



## **Invitation to Participate in National Research Project**

### **‘The Impact of Emergent Technologies Upon the Teaching of Core Law Units in the Australian Law Curriculum’**

#### **The Research Project**

The structure of the accredited Australian law degree – both the Bachelor of Law (LLB) and the Juris Doctor (JD) – continues to be determined primarily by the need to demonstrate coverage of the ‘Priestley 11’ (P11) prescribed areas of knowledge: administrative law, civil dispute resolution, company law, constitutional law, contract law, criminal law and procedure, equity, evidence, professional conduct, property law and tort law. The P11 areas of knowledge are taught via a series of core law units within the law degree, the content of which is relatively consistent across Australian law schools. Meanwhile, the practice of law is undergoing rapid change, largely because of the emergence of disruptive digital technologies. There is a clear need for law schools to adjust the way law is taught to ensure law graduates continue to be effectively prepared for contemporary legal practice. Many of the recent reports regarding the future of legal education and of the legal profession call for an increased emphasis in the law curriculum upon teaching digital skills and knowledge of emergent technologies, equipping work-ready graduates for technology-enhanced or technology-centric practice, while at the same time emphasising the need to retain the existing emphasis upon more traditional legal knowledge and skills.

**The challenge confronting Australian law schools is the fact that many of the legal academics responsible for teaching the core law units lack the time, resources and expertise to identify and evaluate the impact of emergent technologies upon the law curriculum. The objective of this Project is to assist Australian law schools to address this challenge.**

The Project will investigate the impact of emergent technologies upon the teaching of the core law units in the Australian law curriculum. The Project Leadership Team has settled the overall research questions and method, and identified six categories of emergent technologies. Legal scholars from a variety of Australian law schools are now being invited to conduct multiple ‘Micro-Projects’ to identify the impact of each category of emergent technology upon each P11 area of knowledge. The Project’s scholarly outputs will include periodic reports, journal articles, and a monograph. The practical outputs of the first phase of the Project will be reports identifying (1) the impact of particular emergent technologies upon a particular P11 area of knowledge and any consequent changes to the way the P11 area of knowledge should be taught, and (2) the educational resources for law students and law teachers needed to ensure the core law unit appropriately acknowledges and incorporates the impact of the emergent technologies. The second phase of the Project will be the development of these resources.

## Your Role

If you elect to participate in this Project, you will write a 2500-word report about your own Micro-Project, examining the impact of a particular Category of Emergent Technology (CET) upon a particular P11 area of knowledge. Subject to availability, you will be able to choose both the CET and the P11 area of knowledge.

(It is preferable that you be familiar with either the CET or the P11 area of knowledge, but you are not expected to be an expert in the impact of the CET upon the P11 area of knowledge.)

You will be provided with:

- An Overview of your CET, including descriptions of specific technologies within the CET; a broad description of the likely level of potential impact of the CET on the law itself, the way the law is administered and enforced, and the way the law is practised; and a list of further readings regarding the CET
- The Micro-Project research questions and method
- A Micro-Project Report Template

**The project has Ethics Approval from Bond University (Ethics Reference Number CP01045). Please ensure you provide each person you interview with a copy of the Explanatory Statement and have them sign the Participant Consent Form. Please submit a copy of the Consent Form when you submit your Report.**

Your Report will be due 3 months from the date you are provided with the above materials.

## Your Micro-Project

The Project Leadership Team has identified six CETs:

CET	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
A. Experiential technologies	New ways of experiencing the world around us	Virtual reality, augmented reality, mixed reality, digital twins
B. Body technologies	New ways of using our bodies	Wearables and implantables, genome editing
C. Information technologies	New ways of thinking, communicating, processing and storing information	Artificial intelligence, advanced machine learning, digital technology platforms, mesh app and service architecture, conversational systems, adaptive security architecture, inevitable architecture, big data, cloud computing, quantum computing, biometrics and digital id
D. Creative technologies	New ways of creating and making	3D printing, additive manufacturing, robots
E. Connection technologies	New ways of connecting	The internet of things, smart cities, intelligent things, intelligent apps, automated vehicles, bots/robots
F. Transaction technologies	New ways of transacting	Blockchains and distributed ledgers, cryptocurrencies, smart contracts, 'everything as a service'

Your Micro-Project will identify and evaluate the likely impact of one of these CETs upon a particular P11 area of knowledge.

