



International Human Rights Training Program

Montreal, Canada
June 4-23 , 2017

Program Information



Application deadlines
International participants : November 21, 2016
Canadian residents : March 23, 2017

The International Human Rights Training Program



The International Human Rights Training Program (IH RTP) is at the heart of Equitas' activities. Now in its 38th year, this annual three-week education event brings together approximately 90 participants from about 50 countries. The IH RTP is an intermediate-level program. It provides a unique opportunity for human rights workers and educators to deepen their understanding of human rights and of the essential role of human rights education in effecting social change.

Participants in the IH RTP include representatives of civil society organizations, national and regional human rights institutions and government bodies. If you feel you and your organization meet the selection criteria and the program objectives meet your respective needs, I invite you to complete the attached application form.

Ian Hamilton
Executive Director

Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education

Equitas is a non-profit, non-governmental organization based in Montreal, Canada. Founded in 1967, Equitas works to advance equality, social justice and respect for human dignity through transformative education programs in Canada and around the world.

Equitas' global programming has been built upon the experience of its annual International Human Rights Training Program (IH RTP) in Montreal. Since its inception in 1980, over 3,600 human rights defenders from more than 100 countries have attended the program.

Currently, Equitas engages in regional programs in West and East Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Asia, Canada and Haiti. These regional programs focus on further equipping human rights defenders to promote human rights principles and values such as equality, inclusion and non-discrimination in their communities. They also play an important role in building networks of human rights defenders. Capacity-building for national human rights institutions and government institutions, including ensuring collaboration between such entities and NGOs, is also an integral part of Equitas' regional programs. Innovative elements of Equitas' approach to human rights education include:

- Promotion of human rights-based approaches in response to challenges regarding human rights abuses, sustainable development, democratic governance and conflict
- Education focused on building knowledge, skills and positive values
- Participatory learning approaches/methodologies
- Follow-up and support for practical application of learning
- Ongoing evaluation
- Engaged partnerships and networking that include systematic sharing of expertise and methodologies

Program goal

The goal of the IH RTP is to strengthen the capacity of human rights organizations to undertake human rights education efforts (e.g., training, awareness campaigns, information dissemination, and advocacy) aimed at building a global culture of human rights.

To this end, the Program places a strong emphasis on the transfer of learning and on follow-up activities. Participants attending the Program develop an individual plan for putting their learning into action as part of the training. Therefore, when submitting their application, both organizations and candidates nominated should consider how the transfer of learning might take place within and beyond the organization after the Program. (See Individual Plan section for some examples)

Program content

The IH RTP is an intermediate-level program focusing on international human rights standards, current human rights issues and human rights education strategies. The exploration of human rights principles and instruments, ongoing critical reflection and inquiry, as well as extensive sharing of experiences allow participants to strengthen their capacity to engage in effective human rights education, and advance equality and human dignity, thus leading to social change.

Program objectives

By the end of the IH RTP, participants should be able to:

- use a framework based on internationally accepted human rights standards and principles to analyze the issues and situations encountered in the work of their organizations
- identify ways in which human rights education can increase the effectiveness of their human rights work
- integrate a participatory approach into their human rights education work
- indicate appropriate ways for putting their learning from the IH RTP into practice in the work of their organizations
- explore networking opportunities essential for furthering the cause of human rights
- determine strategies for promoting gender equality in their human rights education work
- employ a basic evaluation process for assessing the results of their human rights education work

Language requirement

The IH RTP requires participants to actively engage in group work and read extensively. Therefore, all participants must be fluent in either English or French.



Schedule

Week 1

Week 1 focuses on the current human rights context and defining what positive social change looks like. Participants will get to know the members of their working group and engage in activities that lay the groundwork for developing a productive group dynamic.

They begin a process of reflection on human rights in their societies, the human rights work of their organizations and their own role within those organizations. They will also explore how the global human rights context influences and is influenced by issues at the local level.

Principles and values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and their importance in human rights education will be examined as well as the key elements of a culture of human rights. Using systems analysis, participants will then look at the role of human rights education in the process of social change and compare their roles as human rights defenders/educators. Participants will end the week by examining how personal values and deeply held assumptions about “right and wrong” influence the actions and reactions of individuals.

Week 2

Week 2 focuses on actions for social change in line with human rights principles and values. Participants begin the week by exploring the universality of human rights and effective human rights education strategies for dealing with culturally sensitive issues in their work.

They explore how adopting a human rights-based approach can help ensure that actions undertaken by governments, civil society and communities can help lead to positive social change and make human rights a reality in their societies. Through case studies and discussions, participants are introduced to a number of key international human rights instruments, mechanisms and special procedures, and their potential relevance in their work.

Week 3

Week 3 focuses on skills building for action. For a number of activities, participants are grouped by geographic region, giving them an opportunity to work together to examine key components of effective monitoring and advocacy and the role of these activities in human rights education. They also become familiar with methods of evaluating educational activities. Participants will be introduced to new trends in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for human rights and human rights education work.



