Job Announcement

Immigrant Defense Project

Surveillance & Tech Research and Policy Associate

Organization Background

The Immigrant Defense Project (IDP) is a New York based nonprofit that was founded over twenty years ago to address the crisis of escalating criminalization and mass deportation. IDP's work attacks the injustices at the intersection of the racially-biased criminal and immigration systems via a multi-pronged strategy. We strengthen immigrant defense through training and expert advice, challenge unfair laws through impact litigation, shape just policies through advocacy, work alongside communities and advocates through alliance building and providing resources, and challenging criminalizing narratives about immigrants through strategic communications.

IDP's Surveillance, Tech & Immigration Policing project aims to build the capacity to organize for a just digital future and economy. Governments are increasingly joining forces with technology corporations to develop tools to identify, track, and surveil people within and across national borders. Surveillance to track and police people is also converging with urban "Smart Cities" initiatives, where massive amounts of data are collected and analyzed from public transactions and interactions, such as transit systems, public Wi-Fi, and cashless payments. Not only are tech corporations expanding their role in local governance by providing critical services to automate and centralize a wide range of government services, these corporations are increasingly defining our collective future and undermining democratic governance and struggles for justice and equality.

Position Summary:

The Immigrant Defense Project (IDP) is hiring a Research and Policy Associate to work as part of the Surveillance, Tech & Immigration Policing project. We are seeking an experienced and innovative associate who thrives in a collaborative organization and can skillfully handle diverse approaches to a broad range of policy and research initiatives related to technology, surveillance, biometrics, and data protection at the intersection of domestic policing and immigration policing. This position requires initiative, vision, and ability to develop and implement short and long-term policy strategies utilizing a broad range of political and legal tactics. This Associate will primarily conduct research, writing, and resource development, and policy advocacy as needed, as part of the IDP Project on Surveillance, Tech, and Immigration Policing. This Associate will work in close collaboration with the Deputy Director and IDP's NYC and NYS policy teams. The Associate will be responsible for researching, developing, and implementing a range of campaign and policy strategies to expand and protect the rights of immigrant New Yorkers, including technical research and writing, support for IDP's community defense initiatives, advocacy and informational materials, and coalition building. We are particularly interested in candidates

who, through lived or professional experience, brings a lens of social, economic and racial justice to the work.

The core responsibilities of the Research and Policy Associate include:

- Conducting research, analysis, and writing on surveillance technologies and policing practices (domestic and immigration) that disproportionately harm immigrants and other targeted communities. This includes developing advocacy and communications materials, such as policy reports, legislative briefers, communications materials, and public education materials, and information requests under freedom of information laws;
- Creating resources for community members, advocates and elected officials/decisionmakers that translate complex tech and surveillance issues into a digestible and actionable language/format (e.g. pamphlets and infographics);
- Monitoring and supporting policy initiatives, primarily in NYC and NYS, related to protecting rights in the face of the growing threats associated with surveillance, data and biometrics collection, data sharing between government agencies and with third parties, and policing;
- Devising and supporting short- and long-term campaigns to protect and expand rights related to immigrant policing by focusing on surveillance issues through a combination of advocacy, public education, and organizing. This will include working with IDP's legal and policy staff to develop advocacy tactics, educating government officials, and developing public education resources and strategic communications materials.
- Building and maintaining relationships with technology experts, public interest groups, government officials, community stakeholders, and academics to engage them in our work and implement collaborative projects;
- Representing IDP and cultivating partnerships and alliances, along with the IDP advocacy team, with community-based organizations and other advocates at the intersection of surveillance, technology, and the criminal and immigration systems

For candidates with four or more years of experience and a proven track record of leadership in relevant research, advocacy, and strategy development. Depending on experience, we will consider adjusting to a more senior position.

QUALIFICATIONS

4+ years of experience in research and writing on technology and surveillance issues—for example, surveillance technologies such as biometrics, automated decision making systems, digital identification, or Smart Cities.

2+ years of legal or policy analysis and/or advocacy in areas at the intersection of technology, surveillance, policing, privacy and civil rights.

Excellent research and analytical skills are a must, as is a fluency with technological concepts and vocabulary. Familiarity with surveillance technologies, political landscape, and scholarship on these issues is required.

Familiarity and comfort engaging in technical and computer and social science scholarship/research, such as surveillance studies, science and technology studies, political economy of information, or American/cultural studies.

Strong communications skills—both written and oral—are necessary for this job's focus on external advocacy. The successful candidate will be able to effectively communicate complex legal and technical issues to a variety of audiences.

Ability to develop and implement strategic initiatives and manage multiple issues at once in a fast-paced environment. This position requires strong project and time management skills, including a high level of organization, attention to detail, and follow-through.

Demonstrated experience engaging in creative problem solving, strategic flexibility, and good judgment.

Ability to develop allies and work collaboratively and diplomatically. Experience working in coalition with community-based organizations and other advocates at the intersection of surveillance, technology, and the criminal and immigration systems a plus.

A strong commitment to diversity and a personal approach that values and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability and socioeconomic circumstances is a must. Demonstrated experience engaging and working with and/or on behalf of directly impacted communities is a plus.

Experience and ability to supervise and develop staff members.

Willingness to travel within New York State for meetings and conferences (after safe travel has been cleared).

B.A. or J.D. preferred but not required.

Compensation

> The salary range starts at $77,000, with salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. Excellent benefits, including medical, dental, and 401K.

To apply:

> Submit cover letter with salary requirements, resume, and three references to jobs@immdefense.org. Include "Tech Application" in the subject of email. Position open until filled, though applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible. No phone calls please. Candidates based in the New York area are preferred, but we will consider applications from people based elsewhere. Occasional travel to New York will be expected for applicants working remotely.
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> The Immigrant Defense Project is an Equal Opportunity Employer that actively recruits women, people of color, persons with disabilities, persons with diverse gender and sexual identities, immigrants, and formerly incarcerated persons.