Désirée Sandanasamy

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Legal scholar with expertise in anti-discrimination law, international human rights, criminal law, and legal enforcement mechanisms. Experienced in high-pressure advisory environments, legislative advocacy, and developing diversity-sensitive compliance structures. Strong interdisciplinary background with a proven commitment to social justice and hate crime prevention.

Education:

University of California – Los Angeles (UCLA), United States
US Master of Laws (LLM) | 08/2026 – 05/2027
Specialisations in Critical Race Studies and Technology Law

University of Innsbruck, Austria
Diploma in Law (Mag.iur) | 10/2011 – 10/2022
Thesis: Die völkerrechtliche Mitverantwortlichkeit europäischer Staaten für Beihilfehandlungen zum US-Drohnenkrieg ("The International Legal Responsibility of European States for Acts of Complicity in the U.S. Drone Warfare")

BA Political Science, Coursework | 10/2012 – 11/2014

Université Paris-Est Créteil Val de Marne, France
Erasmus+ Exchange Semester | 01/2015 – 06/2015

Professional Experience:

Judicial Clerk 02/2026 – 06/2026
Austrian Judiciary | District Court of Innsbruck and Labor and Social Law Court Vienna, Austria

- Gaining comprehensive exposure to judicial decision-making, court administration, and procedural practice across both civil and criminal law proceedings
- Supporting judges and court staff through legal research, drafting memoranda and decisions, case preparation, and participation in courtroom proceedings

Avocational Lecturer at the University of Applied Science (Freelance) 10/2025 – **Present (on sabbatical)**
Hochschule Campus Wien | Vienna, Austria

- Teaching a lecture and two seminars on the topic of *"Human Rights and Ethics"* for first-semester students in the BA Social Work program
- Designing assessments and grading student work, and facilitating discussions to introduce students to foundational concepts in human rights theory, applied ethics, and social justice practice

Anti-Discrimination Trainer (Freelance) 03/2025 – **Present (on sabbatical)**
ZARA Training gemeinnützige GmbH | Vienna, Austria

- Design and deliver trainings on anti-racism, civil courage, and countering online hate.
- Facilitate workshops for diverse audiences, including educators, public institutions, and civil society.

Alternate Member of the Independent Advisory Board 01/2024 – **Present (on sabbatical)**
Investigation and Complaints Office for Allegations of Police Ill-treatment (EBM) | Vienna, Austria

- Oversee the structural safeguarding of fundamental and human rights in EBM activities.
- Review resource allocation, staff training, quality assurance, and organizational development.
- Contribute to advisory reports and recommendations to address systemic deficiencies.

Senior Legal Counsel for Legal Enforcement and Hate Crime Prevention 09/2024 – 01/2026
ZARA – Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit | Vienna, Austria

- Responsible for handling all cases involving hate crimes, bias-motivated incidents, and complaints of police misconduct; includes legal counselling and drafting legal documents.
- Conduct legal research and analyse national and international legal frameworks and jurisprudence; support the team in applying relevant case law.
- Provide legal expertise for public relations work; independently share knowledge and conduct internal training sessions in coordination with the legal department lead.
- Draft legal statements on legislative proposals, international recommendations, and legal publications in consultation with the legal department lead.
- Represent ZARA in expert forums and legal working groups; liaise with legal professionals in coordination with management.

Compliance Manager 01/2024 – 01/2026
ZARA – Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit | Vienna, Austria

- Develop and implement internal compliance protocols and risk management systems.
- Monitor regulatory developments and ensure adherence to legal and ethical standards.
- Coordinate organisation-wide compliance reporting and documentation.
- Deliver awareness-raising sessions and trainings on compliance topics.

Data Protection Officer 07/2022 – 01/2026
ZARA – Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit | Vienna, Austria

- Ensure compliance with the GDPR and national data protection regulations across all departments.
- Advise on data processing activities, impact assessments, and risk mitigation strategies.

Legal Counsel 07/2021 – 09/2024
ZARA – Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit | Vienna, Austria

- Provide legal counselling to individuals affected by discrimination and hate crimes.
- Deliver public talks and represented ZARA in educational and awareness-raising events.

