

## Columbia Justice Fellowships 2024

Columbia Law School announces the inaugural Columbia Justice Fellowship, which will help launch the public interest career of two Columbia Law J.D. graduates by placing each with one of a select group of participating impact litigation organizations focused on promoting justice. During the fellowship's two-year term, fellows will have the unique opportunity to work on cutting-edge impact litigation for prominent organizations and to participate in effecting social change through legal advocacy. Applicants may choose to apply to any of the below organizations. Successful applicants must demonstrate substantial commitment, ability, and preparation for making a difference as a public interest lawyer. Fellows will receive a stipend of \$70,000 per year for each year, and benefits will be covered by the participating organization.

**Applications for the fellowship are due on January 31, 2024.**

### Terms of the Fellowship

Two Columbia Justice Fellowships will be awarded for a two-year term. The fellowship is available to graduates of Columbia Law School who are members of the J.D. Class of 2024 (October 2023, February 2024, or May 2024).

The fellowship will be awarded to two applicants who demonstrate a deep commitment to public interest legal work and an ability to make a substantial contribution to their field. It will provide the fellows with the opportunity to join an organization committed to significant justice-oriented work and will enable them to engage in impact litigation and other related legal work. The fellowship does not require development of an independent project; fellows will instead do work similar to that of staff attorneys at each organization.

The fellowship carries a stipend of \$70,000 per year. The participating organization will provide all fringe benefits to which an entry-level lawyer at the organization is entitled. The fellows must begin work within five months of graduation.

### Participating Organizations

Applicants for this year's Columbia Justice Fellowship may join any of the following participating organizations:

- **The NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF)** is the country's first and foremost civil and human rights law organization. Since its founding in 1940 under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall, LDF's mission has been transformative—to achieve racial justice, equality, and an inclusive society. LDF's litigation, policy advocacy, organizing, and public education programs in the substantive areas of criminal justice, economic justice, education, and political participation seek to ensure the fundamental and basic human rights of all people to quality education and economic opportunity, the right to vote and fully participate in democracy, and the right to a fair and just judicial system. LDF seeks to sponsor a fellow or fellows to address systemic obstacles and policies that underlie

continuing racial disparities and discrimination. Fellows will work with LDF attorneys and other staff on litigation in state and federal courts, policymaking, and/or other forms of advocacy.

- **LatinoJustice PRLDEF (LJP)** is one of the foremost Latino civil rights organizations in the country, serving a pan-Latinx constituency. Since 1972, LJP has been bringing precedent-setting racial justice litigation that has profoundly improved the way Latinos are treated in our society. Current areas of focus include economic justice, with a focus on employment, education, and housing; immigrant rights, challenging federal and local law enforcement abuses; criminal law reform, combatting unconstitutional conduct in our policing and prison systems; voting rights, including language access and redistricting; and the rights of Puerto Ricans, both in the archipelago and in the United States. For 2024-2026, Columbia Justice Fellows will be based in the New York headquarters and will work in several of these pillar and practice areas, with a focus on economic justice and workplace rights. Fellows will be incorporated into existing litigation, receive training in all aspects of civil rights law, and join staff in developing new impact and law reform litigation.
- **The New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU)** is one of the nation's leading advocates on behalf of constitutional rights and liberties. Founded in 1951 as the New York affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union, the NYCLU is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with more than 85,000 members and supporters and eight offices statewide. For 2024-2026, fellows will be based in New York City and can expect to work on litigation and policy matters focusing on racial justice, criminal justice and police accountability, voting rights, gender equity, reproductive rights, LGBTQ justice, education equity, privacy and technology, economic justice, and environmental justice.

### Application and Selection Procedure

The application deadline is January 31, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. Please upload the following materials at [cglink.me/2it/s81834](https://cglink.me/2it/s81834).

- 1) Your resume
- 2) An *unofficial* copy your Columbia Law School transcript
- 3) Two letters of recommendation (with at least one coming from a past legal supervisor)<sup>1</sup>
- 4) One statement of interest (one page, single-spaced) per participating organization you wish to apply for. (For example, if you are interested in two organizations, you may submit two separate statements of interest.)

A selection committee consisting of representatives from the Columbia Law School Office of Public Interest/Public Service Law and Careers, Columbia Law School faculty, and representatives from the participating organizations will select the fellowship recipients. As part of the selection process, applicants will be invited to participate in a short interview with the selection committee after submitting their applications. Fellowships will be awarded by the end of March 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> If recommenders prefer, they may send letters directly to Rebecca Hinde at [rh2523@columbia.edu](mailto:rh2523@columbia.edu).

**Fellowship Contacts**

For questions about substantive issues such as fellowship criteria or your materials, please contact:

Joel Dodge

Director of Public Interest Lawyering and Strategic Initiatives

[jd3645@columbia.edu](mailto:jd3645@columbia.edu)

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

Rebecca Hinde

Coordinator for Communications and Postgraduate Fellowships

[rh2523@columbia.edu](mailto:rh2523@columbia.edu)