



LAWYERS FOR AMERICA FELLOWSHIP PROPOSAL

Organization

1. Please provide any information about your organization (mission, history, size, office location(s), etc.) that you think would be helpful to student applicants.

Center for Food Safety (CFS) is a national nonprofit public interest and environmental advocacy organization working to protect human health and the environment by curbing the use of harmful food production technologies and by promoting organic and other forms of sustainable agriculture. CFS was founded in 1997 and has since grown to represent over 750,000 members nationwide. CFS currently has thirty-five staff members spread across four offices in the District of Columbia; San Francisco, California; Portland, Oregon; and Honolulu, Hawaii.

To accomplish its mission of protecting and promoting consumers' right to know how their food is produced, CFS uses legal actions; administrative advocacy; scientific and policy reports, blogs, books, and other educational materials; and market pressure and grass roots campaigns. CFS's legal team litigates mostly federal cases, with a growing docket of cases in California state court. CFS lawyers also work with our policy staff and colleagues to develop local, state, and federal policies that address the harmful effects of and promote sustainable alternatives to genetically engineered crops, trees, and insects; industrial animal agriculture and aquaculture; unsafe food additives; harmful pesticides and soil-depleting management practices; and water pollution and privatization.

Workplace

1. If your organization has more than one office location, please note the location to which the fellow would be assigned in the first and second years. For each of the above offices, please note (approximately) how many FTE attorneys and non-attorney staff work in that office.

CFS's legal team is based in San Francisco. The San Francisco office is made up of four attorneys and one legal assistant, CFS's West Coast Director, one office administrator, and three program staff. The Portland office is made up of one attorney. The legal team currently includes three legal fellows (two in San Francisco and one in Portland), though their fellowship term will have concluded by the start of the LfA Fellow's term. The LfA Fellow will be based in the San Francisco office but will work regularly with the attorney in the Portland office, as well as with the rest of CFS staff across the country.

Supervision

- 1. What is the name and job title of the person you expect to be the fellow's primary supervisor and the LfA liaison? Please describe that person's experience supervising law students, including whether those students earned academic credit. Will other attorneys be giving the fellow assignments as well?**

Cristina Stella, Staff Attorney, will be the Fellow's designated point-of-contact, but each of the attorneys on the legal team will supervise the Fellow's work on a case-by-case basis. Cristina has been practicing law for five years (four years at CFS), and has supervised law clerks and coordinated CFS's law clerk program for the past two years. Adam Keats and Paige Tomaselli, both senior attorneys in the San Francisco office, will also monitor the Fellow's overall experience and be there to advise and support the Fellow throughout. Adam and Paige have been practicing for 19 and 12 years, respectively, and have extensive experience supervising staff attorneys, law fellows, and law clerks. The legal team works together very closely and the Fellow will have daily communication with the other attorneys in San Francisco and Portland. The Fellow will work closely with and receive assignments and feedback from other attorneys and non-attorneys, as well.

- 2. What formal training will the fellow be provided by your office at the start of the fellowship? Please describe the duration, nature, and scope of that training.**

CFS has an established on-boarding procedure for incoming fellows and clerks. The Fellow will meet one-on-one with her supervisor on the first day and be provided with an introduction to CFS and its history, mission, goals, office structure, and program areas/campaigns; an introduction to the policies and procedures specific to the legal team; and general office protocols. The Fellow will also be provided with a "Law Fellow Manual" for reference, which provides written summaries of the topics discussed during the orientation meeting, as well as sample readings that further explain some of the central issues that underlie our programs and campaigns. The Fellow will meet separately with the legal assistant for an introduction to our computer and phone systems, including our timekeeping software. Additional trainings on the basics of Westlaw, the Federal Register and regulations.gov, PACER, Electronic Case Filing, and Freedom of Information Act requests will be provided by the assigning attorney upon the first assignment requiring their use.

- 3. What additional training opportunities (regular in-services, conferences, observation opportunities, etc.) will be available to the Fellow during the two-year fellowship?**

Given the small size of our office and legal team, the Fellow will be able to observe the practice of CFS lawyers on a daily basis. The Fellow will be fully immersed in the activities of the legal team, participating in legal team phone calls and all-staff phone calls, and contributing directly to discussions pertinent to her work. The Fellow will be encouraged (and sometimes expected) to attend hearings and oral arguments, conferences, meetings with our coalition partners, and networking/socializing opportunities with other staff.

- 4. Supervisors will be asked to participate in periodic formal written evaluations during the 3L year. What additional (more immediate) evaluation and feedback structures will you implement for the Fellow throughout the fellowship? Do you anticipate that you will implement a regular meeting to check in with the LfA Fellow(s)? How often?**

Each attorney will provide direct evaluation and feedback to the Fellow at the conclusion of each assignment. The Fellow will also have an opportunity to receive formal evaluations and feedback sessions from the full legal team at six-month intervals. In our current fellowship program we begin with weekly or bi-weekly meetings to check-in, and transition to monthly or as-needed meetings as the fellowship progresses. Because of our small office size and close working relationships, we are able to gain familiarity with the work style and needs of each attorney and can adjust accordingly.

