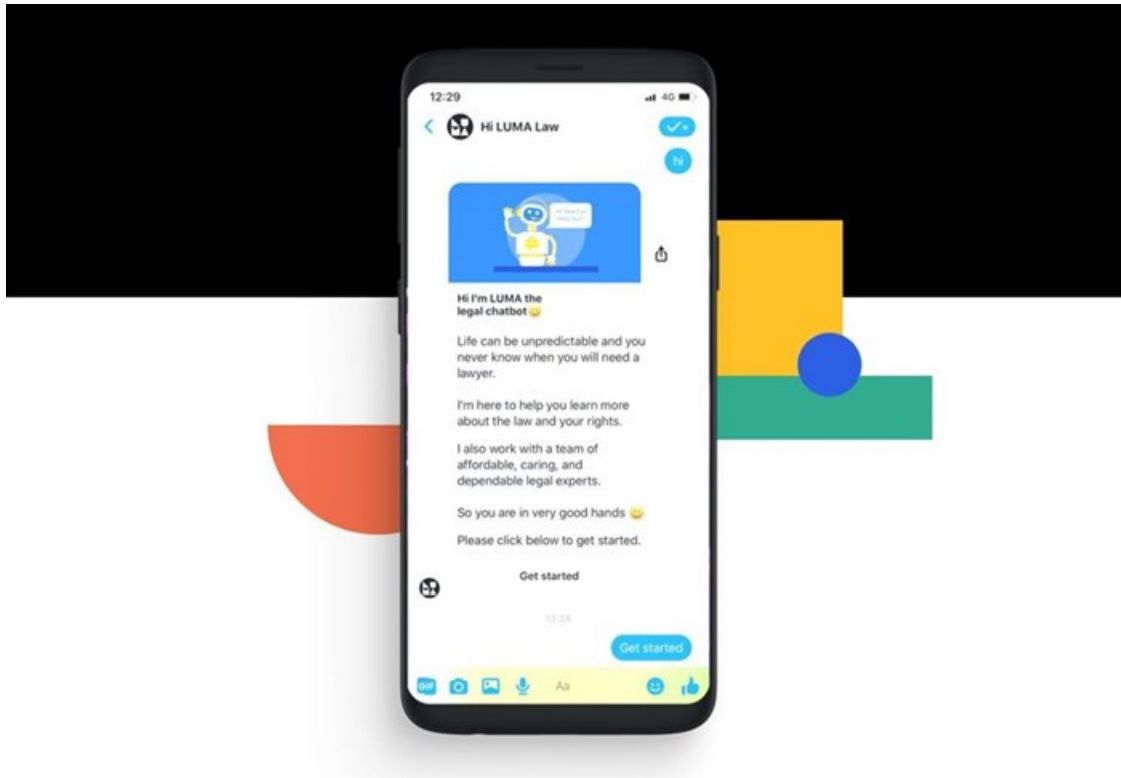


# Free legal help for South Africans

Issued by [Helm](#)

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LUMA and Praekelt.com have co-created a chatbot that makes legal help available and accessible to all South Africans.



LUMA walks the justice journey with its users, who can now [access legal information](#) and advice at any time of the day or night. From the comfort of their own palms, South Africans can learn about the law and how it could affect their everyday decisions – both big and small.

LUMA currently provides free legal information relating to labour and family law. Access to lawyers for further assistance is also provided, with consultations starting from R270.

With legalese being hard to understand for many people outside of the profession, LUMA has found a way around judicial jargon through the art of storytelling. Using hypothetical stories relating to the laws in question, users can easily identify with situations that are relevant to them, rather than having to sift through latin legal terms to find what they need.

The bot is the brainchild of Grace Gichanga, who entered the SAB Foundation Social Innovation and Disability Empowerment Awards in 2019. As you can imagine, she won, and chose technology and service design company Praekelt.com to help bring her vision to life.

“When I first pitched LUMA, I knew it was a lofty idea,” says Gichanga. “I didn’t even know what a chatbot was at the time, but now I see it as a technological solution to a very human problem that we’re solving together with Praekelt.com.”

LUMA is built using Praekelt’s Feersum Engine, an AI-powered conversational platform that builds Intelligent Assistants with the ability to chat to millions of users in multiple local languages. Combining elements of machine learning, conversation

design and good old-fashioned legal expertise, this particular bot is the very definition of co-creation.

“Collaborating with paralegals and watching them lend their real-world experience to a digital platform really helped us design these conversations from a place of understanding,” says Praekelt Service and Interaction Designer Cassandra Nel. “This unique dynamic created a powerful and impactful product that inspired us to think more carefully about the role technology can play in empowering people.”

The groundbreaking first release is going to make a massive change for those in need of legal help. With plans of expansion already afoot, the future of LUMA is looking bright.

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[Praekelt.com](https://praekelt.com)

*Praekelt is a technology and service design company, whose AI-powered conversational platform Feersum Engine builds Intelligent Assistants with the ability to chat to millions of users in multiple local languages.*

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