Augmenting Legal Work: Artificial Intelligence in Professional Practice

Felicity Bell
Centre for the Future of the Legal Profession
University of New South Wales
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
f.bell@unsw.edu.au

Eike Schhneiders
University of Southampton
Southampton, United Kingdom
eike.schneiders@soton.ac.uk

Václav Janeček
University of Bristol
Bristol, United Kingdom
vaclav.janecek@bristol.ac.uk

Dirk Hartung
Singapore Management University
Singapore, Singapore
dirkhartung@smu.edu.sg

Erin T Solovey
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Worcester, MA, USA
esolovey@wpi.edu

Niels van Berkel
Aalborg University
Aalborg, Denmark
nielsvanberkel@cs.aau.dk

Benjamin Tag
University of New South Wales
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
benjamin.tag@unsw.edu.au

Abstract

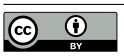
As legal professionals increasingly incorporate artificial intelligence into their daily work, established professional norms of reasoning, expertise, and ethical behaviour are being challenged. Generative AI (GenAI) tools are being rapidly adopted by legal professionals across many jurisdictions. Although these technologies offer significant potential benefits, concerns persist that they may degrade professional skills. Misuse also poses risks to legal professionalism and to the broader justice system. This workshop brings together legal professionals, researchers, and experts in AI and computing to discuss how GenAI tools may be designed so legal professionals develop skills to productively use artificial intelligence; and how we might guard against deskilling and cognitive offloading in high-stakes work. Our workshop will enable researchers working in this emerging yet contentious area to share findings, receive feedback, and propose new research and design ideas, contributing to a shared research agenda for future work on augmented legal practice.

CCS Concepts

• **Human-centered computing → Human computer interaction (HCI)**.

Keywords

Cognitive offloading, cognitive augmentation, conversational AI, AI and decision-making



CHIWORK Adjunct '26, Linz, Austria

ACM ISBN 979-8-4007-2598-2/26/06
https://doi.org/10.1145/3805029.3818268

ACM Reference Format:
Felicity Bell, Eike Schhneiders, Václav Janeček, Dirk Hartung, Erin T Solovey, Niels van Berkel, and Benjamin Tag. 2026. Augmenting Legal Work: Artificial Intelligence in Professional Practice. In *Adjunct Proceedings of the 5th Annual Symposium on Human-Computer Interaction for Work (CHIWORK Adjunct '26), June 22–25, 2026, Linz, Austria.* ACM, New York, NY, USA, 4 pages. https://doi.org/10.1145/3805029.3818268

1 Motivation

Lawyers' augmentation by generative AI spells fundamental change for legal education, legal training and practice, and the legal profession itself [2, 17], as professionals seek both to preserve their expertise and professional status while also leveraging new tools for legal work. In recent years, generative AI (GenAI) has caught the attention of lawyers, regulators, courts, and scholars[1] [12, 17, 22]. While machine learning, e.g., for the review of electronically stored information, has been used in the profession for many years for large-scale document review in discovery and due diligence [7, 15], the sudden rise of GenAI has resulted in a host of new products and features for legal work.

Industry surveys suggest that the use of GenAI by the legal profession is rapidly increasing [18, 26]; one found that 80 per cent of respondents considered GenAI would have a high or even transformational impact on their work over the next five years [17, 23]. This uptick is driven by lawyers' and their organisations' need to maintain profits and respond to client demands for faster and more cost-effective legal services [25]. Yet many legal professionals still lack AI literacy, risking over-reliance and under-verification of AI outputs [6]. Lawyers continue to grapple with both its potential and its risks – including, notoriously, instances where lawyers have mistakenly filed fabricated case law generated by AI. Lawyers' reliance on incorrect, misleading, or hallucinatory outputs has prompted some courts to regulate the use of GenAI for legal work and has

