Student Guide to:

Nonprofit and Public Interest
Post-Graduate Legal Fellowship Programs

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I. Introduction to Post-Graduate Fellowships

I. WHAT IS A POST-GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP?

There is an increasing number of fellowships available to recent law school graduates. Some are designed to financially assist graduates who want to do public interest or pro bono work, but face too large student loan repayments. While the term "fellowship" is used by a variety of different programs, generally legal fellowships:

- are short-term opportunities lasting from a few months to several years – most are 1 or 2 years
- allow fellows to assist underrepresented populations and/or address specific issues in a given community
- focus on the professional development of the fellow
- are sponsored by a specific association or organization seeking to expand leadership in its particular area of law

The financial compensation varies greatly.

Still, this can be balanced with the ability to work on legal issues the fellow cares about, helping people and communities who often have nowhere else to turn. Also, legal fellowships allow the recent graduate to assume much more responsibility, more quickly, than would be possible in some other types of legal work. In addition, many fellowships offer:

- student loan repayment programs
- healthcare coverage and other employment benefits
- housing stipends
- paid travel or relocation expenses
- alumni networks for developing and maintaining contacts in the field
- training programs

The most comprehensive list of postgraduate legal fellowships can be found on pslawnet.org in the “Fellowship Corner”.

II. TYPES OF FELLOWSHIPS (The most comprehensive list of post-grad fellowships can be found on pslawnet.org in the “Fellowship Corner”)

✓ Educational Fellowships
✓ Project-Based and Entrepreneurial Fellowships
✓ Organizational Fellowships
✓ Teaching Fellowships
✓ International Fellowships
✓ Firm-Sponsored Public Interest/Pro Bono Fellowships

III. PROJECT-BASED AND ENTREPRENEURIAL FELLOWSHIPS

Description: Project Fellowships help fund projects that serve unmet legal needs. Usually, applicants must propose their own projects, usually in conjunction with an existing organization, but in some cases candidates may apply for support to start a new organization.

Examples

Equal Justice Works (www.equaljusticeworks.org)
✓ Equal Justice Works organizes, trains and supports public service-minded law students and is the national leader in creating summer and postgraduate public interest jobs. About 50 fellowships are awarded each year.
Recognizing that many obstacles prevent committed attorneys from practicing public interest law, the program provides financial and technical support to lawyers working on innovative and effective legal projects. The two-year fellowships offer salary and generous loan repayment assistance; a national training and leadership development program; and other forms of support during the term of the fellowship.

Equal Justice Works does not request a transcript and grades are not considered in the selection process.

This is an entrepreneurial fellowship in that students must design a project in conjunction with a nonprofit host organization. The project must bring something new to the organization that distinguishes the fellow’s role from that of a staff attorney.

A project is a carefully designed initiative that involves innovative, effective legal advocacy on behalf of individuals, groups, or issues that are not adequately represented by some aspect of the legal system. Advocacy may entail a wide range of approaches, including, but not limited to, community legal education, training, and organizing; direct services; litigation; transactional work; and administrative or legislative efforts.

The Equal Justice Works Fellowships Program creates partnerships among public interest lawyers, nonprofit organizations, law firm/corporate sponsors, and other donors in order to provide more Americans with effective access to the justice system.

Skadden (www.skaddenfellowships.org)

The Skadden Fellowship Foundation, described as "a legal Peace Corps" by The Los Angeles Times, was established in 1988 as an affirmation of the firm's commitment to public interest law. The foundation, funded by a bequest from the firm, awards approximately 25 fellowships per year to graduating law students and outgoing judicial clerks. Fellows provide legal services to the poor, elderly, homeless and disabled, as well as those deprived of their human rights or civil rights. In recent years, Fellows have also worked on issues concerning economic development and community renewal.

Fellowships are awarded for one year, with the expectation of renewal for a second year. Skadden provides each Fellow with a salary of $46,000 and pays all fringe benefits to which an employee of the sponsoring organization would be entitled. For those Fellows not covered by a law school loan repayment assistance program, the firm will pay a Fellow's law school debt service for tuition for the duration of the fellowship.

A distinguishing trait between the Skadden fellowships and the Equal Justice Works fellowships is that the goal of the Skadden program is to provide solid apprenticeships for new lawyers. Both programs require that supervision by an attorney and training be provided by the host organization, however, Skadden seeks to "groom" the next wave of public interest attorneys rather than funding entrepreneurial or "cutting edge" projects.

