

Luris Helps Scientists and Their Staff Take Legal Matters Into Their Own Hands

A Case Study About how to Optimally Share and Use Legal and Academic Knowledge



Luris' Contract Tool Helps Academics to Generate Easy-to-use Legal Contracts

Luris, Leiden University and LUMC's Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO), focuses on maximizing the societal impact of academic research. Bringing academic research and knowledge to the market in the most effective manner is the backbone of their work. Luris guides academics through the fundraising process, defines and protects intellectual property, and manages the complex relationships between the university and commercial partners - those who wish to invest in, develop, manufacture, and market the results of research to benefit society.

Numerous legal contracts and agreements are required to align the interests of public, academic, and commercial partners to generate a truly positive impact on society. In collaboration with Berkeley Bridge, Luris has recently developed an online "[Contract Tool](#)" to help scientists create legal contracts with potential partners as fast as possible. The contract tool helps users find what contract they might need - such as a Confidentiality Agreement - while also indicating what information is required to complete a contract. The academic knowledge transfer process is suitable for a standardized legal-tech approach due to the high number of contracts as well as their relatively formulaic nature.

"Our goal was to generate easy-to-use contracts, and Berkeley Bridge provided the most practical solution to start building the tool," said Sander Gellaerts of Luris. "We didn't have to invest in large-scale systems - we could test our ideas and make sure everything worked without having to integrate the tool into our entire IT system."

Sander Gellaerts

Sander Gellaerts studied law at Erasmus University in Rotterdam, where he worked from 2007 as a lecturer and researcher in the field of intellectual property rights. In 2015, he received his doctorate from the Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology, and Society. He has shared his expertise in many forms: through presentations, as a course instructor, as an author of several textbooks on law and IT, as an e-learning and IT consultant, and as a creator of informational websites.

A major sticking point when dealing with large volumes of legal work is accuracy. Some of the main benefits of using the Contract Tool, therefore, include the reduction of legal risk incurred by errors or inconsistencies between contracts. Standardization of the contract templates also ensures that all parties know what to expect and where to find information when reading and drafting.

Gellaerts notes three further benefits the tool brings Luris and its users: "The Contract Tool enhances researchers' independence, lightens the load on the legal department, and improves turnaround times for the researchers - a researcher might already have a Confidentiality Agreement prepared during a first partner meeting, while the KTO lawyers can focus on the more tailor-made contracts, such as License Agreements."

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The first generation of the Contract Tool has been online since January 2019, and it will continue to be improved and developed by Britt Velthuijs at Luris, in close collaboration with Berkeley Bridge. “We talked to other Berkeley Bridge clients, and they all emphasized how helpful and supportive the Berkeley staff were.” Gellaerts said.

Finally, Gellaerts notes that Luris and Leiden University are unlocking some unexpected potential in the application of legal technology. The hope is that KTOs at other universities will use and develop the Contract Tool in collaboration with Luris and Berkeley to increase the impact and efficiency of the KTO process. Luris may be “the first KTO in the Netherlands to start working with Berkeley Bridge, but Radboud University in Nijmegen is also on board.”

The nature of the tool itself owes something to the open-ended, collaborative spirit that animates scientific inquiry. “KTOs largely have the same legal needs, and we generally don’t compete using any of these contracts (unlike law firms),” Gellaerts said. “So Nijmegen might obtain a license from Berkeley Bridge and get Leiden’s models for free. And if Nijmegen develops something interesting, we can use it as well. We could develop standardized templates within a consortium of universities, which would help contracts circulate between institutions and make clear to industry that they can expect the same templates from every university. It will save everyone valuable time. After all, the money we use is public money.”



[View demo video](#)

LURIS 

About Berkeley Bridge

Berkeley Bridge believes that the existing knowledge & experience in organizations is the most important precondition for success. The effective use of all information available allows organizations to optimize processes and to serve customers better.

Berkeley Bridge has been supporting organizations for over fifteen years by advising them and inspiring them in terms of knowledge systems. We provide solutions for designing, managing, and sharing knowledge in, inter alia, the legal domain, in health care, for the government, and in many other sectors. We do so with a team of enthusiastic knowledge experts and experienced developers from our office in Alphen aan den Rijn.

Contact

Curious about what we can do for your organization? Please feel free to [contact us](#) for advice on how we can help you achieve your goals.



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