QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST
QUEEN's BUSINESS SCHOOL

2025
2026

Queen's Student Managed Fund

ANNUAL REPORT – ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/26

OUR COMMITTEE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

Michael E. Gasior

PhD Nursing & Midwifery

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER:

Darragh O'Connor

MSc Actuarial Sciences

CHIEF INVESTMENT OFFICER:

Henry Megarity

BSc Finance

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:

Sean Freeburn

MSc Finance

CHIEF RISK OFFICER:

Adam Neill

BSc Finance

As your executive committee, it has been a privilege to lead the fund through another transformative year. we have been proud to shape its direction, drive new initiatives, and support the continued growth of our members and portfolio this year. as such, we are pleased to present the QSMF annual report 25/26.

Contents

Foreword

It is my pleasure to introduce the 2025–2026 Annual Report for the Queen's Student Managed Fund (QSMF). This past academic year has been a time of immense growth and celebration for the QSMF, and it has been my honour to serve as CEO through such an exciting period.

Each year's Annual Report provides the departing Executive Committee with an opportunity to share the year's accomplishments with the QSMF's membership, the broader Queen's student and alumni communities, and our supporters in industry.

The QSMF's educational program alongside the practical experience of making investment decisions for our £100,000+ portfolio allow our members to cultivate knowledge, skills, and experiences that will set them apart in their post-university careers, and the Executive Committee is pleased to share this year's accomplishments.

What We Do

The QSMF is a real-money investment fund with a large, long-only portfolio comprising individual stocks, equity indices, fixed income, and alternatives. Our overarching goal is to provide experiential learning for all members to better prepare them for internships, placements, and post-university careers.

Our organisational structure provides for internal progression through the Fund's leadership hierarchy within and between years of study to ready members for an increasingly competitive and global job market. The QSMF comprises 14 sectors, each led by sector heads who oversee groups of ~40 students. Members can be promoted to analysts by completing the Equities module of the Bloomberg Market Concepts, available at no cost to students on the FinTrU Trading Room's Bloomberg terminals, and analysts may be further promoted to senior analysts within their sectors based on commitment and performance.

The Fund's hands-on approach to learning and engagement means members are actively involved in investment decisions. To facilitate members' full engagement in the Fund's activities, regardless of academic background, the Executive Committee provides a series of masterclasses discussing basic concepts relevant to stock picking, equity report writing, and portfolio construction.

The educational program does not end with masterclasses. Throughout the year, the Executive Committee organises guest speakers, employer visits, and internal and external competitions to create spaces through which members can connect with potential employers and apply their knowledge and skills.

In addition to the educational program and calendar of events, the Fund's organisational layers foster mentorship between members and near-peer learning within and across sectors. This has the twofold effect of offering returning and more experienced members the chance to teach, mentor, and lead while supporting new members in engaging with Fund activities to the fullest possible extent.

This combination of education, experience, and mentorship provides our members with unparalleled opportunities to set themselves apart as they seek internships, placements, and graduate roles.

The Past Year in Review

This academic year, the QSMF grew to over 600 members, celebrated its 10th anniversary as a real-money fund, and surpassed £100,000 in assets under management.

The autumn semester was defined by the rapid expansion of the Fund's membership from roughly 380 members last academic year to just over 600 this year. An exciting part of this expansion was the addition of the Quant sector, allowing a selected group of Fund members to explore the fast-paced world of quantitative finance and possible careers therein. We also introduced an Alternatives sector to cater to members' interest in the alternative investment space.

April 2026 marked the QSMF's tenth anniversary as a real-money investment fund, and we celebrated the occasion by inviting our supporters, members, and alumni to join us at an event kindly sponsored by Davy.

That month, we also surpassed £100,000 in assets under management, a major milestone in the Fund's growth originally forecast to be met in 2027.

A point of personal pride has been the design and implementation of a cohesive educational program that caters to students of all degrees, experience levels, and personal and professional backgrounds. This year's Executive Committee synthesised past years' educational presentations into a coherent program that future Committees will be able to implement and further refine.

Looking Forward

As the membership of the QSMF grows, so does the range of interests and experiences of members. Each year's CEO and Executive Committee are tasked with not only planning the year's calendar but also with outlining developments that would create a more robust experience for the Fund's membership. Thinking ahead, the QSMF will endeavour to better serve the needs of its members by pursuing the following:

1. Expanding the QSMF to accommodate students' broader interests in finance, including private equity, investment banking, and venture capital.

While the core of the QSMF remains our real-money fund and experiential learning in investment management, we recognise an increasing number of members from Queen's Business School and beyond who join the Fund to explore careers in finance more broadly.

Members have expressed particular interest in private equity, investment banking, and venture capital, and we believe the Fund has the connections and resources to make this expansion possible for future cohorts of students.

2. Furthering refining the educational program developed this year with a particular focus on the portfolio construction portion.

Major steps were taken this year in designing and implementing a cohesive educational program that caters to students of all backgrounds and experiences, and we believe there is additional space to expand upon this work in future years for the benefit of members. In particular, the portfolio construction curriculum intended to be delivered in the spring semester will be built up to provide more comprehensive instruction on the topic.

Closing Remarks

The QSMF, and the Executive Committee especially, rely on the involvement and guidance of several key people and groups without whom the Fund could not operate to its current level of excellence. The Executive Committee would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our sponsor, Davy, for their ongoing generous support of the QSMF. Their provision of brokerage services and continued engagement in our Annual General Meeting and Davy Pitch Event provide excellent opportunities for our members to connect with industry and showcase their skills, and we greatly appreciate their involvement in the Fund's success.

We also want to express our gratitude to the Faculty Oversight Committee for their unwavering support and guidance throughout the year and for entrusting the Executive Committee with our roles and responsibilities. Their dedication to and passion for the Fund have created innumerable learning opportunities for Queen's students, members of the Executive Committee included.

On a personal note, I want to thank my fellow committee members for their time and dedication to the QSMF throughout the year. The size and scope of the QSMF make it a unique society to lead, and it has truly been a team effort to sustain the legacy of the Fund during a period of such intense growth.

Lastly, the Executive Committee would be remiss not to also thank members of the QSMF and our wonderful sector heads for their enthusiastic involvement in Fund activities. We are honored to have served as your Executive Committee for this academic year, and we look forward to seeing the Fund and its members continue to grow, evolve, and succeed in the years

Michael E. Gasior

Our Values

The QSMF is a constantly evolving organisation. Each cohort of students that join and progress through the fund shape its goals and program to meet their wants, needs, and long-term professional aspirations. As such, the Fund undergoes a constant iterative process to develop as an investment fund and student society that provides members with key skills and experiential learning to thrive academically and professionally.

