

Herbert and Nell Singer Social Justice Fellowship 2025

Columbia Law School announces the 2025 Herbert and Nell Singer Social Justice Fellowship, which honors Class of 1928 graduate Herbert Singer and his commitment to supporting meaningful learning experiences in public interest law. The fellowship will help launch the social justice career of a Columbia Law graduate who demonstrates substantial commitment, ability, and preparation for making a difference as a public interest lawyer. The fellow will receive a stipend to practice public interest or human rights legal work at a nonprofit organization in the United States. **Applications for the fellowship are due on November 3, 2024.**

Terms of the Fellowship

One Singer Fellowship will be awarded for a two-year term. The fellowship is available to graduates of Columbia Law School who are (1) members of the J.D. Class of 2025 (October 2024, February 2025, or May 2025) or (2) graduates from previous J.D. classes who are currently state or federal judicial clerks and for whom the clerkship is their first postgraduate position.

The fellowship will be awarded to an applicant who demonstrates a deep commitment to public interest or human rights legal work and an ability to make a substantial contribution to their field. It will provide the fellow with the financial ability to work with a public interest organization that addresses the unmet legal needs of low-income and disadvantaged individuals or of underrepresented communities or issues and that could not otherwise afford to hire an entry-level lawyer. The fellowship is also intended to provide the fellow with the opportunity to gain the practical legal experience necessary to advance their career as a social justice lawyer.

The fellowship carries a stipend of \$60,000 a year plus health insurance and all other fringe benefits to which an entry-level lawyer at the host organization is entitled, up to the value of \$15,000. The fellow must begin work within five months of graduation or of completion of a clerkship.

Qualifying Projects and Host Organizations

Applicants can propose to be staff attorneys at their host organization or to implement a new project at the organization. Applications for a Singer Fellowship must include a description of the staff position or project. In evaluating the proposal, the fellowship selection committee will consider the appropriateness of the proposed host organization to the applicant's long-range career goals and, if applicable, to the proposed project.

Eligible host organizations are generally limited to public interest or human rights nonprofit organizations (501(c)(3) or the equivalent) located in the United States that engage in civil legal work as a substantial part of their mission. In most cases, these organizations will be involved in direct legal services, impact litigation, or public interest transactional work.

Qualifying projects may also be carried out at organizations that embrace new or interdisciplinary forms of legal advocacy as long as a legal education is required for the project.

Applicants are encouraged to meet with an adviser at the Office of Public Interest/Public Service Law and Careers as they develop their proposals.

Application and Selection Procedure

The application deadline is November 3, 2024. Application instructions can be found on the next page.

A committee consisting of the dean for the Office of Public Interest/Public Service Law and Careers, a Columbia Law School faculty member, a Columbia Law School graduate, and a federal judge will select the fellow and an alternative recipient by the end of December 2024.

Fellowship Contacts

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

Emily Harris
Director of Public Interest Lawyering and Strategic Initiatives
eh3097@columbia.edu

You can make an appointment with Emily 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

Herbert and Nell Singer Social Justice Fellowship 2025 Application Instructions

Please apply at cglink.me/2it/s81815 by November 3, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. You will be asked to upload the following documents.

1. Your resume
2. A personal statement (two pages maximum) that demonstrates your deep commitment to public interest or human rights law and an ability to make a substantial contribution in your field. This should include your relevant experience and future aspirations with respect to public interest or human rights legal work. The statement should also include a discussion of the fellowship's place in your career plans.
3. A project description (three pages maximum) including:
 - a. a description of the host organization or agency and its work; and
 - b. a description of your project, or of the work you will undertake in a staff position, and its relation to the work of the proposed host organization
4. An unofficial copy of your Law School transcript.
5. A letter indicating bona fide interest in your proposal from the host organization. The letter should include discussion of how you would be supervised and a statement that the organization does not have the financial ability to hire entry-level lawyers. The letter should also state:
 - a. the term of the fellowship as a two-year position
 - b. that Columbia Law School will provide funding of \$60,000 per year, plus health insurance and all other fringe benefits to which an entry-level lawyer at the host organization is entitled, up to the value of \$15,000 per year
 - c. if your host organization will supplement your stipend with their own funds, the amount of the supplement
6. Two letters of recommendation, preferably one from a Columbia Law School faculty member and one from a supervisor at a relevant organization other than the proposed host organization. If the recommenders prefer, they can email their letters to rh2523@columbia.edu by the application deadline.
7. Identification of two *additional* persons who would serve as references