A fellowship is a financial grant to do short-term (1-2 years) post-J.D. work at a public interest/public sector organization or at an academic institution.

Timeline: A number of fellowship applications are due in early September of your 3L year while others will have spring deadlines. Check PSLawNet’s online fellowship listings at www.pslawnet.org. You will need to establish a relationship with the public interest organization you wish to work with no later than your 2L summer.

Types of Fellowships:
   **In-House:** The organization itself sponsors a fellowship.
   Examples: Equal Justice Society; ACLU; Lawyer’s Committee for Civil Rights (Thurgood Marshall fellowship); Equal Rights Advocates
   Usually, you apply directly to the organization and no project proposal is required.

   **3rd Party:** An outside agency funds a fellowship at a host organization.
   Examples: Equal Justice Works, Skadden, Echoing Green, Coro Foundation and Fulbright
   You will need to establish a relationship with a sponsor organization and develop a project proposal.

Materials Needed:
Most fellowship applications require:
   • Resume (2-3 pages)
   • transcript
   • writing sample
   • references.
Many also will require:
   • Statement of interest
   • research or project proposal
   • cover letter.

Writing the Fellowship Application:
Make sure your proposal meets the funder’s particular goals, preferences, objectives and requirements. This is one of the most critical factors in a successful fellowship application. For example, is the funder looking to support direct services or litigation? Does the funder prefer to sponsor unique projects? Projects that fill a gap in existing services? Urban programs? Rural programs? National projects? Etc.
• Think carefully about how you can demonstrate the importance, benefit, impact and value of the project you propose. You will need convincing evidence (rather than untested opinions) that the activities you propose will be effective. Specifically outline the strategies you will use to accomplish your objectives and the baseline you will use for measuring the success of your project.

• Be able to show that your project could not take place as you propose without the funding you hope to receive.

Specific Components of the Fellowship Application:
Bear in mind that the specific requirements of each fellowship can vary. The following sections, however, are standard for most project or program proposals:

• Abstract or summary: As a general rule, you will see this section only in lengthy proposals to third party funders. Similar to a summary of the argument, the abstract serves as an umbrella statement of your project and a summary of the entire proposal. It provides a brief statement of the problem or issue you hope to address and proposes your solution. It also should contain a brief statement about the host organization, including name, history, organizational structure, and purpose.

• Introduction: The introduction sets out the background for the project and what the project will accomplish in terms of target clients served, basic approach, etc. Bear in mind that poorly stated goals or unrealistically ambitious goals will hurt your application. You'll want to state clearly the need your fellowship will address and provide any facts or other evidence to support that need. Use compelling language in your application; be an advocate on your behalf. As an example, in its application materials Equal Justice Works contrasts the following two proposals:

I propose to work on consumer fraud issues in Los Angeles.

I propose to develop new litigation strategies to expose and stop home equity fraud against poor, disabled and elderly residents in Los Angeles.

• Familiarity with community served: When reviewing the background for the project, funders will examine whether the application demonstrates a solid understanding of the legal and institutional problems facing the community you propose to serve. They also will need to see how your project fits into the structure of services already existing to serve the community.

• Program/project description: This is the section the funders will rely on to
determine the overall feasibility of your project in terms of goals, budget, timetable, future financing and evaluation procedure. Explain exactly what you intend to do; as well as when, where and how you intend to do it. Describe the organizational structure and staff, facilities or other resources that will be part of your budget. In order to deal effectively with these issues you’ll need to provide a detailed time frame and concrete budget. You also might wish to discuss the prospects for future funding. Don’t let the project description simply duplicate the information contained on the application form or in the letters of support. Funders state that applicants make a mistake by simply referring to the supporting documents for more information. It is often compelling if you can show how the Fellowship’s initial support will be followed by institutional continuation of the project; funders like to know the ball won’t be dropped when your fellowship ends.

- **Letters of recommendation.** The best letters are those that speak to your ability to carry out the project and the overall feasibility of your proposal. They will demonstrate the quality of your work and your personal strengths. Specific examples will be helpful. In addition, try to have your references reflect the diversity of your experience (e.g., a letter from someone who can attest to your academic ability, a letter from a past work supervisor, and a letter from a clinical faculty member). To allow your references to comment directly on these subjects, provide them with a copy of your application as well as a resume if they are not familiar with all of your relevant experience.

- **Letter of support from the host organization.** Some funders request a letter from the host organization. In these letters, the funders are looking to see support for both you and your project. The most effective letters of support will evoke a spirit of cooperation and will indicate that you will receive effective training and supervision. There is generally no page limit for the letter of support from the host organization (which is usually written by the applicant), so some applicants use the support letter to amplify their project description or personal statement.

**How to Research Fellowships:**

**Equal Justice Works** ([http://www.equaljusticeworks.org](http://www.equaljusticeworks.org)). Equal Justice Works is the largest provider of post-graduate legal fellowships in the country. The organization provides two different categories of fellowships: (1) those where individuals apply for fully funded Equal Justice Works fellowships and (2) those where organizations apply in the fall for matching funds and publicize their fellowships. Equal Justice Works’ website also offers comprehensive tips regarding the fellowship application process.

**The Foundation Center**, 312 Sutter St, San Francisco. 415.397.0902 ([http://www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org)). A great collection of resources on private funding sources,
with an emphasis on direct service.

**Idealist.org** ([http://www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org))

**PSLawNet** ([http://www.pslawnet.org](http://www.pslawnet.org)). A comprehensive computer database which includes public interest jobs, as well as fellowship listings.


**Network, network, network:** talk to clinical teachers, current fellows and alums or other attorneys at public interest organizations to gather more information.

**Some Specific Fellowships:** (please visit our [public interest page](http://one-justice.org/) as well)

*Echoing Green Foundation Fellowships:* Applicant’s handbook available in Career Office and at: ([http://www.echoinggreen.org](http://www.echoinggreen.org))

*Equal Justice Works Fellowships:* ([http://www.equaljusticeworks.org](http://www.equaljusticeworks.org))


*Presidential Management Intern Program:* ([http://www.pmf.opm.gov](http://www.pmf.opm.gov))

*Georgetown University Law Center’s Women’s Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program:* ([http://www.law.georgetown.edu/wlppfp](http://www.law.georgetown.edu/wlppfp))


*Georgetown University Law Center’s Women’s Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program:* ([http://www.law.georgetown.edu/wlppfp](http://www.law.georgetown.edu/wlppfp))

*Pacific Legal Foundation Conservative/Libertarian Public Interest Litigation Fellowships:* ([http://www.pacificlegal.org](http://www.pacificlegal.org))