TheNeutralsORG™

EIGHT ROLES · FIVE LENSES · THREE GRADES · ONE GLOBAL STANDARD

Certified Neutral™

The professional standing for people every side can trust.

CERTIFICATION PROSPECTUS · 2026-27

AN INVITATION

Everyone in the room has a side. A Neutral is the one person every side can trust.

Boards, governments, families, investors and communities face decisions too important to leave to whoever argues loudest. What they need, more and more, is someone without a stake: a professional who can examine the question, hold the process and say what they see, independently.

TheNeutralsORG™ exists to make that profession visible, examinable and trusted, across every sector and every border.

This prospectus explains what Certified Neutral™ recognition gives you, how it is earned, and why a credential that cannot be bought is the most valuable kind to hold.

Part of the UNBOUNDED™
Global Ecosystem

Certification Prospectus
Edition 2026–27

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Everything a serious applicant asks, answered.

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Independent judgement for every board, every deal, every border.

Every decision has more than one side. Now it has more than one country.

Demand status

01 BOARDS · OUTSIDE VIEW	·
02 INVESTORS · VALUATION	·
03 PARTIES · AGREEMENT	·
04 PUBLIC BODIES · FAIR PROCESS	·
05 PROJECTS · STANDING NEUTRAL	·
06 WORKPLACES · OMBUDS	·
07 TECHNICAL · DETERMINATION	·
08 CROSS-BORDER · ALL OF THESE	·
BIAS	0

Neutral evaluation reaches beyond disputes

Any decision that needs a third-party view: a board vote, a valuation, a policy choice, a stalled negotiation.

Singapore Convention on Mediation

A framework for enforcing international mediated settlement agreements across borders, where it applies.

170+ states, one convention

Party to the New York Convention on arbitral awards. Cross-border neutral work is already the norm.

WHAT A NEUTRAL DOES

One profession. Eight ways to hold neutral ground.

A Neutral is defined by the function performed, the independence it requires, the competence to perform it and the authority the mandate grants. Certification recognises your practice in one or more of these roles.

AUTHORITY STAYS WITH THE PARTIES → AUTHORITY MOVES TO THE NEUTRAL

01 MOVE

Facilitation

Designs and runs the process for a group that must plan, decide or align.

02 AGREE

Mediation

Leads a structured negotiation towards an agreement the parties choose.

03 LISTEN

Ombuds

A confidential, independent place to raise concerns and explore options.

04 VIEW

Neutral Evaluation

A reasoned, independent assessment of a defined question. The client decides.

05 STEER

Independent Chairing

Chairs a board, panel or process without a stake in its outcome.

06 STAY

Standing Neutral

Stays available inside a long project, including Dispute Boards.

07 DECIDE

Expert Determination

Decides a defined technical or valuation question, as the parties agreed.

08 AWARD

Arbitration

Formal adjudicative authority. Proceedings administered by UNIONE™.

12

More than a symbØl of service.

Certification signals your commitment to independent service. It also equips your practice with twelve concrete advantages, from the day your recognition is ratified.

01

Verifiable standing

A Credential Passport anyone can check at source, in seconds, from anywhere in the world.

02

A place on the Global Register

Your roles, sectors, jurisdictions and languages, published and searchable where clients look.

03

An approved designation

Certified Neutral™ with your grade post-nominal, NGN™, AN™ or FTNO™, for every profile and mandate.

04

Eligibility for the Annual Bench

Consideration for a small number of Bench positions per sector, per jurisdiction, each year.

05

Visibility where decisions begin

Register entries inform the role-matching tools clients use to find the right role and profile.

06

The Handbook of Neutral Practice™

A complete, citable framework for how neutral work is scoped, disclosed, conducted and recorded.

AND A PRACTICE THAT TRAVELS

07	Ready-to-use instruments	The Neutral Evaluation Mandate, the Model Neutral Clause and disclosure records, built for real engagements.
08	Responsible AI, clearly framed	An AI Use Framework to work faster with confidence: AI informs, you decide, material use is disclosed.
09	One standard across borders	A single professional standard, recognised in every jurisdiction where you are recorded to practise.
10	A path to grow	From Next-Gen Neutral™ to Accredited Neutral™ to Fellow, following your evidenced record.
11	A global peer community	Colleagues across eight roles and every sector, sharing practice, standards and convenings.
12	The UNBOUNDED™ ecosystem	A place inside a six-institution platform spanning law, business, dispute resolution and services.

AN HONEST NOTE

Certification does not guarantee appointments. That is exactly what makes it worth holding.

It is earned on evidence, examined independently and kept current every year, so the people who check it can rely on it.

CREDENTIAL PASSPORT

Your standing, verifiable in seconds, anywhere in the world.

