



100

FIRST
HUNDRED
YEARS

Impact Report

2014-2019

SPARK21

Registered Charity No: 1167825

Contents

<u>About First 100 Years</u>	3
<u>Mission Statement</u>	4
<u>On The Roll</u>	4
<u>Biographical Films</u>	5
<u>Exhibition</u>	7
<u>Photography</u>	8
<u>Podcast</u>	9
<u>Guided Walks</u>	10
<u>Book</u>	10
<u>Artwork</u>	15
<u>Music Commission</u>	16
<u>Mosaics</u>	16
<u>Inspirational Women In Law Awards</u>	17
<u>First Women of the Supreme Courts</u>	17
<u>Events</u>	18
<u>Research</u>	20
<u>Social Media</u>	21
<u>Press Coverage</u>	22
<u>Corporate Sponsors</u>	23
<u>Pro Bono Partners</u>	23
<u>University Partners</u>	23
<u>What's next?</u>	24
<u>Acknowledgements</u>	26

About First 100 Years



The photograph that inspired the First 100 Years project. Dorothy Livingston (centre) as the only female partner at a law firm partners' dinner in 1982

© With kind permission of Dorothy Livingston

First 100 Years is the national campaign which led the celebrations for the centenary of women in law during a 5 year period, between 2014 - 2019. A groundbreaking history project, that gained support from all corners of the legal profession, including the Law Society of England & Wales, the Law Society of Scotland, the Bar Council, CILEx and the Magistrates Association, First 100 Years has been charting the history of women in law since the enactment of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919, which paved the way for women to become lawyers.

It set out to celebrate the past to change the future for women in the legal profession through a multimedia approach that would seek to generate a positive discourse around gender equality and diversity across the legal profession.

The project's founder, Dana Denis-Smith came across a photograph (above) in an alumni magazine for a well-known law firm and found the woman in the centre, later identified as Dorothy Livingston, particularly striking and she wondered what Dorothy must have felt like as the only woman. This kickstarted Dana's interest in the experience of women in the profession and she began researching the topic when she

discovered the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919, realising women could only be part of the legal profession for less than 100 years. Recognising that the centenary would be coming up in only a few years, Dana felt this occasion needed to be marked and set about creating the project to highlight the achievements of women in those 100 years and to make current generations aware of this important milestone.

Dana Denis-Smith, CEO of Obelisk Support and founder of the First 100 Years campaign said at its launch, in March 2014:

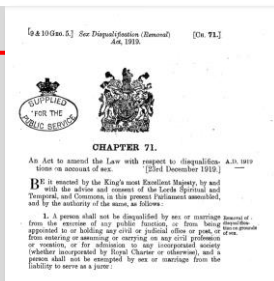
“

People don't know their history – who the first woman solicitor was, for instance. There is no archive like the First 100 Years to help us place ourselves in history.

1919

Passing of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act

© Parliamentary Archives



Left to Right: Carrie Morrison, Cornelia Sorabji

© National Portrait Gallery

Historic Timeline



Frances Kyle

Mission Statement

To ensure a strong and equal future for all women in the legal profession by raising awareness about their history and inspiring future generations of lawyers.

First 100 years was dedicated to the women in the legal profession and was set up with the aim to chart their progress over the last 100 years. It remains the most ambitious multimedia project that sought to introduce the history of women in law to the widest possible audience by being a visual, structured and engaging storyteller of often untold and lost stories of pioneering women. Its initial campaign budget was raised during a crowdfunding campaign in October 2015 which allowed us to start filming. A film was created to encourage crowdfunding, this can be seen [here](#). In June 2016 we received our charitable status with our charity Spark21. This allowed us to secure more widespread individual and corporate financial support. The objectives of Spark21 are for the public benefit to:

- advance education in the subject of women in the legal and other professions;
- promote equality and diversity and in particular the elimination of discrimination on the ground of gender;
- advance the arts, in particular but without limitation by commissioning, establishing, maintaining, publishing and performing (as applicable) works of art.

Over 5 years, the campaign told stories in numerous formats - from films to a touring exhibition or a music commission. We have told the stories through:

On The Roll

We created a limited edition toilet roll, 100 of them in total, which tells the story of how law firms, chambers and other legal institutions had provided the lack of women's lavatories as a reason for not promoting women to senior positions within their organisations. It is but one of the incredible stories that the First 100 Years has uncovered in charting the history of women in law.

The commemorative toilet roll is displayed at the Supreme Court, the Museum of London and all four Inns of court as well as Glasgow Women's Library, The Law Society, LSE Women's Library and the Parliamentary Archives. A number of firms and chambers have also donated to the project for one which they display in their entrance halls.



© First 100 Years



we've made

130

films

including

76

biographies
of #WomeninLaw

Achieving...

130,000+

total views

&



22,000

views for Lady
Hale's biography

&

8000+

hours
watched

Biographical Films

"I just would like the next generation to find it easier" - **Lady Arden**

"Well since I can't be Queen, I'll be a judge" - **Master McCloud**

"Becoming a peer was like winning the lottery without buying a ticket" - **Baroness Fiona Shackleton**

"Getting silk was the best day of my life" - **Anuja Dhir QC**

"And she turned around to me and said 'I'm sorry but little black girls from Balham don't become judges'" - **Sandie Okoro**

"I do get angry at injustices" - **Dame Linda Dobbs**

"I never thought as the daughter of a penniless refugee that I would end in the House of Lords" - **Baroness Ruth Deech**

We filmed over 75 mini biographical films of the female legal pioneers of our generation. As a methodology, and given the significant cost of video, we focused on capturing the lives and work of "Firsts" and so the women featured in the biographical films were chosen through an independent Finders' Committee that researched and then assessed multiple individuals across 10 categories, including:

- Firsts/pioneers
- Law Makers
- Role in Education
- Campaigners
- Mothers/Family women who perhaps have an interesting perspective on how they balance family life.
- Against the Odds - people who faced more difficult circumstances such as prejudice or poorer socio-economic background.
- Up and Coming/Women of the Future - Women who are younger or less experienced, doing things differently and working in an innovative way to make the legal sector more progressive.
- Rainmakers - Women who are particularly successful in their field.
- 'Inspired by' - People who were inspired by women in their careers or can speak on inspirational female lawyers that they were close to.
- Commentators
- Unusual/interesting - People who have come into the profession through unusual paths, or appeal because they are quirky/have a particularly interesting story or job.

