



Laura C. Abrahamson, Esq., FCI Arb

Arbitrator and Mediator

Case Manager

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[Laura C. Abrahamson, Esq.](#), has more than 25 years' arbitration and ADR experience, following a long career in private practice and in-house litigation senior leadership roles at Fortune 500 companies. She brings a unique, well-rounded and pragmatic perspective to arbitration and ADR, as well as deep national and international experience in the engineering, construction, oil and gas, and chemicals industries.

Ms. Abrahamson has been involved in more than 100 arbitrations and major litigation matters and more than 50 mediations both within the U.S. and globally, including matters involving antitrust, complex commercial contracts, energy, engineering and construction, environmental, labor and employment, insurance coverage, intellectual property, securities and sports and entertainment.

Prior to joining JAMS, Ms. Abrahamson served as senior vice president, deputy general counsel and global head of litigation at AECOM, an American multinational firm that provides engineering, design, consulting and construction services, where she oversaw complex, cross-border disputes. Previously, Ms. Abrahamson spent nearly 20 years in-house at Occidental Petroleum (OXY), where she led major litigation and domestic and international arbitration efforts. Her experience at OXY and AECOM included numerous plaintiffs' international arbitration claims arising out of energy, power and construction infrastructure projects; most notably, an ICSID arbitration against the Republic of Ecuador was recognized by *Global Arbitration Review* as the "Most Important Published Decision of 2012" and selected as the "2013 Global Dispute of the Year, Investment Arbitration" by *The American Lawyer*.

A Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, Ms. Abrahamson has served as a member of and an arbitrator for the Court of Arbitration for Sport since 2015. She currently serves on the board of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, North America Branch; on the executive board of the California International Arbitration Council; on the board of trustees of the Institute for Corporate Counsel; on the List of Arbitrators for the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC); as a member of the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA) panel; and as an arbitrator for California's Public Works Contract Arbitration Program (PWCA).

As a mediator and arbitrator, Ms. Abrahamson is sensitive to the financial, political and other pressures facing parties in disputes, and uses her decades of experience as both an advocate and a client; her strong financial and legal backgrounds; and her ability to quickly synthesize information and assess strengths, weaknesses and nuances of cases to promote fair and efficient resolutions.

Ms. Abrahamson holds a degree in business administration from the Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley, with a dual major in accounting and finance, and a J.D. from the UCLA School of Law.

ADR Experience and Qualifications

Representative Matters as Arbitrator and Mediator

- Chair in a USADA arbitration relating to appropriate sanction for alleged doping violation by masters cycling athlete
- Co-arbitrator in two USADA arbitrations relating to appropriate sanction for alleged doping violation by track and field athletes
- Arbitrator in Safe Sport Temporary Measures hearing
- Sole arbitrator in two renewable energy disputes under JAMS rules
- Sole arbitrator in more than ten breach of contract/commercial disputes under JAMS commercial and international rules
- Sole arbitrator in more than twenty labor and employment disputes under JAMS rules alleging discrimination, wrongful termination and wage and hour violations
- Mediated dispute involving breach of contract, stock options and employment law claims
- Mediated oil and gas dispute involving claims related to surface and drilling rights
- Mediated dispute involving claims for environmental damages arising from mining operations

Additional ADR Experience and Qualifications

- Acted as advocate, counsel and/or client in more than 50 domestic and international commercial and investment treaty arbitrations under ICC, ICSID, LCIA, DIAC, BCIAC, JAMS, TAI, UNCITRAL and AAA rules
- Participated in more than 50 mediations
- 24 years of experience managing litigation and arbitration teams in the engineering, construction, oil and gas, and chemical industries
- 9 years in private practice at large international law firms handling complex commercial, labor and employment, energy and securities litigation and arbitrations
- Speaker on a variety of ADR topics, including domestic and international arbitration case management, arbitration reform, and diversity and inclusion, before professional organizations and numerous arbitration thought leadership panels

Representative Matters as Advocate and Client

Engineering and Construction arbitrations

Led commercial disputes between owners, contractors and design professionals involving claims of delay, disruption, variations, cost overruns, acceleration, defects and breach of contract arising out of P3 and public infrastructure projects (airports, highways, rail, subways, wastewater treatment plants); private infrastructure projects (power plants, oil, gas and chemical refineries and plants); public building projects (hospitals, prisons, courthouses, schools and universities); private building projects (hotels, high-rise office buildings, private hospitals); heavy construction projects (dams, bridges); and stadiums and arenas, including the following:

