



**Pro Bono
Awards
2025**

The LawWorks Pro Bono Awards

Wednesday 3rd December 2025

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Welcome to the LawWorks Pro Bono Awards 2025

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 2025 LawWorks Pro Bono Awards.

These Awards are one of the most valued moments in the LawWorks calendar, providing an opportunity to come together and recognise the outstanding commitment to pro bono across the profession. Each nomination tells a story of time, expertise and compassion given freely to help others, and together they show the profound impact of our shared commitment to access to justice.

Over the past year, the breadth and quality of pro bono activity have continued to grow. From partnerships between firms and community organisations to the work of law schools and clinics supporting those who might otherwise go without advice, the difference being made is remarkable.

I would like to thank our sponsors, LexisNexis, the Law Society and One Essex Court, for their generous and sustained support, and our judging panel for their thoughtful deliberation. My warmest thanks also go to all who submitted nominations, to those shortlisted, and to this evening's winners.

Your achievements demonstrate the best of our profession in action and remind us why the work of LawWorks, and of the wider pro bono community, remains so vital.



Lord Peter Goldsmith KC
Chair of Trustees



Order of proceedings

Time	Event
6.30pm	Welcome by Rosamund Urwin
6.35pm	Welcome from the Law Society
6.40pm	A word from Josh Giddens, LexisNexis
6.45pm	Awards presentations
8.00pm	Drinks and canapés in the Reading Room
The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1PL	

Host

Rosamund Urwin

Rosamund Urwin is the media editor of The Sunday Times and previously wrote about Brexit for the paper.

Her biggest stories including leading the paper's four-year investigation into allegations against the comedian Russell Brand, single-handedly revealing the Operation Yellowhammer papers about a no-deal Brexit in 2019, and exposing the Martin Bashir scandal at the BBC in 2020.

She was previously a columnist, senior features writer and the main interviewer for The Evening Standard.



Judging Panel

Clare Carter, Chief Executive, Access to Justice Foundation

Clare Carter is the CEO of The Access to Justice Foundation. The Foundation is a fundraising grant maker dedicated to increasing free legal support, advice and representation across the UK. Clare is a qualified solicitor with a background in legal aid family work and law centre management.

Mark Evans, President of The Law Society of England and Wales

Mark Evans is the president of the Law Society. Mark practised property and private client law for more than 28 years at a cross-border general high street law firm with offices in North Wales and Chester. Currently, he teaches various courses on real estate, private client and professional skills at the University of Law, based at the Manchester campus.

Josh Giddens, Director of Practical Guidance, LexisNexis UK & Ireland

Josh Giddens currently serves as the Director of Practical Guidance at LexisNexis UK, a position held since December 2016. Josh oversees strategic initiatives, operational functions, and current legal news offerings for key research and guidance platforms. Prior to this, Josh worked as Operations Manager and Legal Engineer at Falcon Group, with an educational background that includes a Bar Professional Training Course with Very Competent distinction from City, University of London, and a First Class Honours Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Westminster.

Chris Minnoch, Chief Executive, Legal Aid Practitioners Group

Chris is CEO of Legal Aid Practitioners Group (LAPG), the membership body for legal aid lawyers in England and Wales which campaigns for a fair, accessible and sustainable legal aid system. Chris has many years of legal practice, management and policy experience in the legal aid and advice sector and as a charity trustee. Chris' recent policy roles have included being a member of the Ministry of Justice's Legal Support Advisory Group, the Advice Sector Panel of the Administrative Justice Council and the Review of Civil Legal Aid's Stakeholder Advisory Group.

Professor Richard Owen, Chair of the Law Society's Access to Justice Committee

Richard Owen is a Professor of Law and Director of Swansea Law Clinic, a pro bono clinic, at the Hillary Rodham Clinton School of Law at Swansea University. He is currently the Chair of the Law Society's Access to Justice Committee and has been appointed by the Welsh Government as the Independent Chair of the Swansea Neath Port Talbot Regional Advice Network. Previously, he has been Chair of the Association of Law Teachers and was a Visiting Professor at Fudan University in the People's Republic of China.

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

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

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. She has undertaken work for the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime in this regard. In 2022 she was recognised in the Queen's New Years' Honours List for her work in Human Rights, Rule of Law and International Development for which she received an MBE.

Rebecca Wilkie, Chief Executive, Advocate

Rebecca is Chief Executive of Advocate, the Bar's national pro bono charity. Prior to this Rebecca was the programme director for the Litigant in Person Support Strategy at the Access to Justice Foundation. Rebecca originally qualified as a solicitor at Hogan Lovells and she is currently Vice Chair of Money Advice Trust, having previously held a number of non-executive director roles including at the Advice Services Alliance and Blackfriars Settlement. Rebecca holds a number of government and professional advisory roles including sitting on the HMCTS Strategic Engagement Group.

The Awards

- Best Contribution by a Small or Medium Firm
- Best Contribution by a Large Firm
- Best Contribution to LawWorks Not-For-Profits Programme
- The Jonathan Goldsmith Award
for Best Contribution by an In-house Team or an In-house Solicitor
- Best Contribution by a Junior Lawyer
- The Stephen Denyer Pro Bono Award
for Best Individual Contribution



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Best Contribution by a Small or Medium Firm

Covington & Burling

"In the current climate, when pro bono legal support can feel uncertain or vulnerable to shifting priorities, we have never once worried about Covington's commitment."

Over the past year, Covington's London office has dedicated over 16,300 hours to pro bono work, with 159 of its 166 lawyers actively participating. The team supported international organisations such as the Public International Law and Policy Group, and the Clooney Foundation for Justice, whilst making a profound impact locally.

Key initiatives include assisting children and families to secure UK citizenship through partnerships with Islington Law Centre and Kids in Need of Defense UK, and advising charities via the LawWorks Not-for-Profits Programme. Notable projects include support for a West Wales motorcycle club, a Midlands Polish community centre, and a Tower Hamlets women's charity.

Covington lawyers have also helped individuals challenge benefit refusals, provided support for US death row inmates through the firm's collaboration with Amicus ALJ, and delivered workshops through the Schools Consent Project, educating over 1,900 students on sexual consent law.

Through partnerships with UnLtd and Working Families, Covington continues to empower social enterprises and employees. The firm's unwavering commitment to pro bono work ensures access to justice and strengthens communities across the UK.

Hodge Jones & Allen

"The PI clinic provided by HJA is... a model of how pro bono initiatives can bridge the gap between education and practice while delivering tangible social value."

Over the past year, Hodge Jones & Allen (HJA) has partnered with 38 universities, a charity, and a local Citizens Advice to deliver a personal injury legal clinic, as well as partnering with eight universities to provide a contested probate clinic. These clinics provide vital guidance to vulnerable individuals whilst offering students hands-on experience through training, supervision and shadowing lawyers in remote hearings and client conferences.

HJA's pro bono initiatives also include sponsoring the University of Southampton Global Legal Clinic, enabling projects such as the McKenzie Friend Service and Form Filling Service.

Beyond clinics, HJA is innovating with an AI app, launching in 2026, to help the public access justice; and collaborates with Anglia Ruskin University on an Access to Justice award, encouraging research that raises public awareness of legal issues.

The impact of their work is significant: vulnerable individuals and communities gain free legal support, and students learn practical skills whilst developing a career-long commitment to pro bono. HJA's commitment promotes social mobility, strengthens university ties, and delivers lasting benefits to society.

Milbank

"Obtaining a fair settlement of pay owed to... individuals can make a significant difference in their lives. Just as important, it sends a strong message to employers that they can not take advantage of these individuals without any consequences."

In the last year, through its partnership with LawWorks, nearly 70 attorneys and trainees from Milbank have billed over 2100 hours to 20 different LawWorks clients, including unpaid wages disputes and assisting charities.

