
The Robert L. Bernstein Fellowship in International Human Rights

The Robert L. Bernstein Fellowship in International Human Rights enables two Yale Law School graduating students or recent graduates to devote a year to full-time human rights work.

The Bernstein Fellowship was established at Yale Law School in 1997 to honor Robert Bernstein, the founder and former chair of Human Rights Watch; former chair, president, and chief executive officer of Random House; and a tireless champion of human rights. The fellowship, supported by the family, friends, and colleagues of Robert Bernstein and administered by the Orville H. Schell, Jr. Center for International Human Rights at Yale Law School, promotes innovative approaches to human rights advocacy.

Each spring, the Bernstein Fellowship Program convenes a symposium designed to promote thoughtful, creative discourse on international human rights. Past and current fellows return to Yale Law School to speak with students and each other about the challenges of human rights advocacy. Leading activists and scholars in the field join in discussions exploring critical human rights issues and effective approaches to the defense of human rights.

The Robert L. Bernstein Fellowship in International Human Rights

Orville H. Schell, Jr. Center for International Human Rights
Yale Law School
P.O. BOX 208215, New Haven, CT 06520-8215

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YALE LAW SCHOOL

The Robert L. Bernstein Fellowship in International Human Rights

*“Human rights are not a luxury,
or something to be observed if they
don’t conflict with some other priority,
like peace or economic development.
They are instead the key to achieving
those things and anything else of urgent
importance to the world.”*

—Robert L. Bernstein

Applying for the Bernstein Fellowship in International Human Rights

Fellowship Support

The Bernstein Fellowship provides a one-year stipend of approximately \$42,000.

Application Requirements

Graduating students or recent graduates (within the last five years) of Yale Law School are eligible for the Bernstein Fellowship. Applicants are encouraged to develop their project proposals in cooperation with appropriate organizations, but independent projects will also be considered. Proposals may deal with issues anywhere in the world; projects designed to address problems that have otherwise received little attention are especially welcome. A number of human rights organizations have expressed interest in having a Bernstein Fellow join their staff for a year; please contact the Schell Center for more information about these opportunities.

Applicants should submit the following materials.

1. a short personal statement (500 words maximum) describing the applicant's relevant experience, interest in human rights work, and aspirations;
2. a concise summary (one paragraph) of the proposed Bernstein Fellowship project and its goals;
3. a project proposal (1,500 words maximum) including:
 - a. a discussion of the problem or need that the proposed project will address, why this problem is important, how the project will address it, and other reasons for choosing this project;
 - b. a discussion of how the applicant will implement the project and meet the project's goals within the one-year fellowship period (a proposed timetable for the project should be included);
 - c. identification of the sponsoring organization (if applicable) and other organizations or individuals who will assist the applicant with the project and a description of how they will assist and supervise the applicant; and
 - d. a discussion of the applicant's relevant skills, training, experience, or other significant background;

4. two or three letters of recommendation, including one letter from a current or former professor or other person associated with Yale Law School and one letter from a supervisor or employer familiar with the applicant's human rights work or recent work experience (letters evaluating the proposed project and the applicant's capacity to achieve its goal are particularly helpful);
5. a resume with a list of additional references, including both prior employers and professors;
6. a law school transcript (registrar may forward to Schell Center); and
7. a letter, if applicable, from the sponsoring organization, detailing the organization's purpose and function; its interest in, and commitment to, the proposed project; and how the Bernstein Fellowship will contribute to the organization's efforts to further respect for human rights. If there is no sponsoring organization, the applicant should submit a short statement (250 words maximum) describing any consultations the applicant has had with human rights professionals or others working in related fields in developing the project proposal.

Applications must be received at the Schell Center by February 11, 2008. Applicants are encouraged to consult with the Schell Center as they explore project possibilities and prepare their proposals.

Submit all materials by mail, courier, hand delivery, or email to:

Bernstein Fellowship Selection Committee

*Orville H. Schell, Jr. Center for International Human Rights
Yale Law School*

Mail	Courier	Email
<i>P.O. Box 208215</i>	<i>127 Wall Street</i>	<i>schell.law@yale.edu</i>
<i>New Haven, CT 06520-8215</i>	<i>New Haven, CT 06511</i>	
	<i>203-432-7480</i>	

The Bernstein Fellowship Selection Committee will consider the proposed project's potential impact and value; the applicant's ability to carry out the project; the applicant's human rights experience (in law school courses, extracurricular activities, summer jobs, or full-time work); the applicant's commitment to human rights work; and the sponsoring organization's capacity to implement the proposed project (if applicable).

Bernstein Fellows have:

- worked to promote the rights of the disabled in South Africa;
- helped launch an advocacy program to protect human rights defenders;
- investigated human rights violations arising from the Eritrean-Ethiopian war;
- developed arguments for the incorporation of international human rights in U.S. law;
- worked to ensure the rights of refugees in South Africa;
- helped start a project addressing human rights in Southeast Asia;
- developed cases from Northern Ireland for the European Court of Human Rights;
- conducted research and advocacy on the rights of Tibetans;
- participated in litigation and advocacy to hold corporations accountable for human rights consequences of their activities;
- developed an Internet-based advocacy campaign for U.S. immigration law reform;
- documented Minnesota's response to domestic violence against immigrant and refugee women;
- developed materials for a campaign to increase global support for programs to combat HIV/AIDS;
- developed strategies to combat sexual abuse and sexual harassment of girls in Beninese schools;
- brought economic, social and cultural rights cases in the inter-American human rights system;
- promoted the use of international human rights law in cases concerning discrimination and violence against women in Africa;
- worked on a project addressing child trafficking in Gabon;
- advocated against restrictions on Palestinians' freedom to travel within and outside the Occupied Territories;
- promoted the use of India's public interest litigation mechanism to address violations of women's reproductive rights;
- documented sexual violence against women in the civil war in the Ivory coast;
- developed legal strategies to challenge human rights violations in Argentina's prisons;
- developed resources and implemented a strategy for addressing the right to water in India; and
- investigated and publicized situations of statelessness around the world.