1949

Dame Rose Heilbron and Helena Normanton become the first two women appointed King's Counsel at the English & Welsh Bar



Historic Timeline



Our films have featured trailblazers including (clockwise from top left) Lady Hale, Cherie Blair QC, Dame Linda Dobbs, Baroness Kennedy, Dame Rosalyn Higgins GBE, and Baroness Scotland QC.

These films form a large part of our free digital museum, accessible for all to learn about the pioneering women in the legal profession.

We also feature a number of other videos, including #OnTheRoad interviews in the Red Chair with different people in the legal profession, conference addresses and panel discussions.

The majority of our films have been produced by an all-female production crew of Angela Holdsworth, Deborah Perkin, Jane Greenwood and Ruth Garner.

We have been honoured by the participation of many distinguished voices from all corners of the legal profession who have spoken candidly about their lives and their journeys as women in law. Without their enthusiasm and openness, this campaign could not have achieved as much as it has.

To ensure future generations of researchers have a richer source of material, we have agreed to donate the footage in full and the edited versions of the films to the Women's Library, London School of Economics.

Film Premieres

For many of the 75+ biographical films, we have held a special premiere event to officially launch the film and celebrate the woman in law it features, before making it accessible to view online by all.

Press coverage for the film premieres include *The Times*, *The Evening Standard*, *The Barrister Magazine* and *Legal Cheek*.



1965

Dame Elizabeth Lane appointed High Court judge, the first woman to achieve this position

© Alamy



1988

Dame Elizabeth Butler-Sloss appointed to the Court of Appeal, the first woman appointed in this role.

Historic Timeline

Exhibition

The exhibition materials have had over 2.5 million visits.

We have been very keen throughout the campaign's life to ensure that the story of women in law is heard far and wide, across legal and non-legal communities.

In 2018, we curated a "Print & Display" exhibition, following the timeline we compiled and maintained on our website, comprising ten panels, one for each decade of the centenary, 1919-2019. The design of the exhibition was produced pro bono by Jonathan North of Baker McKenzie. The success of the exhibition has been phenomenal - 1 million visits across 14 months, with displays from the UK Supreme Court to local churches. We were proud to make our copy available to borrowers, who could order it online and only pay for collecting rather than printing costs. As a result, our copy toured the country. We have also encouraged those organisations that supported us financially to print their own copy and to lend it on to ensure the widest possible audience.

Our copy of the exhibition began a UK University tour in October 2018 at the University of Oxford, before spending the entirety of 2019 on the road. The exhibition visited the Supreme Court and has been displayed in Worcester Cathedral, the Law Society, the Great Hall in Winchester, Southwark Crown Court and the Royal Courts of Justice, as well as Universities across the country, including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leeds, Cambridge, Aston, Manchester, and Liverpool.



© Royal Courts of Justice

We have also encouraged schools, universities, libraries and not-for-profit organisations to print their own copy of the exhibition in whichever format suited them best and have allowed business and law firms to do so in return for a donation to the project. It has been displayed for a variety of events, often also being made a permanent fixture in law firm lobbies, university law faculties and courts. After displaying the exhibition, we have encouraged all organisations to donate their copy to a school, so that it can continue our work of educating the next generation. Our tracking of the exhibition over 14 months showed that it had reached 2,500,000 visits.



© University of Leeds



© Helen Booker



© Marcus Jamieson-Pond

Photography

#100Faces100Years

In 2019, to celebrate the centenary of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919, we wanted to show the diverse face of women in law today. Our vision was to create a visual representation of how, 100 years after being barred from the profession, women now make up a large and multi-faceted part of it.

On International Women's Day, we photographed women in all four capital cities of the UK, at the Law Societies of each nation, to capture the face of women in law. Over the course of a single day we photographed over 800 women in the profession, from support staff and legal secretaries, to paralegals and trainees, pupils and barristers, partners, members of the House of Lords and Supreme Court judges, all to show just how important women are in every part of the profession.

The photographs taken on the day can be found [here](#).

“

This is an exciting project that will create a fantastic collection of dynamic and vibrant images that illustrate the breadth of experience of women in the legal profession.

- Marcus Jamieson-Pond,
Creative Director for the
#100faces100years project

Podcast

Sponsored by Goldman Sachs and Linklaters, this series of 10 episodes covers the last century of women in law, decade by decade. Featuring academics and practitioners, we had an incredibly distinguished guest list, including Baroness Scotland, Baroness Butler-Sloss and Lady Hale. Episode 9 was recorded live with a live audience at Goldman Sachs, featuring Funke Abimbola, Christina Blacklaws, Sally Boyle and Professor Jo Delahunty QC.

Podcast Launch

We held a launch event in January 2019, generously hosted by Goldman Sachs, to celebrate the launch of the podcast series. The event featured speeches, a podcast trailer clip and a short film compilation and guests included some contributors of the podcast and leaders of professional organisations in the legal profession.



© Helen Booker

“

This podcast is just brilliant. Very informative of an untold history, informative interesting questions and a great cohort of guests.

- one of many five star reviews for the podcast



Guided Walks

When First 100 Years podcast host and team member Lucinda Acland met a tour guide, Anne Tickell, on a walking tour of London and discovered she was the granddaughter of Gwyneth Bebb, the idea of a women in law guided walk was born.