Through the LawWorks Unpaid Wages project, Milbank lawyers have dedicated significant time and resources to supporting workers who were exploited by employers. Milbank lawyers approach these matters with the same diligence and expertise as high-value cases, deploying the full resources of the firm to achieve justice.

In addition to individual representation, Milbank provides vital legal assistance to charities delivering essential services to communities in need. In the past year alone, the firm has supported 11 charities on a wide range of legal issues, enabling them to focus resources on their missions and expand their impact.

These efforts collectively demonstrate Milbank's unwavering commitment to equality, social responsibility, and strengthening access to justice for both individuals and organisations.

Pallas Partners

"If successful, this case could have significant implications for how political parties handle voter data and could potentially lead to stronger regulations around data protection in political campaigns."

Pallas Partners, an elite litigation and disputes boutique launched in 2022, has made an outstanding contribution to pro bono work. With thirty-three lawyers and six paralegals, the firm has taken on significant matters that advance civil liberties, strengthen access to justice, and support charities.

Notable cases include representing the Good Law Project in a landmark data protection claim against Reform UK, believed to be the first group action under Article 80(1) of the UK GDPR in English courts. Pallas collaborated with Cooley LLP and Norton Rose Fulbright to create a referral platform for the Access to Justice Foundation, enabling the three firms to work together to enforce pro bono cost orders on Behalf of the Foundation. Pallas have since taken four enforcement claims totaling £16,925. They have also advised several charities through the LawWorks Not-for-Profits Programme, including disputes over contracts and essential services.

Pro bono is embedded into the firm's culture: contributions are recognised in performance reviews, count towards associates' hours targets, and are actively championed by senior leadership. Recognition has followed, with Pallas lawyers named Pro Bono Champions and the firm shortlisted for Legal 500's ESG UK Awards, reflecting its deep commitment to justice and positive change.

Best Contribution by a Large Firm

A&O Shearman

"AOS volunteers are exceptional! They are dedicated and consistently go above and beyond for the families they support... Their work makes a real and lasting difference."

A&O Shearman has significantly expanded its pro bono practice over the past twelve months. The firm now runs sixteen access to justice projects, partnering with NGOs to address unmet need in family law, welfare, housing, employment, immigration, and refugee family reunion. Their work includes bail applications for vulnerable adults, asylum support for those facing homelessness, and citizenship and leave to remain applications through KIND UK hubs.

A&O Shearman's collaboration with Coram Children's Legal Centre on challenging permanent school exclusions, intersects between social mobility, racial discrimination, and SEND; and highlights their commitment to complex areas. The firm has also represented clients in over one hundred disability

benefit tribunal hearings with Z2K, securing more than £1m in benefits, and provided four hundred eighty pieces of advice to parents via Maternity Action's clinic.

The firm has advanced LGBTQ+ rights, racial justice, and women's rights, supporting landmark interventions at the European Court of Human Rights and contributing to advocacy with the Black Equity Organisation (BEO). The firm's transactional pro bono practice has grown too, supporting charities, social enterprises and Black-led start-ups via the BEO's F100 Growth Fund.

Brabners

"[Fee earners] are grateful to be in a firm which sees the value of pro bono work and lives its purpose: to demonstrate that business can bring about positive and lasting change."

As part of its mission to "make the difference", Brabners holds pro bono at the heart of its strategy to deliver positive and lasting change for the communities it serves. The firm focusses on providing high-quality pro bono legal support to vulnerable charities, individuals and social enterprises, often at moments of existential challenge. They have provided pro bono legal support to a range of clients, including a Liverpool-based hospice that provides care for infants with life-limiting conditions. The team worked hand-in-hand with the charity's trustees and staff, providing pro bono support to help stabilise operations and secure a new hospice site which offers the charity a permanent home.

Brabners have also provided pro bono support to the British Basketball Federation to strengthen governance integrity and disciplinary fairness within the sport. By applying their specialist legal expertise to the challenges faced by individuals, charities and social enterprises, Brabners aims to safeguard vital community services and deliver long-term impact for organisations and individuals across the UK.

Eversheds Sutherland (International)

"From the moment the case was taken on I felt we were in safe hands... every person in the team worked tirelessly throughout. The level of client care was outstanding, as were their legal skills and knowledge."

Eversheds Sutherland provided pro bono legal advice to the Mary Ward Legal Centre ("the Centre") over an 18-month period, advising them on a professional negligence claim from a former client. The proceedings

involved numerous interlocutory applications and court hearings, culminating in a six-day High Court trial during January 2025.

The case – Eversheds Sutherland's largest litigation pro bono matter during the 2024/2025 financial year - involved a monumental team effort by over 30 litigators who recorded over 1,500 pro bono hours on the matter.

In February, the High Court's judgment dismissed the claim in its entirety, fully exonerating the Centre. Speaking of their pro bono support, the Centre explained that the team at Eversheds Sutherland "went above and beyond to help the legal centre and provided exceptional pro bono legal representation." Without the pro bono advice, the Centre, which has been providing free legal advice to vulnerable individuals in London for over 100 years, would likely have had to close.

Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer

"In the past 12 months, HSF Kramer volunteers have assisted over 130 clients and provided the clinic with over 3,000 hours of legal support, helping positively change the situation for many clients."

Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer's pro bono work prioritises people experiencing or at increased risk of marginalisation, underrepresentation or systemic disadvantage, contributing over 28,000 hours of pro bono legal support across its UK practice last year.

HSFK achieves this by leading the housing clinic at Toynbee Hall, where it advises on disrepair, evictions, homelessness, rent increases and social housing. It also resources Centrepoin's Connect Legal Advice Clinic, spending 800 hours giving free legal advice to homeless 16-25 year-olds.

The firm collaborated with Crisis, helping it to build internal capacity by hosting in-person workshops to "hack" contract templates and resolve complex legal issues, and advising a startup that unlocked £300,000 in funding. Their work with Big Issue facilitated a major housing finance initiative, helping to unlock funding for community housing projects in partnership with the Greater London Authority.

Overall, HSFK's work has helped individuals secure safe housing, supported young people at risk of homelessness, strengthened the capacity of frontline organisations, and helped create systemic change.

Travers Smith

"I am very grateful and words are not enough to thank you for everything you've done. I am very relieved that this is all over and I can now continue to rebuild my life."

Travers Smith has a long history of winning compensation for survivors of human trafficking from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA).

Over the past year, it has represented seven survivors of modern slavery from four different continents. The application and evidential process are delicate to manage, particularly with traumatised clients, and it can take months (and sometimes years) of dedication to win an award.

In each case, the firm adopted a trauma-informed approach, including sometimes putting together all-female legal teams. Intervention in these cases permits clients to reassert their rights in a system that is not designed to cater for victims of modern slavery. They are some of the most vulnerable members of society, even before their exploitation, and are the epitome of someone who cannot stand up for themselves without significant legal support.

An award from CICA aids victims' recovery and helps them to rebuild a dignified future.

Best Contribution to LawWorks Not-For-Profits Programme

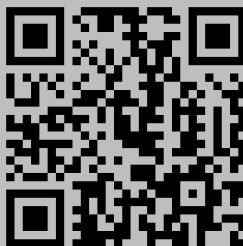
The LawWorks Not-For-Profits Programme supports small and medium-sized not-for-profit organisations that help people in need in England and Wales. Their work for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our society varies enormously but, for example, commonly deals with poverty, disability, abuse, social exclusion, and special educational needs.

These organisations are working at the very heart of our communities and would otherwise struggle to pay for legal advice. With the support of our members LawWorks helps them access legal assistance for free, thereby supporting them to help their wider communities.

