

John Clendenin

Partner



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Venture Capital
Fund Formation
Emerging Companies
Technology
Spacotech and Satellite

John is the chair of Cooley's global fund formation practice group. His practice focuses on the representation of domestic and international investment funds – including venture capital, private equity, fund of funds, secondary funds and special opportunity funds in connection with their formation, operation and investment activities. He has represented sponsor organizations in the formation of more than 125 fund programs, ranging from some of the most well-known, multibillion-dollar investment firms to much smaller firms forming seed and early-stage venture capital, angel and similar microcap funds. In addition to his fund formation practice, John also represents a number of emerging growth companies in financing transactions and general corporate matters.

John is consistently recognized as a leading fund formation lawyer by prestigious publications, such as The Legal 500 US and Chambers USA. Since 2020, The Legal 500 US has ranked him in the Investment Fund Formation and Management – Private Equity Funds (including Venture Capital) category, while Chambers USA has included him in its Venture Capital: Fund Formation rankings for both nationwide and California regions. Notably, John also achieved Band 1 tier recognition from Chambers for the California region in 2024.

John received a joint JD/MBA degree from the University of California, Davis, in 2005. In law school, he served as the editor-in-chief for the UC Davis Business Law Journal and a member of the Moot Court Board. During business school, John concentrated on finance and was elected to the Beta Gamma Sigma honor society. He earned his BA, magna cum laude, in business administration from the University of Washington in 2001.

John is a member of the State Bar of California.

Education

University of California at Davis King Hall School of Law JD, 2005

University of California, Davis MBA, Beta Gamma Sigma, 2005

University of Washington BA, magna cum laude, 2001

Admissions & Credentials

California

Rankings & Accolades

Chambers USA: Venture Capital: Fund Formation – California (2024 – 2026)

Chambers USA: Venture Capital: Fund Formation – Nationwide (2020 – 2026)

The Legal 500 US: Investment Fund Formation and Management – Private Equity Funds
(Including Venture Capital) (2020 – 2025)