

Competition Law, Innovation and Growth: Connecting the Dots

May 16th, 2025 (Friday)

Academic Conference Room, 11/F Cheng Yu Tung Tower, HKU

Conference Organizers: Prof. Ioannis Lianos (UCL) & Prof. Julian Nowag (HKU)

Organizing Institutions: [HKU Faculty of Law](#) and [CLES@UCL](#)

in cooperation with the

[Inclusive Competition Forum](#)

Programme

9:15 Welcome: Honouring Valentine Korah

- Professor Thomas CHENG, Associate Dean, Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong
- Professor Ioannis LIANOS, Co-Director, Centre for Law, Economics and Society, UCL Faculty of Laws, Member, UK Competition Appeal Tribunal
- Victor CHU CBE, Chairman, UCL Council (TBC)

9:45 – 11:40

Panel 1: Innovation Concerns in Competition Law: Towards a New Innovation-centric Paradigm?

Competition law has evolved dramatically in its approach to innovation, shifting from viewing innovation as a potential source of market power to recognizing it as a crucial driver of consumer welfare. This panel will examine this complex relationship across three key dimensions of competition law: anticompetitive agreements, abuse of dominance, and merger control. The discussion will trace the progression from initial tensions between innovation and competition law to a more nuanced understanding of their synergies, focusing on how innovation concerns have been framed, the establishment of regimes addressing technology transfer, assessment methodologies, and operational concepts such as innovation markets and technology markets. Case studies will include SEPs and competition law, the treatment of R&D agreements, and innovation theories of harm in digital mergers and abuse of dominance cases.

Building on this foundation, the panel will also delve how innovation considerations in competition law are being reshaped by the growing emphasis on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and responsible innovation frameworks.

This reconceptualization broadens the scope of innovation considerations, emphasizing not just levels of innovation but also its quality, variety, and directionality. The discussion will engage with emerging operational concepts — dynamic capabilities, technological trajectories, and innovation ecosystems — that challenge the traditional structural focus of competition law. By analyzing doctrines such as the "innovation defense" and the interaction between competition

policy and national innovation systems, with a particular emphasis on Asian jurisdictions, the panel will investigate how competition law enforcement might evolve if innovation promotion becomes a central objective.

Central questions include: How might competition authorities evaluate and weigh innovation quality alongside traditional competitive metrics? What methodological and practical challenges arise when incorporating broader societal goals into competition analysis? How can competition law frameworks evolve to better support responsible innovation?

- Jens-Uwe FRANCK, Universität Mannheim
- Kazuhiko FUCHIKAWA, Keio University Japan
- Kelvin HF KWOK, The University of Hong Kong
- Stavros MAKRIS, University College London
- Sandra MARCO COLINO, Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Julian NOWAG, The University of Hong Kong

11:40 – 12:00 Break

12:00 – 13:15

Agency Round Table: New Objectives Innovation and Sustainability Shaping Competition Policy

- Caleb TAN (Competition Commission Singapore)
- Katrina Margarita D. LOPEZ (Philippine Competition Commission)
- Max HJÄRTSTRÖM (Swedish Competition Authority)
- Timothy Paul KER (Hong Kong Competition Commission)

13:15 – 14:10 Lunch

14:10 – 16:00

Panel 2: Scale, Growth and Competition Policy: from Conglomerates to Digital Ecosystems

The panel will examine how economic growth considerations have shaped competition policy and enforcement since competition law's foundations, though often operating implicitly rather than explicitly. The discussion will focus on the way scale has been taken into account in competition law enforcement, by looking to the examples of competition law enforcement towards conglomerates and more recently towards digital platforms in ecosystems. The discussion will explore the tension between promoting efficient business scale and preventing anti-competitive concentration, from traditional conglomerate enforcement to modern challenges posed by digital platforms operating across multiple markets. This analysis will reveal how competition authorities have adapted their approaches to balance growth-enabling efficiencies with competitive market structures, especially as technology enables new forms of scale and market power through ecosystem dynamics.

- Yesim ELHAN-KAYALAR, Asian Development Bank
- Liyang HOU, KoGuan School of Law, Shanghai Jiao Tong University
- Adrian KUENZLER, The University of Hong Kong

- Ioannis LIANOS, University College London
- Liang LI, China University of Political Science and Law (China)
- Masako WAKUI, Kyoto University

16:00 – 16:20 Break

16:20 – 17:50

Panel 3: Competition and Industrial Policy: Reimagining the Field

The panel will examine the evolving relationship between industrial policy and competition law enforcement through detailed case studies, exploring both tensions and potential complementarities between these two regulatory domains. Through analysis of specific enforcement decisions and policy frameworks, it will evaluate how competition authorities navigate industrial policy objectives while maintaining competitive market structures.

The discussion will address the critical question of whether and how industrial policy and competition law (particularly competition law remedies and sanctions) can operate synergistically rather than at cross-purposes. Special attention will be given to the emerging divide between techno-nationalist approaches, which prioritize domestic technological capabilities and strategic autonomy, and techno-globalist perspectives that emphasize international cooperation and open innovation ecosystems. This analysis will illuminate how different jurisdictions balance domestic industrial development goals with maintaining competitive markets and international economic integration.

- Thomas K CHENG, The University of Hong Kong
- Ju HENG, College of Business, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics
- Eun Hye KIM, Leeds University
- Sangyun LEE, Kyoto University
- Payal MALIK, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations

17:50 – 18:00 Conclusion

- Ioannis LIANOS, University College London
- Julian NOWAG, The University of Hong Kong

18:00 – 19:00 Reception