

News release

Independent research into innovation and the use of technology in the legal sector is launched

23 March 2021

Law firms throughout England and Wales are being asked about their experiences and views on the use of technology and innovation in the legal sector as part of a major research project launched this week by the University of Oxford.

We have commissioned the university to conduct independent research into the extent that legal tech and innovation are being used and how their use may develop in the future. Involving an online survey of all the 10,200 law firms we regulate in England and Wales, researchers will also explore what impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on the development and use of technology.

As well as surveying firms, the university is also conducting extensive wider research and interviews to gather input from a broad range of stakeholders and experts, from both within and beyond the legal profession. The research will focus particularly on innovation and technology which may improve access and services to the public.

Once complete the findings will help us and wider legal sector to understand:

- current use of innovation and technology across the sector
- what the most likely areas of future use and development are
- how to best support future innovations, including by potentially removing regulatory barriers

Anna Bradley, Chair of the SRA Board, said: 'We are committed to supporting the use of innovation and legal technology that helps to meet the needs of the public, business community, law firms and the economy. Commissioning this research from the University of Oxford is an important step as we work to bring together the views of a wide range of stakeholders on what is happening in our sector at the moment, and what the future might hold.'

'New ways of doing business and the increasing use of legal technology will affect everyone working in the legal sector, so we want to hear from as many people as possible. I encourage you all to take this opportunity to get their views heard.'

Supporting the adoption of legal technology, and other innovations, that help to meet the needs of the public, business community, regulated entities and the economy is one of our three key objectives

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/>] for the next three years.

Further information on the research, including on how those working in settings other than a regulated law firm can get involved, is available on our website [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/archive/reports/technology-innovation-in-legal-services/>] .

The University of Oxford research team includes well known experts in the field of legal technology and innovation, including Professor Mari Sako [<https://www.sbs.ox.ac.uk/about-us/people/mari-sako>] and Professor John Armour [<https://www.sbs.ox.ac.uk/about-us/people/john-armour>] .