



2017 International Fellowship – Multiple Opportunities

Tunisia • the West Bank • Nepal • Myanmar

“International Fellows are the backbone of the ILF’s success in post-conflict and transitioning countries. They work side by side with our local lawyers, helping teach them to think differently, to do more, and, beyond the skills training, inspire them and teach them that they are not alone in the work that they do.”

~Jennifer Smith, ILF Executive Director

The International Legal Foundation, a not-for-profit organization which establishes public defender systems in post-conflict and transitioning countries, seeks experienced criminal justice system lawyers to take part in its groundbreaking International Fellows Program in Tunisia, the West Bank, Nepal, and Myanmar.

International Fellowship candidates are public or private defense attorneys, prosecutors, or judges who have at least five years of criminal justice sector experience and experience supervising and/or training other lawyers. Fellows volunteer to work and live abroad for three-month assignments (shorter or longer assignments are considered on a case-by-case basis).

Fellows mentor the ILF’s local staff attorneys and management staff day-in and day-out to help them develop the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure meaningful access to quality defense services for the indigent accused. The work may include assisting the staff lawyers as they visit clients in jail, write motions, make court appearances, and conduct investigation; assisting the local management team to maximize their efficiency and impact; or meeting with government officials, other NGOs, and donor representatives to further the ILF’s in-country work. Each ILF program is unique in its cultural context, current stage of development, and current International Fellow needs.

For more information about the ILF and these fellowship opportunities, contact Natalie Stephenson at (212) 608-1188 or nstephenson@theilf.org. To apply for a fellowship position, please send a thoughtful cover letter and resume to Nicole Taylor at fellows@theilf.org.

About the International Legal Foundation

For the past ten years, the ILF has focused solely on providing criminal defense services to the poor, first in Rwanda, now in Afghanistan, Nepal, the West Bank, and Tunisia, and soon in Myanmar. The ILF operates on the belief that indigent representation is crucial to a functioning criminal justice system, and a functioning criminal justice system is crucial to long term rule of law development. Without defense lawyers to ensure that judges, prosecutors and police officers follow the law, reform and reconstruction of the justice system is impossible. By fighting against arbitrary detention, public defenders are often the first line of protection against human rights violations.

Since 2001, over 60 Fellows from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand have helped transform the role of local lawyers in these countries from passive participants in the criminal justice system to proactive advocates for their clients. As a direct result, clients languishing in detention have been released and many innocent have been acquitted. Fellows have influenced judges to change policies and practices from the bench, and have helped win landmark legal victories in court that have improved the justice systems of all countries in which the ILF works.

Tunisia Fellowships

Openings as of July 2017 or later

ILF-Tunisia is the ILF's youngest program, founded in late 2014. We currently have one office in Tunis with two local lawyers and support staff, and intend to open at least one more office in 2017. Tunisian law provides the right to counsel for the indigent accused, yet Tunisia faces challenges in implementing this right. The government legal aid system only provides for appointment of counsel in felony and juvenile cases, and lawyers' access to detainees is limited during the critical early stages of the criminal justice process. Appointed lawyers are often newly admitted to the Bar and rarely have sufficient training or experience. As a result, defense lawyers are usually passive, and the accused are vulnerable to arbitrary and illegal pretrial detention, coerced confessions, torture and wrongful convictions.

The ILF's Tunisia fellows will mentor the ILF's Tunisian staff lawyers, day-in and day-out, case-by-case, incrementally improving their skill and ability. The work includes closely supervising staff lawyers as they visit clients in jail, write motions, make court appearances, and conduct investigations. Fellows may also help plan and execute trainings with justice sector stakeholders, and participate in meetings with government officials, other organizations, and donor countries involved in rule of law projects, as representatives of the ILF. Additionally, fellows should work to develop the skills and capacity of other support staff in this nascent office, including the paralegal and office administrator. Fellows may be asked to assist in developing institutional policies and procedures to make the Tunisia office a high-functioning, efficient and effective public defender office, and to contribute to our efforts to expand the office to cities outside of Tunis.

