

TrustLaw an Introduction to Legal Pro Bono.

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

On Screen Video, Sameena Usmani, Kelsey Lee

Sameena Usmani 08:11:21

Hi everyone, and welcome to this special Taproot Foundation webinar.

Sameena Usmani 08:11:26

TrustLaw an introduction to legal pro bono.

Sameena Usmani 08:11:29

I'm Sameena Usmani, and I'm the Content Manager here at Taproot. And we're thrilled to be joined by Kelsey Lee from TrustLaw, which is the legal pro bono service of Thomson Reuters Foundation. And TrustLaw has been a fantastic partner and resource for nonprofit community members for years. And just a little bit about what we do here at Taproot.

Sameena Usmani 08:11:55

Taproot Foundation drives social change by leading, mobilizing, and engaging professionals in pro bono service. We've been around since 2001. And our community of more than 30,000 School volunteers has served over 10,000 nonprofits and social change organizations. And our dedicated volunteers have logged over 1.9 million hours of service. And now, I am thrilled to introduce our guest speaker, Kelsey Lee, TrustLaw's legal officer of North America and the Caribbean. Kelsey, welcome. And thank you so much for joining us.

Kelsey Lee 08:12:32

Hi, everyone. Thank you for having me here to present today. As Sameena said, my name is Kelsey Lee, and I'm a legal officer with TrustLaw. I want to quickly walk through our agenda for today before we get started.

Kelsey Lee 08:12:45

So first, I'll be giving a brief introduction to the Thomson Reuters Foundation and to TrustLaw, which is a part of the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Kelsey Lee 08:12:53

Second, I will use an in house tool we call our Legal Health Check to help you think through any legal pro bono needs you might have for your organization.

Kelsey Lee 08:13:01

And third, I will explain how to access that pro bono support from TrustLaw if needed, including membership criteria. And finally, I will stop for questions. So please also feel free to jump in anytime with questions. And let's get started.

Kelsey Lee 08:13:16

So I just to pick up with some background, we are leaving Thomson Reuters Foundation are, the corporate foundation of Thomson Reuters, and launched more than 10 years ago, TrustLaw is part of that corporate foundation. So at the foundation, we use the combined power of journalism and the law, to advance media freedom, foster more inclusive economies, and promote human rights.

Kelsey Lee 08:13:39

So we really work in those three pillars to guide all of our work. So that's media freedom, human rights, and inclusive economies. And through news, Media Development, free legal assistance, and convening initiatives, we combine our unique services to drive systemic change in these three pillars.

Kelsey Lee 08:13:58

And so to achieve progress, I mentioned the four core services. And so I'll just give you a little bit more information about each of those.

Kelsey Lee 08:14:06

So in thinking about our news coverage, we have a global editorial team of almost 50, journalists and 300 freelancers covering unreported human impact stories about women's rights LGBTQIA plus rights, poverty, climate change, social innovation, modern slavery, and international development.

Kelsey Lee 08:14:29

We also run a series of training and grants programs led by world class experts that combine hands on experience, and then also opportunities for international distribution of any news outputs. Trust conferences, also the Thomson Reuters Foundation flagship event held in London every year, this year, it will be in October.

Kelsey Lee 08:14:49

And it's a leading Human Rights Forum where we bring together 600 delegates across sectors around the world to talk about critical and cutting edge issues. And then lastly, what we're really here to talk about is the pro bono legal assistance we provide through TrustLaw.

Kelsey Lee 08:15:04

So I do want to get into a little bit more about what we do here at TrustLaw. And so just to start off, we work in two different buckets. So we provide legal advice pro bono through advisory work or research work.

Kelsey Lee 08:15:19

And so on your screen, you can see that first we're going to talk about the advisory support we can offer in really any area of law, including corporate law, contract law, intellectual property, banking and finance, employment, real estate, really any type of legal question that your organization needs support for, we can connect you with pro bono lawyers to help provide that support.

Kelsey Lee 08:15:42

So here, we really facilitate that free legal advice and assistance to enable your organizations to streamline their operations, expand into new countries, and scale your impact. So some of the examples of support we can provide for day to day needs are establishing new legal entities.