Our nominees this evening are:

- Covington & Burling
- HFW

If you would like to support this award by donating to LawWorks, please scan the code below:



The Jonathan Goldsmith Award for Best Contribution by an In-house Team or an In-house Solicitor

BPP Social Impact Team, BPP Education Group

"This service is almost too good to be true – but it is true!"

The BPP Social Impact Team ("Team") is a dedicated in-house team of 13 staff, focussed on training the next generation of socially responsible lawyers. Together they deliver one of the UK's most comprehensive university-based pro bono programmes. Employed by BPP Education Group and spread across seven Law School campuses, the Team provides free legal advice, representation, research, and public legal education across 20 distinct projects.

The recent introduction of paid one-year QWE placements for SQE graduates has been one of the Team's proudest achievements, reflecting their ambition to make pro bono a core professional habit for the next generation of lawyers. In 2024/2025, the Team delivered life-changing support to 1,240 clients, providing tailored legal advice that prevented homelessness, stabilised family arrangements, and resolved complex consumer and welfare disputes. One example is their work supporting a vulnerable domestic abuse survivor facing fraud litigation after identity theft. Every project the Team delivered created measurable social value.

Their reach into the most disadvantaged communities, combined with AQS-level practice, powerful client outcomes, and a scalable, collaborative model, makes the Team a compelling candidate for Best In-House Team.

In-house legal team, nGAGE Talent Group

"Your support eased our worries and left us confident in our policies. Crucially, your one-to-one help means our policies are tailored to our operations..."

nGAGE Talent Group's in-house legal team of four provided pro bono support to the Community Lab Initiative CIC, a new developing charity with limited resources which assists Ukrainian refugees with employability skills, ESOL and community integration. The Team was initially asked to review the Charities initial policies but, they also helped further for example, providing a staff handbook for staff and volunteers, guidance on using volunteers, and a new privacy notice to accompany the data protection policy. The Team committed to ensuring that the work they undertook was relevant and

aligned with the charity's missions. Their approach and willingness to explain the 'why' behind policies and make any further revisions helped the charity to feel confident in their policies and empowered to approach future challenges. This allowed the charity to recruit new staff and see an impact in their work rebuilding the lives of Ukrainian refugees and helping them to integrate in their new home. The Team have since gone on to put this experience and work into assisting two more charities.

The University of Law Pro Bono Team

"[The volunteer's] advice was realistic and transparent... helping me to make informed decisions... he approached everything with empathy and understanding..."

The Team consists of 12 employed solicitors who collaborate to offer over 150 pro bono activities both locally and nationally. Their work has enabled 15,000 students to volunteer outside the university curricula to meet unmet legal need. The Team excel in designing pro bono schemes in pro bono collaborations. Collaborative projects include in Bristol, where the Bristol Ulaw, Advocate and HMCTS work together to support Litigants in family court proceedings. The Team have also collaborated nationally to deliver pro bono for example working with Shoosmiths, Womble Bond Dickinson, Paul Loynes, Mischoon de Reya and Disney on the Small Business Advice Line which ensures clients can be allocated to a clinic where expert advice can be provided. The Team continually assesses their impact and considers unmet legal need and opportunities. In September 2025 they launched 54 pro bono activities. Clients have praised volunteers' empathy as well as their expertise and the quality of the legal work provided to them.

Their work has enabled students to develop professionally but, also to understand the need for pro bono.

Legal, Ethics and Compliance Team (Europe), Visa

"Thank you so much for your support and for this quite exceptional advice."

Visa's Legal, Ethics and Compliance Team has developed a broad pro bono programme aligned with Visa's Inclusive Impact and Sustainability goals. The team works across LawWorks initiatives, supporting charities through both project work and the honorary counsel scheme, and collaborates with partner firms such as Morrison and Foerster, Baker McKenzie and Freshfields. Their work is coordinated through Visa's Global Pro Bono

Committee and supported by the Benevity system, which tracks hours and enables financial donations alongside legal assistance. The creation of a European Pro Bono Committee has further expanded opportunities for colleagues across the region to participate.

The team's contribution includes targeted support to LawWorks charities, research and education projects with partner firms, volunteering on asylum seeker programmes and providing free legal help at community law centres. Over the past year they have recorded more than 400 pro bono hours and generated over USD 10,000 in Benevity donations, directing funds back to the organisations they assist. Their work showcases the effectiveness of an in house team using structured collaboration and specialist skills to meet legal need across multiple areas.

Best Contribution by a Junior Lawyer

Hleb Buziuk, FairGo CIC

"He reimagined a clinic at the intersection of law, technology and community, and then shipped it, in production, to people who had nowhere else to turn. He proved that access to justice can be modern, scalable and human."

Hleb founded Global Talent in 2024 to support skilled migration and bring some sense to the complex process around talent-based settlement in the UK. There is currently no single tribunal process or right to appeal, with refusals often based on minimal evidence or reasoning.

Hleb developed a clinic model assisted by technology and AI to streamline every stage of the process, with simple queries managed by virtual assistants leaving the lawyers free to deal with the most complex cases. He has also created a bank of templates and resources to assist those who are unrepresented at hearings.

With over 274 successful endorsements in the first year, and 70 successful cases personally, Hleb's vision has changed the landscape for skilled migration, securing talent for UK universities, laboratories and other institutions. Many have returned as mentors to the clinic to further support others. The success of the project has been remarkable.

Caolán Duffy, Covington & Burling

“Caolán has handled sensitive client disclosure with empathy and professionalism, and his background in medicine has added valuable insight when interpreting clinical evidence.”

Caolán is a trainee involved in pro bono work since joining the firm. His work, mainly with and for children and families has been transformative. He has empowered many young people through his work on the Schools Consent Project, presenting legal concepts with clarity and empathy.

His immigration work has changed lives. Working with Kids in Need of Defence, he secured leave to remain for a mother and her three children, including a meticulous review of extensive financial evidence. He was also successful in a case involving domestic abuse, securing leave to remain on non standard grounds.

Caolán worked tirelessly to meet submission deadlines, going over and above expectations, and showing a high level of maturity and initiative. His client interactions were always sensitive and compassionate. The impact of his dedication has been life changing for his clients.

Catrin Norton, Hogan Lovells International

“Catrin is a rising star in our team. Calm under pressure, meticulous in her attention to detail – and fiercely intelligent.”

Catrin has been an active pro bono volunteer since joining the firm. Her work in supporting applications for Criminal Injuries Compensation has resulted in over £345,000 in compensation for victims of crime in the last year.

She works compassionately with clients who are often deeply traumatized and presenting highly sensitive details. Catrin is able to gain their trust in order to prepare and present highly evidenced cases.

The firm works with Victim Support and other agencies and Catrin is instrumental in supporting all 30 current cases. She has recently completed a successful judicial review in a case involving refusal of an award for historical sexual abuse. This outcome was remarkable given the passage of time, and has provided a new lease of life for the victim, as well as potential policy changes – which will help future victims of crime.

Catrin’s experience and skill enables her to mentor and train other lawyers ensuring that more victims of crime are adequately supported with their claims, and that the firm can continue this valuable work.

Nick O'Neal-Kenny, Linklaters

"Nick's leadership and coordination of a large-scale empirical research project has been instrumental in highlighting serious inconsistencies in how the death penalty is being applied."

Since joining Linklaters in 2021, Nick has contributed an incredible 1,600 plus pro bono hours, splitting his time between working with Amicus on death penalty cases in Florida, and Reprieve on death penalty cases in Kenya.

In his work with Amicus, Nick has co-lead a team of 30 volunteers tasked with tracking the inconsistencies in death penalty sentencing in Florida. He has also provided 250+ hours of training on death penalty law to this end.

In 2023, Nick spent six months on secondment with Reprieve's Kenyan death penalty team, assisting in identifying cases that were a high priority for resentencing following a Kenyan Supreme Court decision on mandatory death sentencing, as well as helping to build capacity in the Kenyan legal sector. His work included leading on the release of a prisoner found 'guilty but insane', creating a constitutional precedent in Kenya.

