
PUBLIC INTEREST POST- J.D. FELLOWSHIPS

Office of Career & Professional Development
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A fellowship is a financial grant to do short-term (1-2 years) post-J.D. work at a public interest/public sector organization or at an academic institution.

Timeline: A number of fellowship applications are due starting as early as August of your 3L year while others will have spring deadlines. Check the Postgraduate Fellowships tab at www.psjd.org. You will need to establish a relationship with the public interest organization you wish to work with no later than your 2L summer.

Types of Fellowships:

Organizational: In house fellowship funded by the organization where the fellow is working. Usually, you apply directly to the organization and no project proposal is required.

Examples: Equal Justice Society; Equal Rights Advocates, ACLU; Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights-*Thurgood Marshall* Fellowship.

Project Based: Third party organizations fund a fellowship with a host organization that allows a fellow to work on a specific project with a host legal services organization. This is usually a unique project the fellow and organization create together. With the guidance of a host organization, a law student or recent graduate would apply directly to the funding organization.

Examples: Equal Justice Works, Skadden, Echoing Green, Coro Foundation, and Fulbright. You will need to establish a relationship with a sponsor organization and develop a project proposal.

Materials Needed:

Most fellowship applications require:

- Resume (2 page resume that includes volunteer/community service work)
- Transcript
- Writing Sample
- References

Many also will require:

- Statement of Interest
- Research or Project Proposal
- Cover Letter that has the components of a statement of interest

Writing a Fellowship Application:

Make sure your proposal meets the funder's particular goals, preferences, objectives, and requirements. This is one of the most critical factors in a successful fellowship

application. For example, is the funder looking to support direct services or litigation? Does the funder prefer to sponsor unique projects? Projects that fill a gap in existing services? Urban programs? Rural programs? National projects? Etc.

- Think carefully about how you can demonstrate the **importance, benefit, impact, and value** of the project you propose. You will need convincing **evidence** (rather than untested opinions) that the activities you propose will be effective. Specifically outline the strategies you will use to accomplish your objectives and the baseline you will use for measuring the success of your project.
- Be able to show that your project could not take place as you propose without the funding you hope to receive.

Specific Components of the Fellowship Application:

Bear in mind that the specific requirements of each fellowship can vary. The following sections, however, are standard for most project or program proposals:

- **You can work with your host to come up with a project idea:** You do not have to have a solid idea in mind when you approach a host organization. You can work together to develop one. You should try to develop something that is cutting edge, unique, or involving an issue or problem that may result in a change of law or policy.
- **Abstract or summary:** As a general rule, you will see this section only in lengthy proposals to third party funders. Similar to a summary of the argument, the abstract serves as an umbrella statement of your project and a summary of the entire proposal. It provides a brief statement of the problem or issue you hope to address and proposes your solution. It also should contain a brief statement about the host organization, including name, history, organizational structure, and purpose.
- **Introduction:** The introduction sets out the background for the project and what the project will accomplish in terms of target clients served, basic approach, etc. Bear in mind that poorly stated goals or unrealistically ambitious goals will hurt your application. You'll want to state clearly the need your fellowship will address and provide any facts or other evidence to support that need. Use compelling language in your application; be an advocate on your behalf. As an example, Equal Justice Works contrasts the following two proposals in its application materials:

I propose to work on consumer fraud issues in Los Angeles.

I propose to develop new litigation strategies to expose and stop home equity fraud against poor, disabled, and elderly residents in Los Angeles.

- **Familiarity with community served:** When reviewing the background for the project, funders will examine whether the application demonstrates a solid understanding of the legal and institutional problems facing the community you propose to serve. They also will need to see how your project fits into the structure of services that already exist to serve the community.
- **Program/Project description:** This is the section the funders will rely on to determine the overall feasibility of your project in terms of goals, budget, timetable, future financing, and evaluation procedure. Explain exactly what you intend to do, as well as when, where, and how you intend to do it. Describe the organizational structure and staff, facilities, or other resources that will be part of your budget. In order to deal effectively with these issues, you'll need to provide a detailed time frame and concrete budget. You also might wish to discuss the prospects for future funding. Don't let the project description simply duplicate the information contained on the application form or in the letters of support. Funders state that applicants make a mistake by simply referring to the supporting documents for more information. It is often compelling if you can show how the Fellowship's initial support will be followed by institutional continuation of the project; funders like to know the ball won't be dropped when your fellowship ends.
- **Letters of recommendation.** The best letters are those that speak to your ability to carry out the project and the overall feasibility of your proposal. They will demonstrate the quality of your work and your personal strengths. Specific examples will be helpful. In addition, try to have your references reflect the diversity of your experience (e.g., a letter from someone who can attest to your academic ability, a letter from a past work supervisor, and a letter from a clinical faculty member). To allow your references to comment directly on these subjects, provide them with a copy of your application as well as a resume if they are not familiar with all of your relevant experience.
- **Letter of support from the host organization.** Some funders request a letter from the host organization. In these letters, the funders are looking to see support for both you and your project. The most effective letters of support will evoke a spirit of cooperation and will indicate that you will receive effective training and supervision. There is generally no page limit for the letter of support from the host organization (which is usually written by the applicant), so some applicants use the support letter to amplify their project description or personal statement.

