

SENIOR SPECIALIST LAWYER – NATURE

Position description

Use your legal skills to protect Australia's precious ecosystems! This role will lead EJA's nature program and manage a small but high-impact team to use litigation and other legal strategies to protect key ecosystems across Australia. Our strong record on nature protection demonstrates the impact you could have in addressing our biodiversity crisis.

The role will supervise legal staff, lead the strategic direction of the program, and develop and lead the delivery of the key elements of the program. These include researching potential legal interventions, engaging with clients and community partners, developing funding proposals, monitoring and reporting on activities and impact, managing budgets and representing EJA at events and in the media.

The capacity and willingness to work closely with local communities and environment groups, and support their strategies and campaigns, is essential.

The position is full time but 4 days per week will be considered. The role reports to the Co-CEOs and manages a team of three lawyers.

The candidate must be admitted to practice or eligible for admission to practice in Australia.

Environmental Justice Australia is an equal opportunity employer. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTQI people and people with a disability are encouraged to apply.

Applications close 27 February 2022, but applications will be reviewed as they are received and interviews arranged for suitable candidates.

About us

Environmental Justice Australia is a leading public interest legal organisation. Our lawyers act on behalf of people and community organisations to safeguard health; protect magnificent forests, rivers and wildlife; and tackle the climate crisis. We partner with communities and other social justice organisations because we are stronger together.

Using innovative approaches, we find the best legal solutions to climate and environment issues. Our team works inside and outside the courtroom to make the system fair and just for all. We work on issues and in areas of Australia where we can have the most impact.

Values

Collaboration: We work in partnership with community and other organisations because we are in this together

Respect: We treat everyone with respect and we value different perspectives as we know we can learn something from everyone

Ambition: We aim high and are at all times focused on achieving maximum impact for nature, climate and communities

Positivity: We maintain hope and a positive approach because we believe we can change the world

Justice: We are driven by our sense of justice – it's at the core of everything we do.

Responsibilities

- Lead and manage EJA's nature program including the strategic direction of the program, represent EJA in meetings and the media, manage program budget, maintain funding relationships, and report on the program.
- Run strategic litigation and provide high quality legal advice and representation to community and NGO clients in matters related to nature.
- Supervise legal staff and guide their work programs.
- Conduct detailed legal research in the area of public or environment law on matters relevant to the program, and draft reports and legal analysis for publication.
- Contribute to public advocacy on nature protection issues in partnership with community groups and NGOs.
- Build and maintain excellent relationships with key stakeholders including government and politicians, partner organisations, funders and community groups.
- Work with the Communications Manager and the Development Manager to ensure our work is communicated effectively to multiple audiences.
- Effectively use practice management and office management software.
- Contribute to the EJA team and the running of the organisation and office, uphold EJA's values and participate in all relevant aspects of EJA planning, review and reporting.

Selection criteria

Essential

- Currently admitted or eligible for admission to practice law in Australia, with post-graduation legal experience of 7+ years in Australia.
- Experience as the instructing solicitor in public interest, environmental or public law litigation, and in managing complex legal files.
- Experience in developing and delivering program and legal strategies, preferably related to public interest environmental law.
- Experience in managing junior lawyers.
- Enthusiasm to work closely with local communities and NGOs to support their campaigns and legal needs.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills including demonstrated ability to communicate legal concepts in clear language and prepare written legal advice.
- Commitment to environment or social justice issues.
- Initiative, energy, self-motivation, and ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a collaborative team environment, and to work to tight deadlines.

Desirable

- Prior experience working within an integrated legal, human rights or environmental justice advocacy organisation as a lawyer, or of working on campaigns for legal change.

- Knowledge of environment or public law and environmental issues.
- Knowledge or training in environmental science or similar discipline.

Location

Melbourne. Other locations in Australia will be considered for an exceptional candidate.

Terms and conditions

Terms and conditions for these roles will be negotiated based on the following:

- The position is full time but 4 days a week will be considered for an exceptional candidate. It is a 2-year initial contract with likelihood of extension depending on funding.
- EJA encourages flexible work arrangements and there is some scope for negotiation with respect to days and hours of work.
- The role is based in Melbourne at our office in Carlton, with travel outside Melbourne required occasionally. Other locations will be considered for an exceptional candidate.
- Out of hours work is required occasionally.
- Terms and conditions of employment are based on the SCHADS award with over-agreement salary and conditions depending on experience. Salary range for full-time work is \$118,150 to \$124,650 depending on experience, plus superannuation and leave loading.
- EJA is bound by the Victorian Government COVID vaccination mandate and therefore EJA staff members must be fully vaccinated to undertake any work outside the home in Victoria.
- Please note that salary sacrificing is not available.

Benefits of working with EJA

You will be an important part of a lean but high-impact organisation. We are proud to offer our staff a supportive workplace with excellent conditions, including:

- Supportive work environment and opportunity to work regularly from home, with options for flexible work hours.
- Four weeks of annual leave a year plus an additional three days off (pro rata) over the Christmas period.
- 17.5% annual leave loading.
- Ongoing professional development opportunities.
- Access to our Employee Assistance Program and wellbeing support.
- Melbourne office has secure bike parking and close to public transport as well as countless cafes, restaurants and shops.
- Be part of an organisation that values and celebrates cultural diversity.

How to apply

Send us a brief application comprising:

- your resume; and
- a statement of no more than 3 pages detailing why you want to work with us and addressing the selection criteria outlined above. NOTE that if you do not address the selection criteria your application will not be considered.

Email your application to recruitment@envirojustice.org.au

Enquiries: Nicola Rivers or Elizabeth McKinnon, Co-CEOs on 03 8341 3112

Closing date: Sunday 27 February at 11.59pm (AEST), but applications will be reviewed as they are received and interviews arranged for suitable candidates.