

Bird & Bird

A world of *possible*.

Summer Clerkships

In Australia





Our vision

To be the *number one* law firm in the world for organisations being changed by technology and the digital world.

Your firm.
Your future.



What's your vision?

Welcome to Bird & Bird!

With 31 fully integrated offices around the world and over 1,700 lawyers, we are truly international in our outlook. We work for some of the biggest and best-known global brands, on some of the most interesting and challenging legal matters around.

We win many awards and accolades here in Australia and across the world. But we continue to remain grounded, friendly, collegiate, and collaborative – here and across all borders. We call this our "One Firm Culture".

Clients value our positive personal chemistry and the creative perspectives we bring to solving their problems.

We greatly value innovation and creativity: diverse viewpoints, backgrounds and life experience are very welcome here.



Can you see yourself with us?



One firm. Your firm.

A *summer clerkship* with Bird & Bird is much more than just work experience. It's an opportunity to *discover your potential* and *kick-start your career* in law, taking you straight to the heart of a global law firm. With *access to senior people* across the firm, including partners and management, you'll have a chance to *live and breathe the brand*, experiencing our business from the inside.

You will also see first-hand the *impact of client relationships* and how *we work seamlessly between 31 offices across Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, and North America*. Immerse yourself in the friendly and vibrant culture that makes Bird & Bird, and our people, unique.



Curious to learn more?

We answer some questions we're often asked by prospective summer clerks.



"Where does Bird & Bird have offices?"

In Australia, our office is in the heart of Sydney's legal and financial district. But we have many offices in other locations too – a total of 31 global offices at last count.



Your firm. Your future.

“What are your practice areas?”

In Australia, our lawyers work in Commercial, Competition & Regulatory, Corporate, Dispute Resolution, Employment, Finance and Financial Regulation, Intellectual Property.

We have principally organised ourselves into industry sector groups for over 20 years – so a lot of our work is done by cross-practice groups.

“What are Bird & Bird's core sectors?”

We work with clients in a number of exciting sectors, all at the cutting edge of the global new economy.

Automotive

Hotels, Hospitality & Leisure

Aviation & Aerospace

Life Sciences & Healthcare

Defence & Security

Media, Entertainment & Sport

Energy & Utilities

Retail & Consumer

Financial Services

Technology & Communications

“What does this practice/sector specialisation mean for Bird & Bird's lawyers?”

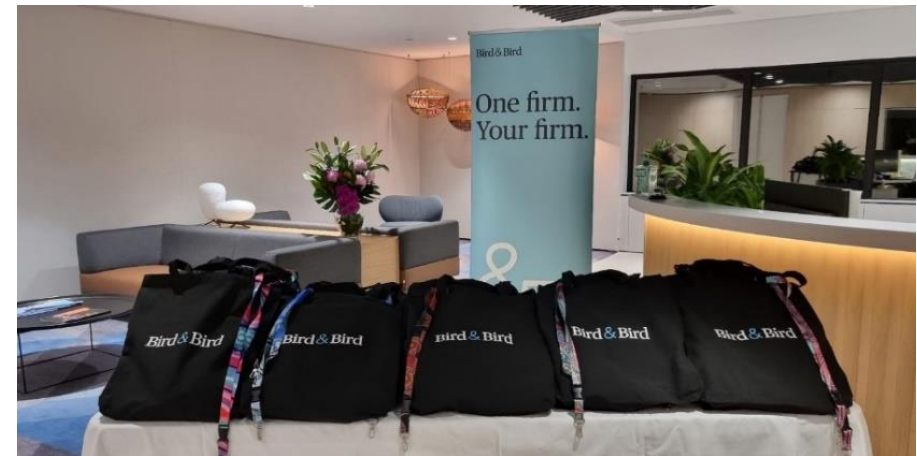
Our lawyers work in a practice group covering a particular legal discipline/specialisation and typically focus on at least one sector group, gaining depth of expertise as a specialist lawyer with strong, practical, industry knowledge. We think it's the best of all worlds.

“How long has Bird & Bird been in Australia?”

We have been in Australia since 2014, but our office here traces its origins back 90 years; Bird & Bird having merged with one of Australia's leading new economy law firms. So, we are very much an established presence here, with a rapidly expanding office in Sydney.

“How big is Bird & Bird in Australia?”

