Equal Justice Works Fellowships 101: Mobilizing Passionate Public Service Leaders
About

Equal Justice Works is the nation’s largest facilitator of opportunities in public interest law.
Become a Fellow
Join a Fellowship Program

• Work as a corps on designated priority issue
• Interviewed and selected by host organization
• Rolling and seasonal deadlines pending availability
• Apply after graduation and bar exam for immediate hire

Design Your Own Fellowship

• Project-based
• Work with your prospective host organization to design a project and submit an application as a rising 3L (*application closes September 20, 2019*)
• Interviews are conducted by Equal Justice Works and selected sponsors
Design your own Fellowship
Fellowship Components: Candidate

Eligibility for Class of 2021

- Graduate of member law school by September 2021 with JD or LLM
- Not have held full-time, permanent public interest attorney position
- Not participated in other major Fellowship programs (e.g. Skadden, Echoing Green, etc.)

Keys to Success

- Personal connection, commitment to public interest, innovation. No transcripts, no GPA/class ranks required.
Fellowship Components: Project

Eligibility

• Underserved people and/or issues in our legal system
• Direct services, advocacy, education, litigation, or some combination
• Not international law

Keys to Success

• Innovative project
• Not a staff attorney or public defender position, built-in sustainability, ambitious but feasible
• Balance candidate passions with sponsor preferences
Fellowship Components: Host Organization

Eligibility

• Non-profit organization with legal staff
• Capable of providing benefits, health insurance, office space
• Able to support and supervise new attorneys
• Based in the United States or territories

Keys to Success

• Supervisor has experience in the project area, project aligns with strategic vision and mission, prior relationship a plus, look far and wide for best fit
Identifying a Host Organization

• Widen your search
• Use PSJD, our website, career services contacts, alumni
• Dream Big - approaching an organization cold is okay, but come with ideas
• Have a project outline ready when approaching an organization
• Organizations may solicit for a specific project idea
• If the organization has never hosted Fellows, come prepared with an overview of the benefits (see Application Guide on our website)
Fellowship Components: Sponsors

Fellowship sponsors may express issue area or geographic preferences for the Fellowship projects they will consider for funding.

• Law firms, Corporations, Foundations, Bar foundations, Individuals

• See our website for updates on sponsor interest in particular geographic and issue areas
Writing a Competitive Application

• Different than a standard job application or grant

• Focus on fit: candidate’s unique ability to bring the right project, at the right time, with the right organization

• Blend data, personal stories, and client narratives to highlight the impact on people

• Key Sections: Statement of Need, Goals, Timeline, Personal Statement, Sponsor Involvement
Most Common Application Mistakes

• Writing too little - each field should be at or near character limit
• Neglecting “Pro Bono Opportunities” section
• Disjointed personal statement / summarizing resume in personal statement
• Not including information on the legal/service provider landscape and community partners
• Overambitious project design OR staff attorney projects
• Generic or vague one-sentence project description
• Typos, spelling, grammar errors, clarity - Use a review team
I Submitted My Application, Now What?

- September 2020: Applications due
- October 2020: Alumni Review and Score Applications
- November 2020 - March 2021: Candidates Slated and Interviewed by Sponsors
- November 2020 - March 2021: Candidates Selected on Rolling Basis
- May 2021: Selection Process Closes
- September 2021: Class of 2020 Fellowships Begin
Fellowship Benefits

• Salaries set by host organization, commensurate with the starting staff attorney salary
• Health care coverage and other fringe benefits
• Equal Justice Works’ Loan Repayment Assistance Program
• Annual Leadership Development Training in November
• Network of more than 1,800 Fellows & Alumni
What Should I Do Now?

1Ls should start:
• Thinking about the type of Fellowship project you are interested in, identify internships with organizations that do that work, build relationships
• Invest your time in gaining public interest experience

2Ls/3Ls that are clerking/taking a gap-Fellowship should start:
• Approaching organizations
• Asking professors and supervisors for letters of recommendation
• Fine-tuning resume and outlining personal statement
• Start draft of application!
Equal Justice Works for Law Students

- Rural Summer Legal Corps
- Immigration Summer Legal Corps
- National Advisory Committee
- Student Representatives
- Public Interest Awards
- Conference and Career Fair
Questions?