

BAKER & MCKENZIE CAREER JOURNEYS

Angelique Wanner

Summer Clerk, Sydney
International Clerk, Hanoi
Graduate, Sydney
Associate, Sydney

Joining the truly global firm

Baker & McKenzie was my first choice for a Summer Clerkship because in my view, it is the only truly global law firm in Australia that operates seamlessly across 47 countries and 77 offices. It also offered an International Clerkship, an opportunity that is rare so early in one's career. I was lucky enough to be awarded an International Clerkship with our Hanoi office before commencing as a Graduate in Sydney.

And I'm off...

I arrived in Vietnam in February to begin my 3 week Clerkship in the Intellectual Property (IP)/ International Trade Commission (ITC) Practice Group. IP is becoming increasingly important in Vietnam and I was fortunate enough to work with a team of very accomplished IP lawyers who are experts in their field. My work included drafting client advice and correspondence, marking up contracts and letters of demand and conducting research on the complex and evolving intellectual property laws of Vietnam. Working directly with partners, I also drafted an academic paper on the Trans-Pacific Partnership multilateral Free Trade Agreement and its potential ramifications in Vietnam. Everyone was extraordinarily encouraging and inclusive. The Managing Partner of the



Vietnam offices, who was visiting from Ho Chi Minh, even took the time to welcome me to the team. I sat in on Professional Development sessions, conference calls, team meetings - and enjoyed some exquisite Vietnamese banquets. The English proficiency among my colleagues was astounding, although this proficiency became a little more challenging with the locals, once lost in the winding and beautiful streets of the city.

I made some excellent friends, who were kind enough to show me the wonderful sites around the city and make sure that I had an authentic Hanoi experience. We visited temples, wandered around the world-famous Hoan Kiem Lake, and enjoyed some traditional street-food. Also, a Sydney summer clerk who was on an International Clerkship in Ho Chi Minh City visited Hanoi one weekend. We spent a couple of days together visiting museums and getting lost in the Old Quarter, surrounded by excellent food and lovely local people. We also treated ourselves to high tea at the Hotel Metropole, known for its historical French Colonial-style architecture.

A warm welcome

The kindness and hospitality I experienced inside and outside the office was unforgettable. I felt like I had been part of the IP/ITC team for years, even after only a single day in the Hanoi office. The global coordination between the Baker & McKenzie offices and lawyers was seamless, despite widely diverging jurisdictions. The lawyers have countless connections throughout the Asia-Pacific Region, and beyond, and are more than happy to integrate newcomers and help cultivate important networks. I was even asked by one of the partners if I would be interested in pursuing a legal career in Vietnam! Although I was only there for a short time, I was never once made to feel like my presence was fleeting. Everything I contributed was greatly appreciated and I was given feedback in the same way as I would be at home.

Forging lasting friendships

I have since corresponded with my supervising partner about various projects that we were working on and I am certain that we will keep in touch. I discovered that the friendships you forge and the people you meet during an International Clerkship form one of the most important aspects of the experience. In addition to the knowledge acquired about the complexities of a completely different legal system, the bonds you make with lawyers are career-shaping.

The International Clerkship experience is a wonderful way to immerse yourself in an entirely different culture, engage with and learn about the law, and meet some incredibly talented people, with whom I will continue to correspond into the future.

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Jahan Navidi

Summer Clerk, Sydney
International Clerk, Chicago
Graduate, Sydney
Associate, Sydney

Gabon one minute, UN the next!

My Summer Clerkship at Baker & McKenzie was a thoroughly rewarding, diverse and intellectually stimulating experience. I was continuously exposed to innovative work and leading clients and I really enjoyed the strong culture of coaching and support. The genuine camaraderie a summer clerk experiences at Baker & McKenzie provided me with the perfect introduction to life in private practice and to a truly international firm with a strong grasp on an increasingly globalised legal profession.