We have around 110 people in our Sydney office. We have carefully planned strategic growth for the years to come.






Helping clients navigate the transformation journey.

Automotive

Providing advice across each stage of the lifecycle of a motor vehicle, from initial design and development through to serial production, sales, distribution and disposal. Though our expertise is intellectual property and other technology-dependent areas, we have a strong understanding of automotive technologies and technological developments in the sector. Our clients include suppliers of production parts and investment goods, motor vehicle manufacturers, distributors, logistics businesses and investors.

Aviation & Aerospace

Our specialist team works seamlessly across all our offices, with a shared passion and enthusiasm for the sector. We work across the entire aviation and aerospace sector, advising airlines, lessors, financiers, aircraft manufacturers, ground handlers, airports, MROs, freight forwarders, insurers, tour operators and travel agents.



Because challenge is always on the horizon.





Helping clients deliver a sustainable future.

Energy & Utilities

Our team is renowned as cutting-edge and leads the way in understanding the technologies and efficiencies that lie at the heart of the markets we work within. Our work includes energy regulation, major projects, corporate finance, emissions trading, environmental issues, and dispute resolution.

Financial Services

Our team advises major international and domestic banks, funds, asset managers, insurers, and brokers. We're particularly well-versed on how to capitalise on the disruptive forces which permeate the sector, from increased regulatory compliance to the use of innovative technological solutions.



Helping clients stay in front of the digital revolution.

Because innovation is everything.



Life Sciences & Healthcare

We're trusted advisors to over 50% of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies. From multi-jurisdictional patent litigation and strategic transaction to regulatory navigation and transformation projects for national healthcare systems, we cover the full spectrum of legal issues and projects at the core of this complex and dynamic sector.

Media, Entertainment & Sport

We're constantly advising clients across the entire content delivery chain and across all media platforms, including agencies, broadcasters, right holders, media companies, and online content providers. Our sport team acts in some of the highest-profile legal matters in the world and is recognised as an undisputed market leader.

Helping clients disrupted by technology.



Understanding today's and tomorrow's consumer.



Retail & Consumer

We advise some of the world's best known retail brands from across the fashion, luxury, and household sectors, as well as food and beverage, hotel, and leisure businesses. We work flexibly and creatively to help clients through all stages of the product and brand lifecycle. Our work includes matters such as product and brand development, regulatory compliance, structuring, finance, and international multi-channel growth.

Technology & Communication

We're trusted advisers to many of the most valuable and innovative technology and communications companies in the world. We've been at the forefront of legal developments in the sector for decades with unrivalled expertise in matters ranging from smaller, innovative projects to some of the largest, most complex, ground-breaking transactions and disputes of recent years.

Helping clients to connect the world.



Your firm. Your future.



“What's your culture like?”

Despite our recent, rapid growth, we retain our friendly, warm, and inclusive culture for which we are renowned in the Sydney legal market and globally.

We celebrate and prioritise diversity and inclusion and encourage everyone to be respectful, authentic, and importantly to be themselves

Our people participate in a range of activities in the office or with groups of colleagues from the office. Whether you're into yoga, netball, or touch football, or you're enthusiastic about ocean swimming or playing in an orchestra, all of those and more are on offer to you here at Bird & Bird.

We're also actively involved in pro bono work and charity fundraising.

We have full office gatherings on a very regular basis, with delicious catering provided, so you can mingle with everyone from the office and hear about the latest happenings.

Keen to set up something new if you come to join us? We welcome new ideas too! Our culture is one of “can do” attitudes, collaboration, and creativity.



Thomas Jones (Partner) is the founder and conductor of Sydney Lawyers Orchestra, pictured above, in concert.



Our Diversity and Inclusion Committee regularly organises celebrations, awareness campaigns and fundraising.



“Who do you work for?”

Our clients in Australia include many global household names – media organisations, pharmaceutical companies, major technology multinationals, international investors, travel businesses, sports bodies, satellite companies, government entities and regulators, to list just a few.

A significant portion of our work is international in nature. In fact, we have advised clients from over 120 countries. We regularly work with our international colleagues across the other 30 offices outside Australia on exciting and complex cross-border matters.

“What other awards and accolades have you won?”

