

# FUTURE FUNDS

BUILD. GROW. ESTABLISH IN THE MIDDLE EAST

28TH JANUARY, 2026

THE  
ABU DHABI  
EDITION

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



EAST EMBLEM  
THE VALIDATION ENGINE



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# A CURATED EXPERIENCE FOR LEADERS

FutureFunds offers a unique blend of content and networking, moving beyond impersonal, large-scale events. You will connect with an exclusive audience of peers, including Partners, CEOs, CIOs, COO's, General Managers, Fund Heads,

Heads of IR and key decision makers, in an environment built for candid, peer-to-peer discussion. With curated roundtables, focused masterclasses, and targeted networking, this is your opportunity to gain the strategic foresight and build the relationships needed to succeed in the Middle East.

## MASTER CAPITAL RAISING AND INVESTOR RELATIONS

Build a formidable presence in the Middle East by moving beyond a generic approach to fundraising and mastering the art of on-the-ground engagement. You will gain actionable strategies for building a robust, institutional-grade foundation to earn allocator trust and secure long-term capital, including tailoring your fund positioning for diverse allocators in the region, and tap into technology and infrastructure to advance your capital raising capabilities.

## ACHIEVE OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND INVESTOR CONFIDENCE

Solve the "build vs. buy" dilemma for fund technology and operations by mastering the frameworks for scalable growth and institutional-grade compliance. FutureFunds delves into what it takes to cost-effectively optimise operations, from automating manual processes and smart software selections to building a resilient foundation that meets the highest standards.

## EMBRACE INNOVATIVE FUND STRUCTURING

Gain a strategic playbook for meeting modern investor demands by exploring innovative local frameworks and fund structures that are more flexible than traditional models. This segment will provide insights on how to cater to the growing demand for transparency and co-investment models, and how to structure funds to capture new opportunities in real asset tokenisation and the rapidly expanding market for Shari'a-compliant products.

## TAP INTO EMERGING INVESTMENT TRENDS

Position your fund for success by gaining exclusive insights on the emerging investment trends and risks that are shaping the market, identify and manage risks in sensitive sectors impacted by geopolitics and tech nationalism, and navigate the evolving exit landscape. Discover the latest opportunities in the major growth areas such as private credit, real estate, Shari'a investments and GCC tech, to maximise returns for your investors.

## ATTRACT, RETAIN AND DEVELOP WORLD CLASS TALENT

Unlock the full potential of your team by mastering strategies for attracting, developing, and retaining world-class talent in the GCC's competitive financial hub. Discover a practical guide to mastering the regulatory landscape and establishing robust governance frameworks that are scalable, efficient, and essential for building institutional trust and attracting capital in a maturing market.

# FUTURE FUNDS

## OUR SPEAKERS, YOUR VISIONARIES:



**ABDULLAH SHAHIN**  
Founding Partner,  
**Olive Rock Partners**



**DR. AHMED MANSOUR**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
**Private Department of H.E. Sheikh  
Mohammed Bin Khalid Al Nahyan**



