



**INDUSTRY REPORT**  
**FINANCE SECTOR**

JULY 2025

**ie**  
UNIVERSITY  
TALENT & CAREERS

# AGENDA

1. Industry Overview
2. Impact of Global & Regional Trends
3. Sector-specific Insights
4. Top Employers and Strategic Partnerships
5. Talent Needs and Recruitment Trends
6. Recruitment Timelines by Industry
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# Industry Overview

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## Scope of the Finance Job Market/Sector

The Finance sector remains a cornerstone of global economic stability, encompassing:

- **Corporate Finance & Investment Banking:** Focused on capital raising, mergers and acquisitions (M&A), and strategic financial advisory.
- **Private Equity & Venture Capital:** Fueling business expansion and innovation through private funding.
- **Global Markets (Sales, Trading & Research):** Facilitating liquidity and price discovery in financial markets.
- **Asset & Wealth Management:** Managing investments for individuals and institutions, with a growing focus on ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) criteria.
- **FinTech:** Disrupting traditional financial services with innovations in payments, lending, and digital banking.
- **Sustainable Finance & Impact Investing:** Aligning capital with sustainability goals, driven by regulatory pressures and investor demand.
- **Insurance:** A critical subsector providing risk management solutions through life, health, property, and casualty insurance, as well as emerging areas like cyber insurance and climate risk insurance.

## Current State of the Finance Jobs Market/Industry


- **Moderate Optimism, Regional Variations & US headwinds:** Hiring in financial services has rebounded strongly since second half of 2024, with a 66% increase in job vacancies in 2024 (eFinancialCareers). However, geopolitical uncertainty and trade tensions are creating headwinds, particularly in the U.S. and Europe. According to Bloomberg, the U.S. Federal Reserve's monetary policy and ongoing trade disputes with China are causing firms to adopt a "wait-and-see" approach, delaying M&A, IPOs thus also hiring decisions.
- **Technology Integration Accelerates:** The adoption of AI, machine learning, and blockchain is transforming the finance industry. Financial Times reports that AI-driven financial modeling and algorithmic trading are now standard in many



firms, with a growing demand for professionals skilled in data analytics and quantitative finance. Additionally, blockchain technology is being widely adopted for tokenization of assets, enabling fractional ownership and liquidity in traditionally illiquid markets.

- **Juniorization of Hiring:** Firms are increasingly hiring junior-level talent to manage costs while building a pipeline of future leaders. This trend is particularly evident in investment banking and asset management, where firms are investing in training programs to equip young professionals with the latest technological and financial skills.
- **Private Markets Boom:** The private markets sector, including private equity, venture capital, and private credit, is experiencing significant growth. According to Preqin, global private capital assets under management (AUM) are expected to surpass \$13 trillion by 2025, driven by investor appetite for higher yields and diversification away from traditional public markets.
- **ESG and Sustainable Finance:** Despite some setbacks due to greenwashing scandals, ESG remains a key focus for financial institutions. The Economist highlights that Europe continues to lead in ESG adoption, driven by stringent regulatory requirements, while the U.S. is catching up as institutional investors demand greater transparency in sustainable investments.

### Emerging Technologies/Innovations and Shocks

- **AI and Automation:** AI is reshaping finance through fraud detection, risk management, and customer service automation. CNBC reports that robo-advisors are now managing over \$1 trillion in assets globally, with further growth expected as AI becomes more sophisticated.
  - **Cryptocurrency & Tokenization:** With increasing regulatory clarity, cryptocurrencies and digital assets are gaining mainstream acceptance. Reuters notes that major financial institutions like JPMorgan and Goldman Sachs are expanding their digital asset offerings, including tokenized securities and blockchain-based payment systems.
  - **Compliance & Regulatory Adjustments:** Governments worldwide are implementing stricter compliance measures, particularly in anti-money laundering (AML) and cybersecurity. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has introduced new rules for ESG disclosures, while the European Union is tightening regulations on crypto assets and AI-driven financial services. US is creating a digital asset framework that will change the industry.
  - **Embedded Finance & Banking-as-a-Service:** The rise of embedded finance is allowing non-financial companies to
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offer financial services, disrupting traditional banking models. Financial Times reports that companies like Apple and Amazon are entering the financial services space, partnering with banks to offer seamless payment solutions and credit services.

