

IP Inclusive: LEO's report 2Q 2021



IP INCLUSIVE

Working for diversity and inclusion in IP

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1 Overview

2Q 2021 was incredibly busy. There were big issues to deal with around reconstituting IPIM, establishing the foundations for its new advisory board, preparing the 2021-22 business plan and budget, and embarking (with some success) on our first serious fundraising campaign. More on these in 8 below.

Alongside all this, events continued to happen and resources to be generated, largely through our communities, regional networks and Careers in Ideas task force but also some from IP Inclusive generally. June was particularly busy.

Other highlights included the establishment of our sixth community, the IP Non-traditional Family Network (see 4.4 below); the creation of a soon-to-be-launched leaders' pledge (6.1); and significant development of our BAME network directory (4.1). The proposed Careers in Ideas mentoring scheme has also made progress (see 2 below).

A June event showcasing IP Inclusive to overseas IP professionals (see 6.2) proved a useful – and popular – opportunity to promote both D&I and the UK IP sector's unique approach to it.

2 Careers in Ideas (CinI)

- June: CinI task force met to progress 2021 projects and priorities
- June: re-run of the Careers in Ideas Week November 2020 “masterclass” offering guidance on the application and interview process for students hoping to train as patent and/or trade mark attorneys
- June: website News and Features post about the social mobility and outreach charity In2scienceUK and its collaborations with IP sector organisations, largely brokered through IP Inclusive and Careers in Ideas
- Working group established to progress the proposed mentoring scheme
 - Basic terms of reference agreed
 - Pilot mentor induction programme created
 - Exploring the feasibility of hosting on an online platform such as “MentorLoop”
- September event being planned with the JAC and IPO about careers as an Appointed Person (see 6 below)

3 The EDI Charter

- Focused on helping signatories with the transition to post-lockdown working arrangements:
 - April: webinar with Focal Point Training on “Time to... RESET!”
 - May: published tips for post-lockdown inclusivity, a document created with input from the IP Inclusive communities, Focal Point Training and Jonathan's Voice

- May: Scotland network event on “Flexible working in IP – embracing the benefits for all”
- May & June: continuing regional involvement in the Women in IP coffee dates (see 4.6), each of which comprises a series of virtual meetings hosted around the country
 - “Venues” this quarter included Belfast, Cambridge, London, Midlands, North of England (including Leeds, Liverpool and York), Scotland, the South West and Wales, also Dublin (“in association with” IP Inclusive)
- Next North of England network event planned for July, to mark their second anniversary
 - Will include updates from all six IP Inclusive communities and informal discussions about future plans and priorities
- The South West network had planned a “picnic in the park” to mark the Bristol Pride celebrations in early July; sadly that had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions and the cancellation of the Pride celebrations themselves
- Acquired 2 new Charter signatories during 2Q 2021

4 The six communities

April saw the establishment of a new community, the IP Non-traditional Family Network (see 4.4).

4.1 IP & ME

- April to June: BAME network directory continued to progress:
 - Prototype directory categories circulated to potential users for feedback
 - Sponsorship obtained to develop an online sign-up form and “customer” interface, to be hosted on the IP Inclusive website
 - Initial scoping work carried out with the website developers
 - Agreed name for the directory (which will include volunteer speakers, writers, committee contributors and mentors): “AskME”
- June: first virtual coffee date for IP & ME supporters; more expected to follow in order to develop the community of BAME IP professionals and their allies

4.2 IP Ability

- April: webinar on stress management, in collaboration with LawCare, to mark Stress Awareness Month
- April: filed submissions to the EPO’s Enlarged Board of Appeal in case G1/21, regarding the accessibility of ViCo hearings
- May: informal “coffee dates”, hosted from 6 locations around the UK (plus an associated event in Dublin)
 - Joint project with Women in IP
 - Discussion theme related to what disability looks like, how disabled people experience their impairments and how to be better allies
- June: Carers Week webinar (with the IP Non-traditional Family Network) on supporting carers and solo parents at work

- June: filed a response to the epi's discussion document on changes to the format of the European Qualifying Exams and e:EQE
- May & June: website News and Features posts to mark World MS Day and Autistic Pride Day