- London seated ICC arbitration applying Saudi law to dispute arising out of rail and subway construction project in Saudi Arabia
- Geneva seated ICC arbitration applying Swiss law to dispute for pre-tender services related to rail and subway construction project in Saudi Arabia
- London seated ICC arbitration seated applying English law to dispute over design and construction of luxury hotel and office complex in Baku, Azerbaijan
- New York seated ICC arbitration involving claims and counterclaims relating to construction of Iowa fertilizer plant
- DIFC seated DIAC arbitration related to design and construction contract for private hospital in UAE
- London seated ICC arbitration related to construction of natural gas plant in Oman
- Austin seated ICC arbitrations arising out of construction project for toll road in Texas
- Ad Hoc arbitrations seated in Toronto applying Canadian law to related to claims for defective design and construction of wastewater treatment plant
- Bangkok seated Thai Arbitration Institute arbitrations between airport authority and design consortium and construction consortium related to alleged defects in paving and construction of Bangkok airport
- Chicago seated AAA arbitration applying New York law to dispute arising out of EPC contract for construction of Illinois power plant
- New York seated AAA arbitration relating to upgrade of wireless network in Grand Central Terminal in New York

Energy/Oil and Gas/Chemicals arbitrations

Led commercial and Investor-State disputes with government and joint-venture partners and third parties arising out of oil and gas and chemicals operations, interpreting production sharing, and indemnity obligations; disputes relating to construction of power projects and energy infrastructure, including the following:

- ICSID investment treaty arbitration related to expropriation of oil and gas assets in Ecuador and following annulment proceedings (recognized as Most Important Published Decision of 2012, *Global Arbitration Review* and 2013 Global Dispute of the Year: Investment Arbitration, *The American Lawyer*) and subsequent ICSID annulment proceedings
- UNCITRAL investment treaty arbitration asserting right to reimbursement of value-added tax on goods and services related to oil and gas production in Ecuador (arbitration under New York law and English court proceedings through the House of Lords challenging award)
- New York seated ICC arbitration relating to rescission of sale of Argentine oil and gas assets
- Los Angeles seated UNCITRAL arbitration applying New York law to dispute between joint venture partners relating to application of force majeure to contract for exploration in Peru
- London seated LCIA arbitration interpreting production sharing agreements and joint venture agreements in Colombia
- London seated ICC arbitration relating to joint venture agreements and sole risk operations in Peru
- London seated ICC arbitration among U.S., Canadian and Lebanese joint venture partners in dispute over indemnity obligations arising out of production sharing agreements in Yemen

Other Business and Commercial and Environmental arbitrations

- Los Angeles seated ICC arbitration related to alleged breach of exclusive distribution and licensing agreements for waterproof mobile device cases and accessories
- Vancouver seated BCIAC arbitration related to breach of settlement agreement
- Dallas seated AAA arbitration dispute over indemnification for alleged environmental damage associated with oilfield operations in Texas
- Los Angeles seated AAA arbitration related to alleged breach of contract to for environmental testing and remediation of groundwater system in California

Professional Memberships and Activities

- Member, Board, North American Branch, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, 2020–present
- Member, Arbitral Women, 2018–present
- Member, Women in Sports Law, 2019–present
- Member, Sports Law Association, 2019–present
- Member, Board, Institute for Corporate Counsel, 2019–present
- Member, Society of Construction Law, North America, 2021–present
- Faculty Member, ABA Masterclass in International Arbitration (2021, 2022)
- 2022 Sports Law Arbitration Moot (SLAM) volunteer judge/arbitrator
- Executive Committee, Corporate Counsel International Arbitration Group, 2019–2020
- Member, California Advisory Committee, International Centre for Dispute Resolution, 2018–2020
- Member, International Expert Panel, “Overseas Construction Projects by Chinese Enterprises: Legal Risks and Inspiration,” Sixth Working Group, Permanent Forum of China Construction Law, 2018
- Member, Advisory Board, Institute for Energy Law, 2014–2016
- Member, Advisory Board, Institute for Transnational Arbitration, 2014–2016
- Reporter, Arbitration Guidelines and Rules Subcommittee, International Bar Association, 2015–2016

Selected Speaking Engagements

- Renewable Energy Opportunities and Energy-Related Infrastructure Development,” iLaw ILS Global Forum on International Law, 2022;
- “Harnessing Global Change to Propel Diversity in International Arbitration: New Initiatives and Opportunities,” California International Arbitration Week, 2022;
- “Building a Better International Arbitration – A California Corporate Counsel’s Perspective,” California International Arbitration Week, 2022;
- “What is the Future of Law in Sport?” Law in Sport 7th Annual Law Conference – Understand the Rules of the Game 2021;
- “Cocktails and Conversations: Hot Topics in Global Energy and Construction Projects,” JAMS Webinar, 2021;

