

## **LEADERSHIP FOR JUSTICE FELLOWSHIP**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **How long has Seattle University School of Law offered a post-graduate fellowship program?**

The *Leadership for Justice* Fellowship Program was launched in 2009 in response to the economic downturn and resultant justice gap created by an increase in need for legal services and a decrease in funds for meeting that need. This is the fourth year of the *Leadership for Justice* fellowship at Seattle University School of Law.

#### **Do other law schools offer post-graduate fellowship programs to their own law students?**

We are aware of about 35 law schools nationwide that offer post-graduate fellowships to their own law students (and some to other law students). Seattle University School of Law continues to be the only law school in the Northwest to offer a post-graduate fellowship program to its own law students.

#### **Why is there only one fellowship offering this year, when there were two separate offerings last year?**

Each year, the law school is able to offer one fellowship; any additional fellowship offerings in the past have occurred as a result of gifts from donors. This year, we are only able to offer one fellowship offering.

#### **If I get the post-graduate fellowship, who is my employer – the host organization or Seattle University?**

The host organization would be your employer. Seattle University will send \$55,000 to the host organization once the host organization submits its budget, signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the law school and sends in an invoice. Seattle University has no role in playing an employer and leaves it to the host organization to make any employment-related determinations.

#### **Will I get all of the \$55K as salary?**

The \$55K amount is designed to provide fellows salary and benefit parity with entry-level attorneys at their host organization. If the entry-level salary and benefits are less than \$55K, the remaining will go to overhead expenses associated with employing the fellow. Before the transfer of funds from the law school to the fellow's host organization, the host organization must submit a budget breakdown of all expenses associated with employing the fellow, including salary, benefits, and other overhead/in-kind expenses.

**Do I have to have a host organization?**

Yes.

**Can I have two host-organizations for my project?**

It is possible to create a “collaborative” project – which is the product of a partnership between two host organizations. The application will need to present a plan for providing seamless supervision; and one host organization will need to serve as the “fiscal base” of the project for purposes of signing and adhering to the host organization commitment letter, and providing all materials required therein.

**Does the organization need to be a legal organization?**

Not necessarily. However, the host organization must be a 501(c)(3) organization that has committed and is able to provide appropriate training, support and supervision consistent with professional and leadership development goals throughout the fellowship term (e.g. support for appropriate training, skills acquisition, conferences etc.).

Also, keep in mind that the project must involve legal advocacy on behalf of marginalized or underrepresented individuals or groups, or on issues that are not adequately represented by some aspect of our justice system. Advocacy may entail a wide range of approaches, including, but not limited to, community legal education and training, community engagement related advocacy, direct legal services, impact litigation, transactional work, legislative advocacy and policy work. (SEE LFJ GUIDELINES PART I(C)).

**Can I apply more than once with two different host organizations and two different projects?**

It is possible to apply with two separate applications with two separate host-organizations and two separate projects. Indeed each application requires a great of work on your part; however, you are not precluded from applying more than once – indeed each application will be viewed independently.

**Can I apply as a co-applicant with a colleague (an eligible law student) for a joint fellowship?**

Yes, this can be done. The fellowship amount will remain at \$55,000 and should be split between the two fellows. Applicants should indicate in their application how they intend to carry out their proposal plans with the limited funding. That said, receipt of the fellowship does not preclude the co-applicants from raising additional funds through alternative sources.

**Can I use footnotes to support my statement of need for my fellowship project?**

No. If you feel it useful to support your statement with cites/statistics, you are asked to incorporate such into the text of your application.

**When will I be notified about whether I am a finalist to be interviewed?**

On February 24, 2012. (SEE LFJ GUIDELINES PART III(B)).

**When and where will the interviews take place?**

March 3, 2012 at Seattle University School of Law. (SEE LFJ GUIDELINES PART III(B)).

**If I am selected for an interview, but cannot participate on that date and time, will I be able to reschedule the interview?**

No. If you are not able to be interviewed, the Selection Committee will make its determination based on your application materials. If you want to appear at the interview by teleconference or video conference, you can make arrangements with ATJI.

**How many applications have there been in the past?**

Over the past three fellowship cycles, we have received an average of 10-12 applications/year.

**How many finalists are chosen?**

At the most, 5 finalists will be chosen.

**How do I prepare for the fellowship interview?**

CPD Director Stacey Lara will be available to prepare finalists for interviews during the week of February 27 – March 2.

**Does ATJI have a role to play in selecting the fellow?**

No one from ATJI will serve on the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will score and rank all applications received in order to determine the five finalists, and then the Committee will interview the finalists and select the fellow. ATJI staff will administer and oversee the fellowship process; and ATJI staff members are available to meet with applicants to brainstorm ways proposed projects can create meaningful social justice opportunities for SU law students. ATJI staff will have no role in the selection process.

**What criteria will the Selection Committee use in determining who will be the Fellow?**

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria below (the percentage of weight given for the criteria is indicated): (SEE LFJ GUIDELINES PART I(C)).

- **Applicant Evaluation Criteria – 38%**

1. The candidate has a demonstrated commitment to social justice law generally, and specifically to the community with which s/he plans to work.

2. The candidate possesses the appropriate professional, volunteer and/or subject matter expertise indicating that s/he has the relevant skills and initiative to make the proposed project a success.
3. The candidate has demonstrated leadership capacity, cross-difference competence, and a commitment to the issues/problems sought to be addressed by the proposed fellowship project.
4. The candidate evidences the commitment and ability to fulfill the one-year term envisioned by the program.
5. The candidate brings a diverse perspective to his or her project and to the legal profession. Seattle University School of Law strongly encourages applications from candidates reflecting diverse cultural and experiential backgrounds, people with disabilities, and individuals of diverse ethnic, racial, religious, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds, work experiences, national origins, sexual orientations, and ages.

