

SFI Knowledge Exchange Seminars

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In the Fall of 2017, Swiss Finance Institute (SFI) will launch the Knowledge Exchange Seminars project — a series of invitation-only workshops — bringing together SFI professors and practitioners active in the Swiss banking and finance industry. With the help of an advisory board composed of Swiss bank executives and SFI professors, SFI management is setting up a Knowledge Exchange Seminar series to foster intellectual interactions between SFI professors and Swiss practitioners on topics of mutual interest. Depending on the topic, the Knowledge Exchange Seminars may lead to various further collaborative initiatives involving faculty and industry, such as practitioner-oriented publications and events, and joint research projects.

Goal

The goal is to foster intellectual interactions and dialogue between professors and practitioners on topics of mutual interest. Specifically, the aim is to:

- Have professor-practitioner interactions occur early in the research process.
- Make such interactions be a real exchange as opposed to a one-way knowledge transfer:
 - Practitioners will learn not only from the professors' own research, but also from the professors' knowledge of other people's research in the area.
 - Professors will receive early feedback on research ideas and results, and input from practitioners
- Provide a networking environment for both academics and practitioners, in an exchange and intimate environment, with a long term goal of further increasing Switzerland's competitiveness in the fields of banking and finance

Format

The Knowledge Exchange Seminars will be invitation-only 90-minute events. The seminars will be kicked-off by a 20-minute presentation outlining the issues on a topic, the known facts, the unknown facts, the controversies, the possible directions for new research, and the practical applications. The presentation will be followed by a prepared reply and then by an open discussion. We foresee attendance of maximum 15-20 participants per seminar to ensure that the seminar is interactive. If the kickoff is done by a professor, the reply will be done by a practitioner, and vice-versa. A PhD student will prepare a write-up, with no attribution of views (Chatham House rules). To ensure that momentum is not lost, in each area, further seminars will be shepherded by a pair consisting of a professor and a practitioner. Together the pair will

narrow down seminar topics in their area of expertise and identify practitioner invitees with the help of the SFI team and KES Advisory Board.

Knowledge Exchange Seminar Areas

With the help of an informal advisory board, SFI has defined a preliminary list of areas for Knowledge Exchange Seminars:

- Banking transformation
- Behavioral finance
- Big data
- Block chain
- Central banks
- Corporate governance
- Debt
- Econometric models in finance
- Equities
- Factor analysis and market biases
- Fintech integration
- Hedge funds
- Market liquidity and frictions
- Mutual funds and ETF
- Pension funds and portfolio management
- Private equity and illiquid assets
- Real estate
- Volatility

Expectations

The Knowledge Exchange Seminar is a place to exchange and improve participants' knowledge, and for them to expand their network.

The Knowledge Exchange Seminar is expected to increase collaboration between academia and industry in banking and finance in Switzerland. The output of the different Knowledge Exchange Seminars will differ based on the dynamic of each area's participants, but will in all cases seek to increase Switzerland's knowledge in financial economics. It is

worth noting that in other major financial centers, such as London and New York, similar knowledge exchange initiatives involving academia and practice have long been in place.

The professor-practitioner-pair that is responsible for a specific area is expected to develop a series of events at which academics and practitioners learn from each other and exchange views.

SFI has sounded many stakeholders and has received strong indications of interest and concrete support for this project. SFI will facilitate the creation of professor-practitioner pairs and the organization of the seminars.

FAQ

Who defines the Knowledge Exchange Seminar topics in each area?

Within each area the professor-practitioner pair in charge of the area defines the topics.

Who chooses the professor-practitioner pair in each area?

In each area the professor-practitioner pair is selected by the SFI Knowledge Exchange advisory board.

How many Knowledge Exchange Seminars will take place each year in each area?

This will vary across areas, but we aim for between two to three seminars per year in each area as the steady-state frequency.

How will the Knowledge Exchange Seminars differ from regular events organized by SFI or other organizations?

The SFI Knowledge Exchange Seminars are invitation-only and they are not intended to be a presentation of an article or working paper. Rather, the goal is to have academics and practitioners explore together the frontier of a topic.

Can anyone participate in the Knowledge Exchange Seminars?

No, the seminars are invitation-only. All participants are expected to have a high level of knowledge and experience regarding the specific seminar topic; they are expected to actively engage during the seminar.

What level of commitment is expected from practitioners taking part in the Knowledge Exchange Seminars?

Various levels of commitment are possible:

- High level: The practitioner member of the professor-practitioner pair,
- Medium level: The practitioner giving a prepared reply to a professor's kickoff presentation, and vice-versa,
- Light level: Participating in the seminars as an invitee

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