



SOPHIA
KOTUNG

出入平安

百無禁忌

生意興隆

身體健康



Community justice workers act as force multipliers, extending legal first aid to marginalized, isolated and excluded communities...



The Promise of Legal Empowerment on Advancing Access to Justice', United Nations Special Rapporteur (2023)

This impact report has been generously sponsored by

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Equal Justice 平義社 is a registered charity providing community legal access. We are not a law firm and we do not offer or provide legal advice

Equal Justice 平義社 is a referring agency under The Duty Lawyer Free Legal Advice Scheme

The Hong Kong Bar Association has authorised Equal Justice 平義社 to instruct barristers directly for the purpose of providing free legal advice

Equal Justice 平義社 is a member of the World Justice Project Network and Namati, the Grassroots Justice Network

Cover artwork created as a pro-bono commission by the very talented local Hong Kong artist and creator of *The Hong Konger* collection, **Sophia Hotung 何慧恩**, based on photographs taken by Chloé Fenech. Loving the artwork? Visit sophiahotung.com/equaljustice

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Overview

Launched in 2020, Equal Justice 平義社 provides free legal education, information & support to disadvantaged people in Hong Kong who cannot afford, or otherwise access the law and lawyers

#AllRise



There is an important connection between unresolved legal problems and broader issues of health, social welfare and economic well-being.



Source: OECD (2019), 'Equal Access to Justice for Inclusive Growth: Putting People at the Centre'

Welcome from Our Founder & Our Board Chair

Dear Friends

2023 was all about 'People First; Managing Growth' and, looking back, we certainly embraced both! Our third full year, saw us serving more people, launching our second digital legal portal and significantly expanding our education programme. The numbers in this report speak for themselves.

Demand for legal support shot up 80% in 2022, and a further 40% in 2023. We've helped over 1,500 people get legal support. In 2023 alone, 481 disadvantaged people and NGO caseworkers (+36% YOY) with 351 cases and enquiries (+40% YOY) benefitted from our free community legal services. We also worked with more diverse clients, increasing the numbers of men and local clients helped. We now partner with 22 organisations, up from just 1 at launch in mid-2020. Government departments such as Legal Aid, Social Welfare and Immigration, as well as Consulates, now consult with and refer cases to us.

Alongside two other NGOs, we launched our second legal portal, CLIX, matching impact organisations, and their client beneficiaries, with unmet legal needs, to lawyers willing to help for free. CLIX was one of three finalists for ALITA's 2023 Outstanding Legal Technology for Good Award.

2023 saw our community legal education programme take flight, providing free, legal education on employment, discrimination, immigration, family and crime to around 300 frontline NGO caseworkers from 18 NGOs, enabling them to better and earlier understand the legal problems their clients face and how best to help them escalate and find solutions. Free legal education sessions delivered went up 68% YOY, with attendees up 50% and participating NGOs up 125%.

A significant win in 2023 was becoming an approved referring agency under The Duty Lawyer Free Legal Advice Scheme. This builds upon the Hong Kong Bar Association granting us an exemption to instruct barristers directly for legal advice and was most welcome validation of the importance, impact and effectiveness of our community legal work. Society perhaps too often views justice as the poor social development cousin of health, education and welfare. And yet the law operates as the 'golden thread' that binds and enables sustainable human development, the alleviation of poverty and even economic growth.

Indeed, unless everyone facing a legal problem can access affordable, quality legal help, the poorest and most vulnerable people will continue to be left behind, placing yet more pressure on governments and communities to pick up the pieces.

Our achievements, as always, are down to the hard work and dedication of our extraordinary team and the vital guidance of our committed board. Through a strong preference for teamwork over ego – and alongside the vision and passion that drives everyone here at Equal Justice 平義社, we are achieving more than many organisations of similar size and funding.

Both trite and true, none of these achievements would be possible without the wonderful and supportive efforts of our donors, partner law firms, NGOs, interns and volunteers. Creating change is never easy, and we thank, most heartily, everyone who is helping to bring to life our vision of equal 'access to justice for all' for people who cannot afford or otherwise access legal support. Fundamentally, want to make sure that no one is left behind.

Very best,  **Kay McArdle 麥雅社** Founder, and  **Jenny McAlpine**, Board Chair

Our Story So Far... 平義社的簡史

2023

Launched **CLIX – Hong Kong's Pro Bono matching platform**

Beneficiary charity of the 2023 **Hong Kong Legal Walk**

Appointed as referring agency under **Hong Kong's Duty Lawyer Service Free Legal Advice Scheme (FLAS)**

Spoke at **Hong Kong's first ever Pro Bono Week**



2022

Milestone - over 1,000 people helped

Won our first award – the **ALITA 2022 Law Tech for Good Award** for our PAT: Pregnant@Work portal

Spoke at the Comparative Equality Law in a Post-Pandemic World: **BCCE Hong Kong 2022 Annual Conference**



創始人及董事會主席的歡迎辭

親愛的朋友們：

我們 2023 年的座右銘是「以人為本；管理增長」。回首過去，我們可以自信地說，我們確實實踐了這兩者！

在我們成立的第三個完整年度，我們不斷壯大，經驗日益豐富的團隊繼續為更多人提供更優質的服務，推出了第二個法律平台 CLIX，並大幅擴展了我們的教育計劃。

在 2022 年，法律支持的需求激增了 80%，在 2023 年又增長了 40%。自我們啟動法律援助計劃以來，我們已經幫助了超過 1,500 名需要法律支持的人。在 2023 年，481 名弱勢群體和非政府組織的案件工作者（同比增長 36%）通過 351 個案件和諮詢（同比增長 40%）受益於我們的免費社區法律服務。

我們不僅擴大了規模，還幫助了更多不同的受益人，提升了受助男性和香港本地市民的人數。相比我們於 2020 年成立時只與一家組織合作，我們現時已增加至與 22 家組織合作。另外，法律援助署、社會福利署、人民入境事務處等政府部門以及領事館現在也會向我們諮詢及轉介案件。

我們也同時開始與兩家非政府組織合作，推出了第二個法律平台——CLIX，旨在有法律需求的公益組織及弱勢群體與願意提供免費幫助的律師進行配對。CLIX 成為 ALITA 2023 年度「傑出公益法律科技獎」的三名決賽入圍者之一。公益組織、其受益人及公益律師體驗到更高效、公平和透明的法律無償工作配對所帶來的好處，組織內部治理能力亦得到改善，更多弱勢和貧困人群獲得了他們無法獲得或負擔不起的免費法律幫助。

