

The background of the entire page is a close-up, artistic photograph of a car's instrument cluster. It features a speedometer with white markings on a dark face, and other gauges are visible in the blurred background. A semi-transparent teal horizontal band is positioned across the middle of the image, serving as a backdrop for the text.

AA THORNTON

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW

# Automotive & Aerospace

It's our people that make the difference

# About us

We are a leading Intellectual Property firm based in London and Munich. Our team of committed and passionate individuals includes patent, trade mark and design attorneys, as well as litigation solicitors, working with clients across a huge range of technologies and commercial fields. We provide the full range of IP services to clients around the world, from prosecution to litigation, in patent law, trade mark, design and copyright law.

Having an excellent understanding of our clients’ industries and the challenges they face is key to us delivering commercial, insightful legal advice. Our highly qualified industry teams are made of attorneys and solicitors who work together to share knowledge and experience. We firmly believe *it’s our people that make the difference* and that this sets us apart from others. Simply stated, we speak our clients’ technical language!

We offer a completely bespoke service at a competitive price. We pride ourselves on our genuine desire to understand the way clients want to work with us, and provide every client with a personalised, superior service that reflects their commercial needs. Our advice is always in-depth, commercial and accessible. We ensure that your inventions, brands and designs are expertly protected and your risks are minimised.

We have a wealth of experience in all aspects of patent law and can advise across a wide and diverse range of *innovations* and technical areas. Whether you are a sole inventor or large corporation, protecting your ideas is vital and we have the leading knowledge to help you. We work seamlessly with legal counsel, R&D, Business Development, Regulatory and Commercial Affairs departments to become an integral part of your team.

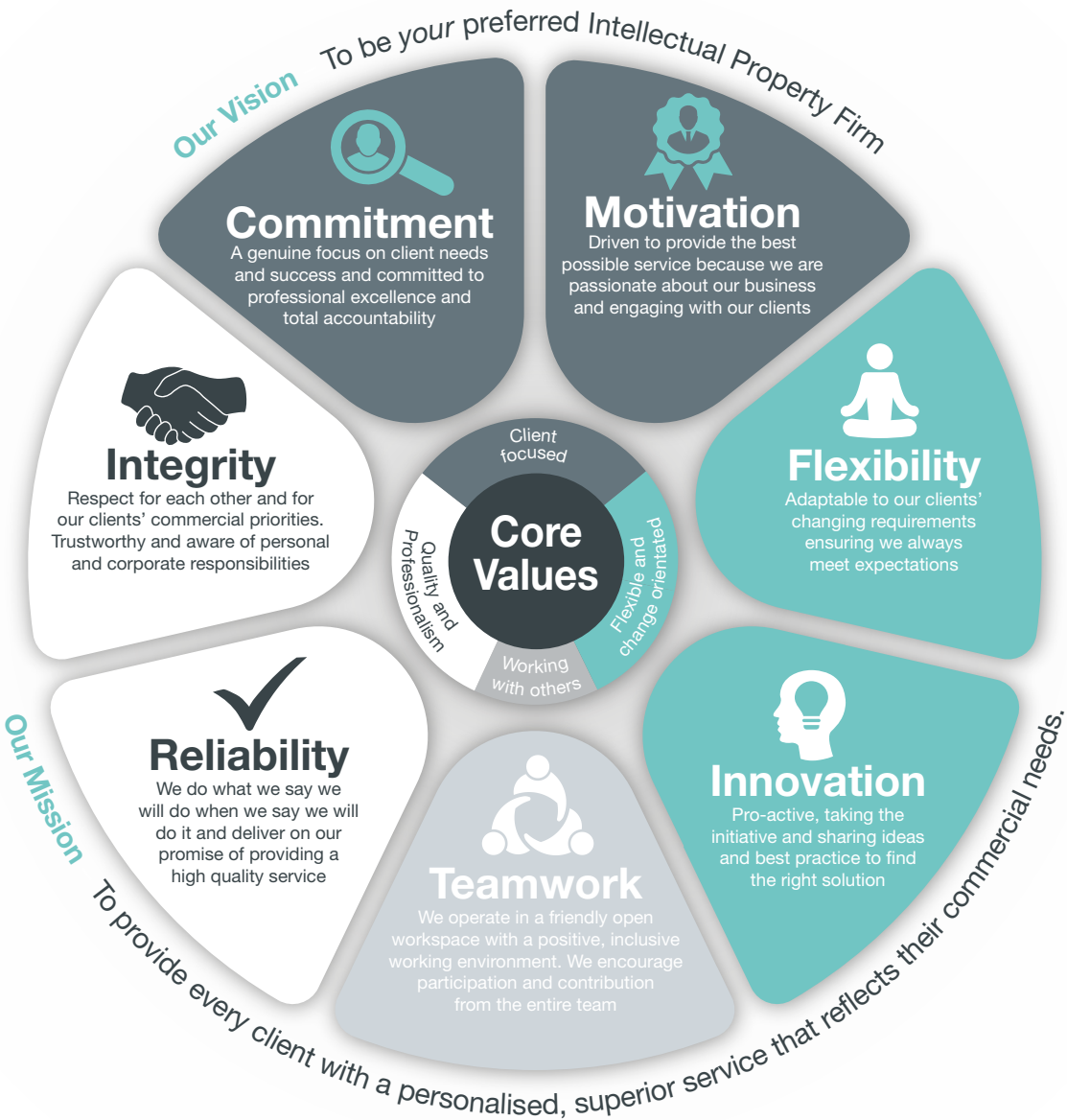
Our attorneys and lawyers regularly speak at conferences, and publish articles in leading magazines. We are passionate about innovation and enjoy nothing more than working on new or complex technologies.

