



World Association of
Investment Promotion
Agencies



Invest Kuwait
استثمر في الكويت

WAIPA HIGH-LEVEL FORUM

on Finance, Technology and the Future of Investment Promotion



11 February, 2026
Hotel Baur au Lac,
Zurich, Switzerland

WAIPA High-Level Forum on
Finance, Technology and the Future of Investment Promotion

in partnership with KDIPA

Hotel Baur au Lac Zürich, Wednesday, 11 February 2026

The WAIPA High-Level Forum on Finance, Technology and the Future of Investment Promotion, organized in partnership with Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), brings together corporate leaders, investors, financial institutions, and innovation actors in Zurich to examine how Europe's investment environment is evolving and how this affects business strategy and location decisions.

For businesses and investors, the forum offers a strategic lens on capital allocation, technology-driven growth, and emerging investment opportunities across Europe, while also highlighting growing bilateral investment and business linkages with Kuwait and the Gulf region. As financing conditions tighten, competition for high-value projects intensifies, and technology reshapes industries, investment decisions are increasingly shaped by access to sophisticated financial ecosystems, strong innovation capabilities, regulatory clarity, and effective institutional support. Through focused discussions on finance, sovereign capital, and innovation-led investment, the forum provides insight into how European markets—supported by global financial hubs such as Switzerland and international sovereign partners—are positioning themselves to attract and support globally competitive businesses.

For Investment Promotion Agencies, the Forum creates a parallel opportunity to align promotion strategies more closely with corporate and investor expectations, facilitate cross-regional investment flows, deepen engagement with financial and innovation ecosystems, and sharpen their value proposition in an increasingly competitive global investment landscape.

08:30 – 09:00 Welcome Coffee & Networking

09:00 – 10:00 Opening Session

The opening session frames the Forum within the context of a rapidly evolving global investment landscape, where shifts in finance, technology, sustainability, and geopolitics are reshaping investment flows and location decisions. These factors, in addition to the rapid climate change repercussions, underscore the need for closer alignment between Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs), financial institutions, innovation ecosystems, and international partners to respond effectively to these changes. In this context, Switzerland's role as a global financial and innovation hub and Kuwait's leadership through the WAIPA Presidency reflect how both established financial centers and globally engaged investment institutions contribute to today's interconnected investment environment. The session is further enriched by the inaugural address from Kiribati, representing the perspective of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), highlighting the importance of inclusive investment approaches, resilience, and sustainable development. Together, these perspectives set the tone for a day focused on finance, technology, and the future direction of investment promotion worldwide.

09:00 – 09:30 Welcome Remarks & Strategic Framing

- Mr. Mohammed Yousef Mulla Yaqoub, Acting Director General, Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority and President, WAIPA
- Ms. Hilda Al Hinai, Secretary General, Arab-Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Mr. Ismail Ersahin, Executive Director and CEO, WAIPA

09:30 – 09:45 Keynote Address: Dr. James Zhan, Chairman, WIC Executive Board, WAIPA

09:45 – 10:00 Inaugural Address: Honourable Tangariki Reete, Minister of Tourism, Commerce, Industry & Cooperatives, Kiribati

10:00 – 10:55 Finance Investment Flows: Understanding Today's Capital Landscape

This session examines the evolving global financial environment shaping international investment flows. As capital needs grow, sustainability priorities deepen, and global dynamics shift, understanding investor motivations, regulatory frameworks, and risk assessments is becoming increasingly important.

Bringing together perspectives from global financial markets, international investment institutions, and impact-focused fund investors, the discussion will explore how countries and regions can strengthen their attractiveness for long-term, innovation-led, and sustainable investment. The session will also highlight how climate considerations, emerging market financing models, and development-oriented capital are influencing capital allocation decisions.

- Ms. Courtney Fingar, Senior Communications Advisor (Moderator/MC), WAIPA
- Dr. James Zhan, Chairman, WIC Executive Board, WAIPA
- Ms. Nicola Watkinson, Managing Director, International, TheCityUK
- Mr. Thomas Walenta, Head of Global Strategies and Climate Fund Investments, Responsibility Investments AG

11:00 – 11:55 Fireside Chat – Global Investment Dynamics: Sovereign Capital, Emerging Trends and the Future of Investment Promotion

This high-level conversation brings together a global perspective and a sovereign investor viewpoint. The discussion examines how financial, technological, and geopolitical developments are reshaping investment flows worldwide - and what this means for investment strategies in an increasingly complex global environment.

