

GIR introduces Women in Investigations 2021

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GIR's Women in Investigations special 2021 shines a spotlight on the wide variety of outstanding female practitioners in the field.

The survey [highlights 100 exceptional women in the white-collar world](#), from future leaders to some of the established stars.

We selected the final list from some 300 submissions sent to us following an open nomination process where GIR readers were encouraged to put forward up to three practitioners along with compelling reasons for why they deserve to be featured. Because of the immense response and overall quality of the individuals put forward, we decided to only include individuals who either hadn't been featured before, or individuals who had seen a significant change in their career since their first nomination.

Women in Investigations 2021 is our most geographically diverse survey yet and lists individuals from 21 countries, including, for the first time, practitioners from Israel and Japan.

Among the nominees is former US Attorney General Loretta Lynch at Paul Weiss Rifkind Wharton & Garrison, as well as King & Spalding partner Sally Yates, the former deputy US attorney general.

The survey features senior prosecutors from across the globe, such as Anna-Elisabeth Krause-Ablass at the newly-formed European Public Prosecutor's Office. Also included is Rebekah Dix, associate general counsel at the UK's Serious Fraud Office, who oversees all criminal litigation at the agency, as well as Deborah Connor, who heads up the money laundering and asset recovery section within the Justice Department's criminal division.

Rogéria Gieremek, the chief compliance officer at South American airline Latam, is among the in-house contingent, along with Mary Dontzin, the US-based head of business integrity at Finnish telecommunications company Nokia, and Ingrid Busson-Hall, the head of financial regulation at US payments company Paypal.

This year's survey also recognises the contributions to the investigations landscape by NGOs and academics and as such features Professor Jennifer Arlen at New York University's School of Law, and Gretta Fenner, a director at the Basel Institute's International Centre for Asset Recovery.

The past year has been one like no other with the pandemic resulting in office closures, travel restrictions and other social distancing measures being implemented across the globe. GIR asked practitioners to share their reflections on how covid-19 has altered their work and how it has possibly changed the practice of investigations for good.

Many nominees said that when they were forced to orchestrate internal investigations virtually during the pandemic, they found, to their surprise, that it can be a flexible and cost-effective way to conduct work that they would have frequently travelled for in pre-covid times.

The dramatic shift was made possible, they said, through advances in software and IT infrastructure, as well as a greater willingness on the part of companies to permit firms to employ novel ways to collect evidence.

While many lawyers predict that this new way of handling investigations is here to stay, they believe that some highly-sensitive cases will still require in-person interviews with witnesses and meetings with clients.

Looking to the future, the nominees were asked to identify what the investigations community will be discussing in five years' time. At the top of the agenda for many nominees are regulators' increased focus on environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) disclosure requirements. Gary Gensler, the recently-confirmed chairman of the US Securities and Exchange Commission, said earlier this month that ESG disclosure rulemaking is among his top priorities.

Lawyers were also asked to talk about some of the unlikely sources of inspiration that have helped them crack the toughest investigations challenges. One practitioner discovered the answer to her problem in a dream, while another lawyer described how the "synchronisation, grace and perceived ease" of ballet dancers inspires the way she coordinates her team when working on complex investigations.