

Litigation Director – Justice Initiative

The Justice Initiative, a program of Open Society Foundations, uses litigation and other forms of legal advocacy to empower people, defend the rule of law, and advance human rights. Through litigation, legal advocacy, research, and technical assistance, we promote and defend accountability for international crimes, combat racial discrimination and statelessness, support criminal justice reform, challenge abuses related to national security and counterterrorism initiatives, expand access to and exercise of freedom of information and expression, and confront corruption linked to the exploitation of natural resources. To our activities we bring deep and varied practice of litigation and other forms of legal advocacy, familiarity with legal and related political fora, substantive knowledge of human rights issues, and issue- and place-specific expertise and experience. We collaborate with a community of dedicated and skillful human rights advocates across the globe, and form part of a dynamic and progressive justice movement that reflects the diversity of the world it inhabits. More information on the Justice Initiative and its activities can be found at www.justiceinitiative.org.

The Justice Initiative engages in strategic litigation on multiple themes in all of the regional human rights tribunals, before the United Nations Treaty Bodies, and before apex courts in more than 40 national jurisdictions. Strategic litigation involves using multiple civil society techniques beyond casework to achieve impact, including empowerment of local communities, research, advocacy at national, regional, and international levels, and communications. Our litigation is delivered by our own staff through collaborative partnerships and coalitions with national individual and organizational partners.

Based in London or New York, the Litigation Director will provide leadership and vision for the Justice Initiative's strategic litigation. For the right person this role will provide a unique platform to steer human rights litigation across the globe. The successful candidate will have 15 or more years' experience in national and international litigation, preferably with experience litigating before one or more jurisdictions and fields of human rights law. The Litigation Director must have highly developed communications and management skills as well as demonstrated experience working in a multi-cultural environment, to provide effective and constructive feedback to lawyers from a wide variety of national systems, cultures, and levels of experience. This position requires both a broader vision and extraordinary attention to detail, the ability to keep track of multiple deadlines, and the skills needed to manage a large portfolio and a diverse team.

Job Profile

Vision and leadership. Act as a focal point for the Justice Initiative's litigation and as a leader in the human rights litigation field. Nurture a portfolio of ground-breaking, high profile, and impactful cases. Demonstrate what effective strategic litigation looks like and encourage constant innovation.

Strategy development. Work with colleagues to develop and refine thematic strategies that utilize litigation. Provide guidance on the development of project plans for litigation. Oversee the identification and assessment of specific cases, including reviewing the strengths and risks of each proposal.

Senior management. As part of the Senior Management Team, help guide the strategic direction of the Justice Initiative, and participate in decisions relating to the organizational management of the program.

Team management. Lead and further develop a high-performing team of 8-10 staff, made up of legal officers, program staff, and litigation fellows.

Litigator support. Provide professional advice and guidance to each of the Justice Initiative's litigators, to encourage a high quality of strategic litigation.

Case management. Nurture high professional standards to maintain a reputation for excellence in strategic litigation. Ensure the implementation of existing policies and guidance for litigation, revising or developing new standards where appropriate.

Oversee an effective case management system for multiple cases and deadlines, and maintain high quality case files.

Document review. Maintain our reputation for high quality pleadings by oversight of an assurance system for the legal integrity and persuasiveness of all documents submitted to courts. Undertake final review of all pleadings.

Professional responsibility. Ensure that the Justice Initiative's litigation fulfils all professional and ethical standards.

Litigation Support to OSF. Oversee support on strategic litigation to selected other OSF programs and grantees, including through publications, litigation workshops, regional meetings, and a summer school course in strategic litigation.

Reporting. Manage systems for the periodic review of individual cases, and for reporting to senior management and to the Justice Initiative board on Justice Initiative litigation;

Candidate Profile

- advanced degree in law and bar membership, with substantial experience practicing and of undertaking and leading strategic litigation in more than one jurisdiction (national and international experience preferred)
- 15 or more years of progressively responsible experience in a situation relevant to the duties of this role
- a sophisticated understanding of the concept and practice of strategic litigation; excellent political judgment and the ability to develop and carry out innovative advocacy strategies
- demonstrated knowledge of international human rights is a significant advantage
- well-developed strategic planning skills, including the ability to gather evidence and research to inform strategies, work plans, activities and internal results assessment; and effectively manage multiple projects in a fast-paced environment
- commitment to and experience in team development and leadership, including supervision and mentoring and supervision of a global team a diverse staff body at different levels of experience, and in multiple locations
- exceptional written and oral communication skills in English, for a wide variety of situations; working proficiency in French or Spanish a distinct advantage [highly desirable]
- excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with a demonstrated ability to build and maintain relationships in a multi-national environment with a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds
- proven ability to work efficiently in a fast-paced environment, troubleshoot and follow projects through to completion, consistently on schedule, without loss of attention to detail
- flexibility and ability to work simultaneously on a wide range of tasks and projects and ability to prioritize tasks, particularly under pressure
- commitment to diversity and a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ability and socio-economic circumstances, and ability to work with diverse individuals within the organization and broader community

Application Deadline: January 8, 2018

Application Instructions:

Please apply through our website: <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/jobs/jr-0000820/litigation-director>

Please upload a cover letter and resume *as one document* when submitting an application.

We are strengthened by the diversity of our colleagues across the Open Society Foundations. We welcome applications from people of all cultures, backgrounds, and experiences, and are committed to providing reasonable accommodations so that colleagues with disabilities are able to fulfil the essential functions of the job.