在 2023 年，我們的社區法律教育計劃也取得了迅速發展，為來自 18 家非政府組織的約 300 名前線個案工作者提供了關於就業、歧視、移民、家庭和犯罪等領域的免費法律教育，使他們能更早、更深入地理解弱勢社群面臨的法律問題，並幫助他們尋找解決方案。我們看到免費法律教育課程的數量持續增加（同比增長 68%），參與者人數增加了 50%，參與的非政府組織數量同比增長了 125%。

2023 年的一項重大成就是成為免費法律諮詢計劃的認可轉介機構。繼香港大律師公會在 2021 年授予我們可豁免透過事務律師而直接指示大律師，這項委任進一步肯定了我們社區法律工作的重要性、影響力和成效，以及合作夥伴關係在填補香港社區法律服務缺口方面的力量。

就社會福利服務而言，社會一般認為健康、教育和福利較為重要，而忽略了法律支援的重要性。然而，法律是最重要的社會福利和服務，因為它是一條串連著可持續發展、減輕貧困及經濟成長的「金線」。

簡而言之，除非每個面臨法律問題的人都能獲得經濟負擔得起的優質法律援助及支持，否則最貧窮和最弱勢群體的無助只會為政府和社區帶來更大壓力，成事不足，敗事有餘。

我們所有的成就，始終歸功於團隊的辛勤工作和奉獻，以及董事會的寶貴支持和指導。通過對團隊合作的強烈偏好，而非個人主義——以及推動我們在平義社實現更大目標的願景，我們的成就超越了許多規模和資金相似的組織。

這聽起來可能有些陳詞濫調，但我們的所有成就都離不開來自捐贈者、合作律師事務所、非政府組織、實習生和志願者的卓越和支持性努力。

改變從來都不是一件容易的事，我們衷心感謝每一位支持並繼續幫助我們實踐「弱勢群體可得到需要的免費法律支援」的願景，確保不遺留任何一人。

敬祝安康  創辦人：麥雅社 **Kay McArdle** 及  董事會主席：**Jenny McAlpine**

Our 2023 Impact

我們 2023 年的影響

So far, we've helped

1500+

people get legal support

Demand for legal support shot up 80% in 2022 and a further 40% in 2023. Our client base continued to diversify, with increasing numbers of men and more nationalities. The number of NGOs attending our community legal education sessions has more than doubled.

“ The organisation was a huge pillar of support. I really loved how safe Equal Justice made me feel at a time of extreme vulnerability and stress for me. ”

A client

Our 2023 Partners

我們 2023 年的合作夥伴

481 disadvantaged people helped	18 organisations received free legal education
300+ attendances at our NGO community education sessions	351 cases and enquiries handled
11 areas of law supported	

48 law firms and barristers' chambers provided legal advice and representation	
32 NGOs and 3 government departments referred cases to us	9 universities collaborated with us
#NeverOurWorkAlone	

COLLABORATION AND RECOGNITION

Powered by Justice Connect and in partnership with PILnet, we **launched CLIX - Hong Kong's Pro Bono matching platform** in May 2023 with the purpose of connecting NGOs that need legal support to lawyers willing to give it for free. CLIX was a **finalist** in the 2023 ALITA Legal Tech for Good Awards.



One of the three beneficiary charities for the **2023 Hong Kong Legal Walk**



Pro Bono Week 2023



We spoke at the **first ever Pro Bono Week** – a special convening of Hong Kong's legal community – to raise awareness, and promote the voluntary contributions by, the legal community for the public good in giving legal advice and assistance to those in need.



We partnered with an award-winning artist **Sophia Hotung**, who created the **'Everyday Justice' Collection of art** to raise funds for us.



Equal Justice 平義社 became a referral agency under **Hong Kong's Duty Lawyer Service Free Legal Advice Scheme (FLAS)**. This significantly improves our ability to ensure that more disadvantaged people can access free legal support.

The Access to Justice Gap

填補公義的狹縫

Access to justice remains an elusive goal for many, especially for people facing economic hardship, language barriers, and health-related challenges. These barriers contribute to a broader “justice gap” between the need for legal assistance and the ability to access it. This gap disproportionately affects vulnerable people who, despite having a greater need for legal services, find the legal system daunting and difficult to navigate.

Access to justice is an integral part of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In Hong Kong, the Department of Justice launched its Vision 2030 for Rule of Law initiative, showing support for the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and in particular Goal 16, which has a target to: “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all.”

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has identified a clear link between legal issues and significant social and economic issues. Unresolved legal issues can exacerbate health problems, lead to loss of employment, and necessitate additional social and healthcare services, with the OECD estimating that unmet legal needs can cost countries between 0.5 to 3% of their GDP. For Hong Kong, this translates into a potential loss of US\$1.9 to \$11.5 billion, underscoring the economic imperative of addressing the justice gap.

The Hong Kong government supports people in need by providing healthcare, education, and social welfare, much like a stool with only three legs. While it stands, it's not as stable as it could be. The missing fourth leg represents access to justice. By strengthening this aspect, we ensure greater social welfare for all. A chair with four legs - healthcare, education, social welfare, and access to justice - offers a stable, comprehensive support system that benefits the whole society.

Equal Justice 平義社, an award-winning community impact charity based in Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon, plays a vital role in bridging the access to justice gap. We offer “legal first aid” and connect vulnerable people to more tailored legal advice. In collaboration with the legal eco-system and in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, we provide free legal education, information, and support to people who are disadvantaged, excluded and who cannot afford or otherwise access or understand it.

By expanding access to legal services to the needs of the most vulnerable people, significant progress can be made toward the realisation of global development goals and the promotion of a more peaceful and inclusive society.



