



Joanne van Harmelen
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"you gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. you must do the thing which you think you cannot do"

practical experience

Dr Joanne van Harmelen leads our Biotechnology and Life Sciences Cluster in ENSafrica's Intellectual Property ("IP") department. She is a qualified patent attorney specialising in patent filing and prosecution in the biotech and pharmaceuticals sectors.

Joanne holds a PhD in medical microbiology and vaccine development. She has extensive experience in the field of biotechnology and life sciences, having prepared and filed patent applications locally and in foreign jurisdictions in the fields of microbiology, biochemistry, molecular medicine, agrobiolgy, bioremediation, bioprocessing, biopharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, cosmetics and food sciences. Joanne is also experienced in the preparation and filing of plant breeders' rights applications.

Joanne's clients include leading international biotech companies and start-ups with operations in Africa, North America, Europe, Australasia and Asia.

Her expertise extends to the assessment of the patentability of inventions, preparation and filing of patent applications locally and abroad, performance of freedom-to-operate assessments, general IP commercial transactional advice and IP due diligence assessments. She also advises on IP and biotech-related legislation, in particular, legislation relating to publicly-financed research and development; bioprospecting involving indigenous biological resources and traditional knowledge; and genetically modified organisms.

Prior to qualifying as a patent attorney, Joanne was employed as a chief scientific officer at the University of Cape Town, involved in HIV vaccine development and testing, as well as the preparation for Phase I clinical trials in South Africa and the United States of America.

Joanne is recognised as a leading/recommended lawyer by:

- The Legal 500 EMEA 2018, 2017, 2016 – Intellectual Property (South Africa)
- Best Lawyers® 2019, 2018, 2017 – Healthcare (South Africa)
- Managing IP: IP Stars Handbook 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016 – Patents; 2019 - Patent Strategy and counselling; 2019 - Patent prosecution (South Africa)
- IAM Patent 1000 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016 – Prosecutions (South Africa)

Joanne is a member of the following professional institutions:

- SAIPL – South African Institute of Intellectual Property Law (fellow)
- LES – Licensing Executives Society (board member)

qualifications

- BSc (Rhodes University)
- BSc (Hons) (Rhodes University)
- PhD (University of Cape Town)
- LLB (University of South Africa)

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