

Info briefing on attending COP26: accreditation, vaccinations, visas

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When is COP happening and where?

COP26 will run from Sunday 31st October to Friday 12th November. It will be held at the Scottish Exhibition Centre (SEC) in Glasgow, Scotland, UK.

What are the different spaces at COP26? What are the 'Blue' and 'Green Zones'?

The official negotiations of COP26 will run for two weeks at the SEC - the so-called **Blue Zone**. This will be where the actual negotiations take place between all the countries that are signed up to the United Nations Framework for Convention on Climate Change. Also happening in this area will be a huge mix of different negotiation tracks, events, workshops, speeches, interventions, meetings, exhibitions and everything in between.

Attendees to the Blue Zone include the official country (or 'party') delegates and then a huge diversity of civil society (or 'observer') delegates including environmental campaigning and advocacy organisations, youth, farmers, businesses, researchers, academics, indigenous people, women and gender groups, and financial institutions.

Outside of the official negotiations is a UK Government-managed space called the **Green Zone**. This will be held at the Glasgow Science Centre and is a civil society oriented space where events and exhibitions take place, but not the official conference. The audience will be a mix of local and international civil society, including those new to COP and regulars. Government delegates also attend events in the Green Zone, but it's not where the main energy and action of the conference is. The Green Zone will be open to the public and will not require official accreditation to attend.

How can I attend COP26?

Attending the UNFCCC-managed COP26 / Blue Zone

In order to attend the COP26 Blue Zone, you need to have official accreditation (sometimes this is called being 'badged', because accredited delegates wear different coloured badges on lanyards while at the COP).

Accreditation happens in two stages for observers (civil society, NGOs etc). First, you need to be part of an organisation, and that organisation needs to be formally accredited with observer status well in advance of COP. The deadline to apply for organisational accreditation was 31st December 2020. You can see a list of NGOs that have been accredited as observers for COP26 [here](#).

Second, after your organisation has been accredited, you need to apply for individual accreditation for each person ('delegate') you're planning to send into the conference.

This year, there are two 'windows' of time where organisations need to register delegates. From **1st-14th July**, you need to register all delegates who will require a vaccine under the UK Government's Vaccination Offer scheme. From **2nd-31st August**, you need to register all other delegates.

However, it is encouraged that you nominate your full delegation in the July period (i.e., nominate by July 14th), irrespective of whether you need a vaccine from the UK government or not. Following these nominations, you will receive a quota from the Secretariat and can identify which nominees require a vaccine by July 23rd (as described below). The only delegates you need to confirm in July are the ones that need vaccinations. All other nominees can be confirmed after the August nomination period.

Participants interested in the vaccination offer are very strongly encouraged to express their interest in vaccination on the web page linked from in the acknowledgement letter by Friday, 23 July 2021. This means they would need to be confirmed in ORS in advance of that date.

You will have an additional opportunity during the August period to add nominees or register someone for the first time. If you have nominated representatives during the July period, your quota may be increased during August. Additional information on the Vaccines can be found here: <https://ukcop26.org/vaccines-faq/>

Key dates for applying for accreditation and vaccination

On 28 June 2021, the UNFCCC Secretariat informed Parties and Observers on the offer of the UK COP26 Presidency for COVID-19 Vaccines to COP26 Delegations. Further information on details of this offer was also presented at the briefing of the UK COP26 Presidency to the UK Parliament on 23 June 2021, including that COVID-19 vaccination will not be compulsory for attendance to COP26. The following calendar will apply:

- By 14 July, UNFCCC Accredited Observer Organizations will send their nomination list for UK COP26 Presidency COVID-19 Vaccination Offer.
- On 16 July, the UNFCCC Secretariat will announce COVID-19 Vaccination Offer Quotas for UNFCCC Accredited Observer Organization.

- By 23 July, UNFCCC Accredited Observer Organizations will confirm the names of their delegations that will benefit from the UK COP26 Presidency COVID-19 Vaccination Offer, based on the quota announced by the UNFCCC Secretariat.
- Between 2-31 August, UNFCCC Accredited Observer Organizations will send their nomination list for UK COP26 Blue Zones. Nevertheless, the UNFCCC Secretariat “encourages” Observers to communicate their COP26 Blue Zone Delegation nominations as early as possible, including during the period of Vaccination Offer, even if these nominations will not apply for UK COP26 Vaccine Offer. (in practical terms “encourage” implies that the [relevant action] “can” be done, but will not be a problem if it is “not done”)
- On 6 September, the UNFCCC Secretariat will announce COP26 Blue Zone Quotas for UNFCCC Accredited Observer Organizations and from that moment onwards, UNFCCC Accredited Observer Organizations nominated COP26 delegations will start to receive their COP26 Blue Zone Acknowledgement Letters and COP26 UK Visa Support Letters.

