

Participant Guide

SME Forums are not like other conferences you may have been to. They are designed to maximize the free exchange of experiences and interests amongst its member participants in a balanced way. You will find three types of engagement options in three different ways:

General Sessions with everyone in a ballroom setting tend to be more formal but always open
Breakout Sessions are a mix of formal topics and agenda items with participant driven discussion
Social Settings such as meals, receptions, activities and other events to allow more self-direction

These represent the three key mechanics we use to help you and your organizations learn and grow at the Forums. The emphasis is on the Breakout Sessions and Social components with the General Sessions being venues to share broadly common interests through panels and guest speakers. Beginning with the Fall 2019 SME Forum, we have nearly doubled the number of breakout sessions to help address the broad interests of the members in smaller groups and more focused topic discussions.

In addition to member participants from a broad spectrum of retail and institutional asset management firms, a curated selection of Vendor Partners have been invited by our members for showing deep understanding and dedication to this space in the financial services industry and in particular to Sales, Marketing, Client Servicing and the tools, technologies, and practices that enable them. However, unlike other conferences, our Vendor Partners do not have booths, tables or other dedicated space at the events. On the contrary, we now invite them to participate in the sessions as a means for them to continue learning about what we are tasked with, how they may be of help and how they have assisted others in similar situations as us. They are forbidden from making sales pitches but encouraged to share their accomplishments and experiences with you to demonstrate possibilities to consider.

As such, a driving success factor of The Forum over the past 20 years is participant engagement. This hallmark differentiator is only possible when:

- ✓ You come prepared with what you, your team and organization are interested in learning
- ✓ You openly share, without giving away any secrets, what your experiences and views are
- ✓ You arrive and maintain a mood of wonder and a thirst to learn from and with others
- ✓ You seek and include others in your conversations and give them space to share too
- ✓ You actively introduce participants who may have common goals; be a host
- ✓ You offer to follow-up with others on subjects or introductions of interest after the event
- ✓ You share what you learned with the rest of your organizations

On the back side of this guide is a worksheet that can help you prepare for and capture what you would like to better understand and learn, who you might want to meet and speak with, and what you might return with for yourself, your team or others at your organization as a result. Feel free to use it as you prepare for and during the conferences themselves.

SME Forums are salons for like minded people who grow and thrive through sharing.

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People I want to connect with: (See Participant List)

<u>Person</u>	<u>Reason</u>

Subjects that I want to gain further perspectives on: (See Program and Agenda)

Questions to ask: (Think about this with/for your team)

Topics to explore: (What should we be thinking about next)

Key take-aways to share and next steps to act on when I return:
