



THE EQUAL RIGHTS TRUST



Sandžački odbor za zaštitu
ljudskih prava i sloboda

Call for applications to join the Strategic Litigation Program on equality and non-discrimination in Serbia

Date: 4 September 2017

CLOSING DATE EXTENDED BY 2 WEEKS!

The Equal Rights Trust (**ERT**), the Association of Citizens Praxis (**Praxis**), and Sandžak Committee for Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms (**Sandzak Committee**) invite applications from lawyers who wish to participate in a Strategic Litigation Program for Serbian lawyers to undertake strategic litigation on equality and non-discrimination issues at the national level. The closing date for applications is **15 September 2017**. Applicants need to be available to attend the Strategic Litigation Workshop from 16 – 18 October 2017 in Belgrade.

Background

Praxis is a Belgrade-based civil society organisation that aims to protect human rights by providing legal protection and advocating for the elimination of systemic obstacles in access to rights. Sandzak Committee is a civil society organisation based in Novi Pazar that aims to protect personal and collective human rights guaranteed by domestic and international law. The Equal Rights Trust is a London-based independent international organisation whose purpose is to combat discrimination and promote equality as a fundamental human right and a basic principle of social justice.

The Strategic Litigation Program is part of a broader project in Serbia co-ordinated by the three organisations that is designed to increase protection from all forms of discrimination in Serbia.

The Strategic Litigation Program

The purpose of the Strategic Litigation Program is to support Serbian lawyers to use strategic litigation at the domestic level to improve the equality legal and policy framework. The Program seeks to increase the number of Serbian lawyers ready to bring cases under the legal framework on equality and non-discrimination; to develop improved jurisprudence on equality and non-discrimination in Serbia; and to facilitate greater access to justice for victims of discrimination.

The Strategic Litigation Program is a **unique opportunity for Serbian lawyers** with experience of bringing cases on discrimination and equality or human rights and experience of litigation more broadly to join a small cohort of lawyers who will receive skill development, funding and ongoing case strategy support to challenge discrimination and inequality through strategic litigation.

A total of **5 to 10 individual lawyers** will be selected to participate in the Program. The selected lawyers will attend a **three-day Strategic Litigation Workshop** to be held in Belgrade in October 2017 which will be hosted by the Equal Rights Trust. During the Workshop, potential litigation cases will be discussed and developed. Cases will be selected according to selection criteria that will include the gravity and spread of the particular abuse, the need to fill a gap in judicial clarity,



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expected outcome in terms of remedy and public education, and other potential for strategic impact.

After the Workshop, the Equal Rights Trust will finalise the selection of cases and assign cases to individual lawyers, in consultation with them. The selected lawyers will receive individual support to develop a case strategy through in-person and Skype meetings with lawyers from the Equal Rights Trust.

Case strategies shall be developed in such a way as to maximise the possibility of successful legal action at international or regional tribunals, such as the European Court of Human Rights, the European Committee on Social Rights, or UN treaty bodies, once domestic avenues are exhausted.

Responsibilities

The program will commence in **October 2017** and will operated on a part-time basis until **January 2018**. The program is intended to support lawyers who have existing full-time legal practices. However, the selected lawyers need to be available to participate in the program until January 2018.

It is intended that each lawyer selected in the Program will file **one strategic litigation case**. The selected lawyer will be responsible for attending the Strategic Litigation Workshop in October 2017, two subsequent in-person meetings in Serbia with the Equal Rights Trust in 2018, and providing regular updates to the Equal Rights Trust about the progress of the case.

The selected lawyer will be responsible for:

- all preparation required for the case to be filed, including:
 - collecting evidence and conducting interviews;
 - reviewing relevant jurisprudence; and
 - drafting briefs, including developing arguments and drawing on international and comparative law relevant to the particular case;
- all attendances at court; and
- all interactions with the client.

The ERT will provide support to the selected lawyers to develop, file, and litigate the cases. The support to be provided will include:

- one-to-one case strategy meetings via Skype;
- a case dossier containing relevant international jurisprudence for the selected case;
- 2 x in-person meetings in Serbia; and
- comments on draft pleadings to support the development of legal arguments and/or submit amicus briefs to the courts.

