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About Reprieve

It has been said that you can judge a society by how it treats people accused of violating its laws. Through the example set by the world's most influential nations, fundamental human rights principles stand or fall across the world.

Reprieve provides frontline investigation and legal representation to prisoners denied justice by powerful governments across the world, especially those governments that should be upholding the highest standards when it comes to fair trials.

Reprieve Fellowships

The Reprieve Fellowships are awards that enable outstanding individuals with a proven commitment to capital defence work to initiate a project or take up a position in a not-for-profit host organisation in the United States working on behalf of poor people facing the death penalty.

Reprieve's priority areas for this application cycle are:

- The use of the death penalty against the innocent
- The use of the death penalty against the mentally ill or learning impaired
- The disproportionate use of the death penalty against people of colour
- Broader issues such as system-wide ineffective assistance of counsel, use of unreliable forensic science, and police and/ or prosecutorial misconduct
- Inhumane death row prison conditions

Reprieve regards the Fellowships as seed money to start projects or careers in capital defence in the most under-resourced death penalty jurisdictions.

Reprieve Fellowship candidates can be from anywhere in the world, including the U.S., providing permission to work in the U.S. has been or demonstrably can be obtained by the date the Fellowship would commence.

In this application cycle, depending on the persuasiveness of the applications received, Reprieve is in a position to award at least one Reprieve Fellowship, of either one year in duration, or two years in duration. It is possible that more than one Fellowship may be available. Previously, two or three candidates have been awarded fellowships each year.

In this cycle, Fellowship proposals must involve work to be performed in the United States. Other death penalty jurisdictions will be considered in future years, as more resources become available to the programme.

Candidates must submit applications to Reprieve for projects or positions devised by the fellowship candidate and the proposed host organisation. To be successful, an application must demonstrate an excellent match between the problem or need to be addressed, the experience and qualities of the candidate, and the commitment and ability of the host organisation to support the project or position. A project-based application is one that sets out to accomplish a specific set of goals within the fellowship period, distinct from work already being carried out by the host organisation. A position-based application is one that would enable a candidate who is comparatively new to the host organisation to start a career there, working in an area already covered by the host organisation.

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APPLYING FOR A REPRIEVE FELLOWSHIP

The award

A two-year Reprieve Fellowship award for work in the U.S. consists of:

- a stipend of US\$35,000 per fellowship year. The stipend is intended to be used as salary for the Fellow but may also be used to support the project or position costs; fellows are strongly encouraged to seek other contributions to support their work during the fellowship;
- up to US\$2,500 for health insurance coverage, if needed;
- up to US\$6,000 for education loan debt repayment, if needed;
- US\$1,000 for professional development per fellowship year.

A one-year Reprieve Fellowship award for work in the U.S. consists of:

- a stipend of \$34,000 per fellowship year. The stipend is intended to be used as salary for the Fellow but may also be used to support the project or position costs; fellows are strongly encouraged to seek other contributions to support their work during the fellowship;
- up to \$2,500 for health insurance coverage, if needed.

The host organisation may 'top up' the salary paid to the fellow with other funds, but only up to an amount that enables the host organization to achieve wage parity with an entry-level prosecutor practicing in the same jurisdiction. In the case of a one-year Fellowship only, the host organisation may, from its own funds, pay up to \$6,000 towards educational loan debt repayment.

Location of work

For this application cycle, the Fellowship work must take place in the United States, with a strong preference given to applications for work to be conducted in states with the most severe indigent capital defence problems.

One year or two years?

Only one project or position can be proposed per candidate. However candidates can apply for both a one-year Reprieve Fellowship and a two-year Reprieve Fellowship in the same application cycle. To do this, two separate applications must be submitted, and attention given to the distinction between what can be achieved in one year as opposed to two years. If applying for both fellowships, candidates must submit two separate fellowship proposals (item 4), but only one set of the supporting documentation. Applicants wishing to be considered for a two-year Fellowship should also apply for a one-year Fellowship, in case Reprieve is only in a position to offer a one-year Fellowship this cycle.

Start dates and reporting

In this application cycle, Reprieve Fellows must begin work between 1 January, 2009 and 1 October, 2009.

