

LL.M. Public Interest and Government Fellowships 2021

Columbia Law School is pleased to offer Public Interest and Government Fellowships for LL.M. graduates beginning their careers in public interest law, including human rights, or in government service. The goal of the Public Interest and Government Fellowships is to enable graduates to gain experience, skills, and professional networks that will lead to permanent paid positions in their fields. In addition, the fellowships allow public interest organizations and government agencies confronting great demand and diminished resources to benefit from the services of talented lawyers.

Priority will be given to students who demonstrate a substantial commitment to and preparation for careers as public interest or government lawyers.

Fellowships will be awarded to selected 2021 LL.M. graduates who obtain positions at qualified host organizations. The position must require the fellow to make use of their legal education. To accommodate different student needs and use limited fellowship funds efficiently, there is great flexibility regarding the length of fellowships for which applicants may apply. Fellowship stipends will be \$550 per week of full-time work. Applications may be made for fellowships ranging between 10 weeks and 52 weeks. Applicants may request grants for several time periods, detailing their different options for each. (For example, "A fellowship of ten weeks would allow me to..." "A fellowship of six months would allow me to..."). A maximum of one fellowship will be awarded to any applicant.

To be considered for this fellowship, an applicant must obtain a public interest organization or government agency host. Social Justice Initiatives (SJI) advisers will work with applicants to identify organizations that may be a good match.

Fellows must commit to work at the host organization full-time, which is at least 35 hours per week. Fellows who secure and begin a full-time paid position before the end of the fellowship period or leave the fellowship position for any reason will not receive stipend payments after their departure date. *Note: While fellows may begin their fellowship immediately after graduation if they choose, the Law School will not begin to issue stipend payments until August 1. If you hope to begin your fellowships before August 1, we invite you to contact Rebecca Hinde, Coordinator for Communications and Postgraduate Fellowships, for more information.*

Fellows are not employees of Columbia Law School. The Law School cannot pay for health insurance or other benefits. (In some cases, fellows are able to arrange to receive benefits through their host.)

This packet contains information about eligibility requirements and application and selection procedures, including deadlines. **Please read carefully.**

ELIGIBILITY

LL.M. Public Interest and Government Fellowships are available to LL.M. Class of 2021 members who:

- Have completed the requirements for their LL.M. degree
- Obtain a position at a qualified host that will make direct use of their legal education
- Are unemployed and do not have a fellowship, stipend, or other source of funding to work during the time period for which a grant is sought

A “qualified host” is a public interest organization¹ or government agency (federal, state, local, multinational, or international) that commits, contingent upon the applicant receiving the fellowship, to provide the applicant with:

- A position that will utilize the recipient’s legal education
- Appropriate training and supervision during the fellowship period

Columbia Law School faculty members and Columbia Law School Centers are *not* qualifying hosts.

Please note that priority for the fellowship will be given to applicants who:

- Exhibit a substantial commitment to pursue a career in public interest law or government service (including those who are transitioning from the private sector)
- Demonstrate preparation for a career in public interest law or government service
- Will endeavor to work in the public interest or government sector immediately following the fellowship’s conclusion

APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCEDURE

1. Meet with an SJI Adviser (Mandatory)

Applicants must meet with an SJI adviser BEFORE submitting an application. Among other things, advisers can help applicants identify hosts that match their interests and will benefit from their service. **Cassandra Théano** will work with applicants interested in human rights organizations or international public institutions. **Maddie Kurtz** will work with applicants interested in domestic public interest organizations. **Rachel Pauley** will work with applicants interested in federal, state, or local government agencies. Applicants with multiple interests are encouraged to meet with multiple advisers. Appointments should be made through [Symplicity](#).

2. Apply to hosts

Apply directly to organizations or agencies of interest with a cover letter, resume, and additional materials, if appropriate.

3. Email your fellowship application to SJI by April 19, 2021.

See the application cover sheet at the end of this document for instructions.

4. Applicants will be notified of the selection committee’s decision by May 10, 2021.

¹ A public interest entity is one whose proclaimed purpose is the advancement of a vision of the public good that is broader than the interest of particular clients, or one that provides legal services for a specifically defined low-income population. Such entities will normally be domestic 501(c) (3) nonprofits or international nongovernmental organizations. SJI will determine whether or not a particular employer satisfies this requirement.

FELLOWSHIP CONTACTS

Questions about substantive issues such as fellowship criteria, your statement, or the appropriateness of a reference or host:

Cassandre Théano

Assistant Director of Human Rights and Public International Law
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS/PUBLIC LAW ADVISER
ctheano@law.columbia.edu

Maddie Kurtz

Director of Public Interest Professional Development Programs
PUBLIC INTEREST ADVISER
mkurtz@law.columbia.edu

Rachel Pauley

Director of Government Programs
GOVERNMENT ADVISER
rachel.pauley@law.columbia.edu

Questions about the application and payment process:

Rebecca Hinde

Coordinator for Communications and Postgraduate Fellowships
rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu

**LL.M. Public Interest & Government Fellowship 2021
Columbia Law School**

Application Cover Sheet

Name: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Proposed Host Organization: _____

Country in Which You Would Serve Your Fellowship (if known): _____

Please email the following documents as one PDF to rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu, using the subject line "LL.M. Fellowship Application," followed by your last name and first name. Organize the documents in the order they are listed below. * **Applications are due April 19, 2021.**

1. This cover sheet.
2. An essay explaining how a position with the host employer will help you begin a career in your chosen field (no more than one page).
3. Your resume.
4. A letter of recommendation, preferably from a Columbia Law School faculty member. If the recommender would prefer, s/he may email the letter to rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu no later than the deadline for the rest of the application.
5. A list of two *additional* references, including their titles, organizations, and contact information. We recommend that at least one be someone who supervised your legal work.
6. A commitment letter from your host that demonstrates its qualifications for purposes of this fellowship and describes the work you will be assigned and the training and supervision you will receive if your application is successful.
7. *If you are a joint degree candidate*, certification from the institution conferring the joint degree that all requirements will be completed in time for you to receive both degrees in May 2021.

*The selection committee will also review each applicant's Columbia Law School transcript. **Do not email your transcript with your application.** SJI will add it to your materials upon receipt.

Please complete the following only if your recommendation letter is *not* included in this PDF.

Recommender Name: _____

Email: _____ Letter will be submitted to by this date: _____

If you have accepted an offer for a paid position or fellowship in the future, identify the position, employer, and start date:
