



Student Pro Bono Awards 2026

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The LawWorks and Attorney General's Student Pro Bono Awards

Tuesday 28th April 2026,
3:30-5:00 Cholmondeley Room and Terrace
House of Lords

Welcome from the Attorney General



Pro bono is some of the most interesting work you can get involved in as a young lawyer. It is not a substitute for legal aid, but it embodies the very best of what it means to be a lawyer, a belief that the law should serve everyone, no matter who they are.

Throughout my career, I have undertaken extensive pro bono work for people who would otherwise have had no access to justice. It has brought me face to face with some of the most vulnerable people in society and enriched me beyond measure. Those experiences have shaped not only my understanding of the law, but my sense of purpose within it.

They have also strengthened my conviction that pro bono is not peripheral to our profession, but fundamental to who we are. It is why I am so proud to serve as the Government's Pro Bono Champion.

Today, demand for support continues to grow. The LawWorks Clinic Report shows that more than half of all clinics are based in university law schools. That matters, because it highlights the vital role that you, as students, already play in widening access to justice and supporting communities in need.

The law is not a sterile application of abstract rules. It is about purpose, and it is about people. That is what draws so many of you to this work, an instinctive understanding that the rule of law carries responsibility. You will not be able to say yes to every case. But the experiences you gain through pro bono will challenge you, surprise you, and stay with you long after. They will remind you why you chose this path.

To those recognised today, congratulations, and thank you. Your work matters, to the people you support, and to the future of the law itself.

Pro bono reminds us that the law, at its best, belongs to everyone. The most important work you will do is not always the work that pays, but it is always the work that matters.

So go out there and seize the opportunities!

Lord Hermer KC
Attorney General

Welcome from LawWorks Chair of Trustees



I am very pleased to welcome this year's shortlisted nominees to the House of Lords for the 20th annual LawWorks and Attorney General's Student Pro Bono Awards. We are grateful for the continued support of the Attorney General and his office for both the awards and today's celebration.

On behalf of LawWorks, I would like to pay tribute to all the students nominated, as well as to the teachers, lawyers, and legal professionals who support them. This work remains one of the most inspiring aspects of what we do and gives us great confidence in the future of the profession.

These Awards are a cornerstone of LawWorks' engagement with students, offering an opportunity to celebrate the innovation, commitment, and dedication shown by law students and law schools. The pro bono work undertaken across the country plays a vital role in delivering free legal advice to those who need it most.

At a time when many continue to face significant barriers to accessing legal support, it is encouraging to see student pro bono so firmly embedded within universities across the UK. Today is an opportunity to recognise that commitment and to celebrate its continued growth.

Each year we receive a wide range of impressive and diverse nominations, and this year is no exception. The award categories are: Best New Student Pro Bono Activity, Best Contribution by an Individual Student, Best Contribution by a Law School, and Best Contribution by a Team of Students, with winners selected by an independent panel of judges. We also welcome the winners of the Law School Challenge, whose fundraising efforts in support of LawWorks and Advocate are greatly appreciated.

Congratulations to all our nominees. You should be proud of your achievements and the contribution you have made to access to justice.

Lord Goldsmith KC
Chair of Trustees

The Awards

- Law School Challenge
- Best New Pro Bono Activity
- Best Contribution by an Individual Student
- Best Contribution by a Team of Students
- Best Contribution by a Law School



LawWorks and Advocate Law School Challenge 2025-26

LawWorks and Advocate would like to extend their congratulations and thanks to the 20 teams who took part in the Law School Challenge 2025–26. The energy, creativity and dedication shown throughout this year's Challenge has been exceptional. Together, the teams raised an incredible £20,161.37, making this our most successful year to date.

We are delighted to recognise Birmingham City University Law School as the winners of the 2025–26 Law School Challenge. Congratulations also go to Durham University and the University of Plymouth, who placed second and third as this year's runners up.

The other participating teams were De Montfort University; University of Huddersfield; University of Hertfordshire; University of Chester; Edge Hill University; University of Birmingham; University of Leicester; London School of Economics; Swansea University; City, University of London; Nottingham Law School; University of Cambridge; Bangor University; and the University of Glasgow.