Fellows and their host organizations are required to provide two to four reports, depending on the duration of the fellowship, during the fellowship period. Payment of the grant after the first instalment is contingent on Reprieve receiving a positive report on the Fellow's first year of work. No funds will be disbursed unless Reprieve has received such reports. Fellows are required to use timekeeping software throughout the fellowship period, creating a contemporaneous record of how their time is spent, regardless of whether or not such software is used by the host organisation. A printout of these timesheets may be requested by Reprieve at any time.

Preferred experience and qualifications

Reprieve welcomes applications from all qualified candidates, irrespective of age, sex, race, sexual orientation, religion, financial resources, colour, or national or ethnic background.

A strong preference is given to candidates with at least six months substantive first-hand experience working on behalf of poor people facing the death penalty, as lawyers, law clerks, paralegals, investigators, mitigation specialists or other sorts of advocate. Candidates can, but are not required to, have an undergraduate or graduate degree in law, public policy, social work or other fields related to criminal justice. If the candidate is currently enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree programme, he or she must have completed the degree at the start of the fellowship, as the fellowship is full-time. You do not have to be a recent graduate to apply, and former prisoners are welcome to apply.

If the candidate's role in the project or position is that of attorney, the candidate must be licensed to practice law in the jurisdiction in which the project is to take place, or plan to obtain such a licence before the start date of the fellowship. In such cases, Reprieve may make the award of the Fellowship contingent upon passing the bar examination and obtaining a licence to practice law in the relevant jurisdiction. The candidate need not be a U.S. citizen, but must demonstrate the likelihood that permission can be obtained to work in the U.S. at the time the application is made, and award of the fellowship will be contingent on such permission being obtained. Reprieve cannot offer advice regarding work visas.

Host Organisation

Candidates must secure a not-for-profit U.S. 501(c) (3) host organisation, or statutorily created state agency providing indigent defence services, in order to apply for the Reprieve Fellowship. A host organisation provides the fellow with access to available resources such as office space, technology, networks, and necessary overhead expenses as well as mentoring and guidance. The Fellowship award is paid to the host organisation, which uses it to employ the Fellow. Only one candidate can be proposed per host organisation.

Past recipients of Reprieve support

Past recipients of Reprieve support or funding, including both candidates and host organisations, are eligible to apply, with the exception of past Reprieve Fellows. However, any host organisation awarded a Reprieve Fellowship a previous cycle may not apply in this 2009-10 cycle, unless the proposed 2009-10 Fellow would not start work until the previous Fellowship has concluded.

Past employment

Because Reprieve is seeking to create new positions and projects that could not otherwise exist, if the candidate is already employed full-time by the host organisation, the candidate may only apply for a fellowship if they have been so employed for less than one year at the time the application to Reprieve is due (October 17, 2008). In such instances, a preference is given for a project-based rather than position-based application, where the Fellow would be doing work that is new to that host organization and could not otherwise be funded. Candidates already employed by the host organization who have a commitment from the host organization for employment that is as long as the Fellowship being applied for (one or two years) are not advised to apply.

Lobbying exclusion

Please note, Reprieve cannot support political activities, and nor can typical host organisations with non-profit status. Proposals that include political or lobbying activities will not be funded. Please refer to local non-profit and tax laws if you need more information on definitions of political activities or lobbying; your proposed host organisation can probably direct you more specifically in this regard.

SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

Applications will be judged by both the demonstrated need for the project or position, by the candidate's ability to carry out the work proposed in effective manner and to a very high standard, and by the commitment and ability of the host organisation to support the Fellow in achieving their goals. A selection panel, including Reprieve Board members and supporters of Reprieve, as well as capital defence practitioners, will review proposals and nominate a group of finalists who will be invited to do a phone interview with the selection panel.

Finalists selected for interview are advised if possible to do a practice phone interview with their supervisors at their proposed host organization to ensure that the candidate is prepared to present their fellowship proposal to the selection panel succinctly and effectively over the phone in a conference call setting. Finalists' references may be contacted by telephone during this time, and finalists may also be asked to supply additional documentation or answer questions about their proposals in writing.

In reading and evaluating applications, Reprieve will consider the following list of factors, which is not exhaustive, but is offered as a general guide:

The work to be performed

- Does the proposal address one or more of the Reprieve priority areas, which are the use of the death penalty against the innocent, the mentally ill or learning impaired, disproportionate use against people of colour, and broader issues such as system-wide ineffective assistance of counsel, use of unreliable forensic science, police and/ or prosecutorial misconduct and inhumane death row conditions?
- How many indigent capital defendants will be benefited by the work?
- Is the project or position creative in its approach to the problem it is addressing?
- Is the strategy behind the work to be performed well thought out and backed up with evidence of why it is likely to be successful?
- Are the candidate's goals and timeline realistic?
- Does the candidate demonstrate an awareness of work in the area already being performed by other individuals or organisations, and an intention to build on such efforts?
- Would the candidate work well in partnership with other organisations? Does the proposal demonstrate a sound understanding of the legal, social and political landscape of the target jurisdiction?
- Have alternative potential state or private sources for funding the work been canvassed and why are these sources not able or not willing to fund the work?

The Candidate

- Does the candidate demonstrate the motivation and discipline needed to accomplish the work proposed?
- Are the skills and experience gained by the candidate in previous positions transferable to the work proposed?
- Has the candidate demonstrated past commitment to working on behalf of poor people facing the death penalty?
- Do the candidate's track record and recommendations distinguish him or her as someone who could one day take a leadership role?
- Does the candidate demonstrate a strong personal connection with the constituency that he or she seeks to serve?
- Has the candidate spent time working in the specific jurisdiction targeted by the proposal?
- Does the candidate have a personal support network in the jurisdiction targeted by the proposal, or within reach?

The Host Organisation

- Has the host organisation demonstrated its ability to support the fellow effectively?
- Is the host organisation's account of how it will monitor the fellow's progress persuasive?
- Does the host organisation's budget, revenue sources and staff salary structure suggest that it could not pay for the project or position in other ways?

HOW TO APPLY

Completed applications and all supporting materials, including letters of recommendation must be received by Reprive no later than 5PM GMT on 17 October, 2008. Candidates who are chosen as finalists will be so notified on 21 November, 2008 and will be required to participate in a phone interview with the Reprive Selection Panel between 1 December and 5 December, 2008. Notification of the award/s will be made on 12 December, 2008.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to contact programme staff at Reprive regarding their proposals, including queries about the suitability of projects or positions, of host organisations, and basic eligibility issues. Please send your questions by email to: info@reprive.org.uk, or call + (44) (0) 207 353 4640. Please try to avoid leaving your questions until the final week before application is due, though you may still send queries after this date. Reprive staff will not, however, be able to review the applications themselves, and candidates are advised instead to have their applications read over carefully, not only by their proposed host organisation, but also by a friend or colleague who knows little about the area of work, to check the application for clarity and persuasiveness.

It is estimated that it takes at least a month to put together an application for a Reprive Fellowship, in order to have time to gather the supporting letters and other documentation required.

Please note that due to resource constraints Reprive will not be able to offer feedback to candidates who were not short-listed for interview on why an application was unsuccessful. However, Reprive would appreciate feedback on these application materials or the programme generally.

To compile a complete application, candidates should assemble the following documents, in the order listed below, into one original set; write their last name and the page number on the upper right-hand corner of each page and scan the complete application to submit by email. Candidates should then place the complete application, (not folded, or bound in any way, but simply stapled at the top left corner) in an envelope postmarked no later than 17 October 2008. Do not send any materials that are not requested in the application instructions. No faxed, or late applications will be accepted. Applications arriving incomplete, without requested letters of recommendations, documents or photocopies, or improperly collated may not be given full consideration. In addition, supporting documents sent in under separate cover may not be accepted.

Please assemble the following, in this order:

1) A cover page, listing the following information on separate lines:

Candidate Name
Address for Communication
Home Phone
Work Phone
Mobile Phone
Email address to which Reprive can send you an acknowledgement of receipt of your application(s), and for other notifications

Which Fellowship (s) you are applying for, one-year, two-year, or both
Project or Position Title
Single sentence describing the work to be performed
Jurisdiction covered by proposal

Name of Host Organisation
Address of Host Organisation
Name of Mentor at Host Organisation

Names of referees providing letters of recommendation
Name/s of project partners providing letters of support
Any dates of non-availability for phone interview between 1 and 5 December, 2008
Proposed date to start work if Fellowship awarded

2) A CV/ résumé of not more than two pages in length

3) A five-page, single-spaced proposal, in 12-point Times New Roman font, with 1 inch margins on all four sides of each page containing the following items in this order:

a. A clear, detailed, focused explanation of the project or position, including the need for the work to be performed, and its importance to indigent capital defendants in the locality that the project or position seeks to serve.