Nik Sharma, Dechert

"Nik was really outstanding...involved at all stages, with the planning...file reviews...interviews and report writing. His contribution to the project was invaluable."

Since joining Dechert in 2023, Nik has volunteered over 600 hours to a wide variety of pro bono causes. Alongside this work, he also acted for an impact investor in relation to a dispute where a settlement in excess of US\$1 million was achieved, one of his most significant accomplishments.

Working with JUSTICE and Dr. Jo Wilding to produce the report "People need legal help: The value of legal representation in the Windrush Compensation Scheme" Nik was instrumental in helping to streamline the review of case files and interview transcripts by relentlessly testing the use of AI and adjusting instructions to get accurate results.

His work on the Kids in Need of Defence UK and Central England Law Centre secured British citizenship for two children; he worked on three cases (completing settlement applications to also include 18 family members) as part of the Afghan lawyer resettlement project with the Max Planck Foundation, Clyde & Co, Eversheds and Squire Patton Boggs; and also worked on a successful application to the UN Committee for Arbitrary Detention to secure the release of a political prisoner.

Nik is currently working with the University House Legal Advice Centre to support a client with a disability benefits appeal and is part of a team advising a family in preparation for a coroner's inquest.

Jessica Tucker, Pallas Partners

"Jessica' is involved with our work with the Domestic Abuse Response Alliance (DARA). Throughout her training contract, Jessica worked closely with the wider legal team to provide urgent representation to survivors of domestic abuse, securing non-molestation orders in emergency situations."

Since joining Pallas in 2024 Jessica has served as Deputy Pro Bono Lead and interim Pro Bono Lead, covering a colleague's maternity leave. During her tenure in these roles, Jessica has lead on developing new partnerships with both the Access to Justice Foundation-working to secure Pro Bono Costs orders - and the charity Not Beyond Redemption which supports mothers in prison. Jessica's leadership has led to an overall increase in pro bono activity at Pallas, with fee earners now giving an average of 25.6 pro bono hours per year.

In addition, Jessica's own pro bono work during her training contract at Debevoise and Plimpton with LawWorks' Unpaid Wages Project and the Domestic Abuse Response Alliance, resulted in positive outcomes for clients such as Non-Molestation Orders and the set-aside of a default judgement order.

The Stephen Denyer Pro Bono Award Best Individual Contribution

Following the passing of Stephen Denyer last year, and in recognition of his gift for bringing people and organisations together across the profession, we are pleased to dedicate our Best Pro Bono Contribution by an Individual award to his memory. Stephen was a true advocate for pro bono work and believed deeply in the power of solicitors to come together to make the world a better place. The nominees for 2025 are:

Naga Kandiah, MTC Solicitors

“Mr Kandiah has consistently demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to justice and humanitarian support by undertaking several complex and emotionally charged cases entirely on a pro bono basis.”

Naga Kandiah has made a profound impact on the lives of some vulnerable members of society, including the case of AG, a disabled Nigerian man who won his appeal against deportation after 39 years in the UK.

Mr. Kandiah represented SJC, a Windrush grandfather and lifelong UK resident who was threatened with deportation and homelessness due to lost immigration status. Also COO, an 82 year old Windrush era grandmother forced to live apart from her family for over five decades. Mr Kandiah's efforts resulted in her right to remain being reinstated, allowing her family to enjoy the security and companionship she had been denied for so long.

He provides vital pro bono legal support to numerous survivors of domestic violence, and mentors young people and students, encouraging them to pursue a career in law, to make positive changes to society and the legal profession.

Mr Kandiah's work is an inspiring example of what it means to use one's expertise and position for the greater good.

Ben Kerawala, Reed Smith

“What stands out most about Ben is not just his legal brilliance, but the way he shows up, consistently, quietly, and with a deep kindness that makes people feel safe, seen, and valued.”

Ben has worked on Reed Smith's Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Project, notably the creation of state-by-state survivor guides for victims and those at risk of FGM in the US. These guides provide education and support to survivors of FGM, those at risk, medical practitioners and support workers. They provide both legislative and practical guidance to combat FGM.

He also supported Equality Now with policy work in Colombia and Kenya, advocating for FGM legislative reform. His contribution included producing policy papers on how legislation in both countries could be amended to discourage FGM.

His pro bono work further extends to the Prisoners' Advice Service, where he has provided free legal advice and advocacy on prison law matters to adult prisoners in England and Wales, including issues relating to bail and threats of violence from other inmates.

Through all of this, Ben's work has shaped the FGM Project's impact, which has been life changing and lifesaving. His dedication has advanced legal protections, legislative reform, access to justice and systemic change to empower survivors.

Emily Lim, Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer

"As a result of her work in managing the tracking of resentencing in Malaysia, following the abolition of the mandatory death penalty, we have been able to identify and articulate the need for new sentencing guidelines."

In 2023, Malaysia abolished mandatory death sentencing for 33 crimes. Over 1,000 individuals on death row were suddenly eligible to apply for review, but with no centralised information many had spent years without legal representation or even awareness of their eligibility.

Emily co-ordinated a team to monitor and track judgements from resentencing hearings, capturing emerging sentencing trends. She reviewed cases and produced a report for Reprieve, drawing on insights from monitoring more than 500 new matters. As Malaysian courts do not publish resentencing rulings, the database Emily developed is the only comprehensive record of the process, and has been shared with over 200 lawyers supporting applicants.

Emily also volunteers with Schools Consent Project, delivering workshops to high school students on the legal definition of consent, what constitutes a sexual offence, and how to check for and communicate consent.

Hannah O'Malley, Linklaters

"It really is very hard to express our thanks enough. The pro bono support provided by Hannah and team on this premises move, and on so many other matters in the past, was invaluable."

As a senior lawyer in the real estate team, Hannah is a driving force behind

Linklaters pro bono practice focusing on skill-building and embedding excellent client care into the team's culture. Ninety percent of her group worked on pro bono matters last year and she launched the team's first internal pro bono newsletter. As Pro Bono Co-ordinator, she has inspired record engagement across the UK and globally.

In addition to this, Hannah advised the Mary Ward Centre from acquisition to redevelopment of their new premises, managing complex issues efficiency, securing a modern headquarters with upgraded technology, improved transport links and accessibility.

Hannah also supported Eden Gate in securing a lease and developing a construction skills training centre for people facing homelessness in South Wales. She has facilitated pro bono support from the firm's wider Real Estate team for many non-profit organisations.

Hannah Owen, Charles Russell Speechlys

"Hannah's pro bono work has had a profound and tangible impact on the lives of her clients and the wider community, delivering outcomes that are both life-changing and precedent setting."

Hannah has dedicated herself to providing pro bono advice and assistance to vulnerable individuals in family law matters, alongside her fee-paying work. She has represented clients in complex, sensitive proceedings.

Through regular legal advice clinics, Hannah delivers specialist family law advice to individuals unable to afford legal help, particularly in advice deserts outside London. Her early, practical interventions have clarified rights, diverted cases from court, and broadened access to justice. Hannah's pro bono work has profoundly impacted clients and communities, achieving life-changing and precedent-setting outcomes. She exemplifies leadership and compassion, tackling challenging issues, advancing law reform and access to justice, and serving as a role model who supports junior colleagues with their own pro bono cases.

Hannah also completed a two-week secondment in Athens with European Lawyers in Lesvos, supporting asylum seekers through interview preparation, fact-checking, drafting memoranda, and legal research, directly improving refugee protection prospects.

