Major Functional Series 400: PERSONNEL
468 - FOREIGN SERVICE (FS) PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT

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This Chapter supersedes Handbook 25, Chapter 31 in its entirety.

468.1   Authority

1.   **Foreign Service Act of 1980, Sections 301, 303 and 309** , as amended.
2.   Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended by P.L. 92-261).
3.   **Section 633a of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 as amended, 29 U.S.C. 621**.
4.   Sections 1622, Defense Authorization Act of 1986.
5.   **Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** as amended **29 U.S.C. 701**.

468.2   Objective

This Chapter provides the policies and essential procedures, which govern the recruitment and selection of applicants for appointment to USAID's Foreign Service (FS).

468.3   Responsibility

1) The Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources, Recruitment Unit of the Counseling, Recruitment and FSN Operations Branch (M/HR/POD/CRF) is responsible for:

a.   Developing Foreign Service (FS) recruitment plans in accordance with Agency requirements and analysis prepared by the Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources, Policy, Planning and Information Management staff (M/HR/PPIM);

b.   Managing all recruitment outreach activities;

c.   Initiating and assuring completion of appropriate documents for all paid recruitment advertising and trips;

d.   Processing all applications;

e.   Coordinating and overseeing all Recruitment Panels and Committees;

f.   Identifying qualified and responsible representatives to serve on the **Technical Review Committee (TRC)** and **Final Selection Committee (FSC)**;

g.   Keeping systematic records of all recruitment processing events and dates from beginning to end of the application process, and advising applicants of their status during the recruitment process;

h.   Initiating hiring and initial placement of applicants selected for employment in accordance with established essential procedures;

i.   Coordinating the process of pre-employment clearances (e.g., security, medical, and references);

j.   Developing specific training plans for International Development Interns (IDIs), in consultation with Career Development Officers (CDO); and

k.   Managing the **Intern Investment Program**.

2) The Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources, Personnel Operations Division (M/HR/POD) is responsible for:

a.   Reviewing the updates of recruitment selection criteria in conjunction with M/HR/PPIM and the TRC; and

b.   Reviewing selections for IDI and Mid-Level programs to ensure compliance with affirmative action and Agency employment and programmatic goals.

3)   The M/HR/PPIM is responsible for:

a.   Identifying skills categories and determining the number of FS hires by skills grouping and type (i.e., IDI or Mid-level) for each fiscal year, in collaboration with M/HR/POD; and

b.   Making certain, in consultation with M/HR/POD, that near and long-term FS recruitment needs are consistent with projected trends of sector and regional strategies and programs.

4)   Bureaus and Offices are responsible for:

a.   Developing selection criteria for recruiting FS officers;

b.   Advising M/HR/POD/CRF on productive sources for recruitment advertising and outreach;

c.   Assisting in recruitment travel as requested by M/HR/POD/CRF;

d.   Forwarding all applications received to M/HR/POD/CRF for processing; and

e.   Providing qualified and responsible representatives to serve as TRC chairperson, members, and alternates.

5)   The **Paper Review Committees (PRC)** are responsible for developing criteria to be used for screening applicants at the paper review stage and then conducting the paper reviews.

6)   The Technical Review Committees (TRC) are responsible for reviewing the qualifications of applicants and conducting the technical review interviews of all applicants who pass the paper review stage. The TRCs are also responsible for assisting in the formulation of training plans for backstops to be used by Career Development officers and IDI supervisors when developing IDI specific training plans.

7)   The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (EOP) is responsible for:

a.   Advising M/HR/POD/CRF on affirmative action and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) matters related to selection activities, e.g., identification of barriers to selection of qualified minorities and women;

b.   Advising M/HR/POD/CRF on productive sources for recruitment of minorities and women;

c.   Referring inquiries from potential applicants to M/HR/POD/CRF; and

d.   Monitoring technical interviews as a non-voting member and the final selection process to ensure compliance with EEO policy.

8)   The **Tenure Board** is responsible for making recommendations to the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources (DAA/M/HR) on the development, tenuring, or termination of **career candidates**.

468.4   Definitions (See **ADS GLOSSARY**)

CANDIDATE APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEM
CAREER CANDIDATE
FINAL SELECTION COMMITTEE
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT INTERN PROGRAM
INTERN INVESTMENT PROGRAM
NON-CAREER CANDIDATE
PAPER REVIEW COMMITTEE

RIFFS
TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE
TENURE BOARD

468.5   POLICY

The following are the official Agency policies and corresponding essential procedures:

468.5.1   RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

USAID shall endeavor to fill Foreign Service (FS) positions with the best-qualified applicants available, either from within the Agency or through outside recruitment.

Each fiscal year, the Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources, Policy, Planning, and Information Management (M/HR/PPIM) develops recruitment recommendations concerning the number and composition of FS positions needed. This proposal is then submitted to the Assistant Administrator for Management (AA/M) for approval.

USAID recruitment requirements are derived from assessments of present and projected USAID personnel resources and its organizational and programmatic needs. M/HR/PPIM, in collaboration with the Bureau for Management, and USAID's Regional and Global Bureaus and Offices, determines these recruitment and hiring needs.
Recruitment plans for technical and generalists career officers are to be consistent with long-term sector and regional strategies and programs. Overseas needs for highly technical specialists shall be met through the recruitment of personnel for non-career appointments to the extent possible.

FS non-career or career candidate appointments must not be used to meet USAID/W personnel staffing needs, although initial assignments in USAID/W are permitted for orientation and training.

