

IP Inclusive annual meeting 2 April 2025

Extra updates



We apologise again that we were unable to bring you live updates, at our 2 April 2025 annual meeting, from our IP & ME community and our Scotland and South West Networks. Lianne Da-Cunha, Laurence Cheney and Megan Jefferies have very kindly provided these written notes instead; read on to learn about the fantastic things they've been up to in the last twelve months as well as some of their future plans.

***All three groups are keen to hear from new volunteers.
Please email us at contact@ipinclusive.org.uk if you'd like to get involved.***

From IP & ME (Lianne Da-Cunha, Forresters):

Bea Malacart, Riddhi Patel and Lianne Da-Cunha have been co-leads of IP & ME for just over a year, so 2024 provided an opportunity to find out what type of events work, get an idea of how large the community is, and build IP & ME's presence, especially on LinkedIn.

The following events took place:

- Coffee clubs in February and May. These are open-ended, informal discussions on a particular theme. For example, February's was about how love, affection and kindness are expressed and understood across communities.
- Lunch and learns. These involve online talks over lunch, where we invite speakers from ethnic minority backgrounds to share their experience in the IP professions, and sometimes to teach us more about a particular topic. For example, we had a talk on taking your power back and how to overcome your inner voice. Another lunch and learn was held in collaboration with IP Ability and Women in IP, and the speaker touched on the intersectionality of these different groups. To reach as many members of the community as possible, we started recording the lunch and learns and posting these to IP Inclusive's YouTube account for people to access at a later date.
- In-person book club for South Asian Heritage Month. This was held in London, and coincidentally right in the middle of the far right protests that broke out across the country.

The book eerily seemed to mirror these protests, and it definitely brought to light how important it is to come together to support and celebrate under-represented groups.

- Panel discussion for Black History Month. Three IP professionals at different stages of their careers were invited to join a panel discussion and share their experiences, considering the Month's theme of "Reclaiming Narratives". This was posted as a video on YouTube, and shared on LinkedIn.
- Two IPs in a Pod podcast. Co-leads Bea, Riddhi and Lianne spoke about all things IP & ME and IP Inclusive with the CIPA hosts. This provided an excellent way to raise awareness of the community.

Plans for 2025:

- More in-person events, in particular regional events
- Continuing our popular lunch and learns
- Building our informal community, for example a WhatsApp group that allows community members to share details of exhibitions they want to attend, or relevant articles they have read

From the Scotland Network (Laurence Cheney, Murgitroyd):

It has been another great year for the Scotland Network:

- Expanded our committee to 8 members with representatives from different professions within the IP community: In-house Patent Attorney David Blair, HR Business Partner, Margaret Hastie, IP Solicitor Rachel Gillian, Private Practice Patent Attorney Amy Dawson, Trade Mark Attorney Ryan Kellingray, Patent Paralegal Gillian Harrison (with Stephen Wardrop currently standing in for Gillian), Trade Mark Paralegal Andrew Couttie and myself Head of Marketing, Laurence Cheney – 5 firms
- We had another busy event calendar since the last conference:
 - Shepherd & Wedderburn event in Glasgow on Neurodiversity in May
 - Multi-firm *Summer of IP* event in August where students interested in the IP profession met at Marks & Clerk Glasgow offices to attend presentations from Pete McBride, founder of Scintilla; Ryan Kellingray from Dentons about trade marks; Mary Pratt from Murgitroyd and Jo Spreckley from Marks and Clerk about HR; David Blair from start-up Solgel; Andy McGlone from Murgitroyd about patents; and Rachel Gillan and Megan O'Neill about the IP solicitor's role.
 - A mental wellness event "Out of the summer into the winter" in Glasgow in September hosted by Thorntons.
 - In January, "How to attract and retain talent in a gen Z world", kindly hosted by Hindles.
 - Two successful Connected Bubbles events in Edinburgh and in Glasgow in March.

- We've grown our LinkedIn group and participation at events with more events planned for this year. The team at HGF Glasgow will host an event in June, based around promoting social mobility in the IP profession followed by an event hosted by Pinsent Masons in September on artificial intelligence. We are also tentatively preparing a *Summer of IP*-style event in Glasgow at Murgitroyd for August.
- We were delighted to take part in the working group tasked with planning the 10th anniversary celebrations of IP Inclusive and in October the Scotland Network will contribute to the 10th anniversary by organising a coffee roulette, a UK-wide IP Inclusive online event which will offer a networking opportunity for all IP Inclusive allies. The proposed date for this event is October 15th at 10 am.

We look forward to another busy year! Thanks for your time.

From the South West Network (Megan Jefferies, Thrings):

I'm Megan Jefferies. I head up the IP team at Thrings and am chair of the IP Inclusive SW Network.

A very brief update from the SW group today:

- On our committee we have representatives from Abel & Imray, Mewburn Ellis, Script IP, Hasseltine Lake Kempner and Airbus, so a range of IP professionals from attorneys to solicitors to support staff to in-house roles.
- We have held Connected Bubbles events in the South West over this past year, got involved in IPause events and continued to work collaboratively to share best working practice around diversity and inclusivity in our member firms.
- I think our highlight of the year has been, as part of the Careers in Ideas *Summer of IP* campaign – we ran a half-day event for those considering a career in IP at Thrings' offices in Bristol.
 - We had panel speakers which included an IP solicitor, an IP barrister from 3PB, patent attorneys, trade mark attorneys and examiners from the IPO.
 - After the panel discussion, attendees could then go off into breakout groups and talk with two of the speakers they had been most interested in or which spoke about the area of the profession they were thinking about.
 - The event ended up with some informal networking and drinks.

For IP Inclusive's 10th anniversary Mewburn Ellis are hosting an in-person SW committee panel event focussing on neurodiversity which we're hoping will bring neurodiversity in the profession to the forefront and outline some tips and insights into making our profession a more inclusive environment.