Our work furthers the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals



Globally more than **5.1 BILLION PEOPLE** lack meaningful access to justice¹

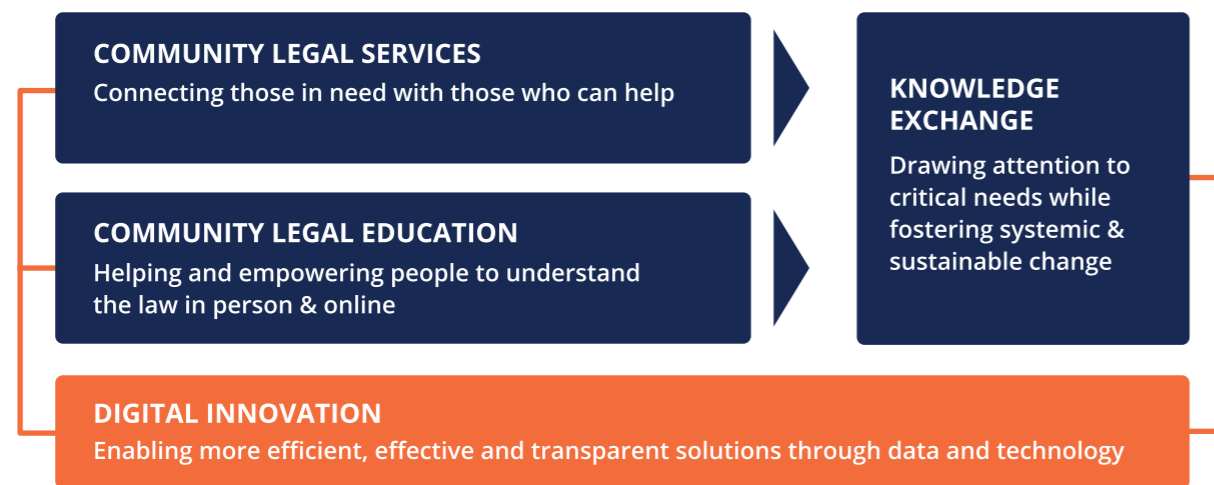
In Hong Kong, more than **1 IN 5 PEOPLE** (over 1.36m people) **LIVES IN POVERTY**³

GLOBAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE WEAKENED in 2 out of 3 countries in 2022-2023²

¹ Source: OECD/Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies (2023), “Improving the monitoring of SDG 16.3.3: Towards better access to justice”
² Source: The World Justice Project (2023), ‘World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2023’
³ Source: Oxfam Hong Kong (2023), ‘Hong Kong Poverty Report 2023: A Polarised Recovery in the Post-Pandemic Era’

About Equal Justice

- OUR VISION** We want equal access to justice for everyone. Society benefits when every person facing a legal problem gets the support they need.
- OUR MISSION** We help everyday people anticipate, prevent and solve their legal problems. We aspire to drive positive social change through digitally-innovative, interconnected cycles of education, service, and knowledge exchange.
- WHO WE HELP** There is no “typical” Equal Justice 平義社 client. We help disadvantaged and legally vulnerable people from many backgrounds and ethnicities to bridge their access to justice gaps to ensure they get legal support. Most of our clients come to us directly, often finding us through word of mouth or personal recommendations.
- HOW WE HELP** To bring our vision and ambitions closer to reality, we have developed four, interrelated, and complementary programmes that bring focus and strategic direction to our day-to-day work:



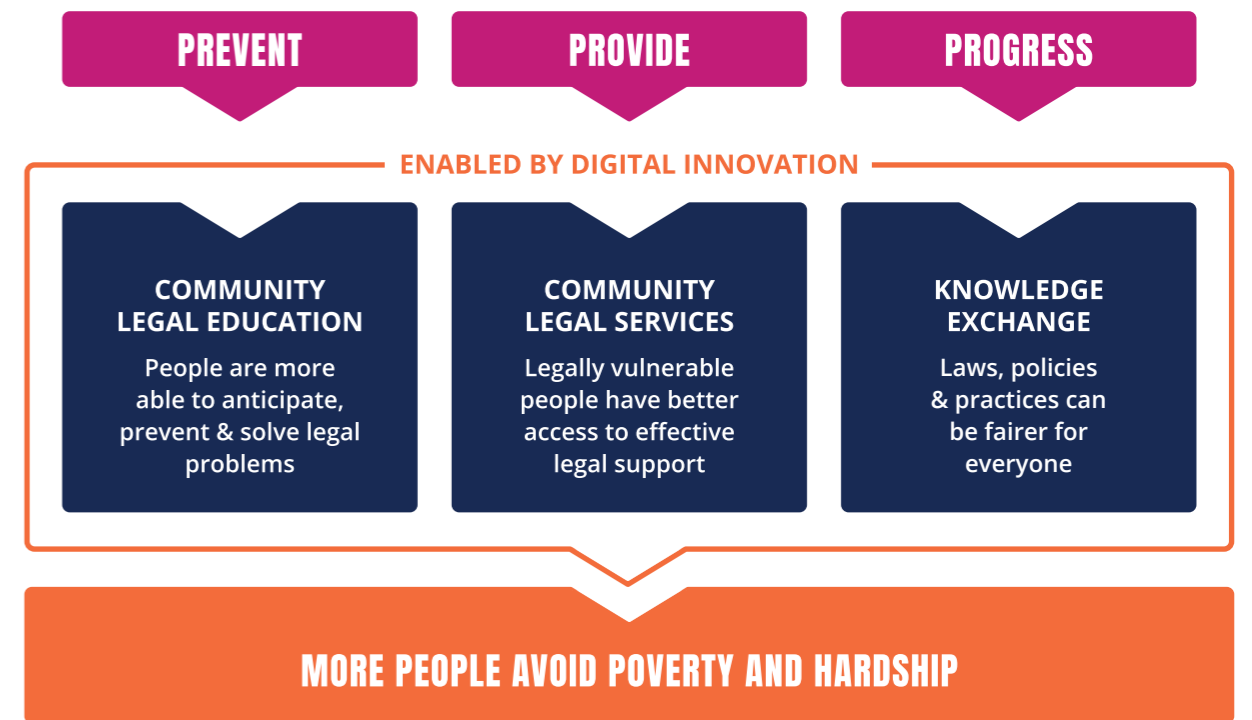
We have developed a successful, people-centred referral approach, first used and honed with our longstanding NGO partner, PathFinders. We’ve extended that now to more than 50 impact organisations. Through this collaborative model, we build relationships with referring partners, giving them the confidence to direct clients with potential legal problems to us.

We provide legal education to our own clients, making the law more accessible. We also deliver training to our NGO partners and their front-line workers, building capability so they can better anticipate, prevent and solve legal issues for the communities they serve.