Kelsey Lee 08:15:57

So if you are a nonprofit looking to incorporate AS a nonprofit in a new country, perhaps that's something we can assist with.

Kelsey Lee 08:16:05

Or if you're looking to develop a for profit arm under the nonprofit arm, that's also something that we can assist with. We can provide advice on hiring employees and independent contractors.

Kelsey Lee 08:16:17

Lawyers can assist with either reviewing or drafting, corporate and commercial contracts and agreements such AS partnership agreements, sponsorship agreements, really any type of contract that you might need drafted or advice on how we can also provide advice on any intellectual property issues such AS trademarks, patents, copyrights, and then data protection policies.

Kelsey Lee 08:16:41

Now that most organizations are moving services online are offering some services online, some privacy regulations, and then website terms and conditions. We also provide support in terms of legal research.

Kelsey Lee 08:16:54

So we connect organizations such AS yours with world class legal research from pro bono lawyers across the world, which you can then use to drive social missions and lead groundbreaking legal and policy reforms.

Kelsey Lee 08:17:06

So this is really where we're assisting organizations with the social mission rather than the operational aspect that we would for the advisory support.

Kelsey Lee 08:17:14

So I'll give some more detailed examples later. But this could be an internal document, such AS a memo, on a new piece of legislation that might help inform your organization's litigation efforts or advocacy strategy.

Kelsey Lee 08:17:28

Or it could be an external published report, such AS a Know Your Rights guide to help with your public facing policy work, we're gonna be shared amongst your membership or communities that you're doing the work in.

Kelsey Lee 08:17:38

So this research that we do is often cross jurisdictional. It can involve multiple law firms across the world, or in house teams that work together. It but it can also be a smaller, more focused projects for one firm in one jurisdiction, such AS a really detailed in depth memo on one new piece of legislation that's happening in one state AS an example.

Kelsey Lee 08:17:59

So it really can be a wide array of research opportunities that we can assist with. And then just to give a little bit of an oversight or overview on on our work here, we're really a global team. So we operate all over the world, we have over 6500 members, we've connected projects in 175 countries, and the last 10 years, we've generated 205 million USD and pro bono hours.

Kelsey Lee 08:18:25

So there really is a huge value to be gained from joining. And there is a lot of value that our employers are providing pro bono, and that would really make a huge difference for the organizations that they work with.

Kelsey Lee 08:18:37

So let's get a little bit more into Do you have a legal pro bono need really going through that those kinds of legal questions to see whether this is something that might be of service to your organization.

Kelsey Lee 08:18:50

So we use this term, called the trestle Legal Health Check. It really is what we just call our guide to see whether you have legal a pro bono needs to help your organization really think through the different aspects that I've already talked about in terms of contract law, intellectual property, law, corporate law to see whether we can assist you with your legal needs. And so that can be found on our website and will be shared with you following the webinar.

Kelsey Lee 08:19:15

But if you want to complete the full Legal Health Check, you can do so online. I'm just going to walk through a few questions, common questions under each category.

Kelsey Lee 08:19:23

So why don't we start with structuring and governance? These are really questions about the structure of your organization. I'm sure some of you are already thinking about this, but it might be is your legal structure the most appropriate for your current operations activities?

Kelsey Lee 08:19:37

So for example, are you looking to start some kind of social enterprise or for profit arm for your nonprofit? These are the types of questions that maybe pro bono lawyers could help you think through advise you on the different legal implications associated with each type of corporate structure, and then help you be right up the the new policies or the new legal structure for your organization.

Kelsey Lee 08:20:00

They can also review governing documents. So articles of association articles of incorporation, help you rewrite policies related to having a board of directors, if you're looking to shift the board of directors, these are all questions that our structured and governance focused pro bono corporate lawyers can assist with.

Kelsey Lee 08:20:19

They're also further questions related to the COVID 19 pandemic that we've seen come up. So just maybe any updates to risk guidance that that maybe need to be updated in your governance documents, or maybe the structure of your organization has changed in terms of the activities that you're engaging in, due to the COVID 19 pandemic?

