

Meet Deborah Low: Legal Rising Star and Leader at the Intersection of ESG and Finance

August 15, 2023 Deborah Low

PRACTICES Environmental, Social and Governance, Finance, Fund Finance

[Deborah Low](#), founder of Haynes Boone's ESG practice and a partner in the Finance Group, is among the 2023 recipients of the New York Legal Awards, presented by the *New York Law Journal*. She has been honored with a Rising Star Award, a distinction given to the New York legal community's emerging leaders.

Deborah's ESG practice focuses on advising clients on sustainability-linked and green loans, as well as working with other firm practice groups to advise companies on policies and practices that reduce negative environmental impact and improve social equity. She also works on a wide array of finance transactions, specializing in fund finance, leverage finance, corporate debt and project finance.

We recently chatted with Deborah about her Rising Star award and the latest trends and issues in ESG and fund finance.

Q: What accomplishments are you most proud of in your career to date?

Deborah Low: Probably starting the firm's ESG practice and seeing it grow in size and scope into what it is today. Our practice largely focuses on helping clients identify and apply meaningful ESG policies and concepts to a broad spectrum of operations and transactions. Our clients' greatest barrier to entry is often lack of experience, and we get to help bridge that knowledge gap. My hope is that our work can have a meaningful impact by helping to educate and standardize the broader market with respect to setting and accomplishing realistic and attainable ESG goals.

Q: What is it about fund finance and ESG work that keeps you inspired and coming back to work every day?

Deborah Low: Fund finance is fascinating in that it relates to larger global economic questions. The industry is helping to drive investment around the world, which is pretty cool.

When it comes to ESG, one thing I'm always encouraged by is the volume of interest we get in the topic from existing and new clients. Even though there are challenges in implementing successful ESG policies and practices, it's great that there are many companies with ambitious ESG goals that we can try to help them accomplish.

Q: What issues do you find yourself working on a lot lately that are particularly interesting?

Deborah Low: In finance, there has been a lot of focus on ensuring stability following the bank failures, rising interest rates and changing capital requirements, among other market fluctuations in the last year. These changes have shaken the market in different ways, so we've been busy helping clients navigate evolving conditions and protect against future disruption.

In ESG, we are always recalibrating our expectations and plans for what can and should be done. There is a lot of interest from clients in incorporating initiatives while still being mindful of differing opinions and being realistic about the pace of progress. It's a moving target, but we're figuring out what is both impactful and attainable.

Q: What makes you happy outside of work and refuels you to come back to the office?

Deborah Low: Honestly, I'm normal. I love to travel. Recent trips include Iceland in June and last New Year's Eve in South Africa. And I'm always trying new restaurants around New York City.