

PROJECT FELLOWSHIP INFO SESSION

MARCH 5, 2024

WHAT ARE PROJECT FELLOWSHIPS?

Time-limited position



With a partner (host) organization



Executing a specific public interest legal project



Funded by an external project fellowship funder

WHO SHOULD CONSIDER PROJECT FELLOWSHIPS?

You have a passion for particular legal issue and/or population.

You have an idea for legal project to address unmet legal need.

You have career goals with limited entry-level options.

You plan to pursue public interest law

WHO SHOULD APPLY FOR PROJECT FELLOWSHIPS?

Genuinely passionate about the project

Host org supports both you and the project

Flexible and can tolerate uncertainty

Can navigate multiple job searches at once

HOW PROJECT FELLOWSHIPS FIT INTO YOUR JOB SEARCH

Clerkships

Funded
Fellowships

**PUBLIC INTEREST
JOB SEARCH**

Project
Fellowships

Staff Attorney
Positions

PROJECT FELLOWSHIP VS GENERAL JOB SEARCH PROCESS

PROJECT FELLOWSHIPS

- Take a narrow approach
- Need to be sincerely excited and passionate
- Bigger lift & longer timelines

GENERAL JOB SEARCH

- Take a broad approach
- Focus on developing skills & experience that serve your long-term goals
- Look for positions that will help you achieve those skills/experience

APPLICATION TIMELINES

2L SPRING

Learn About Project Fellowships

Brainstorm Projects

Research Prospective Partner Organizations

*Have call with Skadden ED, Kathleen Rubenstein***

Network!

APPLICATION TIMELINES

2L SUMMER

- Network with current/recent fellows*
- Look for & apply to sponsorship postings*
- Reach out to potential partner organizations*
- Narrow down project areas and ideas*
- Secure organizational partner.*
- Start drafting Skadden & EJW proposals.*

APPLICATION TIMELINES

2L FALL

Finalize & submit Skadden & EJW applications!

Confirm other fellowships for which your org will sponsor you.

Interviews! Mock interviews with both your host & PILC.

Stay in touch with fellows and other networking contacts throughout!

HOW PILC CAN HELP

Talk through interests, priorities and options



Insight and guidance on the fellowship process



Help identify prospective partner organizations and contacts



Feedback on resumes, cover letters and proposals

HOW TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL HOST ORGANIZATIONS

Research & consider organizations:

...where
you have
worked
before.

...that are
recruiting
fellowship
applicants.

...that have
successfully
hosted
fellows.

...referred
by your
networking
contacts.

...that
fit your
interests &
needs.

NOTE: Be aware of any funder requirements regarding host organizations. For example, Skadden requires at least two full-time attorneys on staff.

HOW TO REACH OUT TO POTENTIAL HOST ORGANIZATIONS



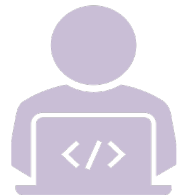
Personal Contacts

- Initial informal call or email
- Ask for time to talk or referral to best contact



Referred Contacts

- “Mini cover letter” email
- Ask for time to talk and/or information about fellowship sponsorship selection.
- Attach your resume!



Other Organizations

- Research org’s website for best contact.
- Sleuth out contact’s email. Avoid generic “info@” email.
- Send similar email to referred contacts.



Formal Postings

- Easy – apply as directed!
- Check organization’s career site first for official posting or general application directions

HOW TO REACH OUT TO POTENTIAL HOST ORGANIZATIONS

Are they looking to sponsor a project fellowship?

Do they have a process for selecting applicants to sponsor?

What is their timeline for making sponsorship decisions?

BEFORE COMMITTING TO A HOST ORGANIZATION

Speak With Current and Recent Fellows

- *What was their experience like?*
- *Did they have adequate supervision?*
- *Were they able to focus primarily on their project?*

Ask Important Questions

- *Will you be their only fellowship candidate?*
- *Which fellowships will they sponsor you for?*
- *Can they supplement salary and provide benefits?*
- *What are the options post-fellowship?*

Continued Job Search

- *This is not a job offer!*
- *Can they commit to hiring you if you do not secure a fellowship?*
- *If not, be upfront about plans to apply to other positions as they arise.*

GENERATING PROJECT IDEAS

What Do You Care About?

