

Equal Justice Works

Intro to Equal Justice Works Fellowships

Our highly competitive private Fellowships program provides opportunities for law graduates to positively impact vulnerable communities around the country by developing the career of their dreams. The Equal Justice Works Fellowships program funds hundreds of public interest attorneys annually, each assisting vulnerable populations through a project of their own creation.



Components of a Fellowship

There are four components of an Equal Justice Works Fellowship: a project, a candidate, a host organization, and a sponsor.

- A **project** is a carefully designed initiative that involves innovative, effective legal advocacy on behalf of individuals, groups, or issues that are not adequately represented within the legal system
- A **candidate** is a third-year law student, recent law graduate, or experienced private sector attorney who has a demonstrated commitment to public interest law, and who has the relevant skills and initiative to carry out the goals of the project
- A **host organization** is a nonprofit organization that will be the Fellow's employer for the duration of the fellowship term



For three decades Equal Justice Works has created opportunities for public interest lawyers committed to building a more just society. We believe that the poorest and most vulnerable among us deserve the same access to justice and quality legal representation as the privileged. To achieve this, we offer a continuum of opportunities for law students and lawyers that provide the training and skills that enable them to provide effective representation to underserved communities and causes.

- A **sponsor** is a law firm, corporation, foundation, or individual that contributes to funding partially or fully one or more Fellowships

Eligibility

Application Dates

The Equal Justice Works Fellowships program typically accepts applications from July – September. **The 2016 application period opens on July 6th and closes at 8 p.m. EDT on September 16th.** You can [apply here!](#)

Who Can Apply?

You must be a third year law student, a recent law school graduate, or an experienced attorney who demonstrates a commitment to public interest law. Your law school must be an Equal Justice Works member law school.

All applicants must identify a qualifying nonprofit host organization that will provide them with a full-time position upon receiving a Fellowship. The host organization must be willing to be your employer during the term of the two-year Fellowship, meet salary requirements, and provide you with supervision, a work space, employee health and fringe benefits, and the materials (computer, internet access, phone, etc.) that you will need to successfully complete your project.

Project and Candidate Evaluation Criteria

Project Evaluation Criteria

Together with your host organization, you must carefully design a new project that involves innovative, effective legal advocacy on behalf of disenfranchised individuals, groups, or issues not adequately represented in our legal system.

The goal is to create new public interest positions. Equal Justice Works Fellowships are not used to fund general staff attorney positions within existing organizations. They should provide Fellows with the opportunity to exercise leadership on a discrete project. Individuals and host organizations work together to generate project proposals.

Fellowship Candidate Evaluation Criteria

Equal Justice Works and fellowship Sponsors will evaluate the candidate's demonstrated or stated commitment to public interest law generally and specifically to the community in which s/he is planning to work, in addition to the candidate's professional, volunteer, and/or subject matter expertise indicating that s/he possesses the relevant skills and initiative to make the proposed project a success.

Equal Justice Works does not require a candidate to have taken or passed a bar exam by the beginning of the Fellowship term. However, the prospective host organization may require bar passage, agreement to take the bar exam in the summer, or license to practice in the fellowship state.

Equal Justice Works will not fund an applicant who has had a previous postgraduate legal fellowship through Equal Justice Works or any other major fellowship program (e.g. Skadden, Soros, Echoing

Green). However, Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Legal Fellows are eligible to apply, as well as those candidates who have previously received a law school fellowship such as a clinical fellow position.

Equal Justice Works reviews the applications and selects projects that can be matched with potential sponsors. Sponsors determine whom they would like to interview and ultimately choose the Fellow. Decisions are made on a rolling basis.

How to Apply

Eligible applicants must:

1. Develop an innovative legal project to serve individuals or groups in critical need of legal services
2. Select a relevant non-profit organization to serve as your host organization for the two-year term of the Fellowship
3. Submit your application by 8 p.m. EDT on September 16, 2016
4. Interview with sponsoring law firms, corporations, foundations, and other companies and individuals between October 2016 and May 2017
5. Begin your dream job in September 2017!

Download the [Equal Justice Works Fellowship Application Guide](#) or [register for our webinar](#) for more details about crafting a successful Equal Justice Works Fellowship application.

Sponsorship Preferences

Equal Justice Works always welcomes applications from all parts of the country and all qualified host organizations.

However, Sponsors confirmed for 2017 have expressed interest in specific geographic areas, substantive issues, and host organizations. [To view a list of sponsor preferences, click here.](#)

Equal Justice Works Fellow Support

Salary

Equal Justice Works will provide each host organization with up to \$50,000 annually toward a Fellow's salary. If the salary exceeds \$50,000, then the organization must provide the remaining amount.

Equal Justice Works Fellowships do not have a set salary level. Equal Justice Works requires each host organization to set the Fellow's salary commensurate to what an attorney with similar experience and/or responsibility would receive at that organization. Salary must be agreed upon prior to submitting an application.

Fellowships Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP)

Equal Justice Works provides loan repayment assistance to Fellows who qualify through its Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP). The amount of assistance a fellow will receive is based upon the monthly Income Based Repayment (IBR) set forth by the Federal Direct Loan Program. All new fellow LRAP participants must consolidate their federal loans with the Federal Direct Loan Program (www.loanconsolidation.ed.gov) and select IBR as the repayment option on the Federal application.

Development Training

The Equal Justice Works Fellowship program sponsors trainings over the course of the two-year Fellowship to provide Fellows with practical leadership, management, and networking skills that will help them be successful in their Fellowships and throughout their careers.

Resources and Services Provided to the Fellows

Equal Justice Works provides Fellows with program support and assistance by offering informative webinars, check-ins, and the help of dedicated staff members who are ready and willing to help you navigate your Fellowship. Equal Justice Works also facilitates and manages the relationship between a Fellow and his/her sponsor.

For additional questions, please view our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) or contact us at fellowships@equaljusticeworks.org.