Developments in information technology have enabled businesses to produce, collect, store, analyse, use and share vast collections of data which are estimated to be worth trillions of dollars. Essentially large databases, the manner in which data is collected (including through collaboration and user-generated content), and the ways in which it can be used to create value, sets Big Data apart from traditional databases.

The increasing prevalence and value of Big Data raises questions in many areas of law, from data protection and consumer law to competition, telecommunications and fundamental-rights law. This panel will focus on the challenge of Big Data to IP law.

Central to IP protection is the concept of ownership of property (albeit, intangible). Big Data is generally dynamic, massive, unstructured and real-time. The emphasis is on access and use. Traditional IP laws provide limited protection to those who invest in Big Data, and little predictability for those who use it. Rights such as trade secret protection and sui generis database protection struggle to fill the gap.

This third session in 'The business of IP' series will explore the relevance and application of current IP laws to Big Data, whether they meet industry needs, and whether there are any alternative models.