



the global voice of
the legal profession®



Follow us
@IBAEvents
#IBALFMC

INTERNATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION LPMC ACADEMY 2026

IBA Law Firm Management Committee Academy for Leaders

A practical leadership programme for law firm leaders

27–30 July 2026, King's College London, London, England

The global legal market is undergoing structural change. Client expectations are rising, competition for work and talent is intensifying, and technology is altering how legal work is priced, managed and delivered. At the same time, many law firms are reviewing their growth strategies, governance arrangements and remuneration models to ensure they remain competitive and sustainable.

These changes place new demands on law firm leaders. Strategic decisions now involve greater financial risk, shorter timeframes, and more complex trade-offs between investment, performance and long-term capability. Leadership roles are expanding beyond legal excellence to include strategy, people management, governance and execution across increasingly diverse and international firms.

The IBA Law Firm Management Academy is a practical programme for law firm leaders, focused on leadership, governance and decision-making in modern law firms.

The programme addresses the practical leadership issues law firm leaders face today, including evolving business models, the impact of technology and AI, partner performance, diverging career and workplace expectations, governance, growth and succession. Through structured discussion, frameworks and case-based learning, participants develop a clearer understanding of how to lead their firms more effectively.

Participants will gain:

- Practical tools to support sustainable growth and focused client development
- A clearer understanding of leading, managing, decision-making and accountability in modern law firms
- Insight into strengthening market position through sharper strategic focus and prioritisation
- A practical understanding of how knowledge, technology and innovation affect client relationships, service delivery and financial performance
- Approaches to developing and managing international work through referrals, networks and alliances
- A structured framework for addressing future leadership, governance and business challenges
- Clear personal and firm-level action points with practical application

Who should attend

The Academy is intended for senior professionals with leadership responsibility in law firms, including:

- Current or future firm leaders
- Office, practice group or sector leaders
- Senior business professionals within law firms (e.g. CEO, COO or equivalent)

Why this, why now

Law firm leadership has become more demanding. The legal profession continues to offer significant opportunity, but that opportunity is increasingly uneven and competitive. Firms face sustained pressure on pricing and margins, rising client expectations around value and service delivery, changing talent dynamics, and growing investment requirements. Responding effectively requires balancing short-term performance with long-term capability, while maintaining quality, culture and trust.

Technology, particularly artificial intelligence, is accelerating these pressures. While AI offers efficiency and scale, it also affects leverage models, training pathways, quality control and risk. Leadership challenges therefore extend beyond technology adoption to questions of governance, accountability and the deliberate development of future expertise.

At the same time, many firms are reassessing how decisions are made and implemented. Structures designed for stability and consensus are under strain as leaders face faster, higher-impact choices on investment, remuneration, growth and international positioning. Aligning partners, managing performance and sustaining confidence in leadership have become central leadership tasks.

Traditional legal education does not address these challenges, and general management programmes rarely reflect the realities of leading law firms. The Academy for Leaders is designed to address this gap.

A learning approach designed for law firm leaders

The Academy uses a highly participatory and practical learning approach. It combines structured input from experienced practitioners, academics and advisers with group discussion, exercises and case studies drawn from real law firm situations.

Participants are encouraged to reflect on their own firm context, test ideas with peers from different jurisdictions, and develop practical insights that can be applied directly on return to their firms. The emphasis is on judgement, decision-making and execution.

Class testimonials

'The Academy for Leaders not only provides deep and concrete teachings about law firm management applicable to its leaders, but also has proven to me to be very effective in motivating me to go for a specific management role and how to execute and be effective in such a project. The networking with the other attendees is probably the best environment in any legal organisation for lawyers.'

Adrian Furman *Bomchil, Buenos Aires*

'The Academy for Leaders stands out for its comprehensive approach to developing legal leadership—from understanding how technology and geopolitical dynamics reshape our profession, to addressing talent and rule of law challenges. The calibre of discussion between faculty and participants from across the globe is truly exceptional.'

Hanim Hamzah *King & Wood Mallesons, Beijing*

'Almost a year after the academy, my reflection is still hugely positive: very practical topics, high-level speakers sharing best international practices, engaging discussions with peers. Extra bonus: great network and lots of fun!'