In **Australia**, by way of recent examples, our team has won:

- Winner of the Australasian Lawyer **Employer of Choice 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023**
- Winner of the Mondaq **Thought Leadership Award 2022**
- Winner of the Australasian Lawyer **Innovative Firms 2020**

We were finalists in a range of recent awards:

- Australasian Law Awards: **Law Firm of the Year (1-100 Lawyers) 2020**
- Australasian Law Awards: **Excellence in Technology and Innovation 2020**
- Australasian Law Awards: **Excellence in Employee Health and Wellbeing 2020**

Our lawyers have also been **ranked** in Doyle’s Guide, Who’s Who Legal, Australasian Lawyer, Managing IP, Euromoney, Benchmark Litigation and Best Lawyers.



The Bird & Bird team ‘invariably deliver top-quality service and are always available.’

Chambers Asia-Pacific, 2023



“Do associates travel internationally for work?”

As an associate you can expect global travel to be part of your role within the first few years of working with us.

Many of our associates, including those who have come through our summer clerkship program in earlier years, have previously travelled to different countries within Asia such as Bintang, Indonesia and Bangkok, Thailand, along with their colleagues from the Asia Pacific region.

Opportunities also arise for our more senior associates to participate in secondments to other offices and/or to clients.

Associates may also attend international sector and practice area retreats, which bring together large numbers of our global team to meet face to face, to discuss legal developments, and ways in which we can work even more effectively with our clients.

Your summer clerkship can therefore be just the beginning of an exciting career with a truly integrated, international law firm. Cross-border collaboration is in our DNA!



“What is your office like?”

Our office has an open, modern, and warm feel, with better connectedness: we're now across two floors, rather than several; and have great communications technology options in all our meeting rooms. Our combined kitchen/library is generally abuzz with activity – whether coffees, lunches, morning teas, events, or informal chats. We hope you will apply for a summer clerkship and come to visit us.



What is it really like at Bird & Bird?

Our recent summer clerks tell you in their own words.

Jonathan Wong, Summer Clerk, 2022/23

“My clerkship experience at Bird & Bird has far exceeded my expectations. From the outset, I was entrusted to do a wide range of interesting and meaningful work for industry-leading clients, from drafting advice on cross-border contractual issues to transcribing trial proceedings for a 7-day defamation trial in the Federal Court. Moreover, I regularly participated in team meetings, received feedback from Senior Associates and Partners and always felt welcomed throughout the whole programme. Overall, as someone who is passionate about the interface between law and technology and enjoys working with intelligent people who share the same passion, I am really glad that I chose Bird & Bird for my clerkship.”

Ruby Simpson, Summer Clerk, 2022/23

“The clerkship with Bird & Bird has been an amazing opportunity as I have had exposure to different practice areas and sector groups, and the opportunity to put my legal knowledge to the test. The firm has a great culture and is the perfect place to cultivate your skills as a young lawyer.”





Eleanor Clifton-Bligh, Summer Clerk, 2022/23

“I rotated through the Commercial (Technology Transactions) and Corporate practice groups and had the opportunity to draft advices, conduct research and sit in on client calls/interviews. The breadth of experience I gained from completing a variety of intellectually challenging (and also extremely interesting!) work in these two practice groups has been invaluable.”

Chloe Corne, Summer Clerk, 2022/23

“I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as a clerk at Bird & Bird! Everyone at the firm takes an interest in your professional development, providing you with meaningful work and offering helpful feedback. In this way, the clerkship has really helped me to hone my practical legal skills and has given me a clearer insight into the day-to-day life of a lawyer. With a warm and welcoming workplace culture, Bird & Bird is truly a great place to work!”

Madelaine Morgan, Summer Clerk, 2020/21

“It’s really nice and sometimes rare to work in an environment where people are so supportive of one another”.

Tom Green, Summer Clerk, 2020/21


“I was surprised by who I was working with. A lot of the time during my clerkship I was working directly with the Partner that leads the Practice Group.”

Dylan McGirr, Summer Clerk, 2020/21

“I was given the opportunity to, among other things, attend client meetings/discussions, complete meaningful work that was then provided to the client, work closely with partners, senior associates, and associates, and work on really interesting matters.”





An aerial photograph of a large, circular paved plaza. The plaza is divided into sections by curved white lines. One section is a green lawn area. Many people are walking around the plaza. The text is overlaid on the lower-left portion of the image.