The Credential Passport is your public professional identity. It resolves to one master record on the Global Register and is verified live by the institution, so a client in another country never has to take your word for it.

WHAT CLIENTS SEE

- Name and credential status
- Grade and designation
- Roles and practice areas
- Sectors, jurisdictions, languages

WHAT STAYS PRIVATE

- Your certification file
- Reviewer evaluations
- Evidence and references
- Anything not needed to verify you

HOW YOU DESCRIBE IT · APPROVED FORM

Certified Neutral™ · Accredited Neutral™ (AN™), TheNeutralsORG™

TheNeutralsORG™ CREDENTIAL PASSPORT

Your Name

Accredited Neutral™ (AN™) · Current, ratified

ROLES	Neutral Evaluation · Mediation
SECTORS	Energy · Infrastructure
JURISDICTIONS	Your recorded jurisdictions
LANGUAGES	English and others
REFERENCE	TN-CP-0000-0000

VERIFY AT SOURCE

theneutrals.org/verify

SPECIMEN · ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY

NEUTRAL GROUND, EVERYWHERE

Neutrality means the same everywhere. Your standing should too.

Local law shapes how a role is used; it does not change what independence is. One standard, recorded with the exact scope of your practice, legible to clients in any country.

One standard, every jurisdiction

The same evaluation, Code and verification, in one country or twenty.

Your scope, precisely recorded

Roles, sectors, jurisdictions and languages on one record.

WHAT YOU PRACTISE WITH

Everything a serious practice needs, inside one institutional framework.

01

Handbook of Neutral Practice™

The reference text for every role, cited paragraph by paragraph.

02

Code of Neutral Practice™

Clear obligations that protect participants, and protect you.

03

Mandates and clauses

Every engagement starts with a defined, written scope.

04

Disclosure discipline

Search broadly, assess carefully, disclose what trust requires.

05

AI Use Framework

AI can assist. It never holds the mandate.

06

Independent oversight

Complaints heard by an independent panel, with appeal.

Neutral Practice Standard™

01 INDEPENDENCE & IMPARTIALITY

02 COMPETENCE FOR THE ROLE

03 A WRITTEN MANDATE

04 DISCLOSURE, THROUGHOUT

05 FAIR PROCESS

06 CONFIDENTIALITY

07 SAFETY AND POWER

08 ROLE CLARITY

09 TECHNOLOGY & AI, OWNED

10 ACCOUNTABILITY UNDER THE CODE

HUMAN CHECKPOINT: ON BIAS: 0

ONE CREDENTIAL

Three grades. Each one follows the record.

You may indicate the grade you believe your record supports. The grade awarded follows the evaluated evidence. It cannot be bought, and it does not rank who receives work.

NGN™

Next-Gen Neutral™

FOUNDATION · DEVELOPING PRACTICE

WHO IT IS FOR

Qualified professionals building a neutral practice, or stepping into a neutral role for the first time.

WHAT IT OPENS

Your Credential Passport, Register entry and a clear route to Accredited standing.

AN™

Accredited Neutral™

ESTABLISHED PRACTICE

WHO IT IS FOR

Professionals with a sustained, evidenced record of neutral work in at least one role and sector.

WHAT IT OPENS

Full Register standing and consideration for the Annual Bench.

FTNO™

Fellow of TheNeutralsORG™

SENIOR RECOGNITION · BY INVITATION

WHO IT IS FOR

Senior Neutrals whose practice and contribution have shaped the profession.

WHAT IT OPENS

The institution's highest recognition, held by few, examined by peers.

Five lenses.
Five independent reviewers.
One evidenced decision.

Matched

Reviewers drawn to fit your roles and fields.

Reasoned

Each lens carries reasons and evidence references.

Decided

Reviewers assess. The Certification Board decides.

01	Professional Standing	Qualifications, licences and regulatory standing.
02	Neutral Practice	Engagements where you held a neutral role, and how.
03	Sector Competence	Depth in your stated sectors, shown by work.
04	Independence & Integrity	Disclosure practice, conflict handling, conduct record.
05	Overall Suitability	The whole record, read against the published standard.

5

THE PROCESS

From application to the Register, in seven steps.

Run with methodical care. Each step has a named owner, and every decision carries its reasons.

			APPLICATION	EVALUATION	DECISION	RECOGNITION	EVERY CYCLE
01	Apply	Roles, sectors, jurisdictions and the grade you believe fits.	You				
02	Submit evidence	A concise, verifiable record, references and declarations.	You				
03	Five-Lens review	Five independent reviewers, matched to your fields.		Reviewer panel			
04	Board decision	Recognition and grade decided, with reasons.			Certification Board		
05	Register & Passport	Your Credential Passport goes live on the Register.				Institution	
06	Annual Bench	A separate decision each cycle.					Separate
07	Annual Ratification	A fresh look at your current record, every year.					Every cycle

The record sets the pace.

