



Roundtable: COMPANY LAW AND NOVEL BEINGS

Wednesday 17 January 2018, 11:00-16:00

Venue: Rose Heilbron Room, Grey's Inn, London

Lunch provided from 12:00

One forthcoming challenge for policy and regulation is the potential emergence of new types of being, both sapient and not, through advances in both synthetic genome technologies and the development of artificial intelligences (AI). It seems likely that these technologies will be the product of public companies and in particular multinational corporations. The main source of regulation for these bodies derives from company law; and we have to decide whether the beings they produce should be accorded legal personality. How we answer this question will inform how heavily corporations should be involved in the development and application of these technologies. This poses the question as to whether company law can, or should, be the primary means of regulating these novel beings, and by extension their potential wide-ranging societal impacts. This is not merely speculative; draft European Parliament legislation including electronic corporate personhood for AI systems has already been proposed.

Agenda

Please note that our intention is to allow free exploration and discussion and so these topics and timings are merely a guide to structure the afternoon.

11:00-12:00

Coffee; Introduction and Project Overview- *Sarah Morley and David Lawrence*

12:00-14:00

Working Lunch; Current Regulatory Proposals (see pack for summaries), Role of Companies and Company Law in Development of Novel Beings

14:00-16:00

Coffee; Other Potential Regulatory Approaches, Legal Definitions for Consciousness and Personhood