- **Shocks - Geopolitical Uncertainty & Trade war:** Trade tensions, particularly between the U.S. and China, are creating volatility in global markets. Bloomberg warns that potential trade wars and political instability could slow down M&A activity in the short term, though a rebound is expected in second half of 2025.



# Impact of Finance Jobs Market

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## 2.1 Global Trends Impacting the Finance Industry

- **Geopolitical Uncertainty:** Tariffs, trade tensions and political shifts are influencing overall economy (inflation and economy slowdown) but also investment flows, M&A activity, IPOs and therefore ultimately hiring decisions. The U.S.-Canada -China-EU trade war and Brexit-related uncertainties are causing firms to reassess their global strategies, particularly in commodities, energy trading and risk management.
- **AI and Digitalization:** The rapid adoption of AI is automating back-office operations, reducing the need for traditional roles while increasing demand for data scientists, AI specialists, and cybersecurity experts. According to McKinsey, AI-driven trading algorithms are now responsible for over 60% of trading volume in global markets.
- **Sustainability and ESG Trends:** ESG considerations are now a core part of investment strategies. BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, has announced that ESG metrics will be a key factor in all future investment decisions. This trend is particularly strong in Europe, where regulatory pressures are driving the adoption of ESG principles.
- **Shift Toward Alternative Investments:** Investors are increasingly turning to private equity, hedge funds, and private credit markets for higher yields. According to Preqin, private equity AUM is expected to grow by 15% annually through 2025, driven by strong investor demand.

## 2.2 Regional Trends

- **North America:** The U.S. is experiencing steady and healthy job situation with moderate growth, particularly in finance in risk management and compliance roles. However, trade policies and regulatory changes are creating uncertainty in sectors like commodities trading and energy finance pushing the economy to stall.
- **Europe:** Hiring remains flat in some areas, but Germany is seeing a rise in investment banking recruitment, particularly

in M&A and capital markets. The UK is experiencing a post-Brexit boom in FinTech, with London emerging as a global hub for digital banking and blockchain innovation.

- **Asia-Pacific:** Growth in Singapore and Hong Kong is mixed, with strong demand for private banking roles but a slowdown in FinTech hiring due to regulatory tightening. China is focusing on domestic innovation, with significant investments in AI and blockchain technology.
- **Middle East:** Dubai and Riyadh are emerging as financial hubs, with high demand for talent in FinTech, compliance, and wealth management. The region is also seeing increased interest in sustainable finance, particularly in the context of energy transition.



# Sector-Specific Insights

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## 3.1 Financial Market Trends

- **FinTech Growth:** Digital banking and embedded finance solutions are disrupting traditional financial services. According to CNBC, FinTech firms raised over \$150 billion in funding in 2024, with significant growth in digital payments and blockchain-based solutions.
- **Cryptocurrency Institutional Adoption:** More firms are integrating digital assets into their investment portfolios. Goldman Sachs recently launched a Bitcoin futures trading desk, while BlackRock is offering tokenized asset funds to institutional clients.
- **AI in Financial Decision-Making:** Predictive analytics and AI-driven insights are enhancing asset allocation strategies and risk assessments. JPMorgan has developed an AI-powered trading platform that analyzes market data in real-time, providing traders with actionable insights.
- **Insurance Sector Growth:** The insurance industry is experiencing a surge in demand for cyber insurance and climate risk insurance due to increasing cyber threats and climate-related disasters. According to Reuters, the global insurance market is expected to grow by 5.5% annually through 2025, with significant opportunities in insurtech (insurance technology) and parametric insurance products.

## 3.2 Regulatory Environment

- **Stricter ESG Disclosures:** Financial institutions are now required to provide detailed ESG disclosures, driving demand for ESG analysts and sustainability experts. The EU has introduced new regulations requiring firms to report on carbon emissions and social impact metrics.
- **Evolving Regulatory Frameworks:** Governments are implementing new rules for digital assets and AI-driven finance, creating opportunities for compliance professionals with specialized expertise.

### 3.3 Emerging Roles in Finance

#### 3.3.1. Sustainable Finance and ESG Specialists

- Role: ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) Analysts, Sustainable Investment Managers, Green Finance Consultants.
- Why: With increasing focus on sustainability, companies and investors are prioritizing ESG factors. Professionals who can integrate sustainability into financial decision-making will be highly sought after.

