

# Global Blockchain Business Council (GBBC) Launches New US Branch in Washington, DC, Announces New Board at Kickoff Event

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – March 07, 2017 – In January, The Global Blockchain Business Council (GBBC) was launched during the Annual World Economic Forum Meeting in Davos, Switzerland. In Davos, innovators, business leaders and former heads of state addressed a capacity audience about the current and future impact of this groundbreaking technology. Today, the GBBC launches its first US Branch in Washington, D.C.



[The Global Blockchain Business Council \(GBBC\)](#) brings together the world’s leading businesses and business leaders to highlight the latest innovations and advances in Blockchain technology. The GBBC educates business leaders on Blockchain technology, provides a forum for businesses and technology experts to collaborate on Blockchain-based business solutions, supports businesses interested in implementing Blockchain technology in their operations and advocates for the global adoption of the technology.

“In the next 5-10 years, it is likely that Blockchain technology will fundamentally alter the way we do business; by reducing friction and costs associated with digital transactions, this technology has the power to open the global economy to billions who are currently excluded—the GBBC will be essential to making these possibilities a reality” said Val Vavilov, CEO of The Bitfury Group and GBBC Board Member.

“The agility facilitated by immutable, efficient, secure and transparent Blockchains has far-reaching implications” said Jamie Smith, Global Chief Communications and Marketing Officer for The Bitfury Group. “This technology has the potential to transform, not just finance and banking, but the world beyond finance – insurance, medicine, governance, education, music and so much more. These are exciting times and the GBBC is helping lead the way for business leaders around the world.”

At a cocktail event hosted at New America, Smith will announce the new GBBC board, which includes Wei Wang, Founding Chairman of China Mergers & Acquisitions Association (CMAA); Val Vavilov, CEO and founder of The Bitfury Group; Tomichah Tillemann, Director of the Bretton Woods II program at New America; Sandra Ro, Executive Director of Digitization at CME Group; Yew Kiat Phang, CEO and Vice Chairman of Credit China FinTech Holdings Limited (CCF); Elizabeth Rossiello, CEO and Co-founder of BitPesa Ltd; George

Kikvadze, Vice Chairman of The BitFury Group; Brian Forde, Co-founder of the Digital Currency Initiative; and Paula Guedes, CEO and founder of Jobzi. Mercina Tillemann-Dick has joined the GBBC as Executive Director.



“As with any new technology, the role of the business sector will be key to maximizing the potential and benefits of Blockchain technology—the task of informing the business community about this transformative new way of doing business is significant” said Tomicah Tillemann, Director of the Bretton Woods II program at New America and Chairman of the Board of the GBBC. “We are so honored to be joined in this effort by such an exceptional, accomplished and balanced group of partners. We could not have asked for a better team.”

### **About the GBBC**

The Global Blockchain Business Council (GBBC) brings together the world’s leading businesses and business leaders to highlight the latest innovations and advances in Blockchain technology. The GBBC is committed to raising awareness of the potential of this groundbreaking technology, advocating for its global adoption and providing a forum for education, collaboration and dialogue. The GBBC is dedicated to serving as an educational hub for any business or government seeking to learn more about Blockchain technology and benefit from its potential; fostering collaboration between organizations of all kinds, including educational, operational and/or civic alliances between companies around the world; connecting leaders with one another and assists companies and governments around the world looking to advance and improve their business using Blockchain technology; working with partners from myriad sectors to advocate for the global adoption of Blockchain technology; and encouraging inclusion and dialogue between and within the Blockchain and business communities by facilitating substantive conversations and promoting an open flow of information. Visit [gbbcouncil.org](http://gbbcouncil.org) for more information.