Best Contribution to LawWorks Secondary Specialisation Programme

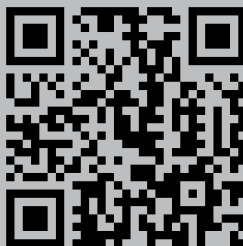
The LawWorks Secondary Specialisation Programme enables volunteer solicitors from participating law firms and in-house teams to support individuals beyond initial advice. Volunteers build up knowledge over time and develop expertise through structured training, supervision and mentoring provided by LawWorks.

Projects within the programme focus on areas of greatest need in employment and community care law, and use legal pro bono as effectively as possible to provide in-depth and broader support to those seeking justice.

Our nominees this evening are:

- Kirkland & Ellis International LLP
- Pallas Partners

If you would like to support this award by donating to LawWorks, please scan the code below:



Best Pro Bono Contribution in Wales

Bangor University Legal Advice Clinic

"The clinic has become a cornerstone of regeneration efforts on Bangor High Street, providing much needed services in an area that has struggled with economic decline."

Despite its recent establishment, Bangor University Legal Advice Clinic (BULAC) has made a profound impact on both its students and the local community. Launched in October 2024, it provides free bilingual legal services to individuals in Bangor and surrounding areas who might otherwise lack access to legal support. The region has long struggled with limited affordable legal advice, particularly in family, employment, consumer and probate matters, due to few large firms and its rural nature. The service meets urgent local needs, especially for Welsh speakers.

Operating from a shared adult learning centre on Bangor High Street, BULAC offers holistic community support while contributing to the area's regeneration. The refurbished premises provide a welcoming, accessible setting for clients and boost local footfall. The clinic delivers letter-of-advice services, blogs, and educational outreach on civil and family law, including domestic abuse and child arrangements. Its partnerships also promote lifelong learning, community well-being, access to justice and Bangor High Street revitalisation.

Cardiff Law School Pro Bono Unit

"They listened to me completely, were very understanding, and kind and acted like humans not people who were just doing a job."

For twenty years, Cardiff University Law School's pro bono unit has grown with the communities it serves. What began as a small initiative is now a wide portfolio shaped by real need, strong partnerships and a clear commitment to using legal skills for public good.

During the pandemic, the unit shifted online and created student projects on climate change and miscarriages of justice to ensure work could continue. In 2024, a new law clinic launched at the Civil Justice Centre for Wales in partnership with Support Through Court. More than 250 students have supported the charity since 2022, saving it over fifty thousand pounds while offering clients patient and practical help.

Long term partnerships have delivered notable results. Cardiff remains the only UK university to overturn criminal convictions through its Innocence

Project. Their NHS Continuing Healthcare work has recovered over three hundred thousand pounds for families, and their asylum and community projects have helped people move from crisis to stability.

Cardiff's pro bono work continues to widen access to justice while giving students grounded and meaningful experience.

Best Contribution by a Pro Bono Clinic

Employment Legal Advice Service, The Growth Company

"Our service is deeply rooted in accessibility, and inclusion. Of those we supported, 49% were from diverse ethnic backgrounds, 36% identified as disabled, and 54% were women. This demonstrates our reach within communities that are often underrepresented and disproportionately affected by employment injustices."

Since launching in November 2020, The Growth Company's Employment Legal Advice Service has provided free, high-quality employment law advice to over 1,200 clients across Greater Manchester. Delivered in partnership with eight leading solicitor firms, the service ensures access to justice for individuals facing employment law issues such as discrimination, unfair dismissal, redundancy, and pay disputes. Every session is delivered virtually, with appointments typically arranged within two working days of initial contact - ensuring timely, flexible access for those most in need. The clinic operates in partnership with Greater Manchester Combined Authority and is supported by trusted referral partners such as ACAS and Citizens Advice.

Between November 2024 and August 2025, the clinic delivered 317 pro bono appointments, offering an estimated £87,175 worth of free legal support. The impact of the Employment Legal Advice Service is also demonstrated by the 93% of clients who confirmed that the service helped them address their employment law issue.

Family Law Group

"Our pro bono activity fosters access to justice for those who need it the most."

Family Law Group runs a series of weekly free legal advice clinics providing individuals access to justice and guidance for their legal pathway. FLG also provides external clinic programmes across many prisons and refuges across the country, providing in-person or remote appointments for whoever needs them. To further support accessibility, FLG operates an out-of-hours pro

bono phone service 365 days of the year, ensuring urgent family law matters can be addressed promptly, even outside of regular working hours.

The impact of these free services has been transformative for individuals and families who would otherwise face legal challenges alone. The huge amount of volunteer hours from lawyers at every level has ensured accessible expertise across a range of family law matters. Individuals and families have been supported - providing clear legal pathway guidance at some of the most difficult times in their lives. Urgent advice provided through the out-of-hours phone service has crucial for clients involved in domestic abuse and child safeguarding.

The clinics and services have strengthened community connections and working partnerships with local charities, community centres and courts, to reach out to the most vulnerable.

King's Legal Clinic

"The evidence of the impact and quality of their work can be seen in the outcomes and in the responses from our clients".

In 2024–25, demand for KLC's services rose by 60 percent to more than 800 enquiries. Through the new Health and Homelessness Project and the Rental Discrimination Clinic, students supported clients experiencing homelessness or prevented from viewing or renting properties. The Refugee Family Reunion Project pairs law and biomedical science students to combine legal submissions with DNA testing and has already reunited two families. Students also helped domestic abuse survivors with non-molestation and occupation order applications through CourtNav and assisted Z2K clients denied welfare support, achieving a 90 percent success rate and securing £123,875.50 in benefits.

KLC's Human Rights and Environment Clinic produced a guide described as "no better single document" on taking action on behalf of rivers in England and Wales. Working with Southwark Law Centre, students supported survivors of the Windrush scandal on more than ten cases, helping recover around £500,000, and KLC's research report on the compensation scheme has been recognised as a valuable contribution to reform.

Legal Advice Centre, University of East London

"From initial contact to final correspondence, I found the team to be professional, courteous, and attentive to detail. The guidance offered was

clear and helpful, and I felt that my concerns were treated with respect.”

The Legal Advice Centre (LAC) is a student led legal service based in the Stratford campus of the University of East London. Situated in the diverse London borough of Newham the LAC responds daily to enquires in housing, family, employment, personal injury, special educational needs, probate, immigration and criminal law. Last year over 550 individuals were supported by the centre.

The LAC has established partnerships with law firms and non-profit organisations to widen their pro bono services. Developing an immigration advice service with their local council; their work with SHEWISE enables a weekly domestic abuse support service; and through their collaboration with APPEAL they have launched a pioneering initiative to support victims of miscarriages of justice. They speak regularly with their local MP and participate on a steering group working towards the creation of a unified law centre in Newham.

The LAC makes an invaluable contribution to ensuring access to justice to communities across Newham.

Refugee Rights Hub, Sheffield Hallam University

“The Refugee Rights Hub’s support changed my life. Without them, I would not have been able to reunite with my children. Their work has had a deep and lasting impact on me and my family.”

Sheffield Hallam University’s Refugee Rights Hub (RRH) delivers vital immigration advice from the heart of Sheffield City Centre, supporting some of the most vulnerable individuals in society. They fill a critical gap in the immigration and asylum system, where legal aid is increasingly limited and families facing separation can struggle to find representation.

In one recent case, a young person fleeing danger faced a Home Office decision that would have prevented reunification with their sibling. After contacting numerous solicitors with no success, the RRH stepped in, offering consistent support and clear explanations. They coordinated expert reports that strengthened the appeal, and the decision was overturned. With their continued help, a visa was arranged, enabling two young brothers to be reunited after fleeing conflict and danger.

The RRH’s pro bono support ensures that justice depends not on ability to pay, but on the principle of fairness.

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



Six 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. The nominees for 2025 are:

Legal Response International and Ashurst

"Ashurst's continued commitment to support us, and willingness to think creatively about different forms of engagement, has made a real difference."