Our vision is “*to be your preferred intellectual property firm*”, and we are committed to providing every client with a personalised, superior service that reflects their commercial needs.



We are delighted to be involved with IP Inclusive, which is an organisation that promotes diversity and inclusion within the various IP professions. AA Thornton were among the first signatories to the IP Inclusive charter, which is part of our ongoing commitment to improving diversity and inclusion. We take an active lead in IP Inclusive, such as the project to promote careers in IP to schools and universities through the “Careers in Ideas” initiative.

# Our values



# Our expertise

Our Automotive and Aerospace team enjoys an international reputation, and benefits from attorneys and solicitors from a wide range of professional and academic experience. We have experience in the varied technical backgrounds that make up these sectors, such as aerodynamic, electrical, and mechanical systems, as well as computer systems, software and electronics, in addition to materials chemistry, and petrochemicals.

Some of us also have a number of years' experience working in these industries, for example, at Rolls Royce, Bentley Motors, IBM, British Aerospace Defence, Johnson Matthey and Cabot Corporation. The team adopts a collaborative approach which we believe to be well suited to clients in this sector where new technology tends to span several technical areas.

Collectively, we are proud to have represented a wide range of companies within the Automotive and Aerospace industries, from SMEs to large multi-national corporations.

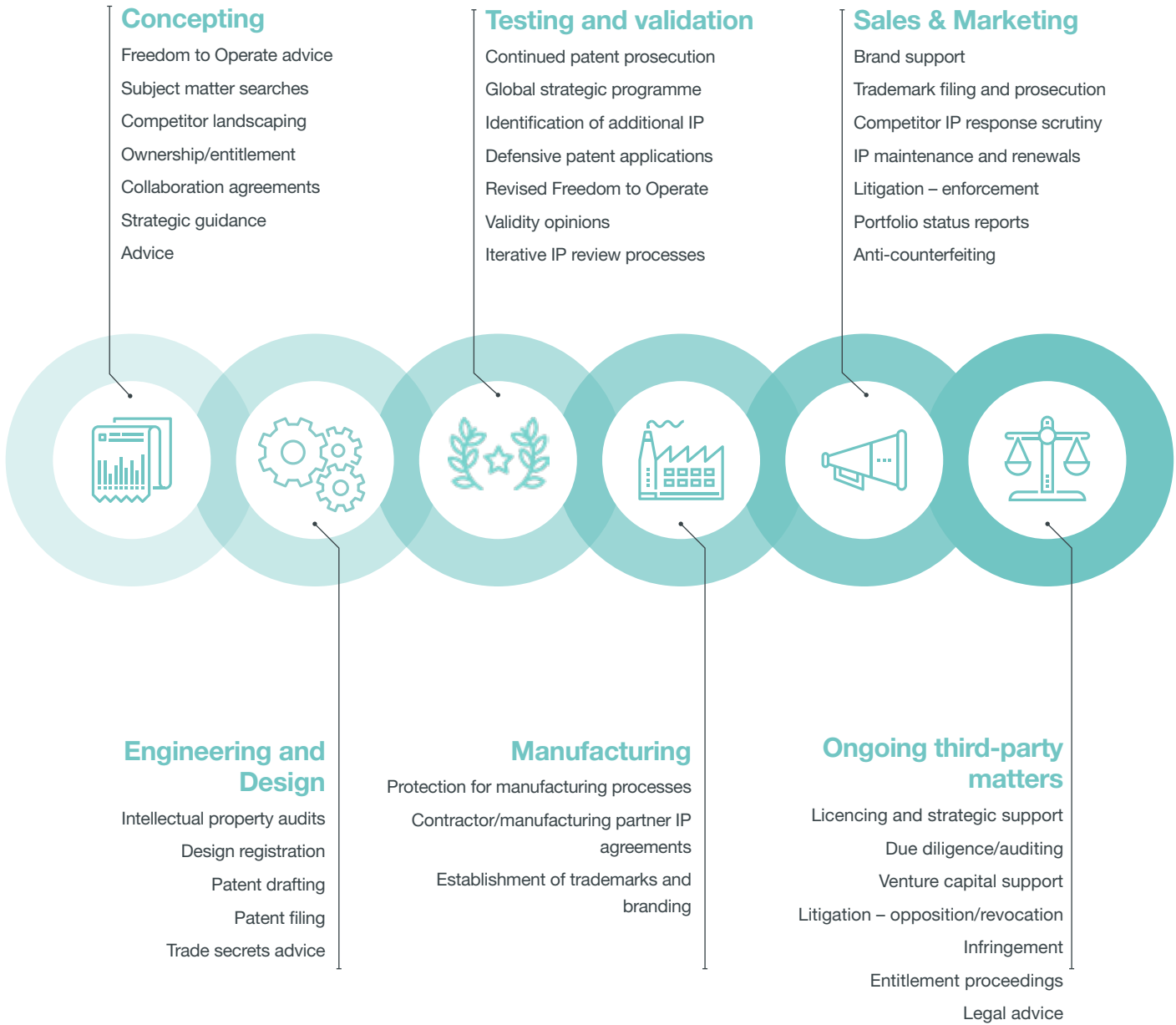
## Our attorneys are members of the following:

- Motorsport Industry Association
- Goodwood Road Racing Club
- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)
- Institute of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE)
- The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)
- The Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys (CIPA)
- The Chartered Institute of Trade Mark Attorneys (CITMA)

The team has significant experience in advising on IP in relation to this sector, and we have listed below a few examples of technologies we have handled:

- Driver aids, including collision warning, head-up displays, and parking assist methods
- Actuators for vehicle control
- Exhaust catalysts
- Fuel injection and exhaust systems
- Oil and gas separators for vehicles
- In-car acoustic communication systems
- Jet-boat control systems
- Aircraft testing and ground run-up enclosures
- Trade marks for automobiles, various parts and fittings for automobiles (including brakes, clutches, engines, gears, steering wheels, tyres, chassis, shock absorbers, fuel tanks, engine oils and lubricants), repair and maintenance services, and insurance services for automobiles.

