

FT .COM Most innovative North American law firms 2014: Social responsibility projects

FT.com North American Innovative Lawyers

Rank	Law firm	Score	Originality	Rationale	Impact	Description
Standout	Reed Smith	26	9	9	8	While carrying out legal aid work in Haiti, the firm implemented the "humanitarian parole mechanism", offering victims of abuse permanent asylum in the US. Commended: Jayne Fleming.
Standout	Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman	24	8	8	8	A programme in collaboration with American Veterans that has provided furniture or home equipment to 1,500 former military personnel.
Standout	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom	24	8	9	7	The firm offers fellows of the Skadden Foundation \$10,000 grants to incubate ideas for delivering legal services to those in need. So far, 57 projects have been funded.
Standout	Linklaters	23	7	8	8	Partnered with B Lab, a not-for-profit social entrepreneurs organisation, to advance the concept of benefit companies worldwide.
Highly Commended	Fenwick & West and DLA Piper	22	7	8	7	Collaborated with Cisco to create virtual pro bono clinics accessed online in public libraries for low-income groups.
Highly Commended	Perkins Coie	22	7	7	8	Help for underprivileged children to apply their rights under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals programme for illegal immigrants who entered the US as children.
Highly Commended	Seyfarth Shaw	22	8	8	6	A new model developed to help legal aid organisations increase the effectiveness of pro bono work.
Highly Commended	Stroock & Stroock & Lavan	22	7	8	7	Drafting the structure and insurance policies for African Risk Capacity, an agency set up to bring more certainty to the way international assistance is provided to African countries faced with extreme weather, using UN data to predict rainfall.
Highly Commended	Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice	22	7	8	7	Creation of a firm-wide initiative to promote the impact economy, which marries investors' profit with social good. Commended: Pam Rothenberg.
Commended	Dechert	21	7	7	7	Created a debt repayment model for a fair-trade cacao sourcing and production company in Belize, tying repayments to receipt of revenue rather than to a fixed schedule.
Commended	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom	21	8	8	5	A new model designed to maximise the delivery of pro bono services to local communities through formal and sustained partnerships with corporate in-house attorneys and non-profit public service providers. Commended: Fred Goldberg.
Commended	White & Case	21	7	7	7	Helping married lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) couples navigate the tax regime in the wake of the legalisation of same-sex marriages.
Commended	Chadbourne & Parke	20	6	7	7	Continuing work with young immigrants has been boosted by a new partnership with the Legal Aid Society.
Commended	Fenwick & West	20	7	6	7	Helped improve access to legal systems in emerging economies by training the providers. Commended: Victor Schachter.
Commended	O'Melveny & Myers	20	7	7	6	A full-time pro bono programme designed to increase access to legal services for underprivileged businesses and individuals.
Commended	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe	20	5	8	7	The firm's "impact finance" practice group allows lawyers to use their expertise on a variety of social finance structures designed to generate positive change.
Commended	Shearman & Sterling	20	6	7	7	Using legal technologies and US media to impact access to justice in Africa.
Commended	Sidley Austin	20	6	7	7	A creative way to do pro bono work in sub-Saharan Africa that attempts to educate legal service providers and improve access to justice.
Commended	White & Case	20	5	8	7	Created an investment fund that uses private-sector money for philanthropic purposes.
Commended	WilmerHale	20	6	7	7	An integrated, strategic approach has added to the impact of the firm's charitable endeavours and support for community projects.