We are hugely grateful to all the students who took part. From inventive fundraising ideas to sustained team efforts across the year, your contribution has made a real difference to the work of LawWorks and Advocate, helping to strengthen access to justice for those who need it most.

Best New Pro Bono Activity

The Fresh Claims Project

"We work holistically with many statutory and third sector partners to support our clients' entire wellbeing.....This holistic approach creates a 'virtuous cycle' whereby our clients are engaging better with outside services, which in turn improves the merits of their case."

The Fresh Claims Project comprises Cardiff University and Welsh asylum charity Asylum Justice collaborating to provide end-to-end casework on 'Fresh Claims' for destitute Appeal Rights Exhausted asylum seekers who have no recourse to public funds. The project supports clients from all over the world, including Sudan, Palestine (Lebanon), Namibia, Ghana, Syria, Somalia and Iraq. Funded by the Welsh Government, it offers advice on a first come first serve basis to all clients ensuring no case is turned away due to merits. Supported by 28 students, the project has taken on 14 end to end cases since Nov 2024, most of which are highly complex. Students assist with reviewing previous documents, identifying the legal issues in the case, undertaking objective research, sourcing and commissioning expert reports, and drafting documents before a submission is made. The project boasts a 100% success rate so far, and provides valuable skills to the students, many of whom go on to work in immigration law.

LSE Homeslessness Legal Clinic, LSE Law School

"The students have demonstrated a clear appreciation of the urgency of this type of work and have shown real dedication, often putting in additional time to ensure that letters are completed promptly and carrying out follow-up work to ensure local authorities are complying with their legal duties."

Launched in 2025, the LSE Homelessness Clinic addresses the widespread issue of "gatekeeping" of young people seeking homelessness assistance from local authorities. The clinic provides early, supervised legal challenge where statutory duties may have been ignored.

In partnership with Centrepoin and Shelter, 18 specially trained student volunteers work on short notice to support young people in need. Initial meetings are conducted online for speed and efficiency, followed by detailed written advice for the clients and a formal letter of representation to the local authority. Students go over and beyond including regular telephone follow up.

The clinic has supported 13 young people facing acute housing insecurity. Five have been offered accommodation. For many, the clinic represents the first time their concerns have been listened to and taken seriously, having a profound wider impact.

Students describe the Clinic as one of the most meaningful elements of their legal education where their work leads directly to tangible outcomes.

Family Law Clinic, University of Bedfordshire

"A woman who said she was left crying after representing herself in a family court described her relief to receive free legal advice from a clinic run by students".

The Family Law Clinic is a newly established, student-led pro bono initiative designed to address the growing access to justice gap in family law. The Clinic has already demonstrated meaningful social impact. By offering free legal guidance to individuals who would otherwise face family proceedings alone, the Clinic empowers clients with clarity about their rights, responsibilities, and available legal pathways.

Volunteers commit significant time beyond their academic studies, preparing for client appointments, conducting legal research, drafting detailed attendance notes, and producing comprehensive letters of advice. They also undertake client interviews, developing the confidence, empathy, and professionalism required to handle sensitive family law matters.

The significance of this work has also been recognised publicly: the Clinic was featured on BBC Look East for its efforts to address the pressing need for accessible family law support in the region. The University of Bedfordshire Family Law Clinic has had a measurable, demonstrable, and human impact: over 120 clients received legal advice in 2025.

University of Leicester Legal Advice Clinic Immigration Service

"I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for your invaluable assistance in helping me reunite with my family. Thanks to your legal expertise and guidance. I am deeply grateful for your time, dedication, and professionalism. Your support has made a significant difference in my life, and I am incredibly thankful for the positive outcome".

The clinic's Immigration Service launched in Feb 2025. The service helps to promote a strong culture of social responsibility and enables students to address a real community need within the diverse city.