Timelines are confirmed on application. Evaluation moves with the evidence, not the fee.

Ratified, never auto-renewed.

A review of current role, conduct, competence and declarations. Not a payment event.

Fair to you, too.

Outcomes include clarification and deferral, not only yes or no, with a route to appeal.

Qualified professionals with a record to evaluate, from any field.

(Who may apply)

Lawyers and engineers, accountants and clinicians, HR leaders, valuers, diplomats and executives.

(Eligible) ↘

A current professional basis

- A recognised qualification or equivalent standing
- Experience in at least one neutral role
- A stated sector, and jurisdictions
- No undisclosed regulatory matter

(What evidence counts) ↘

A concise, verifiable record

- Engagements where you acted as a Neutral, kept confidential
- The role you held and its authority
- Qualifications, licences, current standing
- References who can speak to your independence

(Not enough alone) ↘

Seniority, title or a fee

- Reputation without evidence
- A general credential for regulated work
- Payment of any fee

- Certification never substitutes for the licence or specialist qualification a role requires. Role and sector endorsements are recorded separately.

Evidence Evidence Ev

CONSTITUTED

Annually

A SEAT ØN THE BENCH. SELECTIVE, CURRENT, BY SECTOR.

Each year the institution constitutes a Bench of certified practitioners by jurisdiction and by sector or practice area: a time-bound reference that clients and institutions can consult. A separate decision from certification, made afresh every cycle.

Selective

Small by design, so inclusion means something.

Current

Constituted each cycle, never inherited.

Not a fourth grade

A position, not a rank. The Bench informs; the matter decides.

10

positions per sector, per jurisdiction, per year, ordinarily no more than

A MAXIMUM, NOT A QUOTA

Questions and answers

Straight answers to what serious applicants ask. If yours is not here, the certification team will answer it before you apply.

01

Will certification bring me appointments?

No credible credential can promise that, and we never will. It gives clients a clearer, verifiable basis to examine your standing and choose you with confidence.

02

Is this only for mediators or lawyers?

No. It covers eight neutral roles, and many Neutrals come from engineering, finance, medicine, HR, valuation and public service.

03

Can I choose or buy my grade?

You may indicate one. The grade follows the evaluated record, and payment is never evaluation.

04

What does it cost?

Current fees are published with the application. The annual membership fee covers your record and services; it is not a renewal of recognition.

05

How long does evaluation take?

Timelines are confirmed when you apply. The completeness of your record decides the pace.

06

Does it replace my licence?

Never. Where a role requires a licence or specialist qualification, that requirement stands.

And six more

On practising across borders, the annual cycle, AI, and what happens if a concern is ever raised about your work.

07

Can I practise across borders?

Yes. The standard is the same everywhere; local law governs how each role is used, and your record shows your jurisdictions.

08

Is arbitration included?

Yes, as a practice field. Arbitral proceedings are administered by UNIONE™, a separate institution in the same ecosystem.

09

What happens each year?

Annual Ratification reviews current role, conduct, competence and declarations: ratify, update, clarify, defer or do not ratify.

10

How may I describe my designation?

Only in the approved form for the current cycle, and never as a promise of appointments.

11

Can I use AI in my practice?

Yes, within the AI Use Framework. AI may assist research and drafting; you keep the judgement and disclose material use.

12

What if someone complains?

An independent panel assesses complaints under fair process. You are heard, outcomes are proportionate, and decisions can be appealed.

FOUR COMMITMENTS

NØt for sale. Never automatic. Never a promise.

A credential anyone can buy protects no one. One that must be earned, examined and kept current is one clients can rely on.

A purchase

01 · NEVER

Fees cover administration and services. Recognition follows the evidence alone.

Automatic

02 · NEVER

Ratified each cycle on a current record, so it always means something today.

A promise of work

03 · NEVER

The Register and the Bench inform. Each matter is decided on its own suitability.

A licence substitute

04 · NEVER

Regulated specialist roles keep their own requirements.

And that is precisely its value.

APPLY FOR CERTIFIED NEUTRAL™ RECOGNITION

Take your place between positions.

The world has no shortage of advocates. It needs more professionals every side can trust. If your record shows you are one of them, let it be examined, recognised and seen.

APPLY NØW

PREPARE

Roles and sectors
Jurisdictions
Languages
Grade sought

GATHER

Neutral engagements
Qualifications
References
Declarations

BEGIN YOUR APPLICATION

Fees and timelines are published with the application.

theneutrals.org/certification

Begin

Certified Neutral™ earned on evidence · **Examined** independently · **Verifiable** in every jurisdiction · **Ratified** every year · **Certified Neutral**™ earned on evidence · **Examined** independently · **Verifiable** in every juris