#### 3.3.2. Fintech Innovators

- Role: Fintech Product Managers, Blockchain Developers, Cryptocurrency Analysts, Digital Payment Specialists.
- Why: The rise of fintech is transforming traditional banking and financial services. Expertise in blockchain, digital currencies, and payment systems will be crucial.

#### 3.3.3. Data Scientists and Financial Analysts

- Role: Quantitative Analysts, Financial Data Scientists, Machine Learning Engineers in Finance.
- Why: The ability to analyze large datasets and derive actionable insights is becoming increasingly important. Proficiency in data science, machine learning, and AI will be valuable.

#### 3.3.4. Risk Management and Compliance Experts

- Role: Cybersecurity Risk Managers, Regulatory Compliance Officers, Fraud Detection Specialists.
- Why: As financial systems become more complex and interconnected, managing risks and ensuring compliance with regulations is critical.

#### 3.3.5. Private Equity and Venture Capital Professionals

- Role: Venture Capital Associates, Private Equity Analysts, Investment Strategists.
- Why: The growth of startups and the need for capital investment in innovative ventures will drive demand for professionals in these areas.

#### 3.3.6. Wealth Management Advisors

- Role: Digital Wealth Managers, Family Office Advisors, Financial Planners.
- Why: The increasing complexity of financial products and the need for personalized financial advice will create opportunities in wealth management.

#### 3.3.7. Corporate Finance and Strategy Consultants

- Role: Financial Strategy Consultants, Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A) Specialists, Corporate Development Managers.
- Why: Companies will need experts to navigate complex financial landscapes, including mergers, acquisitions, and strategic investments.

#### 3.3.8. Behavioral Finance Experts

- Role: Behavioral Economists, Consumer Finance Analysts, Financial Psychologists.

- Why: Understanding the psychological factors influencing financial decisions can help in designing better financial products and services.

### **3.3.9. RegTech Specialists**

- Role: Regulatory Technology Consultants, Compliance Automation Experts, RegTech Product Developers.
- Why: The increasing regulatory burden on financial institutions is driving the need for technology solutions that can streamline compliance processes.

### **3.3.10. Financial Educators and Literacy Advocates**

- Role: Financial Literacy Coaches, Educational Content Developers, Financial Wellness Consultants.
- Why: As financial products become more complex, there is a growing need for professionals who can educate consumers and improve financial literacy.

### **3.3.11. Global Financial Strategists**

- Role: International Finance Managers, Global Investment Analysts, Cross-Border Financial Consultants.
- Why: The globalization of financial markets requires professionals who can navigate international regulations, currency risks, and global investment strategies.

### **3.3.12. InsurTech Specialists**

- Role: Insurance Technology Consultants, Product Managers in InsurTech, Data Analysts in Insurance.
- Why: The insurance industry is undergoing digital transformation, creating opportunities for professionals with expertise in technology and data analytics.

### **3.3.13. Real Estate Finance Experts**

- Role: Real Estate Investment Analysts, Property Finance Managers, REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust) Specialists.
- Why: The real estate market continues to evolve, with new financing models and investment opportunities emerging.

### **3.3.14. Financial Inclusion Advocates**

- Role: Microfinance Specialists, Financial Inclusion Consultants, Social Impact Investment Managers.
- Why: There is a growing focus on providing financial services to underserved populations, creating opportunities for professionals in this space.

### **3.3.15. Cybersecurity in Finance**

- Role: Financial Cybersecurity Analysts, Information Security Managers, Cyber Risk Consultants.
- Why: As financial institutions increasingly rely on digital platforms, protecting sensitive financial data from cyber threats is paramount.

