

## [Supporting Defenders | ISHR's Human Rights Defender Advocacy Programme kicks off](#)

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On Monday 29 May 2017, ISHR will open the 2017 edition of its [Human Rights Defenders Advocacy Programme \(HRDAP\)](#). The programme equips defenders with the knowledge and skills to make strategic use of the international human rights system. It also provides an opportunity for participants to directly engage in lobbying and advocacy activities at the UN level to effect change on the ground back home.

ISHR's Training and Advocacy Support Manager, Helen Nolan, explains that this year's HRDAP participants were selected from a pool of 380 applicants - the highest number yet.

'We're incredibly excited to be collaborating with 17 committed human rights defenders working on women's rights, business and human rights, the rights of LGBTI persons, and human rights defender protection,' said Nolan. 'These defenders are travelling from around the globe - including Argentina, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, India, Nigeria, Peru, Russia and Sierra Leone - to spend two highly intense weeks gaining practical advocacy experience in Geneva.'

HRDAP coincides with the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council. As well as receiving training modules on all the UN human rights mechanisms from a range of experts, participants will have the opportunity to build networks in Geneva and around the world, carry out lobbying of UN member States and UN staff, learn from peers from a range of regions working on a range of human rights issues, and even deliver statements and provide testimony at the Human Rights Council itself.

'Crucially, we know the programme works,' said Nolan. 'Last year, 100% of our participants were either very satisfied or satisfied with the programme, with 96% of them having at least partially achieved their key advocacy and learning objectives.'

In 2016, HRDAP enabled:

- corporate accountability activist Alexandra Montgomery to provide first hand testimony to state representatives and experts about the violence faced by land rights defenders in Brazil
- Tehmina Zafar to sound the alarm in the UN Human Rights Council about proposed laws which could dramatically restrict the operation and independence of NGOs in Pakistan
- Karen Mejía to inform a UN expert body about the need to defend women's rights activists and decriminalise abortion in Honduras.
- several participants to contribute substantially to the historic campaign to appoint the first ever UN expert on LGBTI rights

'Our training alumni become our partners, and we're looking forward to seeing what our trainees achieve during the two weeks, as well as how we can work together beyond HRDAP.'

"life-changing": [@AychMcArdle](#) talks about [@ISHRglobal](#) advocacy training. Apply now!  
<https://t.co/gjEKIRq8G9> <https://t.co/k282PcdFPT>

— Helen Nolan (@Helen\_ISHR) [23 de diciembre de 2016](#)

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