

How to simplify legal services.

Tool Support for Visualization, Management and Analysis of Normative Documents

Do you want to be part of the development of an early stage project focusing on Artificial Intelligence and the use of technology and software to provide legal services?

Black Dot and the Grants and Innovation Office at the University of Gothenburg is supporting researcher Gerardo Schneider and Devdatt Dubhashi in developing their “*Tool Support for Visualization, Management and Analysis of Normative Documents*” project further. They are now looking for dedicated persons to drive the project further, which can be for instance the creation of a LegalTech startup or an application to a specific funding body.

The researchers are looking for students with different kinds of backgrounds and perspectives. There are no specific requirements but its meritorious if you:

- **Have prior knowledge in computer science**
- **Have knowledge about legaltech**

You don't have to speak Swedish, but it could be helpful if you can read and understand Swedish contracts. The positions will be on a voluntary basis and you will work together with a group of other students. The ambition of the project is also to apply for funding in order to start a company. So, depending on your commitment there might be a chance for a paid continuation.

In your work, you will be supported by the researchers and an innovation advisor from the Grants and Innovations office at GU. The researchers will give you more details about the project status, vision and goals, and together with them and your dedicated advisor you will plan the work ahead.

As a student you will:

- **Get experience in working with a real-life startup project**
- **Learn methods and tools to develop early stage ideas that are used at the Grants and Innovation Office**
- **Get experience in creating a LegalTech startup**
- **Get the opportunity to be part of the company after the initial phase and continue to develop it further with a leading role**

If you are interested, read the attached document and send us an application with a short description on why you would like to be part of the project and what you can contribute with. Also summarize very short what you study.

If you have any questions, please read the attached FAQs first and then contact Gerardo Schneider at gerardo.schneider@gu.se or contact@blackdot.xyz if needed.

Send the application to contact@blackdot.xyz before the 10th of March.

FAQs:

Background

In the last years there have been and increasing interest in LegalTech, that is the application of IT methods, techniques and tools to the (partial or total) automation concerning handling of normative documents. In this area, IT may help to reduce the burden of drafting, management and analysis of normative documents.

What is the innovation?

The recent advances in AI/ML, NLP, and on the formalization of normative documents have the potential to advance the state-of-practice in this domain. The idea could be used in different ways. they explain in what follows just a couple of interesting possibilities. One possibility is to have a cloud-based system where customers upload their documents to be analyzed. This could be done via generic or customized queries. Also, it could be possible to help the customer to draft a contract based on an existing database of templates. they could also offer a versioning system to help customers to keep track of different versions of their documents.

Who is the customer?

The customers could be law companies, individual lawyers, SME in need to get help in drafting a new legal contract (based on a template) or analyzing an existing contract, or even to normal citizens wanting to analyze any normative document for example to see his/her obligations and rights. The researchers believe there is a market need in this area as expressed by contact with local emerging companies in the area (e.g. [Seal Software](#) and [Precisely](#)).

What need does the idea solve?

The above-mentioned companies provide solutions not overlapping with the current idea. Their idea is to use a range of techniques coming from Machine Learning (ML) and Formal Methods (FM), in combination with Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques. This is a unique combination offering solutions to problems not possible to solve by only using any of such techniques alone.

What benefit does the idea offer the customer or the market?

Better services and more advanced analysis tools.

How does the idea compare to existing solutions and alternative?

To the best of their knowledge there is no current commercial solution to the problem in hand. Existing companies (as the one mentioned above) focus on different or simpler aspects.

What is the market status?

The researchers are aware of the companies working on LegalTech offering tools that are, to the best of our knowledge, complementary or simpler to what they propose.

SWOT analysis of the ideas

What are the Strengths?

They have unique competence on the use of FM for the analysis of normative documents (Gerardo Schneider@GU) and on ML (Dedvatt Dubhashi@Chalmers) having contact with experts on NLP. They have access to the state-of-the-art research in the above areas as well as students and potential programmers and engineers with the right expertise to work in this domain.

What are the Weaknesses?

The idea is feasible technically but it requires investment. They have not done a market analysis and they don't have a client yet.

What are the Opportunities?

The idea to work on this area has been presented many years ago to Chalmers Innovation but talks with lawyers back then showed that the market was not yet ready. The raising of new startups in the area (some of them funded by lawyers) shows that there is a market ready for the idea now. They don't have any concrete client at this moment though their informal contact with few lawyers showed some interest from their side.

What are the threats?

LegalTech has been taking momentum in the last years. In particular, new startups were created in the last four years or so. Other companies may be created soon. If it takes too much time in commercializing the idea, it might be too late.

Who will manage the project?

Both Schneider and Dubhashi can provide time to discuss the idea and implementation of the project. They do not provide here a time-plan as this could be adapted depending on how many students will be involved and the ambition of the participants. This should be discussed with the group of students to scale the project according to the constraints and scope of the course.

Thinking ahead, the idea is to create a start-up to commercialize the idea. For that there is a need of a CEO and a CTO, as well as for other business and administrative roles. Schneider and Dubhashi could act in different roles concerning the scientific and technical aspects (e.g. as Scientific Research Officer, Scientific Chief Officer, or similar).

What is the capital needed?

The overall idea is quite ambitious but it is possible to define the project in terms of sub-goals with incremental complexity. The project needs a CEO and a CTO, as well as business/marketing and administrative personnel. Schneider and Dubhashi could act in different roles concerning the scientific and technical aspects (e.g. as Scientific Research Officer, Scientific Chief Officer, or similar). It also needs 2-3 programmers and a legal expert.