

## **FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT** *(2017-2019 Fellowship Period)*

The Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund, located in Berkeley, California seeks candidates for collaboration on Skadden, Equal Justice Works (EJW), and other public interest fellowship applications for the two year period beginning fall 2017. Such fellowships offer recent law graduates an invaluable opportunity for entry-level training in various aspects of public interest law practice.

Founded in 1979 by persons with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities, DREDF is a national, non-profit law and policy organization dedicated to advancing and protecting the civil rights of individuals with disabilities. We work through legislation, litigation, informal and formal advocacy, and education and training of lawyers, advocates, and clients with respect to disability issues. Since 1988, DREDF has taught disability rights courses at Bay Area law schools, and we work regularly with law student interns. Our office is uniquely comprised of not only attorneys, but also special education advocates and policy analysts, which provides for truly interdisciplinary and multifaceted perspectives on disability rights issues.

DREDF is particularly interested in candidates who want to collaborate on simultaneous applications to more than one funder, and in disability civil rights projects in one of the following three areas:

**Education Access:** Public education provides the primary preparation for economic and social participation in society. Yet today many students with disabilities are still denied equal educational opportunity. For over three decades, DREDF has worked to preserve, strengthen and enforce the rights of children with disabilities through legal advocacy and training. We have worked to ensure that schools support students in meeting basic health maintenance needs (e.g., as to diabetes care, epi-pens, nebulizers, etc.). DREDF is also dedicated to ensuring that students with disabilities receive meaningful and appropriate special education services in the least restrictive environment. This includes work to end inappropriate restraint and seclusion of students with disabilities, and disproportionate discipline of students of color with disabilities.

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**Health Care Access:** People with disabilities have always faced fundamental health care access barriers involving architectural, communications and policy issues, as well as problems with diagnostic and exam equipment. But federal health care reform and current economic challenges are combining to create dramatic changes in the way health care and long-term care is provided and funded in the United States. Federal agencies and states are now relying on relatively unproven mechanisms of managed care and care coordination to control health care delivery costs, while maintaining or even improving health care delivery in publicly funded programs such as Medicare and Medicaid. In this new landscape, DREDF is focused on two health care goals. First, we seek barrier removal *through* health care delivery changes (such as using new managed care frameworks to help ensure that the accessibility needs of people with disabilities are met). Second, we seek to use existing federal disability rights laws principles (such as the Supreme Court's deinstitutionalization decision in *Olmstead*) in this new landscape.

**Technology Access:** Civic, commercial, social and personal activities are increasingly carried out on the Internet. Rapid technological innovation is the hallmark of the age, both in cyberspace and in the physical environment. It is critically important to ensure that individuals with disabilities can access this 21st century world. DREDF is at the forefront of addressing the challenging legal and practical questions that are unfolding with this new reality. We have worked on issues of technology interfaces with the bricks-and-mortar environment (such as retailer "point-of-sale" devices); captioning for streaming videos offered in various contexts; and various aspects of website access. DREDF is also interested in other technology access issues, particularly as all kinds of different services continue to migrate to automation in lieu of human staff.

**Other Proposals Also Invited:** While these are our current preferred focus areas, DREDF is also open to other project ideas proposed by candidates who have a particularly strong background or interest in other areas of disability rights advocacy.

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**Qualifications:**

Demonstrated commitment to public interest law

Established knowledge of and interest in civil rights laws

Ability to work independently and cordially with others

Strong academic performance

Excellent legal research and writing skills

DREDF is an equal opportunity employer and individuals with disabilities, minorities, and women candidates are especially encouraged to apply.

**Application Instructions:**

Applications for sponsorship must be submitted to DREDF by **Monday, July 18, 2016** (before close-of-business Pacific Time).

Your application should include:

Detailed cover letter describing your interest in DREDF; the fellowship(s) in which you are interested; and a brief project proposal (to be developed more fully in collaboration with DREDF)

Resume

Transcript

Writing Sample

List of three references (including nature of supervision, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers)

DREDF works collaboratively and intensively with prospective fellows to develop projects that address disability civil rights law issues. We have been successful in obtaining past fellowship awards. DREDF is committed to fully supporting and advising the applicant during the application process to ensure that a high quality and well-informed application is ultimately compiled and submitted. The collaborative applications are due to EJW on **Friday, September 16, 2016**, and to Skadden on **Monday, October 3, 2016**.

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Please submit your applications by email to Hongyu Min at:  
[hmin@dredf.org](mailto:hmin@dredf.org). Please also include the following language on the  
“subject” line of your e-mail:

**“Attn - 2017-2019 Fellowship Application (YOUR LAST NAME)”**

**Contact Information:**

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