

Kluwer Arbitration Blog

2025 PAW: How Do Rising Arbitrators Gain Visibility and Appointments?

Francois Wouter Landman (Cape Bar) · Sunday, April 13th, 2025

The hosts of this discussion, as part of **Paris Arbitration Week (“PAW”) 2025**, were [Alexander Leventhal](#) (Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, LLP), [Flavia Foz Mange](#) (Flavia Mange Disputes), [Nhu-Hoang Tran Thang](#) (Astute Dispute Resolution), [Marc Krestin](#) (Fieldfisher), [Youssef Al Saman](#) (Zulficar & Partners) and [Maria Angélica Burgos](#) (Burgos Dispute Resolution). Each of the hosts are members of the executive committee of the [Rising Arbitrators Initiative \(“RAI”\)](#).

RAI aims to support rising arbitrators around the world in the practise of international arbitration by, among other things, creating a support network and encouraging best practices. The discussion aimed to give a practical understanding into how arbitrators can use their profile to gain appointments (or the ever illusive first appointment) from the perspective of leading arbitral institutions.

RAI invited guest speakers from some of the leading institutions to give some insight into their experiences in the appointment of rising arbitrators. The guest speakers from the arbitral institutions were [Rodrigo Garcia Da Fonseca](#) from the [Center for Arbitration and Mediation of the Chamber of Commerce Brazil-Canada \(“CAM-CCBC”\)](#), [Dr Ismail Selim](#) from the [Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration \(“CRCICA”\)](#), [Wing Shek](#) from the [London Court of International Arbitration \(“LCIA”\)](#), [Joanne Lau](#) from the [Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre \(“HKIAC”\)](#) and [Nicolas Galvez](#) from the [International Chamber of Commerce \(“ICC”\)](#). [Athina Fouchard Papaefstratiou](#) (AFP Arbitration) was also invited to share her experiences in gaining arbitral appointments.

How to Get Noticed?

The panel discussed difficulties that may arise for rising arbitrators. The importance of creating a network of party representatives, arbitrators and intuitional staff cannot be underestimated. Many appointments occur by word-of-mouth. Part-time work with other (more senior) arbitrators can lead to appointments, and, so too, can persons who are willing to advance your profile. The adage, albeit somewhat imprecisely applied, that it is not what you know, but who you know, comes to mind.

However, it is clear that it is what you know, as much as who you know, that will make you stand out. Most of the arbitral institutions require that a resumé or curriculum vitae (“CV”) accompany an application to be appointed to an arbitral panel or roster. Affiliation to institutions such as the [Chartered Institute of Arbitrators](#) (“CIArb”) is also considered. Prior experience in the form of arbitral awards given can support an application. In the case of a rising arbitrator seeking a first appointment, pleadings drafted in the context of arbitration proceedings can also strengthen an application. Of course, when such work product is sent to the arbitral institution as part of an application, it must be redacted to maintain confidentiality.

When starting out as a rising arbitrator, it is very important to acknowledge that you may require assistance, whether from the arbitral institution or other sources, such as more senior arbitrators. The secretariats of the various institutions are keen to assist rising arbitrators. Often, from the institution’s perspective, it is the result of the first appointment that will lead to further appointments. This does not mean the substantive result, but rather the manner in which the procedure was followed and the rising arbitrator conducted him or herself in the proceedings.

It is important for the arbitral institutions to know that rising arbitrators are capable of performing timeously and acting in accordance with their duties as arbitrators. When comments are made to proposed awards, rising arbitrators ought not to become despondent. Having multiple people consider an award is (almost) necessarily going to lead to comments being made thereon and differences of opinion arising. This is an iterative process to ensure that both the arbitral institution and the rising arbitrator are held to the highest standards. It also avoids reputational risk. The arbitral institution and the rising arbitrator have a common interest in this regard. Ask for help!

To enhance your profile, consider using your own website. A profile contained on your own website can be fully set out and is not constrained as it otherwise may be when it is placed on the website of a law firm. The fact that you are able to conduct proceedings in multiple languages is something that would be useful to include in your profile. Using platforms such as Who’s Who Legal and CIArb can be beneficial. Let people know that you are accepting and want to accept appointments.

