Columbia Law School

PI/PS
Office of Public Interest/
Public Service Law and Careers



LL.M. Supplement

To the Public Interest Job Search Toolkit

A Job Search Tool from the Office of Public Interest/Public Service Law and Careers

2026-2027

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How to Use This Guide

The LL.M. Supplement to the Public Interest Job Search Toolkit provides advice and practical ideas to prepare LL.M. students interested in careers in public interest law. It is intended to be used with our Public Interest Job Search Toolkit and the International Supplement to the Public Interest Job Search Toolkit, as well as additional career guides and tools, accessible on our job search tools page.

In addition to using this guide, students are encouraged to learn more about the Office of Public Interest/Public Service Law and Careers. Our advising team is available to speak with you about your job search. Information on each of our advisers and how to make an individual appointment is available online.

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Welcome

Welcome to Columbia Law School. We are excited to have you as a member of the Law School community and of the public interest community in particular. Most of our foreign-trained LL.M.s return to their home countries upon completion of their studies at Columbia or pursue private sector opportunities. The Office of Public Interest/Public Service (PI/PS Office) looks forward to working with those of you who want to pursue public service either on a full-time or pro bono basis.

As experienced attorneys, you have much to offer the domestic and international public interest fields. Your LL.M. year is an exciting time to explore and consider how to use your knowledge, skills, and commitment to further domestic and international public interest work. However, as you embark on your chosen career path, you may find that you have more questions than answers because of the array of issues, career paths, and settings in which you can work. If you know what you want to do, we can help you identify your goal and develop a plan and tools to help you achieve it. As you begin your search, however, it is important to recognize that opportunities to pursue full-time public interest positions with

U.S.-based nonprofit organizations or government agencies are very limited and dependent on your visa status.

During this year and following graduation, we will guide you through the job search process through one-on-one counseling and a series of coordinated programs and workshops on creating domestic and international application materials and developing strong interviewing skills and techniques. The PI/PS Office also will work with you throughout the year by forwarding information about opportunities, PI/PS Office programs, employer-hosted events, and professional development workshops.

The PI/PS Office has a large advising staff of full- and part-time lawyers who have varied expertise areas and backgrounds. You can meet with as many of us that are of interest to you, and you can meet with us multiple times. Information about us, including how to make an appointment, is available on our website, law.columbia.edu/about/departments/pips.

We look forward to working with you

General Overview

This booklet supplements our Public Interest Job Search Toolkit by providing information of relevance to LL.M.s. It will serve as a guide as you explore and develop your interests and options in domestic and/or international public interest work. It also will help you prepare to seek specific public interest positions. It is meant to be used in conjunction with the Toolkit for domestic public interest positions and with the International Supplement to the Public Interest Job Search Toolkit if you are interested in working internationally.

Exploring Public Interest at Columbia: Developing Knowledge and Experience

During your LL.M. year, there are many opportunities to explore domestic and international public interest law. Here are some suggestions to consider:

- ➔ Attend public interest programming (including Public Interest Mondays and other PI/PS Office panels and programs, which you will learn about via our Monday newsletter, emails, and LawCal) and begin networking with students, professors, alumni, PI/PS staff, and practitioners.
- ➔ Participate in student organizations dedicated to public interest.
- ➔ Explore pro bono projects[1] to take on during the semester or over winter or spring break, and participate in a term-time public interest internship.
- ➔ Take clinics and externships, as well as other public interest classes, such as seminars and courses.
- ➔ Work on a public interest journal.
- ➔ Serve as a research assistant for a professor on a public interest law topic.
- ➔ Consider attending job fairs like the Equal Justice Works Fair (EJW), held in Washington, DC, in October, and the Public Interest Legal Career Fair (PILC), held in February.[2]
- ➔ For those of you interested in postgraduate careers in the U.S., remember that securing public interest or government employment without a U.S. J.D. degree and/or U.S. citizenship is especially difficult; public interest employers rarely sponsor visa applications. There are opportunities, however, to gain

[1] For more information on Columbia's pro bono program and state pro bono requirements for bar admission, see law.columbia.edu/pro-bono. The words "pro bono" and "internships" often are used to mean the same thing: volunteer legal work at a nonprofit organization or government agency. Sometimes, "pro bono" indicates a specific project and "internship" means working in the office for a specified period of time (e.g., one day per week) on a variety of projects. How much you do is an individual decision based on your goals for your LL.M. year and after graduation, how much practical experience you obtained before you came to Columbia, how efficiently you study, your other work or life obligations, and other factors.

[2] For more information on networking at public interest job fairs, see the section in the Public Interest Job Search Toolkit on networking and table talk.

valuable experience with U.S. employers through volunteer work. Doing relevant volunteer legal work with U.S. public interest employers as soon as possible is one of the best ways to network and enhance your qualifications.

- ➔ Start planning for postgraduate employment by researching and applying for fellowships and funding opportunities beginning in the fall semester. Check for early application deadlines. Our weekly Symplicity job emails will alert you to opportunities. Think about creative ways to raise funding for the work you want to do and meet with PI/PS advisers to come up with a strategy for fellowships and job applications. Also, use the job search timeline to help you map your strategy.

Should I Do a Term-Time Internship or Pro Bono?

You should definitely consider a term-time internship. It is one of the best ways to get valuable experience and become known to public interest employers. Columbia students have a big advantage by being in New York City: there are many excellent public interest opportunities at our doorstep. Term-time internships are invaluable for building skills, contacts and knowledge about "real jobs" in public interest. Many organizations welcome LL.M. students. We are happy to work with you to identify organizations that would serve your interests and goals.

If you plan to seek admission to the New York State Bar, you will have to complete 50 hours of qualifying pro bono service before you apply to the bar. Your service can be done after you graduate and even after you take the bar exam. (Those of you who did qualifying pro bono or took a law school clinic that did qualifying work within one year of the start of your LL.M. program may have already satisfied the New York requirement.) More information about the 50-hour rule is available on the bar's website; you may also find it helpful to visit our pro bono page and/or contact our pro bono staff with questions or for advice.

Even if you have already satisfied the 50-hour requirement or do not plan to apply for admission to the New York State Bar, pro bono service is an excellent way to use your education to assist people in need, develop professional contacts and skills, and work with others who share your concerns and beliefs.

Should I Think About Clinics and Externships?

Doing a clinic or externship is an important curricular experience you can get at Columbia. It will help you develop knowledge and skills that will be directly applicable to many public interest jobs. It also demonstrates your interest in and commitment to public interest work. Finally, it will enable you to get to know public interest professors and practitioners, as well as provide you with a source of mentorship. However, keep in mind that clinics and externships take a lot of time and use a lot of academic credits, so they might not be the best option for everyone. They also typically receive a very high number of applications so you cannot reasonably rely on being accepted into one of them. A good alternative is undertaking an independent externship, for which you may earn academic credit by registering under the direction of a Columbia Law School faculty member.

Are There Certain Classes I Should Take?