Our Australian clerkship programme is the main pathway into our graduate and associate programme.



The start of your career:

1. Clerk

- When you apply for a summer clerkship here at Bird & Bird, you'll be in your second-last or final year of law school.
- We love technology, but we also deeply value our shared humanity – so we don't screen out summer clerk applications with AI. Instead, your application is thoroughly and personally reviewed by our clerkship committee, which combines partners, HR and senior lawyers.
- If you're offered a summer clerkship, you'll have direct access to a junior lawyer buddy, a supervising partner and our office's managing partner. You'll also undergo rotations across a range of different legal teams.
- As a summer clerk, you're a vital part of our business and a valued member of our office. You'll be involved, not just on the legal side, supporting on a wide array of different Australian and international matters, but also with our warm and friendly culture, with social opportunities from summer clerk sports to special morning tea events.
- We're keen for you to really understand our business, so you'll also receive training on all our practice and sector groups, and our business services departments.
- Do you have a passion for doing good in business? If so, our committees covering pro bono, environment and sustainability, and diversity & inclusion certainly welcome you and your commitment to making our business and our community better.

2. Paralegal / Graduate

- Once you've finished your law degree, and can work full time, you can join us as a Graduate, during either our February or July intakes and benefit from our graduate training programme run by the partners of the firm.
- You'll start your first 6-month rotation as a Graduate, with ongoing access to and support from buddies and partners.
- You'll now be able to dive more deeply into high-profile matters, working with colleagues in Sydney and from across our integrated international network.
- We know Practical Legal Training can be expensive. As a Graduate, you are eligible for financial support for PLT, as well as study leave, to help you to jump start your career.



3. Lawyer

- Once you're admitted, your title changes from Graduate to Lawyer. Celebrate your admission (and your new title) day with a paid day's leave from us!
- Your 6-month rotations continue from your role as a Graduate. We typically expect lawyers to have completed three separate rotations of 6 months, to support your professional development and nurture your technical proficiency. You receive the benefit of experiencing working across different areas of law and sectors, before you settle in a practice group.
- Your role in this stage of your career is to really learn to identify and analyse legal, factual, and commercial issues, always taking into account our client's needs.
- Once your rotations are complete and you've settled into a practice area, you're eligible for consideration for promotion to junior associate.



4. Junior to Mid Associate

- As an associate, you will support your team to find creative and innovative solutions for complex legal issues for our global clients.
- You will receive support from us to develop your professional profile and improve your marketing and networking skills.
- As your skills grow and you develop deeper legal knowledge, you may be considered for promotion to mid-level associate.
- As a mid-level associate, you will typically receive opportunities for client secondments, both physical and virtual.
- Recognising your increasing knowledge and professional growth, we reciprocate with increased benefits, which will likely also include opportunities to network with your global colleagues at overseas international practice group and sector group retreats.



5. Senior Associate

- Once you've been qualified for around 5 years, you'll likely want to work with your supervising partner and HR on your application for senior associate.
- As a senior associate, you will manage matters and client relationships autonomously.
- At this stage, you'll be proactively promoting the firm's profile and your professional brand and building your own client connections and relationships.
- You'll also be very well integrated into your wider global sector and practice groups, working closely with colleagues from across our global network, and actively taking forward initiatives to support the global firm.
- As a senior associate, we're expecting you to be a role model and to mentor and develop your junior colleagues.



6. Special Counsel to Partner

- By this stage, you're already making a name for yourself in the firm and in the legal profession. You can now apply to be recognised as Special Counsel, which is a global appointment.
- In some firms, this title is seen as an alternative to partnership, but that's not certainly how we see it. Many of our Special Counsel progress onwards to partnership.
- Ambitious candidates will be invited to attend our award-winning global development courses at our largest office in London.
- You will be demonstrating collective ownership for the delivery of high-quality client service in an efficient and effective way.
- As a senior member of the team, you will actively participate in industry, business and community events, developing your own client base, supporting our global partnership.
- Our UK-based partner HR team will support appropriate partner candidates as they continue their partnership journey.



Summer clerkship application process



First things first...

Are you a law student in your penultimate year of legal studies? If yes, that's great! You are eligible to apply.

Our summer clerkship process forms part of the Law Society of NSW summer clerkship programme – so we keep to the guidelines set by the Law Society.