**YAZAN ABDEEN**  
Chief Executive Officer, Asset  
Management,  
**Al Ramz PJSC**



**JASPREET RANDHAWA**  
MD and Head of Investments,  
**Burkhan World Investments**



**OMAR AL YAWER**  
Partner,  
**Ruya Partners**



**RAJESH RANJAN**  
Head of Investment,  
**Ali & Sons Holding**



**OMAR FAROOQI**  
Managing Director, Corporate Finance  
Advisory Division,  
**Sidra Capital**



**HAZEM ABU KHALAF**  
Managing Director, Private Equity & Growth  
Investments,  
**Gulf Capital**



**HABEEL KANTH**  
Director,  
**Tikehau Capital**



**ALINA TRUHINA**  
Founding Partner, Managing Partner,  
SEA / Middle East,  
**Utopia Capital Management**



**NATHAN KWON**  
Partner,  
**Shorooq**



**TAMMER QADDUMI**  
Co-Founder and General Partner,  
**VenureSouq**



**KONSTANTIN BEHR**  
Chief Strategy Officer,  
UTOPIA Capital Management



**SARA AL-ATEEQI**  
CEO, **Al Mal Investment Company**  
& Founder, **The Wealth Edit**



**HASHEM SHEHAWI**  
Head of Investments,  
**Halkin Investments Middle East**



**DAVID SHAPIRO**  
Founder and CEO,  
**OPEN VC**



**LUCY GAZMARARIAN**  
Founder & Managing Partner,  
**Token Bay Capital**



**SANDEEP JADHWANI**  
Head of Investment Advisory,  
**H Capital**



**ASHISH MARWAH**  
Chief Investment Officer,  
**Neovision Wealth Management**



**MATTHEW MCMOUGHLIN**  
Strategic CEO, COO & CCO,  
Strategic Growth Advisor,  
**Prospera Fund Partners**



**LEWIS KILROE**

Co-Founder, Managing Director,  
**East Emblem**



**MICHAEL FOURNIE**

Head of Investor Relations,  
**Arzan Investment Management**



**ANGELA HOMSI**

Founding Partner,  
**Angaza Capital**



**EDWIN LAWRENCE**

Chief Executive Officer,  
**Nettlestone Capital Advisors**



**SOHAIL LALANI**

Managing Director,  
GP Strategic Capital  
**Blue Owl Capital**



**NICHOLAS PAILLART**

Managing Partner and CEO,  
**Liberte Capital**



**NICOLAS MICHELON**

Managing Partner,  
**Alagan Partners**



**IAN HIGGINS**

Chief Investment Officer,  
**Emergence Partners**



**BASIL MOFTEH**

Managing Partner  
**Key Capital**



**MARK HAMBACH**

Chief Executive Officer & Managing  
Partner,  
**Investbridge Capital**



**RACHEL ZLATAR**

Head of LP Engagement  
Middle East Investor Network



**SUSANNAH DE JAGER**

Founder, Advisor and Podcast Host,  
**Oxford+**, and Independent Advisor,  
**De Wesley Limited**



**BHASKAR DASGUPTA**

Chairman of the Board, **Point 72**,  
Board Advisor, **APEX Group**,  
Family Office Advisor and IC Member



**ROBERT FARQUHAR**

Chief Commercial Officer,  
**Ctrl Alt**



**PRANAV SHARMA**

Senior Executive Officer  
**Agna Capital**



**ADRIAN BEATTIE**

Principal Consultant,  
**Belclare Advisory Services**



**BENJAMIN DANSO**

Principal,  
**Optima Partners**



**RACHA GHAMLOUCH**

Co-Founder and CEO,  
**Digital Digest**



**SIMONE MACLEOD-NARIN**,

Former SVP, FAB and  
**Digital Transformation Expert**



**KAY FRENCH**

Co-Founder  
**Investory**

08.15

## WELCOME COFFEE & REGISTRATION

09:25

### OPENING REMARKS

**Joseph Houguez**, Co-Founder, **Middle East Investor Network**

09.30

### FUTUREFUNDS HEADLINER - THE FOUNDERS JOURNEY

**The GCC Growth Blueprint: A Fund Manager's Success Story on Building a Formidable Presence in the Region**

**Abdullah Shahin**, Founding Partner, **Olive Rock Partners**

**Interviewed by: Bhaskar Dasgupta**, Chairman of the Board, ME and India, **APEX Group** & Family Office Advisor and IC Member

As a Founding Partner of Olive Rock Partners, one of the first independent private equity firms established in the Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), Abdullah has been a pivotal architect in the regional investment landscape. Having worked on transactions worth over \$4 billion throughout his career, he has successfully transitioned from senior leadership roles at Gulf Capital and The Abraaj Group to building a sovereign-backed, institutional-grade firm from the ground up. Abdullah will share his journey, providing a practitioner's roadmap for navigating the GCC's unique complexities—from sourcing initial capital to building a brand that the region's most sophisticated allocators can't ignore.

