

TurksLegal WiBF Leadership Scholarship winner announced for 2019

TurksLegal and Women in Banking and Finance (WiBF) are delighted to announce **Rowena Rees-Poole**, Head of Communications, Media & Technology, Client Solutions Group, Institutional Banking & Markets, Commonwealth Bank as the winner of the 2019 TurksLegal WiBF Leadership Scholarship.

Rowena produced a powerful written submission in response to the question about what is the major challenge to the banking and finance sector over the next 5 years and how, as a CEO, would she would drive her organisations response to that challenge. Rowena's thoughtful and articulate response to the challenge of the pace of change was evocative and impassioned; the judges felt compelled to interview her and explore those ideas further face to face. At interview, Rowena's ideas were tested; her history of and potential for expanding an ambassadorial role promoting the interests of WiBF investigated and, in the end, Rowena won the judge's over and she was awarded the Scholarship ahead of a hot field of finalists. Rowena's win was announced at a WiBF Business Lunch in Sydney on 29 November 2019.

As the winner, Rowena will travel to the United States in April 2020 to participate in The Women's Leadership Program; a one week course run by the highly esteemed Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia. The program helps women assess and address their unique strengths and challenges, as well as navigate the frequently complex dynamics of strategic business leadership.

Partner and Practice Group Leader of TurksLegal's Banking practice as well as an award judge, David McCrostie said, "Rowena was such an impressive all round effort. It had to be because all entries were strong and the finalists especially impressive. We are very excited for Rowena and the skills she will develop from participating in The Women's Leadership Program at Darden and how those skills and experiences will help further her career and inspire others at CBA" said Mr McCrostie.

The judges found this year's Scholarship extremely difficult to judge due to the high quality of the written entries and the impressive performances of the finalists at interview. All of the applicants were absolutely inspirational. In the end, the judges agreed that Rowena was a stand-out applicant and are truly delighted to see her win the ultimate prize.

"WiBF is proud to support the Banking and Finance sector to develop the pipeline of female talent at all levels, with an emphasis on increasing the representation of women in key leadership positions. We are delighted to partner with TurksLegal to provide the opportunity for one of our members to attend the coveted Women's Leadership program at Darden, with an impressive cohort of female executives, and immerse themselves in a program that will expand their thinking and leadership capability," said Jen Dalitz, CEO, WiBF and judging panel member.

2019 was the 6th year of the TurksLegal WiBF Leadership Scholarship. The Scholarship supports the professional growth of excellence in the industry by providing WiBF members with a significant career development opportunity.

The 2020 TurksLegal WiBF Leadership Scholarship will open in July 2020.