

# RISING STARS

★ of 2019

## 40 UNDER 40: THE RISING STARS IN PRIVATE EQUITY

By Hannah Roberts

Seeking out the best up-and-coming private practice lawyers in the U.K. private equity industry was not an easy task. Legal Week spent months approaching many of the world's largest and most influential private equity firms to seek out recommendations before surveying a wide range of experienced partners for their views on who they rated.

Next, Legal Week approached the top U.K. and U.S. firms in the market, particularly the ones known for private equity work, to ask for their own recommendations.

Nominees were then assessed on the following criteria: quality of their client base; scale, significance and complexity of their deals; their client feedback and general market reputation; the standing of their mentor; and any other examples of career success and innovation.

The process was extremely competitive and many talented lawyers did not make the cut, not only because of the calibre of the other entrants but also because the number of lawyers that could make the list from any single firm was capped at three.

But the rigorous analysis ensured that the final list consists of the U.K.'s finest private equity legal practitioners aged under 40 as of the end of September, 2019.

### MIKE JAMES CLEARY GOTTlieb STEEN & HAMILTON

**Year of birth:** 1987

**Joined firm:** March 2010

**Position:** Associate, since March 2012

**Key clients:** TPG Sixth Street Partners, TPG Capital, Warburg Pincus, TPG Growth and The Rise Fund

The longest-serving Cleary associate in London, James is part of the U.S. firm's private equity strategy planning team in London, and has led on deals for a number of its key clients. He is described as a go-to lawyer for many of the firm's leading private equity clients and has advised on several early-stage social impact investments - a fast-

growing area for the practice - across Latin America and sub-continental Asia. These included The Rise Fund, which focuses on social and environmental impact and was created by Bill McGlashan, TPG Growth's founder and managing partner. He thinks the legal industry is "a little less Suits and a little more battling with computers and printers at 4am".

