

August 28, 2019

DFI Scientific Board, Annual Report 2019-20

Summary

The Scientific Board (SB) of the Danish Finance Institute (DFI) met virtually via Zoom on August 14, 2020. The meeting started with DFI Director Carsten Sørensen providing a summary of DFI activities and administrative changes since the previous in-person meeting by the SB at the Copenhagen Business School on August 14, 2019. This was followed by a discussion of various personnel and other matters on which the SB was asked to provide its recommendations. The SB also briefly discussed and concurred with the DFI journal and top-50 universities lists that currently govern the award of Publication Scholarships and Junior Research Fellowships. The meeting concluded with a discussion about various initiatives that might help enhance the visibility of the DFI.

The SB is generally pleased with the continued success of the DFI in furthering elite finance research at Danish academic institutions. It also commends the inclusion of Aalborg University as a fifth DFI member institution effective April 2020.

As a direct testament to the value of the Research Scholarship program, the hiring of Associate Professor Christoph Merkle by AU (from Hamburg University) and Professor Anders Trolle by CBS (from HEC Paris) would likely not have been possible without the financial support of the DFI. Similarly, the hiring of new Assistant Professors Fatima Filali Adid by CBS (PhD INSEAD), Olga Balakina by AU (PhD Bocconi University), Negar Ghanbari by AU (PhD Norwegian School of Economics), Yingjie Qi by CBS (PhD Stockholm School of Economics), and Stefan Voigt by KU (PhD Vienna Graduate School of Finance), were all facilitated by, and in most cases might not have happened without, the support of DFI tenure-track Assistant Professor Research Scholarships. These recent appointments, together with the successful recruitment of several other DFI-supported Assistant and more senior Professors over the past two years, have significantly expanded both the quality and the depth of the finance faculty at the DFI affiliated institutions.

Further underscoring the increased success of research efforts made possible through the support of the DFI, the list of finance publications by current DFI Research Fellows that have been accepted for publication or have already been published over the past year and deemed eligible for Publication Scholarships is extremely impressive. This includes a total of ten publications in what is generally considered to be the top-4 finance journals, comprised of one in the *Journal of Finance*, five in the *Journal of Financial Economics*, one in the *Review of Finance*, and three in the *Review of Financial Studies*. Another paper with clear finance content was published in the *American Economic Review*, considered one of the very top journals in economics more generally, together with two papers in the highly rated *Journal of Corporate Finance* and one



paper in *Management Science*. This impressive list further adds to the already strong list of publications by DFI Research Fellows over the past two years, and as the SB noted in its previous annual report, easily ranks the DFI as an institution on par with the very best academic finance departments in the world. Thus, firmly establishing Denmark as one of the top places in Europe for carrying out and publishing cutting edge finance research.

The SB also commends the DFI leaderships' new marketing initiatives to help solidify the DFI brand and further broaden the recognition of the value of DFI to society more generally. In addition to the various awards considered by the DFI leadership, the SB brought up the idea of short research summaries to help promote the research by DFI Research Fellows and make it more widely accessible. The VoxEU organized by the CEPR could serve as a model. Another idea was to post short podcasts on the DFI website, LinkedIn and/or other social media platforms by the recipients of DFI Publication Scholarships, briefly summarizing the award-winning work and the practical import of the new findings. The SB believes that such efforts are important in securing the continued support and financial funding of the DFI by the members of Finance Denmark.

While the pandemic resulted in the cancellation of all in-person DFI activities and conferences for the Spring and Summer, the SB is hopeful that the DFI Annual Conference scheduled for October 8 at the University of Copenhagen will be able to take place as planned and encourages all DFI Fellows to participate in the event. The SB was also pleased to learn that the previously scheduled 2020 Spring Retreat for DFI Research Fellows at Sandbjerg Manor has been rescheduled for Spring 2021. The SB believes that these types of in-person meetings can be very helpful in fostering a sense of research community among DFI Research Fellows associated with each of the five different DFI affiliated institutions.

The SB was also asked to weigh in on various personal matters directly related to specific individuals. The DFI does not believe that it would be appropriate to make these deliberations public.

DFI Scientific Board

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