The Clinic offers initial advice, so clients understand their rights and feel empowered to navigate the immigration system. British Red Cross and Leicester City of Sanctuary refer individuals to the clinic, identifying clients in significant need/facing barriers to accessing justice. The clinic prepares ECF applications, review documents for potential fresh claims, and explains eligibility requirements and processes. The Clinic also collaborates with Migrants at Work (MAW), who support migrant workers experiencing exploitation.

Approximately 26 students have been active in the clinic work. Many are drawn to the work by a history of migration in their families, and a desire to support others who are facing challenges felt by their own families/communities.

LEAP (LGBTQI+ Evidence for Asylum Project), University of Westminster Legal Advice Clinic

"I can say that without your help, I would not have been able to navigate the asylum appeal process... you gave me a chance to be heard and to be safe."

Launched in September 2025, LEAP is a collaboration between the University of Westminster Legal Advice Clinic, Rainbow Migration and Wilson Solicitors LLP. It responds to a growing access to justice crisis, with many LGBTQI+ asylum seekers unable to secure legal aid despite rising refusal rates and record appeals.

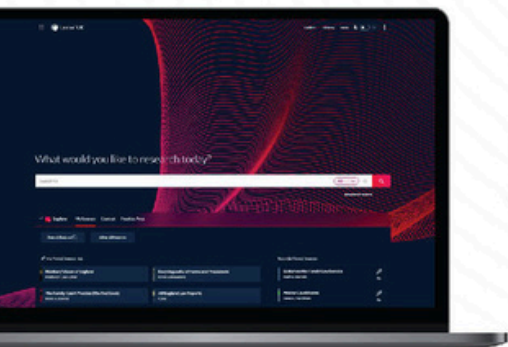
LEAP supports unrepresented appellants with evidence preparation, helping them navigate complex tribunal processes. Students work one-to-one with clients across the academic year, producing witness statements, organising evidence, and building coherent cases under specialist supervision. The project embeds a trauma-informed approach, supporting both vulnerable clients and students working with distressing material.

Since its launch, 11 students have supported 11 asylum seekers, many of whom had contacted over 50 legal providers without success. Clients gain clarity, confidence, and a stronger ability to present their case. For students, LEAP develops advanced legal skills and a sustained commitment to careers in immigration and legal aid.

Hey students! Time to get certified

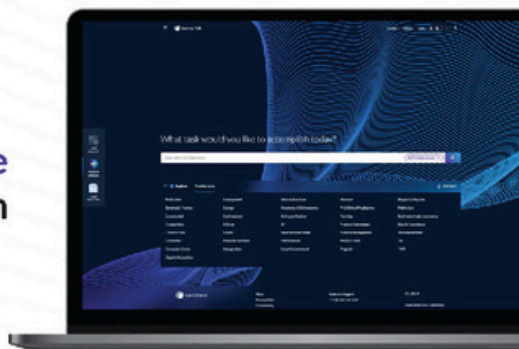
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Best Contribution by an Individual Student

Caitlin Amos, University of Exeter Women and Law Society

"Under Caitlin's guidance and support, this project was well organised, informative and ultimately extremely rewarding as we learnt our efforts had resulted in a 'life without parole' sentencing."

As Pro Bono Officer for the University of Exeter Women and Law Society, Caitlin Amos has transformed the scale and accessibility of student pro bono. Leading a society of over 500 members, she has created multiple projects that offer hands-on legal and social justice experience across local and international contexts.

Caitlin founded and leads Exeter's Amicus Student Law Clinic, supporting US death penalty cases, engaging around 50 students in live casework. Alongside this, she has developed partnerships with organisations including Twelve Period, tackling period poverty, and Project Shakti, supporting women and children through sustainable income initiatives. Her collaboration with SPACE delivers workshops across Devon, educating young people on legal rights and issues such as stop-and-search and LGBTQ+ protections.

Caitlin's work is defined by its inclusivity and depth. She supports students from diverse backgrounds through training, supervision and pastoral care, building confidence in complex areas of law.

Her initiatives have supported communities locally and globally while equipping students with the skills and motivation to pursue careers in social justice.

Tom Bird, Keele University Legal Advice Clinic

'His impact has not just been significant, it has been genuinely transformative.'

