HEATHER BURNS

Building bridges between tech and policy

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WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU

We are people of enormous power and influence over the web. I empower digital professionals to use that power wisely. As a tech policy and regulation specialist, I educate the profession on the policy issues which impact our work, inspire professionals to participate constructively in the regulatory process, and facilitate cooperation between policymakers and digital leaders.

WHAT I'VE BEEN WORKING ON

Coadec: the Coalition for a Digital Economy

📅 05/2019 - Ongoing 📍 Remote / UK

Policy Fellow for the UK's leading policy voice of tech startups and scaleups

Tap My Data

📅 01/2019 - 04/2019 📍 Remote / UK

Regulatory advisor on privacy law and tech policy for a privacy startup; also supporting their participation in ICO's regulatory sandbox

Mozilla Open Leaders initiative

📅 01/2019 - 05/2019 📍 Remote / Global

Selected for Mozilla's open source leadership training programme in support of the cross-project CMS privacy group

After Brexit

📅 2016 - Ongoing
🔗 https://afterbrexit.tech

Regulatory monitoring on Brexit's impact on domestic tech policy, used as a resource by Parliament, the European Commission, and the media

WHAT I KNOW

PG Cert, Internet Law and Policy

University of Strathclyde, 2015

BA, International Affairs

The George Washington University, 2000

WHAT I BELIEVE

"If you're not at the table, you're on the menu."

WHAT I DO BEST

Empowering people
I give contributors knowledge, support, and inspiration where it matters

Bringing people together
I help diverse international teams to overcome cultural obstacles to success

Inspiring audiences
I've delivered over 30 conference talks to audiences in 8 countries - so far

Writing for impact
I explain complex legal and policy issues with clarity and empathy

Reaching across boundaries
I provide the leadership needed to support collaboration across teams and projects

WHERE I AM

Twitter
@webdevlaw

LinkedIn
https://www.linkedin.com/in/webdevlaw/

Github repo
https://github.com/webdevlaw

WHAT I'VE GIVEN BACK

Cross-project CMS privacy initiative

WordPress, Drupal, Joomla, Umbraco, and Typo3

📅 2018 - Ongoing

Establishing a coalition of privacy team members working across open source CMS projects to strengthen teams and create collaboration in privacy

Component maintainer

WordPress.org core-privacy team

📅 2018 - Ongoing

Active contributor to the open source team enhancing the base standard of user privacy for over 30% of the sites on the open web

Community organiser

WordPress.org

📅 2011 - 2018

Helped establish and run local meetup groups in Glasgow and Edinburgh; helped to organise and run three WordCamp conferences; spoke at 18 WordCamps in six countries

Policy advisor

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Assistive Technology

📅 2017 - Ongoing

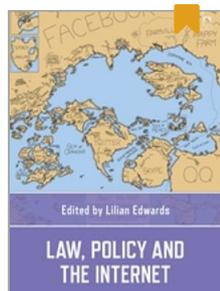Providing insight on European Union web accessibility regulations
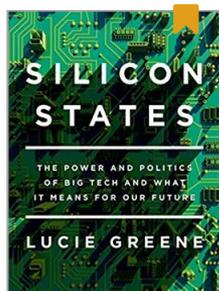
Co-founder

Web Matters

📅 2017

Helped to establish an independent, adversarial industry body for freelance web industry professionals

WHAT I'VE BEEN READING

Law, Policy, and the Internet

Lilian Edwards

Silicon States: the power and politics of Big Tech and what it means for our future

Lucie Greene

Enough Said: What's gone wrong with the language of politics?

Mark Thompson

WHAT INTERESTS ME

👑 **Ethics washing**
The growing trend of tech ethics initiatives being deployed in bad faith as a form of regulatory evasion

🔨 **Legal endogeneity**
When the interpretation of digital laws drafted without developer involvement is, nevertheless, delegated to them

☁ **Open washing**
The consequences of closed leadership, lack of transparency, and community exclusion in open source project governance structures

WHERE I'VE BEEN

Tech policy and regulation specialist

Freelance

📅 2015 - Ongoing   📍 Glasgow, Scotland

Web designer

Idea15 Web Design

📅 2007 - 2015   📍 Glasgow, Scotland

Executive Assistant to the President

American Councils for International Education

📅 2000 - 2003   📍 Washington, D.C.