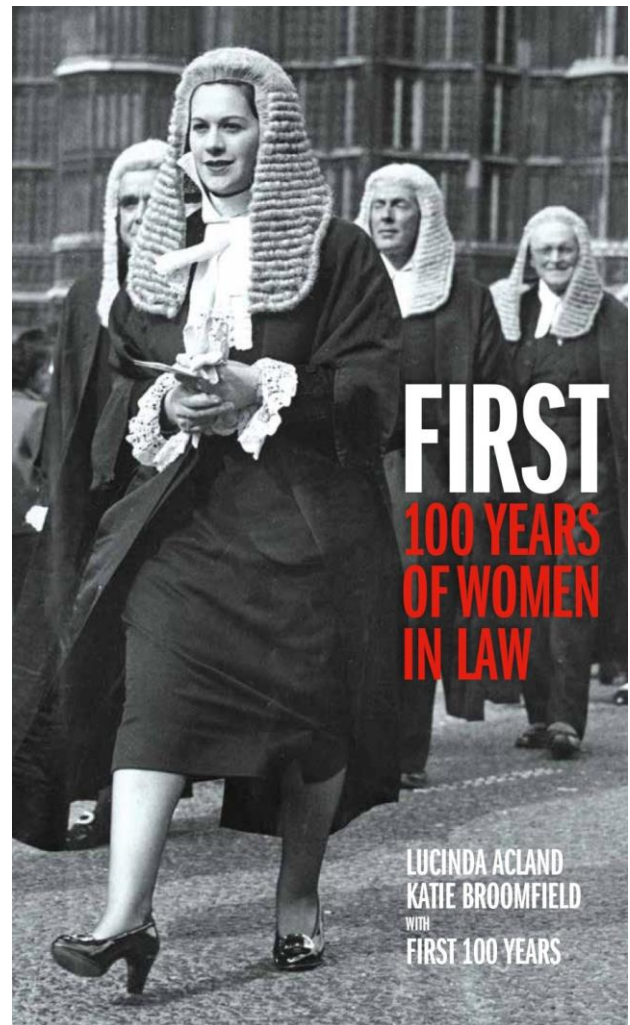
Guided walks took participants around the key areas of London for the legal profession, from the Inns of Court to the Law Society, telling the stories of a variety of pioneering women in law. We ran four of these tours and put on several private tours for schools too.

“
Following the
footsteps of the first.

- The Law Society Gazette



© First 100 Years



Book

We were proud to release the first book of its kind telling the story of women in law over the last 100 years in an informative yet accessible way.

Marking the centenary of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919, “*FIRST: 100 years of women in law*” by Lucinda Acland and Katie Bromfield tells the story of women in law in their first 100 years of practice. From early campaigners through to the first women solicitors, barristers, magistrates and judges, the book tells the often untold stories of the pioneers, reformers and influencers who paved the way, revealing the

100
FIRST
HUNDRED
YEARS

2014

Soft launch of the First 100 Years with support of The Law Society

Historic Timeline

barriers they faced, their challenges and triumphs. It offers a unique insight into how women have made their way in a profession still dominated by men and looks ahead to the prospects for women in law in the next 100 years. *FIRST* also features a forward from Baroness Hale of Richmond, former President of the Supreme Court.

FIRST received multiple endorsements from prominent legal figures, including notable legal authors, which cemented its contribution to our legal history. The Secret Barrister, a Sunday Times bestselling author and legal commentator with a considerable following, described the book as ‘a fascinating, beautiful, inspirational and, above all, important portrait of the first century of female empowerment in the legal system.’ Baroness Helena Kennedy QC, herself the author of the seminal ‘Eve was Framed’, called it ‘a vital and stunning piece of our history’.

“

Addressed as ‘My Lord’, banned from wearing trousers, forced to lower their voices and make the tea – new book tells the untold stories of women in law.

- The Barrister Magazine



“

This book was made possible by the volume of original material recorded and collected over the last five years. There is no archive like it to help women in law to place themselves in history.

- Dana Denis-Smith,
Founder First 100 Years

The Authors

[Lucinda Acland](#) is the host of the First 100 Years podcast series celebrating the centenary of women in law. She has over 25 years' experience in the legal sector as a solicitor and litigation support/IT lawyer, a creator of online CPD courses, and as the community manager at Obelisk Support, training and supporting returners back into flexible legal work.

[Katie Broomfield](#) is a barrister and historian. Based in the History Department at Royal Holloway, University of London, she is currently researching the opening of the legal profession to women in 1919. She is a contributor to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, the First 100 Years Podcast series and the creator of an exhibition Celebrating the Centenary of Women Lawyers.

We've sold or donated nearly 2000 copies of the book, including a copy donated to each of the four Inns of Courts. We donated £1000 from the book sales to the Legal Action Group to support their campaign to get their book *Judge Brenda* into every primary school in the country. The book continues to be available for purchase from Amazon and Waterstones.

The production of this book was kindly funded by the professional bodies: The Law Society of England & Wales, The Law Society of Scotland, The Bar Council, CILEx, as well as the Solicitors' Regulation Authority and the charity that houses the First 100 Years project, Spark21.



The Law Society



SPARK21



Endorsements of the Book

"First 100 Years of Women in Law is a fascinating, beautiful, inspirational and, above all, important portrait of the first century of female empowerment in the legal system." - **The Secret Barrister**

"This inspiring book reflects on the first century that women have been able to practice as barristers, solicitors, judges and jurors, allowing us to celebrate their successes, to hear their stories and locate ourselves within this dynamic and ever-changing profession...it's an important contribution to the change that is still desperately needed in the legal profession."
- **Cherie Blair QC**

"This is a vital and stunning piece of our history...This book is a triumphant celebration of all the struggles that breached the walls of exclusion. Brilliant!" - **Baroness Kennedy**

"A fascinating and indispensable insight into the female pioneers of the legal profession." - **Caroline Criado-Perez**

"This fascinating and vital book shines a spotlight on those women - often forgotten - who forged a path into the law when it was near impossible to do so. Reading it has made it clear how grateful I am to them for enabling me to stand on their shoulders and join the profession I love." - **Sarah Langford**



Graduation



“

Heilbron is cited as an inspiration by many women interviewed for the First 100 Years project, including Cherie Blair, Anne Rafferty and Mary Arden.

-- FIRST: 100 Years of
Women in Law, pg 66

Dame Rose Heilbron



© Marcus Jamieson-Pond

Book Launch

We were proud to launch our book, *FIRST: 100 Years of Women in Law*, in London at the Law Society of England & Wales. In connection with the Cambridge Women In Law, the book launch featured speeches from the authors, Katie Broomfield and Lucinda Acland, as well as from

Lady Hale, who wrote a foreword to the book, and held a book signing at the end of the event. We also hosted a Scottish launch of the book in collaboration with the University of Glasgow at Ashurst Glasgow.



