

Event toolkit



What is Pro Bono Week?

Pro Bono Week is an annual week to recognise the contribution lawyers make, free-of-charge, to many people and organisations in need of legal advice who otherwise would not be able to afford it. It supports and promotes the pro bono legal advice carried out by solicitors, barristers and chartered legal executives throughout the year and provides thought leadership on pro bono topics through a series of events run across England and Wales throughout the week.

When is Pro Bono Week?

Pro Bono Week 2019 takes place Monday 4th - Friday 8th November 2019.

What are the goals for Pro Bono Week?

Activities during Pro Bono Week focussed around four key themes. Law firms, chambers, legal societies, charities, universities and law schools are encouraged to sign up to or host events during Pro Bono Week, focussing these areas:

- 1. Changing lives through pro bono** - Highlighting how legal volunteering makes a difference to the public and can even lead to changes in the law.
- 2. Celebrating pro bono** - Showcasing pro bono work and achievements of volunteer lawyers; for example the Advocate Bar Pro Bono Awards will take place on 6th November 2019.
- 3. Why pro bono is good for you** - Demonstrating the career value of pro bono through events which explore the benefits of pro bono in terms of collaboration and impact on practice development.
- 4. New developments in pro bono** - Specific areas of development and best practice in pro bono schemes, such as cross-sector collaboration, new forms of pro bono practice, improving pro bono technical assistance and use of new legal technology.

How do I run my own event as part of Pro Bono Week?

Many firms, charities, law schools, law centres and local Citizens Advice around England & Wales run successful and effective events during Pro Bono Week. See our ideas and “top tips” for organising an event below.

If you are planning an event, please let us know so we can include it on the Pro Bono Week timetable hosted on the Pro Bono Week website. www.probonoweb.org.uk

How to I share our event?

If you are tweeting about your event, or anything else related to Pro Bono Week, please use these social media hashtags: **#ProBonoWeek #WeDoProBono**

Event ideas

For firms

- **Pro Bono talks:** Talks on pro bono by a senior partner or a CSR manager on a particular project that has been done during the year. This is the opportunity to celebrate a pro bono project whilst also educating the rest of the firm about the opportunities available.
- **Articles:** Articles for in-firm newsletters - the week is a great hook to convince the editor to cover your work. Or use the week to publish impact reports.
- **Shadowing:** Shadowing evenings at the firms' pro bono clinic for new members of staff. This is a great way to introduce new staff to pro bono whilst also allowing them to network with other members of the firm.
- **Fundraising:** Fundraising events for local Legal Support Trusts, law centres or local Citizens Advice. Join in any events fun by the Legal Support Trusts.
- **Debates:** In firm debates on the direction of pro bono. You could pick a controversial topic, such as "The pros & cons of targets", or "Should pro bono be compulsory?"

For organisations (including charities, advice agencies)

- **Coffee mornings:** a.k.a Thanks A Latte: You could run an "Open House" with coffee and cake for volunteers (and potential new volunteers!) during Pro Bono Week.
- **Awards/recognition events:** We are sure you have un-sung pro bono champions working on your projects. This is your opportunity to celebrate them.
- **Speaker events:** You could invite a local (or national) pro bono star to talk about pro bono. This is a great way to engage with the wider pro bono sector in your area.
- **Articles:** Ask to have your pro bono project featured in your local Law Society Newsletter

For law schools:

- **Awards/recognition events:** This is your opportunity to celebrate the student pro bono stars in your law schools. Everyone loves receiving recognition and it's a great way to publicise great work!
- **Speaker events:** You could invite a local pro bono lawyer in to talk about the value of pro bono on students' applications as well as to the local community.
- **Articles:** Ask to have your pro bono project featured in your law school newsletter.

Just Do What You Always Do... but do it during Pro Bono Week.

Schedule whatever events you usually have as part of your program, whether a clinic, training, award ceremony, or fundraiser, but simply hold it during the week. Post your event on the Pro Bono Week website and get free national exposure. If it is a particularly creative or innovative program, send it to us and we'll feature it on the website.

If you have any questions about Pro Bono Week, or would additional support in organising and promoting your event please contact the Pro Bono Week Organising Committee: contact@probonoweek.org.uk.

Top tips for organising an event

1. Collaborate! Take advantage of existing networks and communities

Get in touch with other pro bono lawyers and projects in your local area. Draw on the support of your local Law Societies, CILEx branches and local legal support trusts. These groups can often help you publicise events, and might even be able to help you organise events, or at least suggest ideas for speakers.

A special event might be just the occasion for a new partnership that develops and extends pro bono work in your local area.

2. Don't reinvent the wheel

The Pro Bono Week website, www.probonoweek.org.uk has ideas and resources for Pro Bono Week events, including examples from previous years. These resources are there for your use!

We can help you with ideas, posters, publicity, logos, press releases. And if we don't have it, just ask and we can look into creating it.

3. Context is key

Pro Bono Week has themes and aims, but within each of them is room for all kinds of events and activities. We know that there is a huge diversity of projects and programmes taking place across England & Wales, and what works well in Carlisle might not be the right fit for Bournemouth.

Please take what you can from our ideas and add your own local twist.

4. Have a communications plan

Your event is unlikely to achieve its purpose if no one knows about it or hears about it. Develop a communications plan (see more information on the PBW webpage) with clear goals and intended audiences. Write letters to your local paper, send out a press release, send invites to your local journalists. And who knows - you might attract a new supporter of pro bono in the process.

5. Have fun!

Be prepared, do your work, and when your event arrives, enjoy the fruits of your labour!

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