Ashurst has developed an evolving two-year pro bono partnership with Legal Response International (LRI), a UK based charity that plays a vital role in supporting less well resourced parties and civil society observers in the international climate negotiation process. The collaboration is designed to contribute towards the need for accessible, high quality legal support within the complex and often opaque framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations.

A key element of the support to LRI is an annual four-month secondment to LRI, which this year includes a two-week placement on the ground at the COP30 negotiations in Belem, Brazil. In 2024 the secondee provided on the ground support during COP29, drafting briefings that demystified key concepts in climate negotiations, preparing summaries of COP29 outcomes, and researching and commenting on complex legal issues as they arose.

Ashurst volunteers also contribute LRI's "situation rooms" during key UNFCCC meetings, most recently in June. Where they undertake preliminary research on points of international public law, draft legal opinions, and produce real-time updates on the progress of negotiations.

AsyLex - Rights in Exile Platform and Covington & Burling

"What stands out to us is not just Covington's expected professionalism and responsiveness, but also their genuine commitment to advancing global access to justice."

Several years ago, Human Digital Trust (HDT) working with Herbert Smith Freehills (HSF) identified that Mauritius was one of several countries

retaining colonial era laws that effectively criminalised homosexuality and was suitable for a legal case. Section 250 was inherited from the British and kept upon independence in 1968, only shortly after the corresponding law was removed from the statute books in England in 1967.

The team identified a Plaintiff and worked with local activists to draft claim forms, gather evidence and attend the oral hearings. With the support of Mauritian lawyers and Tim Otty KC and Isabel Buchanan of Blackstone Chambers a case was filed in the Supreme Court of Mauritius. On 4 October 2023, the Supreme Court handed down their decision, finding section 250(1) to be unconstitutional and therefore of no legal effect. This victory has empowered the LGBTQ+ community in Mauritius, while also giving hope to LGBTQ+ communities across the rest of Africa, who are currently facing a heightened onslaught of persecution and violence.

UN Human Rights Committee Rulings on Reproductive Rights, Debevoise & Plimpton

“(We) are committed to using the power of the law to ensure that women and girls, not only in Latin America but all round the world, are guaranteed access to sexual and reproductive health rights and services”.

In May 2019, Debevoise & Plimpton, co-counselling with the Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR), filed legal petitions with the UN Human Rights Committee on behalf of four rape survivors seeking to hold Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Ecuador in breach of their international human rights obligations. The aim was to demand accountability, justice, and reparation for the girls and make visible the issue of forcing girls into motherhood due to the persistence of sexual violence and lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services.

Debevoise worked with the CRR, Planned Parenthood Global, Mujeres Transformando el Mundo Guatemala, Observatorio en Salud Sexual y Reproductiva Guatemala and Surkuna Ecuador to file the petitions in May 2019. In 2025, the Committee issued positive rulings in the four cases. The 2025 Rulings constitute a historic precedent and set new international law standards for the global protection of reproductive rights and freedoms.

Debevoise continues to advise the CRR on the implementation of the 2025 Rulings, legal communications and advocacy strategy.

Pallas Partners

"The importance of the work cannot be underestimated...(the case) is encouraging further debate nationally and maintaining a momentum for potential reform"

Launched in 2022, Pallas Partners (Pallas) undertakes leading international work between it's London and New York office with two projects standing out in the last 12 months.

The first is a project in partnership with the Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR) seeking to extend reproductive rights in Africa. Pallas worked with local counsel in Malawi to challenge Malawi's abortion prohibition on behalf of a minor accused of abortion when they were raped and became pregnant at the age of just 13. The team has spent over 200 hours working on this matter and have been successful in obtaining permission to submit its amicus brief and for the CRR to appear as amici at the substantive trial.

The second is in partnership with the Trevor Project, a leading American charity dedicated to preventing suicide in LGBTQ+ youth. Pallas have filed amicus briefs across a range of matters including transgender access to sport and medical care, as well as banning conversion therapy for minors. To date, nine briefs have been filed. Pallas's work on behalf of the Trevor Project has contributed to successful outcomes in multiple cases, including decisions from the Fourth and Fifth Circuits striking down bans on transgender access to school sports.

Travers Smith

"The teams' dedication to supporting Colours Caribbean - advocating for the rights of the LGBTQ+ community across the Caribbean - alongside a busy caseload of fee-earning work, demonstrates not only their dedication to this important cause, but also their legal prowess."

Since 2019, Travers Smith's Dispute Resolution department has provided ongoing pro bono legal representation to Colours Caribbean, an LGBTQIA+ rights advocacy organisation. This has included acting on their behalf in proceedings before a range of courts across the Caribbean and the UK.

Recently, the team played a pivotal role in Colours Caribbean's successful intervention to make written submissions in an appeal before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council that was challenging the legality of civil partnerships in the Cayman Islands. Travers Smiths' interventions meant that

the interests of the local LGBTQIA+ community were properly represented. This resulted in a landmark judgment, upholding the legality of civil partnership legislation and securing vital rights for same-sex couples - including the ability to have their relationships recognised in law, and entitlement to rights relating to family, adoption, immigration, pensions, and medical decision-making. There are now over 126 civil partnerships registered in the Cayman Islands under that legislation, all of which benefit from legal recognition.

The Pro Bono Connect Award

Sponsored by



ONE ESSEX COURT

The Pro Bono Connect scheme, supported by LawWorks, links solicitors and barristers acting pro bono on civil matters for individuals, charities and community groups who cannot afford legal advice or representation. Often a claim or piece of work may reach a stage where it needs input from a barrister perhaps by way of specialist advice, or representation at a hearing, or a barrister may benefit from the skills and support of a solicitor to further the claim.

The scheme enables solicitors to be matched up with suitably experienced barristers, and vice versa quickly. The effect is a seamless pro bono litigation service for clients.

Our nominees this evening are:

- Commercial Dispute Resolution Client Team, Charles Russell Speechlys
- HFW
- Mayer Brown and Matthew Parfitt of Erskine Chambers
- Morgan, Lewis & Bockius



ONE ESSEX COURT

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Commercial Dispute Resolution Set of the Year

Best New Pro Bono Activity

Ashurst and APPEAL Case Enquiries

"Their lawyers have helped us manage an overwhelming volume of correspondence from individuals seeking justice, many of whom are incarcerated and vulnerable."

APPEAL receives a constant flow of requests from people trying to overturn wrongful convictions, many writing from prison with no other source of help. Demand has surged since the Andrew Malkinson case, leaving the charity under real pressure to respond to thousands of letters, emails and calls. To help meet that need, Ashurst created a new casework partnership that now forms an essential part of APPEAL's capacity.

Twice a month, Ashurst lawyers work on site at APPEAL to review and categorise enquiries, prepare short case summaries, carry out initial research and manage follow-up communication, including sensitive Rule 39 mail. They have contributed over one hundred hours so far, as well as helping refine systems so the charity can handle its growing workload more efficiently.

The partnership has reduced wait times for vulnerable clients and freed APPEAL's lawyers to focus on complex appeals and wider advocacy. It also gives Ashurst lawyers meaningful insight into the criminal appeals process. APPEAL describes the support as genuinely transformative for both clients and casework.

Bangor University Legal Advice Clinic

"By empowering individuals with legal knowledge and providing practical advice, BULAC has contributed to enhanced well-being and stability for local families."

Launched in October 2024, the Bangor University Legal Advice Clinic represents a new pro bono model for North Wales, offering a focused letter-of-advice service that gives clients clear, practical guidance on civil and family law issues. The clinic was created in response to a sharp unmet need in Bangor and Anglesey, where advice deserts leave many residents navigating legal problems alone, including domestic abuse, employment disputes and consumer issues. Its bilingual delivery is central to its design, ensuring Welsh-speaking clients can access advice without barriers.

