

Justice and Innovation Group

March 2024 Meeting Notes

Video link [here](#)

1. Welcome and introductions

EE introduced the group and attendees introduced their interests via the chat function.

2. Tool and resource demonstrations

This session focused entirely on practical tool demonstrations and showcased new and developed tools.

a. [Frameworks UK, Reframing Justice project](#)

Tamsyn Hyatt, Director of Evidence at **Frameworks UK**, discussed the **Reframing Justice project**. This evidence-led research and communication project is a collaboration between Frameworks UK and the Law Society and seeks to understand how people think about the role of the law and access to justice.

Moving into the second year of the project, this phase focuses on testing different narratives and frames of reference for how the public understands the law and justice.

If you have any further questions, please contact Tamsyn at thyatt@frameworksuk.org.

Attendees thanked Tamsyn and asked questions and shared some comments.

Questions and Comments	<p>Q: Is any of this being applied to how the Treasury think about justice?</p> <p>A: We have got some insights around how people understand money and the role of money in the justice system. And we see that it is applied in 2 different ways to understandings of individual wealth. But also understanding of government funding, how the government should be funding the justice system in order for it to function effectively.</p> <p>We think there's a lot of potential in that space for us to be able to find the communication strategies that we can use to communicate with Treasury and to campaign for additional funding in that space.</p> <p>It will be part of the key components of what success looks like for phase 2.</p>
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b. [Online Procedure Rule Committee](#)

Sarah Stephens, Associate Professor of Legal Innovation at the University of Sussex; and Member of the Online Procedure Rules Committee with responsibility for lay users, **Antonio Perra**, Senior Policy Lead, DJS, and **Andreea Ardelean**, Senior Service Designer with the **Ministry of Justice**, gave an update on the **Online Procedure Rule Committee** as well as an overview of their recent work pulling together an **ecosystem map**.

The Online Procedure Rule Committee was established in June 2023 and was set up to understand how to build a justice system that works for the people it's designed to serve. The Committee is charged with regulating online court services in civil court, family court, and tribunals, and helps to develop rules for online court services and sets standards for online dispute resolution providers.

In line with this work, the Ministry of Justice's [Ecosystem Map](#) illustrates the complex, non-linear nature of the end-to-end user journey within civil court, family court, and tribunals.

Antonio encouraged anyone with questions or who would like to engage further with the work the MoJ is doing to email the team at: cft@justice.gov.uk.

They are very keen to use your expertise to develop the next phase of their work.

Attendees thanked the speakers, asked questions (those answered live can be seen in the video), and shared some comments.

Questions and Comments	<p>Q: Do you have input from people at the frontline i.e. vulnerable community members on what it needs to look like too? This seems key to me.</p> <p>A: Yes, we are bringing forward some projects for intervention that rest on extensive engagements, including with vulnerable users.</p>
	<p>Q: Is there a plan to support OPRC by creating a community of Non Court Based Dispute Resolution providers and platforms that consult and inform the development of data standards to be created by the OPRC?</p> <p>A: Yes, this is very important. A series of stakeholder engagement is planned and also the work of the Technology and data subcommittee is to engage with stakeholders across the sector.</p>
	<p>Q: How will you get participants given these groups are often so disengaged and trust is a big issue. How will you ensure that your input includes those who are most likely to be left behind by digital shift who already are so behind. What is the funding for 'trusted intermediary ' that people often turn to for help or disclose problems too who can support people in digital use? These things must be considered deeply as huge risk of furthering the digital divide otherwise this becomes an add on that will work well for people who are articulate but will leave those who are excluded even more behind.</p> <p>A: I note your comments concerning the risks that digital justice present to generate further digital exclusion. The user of the justice system should be at the heart of what is being developed. There is already a lot of research on this topic, especially with the HMCTS (they have an entire unit committed to this topic and digital inclusion) which we can leverage, and of course assisted digital has been well promoted by Justice and other advocacy groups. But to assure you that I share these concerns and this is my role on the OPRC to represent lay users and consult the sector.</p>

3. Dispute Resolution

EE introduced the second session, which covered Dispute Resolution.

