

Accepting Applications: 2026 CGRS Refugee Leadership Program Fellow (Paid)

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The Center for Gender & Refugee Studies (CGRS), based at the University of California College of the Law, San Francisco is excited to launch its second annual cohort of the Refugee Leadership Program to support the advocacy and leadership of individuals living in the United States who have personal experience of forced displacement. CGRS provides legal expertise, training, and resources to attorneys representing asylum seekers; litigates cases before the immigration courts, the BIA, and federal courts to protect individual refugees as well as the asylum system as a whole; and engages in domestic, regional and international policy and advocacy to advance the rights of people seeking asylum. For more information about CGRS, visit <http://cgrs.uclawsf.edu/>.

FELLOWSHIP DESCRIPTION

The CGRS Refugee Leadership Program offers hands-on experience advocating for refugee rights in the United States, as well as enriching professional development and networking opportunities alongside colleagues at a leading national organization. Through the fellowship, we aim to incorporate the expertise of individuals who have been forcibly displaced into our work, collaborating to foster mutual learning and strengthen our refugee rights advocacy initiatives. To learn more about the fellowship, visit <https://cgrs.uclawsf.edu/en/refugee-leadership-program>.

Fellows will contribute to CGRS's work through a combination of:

- **Organizational engagement:** Fellows will participate in CGRS's collaborative environment through involvement in team meetings, projects and initiatives aligned with their interests.
- **Leading a project:** Fellows will lead a project shaped by their interests and perspectives, contributing directly to CGRS's mission. Projects may take a variety of forms, including research, advocacy, educational resources, visual and other storytelling initiatives, community engagement projects, or other activities.
- **Professional development:** In collaboration with the fellows, CGRS will coordinate opportunities for professional development in the form of networking events, guest speakers, and workshops or other training that align with fellows' interests.

Building on the success of our inaugural cohort, we anticipate selecting two fellows for the 2026–2027 cohort. The program is coordinated by a staff member, who supports the fellows, and each fellow will be assigned one or more staff members as peer mentors.

Fellowship details:

- **Location:** Remote participation
- **Scope:** Nationwide (for individuals currently living in the United States)
- **Duration of the fellowship:** 7 months (October 2026 – mid-June 2027)
- **Time commitment:** 20 hrs/month (5 hrs/week)
- **Compensation:** Fellows will receive a \$6,000 stipend disbursed in three installments. Each fellow will also be allocated \$500 for professional development opportunities.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Ideal candidates will have personally experienced forced displacement across borders. This includes, but is not limited to, those displaced due to persecution, torture, armed conflict, and/or the effects of climate change and environmental disasters.
- Applicants must currently live in the United States, and be authorized to work in the United States.
- Strong preference for candidates who have a demonstrated experience with or commitment to at least one of CGRS's core focus areas:
 - Refugee and immigrant rights
 - Legal protections for survivors of gender-based violence
 - Advocacy related to climate-induced displacement
 - Pro se support (efforts to empower and defend the rights of asylum seekers forced to represent themselves in legal proceedings without an attorney)
- Other related experiences and interests that align with CGRS' mission to defend the human rights of people seeking safety in the United States will also be considered.
- Candidates must be comfortable working in English to ensure effective collaboration and communication, including reading, writing, and speaking skills.
- The fellowship requires availability of 20 hours per month and flexibility to attend various meetings during West Coast business hours (approximately 6 hours out of total 20). Outside of meetings, fellows have the flexibility to work on their projects whenever it fits their schedule.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applicants are encouraged [to submit the application form](#) by August 30, 2026. If you have any questions, please contact cgrshires@uclawsf.edu. Please add in the subject line "Refugee Leadership Program". Only those who are selected to move forward to the interview stage will be contacted and asked to interview.

No phone calls please.

CGRS is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to inclusive hiring and work culture. We strongly encourage applications from people of color, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, formerly incarcerated individuals, individuals with disabilities, and members of marginalized communities.

Federal law requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities. Please reach out if you require a reasonable accommodation to apply for a job.

Examples of reasonable accommodation include making a change to the application process, providing documents in an alternate format, using a sign language interpreter, or using specialized equipment.