



2026 FUTURES CONFERENCE

*Leading in the Intelligent Era:
Human Judgment, Shared Leadership, and the Future of Legal Service*

New York City · June 29-30, 2026

The 2026 Futures Conference invites leaders across the legal ecosystem to New York City for an inspiring, forward-looking experience that blends community, innovation, and human-centered leadership, highlighted by the return of the College’s Black-Tie Gala to honor the Class of 2026 Fellows and the Michael Mills InnovAction Award winner. Over two days of keynotes, hands-on labs, intergenerational exchange, and thoughtful peer collaboration, attendees will explore the forces reshaping legal service, including the rise of intelligent systems, shifting client expectations, evolving professional identities, and new opportunities to expand access to justice, while emphasizing the enduring importance of human judgment, creativity, and leadership in guiding change. Participants will learn, experiment, reflect, and practice together, gaining new approaches to communication, innovation, and leadership, deepening their understanding of the transforming legal ecosystem, and experiencing the power of the Fellows community. They will leave inspired, connected, and equipped with shared language and renewed purpose to carry momentum back to their organizations, clients, and communities.

SCHEDULE (subject to change)

FUTURES CONFERENCE	
Practising Law Institute—Anita Shapiro Conference Center 1177 Sixth Avenue, New York, NY 10036 (Note: Enter and exit the building via the West 45th Street entrance.)	
DAY ONE Monday, June 29	
Time	<i>Understanding the Intelligent Era & Designing the Future</i>
11:30 am-12:00 pm	Registration
11:45 am-12:45 pm	Hot Buffet Lunch
12:45 pm-1:00 pm	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kristen Bateman Leis 2026 Futures Conference Chair
1:00 pm-1:15 pm	Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Boyd, COLPM President • Patrick Fuller, COLPM President-Elect

Time	Monday, June 29 (continued)
1:15 pm- 2:30 pm	<p>KEYNOTE ADDRESS FEATURING RICHARD SUSSKIND, CBE, KC (HON.)</p> <p>Rethinking Legal Expertise in the Age of AI How judgment, value, and professional identity evolve when machines can reason</p> <p>Richard Susskind will deliver an energizing and thought-provoking address drawn from his forthcoming book on how to think differently about artificial intelligence in law. He will challenge attendees to reimagine what legal service means in an age of intelligent systems and exponential change.</p> <p>Attendees can expect to learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How AI will reshape the roles and responsibilities of legal professionals and redefine what “expertise” means. • Why the biggest barrier to innovation is mindset, not technology — and how to cultivate a more adaptive one. • How human judgment and machine intelligence can complement one another in delivering legal outcomes. • What emerging AI tools are likely to transform access, efficiency, and client expectations. • How legal leaders can prepare their organizations for continuous reinvention in a technology-driven future.
2:30 pm- 2:45 pm	Afternoon Break
Sponsor Spotlight #1 – Practising Law Institute (Sharon Crane)	
2:45 pm- 4:15 pm	<p>Innovation Lab <i>Sponsored Lega</i></p> <p>Facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian Lang, Founder & CEO, Lega <p>Designing AI-Enabled Legal Service in Real Time</p> <p>A fast-paced, immersive lab where participants work in teams to design and test prototype AI-enabled legal service solutions. Guided by Lega’s innovation strategists, attendees will experiment with real use cases and engage in scenario-based exercises that surface ethical, human, and client-centered considerations.</p> <p>This session moves beyond theory into hands-on, exploratory learning—inviting participants to think boldly, challenge assumptions, and experience what it truly means to reshape legal service in an intelligent era.</p>
Sponsor Spotlight #2 – Harvey (Steve Shuldman)	

