

Crystal Wong Wai Chin

Crystal has an active arbitration practice throughout Malaysia, Singapore, and the ASEAN region, with an emphasis on electricity, conventional and renewable energy generation, water supply, and complex infrastructure & engineering projects. She is a trusted advisor to clients comprising of utility companies, independent power producers, government-linked companies and multinational companies. Her experience includes an extended stint with a leading international utilities conglomerate.

As co-head of the Firm's China Desk, Crystal has also gained a strong reputation as a trusted advisor and leading solicitor to Chinese state-owned enterprises and other mainland Chinese companies investing in Malaysia. In this area of her practice, she is aided by the Chinese legal training she received at Southwest University of Political Science and Law in Chongqing, as well as her fluency in English and Mandarin and first-hand understanding of Chinese corporate and social culture.

Crystal is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and sits on the panel of arbitrators for the Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC) and Chinese Arbitration Association, Taipei. Crystal also holds numerous committee appointments, including Committee Member of the Arbitration Committee for the Bar Council of Malaysia, Director of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb), Malaysia Branch, and Committee Member of the Belt & Road Committee for the Young Practitioners Group of AIAC. She is also a Regional Ambassador of the HK45, Hong Kong International of Arbitration Centre, the sole member from Malaysia of the Rising Arbitrators Initiative, and the founder of the Malaysian Chapter of Energy Related Arbitration Practitioners (ENERAP).

In 2022, she was selected by **Asian Legal Business (ALB)** as one of the "Malaysia Rising Stars 2022". Crystal was also described as "a very capable, dedicated and reliable lawyer", who is "knowledgeable and has great commercial acumen", "extremely hard-working and always puts in the extra efforts to really understand and analyse the clients' matter, regardless of its complexity and technicality", "responsive and great communication skills", "excellent organization skills" and "delivers work of quality that exceeds clients' expectations". She has been ranked by **Chambers Asia-Pacific 2024** as an "Up & Coming" disputes lawyer who specialises in construction mandates, who "is especially well versed in the intricacies of arbitration". Most recently, Crystal was also named "Young Lawyer of the Year" by **Asian Legal Business Malaysia Law Awards 2023**, and a "Future Star" by the **Benchmark Litigation Asia-Pacific 2024** for Construction. Crystal was recently acknowledged as a "Next Generation Partner" for Projects and Energy by **The Legal 500 Asia-Pacific 2024**.

Crystal's contributions to publications and speaking engagements, particularly on arbitration and energy, have spanned national and international conferences and have been included in various books and journals. She is a regular contributor to the Arbitration chapter of Malaysian Civil Procedure (Sweet & Maxwell, 2015, 2018 and 2021 editions). In her pro bono capacity, Crystal serves as a commissioner on the National Executive Board of the Girl Guides Association Malaysia. Crystal is also a Member of TrustLaw, under the Thomson Reuters Foundation.



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Qualifications

- LLM, International Arbitration and Dispute Resolution, National University of Singapore
- LLB (Hons), Cardiff University
- Advocate & Solicitor of the High Court of Malaya
- Called to the Bar of England and Wales (Lincoln's Inn)

Practice Areas

- International Arbitration
- Adjudication
- Energy, Natural Resources & Utilities
- Engineering & Infrastructure Projects
- Construction

Professional Affiliations

- Panel Arbitrator, Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC)
- Panel Arbitrator, Chinese Arbitration Association, Taipei
- Fellow, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb)
- Director of the CI Arb, Malaysia Branch
- Committee Member, Belt & Road Committee for the Young Practitioners Group of AIAC
- Regional Ambassador of the HK45, Hong Kong International of Arbitration Centre (HKIAC)
- Regional Leader, Asia Pacific, Interlaw, Special Business Team – Arbitration and ADR
- Member of the Bar Council Arbitration & Construction Law

Experiences

As Counsel/Co-Counsel and Advisory:

- Represented one of Malaysia's largest independent power producers in a series of AIAC arbitrations concerning the operation and maintenance of power stations, generation capacity payments under power purchase agreements for IPPs, and the operation and maintenance of the Malaysian Grid System.
- Advising one of Malaysia's largest independent power producers on payment-related disputes in relation to commercial rates for Capacity Payments and Energy Payments, including adjustments to the Fixed Operating Rates and Variable Operating Rates, under various long-term power purchase agreements.
- Representing a Malaysian independent power producer in a Singapore-seated ad hoc arbitration against Japanese contractors concerning design and operating defects in the boiler and auxiliary systems of a coal-fired power plant.
- Advising various power producers in arbitrations against EPC contractors for delays in the completion of works for conventional power plants and co-generation plants.
- Representing a state-owned company in a dispute over construction and transmission-related issues with power transmission lines.
- Representing a state-owned company in a series of arbitrations (against an insurer, an engineer, and an end user) arising out of a post-completion explosion at a petroleum shore tank facility.
- Representing and advising a Malaysian conglomerate in relation to a French-seated ICC arbitration involving disputes with Algerian state-owned entities arising from a suite of civil law project agreements for a seawater desalination plant in Algeria.
- Counsel for a major Chinese oil conglomerate in a multi-party litigation arising from commercial arrangements under a suite of construction contracts for a refinery and petrochemical integrated development in Malaysia.
- Advising and representing one of China's largest state-owned construction companies in respect of arbitration claims and counterclaims exceeding RM300million arising out of the construction of one of the tallest towers in Malaysia.
- Advising various Chinese state-owned companies on commercial and construction disputes arising from Belt and Road Initiative-related investments in Malaysia.
- Representing a state-owned petroleum company in a series of Malaysian-seated ad hoc arbitrations involving engineering disputes over defective earthworks in the construction of an international airport runway.
- Representing a U.K.-based oil and gas contractor in an arbitration against a Singaporean employer concerning the construction of production enhancement facilities for an offshore petroleum facility.

As Arbitrator:

- Sole arbitrator in an arbitration relating to dispute under a sale and purchase agreement for an agarwood tree plantation under the AIAC Arbitration Rules.

- Sole arbitrator in an ad hoc arbitration arising out of the construction of a public university campus.
- Sole arbitrator in an arbitration arising out of an employee loan agreement under the SIAC Arbitration Rules.

Notable Publications

- Contributor - Malaysian Civil Procedure (Sweet & Maxwell Asia 2013, 2015 and 2018 editions)
- Contributor - Bullen & Leake & Jacob's: Malaysian Precedents of Pleadings (1st and 2nd editions)
- Author - Research paper on "Climate Change & Energy: Malaysia's Energy Policy – where roads paved with good intentions lead?" nominated for Best Paper Award, International Conference on the Future of Law & Legal Practice 2019
- Co-author - The COVID-19 Act and Contracts, 23 October 2020
- Co-author - The Coronavirus Epidemic: Does it count as Force Majeure? [2020] MLN(A) xiii
- Co-author - The Rise of Mediation: An Alternative Dispute Resolution Forum in the Times of COVID-19, 16 April 2020
- Co-author - Changing for Climate Change: Renewable Energy Regulation in Malaysia, Master Builders Journal, Issue 119, Vol. 2/2020
- Co-author - Enforcing foreign arbitral awards in Malaysia, Lexis@PSL, 2 June 2016

Languages

- English
- Bahasa Malaysia
- Chinese Mandarin, Cantonese, & Hokkien