



Business & Practice

Crowell & Moring Merges With Boston Life Sciences Firm Faber

June 3, 2025, 12:01 AM EDT

- New legal operation went live on Monday after collaboration
- Crowell seeks to deepen its life sciences corporate bench

Crowell & Moring has absorbed a 24-lawyer dealmaking boutique, with a major client in Alphabet Inc.'s venture capital arm, as part of the law firm's plan to grow a base of life sciences clients.

Crowell announced the combination with Faber Daeufer & Itrato on Tuesday, after what the leaders of both firms described as a six-month collaboration.

The tie-up deepens Crowell's "limited" capabilities in the life sciences and emerging companies areas, Philip T. Inglima, chair of the firm's management board, said in an interview. The combination also allows Crowell to expand its real estate footprint in Boston, a key geographic area for life sciences and start-ups where Faber has an office and Crowell has a few lawyers servicing clients from other locations.

"Growth in our transaction practices is a priority, and they bring us that in spades," Inglima said of Faber. "They bring us great credibility in life sciences and depth in the emerging companies and venture capital practice, where we only had a limited amount before."

Faber in October represented Google Ventures, the venture capital arm of Alphabet Inc., as the lead investor in a \$32.3 million fundraising round for primary care provider PeopleOne Health. The firm's lawyers advised GV months earlier in a \$125 million financing round for drugmaker Santa Ana Bio, according to Faber's website. The firm also advised drugmaker Tasca Therapeutics Corp. last year in a Series A financing round worth \$52 million.

The transaction comes as the number of first-quarter mergers involving at least one US law firm ticked up slightly compared to the previous year. The tie-up that created Troutman Pepper Locke—the combined operations of Troutman Pepper and Locke Lord—was the largest of the 22 law firm mergers in the quarter, resulting in a firm with more than 1,600 lawyers, according to Fairfax Associates. More recently, global firm Herbert Smith Freehills tied up with Manhattan-based Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel in a combination that went into effect Sunday.

Smaller deals are much more common: About 77% of the first-quarter mergers this year involved firms similar to Faber—those with between five and 20 lawyers, according to Fairfax.

Joseph Faber, a cofounder who served as its managing principal, said the firm over the last few years has been exploring the possibility of a merger to meet the needs of its emerging company clientele, which has grown to encompass cyber security and cross-boarder regulatory matters.

"With transactions becoming more complicated, we've been working with lots of law firms to support us," said Faber, the former associate general counsel of Millennium Pharmaceuticals. "That can work well, but at a certain point, you lose something in the lack of integration and ability to counsel clients with people at the same firm who deeply understand what is going on with that client."

The firm, founded in 2003, exclusively handles transactional and corporate work for companies and investors in the life sciences industry, Faber said.

Faber's Role

Crowell generated \$626 million in revenue in 2024 and has more than 600 lawyers, according to data compiled by the American Lawyer. Inglima and Faber declined to comment on the combined firm's expected revenue.

Faber will have a leadership role at the combined firm, he and Inglima said, overseeing the post-merger integration and operations of Crowell's life sciences practice. His specific title hasn't been worked out yet.

Crowell last month took the Trump administration to court on behalf of the American Association of Physicians for Human Rights Inc. to challenge president's executive order targeting the funding of research grants for institutions that provide services to transgender individuals. The pro bono engagement came about through Crowell's longstanding relationship with Lambda Legal—and the firm didn't have a pre-existing relationship with the association—according to a firm spokesperson.

Although Trump has been targeting firms for pro bono work adverse to his administration's goals, Inglima said Crowell is carrying forward business as usual. "We are simply doing what we think is right whether pro bono or paying clients—that hasn't changed," he said.

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