Funding

Each lawyer will receive a fee of €800 to cover litigation costs at the domestic level.

Selection Criteria

- Licence to practice law in Serbia (essential);



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- At least three years' professional experience conducting litigation at the domestic level in Serbia (essential);
- Professional experience conducting litigation in relation to equality and non-discrimination at the domestic level (desired);
- Excellent knowledge of the rights to equality and non-discrimination under Serbian law (essential) and international law (desired);
- Experience working with vulnerable groups in Serbia (essential);
- Professional fluency in English and Serbian (desired);* and
- Strong organisational and practice management skills (essential).

*If you are a lawyer with professional experience conducting litigation in relation to equality and non-discrimination at the domestic level, but have concerns regarding your level of professional fluency in English, please contact Vuk Raičević of Praxis (vuk.raicevic@praxis.org.rs) who can discuss whether this can be accommodated within the current project design.

Application and Selection Process

The deadline for applications is **15 September 2017**. Please note that applications will be reviewed and considered on an ongoing basis. It is to your advantage to apply as early as possible.

Applicants must provide the following documents to be considered:

1. A completed Application Form;
2. An up-to-date CV; and
3. A copy of the licence to practice law.

Applicants should send their completed Application Form (below) and supporting documentation to Vuk Raičević of Praxis (vuk.raicevic@praxis.org.rs) and Semir Tutić of Sandzak Committee (tuticsemir@gmail.com).

Applicants will be selected by the **22 September 2017**. Selected lawyers will attend the Strategic Litigation Workshop to be held in **October 2017** and will commence litigation preparation in the same month.

Further Information

For further information, or if you have any questions, please contact Vuk Raičević (English and Serbian speaking) (vuk.raicevic@praxis.org.rs) or Semir Tutić (English and Serbian speaking) (tuticsemir@gmail.com).



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Application Form for Strategic Litigation Program

Section 1: Contact Information (All information provided is confidential)

Name: _____

Current role and organisation: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Section 2: Professional Information

Date of admission to practice:	
How many years of professional experience do you have of representation in the courts?	
<p>Have you had experience in legal assistance and/or litigation <i>on cases of discrimination</i> at the national level in the past 3-5 years?</p> <p>Please provide details (examples of cases, areas of litigation, online links to relevant cases, etc.)</p>	
<p>Have you had experience in legal assistance and/or litigation <i>on cases other than discrimination</i> at the national level in the past 3-5 years?</p> <p>Please describe the areas of your experience (e.g. criminal law; public law; private law) and the type of litigation that you have conducted (e.g. 3-day trial; inquest)</p>	



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P R A X I S



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Have you had any practical experience of litigation before an international or regional human rights body in the last 3-5 years?

Please provide details of the cases and indicate whether any of the cases related to *discrimination*.

Section 3: Knowledge of equality and non-discrimination issues and legal framework

Please describe your level of knowledge of the rights to equality and non-discrimination under Serbian law and international law, and how you developed this knowledge (e.g. study; academia; practice).

What experience have you had in the past 3-5 years working with vulnerable groups in Serbia who may experience discrimination?

Please indicate the nature of your work, whether it was legal or non-legal, and the group(s) you have worked with.

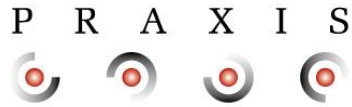
Do you have ongoing engagement or involvement in work with vulnerable groups in Serbia?

Please provide details of professional or voluntary commitments.

Please indicate two areas of law related to equality and non-discrimination in Serbia that you consider require strengthening or testing in court, and why.



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Please indicate why you would like to participate in the Strategic Litigation Program and what you hope to gain from your involvement in the Program (maximum 500 words).

Please indicate if there are any dates in October 2017 when you would be *unavailable* to attend a three-day Strategic Litigation Workshop.

Please answer all questions on the form. Incomplete forms will not be considered.

Please send the completed form to Vuk Raičević (vuk.raicevic@praxis.org.rs) and Semir Tutić (tuticsemir@gmail.com) by 4 September 2017.