

Yale Global Health Justice Partnership

Sex Worker Health and Rights Projects: Fall 2019 Call for Applications

The [Global Health Justice Partnership](#) (GHJP) is a program hosted jointly by Yale Law School and Yale School of Public Health that tackles contemporary problems at the interface of global health, human rights, and social justice. **For fall 2019, the GHJP is looking for 2-3 graduate or professional school students to join our projects on sex worker health and rights for course credit. Please read the description and instructions below closely. Applications are due by Sunday, August 25 at 11:59PM.**

OVERVIEW OF PROJECTS

For the past several years, the GHJP has been engaged in global, national and local work to support the health and rights of people involved in the sex sector. The GHJP seeks to approach its work in politically ethical ways: collaborative projects are developed with sex workers and other marginalized communities, with awareness of our structural and individual positions as Yale academics in New Haven. Recently, we have been investigating policing and criminal court “diversion” processes that effectively make police and courts gatekeepers of resources and social services. With the [Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Center](#), we published [two reports](#) analyzing court-based, post-booking prostitution diversion programs that claim to deliver rehabilitative services to ostensibly “trafficked” peoples, but in reality often expose them to punitive and destabilizing harms. In New Haven, we have partnered with the [Sex Workers and Allies Network](#) (SWAN), a grassroots harm reduction organization led by and for current and former street-based sex workers, to watchdog a local pre-booking diversion program and support advocacy for improved structural conditions and service accessibility for street-based communities.

In fall 2019, the GHJP will continue working with sex worker advocacy groups to sustain current projects and expand into new areas of research and advocacy. Students will work in interdisciplinary teams on one or multiple projects, described below, related to sex worker health and rights. The activities outlined here collectively seek to minimize the harms of the criminal law, while simultaneously re-directing power to systems and resources led by and for affected communities.

Fall 2019 Projects

- 1. Watchdog local pre-booking “diversion” program:** This involves research, analysis and advocacy into a criminal “diversion” initiative being implemented in New Haven under the rubric of a pre-arrest/pre-booking model known as Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD). The GHJP supports SWAN in developing engagement and advocacy strategies with New Haven’s LEAD in order to increase the accountability and transparency of the City and other actors (police, prosecutors, service providers, etc.). For more information, visit our [watch site](#).
- 2. Support SWAN in advocating for improved structural conditions and service accessibility in New Haven:** Students will support SWAN in implementing, analyzing, and utilizing in advocacy work a peer-led needs assessment survey that will help SWAN better understand the New Haven service landscape and gaps in social and structural resources for their communities.
- 3. First phase of planning with SWAN for a multi-year, statewide, coalition-led sex work decriminalization campaign:** This fall, we will begin exploring the foundation for a coalition-led campaign to decriminalize sex trade-related offenses in CT and re-direct investments into

supportive, community-led structures. We anticipate that this will be a multi-year decriminalization effort: students engaged in the first phase of planning will help research the legislative landscape and political atmosphere in CT and support our partners in forming a coalition, led by people with lived experience, around the issue.

- 4. Advance critical analyses of “diversion” programs as well as non-penal alternatives to the criminal law:** To increase awareness of critical analyses on diversion programs, we will convene stakeholder meetings, create and disseminate advocacy materials, support the adoption of non-penal accountability practices, and develop and pilot intersectional and rights-based evaluation rubrics that assess the impact of diversion programs on multiply marginalized groups.

COMMITMENT AND DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

We seek graduate and professional school students to join these projects in fall 2019 (undergraduates may not apply). While this call is only for work in the fall semester, we will give preference to students who are interested in continuing project work for additional semesters. The projects are designed to engage public health, legal, and policy approaches, though students from all disciplines are encouraged to apply.

Accepted students will enroll in *Advanced Global Health Justice Practicum: Fieldwork* at Yale Law School. The number of credit units is determined in consultation with the course supervisors and is dependent on the project and student’s workload (generally, students receive 1 YSPH credit or 2-3 YLS credits). There is no didactic or seminar component, but teams meet regularly (1-2x/week) at YLS for supervision. The time commitment, including supervision and project activities, is approximately 8-12 hours per week, though this may vary depending on your role and project’s needs.

While the qualifications vary by project, in general, we are looking for students who have:

- Interest in learning about and engaging with local city politics and institutions from a health justice perspective
- Interest in harm reduction, sex worker rights, and criminal legal system policies and practices
- Competency in engaging ethically with community-based groups and an understanding of the dynamics and histories of structural oppression, criminalization and over-policing, trauma, and addiction that may impact people who trade sex, use drugs, and/or are houseless, etc.
- Interest in working with an interdisciplinary team to address questions of health and rights justice
- Ability to work collaboratively as well as independently on quick-paced, time-sensitive projects
- Specific projects may require specific skill sets (e.g., for the needs assessment, experience using Qualtrics and conducting qualitative and quantitative data analyses may be helpful)

Please note that while we are looking for a strong interest in this work, prior experience or issue expertise are not required. **All students will complete a required “boot camp” for onboarding on Thursday, September 5 and Thursday, September 12 (time TBC in the afternoon/evening).**

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS: To apply, please send a copy of your resume and a brief statement of interest and qualifications (max one page single spaced) by **Sunday, August 25 at 11:59PM** to alice.miller@yale.edu (GHJP Co-Director) and poonam.daryani@yale.edu (GHJP Clinical Fellow).