4.3 IP Futures

- April: informal networking and discussion event on the theme of "Positivity and looking forward"
- June: webinar entitled "Mind your head!" on anxiety, depression and practical steps for promoting mental wellbeing, delivered by mental health champion Andrew Wells from Herbert Smith Freehills
- June: informal "fireside chat" event with Soni Basra (Haseltine Lake Kempner's first female ethnic minority partner) on "What I'd tell my younger self"

4.4 IP Non-traditional Family Network

- Established in April with basic website page, LinkedIn group and blogsite
- LinkedIn group now has over 40 members and several active discussions
- June: Carers Week webinar with IP Ability (see 4.2)
- Hoping to facilitate informal regional "park meets", over the summer, for supporters and their families

4.5 IP Out

- May: committee member Triona Desmond contributed an article to the *CITMA Review* about her experience as a Stonewall Educational Role Model and her thoughts on the meaning of Pride events
- June: webinar on "Religion and the experiences of lesbian and gay people"
- June: promoted a CITMA webinar¹ to mark Pride Month, which included speakers from IP Out, the IPO and IPReg

4.6 Women in IP

- April: website News and Features post on "Shaping the path for working women post-Covid"
- May: joint "coffee dates" with IP Ability (see 4.2)
- May: collaboration with AIPLA to publicise their global Women in IP networking events (hosts Boulton Wade Tennant and Mewburn Ellis)¹
- June: coffee dates, hosted from 9 locations, discussing people's expectations of new working models post-lockdown
- June: collaboration with Chicago Women in IP on a panel discussion comparing D&I initiatives "Across the Pond"

¹ Open to all IP Inclusive supporters

5 Mental health and wellbeing

- April: IP Futures event on “positivity and looking forward” (see 4.3)
- April: IP Ability webinar on stress management (see 4.2)
- April: website News and Features post on “Mental health in the workplace post-Covid”
- May: Mental Health Awareness Week:
 - Publicised Jonathan’s Voice and LawCare resources via our IP Inclusive Updates e-newsletters
 - Promoted a CITMA webinar¹ on “Implementing better mental health support in the workplace”
- June: IP Futures “Mind your head!” webinar (see 4.3)
- Mental health first aider (MHFAer) network continued to post relevant content in its LinkedIn group, a rota ensuring content is frequently updated
- Plans to repeat our 2018 and 2019 mental wellbeing surveys, in collaboration with Jonathan’s Voice, are currently on hold due to lack of resources on both sides
- No news yet on the 2020 LawCare survey (including IP sector-specific results), but hope to revive this before the end of the summer

6 Extending our reach

6.1 Senior leaders’ “think tank”

- May: meeting including a presentation by Eifion Morris, senior diversity champion at Stephenson Harwood, and his diversity colleague Liz Cope
 - Aimed to progress some of the objectives from the inaugural November 2020 meeting, specifically those about embedding D&I throughout corporate systems and practices, and supporting the HR teams and managers who help make that happen
 - Hosted guests in senior HR roles within participating firms, to bring more of them into IP Inclusive and create a more joined-up approach to D&I between people in different roles within the sector
- June: “Leaders’ pledge” drafted and receiving broad support; hoping to launch with a first set of signatories during 3Q 2021

6.2 International collaborations

- May: I participated in a panel discussion on D&I at the EPO Academy’s “Examination Matters reloaded” conference
- June: global diversity meeting with representatives from IP sector organisations around the world
 - Included talks on IP Inclusive generally, its communities and Careers in Ideas, plus others from the IPO’s Tim Moss and representatives of the founding organisations
 - Breakout discussions allowed for the exchange of ideas with our overseas counterparts; they were facilitated by a wide range of our supporters, including

representatives of the IP Inclusive communities, Careers in Ideas, IPReg, IPLA, IP Bar Association and Jonathan’s Voice

