

Global Public Service Fellowship 2025

Columbia Law School is pleased to announce the 2025 Global Public Service Fellowships for J.D. and LL.M. students or graduates beginning or advancing their careers in public service law.

Through this year of practical training, the fellowships will allow graduates to gain the experience, skills, and professional networks necessary to begin or advance their careers in the field of public interest law, in nongovernmental organizations or agencies, as legal practitioners specializing in public interest work, or in academic life. In addition, the fellowships will enable public interest organizations confronting great demand and diminished resources to benefit from the services of talented lawyers. **Proposals for the fellowship are due on February 2, 2025.**

Terms of the Fellowship

The 2025 Global Public Service Fellowship will be awarded for a one-year term to selected students or graduates who obtain positions at qualified host organizations abroad. The position must require the fellow to make use of their legal education. The fellowship is available to (1) members of the Columbia Law School Class of 2025, including those who will graduate in October 2024 or February 2025, or (2) graduates of the Classes of 2023 or 2024.

To be considered for this fellowship, an applicant must obtain a placement with a public interest organization or intergovernmental agency. Preference will be given to organizations based in Asia that are engaged in the practice of international law and possess expertise in issues of global consequence, such as climate change, security, human rights, and immigration. Applications involving environmental work in Asia will be given special consideration. Applications will also be considered for placement as foreign law clerks with national supreme courts or at international courts or tribunals. Advisers from the Office of Public Interest/Public Service Law and Careers (PI/PS Office) will work with applicants to identify organizations that might be a good match.

Fellows must make a commitment to work at their host organization full-time, which is at least 35 hours per week, for 12 months. Fellows who secure and begin a full-time paid position before the end of the fellowship period or leave the fellowship position for any reason must notify the PI/PS Office as soon as possible regarding the last day to be worked. The fellow will not receive additional fellowship payments after that date. Fellows are not considered employees of Columbia University or Columbia Law School. The university cannot pay for health insurance or other benefits. Further details will be supplied to students who are granted a fellowship.

The fellowship carries a stipend of \$65,000 a year and must begin within five months of graduation or of the award date, whichever is later. Please see below for information about the payment process.

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

Eligibility

Global Public Service Fellowships are available to Columbia Law School students or graduates who:

- Have completed or will have completed the requirements for their J.D. or LL.M. degree.
- Obtain a position at a qualified host that will make direct use of their legal education.
- Do not have a full-time job or a fellowship, stipend, or other source of funding to work during the time period for which the fellowship is sought.

A “qualified host” is a public interest¹ organization, intergovernmental agency, national supreme court, or international court or tribunal that commits, contingent upon the applicant’s receipt of the fellowship, to:

- Provide applicants with a position that will utilize their legal education.
- Provide appropriate training and supervision during the fellowship period. The applicant's supervisor should be a lawyer.

Columbia Law School and Columbia University faculty members or affiliated institutions are *not* qualifying employer hosts.

Please note that priority for the fellowship will be given to applicants who:

- Exhibit a substantial commitment to pursue a career in public interest law (including those who are transitioning from the private sector).
- Demonstrate preparation for a career in public interest law.
- Will endeavor to work in public interest immediately after the fellowship concludes.

Application Procedure

1. Meet with Director of Human Rights and Public International Law Kerry McLean before applying (recommended)

Please make an appointment on [Simplicity](#).

2. Apply to hosts

Apply directly to nonprofit or intergovernmental employers of interest.

3. Submit a fellowship application

Application instructions can be found on the last page of this document.

¹ A public interest entity is one whose proclaimed purpose is the advancement of a vision of the public good that is broader than the interest of particular clients or one that provides legal services for a specifically defined low-income or other marginalized and underserved population. Such entities will normally be registered nonprofit organizations, international or regional intergovernmental agencies, national supreme courts, or international courts or tribunals. Columbia Law School will determine whether or not a particular employer satisfies this requirement.

Application and Selection Procedure

To apply, please follow the instructions on the next page. Applications are reviewed by a committee of Columbia Law School faculty, administrators, and human rights practitioners. Fellows will be selected by the end of March 2025.

Stipend and Payment Process

Unless their host organizations ask to have the stipend transferred to the organization, fellows are paid by Columbia Law School in monthly installments. Funds are not available before fellows commence work. Stipends are subject to U.S. taxes.

If either of the following circumstances apply to you, please reach out to Rebecca Hinde at rh2523@columbia.edu to discuss the payment schedule PRIOR TO SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION:

- *You plan to start your fellowship prior to July 1, 2025.*
- *Your proposed host organization is a U.N. agency.*

Fellowship Contacts

For questions about substantive issues such as fellowship criteria, your statement, or the appropriateness of a reference or prospective host, please contact:

Kerry McLean
Director, Human Rights and Public International Law
km3754@columbia.edu
Please make an appointment on [Simplicity](#)

For questions about submitting your materials, the application timeline, and fellowship payments, please contact:

Rebecca Hinde
Coordinator for Postgraduate Fellowships
rh2523@columbia.edu

Global Public Service Fellowship 2025 Columbia Law School

Please visit cglink.me/2it/s78703 to upload the following documents. **The deadline is February 2, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.**

1. Your resume.
2. A personal statement (1,000 words maximum) about your relevant experience, interest, and future aspirations with respect to public service legal work. The statement should include a discussion of the place of the fellowship in your career plans. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NAME ON THE DOCUMENT.
3. Your UNOFFICIAL Columbia Law School transcript.
4. A commitment letter from a host organization that demonstrates that it is a qualified employer for purposes of this fellowship and describes the work, training, and supervision that you will receive if the application is successful. If you are a J.D. student, the letter MUST also state*:
 - a. the term of the fellowship as a full-time one-year position.
 - b. that Columbia Law School will provide funding of \$65,000 per year.
 - c. if the host will supplement the stipend with its own funds, the amount the host will pay you.
5. One letter of recommendation, preferably from a Columbia Law School faculty member or a supervisor at a relevant organization. The letter may be emailed separately to rh2523@columbia.edu by the application deadline at the discretion of the letter writer.
6. A list of two ADDITIONAL persons who would serve as references.

* The American Bar Association requires Columbia Law School to report on any fellowships the Law School awards to its graduating J.D. class. For each fellow, the report must include a host letter that acknowledges the fellowship duration and stipend amount and specifies that the stipend is being provided by Columbia Law School. If the host is supplementing the stipend with its own funds, the letter must state this, with the supplement amount included in the letter. We ask that applicants ensure that their letter includes this information. Thank you.