

Research Overview

Why is research important?

The first step to Model UN preparation is research. It will help you pose helpful research questions and point you to the best resources for gathering information on your **country** and its positions, the **topics** to be discussed at the conference, and the **UN system**.

Preparation

The first step in preparing for a rewarding Model UN experience is to gather information. Give yourself plenty of time before a conference to research, read and then formulate your arguments.

While conducting research, try to keep in mind that your primary goal is to represent your country as realistically as possible. To do so, you will need to research three different areas.

1. Your country and its positions
 2. The issues to be debated at the conference; and
 3. The UN system.
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Topic Research

What are some questions you could ask to help guide your research on the topic?

Questions to help guide your research

- What is the problem? How does it affect your country?
- What has your country done to combat the problem?
- What are the various "sides" in the debate?
- Which aspects of the issue are most important to your country?
- If your country is not involved with the issue, how can it become involved?
- How will your country shape the debate at the conference?
- What arguments will other countries make?
- How do the positions of other countries affect your country's position?
- Is there evidence or statistics that might help to back up your country's position?

UN System Research

Understanding the **UN system** will help you play your role realistically at a Model UN conference. It is important to understand which bodies and actors make up the UN system, what the UN can and cannot do, and how international issues are addressed by the UN.



What are some
questions that will
help get you
started?

Important questions to ask

- What are the important elements of the UN Charter?
- What are the main bodies of the UN?
- How are the UN's bodies and agencies organized?
- Which countries serve on the body or agency you are simulating?
- How does the body or agency you are simulating operate?
- What are the most recent UN actions on your issue?
- Why did past UN actions succeed or fail?
- What conferences and meetings have been held with regard to your issue?
- What have UN officials said about your issue?

Tips for effective search strategies

Visit the UN website at www.un.org. Read about current affairs on the [UN News](#) page. In addition, you should look at the [UN Cyberschoolbus website](#), as well as UNA-USA's guide to using it.

Look at the [UN Global Issues](#) page, which has an index to some prominent issues as well as a list of UN agencies that work in various issue-areas. Also, through the [United Nations Documentation Center](#), you can find resolutions and voting records from the current and previous years.

Visit non-governmental organization (NGO) websites. NGOs are an important part of the UN system, in part due to the valuable research and information they generate. Look for NGOs that address your topic.

Check out [news and media](#) for up-to-date developments on an issue.

Now you're ready to
research!

