

Staff Attorney, Strategic Litigation Department

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION:

The Innocence Project was founded in 1992 by Barry C. Scheck and Peter J. Neufeld at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University to assist the wrongly convicted who could be proven innocent through DNA testing. The Innocence Project's groundbreaking use of DNA technology to free innocent people has provided irrefutable proof that wrongful convictions are not isolated or rare events but instead arise from systemic defects. Now an independent nonprofit organization closely affiliated with Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University, the Innocence Project's mission is to free the staggering numbers of innocent people who remain incarcerated and to bring substantive reform to the system responsible for their unjust imprisonment. To learn more, please visit www.innocenceproject.org.

JOB SUMMARY:

The **Staff Attorney, Strategic Litigation** is an exciting new position created to build out our reform work at the intersection of social science, psychology, and the law. The new staff attorney will be responsible for developing and executing nationwide litigation strategies and policy initiatives to address the use of coercive police interrogation tactics, which can result in false confessions; suggestive eyewitness identification practices; and related reform efforts. This work involves close intra-department collaboration, as well as collaboration with the Legal, Policy and Science & Research Departments at the Innocence Project. This attorney will also work extensively with public defenders and defense counsel across the country, both on individual cases and broader reform goals, and with leading scientists working in relevant fields. In addition, the attorney will train and speak about these reform efforts around the country. This position invites and requires creative thinking and new ideas on how to achieve the Innocence Project's reform goals. The ideal candidate is passionate about criminal justice reform, and excited about the possibility of developing a deep expertise in the areas of false confession and eyewitness identification in particular.

The staff attorney reports to the Director of Strategic Litigation. The department is currently composed of a Director, two staff attorneys and two paralegals. This is a full-time position and requires travel.

SPECIFIC LITIGATION/ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES:

The staff attorney engages in all aspects of litigation and advocacy, which include:

- Developing comprehensive, national litigation strategies to advance reform efforts, through individual casework and affirmative impact litigation.
- Drafting and filing amicus curiae briefs in state and federal court, including the United States Supreme Court.
- Consulting with defense counsel at pre-trial, appellate and post-conviction litigation on strategy in criminal cases, including drafting memoranda, affidavits and briefs.
- Developing new strategies for reform, including ongoing collaboration with public defender offices around the country.
- Conducting legal research and analysis and developing an expertise in national legal developments around of false confession and eyewitness identification in particular.

- Building an expertise in relevant social science research, remaining informed about research developments, and incorporating scientific research into legal arguments.
- Researching prospects for new litigation, including both factual and legal claims.
- Preparing reports, training materials, and advocacy materials.
- Conducting trainings and making presentations to stakeholders across the criminal justice system, including the defense community, law enforcement, and the judiciary.
- Providing support and assistance to Innocence Project network affiliates and cooperating attorneys.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE:

- At least 6 years intensive litigation, appellate and/or clerkship experience required.
- Criminal justice, indigent defense or related civil rights experience required. Applicants with experience in related impact litigation are also encouraged to apply.
- Experience with and the ability to understand, summarize and translate complex research for a lay audience preferred.
- Public speaking and/or training experience is a plus.

KEY COMPETENCIES:

- Outstanding interpersonal and verbal communication skills.
- Comfort with and enthusiasm for public speaking.
- Ability to work independently and manage multiple competing demands.
- Excellent analytic and writing skills, and ability to construct cogent arguments.
- Organizational skills and the ability to prioritize cases.
- Ability to work with diverse range of people.
- Willingness and ability to develop expertise and facility with a body of scientific and legal research
- Commitment to social justice and public interest law, and an interest in leveraging the Innocence Project's work exonerating the wrongfully convicted towards broader criminal justice reform.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS:

The salary for this position is competitive and the Innocence Project offers an excellent benefits package, including health, dental and vision insurance, Flexible Spending Account, 401k plan with company-match, and paid Transitcheks.

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY:

The Innocence Project considers the diversity of its workforce to be vital to our organization's success in meeting its mission. We strongly encourage applicants from all cultures, races, educational backgrounds, life experiences, socio-economic classes, sexual orientations, age, gender, and physical abilities to apply.

As an Equal Opportunity Employer, it is our policy not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, familial status, marital status, predisposing genetic characteristics, actual or perceived domestic violence victim status, unemployment status, caregiver status, or any other category protected by law.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

To apply, please visit [Paycom](https://www.paycom.com). Upload your cover letter and resume as (last name. first name. cover letter/resume). Information submitted through this secure site is kept confidential. Due to the large volume of applications, we are unable to give applicant updates by phone.