

## DIGITAL FELLOWSHIP 2024

The Centre for Communication Governance at National Law University, Delhi (CCG), is calling for applications for the *DIGITAL (Digital Rights and Inclusive Technology for All) Fellowship*, to be offered to successful candidates for a period of 8 to 10 months. The Fellows will be hosted by a civil society organisation or litigation chambers (host organisations) to provide them with exposure to litigation research in digital rights and other areas. They will also develop legal and policy research under the guidance of the CCG. Over the course of the Fellowship, the host organisations will work on a range of cases across digital rights and other litigation subject areas. The Fellowship aims to create an enabling environment to provide Fellows with litigation skills and exposure across a range of subject areas.

### About the Fellowship

With increasing internet penetration and the rapid increase of internet users in the country, digital rights have become a core focus within the ambit of the protection of fundamental rights. In the last few years, there have been several important judicial pronouncements stemming from digital rights litigation, whether it was the landmark *Puttaswamy I* judgement upholding the fundamental right to privacy in the Indian Constitution, or the more recent *Anuradha Bhasin* judgement, which clarified that the right to freedom of expression online was a fundamental right. However, several vital questions relating to freedom of expression and privacy in the digital age are yet to be clarified by the courts. For instance, India has recently passed laws on data protection and telecommunications, and is currently drafting legislation that will overhaul internet regulation and bring about a paradigm shift in internet law. Courts will play a key role in interpreting provisions in these laws in the coming years.

Litigation on these issues will define India's digital rights landscape for at least the next decade, if not longer. Moreover, as digital technologies permeate ever-increasing avenues of our lives, litigation in general will need to grapple more frequently with the intersection of technology and society. However, digital rights litigation in India is currently facing significant challenges, including constraints in terms of research capacity and domain expertise.

To address these issues, CCG is excited to announce the third edition of the DIGITAL Fellowship in 2024.

The Fellowship has the following objectives:

- To support the development of digital rights and related subjects by providing high-quality legal research support to lawyers.
- To engage in and produce legal and policy research around the theme of digital rights.

- To build an inclusive and mutually supportive digital rights and technology policy community in India with a long-term vision for supporting the development of law and policy in this domain.

## **The Fellowship Programme**

The DIGITAL Fellowship 2024 is a 8 to 10 month full-time Fellowship that will be awarded by a Selection Committee. The Fellows will be placed either in civil society organisations undertaking litigation around digital rights or litigation chambers that are involved in litigation across subject areas, including digital rights.

CCG has a list of potential organisations and litigation chambers that the Fellows can be placed with. However, applicants are welcome to suggest organisations or litigation chambers they would be interested in working with in their application form. The final discretion on the placement of the Fellows with a host organisation remains with CCG.

The Fellowship will commence in April 2024. A monthly, non-negotiable stipend of INR 50,000 will be provided to each Fellow. We intend to offer the Fellowship to a maximum of five full-time Fellows for this edition. In exceptional circumstances, CCG may choose to award part-time Fellowships to candidates depending on their application and profile.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the DIGITAL Fellows**

- *Litigation research, drafting, and briefing*

Fellows will be required to undertake extensive research to support the development of petitions and other filings at the host organisation, irrespective of whether the subject matter is related to digital rights or not. Fellows will also be involved in briefing the senior advocates/counsels who are leading arguments in courts in these cases.

- *Research and policy output*

The Fellows will be required to carry out high impact policy-centric research and write briefs, responses, blogs, articles, and other documents around digital rights.

- *Building a national network of digital rights stakeholders*

Through CCG, the Fellows will convene lawyers, technologists and civil society organisations working on digital rights issues to enable an exchange of ideas and facilitate learnings from each other.

## **Eligibility**

Applicants for the Fellowship must:

- Be born on or after January 1, 1989;

- Be registered with the Bar Council of India, or, have a provisional registration with a State Bar Council. **Please note that applicants with a provisional registration with a State Bar Council may be eligible to apply if their registration is valid until 31 May 2025.**
- Demonstrate a strong interest in and commitment to the development of digital rights and related subject areas; and
- Have excellent legal writing, drafting, and oral advocacy skills.

Preference will be given to applicants with a minimum of two years' experience in litigation.

### **Selection Process**

Interested applicants must submit the following:

A signed and completed DIGITAL Fellowship 2024 Application Form, available [here](#). The form has the following two essay questions, which applicants have to answer in a maximum of 5000 characters (including spaces):

- a. Discuss up to 3 cases you were directly involved with in your career, which in your opinion, have been impactful. Give details of the cases, including the judicial forum, outcome and impact, as well as your own role in achieving them. We encourage applicants to highlight their experience in fundamental rights/digital rights litigation. If you do not have experience in litigation, discuss up to 3 projects that you have worked on in areas relating to digital or fundamental rights. Provide details of the projects, their significance and outcomes, and the role you played in achieving them.
- b. If granted the Fellowship, please clearly articulate your goals, their alignment with the Fellowship's objectives, and how you would go about achieving them. Please also specify how the Fellowship fits in with your broader professional goals.

Applicants should note that they **cannot save their work on the application form** and return to it later, so they may find it advisable to prepare their essays beforehand. Candidates will have to submit the following information in the form-

- A copy of their Certificate of Practice issued by the Bar Council of India, or a Copy of the Enrolment or provisional certificate issued by their State Bar council which clearly lists the date of expiry;
- A two-page Curriculum Vitae (CV);
- A writing sample (published or unpublished article, essay, blog) between 1000-2000 words on a topic preferably related to the Fellowship.
- Names and contact details of two professional or academic referees who can be contacted for an oral or a short written reference (to be filled in the form).

Please combine the CV and writing samples in a single PDF file labelled as “[Your name] - DIGITAL Fellowship”. The PDF should be uploaded on the link provided in the application form.

Since we require applicants to upload their CV and writing sample, accessing the form requires a Google (Gmail) login. For applicants not having a Google (Gmail) account, we encourage them to create an account, following the simple and quick steps [here](#).

### **Deadline**

All applications must be submitted by **25 March 2024, 11:59 PM IST**. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

### **About CCG**

The Centre for Communication Governance is an academic research centre at the National Law University Delhi. The Centre aims to ensure that Indian legal education establishments engage more meaningfully with information technology law. It undertakes academic research, provides policy inputs at the domestic and international level, and builds the capacity of key stakeholders as part of its endeavour to embed good governance and constitutional principles in the information technology law and policy domain.

### **Note**

- National Law University Delhi is an equal opportunity employer.
- National Law University Delhi reserves the right to enhance the shortlisting criteria.
- National Law University Delhi reserves the right to conduct telephonic or video interviews.
- National Law University Delhi reserves the right not to fill these positions.
- The position shall be paid under the grants received by the Centre for Communication Governance at National Law University Delhi.