

# HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS CONFIRMS APPOINTMENT OF JUSTIN D'AGOSTINO AS NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

12 December 2019 | Global  
News

---

Herbert Smith Freehills confirmed today the appointment of [Justin D'Agostino](#) as its next Chief Executive Officer. The appointment by the firm's Council, approved by partnership vote, will take effect from 1 May 2020 for a term of four years. He will succeed [Mark Rigotti](#), who has served two terms as CEO.

Justin has been a successful leader within the firm, both in leading the global Disputes practice and as Managing Partner of Asia. His enthusiasm, integrity and passion for the firm, its people and its achievements are self-evident to those who know him, and he is well placed to lead the firm in the next phase of its strategy. He has widespread support from partners across all regions and practices.

Justin will retain his home base in Asia during his tenure, spending significant time in each of the firm's regions.

Chair and Senior Partner [James Palmer](#) commented:

I am delighted to be announcing the appointment of such a popular and strong leader as our next CEO, to take the firm forward and build on the progress of the past few years. Justin combines great ambition for the firm with an ability to inspire, as well as successful leadership experience across our regions and markets. He has always been both client focused and a culture-and-people person, building successful outcomes for clients and for our teams. It is good news for our firm that he has agreed to take on this key leadership role, and I and our partners and other colleagues look forward to working with him.

James added:

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mark Rigotti for all he has achieved during his two terms as CEO. The firm is in a much stronger position as a result of his leadership. We have professionalised, expanded our global network and practices, and been widely recognised for both individual and team excellence and an enhanced market position. It is a privilege to work with someone so focused on the success of our firm and its people.

Mark and Justin will work together closely as Justin transitions into the role.

Justin commented:

I am delighted to have been appointed CEO of this great law firm. Herbert Smith Freehills has nurtured me throughout my 21 years at the firm and it is an honour and privilege to lead the business.

There are many opportunities and challenges facing us as we move into a new decade. I have no doubt, however, that our people will continue to innovate and flourish. I relish the chance to work with them, and with our clients, to take our firm forward to even greater success.

## ABOUT JUSTIN

A native of Edinburgh, Scotland, **Justin D'Agostino**, 47, graduated with a bachelor's degree in law from the University of Aberdeen in 1996. He joined Herbert Smith Freehills in 1998 and became a partner in 2007.

Justin currently leads the firm's Disputes practice and Asia and US regions, overseeing people, practices, clients and growth strategies. A thought leader and skilled practitioner in arbitration and dispute resolution, Justin has appeared before tribunals around the world and regularly sits as an arbitrator.

He also works closely with many of the firm's largest clients, both in his personal practice role and as a regional and global business leader.

The founder of the firm's first LGBT+ network in 2007, Justin is a strong advocate and active supporter of diversity and inclusion in the firm and the wider community.

He is currently a member of the firm's Global Executive, chair of the Asia and Disputes Executives, and Executive Sponsor of IRIS, the firm's global LGBT+ network.

Justin's recent legal experience includes:

- representing the Government of Korea on the first investment treaty arbitration under

the US-Korea Free Trade Agreement (Jin Hae Seo v. Republic of Korea)

- advising the Government of Malaysia on a US\$1.2 billion arbitration against the Republic of Singapore concerning the interpretation of a bilateral treaty
- advising Grand Pacific Holdings Limited on its high-profile and successful appeal against a decision by the Hong Kong Court of First Instance to set aside an ICC arbitral award in its favour

His professional, business and community roles include:

- Ranked in the [FT/OUTstanding LGBT+ Executive Role Model Lists rankings](#) every year since 2014
- Led the firm's Asia region to be named Most Innovative Law Firm at the [FT Asia-Pacific Innovative Lawyers 2019](#), and winning the award for Innovation in Diversity and Inclusion for the region's Asia Multicultural Network.
- Chair of the [ICC Court of Arbitration's](#) Belt and Road Commission Initiative
- Honorary Fellow, [Australian Centre for International Commercial Arbitration](#)
- Visiting Professor at [Tsinghua University](#), Beijing, China
- Member of the [30% Club Hong Kong](#), an initiative working to bring more women onto Hong Kong corporate boards

## KEY CONTACTS

If you have any questions, or would like to know how this might affect your business, phone, or email these key contacts.



**JUSTIN  
D'AGOSTINO**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER AND  
PARTNER, HONG  
KONG  
+852 21014010  
Justin.DAgostino@hsf.com

**JAMES PALMER**  
SENIOR PARTNER,  
LONDON  
+44 20 7466 2327  
james.palmer@hsf.com

**MARK RIGOTTI**  
PARTNER AND  
SENIOR ADVISER,  
SYDNEY  
mark.rigotti@hsf.com

---

## MEDIA CONTACT

For further information on this news article, please contact:

**ANNA WARD, GLOBAL HEAD OF  
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

LONDON  
Tel: +44 20 7466 3119  
Email: [anna.ward@hsf.com](mailto:anna.ward@hsf.com)

**KELLY MURRAY, EXTERNAL  
COMMUNICATIONS LEAD**

SYDNEY  
Tel: +61 2 9322 4472  
Email: [kelly.murray@hsf.com](mailto:kelly.murray@hsf.com)

**SALLY GREIG, HEAD OF  
COMMUNICATIONS, ASIA**

HONG KONG  
Tel: +852 21014624  
Email: [sally.greig@hsf.com](mailto:sally.greig@hsf.com)

**CORINNE MCPARTLAND,  
COMMUNICATIONS LEAD**

LONDON  
Tel: +44 20 7466 2057  
Email: [corinne.mcpartland@hsf.com](mailto:corinne.mcpartland@hsf.com)