# Protection from concept to market



# Our areas of expertise and experience

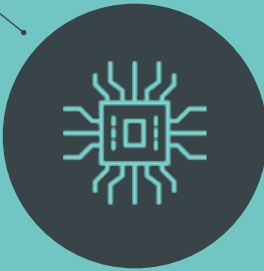
## Mechanical patents

- Powertrain and engine design
- Wheel tread design and materials
- Exhaust systems
- Runflat devices
- Synchroniser systems
- Gear Systems



## Computer-implemented inventions

- Guidance systems
- Autonomous driver aids
- Artificial intelligence
- User interfaces



## Trademarks and branding

- Logos
- Brand names
- Anti-counterfeiting



## Chemical and Battery patents

- Cathode/anode
- Battery pack design
- Thermal management systems
- Interfacing systems
- Catalysts
- Aviation fuel



## Electrical & Electronic patents

- Control systems
- Engine management
- Diagnostic testing
- Sensors
- Telecommunication systems
- In-car communication systems



## Aerodynamics patents

- Computer analysis
- Dynamic control



## Designs

- Shape and configuration
- Interiors
- Display Icons
- Dials and HUDs



## Materials patents

- Alloys
- Polymers
- Reinforced sheet materials
- Friction materials





# Our key team members



Mike heads our Electrical Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms & IT patents department.

Before joining AA Thornton, Mike gained many years of experience as an in-house patent attorney for IBM as well as experience at other leading IP firms in the UK and Australia.

Mike provides strategic IP advice to a wide range of companies in the fields of computing, electrical engineering, including high sensitivity measurement and instrumentation, and software patentability including modelling and simulation in complex environments. He has a particular interest in AI and has contributed to several events focussed on this subject. He handles worldwide invention protection, with particular expertise in EPO examination, opposition and appeal proceedings, and patent prosecution at the UK IPO. Mike is a member of the EPO Standing Advisory Committee's (SACEPO's) Quality Working Group for 2017-2020, personally invited by the EPO President for his "recognised expertise". He is a member of CIPA's computer technology committee, and a member of AIPPI.



Adrian heads our Engineering, Physics and Mechanical devices patents department.

Adrian has considerable experience in the original drafting of patent applications and their strategic prosecution around the world. He also has many years of experience in leading oral proceedings at the EPO and regularly handles these matters. His technical experience covers a broad range of automotive technologies including control systems, suspension and tyre systems, and oil and gas separators for large vehicles.

Prior to joining the firm, Adrian worked as an aeronautical engineer with British Aerospace Defence Ltd for eight years, four of which were spent in the Dynamics Division, and then four in the Military Aircraft Division where Adrian worked on performance and configuration aspects of combat aircraft design, became a Chartered Mechanical Engineer, and qualified as a pilot.

Adrian is presently a member of the International Liaison Committee of the Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys, and represents the Institute and UK patent profession internationally.



Ian heads our Trade Marks department.

Ian has a degree in Aeronautical Engineering and first qualified as a patent attorney before qualifying as a trade mark attorney. He has extensive experience in dealing with both contentious and non-contentious intellectual property matters and is sought after due to his common sense and timely advice which demonstrate a strong desire to put the interests of the client first. Ian's experience also includes managing the worldwide intellectual property portfolios of major companies and assisting clients in domain name dispute resolution proceedings. He works across a range of sectors including Fashion, Agriculture, IT & communications, Mechanical Devices, Food & Drink, and Finance.

Ian is an active member of FICPI (the international federation of intellectual property attorneys) and has presented at the FICPI Open Forum on "Foreign words as Trade Marks".

**"Ian has 'an unparalleled willingness to assist' and is 'extremely articulate and clear in his communication'"**  
– Legal 500



Rachel has over 20 years of experience in assisting clients in selection, protection and enforcement of their trade marks.

Handling a wide range of UK and international trade mark cases, Rachel has significant experience of clearing trade marks for use and registration, and in negotiating and drafting trade mark co-existence agreements, as well as involvement in oppositions, revocation and invalidity proceedings and appeals. Her portfolio of clients covers a variety of sectors, including automotive, fashion retail, and pharmaceuticals. She enjoys working with a diverse client base ranging from individuals and SMEs through to major global players.