There are many other classes that can expand your knowledge of domestic and international public interest or hone skills useful in public interest work. You should think carefully about which classes to take and meet with

an adviser from the PI/PS Office or the Office of Graduate Degree Programs (OGP) to discuss the best classes for you. There are no "mandatory" classes for getting a public interest job. In determining your academic schedule, consider cross-listing at other Columbia University schools, such as:

- School of International Public Affairs
- Mailman School of Public Health
- Columbia University Institute for the Study of Human Rights
- Columbia Business School (entrepreneurship courses)
- Columbia School of Journalism

Additionally, for those of you who would like to work in a country other than your own, consider taking a language course if that skill would be useful to your work and if time permits in your regular academic schedule (as such courses do not count toward the LL.M. degree requirements). If you are considering taking a language course, speak with your OGP academic adviser for more information.

Should I Join a Journal's Staff?

Working on a journal can be interesting and satisfying work, especially if it focuses on a topic you are interested in. It can also be a significant time commitment. Public interest employers generally value public interest journals over business-related journals. However, some public interest employers, particularly those that do direct representation, advocacy, and grassroots work, do not value journal work as much as clinics, externships, or internships. Judges, academic institutions, and employers whose practice involves extensive legal analysis and writing look particularly favorably upon journals.

Publishing a note or other legal research and writing experiences are also of interest to them.

International LL.M.s, Keep in Mind: Visa Implications of Internships

International students interested in internships or pro bono projects in the U.S. during the fall or spring semester should be mindful that pursuing such opportunities may impact their visa status or ability to remain in the United States to work or volunteer after graduation. The PI/PS Office advises that all international students speak with the Office of Graduate Degree Programs or the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) at Columbia University prior to commencing an internship or pro bono project. ISSO is located at:

International House North
524 Riverside Drive, 1st Floor
New York, NY 10027
(212) 854-3587

Additional information:

- Overview of F-1 and J-1 Student Regulations
- U.S. Citizens and Immigration Services

LL.M. Job Search Basics

At the PI/PS Office, we believe the best career advice is that there is no single path to a successful domestic or international public interest career. In general, domestic or international public interest careers tend to be more idiosyncratic than private sector ones; as the public interest fields continue to evolve and adjust to the times, you have more opportunity to create your own journey. Some people graduate, go to one organization, and stay there for an entire career. Others switch jobs every few years, building skills and developing interests in one job that lead them to the next.

As you think about where you would like to work, you should assess your individual skills as well as your interests and goals and think about what competencies you would like to develop in the first years of your post-LL.M. career. Most LL.M. graduates can use their prior work and educational experiences, courses, clinics, and internships to construct multiple narratives that show they are qualified for a variety of jobs. We realize that the process, particularly the timing of obtaining your first post-LL.M. job, is often anxiety-filled. The first thing you should know is that the domestic and international public interest job search is quite different from a private sector search. Domestic and international public interest employers hire according to their own budgets and needs, so the timetable differs for each employer. Public interest LL.M.s need to have patience and a willingness to live with some anxiety, as they will usually not obtain a job until much later than those working in the private sector. In addition, it is often harder for an LL.M. to obtain a public interest position. Employers are frequently financially unable to sponsor visas, and many don't have the capacity to train employees who will only stay for a short time. That said, there are a few ways to approach the job search process strategically, which are outlined in the timetable on the next page. The PI/PS Office is also here to help you navigate the process and develop an effective strategy based on your personal and professional goals.

Lawyers with a Background in Human Rights and Public Interest

If you are a lawyer with experience in human rights and public interest in your home country or another country, you may be hoping to remain in the U.S. to do this type of work after your year at Columbia. Keep in mind that this can be very difficult to do, and it is essential that you get involved as early and as much as possible in developing public interest experience in the U.S. in the ways we have outlined above. Because U.S. lawyers are not always good at recognizing the skills, knowledge, and experience that a foreign-trained lawyer has, showing that you have work experience in the U.S., for example, through an externship or a clinic, becomes very important. If you are hoping to pursue human rights and public interest work outside of the U.S., it is still important to gain as much experience as possible either with U.S. employers or remotely with employers abroad.

Transitioning from Corporate to Public Interest During Your LL.M. Year

If you came to Columbia with the goal of making a transition from corporate law to public interest law, there are a few things that you should keep in mind. First, it is never too early to start setting up informational interviews with public interest lawyers who are doing the work you would like to be doing. In fact, we hope you have been in conversation with practitioners since your acceptance at law school.

You should reach out to Columbia graduates or current students who have worked at organizations you are interested in and introduce yourself to your professors. The advisers at the PI/PS Office can help you find current students and graduates who are working in your areas of interest within the public interest field.

Most public interest organizations value a demonstrated commitment to public service. If you have not demonstrated a commitment to public interest through your work experience before law school, you can demonstrate your commitment at Columbia through your course choices and participation in clinics, externships, internships, and pro bono projects. For those with few public interest contacts, establishing a connection to the public interest community at Columbia is paramount. Attend public interest events and network with Columbia students, professors, graduates, and guest speakers who are on campus or work in New York. You should also join public interest student groups and reach out early and often to the advisers at the PI/PS Office.

If you do not have a good public interest writing sample or lack experience in the field you are interested in entering, seek out classes and writing opportunities that will fill in those gaps. Professors and Columbia centers such as the Human Rights Institute, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, and Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment often seek student assistance with projects during the school year. Additionally, the School of International and Public Affairs offers Capstone classes that provide students with interesting opportunities to gain field experience during the semester or over semester breaks.

You should also use social media channels such as LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook to your advantage. For example, even if you do not have any social media accounts, it could be useful to set one up to follow organizations where you might seek jobs. Monitoring an organization's social media presence can give you valuable insight into its current projects, partners, goals, and culture, which you can use to craft stronger application materials. Also, many organizations post current job and volunteer opportunities to their social media accounts.

The transition from corporate to public interest work is not always an easy one to make, but once you find your first position in public interest, it often is easier to find the next. Talking to attorneys who have successfully made the transition and PI/PS advisers will help you plan a successful strategy.

LL.M. Job Search Timetable

September

- ❑ Attend Introduction to Domestic Public Interest Resumes and Cover Letters.
- ❑ Attend the Public Interest Legal Career Reception at Fordham Law School. This is a meet-and-greet with employers that you do not need to prepare for and is a great place to learn about different organizations and the work that they do.
- ❑ Attend Public Interest Mondays and other public interest events and begin to network with presenters, faculty, and fellow students.
- ❑ Submit your resume to our LL.M. resume review portal. It opens during the first week of the semester.
- ❑ Sign up for an appointment with a PI/PS adviser to discuss your interests and strategize on your job search. You will be able to make advising appointments starting in the first week of the semester.
- ❑ Consider applying for an internship or pro bono project. Consult psjd.org to learn about organizations.
- ❑ Sign up for email lists that provide information about relevant opportunities such as psjd.org, asil.org, reliefweb.int, Hrights.opportunities-list@mailman.yale.edu, or humanrightscolumbia.org.
- ❑ Consider attending the Equal Justice Works Fair (EJW) in October if you are interested in learning about domestic public interest work.[3]
- ❑ Start looking at job opportunities that are currently posted at employers of interest to become familiar with the skills, experiences, and material you will need to apply for similar positions in the future.