With systemic and sustainable solutions in mind, we proactively share the knowledge we gain by collating data and insights for use in academic research and teaching. We also pass on what we have learned at conferences and in response to invitations from the Government and Administration to comment on public policy and other initiatives. By doing so, our work benefits the whole of society.

關於平義社

- OUR COMMUNITY** We work with around 200 lawyers from 48 law firms and barristers’ chambers who provide pro bono legal advice and representation to our clients. Our education, knowledge exchange and digital innovation teams work both with, and in support of, HKSAR Government Departments, consulates, academic institutions like schools and universities, international agencies, and other local and international stakeholders. Partnerships are key to getting the job done.
- THEORY OF CHANGE** Our research-backed theory of change framework ensures we align our vision, mission and day-to-day focus to the impact and outcomes we believe can most efficiently and effectively unlock access legal support for the community.



Our Strategy in Action

我們的策略

“ The team is extremely competent and professional, but at the same time very caring and takes initiative to help passionately. ”

A client

Community Legal Services

THE NEED

When people are confronted with legal issues, they may face significant challenges in accessing the justice system due to lack of knowledge, who to approach, and struggle to afford or obtain legal advice and/or representation.

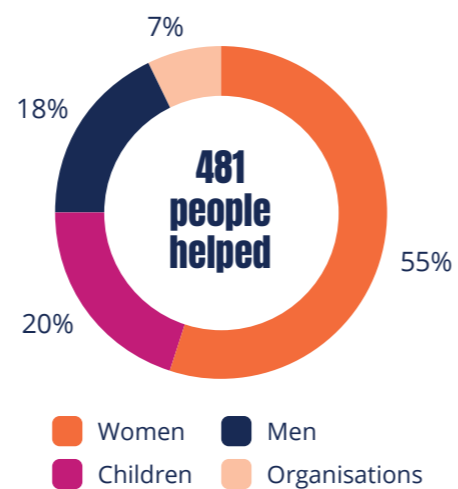
HOW WE HELP

Our community legal services provide disadvantaged people and NGOs essential legal information, support and help them access legal advice and/or representation. Often, our clients' needs are complex, involving more than one area of law, and so we work collaboratively across the community to ensure both legal and non-legal needs are as holistically met as possible:

- ▶ Our case workers identify whether the problem(s) has potential legal solutions; and assess how best to navigate the justice ecosystem
- ▶ We empower clients with legal information and/or assist them filing legal claims before lay tribunals or represent themselves in legal proceedings
- ▶ Where appropriate, we refer cases to and co-work with pro-bono lawyers through CLIX - Hong Kong's Pro Bono matching platform, or help clients apply for public legal assistance from the Legal Aid Department
- ▶ For people with non-legal needs, we refer them to partner NGOs, for example for shelter and social welfare support

WHO WE HELP

We handle one-off enquires and cases for direct clients and those referred to us by our NGO partners and Government Departments. Typical legal problems include immigration and legal identity, family matters, employment and discrimination, criminal matters and sometimes, personal injury, healthcare, probate and online scams. We act as an intermediary during their legal journey by providing ongoing support and guidance.



GET IN TOUCH hello@equaljustice.org

Meet Jenny*: Winning compensation after a fire in a rented flat

Jenny was devastated when she came home to discover that the sub-divided flat she rented for her and her two children had been badly damaged in a fire. Faced with having to find alternative accommodation and worried about her legal rights as a tenant, she approached Equal Justice 平義社 for assistance.

Equal Justice 平義社 helped Jenny to understand how rights in contract law, and in particular under a tenancy agreement, are governed and potential remedies. Additionally, as Equal Justice 平義社 is one of its official referral organisations, we referred Jenny to the Duty Lawyer Free Legal Advice Scheme. She was assigned a lawyer who was able to give her vital information on her rights as a tenant and how she could resolve her case.

Informed and empowered, Jenny was able to obtain the official report from the Fire Department which identified the cause of the fire as a faulty electrical fan. With the knowledge she had gained she could argue her case.



*Jenny is a pseudonym

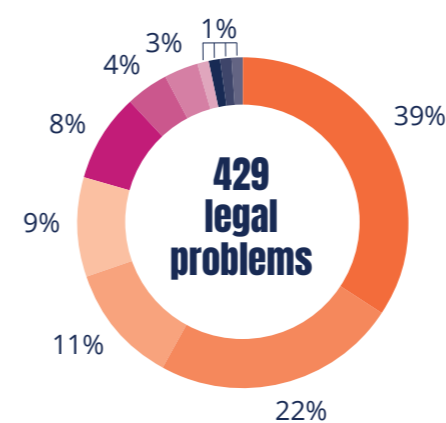
OUR IMPACT

We saw a **significant increase** in the demand for our community legal services this year, with more people than ever **contacting us directly** for help. We received **case referrals from 32 NGOs and 3 Government Departments**. Key impact highlights in 2023 are:



TYPES OF LEGAL PROBLEMS

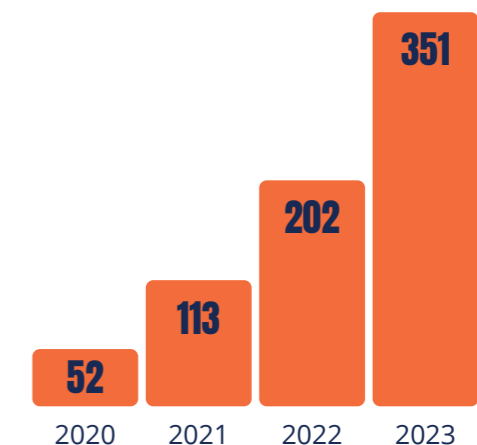
Our community legal services team supported **11 areas of law** with a growing number of civil matters such as landlord and tenant, and loans.



- Immigration & Identity
- Family
- Criminal
- Employment & Discrimination
- Other Civil Matters
- Others
- Healthcare
- Probate
- Unified Screening Mechanism
- Benefit
- Child Protection

CASES AND ENQUIRIES

Demand for legal support shot up in 2023. We saw an extraordinary **74% increase in the number of cases and enquiries**. This highlights the ever-growing need for free legal education, information and support.



Our Strategy in Action

我們的策略

Community Legal Education

THE NEED

Faced with the problems we all have to deal with from time to time - housing, family, employment - many people do not realise that their problem may have a legal solution. Once they do, it may be too late to protect them fully.

