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BIALL Awards 2025

BIALL's 55th Annual Conference and Exhibition was held at The Eastside Rooms in Birmingham from 11th to 13th June 2025. The theme of the conference was 'Playing a Blinder: Moving Forward in the City of a Thousand Trades' – a nod to the popular TV drama Peaky Blinders, and the city's motto of 'Forward!', and also to its historic reputation as a centre of business and industry. It actually continues to be a hub for high quality trades and crafts, with the Jewellery Quarter, while there is no shortage of more modern engineering and business interests in Birmingham, as epitomised by its burgeoning Knowledge Quarter.

The conference keynote lecture was given by Christina Blacklaws of Blacklaws Consulting, who discussed how AI systems have the potential to perpetuate existing societal inequalities if left unchecked, and then offered some practical ideas for how we can proactively address bias in AI.

There were also a number of sessions which focussed on using generative AI tools in day-to-day work, including case studies and examples, as well as tips on what to consider when reviewing generative AI tools for purchase (some of which have been written up for this issue of LIM).

The programme also included a diverse selection of presentations from across the legal information industry, discussing projects and perspectives ranging from tackling the challenges of training trainees since the introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Exam (SQE) in 2021, to identifying company information resources for international jurisdictions, through to practical approaches to horizon scanning.

From the vendor and publisher side, there were product showcase presentations from HeinOnline, Onelog, Oxford University Press, LexisNexis, Thomson Reuters and Soutron.

Note for your diary: the 56th Annual Conference is to take place at the Hilton in Glasgow, from 10th to 12th June 2026.

AWARD WINNERS 2025

The dishing out of the awards at the dinner on the Thursday night is always a highlight of the BIALL Conference, and this year was no exception. Here's a rundown of 2025's worthy winners.





BIALL SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2025

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Claire Mazer (BIALL President), with Wildy & Sons' Jason Crimp, Danielle McCay, Abbie Sinkins, Anastasia Cohen and John Sinkins

Wildy & Sons was the winner of Supplier of the Year Award 2025. The aim of this award is to reward outstanding best practice by a supplier or a publisher in the field of legal information by:

- Recognising and rewarding excellence and innovation in customer relations
- Promoting awareness of how customer relations initiatives can benefit information professionals and suppliers alike
- Encouraging high quality communication
- Promoting best practice

Here are some of the comments from this year's nominations:

"We would find it very difficult to manage if Wildy were not there to assist us, when needed."

"On so many occasions, they have provided us with a purchase in a matter of minutes, which we were then able to collect."

"Not only do I use them every week to order books, but our barristers are also able to contact or visit the supplier and put their purchases onto our account, which I then administer. This removes stress for our barristers when they need something at the last minute, or a hard copy is required because the court will not accept an online version."

"All of the staff work as a great team and will help willingly whenever they can."

"Wildy & Sons always give the ultimate customer service experience."

"Everything arrives so quickly, is tracked and well packaged."

"Any issues with subscriptions can safely be left in their capable hands to be resolved."

LEXISNEXIS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE 2025

The LexisNexis Award for Excellence was awarded to both Blake Morgan and to Travers Smith this year.

The LexisNexis Awards were conceived to recognise, celebrate, and reward the dedicated performance and outstanding service given by legal information services. These awards are particularly unique as they are the only legal information service awards that recognise the value and importance of dedicated teamwork within the sector. The panel looks for teams who can demonstrate best practice within their organisation either via the implementation of a new service or change to an existing service.

For 2025 there were several very strong high-quality entries, so many in fact that that LexisNexis agreed to two awards being made.

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Blake Morgan



Bethany Herrod (Information Services Officer at Blake Morgan) with Claire Mazer (BIALL President)

The Information Services team at Blake Morgan has provided a new current awareness service for its users using a news and market intelligence tool. The aims were to:

- Automate searches as widely as possible across various sources
- Maintain focus and relevancy of content
- Create customised bulletins for each recipient
- Implement the new system without disrupting users
- Expand user base and content capacity
- Reduce team time spent on the service

The system consists of:

- Filtered searches delivering alerts to the Information Services team each morning
- Folders with news stories selected for each watch list company, sector and topic
- Recurring publications auto populated with folder content for each recipient

Content is reviewed and flagged by the team, then automatically delivered to recipients via their individual bulletins. The system efficiently searches numerous sources while allowing manual selection to ensure relevance and avoid duplication. Recipients benefit from this setup without having to configure anything themselves. The team has been informed that their system is unique. The service launched in May 2024 and has fulfilled all the requirements whilst generating much positive feedback from recipients.