Our decision-making and actions are guided by five core values:

01 Education

Provide a "crash course" in all things finance and investing. Our curriculum aims to leave members with relevant knowledge well above their non-member peers.

02 Accessibility

Support the development of members from all degrees, experience levels, and personal and professional backgrounds. All members should be able to learn and participate at their own pace.

03 Experiential

Facilitate opportunities for analysts to practice skills learned through the curriculum and from peer mentors. Analysts actively manage our fund and demonstrate their knowledge through internal and external competitions.

04 Mentorship

Encourage a robust culture of mentorship and near-peer learning. The sector system creates environments for team building and peer leadership for members of the Fund.

05 Philanthropy

Seek to give back to our community and to our student body through charitable work and meaningful support. Members contribute positively to the fund and to university life without exception of personal reward.

"

As an analyst, I learnt how to analyse companies, compile research reports and recognise key drivers within the sector. The knowledge I gleaned enabled me to progress to the position of sector head the following year [and] has been extremely valuable for my personal development.

Ex-Sector Head

Fund Activities and Events

From the very first week, 2025/26 set the tone for what would prove to be another landmark year for QSMF. With a membership base that continues to grow, Semester One was designed to bring new Analysts up to speed quickly, delivering a rich calendar of masterclasses, guest speaker sessions, and hands-on learning opportunities that hit the ground running from day one.

Kicking Off: Getting Everyone in the Room

2025/2026 opened with our introductory sessions, welcoming a new cohort of Analysts and orienting them to the QSMF ecosystem. From understanding how our Investment Committee process works to getting to grips with the basics of equity research, these early weeks were about building a shared foundation. The energy in the room from week one was unmistakable, members arrived with genuine curiosity and a desire to get stuck in, and the sessions were designed to meet that enthusiasm head-on.

Core Masterclasses & Guest Speakers: Theory Meets Practice

A key pillar of what QSMF offers is its masterclass series, and Semester One delivered some of its strongest sessions yet. From finance fundamentals and investment thesis development through to DCF valuation and comparable company analysis, the curriculum gave Analysts the practical vocabulary and analytical toolkit they'll reach for time and again, whether writing a research report, preparing a pitch, or sitting across the table in an interview. What makes these sessions work is their format: rather than passive lectures, they're built around interaction, real world examples, and the kind of candid discussion that makes concepts click.

Trading Simulation Event with Amplify Me

Crucially, the masterclasses didn't exist in isolation. Throughout the year, a carefully curated lineup of guest speakers brought the curriculum to life, showing members exactly how the frameworks, they were learning get applied in practice. A particularly gratifying feature of this year's speaker programme was how strongly it drew on the QSMF alumni network, with several former members returning to share their experiences having gone on to build careers across asset management, investment banking, and specialist hedge funds. The two strands of conceptual learning and alumni led real world insight fed directly into each other, giving Analysts a far richer understanding than either could provide alone.

Kicking things off, a QSMF alumnus now working in investment management returned to speak with members in what proved to be a brilliant way to open the year. Drawing on his experience in the industry, he covered GARP investing, growth at a reasonable price, alongside different style approaches to stock selection, company valuation methodologies, portfolio construction principles, and ESG considerations. For new Analysts who had just been introduced to the building blocks of equity research, hearing those same concepts discussed through the lens of real investment decisions made everything land with far greater impact.

Building on this foundation, an Equity Analyst at UBS Asset Management delivered what was one of the standout sessions of the semester. She walked members through the full equity research process as it operates at one of the world's leading investment banks, from idea generation and fundamental analysis through to the construction and communication of a research view. Her session arrived at exactly the right moment in the semester, as Analysts were getting to grips with their own group equity reports, and the clarity she brought to how professional analysts think about companies, stress test their assumptions, and build conviction gave members a genuinely different lens through which to approach their own work. The overlap between what she described and what was being asked of members in their reports was striking, and the Q&A that followed reflected just how engaged the room was.

A representative from Citi rounded out the core speaker series for the semester, offering honest and practical insight into a career in financial services and the realities of life as a professional in a major institution. Grounding the analytical work members were developing in the broader context of what a career in finance looks like day to day.

A Story Worth Telling: Resilience in a Competitive Job Market

One of the most memorable moments of Semester One came from a QUB alumnus now working as a Senior Analyst at one of Europe's largest uranium and critical resources focused hedge funds. What made this session so special wasn't just where he had ended up, but how he got there.

His story is not a conventional one. The path to a senior role at one of the most distinctive funds in Europe ran through failed modules, innumerable rejected job applications, and the kind of setbacks that would prompt many to question whether they were cut out for the industry at all. Rather than glossing over these, he leaned into them, opening with the striking provocation that the best way to get a job is simply to be unconventional when you are unconventional. His message was clear: in a crowded and competitive job market, trying to fit a mold rarely works. The analysts who break through are often those who back themselves, think differently, and keep showing up.

The through line of his talk, covering perseverance, resilience, and initiative, resonated strongly with the room. He was candid about the reality that rejection is not the exception but the norm, even for those who eventually succeed at the highest levels. His own example made the point more powerfully than any motivational framework could. He had the conviction to set up his own independent research operation, conducting deep fundamental analysis across dozens of companies while the doors he was knocking on stayed firmly closed. That initiative ultimately opened the right ones.

For QSMF members navigating their own early applications and inevitable setbacks, this session was a timely reminder that the path into finance is rarely linear and that persistence in the face of rejection is not just character building, but very often the strategy itself. Barney's core message - that resilience, perseverance, and the ability to carve out a distinctive niche are what ultimately open doors - is one that all at QSMF can draw on as they try to get their foot in the door of high finance.

The ExCo Pitching Event: Putting It All Together

Semester One culminated in what proved to be one of the most exciting and well attended events of the year the QSMF ExCo Pitching Event, held on 3 December. With over 600 members across the fund, 150 active Analysts, and 27 group equity reports produced across 11 sectors, the standard of work heading into the event was the highest the fund has seen. Eight teams were selected to take to the floor, each making their case for a chosen stock to a panel of judges drawn from the QSMF alumni network, joined by our sponsor Davy.