Legal Research Trainee, Liaison Office Brussels 09/2019 – 02/2020
Council of Europe | Brussels, Belgium

- participate and reporte about conferences and events organised by various European Institutions
- cover main political developments within the EU, especially rule of law and migration
- follow the debates in the Parliamentary Committees of Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, Human Rights and Gender Equality
- prepare files on priority matters of CoE-EU relations

Erasmus+ Traineeship Coordinator 04/2017 – 02/2019
University of Innsbruck | Innsbruck, Austria

- Optimising the application procedure for students
- Managing, promoting and administrative accompaniment of traineeships within the EU
- Explaining the Erasmus+ system to students
- Coordination of nominated students with the National Agency

Intern
Austrian Chamber of Commerce, Advantage Austria | New Delhi, India 10/2016 – 11/2016

- Create the economic country updates and reports
- Assist in organising various business events
- Manage communication with Austrian/Indian companies (mails, phone calls etc.)

Paralegal Assistant
Danler, Danler, Platzgummer, Amoser, Geat | Innsbruck, Austria 01/2016 – 08/2016

- Manage communication with clients
- Archive and administer records
- Legal research
- Writing dictations and created documents (mails, pleadings etc.)

Extramural Engagement:

Hub Manager
Sindbad – Social Business | Vienna, Austria 10/2024 – 11/2025

- Support new mentoring teams through regular check-ins, fostering collaboration and development.
- Engage in strategic planning and exchange during recurring site team and hub leadership meetings.

Head of Marketing
Juvenilia Innsbruck (Soroptimist International) | Innsbruck, Austria 07/2020 – 01/2023

- Creating photo and video content for all social media channels
- Coordinating the marketing team and organising the online presence

European Forum Alpbach Stipendiary & Moderator
Topic: Freedom and Security | Alpbach, Austria 08/2019

- In addition to the general scholarship I also moderated 3 workshops

Board Member & Fundraising Manager
Creative Mornings Innsbruck | Innsbruck, Austria 12/2018 – 09/2019
(an international breakfast lecture series for the creative community)

- Launch the club and set up the community form scratch
- Head of Sponsoring and Social Media Marketing

Summer Law School: Climate Change, Environment and Health
ELSA Salerno | Salerno, Italy 07/2017

- Intensive legal courses on the topic in English

- Networking with international law students

Co-Founder, Fundraising Manager & Board Member
Innsbruck Delegation (NMUN New York) | Innsbruck/ New York City 09/2013 – 05/2014

- Found „Innsbruck Delegation “, a registered association with the aim to participate at the National Model United Nations New York (NMUN) 2014
- Prepare on several topics of international politics

Club Member, Head of the Debating Club
Academic Forum for Foreign Policies (AFA) | Innsbruck, Austria 08/2013 – 06/2017

- Found the Debate Club and discussed on current topics
- Participate at two VIMUNs (Vienna Model United Nations)

Excursion: Space Law in Vienna
UNO-City | Vienna, Austria 03/2012

- Symposium on: „Transfer of ownership of space objects: Issues of responsibility, liability and registration“

Youth Representative at the Parish Council
Parish Innsbruck-Allerheiligen | Innsbruck, Austria 03/2012 – 03/2017

- Co-decide on substantive matters in the parish

Legal Advisor for Refugees
Diakonie | Innsbruck, Austria 09/2011 – 12/2011

- Informe clients about asylum procedure in Austria
- Prepare clients for their first interrogation and accompanied them to the authorities

Awards, Certificates & Skills:

P.E.O. International Peace Scholarship
P.E.O. International | Issued: 04/2026

Fulbright Scholarship Fall 2026
Fulbright Austria | Issued: 07/2025

Certified Data Protection Officer
Austrian Standards | Issued: 08/2025

Company First Aider
Austrian Red Cross | Issued: 06/2022

Scholarship Holder
European Forum Alpbach | 2019

Z2X17 Participant
DIE ZEIT | 09/2017

Language Skills:

German:	C2	Malayalam:	A2
English:	C1	Spanish:	A2
French:	B2	Japanese:	A1

(CEFR Reference Level)