



Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment

A JOINT CENTER OF COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL
AND THE EARTH INSTITUTE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Paid Short-term LLM Post-Graduate Fellowship: Addressing Legal Support Gaps and Promoting Transparency in the Context of Land-Based Investments

The [Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment](#) (CCSI), a joint center of Columbia Law School and the Earth Institute, is accepting applications for two short-term fellowships for 2017 graduates of Columbia Law School's LLM program, to begin after graduation.

The role:

LLM Fellows will work closely with CCSI's land, agriculture, and human rights team on projects related to [legal support gaps](#) and [transparency](#) in the context of land-based investments. While the work will be tailored to Fellows' interests and goals, it will primarily involve research, writing, and strategizing. The work may also include assessing contracts and other activities in support of the projects.

The projects:

CCSI is working to identify and advance concrete steps that can help address legal support gaps and promote transparency in the context of large-scale land-based investment (LSLBI) in natural resources, primarily for commercial agriculture and forestry projects. LSLBI presents significant challenges for governments, communities, investors, and other stakeholders. While these challenges are often distinct, one commonality shared by governments, communities, and investors alike is the need for better and more accessible legal support. For example, host governments negotiating investment deals are often out-lawyered and out-resourced at the negotiating table, while communities seeking to protect their land rights in the context of such investment are generally even more disadvantaged. Although investors may have access to sufficient legal support, their lawyers are not always sensitized to land rights, human rights, and other related issues.

CCSI is undertaking a series of projects to help fill these legal support gaps. This includes conducting research on solutions for overcoming specific obstacles; developing guidance resources; providing workshops and other opportunities to strengthen the provision of quality legal support that promotes responsible investment outcomes; and supporting land contract disclosure as a tool for better legal support and investment impacts.

The details:

These short-term fellowships are offered to LLM candidates at Columbia Law School who will graduate in 2017. The fellowships are for 12 weeks, and candidates must commit to 40

hours per week. Fellowships can begin any time after graduation, but ideally would take place over the 2017 summer. The fellowship stipend is \$12,000; fellows must have authorization to work in the US. (Note that F-1 students must apply for an OPT visa authorization before graduation; students needing more details on OPT visa authorization are encouraged to speak with the International Students and Scholars Office.) Acceptance of the CCSI LLM Fellow Position does not preclude opportunities to apply for other LLM fellowships offered by Columbia Law School to work at other organizations once the CCSI Fellowship has ended.

What past LLM Fellows have said about the Fellowship:

- ❖ “It was a remarkable opportunity for me to see the interplay between human rights and sustainable FDI in actual practice. The theory I had learned in the classroom came to life, and that was exciting. One other thing that stood out for me was the flexibility and independence I was given to work on areas of CCSI’s work that I was most interested in. Finally, it provided me a rare opportunity to listen to, speak with and learn from the experiences of many people working to promote sustainable LSLBI in different parts of the world.” – Modupe Odele, CLS LLM ‘16

- ❖ “I would thoroughly recommend the CCSI LLM Fellowship to anyone with an interest in sustainable development and investment. During the three months of my fellowship, I was able to deeply delve into a new issue - large-scale land-based investments - as well as contributing to the ongoing work of the center. CCSI were extremely accommodating and flexible with regard to both my professional goals and personal circumstances, and I felt very supported by the fantastic team.” – Lauren Waugh, CLS LLM ‘16

About CCSI:

CCSI is a leading applied research center and forum dedicated to the study, practice, and discussion of sustainable international investment. Our mission is to develop and disseminate practical approaches and solutions to maximize the impact of international investment for sustainable development. The Center’s work is organized around 3 major areas of research: Sustainable Investments in Land and Agriculture, Sustainable Investments in Extractive Industries, and Sustainable International Investment Law and Policy.

To apply:

Please send a cover letter, CV and writing sample to CCSI’s Executive Coordinator, Nancy Siporin (NSipor@Law.Columbia.edu). Applications are due April 14.