



**Pro Bono
Awards
2021**

The LawWorks Annual Pro Bono Awards

Tuesday 7th December 2021

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Welcome to the LawWorks Pro Bono Awards 2021



Alastair Douglas
Chair of Trustees

I am delighted to introduce you to the LawWorks Annual Awards. The Awards are a highlight of the LawWorks' calendar, and provide the opportunity to come together and celebrate pro bono commitment and achievement over the past year.

This year feels quite special, and I am very pleased to welcome everyone who is able to join us in person this evening at the Law Society, and to those who are watching the live broadcast. Wherever you might be I hope you will find the event enjoyable.

We are very grateful to the Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP, for agreeing to join us this evening to give the annual talk and to present the awards, and to Sangita Myska for hosting the evening.

We have again received many truly inspiring and high-calibre nominations, all are worthy of recognition. Despite continued challenges this year, individuals and organisations have demonstrated ingenuity and commitment to pro bono work. Their contribution benefits society, upholds the values of the legal profession - including a commitment to the rule of law - and helps to extend access to justice where other legal support is not available. It also sends a message to policy-makers that access to justice should be a greater priority.

We know that the pro bono work recognised at these Awards is only a snapshot of the valuable and important work undertaken across England and Wales and internationally – pro bono which makes a difference to individuals, local communities and the charities and not-for-profit organisations supporting them. We hope that the Awards help to raise awareness of the commitment of our members and the profession to pro bono, and the importance of partnerships and the contribution of law schools, law centres, charities and others.

On behalf of LawWorks, I would like to thank all those who took the time to submit a nomination, those who were nominated and all the shortlisted nominees.

I would also like to extend our gratitude to the panel of Judges, who have given their time and consideration to agree on the winners. Thanks also to our sponsors, LexisNexis and Salesforce, and Perception Live for providing the production support to livestream these Awards. Thank you also to the Law Society for their sponsorship and for hosting the event this evening. Most of all, my congratulations go to those shortlisted and to the winners; we hope that your achievements, recognised and celebrated here tonight, will encourage and inspire others.

If you would like to find out more about LawWorks, information about the charity and our work, including how to support us, is included at the end of this programme.

Order of proceedings

Time	Event
6:30pm	Welcome by Sangita Myska
6:35pm	Welcome from Lubna Shuja, Vice President of the Law Society of England and Wales
6:40pm	A word from James Harper, Lexis Nexis
6:45pm	Annual talk by Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP
7:05pm	Interview with Harriet Harman by Sangita Myska
7:25pm	Awards presentations
8:30pm	Drinks and canapés in the Reading Room

The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1P

Watch the [LawWorks Annual Pro Bono Awards on YouTube](#).

Guest Speaker

Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP

Harriet Harman QC MP has represented the diverse inner-city constituency of Camberwell and Peckham in the London Borough of Southwark since 1982

Having obtained a degree in Politics from York University, Harriet qualified as a solicitor. Her first job as a solicitor was at Brent Law Centre in 1974.

When Labour entered government in 1997, Harriet was appointed Secretary of State for Social Security and Minister for Women. She introduced the Minimum Income Guarantee and the National Childcare Strategy.

In 2001, Harriet was appointed Solicitor General and led a drive within Government to make tackling domestic violence a priority. After the 2005 General Election, Harriet was appointed Minister for Justice at the Department for Constitutional Affairs. She also served in Government as Leader of the House of Commons, Secretary of State for Equalities and Minister for Women, where she brought forward the Equality Bill, now the Equality Act.

Harriet was the elected Deputy Leader of the Labour Party from 2007-2015, was appointed Shadow Deputy Prime Minister in 2010-2015 and has twice served as Interim Leader of the Labour Party in 2010 and 2015. She was also the first woman Labour politician to answer Prime Minister's Questions.

Harriet is the Chair of Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights and in 2017 became the longest serving woman MP becoming 'Mother of the House of Commons'.

 [@HarrietHarman](https://twitter.com/HarrietHarman)

Host

Sangita Myska

Sangita Myska is an experienced BBC television presenter and journalist; she was long-listed for the Amnesty International Journalism Awards in 2007 for her ground-breaking television investigation into child trafficking across EU borders, and in 2012 won the international Asian Woman of Achievement in the Media award.

 [@SangitaMyska](https://twitter.com/SangitaMyska)

Judging Panel

Manda Banerji, Chair of the Law Society's Junior Lawyers Division

Manda Banerji is a senior associate at Freeths LLP specialising in construction dispute resolution. She is also the immediate past Chair of the Junior Lawyers Division of the Law Society of England & Wales ("JLD") having completed her term in November 2021. Manda has spent a number of years on the JLD executive committee culminating in her year as Chair, advocating on behalf of and supporting junior lawyers.

Yasmin Batliwala, Chief Executive, Advocates for International Development

Yasmin Batliwala is the CEO of Advocates for International Development (A4ID), which sources lawyers to provide free legal advice and assistance to support organisations working in the international development sector and whose principle aim is the eradication of poverty by focusing on the 2030 Agenda.

She has held a number of significant leadership positions over the years within the Public and Third Sectors. Her portfolios have included HIV/Aids, Drug and Alcohol dependency, and Criminal Justice. She has undertaken work for the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime in this regard. She is Chair of WDP, the largest provider of drug and alcohol services in London. And is also the President of HACRO, a service which caters for the rehabilitation and resettlement of ex-offenders. Yasmin was a recipient of the City of London Woman of Achievement Awards in respect to her work in the Public Sector.

Clare Carter, Joint Chief Executive, Access to Justice Foundation

Clare Carter is Joint CEO of the Access to Justice Foundation, a UK wide grant making charity which raises money to fund and support the provision of free social welfare legal advice to the people who need it the most. Formerly a legal aid solicitor, Clare also worked and volunteered in the advice sector before joining the Access to Justice Foundation in 2016.

Chris Minnoch, Chief Executive, Legal Aid Practitioners Group

Chris is CEO of Legal Aid Practitioners Group (LAPG), the representative body for legal aid lawyers in England and Wales. Chris qualified in New Zealand and then worked within the law centre movement as a youth advocate before moving to the UK in 2001. After a brief stint in the civil service he joined Greenwich Housing Rights, a specialist legal advice and policy charity. Chris has many years of legal practice, management and policy experience in the legal aid and advice sector and as a charity trustee supporting volunteering, student and pro bono initiatives. In 2016 Chris joined LAPG as Operations Director and became the CEO in 2018. Chris is currently leading LAPG's drive for a fair, accessible and sustainable legal aid scheme. Chris is a member of the Ministry of Justice's Legal Support Advisory Group and the Advice Sector Panel of the Administrative Justice Council.

Paul Rogerson, Editor-in-chief, Law Society Gazette

Paul is a journalist who is currently the Editor-in-chief of The Law Society Gazette where he has worked since 2007; before that he was a business journalist on a variety of publications – most latterly as the City Editor of The Glasgow Herald.




Help a family this Christmas by making a donation to our Voices for Families project

We work in partnership on this project with the charity Together for Short Lives (TFSL). We receive referrals from TFSL and children's hospices in relation to families with children with life-limiting/life threatening illnesses. Most of the affected children are cared for at home and the NHS and local authorities are meant to co-operate to ensure that the health care and housing needs of these children are properly assessed and met. In practice this does not always work effectively and families find it hard to obtain the support they are entitled to.

The Voices For Families project, through volunteer lawyers trained and supervised by a specialist solicitor employed by LawWorks, provides free legal advice and support on community care and housing law in order to help rectify these problems. The majority of the children helped are under 10 years old.

We support more than 50 families a year through the Voices for Families project. Please consider donating to LawWorks so that we can help more families next year.



“We were lucky to find support from LawWorks when we most needed it and it was a relief to hear that we weren’t being unreasonable in what we were asking for.”

One father said:

“Sometimes it feels as though the system is set up to break families. I was in a significant amount of debt and it was impossible to see a way out of it. We were lucky to find support from LawWorks when we most needed it and it was a relief to hear that we weren’t being unreasonable in what we were asking for. The lawyers were lovely and did all they could to help. With the money we’ve received, I’ve been able to pay off my debts and buy some equipment for Bella which has enabled her to lie flat and to stand, which has made her more independent which is what she likes the most.”

