Human Rights Law Centre

Position Description: Senior Lawyer or Lawyer, Migration Justice

August 2023

Full-time, 1-year contract.

The Human Rights Law Centre, a leading national human rights organisation, is seeking a Lawyer or Senior Lawyer to work in our migration justice program.

This position is offered for an initial 1-year contract, with a view to extending subject to donor support. This is a full-time position located in Melbourne; however, we are open to flexible arrangements for the right candidate.

People from migrant or refugee backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply.

About the Human Rights Law Centre

The Human Rights Law Centre uses strategic legal action, policy solutions and advocacy to support people and communities to eliminate inequality and injustice and build a fairer, more compassionate Australia.

Our vision is an Australia where everyone is free to lead a decent, dignified life; where our laws, policies and institutions promote fairness and equality; and where people and communities have the power to address inequality and injustice and ensure that governments always act in the public interest.

We maximise our impact by working closely with key partners, including community organisations, pro bono law firms and barristers, academics and experts, and international and domestic human rights organisations. We are independent of government and business, with most of our funding coming from donations and philanthropic grants.

The Human Rights Law Centre is a registered charity with offices in Melbourne and Sydney. We are a diverse team with a strong, shared commitment to creating a better, fairer Australia.

About our Migration Justice work

Our Migration Justice work aims to help create an Australia where all people who cross national borders have a right to dignity, safety and a pathway to making Australia a permanent home.

Our team works in close collaboration with the communities we represent and with other organisations in the migration and refugee rights and services sector. We aim to build relationships of trust and accountability with the communities, partners and clients we work with.

Our current areas of focus include:

- ending the offshore detention regime and ensuring permanent safety for people subjected to it;
- bringing families back together and changing the laws and policies that are keeping people separated from their loved ones for years on end;
- advocating for pathways to permanency for migrants and combatting the exploitation of migrant workers; and
- ending mandatory and indefinite immigration detention in Australia.

About this role

As part of a small but dedicated team, this position will contribute to our work supporting refugee and migrant communities to seek justice and enforce their rights.

The Lawyer or Senior Lawyer will work with our Managing Lawyer, Migration Justice to undertake litigation, provide migration advice, undertake public and political advocacy, draft policy submissions, participate in and build coalitions, and engage with the communities we work with.

We are seeking a senior lawyer or experienced junior lawyer with a deep understanding of the systematic abuses perpetrated through Australia's migration system, and a commitment to working in solidarity towards law reform and social change.

Key responsibilities

Reporting to our Managing Lawyer, Migration Justice, the Lawyer or Senior Lawyer will:

- lead or assist with strategic litigation and project management in the team's focus areas;
- work directly with clients to assist with non-litigious migration matters;
- undertake research, drafting and consultation to prepare policy submissions, reports, letters, and other publications;
- develop strong stakeholder and client relationships including with community and pro bono partners;
- undertake media work and other public appearances to support advocacy goals;
- represent or support the organisation in senior-level meetings and forums;
- assist with strategic planning for the Migration Justice team and the broader organisation;
- assist with communications and fundraising work;
- assist with the induction and supervision of lawyers, paralegals, volunteers or secondees; and
- undertake administrative tasks as required in a small team.

Selection Criteria

- deep understanding of and commitment to promoting the rights of people who are migrants or refugees;
- a law degree and admission to practice in an Australian jurisdiction, and 1-5 years' post-qualification experience working in refugee or migration law;
- experience conducting litigation, preferably in administrative law;
- ability to develop, implement and oversee strategy to achieve legal and policy change;
- ability to develop and maintain strong and constructive relationships with refugee and migrant communities, individuals and organisations;
- strong written and verbal communication skills;
- demonstrated ability to work autonomously and manage priorities and deadlines; and
- willingness to work collaboratively and in partnership with other legal, advocacy, community and grassroots organisations.

Terms and Conditions

The Human Rights Law Centre is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce. We know our team and our work is stronger with a diversity of backgrounds and experience, including lived experience of the issues we work on. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people of colour, people from migrant or refugee backgrounds, people with diverse religious beliefs, women, LGBTIQ+ people and people with a disability are strongly encouraged to apply.

The full-time annual salary for this role is $104,727 for a Lawyer or $114,297 for a Senior Lawyer.

The Human Rights Law Centre's Enterprise Agreement provides benefits including 5 weeks annual leave and paid cultural and ceremonial leave. See further: Human Rights Law Centre Enterprise Agreement.

The position is a full-time, 1-year position with a six-month probation period. The Human Rights Law Centre has charity tax status enabling us to offer staff generous salary packaging options. The tax savings for staff who take full advantage of salary packaging options significantly increases their take home pay.

The Human Rights Law Centre offers flexible working arrangements, opportunities for professional development and mentoring, and a workplace culture that is collaborative, dynamic, values diversity and is committed to learning and looking after each other.

The position may involve regular domestic travel. Applicants must have the right to work in Australia.

Applications

Applications should be sent by email to Justin Baré, Director, People & Operations at jobs@hrlc.org.au. Applications should comprise:

- a cover letter addressing the key selection criteria (maximum 2 pages); and
- your resume.

Please combine these as a single PDF document, clearly named with your name in the document title.

We are keen for this position to be as soon as possible and will be contacting suitable candidates as applications are received.

The closing date for applications is 5pm, Monday September 4 , 2023.

Further information

For further information about the Human Rights Law Centre, see www.hrlc.org.au. For further information about this position, email justin.bare@hrlc.org.au.