Tom's dedication, professionalism and commitment have been exceptional, far exceeding what could be expected of a student volunteer.

When their supervising solicitor unexpectedly left the Divorce Clinic, there was a real possibility of having to close matters. Instead of stepping back, Tom stepped up. He ensured that the clients, many facing complex and emotionally difficult situations, continued to receive clear, reliable, and compassionate support. He liaised with external solicitors for supervision, checked procedures carefully, and ensured every action taken was legally sound.

Tom also provided significant support to the Small Claims Clinic. He willingly took on new matters, delivered detailed and accessible advice, and helped clients feel more confident navigating unfamiliar legal processes. His ability to manage multiple pro bono cases while maintaining exceptional standards demonstrates his strong commitment to community service.

Tom approaches pro bono not merely as a learning opportunity, but as a responsibility and a chance to make a meaningful difference. His care for each client, and the example he sets for other student volunteers, have had a remarkable impact on both the clients and the continuity of their services.

Will Cleary, Coventry University

'Will's contribution ... has had a huge impact ... most distinctively, through his exceptional mentorship.'

Will has personally undertaken sustained, hands-on pro bono work with Coventry University's Central England Employment Advice Law Clinic from the very start of his first year and has continued without interruption.

Will rapidly developed the core skills required for effective advice work and became a reliable mainstay of the Clinic. He routinely makes first contact with clients, conducts detailed client interviews, records accurate attendance notes, identifies and researches the relevant legal issues, and helps to progress matters to the point of supervised specialist advice. He has also worked constructively with the Clinic's pro bono partners, demonstrating maturity, professionalism and an ability to operate effectively within a multi-partner pro bono model. He has also joined the Health Justice Partnership clinic, where he quickly applied transferable skills, and so increasing the impact of his volunteering across two distinct advice services.

Will's personal dedication is best shown through his additional commitment to recruiting, induction and training new volunteers. Above all it his support and actively development of new students through mentorship that the Clinic's continuity, quality, and capacity.

Gia Dhami, Birmingham City University

"What distinguishes Gia...is not only the scale of her contribution, but her leadership and ability to embed pro bono culture across the university. She has transformed pro bono activity into an accessible, visible, and impactful part of student life."

Gia's commitment to pro bono work is exemplified by her leadership of League of Justice, a student-led initiative overseen by Birmingham City University Law Clinic and part of the national Law School Challenge supporting LawWorks and Advocate. Progressing rapidly from volunteer to Vice President in her first year, and President in her second, Gia led a significant expansion of the organisation from 12 to over 80 active members. Under her leadership, the team raised more than £2,600 in one academic year through a range of events and collaborations.

Gia has contributed extensive volunteering hours at Central England Law Centre, supporting clients through interviews, legal research, drafting, and tribunal preparation, helping to ease pressure on overstretched services. She continues to extend this impact by coordinating and mentoring new volunteers within the BCU Law Clinic Housing Team, while also volunteering at Coventry Law Centre.

Gia promotes pro bono engagement through lectures, conferences, podcasts, and launching new initiatives including a national access to justice competition.

Josh Hilditch, The University of Law

"He has been superb throughout...He has had had huge impact on the case enquiry work and he will be missed by the team."

Josh is a widening participation and first-generation university student in the final year of his Law degree at the University of Law's Manchester campus. Demonstrating exceptional commitment, he secured one of only six widening participation placements with APPEAL, a charity that supports individuals facing unsafe convictions or unfair sentences who cannot afford legal representation.

Undeterred by a minimum five-hour round-trip journey from his home near Crewe, Josh travelled to London every Wednesday, self-funding his travel, to support APPEAL's casework alongside in-house lawyers and solicitors from Ashurst LLP. From September 2025 to March 2026, he never missed a single placement day.

Josh has made a significant impact on APPEAL's work reviewing criminal cases for victims of unsafe convictions, contributing to wider efforts addressing racial bias, injustice, and the social and economic consequences of wrongful convictions.

Josh has gone beyond all expectations in his commitment to his placement with APPEAL and has been a fantastic ambassador for widening participation schemes.

