

Guanglei ZHANG

Partner

Dispute Resolution



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Dr. Guanglei Zhang is a Partner at Merits & Tree Law Offices, Head of the Silicon Valley Office, and Lead Partner of the firm's Cross-Border Dispute Resolution practice. Prior to joining Merits & Tree, Dr. Zhang was an Equity Partner at Jingtian & Gongcheng.

Dr. Zhang has long focused his practice on dispute resolution and has extensive experience and a well-established reputation in domestic and international litigation and arbitration. He has represented domestic and international clients in hundreds of major and complex civil and commercial disputes before leading arbitral institutions, including the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC), Beijing Arbitration Commission (BAC), Shanghai International Arbitration Center (SHIAC), Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration (SCIA), Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC), International Court of Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), and International Centre for Dispute Resolution of the American Arbitration Association (ICDR/AAA), as well as before the Supreme People's Court of China and courts at various other levels. His experience spans a wide range of industries, including technology, finance and securities, international trade, pharmaceuticals, new energy, internet, real estate, and industrial manufacturing. Dr. Zhang has a sophisticated understanding of the commercial dynamics of investment and financing transactions and extensive experience in complex disputes involving valuation adjustment mechanisms, equity transfers, corporate control, directors' and senior executives' liabilities, employee equity incentives, and the fundraising, investment, management, and exit of investment funds. A number of matters handled by Dr. Zhang have been recognized for their significance and innovative nature within their respective industries.

In cross-border dispute resolution, Dr. Zhang has extensive experience in international arbitration and cross-border litigation and has regularly acted as counsel and expert witness in overseas litigation and arbitration proceedings. He is particularly experienced in complex cross-border disputes involving multiple jurisdictions and parallel legal proceedings. He develops integrated dispute-resolution strategies informed by the overall dynamics of the dispute and the client's commercial objectives, while effectively coordinating lawyers and other professionals across jurisdictions. Dr. Zhang has particular expertise in developing strategies for multi-jurisdictional parallel proceedings, managing cross-border cases, and coordinating and advancing interrelated proceedings across jurisdictions.

In China-U.S. cross-border matters, Dr. Zhang brings an integrated China-U.S. perspective to clients' legal issues and commercial objectives and leads the coordination of complex disputes and related legal matters involving China and the United States. As Head of Merits & Tree's Silicon Valley Office, Dr. Zhang is committed to combining the firm's professional strengths in China with its local

U.S. practice capabilities and, based on the specific needs of each client and matter, coordinating trusted U.S. counsel and other professional resources across jurisdictions and practice areas. Through this model, he delivers sophisticated and efficient legal services to Chinese companies operating in the United States, as well as to U.S. and international clients in cross-border matters involving China.

Achievements

- Represented a leading Singapore-based multinational trading company in an intellectual property and trade secret ownership dispute with a Chinese listed company and its subsidiary. The matter lasted six years and involved multiple legal proceedings in China, the United States, and Singapore, ultimately resulting in a settlement for the client.
- Represented Hong Kong and Canadian investors in an M&A dispute with a Cayman Islands company concerning a Chinese ice cream chain. Obtained a complete victory in HKIAC arbitration and commenced enforcement and winding-up proceedings in the Cayman Islands, ultimately prompting the respondent to settle and repay the investment in full.
- Represented a leading Chinese healthcare group in an arbitration arising from a joint venture agreement with a prominent U.S. healthcare institution. The matter involved interim measures in a Chinese arbitration and U.S. court discovery in aid of the Chinese arbitration. Represented the client throughout the arbitration and related U.S. proceedings, and, together with other arbitration experts, submitted an amicus curiae brief to the U.S. Supreme Court opposing such discovery. The position advanced in the brief was adopted by the Supreme Court.
- Represented a leading Chinese real estate group in a dispute arising from a real estate investment in the State of Washington, involving U.S. arbitration, mediation, and litigation proceedings.
- Represented a Chinese real estate company in an engineering design contract dispute with a U.S. design firm in an arbitration administered by the International Centre for Dispute Resolution of the American Arbitration Association (ICDR), seated in New York.
- Represented a Chinese new energy company in an investment dispute with an Australian counterparty in an ICC arbitration seated in Sydney.
- Represented a Chinese new energy technology company in a cooperation dispute with an Austrian counterparty in an ICC arbitration and obtained an award in the client's favor.
- Represented a leading cross-border payments company in an HKIAC arbitration concerning a cross-border transaction and payment cooperation dispute and obtained an award in the client's favor.
- Represented a U.S. pharmaceutical R&D company in a cross-border licensing dispute with a Hubei technology company, involving parallel ad hoc arbitration administered by HKIAC and litigation in Mainland China. Obtained a favorable jurisdictional decision and a partial award on costs in the Hong Kong arbitration, as well as favorable rulings from the Wuhan Intermediate People's Court and the Hubei High People's Court confirming the validity of the ad hoc arbitration agreement.
- Served as a Chinese law expert in an ICC arbitration in Singapore arising from an intellectual property dispute between a leading Korean gaming company and a leading Chinese gaming company. The matter involved litigation and arbitration proceedings in China, Korea, and Singapore.
- Represented a major investment group in an arbitration concerning a valuation adjustment mechanism dispute with a leading European insurance company. The tribunal comprised arbitrators from China, France, and Germany. Ultimately assisted the client in reaching a settlement that achieved its intended commercial and legal objectives.
- Represented a leading Chinese internet company in a U.S. investor class action, managing and participating in discovery and advising on related cross-border issues.
- Represented a leading Chinese e-cigarette company in U.S. antitrust litigation, managing and participating in discovery and advising on related cross-border issues.
- Represented a leading Chinese technology company in tort litigation against a prominent U.S. technology company, managing and participating in discovery and advising on related cross-border issues.
- Represented a Chinese listed company in a contractual dispute with a U.S.-based senior executive and advised on related China-U.S. cross-border issues.
- Represented a Chinese listed company in a contractual dispute with a leading German automotive company and advised on related cross-border issues.

