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INTERNATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 2025

A conference presented by the IBA European Regional Forum, supported by
the IBA Closely Held Companies Committee and the IBA Corporate Counsel Forum

8th Annual IBA European Start-up Conference

24–25 September 2025, Grande Real Villa Itália Hotel & Spa, Cascais, Portugal

Working programme

All speaker materials and biographies can be found at www.ibanet.org/conference-details/conf2662

Conference Co-Chairs

Robrecht Coppens *Loyens & Loeff, Brussels; Secretary, IBA European Regional Forum*

Emma Dansbo *Cirio, Stockholm; Membership Officer, IBA European Regional Forum*

Programme coordinators

Isabel Carneiro Kahlen *Morais Leitão Galvão Teles Soares da Silva, Lisbon*

Luís Geraudes *Morais Leitão Galvão Teles Soares da Silva, Lisbon*

Pii Ketvel *Chief Executive Officer, MARCOL Capital Europe, Luxembourg City*

David O'Donnell *Mason Hayes & Curran, Dublin; LPD Council Liaison Officer, IBA European Regional Forum*

Marco Rizzi *Bratschi, Zurich; LPD Council Member, LPD Council*

Merlin Seeman *Hedman Law Firm, Tallinn; Senior Vice Chair, European Regional Forum*

Doron Stern *Meitar Law Offices, Ramat Gan*

Benjamin Ullrich *YPOG, Berlin*

Antonia Verna *Portolano Cavallo, Milan; Vice Chair, IBA European Regional Forum*

Wednesday 24 September

1900 – 2200 **Seated dinner kindly hosted by the local Host Committee**

Mar do Guincho

Estrada do Guincho, Cascais, 2750-642

Thursday 25 September

Registration will take place in the Principe de Saboia foyer
Working sessions will take place in the Principe de Saboia
All coffee/tea breaks will take place in the Principe de Saboia terrace
Lunch will take place in the Restaurante Navegantes

0815 – 1800 **Registration**

0815 – 0850 **Welcome coffee/tea**

0850 – 0900 **Welcome address by the Conference Chairs**

0900 – 0930 **Keynote address**

Ricardo Diniz *Solo sailor, Alcochete*

Since 1996, as a solo sailor, Ricardo has been developing missions and expeditions to promote sustainability and the oceans around the world, working closely with schools, universities and governments. He has sailed the equivalent of four times around the world. His guiding vision has always been to empower people, a mission he describes as 'cultivating human potential'.

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Delegates are requested to ensure that mobile telephones and any other portable devices are switched to silent in working sessions.

Conference dinner sponsor

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Thursday continued

0930 – 1015

From lagging to leading: Europe's strategies for global competitiveness

Join us for an engaging fireside chat featuring distinguished speakers from the US and Europe as they delve into strategies for positioning Europe in the global market. The discussion will explore the current innovation landscape, identify key challenges and propose actionable solutions to bridge the gap between Europe and other leading markets such as the US. Our panellists will share insights on leveraging Europe's unique strengths, fostering cross-regional collaboration and driving sustainable growth in the tech sector.

Moderators

Anna Dabrowska *Wolf Theiss, Warsaw; Co-Chair, European Regional Forum*

Raaj Narajan *Wachtell Lipton Rosen & Katz, New York*

Speakers

Marc Canal Noguier *Senior Fellow, McKinsey Global Institute, Barcelona*

Christopher Grieco *General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer, Rain, Washington, DC*

Andrew Wigfall *Executive in Residence, Balderton Capital, London*

1015 – 1100

Empowering startups: EU and national support strategies for market growth and innovation

Europe's world-class research institutions are a wellspring of DeepTech innovation, yet the path from scientific discovery to scalable venture remains fraught with structural and financial hurdles. As the US and Asia continue to dominate DeepTech investment, Europe faces a pivotal moment. With new EU funding instruments, evolving regulatory frameworks, and a growing appetite for mission-driven innovation, can Europe close the gap? This panel will compare regional investment dynamics, exit environments, and geopolitical influences, offering a candid assessment of Europe's position in the global DeepTech race—and what it will take to lead.

