

W G HART LEGAL WORKSHOP 2026

Call for Workshop Proposals and the Nomination of Academic Directors in collaboration with the University of London Law Schools

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies is seeking proposals and Academic Directors for the 2026 W G Hart Legal Workshop from law schools across the UK.

Workshop Terms of Reference

The W G Hart Legal Workshops are directed towards the advancement of legal education at the academic stage. The Institute hosts the Workshops on behalf of the University of London and invites applications to provide the academic leadership of the 2026 Workshop; it will particularly welcome proposals that continue the Workshop's long tradition of breaking new ground.

The Workshop will be held at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies in June 2026.

In selecting the topic to be covered in any given year regard will be given to the following factors which proposals should address:

- the existence of a new or developing academic literature, which might involve either an innovative approach to an existing topic or the emergence of a new research area, and this may include interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary topics with legal dimensions;
- the relevance of the topic to an audience extending beyond the strictly specialist;
- financial circumstances, i.e. the particular value of providing Hart funding for a workshop on this topic;
- plans for subsequent publication.

With reference to the role that the W G Hart Workshop is intended to play in the academic community, it is also expected that proposals will meet the following conditions:

- That the selection of speakers, and in particular keynote speakers, should reflect gender balance and the diversity of the legal academic community.
- That proposals from scholars early in their academic careers should be encouraged, and that provision is made for early career scholars to participate in the Workshop alongside more experienced scholars.

The WG Hart Bequest provides a budget of approximately £7,000 to use towards the running costs of the Workshop. In addition to this, the Institute covers the cost of venue hire, publicity and administrative support. Registration fees for the organisers and speakers are usually waived. The Workshop structure follows the pattern of a two-day workshop with plenary and parallel sessions, so as to permit participation by a wide range of scholars.

Academic Director(s)

The Institute would welcome proposals and the nomination of Directors from across the UK and would encourage Early Career Scholars, with a proven track record of conference organisation, to submit

proposals and direct future Workshops. It is recommended that there be no fewer than two directors for the Workshop.

The W G Hart Bequest which supports the Workshop was made directly to the University of London and this requires that the lead Director, or co-lead, comes from one of the University of London Law Schools (Birkbeck, City, KCL, LSE, QMUL, RHUL, SOAS, Goldsmiths, UCL). Therefore, where nominees are from elsewhere, they will need to identify and recruit a member from one of the London Law Schools to co-direct the Workshop.

Responsibilities of the Workshop Directors

The role of the Academic Director(s) is to design a detailed programme around the proposal approved by the Advisory Council of the Institute. In particular this will involve:

- drawing up an outline programme and call for papers, for circulation by the Institute;
- selecting and inviting speakers and drawing up the final programme, liaising as appropriate with the Institute concerning its financial implications, particularly with regard to the participation of (Workshop funded) overseas speakers;
- liaison with speakers concerning the submission of papers, and for ensuring their timely delivery to the Institute in advance of the Workshop;
- acting as editor(s) of the proceedings of the Workshop papers;
- where appropriate, securing outside sponsorship for parts of the programme, such as an evening reception/dinner.

No remuneration is payable to the Academic Director(s) in respect of this work.

Background

In 1966, with funds donated by the Ford Foundation, the Institute organised the first ever legal workshop to be held in the United Kingdom based on a concept pioneered a few years earlier by the Law School of New York University. These workshops, which address a different theme each year, have been held annually ever since. The Ford Foundation grant terminated in 1978, but fortunately in 1981 the Institute was able to secure alternative funding under the terms of the bequest of the residuary estate of Dr Walter Gray Hart to the University of London to be used “for the advancement of legal education”. Consequently, since 1981 the Workshop has been named the W G Hart Legal Workshop.

A list of previous topics addressed by the Workshop is available at: <https://ials.sas.ac.uk/research/hart/w-g-hart-legal-workshop-past-years>

Submission of nomination and subject proposals

Please provide a proposal that includes

- The names and Curriculum Vitae of all the agreed Academic Director(s);
- An abstract and rationale of the topic proposed;
- A list of potential themes for parallel sessions;
- A list of the potential keynote speakers and their institutional affiliation;
- An indication of whether (and if so which) other sources of financial support are being sought.

Proposals must reach IALS by **28 February 2025** and should be sent to:

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