You can donate tonight by using one of the contactless card readers available at the registration desk, through our [website](#), or by sending a cheque made payable to LawWorks, to LawWorks, DX 115, 50-52 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 3HL.

The Finalists

Award categories:

- Best Contribution by a Small or Medium Firm
- Best Contribution by a Large Firm
- Junior Lawyers Division Pro Bono Award
- Best Contribution by an Individual
- The LawWorks Cymru Award
- Best Contribution by a Pro Bono Clinic
- Best International Pro Bono Award
- Best New Pro Bono Activity
- Most Effective Pro Bono Partnership

Best contribution by a Small or Medium Firm

Emma Williams Family Law

"Facing one of the most challenging times in my life, I felt understood and validated. Emma offered me the right advice and guidance with professionalism, but in such a human and warm way!"

Emma Williams Family Law is a small team of only two solicitors who provide pro bono advice and assistance to local communities in an area that is classed as being within the top 20% most deprived in Wales. With a 100% satisfaction and recommendation score, the positive impact that Emma Williams Family Law is having on the local community is clear. Whilst eligible service users are sign-posted to local legal aid firms, over 120 individuals who otherwise would have been denied access to justice have been supported by the clinic over the last 12 months. Emma Williams Family Law is also working with Aberystwyth University to not only provide advice at their fortnightly clinic but to supervise their pro bono activity. Service users describe Emma Williams Family Law as being accessible, supportive and compassionate and as empowering them to believe change was possible. The pro bono they are doing is having a profound impact on changing the lives of those they support.

Kobre & Kim

"The K&K team persuaded the Tribunal to allow the appeal and set aside previous decisions...which in real terms means that Mr. X can rely on £60 extra per week...."

Kobre & Kim work in partnership with LawWorks on their Welfare Benefits Tribunal project. The firm supplies volunteer lawyers, who have had no previous experience of advising on welfare benefits, to be trained and then represent clients at First-tier Tribunal hearings in order to challenge decisions made by the Department of Work and Pensions in relation to Personal Independence Payments. In one particular case, the pro bono undertaken by Kobre & Kim has not simply overturned previous decisions of the Tribunal but in doing so has revolutionised their client's life. Obtaining an uplift in their client's Personal Independence Payments and an arrears payment has meant that he will now be able to focus on re-integrating into society after a lengthy incarceration and have the confidence and finances to change his life. The effect of this pro bono work will be ongoing for more than just the client in this case, as the briefing and efforts may be helpful to other future claimants, when confronting the issue of missing historical records.

Nottingham Law School Legal Advice Centre

"The fight to get where we are now was incredibly difficult and hugely stressful. You supported and held us up the whole way through each challenge. If [our daughter] could express her gratitude and sheer happiness I know she would."

Nottingham Law School Legal Advice Centre ("the Centre") was the first SRA regulated law firm to be integrated fully within a law school in the UK which has led to an increase in student opportunities and over 580 students benefitting from practical work experience as a result. Despite Covid-19, the past 12 months has been one of expansion and growth for the Centre as they have sought to address unmet legal needs in their community. Housing, furlough, victims of crime, Intellectual Property and the expansion of their Special Education Needs and Disability service are just some of the key developments. Distinctly aware that even where legal aid may be available, there may not be a provider with capacity to take on the case, the Centre has worked to address the issue of legal advice deserts, for example through its new housing law service.

The Centre has secured £995,000 for clients in the year ending August 2021 alone across 162 cases and 9 service areas.

Best Contribution by a Large Firm

Bates Wells

“This ruling is an important win for gig economy workers and for common decency.”

Between 2017 and 2021 Bates Wells represented James Farrar and Yaseen Aslam, the two test claimants against Uber in the Supreme Court, in a landmark case defining the employment status of an estimated 45,000 drivers across London. The Supreme Court held that Uber drivers are “workers” rather than independent contractors. The decision guarantees Uber drivers’ basic protections including the national minimum wage, holiday pay, and protection against discrimination and will require Uber to adhere to more extensive health & safety obligations. The case will have enormous implications for 2.8 million people working across the so-called “gig economy” and will be relied upon as the leading authority in the UK on worker status.

Bates Wells has carried out pro bono work for the winners and shortlisted candidates to the Bates Wells Foundation’s annual Stephen Lloyd Awards. In May 2020, Bates Wells launched a Charity Registrations Pilot Project, alongside LawWorks, Morgan Lewis and Reed Smith. The project recently helped an LGBTQ+ organisation and a charity using music to reduce social isolation to successfully register as charities.

Dechert

“Dechert have made an ... outstanding contribution to the charity Outset and supporting the cultural sector.”

It became apparent some time ago that the rapid eradication of artists’ workspaces in London threatened to undercut the artistic and creative supply chain in the UK capital. Some 13,000 artists have been held on waiting lists for workspace.

The Outset Contemporary Art Fund, an international charity supporting innovative art projects, helped set up a new entity, the Creative Land Trust, with the aim of purchasing properties for use in perpetuity as workspaces for the creative industries. Dechert provided pro bono advice to Outset on the structuring and creation of the trust, which was established through a private/public partnership with the Mayor of London, Arts Council England and Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Dechert lawyers prepared template letters and fact sheets for artists, spelling out the key points of the Coronavirus Act 2020, outlining how to negotiate “holidays” from rent or business rates, and providing overviews of lease obligations and rent reviews. The materials were widely used. The template letters and fact sheets were downloaded hundreds of times, as Outset reported a fourfold rise in the average number of visitors to its website. In total, more than 70 organisations utilised the information to avoid financial collapse.

DLA Piper

"The applications are highly sensitive, often working with vulnerable individuals and separated families."

During the course of 2020-21, DLA Piper started a project to challenge the provision of inadequate accommodation for asylum seekers, including in former military accommodation at Napier Barracks. This work was done through a pre-action protocol (PAP) project alongside the civil justice and human rights firm Deighton Pierce Glynn and two NGOs, Care4Calais and Human for Rights Network. Under the scheme, charities refer vulnerable clients to DLA Piper, a PAP is issued within 24 hours and a request for the client to be transferred is made within two days. If this is unsuccessful, lawyers at Deighton Pierce Glynn issue judicial review proceedings. So far 54 vulnerable asylum seekers have been transferred to safe accommodation through the PAP project.

2020-21 also saw the launch of DLA Piper's family reunion clinic in the UK, assisting refugees with complex applications for family reunion for family members in other jurisdictions. Family reunion is a safe and legal route for refugees to reunite with family members, but there is little support for refugees for this process. DLA Piper also provides legal education and empowerment courses to refugees and asylum seekers through its programme, Know your Rights, which runs across the UK.

Irwin Mitchell

"Your commitment to details and the law were, I'm sure, the reason I won my appeal. You gave me hope and confidence and I am so very grateful."

As part of the firm's access to justice strategy and responsible business strategy, solicitors from Irwin Mitchell volunteer with LawWorks' Welfare Benefits Advocacy project. These solicitors support some of the most vulnerable people in society with Personal Independence Payment (PIP) benefit appeals. Clients have included those suffering with fibromyalgia, chronic pain, sciatica, degenerative arthritis and psychological harm following on from an accident. For the past year, all seven clients supported by Irwin Mitchell have had their appeals upheld, which has meant the awarding, reinstatement or increase of PIP, in one case indefinitely. This has made "a real difference to [the] life and happiness" of clients and it has been reported that a client "was absolutely gushing in her praise" of Irwin Mitchell's volunteers. In turn, the pro bono work has also positively impacted Irwin Mitchell's volunteers: internal engagement surveys and workshops have provided evidence of the positive effect on the firm's employees in terms of wellbeing, career development and pride in working at Irwin Mitchell.

Sidley Austin

"We are thrilled that Sidley is partnering with us... training 50 of its volunteer lawyers in aspects of family and criminal law enables us to take on up to 50 additional cases each year."