© Marcus Jamieson-Pond

2015

First 100 Years crowdfunding campaign to fund the creation of the first biographical films and the first annual Spark21 conference

2017

Baroness Hale becomes the first woman appointed President of the Supreme Court



Historic Timeline

Artwork

At the beginning of 2019, the Supreme Court contained no artwork depicting women, except the Queen, in its art collection. We worked with Lady Hale, then President of the Supreme Court, the CEO of the Supreme Court and the Contemporary Arts Society to change that.

A shortlist of prominent artists was agreed upon before each being asked to submit competitive entries for the committee to consider. The winner was Turner-nominated artist Catherine Yass, who produced the piece ultimately entitled *Legacy 2019*.

Legacy 2019 features Cornelia Sorabji, the first

woman to sit law exams at Oxford University; Rose Heilbron, one of the first two women appointed KC and first woman judge to sit at the Old Bailey, among other firsts; Lady Hale, the first and only female Law Lord, first female Supreme Court judge and first female President of the Supreme Court; and an unknown woman, symbolising the future generations of women in law.

The artwork was installed in Courtroom 2, the court which was home to the first ever female majority panel of justices in October 2018. The unveiling event at the Supreme Court was the largest ever event hosted at the Supreme Court.



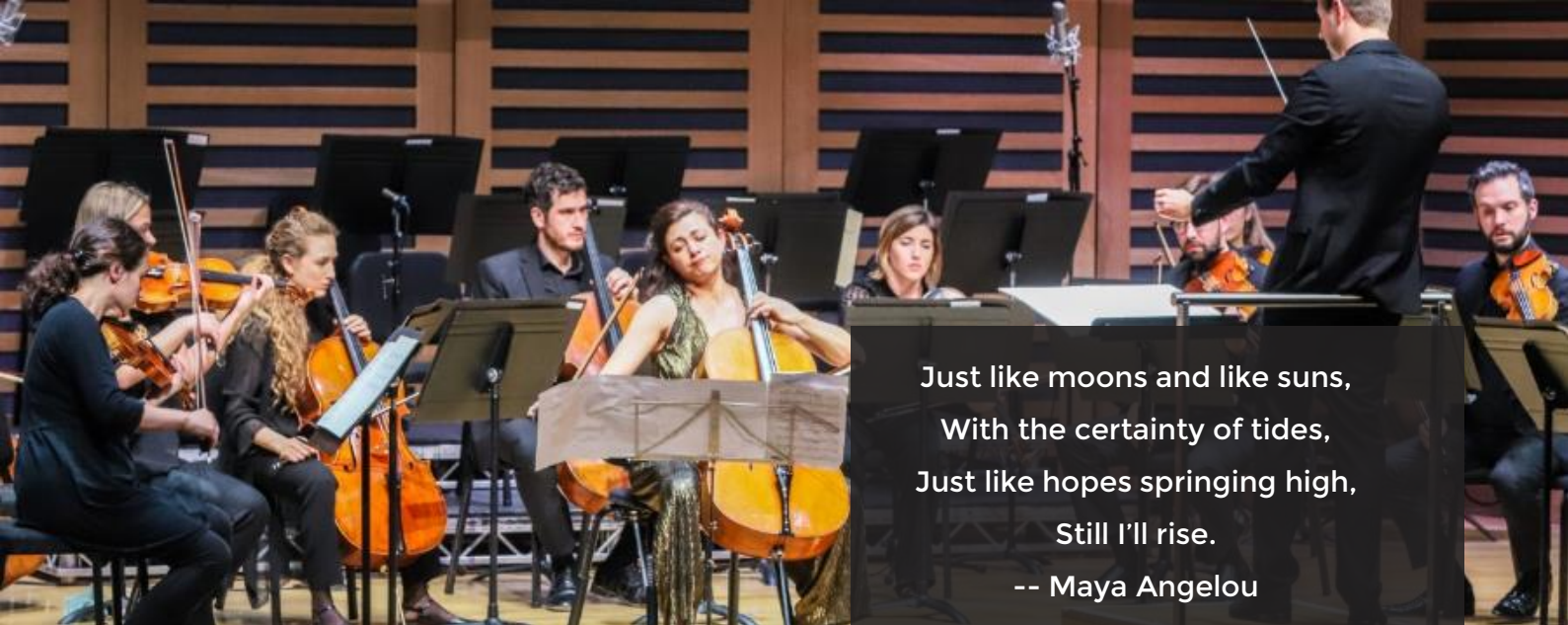
As featured in The Times, The Law Society Gazette, Scottish Legal News, Irish Legal News, Art Daily and on BBC News at 6.

© Hugh Glendinning

Baroness Hale said: "It is important that the story of women in the law can be shared with and understood by visitors to The Supreme Court. I hope that each of the women depicted – past, present and future – will be seen as a role model, especially by our younger visitors. The Supreme Court is enormously grateful to Spark21 for raising the funds for this new work of art."

"Aldi supermarket once had a Yuletide advertising campaign with the slogan 'Everyone's coming to us this Christmas'. Which in our own little legal world is what the Supreme Court felt like [at the unveiling event], where guests mingled with court president Lady Hale, other senior judges, prominent women lawyers and managing partners."

-- The Law Society Gazette



Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.
-- Maya Angelou

© Marcus Jamieson-Pond

Music Commission

We commissioned the first piece of music to commemorate the centenary of women in law. The composer, Charlotte Bray, composed *The Certainty of Tides*, performed on the cello by Natalie Clein with the Aurora orchestra.

The title is taken from Maya Angelou's empowering poem, *Still I Rise*, in which the strength and constancy of woman is likened to the certainty of tides.

The piece was premiered as part of a concert entitled *Pioneers* which also featured Angela Hewitt

playing Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 22 in E flat, K482 and an orchestral piece composed by Louise Farrenc, a relatively unknown composer after her death, but a towering figure in the musical landscape of 19th-century France, achieving the distinction of being the first female Professor of Piano at the Paris Conservatoire (where she successfully fought for equal pay with her male counterparts).

The event featured a pre-concert talk with Charlotte Bray, Dana Denis-Smith and the orchestra conductor Duncan Ward, as well as having our First 100 Years exhibition on display.

Mosaics

Following the photography day, we wanted to utilise these images to show the face of women in law today in a creative and visual way. We did this through creating mosaics of early pioneering women out of the photographs from the day.

