

Prof. Benjamin F. Hughes
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Professor Benjamin F. Hughes is an independent arbitrator at The Arbitration Chambers in Singapore and Fountain Court Chambers in London, adjunct professor at the National University of Singapore Faculty of Law, a member of the Court of Arbitration of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre and a member of the Investment Committees at Omni Bridgeway. Previously, Professor Hughes was a member of the faculty at Seoul National University Law School, the founding co-chair of the international dispute resolution practice group at one of Korea's largest full-service law firms and a member of the international arbitration team at Shearman & Sterling in the US and Singapore. Since leaving law firm practice in 2013, he has been appointed in over 150 arbitrations with several billion dollars in dispute.

Professor Hughes has served as arbitrator under the rules of the AAA/ICDR, ACICA, AIAC/KLRCA, BIAC/BAC, CAA, CIETAC, DIFC-LCIA, DIS, HKIAC, ICC, JAMS, JCAA, KCAB, LMAA, SCC, SCMA, SIAC, UNCITRAL (both administered and ad-hoc) and VIAC. He has also acted as emergency arbitrator and as sole arbitrator in expedited and fast-track proceedings and is a panel arbitrator of numerous arbitral institutions. His experience as arbitrator spans a broad range of commercial disputes, including joint venture and shareholder disputes, intellectual property and licensing, media and telecommunications, construction and infrastructure projects, energy and resources, shipping and shipbuilding, automobile and heavy machinery manufacturing, agency and distributorship agreements, military acquisition and procurement contracts, hotel management agreements, sale of goods and general commercial disputes. He has been appointed in cases seated in Australia, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong SAR, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States (including California, Hawaii, New York, and US territories) and Vietnam. He has heard cases governed by the laws of Australia, Austria, BVI, Cayman Islands, China, England and Wales, Fiji, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia (including *Sharia*), Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United States (including New York, California and US territories) and Vietnam, as well as *lex mercatoria* and the CISG. He has also handled complex conflict of law and jurisdictional issues, joinder and intervention applications, summary dismissal applications and disputes involving multiple contracts and applicable laws.

Professor Hughes is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and the Singapore Institute of Arbitrators. He has taught extensively in the field of international dispute resolution prior to joining NUS as an adjunct professor, including as associate professor of law at Seoul National University Law School and as a visiting professor at the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law and National Taiwan University Law School. Professor Hughes also serves on the editorial boards of the Asian International Arbitration Journal, the Korea Arbitration Review and the Journal of Korean Law.

Professor Hughes was educated in both the civil law and the common law traditions, having studied first at Seoul National University College of Law (MA, all coursework in Korean), and then at NYU School of Law (JD). While at NYU, he spent one semester at the University of Palermo Law School in Buenos Aires, Argentina (all coursework in Spanish). He also studied Chinese (Mandarin) in Beijing and East Asian history at Harvard University.

Recent Recognition:

Benjamin Hughes “is an absolutely first-rate arbitrator” who commentators endorse as someone who “can be trusted with any dispute.”

--Who’s Who Legal: Arbitration (2021)

Benjamin Hughes of Hughes Arbitration is an experienced international arbitrator, having been appointed on cases under the rules of many arbitral institutions. Sources report: “He is adept at adopting a very fair and gentle approach while remaining firm at the same time.”

--Chambers & Partners: Most in Demand Arbitrators, Singapore (2021)

Independent arbitrator Benjamin Hughes is confidently identified by one source, not only as “one of the best arbitrators in Asia,” but also as “one of the pre-eminent arbitrators of the future,” other sources specifically citing him for “very effective witness conferencing” and as a favoured co-arbitrator “because he is prepared, truly neutral, contributes and has a very good sense of humour.” Particularly well known for his longstanding - and continuing - association with Korean matters, he has broadened his range since relocating to Singapore and is now encountered handling arbitrations across the region, with connections to jurisdictions which include China, India, Malaysia and the Philippines.

--Chambers & Partners: Most in Demand Arbitrators, Asia-Pacific (2021)

Benjamin Hughes is a favourite among peers, who describe him as “the most sought-after American arbitrator based in Asia” and “a great practitioner.”

--Who’s Who Legal: Arbitration (2020)

Independent practitioner Benjamin Hughes is widely regarded as “an outstanding arbitrator with a particularly strong market reputation for Korean matters and as a person [whom] Korean clients can trust.” Interviewees clearly indicate that he remains “a shoo-in for Korea-related appointments,” but are also quick to point out that, having relocated from Seoul to Singapore and notably broadened the geographical scope of his practice, “his reputation now transcends country.” One source identifies him as “one of the new wave of arbitrators who are bringing a breath of fresh air to the space.” They also emphasise the “nice mix of the academic and commercial” in his approach, “the way he tries to create a consensus” in proceedings and the “efficient and decisive” manner he adopts in conducting them.

--Chambers & Partners: Most in Demand Arbitrators, Asia-Pacific (2020)

Benjamin Hughes is “the next star in Asia” according to commentators, who describe him as “a pleasure to appear before” and as someone who “delivers well-reasoned awards.”

--Who’s Who Legal: Arbitration (2019)

Independent Seoul-based practitioner Benjamin Hughes is consistently identified by sources as the pre-eminent international arbitrator on the South Korean scene, and is active across the region on a broad commercial range of commercial issues... He is very highly regarded by interviewees, one of whom notes: “We have encountered him on several cases in the past few years and have found him to be excellent,” while another notes specifically that he is “a very good chairman who is really good at running expert witness conferencing sessions.”

--Chambers & Partners: Most in Demand Arbitrators, Asia-Pacific (2019)

Benjamin Hughes is recognized by clients and peers as one of the foremost arbitrators in Asia.

--Who’s Who Legal: Arbitration (2018)

Independent Seoul-based practitioner Benjamin Hughes is acclaimed by one source as “the leading international arbitrator in the Korean market,” while another explicitly confirms his status as an arbitrator in high demand, noting that he is “someone who has really internalized the region’s linguistic and cultural considerations,” which gives him a “deep and significant understanding of Asian business parties.”

--Chambers & Partners: Most in Demand Arbitrators, Asia-Pacific (2018)

Professional Career:

March 2013 – present: Independent Arbitrator and Mediator

March 2019 – present: Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

March 2015 – Feb 2019: Associate Professor, School of Law, Seoul National University

Nov 2009 – Feb 2013: Partner and Co-chair, International Arbitration, Shin & Kim (Seoul)

Sept. 2007 – Nov. 2009: Senior Associate, International Arbitration and Litigation, Shearman & Sterling LLP (San Francisco and Singapore)

Sept. 2005 – Aug. 2007: Foreign Attorney, International Arbitration, Kim & Chang (Seoul)

Aug. 2004 – Aug. 2005: Associate, Shearman & Sterling LLP (San Francisco)

July 2002 – Aug. 2004: Associate, Latham & Watkins LLP (San Francisco)

Education:

NYU School of Law
JD, 2002
Dean Robert McKay Scholar
Global Legal Fellow

Seoul National University
College of Law
MA course, 1999
Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship
SNU Academic Scholarship

Harvard University
AM 1997
MA Thesis on Korean Legal History
Harvard-Yenching Institute Fellowship

Fulbright Grantee
1992-93
Seoul, Korea

Trinity University
BA 1989
President's Academic Scholarship

Languages:

English, Korean and Spanish; limited Mandarin.

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For additional information and a current CV, please see www.hughesarbitration.com.