

# The Legal Education Foundation

**PRESS RELEASE - 15 AUGUST 2016**

## **Applications to become one of The Legal Education Foundation's 2016 Justice First Fellows open today.**

**Competition is expected to be strong for the 11 fully funded trainee solicitor posts at leading social welfare law organisations across the UK.**

Applications for The Legal Education Foundation's 2016 Justice First Fellowship Scheme are now open.

Applicants for TLEF's ground-breaking scheme must have passed the Legal Practice Course,\* and have proven commitment to social justice. Applications must be made via TLEF's website ([www.thelegaleducationfoundation.org](http://www.thelegaleducationfoundation.org)), and to a single host organisation only. The closing date is 20 September 2016. Fellows will take up their posts in January 2017.

The JFF Scheme was launched by TLEF in 2014 and this will be its third intake of Fellows, taking the total to 31. The inaugural 2014 intake will qualify as solicitors in January 2017.

### **TLEF Chief Executive Matthew Smerdon says:**

*'The aim of the Fellowship Scheme is to create future leaders in social welfare law, who are true champions of social justice. The calibre of our existing Fellows is exceptional. They are already making an impact, and we expect the 2016 intake to be equally brilliant.'*

As well as completing their solicitor training, a key part of the Scheme is that Justice First Fellows undertake a project, agreed with their host organisation, which will directly increase access to justice.

Projects underway by existing Fellows include:

- Coventry Law Centre's 2014 Fellow, Fanny Forest, is training volunteers and building links with community groups locally to give victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse better access to legal services;
- Child Poverty Action Group's 2015 Fellow, Sophie Earnshaw, is developing online support to help people representing themselves at Upper Tribunal social security appeals to get a fair hearing.

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## The Justice First Fellowship 2016 host organisations are:

- **Anti Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit**, London (co-funded with Hogan Lovells), [www.atleu.org.uk](http://www.atleu.org.uk)
- **Birmingham Community Law Centre** (co-funded with Eversheds, Gowling WLG, Hogan Lovells, and Shakespeare Martineau), [www.birminghamclc.org.uk](http://www.birminghamclc.org.uk)
- **Children's Law Centre** (Northern Ireland), Belfast, [www.childrenslawcentre.org.uk](http://www.childrenslawcentre.org.uk)
- **Clan Childlaw**, Glasgow and Edinburgh, [www.clanchildlaw.org](http://www.clanchildlaw.org)
- **Islington Law Centre**, London (co-funded with City Bridge Trust), [www.islingtonlaw.org.uk](http://www.islingtonlaw.org.uk)
- **Just for Kids Law**, London, [www.justforkidslaw.org](http://www.justforkidslaw.org)
- **Norfolk Community Law Service**, Norwich (co-funded with partners), [www.ncls.co.uk](http://www.ncls.co.uk)
- **RCJ Advice**, London (co-funded with City Bridge Trust), [www.rcjadvise.org.uk](http://www.rcjadvise.org.uk)
- **Release**, [www.release.org.uk](http://www.release.org.uk)
- **South West London Law Centres**, London (co-funded with City Bridge Trust), [www.swllc.org](http://www.swllc.org)
- **TA Law** (Ty Arian Solicitors), Swansea, [www.talaw.org.uk](http://www.talaw.org.uk)

## For more information about the Scheme or to make an application:

<https://jff.thelegaleducationfoundation.org/>

## For press inquiries, contact TLEF Chief Executive Matthew Smerdon:

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\* Applicants to organisations based in England and Wales must have passed their LPC; those applying in Scotland, must have passed the Diploma in Legal Practice/Diploma in Professional Legal Practice; those in Northern Ireland, must be eligible to apply for September 2017 admission to the solicitors apprenticeship scheme – either at the Institute of Professional Legal Studies (Queen's University Belfast), or the Graduate School of Professional Legal Education (University of Ulster).

## Timeline for applications:

Applications for the 2016 JFF scheme close on 20 September 2016; applicants will be notified whether or not they have been shortlisted for interview by end October; interviews will be held in November; Fellows will take up their posts in January 2017. Interviews are conducted by the host organisation, with a TLEF representative sitting in as an official observer. Fellows will be employees of their host organisations (not TLEF), and there is no guarantee a host organisation will be able to offer Fellows employment beyond the length of the two-year training contract.

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## Notes for editors:

1. The Legal Education Foundation is a charity, whose origins date back to the 1870s, which has existed in its current guise since 2012. TLEF's charitable purpose is 'to promote the advancement of legal education and the study of law in all its branches'. [www.thelegaleducationfoundation.org](http://www.thelegaleducationfoundation.org)

2. The JFF scheme was extended to the Bar earlier this year, with the first two barrister Fellows due to start in September 2016. They will spend a year as a paid case-worker at the Bar Pro Bono Unit, before starting pupillage. The two inaugural host organisations for barrister Fellows are **St John's Chambers**, Bristol (with support from the Council of the Inns of Court, and the Bar Pro Bono Unit), [www.stjohnschambers.co.uk](http://www.stjohnschambers.co.uk); and **Pump Court Chambers**, London, (with support from the Council of the Inns of Court, and the Bar Pro Bono Unit), [www.pumpcourtchambers.com](http://www.pumpcourtchambers.com)