SPRUSON & FERGUSON

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About Spruson & Ferguson Lawyers

Spruson & Ferguson Lawyers Pty Ltd
ABN 50 169 430 568

spruson.com

Tailored and trusted IP legal services

Your brand, inventions, copyright, designs, trade secrets and data are all valuable business assets, and often provide an essential competitive edge in the market.

Recognising that every client and legal challenge is different, our services are highly tailored to your industry, individual needs and business goals to ensure the best outcome for your business.

As a specialist intellectual property (IP) law firm, our lawyers are highly experienced in IP disputes and litigation, strategy and commercialisation, technology transactions, and data protection advice. Our experience extends to a broad range of industries including information technology, telecommunications, mining, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and consumer products.

Many of our clients are referred to us by other clients, patent attorney firms or general practice law firms.



Whether you are a local business or an international business with IP rights in Australia, we understand the nuances, challenges and opportunities in the Australian market.

Spruson & Ferguson Lawyers is an award-winning and highly experienced intellectual property (IP) law firm, working with clients nationally from offices in Melbourne and Sydney.

We are associated with Spruson & Ferguson, a leading patent and trade mark practice with 10 offices throughout Australia and the Asia Pacific region.

Across these firms, over 500 IP professionals service clients across the globe. We offer true regional capability, knowledge and experience.

Recent awards

2026 Best Lawyers
Best Law Firms | Australia

2025 Best Lawyers
Best Law Firms | Australia

2024 Chambers & Partners
Global Guide | Australia

Ranked in top tiers over at least the last 5 consecutive years

- Doyle's Guide
- Legal 500
- Chambers & Partners

Litigation and disputes

No one relishes the prospect of an IP dispute. But timely action can be critical. Our goal is to protect your valuable investments and defend your market position with timely and strategic action.

Our approach to dispute resolution is built on holistic and seamless integration of first-class litigation expertise with market-leading technical know-how and understanding of the Australian and international IP systems.

Our award-winning team of skilled lawyers, trade mark and patent attorneys has unparalleled experience in Australian IP litigation. With over one hundred years' combined litigation experience in our team, we understand how to present your case persuasively, combining extensive legal expertise with technical, scientific, and industry knowledge to provide a competitive edge in the courtroom.

Services

- **Infringement of rights** - patents, plant breeders rights, trade marks, copyright, registered designs - including urgent interlocutory injunctions, ex parte injunctions and search orders, preliminary discovery
- Breaches of **misleading or deceptive conduct** laws (the Australian Consumer Law), including in respect of similar trade marks, domain names, products or packaging
- Breaches of **confidence or disclosure of trade secrets** – often where employees or teams leave an organisation to work elsewhere
- **Challenging rights** – challenging validity and opposing the grant of rights to enable clients to obtain freedom to operate
- **Ownership disputes** – obtaining ownership of IP rights where a third party has attempted to wrongly assert ownership

Strategic approach

Delivering legal outcomes that achieve commercial goals requires the ability to contextualise a dispute within your IP portfolio, commercial operations and markets. This is what sets our team apart.

From the outset our multidisciplinary team quickly assesses the legal, technical and commercial issues to devise a strategy to meet your goals. With extensive experience across every stage of the IP lifecycle, we tailor our approach to meet your specific needs, where necessary leveraging your entire IP portfolio to strengthen your legal and commercial position on all fronts.

We also recognise that in some cases, litigation may not be the most effective means to meet the objective. We will work with you identify appropriate commercial levers and if other means of dispute resolution are more appropriate, our litigators are also experienced in resolving disputes through means such as negotiation and mediation.



Spruson & Ferguson Lawyers was the first law firm in Australia to specialise exclusively in IP law. Today we have one of the largest IP legal teams in the country, widely recognised for our expertise in IP and related matters including trade marks, patents, designs, and copyright law. Our team has acted in many ground-breaking Australian IP cases.

Commercial transactions & advice

A shared understanding of our clients' commercial objectives and business needs ensures that our advice is always practical, commercially relevant and executable.