What made this event particularly special was the judging panel itself. Two former QSMF Chief Executive Officers, now working in professional roles in deal advisory and investment management respectively, returned to assess the pitches. Having sat on the other side of the table themselves not long ago, their feedback carried a weight and authenticity that resonated strongly with the room. It was a vivid demonstration of the alumni network in action, with those who had built their own careers through QSMF giving back directly to the next generation coming through.

The winning team at our Ex-Co pitching event in December 2025 presenting their Vaalco thesis.

The breadth of sectors and stocks on display was impressive, spanning Consumer Discretionary, Financials, Materials, Alternatives, and beyond. Teams were judged across three categories — Best Report, Best Pitch, and Best Overall — recognising that great investment work requires both analytical rigour and the ability to communicate a compelling case under pressure. Central to our mission, QSMF is ultimately about more than investment decisions, it's about empowering our members through learning, collaboration, and real-world experience. From analyst development to leadership growth, competitions to career insight, every initiative was designed to support our members' journeys.

QSMF Annual General Meeting 2026

Whilst our flagship Annual General Meeting remained a cornerstone of the QSMF calendar, the 2026 edition felt like a milestone moment for the fund.

Held in January and sponsored by Davy, the AGM brought together members for a wide-ranging update on the fund's performance, governance, and future direction. The meeting showcased the scale of what QSMF has become, with over 600 members across 14 sectors supported by 115 contributing analysts and reflected on a year of significant strategic development. A highlight of the evening was the fund's performance update, with QSMF having outperformed its existing benchmarks, the FTSE 350 and Russell 2000, both since inception and in the period following the mid-2025 rebalance. That rebalance marked a decisive shift away from concentrated single stock positions toward a more globally diversified structure, with passive ESG screened ETFs introduced and fixed income raised to 23% of the portfolio.

A particularly significant announcement was the fund's transition to the MSCI World Index as its primary benchmark going forward. As our portfolio has evolved to span North America, EMEA, and APAC, our original benchmarks no longer reflect the true nature of our holdings or the ambition of our members.

We were delighted to be joined by our Sponsor Davy, who delivered a keynote address on the market outlook for 2026, covering US economic resilience, global valuation trends, and the importance of diversification in an uncertain macro environment. It was a fitting conclusion to an event that captured both how far QSMF has come and the ambition that continues to drive us forward.

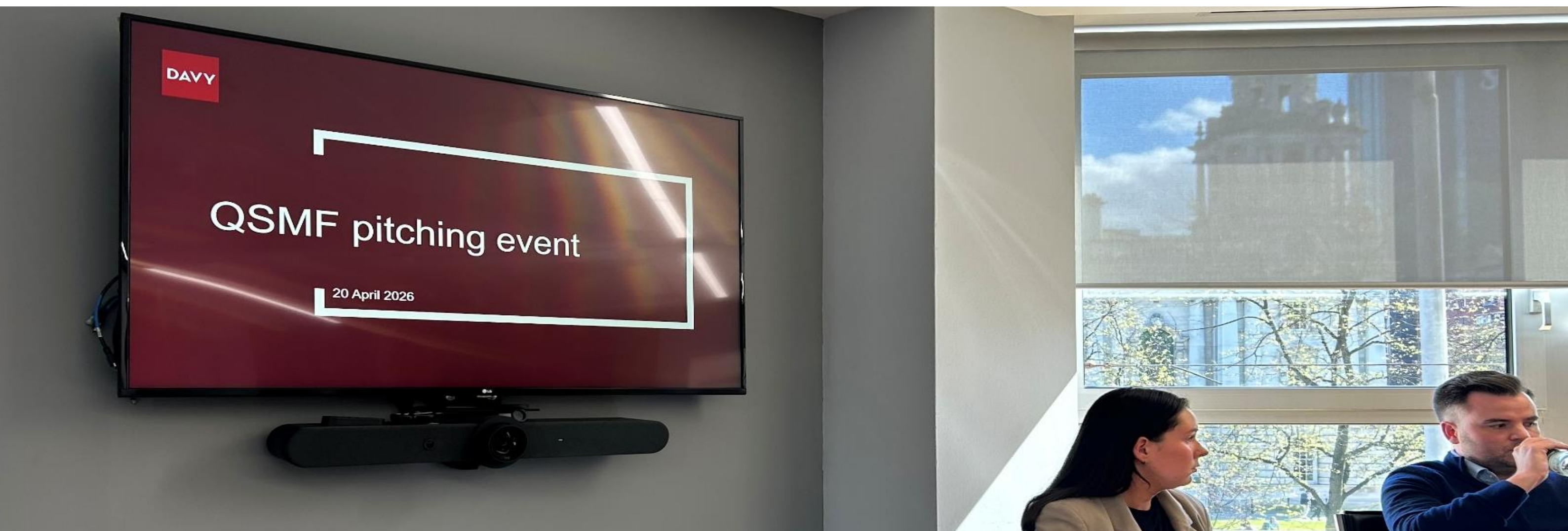
Davy Pitch Event 2026: A Fitting Finale

Our final flagship event of the year was held in April, when our Sponsor Davy opened the doors of their Belfast office to host the annual QSMF pitching event. Eight teams, selected through the internal pitching events, took to the floor to present their stock to a panel of Davy professionals, including Terence Hann, Portfolio Manager and Ben Banerji, Director from the Davy team, who brought both expertise and genuine engagement to the judging process.

Each pitch was followed by a probing Q&A session, giving presenters the experience of defending their thesis in front of seasoned investment professionals in a real-world setting.The evening reflected everything that Semester Two had built toward. Members who had spent months developing their analytical skills, absorbing feedback from masterclasses, and refining their ideas through the internal selection process arrived ready to perform. The quality of the pitches on the night was testament to that journey. After the formal proceedings, the event closed with refreshments and networking, giving members the opportunity to connect directly with the Davy team in a more informal setting, an invaluable experience for those beginning to think seriously about their careers in financial services.

It was a fitting way to close out the year. From the opening introductory sessions of Semester One through to eight polished pitches in front of industry professionals, 2025/26 had been a year that raised the bar for what QSMF members can achieve, and left the fund better positioned than for what comes next. The scale and success of what was achieved this year is a testament to the drive, creativity, and commitment of our members at all levels, including our Executive Committee, Sector Heads, Specialists, and Analysts, and sets a powerful foundation for the future of QSMF in the years to come.

