

HRLA BURSARY AWARD POLICY 2019

Potential applicants with any queries about their eligibility or about the scheme are advised to read this policy document carefully. If this does not answer the query, the applicant may contact the HRLA via the bursary email address: bursary@hrla.org.uk.

INTRODUCTION

The HRLA recognises that those without independent financial backing can sometimes be unable to take up internships, work placements and other either unpaid or poorly paid work in human rights law. He or she may therefore miss out on these opportunities and this can lead to their being disadvantaged when applying for jobs within the human rights field. To assist people in this position, in 2006 the HRLA established a bursary scheme to assist law students, either those currently studying (either undergraduate degree, postgraduate studies or LPC/BPTC/Law Conversion Course) or those who have recently graduated, in undertaking such work.

Each year, the HRLA will provide at least one grant of £3,500 and a number of small awards up to £1,500 per person awards from an annual bursary fund, provided there are suitable applicants. The applicant who receives the highest score for their application will be awarded the Peter Duffy Memorial Award. This special bursary award commemorates the innovative and groundbreaking UK human rights lawyer, Peter Duffy.

The bursary money is to be used to enable the successful applicants to undertake work related to human rights law that he or she would otherwise be unable to afford to do. That work need not take place in the United Kingdom, but it must be relevant to human rights law in the United Kingdom.

ELIGIBILITY

A person is eligible to apply if he or she is studying for, or has recently undertaken, a law undergraduate degree, or postgraduate studies in law, the Law Conversion Course, BPTC or LPC. Those who have already secured a pupillage or training contract will ordinarily be ineligible, save in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the HRLA who will be guided by the purpose of the awards as set out in the above introduction when considering exceptional eligibility. "Recently" will be determined on a case by case basis at the discretion of the HRLA.

The applicant must demonstrate that he or she is committed to finding employment in law, or practising as a lawyer, in the UK in the human rights field in the future.

PURPOSE OF THE AWARD

The successful applicant will be granted an award to enable him or her to undertake either unfunded or low paid short-term work that is related, in some way, to UK human rights law. This award scheme is designed to assist people who, otherwise, would be unable to undertake work/an internship because he or she would lack the financial means.

'Relevant to human rights law in the United Kingdom'

The work/internship does not need to take place within the United Kingdom. What is required however is that as a result of carrying out the placement, internship or contract (wherever in the world it is carried out); the applicant must establish (in the application form) a link to promoting and protecting human rights law within the United Kingdom. For example, an applicant might seek funding to assist him or her to undertake an internship at the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) in Geneva. The applicant will have to identify why such an internship will be relevant to human rights law in the United Kingdom. During the bursary process, prospective applicants often ask “whether x or y placement would be considered to be relevant to human rights law in the United Kingdom.” There are no set rules as to which placements qualify and which do not – it is for the applicant to demonstrate the relevance as he or she see it, and you will see from previous reports found here <https://www.hrla.org.uk/bursary/> that we have funded individuals to undertake placements abroad.

EVIDENCE OF PLACEMENT/INTERNSHIP

Normally, for an application to be considered complete applicants must provide evidence that he or she has been given a firm offer of a work placement/an internship and that, subject to funding, he or she is in a position to take up the offer. If by the deadline the applicant has not yet received confirmation of an offer, the application may still be accepted yet if shortlisted, a final decision will not be made until such confirmation has been provided. Funds will be released at the commencement of the placement. Special consideration for earlier release of funds may be sought in writing to the HRLA Bursary Committee.

PUBLICITY

With their consent, we will publish the names and placements of successful applicants on the HRLA website and may seek to publish this information in other relevant publications – for example, Counsel or the Law Gazette.

REPORT REQUIREMENT

On conclusion of the placement, internship or contract the successful applicant will be required to write a short report (1,000 to 2000 words) summarising the work he or she has done. This report must be provided to the HRLA within six weeks of the completion of the placement, and will (with the permission of the bursary recipient) be published on the HRLA website.

VALIDITY OF AWARD

Awards are only valid for 12 months from the date on which he or she is offered it, and the placement must start within those 12 months. No awards will be made retrospectively for internships/placements/contracts which have already been completed.

CRITERIA

The following criteria will be applied when considering each application (in no particular order):

- Relevance and value of internship/placement/contract to be undertaken to human rights law in the United Kingdom;
- Ability of applicant to demonstrate commitment to human rights work in the United Kingdom;
- Suitability of applicant to the internship/placement/contract intended to be undertaken – with regard to background and experience;
- Benefit to applicant's development as a lawyer and their future United Kingdom based career in human rights by undertaking internship/placement/contract;
- Reasons why the applicant needs the bursary, given that the aim of the scheme is to assist people who, otherwise, would be unable to undertake work/an internship because of their financial situation.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Every applicant must complete an application form. The deadline for receipt of the application form will be no later than **10pm Monday 13 May 2019**. Awards will be announced on or shortly after 17 June 2018.

The application form must be completed fully. It must contain the names of two referees (including email address and telephone number), and must include (by way of an annex/additional item if necessary) evidence of an offer of a placement/internship/contract (or evidence that an application has been made and the decision is pending), and information about the placement, internship or contract the applicant proposes to undertake. The applicant must also state how much funding he or she is applying for and why he or she is applying for that amount.

Financial information provided on the bursary application form will be kept strictly confidential and destroyed once the application process is complete.

Applications are by way of application form and proof of internship document only. No other supporting materials will be accepted with the application, this includes CVs and cover letters which will not be considered and will be discarded. The decision as to who receives a bursary will only be made on documents provided—there will be no interviews.

In each annual bursary round, an individual can only make one application to the scheme relating to one specified placement/internship/contract. Any individual who was unsuccessful in any of the previous bursary round is entitled to re-apply to the scheme. Previous bursary recipients are not entitled to apply for a further bursary in a subsequent year(s).

Communication with applicants will be by email, unless applicants state a preference/need for another method of communication on their application form. Applicants are advised to check their emails regularly after the closing date of the scheme, for updates on their application.

DECISION MAKING

The decision as to which applicants will be awarded a bursary will be made in accordance with the published criteria of the HRLA bursary scheme. In assessing the applications the HRLA will strive to abide by equal opportunities principles. All applications are anonymised

before they are considered by the bursary panel. The first stage of the application process consists of double marking each application. Shortlisted applications will then be re-marked by four members of the bursary panel. Those with the highest scores will be successful in obtaining a bursary award.

AMOUNTS AND NUMBER OF AWARDS

This year the HRLA will award a maximum of £10,000 in total, provided there are suitable applicants. Awards will comprise least one grant of £3,500 and a number of small awards up to £1,500 per person.

CONDITIONS OF AWARD

The money will be paid direct to the successful applicants once the placement/internship/contract commences. A written report must be provided to the HRLA at the end of the placement, internship or contract summarising the work he or she has done and must be signed off by a relevant supervisor or contact from the organisation at which the internship took place. Reports that have not been endorsed will not be accepted. This report must be provided to the HRLA within six weeks of the completion of the placement.