Please note, the official UK COP26 Presidency Vaccination Offer announcement does not contain any specific information on:

- Total number of vaccines to be provided by UK COP26 Presidency to COP26 Delegations,
- Breakdown of these UK COP26 Delegation Vaccines according to Observers, Constituencies and Accredited Organizations,
- Capacity of COP26 Blue Zone, and breakdown of this capacity to Observers, Constituencies and Accredited Organizations, with or without UK COP26 Delegation Vaccines,
- Whether UK COP26 Presidency Delegations Vaccination Offer includes cost of COVID-19 quarantine procedures upon entry to England and/or Scotland.
- Whether COP26 delegations, with or without UK COP26 Delegation Vaccines, will be exempt from COVID-19 quarantine requirements upon entry to England and/or Scotland

Official UNFCCC side events and exhibits

Side events are held inside the COP26 venue Blue Zone and are for badged delegates only, and are also broadcast on UNFCCC TV. The UNFCCC announced that side events will be

in-person (subject to further COP26 updates). The deadline to apply for a side event was **2nd July 2021**.

The UNFCCC announced that UNFCCC managed exhibits in the Blue Zone will be virtual, and applications also closed on **2 July 2021**. (“UNFCCC managed” indicates that physical and virtual platforms will be provided for free by the UNFCCC Secretariat and eligible applications will be selected by the UNFCCC Secretariat.)

Attending the UK-Government managed Green Zone

The Green Zone will be open to the public at the Glasgow Science Centre and will feature events and exhibitions from the UK Government and civil society. You can find out more about what the UK Government is organising at <https://ukcop26.org/>

Events and exhibitions

UK-managed events and exhibitions will be held at both the Glasgow Science Centre Green Zone and within the UNFCCC Blue Zone. Events at UK Government spaces inside the Blue Zone (i.e. at the UK Government Pavilion) have a similar (but smaller) audience to the official UNFCCC side events, but there will likely be UK and / or Scottish Government audience / participation.

The deadline to apply for UK managed side events and exhibition space at the Green Zone at the Glasgow Science Centre was back in March 2021, and the Government is still in the process of shortlisting from 4,000 or so submissions.

The deadline to apply for UK managed side events and exhibition spaces within the Blue Zone (at the UK Government Pavilion) was on **2nd July 2021**.

Applying for visas

Most people attending COP from outside the UK will need a visit visa. The earliest you can apply for a visit visa is three months in advance of the dates you intend to travel - so late July to travel in late October 2021.

If you're applying for accreditation into the official Blue Zone of COP26, your accreditation letter will act as your Visa Support letter. This means that you won't be able to officially apply for a visa until you get official accreditation for the COP, which will be sometime after the 6th September. **However, it is strongly recommended that you start planning and organising your visa application well before this date so that you are ready to apply at the earliest opportunity once you receive accreditation.**

Visa Support Service

The COP26 Coalition is setting up a Visa Support Service to assist frontline, Global South and other marginalised communities navigate the UK visa and immigration system for COP26. We are working with a solicitor who will pre-vet applications and offer advice on the application process. We are not yet set up but are accepting Submissions of Interest from prospective applicants here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/u/2/d/1v0TsseZ17ba11eMCDoyUNE6hp0yBn8flxm6Cq9wgg4g/edit#responses>

The Visa Support Service will not be able to help everyone coming to COP26 from the Global South. However, we will endeavour to provide as much support and resources that we can to assist as many people as possible.

Appendix: Q&A between Civil Society Focal Points and Secretariat (July 2021)

Q - Will delegates who are nominated and confirmed in July in order to have vaccine access need to be re-nominated and re-confirmed in the August opening?

A - No, there is no need to re-confirm delegates that have already been confirmed in the first confirmation window.

Q - If a delegate is confirmed in July to be able to receive a vaccine, are they then a confirmed member of the delegation or can they be swapped out during the August opening?

A - Swapping of confirmed delegates is possible if needed. Swapping of delegates who expressed interest in the vaccine offer is however discouraged given the logistical efforts related to vaccination and because it complicates planning.

Q - Will the quota set in July be wiped out and replaced with the quota obtained in August or are the two additive?

A - The July quota will be taken into account, but it is possible that it will be recalculated after the August nomination window.

Q - Are delegations at a quota disadvantage if they do not nominate delegates in the July opening?

A - No, there won't be any disadvantage. Nominators are however encouraged to nominate delegates as completely as possible by the 14 July deadline.

Q - In the past, allocation of quotas were defined by an algorithm that tracks performances in the previous years. Will this apply to vaccine allocation quotas as well?

A - Kindly be informed that a similar approach will be applied as in the past.