INTRODUCTION TO THE FRANKFURT INVESTMENT ARBITRATION MOOT COURT (FIAMC)

A. OVERVIEW OF THE COMPETITION

The Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot Court is one of the foremost student competitions in investment protection law and international arbitration. It is distinguished by its unique combination of legal history and contemporary international law. Each year's case-study is based on real historical events (ranging from ancient trade disputes to early modern commercial conflicts), but the dispute is argued under modern international law, particularly investment treaty law and arbitration principles.

The final rounds are held annually in **Frankfurt am Main, Germany**, and the **18th edition** will take place from **9-12 June 2026**. Hearings are conducted before tribunals composed of experienced practitioners, academics and, in some editions, judges of leading international courts and tribunals. This setting offers students an unusually realistic exposure to investment arbitration practice, including complex jurisdictional questions, standards of investment protection, and procedural issues arising in investor-state disputes.

B. STRUCTURE OF THE COMPETITION

a) Case-Study and Legal Issues

Teams receive a single case-study that blends historical fact patterns with contemporary legal questions. Students are expected to:

- Analyse the facts in depth, including the historical context;
- Apply modern investment protection law (often BITs, customary international law, and arbitral jurisprudence); and
- Address questions of jurisdiction, admissibility, and merits before an arbitral tribunal.

Historical decrees, national laws and treaties from the relevant period often play a role, requiring both legal and contextual sensitivity.

b) Written Phase

Each team must submit two Skeleton Arguments**:**

- One on behalf of the **Claimant(s)**; and
- One on behalf of the **Respondent(s)**.

Total word limit: 2,500 words combined for Claimant and Respondent (minor exceeding is tolerated but discouraged)

For the 18th edition, the deadline announced is **3 May 2026**.

C. ORAL HEARINGS AND ROUNDS

a) General Rounds

In principle, teams are grouped in fours; each team pleads three times in the general rounds. If the total number of teams is not divisible by four, some may have four pleadings (only the best three scores count).

Each hearing lasts about 60 minutes, divided as:

- 30 minutes per side, including questions from arbitrators;
- At least two advocates per team must speak;
- Before the hearing, each party allocates time between speakers and reserves minutes (if any) for rebuttal.

The organisers may identify up to three core issues to be addressed in the oral pleadings, 60 minutes before the hearing. Arbitrators may nevertheless ask questions on any aspect of the case.

b) Advanced Rounds

- Quarter-Finals and Semi-Finals: approximately 60 minutes per hearing, 30 minutes per party;
- Final: approximately 90 minutes, 45 minutes per party.

The top eight teams from the general rounds (based on oral scores) qualify for the Quarter-Finals. Subsequent winners progress to the Semi-Finals and the Final.

D. SCORING AND AWARDS

Scoring is based primarily on oral advocacy**:**

- In each pleading, a team can receive up to 300 points;
- Criteria include:
    - Knowledge and application of relevant law;
    - Command of the facts and record;
    - Structure and clarity of argument;
    - Responsiveness to questions; and
    - Overall advocacy skills.

E. ELIGIBILITY AND TEAM COMPOSITION

Under the official rules:

- Students must be enrolled in a program leading to a State exam or LL.B.;
- LL.M. students may participate only with the organisers' permission (usually upon submission of a CV);

- Ph.D. candidates and students who are or have ever been admitted as attorneys are ineligible;
- Each university may register only one team, with 2-4 student members and up to 2 coaches.

Our internal selection is open to ALL students, in line with these requirements.

F. INTERNAL TIMELINE AND COMMITMENT EXPECTATIONS

For our university's team, the working timeline is as follows:

- 23 December 2025: Internal application deadline (CV + Statement of Interest);
- By 8 January 2026: Announcement of selected team members;
- 1 March 2026**:** Official registration deadline and clarifications deadline for the 18th edition;
- 3 May 2026: Deadline for Skeleton Arguments**;**
- 9-12 June 2026: Frankfurt rounds in person**.**

For further information, students may also consult the official Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot Court website and reach out to the us.