Echoing Green (www.echoinggreen.org)
The Echoing Green Fellowship program was created to provide social entrepreneurs, who have original and compelling ideas for driving social change, with the tools and resources to start new autonomous public service projects or organizations.
✓ Individuals who are awarded a fellowship receive a two-year stipend of $30,000 per year (total of $60,000 over two years), health and dental insurance coverage, access to the fellowship’s network of social change makers, and technical assistance. The stipend can be used for any purpose related to the start up of the organization or project.

Soros (www.soros.org)
✓ The Soros Justice Fellowship Program was established in 1997 by the Open Society Institute’s Center on Crime, Communities and Culture. The fellowships are designed to encourage innovative approaches to crime prevention, strengthen successful criminal justice programs already in place and promote nonpartisan debate on complex criminal justice issues such as juvenile justice and prison reform.

✓ Each year the fellowships program enables up to 10 individuals to develop their projects in New York City during an 18-month period. A $48,750 stipend is provided over 18-months.

New Voices (http://newvoices.aed.org/home.html)
✓ The New Voices Fellowship Program is a capacity-building and leadership development grant program that assists nonprofit organizations and professionals in a number of fields. Starting in 2007, the next three grant cycles will focus on addressing needs, solving problems, and defending human rights related to the impact on the Gulf Coast of Hurricane Katrina and Rita.

✓ Up to 15 organizations will receive a Fellow each year.

✓ Proposed Fellows must clearly represent a "new voice" to the organization and its field. Most Fellows will have completed an undergraduate or graduate degree, or have equivalent education and experience. While there are no limits with regard to age or professional experience, strong applications will demonstrate that this individual would offer new perspectives, expertise or skills, and insights to the organization and field. Work and/or relevant personal experience will be weighed on a par with educational experience.

✓ Benefits include: Up to $1500 per year to cover the fellow’s participation in workshops, conferences, seminars, etc.; Student loan repayment/financial assistance up to $6000 per year; External mentoring/networking account (year two) up to $1000.

Institute for Educational Equity and Opportunity (http://www.ifeeo.org/)
✓ The Institute for Educational Equity and Opportunity provides a one-year fellowship for recent law school graduates to work with a public interest educational equity project or attorney of their choice in the areas of educational equity and opportunity. Applicants must have taken a course in Education law, be recommended by her/his Education Law Professor, and are responsible for securing a potential position with a sponsoring attorney/organization before submitting an application for a Fellowship.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS
Description: Organizational fellowships are defined positions within existing organizations, usually for a period of one to two years. Applicants do not need to develop their own project. Students or graduates apply to these fellowships in a similar manner as applying for a typical job. An organization usually offers one or maybe a few fellowships each year, but there are hundreds of organizational fellowships available.

Examples
ACLU (www.aclu.org)
✓ The ACLU is committed to defending and preserving the individual rights and liberties guaranteed to all people in this country by the Constitution and the laws of the United States.
- Litigation Fellowship: ACLU National Prison Project
- Applied Research Fellowship in Civil Liberties and National Security
- Ira Glasser Racial Justice Fellowship

**Center for Reproductive Rights, Blackmun Fellowship** (http://www.reproductiverights.org/ab_goals.html)

- The Blackmun Fellowship was established by CRR in honor of Justice Harry A. Blackmun and his principled and passionate defense of reproductive liberty. In *Roe v. Wade* and subsequent decisions, Justice Blackmun recognized that the right to make childbearing choices free of governmental interference is central to women’s lives and their ability to participate fully in society. The Blackmun Fellowship was founded to further Justice Blackmun’s legacy by giving this nation’s aspiring legal advocates and scholars the opportunity to participate in litigation at the forefront of the struggle for reproductive freedom.

- Responsibilities: Blackmun Fellows may be involved with the preparation and writing of appellate briefs; participation in trial court litigation, including discovery, motion practice and witness preparation; drafting of public education materials; public speaking; and legal analyses of state and federal legislation.

- Qualifications: Juris Doctor degree. Applicants should be self-motivated, capable of complex legal analytical work and have an ability to write clearly and effectively. Knowledge of reproductive rights or civil rights issues would be helpful.

**Human Rights Watch (www.hrw.org)**

- Human Rights Watch is the largest human rights organization based in the United States. Human Rights Watch researchers conduct fact-finding investigations into human rights abuses in all regions of the world. Human Rights Watch then publishes those findings in dozens of books and reports every year, generating extensive coverage in local and international media.