## Research questions

1. What is the current and likely future (within the next 5 years) impact of the CET upon (1) the law in the P11 area of knowledge, and (2) the way law in the area is administered, enforced and practised?
2. How will this change what current and future lawyers need to know and be able to do?
3. How will this change the way the relevant core law unit should be taught to law students (including the scope of the unit, the learning outcomes for the unit, the learning activities undertaken by the students, and how students within the unit should be assessed)?

## Methodology

1. Conduct a detailed literature review to see what the academic literature and media commentary are saying about the way the emergent technologies are impacting the P11 area of knowledge.
2. Interview at least THREE law teachers teaching in this area (within your own law school and from other law schools) who have incorporated the impact of the CET into their teaching about their views regarding the current and likely impact of the CET.
3. Interview at least THREE legal practitioners practising law in the relevant area about their views regarding the current and likely impact of the emergent technologies. This should include a range of types of practitioner, e.g. big firms, small firms, government departments, barristers, NewLaw, community legal centres.

## Your Report

### *Word count*

Approximately 2500 words (excluding footnotes).

### *Layout*

- A. *Category of emergent technologies* – A description of the relevant CET, including background readings (250 words) – *To be provided*
- B. *Literature review* – A summary of current and likely future impact of the CET upon (1) the law in the P11 area of knowledge, and (2) the way law in the area is administered, enforced and practised, according to recent scholarship and media commentary (500 words)
- C. *Practitioner perspectives* – A summary of the views of various law teachers and legal practitioners regarding the current and likely future impact of the CET upon (1) the law in the P11 area of knowledge, and (2) the way law in the area is administered, enforced and practised (500 words)
- D. *Consequences 1* – An explanation of how this will change what current and future lawyers need to know and be able to do (250 words)
- E. *Consequences 2* – An explanation of how this will change the way the core law unit should be taught to law students, including the scope of the unit, the learning outcomes for the unit, the learning activities undertaken by the students, and how students within the unit should be assessed (500 words)
- F. *Bibliography and recommended resources* – A list of resources referred to in the report plus additional resources (500 words)

### *Referencing style*

Please use the Australian Guide to Legal Citation. The citing of online sources, with hyperlinks, is preferred.

### *Formatting*

The Centre for Professional Legal Education will take responsibility for formatting your Report.

## The Project Outcomes

1. Your Micro-Project Report will be published by the Centre for Professional Legal Education and made available for download via the CPLE website.
2. Your Micro-Project Report will be collated with other Micro-Project Reports and included in at least two Major Reports to be published by the CPLE:
  - a) the impact of your particular CET upon all of the P11 areas of knowledge; and
  - b) the impact upon your particular P11 area of knowledge of all six CETs.
3. The Major Reports will form the basis of several journal articles, of which you will be named a co-author.
4. The Major Reports will themselves be collated into a monograph, of which you will be named a co-author.
5. The Reports will inform Phase 2 of the Project, the development of learning resources for the coordinators of core law units. You will have the opportunity to participate in this second phase.

## Next Steps

If you are interested in participating in this important project, please send an email to [CPL@bond.edu.au](mailto:CPL@bond.edu.au) notifying us of your interest, attaching your CV, and nominating at least three preferred Micro-Projects using the coding below. We will endeavour to allocate to you one of your preferred Micro-Projects.

	CET A	CET B	CET C	CET D	CET E	CET F
1. Administrative law	A1	B1	C1	D1	E1	F1
2. Civil dispute resolution	A2	B2	C2	D2	E2	F2
3. Company law	A3	B3	C3	D3	E3	F3
4. Constitutional law	A4	B4	C4	D4	E4	F4
5. Contract law	A5	B5	C5	D5	E5	F5
6. Criminal law and procedure	A6	B6	C6	D6	E6	F6
7. Equity	A7	B7	C7	D7	E7	F7
8. Evidence	A8	B8	C8	D8	E8	F8
9. Professional conduct	A9	B9	C9	D9	E9	F9
10. Property law	A10	B10	C10	D10	E10	F10
11. Tort law	A11	B11	C11	D11	E11	F11

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,  
The Project Leadership Team

Professor Nick James (Bond University)  
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Assistant Professor Kylie Fletcher (Bond University)  
Associate Professor Wendy Bonython (Bond University)