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# MANCHESTER LAW & TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

**JULY 4 2024** No 1 Circle Square, Manchester

# CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

**0930-  
0940**

## **WELCOME FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER**

Professor Colette Fagan,  
Vice-President for Research,  
The University of Manchester

**0940-  
0945**

## **OVERVIEW OF THE MANCHESTER LAW & TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE**

Professor Orkun Akseli,  
Professor of Commercial Law,  
The University of Manchester  
Law School

**0945-  
1015**

## **KEYNOTE: LLMS AND NATURAL LANGUAGE PROCESSING: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ANALYSIS**

Prof Sophia Ananiadou, The  
School of Computer Science,  
The University of Manchester

**1015-  
1035**

## **DESIGNING TECHNOLOGY-LED SOLUTIONS**

Jason Dunning, Ignition  
Consultant & Lead Facilitator,  
KPMG

**1035-  
1055**

## **TECH AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR IN-HOUSE TEAMS**

Alex Herrity, Director of Legal  
Solutions, Adidas

## **1055-1115 COFFEE BREAK**

**1115-  
1135**

## **DIGITAL TRENDS IN LAW**

David Harris, Director, Consilio

**1135-  
1155**

## **TRANSFORMING HOUSING COMPLETIONS: HARNESSING PEXA FOR A DIGITAL FUTURE**

Angela Hesketh, FCILEX/Cilex  
Conveyancing Practitioner/  
Licensed Conveyancer, PEXA

**1155-  
1225**

**PANEL 1: A2J – HOW  
TECHNOLOGY TOOLS  
CAN IMPROVE ACCESS  
TO JUSTICE**

Professor Claire McGourlay  
(Chair); **Dr Philip Drake**, Director  
of the Justice Hub, The  
University of Manchester,  
**Francine Ryan** Director of the  
Open Justice Centre, OU;  
**Christopher Howard**, University  
Partnerships Director at  
BARBRI; **Jason Tetley**,

**1225-1315 PM LUNCH BREAK**

**1315-  
1345**

**PANEL 2: AI APPLICATIONS  
AND IMPLICATION OF AI IN  
LEGAL SERVICES**

**Mike Kennedy** (Chair) Senior  
Manager Innovation & Legal  
Technology, Addleshaw  
Goddard; **Sebastian Obeta**,  
Digital Transformation Leader,  
Member of European AI  
Alliance; **Bruce Jones**, Head of  
Intellectual Property and  
Partner, Kuits; **Nikita Patel**,  
Customer Success Manager,  
Definely

**1345-  
1405**

**LEADING IN-HOUSE  
INNOVATION**

**Sophie Jackson**, Senior  
Manager, Innovation Group,  
Addleshaw Goddard will host a  
fireside chat with **Merley Okine**,  
experienced General Counsel /  
Head of Legal and Board  
Advisor

**1405-  
1430**

**REGIONAL HUBS -  
LAWTECH NATIONAL  
NETWORK PANEL**

Jonathan Patterson; Rachel  
Kenyon; Chloe Thomson;  
Vipul Ladwa

**1430-1440 COMFORT BREAK**

**1445-  
1500**

**LAWTECHUK UPDATE  
ON THE REGIONAL  
ECOSYSTEM**

**FEATURED DEMOS SPOTLIGHT**

**1500-  
1515**

**NEXT GENERATION  
COMPLIANCE: POWERED  
BY AI – SHOWCASE OF  
LEXVERIFY**

**Cristian Gherhes**, Founder &  
CEO, Lexverify

**1515-  
1530**

**SHOWCASE OF DEFINELY**

**Nikita Patel**, Customer Success  
Manager, Definely

**1530-  
1600**

**LAWTECHUK SHOWCASE  
EVENT**

Featuring an introduction to  
LawtechUK and showcases of  
LawTech startups in the  
NorthWest

**1600 WRAP UP & CLOSE**

**POST EVENT DRINKS  
NETWORKING UNTIL 1800**

# MEET THE SPEAKERS



**PROFESSOR  
ORKUN AKSELI**

*Professor of Commercial  
Law, The University of  
Manchester Law School*

Orkun is Professor of Commercial Law at the University of Manchester. He studied for his LLB and MA in Turkey, LLM in the USA, and PhD at the University of Manchester School of Law. He is absolutely delighted to be back at his alma mater. Since 2022 Orkun is the Academic Director of the Manchester Law & Technology Initiative, a platform bringing together legal industry practitioners and academic researchers from across three discipline areas to investigate the potential for and impact of technology and digitisation within legal services.