Darragh O'Connor



Fund Governance

Executive Committee

Applications open each summer and are open to all Queen's students. Candidates for Executive Committee roles are expected to demonstrate relevant industry experience or prior involvement in the Fund. Shortlisted applicants are interviewed by the Faculty Oversight Committee, which appoints the incoming Committee.

Typically, the executive committee consists of seven roles form the core: Chief Executive Officer, Chief Investment Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Risk Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Economist, and Chief Quantitative Officer. The Faculty Oversight Committee retains the right to adjust the roles available each year based on applicant experience and Fund requirements.

Sector Heads

The incoming Executive Committee is responsible for the appointment of all other Fund roles, including Sector Heads. Sector Heads are drawn primarily from the previous year's analyst cohort and selected through an internal application and interview process run by the Executive Committee. Each Sector Head takes
ownership of one GICS sector, acting as portfolio manager for the holdings within it and leading the educational development of the analyst assigned to that sector.

Analysts and Members

The QSMF welcomes all students at QUB to join the fund as members. Members are promoted to analysts on completion of key educational milestones such as equity research report-building and Bloomberg Market Concepts modules., available at no cost through the Trading room. Analysts may be promoted to Senior Analyst within their specific sector based on commitment and performance, providing a route into the following years sector head cohort.

Organisation Chart

Responsibilities of ExCo

CEO: Sets the Fund's strategic direction for the year, acts as principal contact to Oversight Committee.

COO: Runs the Fund's day-to-day operations, including the events calendar, member onboarding, and coordination across sectors.

CIO: Owns the portfolio's investment strategy, chairs Investment Committee meetings, and holds dictates direction of

CFO: Manages the Fund's finances and NAV reporting, oversees portfolio attribution, and maintains the relationship with Davy as administrator.

CRO: Leads the Risk team, sets and monitors the Fund's risk framework, and reports on portfolio exposure, VaR, and drawdown to

Meeting Format

Executive Committee
Weekly – during Term
Events, portfolio monitoring, and implementation of the Investment Policy Statement.

Investment Committee
Monthly – during Term
Executive Committee plus Oversight Committee. Market outlook, holding review, and voting on recommendations.

Annual General Meeting
January – annually
Open to all members; Sponsors provide review, ExCo provide fund performance and strategic update.

Sean Freeburn

Introduction to the Quant Sector

2025–2026 marked the first year of the newly formed Quant sector, which was created with the intention of providing members with education and experience in the fast-paced and dynamic world of quantitative finance. After hand-selecting over 40 analysts, the sector began with an options masterclass delivered by Christopher McDonald and I, the Quant sector co-heads. Education is regarded as a core pillar of the Quant sector and will remain a key area of focus in the coming years. This event was followed by several further masterclasses and workshops covering topics such as probability and risk management, led by Oliver Billing, head of research, and Daniel Tenuto, head of risk. After several members competed in the Rotman Trading Challenge in Dublin in November, the sector rounded out 2025 with a special guest talk from Aidan Savage, a Queen's alumnus and current engineer at Hudson River Trading, delivered in collaboration with the School of Mathematics & Physics and EEECS careers services.

Upon returning for semester two, attention turned towards preparing analysts for their final group projects. Each group was led by a senior analyst, providing those members with the opportunity to develop their leadership abilities and to drive a hands-on project based on a specific area of interest for them and their team. A number of strong submissions were received across the sector's four subdivisions: trading, research, risk, and technology. In February, the sector also hosted a much-anticipated poker tournament in collaboration with the Queen's Poker Society, kindly sponsored by Susquehanna (SIG).

Another core focus of the Quant sector is to drive engagement with leading firms within the quantitative finance industry. With Ireland home to the European headquarters of two major trading firms, Susquehanna and Virtu Financial, partnering with these firms was seen as an excellent way to educate members on what it is genuinely like to work at a top quantitative trading firm while also providing valuable links to two of the industry's largest employers. This ties into the sector's core pillar of employability by equipping members with the skills and knowledge required to better prepare them for securing roles within quantitative finance.

The Quant Sector's poker tournament with SIG.

To close out the year, April saw the first-ever edition of Hack Belfast, an event designed to bring together builders from across Ireland and the UK and to tap into the thriving tech ecosystem in Belfast.

Alongside the main builder and non-builder tracks, the sector partnered with Virtu Financial to run a separate quant-focused track in which teams took part in a data modelling competition judged by members of the Virtu team. This proved a fitting way to close out the sector's inaugural year, with similar events anticipated in years to come.

Looking towards the future, the Quant sector will continue to focus on providing top-class education for its members as well as collaborating with industry-leading firms and like-minded university societies and organisations to further advance its three core pillars: education, engagement, and employability.

Kyan Cassidy

Student Managed Fund 10th Year Anniversary

A Decade of QSMF: Celebrating Ten Years as a Real Money Fund

2025/26 marked a milestone year for QSMF. Ten years ago, the fund placed its first trade as a real money fund, and a decade on, that single step has grown into one of the most significant student-led investment societies on the island of Ireland. Fittingly, the fund crossed £100,000 in assets under management just in time for the anniversary, a symbolic full circle moment that reflects the steady growth, discipline, and ambition that has defined QSMF since its earliest days

But the real story of the last ten years was never just about the numbers. It is about the generation of students who have passed through the fund, developed their skills, tested their convictions in front of real markets, and gone on to build careers across investment banking, asset management, hedge funds, and beyond. That impact is woven throughout this year's report, visible in the alumni who returned to share their experiences with current members, the judges who sat on pitching panels, and the speakers whose own QSMF journeys gave this year's Analysts a genuine sense of what is possible. To mark the anniversary, QSMF launched a series of "where are they now" features on the fund's LinkedIn page, celebrating the achievements of alumni and reconnecting the wider QSMF community across the past decade. It has been a fitting way to honour ten years of investment, not just in markets, but in people.

The scale and success of what was achieved this decade is a testament to the drive, creativity, and commitment of our members at all levels, including our Executive Committee, Sector Heads, Specialists, and Analysts, and sets a powerful foundation for the future of QSMF in the years to come.

01 October 2025

Real-Time Trading Simulation with Amplify Me

Delivered in partnership with financial trading specialists Amplify Me. The full analyst cohort took part in a live-market exercise, giving exposure to real-life Trading exposure.

