

Withers opens Singapore office to meet rapidly growing private client industry demand

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We are pleased to announce that Withers is opening a second office in Asia to meet the urgent demand from institutions and individuals alike for tax and trust legal advice, currently under-served in South East Asia.

The new office will be located in Raffles Place in the heart of Singapore and is scheduled to open its doors in May 2012, taking Withers' international office network to ten. The Singapore team will include [Jay Krause](#), a US qualified Partner who works extensively with private clients, trust companies and financial institutions. Jay will head Withers Wealth Planning team in Asia and is acknowledged as one of the leaders in the field on the wide ranging impact of US IRS initiatives such as the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) and voluntary disclosure. Jay will be joined by [Philip Munro](#), a UK and Hong Kong private client tax, trust and estates expert. Further additions will be made in the coming months.

The expansion builds on Withers' successful office opening in Hong Kong in 2008. Since then, the firm has been top ranked for its private client and wealth management legal services by Chambers Asia, noted as one of the top ten law firm to watch by Asian Legal Business in 2010 and named Matrimonial Law Firm of the year The Macallan ALB Hong Kong Law Awards 2011. The Singapore launch illustrates a growing need for integrated legal advice on complex cross-border tax matters amongst Withers' global high net worth client-base, comprised of individuals and families, their businesses, and the institutions that serve them.

[Margaret Robertson](#), the firm's Managing Director comments:

'Even when we opened in Hong Kong we knew it would only be a question of time before we set up in Singapore. Having a presence in both locations along with our offices in Europe and the US enables us to deliver integrated advice both quickly and directly to clients across Asia. I forecast that our Singapore office will grow as quickly as our Hong Kong office.'

Jay Krause explains:

'Recent developments in international taxpayer information exchange have created an overwhelming demand for our US and international tax expertise in Singapore, as well as its South East Asian neighbours such as Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand, as well as India and Australia. This need is increasing daily as more and more Asian institutions begin to come to grips with the far reaching effects of the new US Foreign Account Tax Compliance (FATCA) legislation, requiring financial institutions and trust companies, among others, to identify their US clients and forward their details to local or US tax authorities.'

The Singapore office opening is subject to regulatory approval.

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