

Terms of Reference

Call for Applications: Internship Opportunity

1. Background

The Horn Center for Democracy (HCD) is a regional think-and-do organization working to promote inclusive democratic governance, civic participation, peacebuilding, and youth engagement across the Horn of Africa (HoA). HCD generates knowledge on strategic and contemporary issues affecting democratization processes in the region through research, publications, policy dialogue, and evidence-informed advocacy. The Center also advances inclusive peacebuilding and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda by promoting women's meaningful participation in peace, governance, and decision-making processes, and by supporting evidence-informed policy dialogue and regional cooperation across the region.

Alongside its research and policy engagement, HCD implements regional programs that strengthen democratic participation, civic participation, and cross-border collaboration. As part of its broader Youth Development Program, HCD is implementing initiatives on youth development programs including the inaugural Youth Leadership for Democracy and Solidarity (YLDS) cohort-I. These initiatives seek to advance youth participation in democratic processes, strengthen democratic leadership, foster regional solidarity, and enhance the resilience of pro-democracy actors across the HoA region.

In addition, HCD continues to expand its digital outreach and public engagement initiatives to improve access to knowledge on democratic governance, civic participation, and regional affairs. Through digital platforms and innovative learning approaches, HCD promotes constructive dialogue, civic education, youth-centered learning, and collaboration among democratic actors across the region. To learn more about HCD's work, please visit <https://horn-center.org/>.

To support these initiatives, HCD seeks to engage a dynamic and motivated intern with a strong interest in democratic governance, civic participation, youth engagement, and digital communications. The intern will provide research, coordination, knowledge management, and digital engagement support across HCD's research and program portfolios.

2. Purpose of the Internship

The purpose of this internship is to support HCD's research, policy engagement, youth development, and digital communications initiatives by providing research, coordination, content development, and operational assistance. The intern will contribute to the YLDS program, peacebuilding and the WPS agenda, Digital and youth engagement initiatives, and broader knowledge management activities.

3. Key Responsibilities

The intern will support the research, program, knowledge management, and digital engagement activities of the Horn Center for Democracy (HCD). Specific responsibilities include:

- Support research on democratic governance, civic participation, youth engagement, civic space, peacebuilding and the WPS agenda, and related issues across the Horn of Africa.
- Assist in collecting, organizing, analyzing, and synthesizing information from multiple sources to support HCD's research, publications, policy dialogue, and advocacy initiatives.
- Contribute to the implementation of HCD's research and program activities, including the Youth Leadership for Democracy and Solidarity (YLDS) initiative, and other youth development and democracy programs.
- Assist in maintaining research databases, program records, digital resources, and knowledge management systems.
- Support the documentation of program activities, lessons learned, and emerging developments relevant to HCD's thematic areas.
- Contribute to the development of youth-friendly knowledge and communication materials, including digital content that promotes civic education, democratic governance, and regional dialogue.
- Support HCD's digital engagement initiatives by assisting with content planning, communications, online learning activities, and public engagement efforts.
- Assist in organizing workshops, webinars, consultations, dialogues, trainings, and other program activities, including providing logistical and administrative support where required.
- Perform other research, program, and organizational support tasks as assigned.

4. Required Qualifications and Competencies

A. Education

- Current university student (graduate class) or recent graduate in Political Science, International Relations, Peace and Conflict Studies, Governance, Development Studies, Communications, Media Studies, Public Policy, Law, or a related field.

B. Knowledge and Skills

- Demonstrated interest in democratic governance, civic participation, youth engagement, peacebuilding, human rights, or regional affairs.

- Strong research, analytical, writing, and communication skills.
- Ability to collect, organize, synthesize, and present information from multiple sources.
- Good organizational skills with the ability to manage multiple tasks and meet deadlines.
- Familiarity with digital communication platforms, social media, and online collaboration tools.
- Experience or interest in content development, knowledge management, research assistance, or program support is an advantage.
- Knowledge of governance and political dynamics in the Horn of Africa is desirable.

C. Personal Attributes

- Commitment to democratic values, inclusion, integrity, and youth empowerment.
- Strong motivation to learn and contribute within a dynamic regional organization.
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively in a multicultural environment.
- Attention to detail and strong problem-solving skills.
- Professionalism, discretion, and sound judgment.

5. Duration and Location

The internship will be implemented from August 2026 to December 2026, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

6. Supervision and Working Arrangements

The intern will work closely with HCD's program and research teams and will receive guidance, mentoring, and technical support throughout the internship. The intern will collaborate with:

- Program and Partnerships Director
- Head of the Democracy Unit
- Research and Communications Officer

Additional guidance may be provided by other project staff depending on the specific activities and assignments undertaken during the internship.

7. Application Requirements

Interested applicants should submit:

- An updated Curriculum Vitae (CV);
- A brief motivation letter (maximum one page) outlining their interest in democratic governance, youth engagement, research, or digital communications, and explaining how the internship aligns with their academic or professional aspirations;



- A writing sample or examples of previous research, communication, or digital content work (where available).

8. Application Process

Interested applicants are required to complete the online application form by clicking the "**Apply Here**" link available on this website; and upload the above-mentioned documents.

Application Deadline: All applications must be submitted no later than **Sunday, August 9, 2026, at 11:59 PM (EAT)**.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for the next stage of the selection process.