

**CHICAGO LAW FOUNDATION**  
1111 East 60th Street · Chicago, Illinois 60637

**PUBLIC INTEREST GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION**

**What is the Chicago Law Foundation?**

The Chicago Law Foundation (CLF) is a student-directed nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation that promotes legal work in the public interest through grants to law students for summer work at public interest organizations and bar costs. CLF is non-partisan and funds projects that fall anywhere on the political spectrum.

**Who may apply?**

The CLF summer grant application process will only be open to students who are currently 2Ls.

In previous years, CLF funded summer grants for both 1L and 2L summer employment, but, the Law School now directly assists all 1L students working in public interest through forgivable loans available to all 1Ls. As a result, CLF is now focused on funding as many eligible 2L applicants as possible.

CLF also provides bar grants to 3Ls going into public interest careers.

**How does the application process work?**

The CLF Board selects grantees based on a written application and, at the discretion of the Board, an interview with the full CLF Board. Members of the law school administration and the faculty are in no way involved in the selection process.

All applicants must complete the attached application and should follow the instructions carefully. Applicants should include a copy of their resume and information about the organization for which they plan to work. CLF does not require that applicants demonstrate financial need in order to be considered for grants. Because the CLF Board is comprised of fellow students, applicants should not include their law school transcript or financial information with their application.

## **What are the grant criteria for funding?**

When reviewing grant applications, the CLF Board will consider the following factors:

- Whether the applicant, based on his or her work and volunteer experience, demonstrates a genuine and ongoing desire to work in the public interest, including a commitment to work in the public interest over the summer.
- Whether the applicant is likely to make a meaningful contribution to the organization for which he or she proposes to work. For example, will the applicant participate in drafting briefs and other legal documents? Will the applicant have contact with clients and assist in their representation? Will the applicant take on a substantial research project?
- Whether the grant recipient will be supervised by a licensed, practicing attorney.
- The degree to which the application itself (e.g., presentation, completeness of responses) reflects the applicant's interest in working for the organization and receiving a CLF grant.
- Whether the employer is firmly committed to hiring the applicant for the summer.
- Whether the applicant is knowledgeable about the work of the organization for which he or she proposes to work.

In selecting grant recipients, CLF also seeks diversity among projects and organizations served by the applicants. CLF funds both impact litigation and direct services and tries to ensure that projects are geographically dispersed.

The Board encourages applications from students seeking to serve the public interest in a variety of ways, and intends by its summer grant to promote legal work in public interest, which includes the following areas:

- Protecting the rights of disadvantaged minorities;
- Protecting the rights of victims of racial, sexual, or religious discrimination;
- Protecting the rights of the elderly, the homeless, the handicapped, and the young;
- Assisting those who cannot afford paid legal representation;
- Protecting the environment;
- Promoting greater governmental openness, accountability, and efficiency;
- Protecting the rights of all others whose basic statutory or constitutional rights have been challenged or denied.

CLF funds students who desire to serve the public interest by working with government agencies at the local, state and federal levels, including, for example, state and federal prosecutors' offices, public defenders, and federal and state regulatory agencies and departments.

Judicial externs may apply for a summer grant, but other applicants better meeting the criteria specified above will be prioritized.

**Are there any types of work that CLF does not fund?**

- CLF will not fund work of a purely academic nature.
- CLF will not fund lobbying or political work.
- CLF will not fund clinic positions either at the law school or at other schools.
- CLF will not fund applicants who earn from any source more than \$10,000 of direct aid or other support (e.g. housing).

CLF is a 501(c)(3) corporation, and is therefore prohibited from funding either lobbying or work on campaigns in support of or in opposition to candidates for political office. Internal Revenue Code Section 4911(d) defines lobbying.

You can work for an organization that engages in some lobbying or political work; however, CLF requires that all organizations employing grant recipients (or the grant recipients themselves) write a letter stating that the grant recipient will not personally engage in lobbying or political work.

**Does CLF have a non-discrimination policy?**

Yes. In the administration of its grant-making policies and decisions, the Chicago Law Foundation does not discriminate against grant applicants on the basis of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, status as a veteran, age, disability or other factors irrelevant to work or study. (CLF Bylaws, Article VII, ¶ 4.)

CLF reserves the right to refuse to fund organizations that discriminate on the basis of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, status as a veteran, age, disability, or other factors irrelevant to work. (CLF Bylaws, Article VII, ¶ 3.)

### **How much are the grants?**

Applicants may seek up to five thousand and five hundred dollars (\$5,500) for summer grants. CLF requires that grant recipients work full-time (at least 35 hours per week) for a minimum of ten weeks.

CLF grants are not need-based. Applicants must submit a budget and are encouraged to be realistic about the expenses they will incur during their summer employment. It is expected that in many cases the full grant amount will be necessary to adequately support the applicant. Given the likelihood that CLF will receive more grant applications than it has the ability to fund, applicants are encouraged to consider whether they will have other sources of income that will cover some of their summer expenses.

Please note: CLF grants are taxable income. Recipients are responsible for all taxes on their grants.

### **How many grants are available?**

The total number will vary depending upon funds raised by the organization and the grant amounts requested by the selected applicants.

### **What is the budget portion of the application for?**

The budget in the applicant is not used in the proposal evaluation process. The budget is designed to allow applicants to request the grant amount they need. If grant recipients request less than the maximum grant, the extra money will be available to other applicant(s) who otherwise might not have received a grant.

### **How will outside funding affect my CLF grant?**

CLF seeks to fund as many students as possible. Thus, CLF encourages grant recipients to pursue alternative and additional sources of funding. Such additional funds can come from the grant recipient's public interest or government employer or from an outside source.

Grantees who earn less than \$10,000 of non-CLF money are still eligible for funding, but these earnings must be disclosed in your budget. CLF will reduce the grant amount awarded by 20% of the amount of outside funding (from a job, outside grant, or otherwise).

### **Are there other sources of funding available?**

Fellowships are available for summer internships. Good sources of information regarding these funding sources include the Yale Guide to Fellowships, the Harvard Public Interest Guide, and the Office of Career Services. The Ford Foundation and Amnesty International offer fellowships for summer internships in international law. The Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) gives grants for summer legal work with selected Chicago-area organizations. (Applications for PILI grants are on file in the Office of Career Services.) The Institute for Humane Studies also awards summer grants for student working to further libertarian causes.

### **What are the responsibilities of grant recipients?**

CLF grant recipients are required to turn in a short (1 to 2 page) memo describing their summer experience. The memo should discuss any major projects in which the grant recipient was involved. These should be turned in to the CLF Board within the first week of fall quarter classes.

In addition, CLF grant recipients are expected to assist the CLF Board with fundraising activities for the following year's grants. Grant recipients will be asked to take an active role in the CLF winter auction and the pledge drive in the spring. In addition, grant recipients will be asked to help sell T-shirts and sweatshirts (for example, at lunch, wine mess, alumni weekend, and graduation).

### **Whom should I contact with questions?**

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