

Plenary

Thursday 17 August 2023

Can lawyers be the community's trusted guides in the age of artificial intelligence?

Artificial intelligence is a powerful, disruptive force. AI is changing legal practice, at the same moment that lawyers are being called on to help their clients navigate this brave new world. Lawyers have a unique opportunity to guide our community through this extraordinary period of technological change. But to occupy that vital role, lawyers will need to rise to one of the greatest challenges our profession has ever faced.

Meet the speaker

Edward Santow, Director, Policy and Governance, Human Technology Institute and Industry Professor, University of Technology Sydney

Edward Santow is the Director - Policy & Governance at the Human Technology Institute, and Industry Professor - Responsible Technology at the University of Technology Sydney. Ed's areas of expertise include human rights, technology and regulation, public law and discrimination law. Ed co-founded the Human Technology Institute (HTI), which he heads with Prof Nicholas Davis and Prof Sally Cripps. Ed is leading a number of major initiatives to promote human-centred artificial intelligence. Focus areas include digital government, the future of AI regulation, and facial recognition and digital identity. HTI's approach promotes human rights in the development, use, regulation and oversight of new technology. HTI has three interconnected laboratories: the Human Technology Skills Lab, Tools Lab and Policy Lab.

From 2016-2021, Ed was Australia's Human Rights Commissioner, where he led the Commission's work on AI & new technology; refugees and migration; human rights issues affecting LGBTIQ+ people; national security; and implementing the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture. Ed is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law, a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Human Rights and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and of the NSW Government AI Review Committee. He is a patron of the Refugee Advice + Casework Service, and serves on a number of boards and committees. At UTS, he is a Fellow of the Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion.

In 2009, Ed was presented with an Australian Leadership Award, and in 2017 he was recognised as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum. Ed previously served as chief executive of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre and was a Senior Lecturer at UNSW Law School, a research director at the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law and a solicitor in private practice.