19 November 2025

Barney Fountain Guest Speaker Event

16 April 2026

10-Year Keynote Talk from Declan Breslin

20 April 2026

End-Of-Year Davy Pitching Competition

18 February 2026

York SMIF Pitching Finals

01 January 2026

AGM Keynote – Terence Hann of Davy

Student Testimonials

Joining QSMF has been one of the most rewarding parts of my university experience. I initially joined as an analyst in the Materials sector, where I produced two equity research reports and pitched one of them. The experience gave me a strong foundation and motivated me to take on greater responsibility.

This year, I was appointed Sector Head for Materials, leading a team that produced nine equity research reports across the sector. I also had the opportunity to present two reports myself: one to the Executive Committee and another at the Davy Stock Pitching Event. Comparing my final pitch to my first presentations, the improvement has been significant, and the experience greatly increased my confidence and public speaking skills.

Beyond the technical skills I developed in analysis and valuation, QSMF provided invaluable networking opportunities and exposure to industry professionals. The experience has helped me stand out to employers and played an important role in securing my placement in Audit at KPMG. I would highly recommend QSMF to any student interested in finance or investing.

Max Kirk
Materials Sector Head

My name is Arya, and I have had the privilege of serving as the Real Estate Sector Head for the Queen's Student Managed Fund (QSMF) during the 2025/2026 academic year. This role has been an incredibly rewarding experience, both professionally and personally, and one I will carry with me well beyond my time at university.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the executive team, whose oversight and support were instrumental throughout the year. Under their guidance, our team successfully delivered a pitch at the Davy Pitching Event, proposing the fund's sole real estate holding, a milestone that reflects the hard work and dedication of everyone involved.

I am equally grateful for the broader leadership and expertise the executive team brought throughout their tenure, which provided our sector with invaluable insight into how real estate functions within the context of a student-managed fund. Their mentorship shaped the way we approached research, analysis, and decision-making.

This year has been one of tremendous growth. I leave this role with a deeper understanding of the industry, a stronger professional foundation, and a great appreciation for the team that made it all possible.

Muhammad Aryasatya
Real Estate Sector Head

My experience at QSMF has been one of the most valuable parts of my time at university. Through sector-specific research and building relative valuation models for equity reports, I've continuously developed my investment knowledge and analytical skills.

Being promoted from Information Technology Analyst to Consumer Discretionary Sector Head gave me the chance to grow both analytically and as a leader, skills that proved crucial when applying for roles in industry. The wide variety of events and guest speakers also played an important role in shaping my career direction, giving me the chance to meet industry professionals and build a strong network.

Beyond the technical development, QSMF introduced me to like-minded students across year groups and courses who shared a genuine interest in markets and investing. Completing the Bloomberg Market Concepts certification and putting financial theory into practice prepared me for the demands of working in industry. Ultimately, QSMF helped me stand out to employers and was instrumental in securing a professional role at a top-tier investment bank in London. I would highly recommend it to any student interested in finance or investing.

Zoe Murphy
UBS Asset Management IP

Markets Update

In our 2024 Economic Outlook we described the global economy as "slow and steady." That characterisation has not aged well. The period since has been defined by an AI valuation reset, a historic energy supply disruption, and a renewed tariff regime, each testing investor positioning and strengthening the case for diversification. For the Fund, this environment has vindicated several long-held positions, while the headwinds we have faced are instructive and have shaped how we are positioned entering the second half of 2026.

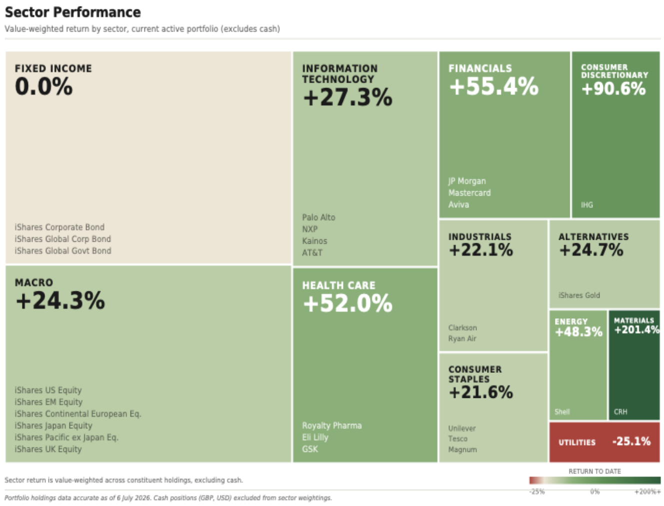
2025 in Review

Global equities trended higher for much of 2025, led by US technology on continued AI momentum. The narrative turned sharply when DeepSeek's R1 model wiped $600bn from Nvidia's market cap in a single session, the largest single-day loss in market history, demonstrating that AI capability could be achieved at a fraction of the assumed capital cost and placing the hyperscaler capex cycle under immediate scrutiny. Beneath the headlines, a broader rotation was underway. The US dollar fell 9.6% on a DXY basis, its worst year since 2017, rewarding non-US exposure: the MSCI World ex USA Index returned 19.5% against 17.4% for the S&P 500. The Bank of England cut rates four times in 2025, taking Bank Rate from 4.75% to 3.75%, continuing a cutting cycle begun in August 2024 from a 5.25% peak.

These dynamics were felt directly across the portfolio. JPMorgan, now returning 94.4% since book cost, benefited from elevated volatility and a supportive rate environment, while our iShares Gold hedge returned 25.6% as investors sought protection against dollar weakness. Shell, up 53.5%, entered the year well-positioned for a tightening energy market. The dollar move validated our June 2025 decision to broaden geographic exposure through passive ETFs, with iShares Emerging Markets Equity since returning 46.9% and iShares Continental European Equity 16.8%. In technology, Palo Alto Networks (45.7%) and NXP Semiconductors (37.1%) absorbed the DeepSeek-driven reassessment and recovered well, while AT&T, at -18.4%, was the portfolio's weakest performer.