Brenda McNally, Ulster University

“... she does not merely participate in pro bono work; she strengthens, expands, and champions it.”

Over nearly two years with the Ulster University Law Clinic, Brenda has shown sustained commitment to pro bono work at three levels: direct client service, leadership within clinical legal education, and wider public-interest advocacy. Balancing part-time study and caring responsibilities for two children with special educational needs. She has provided high-quality legal assistance in employment and welfare matters, preparing tribunal cases and supporting vulnerable individuals through complex appeals. Her work is marked by rigorous legal analysis, meticulous preparation, and client-centred approach. One client noted, “I wouldn’t have been able to do this myself.”

As the clinics’ first Student Clinician Supervisor, Brenda has mentored undergraduate students in interviewing, case strategy and professional standards. Introduced a new triaging process, refining how it responds to enquiries. This has enabled the clinic to expand, allowing participation from a wider range of students, increasing the clinic’s long term capacity and sustainability.

Brenda’s work extends to systemic advocacy. Her research on the rights of children with special educational needs received recognition from the Equality Commission. This led to her involvement in policy discussions on restraint and seclusion in schools. Brenda’s contribution stands out for its depth, impact and lasting legacy.

Maria McRobb-Roldan, University of Southampton

“Her ability to identify the underlying concerns behind a client’s initial query and guide individuals towards the most appropriate support ensured that our clients consistently felt listened to and understood.”

Maria is a third-year Law student at the University of Southampton who has made an exceptional contribution to the Global Legal Clinic (GLC) since its launch in 2024. She has completed over 400 pro bono hours while maintaining strong academic results, part-time work, and managing a health condition, quickly progressing into a leadership role as International Projects Lead.

She has driven impactful international work with the South Asia Democratic Forum, contributing to legislative drafting and advocacy to protect minority rights in Bangladesh. Alongside this, her 163 hours with Citizens Advice Southampton have supported vulnerable clients with housing, financial, and legal issues, while increasing the service's capacity to reach more people.

Maria has also strengthened the Clinic internally, recruiting 80 new advisors and mentoring students, while helping to develop a new representation unit for litigants in person. Her professionalism, leadership, and commitment to access to justice have had a clear and lasting impact, marking her out as an outstanding student pro bono volunteer.

Pardis Pasdar, King's College London

"Pardis's passion and commitment to the client shines through everything she does, and even when the case was subject to delays and difficulties, she consistently showed up to move it forward."

Pardis has played a central role in the development and delivery of two new and demanding pro bono projects: the Refugee Family Reunion project and the Health & Homelessness project.

Pardis worked intensively on a complex refugee family reunion case involving vulnerable Afghan children. Over 12 months, she contributed to all aspects of casework and was Team Leader at the clinic. What distinguishes Pardis is not only the quality of her work, but her exceptional personal commitment.

As other students were stepping away from the RFR project, Pardis remained fully engaged and effectively became the sole student working on the case. Pardis' impact is equally evident in her work with the Health & Homelessness project, where she has been working directly with hospital patients experiencing homelessness or unsafe housing conditions. By assisting patients prior to hospital discharge, Pardis has contributed to improved access to safer accommodation, supporting both legal and health outcomes and reducing the risk of repeat crises.

Best Contribution by a Team of Students

Legal Advocacy Support Project, Bristol Law Centre

"They helped prepare me for what was going to happen at every stage. Without them, I would have given up. They also treated me as a person and not just a number."

Legal Advocacy Support Project' (LASP) provides representation to disabled people seeking to appeal DWP decisions on PIP benefits at First-Tier Tribunal. Students volunteer for at least a year, with the intention to expose volunteers to the stages of managing a case, to provide experience of interacting with the tribunal system and to highlight the importance of client care. One of the key benefits of this project is that it has the potential for capacity building and scaling-up, whilst also providing students with a meaningful and unique opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in social welfare law.

Many clients attest to being repeatedly disbelieved, to feeling hopeless and experiencing a loss of agency as adverse decisions are made against them. The project focuses on making people feel heard and understood, providing dignity through a protracted and often unfair process and ensuring people who are in need have someone fighting their corner. The project's success rate is consistently over 80%, showing that specialist legal advice can turn people's lives around.

