JUSTICE CATALYST FELLOWSHIP

The Justice Catalyst administers one-year, potentially renewable, project-based fellowships for graduating law students, or students completing a post-graduation clerkship, to support innovative public interest work at non-profit organizations.

ABOUT US

The Justice Catalyst activates path-breaking approaches to social justice lawyering and affirmative litigation that have real-world impact and improve the lives of the low-wage workers, the poor, and the marginalized. Towards this end, the Catalyst also launches and supports early-stage projects with existing public interest organizations or public agencies that employ or wish to adopt innovative approaches or legal strategies to address social problems. More information at http://justicecatalyst.org/.

ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Catalyst is looking for diverse, creative, self-starting fellows who will pursue year-long, project-based fellowships, with a possibility of renewal. The Catalyst prioritizes groundbreaking ideas, including early-stage projects that are boundary-pushing in the pursuit of systemic solutions to major injustices, whether at an established legal organization or an organization looking to hire its first lawyer.

The Catalyst’s philosophy is problem-centric. Successful projects start with a problem in the world and identify the best way to attack it. While the Catalyst’s core programmatic work is focused on litigation as a tool, fellowship project proposals need not be. Every problem has multiple possible solutions, and tailoring your project proposal to your understanding of the problem is key. While direct representation can be a major component of your project, the Catalyst is interested in projects that build towards broad scale change, including projects that fall outside traditional conceptions of legal work.

For information on past fellows see http://justicecatalyst.org/team/#fellows-ppl and for some sample projects, see justicecatalyst.org/samples.

The fellowship’s base compensation is generally expected to be $60,000. However, the compensation amount may vary based on host organization and project. Individual questions and specific needs can be emailed to fellowships@justicecatalyst.org.
**APPLICATION TIMELINE AND DETAILS**

In order to foster innovative ideas, the application has multiple stages (detailed below):

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**Stage 1: Resume & Prospectus**  
*Due November 15 (Optional but Highly Recommended)*

In the first (optional) stage, we invite you submit a **resume and a short prospectus summarizing the problem you seek to address and your idea for addressing it.** The prospectus allows us to identify, and help develop and refine, the most promising projects. We may be able to help you find partners and models for your work, and/or a host organization. The earlier we receive your prospectus, the sooner we can begin working with you. Unfortunately, we cannot work with every person who submits a prospectus, however we do our best to provide some feedback (either suggestions, or an indication that the project might not be a good fit for the Catalyst) to each submission.

Submit your **prospectus** (~200-750 words) at justicecatalyst.org/get-started It should describe the problem you hope to address during your fellowship and your idea or ideas for addressing that problem. Consider the following items, but **none are required.** Include whatever you think will help us understand the project and the need it addresses.

- Statement of the problem, including some citations (including to newspaper/magazine articles or reports) for our benefit
- Your approach to addressing the problem
- Why your approach isn’t currently being tried or funded, and the closest existing models or analogues
- Anything else you would like us to know about your relevant skills, experience, or connection to the problem

We also recommend that you include a list of people—lawyers and nonlawyers—that you have contacted or would like to speak with as part of developing your project, in addition to potential host organizations. A listening tour that includes a wide range of input is vital to developing your proposal and ensuring that your work is not duplicative or counterproductive, and these initial contacts may well turn into collaborations and partnerships during your fellowship.
The prospectus is supposed to be a work in progress, and we welcome the opportunity to work with you to turn an initial idea into a detailed plan of action. Indeed, feel free to suggest additional project ideas in your prospectus, outlined in a sentence or two each (submitting more ideas can only help you!).

**Stage 2: Full Application**

**Due January 10 (Required)**

The full fellowship application requires:

1. **Summary Information**
   - Project title and one sentence project summary (for our ease of reference)
   - Name and contact information
   - Two references, with names and contact information
   - Name and address of host organization

2. **Project Description** (~1000-3000 words), including:
   - **Statement of the problem**, with some citations (including to newspaper/magazine articles or reports) for our benefit
   - Any relevant skills, experience, or personal connection you have or feel to the problem
   - Your approach and specific strategy for addressing the problem during your one-year fellowship, and the variables that may cause the project to change or develop over time
   - The closest existing models or analogues to your approach, or why the problem currently isn’t being addressed
   - A list of people--lawyers and nonlawyers--it would be useful to speak to as part of developing this approach.

3. **Commitment Letter from or approved* by the host organization (and in some cases sponsor** organization) including:
   - The mission and basic information about the organization (links to relevant portions of website are sufficient)
   - Formal endorsement of the project and statement that the host organization submits the project for funding

* In some cases, it is expected that the fellow will draft the letter for the host organization’s approval.

** Note that for public agencies or host organizations that do not have 501(c)(3) status, a 501(3)(c) sponsor may also be necessary. Please contact the Justice Catalyst at fellowships@justicecatalyst.org with questions about your proposed host organization.
Proposed supervision, including the name and title of the supervisor, and statement from the host organization that they will host and implement the project. Please note that the supervisor is not required to be an attorney.

If the fellow’s project is predominately focused on representing clients, including a public agency or the people represented by that agency, a description of the organization’s professional liability and malpractice insurance and a statement confirming the fellow’s eligibility for coverage.

Copy of the 501(c)(3) determination letter granting the organization tax-exempt status.

4. Resume

5. Optional 1-2 Letters of Recommendation

6. If you submitted a Prospectus please resubmit it with your final application materials.

Stage 3: Interview

Rolling basis

For selected applications, the Catalyst will conduct an interview and may undertake other follow up, based on the specifics of the project.

Stage 4: All Final Decisions

February 15

After working with you on your prospectus (if applicable) and reviewing your final application, we will contact you should you be selected for an interview, after which we will make final determinations. The Catalyst announces offers on a rolling basis, but will inform participants whether their projects will receive recommendations for support by February 15.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Submit all materials at justicecatalyst.org/get-started.

Grants will be made to the host organizations, which, under the terms of the grant, will be responsible for the expenditure of the grant funds and the project. You will be an at will employee of the host organization.

Please contact us at fellowships@justicecatalyst.org with any questions, and ask a careers advisor at your law school to contact us if you would like to arrange a campus informational visit.