

François Grondin Ad. E.

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Class Action Defence
Administrative and Public Law
Appellate Advocacy
Contract Disputes
Defamation & Media Law
Environmental Disputes

François Grondin has earned a sterling reputation as a litigation lawyer with extensive experience, credibility and drive. He has a diverse practice encompassing an array of complex civil, commercial and public law matters, including large-scale class actions, highly publicized cases, and thorny constitutional disputes. Well versed in the stringent requirements of commissions of inquiry, he has raised BLG's profile through his work on the Chamberland, Gomery, and Oliphant commissions.

His exemplary track record and outstanding advocacy skills enable him to represent a wide range of clients, including many prominent companies seeking a seasoned, pragmatic, relentless, and attentive lawyer to handle sensitive matters of critical importance. François also takes on a variety of professional liability cases (both civil and disciplinary), environmental matters, penal proceedings, extraordinary remedies (injunctions, judicial review and declaratory judgment applications, etc.) and defamation files, for both plaintiffs and defendants. His vast knowledge extends to judicial ethics; in fact, he has been representing the Conférence des juges de la Cour du Québec for nearly a decade, and acted on its behalf before the judges' remuneration committee in 2021 and 2024.

Benchmark Canada recognized his contribution to the legal profession as early as 2015 by naming him a Litigation Star in the General Commercial and Professional Liability categories, and has ranked him as the Local Litigation Star for Québec since 2020. *Chambers Canada* has recognized his talent in the Litigation: General Commercial category (Québec) since 2022. François was named Advocatus Emeritus (Ad. E.) by the Barreau du Québec in 2020 and was inducted as a Fellow of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers in 2022. He was an Excellence Awardee in the Litigator of the Year category of the 2023 Canadian Law Awards, in addition to being highly ranked by *Chambers*.

On the class actions front, François was involved in some of BLG's most memorable wins, including:

- *Procureur général du Québec c. Compagnie de chemin de fer Canadien Pacifique*, which concerned a high-profile rail accident in Lac-Mégantic. Dismissal of the class action was confirmed on the merits by the Québec Court of Appeal in 2025, following an initial victory before the Superior Court of Québec in *Ouellet c. Compagnie de chemin de fer Canadien Pacifique et al.*;
- *Pollués de Montréal-Trudeau c. Aéroports de Montréal*, an environmental class action dismissed at the authorization stage by the trial judge, whose decision was confirmed by the Québec Court of Appeal;
- *Benabu v. Google*, also dismissed at the authorization stage in a decision confirmed on appeal.

François appears regularly before all levels of court, including Québec's Superior Court and Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada. He has been involved in an increasing number of high-profile cases requiring impeccable preparation and unwavering skill even under media scrutiny.

He recently represented the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees before the Supreme Court in the *Kanyinda* case, which was about refugee claimants' eligibility for subsidized daycare. He is also representing the Lord Reading Law Society before the Supreme Court in the challenge to Bill 21 (*An Act respecting the laicity of the State*), which prohibits public-sector employees from wearing certain religious symbols at work.

François is adept at conflict management. Driven by a strong sense of duty and dedication to his clients, he constantly looks for the best and fairest solution in any situation, knowing that sometimes a negotiated compromise is better than going to court. Whether at the negotiating table or in the courtroom, he defends his clients' interests with the utmost skill.

François sat on BLG's Partnership Board (2020-2026), a national leadership position he obtained after spending a number of years on the Regional Compensation Advisory Committee for the Montréal office. He also served on the board of Mira Foundation for 17 years.

