



Public Interest Law Project Summer Award

The Public Interest Law Project Executive Board voted unanimously in September 2020 to modify the PILP Summer Award criteria to be more accessible, more equitable, and less prone to biases. In addition, PILP is working towards continued transparency about our policies and practices. For any questions please reach out to pilp@lclark.edu.

FAQ

What is it? A PILP Summer Award is a stipend that allows law students working in unpaid public interest externships or jobs to financially support themselves during the summer months.

What does it do? The PILP summer award opens doors to summer public interest work for all students, regardless of their ability to afford to take on volunteer or unpaid work.

How much does it provide? Full-time awards offer between \$3,500 and \$5,000 of funding. Students seeking a full-time award must commit to completing at least 350 hours of work over the summer. A student may also work part-time. Part-time awards offer between \$1,750 and \$2,500 of funding. Students seeking a part-time award must commit to completing at least 175 hours of work over the summer.

What if I have other funding? If the host organization or a third party supplies partial funding for a student's work, PILP will not provide funds beyond the amount that increases the recipient's total funding to \$5,000 for a full-time position or \$2,500 for a part-time position.

If I meet the eligibility criteria, will I automatically get a PILP Summer Award? PILP raises as much money as possible for summer awards but cannot ensure that every applicant will receive funding. Award recipients are selected based on the "Decision Criteria" below.

If I receive a PILP Summer Award, what are my obligations? Award recipients must chair a PILP Fundraising Committee the year following receipt of the award. This typically requires 10-15 additional hours of commitment to PILP. In addition to this commitment, each award recipient must submit a photo and one-page essay during the September following their work.

Can I receive a PILP Summer Award each summer? No. Students are only eligible to receive a PILP Summer Award once.

Eligibility

- Must be a Lewis & Clark Law School student with a 2.0 GPA or higher.
- Must have completed at least one year of law school by June of the application year (1L, 2L, 3L Evening students are eligible to apply).
- Must be enrolled in Lewis & Clark Law School for at least one semester during the school year following the summer work (cannot transfer).
- Must have completed at least 30 hours of volunteer work. 15 hours must be specifically PILP hours, and an additional 15 hours must be PILP or pro bono/community service, any combination.
 - To earn PILP hours, join the PILP distribution list and look for emails from Volunteer Coordinator, Elexis Kain, who will notify students of opportunities to earn PILP hours.

Host Eligibility

- Must be a nonprofit or non-governmental organization, governmental office, or tribal entity.
- Must provide attorney supervision to the student, if legal work is to be completed. If policy or other law-related work is to be completed, a supervisor with a JD is strongly preferred.

Decision Criteria

In advance of this year, to service our commitments to equity and inclusion, PILP collected feedback from those familiar with the award application process, including both past award recipients and individuals who chose not to pursue PILP awards. Additionally, PILP Executive Board members met with an equity & inclusion consultant. From these conversations, PILP modified the summer award decision criteria to reduce personal biases and replicated systemic inequities that are near omnipresent in legal education.

The new decision criteria for evaluating PILP Summer Award applicants is a complex matrix. PILP designed the matrix to reduce bias and account for applicants in a holistic manner, keeping in mind the unique circumstances of a wide variety of law students. The matrix was designed in part by a professional equity consultant who worked with PILP to actualize the organization's commitments to equity and inclusion.

Decision Criteria

(1) Commitment to Public Interest

- Describe your personal commitment to public interest work
- Why is the work your organization does important to you?

(2) Organizational Effect

- Describe the nature of the organization for which you plan to work.
- How does the type of work your organization further the interests/rights/protections of the public?
- What communities does your organization serve and what impact does it have on those communities?

(3) Community Engagement

- Of what communities have you been a part in the past few years and how have you engaged with those communities to further their interests and needs?
- Are there circumstances or challenges you have had to navigate that prevent you from engaging with your communities to the full extent you would like?

(4) Furthering Equity

- Does your potential work further the values of equity in the field(s) of law in which you will practice?
- How will you incorporate the values of equity in your work with your organization?
- How will you advocate for incorporating the values of equity into the work of the organization?

(5) Financial Need

- Is your potential position funded in part or completely unfunded?
- Do you receive financial support other than loans?
- On what will your PILP award be spent this summer?
- How would you cover expenses if you are not awarded a full PILP award?

Payment and Taxes

Awards are taxable income paid as a Prize or Award. There is no tax withholding on PILP Awards and Lewis & Clark must report payment via IRS Form 1099-MISC; recipients will be responsible for saving funds to pay state and federal income tax if any is due.

The Power to Revoke and Recoup

The PILP Executive Board retains the power to revoke and recoup an award at any time upon a finding of substantial misrepresentation in a student's application. The PILP Executive Board will have the power to internally resolve all disputes regarding PILP Award eligibility that arise during the academic year.

Nondiscrimination

PILP will not knowingly fund positions with hosts who discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, handicap, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital, premarital, or veteran's status or the prejudice of clients.