3rd GCSEL International Conference on Sports Law in the Global South

THEME: MEGA SPORTING EVENTS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: LAW, GOVERNANCE, LEGACY AND THE PURSUIT OF SPORTING JUSTICE

2-3 April, 2027

MODE: Hybrid (only for participants outside India)

GNLU Centre for Sports and Entertainment Law (GCSEL), India

Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), United Kingdom

Asser International Sports Law Centre, Netherlands

About the Conference

Mega sporting events have evolved beyond celebrations of athletic excellence, intersecting with issues of governance, public finance, human rights, urban development and international relations. For countries in the Global South, hosting these events offers opportunities to strengthen sporting infrastructure, attract investment and enhance global visibility, while raising concerns about economic equity, community rights, environmental sustainability, athlete welfare and public expenditure. The legal dimensions are equally significant, encompassing hosting agreements, bidding processes, procurement, public-private partnerships, sports arbitration, intellectual property and human rights obligations. However, existing governance frameworks often inadequately reflect the priorities and perspectives of the Global South.

The 3rd GCSEL International Conference on Sports Law in the Global South seeks to critically examine the legal, political and institutional dimensions of mega sporting events, questioning whether existing international frameworks adequately accommodate the developmental priorities and socio-economic realities of host nations. It will explore how Global South countries can move beyond hosting events to actively shape international sports law, policy and governance.

With India preparing to host the Commonwealth Games 2030 in Ahmedabad and aspiring to host the Olympic Games in 2036, the conference provides a timely platform to deliberate on the legal and institutional reforms necessary for responsible, inclusive and sustainable event hosting. Bringing comparative perspectives from Asia, Africa and Latin America, it will facilitate dialogue among academics, practitioners, policymakers, sports administrators, athletes and international sporting institutions.

About the Organisers

GNLU CENTRE FOR SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT LAW

The GNLU Centre for Sports & Entertainment Law (GCSEL) is a specialised academic and research centre at Gujarat National Law University (GNLU), dedicated to advancing the study and practice of sports and entertainment law in India. GCSEL works at the intersection of law, sports, commerce, governance, and athlete rights, addressing emerging legal and regulatory challenges in the sporting ecosystem. The Centre undertakes research, capacity-building programmes, conferences, training programmes, and industry collaborations to develop expertise in sports and entertainment law.The Centre has also hosted distinguished national and international experts through its lecture series, workshops and symposia. Eminent speakers and resource persons have included Prof. Richard McLaren (Western University, Canada), Prof. Ian Blackshaw (International Sports Lawyer), Mr. Hayden Opie (Melbourne Law School), Dr. Laurent Vidal (University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne). A significant recent initiative was GCSEL's eight-session Online Expert Lecture Series on *Sports Law & Contemporary Challenges* (August–October 2026), which brought together Olympians, internationally recognised sports law academics, legal practitioners and sports governance experts. The series featured Nikki Dryden, two-time Canadian Olympian and lawyer; Joanna Maranhão, four-time Brazilian Olympian; and other distinguished experts, including Prof. Mark James of Manchester Metropolitan University, Mr. Marcus Mazzucco of the University of Toronto, and Dr. Payoshni Mitra, Executive Director of Humans of Sport. Addressing contemporary concerns such as safe sport, athlete welfare, FIFA governance, ambush marketing, sports technology, sex testing, sports forensics and human rights in sport, the series provided a multidisciplinary platform connecting the lived experiences of elite athletes with emerging legal, regulatory and policy challenges in international sport.

MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY (MMU), UNITED KINGDOM

Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), United Kingdom, is internationally recognised for its academic and research contributions to sports law and governance. Its Manchester Law School houses an established community of sports law scholars, with research spanning international sports regulation, Olympic law, mega sporting events, human rights in sport and the governance of international sporting institutions. A leading figure in this field is Professor Mark James, Professor of Sports Law and Director of Research at Manchester Law School, whose work particularly examines the legal frameworks governing the Olympic Games, host-country obligations, athlete rights, ambush marketing and the intersection of sports governance and human rights. His scholarship has contributed significantly to contemporary debates on the legal and institutional dimensions of mega sporting events.

ASSER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE, NETHERLANDS

The T.M.C. Asser Institute, based in The Hague, Netherlands, is an internationally recognised centre for research and scholarship in international sports law through its Asser International Sports Law Centre (AISLC), established in 2002. The Centre advances the study and practice of transnational sports law through interdisciplinary research, education, policy-oriented consultancy and international collaborations. Its work encompasses sports governance, international sports arbitration, anti-doping regulations, human rights, EU sports law and the regulation of international sporting institutions. It also publishes the International Sports Law Journal and organises academic conferences and training programmes, contributing significantly to the development of international sports law and governance.

Sub-Themes

1. Bidding, Host City Contracts and Sovereignty: hosting guarantees, power asymmetries with international sporting bodies, transparency and public participation in bidding.
2. Governance, Accountability and Dispute Resolution: sporting autonomy versus public law, special event legislation, judicial review, CAS and jurisdictional conflicts.
3. Human Rights, Labour and Displacement: human rights clauses in hosting agreements, migrant worker protection, evictions, and access to remedies.
4. Public Finance, Procurement and Anti-Corruption: sovereign guarantees, PPPs, cost overruns, auditing of organising committees.
5. Sustainability and Climate Justice: environmental clearances, green procurement, and accountability for greenwashing.
6. Legacy, Urban Development and the Right to the City: post event use of venues, land acquisition, and grassroots sports access.
7. Commercial Rights, IP and the Digital Economy: broadcasting, ambush marketing, image rights, ticketing and consumer protection.
8. Global South Representation in International Sports Governance: Judicial Roles, Institutional Leadership and Decision Making in Mega Sporting Events.
9. Culture, Identity and Community Participation: heritage, indigenous rights, sportswashing, fan rights and local sporting traditions.
10. Reimagining hosting through Global South cooperation, multi-city models, and development-led urban planning to support sustainable, equitable bids; India's 2036 Olympic ambitions.
11. Athlete Rights, Safeguarding and Inclusion: athlete voice, harassment prevention, mental health, gender equity and disability inclusion.
12. Integrity of the Event: anti-doping regimes, match fixing, betting regulation and due process.

Organising Committee

- **Mark James**, Professor of Sports Law, Manchester Metropolitan University
- **Antoine Duval**, Senior Researcher, T.M.C. Asser Instituut
- **Niyati Pandey**, Assistant Professor of Law & Head, GCSEL
- **Anamika Shukla**, Assistant Professor of Law & Member, GCSEL

Important Dates

- **Abstract submission deadline**: 15th December 2026
- **Announcement of selected abstracts**: 2nd January 2027
- **Submission of draft paper**: 10th March 2027

Participation Fee

INR 1000/- (Indian authors) & **USD 15** (Foreign authors)
[to be paid only by selected authors]

Conference Venue

Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar, India

Registration Link

https://forms.gle/6yyCrPvNTcGhaGDT7

Submission of Abstracts

Participants are required to submit their abstracts along with the registration form.

Abstract Submission Guidelines:

- Word Limit: 300 words
- Keywords: 4–5 keywords

Contact Information

In case of any queries, please reach out to us at **gcsl@gnlu.ac.in**