

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS LAWYERS NAMED CHAMPIONS OF WOMEN IN BUSINESS IN 2019 GLOBAL RANKING

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Firm news

Herbert Smith Freehills partner May Tai has been included in the global [HERoes 100 Female Executives](#) list for the first time. Alternative Legal Services (ALT) manager Plaxedes Makura was also recognised for the second consecutive year on the [HERoes 50 Female Future Leaders](#) list.

Announced today 12 September in London, the lists recognise female leaders who inspire and drive gender equality within their organisations and professions.

May was appointed Managing Partner of Greater China in 2017 and is a leading arbitration lawyer in Asia. Under her leadership, the firm has introduced agile working arrangements for employees and a groundbreaking [parental leave policy](#) in Asia. May also championed the firm becoming a signatory to the Code of Practice against Discrimination in Employment on the Grounds of Sexual Orientation in Hong Kong 2018.

Plaxedes was appointed as the most senior lawyer in the firm's Johannesburg ALT practice when it launched in August 2017. She now runs a team of approximately 20 legal analysts, and deals with work that is cross-border, large-scale and commercially complex. Plaxedes was involved in the establishment of the ALT Johannesburg Diversity Committee and the ALT Johannesburg Corporate Social Responsibility Committee.

The list is now in its third year and comprises three categories - 100 Women Executives, 50 Women Future Leaders and 40 Advocate Executives. These lists recognise women who are leading by example and driving change alongside male advocates who create a more diverse and inclusive business environment for women.

Executive Partner [Justin D'Agostino](#) was also named on the [HERoes 40 Advocate Executives](#) list for the first time, recognising his role as a personal sponsor and mentor to a number of high-performing women across the firm.

"The landscape has changed a lot since I started my career and I'm pleased that I can help improve workplace equality and inclusion," said May. "There is still a way to go for all, but at Herbert Smith Freehills, we are working to create a workforce that demonstrates to all would-be lawyers and those rising up the ranks that there is no glass ceiling."

"I am delighted to see both May and Plaxedes recognised as leaders and role models for women across our business and the legal profession," said Justin. "I take great pride in the work we are doing at Herbert Smith Freehills to build an ever-growing inclusive culture and their contribution to that has been significant. It is also an honour to have been recognised for my role as an ally, and I encourage my male colleagues to continue to join me in this vital work."