



KENYA BANKERS  
ASSOCIATION

## 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Banking Research Conference

**Theme: Banking sector resilience: Navigating macro-imbalances, responsiveness to evolving business landscape and driving sustainability**

The Kenya Bankers Association (KBA) Centre for Research on Financial Markets and Policy® invites researchers to submit proposals for papers to be presented at its 13<sup>th</sup> Annual KBA Banking Research Conference scheduled for September 2024. This year's Conference theme is: ***"Banking sector resilience: Navigating macro-imbalances, responsiveness to evolving business landscape and driving sustainability"***.

More recently, the banking sector has faced multifaceted challenges stemming from macroeconomic imbalances, and rapid shifts in the business landscape amidst increased focus on sustainability. The recently witnessed geopolitical tensions, elevated inflation and interest rate hikes highlighted vulnerabilities across the globe, prompting fiscal and monetary policies adjustments. On another front, the evolving consumer preferences demanding more convenience and the ongoing digital revolution have compelled the sector to reassess their strategies and operational models. Balancing profitability and liquidity, adapting to changing consumer demands, and embracing the need to mainstream environmental, social and governance perspectives in banking have become the core focus areas in banking; with banks on the latter assuming a critical role in integrating sustainable practices, managing climate-related risks, and supporting green financing initiatives. Additionally, once purely a voluntary disclosure, sustainability reporting has now evolved into a regulatory compliance imperative, reflecting the growing recognition of its importance in mitigating environmental impact, promoting social equity, and ensuring economic viability.

On account of the above, the **13<sup>th</sup> Annual KBA Banking Research Conference** seeks to attract and showcase high-quality analytical work on any or a combination of the following three critical areas:

- **First, an examination of the intricate relationship between macro-imbalances, fiscal and monetary policies and/or their collective impact on the optimal performance of the banking sector.** Analytical work on this front should clearly illustrate whether the macro-imbalances – such as the current account imbalances, exchange rate volatility, and concerns of debt sustainability and exchange currency imbalances, concern of debt sustainability – have to emergence of new risks, amplified the existing ones or both. Moreover, the studies could shed light on the impact of these shocks to banking sector's credit pricing mechanism, asset quality trends, bank capital position and credit growth patterns, while also exploring the optimal policy mix to stimulate lending across various economic sectors. Additionally, research papers focusing on the transmission of global risks, sovereign debt distress, exchange rate movements and heightened borrowing costs, among others, and their implications on banking, are welcome to provide a comprehensive understanding of the fiscal and monetary policy interplay.
- **Second, the analysis of the banking sector's responsiveness, to the evolving consumer preferences.** Arising from these developments is the quest to understand whether there is a pressing need for the banking sector to re-engineer product designs in response to the changing consumer dynamics. Exploring synergies or disparities in product development both within banks and across the industry is paramount. Furthermore, understanding the ripple effects on deposit mobilization strategies, asset compositions, and the delicate balance of profit – liquidity trade offs is crucial. The research papers along this sub-theme could also examine the regulatory framework's role in shaping these dynamics, while highlighting the emerging opportunities and challenges in banking.
- **Third, assess the banking sector's role in funding climate mitigation and adaptation, mainstreaming climate and nature-related risks and opportunities.** A diverse array of policies is crucial to incentivize banks for portfolio reallocation towards green assets. Research should explore aspects like mainstreaming climate and nature risk, implications of green finance, and analyzing banks' sustainability efforts and related risks. Additionally, conduct a comprehensive evaluation of biodiversity risks in banking operations and analyze banks' initiatives to mitigate biodiversity loss and advance circular economy practices.

The Conference's emphasis will be on high-quality research on the theme motivated above in the East African Regional context; bringing out an optimal balance between theory and application, and policy and/or business relevance of the research findings.

An honorarium will be paid for each paper selected for the Conference. The conference shall be hosted both physically and virtually, and all authors (at least one presenter for co-authored papers) will be required to present their papers physically (in-person) at the conference venue. However, for authors from the region whose papers are selected for the conference, they will have a choice to either connect virtually to the conference or meet their own travel and accommodation costs.

Further, all conference papers will be reviewed for possible publication in the KBA Centre for Research on Financial Markets and Policy® Working Paper Series (<http://www.kba.co.ke/research-center/working-paper-series>) which is also hosted on Econstor Repository (<https://www.econstor.eu/handle/10419/249501>).

### Requirements:

1. Researchers should submit a written research proposal to the KBA aligned to the above motivated theme of ***"Banking sector resilience: Navigating macro-imbalances, responsiveness to evolving business landscape and driving sustainability"***.
2. Each proposal **should not be more than five pages** and should include:
  - Motivation of the study
  - Key hypotheses to be tested
  - Research methodology
3. The research area can focus on either one of the areas outline or bring out dimensions of linkages to other areas in the theme line.
4. The proposal should include a **300 to 500-word** abstract.
5. A **brief biography of the researcher/** research team including their professional qualifications and research experience. **(Should not be more than two pages)**.

### Key dates

<b>April 19, 2024</b>	Deadline to submit a research proposal
<b>May 14, 2024</b>	Selection of research papers and notification of authors
<b>July 2, 2024</b>	The full research papers completed by the authors and submitted to KBA Centre for Research on Financial Markets and Policy®
<b>Aug 2024</b>	Technical Review Workshop (Virtual /in-person)
<b>Sept 2024</b>	13th Annual KBA Banking Research Conference (2-days)
<b>Oct 31, 2024</b>	Submission of revised full research papers and policy briefs to KBA Centre for Research on Financial Markets and Policy®

### Submission

Researchers responding to this call can submit their research proposals by sending an email as indicated below.

**Email:** [research@kba.co.ke](mailto:research@kba.co.ke) to attention of:  
**Director, KBA Centre for Research on Financial Markets and Policy®**

**Email Caption:** Annual Research Conference 2024