Time	Monday, June 29 (continued)	
4:15 pm-5:00 pm	<p>Fireside Chat:</p> <p>Leading Through Technological Turning Points. Three Generations, Three Journeys</p> <p>Facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debbie Read, Partner, Thompson Hine <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy Tenney Curren, Chief Talent Officer, Beveridge & Diamond P.C. • Jenna Schiappacasse, Managing Director, Business Development & Marketing, Winston & Strawn LLP • Lisa Smith, Principal, Fairfax Associates <p>This intergenerational conversation brings together leaders from different eras of legal service transformation to explore how each generation has responded to waves of technological change. From the rise of e-discovery and knowledge management to the emergence of legal operations and data analytics, to today's intelligent systems, the discussion will highlight how leadership practices evolve with the tools, pressures, and expectations of the time.</p> <p>The conversation will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What "expertise" meant when each panelist entered the profession, and how it has shifted • How technological change affected identity, credibility, and client relationships • Moments when each leader had to unlearn, let go, or evolve to stay effective • What <i>human leadership</i> looks like when new technology challenges old norms • Which leadership lessons from each era should be carried forward, and which should be left behind 	
5:00 pm	<p>Adjourn for the Day</p>	
6:00 pm-10:00 pm (check-in 5:45 pm)	<p>Black-tie Honors Gala</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Boyd, COLPM President • Patrick Fuller, COLPM President-Elect • Kristen Bateman Leis, Conference Chair • Andrea Alliston, Michael Mills InnovAction Committee Chair • Jennifer Manton, Trustee (on behalf of Jenn Johnson, Calibrate—Sponsor) <p>An elegant evening overlooking Central Park celebrating innovation, leadership, and the Fellows who shape the profession's future.</p> <p>Celebrating the 2026 Michael Mills InnovAction Award Winner and the Class of 2026 New Fellows.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Robert</u> <i>2 Columbus Circle New York, NY 10019</i></p> <p>Sponsors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Mills InnovAction Award sponsored by Calibrate Strategies • Entertainment provided by Harbor and Society 54

FUTURES CONFERENCE
DAY TWO
 Tuesday, June 30

Time	<i>Human Leadership: Communicating Vision & Building Alignment</i>
8:00 am- 8:30 am	Registration & Enhanced Continental Breakfast
8:30 am- 8:45 am	<p>Morning Recap and Introduction to Day Two</p> <p>Day One challenged us to learn, explore and innovate expertise in an age of intelligent systems and to recognize how technology is reshaping the work we do and the value we provide. We learned, we explored possibilities, and we began to experiment together in the Innovation Lab. Day Two will build on that momentum by shifting from understanding change to leading it. Day Two centers the human side of leadership: communicating with clarity so others can truly hear and understand, building trust through connection, and using narrative to help others make meaning and move forward. This is where insight becomes practice and practice becomes leadership.</p>
Sponsor Spotlight #3 – PacerPro (Jake Cockerman)	
8:45 am- 9:45 am	<p>KEYNOTE ADDRESS FEATURING EMMY AWARD WINNER BETH SHERMAN</p> <p><i>Proudly sponsored by Harbor</i></p> <p><i>Rapid Rapport: Using Storytelling and Humor to Build Trust When It Matters Most</i></p> <p>Beth is a comedian and seven-time Emmy Award winning writer for shows including Late Show with David Letterman, The Tonight Show, Ellen, and the Academy Awards. Today, she coaches senior leaders across industries on how to communicate with authenticity, build trust through clarity, and use narrative as a strategic leadership tool. Her approach blends creativity, emotional intelligence, and practical techniques that help leaders influence, inspire, and guide others through moments of change.</p> <p>As the pace of transformation accelerates, leadership requires more than directing strategy. It requires helping people make meaning. Drawing on her writing and coaching experience, Beth will explore how storytelling and humor strengthen human connection, deepen trust, and support cultures navigating uncertainty.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(continued on next page)</p>

