National Lawyers Guild

2027 Haywood Burns Memorial Fellowships for Social and Economic Justice

APPLICATION PACKET

Application Guidelines

HISTORY OF FELLOWSHIP

The Haywood Burns Memorial Fellowship for Social and Economic Justice has its roots in the NLG's tradition of providing legal, political and educational support to the important progressive movements of the day. In the summer of 1964, the Guild sent lawyers and law students to provide legal support for the emerging civil rights movement in what became known as the Mississippi Summer. In 1973, the Summer Projects Committee was officially formed. The committee sent students to assist with the defense of the Attica Brothers, to work with the growing farmworker initiatives in California, and to support Native American treaty rights in the Pacific Northwest.

Over the years, the Summer Projects program has expanded to place hundreds of fellows with organizations working to protect and further the civil rights of oppressed individuals and communities. Although providing legal work under the direction of their attorney-organizers is still important, the primary mission of the Projects is to strengthen each fellow's long-term commitment to promote justice and equality. Fellows have worked with groups to provide legal, political, and educational support on a wide variety of issues, including housing rights; union democracy; workplace health and safety; mass incarceration, LGBTQ rights; defense of protesters from police harassment and criminal sanctions; and international human rights.

In 1996, the program was renamed after Haywood Burns, long-time radical lawyer, law professor and former NLG president, whose life and work created a legend to inspire generations to come. To learn more about Haywood Burns, visit www.nlg.org/fellowships.

ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIPS

The Haywood Burns Fellowships are designed to encourage work in the NLG tradition of "peoples' lawyering." The program helps students and legal workers apply their talents and skills to find creative ways to use the law to advance justice. Burns Fellowships challenge traditional notions of how one must practice law and provide a summer experience that will enrich and challenge fellows.

Fellowships may be completed with NLG aligned organizations or law firms whose mission is in line with the Guild's commitment to prioritizing people and ecosystems over property interests. We encourage applicants to prioritize grassroots and non-traditional work opportunities such as a small non-profit, a community law firm, an organizing campaign that needs legal assistance, or a solo practitioner who embodies the principles of people's lawyering. The Haywood Burns Fellowships usually provide a rigorous legal experience as well as a political one. ***At the end of the application, you will find a list of potential host sites to contact.***

The kinds of grassroots programs that are appealing to us have included developing legal trainings for animal rights and environmental activists, filing habeas petitions, assisting LGBTQ prisoners, and providing legal assistance to low-wage immigrant workers. We encourage applicants to pick timely projects that might be overlooked by more traditional sources of funding. We generally do not provide funding for work at large non-profits or agencies that

receive government or corporate funding, or nonprofits that are able to provide their own funding to interns (such as the ACLU and the Center for Constitutional Rights). We do provide funding for both national and international projects.

In 2027, we expect to award $3,000 for ten weeks of full-time work (unless otherwise noted) and encourage fellows to pursue matching public interest grants or course credit to supplement this stipend. We will be considering both in person and remote internships.

A DIFFERENT FELLOWSHIP EXPERIENCE

One of the benefits of a Burns Fellowship is the mentorship and apprenticeship relationships that Fellows develop with NLG members locally, regionally, and nationally. Depending on the geographic location of the placements, we will introduce Fellows to Guild members working in their regions. Additionally, we provide free membership in the NLG for one year to all Fellows. As members of the Guild, Fellows are encouraged to join one or more of our many issue-related email lists, receive our organizational publications, and attend our annual convention at a discounted rate. Perhaps most important, membership in the Guild introduces fellows to a progressive community of lawyers, law students, legal workers, and jailhouse lawyers working in the service of the people.

SELECTION CRITERIA AND EVALUATION

Projects will be evaluated on the basis of legal, political, and geographical diversity, as well as the project's connections to the ongoing needs of the persons and communities served. Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the applicant's and organization's commitment to social justice and on a balancing of legal, practical and political work and skills development. Reviewers will also take into consideration the need for the project and how the experience will further the Fellow's legal and career trajectory. Projects that produce a practical product or analysis that can be applied to the Guild's work will be looked on favorably.

REQUIREMENTS OF FELLOWS

We expect to hear from our Fellows over their ten-week placement and encourage them to email us to let us know how their work is progressing or to ask us for help networking with other Guild members. In addition to their work during the ten weeks of the Fellowship, Fellows will also be asked to share their experiences with the broader Guild by submitting an article to *Guild Notes*, the NLG Blog, or *NLG Review*.

