

Special Counsel – General

Position description

Use your specialist litigation skills to fight for a fairer, healthier planet! We are looking for an experienced public interest litigator for a leadership role with a difference. This is your unique opportunity to use your legal skills to mitigate the extinction and climate crises and help achieve environmental justice for communities.

The Special Counsel will act as an in-house litigation specialist on climate, justice and environmental law cases across the organisation. You will work collaboratively with the Principal Lawyer and Senior Specialist Lawyers to develop and deliver high-impact litigation for a range of community, NGO and First Nations clients. You will provide supervision and mentoring to junior lawyers on cases, helping to skill them up for complex litigation. You will work closely with clients, barristers and partners to deliver incredible outcomes for environmental justice.

The role is an ongoing, full-time position to start immediately and reports to the Principal Lawyer.

Environmental Justice Australia is an equal opportunity employer. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, all genders, people from culturally and racially marginalised backgrounds, LGBTQI+ people and people with a disability are encouraged to apply.

We're committed to an accessible selection process. Please let us know if you'd like us to make adjustments to support your application process, e.g. requiring extra time, screen readers, providing accessible documents or sensory adjustments.

About us

Environmental Justice Australia is a leading public interest legal organisation. Our lawyers act on behalf of people and community organisations to safeguard health; protect magnificent forests, rivers and wildlife; and tackle the climate crisis.

We partner with communities and other social justice organisations because we are stronger together. Using innovative approaches, we find the best legal solutions to climate and environment issues. Our team works inside and outside the courtroom to make the system fair and just for all. We work on issues and in areas of Australia where we can have the most impact.



Values

Collaboration: We work in partnership with community and other organisations because we are in this together

Respect: We treat everyone with respect, and we value different perspectives as we know we can learn something from everyone

Ambition: We aim high and are at all times focused on achieving maximum impact for nature, climate and communities

Positivity: We maintain hope and a positive approach because we believe we can change the world

Justice: We are driven by our sense of justice – it's at the core of everything we do.

Responsibilities

- Develop and deliver complex litigation including scoping new litigation matters for clients, briefing barristers and experts, preparing evidence and instructing in Court.
- Build relationships with community and NGO clients and provide them with advice.
- Supervise lawyers on matters to which the Special Counsel is assigned.
- Support and mentor colleagues on their litigation matters as required.
- Work with communications and fundraising staff to ensure EJA's work is communicated effectively to multiple audiences, and represent EJA in meetings and the media, if required.
- Effectively use practice management and office management software.
- Contribute to the EJA team and the running of the organisation and office, uphold EJA's values and participate in all relevant aspects of EJA planning, review and reporting.

About You

- You are an experienced public interest litigator, from any sector.
- You build trusted, respectful relationships with a wide range of stakeholders.
- You find genuine satisfaction in mentoring and supervising lawyers and supporting their professional development.
- You're a strong communicator and enjoy cross-functional collaboration.
- You thrive in a small, collaborative team and are flexible, independent, and adaptive.

- You care about social and environmental justice and want to use your legal skills to make a difference.
- You demonstrate strong cultural competency and take a trauma-informed, client-centred approach to your work.
- You bring a strong track record in complex litigation.

Location

Melbourne, with the opportunity to work regularly (but not exclusively) from home. Other locations in Australia will be considered for an exceptional candidate.

Terms and conditions

- The position is full time and permanent. A 0.8 work week will be considered.
- EJA encourages flexible work arrangements and there is some scope for negotiation with respect to days and hours of work.
- Terms and conditions of employment are based on the SCHADS award with over-agreement salary and conditions depending on experience. Salary range for full-time work is \$135,000 to \$142,000 depending on experience, plus superannuation and leave loading.
- **Please note that salary sacrificing is not available, apart from superannuation.**

Benefits of working with EJA

We are proud to offer our staff a supportive workplace with excellent conditions, including:

- Supportive work environment and hybrid work opportunities.
- Five weeks of annual leave a year plus an additional three days off (pro rata) over the year end period plus a range of above-award leave including cultural leave and gender affirmation leave.
- 17.5% annual leave loading.
- Above-award salaries.
- 16 weeks' parental leave (pro rata).
- Ongoing professional development opportunities.
- Access to our Employee Assistance Program and wellbeing support.

- The Melbourne office has secure bike parking and is close to public transport as well as countless cafes, restaurants and shops and the Queen Victoria Market.

How to apply

Send us a brief application comprising:

1. Your resume; and
2. A statement of no more than 3 pages detailing why you want to work with us and addressing the selection criteria outlined above. Note that if you do not address the selection criteria your application cannot be considered.

Email your application to recruitment@envirojustice.org.au

Enquiries: Narissa Diwan, People and Culture Adviser, 03-8341-3106.

Applications close Sunday 1 February 2026 at 11:59pm (AEST)