

BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS FINANCIAL COMMUNITIES

The Global Financial Crisis,
Social Responsibility, and
Faith-Based Finance

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It has long been said that Islamic Finance needs its own innovative blueprints to follow the pulse of the industry. Discussions on Islamic Finance as an alternative to conventional finance or a competitor have reached a new milestone: recognition of their cooperation. As the field of Islamic Finance expands and diversifies, so does its ability to cross new venues and cultivate partnerships.

The Ninth Harvard University Forum, entitled “Building Bridges Across Financial Communities,” sought to explore these opportunities: What lessons on social responsibility can organizations find in Islamic Finance and other faith traditions? What can conventional banks and Islamic Finance institutions learn from each other, particularly after the financial crisis?

This volume, a selection of 11 papers presented at the Ninth Forum sponsored by the Islamic Finance Project at Harvard Law School, investigates these questions through original research on best practices across and between industries and faith traditions. Essays consider diverse topics ranging from the influence of religion on corporate social responsibility and individual financial choices to the parameters of hedging and portfolio diversification.

As our writers suggest, there is reason to be optimistic about the future of cooperation among financial communities; intellectual inquiry is just a first step along this bridge.