[1] https://lawcouncil.au/resources/submissions/artificial-intelligence-use-in-the-federal-court-of-australia

resulted in professional disciplinary outcomes [12]. Work relating to laypeople's use of GenAI to obtain legal information and advice is also emerging, as on the other side of legal advice are the non-experts, citizens who traditionally consume and rely on advice rather than generating or providing it. Recent research shows that non-legal experts are not only willing to seek legal advice using GenAI [20], but also report a high willingness to act on such advice [19]. On the other side of the bench, judges in various jurisdictions have employed a variety of strategies regarding their use of GenAI with both beneficial and detrimental results [21]. Given the persuasive framing of GenAI-generated outputs, Schneiders et al. [19] further demonstrated that – when the source of the advice was undisclosed – participants reported a significantly higher willingness to act on LLM-generated legal advice than on lawyer-generated advice. Thus, while holding out promise for laypeople's ability to access legal information or even advice, GenAI is also potentially threatening to lawyers' knowledge domain.

As well as risks to professional reputation, GenAI also threatens time-honoured professional norms through increasing the speed at which some legal work can be undertaken [3, 4, 14]. This may challenge long-standing reliance on time-based billing and fee structures; disrupt markers of success such as high skill in written work; and reduce the need for human lawyers or paralegals to undertake the repetitive work often used as the basis for training juniors [16]. GenAI is also wreaking fundamental changes to legal education [1, 4, 5, 8, 16]. Questions abound as to how novice professionals will develop the skills they require to successfully apply judgement, including ethical judgement, later in their careers [11]; and the role of GenAI in decreasing cognitive capacity for high-stakes knowledge work [10].

Yet we are still very much in a phase of exploration [9, 22], and there are few studies on how professionals are adapting to AI in their daily work, and the impacts on individuals and longer-term development of professional knowledge [24]. In particular, we lack research on *how GenAI might affect the nature of legal training*; *the maintenance of legal expertise*; *how lawyers might strive to balance their ethical obligations while working with GenAI*; and ultimately, *whether 'professional' work will remain sufficiently satisfying to motivate practitioners to the high standards required.* At the same time, the incorporation of GenAI into legal work holds promise for flattening hierarchies, improving the experiences of both novice professionals and senior lawyers, providing better value legal services, and potentially increasing access to justice, including through the democratization of access to legal knowledge and advice.

Importantly, the challenges faced by the legal profession, both from the perspective of lawyers and the general public, cannot be fully understood through the lens of a single discipline. The GenAI-enabled human interaction with legal data is subject to regulatory and other legal-domain-specific constraints. **This workshop is thus designed as a knowledge exchange between HCI and legal experts to better understand the phenomenon of augmented professional legal work**.

In this workshop, we are seeking participants to share their research ideas, questions, and opinions in relation to the following themes:

- AI uptake and its impact on legal professionals and junior staff across settings (law firms, ALSPs, courts, legal assistance).
- AI literacy, trust, and misuse: tasks most vulnerable to GenAI errors and how professionals and lay users assess or misplace trust.
- Designing AI legal tools and workflows: quality assurance, safety-by-design, sustaining effort and motivation, and limiting deskilling.
- AI tools in legal education and training: personalised learning, improved feedback, and development of ethical judgement.

While there is considerable interest in how professionals are adapting (to) AI in their work, few focus specifically on the legal profession. Studies of professional decision-makers such as judges have focused particularly on the impacts of cognitive biases [13] or provided helpful but formative insights [22]. Moreover, there can be a disconnect among researchers from different disciplines (law, AI, HCI, psychology). Informed by CHIWORK's focus on shaping the evolving landscape of labour and collaboration, our proposed workshop seeks to bridge those disciplinary divides.

2 Workshop Mode and Activities

This workshop will run in a hybrid format, integrating on-site and online participants through collaborative tools such as virtual whiteboards. It is designed as an intensive, cross-disciplinary knowledge exchange, with time allocated to provide context for key concepts and ideas.