- Each year, Human Rights Watch awards four International Human Rights Fellowships to recent graduates of law schools or graduate programs (master’s and above) in journalism, international relations, area studies, or other relevant disciplines. Fellows work full time for one year with one or more divisions of Human Rights Watch, based in New York City or Washington, DC. Fellows monitor human rights developments in various countries, conduct on-site investigations, draft reports on human rights conditions, and engage in advocacy aimed at publicizing and curtailing human rights violations.

**The Women’s Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program** (http://www.wlppfp.org/)

- The Women’s Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program offers 6-8 fellowships annually to attorneys with a background in women’s rights. Selected fellows are placed in nonprofit organizations in the DC Metro area working on a variety of issues including: reproductive rights, domestic violence, work and family, employment and sex-based discrimination, Title IX, economic self-sufficiency, gender-based asylum, rights of women with disabilities, and international human rights. Placements may focus on policy, advocacy, outreach and education, litigation, or some combination thereof.

- The Women’s Law Fellowship also offers a two-year teaching fellowship in the Domestic Violence Clinic at the Georgetown University Law Center. Candidates must be barred at the time the application is submitted in order to be eligible (third-year law students are ineligible). Clinical and/or litigation plus exceptional academics is a must for this and all Georgetown teaching fellowships.
 Occasionally there is also a two-year teaching fellowship available in the International Women’s Human Rights Clinic.

Graduating law students can apply during the fall of their third year. Law school graduates can apply at any time. There is no cap on the amount of time after law school when you can apply.

Salary: $37,500. Loan repayment assistance is not available, however, fellows can usually defer loans during the fellowship.

Criteria: Demonstrated commitment to women’s rights, strong academic record, willingness to work on a variety of women’s rights issues.

Juvenile Law Center Zubrow Fellowship (http://www.jlc.org/index.php/about/zubrow)

The Zubrow Fellowship is an opportunity to engage in a wide variety of advocacy efforts on behalf of children in the delinquency and dependency systems. Zubrow Fellows are involved in training, legislative efforts, litigation, policy work and some direct representation on issues ranging from the rights of dependent youth aging out of the foster care system to the needs of juveniles reentering the community from delinquent placements.

Because JLC is a small public interest firm (seven attorneys), Fellows have an opportunity to work closely with all members of the staff. In addition, Fellows work with organizations and individuals from other Philadelphia legal or public interest advocacy organizations, Philadelphia and Pennsylvania government employees, and juvenile lawyers from around the country.

Zubrow Fellows have a few (1-3) individual clients over the course of the Fellowship. JLC is not a legal services organization, so direct representation is not the focus of the Fellowship. Fellows are eligible to be assigned their first client after they are admitted to any bar.

George N. Lindsey Fellowship (http://www.lawyerscomm.org/2005website/jobs/lindsayfellowship/lindsayfellowship.html)

The Lindsey Fellowship provides an opportunity for recent law school graduates to become familiar with civil rights practice by working with many of the nation’s leading civil rights experts at the national office of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law in Washington, DC.

The one year Fellowship pays a stipend of $42,000, supplemented by a loan forgiveness payment of $2,000. The yearly stipend is also supplemented by payment of bar review and fees. Fellows have the opportunity to gain legal experience in one or more of the following areas: voting rights, criminal justice, poverty, employment discrimination, fair housing, community and economic development, pro-affirmative action efforts, discrimination and the intersection of gender and race, and human rights law.

V. Teaching Fellowships

Description: Teaching fellowships are designed to offer the graduate the ability to learn how to teach law in a clinical setting, or work on legal research projects. Strong academics are a must and most require relevant experience post-law school. Current Bar membership may also be a requirement.
Examples
Environmental Law Institute (www.eli.org)
✓ Law Fellows work with ELI’s Research and Policy Studies staff to advance environmental protection. ELI’s research focuses on pollution and natural resource laws, and policies at the local, state, federal, and international levels.

Georgetown University Law Center Graduate Fellowship Program for Future Law Professors (http://www.law.georgetown.edu/graduate/fellowships.html)
✓ The Law Center offers one graduate fellowship each year to a recent graduate or practicing lawyer. The program is seeking applicants who have demonstrated an outstanding aptitude for independent legal research, through prior research as a law student or legal experience after law school. Applicants must hold a JD degree from an ABA accredited law school. The program expects that candidates will have widely varied intellectual interests, and may wish to pursue research ranging across the full spectrum of legal theory.

