WWL
Thought Leaders
Germany 2019

Interviews with the pinnacle of the profession
Ute Jasper

What attracted you to pursue a career in public procurement?
What appealed to me about this area of law is the creativity of the work and the need for fantasy and ideas. I can work on major, exciting projects that require legal, business and (frequently) political guidance. Another interesting aspect for me is that the consulting covers numerous interlocking areas of law. It goes without saying that the success of the project is also decisive.

What do clients look for in an effective government contracts lawyer?
In my view, clients expect outstanding legal knowledge and experience of political objectives. They also expect creativity and the ability to develop ideas for solving complex projects.

How has the market changed since you started practising?
During my 28 years as a lawyer there has been an increase in the complexity of the requirements. For example, the risk resulting from legal disputes has risen, as has the volume of regulations.

How is the growing movement against diesel use affecting this area of practice?
The growing movement against diesel use has resulted in a high number of related projects, in areas such as electro-mobility, air pollution control and local public transport.

What makes Heuking Kühn Löer Wojtek stand out from its competitors in the market?
Heuking Kühn Löer Wojtek has the largest public sector and public procurement team in Germany. So we can handle the highest number of retainers in this legal field, with the largest consultancy volume in Germany. Also for several years, my team and I have received the top awards from Chambers, Handelsblatt, Best Lawyers, The Legal 500 and Jure.

What has been the most interesting case you have ever been a part of?
One particularly interesting case in which I was involved was the construction of the Elbphilharmonie concert hall in Hamburg. It is a flagship work of architecture – and so was the building process in which we developed a model for future PPP projects for our client, RoGe Hamburg. The contract included the turnkey construction, as well as the functional warranty and building management for the entire complex at a fixed lump sum price.

How do you see your practice developing over the next five years?
I assume fee volumes and the number of lawyers will continue to increase. We will also be faced with a high volume of major projects that necessitate additional consulting. In future we will need to offer even more comprehensive consulting in all areas of law for the public sector, including project organization.

What advice would you give to someone looking to start out in public procurement?
Public procurement is not an area of law that can be mastered as a "small-time lawyer". Lawyers in this field must offer holistic thinking, creativity, a broad base and the ability to read balance sheets and understand political motives.