

Rising Star: King & Spalding's Margaret Nettesheim

By Sarah Jarvis

Law360 (August 14, 2025, 4:00 PM EDT) -- Margaret Nettesheim of King & Spalding LLP is overseeing the development of the third-party risk management process at an international infrastructure company in the Middle East as it builds a megaproject, earning her a spot among the compliance attorneys under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

Her biggest case:

Nettesheim has a leading role in ongoing work helping a Middle Eastern infrastructure company develop its third-party risk management process for what she called a "futuristic mega project." She said the client is anonymous due to the confidential nature of compliance matters.

The project was a large undertaking for Nettesheim because the company onboards "literally thousands" of third-party service providers to help deliver its project, she said.

Her work has included designing and implementing a technology-enabled platform for service provider diligence, as well as monitoring the risks for those service providers. She also conducted an organization-wide compliance review of incident and breach response procedures, offering recommendations to improve those responses.

Nettesheim said it's somewhat unusual in the compliance field today to help a large company develop a program from the ground up.

"Companies that reach that size normally have a compliance program in place by this point, but this was a unique client in that they were a startup — but also at an extremely large scale," Nettesheim said. "So they were needing to quickly scale up their

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Margaret Nettesheim
King & Spalding

Age: 36

Home base: London

Position: Counsel

Law school: Georgetown University
Law Center

First job after law school: Associate
at Stein Mitchell

compliance function, particularly in relation to third-party risk management."

What motivates her:

Nettesheim said she's driven by curiosity and the process of learning about her clients' work, and that enables her to offer solid compliance advice.

"I think a big part of compliance work and doing a good job with compliance advice is understanding my clients' businesses and the different people involved and the specific risks that come up," she said. "That really requires a detailed understanding of the practicalities of how they're doing business and where they're doing business and who their business partners are."

Why she's a compliance attorney:

Nettesheim said that on the micro level, she was drawn to this line of work because she could learn about a wide variety of sectors and how her global clients do business in different jurisdictions while navigating cross-border risk and different cultural norms.

And on the macro level, she enjoys helping companies combat fraud and corruption in their sectors. Nettesheim said corruption and misconduct have a "massive impact on people's lives."

"Public sector corruption can really undermine essential infrastructure for populations in developing countries, and there's a real human impact to that type of corruption," she said. "So I like being part of the solution."

Nettesheim said that while there is a common narrative that companies are willing to cut corners to make a profit at the expense of good compliance, that hasn't been her experience at all.

"The vast majority of clients that I work with are really committed to compliance, and they genuinely want to get it right and be good corporate actors," she said. "I really enjoy being part of that."

How she thinks her practice will change in the next 10 years:

Nettesheim believes artificial intelligence will alter the compliance field in the years to come, including through the development of ways to integrate the technology into compliance programs to improve efficiency.

"I think that's going to require some really careful and clever work to make sure that reliance on AI doesn't undermine the human element of needing to understand those very human drivers behind certain behaviors that can undermine compliance," she said.

Nettesheim also said the general landscape when it comes to national priorities and different jurisdictions will affect the compliance world, pointing as an example to the way the U.S. Department of Justice has tightened its guidelines for enforcement of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act during President Donald Trump's second term.

She said companies will grapple with these different policy agendas in various countries that have large anticorruption enforcement regimes in coming years.

"We'll see companies working out how to balance honing in on these really topical risks without

neglecting the overarching compliance priorities that they have, and adjusting in a way that makes sense for them based on where they're exposed to potential liability," Nettesheim said.

--As told to Sarah Jarvis. Editing by Linda Voorhis.

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2025 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,100 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2025, to be eligible for this year's award.