

JOB DESCRIPTION JUNIOR/GRADUATE SOLICITOR

ABOUT THE NATIONAL JUSTICE PROJECT

The National Justice Project (NJP) is a not-for-profit legal service and civil rights organisation. We use the law, advocacy and education to tackle systemic injustice and promote government accountability. We primarily represent and support First Nations peoples and asylum seekers/refugees who have harmed and discriminated against within the justice and health care systems. We advance human rights by representing and supporting our clients to have their voices heard. We advocate for the reform and development of law, and a justice system that is fair, just and equitable, taking on the most challenging cases that will create systemic change.

We work across Australia and in the Pacific. Our head office is based in Sydney and is a small and busy workplace. We recognise and pay our deepest respects to all sovereign First Nations Peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work. NJP recognises that throughout history the Australian legal system has been an instrument of violence and oppression against First Nations Peoples, as well as other minority groups. NJP seeks to strengthen and promote dialogue between the Australian legal system and First Nations laws, governance structures and protocols.

We are committed to reconciliation, and achieving social justice by ensuring everyone has the right to equal access and status under the law. We work collaboratively with community partners to identify and advocate against systemic injustices. We are a small team of both legal and non-legal staff who all work flexibly and cooperatively to achieve positive outcomes for our clients, strategic outcomes in Australia's legal landscape and enhance rights awareness within the community.

ABOUT DEADLY CONNECTIONS

Deadly Connections Community and Justice Services (Deadly Connections) is an Aboriginal-led organisation based in Sydney, Australia, offering community and consultancy services aimed at reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice and child protection systems. Deadly Connections positively disrupts intergenerational disadvantage, grief, loss, trauma by providing holistic, culturally responsive interventions and services to First Nations people and communities.

THE GRADUATE SOLICITOR POSITION

This role is intended to be a part-time position, 3 days per week for 12-months with the possibility of extension. This role has been created through a partnership between the NJP and Deadly Connections. The position will be fulfilled as a Secondment with DCCJS, with legal work supervised by NJP.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Contribute to direct legal casework and strategic litigation;
- Liaise with clients and our partners;
- Lead the implementation and delivery of community legal projects;

- Provide high quality advice, assistance and casework service to the clients of the NJP;
- Undertake administrative and case management activities;
- Be involved in a wide range of legal and policy issues and cases within our practice; and
- Maintain an effective and ethical legal practice including compliance with the operational policies, legislative requirements and practice management standards.

KEY CANDIDATE CONSIDERATIONS:

- This position is open to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants only;
- This opportunity is intended to be fulfilled as a Secondment with DCCJS, with legal work supervised by NJP. The successful candidate will report to both NJP and DCCJS;
- Candidates must be comfortable working with confronting subject matter and with traumatised and at-times highly distressed clients;
- Applicants should be aware that a considerable portion of the position will involve leading community legal education projects;
- Some travel may be required;
- The successful candidate will apply their legal training, together with lived experience and knowledge, to practical and administrative tasks to seek justice and accountability for our clients and the wider community; and
- You will be required to provide reflective reports over the course of the year.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING:

- Undertaking your work and other activities with integrity whilst upholding the organisation's values and ensuring a people-first approach across our staff, volunteers and clients;
- Supporting team cohesion in a flexible and friendly manner;
- Protecting and enhancing the reputation of the organisation;
- Executing the tasks that are assigned to you to a high standard;
- Collecting data to evaluate your work and regularly reporting on it;
- Meet objectives and deliverables in a timely manner; and
- Maintaining positive relationships with partner organisations and the wider community.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE, SERVICES & PROJECTS, INCLUDING:

- Facilitate and lead community justice projects designed to raise rights awareness and educate the community, break the cycle of incarceration and disrupt disadvantage and trauma;
- Working on or contributing to a wide range of legal matters under the direction of the Senior Solicitors, Legal Practice Manager (LPM) or Principal Solicitor such as case management, child protection, civil litigation, coronial inquests, medical negligence claims, constitutional and administrative law cases and complaints.
- File management, including case planning and maintaining spreadsheets;
- Making FOI or equivalent applications and liaising with recipient organisations;
- Preparing briefs to counsel and experts;
- Developing and maintaining a strong and sensitive working relationship with clients, and taking accurate and clear instructions;

- Preparing advice, legal research and time recording;
- Maintaining strong professional relationships with Counsel, partner firms, defendant firms and the clients; and
- Answering phones, directing calls, doing intakes and referrals, and taking messages.

SUPERVISING JUNIOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS, INCLUDING:

- While you will have no direct reports, it is expected that you will provide day to day guidance to any team member that is allocated to assist you in your matters (or is otherwise assisting you) with their duties and responsibilities, including volunteers and junior staff;
- NJP is involved in various University clinical placements throughout the year. NJP staff may be required to represent NJP and participate in the clinics, including in the allocation of work, provision of training and providing supervision to the students; and
- As you become more experienced, you may provide guidance and training to other paralegals and new solicitors.

APPLICATION PROCESS

All questions and applications should be sent to hr@justice.org.au as soon as possible. The start dates of the positions are flexible for the right candidate.

In your application, please send your CV along with a statement with your response to the below selection criteria:

- A current practising certificate (NSW) or eligibility to hold one within three months of commencement;
- A passion for human rights and social justice, in particular in relation to Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander people; and
- An understanding of culturally safe and trauma informed practice.

The successful candidate will be required to be competent in the following core skills:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills;
- An ability to manage multiple competing priorities under tight deadlines;
- Excellent administrative and organisational skills; and
- Experience working both independently with minimal supervision and as a part of a team.

Desirable experience:

- Experience working with vulnerable clients is highly regarded;
- Experience working in a legal office or community organisation is highly regarded; and
- Strong community relationships are highly regarded.

This position is open to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants only.

Being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person is a genuine occupational requirement for this position under s 14 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW). The filling of this position is intended to constitute an affirmative measure under section 8 of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (CTH).