Kelsey Lee 08:20:38

So these are all considerations that you can speak with a lawyer through TrustLaw with and they can help figure out next steps with you. We also do work in employment and labor. And so if you are an organization that has employees, volunteers, interns, independent contractors, Trump's lot pro bono lawyers can help write up contracts, they can help review those contracts.

Kelsey Lee 08:21:00

We often have TrustLaw pro bono employment lawyers write up employee handbooks or HR policies. They can review different types of employment structures such AS benefit structures to advise you on on what are the legal requirements in your state, perhaps related to benefit structures similar to that structuring there have been some increased employment questions related to the COVID 19 pandemic, such AS a work from home policy or a hybrid policy, or any kinds of benefits or legal obligations to workers who are caring for those who have been impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic.

Kelsey Lee 08:21:36

So these are all questions that you could bring to a trust the lawyer, and we could walk you through this and help you draft these types of policies or contracts. We also do work in intellectual property and data protection.

Kelsey Lee 08:21:48

And this has really seen an impact since by COVID-19, I think with all of the organizations that are working from home, or moving some of their services online, we now have a lot of requests for updating the terms and conditions, updating data protection and privacy policies, given that there are many employees now working from home, who are handling very sensitive data. If you are working outside of the US, perhaps in the UK or in Europe, you might have to look into, does my data protection policy comply with the GDPR?

Kelsey Lee 08:22:22

Have I reviewed with all of the different devices that we have both personal and for work that our employees are using? And then outside of data protection? Do you have a brand or a logo or an idea that you would like to protect so that no one else can use that or replicate it without crediting your organization.

Kelsey Lee 08:22:41

So that's the type of thing that we can help with, we can help you apply for the trademark or the copyright or the patent, we can walk you through that process. And while most of the time TrustLawyers will not help prosecute those patents or receive that through because it can be quite a lengthy process, they'll really walk you through those first steps and make sure your application is filed.

Kelsey Lee 08:23:03

And then let you know, what are the legal considerations that you need to think about moving forward with these ideas, and brands, they can also help you update if you have trademarked an idea for an example or an invention.

Kelsey Lee 08:23:16

And you've made some changes to that idea or invention. TrustLaw, pro bono lawyers can help you update that and apply for any new trademarks that might encompass that new data. So those are all things that intellectual property lawyers through TrustLaw can help with pro bono. We also work in contract law, I think I mentioned that in terms of employment.

Kelsey Lee 08:23:37

But if you're working with some kind of vendor who's providing goods or services, or collaborating with external partners or organizations that trust the lawyers can help draft new contracts that can help you draft template contracts, or amend or revise existing contracts.

Kelsey Lee 08:23:53

So those are all I think every organization really at some point has some kind of contract either with a vendor or a client or an employee. And these are really common questions that our lawyers are very prepared to assist with. Similarly, we have tax and finance questions that we can help with.

Kelsey Lee 08:24:10

I won't go through the details of these. But just AS an example, if you're looking to fundraise, and you have fundraising questions about maybe doing so in a country, other other than where you're registered, these are questions that our lawyers can help you consider in terms of perhaps do I want to register in this country?

Kelsey Lee 08:24:26

Will it be more difficult?

Kelsey Lee 08:24:28

Are there tax implications?

Kelsey Lee 08:24:30

Are there tax benefits I'm not taking advantage of. So these are all questions that our lawyers can assist you with.

Kelsey Lee 08:24:35

And, lastly, I mentioned earlier, we do research. So if you're an organization that carries out advocacy activities, whether that's engaging in policy work, or strategic litigation, or just if you there's information that you think that your constituents really need to know and understand.

Kelsey Lee 08:24:54

This is the type of work that we can really help with. So perhaps it's an internal memo that you just want for your team to understand.

Kelsey Lee 08:25:03

What are the legal implications of this new legislation that might be impacting our members and our constituents and our community? And TrustLaw lawyer will speak through that with you and then connect you with a pro bono lawyer to help you understand what are the research questions that I have?