For example, we donated a mosaic of Madge Easton Anderson to the University of Glasgow, her alma mater, as well as producing mosaics of Carrie Morrison and Maud Crofts, sponsored by Allen & Overy and Ashurst respectively.



From left to right: Mosaic of Carrie Morrison displayed at Allen & Overy London, Maud Crofts at Ashurst London and Madge Easton Anderson at the University of Glasgow.

Inspirational Women in Law Awards

The Inspirational Women in Law Awards seek to identify the trailblazers of the profession in the lead up to the centenary of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919, which paved the way for women to practise law.

Having grown year on year, in 2018 we expanded the Awards from a single Inspirational Woman in Law Award to six categories: Under 35 Lawyer of the Year, Solicitor of the Year, Barrister of the Year, In-House Lawyer of the Year, Champion of the Year and the Lifetime Achievement Award, the latter of which was awarded to Baroness Hale of Richmond. You can see her acceptance video [here](#).

We called for nominations in each category from the legal community, with nominators submitting their justification. The nominees themselves were then asked to write a short essay on a given topic to

complete their entry. In 2018 we asked the nominees to provide their view on the single thing that would make a real and positive difference in achieving equality for women within the profession. In 2019 we asked “what does a role model mean to you?”. The submissions are shortlisted and judged anonymously by a team of judges involving former winners of the Awards and key players in the legal community.

In 2019, we were delighted to hold the fifth edition of the awards with a marvellous ceremony taking place at County Hall on the 19th of November. This was generously hosted by Legal Week as part of their Women, Influence & Power in Law 2019 forum. In 2019 the Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Baroness Helena Kennedy of The Shaws, who delivered an impassioned speech.



© Marcus Jamieson-Pond



First Women of the Supreme Courts

On 5th July 2018, we brought the first female Chief Justices of four countries, across four continents, in conversation together for the first time ever. A sold out event held at Gray's Inn, the largest event ever held at the Inn, it featured Baroness Hale of Richmond DBE PC FBA, the President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom at the time, Beverley McLachlin PC CC CStJ, the former Chief Justice of Canada, Georgina Wood, the former Chief Justice of Ghana and Chief Justice Susan

Khiefel AC, the current Chief Justice of Australia.

Each participant discussed their experiences as the first woman to hold the top position in the legal profession in each country and discussed their challenges and career highlights. You can watch a highlights video of the event [here](#) or the whole event [here](#).

2018

First Women of the Supreme Courts: *Baroness Hale of Richmond, DBE PC FBA, Beverley McLachlin PC CC CStJ, Georgina Wood, Chief Justice Susan Khiefel AC*



© First 100 Years

Historic Timeline

Events

Spark21 Conferences

Every year we have held the Spark21 conference, kindly hosted by Simmons & Simmons. The first event was in November 2015 and the most recent one in 2018.

We have built an affordable and accessible annual conference to encourage both current and past practitioners to come together to discuss the current issues in gender equality for the legal profession and how we can overcome these challenges. Our unique angle has always been to include a wider, cross-disciplined panel from other professions, allowing us to all learn from each other. With around 120 attendees each year and 25 panellists and speakers, the Spark21 conference has always been at the forefront of discussing the ways in which we can tackle gender equality.

Drawing expertise from across the profession, including addresses from the Lord Chancellor on three occasions, and other guests such as Supreme Court judges, the Chief Executive of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Spark21 Conference has become a staple of the legal calendar.

The Spark21 conference has never been a money-making event, with ticket prices by donation only to allow us to cover event costs. Because of this, we have been able to make these discussions available to the next generation of legal professionals by encouraging student participation. We have held a student competition and also worked with LawCareers.Net to encourage their attendance.

“In Conversation”

Katharine McMahon on writing fiction about women lawyers (2015)

We hosted author and magistrate Katharine McMahon for a special event discussing her latest fictional tale, Evelyn Gifford, whose journey into law in 1920 is recorded in Katharine's books *The Crimson Rooms* and *The Woman in the Picture*.

Katharine described her writing process, taking inspiration from female relationships and weaving fictional historical characters in with real ones. For example, Florence Nightingale's illegitimate cousin Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon gave inspiration to her character Evelyn Gifford.



© First 100 Years

Katharine concluded the event by reading from her book. Her character is told “the future must be female...seize the opportunity to change the world” which connected with many in the room at the event. This then led to an open discussion about diversity in law.

Dame Janet Gaymer in conversation with Rosemary Martin (2015)

This In Conversation event brought together two leading lawyers from across the profession to talk about the key issues surrounding women in law discussing the question ‘How Can Innovation and Diversity Shape the Legal Profession’. We were treated to a thought provoking, inspiring and informative conversation with Rosemary Martin, General Counsel at Vodafone, and former Simmons & Simmons senior partner Dame Janet Gaymer. The event was chaired by Catherine Baksi, former barrister and journalist. You can watch a highlights video of this event [here](#).

An evening at the Supreme Court (2016)

To celebrate a year since the launch of the First 100 Years, we invited our supporters to join us for a special evening at the Supreme Court. We enjoyed a great evening in the presence of Lord Neuberger, President of the Supreme Court, and Baroness Hale, the Vice-President of the Supreme Court and one of the leading women featured by the Project. All participants had a guided tour and we showcased some of the films produced by the Project with the funds raised following a successful crowdfunding campaign in 2015.

Manchester in Conversation (2018)

On the 17th May 2018, First 100 Years travelled to Manchester to host the first of our On the Road events, for a thought-provoking conversation about how to increase female leadership in the legal sector.

While women's access to the profession has changed drastically, why is this not yet reflected at the higher echelons of the profession? How can the

next generation get to the top and stay there?

Dana Denis-Smith, CEO of Obelisk Support was joined by Her Honour Judge Singleton QC, Lauren Riley, founder of The Link App and Eve Holt, director and co-founder of Happen Together CIC to discuss the challenges for women reaching leadership positions.

You can watch the highlights of this event [here](#).



© First 100 Years



© First 100 Years

Summer Parties

Each year, with the support of corporate partners, we have hosted a summer party. In 2018, this was held at Mishcon de Reya and featured an address by Lady Hale, then President of the Supreme Court.

In 2019, this was held at Clyde & co, with Harini Iyengar, a champion of the project, a member of the Women's Equality Party and a prominent barrister in employment and equality law.

