

Summer Fellowships for Human Rights Internships (Summer 2006)

I OVERVIEW

The Harvard Law School Human Rights Program (“HRP”) offers fellowship grants to Harvard Law School (“HLS”) students doing summer public interest internships with human rights organizations. The Program’s emphasis is on placements abroad in the developing world with non-governmental human rights organizations (“NGOs”), legal services offices, and certain intergovernmental bodies.

The HRP Summer Fellowship Program began in 1982 and has grown to fund as many as thirty students per year working in up to nineteen different countries with organizations on the front line in the defense of human rights. These ten-week human rights internships offer students an opportunity to explore the compelling field of human rights advocacy and defense and to apply this experience to academic and clinical work at the Law School or an eventual career in the field of human rights law.

Eligibility

HRP summer fellowship grants are open to all HLS students. Grants will be awarded according to the following priority depending on the number of applicants and funds available in a given year:

- 1L and 2L students (who have not previously been HRP summer fellows).
- 3L, LL.M. and S.J.D. students who have not previously been HRP summer fellows. Strong preference in this group will be given to students from developing countries who have plans to work in human rights upon return to their home countries.
- J.D. and graduate students who have previously been HRP summer fellows.

Funding

The amount of each grant is determined on a case-by-case basis taking into account the cost of travel to, and living expenses in, your placement country. In the case of 1Ls and 2Ls, HRP supplements the \$3,600 to \$4,000 of HLS Summer Public Interest Funding with grants of up to \$1,500. Students may not receive funding for paid positions with host organizations; all HRP summer internships must be unpaid or voluntary positions.

Application Timeline

Final applications are due February 6, 2006. Details about each step of the process, the criteria for awarding HRP summer fellowship grants, and the obligations of the student once a grant has been awarded are set forth in Sections II – IX, below. The timeline for the five-step application is as follows:

Step One:

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2005

Identify host human rights organizations and meet with HRP Student Fellowship Advisors. Advisors will be selected in October; their names and contact information will be posted on the HRP website.

Step Two:

NOVEMBER 2005

Apply to host human rights organizations. Copy Mindy Jane Roseman, HRP Academic Director, on all cover letters and emails so that we know how many students are applying to each organization. (mroseman@law.harvard.edu).

Step Three:

DECEMBER 9, 2005 DEADLINE

Register to apply for HLS Summer Public Interest Funding with the HLS Financial Aid Office (1Ls and 2Ls only).

See the Financial Aid Office website for details:

<http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/finaid/sumfund/>

Step Four:

DECEMBER 2005 – JANUARY 2006

Meet with a member of HRP's Clinical Staff to discuss your proposal. Visit <http://www.law.harvard.edu/programs/hrp/CAP/index.htm> for a list of staff contacts. (Prerequisite to submitting a fellowship application.)

Step Five:

FEBRUARY 6, 2006 DEADLINE

Submit written applications to HRP.

II Identifying Placement Organizations

You are responsible for securing an internship with a host organization. Your initiative plays a vital role in obtaining a placement. The typical HRP summer internship placement is with a grassroots human rights NGO in the developing world or certain intergovernmental bodies. HRP encourages students to develop innovative internships in which you will learn about human rights work first-hand and the organization will

benefit from your contributions. Please consult Section VII, below, for the award criteria, which include criteria regarding placement organizations.

In identifying a placement, you should consider how your summer experience will fit with your academic and clinical work at HLS. Ten weeks is typically too short of a time to follow many human rights petitions or initiatives through to completion. Some students may wish to intern with an organization on a project that has potential to continue beyond the summer in the form of clinical or student advocacy work back at HLS. HRP has developed good working relationships with a number of human rights NGOs and can work with you to develop a summer project with the potential for continued clinical work.

HRP Student Fellowship Advisors

HRP will appoint two student alumni of the summer fellowship program to meet with all students interested in applying for the summer of 2006. These Student Fellowship Advisors will help you to get started in your search for a placement and answer any questions you may have about the program. Whether you know exactly where you want to work over the summer or have not yet decided if human rights work is right for you, HRP Student Fellowship Advisors will discuss the type of work you may expect to do and the range of possible human rights placements. We ask that everyone considering a summer internship speak with an Advisor before securing a placement.