3 Call for Participation

Generative AI is rapidly shifting from novelty to infrastructure in legal work and learning. Legal professionals across contexts are experimenting with tools that draft, summarise and reason with legal texts. Yet questions about quality, ethics, professional identity, assessment, and access to justice remain open. This half-day, highly interactive and interdisciplinary workshop brings together legal academics, practitioners, legal aid and public interest organisations, students, technologists, and HCI/AI researchers to explore how GenAI should – and should not – be used in legal practice and education. Rather than a mini-conference of paper presentations, the workshop focuses on shared problem-solving, short provocations, and hands-on design activities.

Participants will work in small groups on concrete challenges such as:

- integrating GenAI into legal education and training without undermining learning;
- designing GenAI workflows that respect professional responsibility and ethical duties;
- using GenAI to support, rather than distort, legal aid and access to justice;
- organising work in law firms, ALSPs, and courts around human–AI collaboration;
- articulating practical guidelines for everyday GenAI use.

We invite a 1-2 page expression of interest describing your context (e.g., clinic, court, firm, classroom, research) and one specific scenario, tool, or question you would like to explore. We particularly

Time	Session	Focus
9:00–9:10	Welcome and introduction	Goals of the workshop, participant introductions, and framing questions.
9:10–10:00	Lightning provocation talks	Short, focused talks from legal and computing experts highlighting tensions, risks, and opportunities of GenAI in legal practice and education.
10:00–10:20	Break	Informal discussion and networking.
10:20–11:05	Small-group work	Participants work in groups on scenarios developed from participant submissions, considering practical ideas, research avenues, or guidelines.
11:05–11:30	Report-back	Each group shares key insights, challenges, and proposed approaches with the full group.
11:30–11:55	Synthesis and discussion	Facilitated discussion to identify shared principles, open questions, and future research or practice directions.
11:55–12:00	Closing	Final reflections, takeaways, and next steps.

Table 1: Proposed half-day workshop schedule

welcome contributions that bring real cases, teaching materials, policies, or prototypes to share. Outputs will include draft principles, workflow sketches, and a shared repository of use cases and teaching ideas. Our goal is to explore a first set of key challenges, producing a paper on grand challenges and advice for research directions in this emerging interdisciplinary field.

4 Organisers

The organising team reflects the workshop's interdisciplinary focus on AI in legal practice. Its members bring extensive experience in delivering accessible, engaging workshops for participants from diverse professional backgrounds.

Felicity Bell is a Senior Lecturer and Deputy Director, Centre for the Future of the Legal Profession, at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. Her work examines the impact of new technologies, such as AI, on legal practice, professional ethics and lawyers' work.

Eike Schneiders is a Lecturer at the University of Southampton. His current research focuses on human-AI decision making and persuasiveness and trustworthiness of agentic systems.

Václav Janeček is a Senior Lecturer in law at the University of Bristol, United Kingdom. He is currently visiting the Institute of Legal Informatics and Judicial Systems (IGSG-CNR, Italy), as the Leverhulme International Fellow.

Dirk Hartung is an Assistant Professor of Law at the Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University, Singapore. He researches complexity in the business of law, legal technology and the legal profession.

Erin T. Solovey is an Associate Professor of computer science at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, USA. She studies human-computer interaction and human-AI interaction, exploring how people and intelligent systems can work together in both high-stakes and everyday environments in ways that are aligned with human goals and values.

Niels van Berkel is a Professor at Aalborg University, Denmark. His current projects focus on cognitive augmentation, human-AI collaboration, and decision support.

Benjamin Tag is a Senior Lecturer at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. His research focuses on affective computing, human factors, and ubiquitous computing.

NOTE: AI Usage

No AI tools have been used in the process of authoring this paper.