French and/or Arabic language skills are strongly preferred.

West Bank Fellowships

Openings ASAP, and preference for those available June – September

ILF-West Bank has four offices, in Ramallah, Hebron, Jenin, and Nablus; the International Fellows are based in Ramallah and travel to the other offices regularly. International Fellows mentor local criminal defense lawyers in the ILF's public defender offices as they represent indigent clients in the Palestinian civilian court system. Fellows oversee criminal cases in their entirety, mentoring local staff lawyers as they visit clients in jail, conduct investigations, write motions and make court appearances. Fellows, as representatives of the ILF, also participate in meetings with government officials, other NGOs and donor countries involved in rule of law projects in the West Bank. The West Bank office is now transitioning to independence, and so Fellows will also assist office leaders in organizing the office, developing leadership skills, advocacy, identifying legal issues, developing legal strategy and ensuring efficient case management systems. International Fellows in the West Bank need to have the knowledge and skills to be mentors to both developing staff lawyers and ILF-West Bank's increasingly independent management team, in order to help set the country program as a whole on a path toward sustainable independence in the long-term.

Arabic language skills are not required (staff translators are available).

Nepal Fellowships

Schedule Subject to Well-Qualified Applicant's Availability

ILF-Nepal has 5 offices, in Kathmandu, Hetauda, Janakpur, Nepalgunj, and Kanchanpur. ILF-Nepal is a well-developed program, and has actively begun the process of transitioning to independence from the ILF, into a local NGO to be called Public Defender Service-Nepal (PDS-Nepal). It no longer requires consecutive International Fellows, as it has developed internal mentorship and training mechanisms for staff lawyers. At this point, we are focused on finding uniquely qualified International Fellows who can mentor ILF-Nepal's top management. The International Fellow will work with ILF-Nepal's Country Director and other management staff on their management skills and leadership capacities, ways to promote and institutionalize quality, monitoring and evaluation strategies, and strategic planning for the short and long term.

International Fellows in Nepal should have extensive experience mentoring, supervising, and managing offices of defense lawyers. We recognize that these uniquely qualified candidates may have less flexibility and availability than our general fellowship candidates, and so we will work with the right candidates regarding the timing and duration of their fellowship. Nepali language skills are not required (staff translators are available, and top management speaks English).

Myanmar Fellowships

Openings as of November 2017 or later

The ILF is opening a new country program in Myanmar as of June 2017. We are moving quickly to establish our first office in Yangon, to be followed with several other offices throughout the country. We are actively seeking International Fellows to start as early as November 2017. Following the successful model of program development the ILF has employed in its existing country programs, we will hire two local staff attorneys in each office and necessary support staff.

International Fellows will engage in day-to-day, case-by-case mentorship with the staff attorneys to incrementally improve their skills and ability to zealously advocate on behalf of their clients. This includes closely supervising staff lawyers as they visit clients in jail, write motions, make court appearances, and conduct investigations. Additionally, Fellows will work with the staff lawyers to identify unconstitutional and discriminatory laws and work with local staff and ILF staff to develop strategic litigation campaigns to challenge them. The International Fellow will also help plan and execute trainings with justice sector stakeholders, and participate in meetings with government officials, other organizations, and donor countries involved in rule of law projects, as a representative of the ILF—a role that is particularly crucial early in a country program's founding.

As part of the foundational work of starting a new country program, the International Fellow will also play an important role in developing the office's Practice Manual, motions templates, administrative policies, etc. Fellows should be willing to work to develop the skills and capacity of other support staff in this nascent office, including the paralegal and office administrator. Fellows may also be asked to assist in developing institutional policies and procedures to make the office a high-functioning, efficient and effective public defender office, and to contribute to efforts (including more administrative and logistical efforts) to expand and open new offices.

Burmese language skills are not required.