



## The Future of the Planetary Protection Guidelines

Chris Newman was invited to write for the UN committee on Space Research. His article 'The Legal and Political Future of the Planetary Protection Guidelines' was featured in Space Research Today, and discusses changes in human space activity over the last decade and how this poses a threat to the continued adherence to the guidelines in the COSPAR Planetary Protection Policy.

[Read now](#)



## Bidding Success—Women in Space (WISPER)

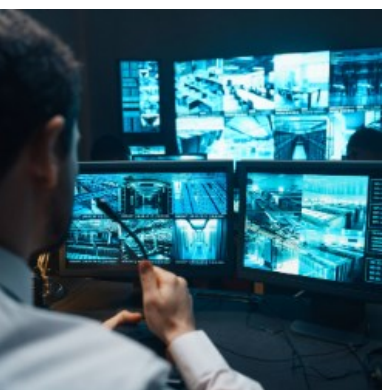
Dr Lauren Napier has recently been co-awarded £7,000 from the Space IDRT fund to work on a cross-departmental project on Women in Space (WISPER). She will be working closely with colleagues in Space Medicine and Space Physics and Maths to complete outputs with policy suggestions on EDI issues around women working in the space industry within the university and the UK.



## Ethical review to support responsible AI in policing

Northumbria University secured £286,000 in AHRC research funding as part of a £100 million AI research boost. Led by Marion Oswald, the project focuses on enhancing the responsibility and legitimacy of AI used by police. It involves collaboration with the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police's data ethics committee to explore how they can improve the legitimacy and responsibility of AI deployed by the police and how its advice has influenced technical developments.

[Read now](#)



## Probabilistic AI Systems in Law Enforcement Futures

A Northumbria University-led team, headed by Professor Marion Oswald, received £3.4 million in funding from Responsible AI UK for a 4-year research project, PROBABLE Futures, on the use of probabilistic AI in law enforcement. As one of three RAI UK Key-stone projects, it explores how AI can benefit police and courts but highlights the risks of misinterpreting uncertain outputs, potentially leading to serious real-world consequences. The research aims to improve data quality and prevent miscarriages of justice.

[Read now](#)

## **RESEARCH NEWS AND UPDATES**



### **Critical Perspectives on Gender, Sexuality and Society**

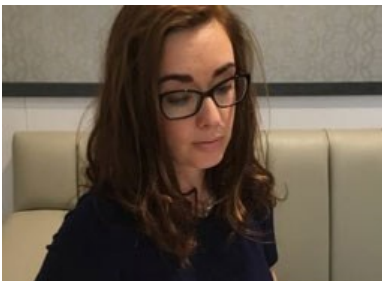
Chris Ashford, Northumbria Law School, and Gareth Longstaff, Newcastle University, were invited to deliver a public lecture at Oxford Brookes University as part of their "Critical Perspectives on Gender, Sexuality, and Society" lecture series. Their presentation, "The Dream City Porn Cinema Fire: Reconsidering Legal and Cultural Narratives," marked the 30th anniversary of the Clerkenwell fire, which killed 11 men and injured 13, drawing on Chris and Gareth's original archival research.



### **Opening the National Archive's legal data to AI for A2J**

In February 2024, Innovate UK funding was secured for "Project Odyssey - Opening the National Archive's Legal Data to AI for Access to Justice." The team, led by Paul McKeown, also comprises of: Kayliegh Richardson, Sarah Morse, Jonny Hall and Rebecca Mitchell. The project fosters the reliable and responsible use of GPT-based LLMs applied to legal subject matter. Recent technological advances have necessitated this epic undertaking. The project divides this journey into National Archives legal data schema enrichment, LLM fine-tuning and Access to Justice.

**[Read now](#)**



### **Law Commission Project Launch Event**

The Centre for Evidence and Criminal Justice Studies and the Gendered Violence and Abuse IDRT hosted the Law Commission Project Launch Event: Domestic Homicide. The event, hosted by Nicola Wake, focussed on themes relating to Defences for Victims of Domestic Abuse who kill their Abusers. Day 1 covered current defences and new solutions, and Day 2 addressed evidence and procedure. Following the event, Harriet Wistrich, author and law-yer, discussed her book 'Sister in Law: Fighting for justice in a sys-tem designed by men'.



*Modern Law Review*

### **Legal Professional Privilege in the 21st Century**

Rebecca Mitchell hosted 'Legal Professional Privilege in the 21st Century: Adversarialism, Confidentiality and Justice'. The seminar, funded by the Modern Law Review, brought together academics, practitioners, and expert witnesses to consider the legitimacy of the litigation privilege limb. The seminar provided a forum for new research that informed the debate between those who favoured retaining a broad privilege and those who believed that the interests of justice required that a court or tribunal possess all relevant information.

## **EDUCATION NEWS AND UPDATES**



### **United Nations Space Law Education Directory**

Lauren Napier recently represented Northumbria at the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space Legal Subcommittee. For the second year, she added the Space Law LLM to the UN's Directory of Education Opportunities in Space Law. She highlighted the program to the UK Delegation and other Member States, receiving strong support.



### **Breaking Down Barriers to Law**

Jill Alexander and Siobhan McConnell were delighted to represent Northumbria Law School at the Houses of Parliament at the launch of the "Breaking Down Barriers to Law: Phase 1 report". The report focuses on improving social mobility in the legal sector, addressing outreach, recruitment and progression for disadvantaged and underrepresented groups. With many of our students sitting within that disadvantaged and underrepresented category, this report is an excellent step in the right direction.



### **Widening Participation Projects**

Our widening participation projects continue to thrive. Since 2018, nine first-year students have joined the prestigious Freshfields Stephen Lawrence Scholarship Scheme, which aims to address the underrepresentation of black and mixed-race men from less privileged backgrounds in commercial law firms. Two of our students, Peace Aribisala (Year 4) and Niyah Waters (Year 2), are the only scholars from Northeast universities. All participants have been excellent ambassadors for our Law School, forming a network and guiding new applicants to the scheme.

## **Further Information**

Further information about the Law school, including other news, events, and previous newsletters please visit [northumbria.ac.uk/law](http://northumbria.ac.uk/law).

We welcome your comments about this newsletter and would be delighted to include articles from our alumni. *For comments and queries, please email [amy.k.cameron@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:amy.k.cameron@northumbria.ac.uk).*