NLG MEMBERSHIP

Current NLG law student and legal worker members receive first priority in the selection process. If you are not already a member, you can join online at nlg.org/join. If you need a dues waiver, please email Cindy Spoon at cindy@nlg.org

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Application Instructions

INSTRUCTIONS:

Email the following items in a single PDF to NLG Director of Education and Research Cindy Spoon at cindy@nlg.org using the subject line "Haywood Burns Fellowship Application":

- Application form (next page)
- Two references
- Essay Questions
- Current resume
- One-page letter of support from host organization, including:
    1. Description of the legal work the Fellow will be responsible for
    2. The need met by this Fellowship
    3. Name of supervising attorney or legal worker who will have day-to-day contact with the Fellow and extent to which someone can mentor the Fellow
    4. Guarantee of all logistical needs (i.e. office spaces, supplies)
    5. Amount of funding, if any, the sponsoring organization can provide

Applications that arrive after the deadline or are incomplete upon arrival will not be considered. Please contact Cindy Spoon at cindy@nlg.org with any questions regarding the Fellowship or the application process.

THE DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2027.

APPLICANTS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY JANUARY 31, 2027.

Application Form

PART 1

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address and phone are valid until what date?_____

____Law Student Year:_____ Law School:_____

____ Legal Worker Where:_____

Optional Information (some may be for purposes of affirmative action):

Age:_____ Gender:_____ Under-represented Community:_____

Name of Project: _____

Organization for which you plan to work:

_____

Dates available to work: From_____ To:_____

Are you a member of the NLG? Yes____ No____ Which Chapter: _____

Have you participated in any NLG events, committees or projects? Yes____ No____

If so, which ones? _____

Legal, political or educational organizations you are or have been active in: _____

_____

List the name, address and phone number of TWO references:

Reference 1:

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email:_____

Reference 2:

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

PART 2- SHORT ESSAYS

Please answer the following essay questions clearly and concisely. Limit your answers to a total of three double-spaced pages.

A. REASONS FOR APPLYING: What are your reasons for applying? Describe your knowledge of the issues of concern to the projects that you have chosen.

B. EXPERIENCE: What kinds of legal, political, educational, and work experience do you have which are relevant and directly applicable to this Project?

C. GOALS AND PLANS: What do you expect to gain from this Fellowship? What types of legal and political work do you hope to do in the future? How do you see this internship helping you in your goals?

D. FOLLOW-UP WORK: How will you share your summer experience and skills with others? How can you carry the work of the project back to your community and/or law school?

E. GUILD PARTICIPATION: Please describe why you want to be part of the NLG. How you will share your fellowship experience with the organization?

POTENTIAL HOST ORGANIZATIONS

Fellows are encouraged to reach out to NLG projects, law firms, and allied organizations. The list below includes suggestions for placements. If you want to work with another group, firm, or individual attorney you believe embodies the NLG's mission, please check with Cindy Spoon at Cindy@nlg.org. It is up to the host site to decide if the placement is remote or in-person.

Nonprofit Organizations

- Abolitionist Law Center (Pittsburgh, PA)
- Animal Activist Legal Defense Project (Denver, CO)
- Black Alliance for Just Immigration (Multiple locations)
- Civil Liberties Defense Center (Eugene, OR)
- Defending Rights and Dissent (Washington, DC)
- Eviction Defense Collaborative (San Francisco)
- If/When/How-Repro Legal Defense
- Law Students for Climate Accountability
- Legal Rights Center (Minneapolis, MN)
- Mass Alliance Against Predatory Lending
- National Immigration Project of the NLG (Washington, DC)
- NLG National Office (Remote)
- National Conference of Black Lawyers (New York, NY)
- National Police Accountability Project of the NLG (Metairie, LA)
- Oregon Justice Resource Center (Portland, OR)
- Palestine Legal (Chicago, IL)
- Parole Preparation Project (New York, NY)
- People's Law Project (Portland, OR)
- Project South (Atlanta, GA)
- Right to Immigration Institute/Dignidad (Massachusetts)
- Sugar Law Center for Social and Economic Justice (Detroit, MI)
- Water Protector Legal Collective (Albuquerque, NM)

NLG Law Firms and Solo Practitioners

- Cohen and Greene PLCC (Criminal Defense, Civil Rights, Trans Rights—NYC)
- Goodman Hurwitz & James (Civil rights/§1983 litigation—Detroit, MI)
- Habekah Cannon (Criminal Defense—Charlotte, NC)
- People's Law Office (Chicago, IL)
- Prya Murad Law PLLC (Criminal Defense—Miami, FL)
- W/rest Collective (Movement lawyers—Boise, ID)