



Economic
and Social
Research Council

LEEDS
SOCIAL
SCIENCES
INSTITUTE



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Call for Papers: Behind Closed Books: Money Laundering in UK Insolvency Proceedings

We are pleased to invite submissions for our upcoming Conference, ‘**Behind Closed Books: Money Laundering in UK Insolvency Proceedings**’, which will take place on 17 July 2025 at the School of Law of the University of Leeds (UK). This Conference, sponsored by an ESRC Impact Acceleration Account Grant, will focus on money laundering in UK insolvency proceedings.

Money laundering costs the UK economy £100 billion annually (NCA 2019), infiltrating key sectors and prompting economic disruption and social inequalities. Insolvency practitioners, as regulated entities under the UK anti-money laundering (AML) regime, play a critical role in combating this crime. However, their AML practices have received limited attention. While other sectors of the UK economy have faced scrutiny regarding AML implementation, the insolvency sector remains largely overlooked. The 2020 National Risk Assessment identified insolvency as a target of money launderers, and in February 2024, the UK Government established an AML Intelligence Cell within the Insolvency Service. However, no studies have explored the money laundering risks of the sector and the lived realities of the practitioners operating in it.

This Conference provides a key opportunity to influence future AML regulation in insolvency through collaboration among academic researchers, practitioners, professional associations, and policymakers. We aim for this Conference to foster teamwork and critical reflection on the event’s theme. Thus, we invite submissions from scholars and practitioners at all career stages addressing these themes:

- **Tiers of ML in Insolvency**

Exploring the different levels, methods, and complexities of money laundering within insolvency proceedings.

- **Risks of ML in Insolvency**

Identifying and mitigating the risks associated with money laundering in insolvency proceedings.

- **Key Problematic Sectors**

Investigating significant sectors targeted by money launderers, including (but not limited to) the service industry, retail industry, and Covid-scheme abuse.

- **Professional Enablers**

Examining the role of professional enablers in facilitating or preventing money laundering in insolvency.

- **Raising Awareness Among Insolvency Practitioners**

Developing strategies to raise awareness and educate practitioners in the insolvency sector about money laundering risks.

- **Best Practices and Policies from a MLROs Perspective**

Sharing insights from Money Laundering Reporting Officers (MLROs) on effective practices and policies to combat ML.

- **Information Sharing and Cooperation in AML in Insolvency**

Enhancing information sharing and cooperation among stakeholders to improve AML efforts.

- **Cross-Sectorial Cooperation: AML Lessons to Be Learnt from Other Sectors**

Learning from other sectors to strengthen AML measures within insolvency.

Participants, grouped in themed panels, will each have 20 minutes to present their papers, followed by a Q&A discussion. The Conference is free of charge for all participants, and it will be held both in person (at the School of Law, University of Leeds) and online (MS Teams). Speakers' travel and accommodation expenses will be covered.

Submission Process

Please submit an abstract in PDF format of no more than 300 words outlining the scope, methodology, and key findings of your paper.

Abstracts should be submitted to I.Zavoli@leeds.ac.uk by **Monday 14 April 2025**.

Please note: When submitting your abstract, indicate in your email whether you would like to present your paper in person or online.

For any queries, please get in touch with Dr Ilaria Zavoli at I.Zavoli@leeds.ac.uk

Important Dates

Deadline for Abstract Submission: **14 April 2025**

Notification of Acceptance: **30 April 2025**

Conference Date: **17 July 2025**

We look forward to receiving your contributions and engaging in fruitful discussions on the challenges of money laundering in UK insolvency proceedings.

The organisers,

Dr Ilaria Zavoli and Dr Oriana Casasola