Currently, we are working with the SRA and the Law Society on the Regulators Pioneer Fund project, which explores how technology can be used to support the delivery of and access to dispute resolution services. This session will be used to provide the key insight into how dispute resolution can support access to justice and what barriers might need to be addressed.

You can learn more about the project [here](#).

We're still in the early stages of this project and we would value anything you'd like to add.

Please get in touch with Emmeline at Emmeline@atjf.org.uk or Martha at marthadelaroche@atjf.org.uk to discuss the project or any thoughts you might have on any of this in more detail.

a. [The Employment Legal Advice Network \(ELAN\)](#)

Victoria Speed, Network Manager at the **Employment Legal Advice Network (ELAN)**, gave an overview of the challenges with using mediation and how technology might best be utilised in settlement cases. The key challenges Victoria highlighted to be aware of in mediation services include terminology, the confidence of users in navigating the system, and the lack of legal support and advice in the employment space.

If you want to join ELAN or you'd like to discuss workplace mediation or mediation more generally in the employment space, please contact Victoria at victoria@trustforlondon.org.uk.

b. The Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR)

James South, Chief Executive at the **Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR)**, gave a comprehensive overview of alternative dispute resolution, its challenges, and effective uses, as well as new developments in this space.

James highlighted some benefits of dispute resolution and mediation in access to justice, including that these processes are cost effective for users, and that the use of technology also reduces court costs and increases accessibility for at-home users.

James also discussed how to make mediation and alternative dispute resolution services more effective, including through better integration, increased use of technology, access to early legal advice, and protection for vulnerable parties going through the process.

If you have any further questions, please contact James at jsouth@cedr.com.

c. Amica

Simon Goodrich, co-Founder of the Australia-based platform **Portable**, presented on the tool **Amica**.

Amica was developed with national legal aid and is used to separate from a partner, make parenting arrangements, and divide property and money.

With a focus on ensuring a user-centred design, the tool enables collaboration, and their online dispute resolution work provides a blueprint of how to create a process for people seeking to resolve their matters on their own.

You can access the tool [here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Simon at simon@portable.com.au.

Attendees thanked the speaker and added comments to the chat.

Comments	Thank you, Simon, really interesting. State funding in England and Wales is non-existent hence what is coming is a kind of public/private partnership.
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d. Shake Dispute Resolution Platform

Austin Milne, Founder of the **Shake Dispute Resolution platform**, gave a demo of the tool.

Shake is an impartial dispute resolution platform which provides a low-cost route to settlement in financial disputes. Settlement avoids the need for negotiation while reducing court costs and wait times.

The tool has a ‘no settle, no fee’ policy, where parties only pay a fixed fee when and if settlement is reached. Neither party discloses information to the other until the point of settlement.

Austin encouraged attendees to reach out if they think of any opportunities for how the platform could be used by the users they represent. If you have any thoughts or questions on this, please contact Austin at austin.milne@axmstudios.uk.

Attendees thanked the speaker and shared some positive feedback.

4. AOB

Finally, EE flagged **LawTechUK’s** upcoming [Access to Justice event](#) which will be held on **Wednesday 27th March**. The event seeks to explore innovative approaches and current challenges in ensuring equitable access to legal resources and services. Martha will also be speaking at the event so if anyone would like to chat with her beforehand about the content, or suggest topics or other speakers, they can [get in touch with her directly](#).

EE then extended thanks to the speakers, presenters, and those who shared their learnings and experiences via the chat, with the rest of the community.

Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday 6th June from 10-11:30am** and will focus on the topic of AI and innovation in this space.

As always, if you have any thoughts on this session or what you'd like to see at future meetings, please do reach out and [let Emmeline know](#).

Membership of this group remains open, so please share joining details with colleagues who may be interested in joining and contributing. You can sign up to receive notifications of future meetings [here](#).