



NGO CSW FORUM 66

NGO CSW/NY | 50TH ANNIVERSARY

FAQs

As of 8 December 2021

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THE BASICS

WHAT IS THE NGO CSW FORUM?

- Civil society side of the UN CSW
- Provides civil society the opportunity to engage in the CSW processes and sessions without ECOSOC-accreditation or a UN grounds pass
- Includes hundreds of events that inform, engage and inspire grassroots efforts and advocacy needed to empower women and girls
- CSOs and NGOs can host their own virtual Parallel Events as part of the Forum

WHAT IS THE UN CSW?

- The principal global intergovernmental body dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- Two-week session where UN entities, Member States, and civil society discuss issues pertaining to women, girls, and gender equality.
- Assess progress and gaps in the implementation of global women's rights documents like the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), as well as issues happening on the regional, national, and local levels.
- At the end of the session, an outcome is usually agreed upon amongst Member States.
- UN Women is the secretariat - All the information related to the CSW can be found on their website.
- Official Side Events happen throughout the session. These events are hosted by Member States, UN agencies, and ECOSOC-accredited CSOs.
- Each year, the Commission focuses on specific themes related to gender equality, known as the priority and review themes.
- For questions or concerns about the UN CSW, contact UN Women at csw@unwomen.org.

WHAT IS THE CSW BUREAU?

- Consists of five Member States representing each region
- Facilitates the preparation for the CSW
- Ensures the successful outcome of the CSW
- Two-year term
- For more information and the list of Bureau members, visit [UN Women's website](https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/inter-agency-coordination/inter-agency-coordination-unit)

WHAT MEMBER STATES MAKE UP THE CSW66 COMMISSION?

- Commission is made up of Forty-five Member States
- Consists of one representative from each of Member States elected by the Economic and Social Council on the basis of equitable geographical distribution:
 - 13 members from Africa
 - 11 from Asia
 - 9 from Latin America & the Caribbean
 - 8 from Western Europe and other States
 - 4 from Eastern Europe
- Four-year terms
- For more information and the list of Commission members, visit [UN Women's website](https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/inter-agency-coordination/inter-agency-coordination-unit).
- For questions about the UN CSW, including Commission members, contact UN Women at csw@unwomen.org.

WHAT IS THE "ZERO DRAFT"?

- Initial draft of the CSW Agreed Conclusions
- Prepared by the UN Secretary-General's office
- Negotiated on during the formal UN CSW session
- Zero Draft usually comes out in January

NGO CSW FORUM VS. UN CSW

NGO CSW FORUM

- NGO CSW/NY = convener
- Feminist & women's rights groups and networks
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and civil society
- Registration for Forum is open to the public
- Hold Parallel Events hosted by civil society
- Written statements to CSW and interventions
- NGO CSWs in the Regions

UN CSW

- UN Women = secretariat
- Intergovernmental process; CSW Bureau
- United Nations agencies and Member States
- Registration for CSW only open to ECOSOC-accredited NGO delegates
- Hold official Side Events hosted by UN agencies, Member States and accredited NGOs
- Conducts expert panel and issues expert papers
- Regional CSW preparatory meetings

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE NGO CSW66 FORUM?

- Virtual Parallel Events
- Consultation Day
- Conversation Circles
- Virtual Artisan Fair
- Virtual Exhibit Hall
- Digital Handbook
- Orientation & Advocacy Training
- Advocacy & Research Group
- Regional Caucuses

WHAT ARE VIRTUAL PARALLEL EVENTS?

- One of the key components of the NGO CSW Forum
- NGOs and CSOs can host virtual Parallel Events as part of the NGO CSW Forum program (regardless of ECOSOC status)
- Open to the public and free
- Provide a space and voice for CSOs who may not have a voice at / access to the UN
- Allow for education and galvanizing around different issues and topics within the feminist and women's movement.

WHAT IS CONSULTATION DAY?

- Prepares participants for the CSW and NGO CSW Forum
- Educates on the priority and review theme
- Program includes an interview between the CSW Chair and the UN Women Executive Director, a panel discussion on the priority and review themes, and feminist entertainment
- NGO CSWs in the Regions also organize their own Consultation Days that focus on their region
- The final NGO CSW/NY Consultation Day program will be shared in February 2022. Watch last year's Consultation Day [here](#).

WHAT ARE CONVERSATION CIRCLES?

- A safe space to raise issues and exchange ideas on different topics in a semi-structured space during CSW
- Each conversation presents a specific topic related to gender equality
- Guided by two co-facilitators who are experts on the topic
- Participants were encouraged to be engaged in discussion either live or by chat.
- More information about the Conversation Circle themes and schedule will be posted closer to the Forum. Watch last year's Conversation Circles [here](#).

WHAT IS THE VIRTUAL ARTISAN FAIR?

- A space where artisans from around the world can sell their goods
- All approved artisans support NGOs with women-focused initiatives and all proceeds go directly to the artisan or their organization
- Applications to be an artisan open in January
- See last year's [virtual Artisan Fair](#) for an example.

WHAT IS THE VIRTUAL EXHIBIT HALL?