October

- ❑ Attend the virtual Equal Justice Works Fair if you are interested in domestic public interest work.
- ❑ Attend clinic and externship information sessions and consider applying to one for spring semester.
- ❑ Attend the virtual LL.M. Fellowships Info Session.
- ❑ Bookmark the employment pages of organizations of interest so that you can visit them frequently to better understand their hiring regularity, methods, and requirements.
- ❑ Follow organizations of interest on social media. Keep up with advocacy, initiatives, and partnerships that they are pursuing and use that information to plan your job search strategy. Look for opportunities to attend events that the organizations are hosting. Many NGOs also post jobs on social media.
- ❑ Continue to network. Talk to presenters and professors who are working in fields of interest to you.
- ❑ Reach out to Columbia alumni and set up informational interviews. PI/PS advisers can help you connect.

[3] While most employers at EJW are seeking summer interns, the fair also includes employer informational tables ("table talks"), at which you can learn about the organizations and to network. If you are interested in attending, talk to a PI/PS Office adviser to see if attending EJW would be useful for you.

- ❑ Begin applying to relevant fellowships and jobs. Begin finding a host organization to apply to Columbia-sponsored fellowships available to LL.M.s, including the David W. Leebron Human Rights Fellowship, Global Public Service Fellowship, Mark Haas Public Service Fellowship, and LL.M. Pathways Fellowships.
- ❑ Create a chart to keep track of internship and job search efforts. Some students find it helpful to construct a chart with four categories: 1) application deadlines; 2) employer name, department, and title; 3) contact person; 4) result/notes. See the Public Interest Job Search Toolkit for an example.

November

- ❑ Attend PI/PS Office networking events, which are advertised in newsletters and weekly emails.
- ❑ Continue to attend relevant public interest and international programs.
- ❑ Continue to network.
- ❑ If you are planning to apply for Columbia's postgraduate fellowships, then continue to find a host organization.
- ❑ Identify which spring public or international public interest classes you want to take.
- ❑ Consider finding a winter break pro bono opportunity or internship, domestically or abroad.
- ❑ Sign up to participate in the Public Interest Legal Career Fair (PILC), which takes place every February.[4] The period to register and apply to interview with employers at the fair generally begins in December.

December

- ❑ Focus on studying for and taking your exams. Good luck!
- ❑ Consider using winter break to network and/or do pro bono work/short-term internships.
- ❑ Enjoy the holidays!

January

- ❑ Continue to meet with PI/PS advisers to practice your interviewing skills.
- ❑ Continue to use job email alerts and listservs to identify employers to apply to.
- ❑ Sign up for an internship or pro bono project for spring semester.
- ❑ Continue to network and attend Columbia public interest programs.
- ❑ Polish your application materials and select a writing sample that reflects your best legal writing.
- ❑ Create a profile on relevant professional websites such as LinkedIn, which can be helpful tools for networking and job searching.
- ❑ Network with potential postgraduate fellowship hosts and begin preparing and submitting applications.

[4] While most employers at PILC are seeking summer interns, the fair also includes employer informational tables ("table talks"), which can be a good opportunity to speak to organizations of interest.

- ❑ Continue to apply for jobs and fellowships. Keep your application tracking chart updated.
- ❑ If you are planning to apply for Columbia's postgraduate fellowships, then continue to find and solidify a host organization.

February

- ❑ Follow up on applications you have already submitted and reach out to employers.
- ❑ Continue your job search and applications.
- ❑ Participate in the PILC Fair in February.
- ❑ Submit your application materials for Columbia's postgraduate fellowships.

March

- ❑ Follow up with applications you have already submitted.
- ❑ Continue your job search and applications.
- ❑ Stay in touch with your PI/PS adviser.

April

- ❑ Follow up with applications you have already submitted.
- ❑ Continue your job search and applications.
- ❑ Stay in touch with your PI/PS adviser.

May

- ❑ Focus on completing your papers and your exams.
- ❑ Graduation!

Summer

- ❑ Focus on the bar exam, if you are taking one.
- ❑ Continue to work with your PI/PS adviser—we are here all summer.

After Graduation

- ❑ Continue to use the PI/PS Office as a resource and be sure to stay in touch

Public Interest Resumes and Cover Letters

You may have to compile an entirely new U.S.-appropriate resume for any internships or jobs with U.S. employers if your resume is based on a different model. U.S. resumes do not list your entire educational and professional background or include long publication and presentation lists. In addition to being much shorter, U.S. resumes should never include personal information such as age, marital status, height, or photos. Moreover, because U.S. employers are likely to be unfamiliar with the education system in your home country, you may need to translate and "Americanize" your educational and work experiences by adding explanatory notes such as "equivalent to a J.D. degree" or an "honor given to the highest-scoring student."

The Public Interest Job Search Toolkit contains advice on crafting "U.S." public interest cover letters and provides examples. While this supplement includes a few sample resumes and cover letters, you should also refer to the Toolkit for a more extensive selection. If you have mostly corporate experience and minimal public interest experience prior to entering the LL.M. program, review the 1L cover letter examples as a guide. If you have significant public interest experience prior to the LL.M. program, see the cover letter examples for 3Ls and alumni. LL.M. students applying for international jobs should use the International Supplement to the Public Interest Job Search Toolkit for internationalizing your resume in accordance with the Columbia Law School format. You will also find a C.V. template for applying for positions with international governmental organizations such as the United Nations.

PI/PS advisers are available to help you further refine your resume as needed. If you apply for jobs in different fields or requiring different skills, you will likely need multiple versions of your resume. To get started, fictionalized samples of LL.M. resumes and cover letters are presented on the following pages. Everyone's resume is different, so the following resumes are meant to serve as useful examples. Take note of the resume formatting and types of work experiences and skills demonstrated. To help you get your professional experiences organized with appropriate formatting, please utilize the resume checklist on the next page.

"U.S." Public Interest Resume Checklist

FORMAT

- ❑ The document is one page in length. (You can go on to a second page if special circumstances
- ❑ exist, such as if you graduated more than five years ago or have extensive experience).
- ❑ Eleven- or 12-point font such as Times New Roman, Calibri, or Garamond with generous margins.
- ❑ NO typos or grammatical errors.
- ❑ Format is similar to our samples.
- ❑ Resume is not cluttered and is easy to read.

CONTENT

- ❑ The resume has a top header and Education and Experience sections.
- ❑ Your contact information is professional and up to date.
- ❑ The resume is tailored to the job you are seeking.
- ❑ All relevant jobs, volunteer work, and activities are included.
- ❑ You have included pro bono work, internships, externships, clinics, journals, on-campus organizations, and research for a professor.
- ❑ There are no "Interests" (unless special circumstances exist) or "Objective" sections.
- ❑ You have not included computer skills, classes (except clinics), or grades (except honors).
- ❑ All high school information has been removed. (See a PI/PS adviser if special circumstances exist.)
- ❑ You have included (if applicable) Languages, Bar Membership, and Publications.

LL.M. Resume: Before Revisions

EMILIE SATROU

300 West End Ave., Apt. 8, New York, NY 10463, (212) 555 6985, sugarbaby@gmail.com

EDUCATION
Columbia Law School, New York, NY
LL.M., expected May 2021

University College London (UCL), Faculty of Laws, London, UK
LLB with French Law, First Class Honors, received June 2018
Activities: European Court of Human Rights Moot Court
Human Rights Bulletin, Writer and Editor
Finalist of the Social Debating Competition

EXPERIENCE
Hon. Mr Justice Silber of the High Court of England London, UK
Clerk Summer 2020
Researched and assisted in writing judgments.