The activity is structured as two linked academic modules, giving students hands-on responsibility under supervision while supporting real clients at

scale. In its first months, the clinic advised 208 individuals with a single supervisor and eleven students, demonstrating rapid impact and a sustainable model for future growth. Alongside client work, students produce legal education materials and deliver street law sessions for local charities on topics such as domestic abuse and child arrangements.

eVisa Guide and Support Sessions Project: Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit, Clyde & Co, Dechert, Linklaters and Squire Patton Boggs

"Thank you for your incredible dedication and hard work in supporting such a wonderful cause. Your generosity and commitment make a difference, and we are truly grateful for everything you do."

The shift to digital-only immigration status left many refugees and vulnerable individuals unable to prove their lawful residence, creating acute risks of job loss, frozen benefits and homelessness. In response, Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit established a new pro bono partnership with Clyde and Co, Dechert, Linklaters and Squire Patton Boggs.

The initiative combines legal education with direct assistance. Partner firms produced multilingual written guides and a video resource, while trained volunteers delivered weekly clinics to help individuals create eVisa accounts, resolve technical issues and apply for confirmation of Indefinite Leave to Remain.

Under GMIAU's supervision, the project supported 295 people who could not navigate the system independently, escalating urgent matters to the Home Office where necessary. The activity has already shown how coordinated pro bono can address digital exclusion in immigration and provide timely protection for those at risk of losing their rights, homes and income.

Roundhouse Trust and Taylor Wessing

"It supports young creatives at a critical stage in their careers and strengthens our community"

In May 2025, Taylor Wessing launched a new free legal advice clinic with the Roundhouse Trust to address the growing need for accessible legal support among young creatives aged 18 to 30. Many face significant barriers due to funding cuts, the cost of living and a lack of affordable professional guidance, leaving them exposed when dealing with contracts, intellectual

property and the early stages of building a creative career. The firm developed a structured clinic model to replace ad hoc requests, allowing lawyers to prepare for expected queries, schedule appointments efficiently and provide focused support. The pilot, delivered over a single afternoon, involved around 75 pro bono hours and offered tailored guidance to ten young creatives.

Participants reported increased confidence and understanding of their rights, and the success of the clinic has prompted the Roundhouse to reassess its wider programming. Plans are now in development for larger, in person clinics and for legal advice to become a regular part of the Roundhouse Works offer, illustrating how a targeted new initiative can expand rapidly and provide meaningful, scalable support for an underserved creative community.

Sheffield Digital Justice, University of Sheffield

“It has been a rewarding experience contributing to this initiative and exploring the practical applications of AI in promoting legal accessibility and fairness.”

Launched in October 2024, Sheffield Digital Justice is a new initiative from the University of Sheffield School of Law designed to strengthen digital literacy in the justice system and address the risks posed by rapidly growing legal technologies. Working with around eighty law, criminology and computer science students, the project partnered with Citizens Advice, Sheffield Law Centre, local lawtech companies and international organisations to test AI tools, evaluate public facing chatbots, design resources for legal educators and develop proofs of concept for how AI could support advice clinics. Students also contributed to practitioner training by delivering sessions on lawtech and AI for the Sheffield and District Law Society.

The activity has already delivered practical benefits: improving digital skills among future lawyers, helping Citizens Advice understand how vulnerable clients use AI tools, supporting the development of Sheffield’s lawtech sector and producing public resources that raise awareness of the ethical challenges surrounding AI in legal advice.

It demonstrates how structured, collaborative pro bono work can help ensure technological change strengthens, rather than undermines, access to justice.

University of Southampton Legal Clinic

"The clinic has become an important resource for our clients, providing them with access to high-quality legal advice and representation that would otherwise be beyond their reach."

Litigants in person in Southampton were increasingly unable to manage court forms, procedures and hearings without structured support, leaving many struggling to present their cases effectively. To meet this need the University of Southampton Legal Clinic developed a two-part scheme with Citizens Advice Southampton and the Southampton County Courts.

Creating a Form Filling Service to assist with complex court documents, and a McKenzie Friend Scheme to provide practical, administrative and emotional support during hearings. Students received targeted training on court processes, client care and the limits of McKenzie Friend assistance before delivering monthly sessions at both the courts and Citizens Advice.

The activity has already delivered substantial benefits. More than 30 members of the public have received tailored help, supported by over 400 pro bono hours, with clients reporting greater confidence, clearer understanding of their rights and improved engagement in hearings.

Demand from partners has grown rapidly, with Citizens Advice requesting additional sessions and the courts expressing interest in expanding the model to small claims representation, reflecting the immediate value and future potential of the scheme for unrepresented court users.

Most Effective Pro Bono Partnership

Kennedys Law and Bright Tide

"The programme has really been fantastic for us because it's provided an opportunity to connect with so many different partners as we build our ecosystem."

The world's food system is at a crossroads. Agriculture alone threatens 24,000 species globally, and many marine fish stocks are overexploited. Every day, regenerative farmers struggle against financial and systemic barriers. Through the Regenerative Farming Accelerator Programme Kennedys worked with Bright Tide, as well as industry leaders, policymakers, social enterprises, and clients, to support 20 global startup farmers to tackle the evolving regulatory space, as well as climate and biodiversity risks, by building scalable, nature-positive solutions.

In practical terms, this meant providing pro bono assistance throughout the duration of the eight week Accelerator. Leveraging the expertise of people, twenty Kennedys lawyers and colleagues met with the farmers to look at how insurance could support regenerative farming and reduce investment and coverage risks, in particular how insurance could bridge the protection gap, mitigate risk and risk management. Following the Accelerator, two of the ventures (Chirrup AI and Pine Island Redfish) were nominated for the Earthshot Prize.

Cardiff University Law Clinic & Support Through Court Partnership

"Simply put, Support Through Court (STC) Cardiff would not exist without the core donation and commitment from Cardiff University... Cardiff University students are a beacon of support where otherwise there is a paralysing unmet need."

STC faced a crisis in 2022 when their Ministry of Justice core-funding ended. Cardiff University played a vital role in this partnership with other UK law schools, which saved STC's key support services for litigants in person in the capital city of Wales. Crucially, the focus of the law clinic service was informed by STC identifying their client's needs for legal advice in housing and family matters. This therefore became the focus of the Law Clinic.

The partnership has enhanced STC's service to their clients, STC cannot give legal advice, so now they can refer their clients to the Cardiff University Law Clinic. In turn, areas outside the scope of the clinic, can now be referred to a solicitor working with STC to provide initial free legal advice, making it a multi-faceted partnership.

School Exclusion Project, Coram Children's Legal Centre and A&O Shearman

Since 2022, Coram Children's Legal Centre (CCLC) have partnered with A&O Shearman (AOS) on a ground-breaking School Exclusions Pro Bono Project, dedicated to championing access to justice for children permanently excluded from school. Recognising the profound and lasting consequences of permanent exclusion, particularly for children from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and those with disabilities or special educational needs, the project works in an urgent justice gap, ensuring some of the young people and their families do not face complex proceedings alone.

The impact of the School Exclusions Pro Bono Project is profound and measurable. Since launch, the partnership has challenged over 25 permanent exclusions, transforming outcomes for children and families who otherwise would have faced life-altering consequences without legal support. Through direct intervention, children at risk of social isolation, diminished educational attainment, and contact with the criminal justice system have been reinstated, supported, and empowered to move forward.

The Chancery Lane Project and Ashurst

"We are very grateful for the support we have received from Ashurst. They have really boosted our quality assurance project this year which we hope will lead to wider adoption of climate-aligned contracting."

Ashurst has partnered with The Chancery Lane Project to support their shared mission to promote climate aligned contracting across a wide range of sectors and jurisdictions. Ashurst provided detailed advice on climate causes, glossary terms and legal guides to ensure these materials are both legally sound and workable for real world use across different sectors.