- “2nd Annual Global Construction Disputes Update: The Energy Transition,” USC Gould Webinar 2021;
- “Complex and Cross-Border Construction Claims: Former GC’s, now Arbitrators, Mediators, Explore Dispute Resolution that Keeps Projects Moving,” JAMS Webinar, 2021;
- “ADR can be a “Win-Win” Solution for In-House Counsel”, Corporate Counsel Business Journal Perspectives Podcast, 2021;
- “Diversity in International Arbitration: Action Requires Commitment, but from who?” JAMS Webinar, 2021;
- “Getting a Handle On It: Commercial Dispute Resolution Clause Drafting for In-House Counsel,” Association Corporate Counsel Webinar, 2021;
- “Diversity in International Arbitration: The Intersection of Race and Gender – building on the future by learning from the past,” JAMS Webinar, 2021;
- “The Business Case for ADR”, JAMS Podcast 2021;
- “The Challenges of Multi-Party and Multi-Contract Issues in International Arbitration and the Anticipated ICC Rules Changes”, New York Arbitration Week (2020);
- “Collaborative Tools for Dispute Management,” JAMS Webinar 2020;
- “Evaluating and Learning From Business Disputes in a VUCA World,” CPR European Conference on Business Dispute Management, 2020
- “ADR in a Time of Pandemic and Global Warming: How the System Must Adapt to the Future,” Society for Construction Law, 2020
- “The Future of Dispute Resolution,” USC Gould/JAMS Arbitration Institute Webinar Series, 2020
- “Litigation Management Roundtable,” ABA Section of Litigation Corporate Counsel Seminar, 2020
- “Transparency in Commercial Arbitration,” CPR Annual Meeting, 2020
- “Tools for Timeliness,” ICC West Coast Conference, 2019
- “Best Practices in International Arbitration,” USC/JAMS Arbitration Symposium, 2019
- “Arbitration Challenged: Reforming Commercial Arbitration in Response to Legitimacy Concerns,” ICCA Congress, 2018
- “Would Construction Arbitration Benefit From Value Engineering, or Does It Need a Full Overhaul?” GAR Live Construction Disputes, 2018
- “How to Maximize Efficiency In a Complex Case,” AAA Construction Conference, 2018
- “The Diversity Dividend: The Power of the Purse,” Groundbreaking Women in Construction Conference, 2017
- “Managing the Client Through the Dispute Resolution Process: An Industry Perspective,” Construction SuperConference, 2016
- “Arbitrating in the U.S.: Minimizing Risks,” The Essentials of International Arbitration Involving Japanese Companies Conference, 2015
- “In-House Counsel’s Perspective on the Effective Management of Arbitration,” Hong Kong ICC Arbitration Week, 2015

Publications

- Value Engineering Construction Arbitration,” JAMS Global Construction Solutions, Fall 2021
- “Enhancing Efficiency in Construction Disputes,” JAMS ADR Insights, July 2021

- “Getting a Handle on It: Drafting Tips for In-House Counsel to Control Costs of Commercial Dispute Resolution”, Corpcounsel.com, May 2021
- “Cost, Delay and Transparency: A Comment on Continued Legitimacy Concerns from a User’s Perspective,” Evolution and Adaption: The Future of International Arbitration, ICCA Congress Series No. 20, Kluwer Law International BV, 2020, pp. 354-360 (Jean Kalicki and Mohamed Abdel Raouf, Eds.)
- Contributor, The Belt and Road Initiative: Legal Risks and Opportunities Facing Chinese Engineering Contractors Operating Overseas, Permanent Forum of China Construction Law, Wolters Kluwer 2019
- “Hottest Oil and Gas Claims of 2015: And How to Beat Them,” Proceedings of the 66th Annual Institute of Oil and Gas, Matthew Bender (2015) (co-author Barry Barnett)

Background and Education

- Senior Vice President, Deputy General Counsel, Global Head of Litigation; AECOM; 2016–2020
- Senior Counsel, O’Melveny & Myers LLP, 2014–2016
- Associate General Counsel – Litigation, Occidental Petroleum Corporation, 1994–2014
- Associate; Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher; 1987–1994
- J.D., UCLA School of Law, 1987
- B.S., Bachelor of Science, Business Administration (Accounting and Finance), University of California, Berkeley, 1984

Court and Bar Admissions

California state and federal courts, United States Court of Appeal for the Ninth Circuit, United States Supreme Court