Who you are?

Every summer clerk, graduate, or lawyer we select has the potential to be both a leader of our global firm and a recognised leader in their chosen field of law.

If you have demonstrated academic excellence, combined with great “people skills”, enthusiasm, leadership and agility in problem solving, you will flourish with us.

Our lawyers have broad-ranging interests, from music to the martial arts. Most of our people have served in community roles, excelled in artistic endeavours, or pursued a sporting interest. Whatever your interest or passion may be, it demonstrates to us that you have the initiative to create for yourself a successful, exciting, and sustainable career in the law.





Working with us

Although we are a tech-focused firm, we still prefer human interaction when it comes to selecting our people. We read every application that is sent to us, often several times over, just to ensure we are thoroughly assessing the potential of every applicant.

Summer clerks usually undertake rotations in two of our practice groups in the Sydney office, with each rotation lasting 4 weeks. You are likely to get exposure to most of our other practice groups by attending meetings and events during your time with us. All of our summer clerks enjoy a paid break over the Christmas and New Year period.

As a valued member of a specialist team, you will be involved in real legal work which adds value to our clients, and which will create an invaluable learning experience for you.

You will be supported by a buddy and friendly HR team throughout each of your rotations to ensure you get the most out of your time with us.



How to apply



The summer clerkship application process for our Sydney office is co-ordinated by the Law Society of NSW. Please check dates via the Law Society's website: www.lawsociety.com.au

Once the formal process opens, you can apply by sending a **detailed cover letter, curriculum vitae, and academic transcript** to sydsummerclerks@twobirds.com

- If current semester transcripts have not been released by your university by the due date, please submit transcripts as soon as possible to the above email address.

We are committed to maintaining an inclusive work environment - we consider all candidates fairly, regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, age or disability. If you require any further assistance or consideration, please let us know.

Indicative dates for a summer clerkship

The approximate timings are set out below but please check with the Law Society for specific dates.

Early-mid June	Applications for summer clerkships open
Early-mid July	Applications for summer clerkships close
Late July – Early September	Interview period
Mid-Late September	Offers for summer clerkships may be made
Mid-September	Offers for summer clerkships must be accepted or declined by 5pm
Late November – Early February	Summer clerkship period





Need handy hints on making an excellent application to Bird & Bird?

1. Start your application early! Save and re-read your answers before submitting. Try to avoid the 4.59pm email on the last day of applications to remove the stress of an unforeseen IT issue. Early applications show you are keen and organised.
2. Be clear and concise in your cover letter. Link your unique achievements and interests back to the firm information you have gleaned from our website, social media, or other interactions with us.
3. Do your research. If you genuinely want to work at Bird & Bird, this will shine through. Don't be caught out by generalising or, even worse, having the wrong firm's name in your application. Yes, it really happens.
4. Make sure you are aware of our firm's areas of expertise and what differentiates Bird & Bird from our competitors. We value our point of difference. Show us that you are familiar with our strengths and that you mirror our enthusiasm for technology and the digital world.
5. Don't be put off if you do not have legal experience. All experience is valuable, so focus on the skills you have learnt and how these apply to the role of a clerk or future lawyer.



6. Maximise the opportunity to demonstrate your legal knowledge and commercial awareness in your communications with us. We don't expect you to be legal experts, but the ability to call on your prior experience and apply that to a different situation is a skill that you will need to develop as a lawyer, so start early. Let your personality shine through (keeping it professional). Firms want to know what makes you tick, your likes and your passions, as well as learning about your skills.
7. Let your personality shine through (keeping it professional). Firms want to know what makes you tick, your likes and your passions, as well as learning about your skills.
8. Ask a family member or friend to proof-read your application before submitting it. Sometimes, a fresh set of eyes helps to spot any spelling or grammar mistakes. Always keep a copy of your application, so that you are able to refer to it prior to your interviews.
9. Always keep a copy of your application, so that you are able to refer to it prior to your interviews.
10. If you don't get through the process with the firm of your choice, don't be disheartened. Focus on looking for the next opportunity. They really do come up all the time!



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We look forward to receiving your summer clerkship application and wish you all the best for your legal studies!

Contacts

All enquiries to Sydsummerclerks@twobirds.com or telephone 02 9226 9888.



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