The 2005-2006 HRP Student Fellowship Advisors will be appointed in October. Their names and contact information will be posted on the HRP website.

Resources

HRP maintains two sets of directories in the HRP office, Pound 401, to assist with placement searches. The Human Rights Placement Directory, which is organized by geographic region, presents information submitted to HRP from organizations interested in having an intern. The Student Evaluation Directory contains evaluations and reports by former HRP interns on their work experiences.

Fellows are not limited to internships with the organizations listed in these directories. We encourage you to consider other organizations that meet our criteria (see Section VII, below). One important source of information is Human Rights Internet (<http://www.hri.ca>). For other online and off line sources, see *Getting Started in Human Rights Research* on the HRP website:

<http://www.law.harvard.edu/programs/HRP/Publications>.

We also recommend that you read through Chapter 2 of OPIA's excellent guide: *Serving the Public: A Job Search Guide, Vol. II - International*. Copies of this publication are available from OPIA in Pound 329.

In addition to our appointed Student Fellowship Advisors, you should contact other former interns listed in the Student Evaluation Directory for first-hand information about organizations, living conditions and other information on the fellowship experience. HLS students from the country or region where you are applying (particularly those in the LL.M. program) are another good resource for information. Finally, Visiting Fellows resident at HRP for the academic year are activists and scholars in the human rights movement and may have knowledge about a particular NGO you are considering or ideas for a placement in their field of expertise. Visiting Fellows' biographies are posted on HRP's website and their offices are located at the HRP office, Pound 401.

Coordination with Other HLS Programs and Funding Sources

There are four primary sources of funding for international public interest work during the summer: Summer Public Interest Funding (PIF), the Chayes Fellowship program, the Lewis Fellowships in International Law & Development, and HRP. There are substantive differences among these programs and the HRP Student Fellowship Advisors and staff can help you to decide which program is right for your proposed internship. No student should be in the position of choosing between programs on the basis of perceived discrepancies in funding. Please let us know right away if problems of this nature arise.

Human Rights Experience

Many NGOs prefer students with a working knowledge of human rights and past HRP fellows have reported that prior experience or study in human rights was helpful during their placements. Although academic work in human rights is not a requirement for a fellowship, many past fellows have found such work valuable. We encourage prospective fellows to consider Human Rights and International Law or related courses for the Spring Elective. The significance of an academic background in the field varies considerably with the type of placement, the region, the NGO, and the type of work expected.

III Applying to Placement Organizations

Students should carefully review the application requirements of a placement organization. Some organizations have formal internship programs for law students with set application deadlines and a competitive selection process; others may be "start-up" organizations where you need to work hard to clarify what work you will be doing during the summer. In the latter case, the best way to apply to the organization may be by email or letter introducing yourself and enclosing a copy of your resume.

Sometimes more than one HLS student will compete for the same summer position. Where there are multiple applications for a single position, the host organization makes the decision on whom to take.

Internships vary in kind and quality, and a successful placement depends to a great extent on the effort put into planning. It is important to ask potential host organizations detailed questions about the type of work expected of you. This is a useful exchange, since it can help both you and the organization to reach a clear understanding of your role. It may also lead to ideas for preparatory work specifically geared to your project.

You should copy Mindy Jane Roseman, HRP Academic Director (mroseman@law.harvard.edu) on all emails and cover letters sent to hosts. HRP wants to make sure that you are receiving an appropriate response from these organizations and that the HRP Summer Fellowship program, as a whole, achieves a broad range of placements.

Visa Applications

Prospective fellows should apply for visas soon after acceptance by their host organizations, well in advance of their date of departure. Students applying to countries in which there is a high risk of visa denial should arrange back-up placements in other countries.

