

Akintunde Opeyemi Idowu is a Nigerian-qualified technology lawyer and AI governance practitioner. His work sits at a question that is becoming harder for organisations to avoid: how should law shape an AI system while it is still being designed, rather than arrive as a final check before launch?

He serves as **Legal Counsel and AI + Law Portfolio Lead at Data Science Nigeria**, supporting Data Science Nigeria and EqualyzAI on legal, regulatory and governance matters relating to artificial intelligence, research, innovation and technology development. His work includes AI governance, data protection, digital regulation, intellectual property, commercial contracting and regulatory compliance.

Akintunde works with legal, product, engineering, research and management teams. His contribution is not limited to identifying the applicable rule. He helps determine what that rule changes in the product: the data a system may use, the authority an agent should receive, the point at which a person must intervene, the records that should be retained and the conditions that should stop or delay deployment.

That distinction matters because some of the most consequential legal decisions are made long before a product reaches the public. A privacy notice cannot repair an unsuitable data source. A broad contractual warranty cannot replace a proper evaluation. Human review is of little value if the reviewer cannot see the evidence needed to question the system. Akintunde's approach is to bring these issues into the design conversation early enough for the answer to matter.

This is the thinking behind **The Law Before the Model**, his writing on the legal and governance choices that precede deployment. He examines those choices from a Nigerian and African perspective while drawing carefully on developments in other jurisdictions. His interest is not in importing foreign compliance language for its own sake. It is in asking what those developments mean for organisations, institutions and communities operating under different laws and conditions.

His professional experience spans **Nigeria and Ireland**. At BOC Legal in Lagos, he advised on technology law, intellectual property, commercial agreements, data protection and regulatory compliance. As Innovation Lead at BOC Legalx Innovation, he also contributed to work on how technology could improve legal practice.

At Neworth Legal Consulting in Dublin, he undertook legal research and compliance work involving technology agreements, cybersecurity and emerging technologies. He later worked at DWF (Ireland) LLP on commercial, construction, energy and dispute-resolution matters, including legal research, procurement documentation, contract review and regulatory analysis.

That broader experience continues to inform his work. AI governance does not sit in a separate legal box. It depends on contracts, evidence, procurement choices, institutional authority and the circumstances in which a system will actually be used.

Akintunde also builds institutions and learning products. This is not separate from his legal work. Both are concerned with the same practical question: how can useful systems widen access to knowledge and opportunity without losing sight of the people they are meant to serve?

He is the **Founder and Executive Director of ATTP Global**, which supports youth innovation, entrepreneurship, leadership and mentorship. Its initiatives include the Teen Innovators Challenge and Teen Innovators Accelerator, through which young people develop ideas and practical responses to problems in their communities.

He co-founded FE-1 Made Simple after preparing for Ireland's FE-1 examinations and seeing how difficult it was to find structured, practical guidance. The platform supports aspiring Irish solicitors with learning resources, past papers, examiner materials and AI-assisted feedback. The experience has also given him a builder's view of the questions that legal teams ask product teams: what a tool promises, how its output is checked and where responsibility sits when it gets something wrong.

Akintunde is developing **Diary of a Tech Lawyer**, an upcoming platform for practical conversations about law, artificial intelligence and emerging technologies. Across his writing and public work, he is particularly interested in AI accountability, auditability, data protection, children's online safety, digital identity, intellectual property and the governance of technology in low-resource and last-mile settings.

His published work includes a 2023 co-authored article in the *Commonwealth Cybercrime Journal* on data security concerns arising from bring-your-own-device practices in Nigerian hybrid and remote workplaces. His wider research interests include AI accountability, data protection, cybersecurity, intellectual property and digital regulation.

Akintunde holds an **LLB from Obafemi Awolowo University** and an **LLM in Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law from Trinity College Dublin**, awarded with High Merit. His postgraduate research examined bring-your-own-device policies and data security through a comparative analysis of Nigerian, British, American and Canadian law. He attended the Nigerian Law School and was called to the Nigerian Bar in 2021.

The thread through this work is straightforward. Good legal counsel should do more than describe risk after the important choices have been made. It should help an organisation decide what it may build, what it can justify and what it must be prepared to explain when its technology affects someone.

Akintunde is based in **Lagos, Nigeria**. He welcomes enquiries about speaking, teaching, research, media and professional collaboration.