✓ Candidates who complete a substantial scholarly publication while in residence at the Law Center will be eligible for the LL.M. degree. The program lasts approximately 18 months, during which time the Law Teaching Fellow works closely with a single faculty mentor in order to observe and participate in teaching, as well as complete a publishable scholarly piece.

VI. INTERNATIONAL AND FELLOWSHIPS ABROAD
Description: There are a variety of post-graduate fellowships that allow recipients to work on international issues in the U.S. and abroad. Some of these are not legal fellowships per se but are good opportunities to work on legally-related issues through nongovernmental organizations, universities, and, in some cases, U.S. government agencies.

Examples
Amnesty International Ralph J. Bunche International Human Rights Fellowship (http://www.humanrightsblog.org/listings/archives/003115.html)
Amnesty International’s Ralph J. Bunche Human Rights Fellowship seeks to develop human rights leaders in communities of color in the United States. The Fellowship provides training and experience in international human rights advocacy to activists who are interested in the field of international human rights. The Ralph J. Bunche Human Rights Fellowship focuses on building the competencies of activists in the core areas of international human rights advocacy, including research, action mobilization, campaigns, and media communications.

Center for Reproductive Rights International Reproductive Rights Fellowship (www.crlp.org/ab_em_irrfellow.html)

U.S. Fulbright Program (http://www.cies.org/us_scholars/us_awards/)
The Fulbright Scholar Program focuses on building and maintaining international relations between the U.S. and the rest of the world. To further this initiative, each year, the program sends U.S. students abroad to conduct research in a wide variety of academic and professional fields. The fellowship provides for travel and living expenses while scholars are abroad conducting research.

Human Rights Watch (www.hrw.org)
Fellows work full time for one year at Human Rights Watch, based in New York City or Washington, D.C. Fellows monitor human rights developments in various countries, conduct on-site investigations, draft reports on human rights conditions, and engage in advocacy aimed at publicizing and curtailing human rights violations. Past fellows have conducted fact-finding missions to, among other places, Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala,
Haiti, Honduras, Hong Kong, India (including Kashmir and Punjab), Iran, Israel, Kenya, Malaysia, Moldova, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Russia, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Uganda, the U.S.-Mexican border, and Venezuela.

Resources

✓ The best comprehensive sources of information on international fellowships are: OPICS Post-Graduate International Fellowships (www.pslawnet.org/fellowship/index.php), compiled by the Office of Public Interest and Community Service at Georgetown University Law Center; and

✓ Finding and Funding International Public Service Opportunities compiled by Robert Kaplan, Paula Nailon and Beth Kirch for the NALP Annual Educational Conference in April 2004. (http://www.nalp.org/assets/142_intpsopps.pdf)

✓ A bank of sample fellowship applications from WCL alumni is available online through the Office of Public Interest. Please email publicinterest@wcl.american.edu to request a copy.

VII. Firm Sponsored Public Interest/Pro Bono Fellowships

Description: Firm fellowships are defined positions within a law firm or a split time position, whereby the fellow spends a portion of her time in the firm and a portion working at a designated non-profit agency.

Examples

Relman & Associates: www.relmanlaw.com
Relman & Associates is a small law firm in Washington, DC where all the attorneys share a passionate commitment to social justice. The Relman Civil Rights Fellowship offers one recent graduate the opportunity to litigate important civil rights cases with experienced practitioners.

The fellowship was created to further Relman's mission of providing clients with legal services of the highest quality while promoting social justice through vigorous enforcement of civil rights laws.

Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobsen: http://www.ffhsj.com/index.cfm?pageID=49
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobsen is an international law firm with a commitment to pro bono work. In 1995 and 1997, respectively, Fried Frank founded the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Fellowship Programs. Each Fellow spends two years in Fried Frank’s New York litigation department, and then, depending upon the fellowship, spends two years as a staff attorney with either LDF or MALDEF. Upon successful completion of the four-year Fellowship, Fellows may return to Fried Frank with full seniority.

Covington & Burling: http://www.cov.com/
Howard C. Westwood/NLSP Fellowships. Created in 1991, the fellowship program is designed to help alleviate the severe under-staffing problem at Neighborhood Legal Services. Currently two graduates of District of Columbia or the University of Maryland law schools are selected for one-year assignments at NLSP offices. The Fellowships are named after a late C&B partner who was instrumental in the formation of the legal services program both locally and nationally. These fellowships have spawned the public service legal careers of a number of new lawyers in the District of Columbia. Contact Ray Maldonado at NLSP, (202) 269-5101.

