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INTERNATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 2025

A conference presented by the IBA Law Firm Management Committee

# Building the Law Firm of the Future Conference

27 November 2025, The Law Society, London, England

## Working programme

### TOPICS INCLUDE:

- What does the future hold for the profession?
- Law firm leadership in a 'VUCA' world
- The importance of being human in a tech-driven world
- An update on the IBA Law Firm Management Committee for 2026
- TED Talk: 'Barbarians at the gate' – private equity's next big opportunity?
- Can independent firms continue to service and thrive in today's challenging market?
- Rethinking business development and client relationships at the law firm of the future
- The client speaks!

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All speaker materials and biographies can be found at [www.ibanet.org/conference-details/conf2690](http://www.ibanet.org/conference-details/conf2690)

### Conference Co-Chairs

Anne Macdonald *Harper Macleod, Glasgow; Co-Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

Paul Marmor *Sherrards, London; Co-Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

David Patient *AGRD Partners, London; Co-Vice Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

Tiziana Sucharitkul *Tilleke & Gibbins, Bangkok; Co-Vice Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

## Thursday 27 November

**All working sessions will take place in the Council room  
All coffee/tea breaks and lunch will take place in the Reading room**

0800 – 1700 **Registration**

0800 – 0900 **Welcome tea/coffee**

0900 – 0915 **Welcome remarks**

Ian Jeffrey *Chief Executive, The Law Society of England and Wales, London*

Tiziana Sucharitkul *Tilleke & Gibbins, Bangkok; Co-Vice Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

David Patient *AGRD Partners, London; Co-Vice Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

0915 – 0945 **What does the future hold for the profession?**

Greg and David will consider the challenges and opportunities facing the profession, and what law firms should be doing to best prepare for what the future may hold.

*Keynote speakers*

David Jackson *Chief Executive Officer, Shoosmiths, London*

Greg Jackson *Founder, Oakwood Strategy, London*

0945 – 1100 **Law firm leadership in a 'VUCA' world**

This panel of experienced law firm leaders will share their thoughts on law firm leadership in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world. This panel will cover issues such as leadership style and skills in uncertain times, leading on culture, strategy and clients, their personal approach to being a leader, and preparing the next generation leader.

*Moderator*

Julian Yarr *Julian Yarr Advisory, Dublin; Member, IBA Law Firm Management Committee Advisory Board*

*Speakers*

Eva Berlaus *Sorainen, Riga; Vice Chair, IBA Strategy and Finance Subcommittee, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

Roger Bull *Burges Salmon, Bristol*

Peter Lawson *Burness Paull, Edinburgh*

Jean-Marc Ueberecken *Arendt & Medernach, Luxembourg City*

1100 – 1130 **Coffee/tea break**

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### Exhibitor



Globe Law  
and Business

1130 – 1230 **The importance of being human in a tech-driven world**

As AI and legal tech threatens to change the ways in which we work, and the skills which lawyers and legal teams need to deliver services to clients, this panel will look at the importance of being human and developing the appropriate people skills in a tech-driven world.

*Moderator*

**Richard Macklin** *Partner, The Alexander Partnership, London*

*Speaker*

**Patrick McCann** *Chief Executive Officer, City of London Law Society, London; IBA Council Member*

**William Peake** *Global Managing Partner, Harneys, London*

**Claire Sanders** *Co-Founder, Being Human Consulting, London*

1230 – 1235 **An update on the IBA Law Firm Management Committee for 2026**

*Speaker*

**Anne Macdonald** *Harper Macleod, Glasgow; Co-Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

1235 – 1345 **Lunch**

1345 – 1415 **'Barbarians at the gate' – private equity's next big opportunity?**

Jonathan and Adil will consider how private equity may change the landscape of the legal services sector.

*Keynote speakers*

**Adil Taha** *Co-Founder, Taha & Watmough, London*

**Jonathan Watmough** *Co-Founder, Taha & Watmough, London*

1415 – 1515 **Can independent firms continue to survive and thrive in today's challenging market?**

The panel will look at the challenges and opportunities facing smaller, independent law firms in today's market, as well as the importance of international networks, referral business and the need to constantly improve legal service delivery.

*Moderator*

**Rodrigo Ferreira Figueiredo** *Mattos Filho, São Paulo; Vice Chair, Talent and Leadership Subcommittee, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

*Speakers*

**Gary Assim** *Shoosmiths, London; LFMC Materials Co-Officer, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

**Ivor Banim** *William Fry, London*

**Christine Blaise-Engel** *Fidal, Paris; Member, IBA Law Firm Management Committee Advisory Board*

**Ines Sequeira Mendes** *Abreu Advogados, Lisbon, Membership Officer, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

1515 – 1530 **Coffee/tea break**

1530 – 1615 **Rethinking business development and client relationships at the law firm of the future**

The panel will look at the role of social media in business development, choosing the right clients, the importance of reputation management, and the changing ways of working and how these will impact business development and client relationships in the law firm of the future.

*Moderator*

**Dana Denis-Smith OBE** *Chief Executive Officer, Obelisk Support, London*

*Speakers*

**Melissa Davis** *MD Communications, London*

**Natascha Doll** *Freshfields, Hamburg*

**Ben Girdlestone** *Joint Managing Director, Byfield Consultancy, London*

**Sandeep Mehta** *JSA, Mumbai; India, Corporate Law Section Liaison Officer, IBA Closely Held Companies Committee*

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# Thursday continued

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## 1615 – 1700 **The client speaks!**

We are extremely fortunate to have a group of leading general counsels (GCs) to share their perspectives on law firms. They will speak openly about their current views on what law firms are doing well, and what they need to do better.

*Moderator*

**Paul Marmor** *Sherrards, London; Co-Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee*

*Speakers*

**Christopher Burniston** *Vice President, General Counsel, International Family Care and Professional, Kimberley-Clark, Reigate*

**Matthew Ingham** *International, G4S, An Allied Universal Company, London*

**Abhijit Mukhopadhyay** *Hinduja Group, London; Regional Fora Liaison Officer, Corporate Counsel Forum*

**Dawn Stallwood** *Floodlight Business, Cobham*

## 1700 – 1715 **Closing remarks**

## 1715 – 1815 **Conference reception**

*Six Clerks Restaurant*

All registered delegates and speakers who are registered for the full conference are welcome to attend.

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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