

2017 Call for projects

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC LAW CLINIC

PRO-BONO LEGAL ADVICE FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES,
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, NGOs, SMEs



TradeLab

International rules on cross-border trade and investment are increasingly complex. There is the WTO, World Bank and UNCTAD, but also hundreds of bilateral investment treaties (BITs) and free trade arrangements ranging from GSP, EU EPAs and COMESA to ASEAN, CAFTA and TPP. Each has its own negotiation, implementation and dispute settlement system. Everyone is affected but few have the time and resources to fully engage.

Who we are

TradeLab aims to empower countries and smaller stakeholders to reap the full development benefits of global trade and investment rules. Through pro bono legal clinics and practica, TradeLab connects students and experienced legal professionals to public officials especially in developing countries, small and medium-sized enterprises and civil society to build lasting legal capacity. Through 'learning by doing' we want to train and promote the next generation of trade and investment lawyers. By providing information and support on negotiations, compliance and litigation, we strive to make WTO, preferential trade and bilateral investment treaties work for everyone.

How we can help

- > Research and analysis for treaty negotiations
- > Compliance assessment of domestic or foreign laws
- > Assessment of legal claims or defence strategies
- > Writing of party and third party submissions
- > Preparation of amicus curiae briefs
- > Legal and economic research on cutting edge trade or investment questions.

Students and supervisors can work in a variety of languages.

What are legal clinics

Legal clinics are composed of small groups of highly qualified and carefully selected students. Faculty and other professionals with longstanding experience in the field closely supervise the work. Clinics are win-win for all involved: beneficiaries get expert work done for free and build capacity; students learn by doing, obtain academic credits and expand their network; faculty and expert mentors share their knowledge on cutting-edge issues and are able to attract or hire top students with proven skills.

How it works

Clinic projects are selected on the basis of need, available resources and practical relevance. Two to four students are assigned to each project. Students are teamed up with expert mentors from law firms or other organizations and carefully prepped and supervised by Academic Supervisors and Teaching Assistants. Students benefit from skills and expert sessions, do detailed legal research and work on several drafts shared with supervisors, mentors and the beneficiary for comments and feedback. The Clinic culminates in a polished legal memorandum, brief, draft law or treaty text or other output tailored to the project's needs. Clinics deliver in three to four months. Work and output can be public or fully confidential, for example, when preparing legislative or treaty proposals or briefs in actual disputes.

How to submit your project

If you or your organization has a legal question or project or you simply want to learn more about the Clinic, please visit www.tradelab.org. All requests will be treated confidentially.

Examples of completed clinic projects

Established in 2008 at the Graduate Institute's Centre for Trade and Economic Integration, TradeLab legal clinics have completed 65 unique projects on international trade and investment law matters for a range of stakeholders including international and non-governmental organisations, Geneva-based missions, public institutions and SMEs.

Drafting of an amicus curiae brief for environmental NGOs in a WTO subsidies dispute

Does the WTO Subsidies Agreement prohibit support for renewable energy? Are GATT environmental exceptions applicable to the Subsidies Agreement?

Should Mexico join ICSID?

An assessment of the pros and cons of different arbitration fora, and how they play out for the specific case of Mexico.

Options for a WTO Member to retaliate after winning a WTO dispute

Can IP rights be suspended in retaliation? How to ensure equivalence between the violation and the retaliation? How to design an effective retaliation scheme in the copyright area?

SME land owner and possible expropriation rights

What redress options are available to a landowner whose land was expropriated by the government?

Other selected projects

- > Illicit trade and international economic law
- > WTO consistency of green automotive policies (confidential)
- > Counterclaims in investor-state dispute settlement
- > Trade & investment treaty implications of the UK leaving the EU
- > WTO consistency of a proposed Carbon Tax bill (confidential)
- > Assisting African nations in the reform of investment treaties



Qatar University is the national institution of higher education in Qatar. It provides high quality undergraduate and graduate programs that prepare competent graduates, destined to shape the future of Qatar. The university community has diverse and committed faculty who teach and conduct research, which addresses relevant local and regional challenges, advances knowledge, and contributes actively to the needs and aspirations of society.

Academic supervisors

- > Dr. Talal Abdulla Al-Emadi, Assistant Professor, College of Law
- > Dr. Jon Truby, Assistant Professor of Law & Policy, College of Law
- > Dr. Francis Botchway, Associate Dean (Research), College of Law

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TradeLab clinic network

- > The Graduate Institute, Geneva
- > Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, D.C.
- > University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law, Ottawa
- > Queen's University, Faculty of Law, Kingston
- > International Economic Law and Policy (IELPO), Barcelona
- > Trade Policy Training Centre in Africa (TRAPCA), Arusha
- > Jindal Global Law School, Haryana
- > Qatar University, Doha

Timetable

January – August	Submission of possible projects; initial discussions with beneficiaries to identify legal questions; selection of projects for the semester
September	Selection of students; composition of teams; meeting between student group and beneficiary; expert and other skill sessions
October – November	Research, completion of draft report and feedback from beneficiary, experts and supervisors
December	Delivery of written report; oral presentation and discussion of the results

Disclaimer

All projects prepared and published by TradeLab law clinics and practica are done on a pro bono basis by students for research purposes only. The projects are pedagogical exercises to train students in the practice of international economic and investment law, and they do not reflect the opinions of TradeLab and/or the academic institutions affiliated to TradeLab. The projects do not in any way constitute legal advice and do not, in any manner, create an attorney-client relationship. The project cannot, in any way, and at any time, bind, or lead to any form of liability or responsibility for the clinic participants, participating academic institutions, or TradeLab.