

Lawyer - First Nations program

Position description

We are looking for a junior lawyer or law graduate to help develop and implement EJA's program to support First Nations communities in Victoria to care for Country. You will work closely with First Nations individuals, organisations and communities to understand their legal needs and develop strategies to overcome the legal barriers that stop First Nations peoples from exercising their caring for Country rights and obligations. The issues you will work on may include water management and cultural flows, cultural burning, forest protection and management and marine protection. You will work with our First Nations Community Engagement Officer and head of our Justice team to deliver the project.

This is an Aboriginal Designated Position, classified under 'special measures' of section 12 of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act 2010. Only Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people are eligible to apply.

About us

Environmental Justice Australia is a leading public interest legal organisation. Our lawyers act on behalf of people and community organisations to safeguard health; protect magnificent forests, rivers and wildlife; and tackle the climate crisis. We partner with communities and other social justice organisations because we are stronger together.

Using innovative approaches, we find the best legal solutions to climate and environment issues. Our team works inside and outside the courtroom to make the system fair and just for all. We work on issues and in areas of Australia where we can have the most impact.

Values

Collaboration: We work in partnership with community and other organisations because we are in this together

Respect: We treat everyone with respect and we value different perspectives as we know we can learn something from everyone

Ambition: We aim high and are at all times focused on achieving maximum impact for nature, climate and communities

Positivity: We maintain hope and a positive approach because we believe we can change the world

Justice: We are driven by our sense of justice – it's at the core of everything we do.

Responsibilities

Alongside our First Nations Community Engagement Officer person and head of our Justice team, this role will:

- Assist in the design and delivery of the First Nations Natural Resource Management project.
- Investigate and identify intersections between environmental and natural resource management laws and Indigenous interests in Victoria.

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- Engage with First Nations communities to identify their legal needs around caring for Country and collaboratively develop options for responding to these needs.
- In conjunction with other EJA lawyers, deliver legal and/or policy strategies (litigation, law reform, other legal services) for clients and partners.
- Provide high-quality legal advice (both written and oral) and representation to Aboriginal individuals, organisations and communities in matters related to environmental law.
- Provide ongoing advocacy support to EJA's partners and clients in pursuing legal outcomes.
- Help deliver a series of presentations and written case studies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations interested in our approach and outcomes.
- Contribute to the EJA team and the running of the organisation and office, including volunteer supervision, and participate in all relevant aspects of EJA planning, review and reporting.

Selection criteria

Essential

- Currently admitted or eligible for admission to practise law in Australia. As a guide, the role is appropriate for a law graduate through to 3 years' post-graduation legal experience.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills including demonstrated ability to communicate legal concepts in clear language.
- Strong analytical skills, with the ability to analyse legal and policy documents and produce written analysis.
- Sound legal research skills.
- A strong understanding of the issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and a demonstrated commitment to justice for First Nations people.
- Initiative, energy, self-motivation, and ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a collaborative team environment, and to work to tight deadlines.

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Desirable

- Experience in public or administrative law, ideally environmental law.
- Demonstrated commitment to environmental and social justice issues.

Location

Victoria. Naarm (Melbourne) preferred but we are happy to discuss other Victorian locations.

Terms and conditions

Terms and conditions for these roles will be negotiated based on the following:

- The position is full time, but 4 days a week will be considered. EJA encourages flexible work arrangements and there is some scope for negotiation with respect to days and hours of work.
- The role is fixed-term for 12 months, with the possibility of extension beyond this date depending on funding.
- The role will require travel in Victoria and interstate occasionally.
- Out of hours work is required occasionally.
- The position reports to the Justice team lead.
- Terms and conditions of employment are based on the SCHADS award with over-agreement salary and conditions depending on experience. Salary range for full-time work is \$71,500 to \$94,600 depending on experience, plus superannuation and leave loading. Note this position is being advertised across two EJA levels and the successful candidate will be offered a salary commensurate with their experience.
- Please note that salary sacrificing is not available.

Benefits of working with EJA

You will be an important part of a lean but high-impact organisation. We are proud to offer our staff a supportive workplace with excellent conditions, including:

- Supportive work environment and opportunity to work regularly from home, with options for flexible work hours.
- Four weeks of annual leave a year plus an additional three days off (pro rata) over the Christmas period.
- 17.5% annual leave loading.
- Ongoing professional development opportunities.
- Access to our Employee Assistance Program and wellbeing support.
- Melbourne office has secure bike parking and close to public transport as well as countless cafes, restaurants and shops.
- Be part of an organisation that values and celebrates cultural diversity.

How to apply

Send us a brief application comprising:

- your resume; and
- a statement of no more than 3 pages detailing why you want to work with us and addressing the selection criteria outlined above.

Email your application to recruitment@envirojustice.org.au

Enquiries: Bruce Lindsay, Senior Specialist Lawyer, Justice team, (03) 8341 3109 or 0439 035 277.

