



Young Professionals Programme for Legal Empowerment



Centre for Social Justice



Our Philosophy

An aphorism often widely debated in law schools is the idea of 'law as an instrument for social change'. But there are few who actually work towards using the agency of the law to empower lives and facilitate socio-legal revolutions. In order to contribute meaningfully as young legal professionals working for human rights, one has to be cognizant of the wide gulf between the law in action and the law as found in statute books, judgments and scholarship. Therefore, whatever may be the course chosen, a direct/lived experience of poverty and discrimination, an understanding of how things work on the ground and experiencing the practical relationship of law with vulnerability is essential for any lawyer, policy-researcher or legal academician.

The Young Professionals Programme for Legal Empowerment (YPPLE) was started by Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) in 2014 with the objective of equipping young legal professionals to become powerful change agents by giving them the opportunity to develop holistic understanding of how legal empowerment at the grassroots plays catalytic role in bringing social change.

YPPLE is now entering its fourth year. In the first three years of the programme, CSJ placed 14 young aspiring researchers in its field areas, where they engaged with grassroots realities and in the process grew immensely both as a professional as well as a person. The programme allowed these young minds to pursue their true interests, with each individual finding something that they can call their own, be it: a particular area of law, a work profile or a social cause they care about. Many YPPLEs continue to be associated with CSJ beyond the one year of the programme and are helping CSJ fulfill its vision towards society.



Programme Details

A group of about six to eight young legal professionals will be placed for minimum period of one year in the field areas where CSJ is implementing its programmes. A learning/performance road map will be developed jointly with the selected candidates. Each individual will spend two-three weeks every month in the field areas and the remaining time will be dedicated towards reflections, writing, inputs and capacity building.



The primary responsibilities of the selected candidates will be to:

1. Conduct research on law and policy issues for making interventions and creating policy documents.
2. Coordinate training and capacity building programmes and develop training materials.
3. Supervise data collection for research programs/projects.
4. Collaborate/coordinate programmes with stakeholders including representations with various government authorities
5. Contribute to the advocacy work of the organisation.
6. Organise events to initiate public debate on issues
7. Bring in creative approaches and perspectives to the existing work

Eligibility

The Programme is open to young law graduates/legal professionals who wish to pursue a career in the field of human rights as lawyers, practitioners, researchers or academics. Willingness to engage with field realities, to live in challenging conditions and to travel extensively, are pre-requisites for every candidate. Candidates must above all display a strong drive, motivation and commitment towards working for social change.

Fellowship

A fellowship of Rs. 25,000 per month will be paid to the selected candidates. Please note that the Programme is designed as a two year engagement. At the end of mandatory one year commitment, YPPLEs would have the option to either continue working with CSJ or opt out.



Selection Process

Candidates interested in applying for the Programme must send in the following in their application:

- a) Personal statement of purpose detailing the candidates motivations and reasons for applying to the Programme. Candidates must also be clear about their areas of interest and expectations from the Programme.
- b) Updated CV along with details of any similar prior work experience.



Applications containing the above mentioned documents should be sent to ypple.csj@gmail.com not later than 31st March, 2017.

Short-listed candidates will be contacted with further queries where upon they shall be invited for a two-day interview process at Centre for Social Justice, Ahmedabad.

The interview process for the 2017 batch of YPPLEs shall take place in two rounds –

- Round I: Second half of April, 2017
- Round II: First half of June, 2017

Short-listed candidates may choose to appear in either one of the two rounds. However, keeping in mind the limited nature of seats we strongly recommend appearing in Round I interviews, for early confirmation of final selection.

The final selected candidates will be invited for a one month probation period. Based on an appraisal of their performance during this month, the organisation will confirm the selection of the candidates into the Programme.

For any queries, please write to us at ypple.csj@gmail.com.

Please Note:

Legal Researchers/Lawyers with atleast three years of work experience in human rights are encouraged to apply at CSJ's Research and Capacity Building (RACB) Unit, which is presently inviting applications for the post of Senior Research Associate.



About Centre for Social Justice



Centre for Social Justice established in 1993, is a human rights organisation fighting for the rights of the marginalised and vulnerable. Active in Eight States across India, CSJ fulfils its mandate by training and strengthening community lawyers and paralegals by building their capacities to deliver change-inducing leadership in their communities through a network of law centres. CSJ has also made path-breaking institutional interventions in the form of research, legal reforms and initiatives bringing together grassroots activism, law and policy-making on a wide array of issues affecting women, dalits, adivasis, minorities and other socio-economically vulnerable groups.

At present, the Centre is engaged in action-research, advocacy, training, and capacity building across the following thematic:

- Law, Society & Culture in the Adivasi Context (South Gujarat)
- Rights of Persons living in Coastal Areas (Gujarat)
- Socio-Economic Rights of Minorities (Rehnuma Centres in 7 States)
- Socio-Economic Rights of Vulnerable Groups (Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh)
- Right to the City (Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh)
- Action-Research Study towards Building Rule of Law Communities in Villages (Gujarat)
- National Campaign on Access to Justice





Centre for Social Justice

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