Our team has in-house business management and IP management experience, and is frequently called on to lead commercial negotiations. We provide practical and proactive assistance to ensure you achieve optimum commercial outcomes.

Counting as clients some of Australia's foremost innovative technology companies, universities, research institutions and Government agencies, the Commercial Transactions and Advice team can help you to optimise the management of your IP portfolios, manage risks and extract maximum commercial returns from your R&D investment.

Services

Our clients pursue a variety of commercialisation strategies to achieve the most from their innovations. This is reflected in the range of advisory and transaction services we provide, which include:

- **IP related agreements** - structuring, negotiation and drafting, including IP assignments, licensing agreements for copyright, trade marks, patents and software and franchising agreements
- **intra-group arrangements** with respect to IP and revenue and service charges for transfer pricing purposes across jurisdictions
- **optimisation advice** - developing strategies and processes to optimise creation, management, protection and exploitation of IP
- preparation of **research services and collaboration** (including private / public collaborations), **joint venture and confidentiality agreements**

Services *continued*

- advice on **early stage research transactions** and services, including advice with respect to investment readiness for high-technology companies, the formation of start-up and spin-off companies and facilitating relationships between start-up companies and investors
- advice on the **regulation of technology products**
- performing **IP due diligence**, including for M&A transactions and initial public offers
- **IP portfolio management** including IP ownership, reviews, policy and process development, and IP audit services

Strategic approach

Commercialisation strategies play an integral role in every business. Our approach is to gain a deep understanding of our clients' unique commercial goals and needs in order to provide practical, commercially relevant, and actionable legal advice.

This strategic advice enables our clients to optimise the management of their IP portfolio, manage risks and extract maximum commercial returns from their R&D investment across the industry life cycle.

We are frequently called on to participate in making commercialisation decisions, lead commercial negotiations and provide proactive assistance to help clients achieve their commercial outcomes.

Data protection and privacy law

Data has now become the central and most fundamental intangible asset for many companies. Management, protection and compliance parameters for this new asset class is a C-suite issue.

Risk management in data driven business models requires a multi-jurisdictional approach to data protection issues and an underlying understanding of the associated technology and legal risks.

Our expertise enables us to support clients conducting business in Asia Pacific. For those clients with a wider footprint, we have access to a global expertise network that we can utilise to support our clients' businesses.

Assisting clients to understand and navigate complex privacy and data protection requirements, and develop pragmatic policies and data management capabilities, enables them to be prepared for and address the risks and challenges required, throughout the data life cycle.

Services

- **Compliance** with privacy and spam laws in Australia
- **data governance**, data transfers, data breaches and partner compliance
- privacy and cyber-security **policies**
- collection notices and data breach **response plans**
- cross-border data **sharing agreements**
- due diligence to **assess compliance of targets** with Australian data protection and privacy laws in M&A transactions
- strategies to **identify and protect confidential information** and data assets

Information Technology and AI Law

IT transformation, innovation and disruption are amongst the top challenges that continue to face many of our clients. Providing our unique blend of IT expertise and IT lawyers ensures clients receive strategic value.

Recognising the increasingly pivotal role of artificial intelligence (AI), our expertise extends to AI law ensuring our clients are prepared to embrace the opportunities presented by AI, machine learning, and automation whilst at the same time managing legal risks.

Services

- Advising on **digital transformation** issues
- Advising on **AI projects** and usage issues
- Issues surrounding the **analysis, collection, sharing and use** of their data
- Drafting and negotiation of **terms in technology transactions**
- **Master Services Agreements** and **Managed Services Agreements** central to managing outsourced service delivery
- **Customer and reseller agreements**
- **Software and technology licenses**
- **API agreements** and data sharing

Consumer law

The team has extensive experience in advising on matters arising under the Australian Consumer Law (ACL) and related legislation. We handle matters of consumer protection across a wide range of industries, including acting for major clients in FMCG industries.

