

Melissa M. Adams, PhD

Principal



T (617) 248-4917 | M (919) 621-3305
madams@choate.com

Practice Areas

Intellectual Property Protection
Life Sciences & Technology Companies

Education

Suffolk University Law School
JD (2020)
*Intellectual Property Law Concentration
with Distinction*

Harvard University
PhD (2014) Biology
Microbial Sciences Fellow

Stanford University
MS (2007) Biology

North Carolina State University
BS (2004) Biology, *summa cum laude*
Phi Beta Kappa
BA (2004) Journalism, *summa cum laude*

Admissions

Massachusetts
U.S. Patent & Trademark Office

Dr. Melissa Adams uses her multi-disciplinary understanding of the life sciences, patent law, and strategic intellectual property issues to help a wide range of early-stage to established biotechnology clients to grow and protect the value of their strategic IP portfolios. Focused on patent prosecution and portfolio development, intellectual property due diligence, and intellectual property-related strategic transactions, Melissa has particular expertise in biotechnology and pharmaceuticals including biologics, cell therapy, gene therapy, gene editing, immunology, and microbiology.

Melissa's Ph.D. research at Harvard University focused on utilizing next-generation sequencing and molecular biology to study energy-generating metabolisms in deep sea microorganisms. She has extensive scientific expertise in molecular biology, microbiology, genomics, and bioinformatics.

Melissa also has experience as a Scientific Editor. She reviewed and revised research publications from non-native English speakers in a broad range of subject areas including cell biology, chemistry, genetics, neuroscience, physiology, and systems biology.

Representative Engagements

Patent Prosecution and Portfolio Management

- Prepared and successfully prosecuted complex patent applications with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and in over 30 foreign jurisdictions.
- Strategically managing multiple patent portfolios for clients from startups to multinational corporations.

Due Diligence and Competitive Surveillance

- Providing IP counsel and due diligence on behalf of biotechnology company for its clinical trial candidate.
- Conducted freedom-to-operate, landscape, and patentability analyses.
- Designed and implemented competitive surveillance programs.

Strategic Transactions

- Provided intellectual property analyses and support for financing transactions including Series A and B fundraising.
- Assisted with drafting and negotiating intellectual property-related agreements.

Publications and Presentations

- "Building a Successful Career in IP," panelist, IPWatchdog Women's IP Forum, August 2024

- “Practicing Patent Law,” panelist, Boston Patent Law Association, October 2022
- “Practicing Patent Law,” panelist, Boston Patent Law Association, October 2018
- “Leveraging your PhD,” panelist, Harvard University, March 2016
- “Anaerobic oxidation of short-chain alkanes in hydrothermal sediments: potential influences on sulfur cycling and microbial diversity,” first author, *Frontiers in Extreme Microbiology*, 4:1-11
- “Anaerobic methane oxidation in metalliferous hydrothermal sediments: influence on carbon flux and decoupling from sulfate reduction,” first author, *Environmental Microbiology*, 14(10):2726-40
- “Phosphorus deprivation responses and phosphonate utilization in a thermophilic *Synechococcus* sp. from microbial mats,” first author, *Journal of Bacteriology*, 190(24): 8171-8184

Professional and Community Involvement

- Co-Chair of the Ethics Committee of the Boston Patent Law Association
- Mentor in Harvard Graduate Women in Science and Engineering (HGWISE) Program
- Member of the Association for Women in Science
- Member of Team in Training
- Member of Phi Delta Phi

Recognition

- *The Legal 500* (2025)
- *Best Lawyers in America: “Ones to Watch”* (2026)
- *Massachusetts Super Lawyers* Rising Star
- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship
- Center for Dark Energy Biosphere Investigations Graduate Fellowship