- How can you **build a compelling investment thesis** by going beyond market hype and demystifying common stereotypes about the region?
- **The Operational Backbone**: What are the key steps in establishing a robust operational backbone, from provider selection to governance frameworks, that meet institutional principles and make your fund "fit to raise money in the GCC"?
- **Navigating Investor Nuances and the Secret to Winning Capital**: A deep dive into the strategy for dealing with different types of investors—from sovereigns and government entities to family offices—and earning their trust.
- **The Legacy**: What has been their fund's role in the maturation of the GCC's financial ecosystem and its vision for the region's future as a global financial hub.

09.50

### ALLOCATOR PERSPECTIVES

**Beyond the Pitch: What Leading LPs Look for in Next-Gen Fund Managers**

**(Session Host) Edwin Lawrence**, Chief Executive Officer, **Nettlestone Capital Advisors**

**Dr. Ahmed Mansour**, Chief Executive Officer, **Private Department of H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalid Al Nahyan**

**Jaspreet Randhawa**, MD and Head of Investments, **Burkhan World Investments**

**Rajesh Ranjan**, Head of Investment, **Ali & Sons Holding**

**Hashem Shehabi**, Head of Investments, **Halkin Investments Middle East**

- **Performance**: What are the key criteria that inform an institutional investor's decision alongside a historical track record? How important are factors like transparency in reporting, genuine alignment of interest, and a clear understanding of a fund's operational capacity?
- **A Partner, Not a Pitch**: What does it take for a fund manager to move from being a transactional service provider to a trusted long-term partner?
- **Local Knowledge, Global Standards**: How can fund managers demonstrate a genuine understanding of the unique opportunities and risks in the GCC?
- **Operational Maturity**: As allocators become more sophisticated, how closely do they scrutinise a fund's operational backbone?

10:20

### ALL STAR PANEL

**Pillars of Institutional Alpha: Mastering Growth, Scalability, and Tapping into the Opportunity Set in the GCC's New Investment Order**

**(Session Host) Susannah de Jager**, Founder, Advisor and Podcast Host, **Oxford+**, and Independent Advisor, **De Wesley Limited**

**Matthew McLoughlin**, Strategic CEO, COO & CCO, Strategic Growth Advisor, **Prospera Fund Partners**

**Yazan Abdeen**, Chief Executive Officer, Asset Management, **Al Ramz PJSC**

**Omar Al Yawer**, Partner, **Ruya Partners**

**Omar Farooqi**, Managing Director, Corporate Finance Advisory Division, **Sidra Capital**

- **Establish the institutional imperative**: Defining the operational maturity and governance frameworks that are now mandatory for attracting sophisticated, long-term institutional capital
- **Building the operational structure for scale**: Critical frameworks and foundations to establish an institutional-grade operational infrastructure for allocator trust and scale.
- **Future-proofing your structure**: How are modern fund designing flexible, innovative fund vehicles that pre-emptively meet evolving LP demands, allowing access to new capital pools.
- **Navigate the new investment order**: How are leaders positioning their funds to maximise returns and navigate geopolitical headwinds while leveraging the GCC's unique position as a secure global solution for international technology and capital.

## MAIN STAGE

## PRIVATE ROUNDTABLES

The FutureFunds roundtables are private, curated discussions for leading fund managers, LPs, and institutional investors. Hosted by industry experts, sessions operate under the Chatham House Rule to ensure a safe, strategic environment for candid, peer-to-peer dialogue and high engagement.

## 11:40 - 12:10 CAPITAL RAISING

### Are You Fit to Raise Capital in the GCC? Debunking the Myths and Showcasing the Reality of Fundraising

**(Session Host) Edwin Lawrence**, Chief Executive Officer, **Nettlestone Capital Advisors**  
**Sandeep Jadwani**, Head of Investment Advisory, **H Capital**  
**Michael Fournie**, Head of Investor Relations, **Arzan Investment Management**  
**Key French**, Co-Founder, **Investory**

- **The new reality of fundraising:** The critical shift from "suitcase selling" to a strategic, on-the-ground approach with a physical presence to secure trust and confidence.
- **The fundraising minimum threshold in the GCC:** What constitutes 'fit to raise money' in the GCC, including the policies, operational structures and governance frameworks.
- **Avoiding common fundraising pitfalls:** What are the critical mistakes that can hinder a fund's success?
- **Allocator dynamics vs. East and West:** Assessing key regional differences and nuances to build trust and a lasting brand in the GCC.
- **Unlocking Capital:** How to build a strong track record, and proactive investor relations and communication practices.