It is important for you to determine what type of visa is required for you to complete your ten-week volunteer internship in your placement country. In many countries it is possible to intern on a tourist visa available automatically upon arrival at the airport. In other countries there may be complications. Fellows in Russia and Indonesia, for example, have had to apply for visas months in advance. Prospective fellows should check with the appropriate consulate or embassy to determine visa requirements. To avoid problems for students and host organizations, students should observe the following guidelines:

- Discuss your visa application with your host organization. Human rights work in some countries can trigger political complications in the visa application process. Please bear in mind the potential effect of your presence upon your host organization's relations with its government. The host organization may know of standard and accepted practice in applying for visas to do human rights work.
- Use common sense in obtaining a visa notwithstanding perceived political pressures. Never perjure yourself on a visa application. A false visa application can put you at serious risk, create difficulties for your host organization and harm the ability of future HRP fellows to do work in the country.

IV Applying for Summer Public Interest Funding (1Ls and 2Ls only)

In the case of 1Ls and 2Ls, the HRP summer fellowship grant is a supplement to the PIF grant available from the Office of Financial Aid. The Deadline to apply for PIF is December 9, 2005. Stop by the Financial Aid Office on the third floor of Pound Hall or consult the website for complete details:

<http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/finaid/sumfund/>.

V Mandatory Pre-Application Meeting

All applicants are required to have a pre-application meeting with a member of HRP's clinical staff prior to submitting a written fellowship application. The meeting is not a formal interview; rather it is an opportunity for HRP to assist you in choosing a host organization, developing a good work plan, and preparing your HRP fellowship application. Members of the clinical staff will be available to meet with you in December and January.

VI Fellowship Application Requirements

Deadline

Written fellowship applications must be submitted in person to Mindy Jane Roseman, HRP Academic Director, in the HRP program office, Pound 401, no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 6, 2006.

Contents and Format

Applications shall consist of the following:

- 1) Cover page listing the following information in the following order:
 - Name,
 - HLS Status (e.g., 1L),
 - Email Address,
 - Mailing Address, and
 - Telephone number.

- 2) Copy of a letter from your host organization accepting you as an intern. (Contact Mindy Jane Roseman, HRP Academic Director if you have difficulty obtaining such a letter prior to the deadline.)

- 3) Resume or curriculum vitae.

- 4) A 2-4 page, double-spaced proposal addressing the following items:
 - a. a description of the host organization and the nature of the work you will do for them during the internship;
 - b. any human rights-related work experience and academic course work (including undergraduate courses or internships) that is directly relevant to your placement;
 - c. a description of how the fellowship will relate to your legal education (e.g., proposed research papers, clinical work, or courses of study);
 - d. a discussion of how the fellowship will inform your professional career; and
 - e. a list of all sources of HLS summer funding you are applying for other than the HRP Fellowship.

- 5) A budget detailing your estimated travel and living expenses for the term of your internship.

Back-up Proposals

Sometimes it is a good idea for students to submit back-up proposals to HRP to be assured of a summer placement, and such a possibility will be discussed during your meeting with HRP staff. We may recommend that students submit back-ups when they are proposing to work for an organization that is popular among HLS students (see Section VII, criteria 3, below). We may also advise that you develop a back-up proposal if you plan to work in a country with a risk of visa delay or denial. Please label your proposals accordingly when submitting a back-up proposal.

VII Award Criteria

HRP staff will review applications during the month of February and announce awards in March (in coordination with other HLS international summer programs). HRP traditionally funds a strong majority of proposals according to the following criteria:

1. HRP will not fund placements with any organization that discriminates on grounds including race, gender, religion, ethnic or national origin, or sexual orientation.
2. HRP seeks functional diversity among fellows. We strongly favor NGOs that are engaged in active work beyond research – for example, grass-roots legal assistance, education or mobilization, fact-finding and reporting, or relief and assistance missions. We strongly favor fellowships in the developing world, although we will support some students for fellowships in developed countries (see criteria 5, below).
3. HRP prefers to spread fellows among the largest possible number of organizations and typically will not support more than two HLS fellows working in the same organization.
4. HRP prefers geographic diversity and likes placements to be spread among the largest possible number of countries. We will not fund more than three fellows for placements within the same country. We will try to advise you if there is a problem in this regard. The earlier you consult with us, the better our chances of resolving this issue in advance.
5. The Program favors placements in the developing world, with the following exceptions:
 - a. On occasion, HRP will fund placements with a US-based human rights organization focused on indigenous peoples or refugees. This decision depends on the background of the fellow and the nature of the project.

