



Christopher Smith

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Areas of Practice

International Arbitration & Cross-Border Disputes | Korea Practice | German Practice | Japan Practice | Litigation / Trial Practice | International Law

Christopher (Chris) Smith is a Partner and Head of the International Arbitration and Cross-Border Disputes Practice of Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP. Chris is also a member of the Firm's Korea, German, Japan, Litigation, and International Law Practices.

Chris represents businesses in their cross-border disputes with companies and foreign governments. He has over a decade of experience representing clients in international disputes, as well as arbitration agreement and award enforcement litigation matters in United States courts. Chris also has significant experience representing investors in disputes with governments relating to cross-border investments. His practice spans a variety of industries, including the renewable energy, pharmaceutical, intellectual property, automotive, nuclear power, insurance, oil and gas, and mining sectors.

Chris currently is President of the Atlanta International Arbitration Society (AtIAS). From 2024 through 2025, he was Secretary of the organization, and from 2022 through 2023, he was a Vice President. In addition to being a member of the AtIAS Executive Committee since 2022, Chris also has been a member of the organization's Board of Directors. From 2021 to 2024, Chris was a Regional Representative for North America of the International Chamber of Commerce Young Arbitration & ADR Forum. He also coached the Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Team at the University of Georgia School of Law from 2016 to 2019.

Chris regularly speaks at international arbitration and cross-border disputes conferences. He also frequently publishes on international arbitration matters, including on recent developments in U.S. courts that affect arbitration practice.

While Chris currently is based in Smith, Gambrell & Russell's headquarters in Atlanta, he previously has worked in Paris, France; Zurich, Switzerland; and Cologne, Germany. Chris is fluent in German and has represented dozens of German, Swiss, and Austrian clients in arbitration disputes. He also has significant experience representing South Korean and Japanese businesses in international arbitration and U.S. litigation matters.

Prior to joining Smith, Gambrell & Russell, Chris worked in the International Arbitration Practice of a major international law firm, and in the International Arbitration Practice of a large Swiss law firm.

Chris earned his J.D. from the University of Georgia School of Law, where he graduated *cum laude*. While in law school, Chris was a member of the Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Team. He also was the Training Chair of the Negotiation Competition Team, where he and a teammate won First Place in the 2012 Robert R. Merhige, Jr. National Environmental Negotiation Competition at the University of Richmond School of Law. Chris also was a Submissions Editor of the Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law. He holds a B.A. in Political Science and History from Furman University, where he graduated *magna cum laude*. Chris is a member of the Georgia Bar.

Representative Experience

- Representing the U.S. subsidiary of a European multinational in an ICDR arbitration involving a trademark dispute with a former affiliate in Latin America. In the dispute, an emergency arbitrator issued a very favorable interim award in favor of Chris's client.
- Representing an entrepreneur in a business dispute before the SCC with a European pop band and multinational media conglomerate.
- Representing a pharmaceutical company in an ICC dispute with a distributor for its products in the Caribbean.
- Representing an East Asian manufacturer in a major cross-border construction dispute.
- Representing a manufacturer involved in a cross-border ICC dispute with another manufacturer.
- Advising and representing East Asian and Middle Eastern companies in enforcement proceedings relating to foreign court judgments and arbitration awards in U.S. courts.
- Obtained dismissal of a U.S. litigation on personal jurisdiction grounds for a European client. The opposing U.S.-based party had sued Chris's client in court during the late phase of a European arbitration proceeding that was not going well for the U.S. company.
- Obtained an award of approximately \$100 million in a SIAC arbitration representing a South Korean electronics manufacturer involved in a dispute with another Asian electronics company arising out of a patent cross-license agreement.
- Prior to a hearing, settled a dispute on terms very favorable to the client, a U.S. public utility involved in an ICDR arbitration with a supplier arising out of a uranium supply and conversion agreement.
- Enforced in Texas state courts three arbitral awards in a dispute related to a joint venture agreement. In the AAA/ICDR arbitration, the tribunal awarded the U.S.-based pharmaceutical client injunctive relief.

- Advised a U.S.-based investment company involved in an ICDR arbitration with two insurance companies relating to a dispute arising out of a political risk insurance policy covering a mining investment in a CIS country; the client obtained an award of over \$100 million.
- Obtained eight awards totaling approximately €190 million on behalf of European investors in the renewable energy sector. The awards were issued in ICSID and SCC arbitrations arising out of the Kingdom of Spain's and the Italian Republic's alterations to and abrogation's of their renewable energy incentive regimes. In addition to the underlying amounts awarded, the eight tribunals awarded the investors over €20 million in legal fees and costs, as well as interest.

