



## Law students solve world problems at international ideas fest



A law student duo has returned from a trip to Miami to participate in the world's first international legal think tank.

James Dong and Sharon Yin flew to the United States in April to represent the University of Sydney in the very first legal innovation think tank.

The legal duo were part of an elite group of students from international law and business schools to come together in the ultimate collaboration program named *Law Without Walls* (LWOW).

According to the program's website, the LWOW was established to facilitate solutions for real-world problems "at the intersection of law, business and technology".

Winning the overall title of global winner was Mr Dong's group, sponsored by Janders Dean, who was presented with the challenge of utilising the law to improve the lives of refugees.

The winning team responded with a custom-designed platform to improve access to justice for refugees in Greece.

"The project was important to me, as the refugee crisis continues to worsen day-by-day," the law school reported Mr Dong as saying.

"It was really rewarding that my team was able to utilise the law, technology and business to create a project of worth that advances social justice."

Earlier in the year, student participants had been split into groups and matched with business leaders around the world. This included academics, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and lawyers.

The LWOW groups got to work with their virtual teams, developing an idea over a period of four months. Using video conferencing the groups investigated a problem and devised a business plan to address the issue, with an accompanying prototype and product presentation.

The University of Sydney law school's Associate Professor Rita Shackel, an academic mentor and lead adviser for the program, said that LWOW was a competition that celebrated innovation.

"Students are challenged to address legal problems with careful consideration of the ethical, social and business issues at stake," Associate Professor Shackel said.

"LWOW is a vibrant, creative and practical vehicle for legal education that engages students in high-level critical thinking and problem solving."

In April this year, 100 student participants then travelled to the University of Miami to participate in a ConPosium, what LWOW described as a "a legal Ted talk show on steroids".

Over two days the teams then presented their ideas, some using the musical scores and documentary footage and others with oral advocacy.

The collaboration that LWOW provides is meant to also highlight the growing importance of problem-solving across geographic and disciplinary borders.

The program's philosophy is that the future of law requires a mentality of a world of law – without walls.

"This blended program is designed to equip experienced and inexperienced talent with new skills and new contacts to make them more successful global business leaders, armed with the knowledge and expertise to meet the challenges of the economic pressures, technological advances and globalisation that have dramatically reshaped the legal market," LWOW said.

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