INNOCENCE PROJECT

Job Announcement
August 2020

Staff Attorney, Strategic Litigation

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The Innocence Project was founded in 1992 by Barry C. Scheck and Peter J. Neufeld at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University to assist the wrongly convicted who could be proven innocent through DNA testing. The Innocence Project's groundbreaking use of DNA technology to free innocent people has provided irrefutable proof that wrongful convictions are not isolated or rare events but instead arise from systemic defects. Now an independent nonprofit organization closely affiliated with Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University, the Innocence Project's mission is to free the staggering numbers of innocent people who remain incarcerated and to bring substantive reform to the system responsible for their unjust imprisonment.

The Strategic Litigation Department's goal is to reduce courts reliance on faulty and unreliable evidence. Focusing on the leading causes of wrongful convictions, the team litigates in the areas of forensic science, eyewitness identification, and unreliable confessions.

JOB SUMMARY

The Strategic Litigation Staff Attorney will be responsible for developing and executing nationwide litigation strategies and policy initiatives to address the Innocence Project's eyewitness identification law reform initiatives, the leading cause of wrongful convictions, and related reform efforts. This attorney will also work extensively with public defenders and defense counsel across the country, both on individual cases and broader reform goals, and with leading scientists working in relevant fields. In addition, the attorney will train and speak about these reform efforts around the country.

The Staff Attorney reports to the Director of Strategic Litigation and collaborates with directors and staff in the Post-Conviction (Legal), Policy and Science & Research departments. This position also works closely with paralegals.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

The staff attorney engages in all aspects of litigation and advocacy, which include:

- Pre-trial, appellate and post-conviction litigation of criminal cases, including drafting memoranda, affidavits and briefs, as well as frequent amicus curiae briefs.
- Conducting legal research and analysis.
- Evaluating scientific research and incorporating scientific research into legal arguments.
- Researching prospects for new litigation, including both factual and legal claims.
- Assisting with the development of national litigation strategies.
- Preparing reports, training and advocacy materials.
- Conducting trainings and making presentations.
- Providing support and assistance to Innocence Project network affiliates and cooperating attorneys.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Must have a J.D. and be admitted to the Bar in at least one state.
- Must have at least five (5) years of litigation, appellate and/or clerkship experience.

- Experience with and the ability to understand, summarize and translate complex research for a lay audience.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- At least five (5) years of experience in criminal justice or related civil rights fields.
- Experience working with racially and socioeconomically marginalized communities.
- Experience developing and delivering presentations to various non-academic audiences.
- Experience incorporating social or natural sciences in legal research and/or case litigation.
- Ability to travel approximately 10% of time. (Due to COVID-19, non-essential travel has been suspended until further notice.)

KEY COMPETENCIES

- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Effectively scans the landscape for relevant information then breaks down complex problems into simple and manageable components.
- Ability to work independently in a fast-paced environment and manage multiple competing demands.
- Embodies strong organizational and planning skills that entails prioritizing key components of a task while maintaining quality of work and attention to details.
- A strong commitment to social justice and criminal justice and wrongful conviction reform.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The salary for this position is highly competitive and the Innocence Project offers an excellent benefits package, including health, dental and vision insurance, Flexible Spending Account, 401k plan with company-match, and paid Transitcheks.

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The Innocence Project considers the diversity of its workforce to be vital to our organization's success in meeting its mission. We strongly encourage applicants from all cultures, races, educational backgrounds, life experiences, socio-economic classes, sexual orientations, age, gender, and physical abilities to apply.

As an Equal Opportunity Employer, it is our policy not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, familial status, marital status, predisposing genetic characteristics, actual or perceived domestic violence victim status, unemployment status, caregiver status, or any other category protected by law.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

To apply, please visit Paycom. Upload your cover letter, resume as (last name. first name. cover letter/resume), and a 10- to 20-page writing sample. Information submitted through this secure site is kept confidential. Due to the large volume of applications, we are unable to give applicant updates by phone.