- b. HRP may also fund LL.M. students from developing countries who intend to do human rights work upon return to their home countries and wish to gain experience in US domestic civil liberties or rights practice with US organizations. We may also fund internships with European-based international human rights NGOs for such LL.M. students.
6. Applicants must demonstrate proficient language skills for countries where a good command of the local language is important for an effective placement. This requirement applies to most placements in Latin America, Asia, Russia, Eastern Europe and French-speaking African countries.
7. Prior human rights experience or study (including voluntary activities at HLS) is not required but will be considered in our evaluation. The need for such experience or academic background varies considerably with the type of placement, the region, the NGO and the type of work expected.

VIII Fellowship Requirements

Confirmation of Arrival

Notify HRP (by letter, e-mail, phone or fax – collect if necessary) as soon as you have arrived at your placement. You should also contact us at least once during the summer.

Completion of a 10-week Term

An HRP Summer Fellowship is a serious commitment for you, HRP and the host organization. Except in the case of serious and unforeseen circumstances, we expect you to fulfill your fellowships without major changes. You must obtain prior approval from HRP before making any material changes to your placement plans. If you arrive to find that your placement position is not what the organization had promised you, you should contact HRP immediately to discuss how to proceed.

HRP reserves the right to seek reimbursement of grant funds from students who fail to complete their fellowships. HRP will charge a minimum of 10% up to a full 100% of the total HRP stipend for any unexcused abandonment of an placement.

In the case of an emergency, (e.g., evacuation of fellows from Cambodia in the summer of 1997, Congo in 1998, or a health or family emergency requiring immediate return) you should, if practical, inform HRP of the emergency situation.

Special arrangements can be made for students who enter the writing competition for the Law Review. Such students should arrange their summer so that they are able to complete at least eight weeks in a placement organization before returning to school for Law Review competition. These special arrangements must be clarified with your host organization and HRP prior to departure.

Written Report

All fellows are required to submit a written report to HRP in the fall of 2006. You will receive guidelines and a deadline for submitting the report prior to departure. In general, the report will be a careful reflection on the summer's experience including your evaluation of the host organization and the substance of your work. These reports will be made available as a resource to future summer fellows in the Student Evaluation Binders.

Evaluations

HRP will ask your host organization to submit a brief written evaluation of your placement to HRP. You should provide HRP with the name and contact information of your supervisor when you confirm your arrival with HRP. Evaluations are confidential and will not be available to students.

Letter to Alumni

We often ask fellows to write letters (which may be based on the report to HRP) to HLS graduates whose gifts to HRP helped to make fellowships possible. You will be notified in the fall if you have been chosen to write an acknowledgement letter to an alumni sponsor.

Attendance at Fellowship Debriefing Meeting, Fall 2006

All HRP Summer Fellows must attend a mandatory group debriefing meeting for fellows, faculty and program staff in the fall of 2006. The focus will be on the value of the fellowship, problems that you encountered, and suggestions for improving the experience. HRP counts on this meeting to evaluate the summer and find ways to continually improve the fellowship program.

IX Risks of Political Violence

Some internships carry students to parts of the world where there are special risks of injury and even death from violent conduct—police and military violence, guerrilla and terrorist violence, crowd violence, arbitrary arrests and detention, and so on. In some situations, it is particularly human rights workers who face risks from government authorities or their opponents. Although past interns over a twenty-year period have not experienced serious threats to their safety, the risk in a number of countries is real. On several occasions interns have had to leave a placement (upon the advice of the sponsoring organization) because of a dangerous political situation. To underscore the obvious, students should seek out and follow the advice of the host organization with regard to issues of personal safety.

Students choosing a country that presents some risk should get as much information as possible before they leave. Although HRP is not in a position to give accurate or current

information, we can point you to sources that may be able to do so--particularly US State Department reports and reports from the US Bureau of Consular Affairs (updates for certain countries). We can also identify relevant NGO reports.