



Kirkland & Ellis with Rachael Fowler of SSQ

## US FIRM OF THE YEAR

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### KIRKLAND & ELLIS STEPHEN LUCAS

#### GLOBAL JUGGERNAUT MOVES INTO POLE POSITION

Pace-setting performance underpinned by booming private equity and leveraged finance markets has underlined Kirkland's 20-year ascent that has seen the thrusting US law firm expand dramatically beyond its Illinois roots to become a potent force in New York and London. Now the largest firm in the world by revenue, London has been one of Kirkland's fastest-expanding offices, growing 61% since 2013 to 237 lawyers in 2017 and currently generates over \$300m.

Kirkland has certainly made its presence felt on both sides of the Atlantic in the past year, perhaps most strikingly when in December it hired Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer private equity veteran David Higgins. The achievement of overtaking Latham & Watkins in 2017 caps a remarkable rise to prominence for a firm that has long divided peers into critics of a supposed ruthless culture and the admirers of its driven panache. But critic or fan, Kirkland is increasingly impossible to ignore.

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED COOLEY

##### JUSTIN STOCK

Since its launch in 2015, Cooley has achieved sustained income growth in the City. London now has 27 partners and more than 85 lawyers in total, a growth of more than 50% since its launch. While the Palo Alto-bred law firm joined the \$1bn club after growing its top line 10% to \$1.07bn for its 2017 year, its London arm grew by an eye-catching 22% to \$57.5m. And while US-generated clients accounted for 25% of London revenue last year, the UK outpost has generated some significant client relationships, including Tata Steel.

#### COMMENDED BOIES SCHILLER FLEXNER

##### NATASHA HARRISON

Harrison joined litigation firm Boies Schiller in 2013 with the simple brief to

build a disputes practice from nothing and lead the firm's London office. She has managed this with aplomb – client wins, financials and lateral hires have all been impressive. In 2017, the hire of Herbert Smith Freehills head of public international law Dominic Roughton stood out in particular.

#### LATHAM & WATKINS JAY SADANANDAN

Standing alongside Kirkland as world's most potent law firm, Latham's London office has managed to outstrip its performance globally in 2017 with double-digit growth. This has been largely achieved by mounting the most credible and sustained threat to the Magic Circle in the City, and the hire of M&A respected partner Edward Barnett from Allen & Overy last year proved this.

#### QUINN EMANUEL URQUHART & SULLIVAN RICHARD EAST, SUE PREVEZER QC

Disputes powerhouse Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan saw London revenues rise by a startling 61% in 2017, with net profit increasing by the same margin. Turnover stands at £71.9m, up from last year's figure of £44.8m. Net profit also rose from £32.6m to £52.6m. As a result, the firm's margin is now a staggering 73%.

#### WHITE & CASE OLIVER BRETTE

Still the largest UK office in the US pack, a traditionally expansive White & Case saw headcount flat in London last year. But it was another successful year for the practice financially as it grew its top line 13% to \$328m – meaning City revenue has effectively doubled in six years – outpacing the firm's 10% global growth.



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SSQ was delighted to be involved with this year's Legal Business Awards to celebrate the industry's finest achievements. We would like to congratulate all of the shortlisted and winning law firms and businesses of this prestigious event.

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