

## An interview with Lex:lead Judge Sun-Hee Park

**Sun-Hee**—please describe your general background and 1-2 highlights of your career:

As far as I am aware, I am the first Korean to qualify as a solicitor in England and Wales. I have been a finance lawyer in the City of London for nearly a quarter of a century, and have worked in a law firm, an investment bank, and a development bank (the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)). These experiences notwithstanding, what I feel most proud about so far is that I feel fulfilled in both my professional and personal life. The Covid-19 pandemic has been terrible but, as with a lot of people, it gave me a chance to reflect. I was struck by a little exercise I had to do on an executive leadership course during lockdown where we were asked to write down answers to the question: '*what does success mean to you?*' and another in response to '*what makes you happy?*' Most people ended up with two very different lists—but should they really be different? Mine look very similar and I was pleased about that. Had I been asked five years ago—I think my lists would have had very little in common.



What in your life has led you to an interest in development and how do you think law can shape positive development trends? What do you think are the most important law and development trends currently?

As a child of a diplomat, I grew up around the world with people from all around the world. I saw real poverty in many places as well as political, cultural and religious struggles, and looked for ways to contribute to making a better world. We can all do something, whether big or small. In terms of trends, I am very concerned about increasing geopolitical division across the globe. Law is one element that provides stability in a country. We have all heard the term 'psychological safety': having this is what allows people to thrive, and it applies not only at a team or organisational level but on a wider scale too.

When were you first introduced to Lex:lead and what are your thoughts on the initiative?

I met Anne Bodley, Lex:lead's founder, many moons ago. We bumped into one another at the same events and I got to know her through these chance meetings. I found a kindred spirit in Anne; someone who was also open-minded, multilingual and multicultural. When she told me about Lex:lead I was impressed, and have been honoured to be a judge since 2019. In fact, learning about the work of Lex:lead was one of the reasons I set up my own community group, the East Asian Lawyers Organisation just over two years ago, as my contribution to increasing East Asian and South East Asian representation in the legal sector.