Jackson Hole Economic Policy Symposium

Jackson Hole Economic Policy Symposium: Through the Years

January 13, 2021

View a timeline highlighting important moment's in the Jackson Hole Economic Symposium's history.

The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City's Economic Policy Symposium in Jackson Hole, Wyo., is one of the longest-standing central banking conferences in the world. The event brings together economists, financial market participants, academics, U.S. government representatives and news media to discuss long-term policy issues, financial issues and global events.

Below is a timeline highlighting important moments in the symposium's history.

1978

The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City hosted its first symposium, "World Agricultural Trade: The Potential for Growth" in Kansas City, Mo. Symposiums were then hosted in Vail and Denver, Colo., exploring agricultural topics.

1982

The event moved to Jackson Hole, Wyo., in the northwest corner of the Tenth Federal Reserve District. Kansas City Fed President Roger Guffey invited then-Fed Chair Paul Volcker to attend the symposium titled "Monetary Policy Issues in the 1980s." Volcker accepted the invitation and participated in the event, which, in the years that followed, was attended by his Fed successors and officials from central banks around the globe.

Federal Reserve Chair Paul Volcker and other attendees listen to 1982 event proceedings. Photo by Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

1985

At the time the topic was selected, the tentative title was "The High and Rising Dollar," however, as the dollar's value began to fall, organizers opted for a rewording of "The U.S. Dollar–Recent Developments, Outlook, and Policy Options."

From left, economist Walter Heller, former Kansas City Fed Director of Research Tom Davis and former Kansas City Fed President Roger Guffey walking at the Jackson Lake Lodge during the 1985 event. Photo by Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

1989

Fed Chair Alan Greenspan offered central bank perspectives alongside representatives from the Bank of Canada and Deutsche Bundesbank under the theme "Monetary Policy Issues in the 1990s." It was the first time a Fed chair had a formal role on the program, starting a trend that continues today.

1990

During this symposium, focused on "Central Banking Issues in Emerging Market-Oriented Economies," eight Eastern Bloc nations spoke about the current environment and future challenges of their economies. Countries represented included the U.S.S.R, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia.

2005

As Chairman Greenspan's retirement loomed, the topic "The Greenspan Era: Lessons for the Future," drew opposing conclusions about the legacy of one of the longest tenured chairmen in Fed history.

2007

The theme "Housing, Housing Finance and Monetary Policy" was viewed by some invitees as boring at the time of its announcement. However, when the event kicked off in August, the housing market had collapsed, making this topic both relevant and timely.

2020

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Jackson Hole Economic Policy Symposium was conducted virtually and streamed to all participants and the public. While the event has since returned to in-person at Jackson Hole, the experience highlighted the event's ability to gather policymakers for insightful discussions despite the challenges of physical distance.

2022

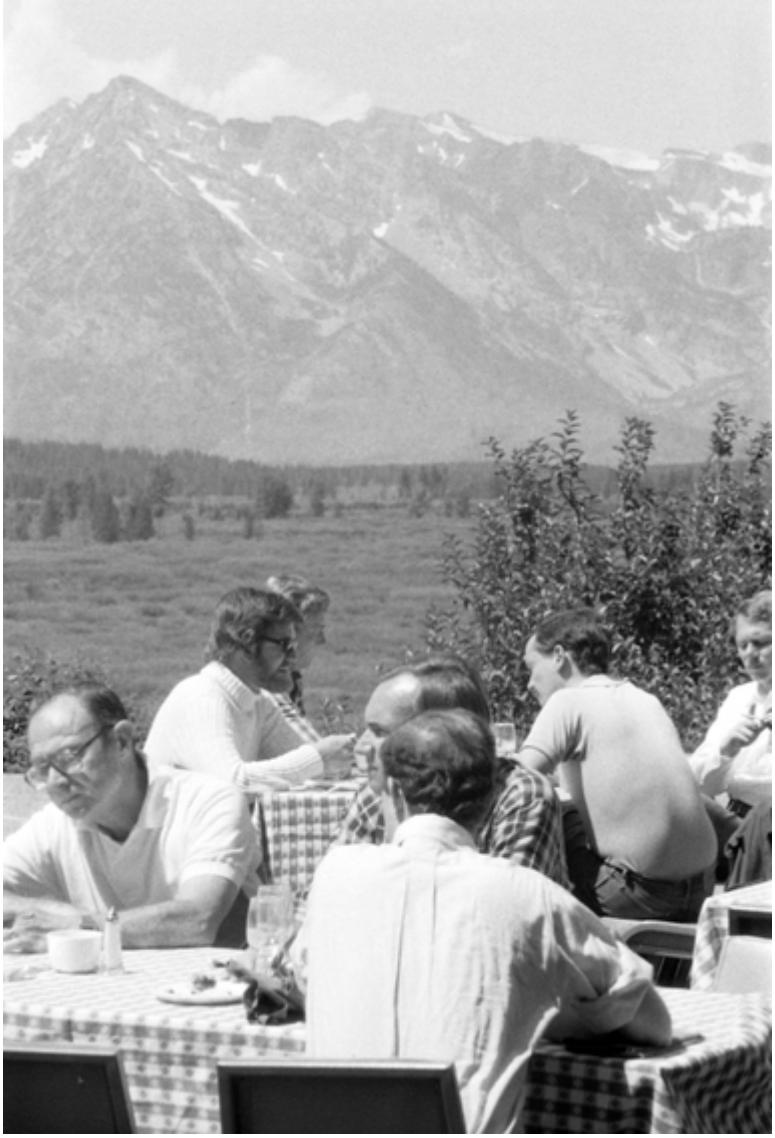
The 45th year of the Jackson Hole Economic Policy Symposium gained attention for having the most diverse attendance since it began. Around 30 percent of the symposium participants and more than 40 percent of the speakers were women. This was also the last year hosted by former Kansas City Fed President Esther George, who worked to expand the reach of the event's participants during her tenure.

2026

The 2026 Jackson Hole Economic Policy Symposium will take place Aug. 27-29. This year's topic is "Financial Innovation: Implications for Payments and Policy."

Given the role of central banks in today's global economic environment, the symposium continues to explore relevant topics that affect many. Transcripts of the proceedings are available each year, providing a public record of the discussions.

Media



Economists Allan H. Meltzer (bottom left), William Poole (top left) and others enjoy a lunch during the first event held in Jackson Hole, Wyo. Photo by Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

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MONETARY POLICY ISSUES
IN THE 1990s

A look at symposium programming from the 1989 event. Photo by Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

Navigating the Decade Ahead: Implications for Monetary Policy
https://www.youtube.com/live/Eig-NOwTpbo?si=gjDm2kcWVqvHx-tM&t;=1734

Women of Jackson Hole
The female participants of the 2022 Jackson Hole Economic Symposium pose for a photo in front of the Grand Teton Mountain Range. Photo by Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.