Sidley Austin's London pro bono programme focuses on tackling barriers to access to justice; enhancing the impact of charities and not-for-profits; and supporting international human rights. Sidley Austin participates in several pro bono projects, each of which aims to bridge the widening gap for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, particularly women, children and disabled people.

Over the past year, highlights of Sidley Austin's pro bono programme have included: working with the charity Not Beyond Redemption to support mothers in prison to re-establish access to their children; partnering with Kids in Need of Defense UK to provide advice to children and their families with uncertain immigration status; and providing support to RE:ACT Disaster Response, the UN Refugee Agency and anti-poverty charity Turn2Us over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic. Additionally, Sidley Austin's market-leading pro bono fellowship programme pays newly qualified lawyers a full NQ salary to spend three months working at a charity or not-for-profit, demonstrating the firm's value of and commitment to pro bono.

Travers Smith

"I can now get my life back to normal... I don't think anyone who hasn't been through abuse knows what it's like to feel powerless and frightened all the time. I can't thank you enough for all your time and hard work."

Travers Smith structures its pro bono work around five pillars: Climate, Diversity, Vulnerable Groups, Rule of Law and Violence Against Women and Girls. Over the past year, there has been a particular focus on the latter and on vulnerable groups, with the Covid-19 pandemic causing a drastic increase in domestic abuse. Travers Smith's Domestic Violence Advocacy Unit mobilised, advocating in the RCJ and Family Courts for clients suffering from rape, child abuse, physical violence, control, coercion, economic abuse and harassment. For one vulnerable child, Travers Smith obtained a two year injunction, while in another case the firm represented a victim of controlling behaviour, described by the judge as "one of the worst cases I have dealt with...".

As part of its Diversity work, Travers Smith partnered with JUSTICE for its expert investigation into the overrepresentation of BAME youth in the criminal justice system, producing the 'Tackling Racial Injustice: Children and the Youth Justice System' paper in February 2021.

Junior Lawyers Division Pro Bono Award

Jonathan Andrews, Reed Smith

"His help and knowledge have been invaluable and I very much look forward to continuing this work moving forward. Jonathan would be a very worthy winner of this award. He has the full support of Support Through Court and we very much hope that he is successful."

Jonathan supports a vast range of Reed Smith's existing pro bono initiatives, including with Amicus and Working Families, and has secured several new pro bono clients such as Include Me Too (IM2) and Support Through Court (STC). Particularly instrumental has been the training he delivered to STC's volunteer cohort on supporting clients with autism. Overall, Jonathan's support of STC has directly assisted 2,000+ clients/volunteers. Additionally, Jonathan also significantly increased his time commitment to Working Families when demand for advice surged during the Covid-19 pandemic, responding to several queries daily and tackling the most complex queries concerning new, rapidly-changing aspects of lockdown-related laws. For this commitment, which reached 1,000+ individuals, Jonathan was nominated as 'Pro Bono Star of the Quarter'. Jonathan's support of IM2 allowed 10,000+ people with disabilities to benefit from its hospital communication passport, streamlining the process for accessing medical support.

Lucy Clifford, Travers Smith

"Lucy's dedication to her pro bono work, even when being pulled in different directions on her other matters, is truly admirable. It is clear to anyone who works with her that she is really passionate about using her skills as a lawyer to help others and that she cares deeply about the client and achieving the best outcome for them."

Lucy is passionate about access to justice and considers that undertaking pro bono work to address inequality as it exists in the legal system should be a primary responsibility for all solicitors. Immediately upon joining Travers Smith, Lucy sought out pro bono opportunities and has been actively involved ever since. Projects include LawWorks' Pro Bono Connect scheme, the Domestic Violence Advisory Unit, City Law School Advice Clinic and the Bethnal Green Legal Advice Clinic. During the challenging past 18 months, Lucy has assisted victims of domestic violence, people facing homeless or living in unsuitable conditions, victims of fraud, people facing financial difficulty and disadvantaged children. In addition to her legal pro bono work, Lucy also mentors aspiring solicitors, teaches high school students about legal issues that impact their lives, and supports primary school children from disadvantaged backgrounds with reading.

Hemna Fargi, Duncan Lewis Solicitors

"I am very pleased to have had Hemna as my solicitor to get me through tough times. I sought a non-molestation order against my ex-partner due to domestic violence and, without the support of Hemna...I don't think I would've got the result I wanted..."

Hemna is a committed and passionate advocate for pro bono work, and she is currently coordinating seven pro bono clinics with seven different service providers, alongside her day job as a family and child care solicitor. Hemna's clients are among the most vulnerable in society, including victims of domestic abuse, and her personal commitment to high standards means that she has been consistently praised for her quick responses to client calls and emails, her excellent communication skills and ability to provide valuable legal support to vulnerable people in difficult situations. Hemna is acutely aware of the impact that legal proceedings can have on clients' mental health, and her approach to her clients and her work is sensitive, informed, and tailored to the needs of each individual.

Hemna's personal life experiences have driven her belief in the power of law and the value of pro bono, but she also carries out this range of pro bono activities to inspire the next generation of lawyers.

Natasha Hunter Jones, Baker McKenzie

"Tash takes time to engage with the subject matter at hand and treats pro bono work with the attention to detail and professionalism which she applies to her commercial work, which is extremely important given the vulnerability of certain clients and the importance of the work in which she has been involved."

Tash has an enthusiasm for a wide range of pro bono work, ranging from providing legal advice to charities and not-for-profit organisations to helping individuals. Her work has covered issues relating to Universal Credit, furlough, unfair dismissal, parental leave, pregnancy benefits, and access to social care. Tash has also worked closely with the Amicus project, which collates data about first-degree murder cases in Florida in order to support prisoners on death row. Despite working on such a wide range of issues, Tash takes time and care over her pro bono work, and successfully maintains an impressive pro bono workload alongside her client work at Baker McKenzie.

Tash has been praised for her impressive commitment to pro bono and an attitude that Baker McKenzie commends as one that "should serve as an inspiration to her peers, both those junior and senior to her."

Lucy Scaramuzza, Baker McKenzie

“Lucy has not been afraid to work in an area of law that is unfamiliar to her, and her willingness to upskill has been very impressive. Her commitment and dedication to this case and the family in question has achieved truly life changing results for them.”

Described as having an “unwavering dedication” to pursuing pro bono projects alongside her other work commitments, Lucy has worked very closely in the last year with Coram Children’s Legal Centre (which works in collaboration with Kids in Need of Defense UK) supporting them to protect the rights of vulnerable children and young people. Lucy specifically worked with a family with four children to secure their right to remain in the UK (on human rights grounds) under a set of stressful – and time sensitive – circumstances. Ultimately, all four children were permitted to remain, and Lucy’s reliability, commitment, attitude and professionalism were commended. Lucy hopes that the experiences she has had through pro bono projects can be shared to help raise awareness of the great work that pro bono lawyers do, and the tangible impact on people in challenging circumstances.

Liljana Shehaj, Duncan Lewis Solicitors

“Liljana’s guidance empowers our clients to make an informed decision as well as the confidence and knowledge to take steps to gain their independence. Liljana’s support has enabled women and their children still at risk to leave abusive situations.”

Liljana handles various complex matters which involve advising and dealing with vulnerable clients, notably those who have been victims of domestic violence, those with learning difficulties or mental health issues, and those with other vulnerabilities. She undertakes regular pro bono work for three separate branches of Solace Women’s Aid, assisting service users via monthly advice surgeries. Liljana, through her passion and dedication to pro bono work, took the initiative to set up three clinics at Solace. She is also responsible for setting up pro bono clinics at Shpresa Programme, the Middle Eastern Women and Society Organisation and Camden Safety Net. In addition, Liljana advises clients during surgeries which her team has set up with Enfield Citizen Advice, Latin American Women’s Aid, Shelter, Refuge and through the Duncan Lewis Pro Bono advice sessions. This dedication to her clients and pro bono work continued throughout the pandemic, where she continued to work hard and provide clients with outstanding service and support.

