

Press Release

Good Showing by SMU Mooters at International Arbitration Moot Competitions

Achievements are notable against the backdrop of Singapore's development as an international arbitration centre

Singapore, 19 May 2015 (Tuesday) – In developing Singapore as a dispute resolution hub, one of the government's strategies is in developing Singapore's international arbitration, alongside the development of litigation and international mediation. Singapore is now the third most preferred arbitration seat in the world after London and Geneva, and the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAS) has also seen an exponential increase in cases in the last 14 years, with the total value of disputes heard by the SIAS in 2014 being more than S\$5 billion.¹

At the Singapore Management University (SMU), through a structured moot training programme, talented young mooters are being trained in critical arbitration knowledge and skills. The programme which was rolled out since Academic Year 2009-10 is yielding results – in the last two months, SMU reached the final of three major international arbitration moot competitions:

- **Champions at the Willem C. Vis (East) Commercial Arbitration (or Vis East) Moot**, held in Hong Kong (15 – 22 March 2015)
- **First runner-up at the Willem C. Vis Commercial Arbitration (or Vis) Moot**, held in Vienna (28 March – 2 April 2015)
- **First runner-up at the Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot**, held in Frankfurt (9 – 14 March 2015)

Vis and Vis East Moots

The annual Vis and Vis East moot competitions are sister moots organised in Vienna and Hong Kong respectively. The goal of the Vis and Vis East moots, which are into their 22nd and 12th editions this year, is to foster the study of international commercial law and arbitration for the resolution of international business disputes through its application to a concrete problem of a client, and to train law leaders of tomorrow in methods of alternative dispute resolution.

This year, SMU had sent a combined team to both the Vis and Vis East moots. The Vis East team comprising Eden Li (year 4), Jason Lim (Juris Doctor), Nicolette Oon (year 3) and Jerald Soon (year 4) made history by becoming the first Singapore team to win the moot competition, after nine rounds of intense competition between 15 and 22 March 2015.

The strong competition began in the preliminary rounds, where SMU faced Wuhan University (China), Waseda University (Japan), former Vis winner Monash Law School (Australia), and Symbiosis Law School (India). The team then met former Vis East winner Tsinghua University (China) in the 'Round of 32', National Chiao Tung (Taiwan) in the octofinal, University of Denver (USA) in the quarterfinal, and former Vis winner West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences (India) in the semi-final, before facing off against Arizona State University (USA) in the final on 22 March to win the championship.

¹ Source: <https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/content/minlaw/en/news/speeches/speech-by-senior-minister-of-state-for-law--indranee-rajah--at-t.html>

In Vienna, the Vis team comprising Bethel Chan (Juris Doctor), Grace Sim (year 4), Alvin Tan (Juris Doctor), and Tan Jun Hong (year 3) also did the University proud by reaching the Vis final on 2 April. After 10 intensive rounds, the team accomplished first runner-up position, and also won an Honourable Mention for Best Memorial and two Honourable Mentions for Best Oralist – Bethel Chan and Tan Jun Hong.

With these victories, SMU became the first university ever to reach both the Vis East and Vis finals in the same year. As the world's second and third largest international moot competitions, the Vis and Vis East moots saw a record turnout this year with 299 teams from 65 countries, and 109 teams from 29 countries respectively.

Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot Court

In March, another SMU team comprising Benjamin Bala (Juris Doctor), Eugene Neo (year 3), Jeremy Tan (Juris Doctor) and Tiffany Tseng (Juris Doctor) was named first runner-up at the 8th Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot Court competition, following a face-off with Jindal Global Law School (India). The Frankfurt moot saw more than 50 teams from 21 different countries participating, with 29 teams making it to the finals held in Frankfurt on 13 March.

The Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot Court, which focuses on investment protection, is significant in that the law on foreign investment protection is presently the most innovative, fastest developing and intellectually challenging branch of international law with high practical relevance. The number of investment disputes before international arbitral tribunals has also increased significantly over the last decades and reflects the notable preferences of the international business community for resolving international investment disputes.

SMU's international mooting achievements

Professor Yeo Tiong Min, Dean of SMU School of Law, said, "With continued efforts by the Singapore Government to support the development of the country's arbitration sector, and a growing interest for multi-tier dispute resolution, arbitration will only become more important. Through the SMU moot training programme, we train students in critical knowledge and skills which will be valuable in their future careers. We are also mindful of the need for a pipeline of skilful practitioners to support the sector, which will see greater complexity and volume of cross-border disputes."

With these recent results, SMU mooters have won 12 international moot titles in 25 championship finals, a significant achievement for the young law school, which was established in 2007 and had graduated its first batch of students in 2011.

Assistant Professor of Law Chen Siyuan, who heads the SMU International Moots Programme, said, "This is our best season yet in international moots, and builds on our recent back-to-back final appearances in the Philip C. Jessup moot. The students were well-trained by the alumni mooters as well as senior members of the legal fraternity who took time off to coach them. If we are to have a world-class dispute resolution scene, we must start with the students."

- End -

Enclosures:

1. Annex 1 – Photos of Vis East, Vis and Frankfurt moot
2. Annex 2 – List of international moot competition achievements by SMU School of Law

About SMU School of Law

SMU School of Law proudly welcomed its first cohort of 116 students in August 2007. Taught by a dynamic faculty with postgraduate degrees from renowned universities such as Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and London, the School aims to nurture its students to become excellent lawyers who will contribute significantly to society. Trained with the ability to contextualise legal expertise and to think across disciplines and geographical borders coupled with SMU's interactive pedagogy, SMU's law graduates are confident articulate and analytically agile.

