Neslihan I. Doran-Civan

Partner

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Services

Asset Creation - Prosecution & Counseling

Intellectual Property

Patents

Industries

Financial Services

Health & Life Sciences

Media & Entertainment

Retail & Consumer Goods

Nesli Doran-Civan is the Managing Partner for the firm's San Francisco and Walnut Creek offices. Nesli is a registered patent attorney who focuses her practice on patent preparation and prosecution in domestic and foreign jurisdictions for a wide variety of technologies including aeronautical and mechanical systems (e.g. unmanned or autonomous vehicles, EV, hybrid vehicles), medical devices, as well as electronics and software technologies.

Before joining the firm, Nesli worked as an associate in the Boston, Massachusetts office of a large East Coast law firm where she prepared and prosecuted domestic and foreign patent applications in the areas of software, avionics, mechanical systems, clean energy generation and storage systems, clean technology, medical devices, surgical tools, and medical implants. Nesli started practicing before the USPTO in 2007, becoming a patent attorney in 2012. She holds dual M.S. degrees from MIT in Aerospace Engineering and Technology and Policy. During her graduate and undergraduate education, she worked as a research assistant at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Istanbul Technical University, focusing on control theory and control systems.

Nesli was recognized as 2019, 2020, and 2021 Northern California “Rising Star” and a 2013 Massachusetts “Rising Star” for Intellectual Property by *Super Lawyers* magazine. She was honored in 2026 as one of the "Most Influential Women in Bay Area Business" by the *San Francisco Business Journal*. Nesli's native language is Turkish, and she is fluent in French.

Education

Suffolk University Law School J.D. (2011) *cum laude*

MIT M.S. (2005) Aeronautics and Astronautics

MIT M.S. (2005) Technology and Policy

Istanbul Technical University B.S. (2000) Aerospace Engineering, Concentration in Spacecraft Control

Admissions

California (2018)

Massachusetts (2011)

Court Admissions

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (2007)

Professional & Community Activities

The Bar Association of San Francisco, Board of Directors, Member (2023-2026)

American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Member

Women’s Bar Association, Member

Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, 2025 Class of Fellows

Insights

Publication

Kilpatrick’s San Francisco head: reduced hours are not a ‘punitive exile’
March 10, 2026

News

Kilpatrick's New SF Head Enjoys Thrill of Patent Work 'Puzzle'
January 26, 2026

News Releases

Kilpatrick Names Nesli Doran-Civan Managing Partner of the San Franciso Office
January 7, 2026

Events

Patent Drafting Masterclass
November 13, 2025

Publication

Broader Eligibility for AI-Related Patents May Be Coming
October 30, 2025