maximum of two (02) positions.
- **Only one** cover letter is required for applications.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- Curriculum Vitae (CV) in PDF format
- Cover letter in PDF format
- Identity card or passport in PDF format
- A copy of academic certificate(s) or its equivalent in PDF format. PDF.

SELECTION PROCESS

Ninety (90) posts have been allocated for the year 2027. The process is based on the principles **of merit, fairness, transparency and equal opportunities**. It includes the following stages :

- Online submission of applications via the programme's dedicated platform;
- Assessment of applications by a selection committee set up by the ECOWAS Commission;
- Institutional approval of the selected candidates;
- Notification to successful candidates.

MOBILITY

1. Any citizen (applicant) who resides **outside their home country but is posted** to their home country is not considered to be on secondment (in mobility).
2. Any selected applicant who leaves their country of origin to take up a post in another country **is considered to be on secondment (**in mobility**)**. In this case, a flight ticket is issued to them from their country of origin to the country where the host institution is located.

PROGRAMME COORDINATION AND GOVERNANCE

This programme is coordinated by the **Directorate of Education, Science and Culture (DESC**), which operates under **the Department of Human Development and Social Affairs (DHAS**) of **the ECOWAS Commission**.

DURATION AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The Immersion Programme for Young Graduates in ECOWAS Institutions and Agencies lasts for one year and is non-renewable, i.e. a maximum of twelve (12) months (January to December);
- The Programme is carried out within ECOWAS Institutions, Agencies and Permanent Representations, or at any other location duly designated by ECOWAS;

- Young graduates participating in the Programme are assessed at mid-term and at the end of their placement. They must produce a report in three (03) copies: one to be sent to the Department of Human Development and Social Affairs (DHAS), another to the host department, and the last for the young graduate themselves. They must present their report to a panel of examiners;
- The practical arrangements for the programme will be defined in conjunction with the host organisation;
- The young graduate is required (mandatorily) to attend, either in person or online (for those not resident in Abuja), any information or debriefing meetings organised by the Programme Coordination Unit.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Applicants are strongly advised to read all the documents made available to them carefully before submitting their application.

For each opportunity, the list of positions specifies the institution or agency of assignment, the location of the placement, the main duties and the required level of academic qualification.

Timeline for the call for applications

- **Date of publication of the call for applications: 31 July 2026**
- **Deadline for submission of applications: 31 August 2026 at 23:59 Nigerian Time (GMT+1)**

Enquiries

For further information not covered by these Terms of Reference, applicants may contact the Programme Coordination Unit at the following address:

escyoungprofessional2027@ecowas.int

In order to ensure the efficient management of applications, the Coordination Unit will only respond to questions relating to matters not explicitly covered in these Terms of Reference or in the Programme's official documents.