

## Senior Staff Attorney - The Neighborhood Project

### **ABOUT THE INNOCENCE PROJECT**

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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](http://www.innocenceproject.org).

### **ABOUT THE POSITION**

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This is an exciting opportunity to lead a new area of multidisciplinary advocacy focused on racial justice, emerging technology, and mass misdemeanor arrests. The new **Senior Staff Attorney** in Strategic Litigation will lead the "Neighborhood Project," which will be based in a community experiencing high levels of segregation, biased policing, surveillance, and arbitrary stops and arrests. This groundbreaking project consists of several, interdependent prongs. The first goal is to work with community members to document the costs of such policing—both in terms of the "hard" costs as well as costs associated with collateral consequences, loss of privacy in biometric data, fear of police, and intrusion on First and Fourth Amendment rights in targeted communities. These data will be used to create a published report that includes the resources invested in community social services, and will be compared to a similarly situated, middle-income neighborhood to highlight gross disparities. The published report will serve as the foundation to advocate for reforms consistent with the Innocence Project's national forensic policy agenda at the local level. To the extent that policy reforms are sought, this will be done in collaboration with the Innocence Project's Policy Department. In addition to working with community partners, the new Senior Staff Attorney will collaborate with the local public defender organization to augment the community-based participatory research and to litigate individual misdemeanor cases that raise issues of surveillance technology, wrongful misdemeanor arrests, and other forms of discriminatory policing. The position also requires partnering with community members and Innocence Project clients to contribute research and center their experiences to challenge structural racial inequities, illustrate the costs of policing strategies in their communities and, potentially, to act as plaintiffs in civil litigation aimed at shrinking the criminal legal system's footprint.

The **Senior Staff Attorney** reports to the Director of Strategic Litigation and works in collaboration with other members of the Strategic Litigation team, the Data Science & Research department, Policy experts, and forensic-science-focused staff across departments in our New York office, and will co-supervise a paralegal, interns and pro bono counsel.

All Innocence Project employees must embrace, respect, and value the rich diversity of perspectives and experience of a diverse and heterogeneous staff. We recognize and appreciate that our work is better for having varied participants and thought partners.

We are interested in every qualified candidate who is eligible to work in the United States. However, we are not able to sponsor visas.

While the Innocence Project has supported remote work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we are currently committed to a hybrid workplace with mandatory two days per week in-office. All staff are currently provided a private workspace with a closed-door for the time being.

### **THE IDEAL CANDIDATE**

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The ideal candidate has a deep understanding of the contemporary criminal legal system, experience litigating at the trial and appellate level, an understanding of “broken windows” policing, and comfort with collaborating with a wide range of stakeholders, including community members, grass roots organizations, public defenders, scientists, and policy makers. Experience with digital technology is a plus, but not required. The ideal candidate must also be skilled at project management, have experience working with expert consultants, and has demonstrated experience with multiple competing demands.

### **ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS**

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

- Pre-trial, trial and appellate litigation of criminal cases, including drafting memoranda, affidavits and briefs, as well as consultation on potential civil litigation.
- Conducting legal research and analysis.
- Collaborating in social science research, especially participatory action research
- Evaluating social science research and incorporating such research into legal arguments and arguments for policy reform.
- Researching prospects for new litigation, including both factual and legal claims.
- Assisting with the development of community-based advocacy strategies.
- Preparing reports, training and advocacy materials.
- Conducting trainings and making presentations in widely varying forums.
- Providing support and assistance to community members, clients facing misdemeanor charges, public defenders and cooperating attorneys.

### **QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE**

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- 10+ years of litigation experience (exceptional candidates with fewer years of experience will be considered, but will have a “Staff Attorney” title)
- Demonstrated courtroom experience, preferably public defense
- Exhibited cultural competency with regard to legal practice
- Prior experience collaborating with community-based organizations
- Experience with multidisciplinary advocacy
- Preferred qualifications: experience in digital forensics, background in coalition-building and conducting empirical research
- Must be legally authorized to work in the U.S.

### **KEY COMPETENCIES**

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- Demonstrated leadership or managerial experience, experience working with multidisciplinary teams and/or background in coalition-building
- Excellent interpersonal and verbal communication skills
- Willingness to travel
- Interest in and ability to work with groups of diverse individuals in respectful, equitable, and inclusive ways
- Enthusiasm for the work of the Innocence Project and for social justice, including a demonstrated commitment to public interest

- Shares values of equity, excellence, collaboration, humanity, integrity, respect, and accountability

### **COMPENSATION, BENEFITS & PERKS**

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The salary for this position is highly competitive and the Innocence Project offers an excellent benefits package, including health, dental and vision insurance, Flexible Spending Account, 401k plan with company-match. While the office is currently remote in consideration of the ongoing pandemic, once commuting into the office (located in downtown Manhattan, New York) becomes again viable we will also offer company-paid transportation benefits.

### **WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

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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. Individuals with personal connections to the criminal legal system are strongly encouraged 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**

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To apply, please visit [JazzHR](#). Upload a cover letter expressing your interest in the role and the organization's work, and a resume titled with your name (last name. first name. cover letter/resume). Only applications with cover letters will be considered complete applications. 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 or direct email.

***\*\*Applications for this position will be considered on a rolling basis until the post is filled.\*\****

### **SALARY RANGE**

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Starting salary \$145,926 (commensurate with experience)