His teaching and research interests are in the field of secured transactions, banking and financial law, and arbitration and mediation. He has been involved in law reform initiatives under the auspices of UNCITRAL and Unidroit. Orkun plans to launch and lead a new Legal Innovation Research Group with the Department of Law which will complement and link in to the activity of MLaTI.



**PROFESSOR SOPHIA  
ANANIADOU**

*The School of Computer  
Science, The University of  
Manchester*

Sophia Ananiadou is Professor in Computer Science at The University of Manchester. Her main areas of research are Natural Language Processing and Biomedical Text Mining. She is the Director of the UK National Centre for Text Mining, Deputy Director of the Institute of Data Science and AI (Manchester), Turing Fellow, ELLIS member, Distinguished research fellow at the AI research centre (AIST Japan) and Lead Researcher at the Archimedes Research Unit, Athena. Her research interests evolved on how AI systems could acquire and exploit knowledge of language, particularly in specific domains such as medicine, finance, history and law. She has worked in Natural Language Processing tasks including information extraction, summarisation, terminology extraction. Her work on emotion detection using large language models (LLMs) has been applied to addressing misinformation and mental health issues. Recently, her work includes the development of a holistic financial benchmark for Large Language Models (FinBen).



### **JASON DUNNING**

***Ignition Consultant & Lead Facilitator, KPMG***

Jason is a distinguished figure in Innovation, renowned for his expertise in creative problem-solving and facilitation. His reputation as an effective leader in crafting and executing Innovation Strategies is well-established, and he is celebrated for enhancing innovation capabilities within organisations. Jason's guidance has been instrumental for numerous businesses in exploring, implementing, and maintaining diverse problem-solving methodologies and techniques.

His extensive background includes serving as a non-executive director and creative advisor to burgeoning companies, imparting knowledge as a visiting lecturer at universities, and holding various leadership roles in Innovation and change management within the Legal and Financial Services sectors. Presently, Jason holds the position of Senior Consultant and Lead Facilitator at KPMG Ignition UK, where he continues to drive innovation and strategic growth.



### **ALEX HERRY**

***Director of Legal Solutions, Adidas***

Alex Herry is the Director of Legal Solutions at adidas, where he leverages his background as a qualified lawyer to drive operational excellence and digital transformation across the legal function. Despite a broad remit from CLM to eBilling in his daily role, Alex's recent focus has turned to the opportunities and challenges for Knowledge Management and Artificial Intelligence for in-house teams. Alex is recognized as a leading expert in legal operations and frequently speaks at conferences and events, sharing his expertise and insights, in person and via LinkedIn.



### **DAVID HARRIS**

***Director, Consilio***

David is an innovative Legal Technology and Operations Director with over a decade of experience across the legal industry. David has developed a deep understanding of the complexities of the way legal work is delivered and has successfully led numerous projects that have revolutionised how legal professionals manage their work, leveraging his expertise in technology to introduce innovative solutions that save time and resources.



### **ANGELA HESKETH**

***FCILEX/Cilex  
Conveyancing  
Practitioner/Licensed  
Conveyancer, PEXA***

Angela is a dual-qualified conveyancer with an extensive understanding of the challenges within residential property law and legal practice. Transitioning to consultancy, she advised startups on reshaping the industry whilst streamlining conveyancing processes.

With a career marked by a passion for positive change Angela has been an influential force in the residential property industry.

Today Angela is the Head of UK Market Development for PEXA offering a value proposition that combines secure financial settlement via the Bank of England with lodgement at land registry delivered via a collaborative workspace. She continues to have an unrelenting dedication to transformation together with a commitment to a more efficient, transparent, and user-centric property market. Angela also sits as an Executive Member of the Open Property Data Association and an active participant of the Home Buying and Selling Council.

