

Covington promotes data lawyer in Beijing

Sam Clark



Yan Luo

Covington & Burling has promoted Beijing-based privacy and cybersecurity lawyer Yan Luo to partner.

Luo, a member of GDR's inaugural 40 under 40 set, took up her role as partner on 1 October as part of a worldwide set of promotions at Covington. The firm promoted a total of 14 lawyers in eight offices.

Luo advises clients primarily on data protection and cybersecurity, assisting international companies with China's fast-changing cybersecurity rules. Her practice also covers antitrust and international trade law matters.

Luo's data work includes advising multinationals on China's data localisation and cross-border data transfer rules as well as data protection issues around transactions. She also assists Chinese technology companies on data compliance outside of the country.

The promotion is a "privilege", Luo told GDR.

Covington's "tech-savvy" data practice helps Chinese technology companies to succeed, she said. She also praised the firm's international approach, saying that its global offices mean that clients get access to lawyers "around the clock", and that she can work with colleagues from around the world.

"This experience has broadened my horizons and is very fulfilling for me personally," Luo said.

A major challenge for clients, Luo said, is the "uncertainties created by the extraterritorial effects of data protection and cybersecurity laws in major jurisdictions".

It is also challenging to build data privacy and cybersecurity programmes that can "meet the constantly evolving requirements in all jurisdictions simultaneously", Luo said. Local laws typically do not consider the "global" nature of data trade, she said.

Timothy Hester, the chair of Covington's management committee, said in a press release that the recent promotions – including nine women and six lawyers of ethnically diverse backgrounds – reflect the "tremendous progress" the firm has made in its diversity efforts.

Luo has worked in Covington's Beijing office since 2011, holding positions as an associate and of counsel. She has also previously worked as a consultant at the US Federal Trade Commission.