- 5. Does your office currently employ, or has it recently employed, post-graduate fellows and/or volunteer attorneys? Does your office host externs earning academic credit? Would the LfA Fellow(s) supplement or replace other fellows/volunteers?**

CFS hosts law school students for 10 weeks each summer for either pay or academic credit. CFS also currently employs three post-graduate fellows on the legal team. Our current fellows are on a two-year term ending in September 2017, and if CFS continues the program, it may host one to three fellows thereafter. Depending on a variety of factors, the LfA Fellow would either replace an existing fellowship position or serve in addition to the existing positions.

- 6. To maximize her/his professional development, the Fellow should be assigned lawyering tasks of increasing complexity and responsibility during the course of the entire fellowship. The second semester should build on the first, and the post-graduate year should include tasks typical of an entry-level attorney. Please describe as concretely and specifically as possible the work that the Fellow will perform in her/his first semester.**

In the Fellow's first semester we anticipate providing discrete legal and factual research assignments to calibrate her skill set, interspersed with longer-term writing assignments such as legal memos. Memo and research topics in the first semester will likely include legal questions that are relatively straightforward and less urgent, so that the Fellow can take more time in completing the assignment and become familiar with the legal issues that we commonly address.

- 7. Please briefly describe what additional skills and experiences you anticipate that the second semester will offer.**

In the Fellow's second semester we anticipate providing opportunities to draft rulemaking petitions or administrative comments, in addition to more in-depth legal memos on more complex legal issues. The Fellow will also assist with more urgent discrete research to assist attorneys in drafting briefs for active litigation. Depending on the skills and capability of the Fellow, she may be asked to draft portions of memos that will be circulated to outside groups or executive staff at CFS, or to draft small portions of briefs.

8. Describe the Fellow's responsibilities during the post-graduate year.

During the post-graduate year we expect the Fellow to have opportunities to do everything that our staff attorneys do. This includes identifying new legal issues and developing cases; researching and drafting administrative motions, portions of briefs, administrative comments, and rulemaking petitions; providing comprehensive legal research and memos related to cases that we are litigating or developing; participating in discussions related to legal theories and strategies with the legal team; representing CFS at recruiting events and conferences; attending lobby days and advising CFS policy staff on new federal or state legislation; and working directly with program staff to advance the issues on which we work.

Other

1. What, if any, classes *must* a Fellow take before starting work at CFS? What classes would you *prefer* that candidates take before starting?

CFS has a very strong preference for students who have taken Administrative Law and some sort of federal environmental law (covering statutes such as National Environmental Policy Act; Endangered Species Act; and Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act). It would also help for students to have taken more issue-based classes that provide familiarity with food law (i.e., Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act), agricultural law (i.e., Farm Bill), natural resources law (i.e., Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act), and climate change. CFS looks favorably upon students who have a demonstrated interest in public interest law, and a commitment to practicing in the field long-term. We seek attorneys who have a passion for the issues on which we work, and who are motivated to work hard to advance our mission.

2. If there are other requirements or preferences (e.g. prior experience in a particular field or language ability), please note them here.

There are no additional requirements.

3. In addition to 16 total units of fieldwork credit, LfA Fellow will earn 8 total units through accompanying classroom work during the academic year. One classroom unit each semester will be earned through the LfA seminar, which is attended by all fellows in all placements and, possibly, other part-time, single-semester externs. If there is an area of professional skills development that would ideally be covered in the seminar, please note that here.

Legal research and writing are the essential skills that we use at CFS.

4. **LfA Fellows are expected to work an average of 32 hours/week at the partner site. To earn the classroom units, they will need to take a limited course load on campus. What day/times would the Fellow need to be consistently available, e.g. for weekly staff meetings or a particular court calendar? We will try to accommodate those scheduling needs to the extent possible.**

The Fellow will be expected to attend monthly all-staff calls and bi-weekly attorney meetings. These meetings currently take place on Tuesdays or Wednesdays in late morning/early afternoon.

5. **An important aspect of the UC Hastings and LfA mission is to increase individuals' access to justice and serve the public. To the extent possible, please describe how an LfA Fellow will expand the legal services provided by your office or otherwise serve the public.**

All of the work we do at CFS is designed to empower members of the public to make informed decisions about their food and communities. We work on behalf of over 750,000 members nationwide and take actions that protect their right to know how their food is produced, including actions that protect their livelihoods and communities from contamination and pollution caused by industrial agriculture. Environmental justice and civil rights are an increasing focus of our work, and the Fellow will help provide the bandwidth for CFS to expand into these areas.

6. **Finally, please feel free to tell us anything else you think might be useful for the LfA program or student applicants.**

CFS is committed to developing young attorneys' skills and bodies of work because we know that it can be difficult to break into the field of public interest law. Our current fellows are an active part of our legal team and we depend on their contributions to carry out our work. We believe that a fellowship at CFS is an enjoyable and educational experience, and we strive to create an environment that helps new attorneys flourish.