

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

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 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 note that this is only possible if you are able to obtain funding via a recognized scholarship/fellowship program. 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 (you should be above Bachelor's level, 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). Open calls for this internship are published on the [ECCHR website](#) and the application process is not managed via the Critical Legal Training team.

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 + Climate Justice:](#) 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: Good knowledge of European and public international 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 earliest and latest possible start date in the application form. Please always check our website to know about the vacancies of the program team you are applying for. The earliest possible starting dates for each team are updated regularly.

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*.

Is remote participation possible?

No, the Critical Legal Training requires being present in Berlin and coming to office regularly. Working and learning alongside our colleagues, engaging in discussion rounds and participating in the curriculum lives from in-person interaction. Work at ECCHR in general is organized in that way.

However, working from home on some days is possible and can be discussed with your supervisors.

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 inform us about these difficulties and send your complete application incl. CV in one PDF document to: application@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 six to 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 e-mail.

If you need to hear back from us earlier, e. g. because of the deadline of a fellowship program you are applying for, please send an e-mail to application@ecchr.eu after having submitted your online application. According to the involved colleagues' capacities, we will try to get back to you earlier. Please respect that this is an exception and we can only do this for very few people.

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](#) and updated regularly.

What funding or scholarships are available?

Participation in the Critical Legal Training is not paid.

We strongly encourage applications with external funding/scholarships. 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](#), [Mercator Kolleg](#), [EZ-Traineeprogramm of GIZ](#)

Some CLT participants come with the support of their university's own fellowship program.

The following platforms provide information on scholarship opportunities:

[Academia](#)

[Arbeiterkind](#)

[Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst \(DAAD\)](#)

Possibility of obtaining funding for research projects:

ECCHR is recognised as a research institution which is helpful for hosting researchers. If you are doing the traineeship with a strong focus on research, maybe even while you are doing a PhD, this might open up more possibilities for you to apply for fellowship programs, e. g. via DAAD (use their scholarship finder linked above). You may apply to the CLT in connection with a research fellowship, but this is to be discussed with your future supervisor after your successful application.

Funding via Erasmus+:

Erasmus+ is one of the easiest options to get funding for a traineeship. You have to be enrolled at a European University (not in Germany) to apply for the stipend. Erasmus+ is also available for recent graduates, but you have to apply while you are still enrolled. Please check with the international office of your university.

Universities also frequently circulate or even offer fellowship opportunities (both for internships and research stays). Check with the career service of your University.

Please note that in most cases, obtaining a scholarship is contingent on your successful application to our program, so if you have to plan several months in advance for the whole process.

In case you need to hear back from us earlier than 6 weeks after the next application deadline (as advertised on our website), please send an additional e-mail to application@ecchr.eu to inform us about your timeline! We will try to look at your application earlier, if our capacities allow us (please understand that this is not always possible, but we are doing our best).

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 monthly allowance.

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@ecchr.eu

Phone: +49 (0)30 40607157

APPLICATION FORM FOR THE CRITICAL LEGAL TRAINING

Application from:

1 / 12 - Personal Details

Name:

First Name:

Gender:

Current Residence:

Official citizenship:

Telephone:

Mail:

Please note: We ask for your current residence and official citizenship for administrative reasons. This information helps us to understand what kind of steps are necessary to realise your traineeship. They are not an exclusion criterion.

2 / 12 - ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK

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 (e.g. ERASMUS, or through your university, note: not the ECCHR scholarship)? YES/NO

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

If you are neither a student nor a “Referendar*in”, are you applying to the Critical Legal Training in connection with a fellowship program you are part of? YES/NO

If you are neither a student nor a “Referendar*in”, have you explored suitable options for fellowship programs to realise your participation in the Critical Legal Training? YES/NO

Are you currently eligible to work in Germany? YES/NO

3 / 12 - TIME PREFERENCES

Preferred start date

please check our website for earliest possible starting dates for each team.

Latest possible start date

please be aware that this might also depend on you being enrolled, your fellowship regulations, clerkship regulations etc.

Preferred length of your stay (minimum 10 weeks, ideally 3 months)

usual duration is 3 months

Please note: for voluntary student internships without scholarships, the maximum duration is three months. For scholarship holders, 4 months is the ideal length.

Full-time (40 hrs/week):

Part-time: YES/NO

Possible working time (minimum commitment: 24 hrs/week)

4 / 12 - THEMATIC PROGRAM

Preference

Please choose the program which fits to your interest, expertise and experience

Business and Human Rights + Climate Justice

Institute for Legal Intervention

Border Justice

International Crimes and Accountability

Experience in the program area

We value both professional as well as lived experience.

5 / 12 - EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Do/did you study law? (this is not an exclusion criterion) YES/NO

If yes, in which country?

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

Degree currently pursued (if applicable)

Current institution (e.g. university/employer)

6 / 12 - LANGUAGE SKILLS

Note: The working language at ECCHR is English. All other language skills are highly welcomed and supportive to your application, but not an exclusion criterion.

English

German

...

7 / 12 - MOTIVATION LETTER

Motivation letter for the Critical Legal Training.

Please explain why you want to join the Critical Legal Training
(*max. 500 characters*)

8 / 12 - CASE ANALYSIS

Please give a critical comment on the potentials and limitations of strategic litigation, analyzing one of ECCHR's cases in the 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*)

9 / 12 - REFERENCES

Please name two persons who are familiar with your work (this can be e.g. former colleagues, activist who you have worked with, supervisors from your studies etc.). There is no need to attach recommendation letters.

Note: Giving references is voluntary and not an exclusion criterion. However, under specific circumstances, we might ask you for references in a later step of the application process.

Reference 1

Name:

Institution/Affiliation:

Address:

Telephone:

Mail:

Reference 2

Name:

Institution/Affiliation:

Address:



Telephone:

Mail:

10 / 12 - HOW DID YOU FIND OUT?

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

11/12

Please attach your CV

Note: We welcome CV that include experiences beyond formal work and education, like self-organizing, community work, activism etc.