



The City of London Solicitors' Company



The City of London Law Society

The 2026 Wig & Pen Prize *for pro bono legal work*

The City of London Law Society & the City of London Solicitors' Company are pleased to launch the 2026 Wig & Pen Prize for pro bono legal work. The Prize, awarded jointly by City of London Law Society and the City of London Solicitors' Company, is open to teams as well as individuals at all levels within the profession. The Prize criteria also includes recognition of outstanding leadership or management of a pro bono initiative or pro bono service to a specific project.

Guidance Notes and Nomination Form

Closing date – Tuesday 1st September 2026

The Wig & Pen Prize for pro bono legal work, provides an opportunity to publicly recognise the invaluable and often unseen pro bono work undertaken across all levels within the legal profession, from trainees and recently qualified solicitors through to associates and senior level partners.

Nominations are sought for those individuals or teams who have made a contribution to broadening access to justice in their communities or who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in ensuring that the legal system is open to all.

In particular, the judges will take into account:

- (a) the length of time involved in giving or co-ordinating free legal advice or representation to people who have otherwise failed to obtain access to justice;
- (b) the candidate's involvement in creating or leading new or innovative projects providing free legal services to people who would otherwise fail to obtain access to justice;
- (c) the significance of the candidate's service and leadership, both to their clients and their community; and
- (d) an indication of the time spent on the project, to include a breakdown between the time spent during normal office hours and the time spent outside of normal office hours;
- (e) the extent to which the individual's outstanding management and leadership skills have resulted in the establishment or success of a particular project and, by example, have encouraged the participation of others on a pro bono basis.

Copies of this application pack are also available on the CLLS website ([Welcome to the CLLS](#)) and the closing date for applications is Tuesday 1st September 2026.

Nominations can be made by you, your employer or the project you support. Please nominate anyone who you think has been involved in a great pro bono project - whether large or small.

Senior representatives from the City of London Law Society and the City of London Solicitors' Company will review the nominations and select the overall winner who will receive a monetary award of £1,000 for the pro bono project they support. The winner also holds the prestigious Wig & Pen Trophy for one year.

Criteria

The Wig & Pen Prize for pro bono legal work is open to trainees and all solicitors, either individually or in teams, at any level in their careers, who practise within the catchment area of the City of London Law Society.

Nomination process

Please complete the nomination form below. Please also supply the following attachments combined into a single pdf document:

- **Attachment 1:** Details about the entrant (maximum 150 words)
- **Attachment 2:** Information about the pro bono project and details about the individual or team's personal contribution (maximum 500 words). Please note guidance below.

Please submit a summary of the pro bono project undertaken and why the entrant should receive an award, for example, time spent on the project and whether it was during office hours; how the activity was undertaken; the impact of the activity on their clients and the local community; and whether the activity involved setting up a new or innovative project.

Examples of work undertaken in the past have included providing legal advice in law centres, setting up an advice service to support business start-ups, setting up a Citizen's Advice Bureau Council Tax Clinic, being part of a team representing a UK national facing the death penalty, representing victims of human trafficking and modern slavery, providing a free legal assistance facility for the Government of Sierra Leone, representation of individuals through the International Refugee Assistance Programme, supporting the Entrepreneurial Refugee Network, supporting the work of Hostage International, co-ordination of the Ukraine Advice Project and a charity working to protect lone asylum-seeking children and championing the rights of bereaved families and frontline social care workers.

- **Attachment 3:** Two letters of support

Please supply two letters of support from other individuals such as supervising solicitors, clients or project managers who have knowledge of the entrant's pro bono work.

Closing date and Award ceremony

The closing date for nominations is Tuesday 1st September 2026.

The Prize will be presented at an "Celebration of Impact" event on Wednesday 30th September 2026.



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The Wig & Pen Prize 2026 Nomination Form

Name of individual entrant/team:

Address of individual entrant/team:

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E-mail address of entrant/team lead:

Telephone number of entrant/team lead:

Please circle: Trainee Qualified Solicitor Team

If qualified, date of admission of each solicitor:.....

Referring to the guidance notes please provide the following documentation in support of the nomination (as a single pdf document):

- **Attachment 1: Entrant/Team biography**
- **Attachment 2: Details of pro bono project and contribution - maximum 500 words**
- **Attachment 3: Two letters of support**

If this nomination is being submitted on behalf the entrant or team, please supply your contact details:

Name:

Address:

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E-mail:

Telephone No:

Closing date – Tuesday 1st September 2026

Please submit your application by email (in a single pdf document) to: liz.thomas@ccls.org