Immigration Law Department, Treasury Solicitors, Government Legal Service London, UK
Intern June 2019
Drafted briefs in cases concerning the right to privacy and the freezing of assets of suspect terrorists attended at the House of Lords and the Court of Appeals.

Commission of Socio-Economic Rights, Amnesty International Paris, France
Intern Oct. 2018 - May 2019
Coordinated five photo stories.

Doughty Street Chambers London, UK
Mini-pupil Summer 2017
Assisted barristers with cases involving human rights issues.

INTERESTS
Jogging, collecting rare porcelain dolls, car racing.

Before

Sample LL.M. Resume: After

EMILIE SATROU

300 West End Ave., Apt. 8, New York, NY 10463
(212) 555-6985 | es@columbia.edu

EDUCATION

Columbia Law School, New York, NY
LL.M, expected May 2021
Activities: European Union Law Moot Court team member
Columbia Society for International Law, Career Symposium Committee

University College London (UCL), Faculty of Laws, London, UK
LLB with French Law, First Class Honors, received June 2018
Activities: European Court of Human Rights Moot Court, Founder and Moots Officer
Human Rights Bulletin, Writer and Editor
Finalist of the Social Debating Competition

EXPERIENCE

Honorary Deborah Batts, U.S. District Court, S.D.N.Y. New York, NY
Intern Sept. 2020-ongoing
Research and assist in preparing judicial decisions in cases on criminal law and employment law issues.

Honorary Mr. Justice Silber of the High Court of England London, UK
Clerk June-Aug. 2020
Researched and assisted in the drafting and editing of judgments in cases on administrative law, immigration law and education law issues.

Immigration Law Department, Treasury Solicitors, Government Legal Service London, UK
Intern June 2019
Drafted briefs in cases concerning the right to privacy and the freezing of assets of suspect terrorists attended at the House of Lords and the Court of Appeals; drafted a memorandum advising the UK government on an immigration issue.

Amnesty International Paris, France
Intern Oct. 2018-May 2019
Coordinated five photo stories in various countries for the Dignity Campaign.

Doughty Street Chambers London, UK
Mini-Pupil June-Aug. 2017
Assisted barristers with cases involving human rights issues, including due process rights in criminal law cases and privacy rights in extradition cases.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Fluent in French and English

Sample LL.M. Cover Letter and Resume Pairings

500 Riverside Drive, Apt. 54
New York, NY 10027
AgnesKallaste@law.columbia.edu

June 1, 2020

Fellowship Coordinator
PI/PS Office
435 West 116th Street, Box B-26
New York, NY 10027

Dear Fellowship Selection Committee:

I submit this letter to express my interest in the Columbia Law School Pathways Fellowship. I believe that my extensive academic coursework in international law and my professional experience in implementing human rights projects make me a strong candidate for this fellowship. I believe that the fellowship will allow me to develop practical lawyering skills, enhance my advocacy techniques, and gain further experience as an international human rights lawyer.

Growing up in a small Estonian village where women did not enjoy the same benefits as men, I learned the value and empowerment of inclusion and equal opportunity through education. Over the course of my academic experiences in law, including my Bachelor's, Master's, and LL.M. degree programs, I learned that it is not sufficient to possess knowledge of the law. It is equally important to utilize that knowledge to combat discrimination and protect the basic rights of other human beings.

Before coming to Columbia, I worked as a Program Manager with the Baltic Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Talinn, Estonia, where I played a critical role in the development and implementation of human rights initiatives that improved the lives and working conditions of marginalized populations. Working in partnership with UN agencies, including UNICEF, UNDP and UN Women, I secured external funding, prepared impact statements, and provided on-the-ground support for internal and external stakeholders. Notably, I worked with UN Women in the "Women in Decision-Making" project to improve women's access to the Estonian government decision-making process at both local and national levels. In furtherance of these efforts, I developed new legal frameworks and policies that gave women a voice in the democratic process, resulting in the election of the first Roma female in the local council in an Estonian village. I strongly believe that my work with the Baltic Foundation provided new opportunities to come closer to the people who suffer discrimination and human rights abuses on different grounds and effectively address these issues in my work. One initiative that I supported is the "Platform for Gender Balance in Estonia." Through this program, I organized trainings on educating young Estonian women in the areas of human rights and personal empowerment.

At Columbia, I continued to expand my knowledge and experience working to advance women's rights. During the spring semester of my LL.M. program at Columbia Law School, I served as an extern with UN Women in New York. In this position, I reviewed the sexual discrimination policies and worked on establishing a new legislative framework for this institution. In addition, I reviewed contracts signed between UN Women and external donors to monitor compliance with the terms of the agreements.

The Columbia Law School LL.M. Pathways Fellowship will allow me to serve as a legal intern within the UN Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Field Support, Conduct and Discipline Unit. This department focuses on misconduct by individual UN staff members, including against native populations in countries where the UN maintains missions. As an intern, I will utilize my LL.M. degree and my experience with the Baltic Foundation to assist in the development of the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, including researching and compiling the best practices of UN Member States in enforcing the zero-tolerance policy.

Through this internship, I will continue my work in advancing human rights and learn new strategies about human rights protection and gender equality initiatives. I believe that the Columbia fellowship will allow me to leverage my academic background and expand my professional experience in the field of human rights advocacy, as well as my personal belief in providing equal opportunities for all. In the future, I hope to work with other NGOs and government organizations in Estonia and internationally, and I believe that the internship opportunity with the UN will provide me with the necessary legal research, legal writing and advocacy and government relations knowledge to become an effective public interest lawyer for individuals impacted by human rights violations.

I anticipate that the UN internship will start in the beginning of July and conclude toward the end of August with a possible one-month extension through the end of September. Thank you for your kind consideration of my application.

Sincerely,
Agnes Kallaste

AGNES KALLASTE

500 Riverside Drive, Apt. 54, New York, NY 10027
917.575.0189 · AgnesKallaste@law.columbia.edu

EDUCATION

Columbia Law School, New York, NY
LL.M., received May 2020
Honors: Parker School Certificate for Foreign and Comparative Law
Activities: Rightslink
Student Public Interest Network (SPIN)

Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands
M.A. in European Union Studies, received March 2018
Honors: Leiden University Excellence Scholarship
Activities: Platinum Category Bonn International Model United Nations International ICC, 1st Place

University of Tartu, Tartu, Estonia Bachelor of Law, received March 2014
Honors: Class rank: 2nd Place

EXPERIENCE

UN Women, New York, NY Jan.-May 2020
Student Extern
Conducted legal analysis and research and assisted in the preparation of legal advice relating to UN Staff Regulations and Rules. Investigated internal policies and procedures of the organization.

Columbia University School of Law, New York, NY Sep. 2019-May 2020
Research Assistant, Professor Anu Bradford
Conducted legal research and drafted memos focusing on EU competition law, EU normative power, and the impact of the EU Court of Justice on the legal systems of other countries.