- **Host Organization Evaluation Criteria - 20%**

1. The host organization is a 501(c)(3) organization that has committed and is able to provide appropriate training, support and supervision consistent with professional and leadership development goals throughout the fellowship term (e.g. support for appropriate training, skills acquisition, conferences etc.).
2. The host organization has priorities that fit with the proposed project.
3. The host organization will provide a salary that is commensurate with entry-level attorney salary.
4. The host organization will provide health insurance and other benefits regularly provided to entry-level attorneys throughout the full term of the fellowship.

- **Project Evaluation Criteria – 42%**

1. The project must involve legal advocacy on behalf of marginalized or underrepresented individuals or groups, or on issues that are not adequately represented by some aspect of our justice system. Advocacy may entail a wide range of approaches, including, but not limited to, community legal education and training, community engagement related advocacy, direct legal services, impact litigation, transactional work, legislative advocacy and policy work.
2. Because the goals of the program are to address unmet legal needs by creating new social justice positions and to give Fellows the opportunity to exercise leadership, the project must introduce new services to address unmet legal needs or expand upon greatly needed services already provided by the organization.
3. Preference will be given to projects that are designed to make the greatest impact (e.g., number of people served, long-term effect, depth and breadth of improvement), that create programs that can be replicated in other areas of the state or country, and that are sustainable with minimal or dependable funding.
4. Projects in the area of indigent criminal defense should support legal services delivery mechanisms that are not adequately funded by government funding, and/or be designed to impact major criminal justice issues.

5. The project should involve working with the Access to Justice Institute to develop potential opportunities for SU law students to contribute to furthering the goals of the project in a meaningful way.

### **Who is on the Selection Committee?**

The Selection Committee members' identities will be shared with the five finalists who are selected to proceed to the interview stage. There will be 3-7 members on the Selection Committee. The Committee will be comprised of reputable members of the equal justice community. One member of the Committee will be a faculty member of Seattle University School of Law. (SEE LFJ GUIDELINES PART II FOR SELECTION COMMITTEE GUIDELINES).

### **Will my identity as an applicant be kept confidential throughout the fellowship application process?**

ATJI will not disclose any identifying information about the fellowship applicants or applications to anyone other than members of the Selection Committee, ATJI staff, the Dean, and Associate Deans Deming, Bird, and Holland. The Selection Committee Guidelines require that members keep the identities of all applicants confidential. While ATJI will do its best to provide confidentiality to all fellowship applicants, it is likely that finalists will see other finalists on the day of interviews.

### **How do I deal with the stress of competing with my social justice minded peers with whom I have been collaborating for the past two years?**

Although not unique, this process can be a stressful experience particularly for students who are social justice leaders and dedicated to building solidarity amongst like-minded colleagues. We encourage you to recognize this stress, and talk about it with one another, or with ATJI/CPD staff, if you think it would help you. While a seemingly competitive process, in the end, it is a process that will result in a distribution of resources to marginalized and underserved communities.

Keep in mind that for almost all former applicants who were not selected as the fellow or finalists, the fellowship application process has helped applicants build relationships with their host-organizations that have continued beyond the fellowship application process. Moreover, if you are chosen as a finalist, you are encouraged to use that accomplishment in your professional development endeavors throughout your career.

In the past, some applicants have assisted each other with applications and with interview preparation. Other applicants have chosen to gracefully keep confidential their project/application. We encourage you to do what feels right to you.

Finally, the justice gap is indeed large, and continues to grow. Seattle University School of Law and ATJI are currently working to grow and expand the post-graduate fellowship program at the law school and further, on state-wide level.

**What resources are available to me at the law school to help me maximize my chances of submitting a successful fellowship application?**

**PROJECT DEVELOPMENT** (for assistance with brainstorming possible host organizations and/or thinking through potential project ideas):

Professor Gillian Dutton ([duttong@seattleu.edu](mailto:duttong@seattleu.edu); 206.398.4010)

Professor Bob Boruchowitz ([boruchor@seattleu.edu](mailto:boruchor@seattleu.edu); 206.398.4151)

Professor Ada Shen-Jaffe ([shen.ja@seattleu.edu](mailto:shen.ja@seattleu.edu); 206.398.4161)

**ATJI COLLABORATION PIECE** (for assisting in brainstorming project's potential to create meaningful social justice opportunities for SU law students through ATJI):

ATJI Director Diana Singleton ([singletd@seattleu.edu](mailto:singletd@seattleu.edu); 206.398.4168)

ATJI Assoc. Director Jennifer Werdell ([werdellj@seattleu.edu](mailto:werdellj@seattleu.edu); 206.398.4455)

ATJI Assist. Director Celeste Miller ([millerc5@seattleu.edu](mailto:millerc5@seattleu.edu); 206.398.4341)

**APPLICATION REVIEW AND INTERVIEW PREPARATION** (for assistance with general fellowship application strategy, getting feedback on your application materials, and preparing for interviews):

CPD Director Stacey Lara ([slara@seattleu.edu](mailto:slara@seattleu.edu); 206.398.4279)

**FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS** (for technical questions on the program, application and selection process):

ATJI Assoc. Director Monika Batra Kashyap ([batram@seattleu.edu](mailto:batram@seattleu.edu); 206.398.4099)