# Top Employers and Strategic Partnerships

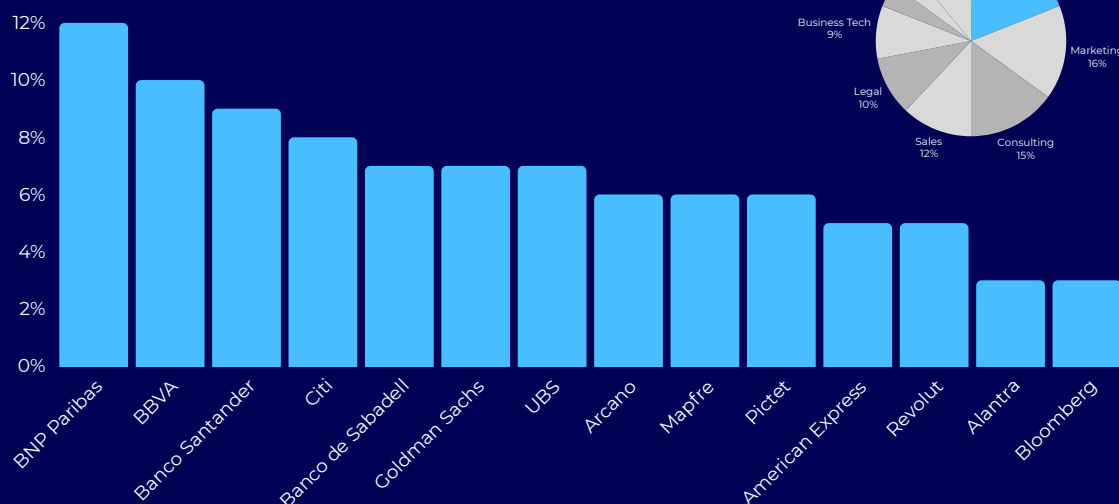
## 4.1 Top Employers worldwide

- **Major Banks:** Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, Morgan Stanley, Citigroup, and Deutsche Bank.(bulge brackets firms)
- **FinTech Firms:** Companies like Revolut, Klarna, Securitize, and Moonfare are leading the charge in digital payments and blockchain innovation.
- **Asset Management Giants:** BlackRock, Vanguard, and State Street are at the forefront of ESG-focused investments.
- **Insurance Leaders:** Companies like AXA, Allianz, and AIG are leading in insurtech and sustainable insurance products

## 4.2 Top Employers at IE

- **Top Employers:** Santander, Goldman Sachs, Revolut, BBVA, Citi, Alantra, Bloomberg, BNP Paribas, and UBS.
- **Highlights:** Regional banks led the way, while investment banks struggled but showed signs of recovery in the second half of 2024. FinTech and insurance sectors improved, and the finance function remained the largest and most robust.
- **The function of finance** is the most placed at IE regardless of sector which highlights its importance

## TOP EMPLOYERS AT IE



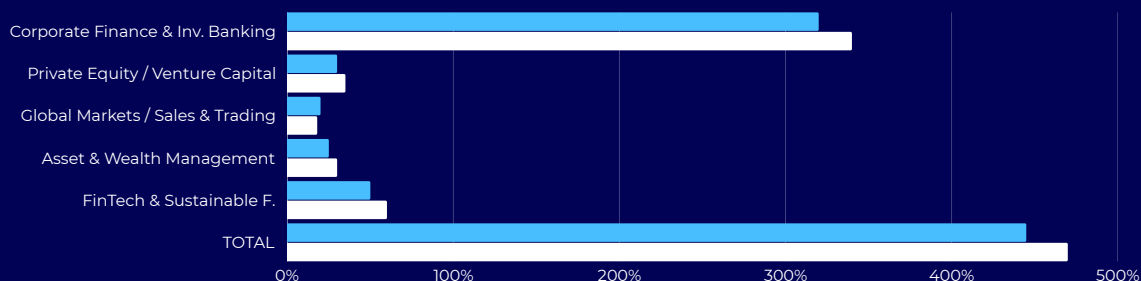
### 4.3 IE as a Finance University

- Finance remains a top choice for IE students across all programs despite a very challenging finance job market in 2022 and 2023 due to over hiring in the pandemic and high interest rates.
- Investment Banking and Asset Management placements saw minor declines due to market conditions, but FinTech and Private Equity actually grew in 2024.
- Other sectors like Big 4 finance consulting, finance consulting, the finance function in companies and insurance compensated for the declines.

