



The University of Sydney Law School

News_

Preparing the next generation of innovative lawyers

22 September 2023

Students re-imagine law in global collaborative program

Sydney Law School students Danielle Haj-Moussa and Kiran Gupta participated in the Law Without Walls Sprint, which brings together students, industry, and academic experts to tackle global challenges.



Kiran Gupta (L) and Danielle Haj-Moussa (R) at the 2023 Law Without Walls Sprint.

Law Without Walls is a global collaborative program that brings together academics and students from legal and interdisciplinary backgrounds and the private sector in order to tackle real-world global challenges with innovative legal, business, and technological solutions.

In teams, supported by expert mentors, they research, develop, and pitch an innovative solution for these real-world problems to a panel of expert judges. The program ends with a final presentation in front of a panel of venture capitalists, legal tech experts, business and innovation leaders.

Professor Rita Shackel, Deputy Dean and Deputy Head of School at Sydney Law School, has been involved in Law Without Walls for over a decade.

"The program is cutting-edge," Shackel said.

"It is a truly unique way of bringing together diverse talent and peoples, new perspectives, and advances in technology, to ideate, create and solve problems in an ethical and sustainable way.

"The Law School is extremely proud to be involved in Law Without Walls and to have the opportunity to showcase Sydney Law School talent in the program."

This year's program kicked off in St Gallen, Switzerland, after a two-month intensive virtual training program, which taught fundamental problem-solving skills and provided a fresh perspective on legal problem solving.

Danielle Haj-Moussa and Kiran Gupta, both supported by leading law firm Corrs Chambers Westgarth, were this year's participants from Sydney Law School. We spoke to them about their experiences in the 2023 Law Without Walls Sprint.

Danielle Haj-Moussa

Danielle is a final year Bachelor of Laws student and has also undertaken a Bachelor of Engineering in Mechatronics.

In this year's Sprint, she was placed in a team with partners from the real-estate arm of CMS who wanted to solve for data fragmentation and the interplay with client management. The team developed an AI-powered dashboard that aggregates data sources and derives insights to ensure lawyers are better informed about firm-wide client matters as well as general market/transaction trends.

Did you find anything challenging during the experience?

When presented with a problem, it is very easy to immediately start thinking about the solution. The Sprint Program is structured so that most of the time is spent dissecting the problem under the premise that a problem can only be solved if you truly understand its intricacies.

This challenged my typical problem-solving instinct, and it was quite difficult at the start of the program to set aside my ideas/solutions and focus on looking at the problem from all angles.

However, my team and I pushed through such that the solution felt obvious only once we properly diagnosed the problem. This method of problem-solving is something I will certainly carry with me in the future.

What are some of the most valuable things you have gained and learned from your time at Law Without Walls?

This was the first program I have experienced where you get to break down the problem and ideate a solution *with* the people who are directly impacted by the problem.

This was an extremely valuable component of the program because it allowed me to learn how best to operate in teams with different levels of experience and understanding of the problem and also served as an important reminder that there are lawyers who are actively thinking about technology and data.

I also left the program with a strong network of other students and lawyers who are also passionate about the interconnection between law and technology, something I am sure will stay with me as I progress through the next stages of my career.

Why should students take part in the Law Without Walls program?

LWOW is an exciting and energetic program that is very organised, well run, fun and will leave you with a sense of zeal about the future of law. I am now armed with a network of legal-tech thinkers as well as a new set of problem-solving skills that will stay with me.

Kiran Gupta

Kiran is in his final semester of a Bachelor of Laws, having also studied a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Media Studies.

Kiran was placed in a team with UBS, who wanted a solution that would allow their sales managers to navigate and interpret complex policy documents. Together, the team developed XB Lightning, which is an AI-powered chatbot that delivers fast and reliable and understandable answers to challenging policy questions, allowing non-legal practitioners to receive answers on complex cross-border issues.

Did you find anything challenging during the experience?

The biggest challenges were developing a growth mindset and moving beyond the lawyer's risk management framework.

We did not discuss the solution at all on the first day, which was very difficult as our mind would drift to fixing the problem rather than meaningfully unpacking the solution.

Developing a novel solution under time pressure was also quite challenging as well as presenting in a five minute Ignite-style presentation, which involved automatically moving slides and no notes.

What are some of the most valuable things you have gained and learned from your time at Law Without Walls?

The program provided a fantastic learning experience as it was incredibly well-organised and highly structured which allowed us to meaningfully make progress and learn.

We were also able to work with the top lawyers and consultants from around the world as colleagues. This was a great confidence boost as our ideas were respected and valued by senior lawyers from around the world.

We were also forced to think deeply about the world around us and about the law which was extremely beneficial. This forced us to leave our comfort zones, developing our skills as law students and future lawyers.

What would you say to students considering taking part in Law Without Walls?

Go for it! It's a great experience and nothing like anything else you can do at law school. It's challenging and intense, but it is absolutely worth it for the skills you learn, people you meet and networks you build. It is a lot of fun as well!

Danielle and Kiran were sponsored to participate in Law Without Walls by Corrs Chambers Westgarth and the Sydney Law School. They would like to sincerely thank Corrs and the SLS for their generous support of the program.

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What can Barbie tell us about international law?

In a new exhibition, 'At the Vanishing Point', Dr Jacqueline Mowbray and Professor Emily Crawford from the Sydney Law School reflect on the material objects of international law – souvenirs, merchandise and memorabilia – and use these as a lens through which to understand and interrogate international law and its institutions.



Call for submissions: Kim Santow Law and Social Justice Essay Prize

Sydney Law School is pleased to announce the second annual Kim Santow Law and Social Justice Essay Prize.



Inaugural George Flannery Vis Fellow leaves her mark

Associate Professor Ashwini Vasanthakur Sydney Law School's inaugural George Flannery Visiting Fellow, recently finishing her ten-year role. Ashwini is a Queen's National Scholar and Political Philosophy at Queen's Law in Canada. We caught up with Ashwini regarding her time at the Sydney Law School.





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