References

[1] Armin Alimardani. 2024. Generative Artificial Intelligence vs. Law Students: An Empirical Study on Criminal Law Exam Performance. *Law, Innovation and Technology* 16, 2 (2024), 777–819. doi:10.1080/17579961.2024.2392932

[2] Felicity Bell and Justine Rogers. 2025. Becoming, Doing, Being: GenAI and the Promise of Professional Identity in Law. *Law, Technology and Humans* 7, 3 (Nov. 2025), 62–93. doi:10.5204/lthj.4120

[3] Colleen V. Chien and Miriam Kim. 2024. Generative AI and Legal Aid: Results from a Field Study and 100 Use Cases to Bridge the Access to Justice Gap. (14 March 2024). doi:10.2139/ssrn.4733061 UC Berkeley Public Law Research Paper; forthcoming in *Loyola of Los Angeles Law Review*.

[4] Jonathan H. Choi, Kristin E. Hickman, Amy Monahan, and Daniel Schwarcz. 2022. ChatGPT Goes to Law School. *Journal of Legal Education* 71 (2022), 387–? doi:10.2139/ssrn.4335905 Published version; earlier version available on SSRN.

[5] Jonathan H. Choi and Daniel Schwarcz. 2025. AI Assistance in Legal Analysis: An Empirical Study. *Journal of Legal Education* 73 (2025), 384–? doi:10.2139/ssrn.4539836 Published version; earlier version available on SSRN.

[6] Sander de Jong, Ville Paananen, Benjamin Tag, and Niels van Berkel. 2025. Cognitive Forcing for Better Decision-Making: Reducing Overreliance on AI Systems Through Partial Explanations. *Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact.* 9, 2, Article CSCW048 (2025), 30 pages. doi:10.1145/3710946

[7] Maura R. Grossman and Gordon V. Cormack. 2011. Technology-Assisted Review in E-Discovery Can Be More Effective and More Efficient Than Exhaustive Manual Review. *Richmond Journal of Law and Technology* 17, 3 (2011), 11. https://scholarship.richmond.edu/jolt/vol17/iss3/5

[8] Daniel Martin Katz, Michael James Bommarito, Shang Gao, and Pablo Arredondo. 2024. GPT-4 Passes the Bar Exam. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A* 382, 2270 (2024), 20230254. doi:10.1098/rsta.2023.0254

[9] Charlotta Kronblad, Anna Jonsson, and Frida Pemer. 2024. Generative AI Beyond the Hype—New Technologies in the Face of Organizing and Organizations. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 60, 4 (2024), 623–630. doi:10.1177/00218863241285454

[10] Hao-Ping Lee, Advait Sarkar, Lev Tankelevitch, Ian Drosos, Sean Rintel, Richard Banks, and Nicholas Wilson. 2025. The Impact of Generative AI on Critical Thinking: Self-Reported Reductions in Cognitive Effort and Confidence Effects from a Survey of Knowledge Workers. In *Proceedings of the 2025 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '25)*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, Article 1121, 22 pages. doi:10.1145/3706598.3713778

[11] Michael Legg. 2024. Better Than a Bot: Instilling Ethical Judgement into the Lawyers of the Future in the Age of AI. *Griffith Law Review* 33, 3 (2024), 273–293.

doi:10.1080/10383441.2025.2493493

[12] Michael Legg, Vicki McNamara, and Armin Alimardani. 2025. *The Promise and the Peril of the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Litigation.* Technical Report Research Paper No. 25-23. UNSW Law. doi:10.2139/ssrn.5352645 SSRN working paper.

[13] John Zhuang Liu and Xueyao Li. 2025. How Do Judges Use Large Language Models? Evidence from Shenzhen. *Journal of Legal Analysis* 16, 1 (Jan. 2025), 235–262. doi:10.1093/jla/laae009

[14] Aileen Nielsen, Stavroula Skylaki, Milda Norkute, and Alexander Stremitzer. 2024. Building a Better Lawyer: Experimental Evidence that Artificial Intelligence Can Increase Legal Work Efficiency. *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies* 21, 4 (2024), 979–1022. doi:10.1111/jels.12396

[15] Dana Remus and Frank S. Levy. 2016. Can Robots Be Lawyers? Computers, Lawyers, and the Practice of Law. (2016). doi:10.2139/ssrn.2701092 SSRN working paper.

