

WIN In-House Counsel Week 2025

Pro Bono for In-House Counsel

Presenters:

Cate Martin, Pro Bono Partner, DLA Piper

Rebecca Lacey, APAC Regional Legal Lead, Pfizer

Kaitlin Edleman, Senior Contracts Manager, Amazon Web Services

Corina Hoon, Senior Legal Counsel, Westpac

Michelle Antonio, Conflict Resolution Practitioner, Mediatius

Wednesday, 19 February 2025

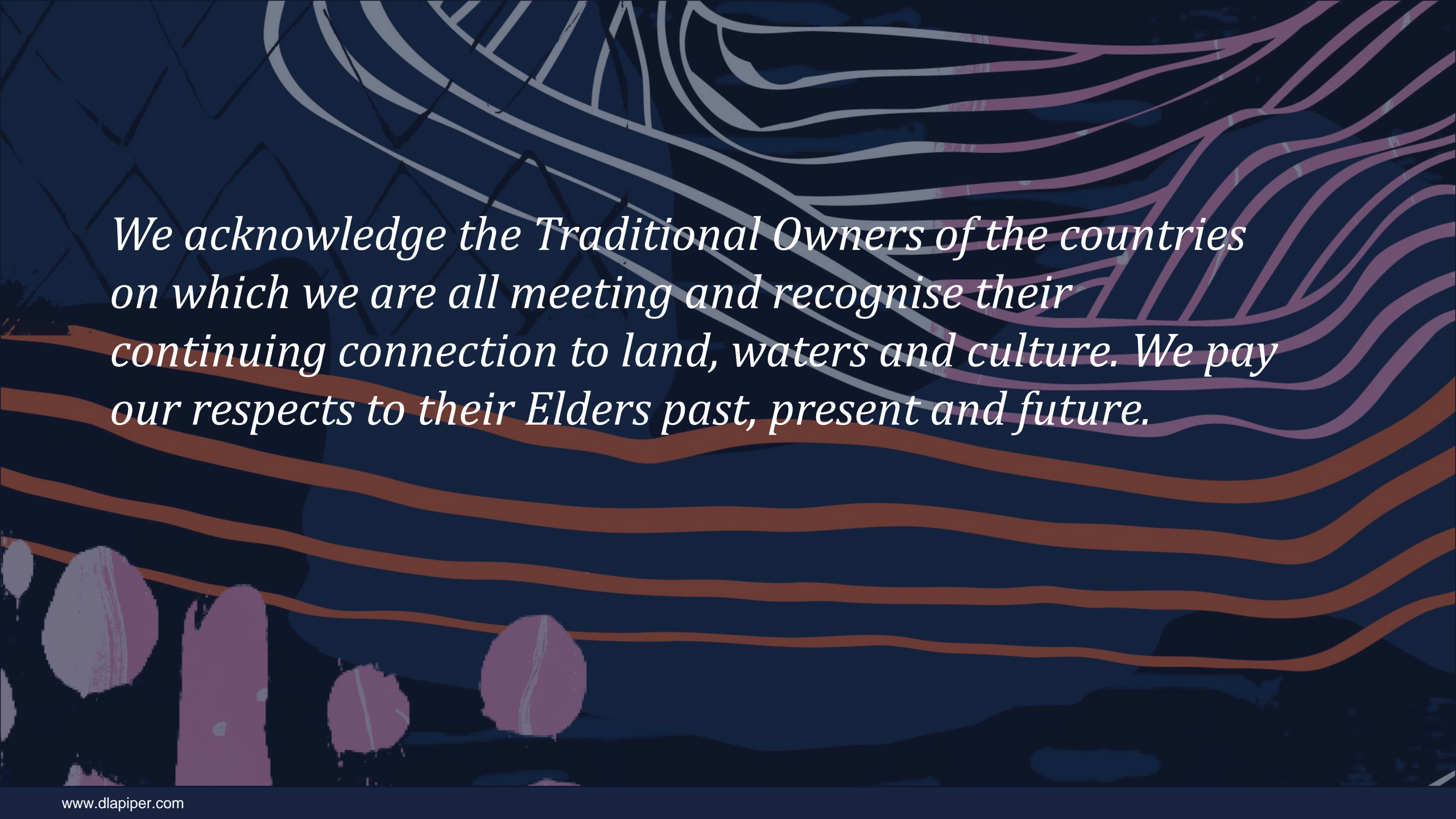
11:00 - 12:00 AWST

13:00 - 14:00 AEST

14:00 - 15:00 AEDT



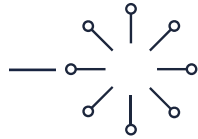
WIN what in-house
lawyers need



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the countries on which we are all meeting and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future.



Agenda



1. What is pro bono work
2. The Australian legal assistance sector
3. The pro bono business case for inhouse lawyers
4. Setting up a pro bono program
5. Panel discussion

Pro bono



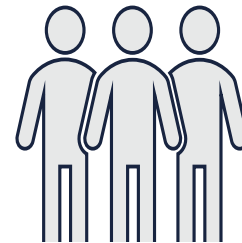
Free or substantially reduced legal assistance to:

- Individuals who cannot access legal aid
- Individuals or organisations whose matter raises a public interest issue
- Not-for-profits which primarily work in the interests of disadvantaged communities