Think about **problems** rather than projects.

What issues get you the most fired up?

What is your dream job?

Reflect On Your Prior Work

Did you see unmet needs due to capacity or lack of services?

Did clients have particular recurring and unaddressed legal problems?

Were specific populations uniquely impacted by particular issue?

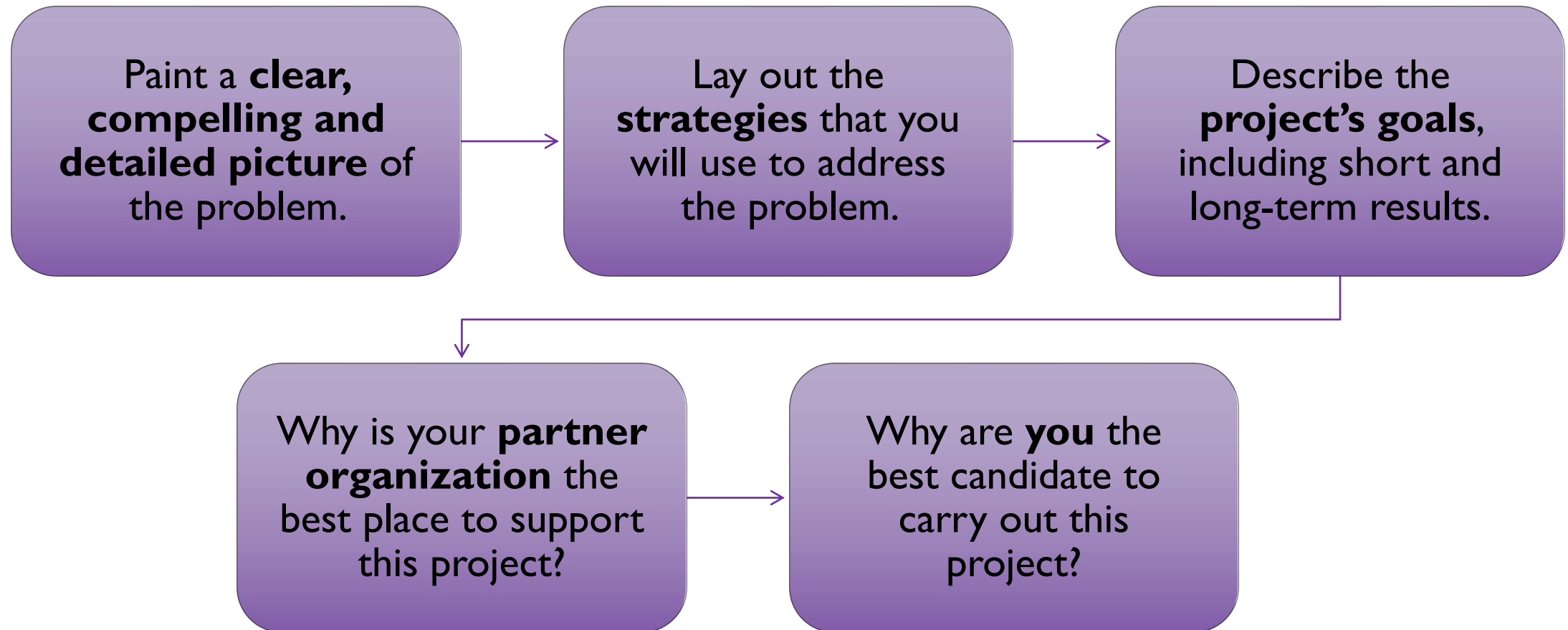
Research and Network

Read summaries of current and former projects.

Read news stories, journal articles, etc.

