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The Swiss Finance Institute (SFI) heralds a paradigm shift in continuing education for the financial sector

Zurich, April 11, 2019 – While the professional requirements and job profiles of employees in the financial industry are constantly evolving, the continuing education sector only partly adjusts the content of its program offerings in order to reflect these changes. In light of this context, the Swiss Finance Institute (SFI) is taking a new approach by launching the so-called “Master Classes”, which will shape and further differentiate the range of continuing education courses offered at SFI in the future. These intensive, half-day learning units are offered under the direction of accredited finance professors who are faculty members at Swiss Finance Institute research institutions, in close cooperation with high-level senior practitioners. They will address various current topics of particular relevance to the financial sector. “Our goal is to transfer new findings from financial research into professional practice in a timely manner, and thus to support the knowledge capital of the Swiss financial center more broadly, explains François Degeorge, Managing Director of SFI. To achieve this objective, we bring together the best academic minds, who belong to the international elite in financial research, with professionals in the financial sector, and thus create the basis for a highly efficient and promising transfer of know-how.”

The Swiss financial industry invests in its employees

A further novel aspect in this endeavor is the fact that the “Master Classes” are offered free of charge for employees of companies affiliated with the Swiss Bankers Association (SBA). “The up-to-date training and further education of employees in the financial sector is of crucial importance to the Swiss financial center. Banks in Switzerland, as well as the SIX Group, are making a substantial contribution to the Swiss financial industry, and are also showing a clear sign of appreciation to financial sector employees,” comments Dr. Romeo Cerutti, President of SFI’s Foundation Board.

New continuing education concepts must reflect changes in the financial sector

Much is demanded of the employees in the financial sector – especially in times of change. New complex thought models and integrated solutions from financial research influence the professional world and affect almost all job profiles in the financial industry. An enormous flow of new knowledge needs to be acquired, assessed and absorbed. In this context, SFI, together with the finance portal finews.ch, which has been selected as cooperation partner, sees itself as a bridge builder: academic findings are to be systematically incorporated into professional practice, in close cooperation with SFI’s six Swiss partner universities, through the latter’s finance faculties. Conversely, questions stemming from the financial industry are to be addressed by academia. “Elementary basic knowledge must increasingly be supplemented by analytical and networked thinking, and enriched with the latest academic findings, explains Dr. Silvia Helbling, Head of continuing education at SFI. This is precisely where our new flexible

continuing education program comes in.” The move away from traditional continuing education is also associated with the reorientation currently underway at SFI. “Due to the new focus on the Master Classes, existing commercial SFI courses will from now on be outsourced to a university partner who will guarantee continuity and quality,” adds Dr. Helbling.

Canton Schwyz also opts to rely on the “Master Classes” offered by SFI

In close cooperation with the Department of Economic Affairs of Canton Schwyz, and in particular with its Office for Economy, SFI is conducting a special “Master Class” series targeted to the local financial industry. “We are convinced by SFI's new continuing education concept and expect a program tailored to our specific needs to play a pioneering role in supporting resident firms and promoting our location,” says Andreas Barraud, Head of the Department of Economic Affairs and member of the Schwyz cantonal government.

Details on SFI's new “Master Classes” can be found under the following link:
www.sfi.ch/en/masterclasses

Media contact

Kathrin Stadelmann
Director Communication & Projects
+41 44 254 30 84 | kathrin.stadelmann@sfi.ch

Swiss Finance Institute

Swiss Finance Institute (SFI) is the national center for fundamental research, doctoral training, knowledge exchange, and continuing education in the fields of banking and finance. SFI's mission is to grow knowledge capital for the Swiss financial marketplace. Created in 2006 as a public-private partnership, SFI is a common initiative of the Swiss finance industry, leading Swiss universities, and the Swiss Confederation.