The Bernabei Law Firm, PLLC: (http://www.bernabeipllc.com/whoweare.html)
The Bernabei Law Firm, PLLC, based in Washington, D.C., is nationally recognized for its expertise in the areas of employment law, sexual harassment law, whistleblower law, civil rights and civil liberties matters, Sarbanes-Oxley claims, and training. In addition, lawyers are
committed to using our collective skills, talents and resources to protect the rights of employees, to promote equal opportunity, to curb unfair and deceptive business practices, and to help create a more just society. Bernabei sponsors a one-year civil rights litigation fellowship.

**Katz, Marshall, and Banks, LLP:** [http://www.kmblegal.com/]

Katz, Marshall & Banks, LLP is a boutique civil rights and employment law firm based in Washington, D.C. The firm's lawyers have been recognized as among the best employment lawyers nationally and in the Washington, D.C. area. Lawyers also serve as faculty members for the prestigious American Law Institute - American Bar Association ("ALI-ABA") and Georgetown CLE, and are regularly published in national legal publications about employment law and civil rights issues. Firm members have appeared regularly as commentators on national television and radio news shows, and in print media, about these issues. The firm sponsors a one-year civil rights litigation fellowship.
II. Identifying and Applying for Fellowships

Fellowship Benefits: All fellowship programs offer great opportunities, quantifiable and unquantifiable. Larger fellowship programs, like Equal Justice Works and the Skadden Public Interest Fellowship Program require an experienced attorney supervisor and sufficient infrastructure and resources to mentor and train the fellow. In addition, they provide additional training via annual conferences for current fellows. Smaller, organization-based fellowships have developed an infrastructure that supports the ongoing hiring and training of a fellow on an annual basis, much like law firms do for new associates, although on a much smaller scale.

Other benefits of fellowships may include loan repayment assistance, membership in a network of fellowship alumni, and assistance seeking jobs when the fellowship has ended. Not to be overlooked is the prestige of any legal fellowship program, which provides similar resume cache as a federal clerkship (and in some cases may lead to a federal clerkship).

1. Start early and utilize those research skills! Start researching during your first summer or as soon thereafter as possible. The “Fellowship Calendar” on PSLawNet.org is a good place to start identifying fellowship programs that seem like a good fit for your interests. Be sure to check each program’s web site for updated information and to verify deadlines.

Getting an early start is particularly important if planning to apply for project-based fellowships such as New Voices, Equal Justice Works or Skadden. Application deadlines are generally in September or October of your third year, so you must identify a host organization and project by your second summer. Summer employers or organizations where you had academic year internships or externships are often good potential host organizations.

Approach potential host organizations early in the summer of your second year to see if they are interested in partnering on a project. Some organizations may turn students away if they receive more than one request in any given year.

Good places to get project ideas include: the Equal Justice Works and Skadden websites, which provide information about current fellows, or by contacting WCL alumni who received postgraduate fellowships.

2. Create a calendar of application deadlines. Once you have identified the fellowships to which you plan to apply, create a chart or timeline of the deadlines and application requirements. Personal statements, letters of recommendation, resumes and transcripts are all common elements of many fellowship applications. Identifying and getting to work on these common elements first is a good way to make the process less burdensome and to tackle a large portion of the work in an organized fashion.

3. Communicate with the host organization early and often. If applying for project-based fellowships, maintain regular contact with your host organization. This includes not only your prospective supervisor but the persons responsible for organizational development and fundraising. The staff or consultants who do grantwriting are invaluable parties in the process and can provide you with boilerplate language that the organization uses to pitch its mission and programs to other funders. Likewise, they can help pull together current information and statistics on the target population that your project addresses.

4. Be sure to adhere to the application guidelines and instructions. Provide what is asked for in the requested format, and refrain from supplementing the application with all manner of “extras”. While the urge to dress up the application with fancy covers or bindings is
understandable, in many cases the entire application or some portion thereof is ultimately photocopied so fancy presentations simply create more work for fellowship administrators. Similarly, if there is a recommendation letter limit, choose your letters strategically rather than submitting extras, as you otherwise run the risk of having your strongest letter discarded at the whim of a third party.