b. A personal explanation of why you want to do this work and why you think you can do it.

c. An explanation of the long- and short-term goals of the project or position and how you expect to accomplish those goals, and how you will measure whether they have been achieved.

d. A list of existing organisations or individuals working on the same issue as the project or position in the same jurisdiction, regionally and nationally and an explanation of how your project builds on existing efforts by others already working on the issue.

e. A specific analysis of how the host organisation's mission complements your project or position, and how the host organisation will provide mentoring and support and help to measure your effectiveness. The analysis should include an outline of the mission and structure of the host organisation, and the number of indigent capital clients that it serves and in what capacity.

f. An analysis of how your work is expected to influence national or regional debate on indigent capital defence issues, and any ongoing systemic reform efforts.

g. A time-line that explains your proposed activities and the time to be allocated to meet goals and achieve expected outcomes. It is recommended that this timeline be presented in table form, in four quarters.

4) Official or unofficial university results transcripts, if you hold an academic degree (only graduate transcripts if you have a graduate degree, undergraduate transcripts if you have only an undergraduate degree);

5) A one to two-page letter from a proposed mentor at the host organisation. It must describe the mentor's qualifications as well as those of the candidate, why the organisation chose to support the candidate, and how it will measure the candidate's effectiveness, and support the candidate's efforts. The letter should be single spaced and in 12-point font.

6) Three letters of recommendation, one from a supervisor, one from a close colleague or peer, and one from a member of the constituency that you seek to serve (such as a prisoner or prisoner's family member), with whom you have worked within the last three years. The letters should address your ability to perform the work outlined in your proposal. Letters should not be more than two pages each. The recommendation letters must accompany your application packet, and may not be accepted if sent under separate cover. Please note that the three sorts of reference letter should address very different aspects of what it is like to work with you, rather than just commend you in general terms. If you are submitting a letter from a prisoner but have concerns regarding identifying the prisoner, please contact Reprive for advice. We recommend that if you are submitting a letter from a prisoner or a prisoner's family member, you ask them to answer questions such as how they met you, how they felt when they first met you, how they feel about you now, what aspects of the work you have done for them made a difference on their case, how you compare to other people who have tried to help them, etc, rather than just request a formal reference letter.

7) At least one but not more than three letters of support from organisations, agencies, funders, experts or individuals who are to act as partners in your proposed work, other than your host organisation. The letter/s should describe the work performed by the partner, why the partner wants to work with you, and how they plan to do so. The letters must accompany your application pack, and may not be accepted if sent under separate cover.

8) A statement of status of the candidate regarding eligibility to work in the jurisdiction (i.e. national or immigration status), and to practice law in the jurisdiction if applying for a fellowship in the role of lawyer (i.e., whether licensed in the jurisdiction, dates candidate will take bar exam). Please note that obtaining such eligibility or qualification is solely the responsibility of the candidate and the host organisation and Reprieve can offer no information or advice on how to do so. The statement should be on a separate sheet, be signed and dated by you, and must accompany your application packet, and will not be accepted if sent under separate cover.

9) Standard letter from tax official or other formal document confirming not-for-profit status of host organisation. The letter must accompany your application packet, and will not be accepted if sent under separate cover.

10) Financial statement for the host organisation for the past financial year, showing income and expenditure. This statement should show outlay on specific costs including staff salaries per position, and on representation-related costs, such as investigation, experts, etc, as well as budget lines typical of a non-profit organisation, including rent, utilities, copy costs, information technology, etc. The statement should also indicate the organisation's revenue sources by amount. This financial statement should be endorsed as true and correct by the organisation's executive director or financial officer. If your host organization has concerns about the confidentiality of staff salaries per position, a representative of the host organization should get in touch with Reprieve well in advance of the deadline for the final application.

11) One page projected budget for the project or position. This budget should indicate total cost of the project, or the work to be performed by the position, break that total cost down by line item, and indicate proposed sources of funding for each item, and the status of proposed source (i.e., to apply, pending, committed).

To submit a completed application, candidates should email a complete application as a PDF attachment to an email to info@reprieve.org.uk, with the words "Fellowship Application" in the email subject line, to be received no later than 5pm, GMT, 17 October 2008. In addition, one paper copy of the application must be submitted, postmarked 17 October 2008. The paper copy should be sent to:

Reprieve Fellowships Programme
Reprieve
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