Services

Advice on **compliance with obligations under ACL**:

- Consumer guarantees
- Warranty against defects
- Unfair business practices
- Unfair contract terms
- Product safety

Advice on marketing, labelling laws & product development, including in:

- textiles
- fashion and related industries
- cosmetics and skincare

Anti-counterfeiting

When your brand and quality is everything, counterfeits can be extremely damaging.

Working closely with the Australian and New Zealand Customs Services on the seizure of counterfeit goods as well as in the digital / virtual arena, we can assist you to develop and implement robust brand protection and anti-counterfeiting strategies.

We also regularly advise on, and can assist with, devising and implementing strategies to seek to combat parallel importation of genuine products.



Our commercial experience and expertise extends beyond legal analysis and contract drafting. Our Principals and professional staff have in-house business management and IP management experience, and are frequently called on to lead commercial negotiations and to provide practical and proactive assistance to clients to help them achieve optimum commercial outcomes.

Our team

Spruson & Ferguson Lawyers is a team of 20, led by Katrina Crooks, alongside some of Australia's leading IP lawyers.



Katrina Crooks

Principal, Head of Spruson & Ferguson Lawyers

katrina.crooks@spruson.com

- Master of Laws (Hons 1)
- Bachelor of Commerce
- Bachelor of Laws (Hons 1)

Dual qualified as a lawyer and patent attorney, with over 25 years' experience of obtaining successful outcomes for clients, Katrina is counted among Australia's top IP litigation lawyers and is recognised by numerous leading legal ranking publications.

Katrina has a particular interest in the life sciences sector, acting for numerous global leaders in pharmaceuticals, animal health, agri/food tech, nutraceuticals, medical devices and biotechnology, including in substantial and complex Federal Court patent litigation, and advising on related therapeutic goods and medical device regulatory issues.

Litigation & disputes



Mark Vincent

Principal

mark.vincent@spruson.com

also provides Commercial & Advisory services

- Master of Laws
- Bachelor of Laws
- Bachelor of Arts (Jurisprudence)

Mark has more than three decades of experience in technology and intellectual property litigation, and advises clients on strategies to manage, commercialise and protect data assets. Mark's expertise in the area of technology based commercial agreements, cloud computing and data protection is highly sought after by clients.



Khajaque Kortian

Principal

khajaque.kortian@spruson.com

- Bachelor of Laws

Khajaque has over 28 years of experience in IP law, specialising in litigation and licensing and related areas of consumer law. He has a particular interest in issues relating to IP and the internet/digital technology and has a notable success rate in domain name dispute resolution.

Litigation & disputes



Francesca Colubriale
Principal
francesca.colubriale@spruson.com

- Bachelor of Laws
- Bachelor of Science (Biotechnology)

Francesca specialises in trade mark matters, including brand clearance and prosecution, enforcement, IP infringement matters and breaches of the Australian Consumer Law, and portfolio management. She acts for local and foreign clients in the healthcare, pharmaceutical, automotive, grocery, and fashion industries.



Duncan Longstaff
Principal
duncan.longstaff@spruson.com

- Master of Intellectual Property Law
- Bachelor of Laws (Hons 1)
- Bachelor of Science (Double Major Cell & Molecular Biology)

A specialist IP lawyer, Duncan is an expert litigator with 15 years' experience in patent disputes for a range of sectors including mining/energy, pharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical device, information technology, financial services, and consumer goods sectors.



Andrew Rankine
Principal
andrew.rankine@spruson.com

- Master of Laws
- Bachelor of Laws (Hons 1)
- Bachelor of Science, Medicine & Surgery (Hons 1)

Andrew is a specialist in IP disputes, with a focus on the life sciences sector. He has particular expertise handling complex patent disputes for global leaders in the pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and medical device industries. Andrew's contentious IP experience extends to trade secrets, copyright, designs, trade mark, passing off and IP licensing disputes.