## 12:10 - 12:40 DEAL FLOW AND LIQUIDITY

### Accessing Deal Flow and Navigating Liquidity: How to Source High-Alpha Assets and Navigate Exits

**(Session Host) Racha Ghamlouch**, Co-Founder and CEO, **Digital Digest**  
**Tammer Qaddumi**, Co-Founder and General Partner, **VenutureSouq**  
**Hazem Abu Khalaf**, Managing Director, Private Equity & Growth Investments, **Gulf Capital**  
**David Shapiro**, Co Founder and CEO, **OPEN VC**  
**Basil Mofteh**, Managing Partner, **Key Capital**

- **The proprietary sourcing engine:** How to build a "local-first" sourcing network that secures exclusive access to high-alpha opportunities in the GCC's most sensitive growth sectors.
- **Engineering the clean exit:** Master the "Liquidity Reading Grid" to navigate a complex exit environment—from regional IPO booms and cross-border M&A to the burgeoning secondary markets—ensuring consistent DPI for your investors.
- **Bridging the liquidity gap with SPVs:** How are funds leveraging Special Purpose Vehicles and co-investment frameworks to maintain deal momentum and manage oversubscribed flow.
- **Operational integrity in deal execution:** Establish the institutional-grade data rooms and governance frameworks required to satisfy allocator scrutiny during fast-moving deal cycles and complex liquidity events.

## 11:40 - 12:40 PRIVATE ROUNDTABLE 1

### Navigating the GCC Regulatory Regimes: A Practical Guide to Licensing, Setup, and Sustainable Growth

**Hosted by: Benjamin O'Danso**, Principal, and **Praveer Pinto**, Regulatory Consulting, **Optima Partners**

A private discussion to deconstruct the 'expectation vs. reality' gap of regional setup, moving beyond the high level to tackle the high-stakes decisions defining 2026. Chaired by the specialists at Optima Partners, the dialogue will explore the trade-offs between speed-to-revenue and long-term regulatory friction, while identifying the "non-negotiables" for supervisor confidence in year one. From a candid comparison of GCC jurisdictions to a tactical look at the first 90 days of authorisation, this session provides the raw roadmap for fund managers building and scaling a reputable presence in the Middle East.

## 11:30 - 12:40 PRIVATE ROUNDTABLE 2

### The Operational Blueprint: Is Your Operating Model and Data Room Blocking Your Fundraise?

**Hosted by: Lewis Kilroe**, Co-Founder, Managing Director, **East Emblem**

A focused deep dive into designing an institutional-grade foundation that stands up to allocator scrutiny, exploring why operational excellence is a strategic differentiator—not just an administrative exercise—and providing insights on how to build a proportional, scalable infrastructure, effectively leveraging technology for data consolidation, portfolio oversight, and investor reporting to keep pace with the region's rapid growth.

## 11:30 - 12:40 PRIVATE ROUNDTABLE 3

### Digital Transformation Strategies: Mastering Technology for Operational Alpha and Fund Growth

**Hosted by: Simone Macleod-Narin**, Former SVP, **FAB** and Digital Transformation Expert

Moving from experimental to foundational, this roundtable examines how technology and AI are being deployed to secure a sustainable competitive advantage. Explore the transition toward agentic AI in the operational core—from data and deal-flow to portfolio construction. The discussion focuses on building a robust data framework that supports the mandate of delivering superior risk-adjusted returns while capturing the "investment alpha" of the future.

