

# Prisma Legal: Pioneering Certified B Corporation doing Pro Bono



*Fotini Kypraios and Dimitra  
Kypraios of Prisma Legal*

Prisma Legal is a certified B Corp™ and NewLaw firm, providing boutique commercial legal services with clarity, purpose and a distinctive difference.

Our pro bono program started organically and evolved as part of our firm's growth. Initially, we undertook pro bono opportunities through our networks, as well as through referrals and our active involvement in presentations and legal education for various not-for-profit and other organisations. The truth is, we have always been passionate about making commercial legal services accessible to entrepreneurs from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who would otherwise not have the financial resources to access a commercial lawyer.

Our Open Access® program is our pledge to dedicating at least 100 hours of pro bono legal and educational services each year to start-up entrepreneurs and social enterprises, as well as providing educational legal services to the not-for-profit sector, tertiary programs and the wider community.

Our pro bono work also formed part of the impetus for our application for B Corp Certification. Certified B Corporations are businesses that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability to balance profit and purpose. B Corps™

are leaders of a global movement of people using business as a 'force for good'. The way we see it, B Corp™ certification reinforced our values and reflected our existing practices when it came to being good corporate and community citizens. We were extremely proud to earn our certification just after our third birthday, becoming one of only four legal firms in Australia to do so!

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The pro bono work we are involved in is as follows:

1. Our principal lawyer, Fotini Kypraios, is the supervisor of the Monash Innovation / Start Up Clinic, run by the Monash University Faculty of Law. This clinic provides free legal advice to the start-up and entrepreneurship community on legal matters relating to establishment of, and operational issues arising from running, a business, as well as the commercialisation of innovative technology-based start-ups.
2. Fotini also conducts educational seminars with the Governance Institute of Australia that focus on ensuring that people serving on boards, or who are about to serve on boards, or undertake a company secretarial role are aware of their legal duties and best governance practices.
3. Fotini also teaches legal governance through Family Business Australia to private individuals that own and operate large and complex family-owned enterprises. The purpose of these educational undertakings is to ensure those who assume board positions do so fully aware of their legal duties and in a manner that can best serve their families, their businesses and stakeholders.
4. Prisma Legal also provides legal services to private clients who would otherwise not be able to afford a lawyer to assist them with commercial legal matters.



*Dimitra Kypraios, Lawyer at Prisma Legal*

5. We collaborate with some amazing not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises. Our current collaborations include:

**a. The Social Studio**, which is a social enterprise using fashion and the creative industries to create work and learning opportunities for Melbourne refugee and new migrant communities. This initiative is being driven by our junior lawyer, Dimitra Kypraios, establishing a deeper connection between the next generation of legal professionals and creatives that might not otherwise have access to commercial legal services to launch their businesses.

**b. Fitted for Work**, which is an organisation that helps Australian women experiencing disadvantage to get work, keep work, thrive at work and navigate their world of work. This collaboration provides a great opportunity for Prisma Legal to empower a disadvantaged sector of the community by helping them establish their businesses and provide them with commercial legal services to help them attain self-determination and financial independence.

**c. Prisma Legal** is also collaborating with the **Asylum Seeker Resource Centre** through our Open Axess® program to provide pro bono commercial legal assistance to people seeking asylum as well as participating in the various programs run through the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. Through these initiatives, we are working together to empower people seeking asylum to transform their entrepreneurial ideas into a reality and access pathways to independence.

At Prisma Legal we prioritise giving back to our community. Our pro bono initiatives recognise that we all start somewhere and often, all you need is someone to help you take the first step. ■

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*Fotini Kypraios is a Principal Lawyer at Prisma Legal and has over 20 years' experience which enabled her to develop expertise in commercial and corporate issues in a diverse range of contexts. Fotini holds Bachelors degrees from Monash University in Arts and Law and was awarded her Graduate Diploma of Applied Corporate Governance in 2012 by the Governance Institute of Australia. Fotini is the Board Chair of the Hellenic Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and a Specialist Accredited Adviser of Family Business Australia. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (UK) and a Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia. Most recently, Fotini also joined the Faculty of Law at Monash University as a sessional supervisor of the Innovation / Start Up Clinic.*



*Fotini Kypraios, Principal Lawyer of Prisma Legal*

*Dimitra Kypraios is a Law Honours graduate, having completed her Bachelor of Arts/ Law degree at Monash University, and was admitted as a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria in 2021. Dimitra is a lawyer at Prisma Legal and is passionate about community engagement. Dimitra is currently managing Prisma Legal's Open Axess® collaborations with The Social Studio, Fitted for Work and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.*