Reach out to practitioners, former supervisors and clinical professors

CREATING A PROJECT FELLOWSHIP PROPOSAL



THREE POPULAR FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS COMPARED

| | Skadden | Equal Justice Works | Justice Catalyst |
|--|--|--|--|
| Grades | No grade “cut-off,” though Skadden puts a strong emphasis on academics. | Does not consider grades or academics. | Does not consider grades or academics. |
| Project Philosophy | Does not require novel project, but has moved away from straightforward direct services projects. | Seeking an innovative, novel project. | Seeking novel and transformative projects to attack social problems. Looking for potential for big impact. |
| Who Funds | Skadden Foundation | Financial sponsors recruited by EJW, including law firms, corporations, bar associations, foundations and individuals | Justice Catalyst |
| Issue Areas Restrictions | Funds domestic projects that “serve the civil legal needs of people living in poverty.” Does not fund otherwise funded work; does not fund projects that primarily serve those incarcerated in the adult criminal legal system. | Does not fund international law or routine criminal defense. Funding priorities come from financial sponsors. | Primarily domestic projects; projects not based in the US must have substantial nexus. No restrictions on substantive areas of law. |
| Fellowship Length and Benefits <i>(as of 2024)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-year fellowship. • \$63,000 towards salary, with \$5,000 supplement if org pays >\$70,000 in salary • Reimburses host organization for most benefits, including health insurance • \$2,000 legal training budget | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-year fellowship • Up to \$64,000 towards salary • Requires host org to supplement salary for parity with other employees, and to provide health insurance and fringe benefits • Provides up to \$5,000 per year in loan repayment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-year with option to apply for 2nd year renewal • \$70,000 base salary • “Expectation” that host org provides health insurance, but may allow org to use part of the fellowship funding towards benefits |

THREE POPULAR FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS COMPARED

| | Skadden | Equal Justice Works | Justice Catalyst |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Who Is Eligible to Apply | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduating JD or LLM students • Attorneys completing judicial clerks, even if they were working prior to the clerkship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduating JD students • Attorneys who have not previously practiced as full-time public interest lawyer, including those completing LLM, bridge/gap fellowships or judicial clerkships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent graduates up to two years out (but this is flexible) |
| Application | Relatively short online application due early September | Lengthy online application due in mid- to late September, generally within a week or less after Skadden deadline | Initial prospectus (not required but recommended) typically due in mid-October; full applications due December 1 |
| Decision Timeline | Follows a set timeline for interviews, finalist selections and fellowship offers. Fellowship offers made on a made early November. | Interviews and offers are extended on a rolling basis, typically late November through April. Each financial sponsor conducts its own selection, so a candidate may have multiple interviews over the course of the selection process. | Responses to prospectuses generally provided by early November. Interviews generally in February, offers by end of March. |
| Fellowships Awarded Each Year | 28 fellowships each year | Usually between 60 and 70 (depends on number of financial sponsors) | Varies, but generally 16-19 |

INCOMING FELLOWS

MAYA HIEBERT

Incoming Skadden Fellow

- **Class of 2024**
- **Host Organization:**
ACLU of New Jersey
Newark, NJ
- **Project Summary:**
Direct representation in administrative appeals, strategic litigation and policy advocacy on behalf of New Jersey parents to enhance parental rights in the child welfare system.

BLAIR CHILDS-BISCOE

Incoming EJW Fellow

- **Class of 2024**
- **Host Organization:**
Brooklyn Legal Services Corp.A
Brooklyn, NY
- **Project Summary:**
Providing transactional legal services to trans, queer and BIPOC community-led mutual aid organizations in New York City so that they can acquire or maintain a physical space and continue to build community capacity, care, and safety.

MICHELLE DAHL

Incoming Justice Catalyst Fellow

- **Class of 2024**
- **Host Organization:**
National Police Accountability Project
Remote
- **Project Summary:**
Creating a resource hub and network to empower public defenders to preserve and develop civil rights litigation for constitutional violations they see in their work, using knowledge generated through co-counsel partnerships with defenders and civil rights litigators.