

# INVISIBLE INSTITUTE

Invisible Institute, a Pulitzer Prize-winning public accountability journalism nonprofit based in Chicago, seeks applicants for a remote legal externship focused on access to public records about law enforcement officers, police misconduct, and related issues.

Invisible Institute was founded after the Illinois Appellate Court decision in *Kalven v. Chicago*, made in a case brought by our founder Jamie Kalven, established a right to public access of records about investigations into allegations of misconduct in Illinois. Utilizing data obtained under that decision, we developed the public data tool known as the Civic Police Data Project ([cpdp.co](http://cpdp.co)).

Since then, we have engaged in further strategic public records litigation with journalistic and legal partners across the country — most notably in several additional lawsuits against the city of Chicago, and through our work on the National Police Index ([national.cdpd.co](http://national.cdpd.co)), a project seeking to obtain and publish data on certified police officers in each U.S. state and other relevant jurisdiction.

Externs can be from any accredited law school, and all work will be conducted remotely\*. Externs will be supervised by Chaclyn Hunt, legal director of Invisible Institute, and Sam Stecklow, an investigative journalist and FOIA fellow with Invisible Institute working on public access projects, including CPDP and the NPI.

Externs can expect to split their time between:

- Assisting with projects working to document the varying levels of access to police records across the U.S., including legal research, interviews with local practitioners, and drafting for either a public or legal/academic readership
- Assisting with public records issues or legal research needed for journalistic investigations at Invisible Institute or partner organizations
- Assisting with internal tracking and discussions of ongoing and planned strategic public records litigation\* (this will not likely include working directly on litigation)

Successful externs in this position will:

- Work collaboratively in a remote setting

- Write for both a legal and a public audience
- Ask for help when needed
- Have a skill for research
- Have a passion for access to public information

Backgrounds in journalism, transparency research, civil rights law, or public administration can be useful, but are by no means required.

Submit the following to [this form](#):

- A résumé
- Brief description of the type of externship you are available for. For example, is it a three month part-time position related to a specific course? Is it a six month independently funded fellowship? We are flexible.
- One writing sample with legal analysis, no longer than five pages. (You are strongly encouraged to submit a writing sample that reflects solely your own work. If you are unable to do so, please briefly explain in a cover page the contributions of others to the writing.)

Invisible Institute strongly encourages traditional and nontraditional law students of all backgrounds and lived experiences to apply.

The externship will run during the Fall 2026 semester. Invisible Institute is **not** seeking Summer legal externs. Applications will be open through April 17 and will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Externs are expected to receive course credit from their schools, and to provide and ensure completion of all necessary paperwork for their individual school. Externs whose schools do not provide for credit for outside externships are not required to show they are receiving credit. All externs are encouraged to seek funding if appropriate or available. Invisible Institute cannot provide any stipend at this time.

Reach out to [sam@invisibleinstitute.com](mailto:sam@invisibleinstitute.com) with questions.

\* Externs from Chicago law schools or who are otherwise based in the Chicago area will have the option to work from or attend meetings at our office in Woodlawn, but this will never be required