



# PIAC Practical Legal Training Placement Volunteer Position Job Description

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The Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) is a community legal centre that specialises in strategic litigation and systemic advocacy on social justice and human rights issues. PIAC tackles difficult issues that have a significant impact upon people who are marginalised or facing disadvantage, ensuring basic rights are enjoyed across the community.

Our work addresses issues such as:

- homelessness;
- access for people with disability to basic services like public transport, education and online services;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage;
- discrimination against people with mental health conditions;
- access to energy and water for low-income and vulnerable consumers;
- the exercise of police power;
- the rights of people in detention, including the right to proper medical care;
- government accountability; and
- Truth, justice and accountability for victims of conflict.

Successful applicants will work either in the Strategic Litigation team or in the Truth & Accountability team.

In the Strategic Litigation team, placements will contribute to the provision of a successful, innovative, and responsive legal practice through assisting with PIAC's litigation and associated policy and law reform work.

In the Truth and Accountability team, placements may work across two projects. This can involve working as part of a team to conduct research and analysis of complex human rights and international humanitarian law violations during the Sri Lankan civil war using open source investigation tools. The other aspect involves undertaking discrete research tasks for the Towards Truth project, as well as working on subject areas to create overviews that tell the legislative and policy story of the issue under consideration.

## **Relationships**

The Strategic Litigation team is made up of two Principal Solicitors, Senior Solicitors, Solicitors, Legal Secretaries and Practical Legal Training Placements.

The Principal Solicitors are responsible for the legal practice, including all decisions affecting the practice and supervision of all lawyers and legal staff.

A Solicitor is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of Practical Legal Training Placements and the operation of the Practical Legal Training Placement Program.

The Truth and Accountability Team includes a Program Director, a Senior Legal Officer, Legal Officers, a Project Officer, a Technology Officer, secondees solicitors and volunteer interns. Interns may be required to undertake work for and under the supervision of several members of the team.

Practical Legal Training Placements may be required to undertake work for and under the supervision of all lawyers engaged in legal practice.

### **Decision - Making**

The Principal Solicitors are ultimately responsible for the conduct of the legal practice. Issues relevant to the legal practice are discussed at legal practice meetings that all members of the legal practice attend.

In the Truth and Accountability team, the Program Director is ultimately responsible for work of the team.

### **Tenure**

The Professional Legal Training Placements are required to work at least two days per week for a minimum of 40 days. However, we are open to requests for flexible working arrangements.

All Practical Legal Training Placements will be required to work at least one of their days at the PIAC office at Level 5, 175 Liverpool St, Sydney.

This is an unpaid position.

### **Major Accountabilities**

For all placements:

- Answer telephone enquiries from clients and potential clients;

For the Strategic Litigation team:

- Assist with casework under the supervision of Solicitors, including taking instructions, drafting correspondence, preparing documentation, undertaking legal research and assisting in court;
- Conduct research to assist staff with casework and policy projects.

For the Truth and Accountability team:

- conduct research and analysis of complex human rights and international humanitarian law violations during the Sri Lankan civil war using open source investigation tools;

- assist to develop and document investigation plans and methodologies to carry out research and analysis; and/or
- undertake discrete research tasks for the Towards Truth project, as well as working on subject areas to create overviews that tell the legislative and policy story of the issue under consideration.

### **Selection Criteria**

- Good telephone manner and an ability to deal effectively with people at all levels;
- Sound time-management and organisational skills;
- Legal research skills;
- Understanding of legislative and law reform processes;
- Writing skills to enable drafting of research reports and legal documents;
- Demonstrated understanding of the issues facing socially and economically disadvantaged people and of public interest concepts;
- Demonstrated ability to work co-operatively as part of a team.

### **Applications**

Your application should be no longer than 5 pages in total. An application should comprise:

- a cover letter addressing the selection criteria and your preference to complete your internship in the Strategic Litigation team or the Truth and Accountability team or both;
- a current CV; and
- a copy of your academic transcript.

All applications must address the selection criteria and should be sent by email to: [jobs@piac.asn.au](mailto:jobs@piac.asn.au)

PIAC strongly encourages applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people living with a disability.

**Closing Date: 5PM, Monday 3 May 2021.**