



Dan Ruan: Associate Project Manager

This month, in celebration of Women's History Month, LegitScript's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team features a Q&A with Dan Ruan for the company's inaugural staff spotlight.

Tell us a bit about yourself and your role at LegitScript.

My name is Dan Ruan. My pronouns are she/her. I joined the Product Management team as an associate project manager early last year. But I had previously worked as a Chinese language analyst on the Platform Monitoring team for six years.

What obstacles have you encountered in your career and how have you overcome them?

This is something I'm still trying to figure out: I've been combating my own assumptions — assumptions I make about other people or things, assumptions I think other people make about me, and so on. They could become a blocker when I'm stuck with them.

Practicing mindfulness has helped to clear some of those assumptions. But the most stubborn ones are those I make about myself.

Smita, my supervisor, called it out and pushed me for a change. She encouraged me to make it a conscious decision. It is empowering because it gives me a different perspective: instead of forcing myself into someone I am not, I can make a decision/choice on my own terms.

Who do you admire and why?

Professionally, there are many talented women and men I admire; for example, Smita, my supervisor and the VP of the Product Management team. She is someone who reflects how a female leader can be confident and authoritative, yet respectful and understanding as well. It means a lot to me, as a woman of color, to have her to look up to.



Personally, I've recently come to admire my mother more and more. My mum is a migrant. She married my father and moved across the country to Shanghai, China, where my dad is from. This was in the early 1980s and the city was not an immigrant-friendly place (not so much today either in some ways). The local people speak a dialect that is almost like a foreign language to people elsewhere. The discrimination toward an "outsider" could be blatant. For my mum, it sometimes came from the family she married into as well.

Navigating life in a foreign country myself makes me better understand what my mum has accomplished and I used to take that for granted. She had to start all over in her early 30s. It could be for small things like learning how to take me on a bike. I remember we picked a Sunday to practice so she could start biking me to school the next day. We fell to the ground as soon as she got on the bike the first time. But we mastered it very quickly.

My mum might be invisible compared to many accomplished people. But the incredible strength she displays inspires me and shows me how one can be a leader in her everyday life and in her own family.



What's your favorite secret spot in Portland?

This is probably not a "secret," but Women's Forum Viewpoint in the Gorge is my favorite place in Oregon. It has a great view and is less busy than the Vista House.

What's your favorite emoji to use on Slack? What are your top three frequently used emojis right now?

The dancing mushroom (🍄) is my new favorite. My most frequently used ones are:

- peace (🕊)
- dancing mushroom (🍄)
- happy cry (😂)



What is one thing you've done at LegitScript that you're really proud of?

I'm really proud of the Lunar New Year post I made on Workplace. I hope it makes those who celebrate the festival feel a bit special and it helps bring attention to those who don't usually celebrate. Many thanks to all who contributed ideas!

Thao Nguyen even asked me if she could repost the poster. That makes me feel so good! [happy cry] 😂