Admissions

Georgia

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia

Memberships

- President and Member of the Executive Committee, Atlanta International Arbitration Society ("AtIAS") (Jan. 2026 – Present)
- President-Elect, Secretary, and Member of the Executive Committee, AtIAS (Jan. 2025 – Jan. 2026)
- Secretary of the Board and Member of the Executive Committee, AtIAS (Jan. 2024 – Jan. 2025)
- Vice President and Member of the Executive Committee of the Board, AtIAS (May 2022 – Jan. 2024)
- Member of the Board of Directors, AtIAS (May 2022 – Present)
- Regional Representative for North America, ICC Young Arbitration & ADR Forum ("ICC YAAF") (Aug. 2021 – Sept. 2024)
- Co-Coach, University of Georgia Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Team (Oct. 2016 – Apr. 2019)

Speaking Engagements

- Conference Planning Committee Member of the 15th Annual AtIAS Conference, Atlanta, GA (Oct. 2026)
- Panelist at ABA 2026 Arbitration Institute: Developments in Arbitration Around the World - Asia and Australia, Virtual (June 2026)
- Conference Planning Committee Member of the 14th Annual AtIAS Conference, Atlanta, GA (Oct. 2025)
- Panel Moderator at 14th Annual AtIAS Conference, Atlanta, GA (Oct. 2025)
- Panelist (Advocate) at ABA Arbitration Institute, and Practical Session Facilitator, Denver, CO (June 2025)
- Co-Chair of 13th Annual AtIAS Conference, Atlanta, GA (Oct. 2024)
- Tertulia Chair at 13th Annual AtIAS Conference, Atlanta, GA (Oct. 2024)
- Panel Moderator at AtIAS Plenary Meeting, Atlanta, GA (Aug. 2024)
- Panelist (Advocate) at ABA Arbitration Training Institute Workshop, and Practical Session Facilitator, Atlanta, GA (June 2024)

- Co-Chair of 12th Annual AtIAS Conference, Atlanta, GA (Oct. 2023)
- Co-Chair of 11th ITA-IEL-ICC Joint Conference on International Energy Arbitration Young Roundtable, Houston, TX (Jan. 2023)
- Moderator of ICC YAAF / AtIAS Young Practitioners Group (“YPG”) Panel, Atlanta, GA (Sept. 2022)
- Panel Moderator at Young ICCA Workshop, and Practical Workshop Facilitator, Virtual (Mar. 2022)
- Panel Moderator at AtIAS Annual and Plenary Meeting, Atlanta, GA (Jan. 2022)
- Panel Moderator at 9th Annual AtIAS Conference, Virtual (Dec. 2020)
- Speaker on ICC YAAF / AtIAS YPG Panel, Atlanta, GA (Sept. 2019)

Publications

- Chapter Editor, International Construction Arbitration Handbook (2025 ed.). Together with Editor Wheaton Webb and Chapter Editor Todd Heffner
- *Stockholm Chamber of Commerce Amends Policy on Seat Selection in Intra-EU Arbitrations to Help Ensure Enforceability of Awards*, Smith Gambrell Russell Client Alert, Nov. 12, 2024, <https://www.sgrraw.com/client-alerts/stockholm-chamber-of-commerce-amends-policy-on-seat-selection-in-intra-eu-arbitrations-to-help-ensure-enforceability-of-awards/>
- *Eleventh Circuit’s Latest Decision in Corporacion AIC Highlights Narrow Review of International Arbitration Awards*, Smith Gambrell Russell Client Alert, Oct. 23, 2024, <https://www.sgrraw.com/client-alerts/hidroelectrica-eleventh-circuit-case/>. Co-authored with Wheaton Webb
- *U.S. Supreme Court Strikes Down “Wholly Groundless” Exception Where Parties Have Agreed to Arbitrate Arbitrators’ Jurisdiction*, King & Spalding Client Alert, Jan. 14, 2019, <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/u-s-supreme-court-strikes-down-wholly-11205/>
- *Expropriation Under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act: Raising the Jurisdictional Bar*, Kluwer Arb. Blog; Young ICCA Blog, Sept. 2017, <https://arbitrationblog.kluwerarbitration.com/2017/09/13/icca/>
- *Not Quite Left Out to Dry: Remedies Under International Investment Treaties Available to Renewable Energy Investors Harmed by Retroactive Legislative Changes*, King & Spalding Energy Newsletter, Nov. 2015, <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/not-quite-left-out-to-dry-remedies-87764/>. Co-authored with Amy Roebuck Frey
- *An Eleventh Circuit U-Turn: How International Arbitration Practitioners Should Now Engage § 1782 Discovery in the United States*, Kluwer Arb. Blog, Feb. 19, 2014, <https://arbitrationblog.kluwerarbitration.com/2014/02/19/an-eleventh-circuit-u-turn-how-international-arbitration-practitioners-should-now-engage-%c2%a7-1782-discovery-in-the-united-states/>. Co-authored with James Menz
- *The Appeal of ICSID Awards: How the AMINZ Appellate Mechanism Can Guide Reform of ICSID Procedure*, 41 GA. J. INT’L & COMP. L. 567 (2013), Student Note