

David W. Leebron Human Rights Fellowship 2022

Columbia Law School announces the 2022 David W. Leebron Human Rights Fellowship, which honors the Law School's former dean (1996-2004) and his commitment to providing meaningful experiences in human rights law. This fellowship will enable a Columbia Law School graduate to spend one year working in human rights in the U.S. or abroad. **Applications are due on February 7, 2022 for J.D. graduates and on March 1, 2022 for LL.M. graduates.**

Terms of the Fellowship

The Leebron Fellowship will be awarded for a one-year term. The fellowship is available to graduates of Columbia Law School who are (1) members of the Class of 2022 pursuing a J.D. or LL.M. degree, including those who will graduate in October 2021 or February or May 2022, or (2) current state or federal judicial clerks whose clerkships will terminate by fall 2022.

The fellowship is designed to enable a Columbia Law School graduate interested in pursuing a career in human rights law to gain practical experience working with a human rights organization. Through this year of practical training, the fellowship aims to provide the graduate with the skills necessary to start or advance a career in the field of human rights law, whether in academic life, in governmental, intergovernmental, or nongovernmental organizations or agencies, or as legal practitioners specializing in human rights work. The fellowship carries a stipend of \$45,000 a year and must begin within five months of graduation or of completion of a clerkship.

Qualifying Placements

Host organizations must be engaged in human rights law advocacy. In most cases, these organizations or agencies will be involved in human rights education, monitoring, reporting, litigation, grassroots mobilization, or other forms of advocacy. They may be involved in human rights work in general or in specific areas of the human rights movement such as, but not limited to, women's rights, children's rights, labor rights, refugee rights, humanitarian law, transitional justice, health care, and so on. Most qualifying organizations would identify themselves as part of the broader universal human rights movement, relying on the norms declared in international and regional treaties and declarations. Qualifying hosts may include organizations embracing new and interdisciplinary directions in the human rights movement, such as those following in substantial part a rights-based approach to economic development, humanitarian relief, media, health, or environmental activism. In special circumstances, the fellowship selection committee may accept a proposal for work within a governmental or intergovernmental human rights organization.

Qualifying placements may also include nonprofit organizations in the U.S. at which the majority of the fellow's work will use the international human rights law paradigm to combat domestic social justice issues. Please note: The fellowship selection committee understands that projects and/or host organizations proposed in this application may be tenuous or uncertain prior to an award of funding. The committee will allow changes to the fellow's project or host organization as long as they are within the parameters of the fellowship as outlined in this notice of application.

Application and Selection Procedure

To apply, please submit the materials listed on the last page of this notice. Email the materials **as one PDF** to rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu, using the subject line "Leebron Fellowship Application," followed by your last name and first name. The fellow will be selected by a committee of Columbia Law School faculty, administrators, and human rights practitioners. A J.D. fellow and an alternate will be selected by the end of February 2022 and an LL.M. fellow and an alternate by the end of March 2022.

Stipend and Payment Process

Unless their host organizations ask to have the stipend transferred to the organization, fellows are paid by Columbia Law School in monthly installments. Funds are not available before fellows commence work. Stipends are subject to U.S. taxes. *If you plan to start your fellowship prior to July 1, 2022, please reach out to [Rebecca Hinde](#) to discuss the payment schedule.*

Fellowship Contacts

For questions about substantive issues such as fellowship criteria, your statement, or the appropriateness of a reference or prospective host, please contact:

Kerry McLean
Assistant Director, Human Rights and Public International Law
km3754@columbia.edu
Please make an appointment on [Simplicity](#)

For questions about submitting your materials, the application timeline, and fellowship payments, please contact:

Rebecca Hinde
Coordinator for Postgraduate Fellowships
rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu

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Columbia Law School

Please email the following documents to rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu with the subject line "Leebron Application: [LAST NAME, FIRST NAME]." The documents should be submitted as one PDF and organized in the order they are listed below.* **Applications are due on February 7, 2022 for J.D. graduates and on March 1, 2022 for LL.M. graduates.**

1. Your resume
2. A personal statement (1,000 words maximum) about the applicant's relevant experience, interest, and future aspirations with respect to public interest and human rights legal work. The statement should include a discussion of the fellowship's place in the applicant's career plans.
3. A project description (3 pages maximum) that includes:
 - a. a description of the host and its work in the local and international context
 - b. a description of the applicant's project and its relation to the work of the proposed host organization
 - c. an estimated budget (to demonstrate feasibility)
4. One letter of recommendation, preferably from a Columbia Law School faculty member or a supervisor at a relevant organization. If the recommender would prefer, they can email the letter to rebecca.hinde@law.columbia.edu.
5. Identification of two *additional* persons who could serve as references and their contact information, including their email addresses and phone numbers
6. Indicia of a bona fide interest from your host organization (email or other communication is acceptable). OPTIONAL BUT RECOMMENDED.

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

In the body of your email, please provide the following information:

- Proposed host organization
- Proposed fellowship start date (please estimate if you are not sure)
- If your recommendation letter is not included in your PDF, please provide the recommender's name, email address, and the date by which each letter will be submitted