LSE Legal Advice Clinic Team, LSE Law School

"An incredible service delivered far beyond my expectation. I cannot recommend the LSE Legal Advice Clinic highly enough and long may they continue with the invaluable support they offer"

The LSE Legal Advice Clinic delivers a high-quality service addressing significant unmet legal need in family, employment, public protest, homelessness and domestic abuse matters. The team comprises around 80 trained Student Advisers and 30 Clinic Volunteers, supported by Clinic staff and more than 30 external supervising lawyers.

Students are central to every stage of delivery: managing enquiries, preparing files, interviewing clients and producing carefully reasoned written advice. Regular team meetings promote shared learning and provide peer support, particularly important given the sensitive nature of many cases. Since launching in January 2025, the team has supported more than 100 clients.

The impact, however, extends beyond providing advice on individual cases, with students developing confidence in interviewing, legal analysis and ethical practice, supported by structured reflection meetings that promote sustainability. Through disciplined teamwork, shared accountability and sustained dedication, this group of students has delivered high-quality legal support to individuals who might otherwise have nowhere to turn.

Knife Crime Prevention Policy Law Clinic with the Josh Hanson Trust, Lancaster University, the Open University and University of Lancashire

"[The universities'] invaluable support...has been instrumental in amplifying our campaign calling for victims' rights. Their dedication and the tangible impact of their pro bono work have significantly strengthened our efforts, allowing us to reach further and advocate more effectively"

The Knife Crime Prevention Policy Law Clinic was founded in response to a request from Tracey Hanson, the founder and CEO of the Josh Hanson Trust which campaigns for victims' rights. Tracey asked Law students from the Open University, Lancaster University and the University of Lancashire to collaborate to produce a research report regarding the operation of the unduly lenient scheme, which allows anyone to ask the Attorney General for for a review of sentences within 28 days of sentencing.

The three institutions recruited around 40 Law students to work on the project, with students conducting extensive legal research and drafting sections of the client report under the supervision of their allocated Policy Clinic supervisor.

The Clinic is ambitious because of its public-facing, cross-institutional nature and impact. The students' commitment to researching the law and working together resulted in the creation of a compelling research report, which has been used by the charity to lobby the government for law reform.

Reach out to Sanctuary Seekers, University of Chester

"Immigration is a sector that is massively under-funded, and the support provided by the students is hugely appreciated"

Students devised systems to alleviate the administrative burden encountered by immigration advisers, assisting with matters that do not require Immigration Advice Authority accreditation. This freed up the immigration advisers to

undertake work for which accreditation is required, most importantly in assisting individuals applying for asylum.

Students attended drop-in sessions across the borough to provide a triaging service. This assistance alleviated the pressure on the sessions as students speak to service users to understand their query prior to passing their triage notes to Move On Support Officers. This ensures MOSOs can maximize the number of service users they assist in any one drop-in session.

In 2025, student volunteers dedicated hundreds of hours to plugging the gap in services, making a significant difference to the lives of those who have fled serious threats to their safety, freedom, or survival.

Students also devised recommendations for enhancements to the service offered to sanctuary seekers across the borough. This will result in more effective support for the hundreds of sanctuary seekers who seek assistance each year.

Junior Lawyers Against Poverty Southampton, University of Southampton

“The team’s dedication and the time and energy they commit to pro bono work is remarkable. The team has become a genuine champion for people in Southampton and their access to justice.”

The team of 20 students support asylum seekers, individuals experiencing workplace discrimination, and those whose first language is not English. They run a McKenzie Friend Project, supporting litigants in person at Southampton Law Courts through monthly court attendances, offering emotional support and improving access to justice.

They have a Court Form-Filling Service in partnership with Citizens Advice Southampton, where students help clients complete complex forms like C100 and C2. In addition, they offer a Pro Bono Business Advice Hub, providing legal guidance to local entrepreneurs on trademarks, compliance, and commercial regulation. They also offer Small Claims Court Representation, with students trained to provide advocacy and minimise delays caused by procedural misunderstandings.