Curriculum Model

The participatory curriculum model of the IH RTP is based on principles of adult experiential learning. The underlying principle is that much of the content will come from the participants and that the Program will serve as a framework for drawing out this content. Participants and facilitators commit themselves to engage in a process of mutual teaching and learning. The emphasis is on practical application and on the development of strategies for action. Continued reflection and evaluation are central to the learning process. Participants work for the most part in groups of about 15 with a facilitator whose role is to provide guidance in achieving the Program objectives. The facilitators are skilled in adult education methods, knowledgeable about human rights and experienced in working with diverse groups. Internationally recognized human rights experts are invited to give presentations and participate in panel discussions throughout the three-week program.

Individual plan for putting learning into action

During the Program, every participant is required to prepare an individual plan for putting their learning into practice once they return to their home organizations. By reflecting on the content of the Program, the individual plan helps participants determine how content is transferable to their own context, resulting in a planned integration of new knowledge and skills into future actions of their organization. Throughout the Program, participants will have opportunities to discuss their individual plans with other participants, their facilitators and Equitas staff for feedback.

Examples of past activities developed in individual plans and carried out afterwards include: organization of training sessions based on certain components of the IH RTP, integration of a participatory approach in the human rights and human rights education, creation of networks and the development of new programs and partnerships.

Program preparation

To maximize the benefits of the IH RTP, it is crucial that accepted candidates prepare for the training. This involves:

- completing and submitting pre-training assignment
- exploring ideas for possible human rights education follow-up activities to be implemented by their organization after completion of the IH RTP
- reviewing the content of international human rights instruments and bringing with them copies in their native language, where available
- bringing with them human rights education materials to share with other participants



Organization and participant profile

Organizations and participants are carefully selected in order to maximize the benefits from the IH RTP.

Organizations that nominate candidates must:

- have a demonstrated commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights
- have an established record for effective action
- be involved in human rights education activities such as training sessions, workshops, public awareness campaigns, advocacy, monitoring
- be committed to providing opportunities for their candidate to apply the knowledge and skills gained in the Program within the organization

The IH RTP is primarily designed for representatives of non-governmental human rights organizations (NGOs), national human rights institutions and government departments that have undertaken some human rights education training activities. In a limited number of cases, consideration will also be given to candidates affiliated with other types of organizations involved in human rights education and corresponding to the above profile, such as educational institutions.

Candidates from qualifying organizations must:

- be active employees / volunteers with their organizations for at least two years
- be in a position to influence the human rights education work of their organizations
- have knowledge of human rights principles and major international instruments
- be committed to transferring knowledge and skills gained during the Program to colleagues and to others with whom they work
- be sensitive to the issues which arise when working in multicultural groups, and be respectful of diversity.

Selection process

A Selection Committee will review all applications. In addition to the requirements previously listed, consideration will be given to overall gender balance and geographic representation.

Given the number of applications and limited space available, we are unable to accept many worthy candidates. Your understanding is greatly appreciated.



Participation fee

The IH RTP participation fee is 5,960\$ CAD. This amount covers:

- tuition
- program materials
- accommodation
- meals
- emergency medical insurance

Participants are responsible of their international transport as well as of any extra expenses such as entertainment and meals purchased outside of the cafeteria.

Bursaries

Through the support of Global Affairs Canada (GAC) Equitas can award a limited number of bursaries to selected international candidates. A bursary includes full tuition fees (including room and board) for the 3-week training program as well as travel expenses.

Once eligibility has been determined, the selection committee will award the bursaries to the international candidates who best meet the requirements. Due to the limited number of bursaries available, there is no guarantee that international candidates selected will receive funding. Therefore, we strongly urge all candidates to immediately begin seeking funding from other sources.

One special bursary, the Ruth Selwyn Bursary for Achievement in Empowering Women and Girls, will be awarded to a candidate who has:

- demonstrated a sustained commitment to the empowerment of women and girls
- advanced the rights of women and girls through the use of innovative methods, including education.



Accomodation

The IH RTP is held in Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, a small community in suburban Montreal, 45 km from the city centre. Participants stay in shared apartments at John Abbott College. Each apartment has separate bedrooms (one person per bedroom), one bathroom, a sitting room and a kitchenette.

Meals are served in the campus cafeteria during the Program. Although every consideration is made to accommodate the needs of participants, it is difficult to cater to all dietary preferences. Your understanding in this matter is greatly appreciated.

How to apply

- 1- Sign up on ContactEquitas (<https://contactequitas.force.com/>)
- 2- Complete the online application form
- 3- Upload the required documents on your ContactEquitas account :
 - The Memorandum of Agreement duly signed by the candidate and the director of the candidate's organization
 - Two supporting letters from national and/or international human rights organizations (other than the candidate's) that are familiar with the candidate's work and/or the work of his or her organization
 - A brochure (and/or mission statement) describing the candidate's organization
- 4- Submit online your completed application

Application deadlines

The completed application must be submitted on your ContactEquitas account by:

- November 21, 2016 for international candidates;
- March 23, 2017 for Canadian residents and citizens.

If you haven't received an email confirming your application submission by December 2, 2016, please contact us immediately at pifdh-ihrtip@equitas.org.



Information

For further information about Equitas and its activities, please visit our website at www.equitas.org or contact us at the address below:

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Photos: IHRTIP 2015 and 2016

