

POSITION DESCRIPTION JUNIOR/GRADUATE SOLICITOR

ABOUT THE NATIONAL JUSTICE PROJECT

The National Justice Project (NJP) is a not-for-profit legal service and civil rights organisation. We use the law, advocacy and education to tackle systemic injustice and promote government accountability. We primarily represent and support First Nations Peoples, asylum seekers and refugees who have harmed and discriminated against within the justice and health care systems. We advance human rights by representing and supporting our clients to have their voices heard. We advocate for the reform and development of law, and a justice system that is fair, just and equitable, by taking on the most challenging cases that will create systemic change.

Our head office based in Sydney is a small and busy workplace. We recognise and pay our deepest respects to all sovereign First Nations Peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work. NJP recognises that throughout history the Australian legal system has been an instrument of violence and oppression against First Nations Peoples, as well as other minority groups. NJP seeks to strengthen and promote dialogue between the Australian legal system and First Nations laws, governance structures and protocols.

We are committed to reconciliation and achieving social justice by ensuring everyone has the right to equal access and status under the law. We work collaboratively with community partners to identify and advocate against systemic injustices. We are a small team of both legal and non-legal staff who all work flexibly and cooperatively to achieve positive outcomes for our clients, strategic outcomes in Australia's legal landscape and enhance rights awareness within the community.

THE POSITION

The NJP is offering two fixed term paid opportunity for lawyers/soon-to-be lawyers. The successful candidates will be offered a 12-month contract, to be based in Sydney, NSW.

There are two positions available:

- A Full Time Solicitor – this is open to people with minimum 1-2 years post admission experience.
- A Part Time Grad Lawyer – this will be a flexible 2-3 days a week position and opened to final year law students and grad lawyers.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Contribute to direct legal casework and strategic litigation;
- Liaise with clients and our partners;
- Provide high quality advice, assistance and casework service to the clients of the NJP;
- Undertake administrative and case management activities;
- Be involved in a wide range of legal and policy issues and cases within our practice; and,
- Maintain an effective and ethical legal practice including compliance with NJP policies, legislative requirements and practice management standards.

KEY CANDIDATE CONSIDERATIONS:

- Individuals who identify as being from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) racial or ethnic group and have lived experienced of discrimination are strongly encouraged to apply.
- Please note that this role involves working with confronting subject matter and with traumatised, and at-times highly distressed, clients.
- Some travel may be required.
- The successful candidate will apply their legal training, together with any lived experience and knowledge, to practical and administrative tasks to seek justice and accountability for our clients and the wider community.
- You will be required to provide reflective reports over the course of the year.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING:

- Undertaking your work and other activities with integrity whilst upholding the organisation's values and in particular, ensuring a people-first approach across our staff, volunteers and clients;
- Supporting team cohesion in a flexible and friendly manner;
- Protecting and enhancing the reputation of the organisation;
- Executing the tasks that are assigned to you to a high standard;
- Collecting data to evaluate your work and regularly reporting on it;
- Meeting objectives and deliverables in a timely manner; and,
- Maintaining positive relationships with NJP's partner organisations and the wider community.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES, INCLUDING:

- Working on or contributing to a wide range of legal matters under the direction of the Senior Solicitors or Principal Solicitor including civil litigation (primarily tort law; medical negligence, nervous shock claims, assault), coronial inquests, constitutional and administrative law cases, and complaints to various bodies including health care complaint bodies, police oversight bodies, the Ombudsman and the Australian Human Rights Commission. This may include contributing to the drafting of pleadings, affidavits or other documents;
- Assisting the Senior Solicitors and Principal Solicitor with all administrative aspects of their work;
- File management, including case planning and maintaining spreadsheets;
- Making FOI or equivalent applications and liaising with recipient organisations;
- Reviewing medical and other records and preparing briefs to counsel and medical experts;
- Developing and maintaining a strong and sensitive working relationship with clients, and taking accurate and clear instructions;
- Maintaining strong professional relationships with Counsel, partner/defendant firms and clients;
- Preparing advice, legal research and time recording; and,
- Answering phones and directing calls.
- Conducting intakes and summarising legal issues to provide legal advice or warm referrals to appropriate services for related problems of but not exhaustive to; employment, social security (Centrelink), housing, credit and debts.

SUPERVISING JUNIOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS:

- While you will have no direct reports, it is expected that you will provide day-to-day guidance to any team member that is allocated to assist you in your matters (or is otherwise assisting you) including volunteers and junior staff;
- NJP is involved in various University clinical placements throughout the year. NJP staff may be required to represent NJP and participate in the clinics, including in the allocation of work, provision of training and providing supervision to the students; and,
- As you become more experienced, you may provide guidance and training to other paralegals and new solicitors.

KEY CONTACTS

You will report to your allocated Team Leader/Senior Solicitor on a daily basis in relation to your caseload, leave requests and other matters. You may also receive instruction from time to time from other members of the NJP Executive Team, Legal team or Principal Solicitor.

APPLICATION PROCESS

All questions and applications should be sent to hr@justice.org.au by 5pm on July 15, 2022. Early applications will be considered. The start dates of the positions are flexible for the right candidate, but we are hoping to have the successful applicant commence in late July 2022.

In your application, please send your CV along with a statement with your response to the below selection criteria:

- For the FT position, a current practising certificate (NSW);
- A passion for human rights and social justice, in particular in relation to Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander people, refugees and asylum seekers; and,
- An understanding of culturally safe and trauma informed practice.

Selection Criteria:

The successful candidates will be required to be competent in the following core skills:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills;
- An ability to manage multiple competing priorities under tight deadlines;
- Excellent administrative and organisational skills; and,
- Experience working both independently with minimal supervision and as a part of a team.

Desirable experience:

- Fluency in a second language is highly regarded;

- Fluency in Arabic, Afghan Farsi, Bengali, Farsi or Persian, Hazaragi, Kurdish, Nepali, Pashtu, Somali, Somali Arabic, Sudanese or Urdu is highly regarded;
- Experience working with clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is highly regarded;
- Lived experienced as an individual who identifies as CALD is highly regarded;
- Lived experienced as a person who has sought asylum or immigrated to Australia is highly regarded;
- Experience working with First Nations, refugee and asylum seeker clients is highly regarded;
- Experience working with vulnerable clients is highly regarded;
- Knowledge of policy and issues impacting people seeking asylum in Australia is highly regarded;
- Experience working in a legal office is highly regarded;
- Strong community relationships are highly regarded; and,
- Experience working in a not-for-profit organisation is highly regarded.

The NJP is an inclusive workplace which values diversity. We strongly encourage people who identify LGBTQIA+, people with lived experience of seeking asylum, First Nations people, people who identify as CALD, and people with lived experience of disability to apply to work with us.