

NEW IP LAWYERS

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Centre for **Intellectual Property** Policy & Management,

Bournemouth University

is pleased to announce the

1st 2017 workshop series

“Ethics of Intellectual Property Rights: Challenges & Solutions”

Friday, 17 March 2017

Executive Business Centre, Bournemouth University

Background

“Ethics” as a principle that guides our society on what is “good” or “bad” fuels controversies on all scientific disciplines. Being at the crossroads between scientific innovations and public policy, the field of intellectual property appears to embrace many of the tensions created by exclusiveness on the fruits of human mind. Although neoclassical economic theory bestows intellectual property rights (IPRs) with the function to promote innovation for the benefit of society, this theory has been put to the test by new institutional economics, empirical studies, and IP scholars, who have voiced growing concerns on IPRs’ negative effects on innovation and societal welfare. Some current examples that illustrate worries on societal welfare are related to the difficulties of accessing protected innovations, such as medicines and food products. The territorial application of IPRs may also hinder people’s fundamental rights to benefit from information and culture in a globalised world (e.g., access and use of copyright protected films, video on demand, literary works, etc.).

Other concerns may arise from increasing litigation, strategic use of IPRs to drive away competitors, and abuse or misuse of rights. These situations may waste resources instead of making a positive contribution to innovation. Technological advancements may pose further challenges. Their impact on societal welfare will depend on the object and scope of protection. The potential of 3-D printing to improve biomedical tools, for example, will be determined by the uses allowed under IPRs.

In these terms, IPRs cannot be considered detrimental for innovation. They are a business tool that directs the flow of capital towards ‘desirable’ inventions and facilitates profitmaking. What should be questioned, thus, is the way they are used. In some areas, however, IPRs may be deemed undesirable and alternative systems of protection may bring more benefits to society (e.g., pharmaceuticals). Hence, the question:

**How to Reconcile IPRs with Ethics
for the Benefit of Society?**

Aim and Scope of the Workshop

This workshop aims at answering this question through a comprehensive understanding of all interests involved. We consider 'Ethics of IP' to include the concerns of innovators, their competitors, and end consumers/users of protected inventions in order to serve society.

Our goal is to thoroughly discuss and analyse the role of ethics in all areas of intellectual protection: copyright, industrial designs, trade marks, patents, trade secrets and interfaces between different rights.

We invite **PhD students** in all areas of intellectual property to submit an abstract via **explaining how they discuss ethics of IPRs in their work**. Students who engage in interdisciplinary research both from a doctrinal and empirical perspective are welcome to apply. Those who examine specific ethical problems in IP regulation are highly encouraged to apply. We wish to promote a dialogue on what type of laws should society promote, how to reform current provisions and shape future ones.

Important deadlines

Abstract (max 500 words) submission: **15 January 2017**

Acceptance notification: **20 January 2017**

Concept paper (max 3000 words): **28 February 2017**

The event is organised by Viola Prifti, on behalf of New IP Lawyers. Please, **submit your abstracts for peer review** and a **short bio** with **your name and affiliation** to Viola: priftiv@bournemouth.ac.uk