Columbia Law School
Berger Public Interest Law Fellowship
2018 Notice and Application

Columbia is proud to offer one of the most supportive Loan Repayment Assistance Programs (LRAPs) of any law school. The Dale and Max Berger Public Interest Law Fellowship (Berger Fellowship) provides enhanced loan repayment support for a Columbia Law School graduate who shows exceptional dedication and potential for making a substantial contribution to public interest law and whose career and first postgraduate job (other than a judicial clerkship) will be substantially devoted to using the law to fight racial, gender, and/or other discrimination. The Fellowship is awarded to one graduate per year.

In addition to the benefits of Columbia’s standard Loan Repayment Assistance Program in effect July 2008 forward, the Public Interest Fellowships provide enhanced loan repayment support for Columbia Law School students. The Berger Fellowship is awarded for a five-year period. During that time, the Law School will cover 100% of eligible debt service for loans borrowed up to the cost of Columbia Law School tuition1 for Fellows whose annual income does not exceed $100,000,2 as long as the Fellow remains in public interest law work covered by the Berger Fellowship. All Berger Fellowship loans the Fellows receive are forgiven on an accelerated scale; upon completion of three years in qualifying employment covered by the Berger Fellowship, all Berger Fellowship loans received up to that point will be forgiven, and all new Berger Fellowship loans made after that time will be forgiven at the end of each six-month period. At the end of the five-year Berger Fellowship period, the graduate may apply for the standard LRAP program, if eligible to do so. If the Fellow leaves qualifying employment before all Berger Fellowship loans have been forgiven, the Fellow may apply to the standard LRAP program, if eligible to do so, and otherwise will be required to reimburse Columbia Law School for the amount of unforgiven Berger loans. In the case of married graduates, spousal income will not be considered in the benefits calculation for Fellows, but one-half of income generated from joint assets will be considered.

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1 Indebtedness covered by the Fellowship is formal debt incurred by the Fellow for payment of Columbia Law School tuition. This means, among other things, that: for joint-degree programs, only the Columbia Law School tuition portion of the joint-degree debt is covered; and educational debt from any other graduate education, including loans borrowed at another law school is not covered. Amounts borrowed above the cost of Law School tuition, but within the standard student budget are the responsibility of the Fellow but may be covered by Columbia’s standard LRAP program. Please see the Loan Repayment Assistance Program policy for details.

2 Fellows will be expected to contribute 34.5% of income above $100,000 toward their annual debt service for loans borrowed to finance Law School tuition. The difference between the Law School tuition debt repayment obligation and the expected contribution provides the amount of the Fellowship loan made to Fellows participating in the Program.

The Fellowship is subject to rules and guidelines governing Columbia’s Loan Repayment Assistance Program as set forth in the LRAP policy description. This means, among other things: The Law School will make LRAP loans to the Fellow to cover all payments on qualifying law school educational loans as long as the Fellow remains in qualifying public interest or public service law work. (If the Fellow leaves qualifying employment before all Fellowship loans have been forgiven, the Fellow will be required to reimburse Columbia Law School for the amounts of the outstanding debt.) The loans must be borrowed through institutionally approved and certified loan programs. Personal loans from banks or from family members, and credit card and consumer debt are not covered by the Fellowship, even when they are used to finance tuition costs. Other loans not covered are commercially available educational loans not certified by the Financial Aid Office, bar exam loans, and loans taken out by parents or others to finance a student’s education. Again, please see the Loan Repayment Assistance Program policy for details.
ELIGIBILITY
The Berger Fellowship is available to 1) members of the Columbia Law School Class of 2018 (October 2017, February 2018, and May 2018) and 2) members of the Columbia Law School Classes of 2017, 2016, and 2015 who are currently clerking for a federal or state judge as their first postgraduate employment. To receive the Fellowship, applicants must:

- Have demonstrated a serious commitment to work in public interest law;
- Plan to work as a lawyer full-time in the public interest sector immediately following graduation or clerkship;
- Have taken out educational loans to finance part of his or her Columbia Law School education; and
- Will devote a substantial amount of her or his time to using the law to fight racial, gender, and/or other discrimination.

APPLICATION & SELECTION
Applicants are not required to have secured permanent postgraduate employment. **Do not apply if you are 1) a member of the Class of 2018 who will be serving a clerkship in 2018-2019 or 2) a current clerk who has committed to serve another clerkship at the end of your present position.**

Fellows are selected by a committee composed of faculty, administrators, and graduates who are committed to assisting Columbia Law students build careers as public interest lawyers working to fight racial, gender, and/or other discrimination.

Applications must include the official Application Form (see the following page).

Applications must be received by Rebecca Hinde **no later than Thursday, June 21, 2018 at 3pm.** Applications should be sent to rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu. You will receive a reply confirming receipt of your application within one business day.

Candidates will be informed of the selection committee’s decision **on or before July 13, 2018.**

FELLOWSHIP CONTACTS

**Rebecca Hinde**
Program Coordinator for Public Interest & Government Programs
FELLOWSHIP ADMINISTRATOR
rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu | 212-854-3535

**Maddie Kurtz**
Director of Public Interest Professional Development
PUBLIC INTEREST ADVISOR
mkurtz@law.columbia.edu | 212-854-8360

* Rebecca Hinde is the contact for administrative or logistical questions about the application submission process. Substantive questions about fellowship requirements or about your application should be directed to Maddie Kurtz.
Columbia Law School
Lowenstein Fellowship
2018 Application

First and Last Name: 

CUID Email Address: 

Alternate Email Address: 

Class Year: 

To apply, please email a single pdf document that includes the following items in the order they are listed below. Email the .pdf to rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu using the subject line “Enhanced LRAP Fellowship Application” followed by your last name and first name.

If you are also applying for a Lowenstein Fellowship, we encourage you to submit both applications in the same email. Each application must be a separate PDF.

1. This cover sheet.
2. A separate typed document on which you respond to the requests below. Indicate the request to which you are responding by repeating its title and number.
3. A copy of your resume.
4. A copy of your law school transcript.
5. A letter of recommendation from a member of your law school’s faculty, addressed to the Selection Committee. The letter may be sent with the rest of the application or separately at the discretion of the person writing the letter. If sent separately, it must be emailed to rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu no later than the deadline for the rest of the application.
6. A letter of recommendation from a letter from a current or past public interest employer who is not a Columbia Law School professor, addressed to the Selection Committee. The letter may be sent with the rest of the application or separately at the discretion of the person writing the letter. If sent separately, it must be emailed to rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu no later than the deadline for the rest of the application.

REQUESTS
1. Demonstration of serious interest in public interest law work devoted to fighting racial, gender, and other discrimination: Discuss your interest in the practice of law to advance racial and/or gender equality and the relationship of the post-graduate or post- clerkship position you have obtained or will seek to this interest, specifically including a statement regarding the proportion of your work time that will be allocated to anti-discrimination work. Be as specific as possible. Indicia of interest include, but are not limited to: past summer or other employment (law or non-law related), volunteer positions, courses taken, papers written, student activities in college and/or the Law School. (1 to 2 pages)
2. Long-term goals: What are your long-range career goals? How does the post-graduate or post-clerkship position you have obtained or will seek further these goals? (1 page maximum)
3. Any other information (optional): Briefly provide any additional information you would like to have considered in the selection process. (Half-page maximum)

This application, including the letters of recommendation, must be received at rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu no later than June 21, 2018, at 3pm.