



Nicolas Patrick

Partner
HEAD OF RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

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Nicolas Patrick is Head of Responsible Business at DLA Piper International. In this role Nicolas has responsibility for the firm's pro bono practice, which delivers more than 200,000 hours of free legal services annually, as well as other community investments including the firm's Foundation, global scholarships, social mobility programmes, and the firm's global partnership with UNICEF, through which DLA Piper has donated more than £2 million to promote justice for children, plus £6 million in pro bono legal services.

Nicolas also heads the London Boardroom Advisory Service, providing strategic advice to the boards of multi-national corporations and global NGOs. Nicolas regularly provides advice to senior executives on business and human rights and reputation issues.

- Litigation, Arbitration and Investigations
- Technology
- Pro Bono
- New Perimeter

Nicolas' legal practice focuses on human rights with a focus on child rights, refugee rights and access to justice. Nicolas is a trusted adviser to global NGOs, corporations, UN agencies and governments. Recent work includes:

- Supporting implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Bangladesh through domestic legislative reform
- Supporting UNICEF to ensure children are included in the transitional justice programme in The Gambia
- Human rights observation visits to African prisons and disability institutions in Eastern Europe
- *Norrie v NSW Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages* - Australian High Court Case establishing the right of transgender people to have their gender accurately recorded on identity documents
- Drafting the baseline shadow report on Australia's implementation of the Disability Convention for the inaugural UN treaty body review

Nicolas has advised the following organisations:

- UNICEF

- UNHCR
- WFP
- UNGC
- UNAIDS
- Amnesty International
- ActionAid
- Human Dignity Trust
- Several governments in fragile and developing countries

CREDENTIALS

Professional Qualifications

- Solicitor of the Supreme Court of New South Wales

Recognitions

- Recognised by Who's Who Legal as the 2015 Global Expert of the Year, for pro bono
- In 2014, Nicolas was named Advocate of the Year at the Australian Law Awards. The award recognizes an individual who has enabled positive change within the legal profession in Australia.
- Recognised as a leading pro bono lawyer by Who's Who Legal 2013 which ranked DLA Piper as a 'top 10' pro bono practice globally.

Memberships

- Trustee, LawWorks
- Pro Bono Council Member, Thomson Reuters Foundation / TrustLaw
- Pro Bono Council Member, PILnet, the global network for Public Interest Law
- Chairman, Redfern Legal Centre (previous role)
- Commonwealth Attorney-General's International Pro Bono Advisory Panel
- Director, Public Interest Law Clearing House (previous role)
- Advisory Board Member, Human Rights Law Centre
- Advisory Board Member, New Perimeter
- Board Member, Legal Information Access Centre, State Library of New South Wales (previous role)
- Executive Member, Australian Lawyers for Human Rights (previous role)
- Law Society of New South Wales
- Association of Pro Bono Counsel

INSIGHTS

As a leading pro bono lawyer, Nicolas is a regular commentator on pro bono and access to justice. Nicolas has been a speaker at the National Pro Bono and Access to Justice Conference of the Law Council of Australia, the PILnet European Pro Bono Forum, the South East Asia Pro Bono Conference and the Pro Bono Institute Conference in Washington DC and is regularly quoted and published in the mainstream and legal press. Nicolas was invited to give evidence before the Australian Senate's Inquiry into Access to Justice, and has also given evidence to the Low Commission into the future of advice and legal support in the UK.

Publications

The Business Case for Pro Bono 2022

DLA Piper's Commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 16

25 January 2022

The private sector has a crucial role to play in the achievement of the SDGs. As a law firm, we have the ability to make a significant contribution to the objectives set out in Goal 16, which include targets related to rule of law, access to justice, accountable institutions and non-discrimination. Some examples of our work follow.

Diversity in Pro Bono Roles

4 November 2021

Reflections on diversity in law firm pro bono practice management in the UK

- *The Australian In-House Counsel Pro Bono Guide*
- *The In-House Counsel Pro Bono Guide, United Kingdom*

Events

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OVERVIEW – BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Overview

Nicolas Patrick is a partner in the Responsible Business team at DLA Piper and has led the responsible business team globally since 2013. In this role he is responsible for helping the firm's clients to act more responsibly in every area of their business operations. Nicolas is the only dedicated responsible business partner in the London market, demonstrating our commitment to working with clients in this space.