Baltic Foundation, Talinn, Estonia June 2016-July 2019
Program Manager
Organized the Baltic Partnership Civil Society Forum and served as the Moderator of "Democracy, Human Rights, Good Governance and Stability" working group. Worked in partnership with UN Women Estonia to implement the "Women in Decision-Making" project, resulting in the election of women into the national Estonian Parliament.

Transparency International, Talinn, Estonia Jan.-Mar. 2017
Program Assistant
Coordinated the 'Identifying and Training Paralegals in Rural Areas of Estonia' project to provide pro bono legal advice to underrepresented populations, including women.

District Court, Tartu, Estonia Jan. 2013-Dec. 2014
Law Clerk
Assisted the district court judge with analyzing legal issues in judicial proceedings. Reviewed court filings, prepared legal briefs for the judge, and liaised with counsel.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

Kallaste, Agnes, *The TTIP Investment Court System – A Real Necessity or An Overlap?*, Villanova Law School – 13th Inter-University Graduate Conference, Philadelphia, PA, April 2019

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Languages: Estonian (native), Russian (fluent), English (fluent), French (proficient)

314 West 127th Street, Apt. 2B
New York, NY 10027
MariaLuizaTeixeira@gmail.com

February 15, 2019

Ms. Ramona Silva
Chief of Staff
Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Organization of American States
1889 F St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Ms. Silva,

I write to express my interest in applying for a postgraduate internship with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). As a Brazilian lawyer devoted to advancing the rights of groups historically subjected to intersectional forms of discrimination, I can attest to the vital importance of the IACHR in ensuring effective protection of human rights in the Americas, and how its multidimensional agenda is contributing to the achievement of major breakthroughs on the matter. I would be delighted to have an opportunity to apply my background and skills to contribute to advance this agenda.

In the last five years, I have used human rights law as tool to advocate for the rights of women with and without disabilities. From 2015 to 2018, as staff attorney at the Center for Justice and International Law, I was actively involved in several actions aimed at monitoring the situation of women in economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) in Brazil and other South American countries. I focused my attention on analyzing states' legal and policy frameworks on women's sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

Among other actions, under the supervision of the ESCR Area Coordinator, I was in charge of drafting the Access to Information on Sexual and Reproductive Health in Latin America report, which was presented to the IACHR during a thematic hearing held in June 2016. The preparation of this report was part of a joint strategy of civil society organizations working in nine regional countries. I was responsible for coordinating their efforts to collect relevant information at the domestic level. On the basis of this information, I drafted a report that assessed states' compliance with the standards set by the IACHR in its Access to Information on Reproductive Health from a Human Rights Perspective report. This experience strengthened my knowledge of these standards and my understanding of the challenges involved in monitoring their implementation.

I also had the opportunity to participate in several projects and initiatives to advance the rights of people with disabilities. In doing so, I learnt that states fail to recognize how the intersection of different identities results in particular patterns of human rights abuse against certain groups. For instance, states' failure to combine the gender and the disability perspectives explain why intersectional discrimination against women with disabilities remains invisible in their agendas. To contribute to change and innovation among Brazilian women's rights activists, I combined my research and advocacy on gender issues with my involvement in disability rights projects. Among other initiatives, I collaborated in strategic litigation that resulted in a precedent-setting decision recognizing the right of women with disabilities to have access to legal abortion, on an equal basis with other women. In addition,

as a student of the Postgraduate Diploma "Women and Human Rights: Legal Advocacy Strategies," I conducted research on possible advocacy strategies to improve access to sexual and reproductive health services for women with disabilities in Brazil.

I have continued to pursue my interest as an LL.M. student at Columbia Law School. The lessons I have learned in the Human Rights Clinic reaffirm my belief that, in order to achieve my professional goals, I must escape the "savage-savior-victim" framework which is so common among human rights advocates. Instead of rescuing women with disabilities, I must contribute to empowering them to be the leaders in the struggle for their own rights. The clinic helps hone my skills to combine legal and non-legal tools to support this struggle. This year, I have had several opportunities to be involved in the work of regional and international human rights bodies, working with the Clinic's grassroots partners. In this role, I have witnessed a debate between representatives of academia, governments, the UN and the Inter-American human rights systems and civil society organizations about strategies to improve the functioning and deepen the impact of human rights bodies. By exposing me to the perspectives of a wide range of institutional and civil society actors, these experiences broaden my understanding of the challenges these bodies face in promoting respect for human rights, and the importance of strengthening cooperation and coordination among them to overcome these challenges.

As a postgraduate intern, I would be honored to have the opportunity to help the IACHR achieve a transformative impact on the observance and defense of human rights in the region. Upon completion of the internship, I am committed to continue supporting these efforts by working with civil society actors on the strategic use the Inter-American Human Rights System not only as a mechanism to obtain comprehensive reparations for victims of human rights abuses, but also as a tool to urge states to develop better legal and policy frameworks for the protection of human rights and the prevention of abuses.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my application.

Sincerely,
Maria Luiza Teixeira

MARIA LUIZA TEIXEIRA

314 West 127th Street, Apt. 2B, New York, NY 10027
MariaLuizaTeixeira@gmail.com | 646-859-9372

EDUCATION

Columbia Law School, New York, NY
LL.M., expected May 2019
Honors: LL.M. Human Rights Fellow
Fulbright Scholar

Universidad de Chile, Santiago de Chile, Chile
Postgraduate Diploma: Women and Human Rights: Legal Advocacy Strategies, received 2017
Thesis: *Advancing the Right to Sexual and Reproductive Health for Women with Disabilities: A Proposal for Brazilian Civil Society*

Universidade Do Estado Do Rio De Janeiro, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil
Bachelor of Law, LL.B., received 2015
Honors: Gold Medal for Highest GPA

EXPERIENCE

Columbia Law School New York, NY
Member of the Human Rights Clinic Sept. 2018 - present
Participate in advocacy strategies to support communities opposing a gold mining project in Peru. Collaborate in the preparation and dissemination of an assessment of the gold mine vis-à-vis World Bank standards. Conduct research on possible SDG indicators and draft a contribution to be summited to the Working Group on the Issue of Discrimination Against Women in Law and in Practice.

Columbia Law School New York, NY
Research Assistant to Prof. Sarah Cleveland Jan. 2016 - present
Conduct research to assist Prof. Cleveland in assessing state reports submitted to the UN Human Rights Committee. Provide edits and comments to drafts lists of issues and views on individual communications.

Center for Justice and International Law **S**ao Paulo, Brazil
Staff Attorney, Women's Rights Project Sept. 2015 - July 2018
Monitored state policies on women's rights at the national and regional level. Cooperated with allied organizations in joint advocacy actions before state authorities and human rights bodies. Led the organization's efforts to advance rights for women with disabilities.

Coordinator, Inclusive Education Project Jan. 2016 - July 2018
Conducted groundbreaking research on the educational situation of people with disabilities in Brazil. Coordinated a network of NGOs committed to advancing legal and policy changes to ensure an inclusive education system.

National Congress Sao Paulo, Brazil
National Congress Commission for the Reform of the Civil Code Jan. - Jun. 2018
Independent Legal Advisor on Gender and Disability Issues
Suggested changes to the draft codes' provisions regarding legal capacity, marriage, and consent to medical treatments.