In 2025, the team partnered with CaseCraft AI to develop a pioneering digital dispute resolution hub for small claims, the first collaboration of its kind in England and Wales. Their collaborative work has led to a second digital hub due to launch with Citizens Advice Southampton in April 2026.

Student Outdoor Clerks, Criminal Justice Law Clinic, University of Sussex

"It [SOC] has bridged the often-wide gap between academic study and real-world application"

The SOC project is part of the Criminal Justice Law Clinic within the CLE module. It involves final-year law students providing pro bono legal assistance, enhancing their understanding of access to justice. It also enables participation from students with caring or work commitments.

Piloted in summer 2025, the project draws on the clinic lead's experience of clerking and awareness of the impact of legal aid cuts, which have reduced the availability of clerks despite their vital role supporting defendants, witnesses, and counsel, facilitating communication, and assisting trial preparation.

The project aims to support an overstretched criminal justice system and encourage careers in publicly funded defence. Development included partnerships with local defence firms, case management systems, and bespoke training, with students supported in court.

Feedback highlights the project's dual benefit: valuable experiential learning for students and essential support for local defence firms, improving professional development and contributing positively to the quality of justice.



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Best Contribution by a Law School

Cardiff University Law School Pro Bono Unit

"They were wonderful. I felt able to talk about everything I needed too. They were understanding and caring."

Cardiff University Law School's pro bono unit celebrated its twentieth anniversary last year, testament to the longevity, resilience and breadth of its award-winning portfolio, underpinned by university investment.

Over time, it has evolved in response to local need, adapting during the pandemic by moving online and focusing on climate change and miscarriages of justice, ensuring continued progress. Post-pandemic investment enabled the launch of a new clinic at the Civil Justice Centre for Wales.

Partnership is central, with a wide range of social justice and commercial schemes supported by professionals and alumni, addressing diverse unmet need. The law school has students from across all programmes, with strong demand for pro bono opportunities. Where places are limited, students can join skills-based programmes in interviewing and negotiation.

Investment continues through new partnerships and a law clinic triage scheme, where students respond to public queries and signpost support.

LawIRL services at The City Law School

"The service has become a lifeline to many vulnerable people... providing a fantastic level of support to our vulnerable client group."

The City Law School's Law in Real Life (LawIRL) programme represents a significant, institution-wide commitment to widening access to justice. Bringing together students, academics, legal professionals and community organisations, LawIRL delivers coordinated, real-world legal support through a portfolio of 11 student-led projects addressing unmet need across London and beyond.

With nearly one third of the student body engaged in pro bono activity, LawIRL embeds access to justice at the core of legal education. Its partnership model, spanning law firms, chambers and community organisations, enables the delivery of supervised legal assistance at scale while maintaining high professional standards.

Services respond directly to systemic gaps in provision, from housing disrepair and welfare benefits to immigration, school exclusions and IPP appeals. Clients receive early, practical support, securing financial awards, improving housing

conditions, and navigating complex legal processes with greater confidence. By combining education with direct service delivery, LawURL not only strengthens access to justice but also shapes future lawyers to see pro bono as fundamental to their professional role.

LSE Legal Advice Centre

"The entire experience was fantastic - from communication with the people covering the admin side, to the initial meeting with the students and a follow-up call with their supervising lawyer to the final letter of advice."

LSE Law School has developed a comprehensive pro bono programme through its Legal Advice Centre, engaging over a quarter of its student body. With 238 students participating across ten distinct projects, the programme integrates access to justice into the student experience.

At its core is the Legal Advice Clinic, which provides free advice in areas including employment, family, and personal injury law. Rapidly growing demand has led to expanded capacity, with the Clinic now supporting multiple clients each week who would otherwise struggle to access legal help. Specialist services, including the Homelessness Legal Clinic and Domestic Abuse Legal Clinic, target particularly vulnerable groups, delivering timely, trauma-informed support in partnership with organisations such as Shelter, Centrepoin and Advance.