Association of Women's Solicitors

We are proud to have collaborated with the Association of Women's Solicitors throughout the project, particularly on their summer parties. For example, in 2019, we collaborated on their summer party as one of our centenary parties, with Dorothy Livingston, the initial inspiration for the project, discussing her early experience of life as a woman in the legal profession.

Centenary Parties

Some of our corporate partners hosted centenary parties to create a whole festival of celebrations in 2019 for the centenary. These parties showed off our exhibition materials, featured different speakers discussing topics in each decade of the centenary each month and generally celebrated the centenary and the achievements of women in law.



© First 100 Years



2018

Launch of the First 100 Years touring exhibition

Historic Timeline

London Legal Walk 2019

The London Legal Support Trust is an independent charity that raises funds for free legal services in London & the South East and holds the annual London Legal walk. Every year, the legal profession walks a 10km route around central London to raise funds for access to justice. To celebrate the centenary of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, we joined leading female lawyers including Lady Hale, Lady Arden, Baroness Kennedy, Solicitor General Lucy Frazer QC MP, and President of the Law Society, Christina Blacklaws, who signalled the beginning of the walk by walking down Chancery Lane to the Law Society.



The leaders of the London Legal Walk wearing sashes to celebrate the centenary of the women in law.

© Marcus Jamieson-Pond

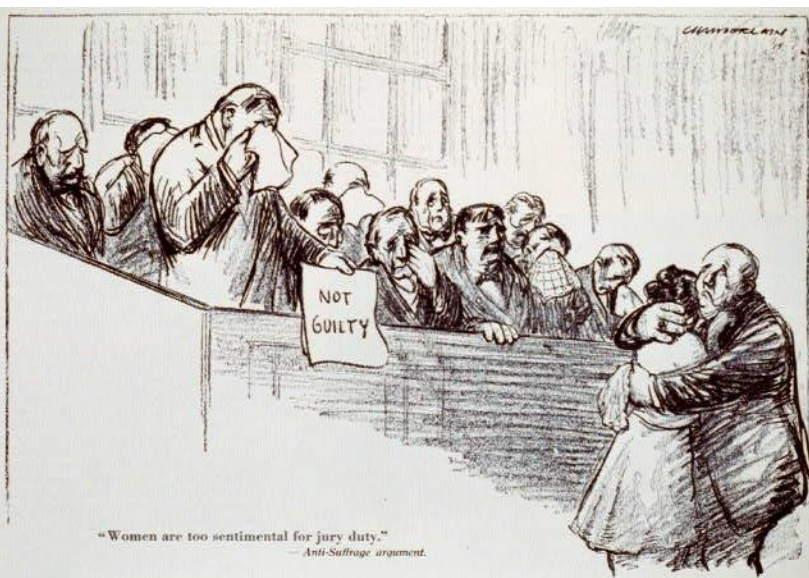
Research

Our aims have also been to start researching the present to devise a clearer advocacy plan for the Next 100 Years campaign based on the experience of women in law currently practicing across all of the legal profession.

In 2019, we surveyed over 750 solicitors, barristers and other women working in the legal profession with the aim of gaining an insight into the experience of women in the legal sector. The results found that, in the centenary year of women being in the profession, there were still considerable barriers to progression and equality.

- 58% said they or colleagues have experienced inappropriate comments from men at work. Almost half (46%) reported that either they or one of their colleagues had not complained about discrimination for fear of the impact on their careers.

- Only 2% think there is true equality in the legal profession.
- 80% predict it will take 20 years or more to achieve equality
- 32% consider that, at the current rate of progress, it will take 100 years.
- The majority (60%) believe that working part-time would impact on their career prospects.
- Whilst 54% say they receive encouragement from senior women in the workplace, a failure of employers to accommodate the realities of family life continues to hold women back.
- 28% say they have considered leaving their job due to a lack of flexible working. 39% say their working hours are not compatible with family life.



“

Sexist remarks remain commonplace within UK legal profession, survey finds.

- The Global Legal Post

One barrister said: *"When I announced my second pregnancy, a senior male said to me 'goodness you didn't keep your legs shut for long'. A law firm trainee reported that 'those at the top of my firm are aware of some of the sexual harassers and do nothing to stop or address them'."*

A solicitor responded: *"The partners in my firm have been very supportive of me. I was always told that it wasn't possible to do this job part-time but here I am working three days a week, with flexible, agile working and term time only, so that I can spend quality time with my three young children."*

On 23rd December 2019, the centenary of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919, the project's founder, Dana Denis-Smith joined Cherie Blair QC, Abi Silver, Beth Collette, Mari Takayanagi, Katharine McMahon and Jacqui MacDonald to discuss the findings of the survey, the last 100 years for women in the profession and what still needs to be done.

You can listen to the programme [here](#).

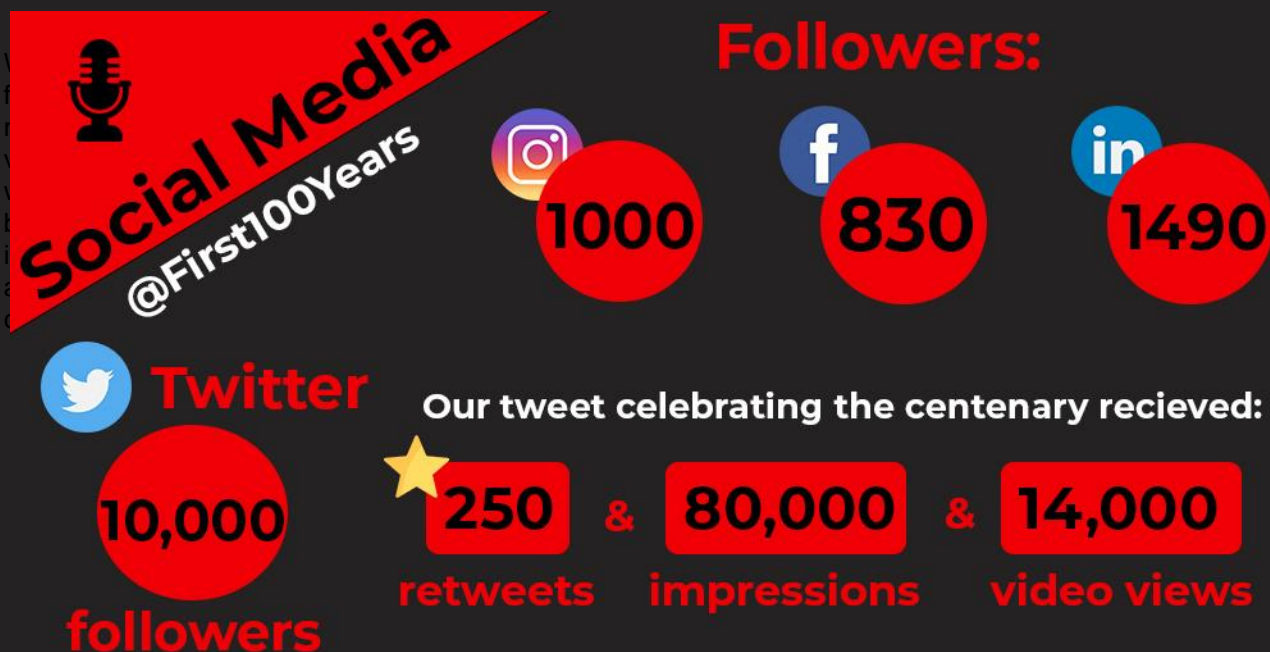
Also featured in LawCareers.Net, Legal Cheek, Solicitors Journal, Scottish Legal News and Legal Futures.

