Program as at 27 October 2026

IAFL Asia Pacific Chapter Meeting

Education Program

NZICC, Auckland, New Zealand, 17 – 21 February 2027

Conference Chair: Inger Blackford (New Zealand)

Education Committee: Isaac Hikaka (New Zealand), Ivan Cheong (Singapore), Joanne Brown (Hong Kong, China) and William Sloan (Australia)

Thursday 18 February

9:00–9:10 am **Introduction and Welcome**

Inger Blackford President, Asia Pacific Chapter

Presentation by meeting charity, De Paul House

His Honour Judge I McHardy, District Court of New Zealand

Jan Rutledge QSM, General Manager, De Paul House

9:15-10:15 am

Plenary 1 **Advancing Indigenous Family Justice: Judicial and Court Initiatives from Around the World**

Moderator: Suzanne Todd (England and Wales)

Speakers: Judge La-Verne King, Principal Family Court Judge (New Zealand)

Chief Judge Abby Abinanti, Yurok Tribal Court (California, USA)

Justice Tafaoimalo Leilani Tuala-Warren, Supreme Court of Samoa

An international judicial discussion bringing together judicial leaders from New Zealand, Samoa and California to share experiences, justice and community led initiatives and collaborations designed to engage indigenous families in the family justice system.

10:15-10:20 am Presentation by a representative of the IAFL Amicus Committee

10:20-10:50 am Coffee/tea break

10:50-10:55 am Presentation by a representative of the IAFL Relocation of Children Committee

10:55-11:00 am Presentation by a representative of the IAFL Dispute Resolution Committee

11:00-12:00 pm **In memory of Anne Marie Hutchinson OBE**

Speaker to be announced

Friday 19 February

9.00-10.00 am ***Concurrent sessions I***

When Expertise Meets Human Complexity

Moderator: Her Honour Judge Kirsty Swadling, District Court of New Zealand

Speaker: Dr Sarah Anticich, Clinical & Organisational Psychologist (New Zealand)

The field of law is fundamentally relational. Legal expertise is exercised through human relationships, where trust, communication and judgement shape what becomes possible. This session introduces Executive Frame™ as a lens for understanding the relational demands of family law and how pressure influences the way practitioners and clients think, respond and make decisions.

Effectively running a cross-jurisdictional property matter (*interactive session)*

Facilitators: Mudita Chawla (New York, USA)

Isaac Hikaka (New Zealand)

This facilitated session will utilise a fact scenario so Fellows can work together to assess how a complex cross-jurisdictional property matter should be handled. It will enable participants to learn from other Fellows and the facilitators and demonstrate their own expertise to their colleagues. The differences between legal systems will be considered, along with practical ways to get the best outcome for your client.

10:05-11:05 am ***Concurrent sessions II***

Interplay between Family Law and Religion

Moderator: Karon C. Bales (Ontario, Canada)

Speakers: Karolina Zoi Andriakopoulou (Greece)

Hassan Elhais (United Arab Emirates)

Rebecca Goldman (Australia)

Karen O'Leary (Ireland and Northern Ireland)

Cross-Border Challenges – How and When Pre-Nuptial Agreements Fail

Moderator: Damien Greer (Australia)

Speakers: Sarah Lucy Cooper (England and Wales)

Charles Fox Miller (Florida, USA)

Billy Ko (Hong Kong, China)

Mark Sandelin (New Zealand)

This session will explore some of the practical and legal challenges that arise when pre-nuptial agreements are tested across jurisdictions.

11:05-11:35 am Coffee/tea break

11:35-12:35 pm ***Concurrent sessions III***

Cohabitants / De Facto Relationships

Moderator : Tim Amos KC (England and Wales)

Speakers: Monica Bardaji Pudejas (Spain)
Kathryn Lellman (New Zealand)
Linda Ong (Singapore)
Anita Vimlati (Hungary)

11.35-12.35 pm *Concurrent sessions III cont./*

Dispute Resolution *(interactive session)*

Facilitator: Suzanne Kingston (England and Wales)

Join your colleagues for an engaging and interactive session to keep the Whitmore-Chen family out of court and help them resolve their complex multi-jurisdictional divorce and finance case. Working through a range of dispute resolution processes – collaborative law, arbitration, and mediation – each table will tackle this family's complicated legal issues and creatively determine the best, most creative – and most private – way to conclude their situation successfully.

12:35-1:20 pm Lunch

1.20-2.20 pm **Plenary Interview**

Interviewer: Margaret Casey KC (New Zealand)

Interviewee: **The Right Honourable Dame Helen Winkelmann GNZM, Chief Justice of New Zealand**

2.20-2.50 pm Coffee/tea break

2.50-3.50 pm **Plenary: Debate: "Honesty Is Overrated" - Full and frank financial disclosure is an illusion and most cases would settle the same way without it**

Moderator: Her Honour Judge Emma Parsons, District Court of New Zealand

Participants: Adriana Chieco (Brazil)
Robin Egerton (Hong Kong, China)
Carrie Gill (Singapore)

3.50-4.05 pm **Upcoming Meeting Presentations**

USA-Canadian Chapters Meeting, New York, May 2027

Fred Siegel, USA Chapter President and Kim Keiller Canadian Chapter President

IAFL AGM, Mumbai, September 2027

Suzanne Todd, IAFL President

European Chapter Meeting, Vienna, December 2027

Alice Meier-Bourdeau, European Chapter President

4.05-4.15 pm **Closing Remarks**

Inger Blackford, Asia Pacific Chapter President (New Zealand)

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