

Manager, Strategic Legal Response Centre

Copy for Job Advert

Manager, Strategic Legal Response Centre, Forest Peoples Programme (FPP)

Forest Peoples Programme is a human rights organisation that stands in solidarity with indigenous and other forest peoples to defend their rights to their lands, territories and resources.

We are looking for someone to coordinate and manage the development and evolution of a Strategic Legal Response Centre. This innovative Centre will capitalise on FPP's 30 years' experience of delivering legal support to forest communities around the world. We are looking for someone who can help to shape the Centre with passion, compassion and respect.

If you are a practical visionary with experience relating to the use of the law to achieve justice, and are passionate about upholding rights and supporting communities to protect the forest ecosystems on which both their cultures and a stable global climate depends, we want to hear from you.

Why this role matters

Indigenous Peoples and local communities manage nearly 300,000 million metric tons of carbon in their trees and soil – equivalent to 33 times global energy emissions in 2017. Despite advances in the past 20 years forest peoples continue to highlight serious human rights violations with consequent grave threats to their forests, for which they seek urgent, increased or sustained legal support. However, the accessibility and capacity of legal support is nowhere near commensurate with the scale and urgency of the need, in a context of shrinking civic spaces, increasing violence, competition for land and the rapid expansion of agribusiness and other forest pressures.

What is the Centre?

FPP is seeking to capitalise on its 30 years' experience of legal support to pilot an innovative *Strategic Legal Response Centre* ("the Centre"). Our vision is to match the untapped potential of strategic legal intervention with the scale of funding and the quality of strategic partnerships necessary to meet the challenge.

What stage is the Centre at?

The Centre is in the pilot phase, but its genesis is in the extensive experience of FPP in this field and its existing team of lawyers and long-term commitments to indigenous peoples and local communities in the Global South. The Centre builds on, formalises, and expands on FPP's approach so that it can be more impactful and elicit wider systems change. Funding for the pilot and the role is now falling into place with more scope to bring others on board.

What are the components of the Centre?

Via the following components, the pilot will intensify and expand the availability of legal support to indigenous and other forest peoples, in order to secure their rights and protect the forest ecosystems on which both their cultures and a stable global climate depends:

1. **Support for test cases** to create important and innovative legal precedents in key jurisdictions. This will involve using FPP's in-house legal team and others to support existing or proposed cases.
2. **Rapid response legal support** to respond to urgent threats or key strategic opportunities to advance rights, including litigation and legal reform opportunities.
3. **Develop a stronger community of practice.** Principally by co-developing an architecture for the Centre's ongoing operation and scaling, and convening regular land rights dialogues to permit expertise sharing and collective problem solving as well as generating guidance materials.
4. **Training, internships and/or fellowships plus local legal capacity building** for forest peoples and their representatives. Scope and convene strategic partnerships to deliver improved opportunities and capacity in this area for forest peoples, young lawyers or law students as well as established legal practitioners, in collaboration with academic institutions.

The role

You will coordinate and manage the functioning of the Centre under the guidance of FPP's Legal and Human Rights Programme (LHRP) Coordinator. In close collaboration with LHRP team colleagues as well as the other programme teams whenever necessary, you will coordinate the piloting and development of the Centre, including identifying legal opportunities, managing and developing strategic partnerships, organising events, as well as providing administrative support for the Centre. The role will have an outward-facing element that involves engagement with partners, collaborators, donors and networks, and will also provide assistance with internal legal awareness and external communications activities. This post is guided by FPP's core principle of forest peoples' right to self-determination and will therefore include ensuring that the Centre's functioning and activities support this principle.

Duties and Key Responsibilities

- **Coordinate and Manage** – coordinate and manage the Centre within FPP under the supervision of the LHRP Coordinator and in collaboration with the LHRP team and other FPP programmes
- **Facilitate engagement of colleagues and partners** – engage FPP's Legal and Human Rights Programme colleagues and other programme colleagues as well as FPP partners and wider allies in the co-shaping and ongoing implementation and evolution of the Centre
- **Make it happen** – directly undertake activities to make the Centre a success and turn the component pillars envisaged for the Centre into a reality
- **Represent and collaborate** – represent the Strategic Legal Response Centre, and FPP, and network and develop potential collaboration in line with FPP's vision and values

- **Project manage** – use an adaptive project management approach to the evolving work of the Centre and ensure all aspects move forward and adapt based on learning
- **Fundraise** – strengthen links with existing funders, build new trusting funding relationships and articulate Centre plans and budgets to attract further funding
- **Manage project finances** – work closely with finance team colleagues for budgeting and oversight of funds associated with the Centre
- **Support internal coordination** – work with the LHRP Coordinator on staff sharing, exchange, knowledge generation and documentation
- **Own caseload** – in the future there may be potential for the post-holder to undertake direct legal case-work with and for affected forest communities in addition to the duties described above. This element of the role’s duties is deliberately expressed as secondary to the preceding components to fairly reflect the fact that the role’s priority focus for the time being is the development and evolution of the Centre and the coordination and management associated with that. This is likely to leave little or no room for any meaningful legal caseload at least for the first 2-3 years of the Centre’s operation.

Skills and Experience

1. Practical visionary – track record that shows energy and vision combined with the ability to make things happen in line with organisational values
2. Committed to bottom up approach – where indigenous peoples and local communities are supported in achieving their visions for their futures
3. Excellent team working skills – Ability to work effectively as part of a multi-cultural, dispersed team of FPP staff, partners and movement allies to achieve shared objectives
4. Project management skills – experience of the project management cycle including project financial management
5. Good networker – able to build new partnerships and alliances, preferably bringing some relevant existing networks to the role
6. Content experience – experience of using the law to help marginalised groups access justice
7. Context experience – experience of working in or on countries in the Global South
8. Good communicator – able to communicate effectively with audiences including potential donors through different media including face-to-face
9. Language skills – fluency in, or good knowledge of, French and/or Spanish is strongly desirable
10. Strong alignment with FPP’s values and principles

Terms

- Salary in the range £38,000 to £45,000 p.a. depending on qualifications and experience
- Full-time. It may also be possible to explore 4 days a week for the right candidate or to support gender inclusion and diversity
- Location. FPP staff are located in different parts of the UK and in different countries. A candidate who can work from or regularly visit our office in Moreton-in-Marsh is preferred, but FPP is open to discuss location for the right candidate. Expected foreign travel would be around 4-6 times per year. For the right candidate not based in the UK they would need to

be able to travel to Moreton-in-Marsh office a few times a year and in the first instance spend time with team members to build relationships.

- Benefits include:
 - 20 days leave per year, plus all public holidays and the week between Christmas and New Year when the office is closed.
- Reporting to: Legal and Human Rights Programme Coordinator

To apply for this post

Please send CV and covering letter by email to info@forestpeoples.org with your name and Manager, Strategic Legal Response Centre in the subject line. Please contact us by email if you would like to discuss the role further.

Closing date for applications: 15 October 2019