Time	Tuesday, June 30 (continued)
	<p>Attendees can expect to learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How comedians build rapport in seconds, and how leaders can use those same principles to build connection quickly — without sacrificing authority or credibility. • A framework for communication that engages both logic and emotion to earn buy-in, align teams, and move decisions forward. • How to use humor and narrative as tools to navigate uncertainty, build culture, and foster inclusion. • Why humor, when used thoughtfully, enhances credibility and human connection even in serious professions. • How to transform everyday leadership interactions into moments of clarity, empathy, and influence.
9:45 am-10:00 am	Movement Break
Sponsor Spotlight #4 – Clio (Damien Riehl)	
10:00 am-10:05 am	<p>Leadership Lab <i>Proudly sponsored by GrowthPlay and The Tilt Institute</i></p> <p>Leading with Agility, Foresight, and Narrative Purpose This immersive leadership lab builds on themes from Beth Sherman’s keynote, shifting from understanding communication and connection to actively practicing them. Participants will engage in hands-on exercises focused on adaptability, foresight, and learning from future-focused leadership scenarios. The session moves from insight to application, helping leaders strengthen judgment and clarity as they guide organizations through change.</p>
10:05 am-10:45 pm	<p>Take 1: “Yes And” Leadership — Thriving When Life Goes Off Script (40 minutes) Facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holly Mandel, CEO, iMergence Corporate Improv Training • Stefan Schick, a partner at Loeb & Loeb <p>This session builds agility, presence, and responsiveness when circumstances shift faster than plans. Participants practice staying grounded, listening deeply, and co-creating solutions in real time.</p>
10:45 am-11:45 am	<p>Take 2: Leadership Pre-Mortem — Learning from the Future to Drive Change Today (60 minutes) Facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marcie Borgal Shunk, President and Founder, The Tilt Institute • Lisa Simon, Chief Marketing & Business Development Officer, Holland & Hart • Alycia Sutor, Managing Director, GrowthPlay <p>Working in stakeholder groups, participants will tackle a realistic future leadership challenge within the legal ecosystem. Teams will examine what went wrong, identify underlying causes, and design interventions to prevent or redirect similar breakdowns. This session builds foresight and strategic awareness while laying the groundwork for translating insight into clear leadership guidance.</p>

Time	Tuesday, June 30 (continued)
11:45 am- 1:00 pm	<p>Casting the Vision: Leadership in Practice (60 minutes) Working Lunch</p> <p>Facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deborah Farone, Author and Consultant, Farone Advisors <p>Participants will transition into a working lunch, using the initial portion to gather food and settle into table discussions. Deborah Farone will guide a structured debrief using five framing questions introduced during the pre-mortem session. Each stakeholder group will designate a spokesperson, with insights shared through a moderated, interactive discussion designed to deepen learning, manage time effectively, and generate a lively exchange of perspectives.</p>
Sponsor Spotlight #5 – Blickstein Group (Brad Blickstein)	
1:00 pm- 2:00 pm	<p>The Leadership Showdown: Humans vs. AI</p> <p>Facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catherine Alman MacDonagh, CEO & Founder, Legal Lean Sigma LLC / Legal Sales and Services Organization • Marci Taylor, President & Legal Strategy Consultant, Mantra Legal Consulting <p>Team Human:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alina Gorokhovsky, CEO, SCG Legal • Melanie Green, Chief Client Development & Marketing Officer, Fish & Richardson • Keith Maziarek, Principal, Lucratic Method LLC <p>Team AI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bob Haskin, Director, Global Affairs of Solutions Enablement and Business Intelligence & Analytics, Google • Milana Hogan, Chief Talent Officer, Sullivan & Cromwell • Megan McMillin, Legal Innovation Partner, Harvey <p>A high-energy finale where human improvisers face off against AI in a series of storytelling, ethical, and crisis-leadership challenges inspired by the entire Futures Conference. This capstone session brings the whole conference full circle. Team Human and Team AI will tackle the same leadership challenges using everything explored over the past two days, from AI and innovation to communication, and human leadership.</p>
2:00 pm- 2:15 pm	<i>Prizes, Conclude Conference and Adjourn</i>
2:15 pm	<i>Ciao!</i>

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