- Interactive virtual Exhibit Booths that participants can visit and learn
- Organizations and groups can apply to host a virtual Exhibit Booth
- Representatives of Exhibit Booths can virtually meet and greet with Booth visitors
- Exhibitors can host events, post resources, and engage with Forum participants directly within their Booth
- Apply to host a virtual Exhibit Booth and learn more [here](#).

WHAT IS THE DIGITAL HANDBOOK?

- Every year, NGO CSW/NY prepares a Handbook with everything you need to know about that year's NGO CSW Forum
- Handbook includes information about:
 - CSW priority and review themes
 - Welcome messages from the NGO CSW/NY Chair, CSW Chair, and UN Women Executive Director
 - The full program of the NGO CSW Forum
- Interactive Digital Handbook includes clickable links for the opportunity to learn more
- Publicly available and free resource posted on the NGO CSW/NY website and NGO CSW Forum virtual Portal
- See last year's Digital Handbook [here](#).

WHAT IS ORIENTATION & ADVOCACY TRAINING?

- Orientation & Advocacy Training sessions during the NGO CSW66 Forum gives an overview of the Forum & the UN CSW and how to advocate within the spaces
- Advocacy Training sessions and resources available leading up to the Forum
- Orientation resources shared leading up to the Forum to help people familiarize themselves with the different aspects of the NGO CSW Forum
- Great for people who are new to the UN CSW and NGO CSW Forum spaces
- Watch last year's Orientation & Advocacy Training session [here](#).

WHAT ARE THE REGIONAL CAUCUSES?

- Informal, loosely moderated spaces for participants to discuss and reflect upon regional advocacy and their region's most relevant and pressing issues
- Hosted by the NGO CSWs in the Regions and the North America and Europe Caucus
- Each region hosts two Caucuses throughout the two weeks of the Forum
- Watch last year's Regional Caucuses [here](#).

WHAT IS THE YOUTH LEADERS & YOUNG PROFESSIONALS (YLYP) PROGRAM?

- A youth-specific space within NGO CSW/NY and the NGO CSW Forum
- Anyone under 40 can join
- Hosts a Youth Preparation Series for NGO CSW leading up to the NGO CSW Forum and CSW
- Hosts other professional development events throughout the year, including informal mentorship sessions
- Shares information related to youth at the CSW
- Learn more, get involved, and join the community [here](#).

HOW DO I PROMOTE MY WORK AT THE NGO CSW66 FORUM?

- [Host a virtual Parallel Event](#)
- [Apply to host a virtual Exhibit Booth](#)
- [Purchase a digital Handbook Ad](#)
- Post about your work in the Message Board on the Forum virtual Portal
- Engage with Forum participants who work on similar issues

WHAT OTHER RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR PEOPLE NEW TO THE NGO CSW FORUM AND UN CSW SPACE?

- [Advocacy Training Guide and App](#)
- [Open Forum recording](#)
- More resources will be available as we get closer to the Forum

WHAT IS THE WORKING LANGUAGE OF THE NGO CSW FORUM? WILL INTERPRETATION BE AVAILABLE?

- The working language of the NGO CSW Forum is English.
- Interpretation will be provided for NGO CSW/NY's events during the Forum (Consultation Day, Conversation Circles, and more)
- Virtual Parallel Event organizers are responsible for interpretation during their events. You can see if a virtual Parallel Event will have interpretation by checking the event page on the NGO CSW Forum Virtual Portal.
- NGO CSW/NY cannot provide interpretation services for any virtual Parallel Events.

NGO CSW66 FORUM REGISTRATION

HOW DO I REGISTER FOR THE NGO CSW66 FORUM?

- Registration for the Forum opens on 15 December 2021
- Go to ngocsw.configio.com/pd/6/ to register
- Click "Register for an account"
- Continue to fill out the form

WILL I RECEIVE A LINK TO JOIN THE PORTAL ONCE I REGISTER?

Yes! When you register, you'll receive an email with info on how to set up your profile on the NGO CSW66 Forum Virtual Portal.

DO I HAVE TO PAY TO REGISTER FOR AND ATTEND THE FORUM?

Nope! The NGO CSW66 Forum is totally free! Upon registration, there is an option to donate to NGO CSW/NY, but it's not necessary. Just click the "I do not wish to donate" option and register for free!

CAN I REGISTER ALONE OR AS A GROUP?

You can register more than one person at a time when registering for the NGO CSW66 Forum.

DO I HAVE TO BE PART OF AN NGO TO REGISTER?

Nope! Anyone can register and attend the NGO CSW Forum whether you're part of an organization or not.

The Forum is totally open to the public.

ADVOCACY FOR CSW:

WHAT IS THE ADVOCACY & RESEARCH GROUP?

- Conducts research on CSW priority theme with regional and global context
- Prepares recommendations for CSW Agreed Conclusions Zero Draft and sends them to Member States, UN Women and the CSW Bureau for consideration and inclusion in their discussions
- Develops and shares advocacy resources
- Currently working on recommendations for the CSW Methods of Work, which are under review this year
- Learn more about the ARG and their work [here](#).

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE ARG?

