

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS AND UNSW LAW PARTNER ON CHINA INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC LAW RESEARCH

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News

Herbert Smith Freehills has announced a partnership with UNSW Law in Sydney to establish the Herbert Smith Freehills China International Business and Economic Law (CIBEL) Centre.

The partnership will establish the CIBEL Centre.

The Centre will strengthen research and partnerships in international business and economic law relevant to China in the 21st century, and particularly to the Australia-China trading corridor.

The five-year partnership will contribute to the continued growth of the Centre through strategic hires, research programmes, publications, and ongoing joint education initiatives in Australia and China.

Established in 2015, the Centre in Sydney is home to the world's largest cohort of Chinese law scholars outside of China. The initiative boasts a core group of five Chinese international economic law scholars in the areas of corporate and competition law, trade law, investment law, and financial law.

Herbert Smith Freehills' Regional Managing Partner [Andrew Pike](#) said the firm's support showed its commitment to bolstering its relationship with key Australian law schools as well as supporting greater legal collaboration across the Asia-Pacific region.

"As Australian business and society forms even closer bonds with China, initiatives such as the CIBEL Centre - which is at the forefront of research in this field - will become increasingly important to sustaining long-term and economically beneficial relationships between our two countries," said Mr Pike. "We're pleased that our partnership will assist the Centre's directors to realise its strategic direction over the next five years."

In addition to the firm's pre-eminent position in the Australia legal market, the firm has more than 30 years' experience in China. It provides 'on-the-ground' expertise that understands the country's dynamic business environment through long-established offices in Beijing, Hong Kong and Shanghai.

"Our team in China is already working with CIBEL and UNSW on projects with our clients, and looks forward to extending our work together," said Asia Managing Partner [Justin D'Agostino](#), who is also a Visiting Professor at Tsinghua University, Beijing. "This partnership will add a new and exciting academic resource for our existing relationships with many of China's leading state-owned enterprises, private companies and educational institutions."

"China is one of Australia's most important trading partners. As a firm we are committed to ensuring we are best placed to serve our clients' interests in the corridor, whether they or their projects are based in Australia, China or elsewhere. Investment in initiatives such as the CIBEL Centre significantly enhances our ability to do so."

UNSW Law Dean, Professor George Williams AO, said: "We are delighted to be entering into this partnership with one of the world's leading law firms. It positions CIBEL to lead the world on research into issues of vital importance to the economic prosperity of Australia and our region."

CIBEL Centre co-directors Professor Deborah Healey and Associate Professor Heng Wang said the partnership will cement UNSW's position as the world's leading centre for CIBEL research and teaching outside China.

"The services sector is rapidly growing in China with a remit for global partnerships and engagement," said Professor Healey. "China is Australia's largest trading partner. This presents an untapped opportunity for CIBEL engagement across a broad range of industries in Australia and China. Given current global trade dynamics, we expect our research to become ever more relevant to the business community in both countries."

Since its inception, the CIBEL Centre has established a record of high-quality research output including more than three books, 24 book chapters and 40 refereed journal articles. It has also forged strong relationships with key research university partners - Tsinghua University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Peking University and Xi'an Jiaotong University.

“The CIBEL Centre aims to be the leading research and impact centre in this area in the world,” said Associate Professor Wang. “The generous support from Herbert Smith Freehills will facilitate deeper understanding and knowledge of international business and economic law related to China for Australian lawyers, but there is also an appetite from international lawyers, too.”

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