

Crowell & Moring Enters Boston Through Combination With Life Sciences Boutique

By Abigail Adcox

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What You Need to Know

- As Crowell continues to build out its transactional capabilities, the firm has combined with a Boston-based boutique Faber Daeufer & Itrato.
- Of the 24 Faber lawyers, eight are joining as partners, seven as senior counsel, six as counsel and three as associates.
- Crowell will open a Boston office, joining other Big Law firms that have opened a location in the market.

Crowell & Moring is launching in Boston by combining with a nearly 50-person boutique, as the biotech and life sciences industries continue to attract more Big Law firms to the city.

Crowell said Tuesday it was combining with Faber Daeufer & Itrato, a Boston-founded boutique specializing in corporate and transactional counsel in the drug, life sciences and emerging technology sectors. In total, 24 lawyers and 20 professional staff from Faber will be joining Crowell in Boston, New York, San Francisco and London.

It's the latest Am Law 100 firm to enter Boston. Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer; Covington & Burling; Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld; Paul Hastings; and Blank Rome, among others, have



Photo: Diego M. Radzinski/ALM

opened an office in the market in recent years, attracted to Beantown's biotech sector. Other firms have been active in lateral hiring in Boston so far this year.

The Crowell combination also builds out a life sciences offering for the firm.

The Faber team includes former in-house lawyers and business executives in biopharma, private fund professionals and contract specialists from pharmaceutical companies, Crowell said. Faber has advised clients on matters from M&A, to product and platform licensing, to day-to-day contracts.

Joseph Faber, founder and managing principal of Faber, said the firm has worked with over 2,500 clients in the life sciences space, particularly

biotech drug developers, since its inception. Faber said the firm had been looking at a combination in recent years, driven by client needs.

"We've been thinking about not just what has worked well in serving [clients] the past bunch of years, but what they're going to need in the next few years," said Faber. "We want to continue to provide the close counseling that we could from a boutique platform, but we were increasingly concerned that our clients were facing so many trends that required a broader skill set and lawyering that we started exploring combination, and Crowell has been a perfect fit for us."

Out of the 24 Faber lawyers, eight are joining as partners, seven as senior counsel, six as counsel and three as associates.

The moves continue to expand the transactional practices of Crowell, a firm well known for its litigation, regulatory and government contracting areas.

"Our strategic plan includes a strong priority for building out our transactional capacity, broadly trying to do that in ways that naturally and robustly intersect with our regulatory core strengths," said Crowell Chair Phil Inglima. "We have excellent practices that are adjacent to life sciences, but we had not been deep in that area by any means in the past, and with our considerable IP development in the last several years and our desire to tap all of those intersects, life sciences was a great area to get into, and these folks are simply best in class."

Crowell has been expanding its transactional capabilities in recent years. In 2021, Crowell, acting on its long desire to expand in New York, combined with financial services boutique

Kibbe & Orbe, adding 24 lawyers in three cities. Through the deal, Crowell gained a traditional New York financial services base. And, in 2023, a 10-lawyer group from Stook & Stook & Lavan joined the firm in New York.

Crowell has also expanded IP offerings in 2021, merging with IP boutique Brinks Gilson & Lione in Chicago.

Crowell's Boston office will be its 12th location worldwide. The firm has existing offices in Washington, D.C., Brussels, London, Chicago, New York, among other locations.

"As our client base in the Boston area has grown, we have increasingly looked at opening an office to address this growing demand. The combination with Faber, which has deep Boston roots, provides Crowell and our clients with an excellent platform in one of the most dynamic legal markets in the U.S.," Stephen McBrady, a member of Crowell's executive committee, said in a firm statement.

Despite more law firms crowding into Boston, demand for biotech expertise continues to grow.

"In the several decades that I've been involved in biotech in Boston, we've seen continual expansion and, if anything, maybe acceleration of that expansion," Faber said.

For Crowell, the firm has already been eyeing other possible talent additions in Boston, with the "most likely areas" being health care, white collar and government contracts, Inglima said.

"We're extremely optimistic and reassured by everything we've heard and seen so far from the legacy Faber clients, and we really expect that to be the greatest benefit to both of the teams as we go forward as one," Inglima said.