How to Research Fellowships:

PSJD.org (www.psjd.org). Online resources for fellowships, internships, jobs and guides on building a career in public interest and government.

Hastings Careers Online (<https://law-uchastings-csm.symplicity.com/>)

The Foundation Center, (<http://www.fdncenter.org>). A great collection of resources on private funding sources, with an emphasis on direct service.

Idealist.org (<http://www.idealist.org/>)

DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS: talk to clinical teachers, current fellows and alums or other attorneys at public interest organizations and make an appointment with your public interest counselor.

Please scroll down to view a sampling of what you can apply for:

Organizational

Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Legal Fellowships (national)
<http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/post-grad/ameri-corps-legal-fellowships>

United Nurses Associations of California/Union of Health Care Professionals (UNAC/UHCP)
<http://www.unacuhcp.org/>

Impact Litigation and Social Justice Fellowship
[Santa Clara County Counsel](http://www.sccba.org/santa-clara-county-counsel)

Immigrant Justice Corps
<http://justicecorps.org/fellowship/>

Disability Rights Advocates, Sid Wolinsky Fellowship
<http://dralegal.org/sid-wolinsky-fellowship>

Ruth Chance Law Fellowship-Equal Rights Advocates
www.equalrights.org

Equal Justice Society
Constance Baker Motley Civil Rights Fellow
<http://equaljusticesociety.wordpress.com/>

ACLU (NY/D.C.)
<http://www.aclu.org>

Center For Reproductive Law and Policy (NY)
<http://www.crlp.org>

Democracy Fellow Program (International or Washington, DC)
<http://www.worldlearning.org/pidt/dfp/index.html>

Ford Foundation Program Associate (NY)
<http://www.fordfound.org>

Juvenile Law Center-Zubrow Fellowship (PA)
<http://www.jlc.org>

Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights—Thurgood Marshall Fellowships (SF); Lindsey Fellowship (D.C.)
<http://www.lawyerscomm.org>

Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center Sanford Heisler Public Interest Diversity Fellow (SF)
www.las-elc.org

Southern Poverty Law Center (AL)
www.splcenter.org

Environmental Law Institute-Public Interest Environmental Law Fellow (D.C.)

Project Based

Equal Justice Works Fellowships
<http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/post-grad/equal-justice-works-fellowships>

Abascal (Hastings Fellowship)
<http://www.uchastings.edu/news/articles/2012/06/abascal-fellowship.php>

Berkeley Law Foundation
<http://boalt.org/blf/grants.html>

Echoing Green
<http://www.echoinggreen.org>

New Voices
<http://newvoices.aed.org/home.html>

Skadden
<http://www.skadden.com>

Soros
<http://www.soros.org/crime>

Ashoka
<https://www.ashoka.org>

Law Firms

Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger Fellowship
www.smwlaw.com

Fried Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson Fellowship
www.ffhsj.com

Teaching Fellowships

Georgetown Law: Graduate Teaching Fellowships (D.C.)
www.law.georgetown.edu

International Fellowships

Amnesty International www.amnestyusa.org

U.S. Fulbright Program
<http://us.fulbrightonline.org/>

Human Rights Watch Alan R. and Barbara D. Finberg Fellowship (International, NY, D.C.)
<http://www.hrw.org>

www.eli.org

Borchard Foundation Center on Law & Aging
(national)

www.borchardcla.org

Equal Justice Initiative Fellowships (AL)

www.eji.org

Center for Constitutional Rights, Bertha Justice
Institute Fellowship (NY)

www.ccrjustice.org

Public Justice: Public Interest Fellowship (D.C./CA)

www.publicjustice.net

Greenlining Institute Fellowships (CA)

www.greenlining.org

Immigrant Justice Corps Fellowship (NY)

www.justicecorps.org

BPI Polikoff-Gautreax Fellowship (IL)

www.bpichicago.org