



Job Announcement
MENA Program Director

The International Legal Foundation (ILF) is hiring a program director for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to help advance the development of the ILF's existing public defender programs in Tunisia and the West Bank and potentially help establish programs in other countries in the region. The ILF program director will lead the ILF's long-term efforts in the region to build a culture of defense through practical skill-building and case-based mentoring, as well as project implementation aimed at strengthening the quality and effectiveness of defense services. This is a great opportunity for an experienced criminal defense lawyer to join a global team of experts who are fighting injustice and discrimination while transforming legal systems around the world.

Driven by the belief that every person accused of a crime deserves to be represented by a well-trained lawyer, the ILF has established pioneering public defender programs in Afghanistan, Myanmar, Nepal, Tunisia and the West Bank of Palestine, and is currently providing technical assistance to legal aid providers in the Republic of Georgia and Kenya, who are leading the fight for equal access to justice for poor and vulnerable accused. The ILF is also providing training and other expert assistance to legal aid systems and providers in many more countries around the world. The ILF's uniquely practical and effective approach focuses on incrementally developing the knowledge and skills of local lawyers through mentoring—not simply dropping in and providing one off trainings—empowering lawyers to provide high-quality, client-centered, rights-based legal aid and challenge injustice. In addition to its ground-up work establishing effective public defender systems, the ILF also engages in high-level global advocacy, pushing countries, international institutions, and donors to prioritize legal aid as a fundamental human right.

The ideal candidate will be a passionate, committed advocate with experience training and mentoring lawyers on how to use the law to increase access to justice and respect for the rule of law. They will also have familiarity with performance standards and guidelines for quality defense representation, with successful experience working in an international or inter-cultural setting.

This position is intended to be based out of the ILF's New York office in Midtown Manhattan or in one of the ILF's public defender offices in either Tunisia or the West Bank, but both hybrid and completely remote opportunities are available. The salary range for this position is \$75,000 to \$95,000. The ILF considers factors such as (but not limited to) scope and responsibilities of the position, candidate's work experience, education/training, key skills, internal peer equity, as well as local market and organizational considerations when extending an offer. The ILF offers comprehensive benefits including health insurance and, where eligible a 403(b) retirement plan.

Responsibilities:

- Mentor ILF Tunisian and Palestinian legal aid lawyers on casework and provide training, both in person and remotely, to enhance their litigation, trial, and advocacy skills; demonstrate strong initiative in identifying opportunities for growth and improvement in these areas;

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of local law and practices in ILF-supported countries and take a proactive approach to formulate effective litigation strategies that empower local lawyers to advocate for the criminally accused within their own legal systems. This includes tackling entrenched rights violations and bridging gaps between statutory law and actual practice. This requires decisive and informed problem-solving abilities;
- Lead the development and continuous improvement of ILF's practice manuals, training guides, and sample motions across existing and potential new programs. Identify key areas for strategic litigation under each country's specific legal framework, collaborating closely with local staff to provide impactful mentorship and resources for in-court preparation;
- Collaborate with ILF country office senior management to uphold and refine high-quality legal aid performance standards, contributing to the development and oversight of ILF's monitoring and evaluation systems, including case management systems. This support ensures accountability, ongoing improvement, and measurable impact through guidance and resources;
- Draft ILF Case Notes to summarize and share key legal issues addressed in ILF's programs, working with the communications team to effectively disseminate insights and outcomes;
- Oversee the ILF's International Fellows Program, coordinating with fellows to ensure they are well-prepared and supported to mentor local lawyers intensively. This includes managing logistics, setting expectations, and providing oversight of progress and challenges;
- Collaborate across New York and country program teams to introduce and implement projects, grants, and activities in Tunisia and the West Bank that strengthen early access to counsel and deliver high-quality, client-centered, rights-based, and holistic legal aid services;
- Engage effectively with donors and other key stakeholders, including local government stakeholders to support the ILF's growth and sustainability and advocate for the expansion of public defender programs, bringing decisive, creative solutions to further ILF's mission;
- Lead report writing and the development of publications that both document and advocate ILF's program achievements, utilizing strong decision-making and project management skills.
- Introduce and champion innovative approaches to build justice sector awareness of the right to counsel and its essential role in ensuring access to justice, supporting local lawyers and ILF leadership and advocacy efforts from a strategic and programmatic standpoint;
- Collaborate closely with the ILF's Executive Director, as well as program and communications staff, to advance ILF's goals and support its mission effectively;
- Represent the ILF globally, including at conferences, embodying ILF's commitment to high-quality legal aid, demonstrating initiative in identifying opportunities for ILF's presence.
- Collaborate with HR to ensure compliance with travel, logistics, and procurement processes;
- Attend organizational policy and procedure trainings and provide guidance and information to ILF lawyers and country staff to ensure compliance with donor requirements.

Qualifications:

- Law degree and at least 5 years of practical experience in criminal defense
- Strong preference will be given to candidates with appellate and public defender experience
- Strong and demonstrated commitment to the ILF's mission
- Experience or knowledge in international and inter-cultural exchange and learning, including in the MENA region
- Practical lawyering skills training experience
- Excellent interpersonal and written communication skills

- Demonstrated ability to work independently as well as in teams
- Ability to work within strict timelines and handle multiple tasks
- Strong preference for Arabic and/or French fluency
- Ability and willingness to travel to ILF country offices, at times for extended periods of time, or be based in the MENA region, as needed to execute the ILF's work
- Must comply with all global Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) policies

Please submit your resume and cover letter to: HR Manager at jobs@theilf.org.

No telephone inquiries please. Only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

Antiracism, diversity, and equity are critical to our organizational values and to the ILF's mission to secure equal access to justice for all. Our success is dependent upon providing the space, resources, and support that allow our global team to bring their full selves to work, and to thrive. The ILF is an equal opportunity employer. We practice inclusive hiring and work to achieve and maintain diversity across races, genders, sexualities, abilities, and experiences. We strongly encourage candidates of all identities to apply. System-impacted people (i.e. people with past involvement in the criminal justice system, directly or through family) are also strongly encouraged to apply.