### **About The Bitfury Group**

The Bitfury Group is the leading full service Blockchain technology company and one of the largest private infrastructure providers in the Blockchain ecosystem. The Bitfury Group develops and delivers both the software and the hardware solutions necessary for businesses, governments, organizations and individuals to securely move an asset across the Blockchain. The expertise of The Bitfury Group ensures successful, easy, fast, secure and cost effective connectivity to the Blockchain. The Bitfury Group is a global team of experts in technology, business, communications, security and civil society. The Bitfury Group believes the Blockchain can and will open new doors for global economic opportunity and prosperity, and its mission is to create

and advance Blockchain applications that will further promote innovation and the advancement of the peer-to-peer economy. Visit [bitfury.com](http://bitfury.com) for more information

### **Jamie Smith, GBBC President**

As Global Chief Communications and Marketing Officer for The Bitfury Group – the world’s leading full service Blockchain company – Smith works to fundamentally enhance and positively advance the way the global community does business, transfers value, and opens new doors to prosperity for billions of people throughout the world. Smith has dedicated her career to making lives better, improving security, and ensuring opportunity is available to all. Smith brings nearly two decades of communications experience, serving at the highest levels of government and the private sector, to the global blockchain arena.

Smith previously served as Special Assistant to President Obama and deputy White House press secretary, Executive Vice President at Edelman Public Relations, Director of Public Affairs for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) and General James Clapper, Communications Director for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation under its then Chairman John D (Jay) Rockefeller IV, Traveling Press Director for Secretary Hillary Clinton’s 2008 Presidential Campaign, Communications Director for former Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright and The Albright Group, LLC. and policy aide to Congresswoman Nita M. Lowey (D-NY).

Jamie speaks regularly around the world – from Money 2020 to the World Economic Forum at Davos to SxSW to the Clinton Global Initiative – she is an industry expert in the emerging technology of Blockchain. She serves as the Co-Chair of the World Economic Forum’s Future Council on Blockchain. She is the creator and President of the Global Blockchain Business Council and the co-creator and President of the Blockchain Trust Accelerator and was recognized by Innovate Finance on the Women in FinTech 2016 Powerlist. Jamie also serves as a member of the Advisory Board for the Bretton Woods II initiative at New America.

### **About the Board of Directors**

#### **Tomicah Tillemann, Board Chairman**

Tomicah Tillemann is a leader in the fields of social finance and civic innovation. He serves as director of the Bretton Woods II program at New America. He and his team work with large asset owners to reduce risk and volatility through strategic investments in social impact and development. He is also cofounder of the Blockchain Trust Accelerator and a member of the advisory board of the BitFury Group, a leading provider of Blockchain infrastructure. He works with the firm to harness Blockchain technology for governance and social impact applications. Between 2010 and 2014, Tillemann served under Hillary Clinton and John Kerry as the secretary of state’s senior advisor for civil society and emerging democracies. Tillemann led a team of experts that operated like venture capitalists in translating promising ideas and technologies into successful foreign policy. He also established and chaired the State Department’s Global Philanthropy Working Group and the State Department’s Federal Advisory Committee on civil society.

Tillemann joined the State Department in 2009 as Secretary Clinton's speechwriter and collaborated with her on over 200 speeches. Previously, he spent four years on the professional staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as an advisor to Chairmen Joe Biden and John Kerry. Tillemann's other professional experience includes work with the White House, five U.S. Senate and congressional campaigns, Reuters New Media, and the World Bank.

Tillemann is a co-holder of four patents. He has helped launch and lead numerous civil society organizations and foundations. He received his B.A. magna cum laude from Yale University and holds a Ph.D. with distinction from the School for Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University (SAIS). He has lectured at Yale and Princeton and testified repeatedly before Congress. He is a frequent keynote speaker and guest on media outlets including the BBC and public radio.

### **Wei Wang**

Wei Wang is Founding Chairman of China Mergers & Acquisitions Association (CMAA), Founder and Chairman of Chinese Museum of Finance (Group), Chairman of China M&A Group. Wang has organized and supervised IPO underwritings for over 40 Chinese companies in both domestic and overseas markets. He is the financial consultant on restructuring, financing, M&A and IPO for many leading companies in China. He had worked in a number of international corporations including Nomura Securities Co., Ltd. in Tokyo, the World Bank in Washington D.C. and the Chase Bank in New York. He also serves as the economic advisor in several ministerial and provincial governments in China as well as independent director for several listed companies.

