

CALL FOR PAPERS

International Symposium on *Imperfect Forms of Collusion*

12 & 13 January 2018

Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study, South Africa

Stellenbosch University (South Africa) and Justus-Liebig-University (Germany) invite you to contribute to a symposium on imperfect forms of collusion that is going to be held on January 12 and 13, 2018, in Cape Town. The conference features prominent keynote speakers such as John Connor, William Kovacic, Kai-Uwe Kühn, Giancarlo Spagnolo, and others.

The topic *Imperfect Forms of Collusion* refers, for example, to information exchange and list price collusion that were elements of, for example, the European trucks cartel and whose economic assessment and appropriate legal treatment is far from clear. The symposium thus invites scholars from law, economics, criminology and related fields to contribute answers to the following non-exhaustive list of questions:

- Under what circumstances can agreements on list prices raise transaction prices even if the colluding firms are free to counteract the agreement by granting higher rebates?
- To what extent do list prices serve as reference points affecting sales managers' behaviour even if perfectly rational agents would leave transaction prices constant despite the agreed-upon increase of list prices?
- Which incentive / remuneration / bonus schemes facilitate collusion?
- What is the likely effect of information exchange among competitors if they discuss the state of negotiations with common buyers without, however, agreeing on prices?
- How can the effect of information exchange on the delayed introduction of technical innovations be assessed? What harm results from such agreements? And how can the damage be quantified that emerges from an impairment of dynamic (rather than allocative) efficiency?

This list of questions is far from comprehensive but illustrates that the topic *Imperfect Forms of Collusion* concerns all agreements among competitors going beyond classical hardcore restrictions such as price fixing, customer allocation, or bid rigging. We also invite case studies illustrating collusive behaviour observed in practice and prosecuted by the authorities that deserves to be studied more intensely. This also concerns the question about the appropriate legal treatment of these forms of collusion, i.e., which imperfect forms of collusion should be banned *per se*, and which forms should be treated by a rule of reason? To what extent are, for example, the horizontal guidelines of EU competition law appropriate to deal with these *Imperfect Forms of Collusion*? Moreover, we especially welcome contributions from the behavioural sciences.

Besides providing a platform for a lively exchange of ideas, we also offer an opportunity to publish these contributions in a handbook on *Imperfect Forms of Collusion*. A similar volume that one of the organizers edited recently may give you an impression of how this new book may look like: Competition Law Compliance Programmes, J. Paha (ed.), Springer publishers (<https://goo.gl/1dwV2C>).

Submissions may take the form of either abstracts or completed papers. Applicants who wish to attend without presenting a paper must indicate their research interests, as they may be involved as discussants.

Send papers and abstracts to Prof Willem Boshoff: wimpie2@sun.ac.za

Deadline for submission: 29 October 2017

Target audience

The target audience are researchers, academics and graduate students in related fields from, e.g., law, economics, business administration, criminology, sociology, and political sciences. Employees of competition authorities are invited to share their views, too. South African researchers from historically disadvantaged backgrounds are also encouraged to apply.

Venue

The conference will be hosted in Stellenbosch, situated in the Cape Winelands to the north of Cape Town, at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS).

Registration and Financial support

You may register for the conference by sending an email to Rossouw van Jaarsveld (rossouwvj@sun.ac.za). The participation fee of 3000 ZAR covers the conference material and all meals. The fee may be reduced for, e.g., PhD-students. For questions about financial support or workshop arrangements, please contact Mr. van Jaarsveld.

Scientific committee

Prof Willem Boshoff (Department of Economics, Stellenbosch University)

PD. Dr. Johannes Paha (Justus-Liebig-University & Stellenbosch University)