HOW WE HELP

We believe that by providing clear, easy to understand legal information, we empower everyday people and the NGOs that serve them, to spot legal problems, make informed and effective decisions and access legal support more quickly. Through increasing their understanding of the law and how it relates to them, we help people to avoid, respond to and find solutions for legal problems. Equal Justice 平義社 has developed 3 ground-breaking community legal education workshops:

- ▶ **PAT – Pregnant@Work 在職孕婦:** Using our award-winning PAT interactive portal to inform employees and employers about maternity rights and duties
- ▶ **Law for All 認識法律:** Sharing real case studies, in different areas of the law, where the problems faced by individuals have a legal solution
- ▶ **Ask A Lawyer 問律師:** In-depth, lawyer-led training on specific legal topics and questions raised by community partners

Drawing on our extensive casework data and experience, and applying legal design principles, these workshops are tailor-made, interactive and community-centred. Our wide network in the legal community allows us to recruit experienced lawyers to help create and deliver training that provides the best possible outcomes and learning experiences, and fosters cross-sector connectivity.

WHO WE HELP

Delivered in-person and online, our community legal education workshops empower our NGO partners and other community leaders to identify potential and live legal issues for their service-users and community members, and to seek solutions quickly.

From the feedback we have received it is clear there is a strong demand for this type of information and training. We continue to explore ways to scale our educational reach and provision using AI and digital technology to meet this demand.

GET IN TOUCH ▶ education@equaljustice.org

“ It was a very informative workshop. It helps to learn the basics of different laws in Hong Kong and how to deal with the client’s situations. ”

NGO partner



OUR IMPACT

2023 was a massive year for our Community Legal Education programme with significant increases in the numbers of education sessions delivered (up 68%), attendees (up 50%) and NGOs participating (up 125%).

Here are some of the headlines:

<p>27 community legal education sessions delivered to 18 NGO partners</p>	<p>300+ attendances at our education sessions, receiving legal training on topics including Employment, Discrimination, Immigration, Family and Crime</p>	<p>98% of NGO partner participants said the sessions had helped them identify potential legal problems their service-users might face</p>	<p>100% of NGO partner participants said the sessions had helped increase their legal knowledge</p>
<p>81 new cases were then referred to us, reinforcing our conviction that legal education helps our partners to better anticipate, identify and solve legal issues for their service-users</p>	<p>2 law firms delivered tailored training on topics identified by NGO partners</p>		

“ The workshop was really insightful and definitely improved my knowledge of the legal matters regarding discrimination. ”
NGO partner

“ Many thanks for the clear and very useful training. I will share what I learnt with my friends who also often face discrimination at work. ”
NGO Ambassador

MEET SUSAN*: Community legal education offers a mother and her son a brighter future

Susan, a victim of domestic violence, separated from her husband many years ago and is struggling to provide for her child and to find new accommodation. When her NGO caseworker attended a community legal education session on family law run by Equal Justice 平義社, the caseworker was surprised to learn from the lawyer presenting that, although Susan separated a long time ago, she was still entitled to claim maintenance for her son and herself.

The caseworker referred Susan to Equal Justice 平義社. We met them both and explained the divorce proceedings and steps in detail. We confirmed that Susan was entitled to claim maintenance for herself and her son. In addition, as Susan is the primary caregiver for the child, as part of the divorce proceedings, she could request to live in the matrimonial home. As Susan and her child have been living in temporary accommodation this new arrangement would provide security for them both.

With Equal Justice’s assistance, Susan is applying for Legal Aid to commence divorce proceedings to obtain maintenance and live in the matrimonial home. Ultimately, Susan hopes to find employment so that she can support herself and her son.

*Susan is a pseudonym



Our Strategy in Action

Knowledge Exchange

THE NEED We frequently see cases and support people with legal problems that we believe could have been prevented. Through our casework, we are presented with complex, systemic challenges that legal education and training alone cannot solve. By sharing what we observe and experience and by drawing attention to these factors and probable causes, we can contribute to making laws, policies and practices fairer for everyone.

HOW WE HELP We are in the privileged position of being able to draw on anonymised data and insights from over 9 years, from our initial access to justice work at PathFinders to our work at Equal Justice 平義社. This gives us the ability to collate, collaborate and share findings on underlying themes and trends by analysing the qualitative and quantitative data collected from helping over 1,500 people.

WHO WE WORK WITH We proactively promote and encourage knowledge sharing with the wider community, and our insights are frequently used by academics and to inform public policy. We also participate in relevant fora, panels and events.

OUR IMPACT Thanks to the contribution of our extraordinary team and volunteers, we produced 14 pieces of case-driven research, covering 7 areas of law, helped on one external Chinese University of HK research, made 2 public submissions to the HKSAR Government and spoke at 12 events.

14 pieces of case-driven research	12 public speaking engagements	2 public submissions to HKSAR Government
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PUBLIC SPEAKING



Speaking at **The Zubin Foundation** conference on racial equality and the status of minorities our founder, Kay McArdle, discussed the barriers that ethnically diverse people face and how to change mindsets.



Our Legal Case Officer, Guramrita Kaur, spoke at the **Kids4Kids 2023 Youth Summit** about the UN Sustainable Development Goals, how law impacts our daily lives and why having access to legal support/information is so important.



In November 2023, we spoke about our work at the launch of **Hong Kong's first ever Pro Bono Week** which brought together representatives from across Hong Kong's legal community and community legal access NGOs.

我們的策略

Digital Innovation



2023 was a boom year as we launch our second digital innovative platform. Using technology is fundamental to our theory of change and transforms how we find solutions to unlock access to legal support for the disadvantaged people in Hong Kong.

CLIX - Hong Kong's Pro Bono Portal: Law for Good



CLIX is user-friendly, online and free, allowing impact organisations (NGOs, foundations and social enterprises) to request legal support for themselves or their beneficiary clients, and where lawyers can find and volunteer for pro bono legal matters.

THE NEED We believe that having access to lawyers and legal information reduces poverty and hardship. And we believe that lawyers want to help but don't always know where to start.

Hong Kong experiences significant legal information and access needs, especially within its vulnerable communities and the 1.36 million people who live at or below the poverty line. With a fragmented pro bono ecosystem plagued by inconsistent and outdated data, our 16,000 NGOs and their vulnerable clients often don't know how to access free legal resources.

