

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

International human rights lawyers tend to do research, advocacy, litigation, protection, and / or capacity-building. Students interested in this field are advised to use their time in school strategically – including doing relevant internships, clinics, and research and writing – to develop a profile and gain expertise in a subject and / or geographic area. It is also incredibly important to build a strong network of contacts.

GET INVOLVED

Student Groups

Law Students for Human Rights
International Law Society
Africa Law Association
Asia Law Society
Anti-Trafficking Advocacy Coalition

Law School Centers

Center for Human Rights & Global Justice
Institute for International Law & Justice
Center for Constitutional Transitions at NYU Law
Hauser Global Law School
US/Asia Law Institute

Take advantage of NYU's location! The NYC Bar Association has many committees dealing with international law. Large numbers of events at the UN and at other organizations in the city also present excellent networking opportunities. NYU also provides resources to develop foreign language skills – see <http://www.law.nyu.edu/global/globalopportunities/languageinstruction>.

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Amnesty International (The Hague)
Crisis Action (NY)
International Criminal Court (The Hague)
Physicians for Human Rights (DC)
Leitner Center for Int'l Law & Justice (NY)
Human Rights Watch (Brazil)
PILNet (NY)
UN High Commission for Refugees (Geneva)
United Nations (NY)
ACLU Human Rights Project (NY)

SELECTED SUMMER FELLOWSHIPS

Center for Constitutional Transitions Summer Fellowships in the Middle East
Ford Foundation Summer Fellowships
International Law & Human Rights Summer Fellowships

CLINICS AND TERM TIME INTERNSHIPS

Students interested in human rights are advised to do as many relevant clinics and term-time internships as possible, given the nature of this particular job market. Detailed information about NYU's many international clinics, including descriptions and how to apply, may be found at <http://www.law.nyu.edu/academics/clinics>. Internships require a time commitment of at least 8 hours per week, and should only be considered if you are comfortable with your course load. The **Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF)** awards students funding for term-time internships. PILC posts term-time internship opportunities on **Simplicity/CSM**. Also, be sure to check out **PSJD.org**.

SELECTED POST-GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES

Human Rights Watch Fellowship: one year research and advocacy fellowship
Human Rights in China, Bernstein Fellowship: one year advocacy fellowship
Arthur Helton Global Human Rights Fellowship: one year fellowship with a host organization based in a developing country

Intern Reports

Be sure to read PILC Intern Reports from students who have worked on related issues, see <https://its.law.nyu.edu/pilc/reports/search.cfm>.

FACULTY

NYU Law has a large number of professors with expertise in human rights. Faculty Directors of the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice are Philip Alston, Ryan Goodman, Sally Merry, Smita Narula, and Meg Satterthwaite. Other faculty working on issues closely related to human rights include: Jose Alvarez, Gráinne de Búrca, Sujit Choudhry, Jerome Cohen, Frank Upham, and Jeremy Waldron. See <http://www.law.nyu.edu/academics/areasofstudy/international/faculty> for a full list of international law faculty. See also <http://www.law.nyu.edu/global/abouthauser> for visiting global faculty and fellows.

PRO BONO

Note that not all human rights internships will count towards the 50 hours of pro bono service required for the New York Bar; pro bono work must be legal rather than academic or policy-focused in order to qualify.

TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS TO CONSIDER

It can be challenging to find entry-level positions in international human rights; most positions require at least 3-5 years of human rights experience. However, numerous NYU Law students and graduates have managed to obtain these positions upon graduation by using their time in school strategically – including doing relevant internships, clinics, and research and writing – to develop a profile and gain expertise in a subject and / or geographic area. It is also incredibly important to build a strong network of contacts. The following are the major types of internships for human rights students to consider.

- **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Developing Countries**
 - Many students opt to spend one or both summers in developing countries gaining what is commonly called “field” experience. This is important to help broaden one’s perspective, and to learn first-hand about the experiences of victims of human rights violations. It is also very helpful to hone foreign language skills if possible. Most human rights jobs require some level of field experience, and for most people it is a huge challenge to find both the time and the funding to do this, so take advantage of your summers!
 - The PILC Internship database, <http://www.its.law.nyu.edu/pilc/reports/search.cfm>, is an excellent way to identify these. PILC can help students network to find good organizations as well. For example, if you know you want to work on Brazil, PILC can contact an alum who works on Brazil at Human Rights Watch and ask that person to recommend partner organizations. Likewise, we can connect students with attorneys at the International Center on Transitional Justice, Center for Reproductive Rights, or International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission if you are interested in those issues; these groups have all expressed an interest in helping connect interns with good NGOs in the field – and there are many more examples.
- **International NGO Headquarters**
 - Working at the main office of an NGO like Human Rights Watch, International Center for Transitional Justice, Open Society Justice Initiative, or FIDH (in Paris), among many others, can also be a great experience. Interns there might be more likely to do substantive research and writing projects. This type of internship is also especially helpful for building contacts (anyone who plans to apply for the Human Rights Watch fellowship should try to intern there at some point, to have a champion on the inside!). Because of NYU’s location in NYC, we often advise students to do these internships during the term-time rather than summer, though this depends on a student’s individual circumstances.
- **Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs)**
 - Many students express an interest in working with the UN and related agencies. Indeed, these can be fantastic internships. However, they are not necessarily different from (or better than) working with NGOs. Students are advised to try to narrow down the geographic area and / or substantive issues they want to work on, then evaluate what the best organizations are, rather than focusing solely on working with the UN.
 - For those interested in a career with the UN or other IGOs, be sure to read a copy of Jobs with the UN and other Inter-Governmental Organizations, available at <http://www.psjd.org/getResourceFile.cfm?ID=24>.
- **Internships that Straddle Domestic and International Human Rights**
 - Some students go abroad their first summer and decide to do domestic public interest work their second summer to increase later job prospects, even if they are most interested in international. They may find that working along the US-Mexico border or near the Gulf Coast allows them to do hands-on human rights work similar to a developing country – building their international resume as well as a domestic one. Similarly, many choose to go abroad their 1L summer then work on national security issues, immigrant rights, legal services, or with an impact organization their second summer. A growing number of organizations are

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working on “bringing human rights home” – using international human rights law domestically, ranging from Alien Tort Statute litigation to using a human rights framework to defend national healthcare.

- Note that Human Rights Watch wants candidates for its fellowship to have interview experience. Students who have not had opportunities to do interviews abroad can still gain this experience through student groups like REACH, Suspension Representation Project, and Unemployment Action Committee.

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