Kelsey Lee 08:25:20

What's the information that we need to have before we can start our advocacy activities? Or it could be an external question or an external memo or guide for your members that might tell them these are the rights that you have?

Kelsey Lee 08:25:33

And these are the things that you need to consider before engaging in X activity. So these are some of just the questions that our lawyers can help with. Although, of course, these are not limited to these questions.

Kelsey Lee 08:25:44

There are so many more topics and questions that the trustful lawyers can assist with. And I just want to give a couple of examples of some of the great products we've been able to to finish out through TrustLaw.

Kelsey Lee 08:25:56

So the first one is I'm advisory project for the Samir Kassir Foundation, their immediate freedom organization that helps protect journalists and free speech. And after the civil war in Lebanon ended the organization was having a lot of difficulty accessing their funds to support these journalists at risk. So we reached out to TrustLaw for assistance.

Kelsey Lee 08:26:19

They were paired with The International Law Firm Latham and Watkins, and they helped them incorporate AS a nonprofit in France, which ensured their financial stability. So that's one great

example of a super meaningful project that we were able to accomplish for this great organization in an advisory capacity.

Kelsey Lee 08:26:36

Another great example of a research project was the Committee to Protect Journalists. They approached TrustLaw for research assistants to publish a guide for their journalist members. So this is an example of that external type of research publication that we can assist with.

Kelsey Lee 08:26:51

So after the widespread protests in the US in 2020, the Committee to Protect Journalists members reached out to that organization asking what are their rights when they're covering these protests if they're being arrested if they're being searched? What are their rights?

Kelsey Lee 08:27:07

So law firm Allen and overy paired up with TrustLaw and the Committee to Protect Journalists and published a Know Your Rights guide for the journalists about what are your rights under the First and Fourth Amendments when you're reporting on protests?

Kelsey Lee 08:27:21

The guide has since been shared widely among the journalists, members of the committee. And I've we've been told that it's been frequently used before and after protest reporting, and that it really was an invaluable resource.

Kelsey Lee 08:27:32

So we really wanted to do was show you this video that we made to highlight this really incredible project and how meaningful it was for the journalists who benefited from it.

On Screen Video 08:27:46

During 2020, summer of social unrest following the police killing of George Floyd, a record number of journalists were attacked while covering the hands of law enforcement. Do you mind telling me why I'm under arrest, sir? Why, why am I under arrest. According to the US press freedom tracker, more than 400 assault claims were recorded in May and June of that year alone. That's eight times the number of confirmed attacks from all of 2019.

On Screen Video 08:28:16

Used to be the case, journalists were most in danger and covering was increasingly we see them at risk in all sorts of contexts, including most recently, protests.

On Screen Video 08:28:28

This rise in violence led many journalists to seek legal counsel on their rights when confronted by police officers while covering protests.

On Screen Video 08:28:36

Through TrustLaw, the Thomson Reuters Foundation's pro bono service, the Committee to Protect Journalists was connected with international law firm Allen and overy put together a concise legal guide for reporters to use in the field.

On Screen Video 08:28:50

It outlines such basic rights AS the right to gather News and Record law enforcement protect against unreasonable search and seizure, AS well AS offering practical advice for reporting in times of civil unrest, such AS information on the proper legal grounds for arrest and what to do if detained, were immediately excited to get involved in something that was really at the forefront of everybody's minds in that moment.

On Screen Video 08:29:16

And we're really excited that the Committee to Protect Journalists is still using to this day and sending it out in advance of any demonstration.

On Screen Video 08:29:24

The protection of journalists is a fundamental pillar of the Thomson Reuters Foundation's work to advance media freedom. And, of course, don't have a healthy democracy, supporting an open, empowered press who can report freely and without intimidation, on the critical issues of our time.

Kelsey Lee 08:29:46

Thank you.

Kelsey Lee 08:29:46

So this is just a great example of a project that that we did with with with this Committee to Protect Journalists. And really this is an example of the Committee to Protect Journalists approach trusts law with this idea, which was our members are coming to us with this issue.

