

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS TO LAUNCH FIRST ALTERNATIVE LEGAL SERVICES TEAM IN SOUTH AFRICA

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Firm news

Leading global law firm Herbert Smith Freehills is set to extend its innovative Alternative Legal Services (ALT) business to Johannesburg, in South Africa.

Expected to launch later this year, the business will be housed in the firm's existing Johannesburg office. It will combine a mix of legal expertise, process efficiency and technology to handle high-volume or document-intensive work more efficiently and cost effectively for clients.

This is intended to complement the existing 24/7 service the firm provides clients from offices in Belfast, London, Shanghai, Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane.

The new team will initially be staffed by around 5 lawyers and 20 legal analysts, who will be the first cohort to participate in our new International Legal Development Programme (ILDP). The new ILDP will launch alongside the opening of the Johannesburg ALT business.

The 18-month programme will offer up to 20 legal graduates the opportunity to gain employment and work experience through a structured learning and development programme.

Taking part in the ILDP, participants will develop client and commercial skills, increase their technical capability and improve their personal leadership qualities. They will also have the opportunity to work with the firm's disputes, corporate and finance practices, alongside Partners and Associates across the firm's international network giving them exposure to global clients.

Participants completing the programme will gain a deeper understanding of legal processes and a stronger CV, therefore increasing their chances of securing a Candidate Attorney position, or other roles in the legal sector, in the future.

With South Africa's unemployment rate currently at 27%, and youth unemployment at a critical state, and with a further intake planned in 2018, it is hoped that the new ILDP programme will go some way to alleviating this issue.

Herbert Smith Freehills' ALT business comprises of over 400 lawyers, legal analysts and technologists globally and became the sixth practice group in the firm on 1 May 2016. This follows the recent openings of ALT offices in Shanghai and Melbourne. The Johannesburg team will grow our offering in the UK, US & EMEA region specifically, joining our London and Belfast teams where it all began in 2011. The South Africa based team will be led by Lisa McLaughlin, Director, ALT UK, US & EMEA.

Meanwhile, the firm's office in Johannesburg has also rapidly expanded since its launch back in October 2015, with two Partners. The firm's offering has now grown to six partners, in just under two years.

Libby Jackson, Herbert Smith Freehills' Partner and Global Head of the Alternative Legal Services, said:

"The demand for our ALT services is continuing to grow and it is important that we keep investing in innovative solutions for our clients, to ensure they are receiving the most cost-effective service possible.

"By equipping our new ALT team in South Africa with the skills they need alongside the right technology solutions, we can offer clients a very low cost way of tackling high volume document-intensive elements of their projects, complementing the high-end advice offered by the firm's lawyers around the world."

Lisa McLaughlin added:

"We believe the introduction of an Alternative Legal Services team in South Africa will change the face of the local industry. Our clients will benefit enormously, not only through the realisation of value and savings but also because it frees up our core teams to focus on delivering support for more strategic high-value priorities. In addition, this initiative further strengthens our commitment to assisting South Africa's law graduates in securing leading, world-class training and work experience."

The recruitment drive for the Johannesburg ALT team has now commenced. For more information, or to apply, please contact: ALTSACareers@hsf.com

KEY CONTACTS

If you have any questions, or would like to know how this might affect your business, phone, or email these key contacts.



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