

# Attending the United Nations (UN) in New York – Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

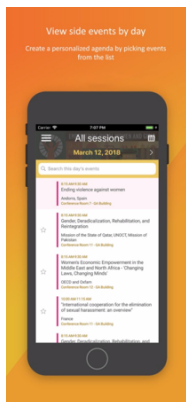
## How can I become a Delegate to attend CSW at the UN in New York?

### Delegate Status



NGO groups like BPW and thousands of others, attend the CSW each year. The UN has limited the number of members who can enter the UN Headquarters (HQ) building for security reasons. Each organization is granted only 20 delegates that can receive a “ground pass” allowing them to enter the HQ during the two weeks of the CSW. **BPW Canada does not have consultative status with the UN** so our members must rely on BPW International (BPWI) or other Canadian NGO groups to obtain a ground pass.

BPW International must allocate their 20 passes amongst their own Executive Board and members from over 90 countries. They have required that members who apply must be involved in projects that reflect the “CSW Theme or Review Theme” to obtain one of their 20 passes. Members must contact their Federation President (BPW Canada President) for recommendation, their name is then put forward to the Regional Coordinator who makes her selections and then puts the names forward to the BPW International VP – UN for approval of the passes. Members would then be notified that they can register on the UN Registration Portal and official approval will follow. Note, anyone can complete the online application but if prior approval has not been given, the application will not be approved. BPWI’s UN site: <https://www.bpw-un.org>.



Once approved by an organization, **registration is free** and completed on the UN website:

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/cswo/ngo-participation/registration> and following the instruction which will lead to <https://reg.unog.ch/user/register> to register. Once approval is verified by your organization, you will pick up your ground pass when you arrive in NY. You will receive an email and following the steps outlined you will bring your official letter and ID to the office address you will be sent. A photo ID card will be printed and you are then able to attend the UN organized talks and the Side Events inside the UN HQ building as well as the Parallel Events outside the UN building. You can review all the events on the wall TV monitors or **download the UN CSW app that lists all the Side Events**.

As a Delegate you can also attend all the events noted below. However, each time you leave the UN HQ to attend outside events, you must clear the security again when you return. This may involve lengthy line-ups along the sidewalk outside. Be sure to dress warm.

## What if I cannot get a Delegate Ground Pass, can I still attend?

### Non-Delegate Status

Any NGO member can attend the CSW-NGO programs. The **registration is free** and online through their website <https://ngocsw.org/ngo-csw-forum/>. Once you are registered you can attend any number of 700 plus Parallel Event offering speakers, panels and information about the priority theme for the meetings. These are often emerging issues supported by ground breaking research or lived experiences. You do not need approval to register and attend these events although it would be preferable to notify your National President so she can stay connected with members while in New York. The Parallel Events are listed in a booklet available for a small fee or you can **download the Guidebook app that lists all the Parallel Events** free of charge.

You can also attend special Side Events inside the UN building by responding to the email address posted for the event on the app. You may need to email days to weeks in advance depending on the seating availability. If approved, you will be granted a special pass to enter for that event only. You will be allowed to enter the UN HQ and will be escorted to the event and back outside after the event.



The NGO organization also holds a **Consultation Day** on Sunday before the start of CSW. It is advantageous to attend this day but the cost is usually **\$100 USD**. Space for this event is limited and you must pre-register if you wish to attend. You will receive a book listing all the Parallel events, maps to the venues and other information.

Many events have a pre-registration process regardless if you have a ground pass or not. You are usually required to register for any event at a Consulate, Embassy or Mission so they have your name on their list prior to the event. They will check ID when you arrive and before access is granted. If your name is not on the list, you will not likely be given access. Other events may have seating limitations and become full prior to the start of the event. Though, there are still many other events that are first come first serve. Once the seating is full, they will close the doors and not allow entry. There are also a number of events inside the UN HQ that are closed doors or priority card access only.

### **What if I cannot go to New York, how can I participate?**



Most of the events, as well as the meetings, inside the UN HQ are broadcast on the UN TV <http://webtv.un.org/>. Access them online and follow along to see what is going on. **This is free.**

### **Besides attending the Speakers/Panels/Meetings and Parallel and Side Events, what is the purpose of CSW meetings?**

Each year the CSW Committee selects a "Theme". All member countries come together to work on an agreement that states how women and girls will be treated as it pertains to the Theme, in their respective countries, for the upcoming year. For two weeks countries negotiate the language of the agreement and at the end of the talks it is hoped that all countries agree and sign the document. This becomes the Agreed Upon Conclusions document and in all the 63 years of this process they have only not agreed on two occasions. Because countries sign this agreement, it becomes a document that NGO groups like BPW can use to ensure the government is fulfilling their obligation to the UN.

Each morning a briefing is held inside the UN by the Chair of CSW-NGO to discuss any issues with the draft document, developing trends or issues. It is important for NGO groups to help our Country Delegates i.e. Canadian Government Delegation, by reading the "Zero Draft" document prepared by the Chair of the CSW and monitoring the changes as they are made. This "Draft" document is posted and often emailed to attendees by the Chair of CSW-NGO every few days. CSW64's Theme: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw64-2020>

This process can be observed from outside the UN and anyone interested can email their Country Delegates with their concerns. For those inside the UN, the Country Delegates meet with NGO delegates inside the UN on a daily basis. At these meetings they often talk about any concerns and ask for help from the NGO experts on various parts of the document. This is a great way to have direct input to the conclusions document.

In addition to obtaining a new conclusions document, countries must report on their progress from past years (Review Theme). Countries hold each other accountable and these proceedings are open to the attendees to view. Our government prepares their own review document <https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/more-plus/uncsw-ccfnu/call-appel-en.html> and submits it for everyone to review. If there are concerns we or other countries can raise them with our government.

Prepared by BPW Canada President, Linda Davis (2018 – 2020)