

News release

Further fund award is an opportunity to connect innovative services with those who need legal help

16 September 2021

We have won a further grant from the latest round of Regulators Pioneer Fund (RPF) to help connect those using new legal technologies with those who need their services.

The award of £167,856 from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will be used to create a new network where regulators, expert research institutions and local government can work together to improve legal access within local communities. We aim to do this by supporting, testing and promoting new and emerging legal technology.

Our project will involve partners at Swansea and West of England Universities, the Information Commissioner's Office and the West of England Combined Authority. Communities around Swansea and Bristol will be engaged to test new developments.

The first part of the project will involve researching what innovations are available and how they connect with those in need of them. The partnership will explore the feasibility of developing these innovations for wider use. We will then showcase these connections to other interested parties so that they can be replicated across the country.

Anna Bradley, Chair of the SRA Board, said: 'We're delighted to have been given a further grant from the Regulators Pioneer Fund. Our 2020 Legal Access Challenge was a success, awarding £500,000 to developing legal technology solutions, and this is a welcome opportunity to do more to support people to find the legal help they need.'

'This project will focus on working with local partners and communities to identify innovative services that can increase access to legal services. We know this is hugely important because the majority of people and small businesses don't seek legal help either because of concerns about affordability, or simple lack of confidence and familiarity with the legal sector. This work is, particularly timely in the context of the pandemic and the lasting impact it will have on communities, the economy and our readiness to use tech to solve problems.'

Business Minister Lord Callanan added: 'Good regulation should spur entrepreneurship, not stand in its way, and this project will help keep the UK at the cutting-edge of innovation. This project could pave

the way for exciting developments in the sector, bringing benefits to British businesses and consumers alike.'

This project has been made possible by a grant from the £3.7 million RPF. Our award is one of 21 projects being run by 16 organisations or partnerships. It will run from October 2021 to March 2022. We previously secured a £750,000 grant from the RPF to fund the 2019/20 Legal Access Challenge, which was a competition for developing tech solutions.

Our current [Corporate Strategy \[https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/\]](https://upgrade.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/) has three priorities, the second of which is to support the adoption of legal technology and other innovation that helps to meet the needs of the public, business community, regulated entities and the economy.

The announcement from BEIS can be found [on its website \[https://www.gov.uk/government/news/vaccine-carrying-drones-and-self-driving-cars-government-fund-backs-cutting-edge-innovation\]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/vaccine-carrying-drones-and-self-driving-cars-government-fund-backs-cutting-edge-innovation)