

Obituary

Committed to the last: Dr Jean-Claude Dufournet

His passion for higher professional education, specifically for financial analysts and portfolio managers, experts in finance and investment and experts in financial market operations, was inexhaustible. But now we have been informed by the family of the former long-time CEO of AZEK and SFAA, Dr Jean-Claude Dufournet, that he died in Geneva on 8 June, shortly after his 59th birthday.

Jean-Claude Dufournet dedicated practically his whole working life to the development and growth of AZEK (Swiss Training Centre for Investment Professionals) and SFAA (Swiss Financial Analysts Association). Having qualified with a Master in IT as well as a Master and later a Doctorate in Economic Sciences from the University of Geneva, in 1990 at the age of 32 he was appointed as the first directors of the newly-founded AZEK, which was established under the umbrella of SFAA. His task, with one of his colleagues, was to develop a concept for advanced professional training for financial analysts and portfolio managers. Only a year later, the newly created training programme was recognised as a Swiss Federal Advanced Professional Education Diploma by the then State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI). The first successful graduates were awarded their Diplomas in Financial Analysis and Portfolio Management in 1992.

A decade later, Jean-Claude Dufournet was also instrumental in obtaining international recognition of the diploma with the title of CIIA[®]. He also co-founded ACIIA, the Association of Certified International Investment Analysts in 2001. His great creative power is evidenced, among other things, by the fact that ACIIA now comprises 36 national analyst associations around the world that award the Certified International Investment Analyst (CIIA[®]) diploma.

As early as 1996 Jean-Claude Dufournet recognised that not only financial analysts and portfolio managers, but also wealth management client advisers should have the opportunity to earn a higher professional education qualification recognised by the Swiss state. With the passion so typical of him, he developed a high-quality professional education programme with the title of Certified Expert in Finance and Investments, which has been awarded to successful graduates in Switzerland since 1998. This education programme, Certified International Wealth Manager (CIWM[®]) is also now offered globally by AIWM, the Association of International Wealth Managers, which was founded by Jean-Claude Dufournet in 2007.

The most recent education programme initiated and implemented by Jean-Claude Dufournet, in 2012, leads to the Expert in Financial Market Operations with Advanced Federal Diploma. This programme is also based on his great awareness and excellent understanding of the needs of the Swiss financial centre. With all three programmes, AZEK contributes to keeping the individual market participants and the financial market as a whole competitive into the future.

Jean-Claude Dufournet was an entrepreneur in the best sense of the word, who directed his ventures with great vision. His creativity, energy and untiring enthusiasm for his work were deeply impressive – a mere listing of his other projects and activities would hardly do justice to his achievements. Instead, the impressive work done by Jean-Claude Dufournet in his professional life can be best recognised by a number: there are now approximately 15,000 people around the world who have successfully completed advanced Swiss federal diplomas of professional education and training, or the international equivalent.

With the death of Jean-Claude Dufournet, we have lost an individual to whom we owe a lot. With his far-sightedness, conscientiousness, intellectual honesty and great ability, as well as his steadfastness in bringing things to fruition, he was always an example to all of us. His deep humanity was the key to the operation and growth of AZEK, SFAA and the whole team.

We will always honour his memory, and we wish his family strength at this difficult time.



Jean-Sylvain Perrig
President SFAA



Andreas Jacobs
CEO

