



SOUTH-EAST MONASH LEGAL SERVICE INC.

ADVOCACY COMMUNITY EMPATHY

POSITION DESCRIPTION: Community Engagement Lawyer

Title:	Community Engagement Lawyer
Status:	0.8 FTE or Full Time
Reports to:	Principal - Partnerships, Community and Impact
Classification:	Social Community Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award
Salary:	SCHADS Award rate (based on skills and experience) plus superannuation and generous salary packaging

About SMLS

Established in 1973, South-East Monash Legal Service (SMLS) is a community legal centre that provides free legal assistance to people in Southeast Melbourne. SMLS provides legal information, advice and case work including representation for people experiencing disadvantage on a range of legal matters, such as family law and family violence, employment law, debt and fines, civil litigation, wills, power of attorney, and tenancy.

SMLS aims to empower and support members of the community to understand and make use of the law and the legal system to protect their rights and to increase their awareness of their legal responsibilities. SMLS is a strong advocate of and committed to the use of integrated service models to address multifaceted challenges facing our community members.

SMLS is committed to advocacy and social change. SMLS is a leader in the provision of community and clinical legal education; advocacy through policy submissions and lobbying; outreach services; and targeted referral programs.

Our Vision

A fair and inclusive community where people can access the resources, networks and support they need to resolve legal issues and overcome barriers to social, cultural and economic inclusion and participation

Our Purpose

To help resolve people's legal and interconnected issues and ensure that laws and legal processes are fair.

Our Values

Our core values are Respect, Community, Excellence and Courage.

Position Purpose

The Community Engagement Lawyer will lead and deliver legal education and engagement initiatives that improve legal literacy and empower individuals from multicultural and linguistically diverse communities. The role builds community capacity to understand and navigate the legal system, with a focus on culturally safe and accessible education. The Community Engagement Lawyer will co-design and co-develop content with team members and communities to ensure appropriate delivery of key legal messages. This role will also contribute to law reform to strengthen our community.

Strategic Objectives

This role aligns with all our Strategic Objectives.

Employees, students and volunteers at SMLS should be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of these objectives and be able to implement them through their duties. For more information about our strategic objectives, read SMLS' Strategic Plan 2021-2025 [here](#).

Position Responsibilities

Community Engagement and Legal Service Delivery

- Plan, develop and deliver effective community legal education content and projects.
- Design, develop, and deliver culturally appropriate community legal education workshops, webinars, and outreach sessions.
- Build and maintain partnerships with multicultural organisations, migrant resource centres, religious groups, and ethnic community leaders to support community engagement, outreach and service delivery.
- Produce plain-language legal resources (e.g. fact sheets, videos, podcasts) on priority topics (e.g. tenancy, family law, fines, employment law, domestic violence, etc.).
- Facilitate co-design processes with community groups to ensure CLE content is relevant, accessible, and respond to identified needs.
- Identify emerging legal issues and barriers faced by community through engagement and feedback and contribute insights to law reform initiatives.
- Support general legal services by providing advice sessions, limited case work and warm referrals.
- Assist in collecting data, evaluating impact, and assisting in preparing reports to funders.

Organisational Participation

- Participate in organisational strategic planning initiatives and projects.
- Contribute to a healthy, productive organisational culture where work practices, decision making, and behaviour reflect SMLS philosophy and values.
- Develop and strengthen networks, engaging the support and involvement of a range of individuals and organisations.
- Occasional travel within regional Victoria may be required as part of program delivery and community engagement activities.
- Perform other duties as directed and necessary for the proper performance of the role.

Values and Behaviour

- Promote and role model appropriate behaviour to support SMLS culture, performance and profile.
- Actively support SMLS commitment to the principles of diversity, inclusion, social justice and Equal Employment Opportunity.
- Actively demonstrate organisational values.
- Demonstrate commitment to continuous personal development, with a strong willingness to develop new skills and knowledge.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

- Act in a safe manner at all times, including complying with all safety instructions and training.
- Participate in, and contribute to, health and safety awareness and improvements.
- Report all incidents, injuries and potential hazards in a timely manner.
- Ensure that the work is carried out in ways which safeguard the health and safety of workers, or others in their charge, including contractors whom they engage.

Position Requirements

Essential Selection Criteria

- Eligibility to hold an unrestricted Victorian legal practicing certificate with two years post-admission practice.
- Demonstrated understanding of community legal education principles and adult learning approaches.
- Strong experience engaging with CALD communities, including cultural sensitivity and awareness of systemic barriers.
- High-level written and verbal communication skills, including public speaking and community engagement.
- Ability to work collaboratively across legal, social work, and community teams.
- Strong commitment to social justice, human rights, and the values of SMLS.

Desirable

- Experience working in a community legal centre or not-for-profit setting.
- Knowledge of specific legal issues affecting migrants and refugees, such as immigration law, employment rights, or domestic/family violence.

Personal Attributes

- Motivated by collaboration and a commitment to achieving collective impact.
- Flexible and adaptive, with the ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a small team.
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to social justice, equity, and community empowerment.

- Demonstrate a solutions and outcomes focus, maintaining a steady line of sight to the impact of our actions for our clients.
- Ability to demonstrate initiative and openness to change, with a receptiveness to new ideas.
- The capacity to reflect on own work performance.
- A commitment to SMLS values and to creating a positive work environment.

Location and Work Outside Office Hours

The position will be based between the SMLS offices in Springvale and Narre Warren, with work also conducted at outreach and court locations. Occasional work outside normal office hours may be required, such as to attend meetings and after-hours events.

What SMLS offers

- 5 weeks annual leave
- Extra days off over Christmas and New Year
- Paid above award
- Cultural and ceremonial leave
- Additional Family Violence leave
- Gender affirmation leave
- Professional development
- A culture of mentorship and opportunities for career progression