Beyond the day job Angela is a mum of two, sits as a professional member of the CILEX Disciplinary Tribunal and has recently qualified as a professional coach.



### **CLAIRE MCGOURLAY**

***Professor of Legal  
Education at The  
University of Manchester***

Claire McGourlay is a Professor of Legal Education at The University of Manchester. Claire is a National and Principal Fellow of the HEA and is the Director of External Relations at the School of Social Sciences and the Director of the Manchester Innocence Project. Claire is also on the BARBRI advisory panel and is an associate member of Garden Court North Chambers. Claire's teaching and research interests lie in Miscarriages of Justice, Criminal Evidence, and inequality. In her spare time Claire likes to swim and walk her dogs.



### **PHILIP DRAKE**

***Director of the Justice  
Hub, The University of  
Manchester***

Philip Drake is a former practising solicitor and set up the innovative Legal Advice Clinic at the University of Huddersfield in 2013. Since 2019, he has been the Director of the award-winning Justice Hub at The University of Manchester, which incorporates such projects as the Legal Advice Centre, Manchester Free Legal Help Scheme, the Manchester Innocence Project, the Legal Advocacy Research Support Project, the Vacation Scheme and Justice internships. He is also an Associate Member of Garden Court North Chambers. In Between 2019 and 2021, Philip was a member of the steering group for the Legal Education Foundation funded project 'The Law for Dementia Carers'. He is also recently completed a NIHR £208,000 funded research project into 'The

impact of Care Easements under the Coronavirus Act 2020 on co-resident older carers of people with dementia'. In 2021, Philip jointly led a curriculum review working party at The University of Manchester which has resulted in the 'Made in Manchester' concept and social responsibility being incorporated into all teaching on the undergraduate law degree. Philip has keen research interests in the pedagogical, sociological and ethical dimensions of the law, with a particular interest in values based learning and the conflicts and tensions that arise within this sphere.



### **CHRISTOPHER HOWARD**

***University Partnerships  
Director, BARBRI***

Chris Howard is the University Partnerships Director at BARBRI Global. Chris qualified as a solicitor in 2003, specialising in Construction Law at City firm Trowers & Hamlin, before beginning his career in academia. Chris worked as a Senior Lecturer for many years, teaching across subject including Land Law, Company Law and Legal Technology. He also served for 4 years as the first Director of Profession Legal Education at King's College London, establishing the Professional Law Institute and its flagship MSc in Law and Professional Practice. He still works as and External Examiner for the University of Worcester and was recently appointed as Vice-Chair of the International Bar Association's Future of Legal Practice Commission. Chris regularly provides talks for universities on Legal Technology, Legal Innovation and Future Skills for Lawyers.



### **FRANCINE RYAN**

***Director of the Open  
Justice Centre, OU***

Dr Francine Ryan is a solicitor and senior lecturer in law at The Open University Law School. Francine is the co-founder and Director of the Open Justice Centre, which has pioneered the use of experiential learning in distance legal education and leveraged the expertise of the OU to support the free advice sector. Her research explores graduate attributes and the futures of legal education and legal practice. She co-authored one of the first articles examining the risks and potential of ChatGPT in legal education and her recent work has examined the impact of ChatGPT on access to justice and was discussed in The Conversation.



### **JASON TETLEY**

***Director, Greater  
Manchester Law Centre***

Jason has been involved in community advice and development for over 30 years. He has been Director of Greater Manchester Law Centre for the past 5 years. GMLC was formed in 2016 by the community as a response to the closure of law centres and the reduction of community-based face-to-face advice. GMLC started as a campaign for justice and now deals with 20,000 enquiries, supports 5,000 with initial advice and takes on 1500 social welfare cases annually. Every day GMLC receives 60 calls and 20 emails from people across the North West asking for support, many of whom have disabilities, language issues or are unsure of what they should do regarding a legal issue.