Lucy Hartland
Special Counsel
lucy.hartland@spruson.com

- Master of Industrial Property
- Bachelor of Laws (Hons)
- Bachelor of Medicine /Bachelor of Surgery (Hons)

Lucy is a specialist IP litigator with experience across patent infringement and revocation proceedings (including pharmaceutical), appeals from decisions of the Commissioner of Patents, and patent oppositions. She also has experience in litigation involving trade mark infringement and related causes of action, non-use proceedings, copyright infringement, and breach of contract as it touches on IP.



Jacqueline Chelebian
Special Counsel
jacqueline.chelebian@spruson.com

- Masters of Intellectual Property Law
- Bachelor of Laws (Hons)
- Bachelor of Biomedical Science

Jacqueline is a commercial litigator, registered Australian trade marks attorney and registered Australian and New Zealand patent attorney. She has acted in complex and significant IP matters including large-scale Court proceedings concerning patents, trade marks, designs, copyright, breach of confidence, misleading or deceptive conduct, passing off, and domain names.



Stuart Hughes
Special Counsel
stuart.hughes@spruson.com

- Masters of Laws
- Bachelor of Laws (Hons)
- Bachelor of Business

Stuart has extensive experience in relation to all areas of intellectual property law, with a particular focus on copyright and trade mark disputes, and misleading or deceptive conduct or passing off matters. He has worked with a wide range of small and large Australian and foreign companies, including those in the food and beverage industry, the medical and animal health industry, the mining industry and the media industry.

Commercial & Advisory | IT and Data



Sylvie Tso
Principal
sylvie.tso@spruson.com

- Master of Industrial Property
- Bachelor of Laws (Hons)
- Bachelor of Science (Biochemistry)

Sylvie is a lawyer and a registered Australian Patent and Trade Mark Attorney with over 20 years' in the IP field. She specialises in issues relating to IP commercialisation, ownership, licensing, non-disclosure, material transfer, collaborative R&D and participation in CRCs; and conducts due diligence on IP transactions.



Michael Deacon
Principal
michael.deacon@spruson.com

- Bachelor of Laws | Bachelor of Arts (Hons)
- Graduate Certificate in Trade Mark Law and Practice
- Notary Public

A lawyer and registered trade mark attorney, Michael is a versatile practitioner and has worked with a diverse client base in securing trade mark registrations, opposing registration of conflicting marks, as well as brand protection, enforcement, strategy and local and international brand portfolio management.



Note: Spruson & Ferguson Lawyers only services Australia

Spruson & Ferguson

- Top tier intellectual property firm
- Highly qualified and experienced professionals with over 25 PhDs
- Direct filing capabilities in over 10 countries
- Integrated and centralised service delivery across the Asia-Pacific

480+
Employees

190+
IP professionals

25+
Countries

10
Offices

No.1
By patent filings in Australia, Singapore and Indonesia

14K+
Patent applications

5K+
Trade mark applications annually

130+
Years

3K+
Clients

Recent awards

2025

IAM & WTR Global IP Awards
Patent Attorney Firm of the Year | Australia

2024

Managing IP Asia Pacific Awards
IP Boutique of the Year | Asia Pacific

Asia IP Awards
Patents | Australia

IAM Patent 1000
Patent Prosecution | GOLD

Managing IP
Trade Mark Prosecution | Tier 1

World Trademark Review 1000
Trade Mark Prosecution & Strategy | GOLD

Our offices

Bangkok
P +66 2 256 9164
E mail.asia@spruson.com

Beijing
P +86 10 8225 5655
E mail.asia@spruson.com

Brisbane
P +61 7 3011 2200
E mail.au@spruson.com

Hong Kong
P +852 2161 9999
E mail.asia@spruson.com

Jakarta
P +62 21 252 3853
E mail.asia@spruson.com

Kuala Lumpur
P +60 3 2283 1668
E mail.asia@spruson.com

Manila
P +63 282 467 750
E mail.asia@spruson.com

Melbourne
P +61 3 8637 7131
E mail.au@spruson.com

Singapore
P +65 6333 7200
E mail.asia@spruson.com

Sydney
P +61 2 9393 0100
E mail.au@spruson.com

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