It may be a good idea to indicate a specialist field of work on your profile. However, it may not necessarily lead to an appointment. When applying to some of the arbitral institutions to be placed on a panel or roster, it may be a good idea to use more than one resumé or CV. One that is based entirely on your specialism and another that showcases your ability to work more generally in commercial arbitration.

The Institutions

The panel acknowledged that rising arbitrators are often faced with uncertainty as to the exact nature of the process involved in seeking appointments to the panel or rosters of arbitral institutions. The information is often not available or easily accessible.

RAI has started with a pilot of 10 leading arbitral institutions by asking to each of them questions such as: What is the process to be appointed to a panel or roster? When are the deadlines to be appointed? The aim is to compile all of this information in a single location and to make it accessible to rising arbitrators. The launch of this program is eagerly anticipated.

Below is a brief summary of key takeaways from the discussion.

LCIA does not require you to be a member to be on its database of arbitrators. You can contact the LCIA by email to be placed on its database. LCIA will return a form to be completed. The form includes space to indicate whether you are able to conduct other types of alternative dispute resolution procedures, such as mediation. A CV must be submitted with the form. It is possible to send a more specialised CV and a CV showcasing more general commercial arbitration in the same application. It is necessary to complete the form as fully as possible. Members of the relevant committee meet regularly to assess and identify rising arbitrators. There is no particular deadline by which to submit an application.

HKIAC has an arbitrator appointments committee within its external standing committee. There is an application form for prospective appointees to complete on HKIAC's website. HKIAC will usually require two examples of redacted awards as part of an application and a copy of your CV. If you have not rendered any awards, you can support your application with redacted pleadings drafted in arbitration proceedings. HKIAC will use these drafts to consider the applicants' skill at reasoning. Applicants should include two letters of reference with their application. Qualification as a Fellow of CI Arb is highly regarded. The selection team meets quarterly to consider applications and make appointments from a diverse range of nationalities. To further boost your profile, consider gaining additional experience as counsel or serving as tribunal secretary. Participating in speaking engagements at conferences can also enhance your visibility. Additionally, maintaining a comprehensive list of cases on your CV is important.

ICC allows you to approach them through either their national committees or their secretariat and case management teams. You should provide them with an explanation of who you are, your nationality, where you are situated and the jurisdictions in which you are qualified to practise. You should also provide them with a copy of your CV, including the information necessary for the ICC to ensure that you are capable of performing the tasks of an arbitrator and upholding your duties as arbitrator. This can be accomplished by an indication that you have completed ICC training or other forms of qualifications. You can also upload your profile onto [ICC Case Connect](#).

CAM-CCBC also has a roster of arbitrators. Where it must make an appointment, it will appoint from the roster unless there are extraordinary circumstances in the context of the case. The roster is reviewed every two years. Entry points onto the roster include CAM-CCBC's young practitioners' groups and direct contact with CAM-CCBC. There is no formal application process.

CRCICA will usually appoint prospective arbitrators who have experience rendering a minimum of five or six awards. A request to join may be made to CRCICA. In making such a request, it is necessary to indicate the languages in which you are able to draft an award. CRCICA is keen on having arbitrators from diverse nationalities on its roster. Other points of entry include engagement during CI Arb (Egypt) events.

In making appointments, each of the arbitral institutions will consider factors such as the governing law of the contract, languages spoken by the arbitrator and their nationality, the qualifications and specialisms of the arbitrator, their sector and industry expertise, as well as the type of dispute and complexity of the dispute.

Final Remarks

The launch of RAI's tool for rising arbitrators is eagerly anticipated and it should be consulted for a fuller view on each of the arbitral institutions' requirements and processes. While it is not easy to obtain that first appointment, the rising arbitrator's ability to attain it can be greatly advanced through his or her own initiatives and connecting with the arbitral institutions.

*This post is part of Kluwer Arbitration Blog's coverage of **Paris Arbitration Week 2025**.*

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