

J.D. Pathways Fellowships 2024

Columbia Law School is pleased to offer Pathways Public Interest and Government Fellowships for J.D. graduates of ABA-accredited law schools interested in beginning their careers in public interest law, including human rights, or in government service.¹ The fellowships serve two important purposes. First, they allow graduates to gain the experience, skills, and professional networks they need to obtain permanent paid positions in their fields. Second, they enable public interest organizations and government agencies confronting great demand and diminished resources to benefit from the services of talented lawyers.

To be considered for a fellowship, applicants must first obtain a written commitment by a “qualified host” to provide meaningful legal work and supervision. A qualified host is a public interest organization or government agency (federal, state, local, multinational, or international) that commits, contingent upon the applicant’s receipt of a fellowship, to:

- Provide the applicant with a position for a one-year period that will require the use of their legal education
- Provide appropriate training and supervision during the fellowship period. The applicant's supervisor should be a lawyer.
- Consider the fellow for an appropriate permanent full-time paid position if applicable funding becomes available

Law schools (either at Columbia Law School or other law schools) do *not* qualify as hosts. This includes centers, clinical programs, and faculty members. **Please note that applicants must submit a commitment letter from their prospective host. See the last page of this document for instructions on the specific information this letter must include.**

The J.D. Pathways Fellowships pay a stipend of \$45,000 for one year of full-time work. Fellows must commit to work full-time at their host (at least 35 hours per week) for twelve consecutive months.

Fellows are not considered employees of Columbia Law School or Columbia University. Columbia Law School cannot pay for health insurance or other benefits. In some cases, fellows are able to receive benefits through their hosts.

This packet contains information about eligibility requirements and application and selection procedures, including deadlines. **Please read carefully.**

¹ The fellowship is open to applicants receiving their J.D. from any ABA-accredited law school in the U.S. as part of that school’s class of 2024; Columbia Law School does not need to be the degree-granting institution.

Eligibility

In addition to the aforementioned, the fellowships are available to class of 2024 members who:

- Have or will have completed the requirements for their J.D. degree (and all joint degrees, if any) by the end of May 2024
- Are unemployed and do not have a fellowship, stipend, or other source of funding to work in 2024-2025
- Intend to take the February 2024 or July 2024 bar examination

Priority for the fellowship will be given to applicants who:

- Demonstrate a substantial commitment to pursuing a career in public interest law or government service
- Demonstrate preparation for a career in public interest law or government service
- Will endeavor to obtain employment in the public interest or government sector before or immediately following the fellowship's conclusion

Please note that the following are NOT eligible for the fellowship:

- Applicants who are completing a law degree other than a J.D., such as an LL.M., as part of the class of 2024 but will not complete a J.D. as part of the class of 2024; applicants who are completing a joint degree as part of the class of 2024 are eligible if one of those degrees is a J.D.
- Applicants who have completed a J.D. as part of a class earlier than the class of 2024

Fellowship Application Process

1. **Meet with a career adviser at your law school.** We recommend that all applicants consult with a career adviser at their school. Columbia Law School students should meet with a adviser in the Office of Public Interest/Public Service Law and Careers; visit Symplicity to make an appointment.
2. **Apply to hosts.** Apply directly to nonprofit organizations or government agencies of interest with a resume, cover letter, and additional materials as appropriate.
3. **Submit a fellowship application by May 2, 2024.** For application instructions, see the last page of this notice.
4. **Applicants will be notified of selection decisions by the end of May 2024.**

Questions?

If you have questions about the application or payment process, please review our [J.D. Pathways Fellowship FAQs](#). If you still have any questions, please contact:

Rebecca Hinde

Office of Public Interest/Public Service Law and Careers at Columbia Law School

rh2523@columbia.edu

212-854-3535

**J.D. Pathways Fellowships 2024
Columbia Law School**

Application Instructions

Please visit cglink.me/2it/s62229 to submit the following materials.* **Applications are due at 11:59 p.m. on May 2, 2024.** If you have difficulty accessing the online application portal, please contact Rebecca Hinde at rh2523@columbia.edu.

1. Your resume
2. An essay explaining how a position with the host will help you begin a career in your chosen field (no more than one single-spaced page). **Please include your name on the document.**
3. A unofficial copy of your transcript
4. A letter of recommendation, preferably from a member of the faculty of your law school. If the recommender would prefer, they may email the letter to rh2523@columbia.edu no later than the deadline for the rest of the application.
5. A list of two references with their titles, affiliations, and contact information. We recommend that at least one be someone who supervised your legal work. **Please include your name on the document.**
6. A commitment letter from your host that demonstrates its qualifications for purposes of this fellowship and describes the work you will be assigned and the training and supervision you will receive if your application is successful. **The letter MUST also state the term of the fellowship as a *one-year position*, with funding of \$45,000 provided by Columbia Law School. Note that the duration, stipend amount, and source of the funding (Columbia Law School) must be included.**
7. If you are a joint degree candidate, please upload certification from the institution conferring the joint degree that all requirements will be completed in time for you to receive both degrees by the end of May 2024.

*Non-Columbia students: the portal is temporarily unable to receive applications from non-Columbia students. As an alternative submission method, please 1) share your application with Rebecca Hinde (rh2523@columbia.edu) via Google Drive or Dropbox and 2) email Rebecca Hinde to confirm that we have received it. Thank you for your patience.