Rachel is a regular attendee of International trade mark conferences, including those of the Pharmaceutical Trade Mark Group and International Trademark Association, and regularly writes on the subject of Brexit and its effect on Intellectual Property

**Rachel is described as "very thorough"**  
– Legal 500



**Alex Bone**  
Partner,  
Patent Attorney

Alex is a Partner in the Engineering, Physics & Mechanical Devices department.

Alex joined the firm in 2014 following seven years working in-house at Novartis Pharmaceuticals Ltd where he was responsible for IP support relating to medical devices and packaging projects across the Pharma division. During that time he was also involved in the IP due diligence relating to a number of acquisition and licence deals.

Alex's professional experience covers a broad range of automotive technologies including cruise and parking control systems, engine components, exhaust treatment and dashboard instrumentation. He has a keen interest in motorsport and is a member of the Goodwood Road Racing Club. Other than automotive and medical technology, Alex has experience in oil and gas drilling, food packaging, wind and water turbines, waste treatment and heat transfer technologies. Alex has considerable experience in advising businesses about IP strategy, including providing advice regarding Freedom to Operate risks and the protection of product developments.



**Marianne Privett**  
Partner,  
Patent Attorney

Marianne is a Partner in the Chemistry, Biotechnology and Pharmaceuticals patent department.

Marianne began her patent career at Johnson Matthey, where she drafted patent applications, prosecuted patent applications and defended granted patents relating to exhaust catalysts, methods of making exhaust catalysts, methods of testing exhaust catalysts and hydrogen storage systems for use with cars. Marianne also provided Freedom to Operate opinions, sought to invalidate competitor patents and helped to manage global patent portfolios in a range of technical fields. Since moving into private practice, Marianne has gained further experience in chemistry and materials science related fields, including battery technology.

Marianne is also a member of the Examination Committee at the European Patent Office with responsibility for marking the opposition paper, which candidates are required to sit when seeking qualification as European Patent Attorneys.

**“Marianne is ‘very knowledgeable both in Chemistry and in IP law’”**  
– Legal 500



**Nikesh Patel**  
Partner,  
Patent Attorney

Nikesh is a Partner in the Electrical Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms & IT patents department.

Nikesh advises UK-based and overseas clients on patent matters including identification of patentable subject matter, and particularly on the threshold of patentability for computer-implemented inventions in the UK and Europe. He also provides strategic advice for SMEs and large multinationals and manages worldwide patent portfolios for his clients. Nikesh handles patent applications in a wide variety of technologies, including electromechanical devices, computer systems, sensor systems for automotive applications, software, modelling and simulations in complex environments, telecommunication networks and mobile devices, and graphical user interfaces.

Nikesh is a member of the the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).



**Stuart Greenwood**  
Senior Associate,  
Patent Attorney

Stuart is a Senior Associate in the Engineering, Physics and Mechanical Devices department.

Before joining the profession, Stuart worked at Rolls Royce and subsequently Bentley Motors as an engineer in the chassis and suspension department, specialising in ride handling analysis, and dynamic simulation and optimisation of suspension design for the launch of the Bentley Continental GT. He has extensive experience in prosecuting UK, European and overseas patent applications in the automotive sector, with particular emphasis on autonomous driver aids such as crash avoidance, electronic stability control, lane change and automatic parking. He has also drafted applications in fields as wide ranging as road repair and pothole prevention, to puncture prevention aids, run-flat devices, and bicycle security.

Stuart has particular expertise in the complexities of drafting patent applications through his role as an examiner for the UK Final Diploma examination paper – Drafting of Patent Specifications.

# More about our services and expertise



## Patents

Our patent attorneys have a wealth of experience in all aspects of patent law, and can advise across a wide and diverse range of technical areas.

- Chemistry, Biotechnology & Pharmaceuticals
- Electrical Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms & IT
- Engineering, Physics & Mechanical Devices

Whether you are a sole inventor or large corporation, protecting your ideas is vital. Our European and UK Patent Attorneys can act on your behalf, presenting your case to the UK Intellectual Property Office (UK IPO), the European Patent Office (EPO) and the World Intellectual Property Office (WIPO). Thanks to our network of associates overseas, we can advise on different patent laws and protect or defend you anywhere in the world.