Many fellowship applications are by their nature repetitive. For example, some request a resume and a listing of public interest-related experience. If they ask for it twice, there is a reason. Simply inserting the statement “See attached resume” is not advised. Look at the questions and requested information carefully and respond accordingly.

5. **Make it easy for reviewers to decipher the components of the application and/or project.** When submitting paper applications, use headings and subheadings to make the document easy to read and be sure the document reflects your one-sentence project description (where applicable). Pages and pages of text without guideposts are particularly taxing on readers reviewing towering stacks of applications within a short amount of time. Online applications should likewise strictly conform to the requested format.

6. **Never underestimate the power of a personal statement.** Be careful not to spend so much time on the technical portions of the application that you leave the personal statement to the last minute. This is often the hardest part to write. There is no such thing as a “right” or “wrong” personal statement, but there are good ones and bad ones. A good one comes from the heart and indicates a passion or healthy sense of outrage regarding the issues that you seek to remedy. A bad one is forced, boastful and/or angry. After reading pages of facts and statistics, the “human interest” story is a welcome break for reviewers. You should relate personal experiences that help the reader understand why the project is of interest to the applicant.

7. **The Timeline is the Backbone of Your Project.** Many programs require you to create a timeline of your project – listing the time periods when you anticipate undertaking each necessary task. Before you begin writing, create a timeline that adheres to your one-sentence project description and provides a game plan for achieving the goals of your project. While the timeline should be detailed, it should also be flexible and not over-ambitious. A good exercise is to list the components of your project (direct service, education/outreach, policy, etc.) and estimate the percentage of the time you anticipate spending on each. Be mindful that when mixing direct service with other types of work, there is always the danger that the urgency of the clients’ needs will cause the direct service to overshadow the other components of the project.

Generally the first six months of any project will be spent getting your bearings: attending trainings, shadowing other attorneys at the organization, attending local coalition meetings, waiting for your bar results, and getting a better feel for what services/resources currently exist and those that are lacking.

8. **Start Writing!** A lot of writing is involved in most fellowship applications. Particularly onerous is the Equal Justice Works application, which at its essence is a grant application pitching a student’s idea for a project to any number of potential funders. The application can be more than 12 single-spaced pages. Needless to say, this makes drafting a cover letter look easy…

**Preparing for an Interview**
As with all activities job-related, practice makes perfect. You should make an appointment with the Career Center for a mock interview and conduct additional research on both the host organization (where applicable) and the interviewing parties prior to the interview. Equal Justice Works has a list of sample
fellowship interview questions available on their website. These questions are great guidelines for any student interviewing for a project-based fellowship. Anticipate questions and identify weaknesses in your application and be prepared to give responses about them.

When applying for organizational or firm fellowships, take the time to scour the employer’s web site and review any newsletters or information on recent cases or initiatives. An application professing your passion for working with the employer rings hollow when the interview reveals that the you actually knows little or nothing about the employer.

**Before Scheduling an Appointment with a Counselor to Review Your Application:**
- ✓ Proof read the application and correct typographical errors;
- ✓ Provide the counselor with a list of questions you have regarding the application and the application process so she can keep these in mind when reviewing the materials;
- ✓ Provide adequate lead time for the counselor to prepare for the appointment – it can take up to 45 minutes just to read an Equal Justice Works application, and additional time to provide comments and feedback.

**Additional Steps for Project-Based Fellowship Application Review:**
- ✓ Be sure to have the host organization review the application first. Its staff members are better equipped to provide substantive feedback;
- ✓ Obtain a list of questions that your host organization has about its role in the application process, and have the counselor go over this list.

**Resources:**
PSLawNet.org “Fellowship Corner”. Pslawnet.org

*OPICS Post-Graduate International Fellowships* ([www.pslawnet.org/fellowship/index.php](http://www.pslawnet.org/fellowship/index.php)) (click on “Post-Graduate International Fellowships”), compiled by the Office of Public Interest and Community Service at Georgetown University Law Center.

III. Frequently Asked Questions About The Skadden Application Process*

Q. Is it necessary to call Susan Plum at Skadden even if I don’t have a question to ask?

A. It is a good idea for everyone to call. For one thing, if a student’s project is with an organization or on a subject matter that Skadden definitely won’t fund, Susan will say so (very curtly, perhaps, but this is valuable information), and certainly it is better for an applicant to know before sending something in. The conversation can be brief: “I plan to apply with organization X to work on Y.”