Lucy Winnington-Ingram, Reed Smith

"Lucy went over and above, giving up her bank holiday weekend to take on as many referrals as she could to ensure that as many people as possible received the legal information they needed."

Lucy's pro bono record demonstrates extraordinary dedication and leadership, evident throughout the different projects and subject matters she has worked on and led. During 2021 Lucy's leadership has inspired pro bono work from nearly 90 lawyers across our Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) offices. Lucy has championed several teams across the firm's work for Amicus and two of the firm's research projects: one for the Centre for Women's Justice and ongoing research for the Centre for Military Justice. Lucy has also played a key role in the firm's recent Afghanistan Assistance Project, providing invaluable assistance during the ongoing crisis. Since joining the firm, Lucy has regularly volunteered with the University House Legal Advice Centre's Family Law and Domestic Violence Clinic. Lucy has been leading the firm's Amicus work for over four years, which involves coordinating a team of over 50 lawyers across the firm's EMEA offices to support Amicus on death penalty cases. As a result, the firm has been able to support Bradley Martin's US defence attorneys to achieve a resentence from death row to a life sentence.

Best Contribution by an Individual

Simon Bruce, Dads House Family Law Clinic

“Every single time I had you representing me in court I felt so proud of you and so strong at the same time. Your skills, intelligence, heart you put when you do your work is beyond the words.”

Simon is a family lawyer who provides a compassionate shoulder whilst also giving legal advice gained from a distinguished career. From advising those suffering from domestic violence, to mentoring students and his work in the higher courts, Simon's pro bono work has made a significant impact in many people's lives. He is the Legal Director of, and was instrumental in setting up, Dads House Family Law Clinic. He is also an adviser at East Greenwich Legal Advice Centre, the Supervising Solicitor at Hammersmith and Fulham Law Centre for the family advice sessions and advises on the Free Legal Answers online platform on matters relating to family law. During the Covid-19 pandemic when it became problematic for children to move around different homes as a result of lockdowns, and with the growing logjams at court and delays in the system, the work Simon has done has been crucial for his clients.

Jonathan Gilmour, Travers Smith

“The insight and knowhow that Jonathan has both shared and gained through his pro bono endeavours is at the cutting edge of fighting climate change, meaning that he is often the first port of call for colleagues and clients alike. Jonathan is not only an outstanding lawyer, he is, frankly, a thoroughly impressive person.”

Jonathan is a partner and head of the Derivatives and Structured Products Group at Travers Smith. Jonathan is a leading specialist in his field, recognised as a 'Leading Individual' by The Legal 500 and well-known for his dedication to pro bono work, particularly in the sustainable finance, and Environmental, Social and Governance sectors. Jonathan's extensive experience has led to him to become a trusted advisor to Travers Smith's leading pro bono clients such as the Impact Investing Institute and the Green Finance Institute. He has delivered important new partnerships to the firm through his pro bono advisory work for the UK Sustainable Investment & Finance Association and the Taskforce on Scaling Voluntary Carbon Markets. Jonathan leads by example and is a standout leader in the Climate, Environment and Sustainability space.

Naga Kandiah, MTC Solicitors

“Naga has gone beyond his legal practice when it comes to pro bono assistance.”

Naga is a public law and human rights solicitor, who has supported several of his vulnerable clients on a pro-bono basis. He has assisted those claiming asylum as well as their families in establishing their lives in the United Kingdom. Naga has been involved in a number of high-profile cases, generating international attention. For example, Naga represented one of the first victims of the Windrush Scandal and he also represented a refugee in an Australian detention island, Manus Island, on a pro bono basis in a ‘first of its kind’ case. During the Covid-19 pandemic, he was part of the legal team that initiated the judicial review against the digital pilot scheme of remote hearings, which halted the hearings on the basis that they were unfair to applicants. Over this time, whilst working remotely, Naga provided legal assistance to over 300 people. Naga helped clients with their furlough applications, applying for benefits, guiding them to GPs and engaging with employers and schools. Furthermore, he managed to provide free mobile phone credit to asylum seekers, and sent food parcels to over 100 vulnerable people.

Rachel Mathieson, Bates Wells

“What is truly impressive about Rachel is the empathy and deep understanding she has shown, not only for us as clients, but also for the plight of so many precarious workers in Britain today who suffer truly terrible exploitation.”

Rachel successfully represented James Farrar and Yaseen Aslam, the two test claimants taking on Uber, on a pro bono basis in this landmark case. Working on the case with counsel, Rachel helped in examining the intricate mechanisms of how Uber’s app works, successfully establishing that there was a high level of control exerted over the drivers by the company. The Supreme Court ruled decisively in their favour confirming that Uber drivers are workers and not self-employed independent contractors, which means they are entitled to a number of rights and protections including the National Minimum Wage, holiday pay and whistleblowing protection. This case has had an impact on the employment rights of an estimated 45,000 Uber drivers across London and will have implications for the employment status of 2.8 million people working across the “gig economy”.

Louise McCarthy, Sidley Austin

“Louise’s pro bono work is targeted primarily at assisting individuals who would be left unrepresented without pro bono support. Her representation has, in a number of cases, made a significant difference to those individuals.”

Louise is Lead Associate for the firm’s Welfare Benefits Appeals project and, in addition to having responsibility and oversight of all appeals, has represented a number of clients personally remotely since the start of Covid-19. Louise also volunteers on the LawWorks Voices for Families project and has been representing a family in an ongoing dispute with the local authority for over eighteen months where she managed to secure a fully funded care package for their young child with severe disabilities. She has worked with Kids in Need of Defense UK and was part of a group representing a young adult in their application for British citizenship, ensuring they had the best chance of success by working to gather all possible evidence and support. She was also part of a team representing a servicewoman in her claim against the Ministry of Defence for bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Emine Mehmet, Duncan Lewis Solicitors

“By targeting areas where access to justice is scarce, particularly in relation to linguistic or cultural hurdles, Emine ensures that those who are marginalised receive the legal assistance they require.”

Spearheading the Duncan Lewis pro bono initiative to improve access to justice for all is Head of the Duncan Lewis Pro Bono Committee, child care director Emine Mehmet. Emine represents the most vulnerable through public law children proceedings, applications for injunctions, emergency orders preventing unlawful removals of children from the UK, and represents children in private law proceedings. Emine has been chairing the committee since 2009 and through her management and initiative, the firm was able to provide services to over 70 pro bono clinics and surgery sessions (prior to the pandemic). Emine makes sure to target communities where language and cultural barriers often make access to mainstream legal services problematic. She has also dedicated her time to the legal advice centre at the University of East London and at the Royal Holloway’s Legal Advice Centre, in order to showcase first-hand the value of legal expertise and pro bono services to law students.

Charles Wynn-Evans, Dechert

“Chair of Dechert’s London Pro Bono Committee since 2012, Charles has been indispensable, both as a shaper of the pro bono culture in our London office, and as a mentor to a generation of young pro bono lawyers.”

Charles has been instrumental in the development of pro bono at Dechert’s London office from the trainee level upwards. For example, all trainee solicitors at Dechert conduct advice sessions for the Islington Law Centre at its Evening Advice Clinic across a wide range of issues. Charles has led a pro bono committee that has developed a broad-ranging pro bono portfolio in the London office reflecting the needs of the community as well as the skillsets and interests of the firm’s lawyers. Charles also takes on a significant amount of pro bono work himself as an employment law specialist supervising and handling numerous matters for charities ranging across contract and policy reviews, disciplinary and grievance issues, restructuring exercises and the defence of employment tribunal claims. Charles’s tireless commitment to shaping the narrative and success of the firm’s pro bono culture has helped position its London office as a regional leader and facilitated high participation rates in pro bono work.

The LawWorks Cymru Award

Aberystwyth University Family Law Clinic

"Incredibly useful information, clear, concise, helpful and friendly. I felt immediately at ease, supported and grateful."

