

Lawyer or Senior Lawyer - working with First Nations

Position description

We have an exciting position for a Lawyer or Senior Lawyer to be part of EJA's work to support First Nations communities. You will work closely with First Nations individuals, organisations and communities to understand their legal needs and develop legal strategies to progress First Nations peoples' capacities to exercise rights and obligations to care for Country. The issues you will work on may include water management, land management, forest protection, climate change and Sea Country protection. You will work with other legal staff and the head of our Justice team to deliver the work.

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

Within the Justice team, this role will:

- assist in leading (for the Senior Lawyer role) or assist in delivering (for the Lawyer role) EJA's work supporting First Nations clients.
- investigate and identify intersections between environmental and natural resource management laws and First Nations rights and interests.
- 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 First Nations individuals, organisations and communities in matters related to environmental and related laws.
- provide ongoing advocacy support to EJA's partners and clients in pursuing legal 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.

For Senior Lawyer:

- fulfil all responsibilities of the role with a high degree of independence including advising and representing clients on complex matters and being able to appropriately escalate issues or points for discussion to supervisor with proposed solutions.
- represent EJA in meetings and the media, maintain funding relationships, and provide program reporting as needed.
- supervise legal staff (if required) and guide their work programs.

Selection criteria

Senior Lawyer role

Essential

- Currently admitted or eligible for admission to practise law in Australia with 5+ years of post-admission experience, and a practicing certificate with no supervision conditions.
- Experience working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups or organisations and a demonstrated commitment to justice for First Nations people.
- Experience running complex litigation, preferably in public, administrative or environmental law in Australia, including briefing barristers and experts and managing complex files.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills including demonstrated ability to communicate legal concepts in clear language and to prepare written legal advice.
- Strong analytical and legal research skills, with the ability to analyse legal and policy documents and produce written analysis.
- Initiative, energy, self-motivation, and ability to work effectively with limited supervision both independently and as part of a collaborative team environment, and to work to tight deadlines.

Desirable

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are particularly encouraged to apply.
- Experience managing and supervising staff.
- Demonstrated commitment to environmental and social justice issues.
- Prior experience working within an integrated legal, human rights or environmental justice advocacy organisation as a lawyer, or of working on campaigns for legal change.

Lawyer role

Essential

- Currently admitted or eligible for admission to practise law in Australia with 2+ years of post-admission experience.
- Experience working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups or organisations and a demonstrated commitment to justice for First Nations people.
- Experience running litigation, including briefing barristers and experts and managing files.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills including demonstrated ability to communicate legal concepts in clear language and to prepare written legal advice.
- Strong analytical and legal research skills, with the ability to analyse legal and policy documents and produce written analysis.
- 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.

Desirable

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are particularly encouraged to apply.
- Experience in public or administrative law, ideally environmental law.

- Demonstrated commitment to environmental and social justice issues.
- Prior experience working within an integrated legal, human rights or environmental justice advocacy organisation as a lawyer, or of working on campaigns for legal change.

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 a full-time ongoing role. 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 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 \$104,000 to \$109,000 for the Lawyer role and \$115,800 to \$122,000 for the Senior Lawyer role 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.
- Five weeks of annual leave a year plus an additional three days off (pro rata) over the Christmas period.
- 17.5% annual leave loading.
- Above-award salaries, increased each year.
- 16 weeks' parental leave (pro rata).
- A range of other above-award leave offered.
- Ongoing professional development opportunities.
- Access to our Employee Assistance Program and wellbeing support.
- The Melbourne office has secure bike parking and is close to public transport as well as countless cafes, restaurants and shops and the Victoria Market.
- 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.
- Please state whether you are applying for a lawyer or senior lawyer role.

Email your application to recruitment@envirojustice.org.au

Enquiries: Bruce Lindsay, Senior Specialist Lawyer, Justice team, ph 0439 035 277.

Applications close **Sunday 7 July at 11.59pm**