Moderators

Petros Fragkiskos *Drakopoulos, Athens*

Karim Maizar *Kellerhals Carrard, Zürich*

Speaker

Veronica Costa Orvalho *Founder and CEO, Didimo and Ambassador, European Innovation Council, Porto*

João Fonseca Santos *Head of European Investment Bank Group Office, Lisbon*

Arthur Jordão *Executive Director, Europe Startup Nations Alliance, Lisbon*

1100 – 1130

Coffee/tea break

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1130 – 1215 **The investors' perspective: secondary transactions**

The panel will explore the growing popularity of secondary transactions in the venture capital market, highlighting how secondary transactions – traditionally reserved for late-stage companies – are now increasingly being used by early-stage startups to provide liquidity for investors and founders. We will discuss the benefits of secondaries, such as shorter time horizons and lower risk profiles for investors, market trends and the impact on the European venture-backed tech scene.

Moderator

Elisa Sielski *Wilson Sonsini, London*

Speakers

Fiona Darmon *Founder and Managing Partner, Sunvest Capital Partners, Tel Aviv*

Tara Schoeller-Burke *General Counsel Speedinvest, London*

1215 – 1300 **How startups can innovate and secure investments in a classified defence environment**

Startups are playing an increasingly important role in defence innovation, but two major challenges remain:

1. Classified vs unclassified collaboration – the defence sector operates within strict classified environments, while startups typically work in unclassified settings. How can startups still contribute to national security innovation?
2. Access to investment and procurement – the European Investment Bank (EIB) and venture capital firms are allocating capital to defence tech, but deals are not materialising at the expected scale. Which barriers are preventing funding from flowing into startups, and how can they navigate procurement?

This panel will explore practical strategies for defence startups to bridge these gaps and scale successfully.

Moderators

Ricardo Luz *Vice President, European Business Angel Network and Expert Partner, Civitta, Porto*

Speakers

Philip Jungen *General Partner, Darkstar, Cologne*

Florian Köhler *Group General Counsel, Helsing, Munich*

Viktoriia Yaremchuk *Co-Founder and CEO, Farsight Vision, Lviv*

1300 – 1400 **Lunch**

1400 – 1445 **Legal session: market trends, deal terms and investment documentation in growth capital transactions**

Let the lawyers have their say! This interactive session will focus on current trends in the market and their impact on deal terms in growth capital transaction documents, also setting the scene of what growth capital is and how it differs from venture capital.

Moderator

Rita Sobral *Cooley, London*

Speakers

Sofia Egídio *General Counsel, Indico Capital Partners, Lisbon*

Isabel Gandoy *Cuatrecasas, Barcelona; Chair, Western Regional Group, IBA European Regional Forum*

Adam Green *Mannheimer Swartling, Stockholm*

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Local Host Committee (continued)



Pérez-Llorca



TELLES

VIA VIEIRA DE ALMEIDA

1445 – 1600

The role and impact of artificial intelligence on the market and society in general, and specifically on the legal profession and other sectors

This interactive session will begin with a panel exploring artificial intelligence (AI) and European startups, and particularly how to navigate innovation and regulation. Following this, delegates will participate in roundtable sessions on AI's impact on various sectors, practical applications, industry-specific opportunities, and ethical and regulatory challenges.

The role and impact of artificial intelligence – panel discussion

Moderator

Gianluca Maruzzella *Co-founder and CEO, indigo.ai, Milan*

Speakers

Cristina Fonseca *General Partner, Indico, Lisbon*

Pedro Gonçalves *VP of Legal and Compliance, Unbabel, Lisbon*

Jorge Mattamouros *Founder and CEO, EQUALL, New York*

Roundtable discussions

Co-Chairs

Manuel Santos Vitor *Abreu Advogados, Lisbon; Vice Chair, Mental Wellbeing Group, IBA European Regional Forum*