Baker & McKenzie's global outlook is a reflection of its status as a market leader. From the outset of my Summer Clerkship, I was exposed to the multi-jurisdictional capabilities of the Firm through its international client base and regular communication with some of the Firm's 77 offices spanning 47 countries! Whether it was my direct involvement in advising clients in Beijing, developing memoranda for clients in Gabon or working with the United Nations, my work as a summer clerk at Baker & McKenzie had a consistently international flavour.

World leaders

My two rotations in Environmental Markets and Energy, Resources, Infrastructure and Corporate (ERIC) provided me with a blend of consistent and practical engagement with topical issues in climate change and the more corporate and transactional aspect of the energy and resources sector.



I was able to work directly with partners and other senior lawyers on challenging and topical legal issues. With the introduction of recent environmental legislation and reforms in Australia, a rotation in Environmental Markets at Baker & McKenzie provided hands on interaction with some of Australia's – and indeed the world's – leading climate change lawyers. My close communication with my supervising partner (head of Baker & McKenzie's Global Climate Change Practice, Martijn Wilder) allowed me to develop a feel for commercially applying this area of law and how lawyers who are at the forefront of climate change legal practice in Australia operate.

Summer clerks at Baker & McKenzie also share offices with partners or other senior lawyers. This arrangement increases the practicality of the Clerkship, providing an insight into the intricacies of partners' practices. During my Clerkship, I shared an office with a senior associate in Environmental Markets, and sat opposite a partner in the ERIC group, directly observing the day-to-day lives of Baker & McKenzie's leading lawyers.

The rotations also provide scope for summer clerks to investigate the practice areas they may like to gain experience in as a junior lawyer. I gained invaluable legal and commercial experience and knowledge during my rotations, which also informed my choice of electives in my fifth and final year of law school.

Sweet Home Chicago!

I was also lucky enough to be awarded an International Clerkship with our founding office in Chicago before commencing as a Graduate in Sydney. Coinciding with the Chicago office's Summer Associate Program, my International Clerkship presented a unique opportunity to work alongside North America's leading climate change and environmental lawyers. As an ideal complement to my time as a summer clerk in Sydney, this allowed me to observe how Baker & McKenzie operates internationally.

Right from the outset, I was involved in Baker & McKenzie's International Environmental Law Conference which reflected the Firm's global reach - attracting clients as well as partners and associates from all over the world, including lawyers from Baker & McKenzie's Brazilian, Mexican and Chinese offices.

Working under the supervision of the head of the North America Climate Change and Environmental Markets practice, Rick Saines, I assisted with advising clients in the Middle East on a series of Clean Development Mechanism projects at a crucial time. Additionally, I helped draft a North American report on the fiduciary duties of trustees in pension funds to factor in climate change risks in investments.

These varied cross-jurisdictional experiences prepared me well for my career with Baker & McKenzie in Sydney, increased my international awareness and exposed me to Baker & McKenzie's global outlook.

BAKER & MCKENZIE CAREER JOURNEYS

Emma Burn

Summer Clerk, Melbourne
International Clerk, Frankfurt
Graduate, Melbourne
Associate, Melbourne

Real client work and a culture of mentoring

I began my journey with Baker & McKenzie when I completed a Summer Clerkship with the Firm in the Employment practice group.

From the moment I started, I was involved in real client work which was really exciting as a uni student - particularly as it gave me an insight as to what my experience would be like as a junior lawyer with the Firm. I researched various aspects of employment and occupational health and safety law, drafted agreements for a pro bono client and worked on advice for an international client. I also helped to prepare presentations for an event for clients which I was then invited to attend (one of my favourite 'work' events - since it involved a wine tasting!).