2026: Optimism Tested

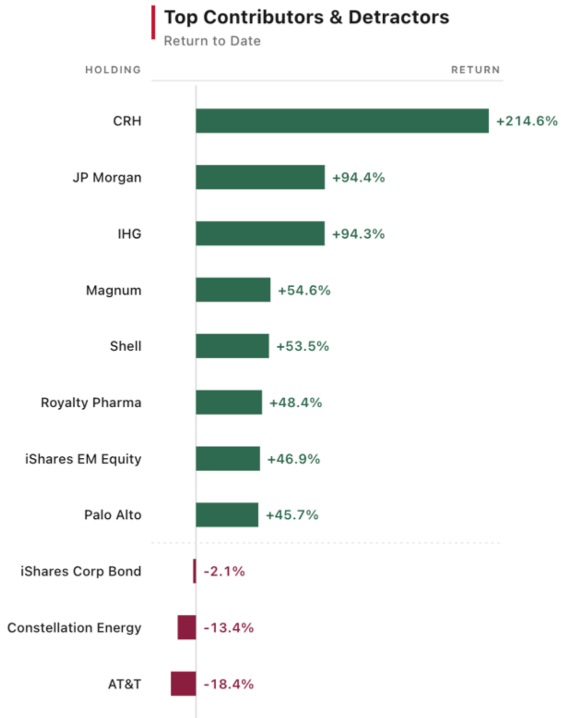
The constructive opening to 2026 was quickly tested. US tech fell further through January and February, software dropped nearly 23% year-to-date, and growth underperformed value across Q1 (down 8.4% against a 1.3% gain). Europe was the unexpected bright spot: Germany's suspension of its constitutional debt brake, alongside a broad European defence spending surge, provided a significant fiscal tailwind, and European equities outperformed the US in Q1 in dollar terms. CRH, our longest-standing conviction position and now returning 214.6%, was the single largest contributor, its European infrastructure exposure benefiting directly from the fiscal impulse. Clarkson (27.1%) and InterContinental Hotels Group (94.3%) also contributed, through global shipping and resilient travel demand respectively. Constellation Energy, down 13.4%, was a notable detractor: our AI-driven power demand thesis remains intact, but regulatory uncertainty and collapsing wholesale energy prices have weighed on near-term sentiment.



Geopolitical forces were meanwhile building. The outbreak of the Iran conflict on 28 February and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz produced what the IEA called the largest supply disruption in the history of the oil market. Brent surpassed $100 on 8 March and peaked at $126, and Shell captured significant margin expansion as a vertically integrated major. The picture then reversed: a mid-June US-Iran Memorandum of Understanding extended a sixty-day ceasefire and reopened the strait, sending Brent back to roughly $80 and erasing nearly all the conflict-driven gains. The accord's durability remains uncertain, with follow-up talks cancelled and the agreement contingent on further nuclear negotiations. The shock also arrived at a fragile moment for monetary policy: the BoE held at 3.75% with May CPI at 2.8% against a 2.1% forecast, and the Federal Reserve held at 3.50% to 3.75% while signalling a hawkish shift, with nine of eighteen officials now pencilling in at least one hike before year-end. The Fund's fixed income allocation has held close to flat through the volatility, serving its intended function as a portfolio anchor, while markets have recovered more broadly: the S&P 500 is up roughly 8% year-to-date and Japan's Nikkei 225 has led globally, up over 30% and benefiting our iShares Japan Equity position.

The Year Ahead

The second half of 2026 will be shaped by the tension between strong corporate earnings and persistent macro fragility. The AI infrastructure buildout continues to accelerate, and our holdings in Constellation Energy and Kainos are positioned for this theme, though Constellation needs a more supportive energy price environment to reflect its thesis. The reshoring of semiconductor supply chains and the generational increase in global defence spending are creating opportunities in industrials and materials, where CRH, Clarkson, and NXP all have exposure. In healthcare, Eli Lilly (43.0%) and Royalty Pharma (48.4%) are delivering on the therapeutics cycle we identified at rebalance, while GSK (30.4%) provides more defensive exposure.

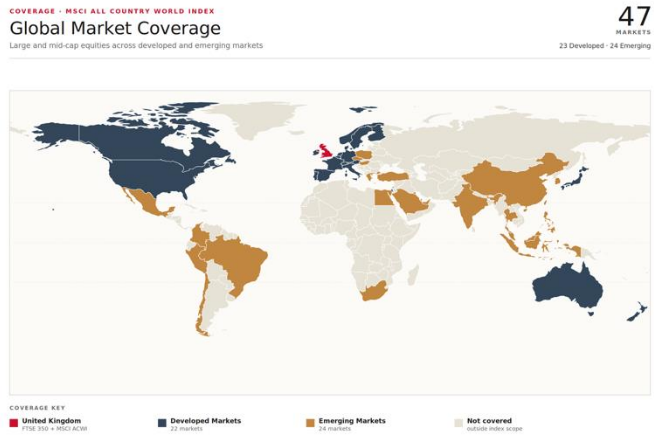


The risks are equally clear: central banks face difficult trade-offs, and the US-Iran accord could unravel if nuclear talks fail, sending crude sharply higher, while a durable resolution would benefit rate-sensitive assets but compress margins for our energy holdings. The Fund enters the second half with a more balanced geographic exposure than at any point in its history, positioned to perform across a range of outcomes rather than depending on any single one.

Change in Benchmark

The Fund has formally transitioned its primary benchmark from the FTSE 350 to the MSCI All Country World Index (ACWI). The rationale is straightforward. The FTSE 350 is a domestically concentrated, sterling-denominated equity index with limited sector breadth. It no longer reflects the portfolio we are managing. As of June 2026, the Fund holds active equities across the US, Europe, and Asia, passive regional equity ETFs spanning six geographies, three global fixed income positions, and a gold allocation. Measuring this portfolio against a narrow UK equity index distorted our performance signal, introduced artificial tracking error, and made attribution harder to interpret. The Brinson, Hood, and Beebower research, which UBS presented to the Fund in April 2026, established that asset allocation explains over 91% of the variation in portfolio returns.

If that is the case, the benchmark against which allocation decisions are measured needs to reflect the opportunity set in which those decisions are being made. The MSCI ACWI, covering large and mid-cap equities across 23 developed and 24 emerging markets, does this.



It is not a perfect match for a multi-asset portfolio that includes fixed income and alternatives, and we acknowledge that limitation. But it is a materially better reference point than a single-country equity index for a fund with global ambitions. Going forward, performance attribution and risk reporting will be measured against the MSCI ACWI.