If a student has spoken with one of the Skadden alums at WCL, they should feel free to say that that person suggested they call (but only if they have spoken to them first). If nothing else, Susan will hear the student’s name, WCL, and the sponsoring organization’s name. There is no downside to that.

Q. Should the application include statistics about the target population, or just narrative? If statistics are included, do they need to be footnoted, or just cite the source in the text?

A. Some kind of data: whether statistics, or a key finding of some sort, are helpful to include for two reasons: 1) they give an otherwise generic project description some substantive content and specific context, 2) it is an opportunity for the student to demonstrate her knowledge/expertise on the subject matter of her project, which is crucial. The data doesn’t have to be about the target population per se, but something that demonstrates the student’s familiarity with the complexity of the problems she seeks to address.

Statistics can be useful in educating the fellowship committee about the need – and counteracting the committee members’ assumptions on need and demographics based on their likely limited experience.

Regarding citation of the source, it could go either way. If it’s a common source, the applicant can use a parenthetical or incorporate it into the text. If it is something more exotic, a footnote might make sense.

Also, applicants should think creatively about how to get in more information about the organization, the project, and the need to have the project funded. It is worth the applicant’s extra effort to spend time with those writing letters of recommendation and talk in-depth about the project so that more about the need for the project can be written into the letter. If the organization does not have a previous relationship with Skadden, the applicant should talk to the person writing the organizational letter of intent about including information about the population to be served and the need for the proposed project.

Q. Should the target population be broadly or narrowly defined? Example: “low-wage workers in DC” v. “limited English proficiency Latina low-wage workers in DC”?

A. It depends on how the rest of the project is framed. Taking the example above, if the latter definition is used, then it is important for the application to talk about how/why the articulated characteristics (LEP and Latina) are going to figure into the project. It shouldn’t make a difference in terms of the likelihood of success. However, if the project were “low-wage workers in DC,” the applicant should be sure to include some information about the demographic diversity of this population, rather than leaving it completely unaddressed.
Q. Any recommendations on submitting a “traditional” v. “innovative” project?

A. If a project is going to be innovative, the applicant should definitely make that call to Susan Plum and have a conversation with her about it. There’s no shame in doing a traditional project PROPOSAL, because, after all, the relationship between the proposal and the project once it is funded is an entirely different story. Skadden has pretty clearly defined likes and dislikes. They are not set in stone, but there needs to be a really compelling reason to try to alter them. There are also trends, and these are not easily altered.

Q. How much information should be included in the first essay regarding the host organization and the student’s relationship with the organization, or should the essay focus strictly on the project itself?

A. It is good to at least mention the host organization and maybe something about why that organization will be good for the student and good for the project. If the student has interned there, that is worth mentioning as well. About the first essay more broadly – students must do three things: 1) describe a problem as incredibly compelling and in desperate need of a lawyer, 2) map out a strategy (direct representation, policy advocacy, education and outreach), and 3) argue why the student is uniquely qualified to meet this critical need. It is important for the applicant to demonstrate or project a mastery of the issue involved, and familiarity with the communities with which she will work.

* A conversation with former Skadden recipients Prof. Muneer Ahmad and Prof. Sarah Paoletti.
IV. Links to Application Forms

Equal Justice Works (www.equaljusticeworks.org)

Skadden (www.skadden.com)

Echoing Green (www.echoinggreen.org)

Soros (www.soros.org)

New Voices (http://newvoices.aed.org/home.html)

Center for Reproductive Rights, Blackmun Fellowship (http://www.reproductiverights.org/ab_goals.html)

ACLU (www.aclu.org)

Human Rights Watch (www.hrw.org)

The Women’s Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program (www.wlppfp.org)

Juvenile Law Center Zubrow Fellowship (http://www.jlc.org/index.php/about/zubrow)

Environmental Law Institute (www.eli.org)

Georgetown University Law Center Graduate Fellowship Program for Future Law Professors (http://www.law.georgetown.edu/graduate/fellowships.html)

Amnesty International Ralph J. Bunche International Human Rights Fellowship (http://www.humanrightsblog.org/listings/archives/003115.html)

Center for Reproductive Rights International Reproductive Rights Fellowship (www.crlp.org/ab_em_irrfellow.html)

For a comprehensive listing of fellowships and deadlines, visit www.pslawnet.org and click on the “Fellowship Corner” link.