

Korean centre launches networking group

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Seoul skyline (Credit: iStock/undefined undefined)

The Korean Commercial Arbitration Board’s international arm has established a new professional development and networking group, which launched at an event in Seoul last month.

KCAB Next, as the new group is called, aims to “usher in much-needed changes in the field” by offering a platform for “the next generation of leading arbitrators and leading international advocates in Korea.”

The group’s founding co-chairs are both Seoul-based US nationals: **Robert Wachter**, co-head of disputes at Lee & Ko; and **David MacArthur**, senior foreign attorney at Bae Kim & Lee. They lead a 13-strong steering committee comprised of recognised young professionals in the Korean market and other key jurisdictions in Asia.

MacArthur says KCAB Next has no age limitation and aims to benefit both “young practitioners getting their start in the field as well as more experienced practitioners looking to build their network, skills and portfolios as arbitrators and leaders.” He adds: “the goal is to develop talent both locally and in conjunction with our peers abroad.”

Wachter adds that the group will build on a natural foundation of “collegiality and support among members and friends of the Korean arbitration community” and provide “a more structured means to actively facilitate networking, professional development, and developing stronger relationships with overseas colleagues.”

KCAB Next will hold interactive workshops for exchanging ideas and enhancing members’ legal skills as advocates and arbitrators; facilitate collaboration in long-term arbitration projects; and organise networking events.

The group is supported by KCAB International, which was formed in April 2018 as an independent division of KCAB, the only authorised arbitral institution of its kind in Korea. KCAB International focuses on cross-border commercial disputes and enhancing Korea’s standing as an arbitral seat in the region. Its secretary general, former Bae Kim & Lee partner **Sue Hyun Lim**, was appointed in June last year.

KCAB Next will advise KCAB International in planning events including identifying issues and liaising with speakers relevant to current trends in the international field.

A member of the KCAB Next steering committee, **Lars Markert** of Nishimura & Asahi in Tokyo, says that the establishment of the group “is another sign that Korea is an extremely dynamic market when it comes to international arbitration.”

He adds: “I have no doubt that with its carefully selected and experienced steering committee, the group will be as successful as other initiatives originating out of the Korean arbitration market, such as the Seoul IDRC and KCAB International.”

KCAB Next steering committee members

- **David MacArthur**, senior foreign attorney at Bae Kim & Lee in Seoul (co-chair)
- **Robert Wachter**, partner at Lee & Ko in Seoul (co-chair)
- **SeungMin Lee**, partner at Shin & Kim in Seoul
- **Hyungkeun Lee**, partner at Yulchon in Seoul
- **Jinhee Kim**, foreign attorney at Jipyong in Seoul
- **John Kim**, senior attorney at KL Partners in Seoul
- **Thomas Walsh**, consultant at Clifford Chance in Hong Kong
- **Lars Markert**, partner at Nishimura & Asahi in Tokyo
- **Zachary Sharpe**, partner at Jones Day in Singapore
- **Dana Kim**, of counsel at Herbert Smith Freehills in Seoul
- **Joel Richardson**, foreign attorney at Kim & Chang in Seoul
- **Yu Jin Tay**, partner at Mayer Brown in Singapore

KCAB Liaison members

- **Sue Hyun Lim**, secretary general of KCAB International
- **Sean (Sangyub) Lee**, deputy director of KCAB International