Sean Freeburn

Fund Performance

The 2025/26 year was the first full reporting period under the rebalanced framework set in motion in Summer 2025. With the new strategic allocation now embedded across the portfolio, this year's results provide the first meaningful indication of how the shift toward a globally diversified multi-asset stance has performed. Since inception, QSMF has delivered an annualised return of approximately 7.0%, with annualised volatility moderating as the new framework takes effect. On a year-on-year basis, the Fund delivered a total return of 11.5%, measured from the post-rebalance valuation on 21 July 2025 to 18 May 2026. This compares with 20% for the MSCI World over the same period. While absolute returns were positive, relative performance trailed the benchmark, and the drivers warrant clear explanation.

The shortfall was largely a function of asset allocation. The current portfolio holds approximately 22% in fixed income, 4% in alternatives, 20% in passive global equity ETFs, and approximately 50% in active equity, with the balance in cash and FX. The fixed income sleeve returned -0.75% as global government yields drifted higher through the period, contributing a drag of roughly 0.2 percentage points to the headline number. The alternatives sleeve, currently held in the iShares Physical Gold ETC, returned 36.6%, adding 1.5 percentage points. The remainder of the gap reflects the Fund's lower equity weighting relative to a pure equity benchmark in a year during which developed-market equities led the field.

The active and passive sleeves performed differently. The active equities returned 14.8% over the period, weighted across sixteen positions, while the passive equity sleeve, comprising the iShares ESG screened funds introduced at the rebalance, returned 19.9%. Although a single year is a short window to draw firm conclusions, the gap of five percentage points between the two sleeves sets a reference point for the active book in subsequent years.

Standout active positions included Royalty Pharma (+48.4%), GSK (+30.4%), Clarkson (+27.1%), NXP Semiconductors (+37.1%), Eli Lilly (+43.0%), and Intercontinental Hotels (+94.3%), with healthcare, industrials and consumer-facing names contributing most of the gains. Within the passive book, the iShares Emerging Markets ESG fund was the headline performer at +46.9%, validating the decision to allocate explicit weight to EM rather than holding it implicitly through UK-listed exposures. Constellation Energy declined 13.4% as a broader pullback in AI-linked power names weighed on a position initiated at the rebalance. AT&T fell 18.4% on continued earnings pressure, while Mastercard gave back 9.9% as payments multiples compressed. The Constellation thesis remains under formal review ahead of the next allocation cycle.

Two positions were closed during the year. Lululemon was exited in late 2025 at a 35% loss relative to original purchase. The position had been held since 2024 on a thesis around premium-brand pricing power and international expansion. Over the holding period, the competitive environment for athleisure shifted, with emerging brands compressing margins and US comparable sales decelerating into mid-2025. With management resetting guidance lower more than once, we assessed the original investment case as no longer intact and closed the position. The decision reinforced the importance of revisiting long-held positions when underlying fundamentals shift.

We exited American Tower in December 2025 at an approximated 24% loss, having been initiated at the June 2025 rebalance. The original investment case rested on a defensive infrastructure REIT positioned to benefit from a normalising rate environment. In practice, tower-leasing economics came under sustained pressure from carrier consolidation, while rate-sensitive selling continued across the REIT complex. We assessed the short-term risk as asymmetric and elected to close the position. The outcome underscored the importance of continued monitoring of newly initiated positions and disciplined sizing for adverse mark-to-market.

Looking ahead, the next reporting period will provide further evidence on two key questions: whether the portfolio's improved volatility profile holds through a more challenging market environment, and whether the active equity sleeve can close the gap to its passive counterpart over a full market cycle. Both will be assessed within the same disciplined framework that has shaped this year's analysis.

Henry Megarity

Risk Update

Risk Governance and Team Development

Against a backdrop of continued macroeconomic uncertainty and evolving market conditions, risk management remained a priority throughout the academic year. A major development during the period was the formal expansion of the Fund's risk function through the establishment of a dedicated Risk Team comprising six members focused on portfolio oversight, analytics, and reporting.

This development marked an important progression in the Fund's governance framework, strengthening the integration of risk considerations into portfolio construction and investment decision-making. The revised structure introduced greater accountability, improved consistency in monitoring processes, and enhanced collaboration.

The Fund continued to transition from a largely reactive monitoring framework towards a more structured and forward-looking approach, with greater emphasis placed on downside protection, diversification, and disciplined allocation management.

Risk Infrastructure and Dashboard Development

A key achievement during the year was the development and implementation of a proprietary HTML-based risk dashboard designed to enhance our Funds analytical and reporting capabilities.

Built upon the previous year's spreadsheet-based framework, the dashboard automated a significant portion of the monitoring and reporting process. The system operates on a weekly basis following the receipt of broker data and consolidates portfolio analytics into a centralised reporting framework accessible to QSMF members. The dashboard significantly improved our ability to monitor portfolio exposures, evaluate risk-adjusted performance, and identify emerging areas of concern in a timely and consistent manner.

Key reporting features included:

- Portfolio NAV and cumulative return tracking
- Weekly performance and drawdown monitoring
- Value at Risk (VaR) and downside risk metrics
- Asset allocation and sector exposure analysis
- Correlation analysis across portfolio holdings
- Monte Carlo portfolio simulations and scenario distributions
- Portfolio concentration and allocation checks
- Risk-focused performance summaries and reporting outputs

The implementation of this infrastructure reduced reliance on manual spreadsheet-based processes, improved reporting consistency, and enhanced transparency.

Portfolio Risk Positioning and Allocation Discipline

The QSMF continued its transition from a concentrated equity portfolio towards a more diversified multi-asset allocation framework. This represented a significant shift in the Fund's overall risk profile and contributed to improved portfolio resilience during periods of elevated market volatility.

Greater emphasis was placed on diversification across asset classes, sectors, and investment styles to reduce concentration risk and improve long-term risk-adjusted returns.

During the year, formal allocation monitoring and risk budgeting processes were introduced, including:

- Portfolio volatility monitoring and downside risk thresholds
- Asset allocation target ranges and allocation checks
- Sector-level exposure monitoring
- Reduced reliance on single-stock concentration

A more balanced portfolio structure was maintained throughout the year, with increased allocations to fixed income and diversified index instruments complementing the core equity portfolio.

This transition materially strengthened our intrinsic risk profile while supporting a more disciplined investment process.

Quantitative Risk Analytics

The revised framework introduced a more quantitative and data-driven approach to portfolio risk assessment. Significant progress was made in enhancing the Fund's analytical capabilities through the integration of portfolio risk metrics and simulation-based analysis into the reporting process.

These tools enhanced the ability to identify concentration risks, assess diversification benefits, and evaluate potential downside scenarios under varying market conditions.