The Aberystwyth University Family Law Clinic, in conjunction with Emma Williams Family Law, offers a fortnightly pro bono clinic from a town centre location. The clinic is non-means tested and is available to any member of the public. There are no limits as to how often a service user may access the clinic which offers initial advice sessions of 30 minutes. Additional support is provided by students under the supervision of a solicitor including completing applications for divorce and for child arrangements orders. In certain cases where service users are unable to act in person, ongoing legal support is provided by the clinic. The current service users receiving this full support are parents who are in receipt of state benefits but have been assessed as not being eligible for legal aid despite the legal complexities of their cases. Without the support of the Aberystwyth University Family Law Clinic they would be denied access to justice.

Cardiff Lawyers Care Advice Clinic

"The advice I was given greatly improved my mental health situation, which without doubt I would have struggled with for a prolonged period of time".

The Cardiff Lawyers Care Advice Clinic was set up in 2019 by solicitor and then President of the Cardiff and District Law Society (CDLS), Clive Thomas, in partnership between the CDLS, the University of South Wales Legal Advice Clinic and leading Welsh homelessness charity, The Wallich. The clinic launched in August 2019 as a face-to-face drop-in clinic running at The Wallich's night shelter in Cardiff. In 2020, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic meant the service was reviewed to ensure it was able to continue providing an essential service. Consequently, in early 2021, the clinic moved to remote delivery, with assistance being offered via 'Teams' and telephone. Adapting the clinic in this way meant the scope of the clinic widened to the whole of Wales and was no longer restricted to those in Cardiff. The clinic now operates every three weeks and offers help in housing, debt, family law and more. It has received 53 referrals from The Wallich and the advice volunteers provide has enabled clients to feel more empowered and in control of their legal disputes.

Duncan Lewis Solicitors

“The essential pro bono work that is being carried out by our teams in Wales continues to bring invaluable support to communities that would otherwise be out of reach of much needed legal advice”.

As a result of the fact that many applicants are not able to qualify for legal aid, Duncan Lewis immigration teams in Wales engage in pro bono work in order to provide hundreds of vulnerable individuals with high-quality legal advice and assistance. By identifying and recognising the difficulties many people in the local communities face and their need for readily available and easily accessible legal services, the teams have been able to collaborate with charities and organisations that best enable them to assist these individuals. Solicitor Samuel Bass has dedicated a considerable amount of his free time volunteering for Asylum Justice, a charitable organisation in Wales that offers free legal advice and representation to asylum seekers, recognised refugees, and vulnerable migrants. Immigration director Vinita Templeton has continued to take on significant pro bono work in relation to Commonwealth nationals, providing essential advice to those who have been unfairly let down as highlighted by the Windrush Scandal.

University of South Wales Legal Advice Clinic

“I felt very lost regarding my situation and did not really know how to pursue the matter. The LAC could not have been more helpful and lifted a weight off my shoulders.”

The University of South Wales' (USW) student led Legal Advice Clinic, established in 2013, is at the heart of USW's Law School, offering every law student an opportunity to participate. The clinic helps plug a gap in access to justice in an area where limited pro bono advice is available, providing free legal advice on employment, family, consumer, civil litigation and housing law. The clinic has grown from 20 students participating in 2013 to over 150 students in the last academic year. The clinic also provides a vital pro bono service, therefore extending its impact to include local communities. It is an invaluable local resource and, following the legal aid cuts, has been at the forefront of helping to maintain access to justice for its local communities. In addition, the changes to working practices (by moving services online) as a result of the pandemic have widened the reach of their work across Wales.

Best Contribution by a Pro Bono Clinic

Anglia Ruskin University Law Clinic

"The Law Clinic's emphasis on offering advice across family, employment and immigration law issues is in direct response to the situation found on the ground in this area which is, in effect, an advice desert with very, very few firms with Legal Aid contracts."

The Anglia Ruskin University Law Clinic moved to a virtual clinic in April 2020 which enabled the continuity of this service throughout Covid-19. More recently, the clinic is offering a hybrid service for those clients who are less comfortable with or do not have access to the necessary technology. In addition to providing clients with advice at appointments, students assist with applications for Child Arrangement Orders and provide a Support@Court service every Wednesday morning to litigants in person. Students also assist clients with applications for Exceptional Case Funding and transfers of tenancies.

The clinic has also developed services with Maggie's Centre at Addenbroke's Hospital, Jimmy's Centre for the homeless, local probation services, Citizens Advice and Women's Aid. Their new public legal education project, in collaboration with Ormiston Families, is designed to inform and empower offenders and their families. Working with the judiciary, the clinic has also launched three websites providing guidance, information and signposting to litigants in person.

BPP University Legal Advice Clinic

"The service was impeccable. The student was very thorough and fully understanding of my situation. I was extremely grateful to have this assistance and feel that I would have been lost without it."

Demand for services from the BPP University Legal Advice Clinic increased by 30% during the pandemic. Students offered advice on general litigation, enterprise, family and housing law. Family law issues dominate, possibly a sad reflection on the impact of lockdown on family relationships but also due to the confusion around and difficulty in maintaining contact arrangements. The housing clinic saw an increase in people seeking advice about rent disputes, rent arrears and ending tenancies, with disrepair as the single largest issues. Two new clinics were opened in Birmingham and Bristol, in addition to existing clinics in Leeds, London and Manchester. The clinic also has a new training contract, which meant that the trainee solicitor was able to assist with clients who needed further advice and representation.

Aware of the exclusionary effect of holding clinics remotely, BPP addressed this by working in partnership with the Hammersmith and Fulham Law Centre to provide advice to their clients directly.

Dads House Family Law Clinic

“Dads House is exactly what their name stands for. Their selfless work and actions make you believe in a brighter and happier future. All they want and wish for you is to be with your children again.”

The charity Dads House offers a holistic welcome for its clients, including a foodbank, and the Dads House Family Law Clinic is part of its offering. It has been in operation for 18 months and provides family law advice to people who cannot afford to pay for a lawyer or cannot get legal aid. Two weekly face-to-face clinics are held at which experienced family law solicitors, barristers and law students team together to provide advice for clients and this service was provided throughout the pandemic. Examples of cases undertaken include applying for non-molestation orders for those suffering from domestic violence (including a mother whose former partner had threatened to burn down the family home), applying for the urgent recovery of a child, and applying for fathers and mothers to spend time with their children. They aim to provide protection for their clients and to enable them to sleep at night.

The Student Legal Advice Centre, University of Derby

“[The Red Cross has] been working with SLAC over two years, and in this time they have demonstrated that they offer a very effective, person-centred and professional service, and have become an integral part of our support.”

The Student Legal Advice Centre at the University of Derby (“SLAC”) has been providing advice on family law matters since 2019. In February 2021, SLAC partnered with the British Red Cross and Paragon Law to launch its Immigration Family Reunion clinic. Through this clinic, assistance is offered to refugees who are seeking to bring family members to the UK. As a result of the pandemic the clinic was launched online, which has meant that clients have been referred from a far wider geographical area. Without such services, some refugees would not receive support and would be unable to apply for family reunion due to lack of knowledge or understanding of their rights, particularly in relation to their right to a family life. The Exceptional Case Funding element of the clinic is a significant part of the service offered and one third of SLAC’s clients have been successful in these applications, giving clients access to specialist legal advice.

University of South Wales Legal Advice Clinic

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Whitechapel Legal Advice Clinic

"This service provides a lifeline for individuals who would otherwise have nowhere to turn."

For over 20 years Whitechapel Legal Advice Clinic ("WLAC"), through a collaboration between Herbert Smith Freehills and Tower Hamlets Citizens Advice, has provided a free service to people living, working or studying in Tower Hamlets who could not otherwise access legal support in one of London's most impoverished boroughs. Advice on housing, employment and consumer issues is given on an 'end to end' basis. The transition to remote working was swift, enhanced by WLAC's provision of a new permanent video link room allowing clients to use the service with staff support. Once in place the service was able to take on referrals from neighbouring boroughs as well as within Tower Hamlets where service queries have quadrupled. Examples of cases undertaken include: achieving a financial award for a client in a sexual harassment case, recovering unpaid wages for clients at the Employment Tribunal, obtaining an award in an age discrimination case and obtaining compensation for a client who had been advised to transfer her pension into a high-risk scheme by a door-to-door salesman.