### **MIKE KENNEDY**

***Senior Manager Innovation  
& Legal Technology,  
Addleshaw Goddard***

Mike is a member of Addleshaw Goddard's Innovation and Legal Technology team, where he runs a Research and Development team. Mike has worked across many areas within legal tech, being part of AG's team for a number of years and responsible for a range of key projects, he now focuses on what problems we have within the legal industry and how we can become better equipped to solve them.



### **SEBASTIAN OBETA**

***Digital Transformation  
Leader, Member of  
European AI Alliance***

Sebastian is an esteemed member of the European AI Alliance, demonstrating his deep commitment to advancing the field of artificial intelligence in a responsible and ethical manner. As a digital transformation leader specialising in natural language processing, he currently serves as a data scientist at Cambridge University. Sebastian is also the founder of the Artificial Intelligence Society at the University of Bradford, where he leads initiatives to demystify AI's complexities.

His expertise and dedication extend beyond academia to multiple advisory boards, where he influences the strategic integration of AI technologies in a rapidly evolving technological landscape. Sebastian's contributions are vital in shaping how AI is understood and implemented globally.

He is a member of the LawTech Advisory Council of the Astana International Financial Centre and co-director of the Manchester LawTech Initiative. He is the programme director of University of Manchester Worldwide LLM in International Commercial and Technology Law. He has held a number of visiting positions including at KU Leuven, the Judicial Academy of Thailand, the University of Tokyo, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and National Taiwan University. He is also an attorney of New York State. He speaks Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, French and a little Italian.



### **BRUCE JONES**

***Head of Intellectual  
Property and Partner, Kuits***

Bruce Jones is Head of Intellectual Property and Partner at Kuits, he is dual-qualified Solicitor and Patent Attorney and is authorised to conduct cases before the (relatively) recently-opened Unified Patent Court. He has spent roughly equal proportions of his career in private practice and in-house, the latter including a 7 year stint as Senior Counsel, IP at Hewlett-Packard in the early noughties spent firstly managing multi-jurisdictional IP infringement cases and secondly heavily-involved in several significant spin-out deals.

Bruce's current practice is centred primarily around IP litigation. His first degree was in Physics and he specialises in cases with a significant technological element.





### **NIKITA PATEL**

#### ***Customer Success Manager, Definely***

Nikita is a Customer Success Manager at Definely, where she helps lawyers with drafting, reviewing, and understanding their legal documents. The Customer Success team at Definely play a vital role in partnering with firms to ensure customers achieve their desired outcomes. From onboarding and training to ongoing support and strategic consulting, Nikita is dedicated to driving the successful adoption of Definely's solutions.

Working alongside law firm and in-house legal teams, Nikita draws from her experience in change management, having been part Mishcon de Reya's emerging technology consultancy, MDRx, and DWF's Innovation & Ventures.

Nikita is an alumna of The University of Manchester's Alliance Manchester Business School, where she graduated with an MSc in 2019.



### **SOPHIE JACKSON**

#### ***Senior Manager, Innovation Group, Addleshaw Goddard***

Sophie leads Addleshaw Goddard's legal tech consulting team and works to help clients drive digital transformation through the adoption of legal technology. Sophie is experienced in finding creative ways to apply legal technology to the delivery of legal services and processes.

Supporting clients in selection and implementation of legal technology tools such as Contract Lifecycle Management systems and other enterprise level solutions. Sophie is a qualified commercial contracts lawyer by background, spending time in-house at a FTSE 250 lifestyle brand, before then moving across into AG's Innovation and Legal Technology team.



### **MERLEY OKINE**

#### ***Head of Legal and Board Advisor, Utility Warehouse***

Merley is an experienced General Counsel / Head of Legal and Board Advisor. Merley manages legal, regulatory and reputational risks, aligning client expectations with wider business objectives.

Merley's passion for innovation and operational strengths have enabled her to plan and implement complex digital strategies, legal transformation programmes and process upgrades. These have driven multiple cost-saving efficiencies and secured sustainable productivity and growth. She enjoys exploring innovative and creative solutions to meet the challenges faced by inhouse teams.

