Instructions for Applicants

Sir Kenneth Keith Award for the International Court of Justice Judicial Fellowship Programme

About the Programme

Thanks to a generous donation from the family of the late Sir Kenneth Keith, an award has been established in Sir Kenneth's memory to support a New Zealand law graduate nominated by Te Kauhanganui Tātai Ture–Faculty of Law at Te Herenga Waka–Victoria University of Wellington if that candidate is then selected to undertake a Judicial Fellowship at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague. The available award is €30,000 for the ten-month period of the Fellowship.

The Award is named in honour of Sir Kenneth as former Dean of the Faculty of Law, Judge of the New Zealand Court of Appeal and Supreme Court and, amongst many other achievements, Judge of the ICJ from 2006 to 2015. He was the first New Zealander to be elected to the Court. As a judge, he contributed to the work of the ICJ, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, in contentious cases between States and advisory opinions.

Judicial Fellows are early career, highly qualified lawyers who work full-time under the supervision of a Member of the Court, alongside the Member's primary legal assistant. Fellows typically conduct research and draft memorandums on questions of law or fact relating to cases pending before the Court, attend hearings and sittings, and undertake other assigned duties.

Before applying

Read these instructions together with current ICJ Judicial Fellowship Programme information.

Important	The International Court of Justice does not accept applications directly from individuals. Applications must be submitted through a nominating university. The Award advisory panel may recommend a candidate for the Award in a given year, if a suitable candidate is identified. The Dean of the Faculty will, on the advice of the panel, then nominate that candidate to the ICJ. Receipt of the award itself is contingent upon selection as a Judicial Fellow by the ICJ and/or individual Judges of that Court. There is no guarantee in any given year that a candidate will be nominated by Victoria University of Wellington Faculty of Law or that the ICJ will select that candidate.
Relevant dates	Applications for the Award must be made by the advertised submission date. If recommended by the advisory panel, nomination of a candidate by the university to the ICJ is usually due in early February, with the final outcome from the ICJ expected in April. The ICJ Judicial Fellows Programme runs for approximately ten months from September to June of that year. Fellowships are a full-time position for that time.

Eligibility

Applicants for the Award must meet the eligibility requirements set by both the International Court of Justice and Victoria University of Wellington's Faculty of Law.

ICJ eligibility requirements

Applicants must first meet the eligibility criteria set by the International Court of Justice for its Judicial Fellowship Programme, available on the ICJ website. Those criteria include:

- Candidates should be 31 years old or younger at the start of their fellowship. This requirement may be waived only in special circumstances.
- Candidates must demonstrate excellent results in their legal studies, and an interest in public international law through their studies, publications and/or work experience.
- Candidates must have an excellent command, both written and orally, of at least one of the two official languages of the Court (English and French); a working knowledge of the other language is considered an asset.

Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington Faculty of Law eligibility requirements for the Award

In addition to the Court's requirements, Faculty expectations are as follows:

- Applications are open to law graduates (any level of study) from New Zealand universities, who are New Zealand citizens or residents.
- Candidates need to demonstrate an excellent academic record and clear expertise in international law. The Court does not impose any formal grade requirements for selection. However, as the ICJ's programme is extremely competitive, it would generally be expected that an applicant holds at least an LLM (which does not need to be from a New Zealand university if the applicant holds an earlier New Zealand law degree).
- Preference will be given to candidates with a current or past affiliation with Te Herenga Waka–Victoria University of Wellington (for example, through study, research, or teaching).
- Candidates must be available for the full duration of the fellowship/internship, taking account of study or any other commitments.
- Candidates who are eligible for support for the ICJ Judicial Fellowship from another institution must choose between that institution and this Award.
- Candidates should also have the aptitude to thrive while living overseas in another culture. As French and English are the working languages of the Court, French language skills, or a willingness to study French before starting, are a possible advantage.
- Successful applicants will be subject to the usual codes of conduct associated with scholarships and fellowships.
- Recipients may be required to make a presentation to the Faculty of Law (and invited guests) about their experience. Information about the recipient, including name, photo and relevant details about their experience may be included in University digital, print, or media communications.

Eligibility questions

If you are unsure whether you meet an eligibility requirement, contact the programme administrator via icj-programme@vuw.ac.nz in sufficient time before the closing date and/or explain the circumstances in your application. Any age exception is a matter for the ICJ.

Completing Your Application

Application components

1. Submit the following documents by email, Attention: Dean, Faculty of Law, to icj-programme@vuw.ac.nz before the deadline. It would be appreciated if documents could be compiled into a single file where possible.
    - Completed ICJ Personal History Form (Word document)
    - Completed ICJ Summary Table (Word document)
    - Curriculum Vitae
    - Official transcript(s) (tertiary study only)
    - A writing sample of not less than 10 and no more than 15 pages.

    A cover letter is not required as the ICJ Personal History Form includes a motivation statement. However, if there is additional information to be conveyed, applicants may include an additional brief statement in their email sending the above documents. In particular, if you have applied/intend to apply to a similar programme related to the ICJ Judicial Fellows Programme via another university for the same year, please include this in your cover email.

2. Arrange for two letters of reference, preferably from individuals who can attest to your abilities and interest in the field of international law, and/or abilities as a judge's clerk, to be submitted directly by the referee by email, in confidence, Attention: Dean, Faculty of Law, to icj-programme@vuw.ac.nz before the deadline.

Writing sample

Your writing sample should demonstrate strong research, analysis and legal writing. It must be your own work, no more than 15 pages long (bibliography included). The sample can, for example, be something written and submitted as part of the candidate's academic coursework, as a publication, or as a note in a professional setting. Where possible, choose work relevant to public international law. Excerpts from a longer paper, or multiple short samples, may also be submitted if they meet the page limit. The writing sample should adhere to generally accepted formatting.

Academic Transcripts

These can be for tertiary-level study only. They must be the official transcripts issued by the university but they do not need to be certified copies. Transcripts in languages other than English or French should preferably be certified by the university and translated into English.

Referees

A referee should be someone who currently engages with you in an academic or professional capacity or has done so in the past. Ideally, they can comment on your abilities, preferably in public international law, and professional suitability.

Contact your referees well in advance of submitting your application. It is your responsibility to ensure that referees have the correct deadline and submission instructions. References must be submitted directly by the referee. References forwarded by the applicant will not be accepted.

Assessment and Selection

Applications will be assessed against the criteria and Faculty expectations by the Award advisory panel chaired by the Dean, Faculty of Law. The panel may interview shortlisted applicants. The panel's decision on nomination is final and the panel may make no nomination in a given year. Nomination by the Faculty does not guarantee selection by the ICJ.

Process

1. Faculty application	Submit the completed application with all required supporting documents by the advertised closing date.
2. Faculty assessment	The Award advisory panel reviews eligible applications shortlisted by the Faculty and may interview shortlisted applicants.
3. Nomination to ICJ	The selected nominee completes any additional ICJ documentation with support from the Faculty.
4. ICJ selection	The ICJ considers nominations submitted by universities and makes the final selection decision.
5. Award arrangements	If a Victoria University of Wellington nominee is selected by the ICJ, the Faculty confirms the funding and administrative arrangements with the recipient.

Funding

Subject to the terms of the Award and available funding, a Faculty of Law-nominee selected by the ICJ will receive a fellowship of up to EUR 30,000 to contribute to living costs in The Hague for the September – June period.

Payment arrangements will be confirmed with the successful recipient. Applicants should not make financial or travel commitments in reliance on nomination alone.

Further information: In case of further questions, please contact icj-programme@vuw.ac.nz