

# Welcome to the event for

## THE CONNECTIONS WORLD

by Simon Commander  
and Saul Estrin

A central feature of modern Asia that trumps differences in economic and political systems is the web of close relationships running between and within business and politics; the connections world. These networks facilitate highly transactional interactions yielding significant reciprocal benefits. Although the connections world has not as yet seriously impeded Asia's economic renaissance, it comes with significant costs and fallibilities. These include the creation and entrenchment of huge market power and the attenuation of competition. They in turn hold back the growth in productivity and innovation that will be essential for further development. The connections world also breeds massive inequalities that may culminate in political instability.

The authors argue that if Asia's claim to the 21st century is not to be derailed, major changes must be made to policy and behaviour so as to cut away the foundations of the connections world and promote more sustainable economic and political systems.

### Key features:

- Provides new insights from an interdisciplinary analysis of Asia's resurgence and its prospects in the 21st century, including identifying the constraints on further, rapid economic growth and development
- Highlights the challenges to the Asian systems based on networks of connections linking politicians and businesses, especially in the areas of innovation and job creation

“This excellent book provides a fresh perspective on Asian success, viewing it through the lens of networks and connections, between businesses and between businesses and governments...The book will be of great interest to researchers and policymakers alike.”

*Ravi Kanbur, Cornell University*

“In the recent competition between liberal and political capitalisms, the latter, exemplified primarily by China, has displayed higher economic growth. Relative economic power has shifted towards the Asian giants. In this timely book which X-ray-like looks at the “insides” of the Asian model, Commander and Estrin present a much more informed and nuanced view than the usual “crony capitalism” dismissal. The Asian capitalism based on family, connections, trust among the insiders, and porous relations between the state and the private sector might succumb to corruption, but it may also show itself to be more nimble than its Western counterpart.”

*Branko Milanovic, Author of Capitalism, Alone*

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