Meanwhile, there are almost 10,000 lawyers, many of whom are keen to help but don't always know where to go to be able to find cases that help the community - they lack the network and rely on word of mouth.

HOW WE HELP As we grew Equal Justice 平義社, we were also struggling to find lawyers to help on our cases. We saw that Justice Connect's award-winning global pro bono portal would resolve this issue. The portal was already used in Australia, the UK and about to launch in Germany and Ireland. In 2022 in partnership with PILnet, we customised the platform to the needs of Hong Kong, and CLIX was introduced to the Hong Kong market in May 2023.

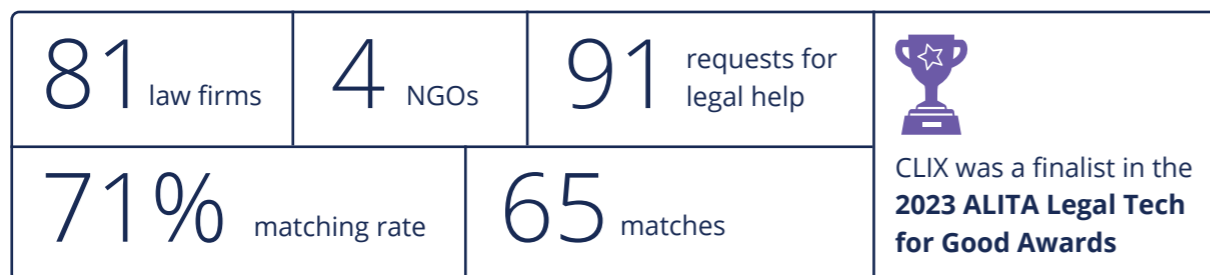


Our Strategy in Action

Digital Innovation (cont.)

OUR IMPACT

At the end of 2023, the CLIX portal had 81 law firms signed up and received over 91 requests for legal help. 4 NGOs have been trained and onboarded and are using CLIX. Of the 91 pro bono opportunities that have been posted on the CLIX portal, 65 have been matched to lawyers. This represents a 71% successful matching rate. We therefore have analytics and evidence that CLIX is working.



The next step is to promote CLIX to the wider legal community in Hong Kong and to more NGOs; and to translate the website and materials into traditional Chinese.

GET IN TOUCH

clix@equaljustice.org

www.clixhk.org
CLIX Hong Kong LinkedIn

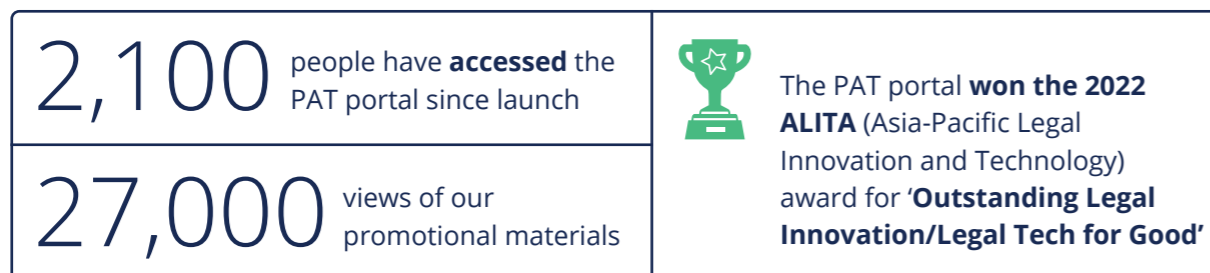


PAT - Pregnant@Work

PAT - Pregnant@Work 在職孕婦, launched on 15 June 2022, is a multi-lingual, interactive portal that gives Hong Kong employees, employers and families the information they need to understand their maternity rights and duties. It is free to access and available in Chinese, English and Bahasa Indonesia.