Kelsey Lee 08:30:01

They had a call with a TrustLaw lawyer so they can talk through what are the legal questions that we have. And then they were paired with a law firm to really dive deeper into those issues and produce this very accessible, helpful guide that can be used every day by their members.

Kelsey Lee 08:30:15

So this is the type of research support that we could really help with. I've talked a lot about the type of work we can do, I do want to quickly just note a few things that we can't do. So we don't engage in any direct advocacy.

Kelsey Lee 08:30:29

We're not representing the communities that you're working with, outside of these types of no your rights guides, but rather, we're helping your organization effectively operate and do so legally so you can continue doing the valuable work that you're doing in those communities.

Kelsey Lee 08:30:45

So we similarly don't do litigations or disputes. So AS an example, we can advise on a contract, but we can't litigate a dispute around a violation of that contract. Or we can help file patent applications, but we can't do that we're prosecuting those patents. So those are the types of things that we can't do. And then lastly, either on the screen but I think another really important one that might be relevant is we don't offer urgent assistance.

Kelsey Lee 08:31:12

There's a minimum one week waiting period before your project is connected to a lawyer. And at this point, we say it takes about a month. Right now in the US to connect a project from when you have that initial call with a TrustLaw lawyer to write it up to when it's actually connected to a lawyer, it takes about a month.

Kelsey Lee 08:31:29

So we really can't make promises to connect projects where the deadline is within a month. But this trust love advice is provided by lawyers in their areas of expertise fully online. So we also don't do in person work.

Kelsey Lee 08:31:43

So those are just some of the things that we can't do. But let's get to you, how do you become a trusted member? And how can we support you. So the next steps to become a member is our membership is free is the first thing to now completely free to organizations, completely free to law firms, we encourage you to apply for membership.

Kelsey Lee 08:32:01

And we have this very short online process, it's really more of a quiz that you can fill out to apply.

Kelsey Lee 08:32:04

So the first thing would be to check our membership eligibility criteria, which we will go through on the next slide.

Kelsey Lee 08:32:09

Two, submit the online application form@apply.trust.org. And then we will process your application. Usually it takes about two weeks, but because Taproot is a referring partner of ours Taproot members get priority review faster than two weeks.

Kelsey Lee 08:32:30

So once the process is completed, will process the application. And if you're accepted, we will send all details such AS how to make an account, how to access our service, anything that you might need guides to getting started, about the Legal Health Check, and also just any other considerations that you might need to think about.

Kelsey Lee 08:32:49

So let's quickly just talk about the eligibility criteria. We focus on non discriminatory, apolitical and non proselytizing organizations. And we have some other criteria. If you are a social enterprise that is has a

for profit component, we require that at least 51% of profits are reinvested back into the social mission. But it's a fairly straightforward criteria.

Kelsey Lee 08:33:15

So once you apply if you meet these criteria, you'll be approved. And if you don't, we will always talk through what is missing or what needs, what needs to change or what more information we might need to process your application. So we will never put you on hold or reject an application without some kind of explanation AS to why.

Kelsey Lee 08:33:35

And if you ever have any questions, we'd be happy to answer them in more detail. So let's talk about how it actually works when you're on our portal. So you'll log into our portal. On your screen, you'll just see this brief overview of how the service works.

Kelsey Lee 08:33:49

So once you're a member, you can log into your portal, which you'll have access to once you're approved AS a member. And just again, all of this information will of course be sent to you once you're actually approved AS a member.

Kelsey Lee 08:34:00

So you can then submit a request for legal assistance through our portal. And you'll schedule a call with a TrustLaw lawyer to talk through the legal issue in more detail. So that TrustLaw lawyer is not one of the pro bono lawyers that will do the actual work there a lawyer who works for TrustLaw, such AS myself, who will really talk through the legal issue with you to figure out what is the information that a law firm might need?

Kelsey Lee 08:34:23

What are the legal questions that your organization has at the moment, so that we can write up this more formal request to post on our portal. So once that request is posted, like lawyers and law firms can make offers of assistance.