Wang received his Bachelor's degree in accounting and Master's degree in finance in China and his Ph.D. in economics from Fordham University in the United States. He is the author of many books and journal articles, and a well-known lecturer—he has given seminars and lectures at universities including CEIBS and Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business. Wang has been named “Top Five Chinese investment Bankers” by Talents magazine in 2003, “The Most Influential Independent Director” by Directors & Boards magazine in 2006 and “The Most Influential Investment Banker” by China Finance Network in 2006. He was selected as a member of Shanghai Stock Exchange Corporate Governance Advisory Committee in 2007. In 2010, he founded the Chinese Museum of Finance (Group) and currently has 6 museums in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Shenyang and Suzhou. Furthermore, he has received the 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award from the M&A Advisor in New York, the 2013 Social Innovator Award from The Wall Street Journal, 2015 IFFM Financial Literacy Award and many others. In 2013, Wang successfully summited Mount Everest. He was elected as the Chairman of Asia Mergers & Acquisitions Association (AMAA) and Co-chairman of International Federation of Finance Museums (IFFM) in November 2015.

### **Val Vavilov**

Val Vavilov is the CEO and founder of The Bitfury Group – the world's leading full service Blockchain company. Vavilov's entrepreneurial experience and passion for Blockchain technology led him to found the company in 2011, when Blockchain technology was just beginning to capture the world's attention and imagination. A native Latvian who experienced first-hand the challenges resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union, Vavilov was inspired

by Blockchain technology and saw an opportunity to build technological solutions that could improve the lives of people all over the world. He focused first on the hardware solutions that would ensure security and trust in the Bitcoin Blockchain, leading The Bitfury Group to develop five generations of cutting-edge mining chips and state-of-the-art data center designs. Under his leadership, the company has expanded its focus to provide custom-designed software, consulting solutions, and advanced hardware, all while maintaining its position as one of the major public Bitcoin Blockchain security and transaction providers. Prior to founding The Bitfury Group, Vavilov spent more than 15 years in a variety of technical and leadership positions. He received his Master's degree from Riga's Transport & Telecommunication University in Latvia.

### **Sandra Ro**

Sandra Ro is Executive Director of Digitization at CME Group. Ro is responsible for the company's digital asset and blockchain/distributed ledger technology (DLT) initiatives. Previously as Executive Director Foreign Exchange (FX) Research and Product Development she was responsible for the global development of CME Group FX solutions within listed and cleared OTC products.

Ro is a core member of the Post Trade Distributed Ledger Group (PTDL), an industry group focused on bringing together regulators with sell-side and buy-side firms to collaborate and discuss the impact of blockchain / DLT. The PTDL is based in London with over 40 institutional members.

Prior to joining CME Group in 2011, Ro led the EMEA M&A FX and interest rates derivatives advisory group at Morgan Stanley, London and worked at Deutsche Bank as a FX structurer on the London trading floor. Ro holds a M.B.A. in Finance from London Business School and a double B.A. Degree in History and Studies in the Environment from Yale University.

### **Yew Kiat Phang**

Yew Kiat Phang is the Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Credit China FinTech Holdings Limited (CCF). CCF is a leading publicly listed (stock code: 8207.HK) Fintech group in Asia with a growing presence in China and Mekong region. Headquartered in Hong Kong, the company successfully established a fully-integrated Fintech ecosystem, providing 7X24 and one-stop efficient intelligent financial lifestyle services to over 30m registered Small Medium Enterprises and middle-class consumers via internet & mobile internet channels.

Phang began his career with Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) in 1994 and over his 17year career in banking, he held various management roles across SCB's corporate and consumer banking businesses, including the appointment as Chief Financial Officer for Indonesia & General Manager for Small Medium Enterprises, Singapore & Malaysia. In 2005, Phang was seconded to China to build a brand new national joint-stock bank in Tianjin, China Bohai Bank and he served as an Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive Officer with full responsibilities for the consumer banking business. He has also served as DBS's Group Head of Strategic Planning. Phang is a member of the United Nations -Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Business Advisory Council. In addition, he serves as the Chairman of Remuneration Committee & Independent Non-Executive Director and of Chuan Holdings Limited (stock code: 1420.HK).

Phang has a B.A. in Microelectronic Systems Engineering from the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology and an MBA from the University of Bristol.