- Ms. Courtney Fingar, Senior Communications Advisor (Moderator/MC), WAIPA
- Ms. Nan Li Collins, Director, Division on Investment and Enterprise, UN Trade and Development
- Dr. Mirjam Staub-Bisang, Chair of the Board and Senior Advisor for BlackRock Switzerland, incoming Chair of Swiss Investment Fund for Emerging Markets (SIFEM) and member of the Investment Committee of British International Investment
- Mr. Abdulmohsen Almutkhaizeem, President and CEO, Kuwait Investment Office, London

12:00 – 13:00 Networking Lunch

13:00 – 13:10 Special Address: Dr. Holger Bingmann, President of the German Committee of the International Chambers of Commerce, and CEO and Partner of Thinking Arabian

13:10 – 14:10 Technology & Innovation: The New Drivers of Investment Promotion

Technology-driven investment is redefining global competition and transforming how high-value projects are attracted and developed. This session explores how European and Swiss innovation actors, corporate R&D institutions, and startup ecosystems shape the next generation of investment promotion. The discussion highlights the practical implications for locations and institutions supporting innovation-driven investment.

- Mr. Jacopo Dettoni, Editor, fDi Intelligence, Financial Times (Moderator)
- Mr. Alex Wong, Senior Advisor to the Secretary General, International Telecommunication Union
- Mr. Nicolas Ramseier, Mr. Nicolas Ramseier, Chairman, Swiss Business Foreign Council & President of Geneva Centre for Neutrality

14:15 – 16:30 Innovating IPA Performance in a Changing Global Investment Landscape

14:15 – 14:20 Introductory Remarks – Mr. Dushyant Thakor, Deputy Executive Director, WAIPA

14:20 – 14:25 Remarks - H.E. Sharaf Sherailzoda, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to the UN Office and other International Organisations in Geneva

14:25 – 14:30 OMAN - Building Sustainable Wealth Together - Address by Shaikh Faisal Ali Zaher AL HINAI, Deputy Permanent Representative (Commercial Affairs/WTO), Permanent Mission of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva



14:30 – 15:30 Session I : This session links the investment lifecycle with the priorities of leading international organizations, highlighting one key focus area each institution believes IPAs should strengthen in 2026 and over the next 3–5 years. The discussion moves beyond trends to practical expectations on how IPAs can enhance their role from investment attraction to long-term development impact.

14:30 – 14:45 UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) - “From promotion to investment de-risking: IPAs and their emerging role in packaging comprehensive industrial investment solutions”

- Dr. Stefan Kratzsch, Head, Sustainable Investments and Responsible Business

14:45 – 15:00 International Labour Organization (ILO) - FDI for More and Better Jobs

- Ms. Rie Vejs Kjeldgaard, Director, Sustainable Enterprises, Productivity and Just Transition Department
- Ms. Githa Roelans, Head of Unit, Multinational Enterprises and Responsible Business Conduct, Sustainable Enterprises Department

15:00 – 15:15 International Trade Centre - (ITC) - Measuring What Matters: Benchmarking Excellence and Reporting Impact in IPAs

- Ms. Silvia Campos Borrás, Programme Officer Institutions and Ecosystems, Division of Enterprise Competitiveness and Institutions

15:15 – 15:30 UN Tourism (UNWTO) - Tourism as an Investment Driver: Innovation, Sustainability, and Competitive Advantage

- Ms. Laura Gasca Beltrán, Senior Project Specialist, Innovation, Education & Investments

15:30 – 15:45 Session II Brief Remarks by selected officials:

- **15:30 – 15:35** Dr. Majed Mneimneh, Chairman & General Manager, Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL)
- **15:35 – 15:40** Ms. Vlada Shilina, Global Economic Development & Investment Strategist

15:40 – 16:30 Session III : Strengthening IPA Strategy and Performance in Competitive Investment Environments

Building on these global perspectives, WAIPA leads a concise and practical session tailored for IPA professionals. The session focuses on strengthening strategic positioning and operational effectiveness in a highly competitive investment environment.

Keynote Address / Presentations:

- **15:40 – 16:00 IPA Strategies in the Changing World Order** - Dr. James Zhan, Chairman, WIC Executive Board, WAIPA
- **16:00 – 16:15 From Strategy to Impact: Building Innovation-Driven Investment Ecosystems**, Ms. Sonja Wollkopf Walt, Head of Business Expansion & Markets, Switzerland Innovation Park
- **16:15 – 16:30 Where Technology Meets Policy: How Public Affairs Shapes Investment Flows**, Dr. Caroline King, Senior Advisor, Berlin Global Advisors

16:30 – 16:35 Closing Remarks, WAIPA