Experience

- FNF and al. against the CNQ, to confirm the legality of Plaintiffs' operations under the *Notaries Act*, as it was modified in October 2023.
- **Canadian Pacific Railway Company**: acts in a class action related to the Lac-Mégantic train derailment
- **JTI-Macdonald Corp.:** represents JTI-Macdonald Corp. in a class action against tobacco companies
- **Google**: acts in two class actions before the Superior Court
- **Aéroports de Montréal**: acts for Aéroports de Montréal in class actions, injunction proceedings and commercial litigations
- **Conférence des juges de la Cour du Québec**: represented the Conférence in the reference before the Court of Appeal regarding the constitutional validity of the competence afforded to the Quebec Court's jurisdiction and represented it in an application for judicial review against the Government of Québec
- Involved in class actions related to smoking, as well as the defence of the action taken by the Attorney General of Québec to recover healthcare costs incurred as a result of tobacco consumption
- Acted as one of the lawyers representing the Commission Chamberland in its inquiry into police practices and their potential impact on the protection of the confidentiality of journalistic sources
- Participated in the Oliphant Commission and was part of a team of lawyers that represented the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney
- Pleaded before the Gomery Commission and defended judges before the Canadian Judicial Council and the Conseil de la magistrature du Québec

- Involved in class action matters and frequently pleads before the Superior Court and the Court of Appeal of Québec

Insights & Events

- Author, "The Court of Appeal upholds the dismissal of an environmental class action at the authorization stage", BLG Article, February 2023
- Action collective – Rétrospective de l'année 2020 au Québec, BLG Perspective, March 2021
- Co-author, "Responsabilité extracontractuelle de l'État," Droit administratif, 2018
- Co-author, "Les principes directeurs de la procédure civile," La Procédure Civile, 2017
- Co-author, "Présomptions," Preuve et prescription, 2017
- Collabore à l'encyclopédie JurisClasseur de LexisNexis (volet Droit administratif).

Beyond Our Walls

Professional Involvement

- Member, Canadian Bar Association
- Member, The Advocates' Society
- Instructor, course on evidence, procedure and obligations at the École du Barreau du Québec, 2006-2023

Community Involvement

- Member of the Board of Directors, Mira Foundation
- Member of the Board of Directors, Joé Juneau Foundation

Awards & Recognition

- Recognized in the 2027 edition (and since 2020) of *The Best Lawyers in Canada* (Class Action Litigation). Also recognized since 2012 (Corporate and Commercial Litigation)
- Recognized in the 2027 edition (and since 2022) of *Chambers Canada* (Litigation: General Commercial [Québec])
- Selected as an "Excellence Awardee" for Litigator of the Year at the 2023 Canadian Law Awards
- Recognized in the 2026 edition (and 2023) of *The Legal 500 Canada* (Dispute Resolution)
- Recognized in the 2026 edition (and since 2023) of *The Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory* (Litigation - Corporate Commercial), 2024 edition (Litigation - Regulatory & Public Law) and 2020-2013 editions (Litigation – Corporate Commercial, Litigation – Product Liability, Class Actions)
- Recognized in the 2026 edition (and since 2020) of the *Benchmark Canada – The Definitive Guide to Canada's Leading Litigation Firms & Attorneys* as a "Local Litigation Star: Québec" and in the 2018 edition (and since 2015) as a "Litigation Star: General Commercial, Professional Liability"
- Recognized in the 2026 edition of *Lexpert Special Edition: Technology*
- Recognized in the 2021 edition (and since 2020) of *Best Lawyers in Canada*® (Class Action Litigation). Also recognized in the 2021 edition (and since 2012) (Corporate and Commercial Litigation)
- Recognized in the 2025, 2024 and 2020 editions of *Lexpert Special Edition: Litigation*
- Named Advocatus Emeritus (Ad. E.) of the Barreau du Québec 2020

Bar Admission & Education

- Québec, 1991

- LLB, Université Laval, 1990
- LLM in International Law (Honourable Mention), University of Nottingham, 1992

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As the largest, truly full-service Canadian law firm, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (BLG) delivers practical legal advice for domestic and international clients across more practices and industries than any Canadian firm. With over 800 lawyers, intellectual property agents and other professionals, BLG serves the legal needs of businesses and institutions across Canada and beyond – from M&A and capital markets, to disputes, financing, and trademark & patent registration.

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