

Q&A: Requirements and How to Apply to the Critical Legal Training

Update: July 2023

Who can participate in the Critical Legal Training (CLT)?

Students: The Critical Legal Training is open to students who will be enrolled at university for the entire period of their participation in the Critical Legal Training (max. three months, or longer if it is a mandatory internship). For expected qualifications, please see below.

Referendar*innen (German trainee lawyers): We welcome applications by *Referendar*innen* for the CLT. You can complete your *Wahlstation* or a part of your *Anwaltsstation* (usually three months) at ECCHR as a legal advice organization. It is unfortunately not possible to complete the full nine months of the *Anwaltsstation* at ECCHR. In some German state jurisdictions, also other parts such as *Verwaltung* may be possible. Applicants would have to inquire about that with the responsible court in their jurisdiction.

Young professionals: In specific circumstances, the CLT is also open to young professionals who have recently completed their education. Please see below (funding and scholarships) for more details.

What are the expected qualifications and experiences?

Education: Applicants should be at an advanced stage of their education (ideally graduate studies or professional legal training (i.e. *Referendariat*)) and should have excellent qualifications in law and/or another relevant subject.

Please note: An academic background in law is a plus but not a must. We welcome applications from other fields (e.g. international relations, social and political sciences) showing a strong understanding of human rights. There is also the option to apply for a [communications & media internship](#) (native-level German required).

Expertise: All applicants should have a fundamental understanding of human rights and ideally should have previous experience in an NGO or activist environment. They should also have program-specific background knowledge:

[Business and Human Rights:](#) Sound knowledge of the international debate on business and human rights and lawsuits taken against corporations on a national level.

[Institute for Legal Intervention:](#) Knowledge of Postcolonial Legal Critique and interest in elaborating on legal interventions against (post-)colonial injustice.

[International Crimes and Accountability:](#) Excellent understanding of international criminal law (incl. extraterritorial cases before national courts) as well as the current legal and political debates on international criminal jurisdiction. Background knowledge of sexualized violence in international criminal law is a plus.

[Border Justice:](#) Very good knowledge of European law and/or international human rights law as well as the relevant fundamentals of refugee law, ideally also practical experience in migration law or refugee protection.

Languages: Fluency in English is required; a good knowledge of German is desirable but not obligatory for participation in the Critical Legal Training; competency in other languages (e.g. Spanish, Arabic, Russian and French – depending on current projects) is a bonus.

Does the program have a fixed length and fixed start and end dates?

No, legal traineeships start on a rolling basis throughout the year, usually on the first day of the month, and depending on availabilities. The length is flexible, too, though three months is the norm.

The minimum length is ten weeks for a student summer internship. However, we strongly recommend a minimum stay of three months in order to fully benefit from the program.

Beyond that, we do our best to accommodate time requirements for university credit, *Referendariat*, and scholarship-funded stays that can be longer.

Applicants should state their preferred as well as the latest possible start date in the application form.

Is part-time participation in the program possible?

Yes, though full-time is recommended, part-time participation is generally possible and can be negotiated with the supervisor. The minimum work time is three days/week.

Note to Referendar*innen (German trainee lawyers): Participation in the CLT will be organized to accommodate obligations arising from the *Referendariat*.

How to apply?

Applications may be submitted in German or in English; the choice of language will not place applicants at an advantage or disadvantage.

Note: For the Border Justice Program, please send your complete application in English.

Please use the [online form](#) to submit your application. An overview of the complete application form is copied below.

If for technical reasons, you are not able to use the online application form, please send your complete application incl. CV in one PDF document to: [application\[at\]ecchr.eu](mailto:application[at]ecchr.eu)

Please limit your application to the requested documents and do not include transcripts, letters of recommendation, or work samples.

What are deadlines and process of application?

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. We review full applications three times a year. The deadlines are published on our [website](#).

You can expect a response from us around eight weeks after the deadline you applied within.

Short-listed candidates will be contacted for an interview with one of the program lawyers. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified by email.

How long in advance to apply?

As an earliest possible start date, applicants should calculate a minimum of two months after the deadline they apply within.

