



# Equal Justice Works Fellowships 101: Mobilizing Passionate Public Service Leaders

# About

Equal Justice Works is the nation's largest facilitator of opportunities in public interest law.

# Our Mission

We create opportunities for lawyers to transform their passion for equal justice into a lifelong commitment to public service.

A large group of people, including men and women of various ages, are posed for a group photo in a garden. In the background, there is a circular fountain with water spraying upwards. The garden is filled with greenery, trees, and several large, ornate stone planters containing flowers. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text 'Become a Fellow' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font, with a short orange diagonal line to its left.

**/ Become a Fellow**

## Join a Fellowship Program

- Work as a corps on designated priority issue
- Interviewed and selected by host organization
- Rolling and seasonal deadlines pending availability
- Apply after graduation and bar exam for immediate hire

## Design Your Own Fellowship

- Project-based
- Work with your prospective host organization to design a project and submit an application as a rising 3L (*application closes September 20, 2019*)
- Interviews are conducted by Equal Justice Works and selected sponsors



**/ Join a Fellowship Program**

# Join a Fellowship Program

## 1. Learn about our programs

Equal Justice Works offers Fellowship programs that address a range of legal issues. Following graduation, explore our current programs to see which one aligns with your passions.

## 2. Select a program

View the list of organizations that are part of the program you selected and have an open Fellowship position. Availability of Fellowship positions at host organizations depends on where the program is in its lifecycle.

## 3. Apply directly to the host organization

Candidates submit their applications directly to participating Host Organizations.

# Program Features

- One to two-year fellowship
- National- or state-based program
- Enhanced training and technical assistance with subject matter experts
- Community of practice, peer-to-peer learning
- Impact evaluation
- Equal Justice Works Leadership Development Training

# Current Fellowship Programs



AmeriCorps VISTA



Crime Victims Justice Corps



Disaster Recovery Legal Corps



Georgia Housing Corps



New York State Family Security Project



Veterans Legal Corps



## PROGRAM SNAPSHOT



# Veterans Legal Corps



Provide direct representation to low-income and homeless veterans, active duty service members, and military families, to address a complex range of legal issues.

Contact us at [vetslegalcorps@equaljusticeworks.org](mailto:vetslegalcorps@equaljusticeworks.org)



**Service locations**  
Nationwide



**Issue Areas**  
Veterans Administration  
benefits, Employment,  
Family Law



# / Design your own Fellowship

# Fellowship Components: Candidate

## Eligibility for Class of 2020

- Graduate of member law school by September 2020 with JD or LLM
- Not have held full-time, permanent public interest attorney position
- Not participated in other major Fellowship programs (e.g. Skadden, Echoing Green, etc.)

## Keys to Success

- Personal connection, commitment to public interest, innovation. No transcripts, no GPA/class ranks required.

# Fellowship Components: Project

## Eligibility

- Underserved people and/or issues in our legal system
- Direct services, advocacy, education, litigation, or some combination
- Not criminal defense or international

## Keys to Success

- Innovative project
- Not a staff attorney position, built-in sustainability, ambitious but feasible
- Balance candidate passions with sponsor preferences



# Fellowship Components: Host Organization

## Eligibility

- Non-profit organization with legal staff
- Capable of providing benefits, health insurance, office space
- Able to support and supervise new attorneys
- Based in the United States or territories

## Keys to Success

- Supervisor has experience in the project area, project aligns with strategic vision and mission, prior relationship a plus, look far and wide for best fit

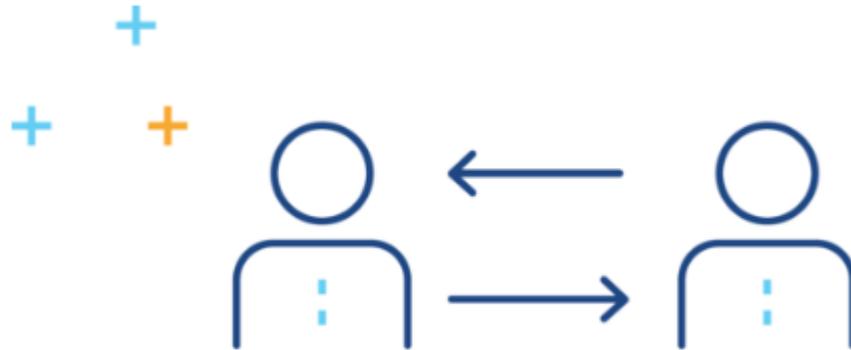
# Identifying a Host Organization

- Widen your search
- Use PSJD, our website, career services contacts, alumni
- Dream Big - approaching an organization cold is okay, but come with ideas
- Have a project outline ready when approaching an organization
- Organizations may solicit for a specific project idea
- If the organization has never hosted Fellows, come prepared with an overview of the benefits (see Application Guide on our website)

# Fellowship Components: Sponsors

Fellowship sponsors may express issue area or geographic preferences for the Fellowship projects they will consider for funding.

- Law firms, Corporations, Foundations, Bar foundations, Individuals
- See our website for updates on sponsor interest in particular geographic and issue areas



# Writing a Competitive Application

- Different than a standard job application or grant
- Focus on fit: candidate's unique ability to bring the right project, at the right time, with the right organization
- Blend data, personal stories, and client narratives to highlight the impact on people
- Key Sections: Statement of Need, Goals, Timeline, Personal Statement, Sponsor Involvement



# Most Common Application Mistakes

- Writing too little - each field should be at or near character limit
- Neglecting “Pro Bono Opportunities” section
- Disjointed personal statement / summarizing resume in personal statement
- Not including information on the legal/service provider landscape and community partners
- Overambitious project design OR staff attorney projects
- Generic or vague one-sentence project description
- Typos, spelling, grammar errors, clarity - Use a review team

# I Submitted My Application, Now What?

- September 2019: Applications due
- October 2019: Alumni Review and Score Applications
- November 2019 - March 2020: Candidates Slated and Interviewed by Sponsors
- November 2019 - March 2020: Candidates Selected on Rolling Basis
- May 2020: Selection Process Closes
- September 2020: Class of 2020 Fellowships Begin

# Fellowship Benefits

- Salaries set by host organization, commensurate with the starting staff attorney salary
- Health care coverage and other fringe benefits
- Equal Justice Works' Loan Repayment Assistance Program
- Annual Leadership Development Training in November
- Network of more than 1,800 Fellows & Alumni

# What Should I Do Now?

1Ls should start:

- Thinking about the type of Fellowship project you are interested in, identify internships with organizations that do that work, build relationships
- Invest your time in gaining public interest experience

2Ls/3Ls that are clerking/taking a gap-Fellowship should start:

- Approaching organizations you want to design a project with
- Asking professors and supervisors for letters of recommendation
- Fine-tuning resume and outlining personal statement

### 3 Frequent Fellowships Misunderstandings

1. GPAs/class rank are required on resume to be competitive
  - May be included, but absence is not detrimental
2. Candidates with projects in rural areas will not be funded
  - Urban areas tend to have more sponsor presence, however list of sponsors without geographic parameters is growing (approx. 10 rural Fellows in 2017, more in smaller cities)
3. Only candidates from “top” law schools are funded
  - 42 different schools’ students funded in Class of 2017, from #1 on US News to RNP. Law school is not a factor in itself.



**Questions?**

**Email [students@equaljusticeworks.org](mailto:students@equaljusticeworks.org).**