



FOR RELEASE ON SEPTEMBER 1, 2022—10:00 a.m. CDT

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September 1, 2022—Racine, Wisconsin—The College of Law Practice Management, an international organization that fosters excellence in law practice management, today announced the recipients of the 2022 InnovAction Awards. The Diversity Lab Team, with Mansfield Rule Law Firm Early Adopters; Fox Rothschild LLP—KM & Innovation Team; and Suffolk University Law School Legal Innovation & Technology Lab are the three recipients of the coveted 2022 InnovAction Awards.

The InnovAction Awards celebrate innovation that is novel, disruptive, and which provides demonstrable value to the industry, providers, or clients. The awards illustrate what can be created when passionate professionals, with big ideas and strong convictions, are determined to make a difference. This is the 19th year the College presented InnovAction Awards.

The three 2022 winners have provided demonstrable value to the legal industry:

- **Diversity Lab**: Despite decades of hard work, the leadership in most law firms still lack diversity. A new idea to drive systemic change—the Mansfield Rule—was

pitched at Diversity Lab's hackathon. The crowd loved it and 30+ firms quickly volunteered to test it.

Initially pitched as a similar framework to the NFL's Rooney Rule, it was modified by industry experts—leveraging science and data—to be more effective.

The Mansfield Rule is a year-long certification process, led by Diversity Lab, that requires law firms to consider slates of at least 30% historically underrepresented lawyers—women, racial and ethnic lawyers, LGBTQ+ lawyers, and lawyers with disabilities—for appointments to leadership committees and roles, promotions to equity partner, hiring for senior lateral positions, and for high-visibility opportunities such as client pitches.

The certification is rigorous. Over a dozen leadership-related talent practices and activities must be tracked and measured. The processes must be written and transparent to all lawyers. There are monthly knowledge-sharing meetings among all firms. And there are numerous data-collection and reporting milestones throughout the year.

Applying for Mansfield certification is hard. It's time consuming. But the early adopters' results demonstrate that it works to diversify leadership.

- **Fox Rothschild LLP**: Fox Rothschild LLP has grown exponentially over the last 15 years—adding new attorneys, more offices, new practices, and innovative solutions to serve the expanding client base. The result of this growth is 35,000+ active clients and 415,000+ active matters.

Yet the firm lacked a central, consistent matter classification system, which is critical to generate firm experience information accurately and efficiently. The KM Innovation Team spearheaded an initiative to address this decades-old issue through the creation of a multi-level classification system: one that could be

retroactively applied to historical matters as well as automatically applied to new matters going forward. The matter classification system was developed in partnership with HBR Consulting, which provides law firms and corporate law departments with strategic guidance, operational improvement and technology solutions that drive innovation.

This project relied on multiple critical skill sets—legal, analytical, and data science. The project’s key players brought years of experience and an in-depth understanding of the legal industry and our client base to mine internal firm data to determine the unique, custom structure of the classification scheme. The Team was also able to automate application of this classification system to new matters—which was not initially foreseeable. This automation has proven to be an immeasurable savings in time and resources.

- **Suffolk University Law School Legal Innovation & Technology Lab**: At the outset of the pandemic, Suffolk University Law School’s Legal Innovation & Technology Lab launched the “Document Assembly Line Project” to help people in Massachusetts – and later other states - access the courts when the courts were not physically accessible. The result has been that, to date, over 20,000 forms have been downloaded, 3,500 fee waivers completed, and 5,500 CDC declarations have been generated to stop evictions nationwide. The project has created the tools for 500 restraining order petitions and 550 emergency housing injunctions.

A large team of academics, volunteer experts, and students worked to create these no-cost tools for the public.

As the situation has stabilized and courts have slowly reopened, the work of the Document Assembly Line Project has continued, building on the initial development, and working toward a post-pandemic future in which the use of the technologies it employed during a worldwide crisis can be implemented to improve the efficiency of the legal system in Massachusetts and beyond. To date,

two other states have adopted the Document Assembly Line's tools (Illinois and Louisiana) and several more are in the process of doing so.

Bill Garcia, Chief Practice Innovation Officer, [Thompson Hine LLP](#), and Chair of the InnovAction Program, applauded the winners: "Through the years, nearly 40 different innovators have been recognized and there have been five repeat winners, including Diversity Lab and Suffolk University. The honorees have included enterprises from every part of the legal ecosystem: law firms, technology providers, in-house law departments, and educational institutions. The awards are truly global: 10 prior award recipients, fully one-third of those recognized by the College, were from outside the United States. The College of Law Practice Management, through the InnovAction Program, is pleased to honor this year's winners. They join an elite list of [prior winners](#)."

The 2022 InnovAction award judges were Stephanie Sciallo, [MSA Safety, Inc.](#), Andrea Alliston, [Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP](#); Jason Barnwell, [Microsoft](#); Ron Friedmann, [Gartner](#); and Rick Kathuria, [McCarthy Tetrault LLP](#).

The awards will be presented Friday, October 7, at the 2022 Futures Conference.

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About COLPM

The College of Law Practice Management (the College) is a not-for-profit organization formed in 1994 to honor and recognize distinguished law practice management professionals, to set standards of achievement for others in the profession, and to fund and assist projects that enhance the highest quality of law practice management. The College and its Fellows inspire excellence and innovation in law practice management by:

- Honoring extraordinary achievement;
- Developing, exchanging and disseminating knowledge;
- Stimulating innovation in the delivery of legal services; and
- Encouraging diversity and inclusion throughout the profession.

About 2022 InnovAction Awards

The College continues its global search for innovation in law practice management. Designed to inspire creative thinking in a field known for its over-reliance on precedent, the InnovAction Awards are intended not only to identify effective innovation but also to inspire it through international recognition.

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