Kelsey Lee 08:34:36

So they'll send through maybe some qualifications such AS who will be working on the project, what their background is, and then you will receive those offers of assistance AS they come in, and you decide which firm will be the best fit to work on your project.

Kelsey Lee 08:34:50

So you really leave that in the hands of your organization, for the first week that a project is up.

Kelsey Lee 08:34:57

Law firms all submit requests, and we hold them all at once. And then at the end of that week, we send all of them to you at once.

Kelsey Lee 08:35:03

And that's really to make sure that all the law firms are having an opportunity submit a request on this new project. And then you decide which firm is the best, which lawyer is the best fit for you. And then we'll connect you with that law firm and the work proceeds from there.

Kelsey Lee 08:35:17

And we really take a step back at that point, to let your organization and the law firm work on this process organically. In terms of figuring out next steps, the timeline, we're always there to help or assist. If there's some kind of miscommunication or any other issue that needs assistance, we are always there to support along the way, we really like to take a step back at this point.

Kelsey Lee 08:35:39

And let the organization the law firm work together from there. So the image provided here is just just a screen capture image of the trestle portals homepage, so you can really see what it looks like. So in the top right, you'll see you can access the New Request button to submit a new request. In the middle of the screen, you see your recent request for assistance, right?

Kelsey Lee 08:36:01

So it shows what are the active ones that you have. And it says here that you might have an offer that you need to view. So once you view it, you'll either either approve it or reject it, which means you'll either accept the assistance from the law firm, or you'll tell us no we want to wait and see if another law firm makes an offer of assistance.

Kelsey Lee 08:36:19

And then You can also see information on the status and offers on all of your requests. So if there are any accessibility questions around our portal, you can contact us at TrustLaw at Thomson reuters.com. We are currently updating this portal.

Kelsey Lee 08:36:34

So there will be some changes, and hopefully, some new features that you'll all find a little bit more helpful and exciting. But for now, if there are any questions, please email us. And that's about it. So we're super excited to be doing this presentation and to hopefully have some applications for membership, we really have been able to have this really incredible service, because of great organizations such AS yourself that are passionate about their social mission.

Kelsey Lee 08:36:59

And these law firms who are so excited about your missions that they're willing to do all of this legal work completely for free. So now I'd like to open it up for questions. I'm sure there are some specific questions on matters, we can take her perhaps questions on our membership process, so please feel free to drop them in the chat. And we can start answering those questions now.

Sameena Usmani 08:37:19

So Kelsey, thank you. And we will go through the q&a. First, we are hearing from Terry from Vancouver. And Terry is asking, Can I use this service if I don't have a registered nonprofit, but plan on using a fiscal sponsor?

Kelsey Lee 08:37:38

So that's a really great question. We do look for some kind of registration. But we do have organizations that are fiscally sponsored by larger foundations or organizations. So that's definitely something you should still apply for. And we might just ask for some more documentation.

Sameena Usmani 08:37:56

Okay, Kathleen, is asking do you help with threats to be sued over copyright infringement?

Kelsey Lee 08:38:04

So that's another really great question. And it is complicated, right? Because we don't do litigation or dispute so we wouldn't be able to represent someone in that kind of dispute. However, our law firms that are our members routinely provide advice around that.

Kelsey Lee 08:38:19

So they might be able to assess what is the risk here? What are your responsibilities and obligations and what might be the best strategy moving forward. So they won't be able to advise you specifically and represent you in the dispute, but they can advise you on the legal concerns around the dispute, if that makes sense.

Sameena Usmani 08:38:39

Okay, and you touched a little bit on this next question, but I wanted to see if you want to clarify any more. Is there any legal support or training for nonprofits in terms of avoiding or defending against potential lawsuits? Namely, like slap or otherwise, from corporations?

Kelsey Lee 08:39:00

Yeah, that's a super interesting question. And we've actually been looking into doing some research on slap suits, just because they've become so much more common and so much more dangerous for our nonprofit members. So we don't have anything specific around that yet.

