

Q&A

Q & A with Fran Spooner



Fran Spooner is a partner in the Corporate Department for Marriott Harrison LLP in London.

Spooner advises clients in a range of sectors on corporate and corporate finance matters including venture capital, venture debt, private equity, M&A, and a wide range of other business matters. A member of the firm for more than a decade, Spooner has extensive knowledge of the businesses and requirements of numerous long-standing clients, including institutions, management teams, companies and founders. She also works with tech start-ups and growth companies, and she is actively developing her growing practice in this area through involvement with initiatives such as Sie., an organization which seeks to drive more capital towards female founders.

Spooner has been recognized as a Next Generation Partner for Venture Capital by Legal 500 UK, and she also leads the firm's corporate social responsibility committee.



A medal and a special sense of accomplishment were among Fran's rewards for completing the London Marathon, a 26.2-mile trek, in 2019.

Q: Before becoming an attorney, what was your first job?

A: In terms of full-time employment, I became a solicitor immediately after law school. I did a summer vacation scheme and trained at Marriott Harrison, where (over a decade later) I am now a partner in the Corporate Department. When I was a student, I did a range of part-time jobs including stewarding at sporting events, waitressing at a football stadium, and working at a cinema. I also volunteered at a charity shop during my final year of university.

Q: What motivated you to pursue a legal career?

A: I can't claim to have any profound motivation – there were probably two things that led me down this path. Firstly, my dad was a lawyer – he ended up being sole practitioner doing mainly commercial work. Whether or not I knew it, that must have had an influence on me. Secondly, one of my favorite TV programs when I was younger was "Ally McBeal" – she made the career look fun, fast-paced and interesting (and it can be any/all of those things at times).

Q: Who was your chief mentor and how did he or she influence your career?

A: My partner, Ed. He isn't a lawyer, but he is my number one confidence booster, career therapist, and cheerleader – if I don't shout about my achievements, he will do it for me and he always gives me perspective on life and work.

Q: What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

A: Failure is an opportunity to learn and grow.

Q: What is one thing you would like to learn to do?

A: Fail better!

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Q: What is your proudest career achievement?

A: After becoming a partner in October 2021, I feel most proud when I am mentoring aspiring/junior female lawyers to help them gain confidence and achieve their career goals (whatever they may be).

Q: What other career path might you have chosen?

A: I (briefly) considered careers in hospitality (being a hotel manager) and journalism. I now love animals, so might have considered becoming a vet.

Q: What is your most treasured material possession?

A: My dog – we bought him, so he counts.

Q: What is your favorite movie and book?

A: Movie: “It’s a Wonderful Life.”
Book: “Everything I know About Love” by Dolly Alderton.

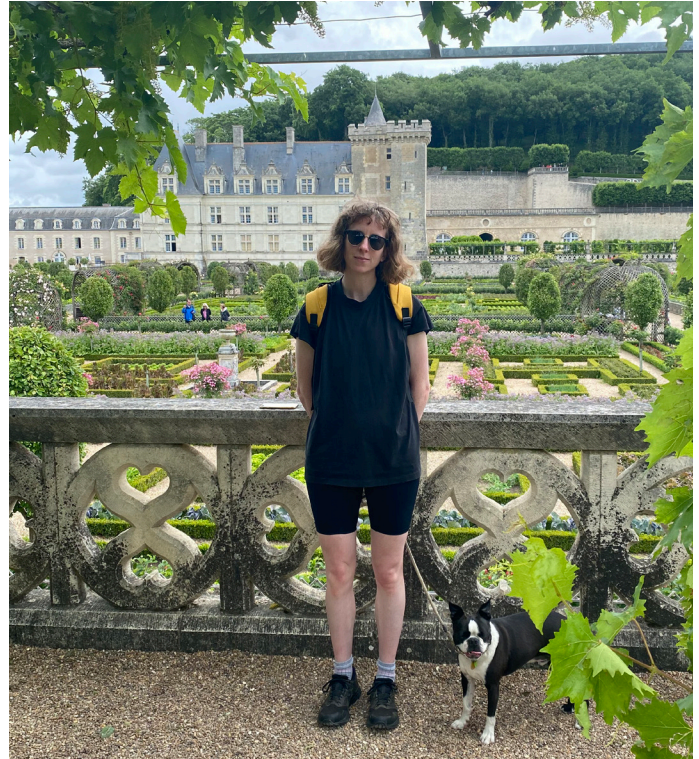
Q: What is the most awe-inspiring place you have visited?

A: I spent two weeks in Japan in 2017 – it was incredible. The people are so hospitable, the cities are frantic (in a good way), and the food is amazing. I’d love to go back.

Nearer to home, there are lots of beautiful places in the U.K. that I love to visit. Climbing isolated (and sometimes bleak) hills in Scotland or the Lake District with my partner and my dog will always be high up on my list of top places to visit.



Fran and her partner, Ed, during a trip to France in 2022.



A French chateau served as beautiful backdrop for a photo of Fran and her dog.

Q: What are your favorite leisure time pursuits?

A: Any sort of exercise (running, cycling, hiking, yoga) and cooking/baking.

Q: What is your favorite famous or inspirational quote?

A: How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.

Q: Who is on your guest list for the ideal dinner party?

A: If you mean famous guests (and assuming they have to be alive), I’d go for an all-female lineup. It’d have to be: Judi Dench, Serena Williams, Beyonce, Michelle Obama, and J.K. Rowling.

If you mean anyone, of course any combination of my best friends and family would be ideal.

Q: What are the top three items on your bucket list?

A: Start a blog. Run an ultra-marathon. Inspire as many women as possible!