Social Media

Social media has been a key part of delivering our aims as a national campaign. Through Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Youtube and Instagram, we have been able to reach all corners of the legal professions to educate and stimulate discussion. This has allowed us to inform a wide audience of significant milestones for women in law, from the momentous firsts being made each year to the historic anniversaries worthy of celebrating, not least of all being the centenary of women being able to practise law in this country.

Similarly, through social media we have been able to amplify our audience for our educational and inspirational films, articles, podcasts and digital museum - reaching tens of thousands of

clicks, views and comments. Finally, it has allowed us to generate conversation and facilitate discussion, both online and at a variety of inclusive events, many of which have been organised through our online network. In particular, it has enabled us to connect to young people, whether junior lawyers or law students, who have taken part in our events in great numbers.



Press Coverage

Written Coverage

We have been featured in a number of national publications throughout the project. We have been featured in *The Times* over 20 times, *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Financial Times*, *The Daily Mail* and *The Evening Standard*.



Can you be a mother and senior law firm partner?

The number of women at the top of big firms remains stubbornly low, writes *Madison Darbyshire* and *Barny Thompson*

It is a question that thousands of women in law firms will ask themselves: can you be a mother and still succeed in law? The answer, it seems, is yes. But the numbers tell a different story. In the UK, only 17 per cent of equity partners in law firms are women. In the US, the figure is 20 per cent. In the UK, the figure is 17 per cent. In the US, the figure is 20 per cent.

The generally accepted view is that women who want to have a family should leave law. But this is not always the case. Some women, like *Madison Darbyshire* and *Barny Thompson*, have managed to balance their careers and families. They have done this by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

For example, *Madison Darbyshire* has a young son. She has managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner. She has also managed to balance her career and family by being flexible and by having a supportive partner.

The Lord Chancellor's address at our 2018 Spark21 Conference had a full write up on gov.uk and can be read [here](#).

In addition to press about our different special projects, we have also been featured in pieces covering a number of topics including the use of quotas, the written submissions for our Awards, the centenary date itself, International Women's Day and the gender pay gap.

WOMEN IN LAW FRONTLINE

Normalising flexible working patterns

A focus on skills in more flexible workplaces is key to achieving equality for women within the profession, says *Dana Denis-Smith*



Dana Denis-Smith
Dana Denis-Smith is a non-practising solicitor and founder of The First 100 Years project first100years.org.uk

We know the legal profession has a diversity problem. While women make up more than half of practising solicitors, they only represent 28 per cent of partners in private practice, with the figures for equity partners even lower.

There is no doubt that law firms recognise this, but so far

working or shorter working hours for both men and women. There was an emphasis on cultural change so that those working fewer hours were no longer considered unsuitable for senior positions or somehow lacking in ambition.

I have long felt that the industrial levels of inflexibility present in many law

of a child's life? How about giving all employees the chance to work a four-day working week as a full-time position? Why not allow more home-working or compressed hours?

It's not just about offering part-time hours or parental leave. It's about women being seen as having potential throughout their careers

We are also a regular staple in legal specific publications such as *The Law Society Gazette*, *The Barrister Magazine*, *Legal Cheek*, *The Solicitors' Journal*, *Legal Futures*, *LawCareers.Net*, *The New Law Journal* and *Counsel Magazine*.

We have also been featured in a number of regional publications for our work outside of London, for example *Scottish Legal News*, *Irish Legal News*, *South Wales Evening Post* and *Western Mail*. There has also been a global response to the project, having been featured in *The Global Legal Post* and *Trinidad Daily Express*.

2019

Donation of the artwork 'Legacy 2019' by Catherine Yass, commissioned by Spark21 and First 100 Years, to the Supreme Court.



Historic Timeline

Corporate Sponsors

We'd like to say thank you to all the corporate sponsors, without whose support none of this would have been possible.



Pro-Bono Supporters



University Partners





What's Next?

The entire archive will be donated to the London School of Economics' Women's Library for all to access for free. The films, transcripts, photographs, podcasts, biographies, artwork and exhibition materials can then continue to inspire future generations and be used by researchers for generations to come so that as a profession we can fully appreciate the achievements of the female pioneers who changed the landscape of the legal profession forever.

The Next 100 Years, the new campaign from the team behind the First 100 Years, is dedicated to achieving equality for women in law and will continue the work of the First 100 Years.

Over the next decade we want to accelerate the pace of change by encouraging collaboration across the profession, improving the visibility of women in law and supporting the women lawyers of the future.

The campaign is powered by Spark21, a charity founded to celebrate, inform and inspire future generations of women in the profession. It builds on the success of the First 100 Years project, created to chart the journey of women in law in the first 100 years following the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919, which paved the way for women to become lawyers for the first time. The five-year campaign culminated in the centenary celebrations in 2019.

The Next 100 Years will continue the work of the First 100 Years, capturing the inspirational stories of today's pioneering women lawyers, educating the public on the legacy of the legal pioneers of the past and driving the change needed to create an equal future for women in the profession.



