

## **Position Description**

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### **Legal Research Officer**

Identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander position

24 month fixed term contract, full time or part time

Location: Sydney, with flexible working supported

#### **1. The Public Interest Advocacy Centre**

The Public Interest Advocacy Centre is a leading social justice law and policy centre. We build a fairer, stronger society by helping to change laws, policies and practices that cause injustice and inequality.

##### **Our work combines:**

- legal advice and representation, specialising in test cases and strategic casework;
- research, analysis and policy development; and
- advocacy for systems change and public interest outcomes.

We actively seek to collaborate and partner in our work to maximise its impact. Our priorities are: First Nations justice; reducing homelessness; disability rights; energy and water justice; and civil rights.

#### **2. Towards Truth Project**

[Towards Truth](#) is a collaboration between PIAC and the Indigenous Law Centre (ILC) at UNSW that responds directly to the call of the Uluru Statement from the Heart for truth-telling. We are building a comprehensive database and website that will provide an accurate, detailed record of the laws and policies that have impacted upon the lives of First Nations people.

This is a bold and ambitious project that is the first of its kind – nationally or internationally. We have started the project in NSW, with other jurisdictions to be added over time.

The database and website will be a tool that can be used by a broad cross-section of the community to better understand our history and engage in truth-telling. It will support the work of a future Makarrata Commission and help inform the process of moving towards treaty making.

#### **3. Position overview**

The Legal Research Officer will report to the Project Director – Towards Truth at PIAC, and work under their supervision and direction. The Legal Research Officer will work closely on a day-to-day basis with the Project Manager, Research Assistant, volunteers and interns.

The Legal Research Officer will support the day-to-day implementation of the project by undertaking legal and policy research and reviewing the law and policy research for the database. The Legal Research Officer will maintain contact with external stakeholders to

obtain documents for the project.

This position is open only to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. It is intended by PIAC and the ILC as a special measure to promote substantive equality for the purposes of s 8(1) of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) and s 21 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW).

## **4. Major accountabilities**

- 4.1 Lead research in a specific areas of law and policy, including:
- developing a research plan
  - preparing research requests for pro bono lawyers, interns and research assistants
  - overseeing research for the area of law and policy, and
  - drafting summaries of laws and policies for the website.
- 4.2 Support the Project Manager to induct pro bono researchers and expert reviewers.
- 4.3 Assist Project Manager with supervising and tracking work of pro bono lawyers, interns and research assistants.
- 4.4 Work with subject matter experts to inform research requests and substantive review of research for the database.
- 4.5 Provide input into database and website design and development.
- 4.6 Ensure core project documents are up to date and reflect practice in close collaboration with Project Manager and Project Director.
- 4.7 Develop relationships with external stakeholders such as libraries and government agencies who can assist the project by providing documents.
- 4.8 Support the successful implementation of PIAC's Reconciliation Action Plan.
- 4.9 Other duties as required, including administrative assistance to support the project.

## **5. Knowledge, skills and experience**

### **Essential**

- 5.1 You are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person according to the following accepted criteria:
- being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent;
  - identifying as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person; and
  - being accepted as such by the community in which you live, or formerly lived.

- 5.2 Demonstrated research and analytical skills;
- 5.3 Well-developed written communication skills with attention to detail and the ability to write clearly for a non-legal audience;
- 5.4 Demonstrated organisational skills;
- 5.5 Good interpersonal skills and the capacity to develop formal and informal relationships and networks with stakeholders;
- 5.6 Understanding of the law and functions of government;
- 5.7 Understanding of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and a commitment to truth-telling.
- 5.8 Demonstrated ability to work cooperatively as part of a team.

### **Desirable**

- 5.9 Proven ability to establish and maintain relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations.
- 5.10 Tertiary qualifications in law.

## **6. Conditions**

PIAC is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Annual salary range: \$86,822 to \$93,424 (pro rata where applicable) plus leave loading and superannuation.

PIAC is a Public Benevolent Institution and is currently able to offer salary packaging options subject to PIAC's Salary Sacrifice Policy. Staff who take full advantage of salary packaging options can significantly increase their take-home pay.

PIAC's Enterprise Agreement provides benefits including additional paid leave between Christmas and New Year and paid cultural and ceremonial leave. See further: [Public Interest Advocacy Centre Enterprise Agreement](#).

The position is offered as negotiated with the successful candidate. The position is for a two year contract with the possibility of extension.

PIAC is committed to flexible working arrangements and provides opportunities for professional development and mentoring. Our workplace culture is collaborative, dynamic and committed to cultural safety.

PIAC requires all employees to have up-to-date COVID-19 vaccination.

## **7. Applications**

**Your application should be no longer than 6 pages in total.** An application should

comprise a cover letter, resume, and a statement outlining your suitability for the role with reference to the selection criteria (see 'knowledge, skills and experience').

Applications should be sent by email to [jobs@piac.asn.au](mailto:jobs@piac.asn.au)

Inquiries about the position should be addressed to:

Anna Harding

Project Director, Towards Truth Project

[aharding@piac.asn.au](mailto:aharding@piac.asn.au)

If you would like to discuss the recruitment process and any reasonable adjustments you may require, please contact Jessica Leung at [jobs@piac.asn.au](mailto:jobs@piac.asn.au).