



ICI VIEWPOINTS

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Where Ideas Meet Execution: What's Ahead at ICI Innovate

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Asset management is operating in a period of change shaped by new technologies, evolving market practices, and shifting regulatory priorities. Many of the questions facing firms today are not about whether change is coming, but how it should be implemented within existing legal and operational frameworks. ICI Innovate is designed for that conversation.

For years, innovation in asset management was discussed largely in conceptual terms. Today, the focus has shifted toward execution. Innovation is coming from multiple directions: regulatory change, new product structures, evolving market practices, and cutting-edge technology solutions, and each brings practical implications for how firms operate. The central questions are no longer theoretical, but operational: how these developments are put into practice within regulated markets, how to structure proper governance, and how existing investor protections are carried out as systems evolve.

ICI Innovate brings together professionals across operations, technology, compliance, legal, and risk functions who are responsible for translating change into systems that must operate reliably on a daily basis. As innovation reaches deeper into core workflows, their role in shaping outcomes has become more visible and more consequential.

A defining feature of Innovate is ICI's ability to convene substantive discussions among senior leaders from across the industry and government. This year includes a fireside conversation between SEC Commissioner Hester and ICI President and CEO Eric Pan. The discussion is emblematic of the role ICI Innovate plays as a forum for serious, informed exchange—bringing regulators and practitioners together to engage directly on how innovation intersects with regulation in practice.

Those conversations matter because the challenges facing the industry are increasingly focused around automation and efficient, yet sound, execution. Artificial intelligence, for example, is already being deployed in areas such as client service, compliance monitoring, risk assessment, and internal controls. Its use raises questions about supervision, model construction, explainability, and accountability—questions that must be addressed through governance and oversight, rather than treated as isolated technology issues.

Digital assets and tokenization present a different but related set of considerations. Market infrastructure applications have moved past pilot phases, and are continuously prompting fundamental decisions about custody, settlement, valuation, and interoperability. Even at this stage, firms and regulators are being asked to consider how digital assets and technologies could scale within regulated markets and what controls would be necessary when they do.

Innovation is also sharpening the industry's focus on operational resilience. As systems become more interconnected, risks increasingly arise from dependencies beyond a firm's immediate control. Third-party service providers, data utilities, and technology vendors play critical roles in day-to-day operations. Managing those dependencies through governance, oversight, and contingency planning has become a core operational responsibility.

Across these areas, a consistent theme emerges: deploying new tools and structures introduces execution risk. New capabilities can improve efficiency and expand opportunity, but they can sometimes also increase complexity and amplify the consequences of weak governance. Addressing those realities requires coordination across disciplines and early engagement between the industry and regulators, grounded in how systems actually operate for the benefit of the individual investor.

ICI Innovate is built around that premise. Rather than focusing on concepts in isolation, the conference emphasizes practical experience, information exchange, and lessons learned from deployment. It provides a forum for professionals who are navigating change in real time and who understand that getting new capabilities right depends as much on process, controls, and oversight as on technology itself.

As innovation continues to shape the future of asset management, the conversations convened at ICI Innovate—grounded in operational reality and informed by policy—play an important role in ensuring that change ultimately serves investors' long-term interests.