Nicolas also co-chairs the firm's Boardroom Advisory Service which provides strategic advice to boards and C-suite executives with his particular focus being on ESG risks, business and human rights and effective stakeholder engagement.

Nicolas has been a full-time human rights practitioner since 2001 and a partner at DLA Piper since 2009. Nicolas brings a unique perspective to clients facing the challenges of human rights and reputation risk as he is trusted adviser to and works regularly with all stakeholder groups including business, government, UN agencies, national human rights institutions and civil society organisations (NGOs), and has a track record of building constructive partnerships across these sectors. As a member of the Business Network on Civic Freedoms and Human Rights Defenders, for the past 3 years Nicolas has worked with senior executives from more than a dozen leading global consumer brands to articulate the business case for closer collaboration between businesses and human rights defenders and has supported businesses to develop proactive engagement strategies as core elements of their risk identification and management framework when operating in high risk geographies.

Experience

Advising a global building supplies company on strategies to responsibly manage substantial liabilities arising from decades of asbestos product manufacturing which resulted in thousands of asbestos related injuries and deaths. Advising a global manufacturing business on issues relating to the use of prison labour in their supply chain. Advising a US based global organisation to develop policies and processes to support the development of a human rights respecting culture within the company, led at board and executive level, following allegations of human rights abuses perpetrated by heavily armed security personnel who had been contracted to guard several high value sites in 4 African countries. Advising the board of a global services business on the human rights, reputation, and shareholder related implications arising from a proposal to take over the management contract for an immigration detention facility. Collaborating with DLA Piper's leading sports sector team to provide guidance on the human rights risks associated with major sporting events. Nicolas recently presented a paper on this topic at the US State Department in Washington DC, to an audience made up of sports governing bodies, corporate sponsors, and host cities.

In countries with poor legislative human rights protections, or with sub-standard monitoring and enforcement, the risks and costs associated with human rights monitoring are often transferred to businesses. Under Nicolas' leadership DLA Piper has worked with governments around the world to improve human rights performance through legislative reform and implementation. Nicolas is currently advising the government of Vanuatu on domestic implementation of international human rights treaties. Over the past few years he has worked with the governments of Australia, Qatar, Timor Leste, Bangladesh and The Gambia on projects including: protection of the rights of migrant workers; reporting to UN treaty bodies on steps taken to improve human rights performance; drafting legislation and regulations to improve protection of human rights; providing training to government employees; and advising National Human Rights Institutions on strategies for the promotion of rights.

Nicolas is also a trusted adviser to the non-profit sector, particularly on matters of strategic importance and has recently worked with the CEOs of two global NGOs to formulate models for more constructive engagement with the business sector. Nicolas has recently advised another global NGO in relation to the arrest and detention of a staff member in Iran.

Nicolas has advised several UN agencies including UNICEF, UNHCR, UNOPS, UNAIDS, the World Food Programme and the UN Global Compact. Recently this has included working with the Business and Children's Rights team at UNICEF to identify ways that businesses can identify and minimise their impacts on children's rights.

As co-chair of the London Boardroom Advisory Service, Nicolas is involved in providing strategic advice to the boards of multi-national corporations and global NGOs. Nicolas regularly provides advice to senior executives on business and human rights and reputation issues, including crisis management, as can be seen in the example cited above in relation to use of lethal force by security contractors protecting sites in various African countries. Nicolas also worked with Harvard Business School and Boston Consulting Group on the development of the UNGC LEAD Board Programme, which provides guidance to boards of multi-national corporations facing the challenges of creating long term value and developing and maintaining their brand value - including in relation to managing human rights and societal risks.

Nicolas is also responsible for improving the performance of DLA Piper in relation to human rights, environmental impacts, community and stakeholder engagement. Nicolas authored DLA Piper's human rights policy and is responsible for overseeing its implementation.