The programme extends beyond individual casework into systemic impact, with students contributing to policy reform and environmental justice initiatives through partnerships with organisations such as Justice and ClientEarth. Supported by strong institutional investment and professional supervision, LSE's model delivers both immediate client outcomes and long-term contributions to access to justice.

Sheffield Hallam University

"It has been a transformative experience academically and personally, handling real cases taught me skills a textbook can't."

Over the past academic year, students at Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) contributed more than 30,000 hours of supervised pro bono legal work, providing assistance in family law, Criminal Injuries Compensation, criminal appeals, prisoners' rights, civil disputes, and immigration matters. Delivered through the Hallam Legal Advice Centre and Justice Hubs, this work delivers

measurable social impact while preparing practice-ready graduates with a strong understanding of ethical responsibility.

Each year, more than 300 students take part in supervised pro bono activity, reflecting a sustainable and embedded approach that positions SHU as a leading contributor to pro bono nationally. The Refugee Rights Hub has supported over 2,700 clients worldwide and achieved a success rate exceeding 90%. Uniquely among university clinics, the Hub conducts its own appeal work, ensuring continuity of representation in complex cases where specialist legal support is limited.

SHU's model combines scale of student engagement, specialist supervision, and innovation. By embedding pro bono across the entire final-year cohort and investing in supervision and infrastructure, SHU operates not only as a provider of student experience but as a sustained contributor to access to justice.

The University of Portsmouth School of Law

"As someone whose family had legal struggles growing up, being able to offer better support and access to justice to those who otherwise could not, is a really rewarding experience."

The University of Portsmouth School of Law has developed a wide-ranging community-centred pro bono programme that responds directly to local legal need while offering transformative experiential learning across all stages of study.

Its flagship General Legal Advice Clinic supports more than 350 clients each academic year. The school has expanded its provision through an innovative, tiered volunteering model spanning Levels 4, 5, 6 and postgraduate study. This structure ensures that over 300 of the school's 600+ students participate, demonstrating both scale and long-term sustainability.

Over the past 16 months, students have contributed over 10,000 hours of supervised pro bono work, supporting at least 500 clients. Students have assisted international students exploited into unsafe housing, helped an elderly couple facing an order for sale during end-of-life care, and prepared evidence to set aside default judgment where the client's mental health prevented timely court engagement. Clients report students helped them to understand their options and regain confidence in moments of distress. For students, participation often becomes the defining experience of their degree.

The University of Law Pro Bono Department

“What stood out most was [the student adviser’s] kindness and compassion. Despite the complexities of the situation, he approached everything with empathy and understanding, making an overwhelming process feel more manageable.”

The University of Law demonstrated its dedication to pro bono by employing 11 in-house Supervising Solicitors to design and deliver pro bono programmes at each of its 18 campuses. This supports and supervises over 15,000 students aspiring to enhance their education via clinical learning and play their part in helping access to justice. The in-house team has collaborated to offer over 150 pro bono activities in the last year, affording members of the public access to vital legal advice and assistance. At the start of this academic year, over 53 pro bono activities were launched, including targeted local community advice schemes. On average, the University of Law clinics have provided advice appointments to over 15 clients per week during term time, ranging from support to navigate employment tribunals, to wills and probate advice, through to advice on family law children matters.

Thank you to our Judges

- **I.Stephanie Boyce** (Hon.Causa) CBE FKC, Former President of the Law Society
- **Josh Giddens**, Director of Practical Guidance, LexisNexis
- **Deborah Smith**, Executive Director & Senior Counsel, Goldman Sachs
- **Marina Faggonato**, Joint Chair - Pro Bono & Social Responsibility Committee, Bar Council
- **Mark Evans**, President, The Law Society
- **Toby Brown**, Chair of National Pro Bono Week and Member of the Bar Council Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee



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.

£20

could help train a
volunteer adviser.

£50

helps a small
charity access free
legal advice

£100

helps a community
access a weekly free
legal advice clinic.



The LawWorks & Attorney General's Student Pro Bono Awards are kindly sponsored by:



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

[LinkedIn.com/company/LawWorks](https://www.linkedin.com/company/LawWorks)

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