The SMU School of Law offers a four-year full-time Bachelor of Laws programme, a five-year double-degree programme which combines law with Accountancy, Business, Economics, Information Systems or Social Sciences, and a Master of Laws programme. The School has also launched a full-time graduate programme, the Juris Doctor Programme which can be completed within three years, and in some cases, accelerated for completion within two years. www.law.smu.edu.sg

About SMU

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning, and for its technologically enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes.

Home to around 8,800 undergraduate, postgraduate, executive and professional, full- and part-time students, SMU is comprised of six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law, and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in interdisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU has an emphasis on generating rigorous, high-impact, and relevant multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities from USA, Europe, China and India, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector, through its research institutes, centres and labs. SMU's city campus is a state-of-the-art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community. www.smu.edu.sg

More information about the moot competitions

Please visit the respective competition websites:

- Willem C. Vis (East) Commercial Arbitration Moot: <http://www.cisgmoot.org/index.html>
- Willem C. Vis Commercial Arbitration Moot: <https://vismoot.pace.edu/>
- Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot: <http://www.investmentmoot.org/>

Media contact

Huang Peiling
Senior Assistant Director, Corporate Communications
Singapore Management University
Tel: 68280964 / 98453361
Email: plhuang@smu.edu.sg

Annex 1

Photographs of Vis East, Vis and Frankfurt moots

- Willem C. Vis (East) Commercial Arbitration Moot



Photo 1: Jason Lim (far left), Eden Li (2nd from left), Jerald Soon (2nd from right), Nicolette Oon (far right), with José Feris, Deputy Sec-Gen of the ICC International Court of Arbitration, who was one of the judges in the final of the Vis (East) moot competition.

- Willem C. Vis Commercial Arbitration Moot

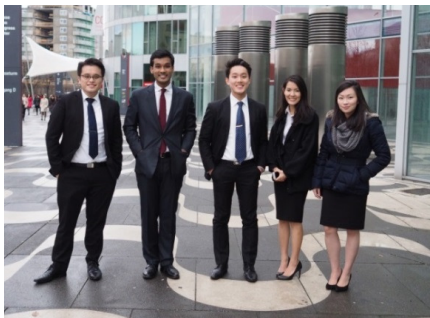


Photo 2: (L-R) Alvin Tan, Shaun Pereira (coach), Tan Jun Hong, Bethel Chan, Grace Sim



Photo 3: (front row, L-R) Bethel Chan and Tan Jun Hong; (back row, L-R) Alvin Tan and Grace Sim

- Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot

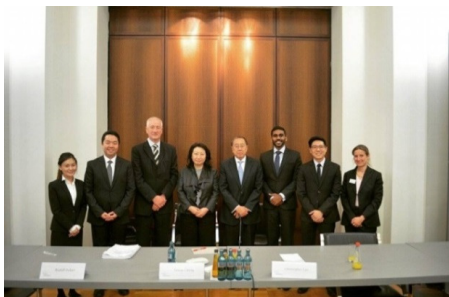


Photo 4: Tiffany Tseng (far left), Eugene Neo (2nd from left), Benjamin Bala (3rd from right), Jeremy Tan (2nd from right)

Annex 2

**SMU School of Law – List of international moot competition achievements
(From Academic Year 2009-10 to date)**

International moot competition	Organiser	Achievement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asia Cup International Moot Competition 	Japanese Society of International Law and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan	2010 champions, 2011 champions, 2012 runner-up, 2013 runner-up, 2014 champions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asian Law Students Association Moot Competition 	Asian Law Students Association	2009 runner-up, 2014 champions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D.M. Harish International Moot Court Competition 	Government Law College	2015 semi-finalist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frankfurt investment Arbitration Moot Court Competition 	Wilhelm Merton Centre for European Integration and International Economic Order of Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main	2015 runner-up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hague Choice of Court Convention Moot Competition 	Hague Conference Asia Pacific Regional Office	2014 champions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Criminal Court Moot Court Competition 	Grotius Centre for International Legal Studies	In progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Maritime Law Arbitration Moot 	Murdoch University	2013 quarter-finalist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philip C. Jessup International Moot Court Competition 	International Law Students Association	2011 exhibition champions, 2012 exhibition champions, 2013 runner-up, 2014 runner-up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LawAsia International Moot Competition 	LAWASIA	2009 runner-up, 2011 runner-up, 2012 runner-up, 2013 champions, 2014 champions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moot Shanghai 	Shanghai Bar Association	2014 runner-up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price Media Law Moot Court Competition 	University of Oxford	2010 champions, 2012 quarter-finalist, 2013 semi-finalist, 2014 quarter-finalist, 2015 runner-up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Cross International Humanitarian Law Moot 	Hong Kong Red Cross	2010 semi-finalist, 2011 semi-finalist, 2013 semi-finalist, 2014 semi-finalist, 2015 quarter-finalist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot 	Association for the Organisation and Promotion of the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot	2015 runner-up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willem C. Vis (East) 	A sister moot to the Willem C. Vis	2013 Asia-Pacific runner-up,

International Commercial Arbitration Moot	International Commercial Arbitration Moot	2015 champions
• International Law Competition Youth for Peace	International University Mitso	2011 champions
