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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FINTECH SUMMIT 2018**

***PART OF THE WORLD BUSINESS ANGELS INVESTMENT FORUM ANNUAL CONGRESS 2018***

20 February 2018, Tuesday

**Democratising access to finance: Financial inclusion through fintech**

***The concept of financial inclusion and its role in economic development was highlighted at the July G20 summit in Hamburg. Small and medium-sized enterprises have been shown to account for the creation of significant numbers of new jobs and are therefore major contributors to economic growth. Access to finance is clearly an important factor in their development. However, an estimated 2 billion people around the world lack access to an account for even the most basic financial transactions such as making deposits and receiving payments.***

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The world clearly needs an innovative way to democratise finance, and we maintain that fintech can help expand access to finance and equalise opportunities. Lowering the cost of financial services is one way, but we need to explore ever-increasing innovations in technology in areas such as biometric authentication, cryptography, and big data analytics.

The WBAF Fintech Summit 2018 in Istanbul will address the challenges and opportunities of the global fintech ecosystem.

Global equity market leaders — family office managers, wealth management executives, stock exchange executives, financial experts, policymakers, academics, active members of early-stage investment markets, bank executives and WBAF delegates — will come together to discuss a wide range of topics related to transformations in the finance industry through the incorporation of cutting edge technology.

**Key Themes to be discussed during the Fintech Summit 2018 of the WBAF world Congress 2018 include:**

* A cashless world: Driving cashless societies through financial technologies
* Encouraging innovations outside mainstream banking: How should one respond to fintech innovation?
* The key role of fintech in humanitarian crises: Connecting migrants with diaspora finance through fintech
* Challenges & opportunities: Digital finance interoperability and financial inclusion
* Access to finance in the fintech’s entrepreneurial roadmap: What is the smartest capital for fintechs from start-up to scale-up to exit?
* Blockchain in the next generation of banking.
* The future of cyber security : Transformation of financial services from on-premises to mobile to cloud and fintech integration
* The role of artificial intelligence and machine learning in digital transformation

**WBAF World Congress 2018**

Drawing together hundreds of the world’s top business leaders, WBAF 2018 will shape the global agenda of the world early and post-early stage equity markets in the year ahead. For the first time ever, The World Business Angel Investors Forum World Congress 2018, the world’s biggest annual gathering of early stage equity and investment markets, will have 5 important summits running concurrently and will host more than 1000 delegates from around the world.

The WBAF Annual Conference 2018 will focus on angel investors partnering with family offices and wealth management institutions. Start-ups, scale-ups and angel investors will be able to connect at the TAKE INVEST SUMMIT. The CEO-PRENEURSHIP SUMMIT will focus on transforming CEOs into angel investors, while the FINTECH SUMMIT will deal with issues of financial inclusion and ways to democratise access to finance. And don’t miss the opportunity to generate innovative ideas to mobilise private and public capital for the social good at the IMPACT INVESTMENT SUMMIT. WBAF will also salute the global successes of the year at the World Excellence Awards & VIP Gala Dinner at the Swissotel The Bosphorus Istanbul.

As a global organisation, the World Business Angels Investment Forum brings together key players of the equity market to discuss the benefits and challenges to the angel investment community’s achieving successful growth for their businesses and to discuss what more can be done to connect the early-stage market ecosystem.

Speaking ahead of the event, WBAF Chairman Baybars Altuntas comments:

“Building on the success of the 2017 World Business Angels Investment Forum (WBAF), this year’s forum will focus on the theme ‘Unlocking the Potential for Innovation: Angel Investors Partnering with Family Offices and Wealth Management Institutions.’

The discussions will explore how family offices and wealth management institutions can foster open innovation and deliver more business value through partnerships with angel investors, start-ups, scale-ups, high-growth businesses and SMEs.

“By working together across borders, with a common vision, and with these smart dynamics in mind, we are well placed to create positive change in the global economy.”

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|  | **Editor’s Notes**  EVENT AND SPEAKER DETAILS: Further details on the event, including the event agenda, speakers and proposed topics call all be found at http://www.wbaf2018.istanbul/ |
|  | **About the World Business Angels Investment Forum**  The World Business Angels Investment Forum (WBAF) is an international organisation aiming to ease access to finance for businesses from start up to scale up, with the ultimate goal of generating more jobs and more social justice worldwide. It is committed to collaborating globally to empower world economic development by creating innovative financial instruments for innovators, startups, and SMEs. The Forum interacts with leaders in all areas of society, first and foremost in business and political spheres, to help assess needs and establish goals, bearing in mind that the public interest is of paramount importance. WBAF engages a wide range of institutions, both public and private, local and international, commercial and academic to help shape the global agenda.  [www.wbaforum.org](http://www.wbaforum.org) |
|  | **WBAF Press Team Head**  Jenna Owen  +44(0)1603 743 363  [jenna@mediajems.co.uk](mailto:jenna@mediajems.co.uk) |