## MAIN STAGE

## PRIVATE ROUNDTABLES

The FutureFunds roundtables are private, curated discussions for leading fund managers, LPs, and institutional investors. Hosted by industry experts, sessions operate under the Chatham House Rule to ensure a safe, strategic environment for candid, peer-to-peer dialogue and high engagement.

## 13:45 - 14:15 FUND STRUCTURES

**Beyond the Black Box: What are the Modern, Innovative Fund Structures that are Equipped to Meet Evolving Investor Demands**

**(Session Host) Adrian Beattie**, Principal Consultant, **Belclare Advisory Services**

**Konstantin Behr**, Chief Strategy Officer, **UTOPIA Capital Management**

**Marc Hambach**, Chief Executive Officer & Managing Partner, **Investbridge Capital**

- How can fund managers **structure deals to offer investors the transparency they desire**, while also maintaining the efficiency and scale of a pooled vehicle?
- How can funds **creatively structure vehicles to engage with new asset classes and sectors** that show strong appetite in the region?
- How can fund managers **effectively collaborate with legal advisors and regulators to ensure your structures are compliant, efficient**, and aligned with a Middle East-focused strategy?
- How can **an open-minded approach to fund structures become a key source of competitive advantage** for fund managers operating in the GCC?

## 13:45 - 14:45 PRIVATE ROUNDTABLE 1

**Unlocking Middle East Capital: A Strategic Roadmap for Sourcing and Vetting Investors**

**Chaired by: Ian Higgins**, Chief Investment Officer, **Emergence Partners**

Success in the Middle East hinges on more than just "showing up"; it requires a bespoke infrastructure for capital raising and a rigorous approach to qualifying regional partners. This roundtable addresses the macro-level challenges of entering the market and diversifying networks beyond the traditional institutional giants.

## 13:45 - 14:45 PRIVATE ROUNDTABLE 2

**Institutional Acceleration: Leveraging GP Staking to Outscale the Market**

**Chaired by: Sohail Lalani**, Managing Director, **GP Strategic Capital**, **Blue Owl Capital**

As GP staking gains significant traction globally this closed-door session explores how minority equity stakes are becoming a primary engine for fund maturation. We move beyond traditional fund-raising to deconstruct how strategic capital can be used to institutionalise the management company, fund GP commitments, and accelerate the launch of new investment strategies. Designed for firm principals, the discussion will focus on the tactical roadmap for transitioning from a boutique manager to a multi-generational institutional platform while maintaining operational control.

## 13:45 - 14:45 PRIVATE ROUNDTABLE 3

**Women in Alternatives: Championing Female Leadership in UAE Investment and Fund Management**

**Chaired by: Sara Al-Ateeqi**, CEO, **Al Mal Investment Company & Founder**, **The Wealth Edit**

Beyond the standard discourse on diversity, this roundtable tackles the tactical reality of female leadership within the GCC's alternative investment space. The dialogue will focus on breaking systemic barriers to boardroom inclusion, specifically addressing how to navigate selection resistance in the GCC to secure substantive decision-making authority. We will deconstruct strategies for amplifying influence within high-stakes investment committees and building robust, professional networks that drive quality deal flow and visibility for female-led ventures. Join this practitioner-led roadmap to explore how building credibility and finding champions can move the needle from tokenism to meaningful impact on regional capital markets.

## 14:15 - 14:45 TOKENISATION

**From Scepticism to Strategy: How to Unlock Access and Alpha through Real Asset Tokenisation**

**Lucy Gazmararian**, Founder & Managing Partner, **Token Bay Capital**

**Robert Farquhar**, Chief Commercial Officer, **Ctrl Alt**

- **Tokenisation 101:** Dispelling the myths: Clarity on tokenisation is and its true purpose; debunking common myths and showcasing how it can provide access to "solid, regulated returns profiles".
- **Navigating the regulatory push-and-pull:** Addressing how the industry can work with regulators to build the necessary "guard rails" to promote the true opportunity arising from tokenisation.
- **The shifting investor landscape:** Modernising traditional structures for the investor generation of today and reviewing current investor sentiment around real-asset tokenisation.
- **The path to token leadership in the GCC:** How local regulatory changes and successful tokenised funds in the region are setting a precedent for future growth.

