

News

Swiss Life Asset Managers awards prizes to best finance theses

10 November 2022

On Wednesday evening, Swiss Life Asset Managers, together with the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts and media partner Finanz und Wirtschaft, awarded the Swiss Life Thesis Award 2022 for the best Master's and Bachelor's theses in the financial field.

A total of 32 Bachelor's and Master's theses on financial issues from universities of applied sciences across Switzerland were nominated for the Swiss Life Thesis Award 2022. Four theses were judged to be excellent by the expert jury. The winners received the coveted award on Wednesday evening at Swiss Life's head office in Zurich. In addition to the award, they also received a financial prize for their outstanding performance.

Stefan Mächler, Chief Investment Officer of the Swiss Life Group, was impressed by the diversity of this year's theses at yesterday's award ceremony: "Presenting research topics in a way that is both detailed and at the same time practice-relevant is a real challenge. It is great that the graduates bring such benefit to practical application with their work. With the Swiss Life Thesis Award, we also want to encourage future students to address financial issues." Professor Christoph Lengwiler, jury member and external lecturer at the Institute for Financial Services in Zug (IFZ), part of the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, also praised their special achievement: "A record number of Bachelor's and Master's theses were submitted this year. Once again, it is a good mix between more research-oriented and practice-oriented assignments. Students add value for the client with their Bachelor's and Master's theses. They accumulate know-how and profile themselves for qualified positions in the financial sector. All nominees can be proud of their performance."

Review of the award winners

Dominic Jäger, from Uetikon am See, a graduate of Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, used a simplified "customer journey" for land ownership to illustrate the opportunities and challenges of densified

building in existing residential areas, as envisaged in the Spatial Planning Act revised in 2014. The jury's verdict: "A very interesting work that sheds new light on a contemporary issue. The work stands out especially through the comprehensive data basis, which took considerable effort in terms of collecting and processing." Dominic Jäger was awarded the **Swiss Life Thesis Award in the Bachelor's category**, worth CHF 5000.



Dominic Jäger, winner of the Swiss Life Thesis Award 2022 in the Bachelor's category

Marilyne Fankhauser, from Yverdon-les-Bains, a graduate of the School of Engineering and Management (Haute Ecole d'Ingénierie et de Gestion du Canton de Vaud (HEIG-VD)), conducted a financial analysis and a company valuation for a group of companies in the food sector in relation to a succession regulation. She examined various scenarios for restructuring with a view to integration into another group of companies. "The work is very well structured and contains clear statements. It clearly shows how the methods learned during the course can be exploited in practical work." The jury acknowledged this work with an **Honourable Mention in the Bachelor's category**, worth CHF 2500.



Marilyne Fankhauser, winner of the 2022 Honourable Mention in the Bachelor's category

Nicola Leuenberger, from Muri, a graduate of the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, addressed the question of the extent to which machine learning methods can improve forecasting accuracy in predicting defaults compared with conventional statistical methods. The jury's verdict: "An excellent piece of work with great substance. The findings, which are based on modern methodological approaches, certainly have the potential for publication in an academic journal." With this work, Nicola Leuenberger earned the **Swiss Life Thesis Award in the Master's category**, which is worth CHF 5000.



Nicola Leuenberger, winner of the 2022 Swiss Life Thesis Award in the Master's category

Marc Leuenberger, from Muri, a graduate of the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, used a range of econometric analyses to investigate how risk spreads on corporate bonds developed during the corona pandemic. In order to answer his research question, he analysed samples of selected European and US companies. The jury's verdict: "Above-average work with an academic character, which particularly stands out due to its high thematic and methodological standards and thus offers interesting added value. The findings are of empirical relevance to capital market participants." The author received **Honourable Mention in the Master's category**, worth CHF 2500.



Marc Leuenberger, winner of the 2022 Honourable Mention in the Master's category

The prizewinners' institutions receive CHF 1500 each for the bestowal of the Swiss Life Thesis Award, and CHF 1000 for the Honourable Mention.

About the Swiss Life Thesis Award

The Swiss Life Thesis Award, presented in cooperation with the Institute for Financial Services Zug IFZ, part of the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, and the business paper *Finanz und Wirtschaft*, provides a platform for innovative and practice-oriented research work at Swiss institutes of higher education. The best theses in the fields of financial investments, financial markets, financial services companies, financial instruments and corporate finance are eligible for awards each year.

Further information on the Swiss Life Thesis Award can be found at [Swiss Life Thesis Award – Swiss Life Asset Managers \(swisslife-am.com\)](https://www.swisslife-am.com).

Swiss Life Thesis Award jury members

- Philippe Béguelin, Head of Markets Department, Finanz und Wirtschaft
- Dr. Claudia Bernasconi, Head of Current Account at the Swiss National Bank (SNB)
- Rita Fleer, Economist Quantitative Analysis, Swiss Life Asset Managers
- Dr. Peter Kaste, Head of Financial Engineering, Swiss Life Asset Managers
- Prof. Christoph Lengwiler, external lecturer at the Institute of Financial services Zug IFZ Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts
- Dr. Diego Liechti, Member of the Executive Board Nest Collective Foundation

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Swiss Life Asset Managers

Swiss Life Asset Managers has 165 years of experience in managing the assets of the Swiss Life Group. This insurance background has exerted a key influence on the investment philosophy of Swiss Life Asset Managers, which is governed by such principles as value preservation, the generation of consistent and sustainable earnings and a responsible approach to risks. This tried and tested approach means that Swiss Life Asset Managers is also available to third-party clients in Switzerland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom and the Nordic countries.

As at 30 June 2022, Swiss Life Asset Managers managed a total volume of CHF 249.9 billion in assets for the Swiss Life Group, including over CHF 99.7 billion for third-party asset management. Swiss Life Asset Managers is also a leading real estate manager¹ in Europe, with CHF 88.0 billion of a total volume of CHF 249.9 billion in assets under management invested in real estate. In addition, Swiss Life Asset Managers, in cooperation with Livit, manages real estate worth a total of CHF 28.5 billion. Total real estate under management at the end of June 2022 thus stood at CHF 116.5 billion.

Swiss Life Asset Managers has over 2500 employees in Europe.

A self-determined life

Swiss Life enables people to live a self-determined life so they can look to the future with confidence. Swiss Life Asset Managers pursues the same goal: we think long term and act responsibly. We use our knowledge and experience to develop future-oriented investment solutions. That's how we support our clients in achieving their long-term investment objectives. This in turn helps their customers to plan long term and act with self-determination.

¹ INREV fund manager survey 2022 (assets under management as at 31 December 2021)