Best International Pro Bono Award – in partnership with Advocates for International Development

Two years ago Advocates for International Development (A4ID) and LawWorks launched this joint Award to recognise lawyers' growing contributions to work in the arena of international pro bono and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



Clifford Chance

“Teen pregnancy has been a source of shame in Rwanda, leading to rejection, stigmatisation and discrimination, since ancient times. The uniqueness of this [teenage pregnancy] project is that young girls, families and community leaders have come together to rebuild lost dignity and hope, to create a better future for teen mothers.”

Clifford Chance's ground-breaking Cornerstone initiative, running from 2019 to 2024 in Kigali, Rwanda, has the objective of improving well-being in the city's poorest communities. The investment of £1 million per annum plus wide-ranging pro-bono support will ultimately deliver around 25 projects in partnership with local and international NGOs, which will significantly impact on barriers to well-being. During 2020 to 2021, nine projects were designed, invested and worked on including environmental degradation, mental health in genocide survivors, teenage pregnancy, STEM and coding education, teacher training and the development of a pro bono and legal aid culture in Kigali. 111 Clifford Chance partners and employees from 18 offices worked on this initiative which directly benefitted 16,138 people in Kigali's poorest communities.

DLA Piper

“Work needed to take place at an extreme pace. The legal team worked in an exemplary fashion ensuring a term sheet was agreed before negotiating a common grant agreement that successfully incorporated the interests of all.”

In 2020 the government of Tristan da Cunha, the most remote inhabited island on Earth, created the largest marine sanctuary in the South Atlantic Ocean after a consortium of leading conservation organisations joined together to develop a £4 million trust fund. Islanders offered to protect 90% of their ocean territory in return for the international conservation community presenting a financial guarantee offsetting lost economic opportunity. The RSPB and National Geographic, with input from a network of in-house lawyers and pro bono teams including DLA Piper, led a group of seven donors to establish the Community Fund held by International Eco Fund (IEF). The RSPB requested DLA Piper (UK/USA) act for the IEF by providing pro bono corporate, finance and compliance advice. The lawyers were able to present a pre-negotiated common agreement to all donors completing the project within the deadline. The resulting Tristan Marine Protection Zone will have a profound long-term effect on the region's ecosystems, creating a vital sanctuary for rare seabirds as well as other fragile species.

Best New Pro Bono Activity

Charity Registration Pilot Project: Bates Wells, Morgan Lewis and Reed Smith

"We're absolutely delighted to have become a registered charity. Thank you so much - it has been absolutely brilliant to be a part of the pilot scheme."

The Charity Registration project was launched in May 2020 as a collaboration between three firms, Bates Wells, Morgan Lewis and Reed Smith in partnership with LawWorks. Charities are increasingly in need of legal advice to navigate the process of registration with the Charity Commission but the regulatory requirements are complex and charities find it difficult to progress without assistance.

The project matches charity law specialist volunteers at Bates Wells with volunteers at Morgan Lewis or Reed Smith who themselves do not have this specialist knowledge. Bates Wells provides the expertise to enable the volunteers at Morgan Lewis or Reed Smith to help organisations complete the necessary documents for the application, governance and charitable objectives.

Following a successful training session in May 2020 attended by over 50 volunteers, the project has now worked with six organisations to enable them to commence the registration process. Two charities have so far been successfully registered. Charity law is a very niche area and can be daunting for volunteers and organisations alike. This project enables organisations to access pro bono assistance through successful collaboration between specialist and general volunteers.

EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS): Coram Children's Legal Centre and Linklaters

"The project with Linklaters [has] allowed us to reach more children and care leavers, as well as provide crucial extra support for complex cases, ensuring better outcomes for more children and care leavers."

Linklaters partnered with Coram Children's Legal Centre to assist children in care and care-leavers apply to the EU Settlement Scheme. The aim is to ensure these vulnerable children and young people would have the right to live in the UK and have access to education, employment, benefits, secondary healthcare and housing. Any child or young person who did not apply in time was at risk of losing a number of rights, as well as risking future removal from the UK.

The aim of the project was to assist as many relevant children as possible by the deadline of 30 June 2021. Around 50 Linklaters lawyers were trained by specialists at Coram. Grouped into teams of two or three, the volunteer lawyers then supported applicants at all stages of the process including gathering documentary evidence and completing online forms. Those assisted ranged from new-born babies to young adults

transitioning out of care. Covid-19 limitations meant that the support was provided entirely remotely.

To date, of the 21 applications made, three have been successful and decisions are pending on 18 others.

Housing Advocacy and Access to Legal Advice Project, University of Chester

“This project is so important because it is allowing people at the heart of the problem to be involved in the solution by being heard.”

The Housing Advocacy and Access to Legal Advice Project is a Chester-based multi-party collaboration between the University of Chester Law School pro bono group and a number of local charities and organisations dealing with homelessness. Its aim is to support those impacted by homelessness in the Chester region.

The project takes a stakeholder-first approach and involves direct input from Community Inspirers who have lived experience of homelessness. This allows full and direct participation from those most affected by homelessness or the risk of homelessness. The project's work for 2021-22 will include the production of pictorial fact sheets to empower people on relevant issues such as tenants' rights, tenancy agreements, evictions and rent arrears and eviction challenges. The Plain English project involves a review and plain English “translation” of common letters sent by local authorities on tenancy issues. Additionally bite-size videos are to be produced along with face-to-face guidance sessions.

This multi-stakeholder approach enables all the agencies involved to help combat the cycle of homelessness and empowers those “in the system” to use their voices to best effect.

Maternity Action Pro Bono Partnership

“I just wanted to take a moment to thank you SO much for your email. I actually (embarrassingly) got emotional upon receipt of it because you have no idea how much I have been stressing over this and your email literally lifted a weight off my shoulders. I now feel I can direct my issues into the right avenues and in the correct way, as I don't really have a clue about anything like this.”

In March 2021 Maternity Action began a partnership with four London law firms to provide advice to women about pregnancy and maternity because their telephone helpline could not meet the demand for help.

Volunteer law students, trainees, associates and partners, having received training, log on to a remote online portal to pick up anonymised email queries from women seeking maternity advice on when to tell their employers they are pregnant, entitlements to

maternity pay, how to cope with a fall in income, what to do when left out of the loop whilst on maternity leave, and making flexible working requests. Every email drafted by a volunteer is checked by staff at Maternity Action to ensure that clients are receiving expert advice.

77% of people helped via the email form reported feeling more confident to talk to their employer as a result of the email service and 85% felt that the email advice had answered their query and felt more aware of their maternity rights and entitlements.

“People Like Us - Know Your Rights”: Toynbee Hall’s Free Legal Advice Centre with Allen & Overy, Bank of New York Mellon, Bloomberg, Cleary Gottlieb Steen and Hamilton, Duncan Lewis and Howard Kennedy

“Great advice. This information of what to do and how to do it in the case of rent arrears is very helpful and can significantly help resolve these issues especially when tackled at the start. Thank you for sharing this very valuable information.”

This project enhances legal knowledge and capability within the local community, utilising the legal volunteers and the community connections of Toynbee Hall. The project works by identifying key common preventable legal situations people face. Volunteers research particular legal issues and produce a written resource that offers clear information on people’s rights and advice on how to exercise them.

In total, the project has created nine packs of legal resources and explainers – from domestic abuse to redundancy rights, from co-parenting agreements to tenancy transfer. Each pack has legal explainers, practical templates, videos, social media posts and webinars that are shared across social media channels.

The resources are helpful for other local organisations, e.g., a food bank, housing associations, and a domestic violence survivors project. 86% of clients surveyed said they better understood their legal rights because of the service.

Pro Bono Intellectual Property Service, Nottingham Law School Legal Advice Centre

"I felt well represented, listened to and everything was explained to me in detail and professionally. Ultimately the decision was always mine as to how to proceed and I was supported with this and the lawyers thoroughly thought out my case and helped me avoid costly mistakes."

In September 2020, Nottingham Law School Legal Advice Centre introduced a new Intellectual Property service, supervised by a fully qualified Trade Mark Attorney, to help small start-up enterprises with Intellectual Property (IP) advice.

