

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS LAUNCHES MILAN OFFICE WITH LEADING DISPUTES HIRE

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Firm news

Herbert Smith Freehills has further strengthened its European offering with the opening of a new office in Milan and the hire of Simmons & Simmons Dispute Resolution and IP Head in Italy, Laura Orlando.

Laura - who previously led Simmons & Simmons' Italian Disputes, Intellectual Property practices, and life sciences sector group - specialises in contentious and non-contentious IP, with a focus on patent and regulatory law in the life sciences sector.

In this field she has acted in some of the highest profile multi-jurisdictional patent cases, also within the context of the Supplementary Protection Certificate (SPC) Regulation, and has assisted major pharmaceutical companies in connection with patent issues concerning their biggest-selling drugs. She also advises on regulatory matters, particularly at the interface with patent law.

Regularly lauded by directories and legal publications, Managing Intellectual Property has listed Laura in the IP Stars Handbook, calling her "*formidable*". Chambers 2017 describes her as playing an "*important role in the IP sector in Italy*". Chambers 2016 describe her as "*intelligent,*" "*proactive*" and "*an excellent professional.*" Laura joined Simmons & Simmons in 2010 and was promoted to its partnership in 2014.

Europe is the second largest market for pharmaceutical companies, after the US, and Milan has a strong and growing biotech and pharmaceuticals industry. Most high value European patent disputes lead to litigation in Italy.

Mark Shillito, Head of Disputes, UK & US and Global Head of Intellectual Property, said:

"We already have the leading pharma client base in the London market and this hire will further strengthen our pharma patent litigation capability across Continental Europe. With Italian speaking partners, excellent market knowledge and a scientifically qualified team experienced at managing pan-European patent litigation, the addition of Laura will further extend our position as the premium adviser to innovator pharma across Europe."

Justin D'Agostino, Global Head of Disputes and Managing Partner for Asia, said:

"We have seen significant growth in our European footprint in recent years. We have more than doubled the size of our disputes team in Germany, attracted a number of high-profile lateral hires in Paris and our Madrid office has seen continued expansion. This reflects the fact that there is a strong client demand for our disputes expertise throughout Europe. Expanding our patent litigation practice into Italy is an important piece of the puzzle for us, and will further strengthen our leading offering for our clients into Europe and beyond."

Herbert Smith Freehills CEO Mark Rigotti said:

"Europe is a key market for pharmaceutical companies, second only to the US and so is naturally a key market for the firm, especially in light of our strategy to grow our EMEA platform. Our new Milan office will further enhance and strengthen our global IP team for our clients, both domestic and from across our wider global network."

Over the past five years, Herbert Smith Freehills has opened four offices across Europe and made over 30 lateral Partner hires.

About Herbert Smith Freehills

Operating from 27 offices across Asia Pacific, EMEA and North America, Herbert Smith Freehills is at the heart of the new global business landscape providing premium quality, full-service legal advice. The firm provides many of the world's most important organisations with access to market-leading dispute resolution, projects and transactional legal advice, combined with expertise in a number of global industry sectors, including Banks, Consumer products, Energy, Financial buyers, Infrastructure & Transport, Mining, Pharma & Healthcare, Real estate and TMT. www.herbertsmithfreehills.com

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