2019

The centenary of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919

© with permission of the LSE Women's Library



Historic Timeline

Work that Next 100 Years has done so far:

#FaceTheFuture

Due to popular demand of 2019's #100Faces100Years campaign, we brought the photography day back on a global scale. Spanning six continents and also featuring male champions this year, we photographed the face of the global legal profession today to celebrate IWD.

More research

In response to the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent changes to everyone's working and living conditions, we set out to report on the impact specifically on women in the legal profession. With women taking more of the childcare responsibilities and a decreased interest in diversity initiatives, we wanted to understand the impact coronavirus is having on women and what they think the future is for gender equality. Nearly 900 women completed the survey, and the following conclusions were drawn:

- There was an overall confidence that firms were handling the crisis well and that business would eventually return to normal with 77% feeling their employer was handling the crisis well and 70% expecting their businesses to bounce back.
- The results highlighted impact on both mental and financial health with 66% reporting the crisis was having an impact on their mental health, 37% experiencing a drop in income and 67% reporting their employer had made cuts or furloughed staff.
- 350 of the nearly 900 had school age children at home and 91% were taking on extra childcare and homeschooling responsibilities, with 49% reporting they were taking on more responsibility than their partner and 73% told us they were finding the situation hard to juggle.

- 65% of respondents were concerned that the lockdown was exaggerating existing inequalities between men and women and more than 50% thought that diversity initiatives would fall by the wayside after the crisis was over.
- 83% expected increased acceptance of flexible working after the crisis.



Acknowledgments

We want to thank all those who have contributed to the campaign and have championed our work since we started:

Films

Thank you to the all-female film production team Angela Holdsworth (Executive Producer), Deborah Perkin (Producer-Director), Ruth Garner (Filming and Editing) and Jane Greenwood (Editing) and the Finders' Committee who selected the interviewees, chair by Harriet Sassoon.

Podcasts

Thank you to Lucinda Acland who has volunteered for the project including as host of the podcast series. Thank you also to those who participated in the podcast discussions and of course to all the listeners.

Campaign team

Thank you to the Project Coordinators who have worked on the project, Rhiannon Adams, Maxie Chopard, Chloe Harrison, Kitty Piper, Fiona Yeoh, Harriet Acland, Keshara Hallock, Annabel Twose, Caroline Dix, Ashley Van De Castele. Thank you to the Champion Coordinator Sarah MacRae. Thank you to the Treasurer Will Stephens.

Photography

Thank you Creative Director for Photography Marcus Jamieson-pond as well as all the photographers Simon Graham, Jamie Williamson and Sue Lacey.

Artwork

Thank you to Lady Hale and the Supreme court staff, including the CEO, Mark Omerod, Paul Brigland, and the communications team for their collaboration on the special centenary artwork. Thank you also to the Contemporary Arts Society and of course to the artist Catherine Yass.

Book

Thank you to the authors Lucinda Acland and Katie Broomfield, the editor Clare Grist Taylor and to Scala Arts & Heritage Publishers. Thanks also to Angela Holdsworth and Mari Takayanagi for reviewing the proofs.

Music

Thank you to the Aurora Orchestra for working with us on this special piece of music and to Suzanne Szczetnikowicz for introducing us to the Aurora Orchestra. Thanks also to King's Place and of course the composer, Charlotte Bray, and performer, Natalie Clein and the Aurora Orchestra.

Professional Organisations

Thank you to The Law Society, The Bar Council, CILEx, The Law Society of Scotland, The Solicitors'

Regulation Authority, The Law Society of Northern Ireland, Gray's Inn, Inner Temple, Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn for their continued support.

Exhibition

Thank you to Jonathan North at Baker McKenzie for designing the exhibition pro bono and also to every organisation and University that has hosted our copy of the exhibition around the country and to all the schools, libraries, firms, businesses and organisations who have displayed their own copy.

Awards and Summer Party Hosts

Thank you to Keily Blair, our first Inspirational Women in Law Awards winner who helped us with subsequent Awards, including hosting the 2017 Awards at PwC. Thanks also to all of the judges of the Awards over the years. Thank you to Legal Week who hosted our Awards for two years in a row in 2018 and 2019.

Thanks also goes to Fatema Orjela and the team at Sidley Austin LLP for hosting our first summer party in 2017. Thank you to Mischo de Reya and Clyde & Co for hosting our summer parties in 2018 and 2019 respectively. Thanks also to the Association of Women Solicitors for collaborating with us throughout the project.

Spark21 Conferences

Thank you to Ania Rontaler and Penny Miller at Simmons & Simmons for their support in the Spark21 conferences every year. Thank you to all the speakers, panellists and attendees of the conferences.

Champions

With thanks to our professional champions Stuart Wilks, Sarah Greer, Amanda Pinto, Maria Fletcher, Janet Morrison, Anne Davies, Chantal-Aimée Doerries, David Standish, Dean Lloyd, Diana Burleigh, Erika Rackley, Fiona Fleming, Harriett Sassoon, Helen Dodds, Henrietta Amodio, Judith Bourne, Katie Broomfield, Kevin Crosby, Laura Boyle, Lucy Scott-Moncrieff, Mark Skinner, Monica Burch, Rosemary Auchmuty, Susan Belgrave, Funke Abimbola, Harini Iyengar, Penny Miller, Nancy Scott, Sandie Okoro, Mari Takayanagi, Elizabeth Cruickshank, Barry Matthews, Ania Rontaler, Leonora Saunders, Sophie Bragg, Fatema Orjela, Steve Rudaini, Peter Crisp, Nicola Sawford and Laura Clenshaw.

Pro-bono Supporters

Thank you to the organisations who have worked with us on a part or full pro bono basis, Black Letter Communications, Rocketseed, Civic Engineers, Obelisk Support.

Spark21 trustees

Thank you to the Spark21 trustees, past and present: Catherine Calder, Dana Denis-Smith, David Standish, Lisa Tremble, Kerry Jack, Caroline Criado-Perez.



100

FIRST
HUNDRED
YEARS

Contact Us

Spark21
info@spark21.org

Suite 3.02, 44 Southampton
Buildings, London, WC2A 1AP

SPARK21

Registered Charity No: 1167825