

Diversity in Asia

MORRISON
FOERSTER

A Global Commitment to Advancing Diversity
and Inclusion in the Region

Our Commitment To Fostering A Diverse & Inclusive Workplace

Founded in 2003 and 2006, respectively, our Diversity Strategy Committee and Women's Strategy Committee are global in their efforts to recruit, retain, and promote diverse and women lawyers. The Committees include representatives from our Asia offices and, together with our office and practice leadership in the region, strive to foster a diverse and inclusive environment. Our affinity groups also are active in developing diversity and inclusion-related programming for the firm's lawyers and staff, as well as engaging with professional and community groups.

Celebrating Diversity & Inclusion In Singapore

On an evening in January 2019, more than 150 clients and friends from the legal and business communities in Singapore celebrated diversity and inclusion through a thought-provoking panel discussion on "Working across Differences" in our professional and personal lives, an eye-catching exhibition showcasing the firm's diversity values and achievements, lively entertainment, and a cast of distinguished guests. Later in the month, Singapore partner Yemi Tépe also participated in the Singapore Corporate Counsel Association (SCCA) Annual Diversity Debate.

Diversity is a core value
at Morrison & Foerster.
We take great pride
in our international
diversity efforts,
including in Asia.

Bringing Together LGBTQ+ Lawyers and Finance Professionals in Hong Kong and Tokyo

John Smith, co-head of MoFo's National Security practice, led a lunch-and-learn along with co-sponsors the Hong Kong LGBTQ+ Attorneys Network (HKGALA) and the Hong Kong LGBTQ+ InterBank Forum (HK InterBank) in April 2019, and shared his experience as an openly LGBTQ+ professional in the financial services space and as a top law enforcement official, the key factors that brought him success in his career, and his views on important economic sanctions issues faced by lawyers and financial industry professionals. A similar event was held in Tokyo during the 2019 Pride Month, co-sponsored with J.P. Morgan, LGBT Finance, and Lawyers for LGBT & Allies Network (LLAN) in Japan.

Women's Professional Development Workshop

40+ lawyers from our Beijing, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore offices participated in a workshop in Hong Kong on May 30. The workshop, which included a dinner the evening before the event, featured the topic "Developing a Strategy for Your Career" and was led by Fiona Rice, an executive coach, trainer, and facilitator who previously worked as an attorney in London, Hong Kong, and Singapore. This was the firm's second women's workshop for the Asia (ex-Japan) region, supporting the growth and development of our talented women lawyers.

Diversity Town Hall For Asia Offices

In April 2018, attorneys from MoFo's Asia offices gathered in Vietnam to discuss how Diversity + Inclusion (D+I) manifests in and/or impacts the lives of associates in Asia, what the pressure points are around D+I in Asia, and how the firm can better support D+I initiatives across the firm and beyond.



2019 Tokyo Pride Parade

Attorneys and staff from MoFo's Tokyo office came together to support and celebrate Pride at Tokyo's Pride Parade on 28 April 2019. They represented MoFo by wearing custom tie-dyed MoFo T-shirts and walking with a MoFo banner.



Stronger Together: Mofo Hong Kong Diversity Dragon Boat Team

20+ lawyers and staff came together to represent MoFo and our commitment to diversity at the annual Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival.



Women In Business Seminar Series

200+ women professionals have participated in the Women in Business (WIB) Seminar series since 2014. Led by head of the Tokyo Litigation Department Louise Stoupe, this one-of-a-kind forum gives women leaders in Japan an opportunity to explore the trends, developments, and challenges driving global business. The ongoing series also offers networking opportunities for women professionals to build productive business relationships and support the development of the next generation of women leaders. In 2018, we hosted Sarah Grimmer, the Secretary-General of the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre, for a WIB event entitled "The Rise of International Arbitration," which was attended by almost 40 prominent women leaders.



Our Pledge For Diversity & Inclusion

Japan: Advancing LGBTQ+ Marriage Right

In Japan, MoFo joined forces with our pro bono client, Lawyers for LGBT & Allies Network (LLAN), to work closely with the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan to adopt a "Viewpoint" recommending that the government of Japan permit same-sex couples to marry—the first affirmative public statement supporting marriage equality by the business community in Japan. Since its launch in September 2018, 34 leading organizations, including chambers of commerce, law and accounting firms, international financial institutions, and other companies, have supported the Viewpoint. MoFo continues to work with LLAN and its member firms on marriage equality and other initiatives related to LGBTQ+ rights in Japan.

Singapore: The Corporate Counsel Association Pledge

Morrison & Foerster Singapore is an official signatory of the Singapore Corporate Counsel Association (SCCA) pledge to remain committed to providing diverse legal teams and ensuring that legal services will not be refused on the basis of status, among other commitments. The firm will continue to work with SCCA to collaborate and strategize around diversity issues.

Hong Kong: Advancing LGBTQ+ Marriage Rights

In Hong Kong, Morrison & Foerster was part of a 31-member-strong coalition of international financial institutions and law firms that took part in an effort to revise the Hong Kong Immigration Department's policy to permit the granting of dependent visa/entry permits to non-local same-sex spouses. We led a pro bono team working with other members of the coalition on the landmark case *QT v. Director of Immigration*, which resulted in a unanimous victory in the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal that required the Immigration Department to grant a spousal visa to an expatriate same-sex couple, as requested.

Launch of The Asia-Wide LGBTQ+ Affinity Group

On April 23, 2019, Morrison & Foerster announced the launch of its new Asia-wide LGBTQ+ affinity group. The group is open to all LGBTQ+ lawyers and staff, as well as any allies or supporters in our Asia offices.