OUR IMPACT



GET IN TOUCH

pat@equaljustice.org

www.pregnantatwork.org

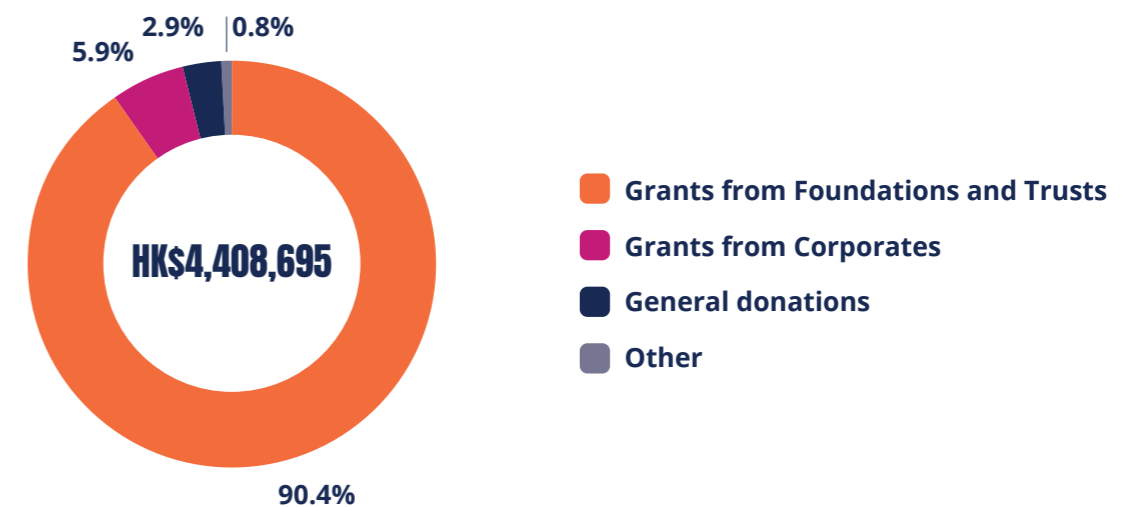


Our Finances 我們的財政

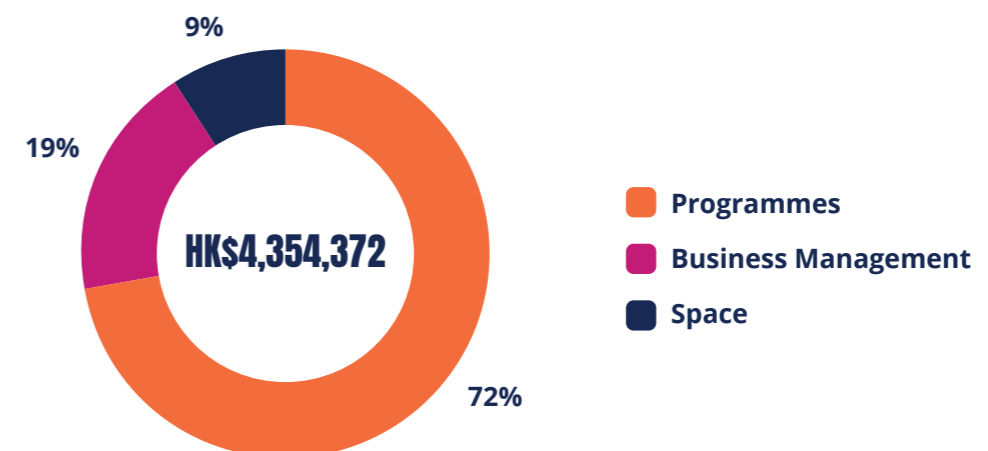
In 2023, our **total income grew by 38%** compared to 2022, mainly due to a **63% increase in funding** we received from foundations and trusts. The increased funding enabled us to respond to the increase in demand for our services, along with the expansion of our education programme and the CLIX initiative.

With continued **support from long-term funders** and **generous individuals** secured through various fundraising campaigns and considerable financial governance, we were fully able to meet our clients' needs and ended 2023 with a **small surplus of HK\$54,323**.

OUR INCOME



OUR EXPENSES



Audited Financial Statements are available at www.equaljustice.org/our-financials

Our People

我們的團隊

It's never our work alone. The impact we achieve through Equal Justice 平義社 is enabled by a passionate and experienced community of talented people, for whose contributions we are extremely grateful.

Board of Directors

We're deeply thankful for our dedicated board, whose expertise and unwavering commitment have helped shape our journey through challenging times. They embody excellence, governance, and strategic vision, defining our organisation.

Kay McArdle 麥雅社
Founder

Janet McAlpine
Chair

Nadine Maurellet
Vice-Chair

Lauren Houghton

Victoria Street

Aruni Weerasekera
Treasurer

Jacqueline Walsh

Agnes Cheng 鄭明慧

Team, Fellows & Consultants

Our accomplished and highly collaborative team of employees, fellows and consultants continued to deliver outstanding outcomes and impact, despite the challenging work environment. We thank them most sincerely for their hard work and their teamwork towards creating a fairer and more inclusive Hong Kong.

Aneezia Bisma Khan
Celine Dermine
Charis Teo
Chloe French
Fontaine Wong
Guramrita Kaur

Haleema Racheel
Janice Ng
Judy Chan
Julietta Wesel
Maria Elkin
Raquel Amador
Vivian Cheung

Recognising our leavers this year.
A fond farewell but not goodbye.

Amanda Tse
Caroline Spivey
Gloria Chor Hung Tang
Jessica Chow
Neha Sabharwal

Peter Reading
Sadia Bibi
Smriti Roy
Tony Young

Strategic Advisors & Volunteers

Our strategic advisors and core volunteers lend significant skills, experience and perspective to our access to justice work. Many are long-standing allies who have already made, and we hope will continue to make, an immeasurable contribution to our mission to reduce hardship and poverty by bridging the access to justice poverty gap.

Adam Vaziri
Adeline Chin
Chris Kwan
Franklin Koo

Henry Ma
Kesty Pringgoharjono
Kevin Wong
Sue Kendall

Student Interns

We are committed to developing and encouraging the next generation of access to justice professionals. In 2023, we welcomed 4 student interns into paid internship roles over the summer months, each of whom played a valuable role in developing our programmes. Thanks to law firm Walkers for sponsoring the paid internships.

Felice Chan
Gloria Leung
Jessica Tai
Lorraine Wong



180 Degrees Consulting HKU Team of students:

Kenji Look
Swanny Wijaya
Dabin Lee
Justin Chan
Max de Bruyn (麦克斯)

Kelly Cheung
Ellen Ryou
Toby Chiu
Alla Ip

Danny Chan and his students at the PinPoint Project in the School of Journalism & Communication at CUHK

Team & Client Wellbeing

Mental wellbeing was a priority for us during the covid pandemic. Since 2021, we partnered with AMINDSET - Professional Counselling to provide free counselling services to our team and clients. We extend our warmest gratitude to Megan Cheng who supported us in 2023.



“ There used to be a time when it was incredibly difficult to find anyone who was able or willing to tackle head-on the complexities of a case involving marginalised individuals. These clients would need not just legal services to assert their rights in law but also, other forms of support in recognition of the multiple obstacles that stand in the way of these communities accessing justice meaningfully. It is profoundly empowering to have collaborated with Equal Justice on their casework with marginalised communities in Hong Kong, witnessing the transformative impact of their work. Equal Justice provides just such a comprehensive approach towards addressing legal needs of disadvantaged groups. Through their casework with marginalised individuals in Hong Kong, Equal Justice is reshaping the legal landscape, ensuring that no one is left behind in the pursuit of justice! ”

Puja Kapai, HKU



Twiggie
- our therapy dog



Thank you

衷心感謝

Our 2023 Funders

Our day-to-day work to bridge access to justice gaps and barriers is made possible by the generous, financial support of our valued funders.

Institutional Donors

Charitable Choice
Clearwater Trust
Equal Opportunities Commission
Goldman Sachs Gives
Help For Children Asia (HFC)
Hong Kong Family Foundations (anonymous)
Hong Kong Land
Hong Kong Legal Walk
International Women's Insolvency & Restructuring Confederation (IWIRC)
Islamic Union
Linklaters
Manan Trust
Mayer Brown
Mercy Hong Kong
Mourant
St James's Place Charitable Foundation
The British Consulate General Hong Kong
The Hong Kong Club Foundation
The WYNG Foundation
Walkers