500 Riverside Drive, Unit 22A
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JebatZainail@law.columbia.edu

March 26, 2020

Human Resources Manager
International Office of Migration
Costado Oeste del Torre C
Mall San Pedro, Sigma Business Center, Piso 1
San José, San Pedro, Costa Rica

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to express my great interest in the Project Officer position in San Jose, Costa Rica, at International Organization for Migration (IOM). I have worked on migration issues throughout my career and recently worked for the Office of Legal Affairs at IOM. I am completing a master's degree in international law and immigration law in May 2020 and would be honored to work on IOM's activities concerning border management in Costa Rica upon graduation, for which I can leverage all my past experiences and knowledge in immigration management and law.

During my previous work as a practicing lawyer focusing on migrants' rights, I promoted and managed various projects relating to immigration issues, particularly on detention, deportation and legalization of irregular migrants and asylum seekers. During the projects, I regularly interacted and negotiated with the immigration authorities, along with other stakeholders including civil society, IOM and UNHCR. I acquired my skills in all aspects of project management, such as planning, implementation, reporting and finance, from my former experience and training as a consultant in global management consultancies, and also had field experience in Kakuma, Kenya, as a volunteer for UNHCR. Through my work and study, I have become thoroughly familiar with global and national migration policy issues and learnt how various countries have dealt with irregular migration with different outcomes.

Moreover, I have thorough knowledge and expertise in the legal works at IOM, and am fully capable of undertaking all contractual works, as well as dispute resolution. In my previous work at LEG, I reviewed numerous contracts of all kinds, including donor agreements and implementation agreements, and wrote opinions and letters on cases of dispute resolution, in coordination with diverse sections of the HQ and regional offices. I am also aware of the issues involving recruitment of external staff and contractors, through in-depth research that I conducted on the contracts and practices of various country offices.

I believe that I can contribute greatly to the work of the office in all aspects of its activities, particularly in project management, while also independently and comprehensively attending to all its legal and contractual matters. I would appreciate an opportunity to apply my background and skills to support and further the valuable and essential works of IOM in Costa Rica.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jebat Zainail

JEBAT ZAINAIL

500 Riverside Drive, Unit 22A, New York, NY 10025
+1-718-514-3435 | JebatZainail@law.columbia.edu

EDUCATION

Columbia Law School, New York, NY Master of Laws, received May 2020
Honors: Fulbright Scholar
Activities: Human Right Watch (Women's Rights Division), Intern
Research Assistant to Professor Sarah Cleveland and Professor Michael Doyle

Jalan University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Bachelor of Law, received Sept. 2012

EXPERIENCE

International Organization for Migration, Manila, Philippines Jan. – June 2019
Legal Assistant (Intern), Office of Legal Affairs
Advised and drafted legal documents for other departments and field offices around the world in all aspects of their operations, including donor/implementation agreements, memoranda on partnerships and large-scale dispute resolution. Drafted internal policy guidelines for the use of human resource providers and developed a database for the office's internal knowledge management.

KL Public Law Office, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Oct. 2014 – Dec. 2018
Partner, Foreigners and International Service Section
Represented migrants and refugees in courts and administrative hearings on a variety of cases including immigration, asylum, criminal, labor and family issues, mostly on legal aid and often in collaboration with NGOs and international organizations. Co-founded a branch office which was the first public-interest law office specializing in foreigners' rights and other international issues, designed its operational protocols including payroll and client management, and played a major role in the management of the office, supporting its co-directors, in its day-to-day operations.

Azziz Shariff Law Office, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Oct. 2012 – Sept. 2014
Associate
Represented migrants and refugees in asylum applications, deportation hearings and criminal cases.

UNHCR, Kakuma, Kenya July 2008 – Aug. 2008
Volunteer
Organized and led a workshop for local NGO staff on micro-projects for the refugees residing in the camps.

VOLUNTEER/PRO BONO

Malaysian Lawyers Network for Refugees April 2014 – Dec. 2018
Board Member
Organized symposia, published opinion papers and directly advocated with the Malaysian government as a network of lawyers involved in refugee protection. Supported members of the private panel of experts for the Minister of Justice on refugee issues to advocate for the improvement of RSD system. Participated in national and international dialogues on refugee issues, including Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights and UNHCR's Annual Consultations with NGOs.

Human Rights Protection Committee, Malaysia Bar Association April 2014 – Dec. 2018
Member, Foreigners' Rights Section
Negotiated with Ministry of Justice on immigration, refugee and detention issues, organized symposia, and drafted sections of its opinion papers, including shadow reports to treaty bodies, mostly on detention and refugee issues.

Lawyers Network for Foreigners May 2016 – Dec. 2018
Vice Executive Officer
Organized seminars, managed a mailing list and built databases on court precedents and other information of practical use for lawyers in Malaysia relating to cases involving foreigners and other international issues. Launched and managed a quarterly newsletter on jurisprudence and other legal issues relating to foreigners.

Office of International Affairs, Malaysia Bar Association March 2016 – Dec. 2018
Part-time Staff Attorney
Organized international conferences and meetings for national bar leaders, and drafted resolutions, formal communication letters and operational guidelines. Directly supported the executive board of the MBA in developing bilateral and multilateral relationships with other national bar associations, preparing for participation in international conferences, and promoting internationalization of its members.

PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH

- Comparative Research on Alternatives to Detention, an unpublished study commissioned to the Malaysia Bar Association by UNHCR (2018)
- A chapter on legitimation and its effect on visa status and citizenship in Malaysia in Latest Practice in International Family Law Cases, (2019).
- A chapter on international divorce and international juridical cooperation in Q&A International Family Law Case Study (2017).
- A chapter on immigration and other legal issues related to natural disasters for foreign residents in Malaysia in Legal Consultation on Natural Disaster Issues, (2015).
- "Lifelines" column, The KL Times, August 2015 to December 2017.
- Columns on various legal issues for foreign residents in Malaysia (eight articles in total).
- "Consultorio Jurídico" column, Revista Mercado Latino, January 2017 to January 2019, (Spanish).
- Monthly columns on various legal issues for foreign residents in Malaysia.

BAR ADMISSION
Admitted to practice in Malaysia in September 2012

LANGUAGES
Bahasa Malaysia (native), English (fluent), Spanish (fluent), French (intermediate)

Final Words: LL.M. Narratives

Hearing from domestic and international public interest professionals about how they secured the jobs they currently have can give you valuable insight that will help you plan a successful job search. This is just one reason why you should reach out to Columbia Law School graduates. (Please remember that the PI/PS Office can help connect you!) But until you do, here are the stories of a few Columbia Law School LL.M. graduates who have been successful in finding public interest work.

Amancio (Tutu) Alicante LL.M. ’04 (Equatorial Guinea)

Originally from the island of Annobón, Equatorial Guinea, Tutu received his J.D. from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 2001. He then spent three years litigating violations of the Fair Labor Standard Act, the Agricultural Worker Protection Act, and other unfair immigration-related employment practice on behalf of migrant farm workers employed in the Deep South (Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee) as coordinator of the Migrant Poultry and Catfish Worker Justice Project, Equal Justice Fellow and then staff attorney for Southern Migrant Legal Services (SMLS). He also volunteered with the South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project (ProBAR), where he served as co-counsel on two successful asylum cases involving street children from Central America under deportation proceedings by the Department of Homeland Security.

