

# ELSC LEGAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

## WHO WE ARE

**The European Legal Support Center (ELSC)** is the first and only, non-governmental initiative dedicated to protecting the fundamental rights to freedom of expression and assembly of those who speak out and take peaceful action in Europe for justice and freedom of the Palestinian people. The ELSC is a joint initiative of the Palestinian NGOs Network (PNGO), The Rights Forum in the Netherlands and European jurists. It is based in Amsterdam and is operational since January 2019.

## WHAT THE LEGAL TRAINING PROGRAMME IS ABOUT

**The core of the project** is to train the students to progressively develop all the basic skills requested for working in human rights Law firms and in NGOs specialized in strategic litigation. Strategic litigation is the use of legal action to bring about certain social, political or legal changes. The goal of strategic litigation is not to win a case for a particular client, but the impact the legal procedure can have on broader interests. For this reason, strategic litigation is also known as impact litigation. Strategic litigation is a supplement to other ways of bringing about change; from lobbying and advocacy to community organizing and protests. An organisation focused on strategic litigation should, therefore, act as an ally to activists, NGOs and grassroots organisations.

The start of a potential opportunity for strategic litigation begins with an examination of what communities, activists, scientists, lawyers or NGOs feel is posing a problem: what hurts and where? From there, it needs to be considered whether litigation is indeed the best method to solve the issue. If so, what type of procedure is relevant and when is the best time? Usually, the aim is to go to court for a legal victory, but sometimes you can win by losing a case. Where injustice is exposed and publicity generated, there is often the opportunity to move closer to the end goal regardless of the outcome of the case.

The ELSC protects freedom of expression and assembly of advocates for Palestinian rights in Europe in different ways; from supporting a case by writing an amicus curiae, preparing expert opinion to be filed to the court, to instigating strategic litigation, gathering information regarding the challenges faced by activists, providing legal advice to Palestinian Human Rights NGOs. The program represents a unique opportunity for gaining practical knowledge about the existing interactions between law and collective political action, and for contributing to rights-based social change.

### **Structure of the project:**

The students will carry out the traineeship remotely carrying out the following assignments:

1. Identify and map the main challenges faced by individuals, civil society organizations and institutions advocating for Palestinian Rights in many European Countries;

2. Draft legal memo, study, analyse and translate relevant legal material, academic papers, judgements, reports and newspapers' articles mostly related to the following topics: **a)** freedoms of expression and assembly, right to reputation and the principle of non-discrimination under International Human rights law, EU Law and the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR); **b)** International Humanitarian Law and Business and Human Rights
3. Legal and factual research and casework in the field of freedoms of expression and assembly, anti-discrimination law, data protection, International Humanitarian Law, European counter terrorism legislation.

The participants will communicate with the ELSC supervisor using online platforms like trello and doing a skype meeting every two weeks.

The duration of the internship will be 150 hours, with a frequency of eight hours per week spread over at least two days. The modalities of the activities must be agreed with the programme's supervisor, in consideration of the frequency of the university lessons. Depending on the outcome of the project, we will invite the trainee to continue the traineeship at the ELSC offices in Amsterdam (paid).

### **REQUIREMENTS:**

Preferably, applicants should demonstrate commitment to the rights of the Palestinian people or other causes of political and social justice. Also required are familiarity with the historical and present experience of the Palestinian people as well as good English language writing and team working skills and a sound understanding of international law and the European Convention of Human Rights.