The cost of legal advice can often be a barrier for those wishing to launch new businesses or protect their products. IP issues arise relating to trade marks, copyright and/or designs. As well as an early advice service, they also assist with the enforcement of rights and the negotiation of settlements, including representation and assistance at commercial mediation.

In one case a start-up client was faced with a challenge to their trade mark application. The team were able to suggest options for defending their application. They reached a settlement which preserved the client's uninterrupted use of their mark, meaning the client did not have to pull stock and rebrand which may have otherwise been ruinous.

Most Effective Pro Bono Partnership

Afghanistan Assistance Programme: Ashurst, Reed Smith and Safe Passage

“As I was finishing a call, the client stopped me and thanked me for the time I took to call him. It hadn’t even crossed my mind that this might happen – that he, in his dire situation, would thank me. It was a very humbling, unbelievable experience... I will never forget this experience for the rest of my life.”

In the immediate aftermath of the Taliban seizing control of Afghanistan in August 2021, there was an urgent need for accurate and reliable information on evacuation plans, resettlement options and family reunion.

Lawyers from Reed Smith and Ashurst, in partnership with Safe Passage, responded to queries that Safe Passage had been receiving from and about individuals in Afghanistan.

The “Afghanistan Assistance Programme” was set up in just 48 hours, including the recruitment and training of 62 volunteers. Over the course of the August Bank Holiday weekend, lawyers picked up over 100 queries, including helping to register 50 families with the Home Office and supporting 18 individuals to write to their MPs. A team of dedicated “Home Office callers” sat on the Home Office phone line to register the families whose information was being collected from volunteers.

Asylum Aid with Akin Gump, Ashurst, Cooley, Dentons, Freshfields, Latham & Watkins, Morrison & Foerster, O’Melveny, Orrick, Reed Smith, Skadden and White & Case

“The project exemplifies an effective pro bono partnership between an NGO and law firms (which compete vigorously for billable work) to address a complex issue, inspiring other collaborative pro bono in the UK.”

An estimated 10 million people worldwide are stateless, including over 600,000 living in the UK and Europe. In 2018, twelve law firms working with Asylum Aid (“AA”) launched a large-scale collaborative pro bono project designed to address the issue of statelessness within the UK. A group of lawyers from each firm are trained and supervised by the AA team to assist individuals in applying for recognition as “stateless”. The firms also financially contribute towards the costs of AA.

Pro bono lawyers work closely with the expert legal team at AA as well as collaboratively across firms, sharing experiences, ideas and suggestions on how to ensure each application is a success. The project has assisted with 45 matters and thirteen clients have already been recognised as stateless or provided other permanent status.

In addition to benefiting clients, there is an important policy element to the project. AA uses the work of this project as a basis for reports and advocacy to simplify and improve the application process.

Bloomberg EMEA Legal and Compliance Department, Ropes & Gray, Simmons & Simmons and Willkie Farr & Gallagher

"We have been inspired and humbled by the intelligence, thoughtfulness, and impact these start-ups can have in combating climate change and pollution. Legal advice can be extremely expensive and we wanted to create a service where we could provide reliable legal support at a critical time when cost-savings can mean the difference between a start-up growing its business or having to scale back."

As part of its drive to provide pro bono support in the Climate Action space, the Bloomberg EMEA Legal and Compliance department created a pilot program to provide pro bono legal support to six sustainability-focused start-ups from Imperial College's Enterprise Lab.

The Bloomberg team, along with Ropes & Gray, Simmons & Simmons and Willkie Farr & Gallagher, created six "in-house teams" to address the legal needs of each start-up. Each team is composed of volunteers from each organisation, working closely with the founders, their teams, and each other, to provide legal support.

The start-ups include companies focused on packaging and selling carbon offsets on behalf of landowners undertaking afforestation; a start-up creating technology to capture and mitigate tyre wear emissions caused by cars' braking, accelerating, and turning corners; and a materials science company creating planet-positive textiles.

Equally Ours and Herbert Smith Freehills

"Facilitators from HSF adapted the delivery style of their content to audience needs and were able to make complex legal topics accessible and easy to understand to participants with limited or no prior legal experience. Furthermore, the HSF team were conscientious, engaged and proactive in ensuring that all access and learning needs were met."

This year, Herbert Smith Freehills ("HSF") launched a landmark partnership with the charity Equally Ours ("EO"), a national network of organisations committed to making a reality of equality and human rights in people's lives. HSF volunteers (with an in-house team of a major financial institution) created a tailored and comprehensive curriculum of legal training, designed around the most pressing needs of the participants (EO members) and provided fundamental guidance to help them grow their business operations and their social impact. In addition, HSF volunteers provided individual, confidential, hands-on mentoring for each member who were able to draw on not only their mentors' legal expertise and experience in the world of business and finance but also on their commercial acumen. Feedback from participants has been very positive, with many stating that they felt their mentors went above and beyond to ensure optimal outcomes.

Pre-action Protocol Project Partnership with DLA Piper, Deighton Pierce Glynn, Care4Calais and Human for Rights Network

"[DLA Piper] lawyers have worked in a responsive and efficient manner, frequently turning around pre-action letters in less than 48 hours to ensure that particularly vulnerable clients [were] moved. [They] were incredibly compassionate and responsive to the needs of the clients."

During 2020-21, DLA Piper formed a partnership with specialist civil rights and judicial review firm Deighton Pierce Glynn ("DPG") and two NGOs, Care4Calais and Human for Rights Network, in order to improve access to justice for newly-arrived asylum seekers. There was a particular need to challenge the provision of inadequate accommodation in Initial Accommodation Centres, including the former disused military barracks at Napier Barracks, as a result of being unable to socially distance safely, and poor food and living conditions. This can significantly affect both the physical and mental health of individuals at the accommodation, many of whom have underlying conditions.

The project focuses on drafting pre-action protocol letters (the PAP project) challenging the accommodation provided to particularly vulnerable individuals and families and requesting transfers. If the letters are unsuccessful, legal aid lawyers at DPG issue judicial review proceedings. The work on this project will continue for as long as Napier Barracks remains open and inadequate accommodation is provided to newly arrived families.

Windrush Compensation Scheme: United Legal Access, Ashurst and Ropes & Gray

"To date, more than two years after the government apologised unreservedly for the mistreatment of the Windrush generation, only 412 Windrush victims have been paid full compensation, despite more than 2,300 claims being submitted."

Sibon Phiri, the founder of United Legal Access ("ULA"), was shocked by the lack of support being provided to those wanting to make an application to the Windrush Compensation Scheme, having falsely been deemed illegal immigrants. Working in partnership with Ashurst and Ropes & Gray since October 2020 has enabled ULA to extend the service it offers to these claimants. ULA provides Ashurst and Ropes & Gray with high quality training and support materials and the two firms' volunteer lawyers work closely with ULA lawyers, assisting with every aspect of their work. The challenge is to reach those who need it most, so ULA works closely with local churches and community groups, and receives referrals from city councillors, African-Caribbean organisations, the Barbados High Commission and many other organisations with links to those affected. So far, the project has assisted 38 claimants. Other areas of assistance provided by the volunteer lawyers are through media reviews of Windrush related items in the press (to assist ULA with policy and advocacy).

ZEUSS Project: Praxis, Akin Gump, Baker McKenzie, Clyde & Co, DAC Beachcroft, Mishcon de Reya, Orrick, Simmons & Simmons and Skadden

“Applicants included survivors of domestic abuse, those with literacy or language problems, and those with mental health issues and physical disabilities, who would have been unable to make an application without assistance.”

The ZEUSS Project started after the charity for migrants and refugees, Praxis, reached out to pro bono professionals in February 2021, having become overwhelmed with requests for support. Praxis was concerned that the Home Office EU Settlement Scheme (“EUSS”) paper-based application process for non-EU parents/carers of British children (known as “Zambrano carers”) was much more difficult than the online system being used by other applicants. Zambrano carers have a right under EU law to apply without charge and immediately for Indefinite Leave to Remain under the EUSS, in contrast to an application under the UK Immigration Rules which takes 10 years and costs thousands of pounds. All eight firms involved in the Project immediately mobilised their resources and provided volunteers to work with Praxis caseworkers to assist 85 families (with 104 applications) before the deadline of 30 June 2021. As a result of the Home Office being successfully challenged in one Zambrano carer case just before the deadline, it has been agreed that applications by late Zambrano carers will not be rejected on the grounds of lateness.