Merley leads Utility Warehouse's London-based legal team that advises its rapidly growing energy, telecoms and financial services business on legal and regulatory risk.

She has nearly 20 years of broad legal experience supporting and advising global organisations, mainly in the FMCG, and Pharma sectors. Before moving inhouse, Merley gained experience at City law firms with an emphasis on advising in corporate insolvency and restructuring situations.



### **JONATHAN PATTERSON**

**COO, Arch.law**

JP is a pioneer in the business of law with particular expertise in law firm management, strategy and innovation. He is the COO of Arch.law and responsible for all aspects of business operations in the UK and internationally. He holds a MSc in Management Practice from the University of Manchester and is a Simon Industrial & Professional Fellow for the academic year 2023/24. He is also a judge for the British Legal Technology Awards and a Member of the Law Society AI Group and his career has spanned over 20 years in the legal sector in a range of business roles at DWF, Addleshaw Goddard and Herbert Smith Freehills.



### **CHLOE THOMPSON**

**Whitecap Consulting,  
LegalTech in Leeds**

Chloe joined Whitecap Consulting in 2020 after graduating with a Distinction in her Masters in Management and International Business. Working as a Consultant, Chloe has led on a range of projects across multiple sectors including Financial Services, Education, Health and more, with specific focus on insights, research, analysis and reports. Chloe also co-runs and co-ordinates the LegalTech in Leeds initiative which was set-up in 2022 with a primary aim of bringing together the legal and tech sectors across Leeds region.



### **RACHEL KENYON**

**Business Engagement  
Manager, Faculty of  
Humanities, University of  
Manchester**

Rachel is Business Engagement Manager within the Faculty of Humanities, within the University of Manchester's specialist Business Engagement & Knowledge Exchange team; she is the Business Engagement Lead across the University for FinTech, LegalTech, and Digital Trust & Security. The BEKE function provides a mechanism for improved information flow between universities and the wider-world, facilitating collaboration with industry, government and the third sector. By widening the University's engagement with society, this role helps inform research and increase our impact on society and economy.

With a thematic focus on tech applications in finance & legal services, & digital trust, Rachel co-ordinates academic researchers across the university and aligns with businesses in these fast-growing sectors to facilitate research activity that can provide solutions to business & societal challenges around the application of new technology in the services sector. As part of this Rachel established and provides programme management for the award-winning Manchester Law & Technology Initiative, a unique consortium bringing together law firms and academics from across the disciplines of law, business & computer science.



### **VIPUL LADWA**

***Co-founder and CEO,  
108 AI***

Vipul is Co-founder and CEO at 108 AI. A 10+ year Technology lawyer, specialising in AI, having worked most recently for DLA Piper and advised leading AI companies and Government departments on commercialisation & risk strategies, regulatory compliance, and specialist AI agreements. Vipul now runs 108 AI which is a promising tech company developing high-accuracy AI products for the Legal sector.



### **BETH FELLNER**

***Director, Legal Geek***

Beth is Director at Legal Geek, which runs legal tech conferences connecting changemakers and industry leaders to create a positive impact on the legal profession. Beth leads on Legal Geek's event content and also works on the delivery of the LawtechUK programme of activity. LawtechUK is a Ministry of Justice-backed initiative dedicated to driving digital transformation in the legal sector. The programme is operated by CodeBase and Legal Geek.



### **CRISTIAN GHERHES**

***Founder & CEO, Lexverify***

Dr. Cristian Gherhes is the Founder & CEO of Lexverify.

He is an experienced social scientist who has conducted pioneering research on artificial intelligence across different sectors and geographies. During his career in academia, Cristian led on multi-million-pound UK government-funded projects focused on AI adoption and digital transformation in medium and large enterprises. Working with top professional services firms, he helped foster AI adoption and advance Next Generation Professional Services in the UK. Cristian founded Lexverify in December 2020 with a mission to make risk prevention as easy as spell checking. Leveraging AI technology, Lexverify empowers proactive compliance at scale on electronic communications, seamlessly integrating real-time risk prevention and ongoing training across multiple communication platforms.

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