

Job Description

Position: Solicitor

Accountable to: Principal Solicitor

Salary: SCHADS Award Level 5, \$76,843 to \$80,273 (depending on level of experience)

This is a fulltime ongoing position

Contact Ali Mojtahedi, Principal Solicitor, on (02) 8234 0700 to have a chat about the role.

Apply by sending your CV and a document addressing the selection criteria at point 7 to sabina.wynn@iarc.asn.au Applications that do not address the selection criteria will not be considered.

Applications close 25 March 2019 at 9am.

1. Purpose of the Position

The Solicitor provides expert, clear and confidential legal advice and casework to vulnerable migrants and refugees on a variety of immigration matters including: humanitarian visas, partner and spousal visas, family visas, child visas, protection visas, visa cancellation or refusal on character grounds, and visitor visas.

2. Organisational Environment

The Immigration Advice and Rights Centre's vision is for an Australian immigration system that is just and equitable. We work strategically to improve the quality and fairness of vulnerable migrants' experiences and outcomes throughout the Australian immigration system.

IARC helps vulnerable migrants, people seeking asylum and refugees to navigate Australian immigration law through the provision of free legal information, advice, and casework. IARC is also involved in community legal education, law reform and policy advocacy. IARC collaborates with other organisations in the legal and social justice/human rights sector on individual matters and on systemic issues.

IARC is an independent, non-government, specialist community legal centre (CLC) with over 30 years' experience in immigration law and policy. All of our solicitors are Registered Migration Agents. We operate a trauma informed, culturally sensitive practice. Our solicitors are expected to have experience in immigration law. We routinely work with people who may be homeless; are victims of domestic violence; have suffered torture and trauma, have special needs or suffer other discrimination. Most of our clients come from culturally and diverse backgrounds and many require interpreters.

3. Major Accountabilities

- Provide legal advice on a range of immigration matters both in face to face appointments and over the telephone;
- Undertake legal casework, including taking instructions, legal research, assessment, providing advice and representation for IARC's clients;

- Supervise volunteers and Practical Legal Trainees, as required;
- Contribute to the identification of legal strategies and test cases suitable for effective legal intervention to achieve public interest outcomes;
- Research and develop policy positions related to the work of IARC's legal practice to provide a basis for advocacy and law reform;
- Participate in the delivery of IARC's community legal education program;
- Provide reports to the Centre Director and Principal Solicitor as required to ensure the IARC Management Committee has sufficient information to understand and properly assess the progress of the IARC's work.

4. Key Communications

Internally

The Solicitor works closely with the other members of legal team and attends weekly legal casework meetings. The Solicitor also works with volunteers who assist with the work of the legal practice. The Solicitor discusses any issues that arise day to day with the Principal Solicitor.

Externally

The Solicitor regularly meets with legal clients to take instruction. The position deals with the staff of the Department of Home Affairs and Tribunal Staff in relation to particular matters.

The Solicitor works with case workers, support workers and staff in the legal assistance sector, and with interpreters from the Interpreter Service to facilitate the provision of legal advice and support services for clients.

The Solicitor maintains relationships and partnerships with key community and government stakeholders to exchange information and views, to exert influence and to raise community awareness of issues faced by IARC's clients.

5. Decision Making

The Solicitor exercises initiative and judgement and manages their own workload. The position is responsible for the day-to-day management of their client files including drafting correspondence to clients, the Department of Home Affairs and the Tribunal, in accordance with IARC's Legal Practice Manual and the *Legal Profession Act*.

Strategic decisions about the direction of client matters and advice to clients are discussed with the Principal Solicitor, as are ethical and professional issues such as conflicts of interest and complaints. Decisions about what client matters are taken on by IARC and decisions with financial implications are also referred to the Principal Solicitor.

Decisions about what policy work should be undertaken and what submissions or reports should be drafted are discussed with the Principal Solicitor and the Centre Director. The Solicitor will refer to the Principal Solicitor and Centre Director any decisions relating to public policy and comment, including reporting to funding bodies, or any other issue that may impact on IARC's priorities, direction and reputation.

6. Key Challenges

- Being resilient and managing the emotional impact of working with vulnerable clients.
- Managing workload given the demand for legal advice and the limited resources available to provide assistance.

7. Selection Criteria: Knowledge, Skills and Experience

1. Holds or is eligible for an unrestricted practicing certificate in NSW and be registered as a migration agent with three years legal experience and at least two years' experience in practicing immigration law;
2. Demonstrated experience working with vulnerable clients in the areas of immigration law undertaken by IARC;
3. Demonstrated understanding of legislative and law reform processes;
4. Well-developed interpersonal skills and the capacity to develop formal and informal relationships and networks in order to engage and build rapport with clients and stakeholders;
5. Writing skills for the drafting of legal correspondence, and the preparation of briefs, case notes and reports and ability to contribute to other IARC publications such as information sheets;
6. Capacity to deliver Community Legal Education;
7. Demonstrated understanding of issues facing socially and economically disadvantaged people and of public interest concepts; and
8. Experience in working cooperatively as part of a team with the ability to manage your own workload, prioritise tasks and take initiative.

Does the position sound like you?

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