



**SAMUEL CENTRE  
FOR SOCIAL  
CONNECTEDNESS**

# **Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness Fellowship Program**

Partner Organization: Human Rights Watch

Project Title: Forced Out – The Right to Work in Older Age

## SCSC Fellowship 2023:

### Project Proposal

#### **Partner Organization:** Human Rights Watch

Established in 1978, Human Rights Watch is known for its accurate fact-finding, impartial reporting, effective use of media, and targeted advocacy, often in partnership with local human rights groups and others. Each year, we publish more than 100 reports and briefings on human rights conditions in over 90 countries, generating extensive coverage in local and international media. With the leverage this brings, we meet with governments, the United Nations, regional groups, financial institutions, and corporations to press for changes in policy and practice that promote human rights and justice around the world.

Learn more at: [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)

#### **Location of the Project:** Remote

Fellow can be located anywhere in the world but will meet virtually with a supervisor in England.

### **PROJECT INFORMATION**

#### **Section 1: Description of the Project**

Work is an important source of belonging for many people. It can provide a sense of purpose, a way to contribute to society, community and family, and important social connections. Income from work can provide economic security and a standard of living that enables people to live with dignity.

However, older people can find it hard to continue working when they want or need to. Negative, ageist stereotypes about older people's ability to work can be a barrier to

work in older age but so too are laws that deny people over a certain age the right to work on an equal basis with others.

The Fellow will work closely with the Senior Researcher on the Rights of Older People to advance research and advocacy on the rights of older people by reviewing and mapping out legislation around the world that forces older people to retire at a certain age, often known as ‘mandatory retirement ages’, or allows for mandatory retirement based on age in certain circumstances.

## **Section 2: Goals of the Project**

HRW was the first global human rights organization with a dedicated focus on the rights of older people. Our vision is a world in which every older person can live with dignity. Being denied the right to work because of their age strips older people of their dignity. It can erode their sense of belonging and increase social isolation.

By mapping mandatory retirement legislation around the world, the Fellow will directly inform new HRW research and advocacy on the right to work in older age. The Fellow’s work will help us identify where such legislation is in force and where to conduct further research and advocacy. By advocating for the abolition of arbitrary age-based mandatory retirement laws, HRW will help expose this denial of rights and call for changes in the law that contribute to a greater sense of belonging and social connectedness in older age.

## **Section 3: Guiding Questions**

This legislative review will form the foundation of our research and advocacy on mandatory retirement ages targeted primarily at national governments.

The Fellow will work with the senior researcher to finalize the scope of the legislative review. Questions could include:

- What is the relationship between belonging and work?
- Are mandatory retirement ages prescribed by law?
  - In which professions?
- Does the law allow for mandatory retirement ages?
  - Under which circumstances?

- Is discrimination on the grounds of age prohibited under the law?
  - Are there any exceptions?
- What impact does forced retirement have on these intergenerational connections?

#### **Section 4: Key Deliverables**

- 1 blog post (500 – 1,000 word), posted to SCSC’s website.
- A Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) in support of the Final Output
  - The Fellow will work collaboratively with the SCSC program manager to design a relevant community outreach/connecting activity. This may interact with people directly (ex/an event) or seek to engage the public with the issue (ex/webinar).
- A Final Output
  - A global map highlighting mandatory retirement laws and regulations with accompanying commentary, including, for example, stories and older people’s experiences. The goal of this output is to provide information on global legislation to better understand the use and impact of forced retirement.
- A Final Presentation with the Cohort

#### **Applicant Information:**

##### **About the Fellowship/What the Fellowship Offers**

The Fellowship empowers young people, recent graduates, and community leaders to engage in meaningful research and community action. At the Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness our mission is to build connectedness within and between communities through partnerships, research, programming, learning initiatives, and advocacy. Belonging is central to our work, and the Fellowship offers the opportunity to apply the lens of ‘Belonging’ to intersectional issues, writing, and problem solving.

**This is a paid full-time opportunity from May 8 – August 28 2023 [16 weeks]. The Social Connectedness Fellowship is a research and community action summer program focused on understanding & integrating social connectedness.**

### SCSC Offers:

- Competitive wages
- Work with national & international community partners
- Capacity building, skills development, & mentorship
- Meaningful work where your research has impact

### Equity Statement:

The Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness is an equal opportunity employer, and we encourage applicants to apply even if they do not meet all the criteria. We believe all candidates have something to bring to the organization and the role. If you have skills outside the job description that you think can benefit the project, let us know in your cover letter. We encourage all equity-seeking groups such as immigrants, Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, women, young people, 2SLGBTQ+ community members, and people with disabilities to apply. Please let us know if you need any accommodation throughout the application and interview process and we will be happy to support you.

### Key Attributes and Skills in the Applicant:

- A legal research background
- Access to legal databases
- An understanding of discrimination and the law
- An interest in older people's rights
- Good time management skills & ability to be self-directed