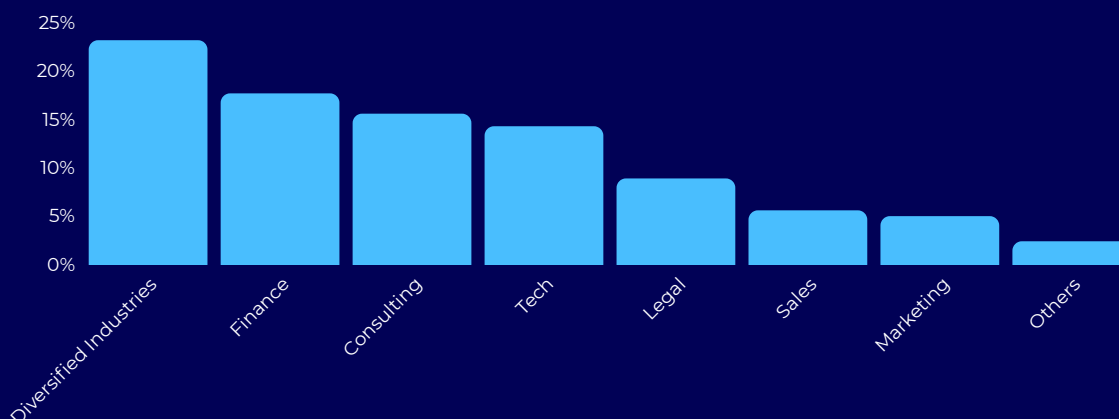
### 4.4 IE Schools Finance Employment Health at IE (% of students placed in top companies)

- **MBA:** 27% of students employed by top companies in 2023, slightly decreasing to 26% in 2024.
- **MIM:** 39% of students in 2023, increasing to 42% in 2024.
- **MIF:** 46% in both 2023 and 2024.
- **UNI:** 49% in 2023, increasing to 60% in 2024.
- **BM:** 48% in 2023, increasing to 50% in 2024.

## FINANCE SUBSECTORS 2023 & 2024



## INDUSTRY PLACEMENT 2024



## Key Challenges:

- Over-hiring during the pandemic and high interest rates slowed recovery in the finance sector.
- Collaboration with Admissions is needed to maintain student quality amid program growth.
- Consistent data measurement methods are required for better insights.

## 4.5 Finance Subsectors Health at IE

- **Corporate Finance & Investment Banking:** Good health, with 51% of students placed in relevant companies.
- **Private Equity / Venture Capital:** Improved but needs more growth.
- **Global Markets / Sales & Trading:** Needs improvement in both quantity and quality.
- **Asset & Wealth Management:** Good health, with 43% of students placed.
- **FinTech & Sustainable Finance:** Needs improvement in numbers and quality.

## 4.6 Key Partnerships with IE University

- IE has established strong relationships with global finance firms for internship and job placements. An example is the MoU signed with State **Street Global Advisors**, the largest custodian in the world, managing over \$4 trillion in assets. This partnership goals are; Talent acquisition, employer branding, alumni collaboration, and integrating State Street into IE's educational activities (mentoring, networking, clubs).



# Talent Needs and Recruitment Trends

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## Recruitment Trends

- There is a notable demand for roles such as financial analysts and business analysts, driven by the need to manage and interpret financial data effectively.
- Emerging roles focusing on AI integration, sustainable finance, and regulatory technology (RegTech) are reflecting the industry's adaptation to new technologies and compliance requirements.

## In-Demand Skills

- **Technical Proficiency:** Skills in data analytics, cybersecurity, and financial modeling are highly sought after.
- **Soft Skills:** Communication, adaptability, and problem-solving abilities are crucial in navigating the dynamic finance landscape.
- **Hard Skills:** Strong analytical and quantitative skills, with proficiency in Excel, Python, and R.

## 5.1. Data Analytics and Data Science

- **Why:** The ability to analyze large datasets, extract insights, and make data-driven decisions is essential across roles like financial data scientists, ESG analysts, and risk managers.
- **Key Tools:** Python, R, SQL, Tableau, Power BI, and machine learning frameworks.

## 5.2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML)

- **Why:** AI and ML are transforming finance through predictive analytics, fraud detection, algorithmic trading, and personalized financial services.
- **Key Applications:** Automation, risk modeling, customer behavior analysis, and investment strategy optimization.

## 5.3. Blockchain and Cryptocurrency Expertise

- **Why:** Blockchain technology is revolutionizing payments, smart contracts, and secure transactions, while cryptocurrencies are becoming mainstream investment assets.
- **Key Skills:** Understanding blockchain architecture, decentralized finance (DeFi), and crypto asset management.

#### **5.4. Sustainability and ESG Knowledge**

- Why: With the rise of sustainable finance, professionals need to understand ESG metrics, green financing, and how to integrate sustainability into financial strategies.
- Key Skills: ESG reporting, carbon accounting, and sustainable investment analysis.

