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S/2504/2026  
10 March 2026  
ENGLISH only

**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT**

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR TWO COURSES  
ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF LABORATORY SKILLS AT THE FINNISH  
INSTITUTE FOR VERIFICATION OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION  
HELSINKI, FINLAND  
14 – 25 SEPTEMBER 2026**

**PURPOSE OF THE COURSES**

1. The OPCW Technical Secretariat (the Secretariat) wishes to inform Member States that in 2026 it will hold two courses on the enhancement of laboratory skills at the Finnish Institute for Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN) in Helsinki, Finland. The courses, which will focus on the analysis of chemicals related to the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention), are intended for qualified analytical chemists from Member States with economies that are developing or in transition, and are aimed at:
  - (a) assisting them in acquiring further experience and practical knowledge;
  - (b) facilitating the analysis of chemicals related to national implementation of the Convention;
  - (c) enhancing national capacities in these Member States by offering training in analytical chemistry to personnel from industry, academic institutions, and government laboratories;
  - (d) facilitating the adoption of good laboratory practices; and
  - (e) broadening the pool of human resources from which National Authorities and the Secretariat can draw in the future.

**COURSES**

2. The courses, to be held from 14 to 25 September 2026, are as follows:
  - (a) a course on the enhancement of laboratory skills in chemical weapons-related laboratory quality management (CW-LQM); and
  - (b) a course on the enhancement of laboratory skills in chemical weapons-related quantitative mass spectrometry (CW-QMS).



### **COURSE ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF LABORATORY SKILLS IN CHEMICAL WEAPONS-RELATED LABORATORY QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

3. The CW-LQM course will include study of the International Organization for Standardization/International Electrotechnical Commission Standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017 Testing and calibration laboratories. Prior to the course, participants will be asked to provide information on the quality assurance system adopted in their laboratories. Then, through lectures, discussions, and practical exercises in the course, participants will learn how to better implement the requirements of the Standard in their laboratory quality management systems.
4. This course will accommodate a maximum of six participants from States Parties with economies that are developing or in transition, to be selected by the Secretariat in consultation with VERIFIN.

### **COURSE ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF LABORATORY SKILLS IN CHEMICAL WEAPONS-RELATED QUANTITATIVE MASS SPECTROMETRY**

5. The CW-QMS course is aimed at improving practical skills in the quantitative analysis of chemicals related to the Convention, through such techniques as liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS) and gas chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry (GC-MS/MS). For this reason, participants should have previous hands-on experience using LC, GC, and MS.
6. The course will consist of the following elements:
  - (a) sample preparation and the use of internal standards;
  - (b) method development, optimisation, and validation;
  - (c) quantitative/qualitative data processing and reporting;
  - (d) demonstrations of LC-MS/MS and GC-MS/MS techniques;
  - (e) hands-on exercises including environmental and biomedical samples; and
  - (f) quality assurance.
7. The course will accommodate a maximum of four participants from States Parties with economies that are developing or in transition. The Secretariat will select the participants in consultation with VERIFIN.

### **SPONSORSHIP**

8. The cost of the courses, as well as accommodation for sponsored participants, will be covered by the Secretariat. In addition, the Secretariat will pay for international travel, meals, and medical and travel insurance for sponsored participants.
9. The Secretariat will not pay for medical assistance. Therefore, participants should be fit for travel. All participants taking prescribed medication should arrive with supplies sufficient for the duration of the event.

10. When making travel arrangements for sponsored participants, the Secretariat will seek the most economical options. It will purchase tickets and send them to the participants. The Secretariat will not cover expenses that are not related to the courses or that result from changes to travel arrangements that it has not authorised. Sponsored participants must bear all costs resulting from changes they make, including cancellations, once the Secretariat has purchased tickets.
11. Participants are responsible for obtaining any necessary visas (including transit visas) before travelling to Finland.

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

12. The analytical skills development courses offered by the OPCW are aimed at building the analytical capacities for chemicals relevant to the Convention.
13. Member States and National Authorities are strongly encouraged to support and endorse the applications or nominations of suitable women candidates.
14. The courses are open to those who:
  - (a) have a minimum of a first degree (BSc or equivalent) in chemistry or analytical chemistry from a recognised university or institution, with relevant practical and theoretical experience in analytical chemistry, including:
    - (i) laboratory quality assurance systems (for the CW-LQM course); and
    - (ii) quantitative mass spectrometry (for the CW-QMS course);
  - (b) are citizens of Member States with economies that are developing or in transition; and
  - (c) have been working in a chemical laboratory or research institution in a Member State with an economy that is developing or in transition for at least five years.
15. The courses will be conducted in English. Candidates must therefore have a strong command of both written and spoken English. Any candidate who is found upon arrival not to meet this requirement may be disallowed from continuing in the courses.

### **SELECTION PROCEDURE**

16. Applications will be carefully screened on the basis of the criteria specified in paragraphs 14 and 15 above. Only selected candidates will be notified by the Secretariat.

### **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

17. Interested candidates are invited to submit their applications through Eventus, the OPCW event management platform (<https://apps.opcw.org/eventus>). Applicants must first create an account and then register for the CW-LQM or CW-QMS course. Each application must be endorsed digitally on the Eventus platform by the respective National Authority or Permanent Representation of the nominee's country to the OPCW. Only nominations endorsed in this manner will be considered.

18. The application form must be accompanied by the following:
  - (a) a curriculum vitae;
  - (b) a photocopy of the personal identification pages of the candidate's passport;
  - (c) a one-page description of the candidate's practical experience; and
  - (d) a letter of recommendation from the candidate's supervisor in his or her institution addressing the candidate's qualifications in line with paragraphs 14 and 15 above and attesting the relevance of the courses to the work of the institution.
19. Participants' personal information must match the name on their passport. Participants are responsible for providing and verifying the accuracy of their personal information, as this information will be used for the issuance of flight tickets. Any inaccuracies may result in exclusion from the course, or additional charges that will need to be borne by the participants.
20. Applications must be submitted in Eventus **no later than 30 March 2026**. Incomplete or improperly completed applications will not be considered. Additional information may be obtained from Mr Massimo de Rienzo, Senior Programme Officer (Email: [massimo.derienzo@opcw.org](mailto:massimo.derienzo@opcw.org)) and Ms Ting Zhang, Senior Project Assistant (Email: [ting.zhang@opcw.org](mailto:ting.zhang@opcw.org)).
21. Candidates who have not been contacted by the OPCW by 31 May 2026 should consider that their application has been unsuccessful.

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