About Advocates for International Development (A4ID)

A4ID is the leading, international charity that believes the law can, and should, be used more effectively to advance fair and sustainable development. A4ID aims to inspire and enable lawyers to join the global fight to eradicate poverty through advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)/Global Goals. A4ID wants to see the law used to its full potential to achieve the SDGs. With access to over 50,000 lawyers and more than 800 development organisations, A4ID has facilitated projects with far reaching impact in over 130 countries.

A4ID works with leading global law firms to align their pro bono practice with the SDGs. Through practical training courses, pro bono broker services and contributions to global policy, A4ID ensures that lawyers and development organisations have the skills and knowledge to use the law as an effective development tool. Supported by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, A4ID has also collaborated with UK government, judiciary and lawyers to strengthen the rule of law in developing countries.

SDG Legal Initiative

Since there is less than a decade remaining to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the legal community has a crucial role in realising these SDGs. By adopting responsible business practices that align with the SDG agenda and by providing SDG integrated advice to clients, lawyers can take concrete steps to achieve the SDGs. The work to realise SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) that focuses on promoting the Rule of Law, addressing corruption, participation in global governance, and developing transparent institutions, squarely rests on the competence of the legal community. A4ID is committed to support the legal community in adopting the SDG Agenda. As part of its SDG Legal Initiative, A4ID is publishing a Legal Guide, comprising 17 chapters, that highlight how the law can be applied to promote implementation of the SDGs. Chapters on SDG 13 and 16 are now available on the A4ID website.

A4ID's work has inspired and enabled lawyers and development organisations to use the law as an effective development tool. A4ID supports its Legal and Development Partners to use their expertise and apply the law to ensure no one is left behind on the path towards sustainable development.

Partner with A4ID

Join A4ID's network of top international law firms, barristers' chambers and law associations to gain access to pro bono opportunities to work with the vast array of A4ID's Development Partners and use your expertise to successfully contribute to the sustainable development agenda.

More information about becoming a Legal Partner of A4ID can be found at www.a4id.org. Alternatively, you can contact the Pro Bono Legal Services team at probono@a4id.org.

If you are interested to become involved in the SDG Legal Initiative or in knowing more about it, please email us at SDG.Legal.Initiative@a4id.org

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About LawWorks

Supporting and celebrating pro bono

LawWorks (the Solicitors Pro Bono Group) aims to promote, support and facilitate pro bono legal services that extend access to the law for individuals and communities in need and the organisations that support them.

We champion pro bono because of the positive contribution and difference it makes for individuals, communities and society.

We work (in England and Wales) with the solicitors' profession and our members, the Law Society, law schools and law students, law centres, advice agencies and others to develop and support pro bono legal services, and to promote access to justice for all.

While pro bono is not, and should not be, an alternative to legal aid - it makes an important contribution to accessing legal information, advice and representation.

We enable the provision of pro bono through:

- Supporting a growing network of over 300 independent pro bono clinics. We work with lawyers, advice agencies, charities and others to establish or develop new clinics, and provide on-going support, information, training and webinars and legal resources (including the online legal research tools Lexis®Library and Lexis®PSL);
- Our Not-for-Profits Programme facilitates the provision of free legal advice for smaller charities and not-for-profit organisations, supported by volunteer solicitors from among LawWorks members. We also provide free online training videos for charities, covering many of the common legal issues they face;
- We support more in-depth pro bono ('secondary specialisation'), in areas of social welfare law. This includes supporting solicitors to provide representation at First-tier social security tribunals, an unpaid wages project and, working with the charity Together for Short Lives, to provide legal advice and case work for the parents and carers of children with life-limiting conditions;
- Connecting barristers and solicitors to jointly litigate civil cases on a pro bono basis through the Pro Bono Connect scheme;
- Digital platforms and tools, including the Pro Bono Portal UK, linking firms and in-house teams to pro bono opportunities easily and quickly, and Free Legal Answers, enabling individuals to request initial or one-off legal advice.

Supporting litigants in person

LawWorks is a partner organisation for the Litigant in Person Support Strategy, working with Law for Life, Support Through Court, RCJ Advice, Advocate and the Access to Justice Foundation. Funded by the Ministry of Justice, the Strategy works to improve the experience of people involved in legal proceedings who do not have a lawyer.

Addressing barriers to justice: a 'policy voice' for pro bono

In addition to encouraging and supporting pro bono delivery, we work to address barriers to justice and to provide a 'policy voice' for pro bono – for example, working to address regulatory and other barriers to pro bono volunteering, and working with our members and others to influence policy on legal aid and other aspects of access to justice. We also provide the secretariat for the All Party Parliament Group on Pro Bono and Public Legal Education. During Covid-19, we helped facilitate an advice sector roundtable with a range of legal and access to justice organisations to discuss issues, challenges and legal needs raised by the pandemic.

Student pro bono

The pro bono contribution of law schools and students is significant and growing. LawWorks encourages and supports student pro bono (many law school clinics are part of the LawWorks clinics network), and the important contribution students make is recognised and celebrated through the annual LawWorks & Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards. The growth in the range and scale of pro bono activities undertaken by students is analysed in more depth our [Law School Pro Bono and Clinics report](#).

Membership of LawWorks

The support of our members is vital to our work. Membership of LawWorks makes an important contribution towards the achievement of our charitable objectives and supporting our work in enabling and celebrating pro bono and the importance of access to justice. We have around 140 members, including some of the largest City and International firms, national, regional and local firms, and in-house teams, law schools and charities.

We support our members in a number of ways, including by providing information, guidance and advice (for example, in setting up or developing a pro bono project), and facilitating pro bono activity and connections through our Not-For-Profits Programme.

Members have the opportunity to nominate for our annual awards and have access to our training, online resources, newsletters and networking opportunities, and have the opportunity to contribute to our growing policy work.

By joining LawWorks you will be supporting our charitable work to encourage, support and celebrate pro bono, and also our work to highlight - and address - barriers to accessing justice.

The fee depends upon the size of the firm or in-house legal team - with other categories also for charities and other organisations.

For more information about membership of LawWorks and the difference your membership can make, please get in touch with Avnita Bhandal, Administration (Casework) & Membership Officer, avnita.bhandal@lawworks.org.uk or visit our website www.lawworks.org.uk.

Other ways to support LawWorks

The need for our work has increased as legal aid has been cut and some law centres closed. Covid-19 has exacerbated the problems faced by disadvantaged individuals and the economic downturn will affect many lives for years to come. As a charity we are almost entirely dependent on grants and other philanthropic funding and this determines the scope and reach of our work.

We welcome both one-off donations and long-term support for our programmes. There are also opportunities to take part in fundraising challenges or to sponsor events. If you would like to discuss supporting LawWorks financially, please contact Kate Buchanan, kate.buchanan@lawworks.org.uk, or visit our website www.lawworks.org.uk.

Our special thanks to:

James Harper and LexisNexis UK for their continued support sponsoring these awards; the Law Society of England and Wales for their sponsorship and hosting the event; Salesforce; the staff of A4ID; the Rt Hon. Harriet Harman for kindly speaking; Sangita Myska for hosting the ceremony; our judges - Manda Banerji, Yasmin Batliwala, Clare Carter, Chris Minnoch and Paul Rogerson for generously giving their time and support. Finally, thank you to everyone who made time to submit a nomination and share the inspiring and tireless activity of the pro bono volunteers and champions in our community.

See you in 2022.

LawWorks

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The Law Society

LawWorks is a charity working in England and Wales to connect volunteer lawyers with people in need of legal advice, who are not eligible for legal aid and cannot afford to pay and with the not-for-profit organisations that support them.

www.lawworks.org.uk

 @Law_Works

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