[16] Lachlan Robb, Rachel Hews, Felicity Deane, Michael Guihot, Jonah Farry, and Amanda Kennedy. 2025. "It's the End of the World as We Know It": Generative AI and the Changing Landscape of Legal Practice and Education. (1 March 2025). doi:10.2139/ssrn.5311507 SSRN working paper.

[17] Ian Rodgers and Mari Sako. 2025. Prompt Engineering as Substantive and Relational Expertise: Linking Professionals' Learning Pathways to Boundary Work. (17 March 2025). doi:10.2139/ssrn.5182132 SSRN working paper.

[18] Mari Sako and Richard Parnham. 2021. *Technology and Innovation in Legal Services: Final Report for the Solicitors Regulation Authority.* Technical Report. University of Oxford. Report commissioned by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.

[19] Eike Schneiders, Tina Seabrooke, Joshua Krook, Richard Hyde, Natalie Leesakul, Jeremie Clos, and Joel E Fischer. 2025. Objection Overruled! Lay People can Distinguish Large Language Models from Lawyers, but still Favour Advice from an LLM. In *Proceedings of the 2025 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '25).* Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, Article 1201, 14 pages. doi:10.1145/3706598.3713470

[20] Tina Seabrooke, Eike Schneiders, Liz Dowthwaite, Joshua Krook, Natalie Leesakul, Jeremie Clos, Horia Maior, and Joel Fischer. 2024. A Survey of Lay People's Willingness to Generate Legal Advice using Large Language Models (LLMs). In *Proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Trustworthy Autonomous Systems* (Austin, TX, USA) *(TAS '24).* Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, Article 33, 5 pages. doi:10.1145/3686038.3686043

[21] David Uriel Socol de la Osa and Nydia Remolina. 2024. Artificial intelligence at the bench: Legal and ethical challenges of informing—or misinforming—judicial decision-making through generative AI. *Data & Policy* 6 (2024), e59. doi:10.1017/dap.2024.53

[22] Erin Solovey, Brian Flanagan, and Daniel Chen. 2025. Interacting with AI at Work: Perceptions and Opportunities from the UK Judiciary. In *Proceedings of the 4th Annual Symposium on Human-Computer Interaction for Work (CHIWORK '25).* Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, Article 5, 8 pages. doi:10.1145/3729176.3729192

[23] Thomson Reuters. 2025. *Generative AI for Legal Professionals: Top Use Cases.* Thomson Reuters. https://legal.thomsonreuters.com/blog/generative-ai-for-legal-professionals-top-use-cases-tri/ Accessed: 2026-02-05.

[24] Julian Webb and Jeannie Paterson. 2025. The Evolution of Legal Knowledge Work in an Age of Brilliant(?) Technologies: From Robo-Lawyer to Digital Law Clerk. *ANU Journal of Law and Technology* 6, 1 (Nov. 2025), 51–84.

[25] David B. Wilkins and María José Esteban Ferrer. 2019. Taking the 'Alternative' out of Alternative Legal Service Providers: Remapping the Corporate Legal Ecosystem in the Age of Integrated Solutions. In *New Suits: Appetite for Disruption in the Legal World*, Michele Destefano and Guenther Dobrauz-Saldapenna (Eds.). Stämpfli Verlag. doi:10.2139/ssrn.3379056 HLS Center on the Legal Profession Research Paper No. 2019-1; chapter available on SSRN.

[26] Wolters Kluwer. 2024. *2024 Future Ready Lawyer Survey Report.* Technical Report. Wolters Kluwer Legal & Regulatory. https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/news/future-ready-lawyer-2024-report Global survey of legal professionals on technology adoption and trends.