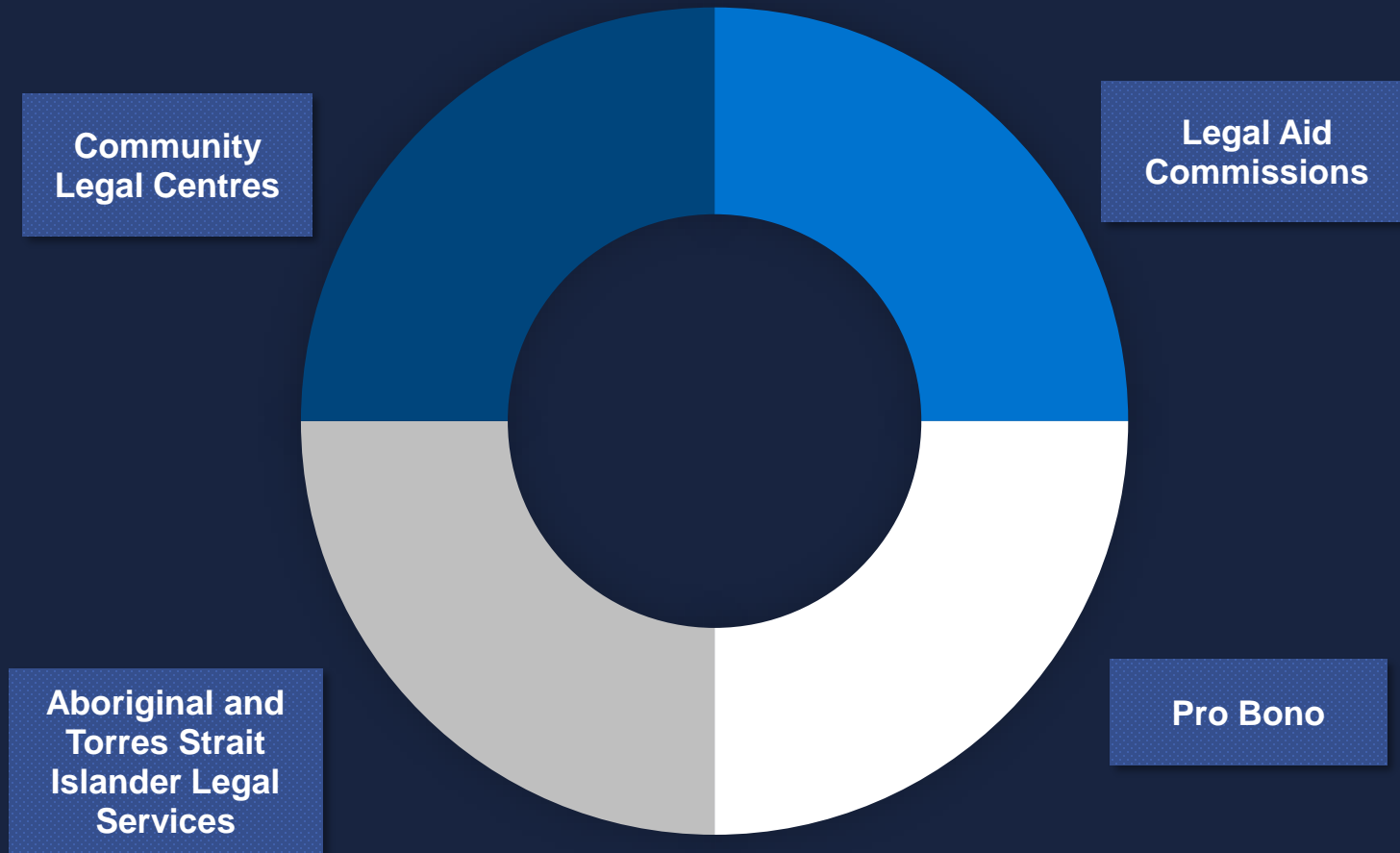
Law reform and
policy work

Free community
legal education



Seconding a lawyer to a
community legal
organisation

Australian legal assistance sector



Services include:



Legal advice

Duty lawyers



Representation

Legal tasks



Australian pro bono sector

How does pro bono contribute?



Pro bono provides a 'safety net' to address unmet legal need:

- assisting individuals with issues unable to be addressed by Legal Aid, CLCs, ATSILS
- Responses to sudden changes in legal needs e.g. natural disasters
- Ongoing work for not-for-profits and charities

Australian Pro Bono Centre



National Pro Bono Target for private practitioners - **35 pro bono hours** per lawyer per year

National Pro Bono Target for inhouse and government lawyers – **20 pro bono hours** per lawyer per year

Pro bono in law firms



All large Australian and international law firms have dedicated pro bono practitioners to drive the strategy and manage the practice.

Mature pro bono sector:

- 27 dedicated pro bono partners in Australia
- 168 dedicated pro bono lawyers
- 781,000 pro bono hours collectively

Demand for legal services



Firms largely 'fill the gap' in:

- Employment law;
- Immigration;
- Administrative and constitutional law;
- Wills, probate and estates;
- Housing and tenancy; and
- General commercial.

Setting up an inhouse pro bono program



The business case for pro bono



Considerations



Types of pro bono assistance

Legal advice

- This involves providing legal advice to a vulnerable individual or charity / NFP

Individual

- Often provided through attendance at a virtual / in person legal clinic which can require a regular time commitment (e.g. 3 hours every 4-6 weeks)

Charity / NFP

- Corporate advice provided directly to a charity. Timeframes depend on the nature of the advice sought

Legal research

- This involves undertaking legal research to support the work of a charity / NFP
- Conducted through desk based research often in the form of a questionnaire / memo / report
- Projects have longer time frames (e.g. 10 hour commitment over 2-3 months)

Legal education / teaching

- This involves training on a legal topic or legal skills to members of a disadvantaged community
- Conducted remotely or in person depending on where participants are based and nature of the training
- Time commitment varies depending on the project

Sourcing opportunities

Finding your own

- Pro bono referral services, e.g. Justice Connect (Vic and NSW), LawRight (QLD), LawAccess (WA), JusticeNet (SA)
- Community legal centres
- Law society pro bono schemes
- Existing charity partners

Partnering with a law firm

- Dedicated pro bono teams can establish and support projects with inhouse teams