- Represented a leading Asia-focused U.S. dollar fund in an arbitration concerning a valuation adjustment mechanism and equity repurchase dispute with a state-owned enterprise. Ultimately assisted the client in achieving a settlement and exit, making it the first among the project's numerous domestic and international investors to achieve its expected return and exit.
- Represented a leading financial company in an arbitration arising from an equity transfer agreement. The matter involved a series of interrelated legal proceedings, including arbitration concerning the equity transfer and equity pledge, litigation concerning enforcement of rights under a title-transfer security arrangement and contract validity, related criminal proceedings, and bankruptcy reorganization proceedings.
- Represented shareholders of a Chinese listed company in a corporate control dispute. Through two arbitration proceedings and four hearings in total, ultimately assisted the client in successfully retaining control of the listed company.
- Represented a founder in an arbitration concerning a valuation adjustment mechanism dispute with a leading investment fund, a medical device company, and other founders. Although the claimant and other respondents all contended that the performance compensation conditions had been satisfied, successfully persuaded the tribunal that the conditions had not been met, resulting in dismissal of all claims against the client.
- Represented the founder of a medical device company in an arbitration concerning a valuation adjustment mechanism dispute with a listed healthcare company. Successfully persuaded the tribunal to adjust the contractual compensation amount based on change of circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing the client's compensation liability by 50%.
- Represented a leading investment fund in more than ten litigation and arbitration proceedings involving valuation adjustment mechanism disputes. All proceedings resulted in successful outcomes or settlements, enabling the client to achieve its expected returns and exit.
- Represented a leading investment fund in an arbitration concerning an equity repurchase dispute with a technology company and its founders. Although the investor had not yet paid the investment consideration, successfully persuaded the tribunal to uphold the investor's request to repurchase the equity for zero consideration and relieve the investor of its obligation to pay the investment amount.
- Represented a leading investment company in a dispute with a Hong Kong company concerning a pledge over equity-related economic rights and obtained a favorable arbitral award. In subsequent enforcement proceedings, handled a series of proceedings before the Chengdu Intermediate People's Court, Sichuan High People's Court, Guiyang Intermediate People's Court, Guizhou High People's Court, and the Supreme People's Court of China, including enforcement, applications by non-parties to refuse enforcement of arbitral award, enforcement objections, reconsideration, enforcement supervision, and retrial proceedings, ultimately obtaining successful outcomes.
- Represented Tuniu in trademark infringement litigation concerning the “Tuniu” trademark and obtained a judgment in the client's favor. The case was selected as one of the Beijing High People's Court's Top Ten Intellectual Property Cases of the Year.

Honors

- 🏆 2023-2026 Benchmark Litigation Litigation Star
- 🏆 2026 LEGALBAND Top 15 Lawyers: Investment Dispute Resolution
- 🏆 2023-2024 LEGALBAND Top Ranked Lawyers
- 🏆 2022 LEGALBAND Top 15 Arbitration Lawyers
- 🏆 2022 The Legal 500 Recommended Lawyer for Arbitration
- 🏆 2021 Asian Legal Business(ALB) Top 15 Litigators
- 🏆 2020 China Business Law Journal(CBLJ) The A-List: China's Top 100 Lawyers
- 🏆 2018 CLECSS China's Top 10 Outstanding Young Lawyers
- 🏆 2019 HKIAC International Arbitration Moot: led the team to win the Beijing regional championship and national runner-up; individually named Best Advocate in every round

Social Positions

- Arbitrator, Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre
- Arbitrator, Shanghai International Arbitration Center
- Arbitrator, Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration
- Arbitrator, Hainan International Arbitration Court
- Arbitrator, Zhuhai Court of International Arbitration
- Research Fellow, Arbitration Institute, China University of Political Science and Law
- Senior Research Fellow, Arbitration Research Institute, Xi'an Arbitration Commission
- Adjunct Faculty, China University of Political Science and Law
- Adjunct Faculty, School of Law, University of International Business and Economics
- Adjunct Faculty, East China University of Political Science and Law
- Adjunct Faculty, School of Law, Shenzhen University

Education

Ph.D. in Civil and Commercial Law, China University of Political Science and Law
LL.M., The George Washington University
LL.M. in Civil and Commercial Law, China University of Political Science and Law
LL.B., China University of Political Science and Law
Visiting Scholar, Columbia Law School

Admissions

- PRC Bar
- New York Bar
- California Bar

Language

English、Chinese