

## **CBF Justice Entrepreneurs Project Information for Potential Participants**

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Are you a lawyer interested in obtaining the skills and resources necessary to build an innovative and successful law practice targeting the middle market? Are you interested in making a positive impact on your community as a social entrepreneur? Do you value autonomy and wellbeing? If yes, then the CBF Justice Entrepreneurs Project (JEP) might be a good fit for you. The JEP is an incubator program empowering lawyers to lead socially conscious law firms and innovative businesses that offer valuable, cost-effective legal services to the underserved middle market. We believe in the power of entrepreneurial lawyers to make a difference as practitioners in the quest to ensure access to justice for all. The JEP is currently seeking applications for its next class of participants who will begin the program in January of 2023. Additional information about the JEP, including the JEP's mission and goals, is available at [www.chicagobarfoundation.org/jep](http://www.chicagobarfoundation.org/jep).

### **About JEP Participants**

#### **JEP is seeking lawyers who are:**

- Seeking autonomy and are enthusiastic about the prospect of becoming a social entrepreneur
- Dedicated to establishing a long-term practice that serves the legal needs of people of all incomes, including the middle market
- Committed to providing access to justice and using the practice of law to enrich the lives of legal consumers and build better communities
- Excited to use set fee structures (e.g., fixed fees by task/phase/case, subscription fees, fee shifting, etc.) in the delivery of legal services to provide price transparency and accessibility to legal consumers
- Interested in using technology and innovation to find new ways of providing cost-effective legal services
- Excited to explore new ideas about problem-solving and the practice of law by using a collaborative approach with other program lawyers, leaders in the legal profession, community partners, and clients

#### **Participants must:**

- Have an entrepreneurial spirit and, preferably, a track record of entrepreneurial, innovative, or creative activity
- Have a demonstrated commitment to public service and access to justice
- Able to learn and apply new skills in high-need areas of law and inspire confidence in clients and the legal community
- Have work experience indicating an aptitude for successfully operating your own business
- Be creative, flexible, and adaptable to changing circumstances
- Be a member of the Illinois bar in good standing at the start of the program (those who have taken the IL bar exam and are awaiting exam results may apply; acceptance into the program will be conditioned on passing the bar exam and being admitted to practice)
- Commit to 18 months of active participation in the JEP, and plan to continue practicing after participation
- Have a plan and resources that provide financial stability as you develop your client base and firm

#### **Those chosen to participate in the program will receive:**

- Top-notch training on substance, skills, and law practice management
- Expert coaching and assistance on business issues including business development

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- Mentoring from experienced and respected practitioners, including JEP alumni
- A structured pro-bono or paid program providing hands-on legal experience and a better understanding of the legal aid community and the legal service delivery system in Chicagoland
- Shared office space in a collaborative environment that fosters innovation and peer mentoring
- Practice resources including law practice management technology and legal research tools
- Access to a variety of helpful networks through the CBA, CBF, and other partners
- Access to referrals coming through the JEP referral platform to help you build your client base
- The ability to collaborate with peers and other successful practitioners

### About the JEP Program

Participants in the JEP develop independent practices (including providing their own malpractice insurance) while receiving training, mentoring, and other support on business and legal issues as well as space and other infrastructure as they get started. During the first six months of the program, participants attend a two-week boot camp and weekly trainings thereafter on how to launch a law firm. They will also begin handling cases and start their structured pro bono or paid program with a partner legal aid organization or law firm. This component of the program provides hands-on legal experience and a better understanding of the legal aid community and the legal service delivery system in Chicago. The time commitment and program structure varies and will range between 180 and 416 total hours depending on the participant's practice experience and situation at the start of the program. During the last twelve months of the program, participants develop fuller caseloads, continue to receive training, mentoring, and coaching as they prepare to move their practices out of the JEP upon graduation, and pay a participation fee of \$300 per month.

### Application Process

Information sessions to learn more about the program will be held on October 17, 2022, 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. CST (virtual) and October 25, 2022, 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. CST (hybrid). You can register for an info session at [www.chicagobarfoundation.org/jep/apply-to-the-jep/](http://www.chicagobarfoundation.org/jep/apply-to-the-jep/). You can apply for the program by using [this google form](#). Applications consist of (1) a resume, (2) a law school transcript, (3) a statement of interest of no more than four pages describing (a) your vision for your life and how your business will help you achieve your life vision and goals, (b) your vision for your practice (including practice areas and target markets) and your participation in the JEP, and (c) a circumstance when you have demonstrated entrepreneurial initiative or an experience that demonstrates your ability to be a successful social entrepreneurs, and (4) a [lean business plan](#). Please apply by no later than November 4, 2022, to be considered for the next JEP class. Two rounds of interviews will be held between mid-November and early December. Selections will be made at least three weeks prior to the January 9, 2023, start date.

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Participation in the JEP creates an immediate positive impact on the community through participants' pro bono work and provision of affordable legal services. The JEP ultimately hopes to create long-term community impact by incubating law practices that will operate over the long-term. If your ultimate goal is job placement rather than creating your own law practice, please do not pursue participation in the JEP.