- Email us at info@engocsw.org to share any priorities, recommendations, or issues that you'd like to be included in the ARG's recommendations

HOW CAN I LEARN HOW TO ADVOCATE AT THE UN CSW AND NGO CSW FORUM?

- [Advocacy Training Guide and app](#)
- Advocacy trainings leading up to Forum (to be announced)
- Attend the [Orientation & Advocacy Training](#) sessions during the Forum
- Advocacy videos (coming soon)
- Make sure you're on [our mailing list](#) to receive updates about new materials and training sessions.

WHAT RESOURCES MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO MY ADVOCACY?

- [Advocacy Training Guide and app](#)
- [Links and Resources for the CSW66 Priority Theme](#)
- [Women's Human Rights Teaching, Learning, and Advocacy Resource \(WHRTLAR\)](#)
- [NGO CSW65 Forum Orientation & Advocacy Training session recording](#)

VIRTUAL PORTAL:

HOW DO I CONNECT WITH OTHER ATTENDEES?

- Go to the “People” tab to see the full list of NGO CSW66 Forum participants
- Search/filter people who work in certain regions or on certain topics
- Direct messages
- Chat features on event pages, Exhibit Booths, Handbook Ads
- Post on the message board to all participants

HOW DO I UPDATE MY PROFILE ON THE VIRTUAL PORTAL?

You can update your name, email, photo, topics of focus, and your bio by clicking on your name/photo at the top right of the screen, and clicking “Edit my profile” in the dropdown menu.

CAN I CREATE MY OWN AGENDA/SCHEDULE ON THE VIRTUAL PORTAL?

Yes! In the Agenda (under the “Schedule” tab at the top of the screen), you can add events that you want to attend to My Agenda by clicking the green “+” button next to the event title.

SAFETY AT THE FORUM:

WHAT IS NGO CSW/NY DOING TO ENSURE SAFETY AND SECURITY DURING THE NGO CSW66 FORUM?

- We strictly enforce our Virtual Safety Guidelines and have a resource about having a safe experience at the Forum
- We have a mechanism and procedure for reporting any harassment or Virtual Safety Guideline violations
- We provide recommendations and guidance to virtual Parallel Event organizers for ensuring safety and security during their events

HOW DO I ENSURE SAFETY AND SECURITY DURING MY PARALLEL EVENT?

- Ensure you are fully familiar with the capabilities and security features of the communications platform you are using for your Parallel Event (Zoom, Webex, Google Meets, etc.)
- The best way to ensure a secure event is to limit attendee participation. However, if you'd like your event to be interactive, there are still many ways to prevent and handle disruption.
- Read our recommendations for hosting a safe and secure virtual Parallel Event

WHAT DO I DO IF I EXPERIENCE HARASSMENT OR AN UNSAFE ENVIRONMENT DURING THE FORUM?

- Report it to virtualsafety@ngocsw.org and we will address the issue immediately.
- Any organization or individual who is determined to be disruptive, violent, and/or has violated our Virtual Safety Guidelines will be permanently removed from the NGO CSW66 Forum Virtual Portal.

FAQs FOR PARALLEL EVENT ORGANIZERS

CAN I MAKE CHANGES TO MY VIRTUAL PARALLEL EVENT ONCE IT'S BEEN ACCEPTED AND UPLOADED TO THE VIRTUAL PORTAL?

Yes. You're allowed one free change request form submission per event. You can include several edits to your Parallel Event in one form submission. However, each additional form submission is a \$25 fee. All change request submissions must be submitted by 1 March. We recommend waiting until closer to the Forum to submit all of your changes for your event.

HOW WILL NGO CSW66 FORUM PARTICIPANTS REGISTER FOR MY VIRTUAL PARALLEL EVENT?

We highly recommend that Parallel Event organizers set up registration for their event, as it greatly decreases the risk of Zoom-bombing and disrupters in your event. For example, if you are using Zoom for your event, you can require registration. If you use a communications platform that does not have a registration option, you can set up a simple registration form on Eventbrite or similar website. For information about the different communications platforms and their capabilities, review this resource.

Your event page will have a button with the link to your event's registration or a link to join your session directly at the time of your event. Forum participants will be able to click that button to register for your event (if you are requiring registration). For a sample of what your virtual Parallel Event page will look like, click here.

Participants will also be able to add events to 'My Agenda' in the Virtual Portal which adds Forum sessions they are planning to attend to their schedule.

WHY DO I HAVE TO USE MY OWN VIRTUAL MEETING PLATFORM FOR MY EVENT?

Using your own meeting platform gives you much more control over preparing for your event, opening the green room, setting up interpretation, and managing your event recording.

DOES NGO CSW/NY PROVIDE INTERPRETATION FOR VIRTUAL PARALLEL EVENTS?

No. NGO CSW/NY does not provide interpretation for virtual Parallel Events. We encourage Parallel Event organizers to provide interpretation for their event, but we are unable to provide interpretation services to them.

HOW DO I PROMOTE MY EVENT?

- Purchase a digital Handbook Ad
- Post about your work in the Message Board on the Forum virtual Portal
- Engage with Forum participants who work on similar issues
- Promote your event to your constituency/ mailing list/ community

