

# Senior Lawyer



Job Description and Person Specification  
March 2023

**Job title:** Senior Lawyer (two positions)

**Type:** Permanent full-time (part-time at 80% considered)

**Salary:** £50k-£55 FTE

**Reports to:** Head of Legal

**Application deadline:** 17 April 2023

**Interviews:** Week beginning 24 April 2023

**Ideal start date:** ASAP

We are looking for two dynamic lawyers who will use their knowledge, experience and passion within an influential international human rights organisation to bring change to the lives of LGBT people globally through strategic litigation and legislative reform.

You will be a talented and detail-oriented lawyer with substantial experience either as a litigator or in a legislative policy/drafting role, and with education or experience in human rights, as well as a strategic thinker and a problem solver.

One position will be focused on the MENA region, for which excellent Arabic language skills are necessary, as is experience of legal work in one or more jurisdictions in the region.

The other position requires a lawyer qualified and experienced in a common law jurisdiction.

## Organisation Overview

The Human Dignity Trust (the Trust) is a legal charity based in London, UK that supports local lawyers and human rights defenders to uphold human rights and constitutional law in countries where private, consensual same-sex sexual conduct is criminalised. 67 jurisdictions worldwide maintain these criminal laws. Legal provisions that criminalise lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people put them beyond the protection of the law, fostering a climate of fear, stigma and violence. These provisions also violate constitutional and international human rights law, including a person's right to dignity, equality, non-discrimination and privacy.

The Trust provides pro bono technical legal assistance at the request of, and in collaboration with, local human rights defenders, their lawyers and other partners who wish to use the courts to challenge the laws that criminalise LGBT people. Since our inception in 2011, we have worked with local partners in 21 countries in all regions of the world.

At the request of governments, the Trust also provides technical legal assistance for the reform of sexual offence laws that criminalise, discriminate against or fail to protect LGBT people and other vulnerable groups in Commonwealth countries, and to enact protective legislation. We also assist civil society groups to effectively engage in the legislative reform process. Laws criminalising LGBT people are often part of a wider set of out-dated sexual offences and related laws that discriminate against and do not adequately protect women, children, LGBT people and other vulnerable groups, such as laws relating to rape, sexual assault and ages of consent. Many of these are rooted in colonial-era laws that have long since been reformed in the UK.

## The role

We are looking for two dynamic lawyers who will use their knowledge, experience and passion within an influential international human rights organisation to bring change to the lives of LGBT people globally through strategic litigation and legislative reform. One will be an Arabic speaker, with knowledge of the legal system in one or more jurisdictions in the MENA region; the other a common law lawyer.

You will be a talented and detail-oriented lawyer with substantial experience either as a litigator or in a legislative policy/drafting capacity in a common law system, and with education or experience in human rights, as well as a strategic thinker and a problem solver. You will have the confidence, skills, tact and gravitas to be a persuasive and culturally sensitive advocate and an authoritative strategic advisor to a range of audiences on the substantive and procedural processes of litigation and legislative reform to eradicate discrimination in compliance with human rights standards.

You will be able to work in close collaboration with the HDT staff team and our world class pro bono legal teams, whilst maintaining a high degree of autonomy and professionalism in working directly with local lawyers, attorneys-general, government officials and local civil society partners around the world. You will be expected to travel several times per year to work with LGBT activists, lawyers, government representatives and other stakeholders around the world including to plan and deliver strategic litigation workshops and high-level legislative reform stakeholder engagements. You will manage consultants and team members based in the main region of focus for your work.

Regrettably, as a consequence of the nature of HDT's work, the Senior Lawyer(s) will be subjected to distressing critiques of LGBT people and the successful candidate will have to tolerate this with resilience, tact and professionalism.

## Job description

Under the direct supervision and guidance of the Head of Legal, the Senior Lawyer will carry out the following duties:

- Assisting in the development of compelling legal strategies to further HDT's aims including legislative reform and / or strategic litigation
- Guiding, overseeing and ensuring the technical integrity of legal and contextual research by consultants and pro bono lawyers
- Overseeing the development of strategic litigation and / or draft legislation, working with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society partners, plaintiffs, consultants, pro bono lawyers, local lawyers and government representatives
- Overseeing, reviewing and ensuring the technical integrity and persuasiveness of legal pleadings and submissions and / or draft legislation
- Developing and delivering compelling and technically sound content for strategic legal workshops for civil society and/or government partners
- Assisting other HDT leads (in particular the Head of Strategic Communications and the Head of Research and Advocacy) to develop and deliver communications and advocacy strategies to support litigation and / or legislative reform work
- Leading on procurement, contracting and management of consultants (including regional team members), with the administrative support of other HDT staff
- Ensuring that programme deadlines are met and consistently excellent outputs are delivered, and contributing to and implementing any necessary programme course corrections
- Contributing to activity and financial reporting, internally and externally
- Representing HDT at meetings, conferences, workshops and other international events
- Any other tasks as reasonably required by the Head of Legal

## Person specification

### Essential skills and experience

- Substantial experience working as a litigator or in a legislative policy/drafting capacity (one within the MENA region; one in one or more common law jurisdictions)
- Education or experience in the fields of human rights and/or public international law
- Very high attention to detail and ability to critically assess and edit legal documents and submissions
- Fluency in English with excellent writing, editorial, and oral advocacy skills
- (For one position only) Fluency in Arabic with excellent writing, editorial, and oral advocacy skills

- Ability to communicate effectively, persuasively and sensitively with senior figures in politics and the legal professions
- Ability to communicate complex legal issues to a non-expert audience
- Ability to work well in a diverse multi-cultural environment and with sensitivity to local cultures and contexts
- Ability to manage effectively multiple workstreams in a fast-paced environment
- Pleasant, diplomatic manner and disposition in interacting with colleagues at all levels, a diverse range of local partners and the general public
- Integrity, professional discretion and ability to handle confidential matters
- Strong commitment to equality and human rights and to the mandate of HDT

### Desirable skills and experience

- Experience in legislative reform and / or strategic human rights litigation
- Experience in managing multi-country legal and human rights programmes
- Experience working in any of the geographic regions in which HDT works
- Experience of working in different legal systems
- Knowledge and experience of the global LGBT human rights movement and developments
- Additional languages – especially French
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### Qualifications

- Law degree
- Advanced degree in human rights law or equivalent experience
- Admitted to legal practice (not necessarily in the United Kingdom)

## Application process

Closing date for applications: 17 April 2023

Interviews and tests to be held: week beginning 24 April 2023

To apply please send a CV of no more than three pages along with a covering letter of no more than two pages, using the person specification as a guide, explaining why you are an ideal candidate for this role to: [administrator@humandignitytrust.org](mailto:administrator@humandignitytrust.org).

If you meet the essential criteria, have a disability and would prefer to apply in a different format or would like us to make reasonable adjustments to enable you to apply, attend any interview and complete any tests, please let us know.

Please note that due to the volume of applications we receive we are only able to contact those candidates who are shortlisted for an interview. Please only apply if you meet the essential criteria.

The successful applicant only will be also asked to undertake a basic DBS check.

## Equal Opportunities

The Human Dignity Trust is an equal opportunity employer and we are committed to diversity and inclusion. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons. Our aim is to create a safe and secure working environment where a commitment to diversity, opportunity, quality and excellence is part of our guiding values.

Our employees and any job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability (including HIV status), gender identity and expression, intersex status, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We recognise that everyone is different and value the diversity of the people who work for us. We are committed to maintaining and building an inclusive culture in our workplace. To help us achieve this, we ask applicants to complete our [diversity monitoring form](#).