Augustas Klezys *Sorainen, Vilnius*

Venue: King's College London, Strand Campus

King's was established by royal charter in 1829 under the patronage of King George IV and the Duke of Wellington.

The Academy will take place at the Dickson Poon School of Law, King's College London at the Strand Campus which incorporates the historic 18th century Somerset House with its beautiful Georgian era quadrangle and Bush House, which previously served as the headquarters of the BBC World Service.

IBA Harassment Policy

IBA conferences provide unrivalled professional development and network-building opportunities for international legal practitioners and their professional associates. The IBA values the participation of every delegate and member of the IBA and wants all attendees to have an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. Accordingly, all Conference attendees are expected to show respect and courtesy to other attendees, IBA staff and those involved with hosting the events throughout the Conference and at all Conference events, receptions, and parties, whether officially organised by the IBA or others. All delegates, guests, attendees, speakers, exhibitors, staff and volunteers at any IBA event are required to conform to the IBA Harassment Policy. See www.ibanet.org/iba-harassment-policy

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

Course content

Each of the four days will cover the key elements essential for leadership success.

■ Day One – Monday 27 July 2026

MODULE ONE

Understanding market position and strategic advantage: what type of law firm do you want to build and how do you build it?

Methodology includes:

- Reviewing the changing business environment and client needs: What is the higher versus lower value work? Which clients and prospects are most attractive?
- Reviewing and prioritising your firm's opportunities in terms of service lines, sectors and client types
- Positioning yourselves accordingly, building and communicating the firm's unique offering and the differentiation required
- Opportunities and challenges for approaching the market through industry specialisation and client service teams (Sector Teams / Client Relationship Management)
- Setting direction, getting buy-in, ensuring accountabilities and delivery
- How will tech/AI and externally funded law firms change the strategic landscape and how firms can respond

MODULE TWO

How to Grow; organically; lateral hiring; alliances; merger; referral relationships and networks. And does this need external investment?

Within more competitive domestic markets, law firms are seeking options for growth including increasing the level of their international work. In parallel, they are seeking to modernise with more professional systems and are investing in AI and other tech. As a result, the number of domestic mergers is increasing as firm's seek economies of scale, while others are also seeking to grow through international networks, alliance relationships or even an international merger. Growth has always involved organic growth – mainly associates into partners but many firms are using lateral hiring as a key growth driver. How is all this funded – is external investment the answer.

The briefing will cover the following topics:

- Do we want or need to grow?
- Understanding your strategic challenges for growth and weighing up the options for growth
- Weighing-up pros and cons of domestic mergers, international alliances and mergers
- Defining your merger needs and making the first selection
- What does a successful lateral hiring and integration strategy look like?
- Pros and cons of external investment
- Managing a Relationship Network

■ Day Two – Tuesday 28 July

MODULE THREE

Understanding financial management and profitability: how do I finance my firm for now and for growth?

This session will provide an overview of the key financial risks for law firms and how you can overcome them.

We will cover the following topics:

- Current trends in law firm financial management; is AI the answer?
- Best practice in handling cash-flow
- Time recording, invoicing and cash collection
- New sources of investment and lending when required
- The levers of profitability

MODULE FOUR

Understanding law firm ownership, partner performance and profit sharing: how do we remunerate and reward to build a firm?

Law firms are facing a 'perfect storm' in terms of their ownership models, evaluating partner performance and dividing profits fairly. What are the financial and non-financial requirements of a law firm partner and how to evaluate their 'contribution'? During turbulent times, how to 'fairly' divide ownership and profits? How can firms continue to promote new partners within a slow or no-growth environment, meanwhile ensuring that the most senior of partners are still able to transition out of the firm?

For many, this is coming against the background of the transition from first to generation ownership with additional challenges regarding law firm valuations and partner contributions.

The briefing will cover the following topics:

- Current challenges within law firm ownership, contribution and profit sharing
- Understanding partner performance in terms of financial and non-financial contribution
- Capital contributions and buying-out founding interests
- How will AI/external capital affect ownership, profit sharing, partner expectations and succession?
- Latest trends in partner performance: objective setting, evaluation and profit-sharing

Course content

■ Day Three – Wednesday 29 July

MODULE FIVE

Inspiring your people and leading through change: how do I best lead my firm? How to lead to achieve strategy.