- Run twice to accommodate delegates from different time zones
- Delegate feedback good; included enquiries about potential overseas membership of our Charter scheme and/or other forms of international affiliation
- June: Women in IP event in collaboration with Chicago Women in IP (see 4.6)
- June: I participated in an AIPLA IP Practice in Europe Committee event¹ on global and national approaches to making D&I policies “systemic”, to mark the end of their virtual European trip
 - Included panellists from the UK, US, France, Germany, Italy and WIPO

6.3 Other

- April: new community launched for non-traditional family members (see 4.4)
- September event being planned with JAC (see 2 above) will help us reach more solicitors, barristers and TM attorneys, all less well represented historically than patent attorneys
- Our events continue to be exclusively virtual, helping us to reach more people; no immediate plans to change this
 - Also moving towards the provision of automatic closed captions (free from Zoom) for all IP Inclusive events and larger meetings, to increase accessibility

7 D&I data gathering

- Still working on a report of the November/December 2020 benchmarking survey results and hoping to publish a summary soon; other projects have had to take priority
- Intending to produce some basic guidance on D&I data gathering for smaller IP Inclusive Charter signatories:
 - Linking to suitable templates available elsewhere (eg from the InterLaw Diversity Forum and various legal sector regulators)
 - Ideally obtaining input and endorsement from key IP sector membership bodies and regulators
 - Potentially promoting through the leaders’ think tank (see 6.1) as well as the IP Inclusive communities

8 Operational

8.1 IP Inclusive Management (IPIM)

In June 2021 IPIM was reconstituted. At a final meeting of the “old-look” IPIM on 7 June, the organisational members (including the founding members) withdrew; new (individual) members were appointed; and a revised constitution was adopted. This all aligned with the “To Diversity and Beyond” plans on which we consulted during 4Q 2020 and 1Q 2021.

- New IPIM membership as of 7 June 2021:
 - Andrea Brewster (Lead Executive Officer)
 - Julia Florence (Secretary)
 - Gordon Harris, Gowling WLG
 - Michael Silverleaf QC, 11 South Square (Chair)
 - James St Ville, 8 New Square
- May: began recruiting for additional IPIM members (2 applications received by 30 June 2021 closing date)
- I attended IPIM meetings on 20 April and 7 June 2021

8.2 Business plan and fundraising

- April: published the 2021-22 business plan and budget
- May: fundraising campaign launched, through mailshots (in particular to Charter signatories) and the website; crowdfunding page established for individual donations
- By end of June 2021, amount raised = £41,650
 - £37,500 of this allows us to cover the year’s basic operating costs; LEO fees and expenses; and set-up costs for the new structure (including professional advice)
 - Further donations would buy us (in order of suggested priority):

£9,800	(Highly likely)	Basic administrative support
£4,600	(Reasonably likely)	HR support for Careers in Ideas
£10,000		Set-up of initial contingency fund
£4,600		Comms support
£13,000		Careers in Ideas website upgrade + one or two other smaller projects

- Some organisations still to confirm their commitment and/or to be reminded

8.3 Advisory board

- May: established draft terms of reference for the new advisory board, to be finalised by IPIM in 3Q 2021
- May: began recruiting for advisory board members
 - 25 applications received by 30 June 2021 closing date
 - IPIM will shortly begin reviewing the applications and making appointments

8.4 LEO role

- LEO contract updated and signed for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022
- Workload high – I urgently need the proposed administrative support, which we expect soon to have funding for (see 8.2)

- As an interim measure, pending the appointment of an assistant, I now handle the IP Inclusive book-keeping and invoicing, which adds considerably to the burden during a time of fundraising

8.5 IP Inclusive website

- 17 “News and Features” posts published during 2Q 2021, many of them IP Inclusive news
- Added 9 items to the Resources page in 2Q 2021
 - Mainly event recordings and associated follow-up materials
 - Included our tips for post-lockdown inclusivity (see 3 above) and the “Introduction to IP Inclusive” presentation from our global diversity meeting (see 6.2)

8.6 Careers in Ideas website

- April: developers fixed a small problem with broken links and outdated “plugins”; this was covered by IPReg’s donation towards our 2021 operating costs

8.7 Other

- June: began work on a draft volunteers’ code of conduct for IPIM approval

ARB

9 July 2021