E468.5.1   Recruitment and Selection

a)   The Paper Review Committee (PRC), comprised of USAID FS officers of the same positional background as the applicant, shall score and rank, after initial screening by M/HR/POD/CRF, all qualified applicants against established selection criteria and determine which applicants to interview.

1.   Paper reviews shall be made by the PRC on a   periodic basis as directed by M/HR/POD/CRF.

2.   PRC members shall also participate in the pre-employment interviews by serving on the Technical Review Committee (TRC).

b)   The TRC shall assess and select applicants to meet the Agency's FS personnel needs. The TRC membership must be comprised of a Chairperson and other FS officers of the same positional background as the applicant, a representative from the Counseling unit (M/HR/POD/CRF) and the Office of Equal Opportunity Program (EOP). TRC members must be representatives of the Agency as a whole and not from any particular segment of it.

1.   Applicants approved by the TRCs, other than for non-career appointments, shall be considered acceptable for assignment worldwide. M/HR/POD/CRF shall not consider appeals of assignment based upon inadequate qualifications.

2.   No applicant shall be hired by the Agency without a pre-employment interview by the TRC.

3.   TRC members shall not contact the applicant, the applicant's employer, or the applicant's references.

4.   In a competitive setting, the TRC must identify applicants who have the highest technical and managerial qualifications needed to perform the duties of the functional backstops under consideration.

5.   When interviewing and assessing an applicant, the TRC shall keep in mind those characteristics and requirements necessary to succeed under USAID's appointment, tenuring, and performance evaluation systems.

6.   The TRC shall recommend that those applicants with highly specialized skills in limited demand overseas, or skill needs projected to be of a limited duration be considered for non-career member appointments.

7.   The TRC shall rate and score each applicant and submit written comments to support selection or non-selection to the TRC Chairperson.

8.   At the completion of the interview cycle, the TRC shall review the files of all applicants passing the interview and produce a list of best-qualified applicants.

c)   The Final Selection Committee (FSC) shall make final recommendations on which candidates are to be given tentative offers of employment.

      1.   The FSC membership shall be comprised of Heads of Offices and Bureaus, and representatives from M/HR/POD/CRF and EOP. M/HR/POD/CRF shall serve as Chairperson for the FSC.

      2.   The FSC shall submit results of final determinations to M/HR/POD/CRF for coordination of all required pre-employment processing before tentative offers of employment are given, and for appropriate notification to all applicants (selected, alternate or non-selected).

d)   All Committee members (i.e., PRC, TRC, and FSC) shall be sufficiently senior in grade and technically qualified and must agree to serve in an assigned responsibility. Members must be trained in interview techniques.

e)   M/HR/POD/CRF shall:

      1.   Notify all applicants of selection or non-selection for employment. Applicants identified as alternates shall be offered employment if a previously selected applicants become unavailable;

      2.   Coordinate all aspects of pre-employment processing. All forms must be provided to the applicant, including salary verification, within five days after passing the oral interview;

      3.   Control a data tracking system on each applicant that has been placed in process. Proper entries shall be made to the **Candidate Applicant Tracking System (CATS)** and Recruitment Interviewing for Foreign Service **(RIFFS)** systems; and

      4.   Keep in touch with the successful applicants until actual hiring takes place.

f)   The Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources, Personnel Operations Division (M/HR/POD) staffer shall coordinate hiring, initial placement, and training, when appropriate, of applicants selected for processing as FS career candidates or non-career limited appointees.

468.5.2   EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) COMPLIANCE

a)   Applicants are considered without regard to race or national origin, color, creed, religion, marital status, sex, political affiliation, sexual orientation, mental or physical handicap, except when disqualified for overseas duty by the Department of State Medical Division, or age, except as indirectly limited by Section 812 of the FSA.

b)   Committee members must have sensitivity to USAID's diversity goals and its commitment to hiring qualified women and minority applicants. The composition of the review and selection committees shall demonstrate diversity by the inclusion of a minority and a woman.

c)   EOP, as a non-voting TRC and FSC member, must ensure that the selection process occurs without discrimination, inequity, or prejudice.

d)   EOP shall stop the proceedings if any evidence of discrimination, inequity, or prejudice occurs.

E468.5.2   Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Compliance - N/A

468.5.3   VETERANS PREFERENCE

The fact that an applicant for appointment to the FS is a veteran or disabled veteran shall be considered an affirmative factor in making such appointments (see section 30l(c) of the FSA, and FPM Chapter 2ll, subchapter 2-2).

E468.5.3   Veterans Preference - N/A

468.5.4   SELECTIVE SERVICE REGISTRATION

Applicants born after December 31, 1959, who are or were required to register under Section 3 of the Military Selective Service Act are required to submit a certification of registration.

E468.5.4   Selective Service Registration

A Re-Appointment Certification Statement for Selective Service Registration is completed by covered applicants who have not been employed previously in a Federal position.

Certifications are permanent employment records and are maintained in the Official Personnel Folder.

468.5.5   CITIZENSHIP AND AGE REQUIREMENTS

Candidates for FS positions must be United States citizens at the time of their appointment to USAID and must be at least 18 years of age.

E468.5.5   Citizenship and Age Requirements - N/A

468.5.6   OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Inspector General has personnel authority under the Inspector General Act of l978 (P.L. 95-452).

E468.5.6   Office of the Inspector General - N/A

468.6   Supplementary Reference

Re-Appointment Certification Statement for Selective Service Registration

List of Backstops

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