



Americas Policy Group

Membership Guidelines

What is the APG?

The Americas Policy Group (APG) is a Canadian civil society policy group focused on development and social justice issues in the Americas. It brings together approximately forty international development and humanitarian NGOs, human rights groups, labour unions, research institutions, church and solidarity groups. The APG provides a space for collective reflection and the articulation of co-ordinated policy positions, as well as dialogue, and advocacy with the Canadian government, other governments, and other decision-making bodies.

What are the APG's policy positions?

The APG's policy positions are based on the voices and experiences of member organizations and their Latin American partners. There is currently a broad-based consensus on, and precedent for, the following positions. These provide a basis for APG's positions on specific events and countries.

Democracy, governance, and human rights: The APG upholds the principle of popular sovereignty and Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination. The APG believes that solidarity between Latin American and Canadian civil society organizations is key to fighting poverty and injustice, and promoting human rights. The APG believes that security efforts in the Americas should focus on the root causes of violence, rather than on further militarization, and be guided by the principles of human security and social, economic and cultural rights.

Trade and investment policy: The APG believes that all trade and investment agreements should be negotiated and monitored in a transparent and democratic manner, based on international human rights and labour standards. The APG opposes the signing of trade and investment agreements with countries that have poor democratic governance, human rights and labour rights records. It strongly opposes the current framework of investor-state dispute settlement mechanisms, which have shown to lack impartiality and undermine democratic processes.

Corporate accountability: The APG believes that corporate accountability is an essential element of sustainable development and that Canadian corporations should be required to meet and be accountable to international human rights, labour and environmental standards in their operations worldwide. The APG believes that transparent corporate reporting against these



standards is essential, and that Canadian public support to corporations should be contingent upon compliance. The APG believes that Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decisions that could affect their rights, property, cultures and environment -- and upholds their right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).

What are the benefits of becoming an APG member?

- Increase your impact by engaging in collective dialogue and advocacy with the government and other decision-making bodies.
- Meet with government officials and policy-makers through events and dialogue sessions organized by the working group.
- Bolster your knowledge by participating in learning events, member meetings, and collective research.
- Improve the quality and impact of your work by exchanging experiences and lessons-learned on policy and programming issues.
- Be part of a network connected to the larger development community: Canadian CSOs, academics, government officials, consultants, researchers and the public.
- Get support from the working group coordinator in implementing policy and advocacy strategies on collective priorities for the region.

How do members participate in the APG?

- By joining a mailing list that provides information and analysis on development and human rights issues in the Americas, helping members stay abreast of current events and trends in the region.
- By participating in learning events and member meetings.
- By participating in sub-committees to help shape APG research, policy briefs and advocacy strategies.
- For those who are interested in taking on a leadership role, by joining the steering committee and working closely with the coordinator to elaborate and implement the activities outlined in the annual work plan.

What is expected of APG members?

- All APG members are expected to make annual financial contributions towards the APG's budget, according to their means. This is particularly important for non-CCIC members, since they do not support the working groups through a CCIC membership. Those facing financial constraints are encouraged to discuss their situation with the coordinator.



- APG members are expected to respect the confidentiality and sensitive nature of information shared amongst members.
- APG members are expected to come to the table with the collaborative attitude needed for collective decision making. Members are asked to treat each other as equals, balance speaking and listening, and respect the time and process needed to achieve consensus.
- APG members are expected to understand that coalitions are most effective when there is active participation and a shared workload.

What are the membership requirements?

- Membership is open to Canadian civil society organizations with a policy and/or program interest in the Americas. Both CCIC-members and non CCIC-members are welcome, but a majority of APG members must be CCIC members.
- APG members' work and organizational mandate should be consistent with the APG's policy positions.
- APG members should be familiar with [CCIC's Code of Ethics and CCIC's 10 Point Agenda](#).

What is the application process?

- Membership requests should be addressed to the APG coordinator and will be assessed by the working group's Steering Committee.