



**NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY, DELHI  
SECTOR -14, DWARKA, NEW DELHI – 110078  
PROJECT 39A**

**August 26, 2022**

**Call for Applications for Research Assistants for Project 39A**

The National Law University, Delhi ('University') is seeking to engage six (6) full-time 'Research Assistant' for Project 39A, to work for a period of four (4) months on a research project examining the practical application of due process safeguards on arrest and remand, in Magistrate Courts in Delhi.

**About the Organisation:**

Project 39A draws inspiration from Article 39-A in the Indian Constitution on equal justice and opportunity in the legal system. We work on issues specific to the criminal justice system, and undertake litigation, research and outreach relating to forensics, torture, legal aid, forensic psychiatry and death penalty (for more information on Project 39A, visit [www.project39a.com](http://www.project39a.com)).

**About the Research Project:**

*Role of Magistrates in Ensuring Constitutional & Statutory Safeguards*

The project will focus on the possibilities of justice represented by custodial safeguards, which come into play the moment a person steps into police custody, and the limits therein. Rather than considering justice as the endpoint of a process of investigation, or after a person has been the subject of custodial violence, this study will examine the first point of interaction between the state and the citizen in custody. Since access to justice, especially in custody, is mediated by class, caste, religion, and gender (for instance), that will be a central framework of the study.

Article 22(2) of the Indian Constitution requires that the police produce arrested persons before the Magistrate within 24 hours of arrest. First production is the first time that the judiciary- the institution reflecting the rule of law and a check on the executive- must exercise their oversight powers to ensure constitutional and statutory protections to a person in custody. At this stage, the Magistrate is empowered to scrutinise the grounds and legality of arrest, assess the availability of quality legal representation, consider the safety of the accused in custody, and make a determination on bail or further detention. Through subsequent remand hearings, the Magistrate is also required to monitor the investigation and the entire duration spent by the accused in police custody. Thus, the Magistrate is empowered to play a crucial role in balancing the rights of an accused with the requirements of police investigation.

This study will involve observing court proceedings on first production and remand, over a period of 90 days, to qualitatively consider the manner in which Magistrates are able to realise due process safeguards and protect the rights and dignity of the accused in custody, particularly those belonging to socio-economically vulnerable groups.

**Responsibilities:**

- A. Conduct empirical research through observation of court proceedings in select Magistrate Courts in Delhi and interviews with relevant stakeholders, as per the project design. Research Assistants would be expected to attend daily court proceedings during the period of study.
- B. Contribute to collating and analysing findings from court observations and interviews.
- C. Contribute to writing of the report and/or other materials based on the findings of the project.
- D. Any other work that may be necessary to ensure the effective implementation and completion of the project within the proposed timelines.

**Qualifications:**

- A. A PhD or postgraduate degree in any of the relevant fields, including Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, or any other Social Sciences.
- B. Demonstrable experience of conducting independent ethnographic or empirical research, particularly on socio-legal issues.
- C. Knowledge and familiarity with issues related to the criminal justice system, courts, and criminal procedure. Prior work in Delhi courts would be an advantage.
- D. Prior engagement with perspectives on systemic discrimination (for instance, due to caste, class, religion, gender, sexuality) and its intersection with access to justice concerns.
- E. Ability to comprehend, converse, read and write Hindi, fluently.

**Compensation:** Remuneration will be commensurate with qualifications and experience, and will be approximately INR 50,000 per month. Project 39A will incur all travel related expenses separately. The duration of the contract currently will be four (4) months. The contract may be terminated before the completion of four (4) months or may be extended, as required

**Application Process:** Interested persons may submit their resumé and a statement of purpose, explaining their interest in working on this specific project and their relevant work experience. Applicants are requested to fill the form in the link <https://www.project39a.com/research-assistants-aug-2022> and attach the relevant documents.

**Deadline:** Applications must reach us no later than **midnight of September 11, 2022**. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

**Note:**

- 1. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted via email. If you do not hear from us within 2 weeks of the deadline, please assume that your application has not succeeded. Unfortunately, we cannot reply to individual queries about the status of applications.

2. National Law University, Delhi is an equal opportunity employer.
3. National Law University, Delhi reserves the right to not fill the position or vary the number of positions vacant for this call. Also, we shall be unable to cover the costs of attending interviews.
4. National Law University, Delhi reserves the right to conduct additional rounds of interviews or written tests.
5. The position shall be paid under the grants received by Project 39A, National Law University, Delhi.