A major strength of the partnership is Ashurst's secondment programme, which places lawyers within TCLP for six-month periods. These secondees help review academic feedback, update TCLP's extensive resource bank and improve the clarity of draft clauses. Their contribution has strengthened the credibility and usefulness of TCLP's materials, which are now relied on by legal professionals in more than 150 countries.

Ashurst has also provided organisational support to TCLP by hosting the in-person climate risk hackathon at its London office in June 2025, bringing together professionals from a wide range of industries.

Through this collaboration, Ashurst lawyers have learned valuable experience while helping widen TCLP's impact and support the growth of climate-aligned contracting.

The Windrush Legal Initiative

"Winning compensation is not just about financial recognition; it's about acknowledging the injustices I've faced. Thank you for believing in my case and fighting tirelessly on my behalf."

The Windrush Legal Initiative was created to respond to the profound injustice experienced by Commonwealth citizens wrongly treated as "illegal

immigrants” under the UK hostile environment policies. Many lost jobs, homes, healthcare and the ability to travel, and were left to navigate a complex, traumatic compensation scheme with no legal aid. In 2021, eight law firms and Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit came together to obtain compensation for Windrush survivors. Since then, the initiative has achieved 22 compensation offers, totalling over £1.1 million so far. Through the initiative, volunteer lawyers work with GMIAU to gather evidence, draft statements and challenge unfair decisions so that survivors can secure the compensation they are entitled to. The partnership also brings in psychologists and forensic accountants to document loss and support clients receiving life-changing awards. A shared HighQ workspace helps the team manage files and monitor impact.

As well as casework, the Initiative raises awareness in affected communities, engages with the Home Office and contributes to media, research and policy reform.

The Young People’s Life Café and Farrer & Co

“The WWW folder is a gift for my loved ones. It reduces their stress, tells them what I want and they can have my back if I can’t communicate for myself. This brings me great comfort.”

In 2023, Farrer & Co’s partnership with the Young People’s Life Café was created to meet a deeply felt need among young adults living with a terminal cancer diagnosis. For many, the task of organising their affairs can be overwhelming. Working alongside the Teenage and Young Adult cancer unit at the Royal Surrey County Hospital, the firm’s Private Client solicitors provide clear, sensitive and age-appropriate advice to patients as they navigate end-of-life planning at an unimaginably difficult time.

From this need, the “Wishes, Wills and Whatever’s” folder was developed, to give young people structure, clarity and control as they consider issues such as wills, letters of wishes, guardianship and future treatment decisions. Volunteers also deliver in-person Q&A sessions on the ward, advise on complex mental capacity issues and support individuals on an urgent, case-by-case basis. Their support has brought real comfort to young people, many of whom say the experience helped them regain a measure of control and feel less alone.

About Advocates for International Development



Advocates for International Development (A4ID) is an organisation whose mission is to harness the power of law and the legal profession to combat global challenges such as the eradication of poverty. With a focus on sustainable development, human rights, and the rule of law, A4ID mobilises pro bono legal support to address some of the most pressing issues facing our world. By partnering with development organisations, governments, and private sector entities, A4ID amplifies the impact of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), transforming legal expertise into a powerful tool for positive change. A4ID brings together international law firms with organisations, in the international development sector, that need their expertise but may not have the resources to access it. Through these partnerships, A4ID addresses critical issues such as gender equality, environmental protection, access to justice, as well as economic development.

A4ID's Impact

A4ID's impact is rooted in its commitment to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which makes its work particularly inspiring for legal professionals looking to make a difference. By addressing issues in the legal and regulatory systems, A4ID helps establish durable pathways for human rights protection, inclusive economic growth, and environmental resilience. A4ID's extensive network of legal professionals from global law firms and corporates enables it to bring the best legal minds to bear on some of the most complex problems, creating long-lasting, change on a global scale.

A4ID also provides educational opportunities, such as training programmes and workshops, where professionals can deepen their understanding of the intersection of law and sustainable development. With both local and global impacts, A4ID's work requires lawyers with expertise in all areas of the law to play a part in advancing a more just and equitable world.

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 a4id.org. Alternatively, you can contact the Pro Bono Legal Services team at probono@a4id.org. If you are interested in getting involved with the SDG Legal Initiative or in knowing more about it, please email us at SDG.Legal.Initiative@a4id.org.



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 member firms and in-house teams, 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. It also plays an important role in driving forward innovative and nuanced responses to access to justice crises.

At LawWorks we enable the provision of pro bono through:

- Supporting a growing network of around 300 independent pro bono clinics. We work with lawyers, law schools, 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®+);
- Our Not-for-Profits Programme, which facilitates volunteer solicitors from LawWorks members to provide free legal advice for smaller charities and not-for-profit organisations. We also provide legal training for charities, through documents, videos and live sessions developed by pro bono lawyers;
- Supervising and training volunteers to undertake in-depth end-to-end pro bono casework ('secondary specialisation'), in areas of social welfare law;
- 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, which links firms and in-house teams to pro bono opportunities easily and quickly, and Free Legal Answers, enabling individuals to receive initial or one-off legal advice.

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

We work to remove barriers to pro bono and use evidence from the work of local clinics, our members and others to advocate for positive policy change to better enable access to free legal advice and to justice.

We have supported various fora for policy engagement including the APPG for Access to Justice. We also work with a range of legal and access to justice organisations to address issues and challenges that arise in the sector.

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 in our Law School Pro Bono and Clinic 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 160 members, including some of the largest City and international firms, national, regional and local firms, and in-house teams, as well as law schools and charities.

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

Members have the opportunity to nominate for our annual awards and have access to our training, online resources, newsletters and networking opportunities (including our annual conference and regional events).

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 membership 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 Sarah Yates, Membership Officer, membership@lawworks.org.uk or visit our website: www.lawworks.org.uk/join-us

Other ways to support LawWorks

The need for pro bono support has increased due to cuts in legal aid, the closure of some law centres, and the ongoing cost of live crisis, which has exacerbated the problems faced by disadvantaged individuals across the UK. As a charity, LawWorks is almost entirely dependent on donations, grants and other philanthropic funding, and the amount we are able to raise determines the scope and reach of our work.

We welcome one-off and regular donations; sponsorship of our events or platforms; and long-term support for our programmes. You can also leave a gift to LawWorks in your will or take part in a fundraising challenge.

The support of our donors enables LawWorks to sustain our vital work and ensure access to justice for those without means. If you would like to discuss supporting LawWorks financially, please contact Sarah Mweene, Head of Fundraising, at sarah.mweene@lawworks.org.uk, or visit our website: www.lawworks.org.uk.

Our special thanks go to:

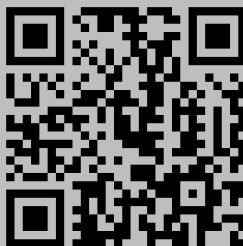
The judging panel - Mark Evans, Josh Giddens, Chris Minnoch, Professor Richard Owen, Paul Rogerson, Rebecca Wilkie, Yasmin Batliwala and Clare Carter - whose time and expertise have been invaluable. We are grateful to LexisNexis and One Essex Court for sponsoring this years awards, and to the Law Society of England and Wales for hosting the event. Thank you to the wonderful Rosamund Urwin for leading the ceremony, and to all of the fantastic staff at LawWorks, who made today possible. You have all been essential to the success of today's programme and a testament to the sector's commitment to pro bono.

A big thank you to everyone who put forward nominations and highlighted the amazing work happening across our pro bono community.

We look forward to celebrating again with you next year!

LawWorks

Consider supporting access to justice and future awards by donating to LawWorks through the QR code below:



The LawWorks Annual Pro Bono Awards
are kindly sponsored by:



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The Law
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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

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