### **Elizabeth Rossiello**

Elizabeth Rossiello co-founded BitPesa Ltd. in 2014 and serves as its Chief Executive Officer. Rossiello began her work in Kenya as a Microfinance Analyst and Investment Associate in 2009. She is an expert in East African financial product development and establishing best practices in risk, governance and IT for local banks. Prior to her work in East Africa, she served as an Analyst at Credit Suisse in Zurich and a Robert Bosch Fellow in Frankfurt. She speaks five languages and holds a Masters in International Finance from Columbia University's SIPA.

### **George Kikvadze**

George Kikvadze is the Vice Chairman of The BitFury Group, the world's leading Blockchain infrastructure provider and transaction processing company. He is also a member of the Advisory Committee of GCF, a \$6 billion private equity partnership. Kikvadze has worked for York Capital Management, AFK Sistema and Morgan Stanley. He obtained his MBA at Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, and his Masters at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Kikvadze is a member of the Europe One YPO Club.

### **Brian Forde**

Brian Forde has spent more than a decade at the nexus of technology, entrepreneurship, and public policy. He is currently a Senior Lecturer at the MIT Sloan School of Management and co-founded the Digital Currency Initiative, an academic research group on cryptocurrencies, at the world-renown MIT Media Lab to research and incubate high-impact applications of this technology. Previously he was Senior Advisor for Mobile and Data Innovation at the White House where he spearheaded efforts to leverage emerging technologies to address the President's most critical national priorities. Prior to his work at the White House, Forde founded one of the largest phone companies in Nicaragua after serving as a business and technology volunteer in the Peace Corps. In recognition of his work, he was named one of the "Most Influential People in Bitcoin and Blockchain" and a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum. Forde received a B.A. at the University of California at Los Angeles and an MBA at the London Business School.

### **Paula Drumond Guedes**

Paula Guedes is the founder and CEO of Jobzi, where she leads her team's efforts in building technologies that learn and power the world's work. She is a specialist at Instituto Millennium (IMIL), where her areas of expertise are entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems. An active member in the civic sphere, Guedes advocates that technology and transparency can dramatically improve the business environment. Her work has earned her a seat at Conselho da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro (Rio de Janeiro's City Advisory Board to the Mayor's Office), where she was the youngest member at the time of her appointment. As contributor to the Cidade Competitiva, Inovadora e de Oportunidades Committee, she focuses on creating a local economy that is more globally-competitive.

Guedes founded IFL Dialogues - sister chapter to Instituto de Formação de Líderes. While President of IFL Dialogues, she co-founded the "5-points Project"—which prioritizes municipal actions aimed at improving Brazil's World Bank's ranks in ease-of-doing-business. In 2012 Paula advised the Department of Science and Technology of Rio de Janeiro towards the creation of the Startup Rio Project, recognized by Latam Founder's Network as a "Top Latin American Accelerator" in their 2016 award edition.

Guedes began her career at Citigroup's Mergers and Acquisitions Group in New York City, where she focused on cross-border transactions. She is an MBA graduate and Joseph Wharton Scholar at Wharton School of Business, and holds a B.S. in Finance from Marshall School of Business and a B.A. in Economics from University of Southern California.

**Mercina Tillemann-Dick, GBBC Executive Director**

Mercina Tillemann-Dick joins the GBBC as Executive Director. Experienced in strategic planning and communications, Tillemann-Dick has spent her career translating complex ideas for broad audiences in the public and private sectors. Whether crafting pandemic plans for the City of Houston, initiating paradigm-shifting public health legislation or introducing and organizing the TED conference at Yale, Tillemann-Dick is used to building things from the ground up. While working with Janssen's Global Public Health Group, she drafted congressional testimony, authored publications and spearheaded multiple public information initiatives. Tillemann-Dick has advised state and national governments on issues involving public health and youth. She has worked in the offices of the former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi and for the Human Rights Commission of the U.S. Congress. In 2013, Tillemann-Dick co-founded A Curated Dialogue, a consultancy dedicated to sharing and shaping ideas through precise and approachable media. Tillemann-Dick has a degree in Bioethics, Law and Political Science from Yale University.

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