

# Wolters Kluwer Partners with Arbitrator Intelligence - A Personal Story

## Kluwer Arbitration Blog

July 9, 2017

Gwen de Vries (Wolters Kluwer Legal & Regulatory, U.S.)

*Please refer to this post as: Gwen de Vries, 'Wolters Kluwer Partners with Arbitrator Intelligence - A Personal Story', Kluwer Arbitration Blog, July 9 2017, <http://arbitrationblog.kluwerarbitration.com/2017/07/09/wolters-kluwer-partners-arbitrator-intelligence-personal-story/>*

---

In June 2014, at the ITA Workshop in Dallas, I heard a passionate woman presenting her mission of increasing fairness, transparency, accountability, and diversity in the arbitrator selection process, and how she intended to do this. “I want to support this” is what I thought. Roger Alford was so kind to introduce me to this energetic woman, Catherine Rogers. That meeting was the beginning of what I hoped then, and still believe, will be a long and productive relationship between Arbitrator Intelligence (AI) and Wolters Kluwer – our formal cooperation was announced last week.

This is an intensely personal story. For those of you who don't know me, I've been with Wolters Kluwer for almost thirty years, either leading or being involved in our arbitration portfolio, first as publisher and since 2004 as publishing director. This portfolio has always been special to me. One reason for my enthusiasm is that it's a portfolio for which we tried out new things, and often succeeded. For example, it was the first portfolio to move online, the first for which we started a blog, and the first for which we created successful tools such as the IAI Arbitrator Tool and Smart Charts. But also because I care about the arbitration process and its community. I believe with many of you that a good international dispute settlement system is crucial for global trade and investment. In return, its community has always welcomed me, and I have seen it grown fast. (In 1996, I attended my first ICCA

conference in Seoul, together with just 200 participants; last year in Mauritius there were 1,000 of us.)

I wholeheartedly agree with Catherine that, in order for arbitration to stay the most preferred international dispute resolution system, it has to continue to develop. The appointment of arbitrators is a crucial decision in the process of arbitration. Parties to arbitration now rely on informal and anecdotal information, which in this age of open access to information is quite unheard of in other industries. There is a need in international arbitration for a more reliable, neutral, data-driven resource for sharing information about arbitrators and their decision-making history.

As Catherine has explained before in various posts on this blog (see here for her last post), AI intends to gather this data through the AI Questionnaire that parties and counsel can fill in after an arbitration. The AI Reports will analyze and summarize the information gathered through the questionnaires. As a non-profit academic-based enterprise, AI is uniquely positioned to ensure independent and high quality reports. However, none of this will happen if you do not fill in the questionnaire. I realize that it's an effort, and perhaps an effort that does not directly benefit you. On the other hand, I hope that Catherine, in the many articles she has written and speeches she has given, has been able to convince you that this is important. I also hope that the place you work will allow you to contribute to something that may not directly benefit you or your firm in the short term, but that is important in the long run for the arbitration process you work for and the arbitration community to which you belong.

I realize more and more that I am very fortunate to work for a company that has given me the freedom to develop products that don't always directly have the highest margin, but that are important for other reasons. A perfect example is this arbitration blog. Roger and I started this because we wanted to connect people in the arbitration world. With 26,000 unique visitors each month we certainly seem to have succeeded.

Just like Catherine, I am passionate about arbitration, believe that it has to become more transparent and diverse and that AI will make this happen. But only if you help! So, join the growing community of arbitration specialists that believe the same and help improve the process: fill out the AI Questionnaire after your next arbitration and convince others to do the same. You are all important for this enterprise and can make this happen!