

**THE SQUARE CIRCLE CLINIC
NALSAR UNIVERSITY OF LAW, HYDERABAD**

September 25, 2026

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS – ASSOCIATE (MITIGATION)

The NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad ('University'), through The Square Circle Clinic (TSCC), is seeking to engage, on a contractual basis, **three (3)** associates in the position of **Associate (Mitigation)** at its New Delhi office. The contract will be for one year initially and may be extended on an annual basis at the discretion of the University. The Associate will be responsible for working on cases being handled by The Square Circle Clinic, primarily concerning prisoners sentenced to death.

About The Square Circle Clinic:

In April 2025, the entire team from Project 39A transitioned from the National Law University, Delhi, to establish The Square Circle Clinic at NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad. This new criminal justice initiative continues our deep commitment to the constitutional ideal of equal access to justice. Building on our foundational work in pro bono criminal defense, forensics, death penalty litigation, mental health, and punishment, the Clinic will now expand its scope to include wrongful convictions, the criminalisation of poverty, and the role of science and technology in the criminal justice system (for more information, visit <https://thesquarecircleclinic.org>).

Role of Associate (Mitigation):

The law as settled by the Supreme Court of India in death penalty cases states that guilt determination and imposition of punishment are two distinct phases in a criminal proceeding. After a person is pronounced guilty, a separate and detailed hearing on punishment is required to be conducted in which the defence can lead evidence and present additional materials which are different from what was considered for the determination of guilt. The Associate (Mitigation) will be part of the defense team providing legal representation to death row prisoners. The mitigation associate will have to work closely with lawyers to collect and analyse detailed qualitative information towards developing a life history of the accused by meaningfully engaging with the accused, their family and acquaintances, as well as finding documents and records relating to the accused's childhood, social context, physical and mental health, etc. Such investigations require sustained contact to be maintained with the prisoner, their family and acquaintances in order to build a working relationship of trust. The life history information collected and analysed would be presented in the form of a mitigation investigation report to aid the courts in deciding an appropriate punishment.

Responsibilities:

- A. Devise effective strategies and communication tools in each case to 1) establish contact, 2) engage in rapport-building interactions, 3) obtain relevant information (anecdotal, biographic, documentary), and 4) undertake record collection exercises from prisoners, their families and other persons and authorities who may have information relevant for mitigation.
- B. Travel extensively throughout India, meet and communicate with prisoners, their family members, and other persons who may have oral and documentary information relevant for mitigation of the prisoners, using the tools and techniques for communication and obtaining information devised.

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- C. Effectively incorporate the information collected about the prisoner in their legal case to be presented before senior counsel, judicial forum, or as part of their mercy petition.
- D. Draft Mitigation Investigation Reports and other relevant documents to be presented before courts.
- E. Engage with mental health professionals and other allied experts in order to obtain their professional opinion about individual cases.
- F. Engage with academic works to develop frameworks of analysis for each case.
- G. Produce op-eds, blogs and academic writing on developments in the field and building on our work.
- H. Engage with and organise workshops and conferences for prison officials, judges, lawyers and others within the criminal justice system.
- I. Present the work of The Square Circle Clinic at various fora.
- J. Any other work that may be necessary to further the aims of The Square Circle Clinic.

Qualifications:

- A. Postgraduate with a degree in social work, psychology, criminology, development studies, economics, sociology, law or any allied discipline.
- B. Two (2) years of work experience in the respective field would be preferred.
- C. Any previous fieldwork involving an emphasis on ethnographic research, interviewing, investigative capacities and/or mental health will be considered an advantage.
- D. Substantial proficiency in reading/ speaking Hindi will be necessary. Proficiency in any of the following languages would be an advantage: Bhojpuri, Bengali, Punjabi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu.

Compensation: ₹65,000/- (Rupees Sixty Five Thousand Only), commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Application Process: Interested persons may send their resumé and a written assignment. The written assignment must not exceed 800 words. <https://forms.gle/rqxWD1nKxwuwMyit9>

The question to be answered in the written assignment is mentioned below.

- What is your strongest held belief? How did you come to hold it?

Deadline and Selection Process: Applications must reach us no later than **11:59 PM on October 25, 2026**, after which the applications will not be accepted. Shortlisted candidates will be required to be present at the New Delhi office for the selection process

Note:

- A. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted via email. If you do not hear from us within 4 weeks after the deadline, please assume that your application has not succeeded. Unfortunately, we cannot reply to individual queries about the status of applications.
- B. NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad is an equal opportunity employer, and TSCC ensures access to legal representation for prisoners regardless of the offence.
- C. NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad 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.
- D. NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad reserves the right to conduct additional rounds of interviews/ written tests/ simulation exercises.
- E. The position shall be paid under the grants received by TSCC, NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad.