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**Conference**

***Behind Closed Books: Money Laundering in UK Insolvency Proceedings***

**Thursday 17 July 2025**

**University of Leeds and Microsoft Teams**

**To register, please use this link:**

[**https://www.tickettailor.com/events/schooloflawuniversityofleeds/1708844**](https://www.tickettailor.com/events/schooloflawuniversityofleeds/1708844)

Convenors:

Dr Oriana Casasola (School of Law, University of Leeds)

Dr Ilaria Zavoli (School of Law, University of Leeds)

**Overview**

This Conference, sponsored by an ESRC Impact Acceleration Account Grant and the School of Law of the University of Leeds, and organised in partnership with the Insolvency Practitioners Association (IPA), focuses on money laundering in UK insolvency proceedings. The IPA licenses and regulates Insolvency Practitioners under insolvency and Anti-Money Laundering (AML) regulations, and works to raise professional standards through professional training, benchmarking, networking, best practice sharing and other engagement opportunities. The IPA is designated one of seven Recognised Professional Bodies (RPBs) for the purposes of authorising and regulating Insolvency Practitioners. It is the only body whose membership is wholly of those involved in insolvency administration or insolvency-related work or interested in insolvency.

Money laundering costs the UK economy £100 billion annually (NCA 2019), infiltrating key sectors and prompting economic disruption and social inequalities. Insolvency practitioners, as regulated entities under the UK anti-money laundering (AML) regime, play a critical role in combating this crime. However, their AML practices have received limited attention. While other sectors of the UK economy have faced scrutiny regarding AML implementation (Zavoli and King 2021), the insolvency sector remains largely overlooked. The 2020 National Risk Assessment identified insolvency as a target of money launderers, and in February 2024, the UK Government established an AML Intelligence Cell within the Insolvency Service.

This Conference is an important first step in addressing this gap and providing valuable insights into this unexplored area. By bringing together practitioners and experts in the field, it offers a crucial opportunity to generate societal impact through the collaborative work of a network of academic researchers, practitioners, professional associations, and policymakers to inform future AML policy and legislative approaches in insolvency proceedings.

The Conference will feature academic and non-academic experts, who will discuss key themes and aspects of AML in insolvency. Confirmed speakers include **Neil Freebury (Head of Intelligence at The Insolvency Service), David Holland (Chief Inspector and MLRO, IPA), Victoria Alexandrou (Insolvency Manager, ICAEW), and Sandy Price (AML Manager, ICAEW).**

**PROGRAMME**

08.30 - 09.15 Registration of participants and refreshments

09.15 - 09.30 Welcome and Introductions

09.30 - 10.45 Panel 1 – Money Laundering Risks and Tiers in Insolvency

10.45 - 11.00 Coffee break

11.00 - 12.15 Panel 2 – AML Practices and Practitioners

12.15 - 13.15 Lunch break

13.15 - 14.15 Keynote and Q&A

14.15 - 17.00 Roundtable discussions with Coffee breaks

17.00 - 17.15 Closing Remarks

17.15 - 18.00 Drinks Reception

**Panel 1 – Money Laundering Risks and Tiers in Insolvency**

* **Paul Smith (Financial crime specialist, Paul Smith Consultancy Services) and Neeti Shikha (Bristol Law School, UWE Bristol)** - *Behind Closed Books: Money Laundering in UK Insolvency Proceedings*
* **Rebecca Parry (Nottingham Law School, Nottingham Trent University)** - *An Assessment of the Potential for Cryptoassets and Insolvency Proceedings to be Used as a Vehicle for Money Laundering*
* **Yuyun Ma (**[**School of Law and Politics**](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/law-politics)**, Cardiff University)** - *Evaluating the UK corporate insolvency regime: Challenges in handling cryptocurrency-related money laundering activities in the financial sector*

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**Panel 2 – AML Practices and Practitioners in a Global perspective**

* **Ilona Schembri (Faculty of Laws, University of Malta)** - *Wolves in Suits: How Lawyers Became the Hidden Enablers of Global Money Laundering*
* **Alberto Jaci (Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche e Giuridiche, Universita’ degli Studi di Messina)** - *The Use of Shell Companies in Insolvency Proceedings: Italian Private Law, Comparative Insights, and Anti-Money Laundering Strategies*
* **Ishana Tripathi (Jindal Global Law School)** - *Overriding Clauses in Bankruptcy Laws: Lessons from the Indian Bankruptcy Regime on Money Laundering Issues in Insolvency*

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**Keynote and Q&A**

**Neil Freebury** **(Head of Intelligence at The Insolvency Service)** – *‘No One’s Too Small to Make a Difference’. How Insolvency Practitioners, Regulators and the Insolvency Service Can Fight Money Laundering Together*

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**Roundtable discussions**

* **Roundtable 1** - **David Holland (Chief Inspector and MLRO, IPA) -** AML Governance, Public/Private Partnerships
* **Roundtable 2 - Victoria Alexandrou (Insolvency Manager, ICAEW) and Sandy Price (AML Manager, ICAEW) -** Outreach, reputation, and public trust