

STATE POLICY ADVOCATE

The Innocence Project, affiliated with the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University, was founded by Barry C. Scheck and Peter J. Neufeld in 1992 as a non-profit legal clinic and criminal justice resource center. We work to exonerate the wrongfully convicted through post-conviction DNA testing, and develop and implement reforms to prevent wrongful convictions. We only handle cases where post-conviction DNA testing can yield conclusive proof of innocence. For more information see www.innocenceproject.org.

JOB SUMMARY:

The Innocence Project seeks a second State Policy Advocate to assist the Director of State Policy Advocacy in building support for reform through various vehicles, from stakeholder groups to coalition partners and policymakers in various states. The Policy Advocate works in close collaboration with key members of the State Policy staff and reports to the Director of State Policy Advocacy.

This position requires a commitment of at least five days per week. The State Policy Advocate must be available to work outside normal office hours or on the weekends as required and have the ability to travel domestically as required.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

- Developing relationships with local/state advocates, stakeholders and policymaker staff
- Representing the organization in specified federal and state-level task forces
- Preparing for and testifying at legislative hearings
- Sparking public interest in the need for innocence reforms

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING:

- Developing relationships with law enforcement and other criminal justice practitioners
- Engaging local partners and creating in-state coalitions
- Cultivating champions for reform among influential legislators and other leaders in state and local government
- Working to enhance the Innocence Project's presence in each state; establishing formal roots and allies for the work
- Learning and understanding the webs of relationships and influence in specific states

POLICY CHANGE:

- Facilitating the initiation, leadership and execution of state-level advocacy campaigns on priority issues
- Analyzing and synthesizing research (or other information) for state-specific support or opposition to proposed and existing policies and legislation, preparation of documents and other media to deliver those messages
- Participating in the drafting of legislation, testimony, op-eds and, when appropriate, other advocacy support material
- Monitoring and providing local partners in multiple states with advice and support from the IP Policy Department on policy initiatives
- Identifying social and other media tools, as well as public events, needed to advance specific efforts

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE:

- An advanced degree in law, political science or policy
- A minimum of 2 years of direct policymaking or advocacy experience, legislative preferred
- Demonstrated expertise in political advocacy, preferably in the social justice arena
- Experience building, leading, and/or motivating the productive work of legislative coalitions

KEY COMPETENCIES, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Skills and motivation to interact effectively with a wide variety of people of diverse professional and cultural backgrounds and political views, including Innocence Policy Network members, local advocates, politicians, criminal justice personnel, legislators and attorneys simultaneously, across various states and issues
- Ability to work as an integral part of a multi-disciplinary policy team.
- Sound judgment, a high level of personal and professional confidence and strong interpersonal, diplomatic and communication (verbal & written) skills
- Social and political savvy
- Ability to juggle multiple tasks in a high-pressured environment
- Ability to work independently, assess priorities and take initiative to excel without significant supervision.
- Passion for the Innocence Project's mission and a commitment to criminal justice reform
- A sense of humor
- Facility with traditional and social media.

The salary is competitive and the position offers great benefits.

Please email a brief cover letter and resume, as one attachment, to: hr6@innocenceproject.org, with "Policy Advocate" in the subject line. All .zip file attachments will be deleted without being read. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled; position is currently vacant.

No phone calls, please. We appreciate all applicants, but please be advised that we can only respond to those we intend to interview.

The Innocence Project is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to workplace diversity.