

Lawyer

Access Program

Lawyer

An exciting opportunity has arisen to join one of Australia's most successful public interest and social justice organisations. In the face of rising levels of unmet legal need, Justice Connect designs and delivers high impact interventions to increase access to legal support and progress social justice.

We are committed to taking an impact-focused approach, applying research and design principles to develop our products and services to ensure they make a tangible difference for our clients and sector peers.

We deliver services that assist both people and community organisations. Those we assist often struggle to navigate the law, are unable to use the law in their daily lives and experience the impacts of harsh and unjust laws. We aim to prevent and to solve legal problems so that we can prevent the negative impacts on people's lives and organisations and empower the community to use the law as a force for good.

Given the scale of the challenges we address, we use digital innovation to extend our reach and impact, supporting us to be more efficient and accessible, while helping us capture and use data to better understand legal need and underlying systemic issues.

We harness the extraordinary pro bono contributions of over 50 member firms and the barristers we work with across the country. We channel pro bono effort through our innovative service models to ensure that pro bono hours deliver real impact for the community.

We develop strategic interventions to help address the system-level drivers of legal problems and barriers people face when engaging with the legal system. By addressing root causes of flawed or unfair laws and poorly designed systems, we prevent the long-term challenges that people and organisations continue to face.

Our creative and passionate staff drive us forward with a commitment to evaluation and iteration that ensures our impact increases year on year.

Justice Connect's **Access Program** is a multidisciplinary team of 20 staff with in-house legal, data, project, and service design expertise. We collaborate to increase access to legal assistance and progress social justice by responding quickly to a wide range of legal problems with a particular focus on disaster response, financial rights and employment law problems. We have expertise in dealing with issues that have escalated to court proceedings with a long history of running court-based services across a range of jurisdictions.

Our legal services use a range of approaches including specialist advice, pro bono referrals (leveraging our network of over 10,000 pro bono lawyers) and online resources to help people experiencing legal problems. We also operate weekly pro bono clinics for help seekers involved in litigation in Victorian courts, Federal courts and VCAT.

Our strategy commits us to identifying ways to scale legal help with digital solutions, including our in-house developed digital platform, Justice Connect Answers (JCA). We seek to identify and respond quickly to emerging legal need in the community. In all our work, we centre client experience and our commitment to impact.

We know our team and our organisation is stronger with a diversity of backgrounds and experience, including lived experience of the issues we work on. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people of colour, people from culturally and linguistically diverse and refugee backgrounds, people with diverse religious beliefs, gender diverse people, LGBTIQ+ people and people living with a disability are strongly encouraged to apply.



Applications close 5:00pm, Thursday 14 April 2022

Position description

Position title	Lawyer
Position reports to	Principal Lawyer – Innovation
Employment status	Fixed term to 30 November 2023
Hours	37.5 hours per week (1.0 FTE), part-time by agreement
Salary	\$87,282.12 per annum, plus 10% superannuation, annual leave loading and generous salary packaging options (lawyer level 1)
Location	Level 17, 461 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000 or Level 5, 175 Liverpool Street, Sydney NSW 2000. *From May 2022 staff will return to the office for 25 percent of their working month (minimum), increasing to 40 percent in July 2022.
Closing date	5:00pm Thursday 14 April 2022
For further information	Contact Joanna Abraham, Manager and Principal Lawyer – Services on (02) 8599 2118

Role purpose

This newly created Lawyer role in the Access Program has a particular focus on the provision of tailored legal assistance to individuals, communities, small businesses and farmers affected by natural disasters and building our approach to disaster preparedness, response and resilience.

The role delivers legal services to vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community, through both one-to-one and one-to-many assistance. The role identifies and strengthens referral pathways to connect help seekers with legal assistance provided by the program, including maintaining and developing collaborative relationships with disaster legal assistance stakeholders

To scale our assistance in response to unmet legal need, the role assists with identification, development and maintenance of self-help resources and monitors for emerging trends in the types of legal problems and challenges encountered by help-seekers to support strategic work focused on addressing system-level issues and developing new approaches and services.