In addition to his human rights work at the Law School, which included participating in the Human Rights Clinic, Tutu was a project team member on the Sao Tome and Principe Economic and Political Development Project at Columbia University’s School for International and Public Affairs. In this role, he helped to facilitate a post-national forum on the implementation of economic and political development and provided advice and technical assistance to the government of Sao Tome and Principe regarding oil revenue management regulations.

In 2007, he was named an Echoing Green Fellow, receiving a two-year fellowship awarded to “individuals with innovative ideas for creating new models for tackling seemingly unsolvable social challenges” (for more information, visit the Echoing Green website), which he used to found EG Justice, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting human rights, the rule of law, and transparency and civic participation in Equatorial Guinea.

Since completing his LL.M. degree at Columbia, Tutu has been working on international human rights issues related to transparency and accountability in the extractive industry of the Gulf of Guinea. Tutu also has served on the board of directors of the Highlander Resource and Education Center in Tennessee and the Peace-Building and Demilitarization Program for the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) in Philadelphia and as a legal consultant for the Open Society Justice Initiative in New York.

Anna Marie Bulman LL.M. ’15 (Australia)

Anna came to Columbia Law School with an LL.B. (First Class Hons.), a B.A., and a Dip. Lang. from the University of Adelaide, Australia. Before commencing her LL.M., she had worked for a top-tier corporate law firm in Australia and as a clerk for the Honourable Justice Gray in the Supreme Court of South Australia. As a former South Australian convenor for Australian Lawyers for Human Rights, Anna developed a passion for social justice through work at the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency and the Young Workers’ Legal Service in Australia and the Legal Resources Centre (LRC) in South Africa.

At Columbia Law School, Anna focused on the central role of food in global development, taking courses such as Law and Development, Global Food Systems at SIPA, and the Human Rights, Law, and Development Workshop. Outside of the classroom, she attended a World Bank conference on law, justice, and development in Washington, DC and organized a Law School discussion on “Food Democracy” with Olivier de Schutter, the former U.N. rapporteur on the right to food. During her second semester at the Law School, Anna joined the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment as a legal intern on the organization’s land and agriculture team—where she later worked over the summer on developing a searchable online database of land development contracts.

Anna graduated from Columbia Law School as a James Kent Scholar and the recipient of a David W. Leebron Human Rights Fellowship. As a Leebron Fellow, Anna returned to the LRC in South Africa, where she spent a year and a half heading a right to food project in its Constitutional Litigation Unit. She assisted with ongoing customary rights litigation and other right to food-related cases, coordinated the organization’s business and human rights work as it related to regional and international advocacy, and conducted a research project into the implementation of the National School Feeding Program in the Eastern Cape province, which led to the production of an organizational report and advocacy booklet.

Following her fellowship, Anna undertook a short-term consultancy with the U.N. Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Professor Philip Alston. Anna then moved to Geneva to work in international agricultural trade at the World Trade Organization, before returning to

New York to take up a full-time advisory position through the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at New York University Law School with Professor Alston in his capacity as Special Rapporteur, where she currently works. Anna’s academic writing focuses on the human rights to food and adequate nutrition within international investment and human rights law, as well as international development more broadly.

Su Anne Lee LL.M. ’17 (Malaysia)

A native of Malaysia, Su Anne received her LL.B. (Hons.) from the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom and began her career as a corporate and commercial lawyer at a leading Malaysian law firm.

During her legal practice, she engaged in legal aid and pro bono work with the Kuala Lumpur Legal Aid Centre. She also volunteered extensively in various local and international NGOs throughout Asia Pacific—working with youth from rural villages in India, street children in Cambodia, migrants and minorities in Yunnan, China, and the stateless community in Sabah, Malaysia. These experiences shaped her desire to work in public interest, particularly with marginalized and underserved groups, and to explore how law might be used to advance social justice. After several years in private legal practice, Su Anne joined the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Malaysia, where she worked with refugees, stateless people, and victims of trafficking for six years, focusing on refugee protection and refugee status determination. In 2014, she worked as a consultant with UNHCR Hong Kong during the transitional period prior to the government assuming responsibility for asylum screening processes in Hong Kong.

Su Anne came to Columbia Law School as a Fulbright Scholar, a Catherine N. Niarchos Human Rights Scholar, and an LL.M. Human Rights Fellow. During her LL.M. degree, Su Anne worked with the Human Rights Clinic on a year-long project supporting local indigenous communities and activists in addressing corporate accountability for the environmental and human rights impacts of the extractives industry in Porgera, Papua New Guinea. Su Anne also conducted research focused on examining the right to work for refugees in Malaysia, analyzing laws and policies addressing mixed migration in Southeast Asia, and exploring the relationship between transitional justice mechanisms and refugee rights.

Su Anne graduated from Columbia Law School as a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar and was awarded the Morrison & Foerster Public Interest Fellowship and the postgraduate Greater China Public Interest Fellowship. As a Morrison & Foerster Public Interest Fellow, Su Anne spent her summer at Human Rights Now, an international human rights NGO based in Tokyo, Japan, where she led research on human trafficking and forced labor in Southeast Asia and victims’ rights and reparations in the International Criminal Court.

As a Greater China Public Interest Fellow, Su Anne spent a year in Hong Kong working with PILnet: The Global Network of Public Interest Law. During her fellowship, Su Anne was responsible for designing and implementing PILnet’s anti-human trafficking initiatives in Hong Kong and other jurisdictions in Asia, particularly through leveraging the resources and expertise of private sector lawyers to provide legal support to anti-trafficking NGOs. She also managed PILnet’s pro bono clearinghouse in Hong Kong; built pro bono partnerships, developed pro bono practice within law firms, and expanded legal capacity among NGOs and social enterprises in Hong Kong. Su Anne currently works at the U.N. Development Programme in Malaysia as a programme analyst.

Tehtena Mebratu-Tsegaye LL.M. ’14 (Sierra Leone/UK)

Tehtena earned her LL.B. from the University of Oxford and subsequently completed her Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice at the College of Law, London. Before starting the LL.M. at Columbia Law School, Tehtena trained as a solicitor at an international law firm, where she worked on finance, energy, and infrastructure projects from the firm’s London and Singapore offices.

At Columbia, Tehtena focused on public international law and human rights. As part of the Human Rights, Law, and Development Workshop, she worked with a PILnet fellow on a project related to the rights of people living with disabilities in Nigeria. She also took part in a SIPA Capstone for Tanzania’s anti-corruption bureau, that focused on Tanzania’s natural gas sector. While at Columbia, Tehtena also interned with the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment, focusing on a project on human rights impact assessments in the context of large-scale investment projects.

On completion of the LL.M., Tehtena joined the Open Foundations as an Aryeh Neier Justice Initiative fellow. At the Open Society Justice Initiative, Tehtena worked primarily on research and strategic litigation related to anti-corruption in the context of natural resources and aid flows, as well as freedom of information projects. In addition, she contributed to litigation on the right to truth in Mexico and the right to protest in South Africa. As part of her fellowship, Tehtena went on to work with Namati as a legal consultant, based in their Freetown office. With Namati, Tehtena worked with paralegals and lawyers to represent rural landowners and land users in their interactions with large-scale land-based investors and extractives companies.