Kelsey Lee 08:39:15

But please watch the space. And we do have a guide for if you're looking to structure in the US AS a nonprofit, or if you're looking AS an international nonprofit to incorporate in the US to specific guides to cover some issues.

Kelsey Lee 08:39:30

That is a legal member isn't able to assist you. Hopefully, you can get some of the answers from those guides. So we don't have one specific about slap suits. Now, that's certainly something that we're aware of and looking into in terms of research.

Sameena Usmani 08:39:43

Okay, great. Um, Caitlin is asking, Can you help obtain trademarks?

Kelsey Lee 08:39:50

Yes. So that's a common request that we get is for nonprofits and social enterprises looking to trademark some kind of idea or invention or a logo or brand. And so that's certainly something that we can assist with.

Kelsey Lee 08:40:03

What the law firms will do is they'll work with you to help you file any trademark applications and all of the appropriate jurisdictions. And then they probably won't see the project through the three to five years. It often takes before you have to prosecute your trademark or your patent application, but they will help you file all of those those kinds of trademark and patent application registrations.

Sameena Usmani 08:40:26

Okay, and can you help with changing bylaws?

Kelsey Lee 08:40:31

Yes, so that falls into our governance bucket? It's a really great question. And it's a really great project that our lawyers are eager to take on, especially ones that are used to working for corporations and are excited to do the same kind of work for nonprofits. So that's a really great question. And definitely something we can work on.

Kelsey Lee 08:40:47

They can help you write the bylaws, they can help you amend existing bylaws, they can help maybe draft other kinds of governance documents, such as articles of incorporation or association. So absolutely, that's something that we can do. And let's see,

Sameena Usmani 08:41:02

we're, uh, we're trying to figure out our appropriate legal structure. Can someone at TrustLaw help with that as well?

Kelsey Lee 08:41:10

Yes. So that's also a really common question that we get. And what we'll do is when you kind of submit that request to our portal, you'll have a call with a TrustLaw lawyer to go through more of the details on that. So we can really help figure out what is the type of structure that you have now, what is the type of structure that you're looking for, so we can really match you with the best lawyer.

Kelsey Lee 08:41:32

It might be that you're trying to incorporate as a nonprofit in a new country, it might be that you're trying to have some kind of for-profit entity that's part of your nonprofit entity, and you don't want to endanger the nonprofit status.

Kelsey Lee 08:41:45

So that's certainly something that legal members can advise on, they can, you know, do the research and tell you what the different options are. And then they can help walk you through the process of maybe changing the structure or just updating it.

Sameena Usmani 08:42:00

Okay, and here's a question. I see a few places we just received our 501 C3. Now what?

Kelsey Lee 08:42:08

That's a good question. So I think maybe one of the next steps would be some of those governance documents in terms of maybe updating the bylaws, establishing a board of directors or trustees. Those are all things that our legal network can help with. We can't really guide you on, on coming up with a legal questions ourselves. But what we do is have that Legal Health Check. So you can kind of go through the questions and say, Is this something my organization needs? Is this something that we have a legal question about? And then we can

Sameena Usmani 08:42:38

We're having more technical difficulties with Kelsey's audio? Please give us one second. Sorry about that.

Kelsey Lee 08:42:47

I can hear you. I'm so sorry. It's not it's not letting you know when I'm getting kicked out. So I really apologize for that.

Sameena Usmani 08:42:54

No problem I'm seeing next question is they're asking about liabilities for nonprofits and insurance options.

Kelsey Lee 08:43:04

Yeah, so there are a lot of law firms, you work with that do insurance on liability law. So for example, if you're an organization that works with kids, you might need special contracts around liability when those kids are in your care, for example. And so that's a really common contract issue that aren't our legal members can help with. Same with other insurance law questions.

Sameena Usmani 08:43:27

And this is another question I think you briefly touched on. But I guess they just need some more clarification. It sounds like your organization can do a lot of work with nonprofits. How is all of this free to the NFP?