Key responsibilities

- Make decisions about the nature of assistance to be provided, prepare briefs or referral materials to pro bono lawyers, provide direct legal advice to clients, legal information, external referrals, and secondary consultations
- Support pro bono lawyers in their provision of legal assistance to clients
- Supervision and support to paralegals and PLTs assessing help-seeker enquiries and undertaking intake, triage and referrals
- Escalate risk and legal practice management issues to the Principal Lawyer or Manager
- Assist the Manager and Principal Lawyers to:
 - develop and conduct training for volunteer lawyers
 - develop and maintain legal resources and self-help tools for help-seekers
 - develop and test new approaches to meeting identified emerging legal need including use of digital and other innovation resources
 - undertake reporting and evaluation requirements

- Work collaboratively with the Head, Managers and Principal Lawyers to maintain strong relationships with key external stakeholders, including our pro bono partners
- Participate in and represent Justice Connect at relevant networks, roundtables, and communities of practice
- Support the leadership team of the program to implement the program and organisational strategy
- Contribute to program and organisation-wide projects including Justice Connect's Reconciliation Action Plan activities.

This job description outlines the current duties and responsibilities of the position. These will be reviewed on a regular basis with the position holder and are subject to change according to the needs and priorities of Justice Connect.

Selection criteria

Qualifications	• Australian legal practitioner eligible to practice in Victoria or New South Wales and hold an unrestricted practicing certificate
Technical expertise	• Understanding of legal issues commonly faced by people experiencing disadvantage or experiencing difficulties navigating the justice system • Legal practice experience in some or all relevant areas of civil law including common disaster-related legal problems (desirable)
Experience	• Experience in delivery of high-quality legal services • Experience in law reform and advocacy (desirable) • Experience in project management (desirable)
Knowledge, skills & attributes	• Demonstrated knowledge of the legal assistance and pro bono sectors in Victoria and NSW and knowledge (or interest in building expertise in) disaster legal assistance. • Strong legal skills, and interest and appetite to learn new areas of law, service models, and processes • Well-developed client management skills, including in working with individuals who have complex needs • Excellent interpersonal and communication skills and an ability to successfully engage in stakeholder relationships and project collaborations • Commitment to Justice Connect's vision, strategy and values, including a commitment to social justice • Curiosity, flexibility and open mind, and comfort working in ambiguity and an environment of change • Impact and outcome focused, and demonstrated commitment evidence-based decisions • Highly motivated, a positive attitude and demonstrated ability to work both independently and thrive in a team and collaborative work environment • Excellent time and task management skills

Employee benefits

Justice Connect offers employment benefits including salary packaging (making part of your salary tax-free), flexible working arrangements, above award annual leave provisions and opportunities for professional development. Justice Connect is an organisation that strives to show leadership, operate sustainably and demonstrate our effectiveness. You will be rewarded with a workplace culture that is professional, committed, collaborative and creative and where you can make a real difference through your work.

Important information

For further information about Justice Connect and its work please visit www.justiceconnect.org.au

Workplace attendance requirements:

Please note we are not asking you to disclose your vaccination status to us at this time, but it is important for you to understand Justice Connect's position about workplace attendance requirements.

Justice Connect has adopted a hybrid working model which requires all staff located in VIC or NSW to work a minimum of 40% of their working month in the workplace. For you to be able to attend our offices and perform your role in other workplaces e.g. at courts or in person meetings with our partner organisations and clients, you will be required to be up to date with your COVID-19 vaccinations so that Justice Connect can meet its obligations under public health orders and workplace health and safety legislation.

We want to be clear with you about this requirement so that you understand what will be expected of you if you commence employment with us. Of course, we respect your right to decide about vaccination but if you decide not to be vaccinated, then that will impact on your capacity to work for us.

The application process is as follows:

- Applications should be addressed to **Joanna Abraham, Manager and Principal Lawyer - Services**, and should comprise a cover letter, your resume, and a succinct statement outlining your suitability for the role with reference to the selection criteria
- Applications should be emailed to hr@justiceconnect.org.au as a **single word or PDF file** including “**Lawyer – Access Program (disaster response)**” in the email subject line.
- Applications close at 5:00pm Thursday 14 April 2022.

