

HLRA BURSARY AWARD POLICY 2021

Summary

1. HRLA has been offering bursaries since 2006 to enable successful applicants to undertake work placements or internships in the field of human rights law that they may be otherwise be unable to undertake due to their financial circumstances.
2. In short, applicants must first independently apply for, and obtain an offer to undertake a relevant internship. Applicants can then apply to HRLA for a bursary to cover the costs and expenses involved in undertaking the internship.
3. Each year, the HRLA will provide at least one grant of £3,500 and a number of smaller awards up to £1,500 per person from an annual bursary fund, provided there are suitable applicants. HRLA bursaries will in most cases contribute to rather than cover total costs. The applicant who receives the highest overall score for their application will be awarded the Peter Duffy Memorial Award.

What is the purpose of bursary?

4. The successful applicant will be granted an award to enable them 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 an internship/work placement because they lack the financial means.

How do I know whether my internship is “relevant to human rights law in the UK?”

5. Internships and work placements in the field of human rights law that are based in the UK or overseas will be considered.
6. All applicants must be able to show that the skills gained during completion of the internship, whether based in the UK or overseas, will assist the applicant in developing an understanding of human rights law in the UK.
7. Previous successful candidates have received awards to support their internships at legal charities, NGOs and law centres. Past examples include:

Reprieve (London);
Prisoner’s Advice Service (London);
International Criminal Court (The Hague);
Human Rights Commission (Northern Ireland);
Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (London);
Texas Defender Service (Amicus) (Texas).

To read reports by previous successful applicants, and to see the range of organisations in which internships have been undertaken, please click here: <https://www.hrla.org.uk/bursary/>

What funding is available?

8. Each year, the HRLA will provide at least one grant of £3,500 and a number of smaller awards up to £1,500 per person from the annual bursary fund.
9. Applicants are required to set out the amount sought on their application forms.

Applicants will need to demonstrate that they will be likely to incur the amount sought, as stipulated on the application form.

10. The applicant who receives the highest total 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.

Who is eligible to apply?

11. A person is eligible to apply if they **are studying for, or have recently undertaken, a law undergraduate degree, or postgraduate studies in law, or the GDL, BPTC or LPC.**
12. “Recently” will be determined on a case by case basis at the discretion of the HRLA executive committee. Ordinarily, applicants will have undertaken their relevant degree in the last five years.
13. All applicants must demonstrate that they are committed to working in the field of human rights law in the UK in the future.
14. 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 bursary, as set out above.

APPLICATION PROCESS

What is the application process?

15. Applicants must:
 - a. Complete the application form accessible on the HRLA website;
 - b. Attach the application form, diversity monitoring form and email/letter showing their internship offer to administrator@hrla.org.uk by **10am on 17th May 2021**;
 - c. Read the instructions at the top of the application form carefully and answer all of the questions, including the financial information section;
 - d. There will be no interviews – the application process is **assessed entirely at paper sift stage** by members of the HRLA Committee.
16. If any applicant requires a paper copy of the application form or access to the application form in an alternative format, please email administrator@hrla.org.uk where reasonable adjustments can be sought.
17. Successful applicants will be notified by email by **31st May 2021**.
18. Applicants who have not been successful this year will also be informed on this date.

What are the assessment criteria?

19. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the following selection criteria:

1. **Human rights (25 points)**

- a. **Commitment to and interest in human rights law in the UK** (10 points);
 - b. **Relevance and value of internship/placement to be undertaken to human rights law in the UK** (5 points);
 - c. **Relevant skills, abilities and knowledge of the field of human rights law** (5 points);
 - d. **Benefit to applicant's development as a lawyer and their future career in human rights law by undertaking internship/placement** (5 points);
2. **Financial need (25 points)**
- a. This is one of the selection criteria given one of the aims of the bursary is to assist those who would be otherwise unable to undertake an internship/placement in human rights law due to their current financial circumstances.

What are your diversity initiatives?

20. HRLA is committed to helping students from the widest possible range of backgrounds access careers in human rights law.
21. **Diversity monitoring form.** Completion of the diversity monitoring form is optional but all applicants are kindly encouraged to complete this in order that HRLA can properly gather data and monitor who is receiving a bursary. Candidates' protected characteristics, including their race and gender, will form no part of the assessment process. This data is collected for monitoring purposes only.
22. **Contextual information.** All applicants are kindly encouraged to complete this part of the diversity monitoring form. The HRLA seeks to gather data on the socioeconomic backgrounds of those applying for and receiving bursaries.
23. Candidates' contextual information will be considered holistically as part of the assessment process. The HRLA will use its discretion to ensure that its bursaries are accessible to candidates from underrepresented backgrounds. The contextual information questions asked currently are to identify whether an applicant:
- a. Attended a UK state school;
 - b. Was the first in their family to access higher education;
 - c. Was eligible for free school meals;
 - d. Spent any part of their childhood in local authority care; and/or
 - e. Entered the country as a refugee.
24. **Name blind sifting.** A candidate's name can often indicate their race and/or their gender. To minimise the effects of potential unconscious bias, all applications will be anonymised. Applicant names will be redacted by the HRLA administrator and replaced by a unique reference number.
25. **University blind sifting.** HRLA is aware of the overrepresentation of students from Oxbridge and Russell group universities at the bar in particular. Therefore, the application does not ask applicants to indicate where they studied at university. The HRLA administrator will also redact any reference to particular universities in application forms as the institution at which the student is studying does not form any

part of the selection criteria.

26. All HRLA bursary assessors are reminded of fair selection processes and instructed to follow and apply the assessment criteria. Every application form will be reviewed by at least two members of the HRLA committee.

What else do I need to know?

27. **Evidence of placement/internship.** Ordinarily, applicants should submit proof of their internship offer with their application.
28. **When will funds become available to me?** Funds will become available two weeks before commencement of the placement.
29. **When must I undertake my internship?** Internships in respect of which funding is sought must commence within 12 months of the date of the award. No awards will be made in respect of internships/placements undertaken in the past.
30. **Publicity.** HRLA, with the consent of the applicants, will seek to publish the names and internship details of successful applicants in promotional materials for future bursary schemes and on the HRLA website.
31. **Report.** Successful applicants are required to write a short report of 1,000-2,000 words summarising the work done on their internship or placement. This report will be published on the HRLA website and must be provided within six weeks of completion of the placement. It must be signed off by the internship manager/supervisor.
32. **Can I apply in respect of more than one internship this year?** No - applicants may only apply in respect of one internship.

How will my data be handled?

33. HRLA is aware that assessors will be handling financial information on applicants. All financial data, provided in section B of the application form, will be destroyed by 1st December 2021 and will **not** be kept on HRLA records.