Kelsey Lee 08:43:41

Yeah, I mean, I think what's really great about this is that our legal members are really motivated to provide this assistance. And that's really why we can do this for free. They really want to do this work for organizations that they feel passionate about. And so, so it's completely free. I know it's hard to believe, because it's really a great service, but it is completely free.

Sameena Usmani 08:44:04

Okay, and is each nonprofit only allowed to work with you on one area pro bono legal at a time?

Kelsey Lee 08:44:12

No. So we say that nonprofits and social enterprises can have three active projects open at once. And what we mean by that is three projects that haven't been connected for legal assistance. So if you have three projects, and they're all connected, and even though they're still open, if they're not looking for legal help, you can post another three. So you can have multiple projects running at once, in all different areas of the law.

Sameena Usmani 08:44:39

Okay, what about fiscally sponsored nonprofits?

Kelsey Lee 08:44:43

Yes, so we do work with fiscally sponsored nonprofits, whether that's by a foundation or by different grants. And so that is definitely something that we can assist with that we have many questions around that related to financial law questions. It just might be something where we have a few more questions or need additional documentation during your application process.

Sameena Usmani 08:45:06

Um, and Marsha is asking for clarification on one thing, AS I understand your services would be for the nonprofit needed needing legal assistance, however, not their clients? Is that correct? Yes, that's correct.

Kelsey Lee 08:45:21

So the only time we really consider it for the clients is that research work with the New Year rights guide that went out to the membership base and was for them, and we're really working to help the operations of the nonprofit.

Sameena Usmani 08:45:35

Okay, and can you help when a large company stole our name? We are a small profit even if we have a registered trademark.

Kelsey Lee 08:45:46

Yes, so that is a common question that we have AS well. Unfortunately, it is the kind of case where a trademark lawyer in our network might be able to give you advice on what your next steps are. While they wouldn't be able to represent you in maybe prosecuting that trademark or in that dispute. They could advise you on your options and maybe what the next steps for it should be. Okay, so this

Sameena Usmani 08:46:09

is related to your answer about nonprofits can work on three projects at a time would they be speaking to different law firms depending on the topic Aperi

Kelsey Lee 08:46:21

Yes. So the law firms that we have so many of them have practice areas in every kind of department, but you know, their capacity really varies. So you might be doing employment law question with one firm and a trademark question with another firm, you can, if you really enjoy working with one firm, we

can always give them kind of the first pass to see if they're available for future requests. But yes, you would likely be working with different law firms on the different projects.

Sameena Usmani 08:46:49

Okay, um, how long does it usually take to speak with someone to get connected?

Kelsey Lee 08:46:56

So you're connected with a TrustLaw lawyer, immediately, once you submit it through the portal, you'll be sent an invitation to book a call with a trusted lawyer to talk about it. After that, we say it takes about a month for it to get connected to a law firm to work on the issue.

Sameena Usmani 08:47:15

can you advise on see Fair Use of copyright materials?

Kelsey Lee 08:47:20

Yes, we can definitely work on those types of issues. Our IP lawyers are, are really familiar with working in that state.

Sameena Usmani 08:47:26

I'm so sorry, everyone, it looks like we're having quite a few technical difficulties. If you could, please continue putting in your questions in the chat box. It looks like we'll probably have to end for the day. We will send out all the slides since we were having technical difficulties throughout the presentation. And obviously, we'll be sending the recording AS well.

Sameena Usmani 08:47:51

I would like to thank everyone, especially for dealing with all these technical difficulties. Sorry about that. But I would like to give a huge thank you to Kelsey Lee. Unfortunately, she probably can't hear me. So I will definitely talk to her later.

Sameena Usmani 08:48:08

AS I mentioned, we'll be sending an email later today with the resources that she mentioned the trestle resources, along with the recording of this webinar and the slides. Please join us for our next webinar, view your fundraising with volunteer support.

Sameena Usmani 08:48:25

It will be on Wednesday, September 7. And on behalf of Taproot and an Kelsey TrustLaw. I would like to thank you all so much for attending. And we will see you next time. Thank you