## PANEL

**Unlocking Peak Alpha Generation: Identifying the Long-Term Sectoral Opportunities and Fund Structure Blueprints****(Session Host) Susannah de Jager**, Founder, Advisor and Podcast Host, **Oxford+**, and Independent Advisor, **De Wesley Limited****Ashish Marwah**, Chief Investment Officer, **Neovision Wealth Management****Sara Al-Ateeqi**, CEO, **Al Mal Investment Company** & Founder, **The Wealth Edit****Habeel Kanth**, Director, **Tikehau Capital****Nathan Kwon**, Partner, Head of Credit, **Shorooq**

15.25

Navigate the GCC's evolving investment landscape, focusing on high-demand sectors like green energy, technology, and real estate to generate alpha, as well as key global diversification opportunities and cross-border plays.

- **The GCC's core alpha engine:** Reviewing the "high demand" investment sectors such as infrastructure, green energy, technology, healthcare and real estate.
- **Global diversification and cross-border opportunities:** Reviewing the key opportunities for alpha generation and diversification and the next international "safe havens" for GCC investors beyond the US.
- **The Asia and emerging markets play:** How can fund managers plug the gap for "underweight allocators in the APAC region and where do the most promising opportunities lie?"
- **Optimising Fund Structures for the modern allocator:** How are funds meeting modern investor demands and exploring innovative local frameworks to attract sophisticated capital.

## KEYNOTE PANEL

**Geopolitics, Tech Nationalism, and GCC Capital: How to Position Your Fund Strategy for Success in a New World Order****(Session Host) Rachel Zatar**, Head of LP Engagement, **Middle East Investor Network****Nicolas Michelin**, Managing Partner, **Alagan Partners****Angela Homsy**, Founding Partner, **Angaza Capital****Pranav Sharma**, Senior Executive Officer, **Agna Capital****Nicholas Paillart**, Managing Partner and CEO, **Liberte Capital**

15.55

The rising tide of wider geopolitics is having a direct and profound impact on fund managers in the GCC. What was once seen as a transitory issue is now a major topic of discussion for CIOs and risk management executives. This is leading to a new world order where asset classes, geographies, and industry verticals are becoming more difficult to access. Get a "reading grid" for fund managers on how to identify and manage these risks in key sensitive sectors:

- **Is your strategy future-proof?** Exploring how tech nationalism and geopolitics are impacting fund managers' decisions, with real-world examples of firms having to divest from Chinese startups.
- **Navigating local regional nuances:** What are the major differences between the investment landscapes of the UAE and Saudi Arabia that impact capital raising and fund management?
- **The GCC as a global solution:** How is the GCC positioning itself as a solution for international technology and ideas, and how can you leverage the region to access new pools of capital.
- **Mastering the new world order:** Demonstrating a "reading grid" for how to identify and manage risk in sensitive sectors like med-tech, agri-tech, and defence tech amongst others.

16.25

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

**16:30 - 18:00 FUTUREFUNDS COCKTAIL RECEPTION | HOSTED BY CARTA**

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Following a day focused on the tactical mechanics of fund scaling and institutional maturation, join us for peer-to-peer engagement and the final "distribution" of ideas before we close FutureFunds 2026.

Carta, a global leader in equity management and ownership infrastructure, is hosting the evening to celebrate the continued growth and professionalisation of the GCC's alternative investment ecosystem.

You are invited to join the teams from Carta and the Middle East Investor Network as we toast to the next generation of regional fund management.

- The 'Strategic Reserve': A curated selection of sommelier-led vintages and premium spirits for the evening's final strategic exchanges.
- The 'Capital Preservation' Menu: A sophisticated range of artisanal mocktails and non-alcoholic refreshments for continued clarity and engagement.
- Artisanal Coffee & Refreshments: Available throughout the reception for those moving directly into evening meetings.