

## Boies Schiller Builds Arbitration Team With Hands-On Training

By Tracey Read

*Law360 (September 24, 2025, 12:04 PM EDT)* -- In August, Boies Schiller Flexner LLP held a full-scale, hands-on training for its international arbitration associates — an investment that firm leaders say not only helped to build legal skills but also strengthened relationships within the team.

The training reflects the fact that the law firm's international arbitration practice is growing, driven by both the number of cases it handles and lateral hires, according to London-based Timothy Foden, co-head of the firm's international arbitration group. The in-person training was held Aug. 5 and 6 at the firm's New York City office at Hudson Yards.

To kick off the training event, attendees dined with firm co-founder David Boies in his usual private room at Sparks Steak House.

"It was brilliant, because everyone was sort of sitting around talking with David, and everyone got a chance to talk to him about his career, and his practice. And he told a lot of great international arbitration stories as a consequence," Foden said.

In the last few years, Boies Schiller's international arbitration practice has handled some of the most significant cases in the industry — including attaining an award of over \$330 million against Poland in 2024 and three wins against Tanzania.

Because cross-border, international disputes involving corporations and sovereign nations are often complex and nuanced, the firm is focusing on building and training associates to support this expanding practice of law.

"There were a fair number of participants there who were very keen to do international arbitration, but really hadn't had the exposure," Foden said. "I find that international arbitration does have a bit of a mystique to it, particularly for the U.S. practitioner. And so, there was a demystification process in some respects, the 'here's everything you wanted to know about international arbitration, but were afraid to ask.'"



Partner David Hunt (left) and counsel Tim Smyth, both based in London, were presenters last month at Boies Schiller's two-day international arbitration training in New York City. (Boies Schiller)

Foden added that the firm has lateral hires coming from law firms all over the world.

"Everybody does this job differently, and one of the reasons why I'm almost reticent to call it a training is the fact that a lot of these folks are highly trained already, but they do things in different ways than I would necessarily do them, and we wanted to make sure we were getting all on the same page," he said.

Foden noted that some U.S. associates are fantastic litigators but find international arbitration to be an otherworldly, continental European construct.

The firm currently has 23 international arbitration attorneys, including two counsel and two partners, and the rest are associates, he said.

"We're onboarding at this rate two, sometimes three, people a month," Foden said of the practice group.

Because of that, firm Chair Matthew L. Schwartz was willing to spend a considerable amount on training. Originally, Foden suggested holding training in London since that is where the primary core group of associates is based, and flying U.S. associates in.

But Schwartz wanted members of the London office and all U.S. international arbitration associates to come to New York — which Foden called a pleasant surprise.

"When you talk about investment, there was plane fare for, I think, 18 different associates and partners," he said.

"And then there were hotels, and a big meal out at Sparks [Steak House]."

In an email to Law360 Pulse, Schwartz explained the reasoning behind the firm's decision to provide significant financial backing in the program.

"At Boies Schiller, we enjoy what we do, and we enjoy each other," Schwartz said. "For a growing practice spread throughout the firm like international arbitration, substantive training is critical to teaching our more junior lawyers the skills they need to serve our clients. But bringing people from throughout the firm together in one place, to spend time and make plans and learn together, is critical to being a cohesive team. BSF is defined by its people; they are the most important part of our culture and of our success."

Foden said he joined Boies Schiller because it's a trial lawyer law firm, and he wanted to meld international arbitration with the trial lawyer approach that was the reason founders David Boies and Jonathan Schiller started the law firm.

"And so, my goal [with training] was to sort of impart that brand into our practice and our advocacy style," he said.

A highlight of the training was a session Foden led with London associate Veronika Lakhno on handling



Boies Schiller is training members of its expanding international arbitration practice. (Boies Schiller)

case and client correspondence, a task that combines daily responsibilities with strategic record-building before proceedings are launched. Because many of the firm's recent cases have involved mining companies, the group has developed expertise in this area. However, Lakhno said, mining represents just one part of the practice. International arbitration attorneys also act for major clients in sectors such as oil and gas, telecom and financial services.

"The training was designed to focus on best practices applicable across all arbitration cases, regardless of industry or arbitration rules," she said. "For associates, this kind of training is invaluable in building both technical confidence and a shared team approach to handling complex disputes."

Lakhno added that the training brought together the firm's multijurisdictional arbitration team from London, the United States and Italy, enhancing its cross-border coordination. She noted that the interactive format also allowed associates to contribute perspectives and engage meaningfully with senior lawyers, making it as much a two-way exchange as a training exercise.

"Overall, it reinforced both our technical expertise and our collaborative culture, while reminding us that the strength of an arbitration team lies not just in legal skill, but in the ability to work seamlessly across time zones and legal systems," she said. "Ultimately, the training reinforced what I love most about international arbitration: the combination of strategic problem-solving, cross-border collaboration and the opportunity to learn something new from every case — and every colleague — every day."

The firm said it plans to run the international arbitration training again next year to incorporate new additions to their expanding group, and it anticipates a focus on other areas for the development of lawyers, including oral advocacy and cross-examination.

--Editing by Amy French.