



Jeff Lillien's Career Overview

Bridging Finance and Tech Through Innovative Legal Solutions

Early Life & Education

Jeff Lillien was born and raised in Chicago and its suburbs, where a vibrant mix of cultures and communities shaped his early experiences. Growing up in a first-generation American household, he developed an intense curiosity and an early aptitude for mathematics. These skills, noticed from a young age, laid the groundwork for his deep interest in analytical thinking

and complex problem-solving. His family encouraged his engagement with current events, governance, and financial developments. These early exposures influenced his academic focus, leading him to study Economics—a field aligned with his passion for understanding societal structures and systems.

Jeff began his higher education at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where his academic development was strongly influenced by a professor whose mentorship significantly shaped his approach to critical thinking, particularly in areas of public policy and institutional analysis. At MIT, he expanded his understanding of how mathematical and technological tools could be used to solve real-world issues. During this time, he also lived in La Maison Française, or the French House, which contributed to his fluency in French and laid the foundation for his later certification in commercial French from the Paris Chamber of Commerce.

Continuing his education, Lillien enrolled in New York University School of Law. There, he was honored with a position in the Law Review and later became an editor—recognition that reflected his commitment to rigorous legal scholarship. He returned to Chicago for a year to complete his legal studies as a visiting student at Northwestern University School of Law. These combined academic experiences gave him a robust legal foundation and an understanding of how law, commerce, and technology intersect in practice.

Career

Motivated in part by his family's legal and financial challenges, Jeffrey chose to pursue a career in law. His first professional role was as an associate at Mayer Brown in Chicago, a leading national law firm. In this role, he focused on areas including lending and securities law, where he refined his expertise in regulatory analysis and complex financial transactions.

As his career evolved, Lillien became known for shaping new financial products and developing legal and business frameworks that support innovation while maintaining market integrity. His contributions span traditional finance and emerging technologies, often bridging gaps between existing financial structures and more modern digital systems. His legal practice has been centered in Chicago and New York City, reflecting a commitment to connecting regional legal work with national and global financial systems.

Industry Contributions & Projects

Jeffrey Lillien has played a key role in several industry efforts to improve and modernize financial market practices. These contributions reflect a blend of conceptual development and practical implementation. Among the projects he has worked on are:

- **Foreign Exchange Global Code:** Supporting principles that encourage integrity and effective operations in the foreign exchange market.
- **Treasury Markets Best Practices:** Contributing to guidelines intended to strengthen transparency and accountability in U.S. Treasury markets.

- **Digitization and Capital Markets:** Co-authoring a white paper examining how digital infrastructure can improve transparency, efficiency, and risk management while proposing a classification system for digital financial assets.
- **Regulated Settlement Network:** Participating in an industry-led initiative to digitize the settlement of fixed-income securities using distributed ledger technology to reduce settlement risk.

Through these and other efforts, Jeff has worked to solve pressing challenges, including:

- Developing clear standards for ethical behavior in financial markets
- Updating legacy financial products to fit into modern technological systems
- Applying distributed ledger technology to minimize settlement risks and delays
- Enabling infrastructure for real-time, round-the-clock liquidity and asset transfers

His influence in these areas has contributed to the transformation of finance into a more coordinated and technologically integrated field.

Professional Memberships & Affiliations

Lillien remains actively involved in several professional organizations supporting the advancement and stability of global financial systems. These affiliations include:

- International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA), where he contributes to setting global standards for derivatives markets
- The Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA) supports work that benefits broker-dealers, investment banks, and asset managers.
- Global Financial Markets Association (GFMA), which promotes resilience and efficiency in capital markets worldwide
- Financial Markets Lawyers Group (FMLG), which focuses on appropriate legal frameworks and conduct in the foreign exchange market

In these roles, he has regularly spoken at conferences hosted by central banks in the United States, United Kingdom, Japan, and Europe and at events organized by the professional associations listed above.

Publications & Media

Jeffrey has written and co-authored multiple white papers and articles addressing key financial themes such as digital transformation, market reform, and regulatory harmonization. His work has appeared in various industry and policy publications, and he has also been invited to participate in expert panels. Media articles have cited his views, especially in contexts where digital technology is used to modernize traditional financial practices. While formal links to these publications are being prepared, his contributions are already part of the ongoing professional conversation in these fields.

Pro Bono Work, Philanthropy & Community Involvement

Since the beginning of his academic journey, Lillien has remained committed to public service. At MIT, he volunteered with Tutoring Plus in Cambridge, helping middle-school students improve their math skills. This experience was personally significant and reflected the values encouraged by his mentor.

As an attorney, Jeff Lillien has performed extensive pro bono work. His early involvement centered on human rights, where he served on the boards of organizations such as the Midwest Immigrant Rights Center and Heartland Alliance. At Heartland, he also served as co-chair of its Human Rights Council. Additionally, he participated in advisory boards for international human rights programs at Northwestern and DePaul law schools. More recently, he has supported pro bono initiatives benefiting New York City's artist community and disabled military veterans nationwide. His work in these areas has been formally recognized with awards, which he considers meaningful acknowledgments of his long-standing commitment to service.

In addition to his legal work, Jeff has consistently contributed to charitable efforts focused on education and environmental causes, demonstrating a broader commitment to societal well-being.

Personal Life

A dedicated father, Lillien enjoys spending meaningful time with his child, particularly through shared musical and art interests. These moments reflect his belief in the importance of creativity and emotional connection in family life.

Jeffrey strongly connects to his roots in Chicago, proudly supporting local sports teams and enjoying the city's well-known pizza.

Throughout his life, Jeff Lillien has focused on blending legal, financial, and technological knowledge with a lasting commitment to public service and community engagement.