This module will help you become an effective and successful leader by understanding what current changes (in generations, society and work practice) mean in terms of your own leadership style, collaborating better and getting the most from your people by building open and trusting relationships, understanding personal motivation and managing by 'outputs' and not 'inputs'.

Having a strategy is important but achieving it is mission critical and it's the primary job of a 'leader'.

Participants will gain a clearer picture of their role both as a leader and as a manager, what can be expected of them (or not), plus insights and tips into how to get the job done effectively while at the same time maintaining personal and professional balance.

The module will cover the following topics:

- Understanding the difference between management and leadership and what is required of today's law firm leaders
- Understanding the job of law firm leadership and how to do it effectively
- Getting the best from your people, appreciating the different styles of leadership and what that means
- How to build consensus
- Understanding the diverging goals, values and attitudes across generational cohorts
- Guiding the junior lawyers and supporting them as they grow professionally
- Improving your 'management leverage' by delegating, supervising and developing an effective team around you
- Ensuring your people are on board and the 'people pipeline' is still intact.
- Leading to achieve strategy.

MODULE SIX

Improving legal service delivery through better use of knowledge, technology and innovation: How do I make the most of disruption, technology and new business models?

More competitive market conditions are forcing law firms to find efficiencies, adopt new ways of delivering their services and adapt and update their business models.

This session will review the challenges of innovation and change ensuring you have the right balance of inputs and outputs required to improve your service delivery without waste and higher costs.

We will cover the following topics:

- Understanding the driving forces for a new approach – is efficiency everything?
- Starting with your clients, people and processes (then adding in the technology)
- The importance of knowledge (what does that mean?) and role of knowledge management
- Affordable options for embracing new approaches
- How should firms embrace AI (and charge for it)

■ Day Four – Thursday 30 July

MODULE SEVEN

Business development and communications: how do I ensure we build strong client relationships?

In this session, we will demystify the state-of-the-art marketing and strategy techniques at use for individual lawyers and their firms. By using these approaches, lawyers maximise their ability to build a network, develop a strong reputation, and create the practice they dream of having.

This module will cover the following topics:

- Understanding your value proposition – Creating strategic plans, practice plans and mini marketing plans.
- Selecting and prioritising opportunities: Which clients and prospects are most attractive and what work do you want from them?
- Options for winning new work and developing stronger client relations
- Market positioning and branding – Why tactics come before strategy
- Communications tactics, PR, social media and law firm directories
- Organising your law firm BD – Various structures and how they operate
- How will AI affect marketing strategy? Some clients are now choosing firms based on recommendations by AI

MODULE EIGHT

Wrap-up session: ask the experts

This concluding session synthesises the week's learning, helps participants build a personalised action plan, and emphasises how to translate insight into measurable leadership outcomes.

Closing keynote

The programme concludes with a keynote session on the future of law delivered by Professor Richard Susskind. Drawing on his long-standing work on the impact of technology, new service models and changing client expectations, he will explore how the legal profession is likely to evolve over the coming years and the implications for law firms and their leaders. Participants will have the opportunity to engage directly with Richard Susskind, raising questions and testing ideas on what the future may hold. The Academy will then close with the awarding of certificates to participants.

Social content (Subject to change)

Monday 27 July – Informal welcome drinks

River Terrace, King's College London

Wednesday 29 July – Networking drinks

*Roof Terrace at Marquess of Anglesey
39 Bow St, London WC2E 7AU*

Approximately a 6-minute walk from King's College London

Thursday 30 July – Awards ceremony and farewell drinks

River Room, King's College London

Course Directors



Moray McLaren

Moray McLaren is Professor at the LawAhead Centre on the Legal Profession at IE Law School and a member of the Møller Institute at the University of Cambridge. A lawyer by training, he holds an MBA in legal services.

He is co-Founder of Lexington Consultants, where he works with leading law firms to improve individual and organisational performance through this period of change and opportunity.

Moray was the inaugural Chair of the Strategy Group of the IBA Law Firm Management Committee. His recent research on The Perfect Partner and The Salaried Partner Dilemma has been published by Harvard Law School's Center on the Legal Profession.