Tehtena joined the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment in 2016 as a legal researcher, and she is now a senior legal researcher. Her work with the center focuses on carrying out research, conducting training, and providing advice to governments and civil society on legal frameworks that govern extractive industries and large-scale land-based investments. Her work also focuses on the impacts of extractive industries and large-scale land-based investments on land rights and human rights.

Sofia Minieri LL.M. ’16 (Argentina)

Sofia completed her law degree at Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Argentina, in 2011. After graduating, she worked as a staff attorney at Asociación por los Derechos Civiles, a leading nongovernmental organization in Argentina. There, she advocated for the rights of women both domestically and in other Latin American countries from an intersectional perspective. She focused her attention on monitoring normative and policy frameworks on sexual and reproductive rights for women with and without disabilities and collaborated with local and regional nongovernmental organizations in the implementation of advocacy strategies aimed at advancing these rights.

At Columbia Law School, Sofia had the opportunity to explore how to develop innovative strategies to advance the rights of women by taking courses such as Gender Justice, International Human Rights Advocacy, and the Human Rights Clinic. She was a research assistant for Professor Victor Rodriguez Rescia in his capacity as member of the U.N. Human Rights Committee. She also worked at the Law School’s Human Rights Institute in its efforts to inform the Review of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies System.

Sofia received the Leebron Human Rights Fellowship to work at Red por Los Derechos de Las Personas con Discapacidad (REDI), the National Network for the Rights of People with Disabilities. The primary goal of her year-long project was to establish a coalition of disability rights groups, feminist organizations, and individual advocates devoted to advancing sexual and reproductive rights for women with disabilities in Argentina. To help inform the coalition’s advocacy goals and strategies, Sofia authored two reviews. The first report described the content and scope of sexual and reproductive rights for women with disabilities and a state’s obligations to meet them, while the second assessed whether, and to what extent, Argentina guarantees full enjoyment of these rights.

At the end of her fellowship year, Sofia joined the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), where she currently serves jointly as a fellow for the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women and in the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression. Her work focuses on deepening member states’ understanding of the scope of their obligations to eradicate violence and discrimination against women and strengthening state officials’ capacity to effectively implement related international and regional standards. She is also co-drafting a report on the impact of gender-based violence and discrimination on the right to freedom of expression for female journalists. Sofia currently works at Red por los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad in Buenos Aires, as a specialist in gender issues and rights of women with disabilities.

Gina Mitchell LL.M. ’17 (Australia)

Gina came to Columbia from Australia, having received her Bachelor’s Degree in Law (First Class Hons.) and a B.A. (First Class Hons.) from the University of Sydney. Before coming to Columbia, Gina had an eight-year career as a prosecutor, serving as a Senior Solicitor at the Office of Public Prosecutions in Sydney. During that time, Gina also spent time in New York, where she volunteered at the National Advocates for Pregnant Women, conducting research on reproductive justice. She also earned a Master’s Degree in Law at the University of New South Wales in Australia, with a focus on international law and human rights. Hoping to pivot careers and begin to do work focused on civil rights and criminal justice, Gina came to Columbia to pursue her LL.M. degree.

While at Columbia Law School, Gina participated in the Challenging the Consequences of Mass Incarceration Clinic, where she was able to work on cases representing federal and state prisoners, including women charged with violent crimes applying for parole and a former death row client challenging his solitary confinement. As part of the clinic, Gina also conducted research focused on mass incarceration and litigation and advocacy strategies to minimize its impact. Gina also participated in Professor Franke’s Racial Justice Litigation Workshop and used the practicum component of that class to work as a legal intern at the Office of the New York State Attorney General in the Special Investigations and Prosecution Unit. There, she focused on policing reform, specifically doing research and investigation into civilian deaths caused by New York City Police Department officers.

Gina graduated from Columbia Law School as a Harlan Fiske Scholar and was awarded a Columbia LL.M. Public Interest and Government (Pathways) Fellowship to work as a policing program fellow at the Vera Institute of Justice. There, she did policy work and research regarding emergency police response issues.

After completing her fellowship, Gina worked in various public interest jobs with the goal of transitioning to criminal defense work. First, she worked as a staff attorney at BOOM!Health, doing housing defense work for almost a year. Gina then moved to a position as a senior staff attorney at Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A, where she worked in their tenants’ rights practice for one year. After gaining this additional public interest experience working directly with indigent clients facing court proceedings, Gina was able to reach her goal of working as a public defender in the United States. Gina now works at Queens Defenders, where she focuses on racial justice and decarceration. Currently, her work is primarily dedicated to getting clients released from Rikers Island in the wake of COVID-19 outbreaks.

Deepa Nambiar LL.M. ’13 (Malaysia)

Trained as a lawyer, Deepa practiced in corporate litigation in her native Malaysia for four years after obtaining her LL.B. (Hons) from the University of London. While in legal practice, Deepa simultaneously pursued her passion in social justice issues as an active member of the Bar Council Human Rights Committee, where she drafted a complaint on the status of women in Malaysia that was submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women as part of the U.N. Universal Periodic Review, co-organized a forum with UNICEF on the right to education for children in Malaysia, and was involved in public interest litigation and public inquiries into human rights violations on behalf of the Bar Council. She also developed an interest and passion in refugee rights, mentoring a refugee family in Kuala Lumpur and regularly providing pro bono legal advice to refugees in Malaysia who were undergoing status determination procedures in the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Keen to pursue a full-time career in human rights, Deepa joined the LL.M. program at Columbia Law School on a Fulbright Scholarship, with a particular focus on international law and human rights. As part of the Gender and Sexuality Law Clinic, she researched and drafted a report for the New York Anti-Trafficking Network on human rights-based alternatives to sex offender registration and community notification legislation for trafficking- and prostitution-related offenses in the U.S. In her second semester, she was selected for the U.N. Law and Policy course, where she authored a paper on the enhancement of refugee protection in Southeast Asia through U.N. human rights mechanisms, which was subsequently published in a law review in Malaysia. She also externed with the Independent Expert to the U.N. Committee Against Torture, Ms. Felice Gaer, analyzing state parties’ compliance with the committee’s recommendations. In her time in New York, she completed internships with Human Rights Watch and the Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the United Nations and graduated as a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar in 2013.

Upon completing the LL.M., Deepa returned to Malaysia and joined UNHCR as a protection associate conducting refugee status determination for refugees. She then founded and launched Asylum Access Malaysia, the Malaysia office of an international refugee human rights nonprofit organization that uses legal empowerment and policy advocacy to improve refugee rights. As country director, she developed and led advocacy strategies to advance refugee policy in Malaysia, including through the use of international human rights mechanisms, and led all its programs and operations. In 2016, she was elected as chair of the Southeast Asia Working Group of the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN), responsible for the development and coordination of APRRN’s strategies in Southeast Asia. In 2018, she joined the International Detention Coalition, a global network of over 400 civil society organizations and individuals in almost 90 countries that advocate for, research and provide direct services to refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants affected by immigration detention. As the Asia Pacific regional coordinator, she coordinates the activities of members in the region. She is regularly invited to speak at international, regional, and domestic events on issues surrounding refugee rights and forced migration in Malaysia and the broader region.