While somewhat thrown into the deep end with work, the mentoring I received was exceptional. I benefited immensely from sharing an office with my associate buddy, who was extremely encouraging and a very helpful mentor. I also really developed from the support provided by my supervising partner, who spent many hours enlightening me on how to be an effective commercial lawyer and how to tailor my advice to clients. He also provided me with regular feedback which enabled me to improve throughout the duration of the



Clerkship. In addition, my supervising partner not only endeavoured to find me challenging work, but encouraged me to take up opportunities such as preparing and presenting a professional development session to employment lawyers in both Melbourne and Sydney.

The Summer Clerkship was an invaluable way to experience the interesting and wide range of work I am now involved in as a lawyer at Baker & McKenzie. And this, together with the mentoring and guidance I received, were a significant part of my decision to ultimately take up a graduate position with the Firm.

From one renowned Employment practice to another

After completing my Clerkship, and subsequently being offered a graduate position with Bakers, I was fortunate to be selected to participate in the International Clerkship program.

With some trepidation at the prospect of experiencing a European winter, I travelled to Frankfurt, Germany, where I spent four weeks working in the Employment practice group. I was excited about working in Frankfurt because of its status as a significant financial and legal centre in Europe and the sound reputation of the Frankfurt office, particularly the reputation of its Employment team.

Although Germany is not generally renowned for its hospitality, I was warmly welcomed by the Employment team in Frankfurt and settled easily into my role. My few self-taught words in German were quickly rendered unnecessary by the fluency with which all members of the office spoke English.

Breakfasts, bilingual agreements and berliners!

My clerkship in Frankfurt clearly reinforced the 'truly global' nature of Baker & McKenzie. During my first week, I attended one of the monthly "Passionately Global" breakfasts, where a lawyer who has worked for a period of time in one of the Firm's other offices shares some insights into that country's culture and their way of doing business. We heard from a partner in the Employment group who spent a year in the Chicago office -and enjoyed a themed breakfast that included bagels! It was fascinating to hear about the interesting matters he worked on and how the culture of the Firm is maintained across borders.

The team also regularly invited me along to Firm meetings and development sessions, practice group meetings, and social lunches. The Frankfurt office actually has its own company "bistro" in the building where many people eat lunch and get their morning coffee!

In terms of work, I was able to learn about, review and amend bilingual employment agreements, and also conducted research on the employment aspects of corporate asset deals in 28 different EU countries. I was pleased to be able to use some foreign language skills to conduct research about a secondment involving three different jurisdictions too. I also helped the team prepare and coordinate an advice for a multinational client requiring employment documents to be prepared and reviewed by various Baker & McKenzie offices throughout Europe. In addition, I was regularly invited to accompany associates to court, which gave me a valuable insight into the Labor Court system in Germany. Interestingly, you can become a judge in Germany soon after finishing university and, in fact, cannot apply to begin a judgeship if you are over 35 years old!

While Frankfurt is often overlooked by tourists, it has the headquarters of the Deutsche Bank, Trade Fair halls, museums, fantastic food markets and a huge international airport - making it a wonderful place to live and work. I thoroughly enjoyed spending my free time exploring the city on foot, getting to know some of the local interns, and savouring the local food and drink such as "applewine". I was also lucky to be in Germany during the time of "carnival", an important and very enjoyable celebration that involves lots of floats, costumes, confetti and Berliners (jam donuts!). Frankfurt is also so well connected by rail that I had the chance to visit various small typical German towns in Hessen state, and take a weekend trip to Paris on the fast train and be back in time for work on Monday!

An inspirational start to my career

My International Clerkship in Germany has greatly enriched my understanding of the way Baker & McKenzie operates seamlessly and maintains its culture across borders. I also found it inspirational to see the way in which the lawyers I worked with, who are experts in various parts of German employment law, have used their expertise and international connections to build a robust, interesting cross-border practice.

My International Clerkship experience has made a significant impact on my career - particularly my development as a global lawyer and in terms of building my connections across Baker & McKenzie's network. I look forward to implementing my insights throughout my career and continuing to develop as a global lawyer in our incredible firm!