Tomás Pessanha *Garrigues, Lisbon*

1. AI in healthcare: innovation with care

Moderators

Joana Feijó *Business Development Director, Health Cluster Portugal, Lisbon*

Pedro Vidigal Monteiro *TELLES, Lisbon*

2. Scaling AI startups across borders: legal barriers and strategic considerations

Moderators

Paulo Bandeira *SRS Advogados, Lisbon*

Cristina Fonseca *General Partner, Indico, Lisbon*

Rita Sobral *Cooley, London*

3. AI in healthcare: innovation with care

Moderators

José Paulo Carvalho *Founder and CEO, Hope Care, Lisbon*

Vasco De Azevedo *Cuatrecasas, Lisbon*

4. What investors look for in AI startups: legal risk and compliance readiness

Moderators

Gil Azevedo *Executive Director, Unicorn Factory Lisboa, Lisbon*

Mafalda Carvalho *CCSL, Lisbon*

5. Smarter finance: AI in Fintech

Moderators

Afonso Fuzeta Eça *Executive Board Member, Banco BPI, Lisbon*

Inês Palma Ramalho *Perez-Llorca, Lisbon*

6. Smarter finance: AI in Fintech

Moderators

André Abrantes *PLMJ, Lisbon*

Bernardo Sousa D'Alte *General Manager, Data4Deals, Lisbon*

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7. From start-up to global healthtech: success factors and pitfalls

Moderators

Magda Cocco *Vieira de Almeida & Associados, Lisbon; Treasurer, IBA Communications Law Committee*

André Eiras dos Santos *Founding team and General Manager of International, Sword Health, Lisbon*

8. Intelligent industry: AI's role in the future of manufacturing

Moderators

Bernardo Cunha *Head of Strategy and Product Marketing, Samsung, Lisbon*

Manuel Liberal Jerónimo *Garrigues, Lisbon*

9. The AI-driven law firm: efficiency, ethics, and change Management

Moderators

Pedro Gonçalves *VP of Legal and Compliance, Unbabel, Lisbon*

Hugo Teixeira *Abreu Advogados, Lisbon*

10. The AI-driven law firm: efficiency, ethics, and change Management

Moderator

Isabel Carneiro Kahlen *Morais Leitão Galvão Teles Soares da Silva, Lisbon*

Jorge Mattamouros *Founder and CEO, EQUALL, New York*

11. Personalised learning: AI in the classroom

Moderators

Rita Serra *Leader in AI and Education, Microsoft, Lisbon*

Tiago Valente de Oliveira *CMS, Lisbon*

12. What investors look for in AI startups: legal risk and compliance readiness

Moderator

Domingos Cruz *CCA, Lisbon*

Ricardo Jacinto *Partner, Shilling VC, Lisbon*

1600 – 1630 **Coffee/tea break**

1630 – 1715 **The founders' perspective: the good, the bad and the ugly**

As startups grow and transform, founders face a myriad of challenges and opportunities. Our panellists will delve into the evolving role of founders, highlighting the highs and lows of their entrepreneurial journey. Key topics will include strategies to protect the founders' position whilst ensuring their motivation as the company and the cap table evolve during the journey. Gain valuable insights from experienced founders and industry experts on navigating the complexities of startup growth while maintaining founder motivation and equity.

Moderator

Louis Oudot de Dainville *Gide Loyrette Nouel, Paris*

Speaker

João Aroso *Founder and CEO, Leadzai, Lisbon*

Ricardo Mesquita *Managing Director, Endeavor, Lisbon*

Joana Rafael *Co-founder and COO, Sensei, Lisbon*

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Thursday continued

1715 – 1800

Navigating ethics for startup lawyers

In the fast-paced world of startups, legal professionals play a crucial role in guiding companies through complex legal landscapes. This panel discussion will explore the significance of establishing a robust ethical code for startup lawyers. We will touch upon key ethical considerations, such as conflicts of interest, confidentiality, competence and fair fees. The session will also highlight the benefits of ethical conduct in fostering a fair and impartial legal system, ensuring long-term success and maintaining the integrity of the legal profession.

Moderator

Gabor Damjanovic *Forgó Damjanovic & Partners, Budapest; Member, IBA Professional Ethics Committee Advisory Board*

Speakers

Nicoleta Lupea *Cravath Swaine & Moore, London*

Doron Stern *Meitar Law Offices, Ramat Gan*

1800 – 1810

Closing remarks

1900

Conference dinner

Arriba

Estrada Guincho, Edificio Arriba, Cascais, 2750-642

Ticket price €100

Transport will be provided from the Grande Real Villa Itália Hotel at 1845 and will return after dinner.

The IBA, its officers and staff accept no responsibility for any views expressed, presentations or materials produced by delegates or speakers at the Conference.

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