



Call for Applications: **Senior Legal Fellow, Defending Rights, Southern Africa**

Who is Natural Justice?

Natural Justice is an organisation rooted in the struggles of communities in Africa. As a team of pioneering lawyers and legal experts, we specialise in human rights and environmental law in pursuit of social and environmental justice.

Natural Justice strives to enhance the collective rights of people and protect the sacred relationships that indigenous peoples and local communities have with nature. Our work is informed by the values, knowledge and self-determination of the communities whom we stand in solidarity with.

Through legal empowerment, research, policy influencing and litigation, and as part of coalitions and campaigns, we support communities to know the law, use the law and shape the law.

Natural Justice has three main pillars: Affirming and Securing Rights to Lands, Resources and Knowledge; Defending Rights against Environmental and Social Impacts; and Standing with Communities.

To learn more about the work of Natural Justice please refer to www.naturaljustice.org.

What are we looking for?

Natural Justice seeks a lawyer to join its Southern Africa hub as a Senior Legal Fellow under the Defending Rights Programmatic Stream. The hub works across South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The successful candidate will be primarily based within the Defending Rights Stream but will work across all three work streams in the Hub to provide legal support to indigenous people and local communities, particularly in relation to climate justice matters, indigenous rights, land rights and human rights.

They will work with a passionate team of staff within the hub and frequently collaborate with staff across the organisation. They will be expected to work with the support staff, including finance, communications, monitoring and evaluation and research staff.

The Senior Legal Fellow must have an interest in supporting Indigenous people and local communities, in the context of the climate crisis, throughout the countries we work in. They will be expected to foster long-term, committed relationships with communities, build connections to community partners and work in consortiums and partnerships with other civil society organisations.

Their knowledge and experience should include a strong background in litigation and legal support across the region and nationally, climate justice, environmental law, and working with communities.

Natural Justice is an African organisation and preference is given to those applying from African countries, but particularly from countries supported by the Southern African team.

The role will be part of the African Climate Legal Fellowship Programme (ACLFP), a pilot initiative aimed at bringing experienced lawyers to the environmental public interest sector in Africa and providing pathways for new talent to enter the public interest sector. In addition to the Natural Justice placement, Fellows will be part of a broader cohort benefiting from mentorship, coaching and leadership development, training in environmental and climate change law and science, and a network of likeminded lawyers in Africa. Travel within Africa for a launch convening will also be required. IREX, a global non-profit that has supported more than 50,000 Fellows over 50 years, will implement the fellowship and provide ongoing support to you and your nonprofit organization.

What's on offer?

Natural Justice is a close-knit and nurturing collective that places emphasis on facilitating opportunities for the professional and personal growth of its members. Joining Natural Justice will also give the successful candidate a chance to work with a passionate and professional team across Africa, and support the candidate to gain valuable national and regional experience.

Natural Justice will offer a nationally competitive salary commensurate with skill and experience, with additional medical aid benefits, Provident Fund, UIF and access to a laptop and technical support. The position is for permanent, full-time employment.

The successful candidate should be open to relocation to Cape Town, with regular travel nationally and regionally, and occasional travel internationally. They are expected to begin work as soon as possible.

The Senior Legal Fellow will work closely with staff across the programmatic streams and will report directly to the Defending Rights Programme Manager and the Hub Director. Their role will be to further develop, maximize the impact of, and expand the Defending Rights programmatic stream in Southern Africa, with a focus on South Africa, Namibia and Mozambique. They will assist in the development of strategy, and initiate, plan, implement and manage projects and activities (including timelines and deliverables).

The key roles and responsibilities

The Senior Legal Fellow will be expected to, amongst other things:

- Support local communities in Southern Africa affected by, for example, large-scale extractives, infrastructure and other projects, by providing legal advice, and by supporting legal empowerment approaches.
- Provide high quality legal advice and support to communities Natural Justice works with and its partners.
- Support environmental and climate litigation cases across the hub.
- Undertake legal research, write submissions and provide opinions on environmental and climate justice issues.
- In collaboration with hub staff, provide support to community environmental legal officers (incl. training, developing and implementing reporting and management structures), especially towards developing climate litigation.
- Support the work of the hub in relation to research and submissions on law and policy.

- Write opinion articles on the outcomes of the programmatic work.
- Contribute to the overall hub programme and strategy.
- Form and maintain good working relationships with all key partners including communities, government entities and donors.
- Collaborate with Natural Justice staff in the other countries.

Requirements

- Completed legal qualification and admission as an attorney or advocate.
- At least four years' post-admission experience in a legal environment.
- A post-graduate degree in law, political science or other relevant natural or social science discipline is desirable.
- An in-depth knowledge of South Africa's constitutional and administrative law, including human rights, land & environmental law, or a clear ability to acquire the necessary knowledge within a short space of time. Additional familiarity with Namibian and/or Mozambican law will be an advantage.
- Experience of working with marginalised communities and/or Indigenous communities will be advantageous.
- Experience in litigation, and in running litigation.
- Good legal research and analysis skills in law, policy and social issues.
- Sound written and oral communication skills.
- Ability to grasp quickly and accurately new and complex concepts.
- Ability to work under pressure and effectively both as part of a team and independently, as called for.
- Ability to balance priorities and co-ordinate work effectively in order to meet deadlines and deal with high workloads.
- Conviction in and commitment to community rights, constitutionalism and principles of environmental justice.
- Sound emotional intelligence skills to enable interaction with persons from all sectors of the society.
- Proficient in English. Fluency in another local language or Portuguese would be advantageous.