Ideally, the preferred start date should lie between six months and one year from the deadline applied for. If necessary (e.g. for external scholarship applications), applications can also be reviewed more than one year in advance.

Earliest possible start dates are advertised on our [website](#).

What funding or scholarships are available?

Participation in the Critical Legal Training is generally not paid. At the same time, ECCHR makes sure that every traineeship is backed with funding.

We strongly encourage applications with external funding/scholarships, and ECCHR is happy to provide all necessary documentation to support scholarship applications.

The following are scholarship programs for students and young professionals we have worked with:

[Erasmus+](#), [Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs](#), [German Chancellor Fellowship](#), [ifa Cross Culture Programme](#), [Mercator Fellowship](#)

The following platforms provide information on scholarship opportunities:

[Academia](#)

[Arbeiterkind](#)

[Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst](#)

Please note that this is contingent on your successful application to our program.

Scholarships specifically linked to the Critical Legal Training:

ECCHR has been able to issue calls for scholarships for the Critical Legal Training in the past. Open scholarship calls will be published on our website.

CLT Training Fund:

If a candidate who is a student and has been accepted to the CLT is not able to obtain any external funding or scholarship, an internal training fund is available. In such circumstances, ECCHR can provide a small stipend.

Who to contact in case of questions?

Please read this Q&A carefully and try to find answers to your questions here. If not, please contact:

Andrea Ries, Coordinator

Email: [application\[at\]ecchr.eu](mailto:application[at]ecchr.eu); Phone: +49 (0)30 40607157

Application Form: Critical Legal Training (Template – please use the online form)

1. Personal Details

First/given name:

Last/family name:

Gender: Female Male Other

Current place of residence:

Place of origin:

Telephone:

Email:

Skype (optional):

2. Administrative check

Are you eligible to work in Germany? (This is not an exclusion criterion) Yes/No

Please note: If you cannot answer at least one of the following questions with Yes, we are unfortunately not able to consider your application

Will you be enrolled as a student for the entire duration of the Critical Legal Training? Yes/No

If you are a student, would the Critical Legal Training be a mandatory internship according to your study rules? Yes/No

If you are a student, will you be able to apply for a scholarship supporting your stay? Yes/No

Are you applying to the Critical Legal Training as part of your German legal clerkship (Referendariat)? Yes/No

If you are not a student, are you applying to the Critical Legal Training in connection with a fellowship you obtained or seek to obtain (please explain in your motivation letter)? Yes/No

3. Educational background

Do/did you study law? (this is not an exclusion criterion)

If yes, in which country:

Degree(s) obtained (please also name the subject):

Degree currently pursued (if applicable):

Current institution (e.g. university/employer):

4. Time preferences

Please note: for voluntary student internships without scholarships, the maximum duration is three months.

Preferred start date:

Latest possible start date:

Preferred length of your stay (minimum 10 weeks):

Full-time (40 hrs/week): Yes/No

Part-time (minimum 24 hrs/week): Yes/No

5. Thematic program

You can choose one of ECCHR's thematic programs you would like to work in.

Business and Human Rights/Corporate Exploitation

Institute for Legal Intervention

International Crimes and Accountability/Grave Crimes

Migration/Border Justice

Relevant experience in the program area

(max. 500 characters)

6. Language skills

	Native	Fluent	Intermediate	Basic
English				
German				
Spanish				
Other				
Other				

7. References

Please name two persons who are familiar with your work

Name:

Institution/Affiliation:

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Name:

Institution/Affiliation:

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail:

8. Motivation letter for the Legal Training Program

(max. 2.000 characters)

9. Analysis

*Please give a critical comment on the potentials and limitations of strategic litigation, analyzing one of ECCHR's cases in the **first** program area you are applying for as it is presented on our website.*

Applicants to the Institute for Legal Intervention can comment on any case pursued by ECCHR and give a critical comment from a decolonial/gender/intersectional/social class perspective

(max. 2.000 characters)

10. How did you find out about ECCHR's Critical Legal Training?

(max. 2.000 characters)

Please upload your CV (pdf, Word, or JPG)