The introduction of simulation and distribution-based analysis also improved the QSMF's understanding of portfolio behaviour during periods of stress and uncertainty, supporting more informed allocation and rebalancing decisions.

Risk Culture and Decision-Making

Alongside technical and analytical developments, we continued to strengthen our broader risk culture.

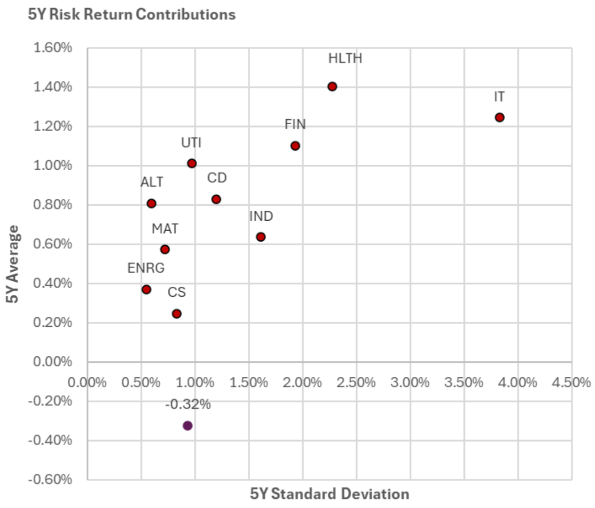
Risk considerations became more integrated into portfolio discussions and investment reviews, encouraging a more balanced evaluation of both risk and return. Greater emphasis was placed on consistency in decision-making, communication of portfolio risks, and alignment with the QSMF's long-term investment objectives.

The establishment of a dedicated Risk Team also improved the frequency and quality of engagement surrounding portfolio positioning and exposure management, reinforcing accountability across investment decisions.

As a result, risk management is now more actively embedded within the Fund's investment process rather than operating solely as a reporting function.

Current Risk Assessment

As of the latest valuation period, portfolio risk metrics remain elevated relative to long-term historical averages but broadly stable given the prevailing macroeconomic environment.



The QSMF's diversified allocation framework has contributed to improved resilience and reduced dependence on individual equity positions compared to prior years. Increased exposure to fixed income and index-based investments has helped moderate overall portfolio volatility while maintaining participation in market upside.

Weekly monitoring indicates that portfolio volatility and drawdown behaviour remain within acceptable internal ranges under the revised framework. Correlation analysis also suggests improved diversification benefits across holdings relative to previous periods of concentrated equity exposure.

Monte Carlo simulation analysis continues to indicate a favourable long-term return profile under most simulated outcomes, although downside tail risks remain present given ongoing geopolitical uncertainty, interest rate sensitivity, and changing global trade conditions.

Overall, the QSMF remains appropriately positioned to balance capital preservation with long-term return generation while continuing to refine its risk management capabilities.

Outlook and Next Steps

Looking ahead, the QSMF intends to continue expanding its risk management and analytical capabilities to further strengthen portfolio oversight and decision-making processes.

Key priorities for the upcoming year include:

- Enhancing scenario analysis and stress testing frameworks
- Expanding risk attribution and factor-based analysis
- Improving data integration and reporting automation
- Further refining asset allocation and diversification strategies
- Strengthening real-time monitoring capabilities
- Continuing development of our internal analytical infrastructure

These developments are expected to support a more robust, scalable, and forward-looking risk framework, positioning the QSMF to navigate increasingly complex market environments while maintaining a disciplined and risk-aware investment process.

Adam Neill

Appendix: Rebalance 2025/26

Holding	Type	Action	Current Weight	New Weight	Change
AT&T Inc	Active Equity		1.68%		
Aviva PLC	Active Equity		2.02%		
Blackrock Collective Investment Funds-Ishares UK Equity Esg Index Fund UK	Passive Equity		0.87%		
Blackrock Collective Investment Funds-Ishares US Equity Esg Index Fund UK	Passive Equity		7.62%		
Blackrock Collective Investment Funds-Ishares Pacific EX Japan Equity Esg Index	Passive Equity		1.31%		
iShares Continental European Equity ESG Index Fund UK	Passive Equity		3.19%		
Blackrock Collective Investment Funds-Ishares Emerging Markets Equity Esg Index	Passive Equity		4.45%		
Blackrock Collective Investment Funds-Ishares Japan Equity Esg Index Fund UK	Passive Equity		0.99%		
Clarkson PLC	Active Equity		2.45%		
Constellation Energy Corp	Active Equity		1.72%		
CRH PLC	Active Equity		2.03%		
iShares Global Corp Bond UCITS ETF	Fixed Income		8.07%		
GSK PLC	Active Equity		2.66%		
InterContinental Hotels Group PLC	Active Equity		5.10%		
iShares Global High Yield Corp Bond UCITS ETF	Fixed Income		1.96%		
iShares Broad Global Govt Bond UCITS ETF	Fixed Income		10.06%		
iShares Physical Gold ETC	Alternative		3.27%		
JPMorgan Chase & Co	Active Equity		2.86%		
Kainos Group PLC	Active Equity		2.92%		
Eli Lilly & Co	Active Equity		3.48%		
Mastercard Inc	Active Equity		2.17%		
NXP Semiconductors NV	Active Equity		2.41%		
Palo Alto Networks Inc	Active Equity		3.09%		
Royalty Pharma PLC	Active Equity		3.14%		
Ryanair Holdings PLC	Active Equity		2.25%		
Shell PLC	Active Equity		0.00%		
Shell PLC	Active Equity		2.16%		
Tesco PLC	Active Equity		2.22%		
Magnum Ice Cream Co NV/The	Active Equity		0.10%		
Unilever PLC	Active Equity		1.63%		
GBP	Cash C FX		9.81%		
USD	Cash C FX		2.31%		

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our gratitude to all those who have supported QSMF in various ways through its development, launch, and ongoing operations.

SPONSOR

DAVY

SMF CONFERENCE

QSMF gratefully acknowledges the financial support from Queen's Annual Fund.

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST | ANNUAL FUND

CONNECT

http://go.qub.ac.uk/qubsmf

Queen's Student Managed Fund

qsmf@qub.ac.uk

DISCLAIMER

QUEEN’S BUSINESS SCHOOL
185 STRANMILLIS ROAD, BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND, BT9 5EE
+44 (0)28 9097 4200 | QSMF@QUB.AC.UK
HTTP://GO.QUB.AC.UK/QUBSMF