

# NEXT GEN LEGAL LEADERS SUMMIT 2025

## AGENDA

**Registration**

8:00 - 8:30

**MC welcome**

8:30 - 8:40

**Session 1 - KEYNOTE**

08:40 - 09:25

### Is the legal profession ready to create equitable change



**DARSHANA PAREKH**

Senior Lawyer and Inclusion Consultant

Darshana Parekh, Senior Lawyer and Inclusion Consultant, will deliver a compelling session examining the question: Is the legal profession ready to create equitable change? Drawing on her experience, Darshana will highlight the profession's historic influence in shaping social progress across Australia.

Despite equity's longstanding presence in legal doctrine, Darshana observes a persistent gap between the theory of fairness and its practical implementation. She will discuss the key factors perpetuating this disconnect, including the systemic and cultural barriers modern practitioners face.

Darshana encourages participants to imagine a future where every day legal work reflects equity's core values. The session will remind delegates that by revitalising the spirit of equity, the legal profession can be a force for meaningful change in Australia. Attendees will leave feeling energised, curious, and challenged about how they might help the legal profession become a force of change in Australia.

**Session 2 - KEYNOTE**

09:25 - 10:10

### 5 ways to become the next generation of legal leaders



**KARENA NICHOLLS**

Partner, Head of Injury Compensation & Employment Law  
Coutts

Key talking points:

- Breaking glass ceilings (or not, and ways around it!) covering resilience
- Finding opportunity (business development, partnership, personal growth)
- Remember your WHY - why you started, why you keep going, what helps you get out of bed in the morning, why law etc.
- Mentorship - both in being one, and seeking others out along the way
- Self awareness - across communication, how you show up each day, how you bring your best self to the table etc.

**Morning tea & networking**

10:10 - 10:40

## Inside the C-Suite: Leading GCs on rising to the top of corporate law

Hear from some of the nation's top General Counsels as we explore their professional journeys from their beginnings as lawyers to their current roles as in-house leaders. Gain invaluable insights into the challenges they faced and the strategies they employed to excel in the corporate legal landscape.



**NICK BROWN**  
General Counsel  
Airtree Ventures



**IVANA KOVACEVIC**  
Group General Counsel  
Tabcorp

## Beyond the billable hour: A lawyer's journey from private practice to the not-for-profit sector



**KATRINA BULLOK**  
General Counsel & Company Secretary  
Greenpeace Australia

For many lawyers, the traditional path of private practice is just the beginning of their professional story.

In this inspiring session, hear from a former private practice lawyer who made the bold decision to leave the corporate world and embrace a new challenge as General Counsel and Company Secretary in the not-for-profit sector. The speaker will share their personal journey, including the pivotal moments that led to this career shift, the challenges and rewards of working in a mission-driven environment, and how their legal expertise has been instrumental in advancing organisational goals and social impact.

Through candid reflection, they will discuss the importance of aligning professional aspirations with personal values, the transferable skills that make lawyers uniquely suited for leadership roles in diverse sectors, and the lessons learned from navigating this significant transition. This session offers valuable insights for legal professionals considering alternative career paths and for anyone seeking inspiration on how to create a meaningful and impactful career beyond private practice.

## Building a proactive legal department: Strategies for success



**JESSICA GIAMPICCOLO**  
Director  
JMLG Advisory Pty Ltd

In today's rapidly changing business landscape, legal departments are under increasing pressure to not only react to legal issues but to proactively manage risks and add strategic value.

This session will explore how legal teams can transition from being reactive to proactive, enabling them to better align with the goals of the broader business while ensuring compliance, minimising legal risk, and optimising resources.

You will discover:

- The need for legal departments to anticipate and prevent issues before they arise, rather than simply responding to crises.
- How to identify potential legal risks early and implement systems to manage them efficiently.
- How to develop relationships with key stakeholders across the organisation, ensuring legal considerations are integrated into strategic decision-making processes.
- Best practices for developing a legal team that is agile, informed, and capable of anticipating business needs.