Individual Donors

Adeline Chin	John Martin	Melanie Bell
Agnes Cheng	John Tso	Monique Novis
Alexandre Kech	Jose & Nadine Maurellet	Nancy Chang
Alice Dermine	Julian & Helen Trott	Nicola Spencer
Andrew Tilton	Julietta Wesel	Nicole Dermine
Anne Schmoker	Juliette Dermine	Pascal Stouffs
Azzhar Family	Justine Lau	Pierre Decamps
Canute Dalmasse	Karen Lee	Richard Sanderson
Carlyon Knight-Evans	Kay McArdle & Peter Murphy	Sandra Martin Neumann
Celine Dermine	Kritika Sethia	Simon Fung
Chloe Fenech	Kyoko Altman	Soline Elhassani
Chris Lau	Laetitia Devaux	Sophia Hotung
David Salembier	Larissa Dudley	Sophie & Cedric Cornelis
Dimitri Potishinko	Laurent Luciani	Stephanie Hui
Gaetan Dermine	Laurent Stouffs	Suhail Bindra
Giorgio Pagnoncelli	Léo Jacqmin	Theodore Waecher
Jacqueline Arena	Libby Alexander	Tom Morrow
James & Lauren Houghton	Lisa Wong Wai Lin	Victoria Chui
Janice Ng	Louis Dermine	Victoria Street
Jenny Hsieh	Maria & Nick Elkin	Wong Wai
Joanna Hotung	Marie Delogne	Yves Tomballe

Our Referring and Partner Organisations

We would not have been able to help the number of legally vulnerable people we did this year without the collaboration and trust placed in us by our referring and partner organisations and the fabulous people who work there.

Branches of Hope: Refugee Opportunity and Development (ROAD)	Hong Kong Women's Workers' Association	PathFinders
Branches of Hope: Stop Trafficking of People (STOP)	HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre	PILnet
Caritas Hong Kong	Holy Family School	Pro Bono Hong Kong
Christian Action	Hong Kong Unison	RUN HK
Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong - Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers - Kowloon	Hour of Love	SideBySide
Fair Employment Agency	ImpactHK	St. James' Church
Government Departments (Immigration, Legal Aid, Social Welfare)	Inner City Ministries	St James Settlement Wanchai
Health in Action	Justice Centre Hong Kong	Integrated Family Centre
HELP for Domestic Workers	Justice Without Borders	The Neighbourhood Action Advice Council
Hong Kong Cancer Fund	Lutheran Social Service	The Zubin Foundation
Hong Kong Christian Industrial Committee	Mercy HK	Voice for Prisoners
	Mission for Migrants Workers	

Our Legal Community

We are immensely grateful for the expertise, time and commitment given freely by the esteemed network of lawyers across 48 law firms and barristers' chambers:

A Lee & Partners	DLA Piper	Kenneth Lam Solicitors	Parkside Chambers
Admiralty Chambers	Eversheds Sutherland	Kirkland & Ellis LLP	Patricia Ho & Associates
ALSC Chambers	Gall	Latham & Watkins LLP	Prince's Chambers
Bernacchi Chambers	Gibson Dunn	Lawrence Lok Chambers	QED Chambers
Boase Cohen & Collins	Gilt Chambers	Linklaters	Queensway Chambers
Bowers Law	Haldanes	Littlewoods	Reed Smith Richards Butler LLP
Chan King Wong & Co	HFW	Lo & Fung	Resolution Chambers
Chiu & Co Solicitors	Hogan Lovells	LWC & Co Solicitors	Ropes & Gray LLP
Choy Yung & Co Solicitors	Howse Williams	Massie & Clement Solicitors	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
Clifford Chance	Hugill & Ip Solicitors	Mayer Brown	Stephenson Harwood
Daly & Associates	Jonathan Mok Legal	Milbank	Tanner de Witt
Denis Chang's Chambers	Karas So LLP	Morley Chow Seto	Wan & Leung

Other Thanks

Many people and organisations made a difference this year, whether through providing a platform to share our work, access to facilities, collaborating with knowledge exchange and other meaningful contributions.

AIASEC	FADWU - Hong Kong Federation of Asian Domestic Workers Union	Progressive Labour Union
Asian Charity Services	Foreign Correspondent's Club	Social Career
Brian Tang	Grant Thornton	Time Auction
Brunswick Group	Hong Kong Baptist University	The Berkeley Center on Comparative Equality and Anti-Discrimination Law
Charitable Choice	Hong Kong University	The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Checkbox	International Organization for Migration	The Lion Rock Press
Center for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents (CHEER)	Justice Connect	The University of Hong Kong
Chi Man Wong	Kids4Kids	University of Cambridge
City University of Hong Kong	LITE Lab@HKU	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
EmpowerU	Mr. Ng	
English Schools Foundation	National University of Singapore	

Special Recognition

Always at the end of a phone to help and offer their insights, we extend our sincere thanks to Kay Chan, Josh Baker, Russell Bennett and our Legal Advisory Board member Susan Kendall.



#AllRise

GET IN TOUCH

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Office: +852 5329 2115
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equaljustice.org

Community Legal Information Centre
Room 301, 3F King Centre, 23 Dundas Street
Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



DONATIONS

As a community impact organisation, our work is powered by donations. We need and heartily welcome your support



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Equal Justice 平義社 has tax-exempt charitable status in Hong Kong SAR

Registered office: Unit 301, 3/F King Centre, 23 Dundas Street
Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon, Hong Kong S.A.R.

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WHAT PEOPLE SAY

"I am often asked about the civil society in Hong Kong and whether NGOs are leaving the territory for various reasons. What I can confidently say is that the community is still supported by organisations involved in meaningful and impactful missions. Equal Justice is on the top of that list and their commitment to ensure equal access to the law is truly remarkable."

Victor Dawes SC, Barrister - Senior Counsel, Chairman of the Bar Association

"Equal Justice's unwavering commitment to ensuring equal access to justice for all is truly inspiring. Their dedication and innovation in providing essential legal support to those in need strengthen our community by promoting fairness and equality in our legal system."

Ms Joyce Cheng, Council member and Chairlady of Community Relations Committee of The Law Society of Hong Kong

"Accessing legal advice can be a frustrating and daunting task for many people. Equal Justice has recognised this and taken a step forward with their digital innovation to bridge the gap between legal professionals and those seeking help. Their efforts go beyond just promoting legal access – it's about connecting people with the legal assistance they need to improve their lives."

Ben Kao, HKU Tech/Digital innovation



SOPHIA
HOTUNG.

If you like to artwork on our front cover, you can purchase it and by doing so support our charity. Buy the artworks from [Sophia Hotung](#) and a boxed set of cards from [The Lion Rock Press](#).

#ArtForGood