Travers Smith



Zoe Strong (Travers Smith) with Claire Mazer (BIALL President)

The second Lexis Nexis Award went to the Knowledge Management team at Travers Smith. The team uses an intranet portal to keep everyone informed with relevant, firmwide legal developments. By providing easy access to high-level summaries, talking points on key legal topics, firmwide tools and resources, and client-facing materials, the

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portal promotes collaboration, supports client conversations, and helps lawyers meet their continuing competence obligations. Everyone at the firm can access it, on the intranet and via mobile devices.

The following feedback demonstrates the impact of this innovative service:

> "For me, the intranet portal represents the Holy Grail of cross-practice knowledge-sharing. Given the depth of our lawyers' specialist knowledge nowadays, it is all the more important that they keep abreast of key developments outside their own specialism to enable them to deliver well-rounded solutions to our clients. Our clients don't operate in practice-based silos, and neither do our lawyers – and our advice reflects that.
>
> "The intranet portal has provided a central place for me and my team to access key information that we need as a business. I have found the Hot Topics section particularly useful. Categorised by business area, it allows me to get a feel for what matters to our clients outside of my own practice and has given me greater confidence to broaden the conversation when meeting with GCs and other business leads at our clients."

WILDY BIALL LAW LIBRARIAN OF THE YEAR 2025

This year's recipient of the Wildy BIALL Law Librarian of the Year award was Tracey Dennis.



Tracey Dennis

The annual Wildy/BIALL Law Librarian of the Year award is made to an individual law librarian or legal information professional who has made a significant contribution to the work of BIALL and/or the legal information world, either in the UK, Ireland or overseas.

Tracey Dennis is a long-standing member of BIALL and has worked as a law librarian for many years, her career spanning roles at the House of Lords, BLM and Lewis Silkin, before coming full circle when she returned to the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple in 2006. Tracey has organised and delivered numerous courses for BIALL members on legal research skills. As a manager she has also mentored and developed many librarians who were new to the profession.

The 2024/25 BIALL President Claire Mazer said: "I collaborated with Tracey when we worked towards and delivered training on behalf of BIALL. I know our winner has long been involved with this particular training initiative which was especially helpful to me as I had not previously been involved in the training. Her knowledge of the context and history of the event proved most valuable as did her flexible approach to dates, times and agendas moving around (which they frequently did!). I found her to be responsive, co-operative and helpful. She responded to my questions and emails in a timely way and transferred relevant files I could work on. To explain further, she had previously delivered two sessions, and I inherited one of them. Clearly her knowledge and experience permeated the presentation. I learned much from her accumulated wisdom about the libraries she worked in, and this gave me a great foundation to work on."

Tracey will be retiring from the library and information profession this year. BIALL said: "[We] would like to recognise her dedication to our profession throughout her long and successful career. Indeed, Wildy's commented on the winner being a 'good friend' of theirs and they are very happy to make this award."

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BIALL ACCOUNT MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2025

The BIALL Account Manager of the Year Award was awarded to Farina Sharif from LexisNexis.



Farina Sharif

For this award nominations are sought to recognise an individual working for a supplier who has gone the extra mile, or someone who provides a consistently outstanding service.

This year's winner, Farina, has received multiple nominations since 2021, but in 2025 she was the most highly nominated individual.

Comments from those nominations include the following:

"Arranged temporary remote access for a member with visual impairment. In less than 24 hours, a solution was developed and executed. The member and librarian greatly appreciated the efficiency and excellent customer service skills."

"An asset to their legal information supplier's team."

"Winning this award is long overdue for Farina."

"Has gone above and beyond and is an absolute delight to work with, ensuring value for money for the products subscribed to."

"Always very helpful and ensure that they resolve any issues quickly and efficiently."

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"Incredibly professional, and trustworthy."

"Always responsive to emails and always follows through on any commitments."

BIALL STUDENT AWARD 2025



Vendjipa Shingandye and Claire Mazer (BIALL President)

The BIALL Student Award is open to all undergraduate and postgraduate library school students on a CILIP/LAI accredited course. It aims to recognise and encourage new entrants to the profession and help them explore the wide range of legal information sectors available. This year's recipient of the BIALL Student Award was Vendjipa Shingandye.

Vendjipa is studying for an MSc Information and Library Studies at the University of Strathclyde, and has demonstrated a passion for legal librarianship which is driven by a strong belief in the power of accessible, well organised legal information to support justice and education.

In addition to a strong academic background, Vendjipa has solid and demonstrable leadership skills, having received a certificate of outstanding leadership, while also having worked in various roles requiring both strategic communication and coordination.

Vendjipa's experience in research, working with participants and promoting cultural heritage awareness, further underscores a dedication to information management. In attending the BIALL Conference this year, Vendjipa's aims were not only to enhance knowledge, but also to gain empowerment to contribute in a meaningful way to the development of legal information services, particularly in those communities which are underserved.

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