## IP Transactions, Ownership & Licensing

We regularly advise clients in relation to commercialising their IP. When entering into negotiations for contracts involving IP it is important that clients' interests are protected and that the appropriate rights are secured in the transaction.

We have the experience and focus to help guide you through what is a technical legal area to achieve a result that meets your commercial aims for all of your non-contentious IP requirements.

**Our services include:**

- Drafting assignments and licences
- IP contract reviews
- IP due diligence
- IP audits
- Developing IP ownership and licensing structures
- Dispute settlement agreements
- Recording transactions at Intellectual Property Offices



## IP Strategy & Audits

We will work with you to put in place effective strategies for the protection and commercialisation of your IP.

**Our services include:**

- IP audits
- IP due diligence
- IP portfolio management and maintenance advice
- Project reviews to identify potential IP
- Strategy reviews
- IP litigation strategic advice
- Marketplace and competitor surveillance
- Advice on upcoming Unified Patent Court opt-outs
- Parallel imports – advice, reviews, procedures



## IP Litigation

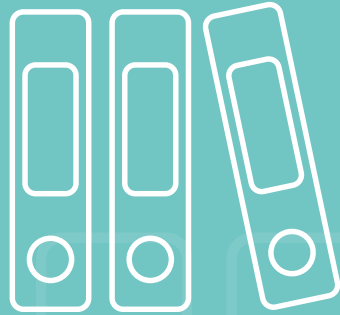
Our IP litigation and legal department advises on all aspects of IP law. Our experience and expertise ranges from dealing with small IP disputes (often resolved in negotiation), to hard-fought high-value IP litigation and coordinating parallel actions in other jurisdictions.

Our litigation approach is, where appropriate, for IP solicitors to work closely with our patent or trade mark attorneys to provide a coordinated approach to both enforcement and protection – ensuring the best possible resolution of IP disputes. The strength of our collective technical expertise also ensures that we can understand the necessary complexities involved in each case.

**Our services include:**

- IP portfolio and litigation strategies
- Patent litigation
- Trade mark, copyright and design right litigation
- Arbitration and mediation
- Licensing disputes
- Coordinating with local counsel in parallel actions around the world
- Settlement advice





## Trade Mark, Design & Copyright Portfolio Management

Our patent and trade mark attorneys regularly advise on IP portfolio management, with a focus on alignment with each client's overall corporate objectives and strategy.

We understand the need to review expenditure, IP asset value and portfolio management decisions on a regular basis, and to check alignment with the current business objectives and market conditions. We approach this with a desire to understand your business needs and to provide a solution that achieves your objectives efficiently and cost-effectively.



## IP Due Diligence & Freedom to Operate or Freedom to Use

We have considerable experience advising clients in relation to commercial due diligence activities across the full spectrum of IP rights. Clients value our commercial focus and attention to detail in helping them to evaluate and realise new business opportunities.

### **Our services include:**

- IP due diligence for clients seeking to commercialise their own IP
- IP due diligence for clients seeking to acquire third party IP
- Freedom to Operate or Freedom to Use assessments





Because of our people we are consistently ranked as ‘top tier’ and ‘leading’  
by our peers and clients:

The Legal 500 | Chambers & Partners | WTR 1000 |  
Managing IP Stars | The Financial Times

### Contact us

T: +44 (0) 20 7405 4044  
F: +44 (0) 20 7405 3580  
E: [aat@aathornton.com](mailto:aat@aathornton.com)

[aathornton.com/contact-us](https://aathornton.com/contact-us)



Follow us on LinkedIn:  
[AA Thornton](#)



Follow us on Twitter:  
[@AAThorntonCo](#)

The information in this booklet is general information only and is not intended to constitute legal advice. If you wish to explore protection and associated costs for any of the types of intellectual property discussed, please contact one of our patent, trade mark or design attorneys. August 2020.



**IPINCLUSIVE**  
Working for diversity and inclusion in IP