#### **5.5 Regulatory and Compliance Expertise**

- Why: As financial regulations evolve, professionals must navigate complex compliance requirements, especially in areas like RegTech, cybersecurity, and global finance.
- Key Skills: Knowledge of global regulations (e.g., GDPR, MiFID II), anti-money laundering (AML), and compliance automation tools.

#### **5.6. Cybersecurity and Risk Management**

- Why: Protecting financial systems and data from cyber threats is a top priority for banks, fintech firms, and investment companies.
- Key Skills: Cybersecurity frameworks, risk assessment, fraud detection, and incident response.

#### **5.7. Financial Technology (Fintech) Proficiency**

- Why: Fintech is reshaping payments, lending, wealth management, and insurance, requiring professionals to understand digital platforms and innovations.
- Key Skills: Digital payment systems, API integrations, and familiarity with fintech ecosystems.

#### **5.8. Strategic Thinking and Business Acumen**

- Why: Roles in corporate finance, private equity, and venture capital require the ability to evaluate business models, assess market opportunities, and drive growth strategies.
- Key Skills: Financial modeling, valuation techniques, and strategic decision-making.

#### **5.9. Global Financial Markets Knowledge**

- Why: As finance becomes increasingly globalized, professionals must understand cross-border regulations, currency risks, and international investment strategies.
- Key Skills: Foreign exchange (FX) management, global trade finance, and geopolitical risk analysis.

#### **5.10. Soft Skills: Communication, Leadership, and Adaptability**

- Why: Finance professionals must collaborate across teams, lead projects, and adapt to rapid technological and regulatory changes.
- Key Skills: Storytelling with data, stakeholder management, and emotional intelligence.

#### **5.10 Bonus Skills:**

- Programming and Automation: Proficiency in Python, R, or VBA for automating financial processes.
- Quantitative Methods; with the use of software and algorithms, ability to interpret data, identify patterns, and draw conclusions. Apply data analysis techniques to real-world problems to gain valuable insights

- Behavioral Finance: Understanding psychological factors influencing financial decisions.
- Financial Literacy and Education: Ability to simplify complex financial concepts for clients or stakeholders.



# Recruitment Timelines by Industry

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## Recruitment Seasonality

- Investment Banking & Private Equity: Recruitment typically begins in early autumn (September--November) for summer internships and full-time roles, with offers being extended by the end of the year.
- Asset & Wealth Management: Hiring follows a similar cycle, though some firms recruit later in the year.
- FinTech & Venture Capital: Hiring is more ad hoc and less structured, with recruitment occurring year-round based on market needs.

## Hiring Process Duration

- Investment Banking: Typically 6--8 weeks, involving multiple rounds of interviews, technical assessments, and case studies.
- Private Equity & Venture Capital: Longer processes (up to 3 months) due to extensive vetting and networking-based hiring.
- FinTech & Trading: Can be as short as 2-4 weeks for technology-driven firms.



# IE Finance Top Alumni Insights and Success Stories

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## **Alumni Data**

- Over 1,000+ alumni from IE University are currently working in the finance sector across investment banks, private equity firms, asset management companies, and FinTech startups.

## **Alumni Success Stories**

- **Notable Achievements:** Several IE graduates have risen to executive-level roles in leading firms such as Goldman Sachs, BlackRock, UBS, and JP Morgan.
- **Entrepreneurial Success:** Some alumni have launched their own FinTech startups, leveraging IE's global network. (ie. Cobee)

## **Mentorship and Networking Opportunities**

- Alumni frequently engage with students via career panels, mentorship programs, and networking events.



# Challenges and Opportunities for IE University

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## 8.1 Industry Challenges

- Talent shortages in specialized finance roles such as algorithmic trading, data-driven finance, crypto, private markets (ie. Direct lending) and sustainable investment and impact investing
- Regulatory complexities affecting hiring and talent mobility.
- Market saturation leading to intense competition for top roles at top companies worldwide and its seasonal nature

## 8.2 Opportunities for IE University

- Enhanced curricula/tracks to include courses/Tracks on Global Markets, Private Markets, AI in finance, blockchain, and ESG finance & investing.
- Expanded industry partnerships with emerging FinTech and impact investment firms.



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