**Session 6 - PANEL**

1:20 - 2:05

**The art of story telling in law: How to build influence and get stakeholder buy-in**

In a landscape where technical proficiency is just the starting line, lawyers who master the art of storytelling gain a decisive edge.

This session will explore why legal acumen alone is insufficient and how persuasive communication can shape perceptions, inspire trust, and drive strategic outcomes. You will discover the power of crafting compelling narratives to clarify complex legal issues, align stakeholders, and advance initiatives that resonate with clients, colleagues, and senior leaders. Whether you're in-house or in private practice, learn how to use the artistry of language to elevate your influence and propel your career forward.

You will learn:

- Techniques for distilling intricate legal concepts into accessible, impactful narratives that resonate with any audience.
- Proven strategies to communicate persuasively, secure buy-in, and foster trust among clients, boards, and business leaders.
- Methods for tailoring language, tone, and story structure depending on the listener's background, needs, and priorities.
- Practical tips on embedding narrative-driven communication into everyday legal work, from internal briefings to high-stakes negotiations.
- Insights into how storytelling shapes professional identity, builds credibility, and amplifies your voice in the legal arena.

**DARSHANA PAREKH**Senior Lawyer and Inclusion  
Consultant

+ Speakers to be announced

**Session 7 - KEYNOTE**

2:05 - 2:50

**Tech-Enabled Lawyer: How to build a sustainable tech culture****FIONA MCLAY**Principal Consultant  
McLay Legal Consulting

In this highly practical session, find out how legal professionals can foster a sustainable technology culture that drives efficiency, enhances client service, and supports long-term success. Learn practical strategies to overcome resistance to change, leverage existing tools effectively, and pick new technologies with confidence.

We'll discuss:

- The key elements of a sustainable tech culture in an often technophobic environment.
- How to align technology with strategic business goals.
- Steps to encourage leadership and team engagement in tech adoption.
- Practical small steps you can take right now to maximize the value of your existing technology.

Whether you're just beginning your tech journey or looking to refine your approach, this session will provide actionable insights to help you and your team thrive in a tech-enabled future.

## GenAI: Help or hindrance in achieving justice?

The use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is rapidly increasing across legal services, including in litigation and dispute resolution. This expert panel will explore the impact of GenAI on these areas of practice, including:

- The rise of 'fake law' in Australia and other common law jurisdictions and the response from courts and legal regulators.
- Balancing efficiency gains from GenAI for case preparation with the need to maintain the integrity of legal processes.
- Ensuring compliance with legal, ethical, and professional obligations.
- Assessing whether GenAI can improve access to justice when resolving disputes or further complicates an already complex field.

Join us to explore these critical issues and understand the dual role of GenAI as both enabler and disruptor.



**VICKI MCNAMARA**

Senior Lawyer and Inclusion Senior Research Associate  
Centre for the Future of the Legal Profession, UNSW Law & Justice

+ Speakers to be announced

## How to lead with purpose and create impact in law

In this session, hear from legal leaders as they uncover how you can lead with purpose, integrate values-driven practices, and generate significant impacts within your organizations and communities.

In this session, our panellists will discuss:

- Their personal paths to finding purpose in their careers. Gain insights into the challenges they faced and the pivotal moments that shaped their approach to leadership.
- What "purpose" truly means within the legal context and how it intersects with profitability in the profession.
- Actionable strategies for inspiring change through leadership that promotes inclusivity, diversity, and sustainability.
- Practical advice on how to lead with integrity and make a lasting impact in your role.
- Ways you can contribute to mentoring and shaping future generations of legal professionals.

Join us and discover the insights and tools needed to lead with purpose and inspire impactful careers in law.



**KATRIN O'SULLIVAN**

General Counsel  
The Fred Hollows Foundation



**JAMES D'APICE**

Principal Lawyer  
Gravamen



**JUSTIN MOSES**

General Counsel  
The Cancer Council



**ALEXANDRA TIGHE**

Partner  
Clayton Utz

# Contact us

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## Ask me about speaking opportunities



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