

First Nations Social Justice Graduate Program

Position Description

First Nations Social Justice Graduate Program

- Structured 2-year program for law graduates
- Financial support and paid Practical Legal Training
- Transition into solicitor role with professional mentoring
- Identified position for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- Flexible work arrangements available

1. The Shopfront and the Justice and Equity Centre

The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre provides free legal advice and assistance for homeless and disadvantaged young people aged 25 years and younger. It is a *pro bono* project of Herbert Smith Freehills, in partnership with Mission Australia and The Salvation Army.

The Justice and Equity Centre (JEC) (formerly the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC)) is a leading social justice law and policy centre. We build a fairer, stronger society by helping to change laws, policies and practices that cause injustice and inequality.

2. Program Components and Structure

The program runs for a total of two years, in two phases. It can be tailored to suit the requirements of the different GDLP course structures on offer.

In phase one (6-12 months), the successful candidate will be supported to achieve admission as a lawyer in NSW, undertaking the Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice (GDLP, or equivalent qualification), while working part-time in a paralegal role at The Shopfront to satisfy the requirements of practical legal training. This will involve:

- A bursary for course fees.
- Paid part-time employment plus living allowance, with study leave for examinations as required.
- Upon completion of GDLP coursework, full-time employment as a graduate, until admission as a solicitor.
- Payment of the fee for admission as a lawyer to the Supreme Court of NSW.

In phase two, the successful candidate will be employed full-time as a solicitor. The solicitor will provide individual casework assistance to clients of The Shopfront (primarily focused on criminal law) and then work at the JEC on strategic litigation and policy responses to issues arising in that casework – including the use of police powers against young people, the impact of child protection laws and policies and systemic responses to youth homelessness.

The successful candidate will be employed by the JEC and work at The Shopfront under a secondment arrangement.

3. Position overview

This is an exciting opportunity for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander law graduate to start their career working with two well-established and highly respected legal centres at the forefront of social and criminal justice.

The First Nations Social Justice Graduate Program combines support for achieving admission as a lawyer with hands-on legal experience, professional mentoring and training to provide the foundations for a successful career in the law.

4. Major accountabilities

You will:

- 4.1 Assist solicitors to provide legal services to clients of The Shopfront and the JEC, including through research, drafting and paralegal support.
- 4.2 As a solicitor, provide legal assistance under supervision, including advice and legal casework in criminal and civil law, to clients of The Shopfront and the JEC.
- 4.3 Contribute to policy and law reform work, including through research and drafting submissions, reports and articles.
- 4.4 Other duties as reasonably required.

5. Knowledge, skills and experience

Essential

- 5.1 This position is open only to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people (see below).
- 5.2 Completed LLB or JD law degree in Australia at the time of commencing in the role or penultimate year LLB or JD student expected to complete their law degree in the first year of the program.
- 5.3 Demonstrated ability to manage competing demands and deliver high-quality results on time.
- 5.4 Legal research and writing skills.
- 5.5 Demonstrated ability to achieve outcomes individually and/or in a team environment.
- 5.6 Well-developed interpersonal skills.

6. Identified position

This role is an identified position for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. It is a selection criterion that the person is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person according to the following accepted criteria:

- 6.1 being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- 6.2 identifying as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person; and
- 6.3 being accepted as such by the community in which you live, or formerly lived.

Applicants who do not address this criterion in their written application will not be considered for the position. No specific form of documentation or 'proof' of identity is required, but applicants should provide confirmation of their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity: for example, a letter of support from a local First Nations organisation, or a recognised Elder in their community.

7. Conditions

The JEC is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Remuneration will be negotiated with the successful candidate, with flexibility for GDLP course requirements and other commitments. Salaries at the JEC are expected to increase in the coming period under a new Enterprise Agreement being negotiated. As an indicative package:

Year one:

- \$75,284 (pro rata), plus superannuation.
- Anticipated 2 days' employment per week during GDLP coursework (and full time employment after GDLP coursework), plus living allowance \$200 per week

Year two:

- \$86,822 plus superannuation.

The JEC is a Public Benevolent Institution and is currently able to offer salary packaging options subject to PIAC's Salary Sacrifice Policy. Staff who take full advantage of salary packaging options can significantly increase their take-home pay.

The JEC's Enterprise Agreement provides benefits including additional paid leave between Christmas and New Year and paid cultural leave. See further: [Public Interest Advocacy Centre Enterprise Agreement](#).

The JEC is committed to flexible working arrangements and provides opportunities for professional development and mentoring. Our workplace culture is collaborative, dynamic and committed to cultural safety

8. Applications

Your application should be no longer than 6 pages in total. An application should comprise a cover letter, resume, and a statement outlining your suitability for the role with reference to the selection criteria (see 'knowledge, skills and experience').

Applications should be sent by email to jobs@iec.org.au

Inquiries about the position should be addressed to:

Jonathan Hall Spence
Principal Solicitor
jhallspence@iec.org.au