

**DR FRANCIS GURRY**  
Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*

Dr Francis Gurry has been a leader in the development of a balanced and effective global intellectual property (IP) system that enables innovation and creativity for the benefit of all.

Born in Melbourne in 1951, Gurry gained a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Melbourne before qualifying for admission to the Australian legal profession. After some years in legal practice in Melbourne and Sydney, Gurry returned to the University of Melbourne – initially to complete a Master of Laws, and subsequently as a Lecturer and then a Senior Lecturer in the Melbourne Law School. He later completed a prize-winning PhD at the University of Cambridge, before embarking on a career in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Geneva-based United Nations (UN) specialized agency for IP services, policy, information and cooperation.

During 35 years of service with WIPO, Gurry held a range of positions, including Legal Counsel, Assistant Director General, Deputy Director General and, from 2008-2020, Director General. In the latter position, he was the highest ranking Australian in the UN system.

Gurry can claim credit for a number of WIPO's most significant achievements. In the early days of the Internet's utilization for commercial purposes, Gurry was instrumental in designing and implementing an international system for resolving legal disputes between IP rights owners and Internet domain name holders without the need to resort to national courts and domestic laws. This system has been a phenomenal success. In just over two decades approximately 80,000 legal disputes have been resolved under it – the majority through cases filed with WIPO.

The 12 years during which Gurry served as Director General were years in which the aspirations of multilateralism in general, and the ideals of the UN in particular, were most under challenge. Despite these difficulties, Gurry led WIPO to substantial achievements, including obtaining agreement between more than 150 states to create two international treaties. The 2012 Beijing Treaty gives actors, singers, musicians and dancers rights over their performances. The 2013 Marrakesh Treaty ensures that blind or otherwise print-disabled persons are able to access copyright material in a format accessible to them. The economic and moral interests of performers, and the lives of the visually impaired, around the world have been significantly enhanced by these achievements.

Gurry's stellar career in the UN system is notable for being achieved without prior holding of political or diplomatic office. His appointments were recognition of his real and substantial expertise in IP law, a fact also reflected in his numerous publications. The most influential of these works is his tome on protection of personal and trade secrets, published by Oxford University Press – originally as *Breach of Confidence* and now as *Gurry on Breach of Confidence*. His eminence on the IP world stage has been recognized by the award of honorary doctorates and professorial positions by universities in Europe, North America, South America, Asia and the Middle East. In recognition of his extraordinary and distinguished achievements, Gurry has recently been conferred with the award of Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun by the Government of Japan.

Since retiring from WIPO, Gurry has taken on a number of substantive roles globally. He is Honorary Dean of the Shanghai International College of Intellectual Property at Tongji University, Vice Chair of the Organizing Committee for the World Internet Conference, Wuzhen, and a Member of the International Business Leaders Advisory Committee for the Mayor of Shanghai. He is also Strategic Advisor to the Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property, and Strategic Advisor to the Australian publicly-listed company IPH Ltd.

Gurry has been an exemplary supporter of the University of Melbourne over the decades. He has been a Professorial Fellow in the Melbourne Law School since 2001, a Patron of the Campaign for the University of Melbourne, and the distinguished guest speaker at the Law School's Gala Dinner in 2015. In 2009, he generously lent his name to the establishment of a Melbourne Law School annual public lecture on IP, which has since been delivered by distinguished national and international speakers 31 times in various cities in Australia and New Zealand, to more than 5,000 attendees.

Dr Francis Gurry's achievements in advancing the role of intellectual property law globally have benefited the world's innovators and creators, and the consumers of their innovations and creations.