Stephen Bowman

Stephen is a former Canadian tax lawyer and Vice Chair and Managing Partner at Bennett Jones. He served for over 12 years as managing partner of the firm's Toronto office and a member of the firm's board. His IBA roles include serving as Co-Chair of the IBA's Future of Legal Services Commission

and former Co-Chair of the Law Firm Management Committee. Stephen has also served variously as a director and board chair of non-profit organisations in the business, international tax, education and cultural sectors.



Stephen Revell

Stephen worked for Freshfields for nearly 44 years and was a partner for 33 of them. He has worked and lived on three continents – North America, Europe and Asia and has managed transactions in over 50 countries. Whilst at Freshfields he led the StrongerTogether relationship program

involving over 400 law firms around the world. Stephen is a past Senior Co-Chair of the IBA Law Firm Management Committee and a trusted advisor to law firm leaders globally on their key strategic challenges.



Zulon Begum

Zulon is a specialist Partnership and M&A lawyer and Partner at London based boutique law firm, CM Murray LLP, where she leads the Non-Contentious Partnership practice. She advises professional and financial services firms – ranging from law firms and accountants to architects, consultants, insurance brokers

and private equity houses – on a wide range of partnership and LLP matters, including partnership agreements, structuring, M&A and partner issues. Zulon is recognised as a leading expert in Non-Contentious Partnership Law and ranked as Band 1 in Chambers & Partners UK and 'Next Generation Partner' in Legal 500. She acts for both UK-based and international firms, with particular experience advising law firms headquartered in the US, offshore jurisdictions, Ireland and India. International firms often seek her guidance on best international practice in drafting and reviewing provisions in their partnership agreements, especially around governance, remuneration, and partner rights. Zulon also serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the IBA Law Firm Management Committee.

Keynote speakers include

Yasmin Lambert Managing Director, RSGI Consulting

David Morley Dejonghe & Morley, London

Professor Richard Susskind OBE FRSE President, Society of Computers and Law; Author, 'Tomorrow's Lawyers', and 'How to Think About AI'

Michael Williams Kirkland and Ellis, Washington, DC

Faculty

Our unique faculty of academics and practitioners includes the following experts

James Batham Clients and Markets Partner, Dentons, London

Christine Blaise-Engel Fidal, Paris

Roger Bull Burges Salmon, Bristol

Katie Cramond Hill

Melissa Davis MD Communications, London

Louise Edwards Michelmores, Southampton

Neville Eisenberg Senior Advisor, Mishcon de Reya LLP, London

Shahir Guindi Chair, Emeritus Osler Hoskin & Harcourt, Montréal

David Gutierrez BLP Abogados, San Jose; Member Latin American Regional Forum Advisory Board

Lise Lotte Hjerrid HortenDahl, Copenhagen; LPD Representative, IBA Management Board

Greg Jackson Oakwood Strategy, London

Mirella Lechna-Marchewka Wardynski, Warsaw

Anne Macdonald Harper Macleod, Edinburgh; Co-Chair Law Firm Management Committee

Paul Marmor Head of Dispute Resolution, Sherrards, London

Rob Millard Cambridge Strategy Group, London

Vaibhav Parikh Nishith Desai Associates, New York

Martin Reufels Heuking, Cologne

Aku Sorainen Senior Partner, Sorainen, Tallinn

Carola Van den Bruinhorst Phyleon Leadership & Governance, Amsterdam; Immediate Past Chair, LPD Council

Julian Yarr Non-executive director and board advisor, Julian Yarr Advisory, Dublin

All speakers and faculty are subject to change.



IBA Law Firm Management Committee Academy for Leaders

DEADLINE – 29 MAY 2026

To apply to participate please complete this form and send to conferences@int-bar.org

Name

Firm name

Your position in the firm

City and country where based

Email

I confirm that I will attend all 4 sessions

A short (no more than 500 words) description of why you want to attend this Academy and how you believe you and your firm will benefit from it.

Until 29 May 2026	Price
IBA Member	£6,750 + VAT
Non-Member	£7,500 + VAT

All fees include course materials