

For immediate release 28 February 2012

2012 Awards for Investment Stewardship

The Australian Centre for Financial Studies (hosting body of the Melbourne Financial Services Symposium (MFSS)), announces seven finalists, for the 2012 MFSS Awards for Investment Stewardship sponsored by VFMC.

The prestigious annual **MFSS Investment Stewardship Awards** recognise long term responsible investment achievement and are proudly sponsored by the Victorian Funds Management Corporation (VFMC). The **Investment Stewardship Awards** are in two categories: Investment Managers and Superannuation Funds.

The Winners of the **MFSS 2012 Investment Stewardship Awards** will be announced at the Gala Dinner of the Melbourne Financial Services Symposium in Melbourne on 1st March, at the Park Hyatt Melbourne. The Gala Dinner will provide an opportunity for the successful fund to be showcased to industry peers as an exemplar of all-round excellence in funds management.

Applicants for the **MFSS Investment Stewardship Awards** are assessed on their adherence to ESG (environmental social and governance) factors in the areas of investment process, fund governance, risk management, investment philosophy, service quality, and product innovation.

In announcing finalists for the Investment **Stewardship Awards** Professor Deborah Ralston, Executive Director, Australian Centre for Financial Studies remarked that *"each of the Award nominees exhibits all of the qualities that our independent expert judging panel, led by John Gall OAM, consider make them excellent stewards of their client's funds"*.

Finalists in the Investment Manager category of the **2012 MFSS Investment Stewardship Awards** are:

- **Aberdeen Asset Management;**
- **BlackRock;**
- **Industry Funds Management;** and
- **Lend Lease Investment Management Australia.**

Previous winners of this Award include **BlackRock; Goldman Sachs Asset Management and Lend Lease Investment Management.**

Aberdeen Asset Management

Aberdeen Asset Management has been nominated as a finalist for the award based on their ability to display investment stewardship by successfully adapting to change and maintaining the best interest of clients throughout a period of

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organisational restructure, extreme market volatility and changing client needs. Aberdeen Asset Management has also shown support for ESG initiatives through their support for ESG training functions and work in encouraging corporate governance best practice in regional companies

BlackRock

Blackrock has been nominated as a finalist for the award due to their implementation of an outstanding corporate governance system and strong company engagement practices. The corporate governance system has ensured a systematic and consistent approach to corporate governance and proxy voting when engaging with firms with whom the fund invests.

Industry Funds Management

Industry Funds Management has been nominated as a finalist for the award as a result of their commitment to ESG improvements. The improvements have been achieved through targeted dialogue with companies with whom they invest in and the implementation of ESG considerations in investment processes. IFM has also been commended on its partnering approach to client communications and commitment to investment stewardship though their dedication to open dialogue with clients.

Lend Lease Investment Management Australia

Lend Lease Investment Management Australia has been nominated as a finalist for the award based on their monitoring and implementation of ESG factors in the investment management process. These factors have resulted in improved long-term sustainability in asset performance and investment products. Lend Lease’s commitment to sustainability is epitomised by the social sustainability audits it performs on all potential property developments, acquisitions and divestments. Lend Lease Investment Management’s commitment to strong corporate governance was also a factor in their nomination for the award.

Finalists in the Superannuation Fund category of the 2012 MFSS Investment Stewardship Awards are:

- Cbus;
- HESTA; and
- SunSuper.

Previous Award winners include **Care Super, Telstra Super, and UniSuper.**

Cbus

Cbus has been nominated as a finalist for the award based on their focus on identification of ESG issues across all asset classes and extending this focus to fund managers. These initiatives have helped in the promotion of ESG across the

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superannuation industry. Cbus has also been recognised for their dedication to providing an outstanding level of communication and transparency to their members.

HESTA

HESTA has been nominated as a finalist for the award due to their ongoing commitment to promoting ESG research and commitment to ESG principle integration across the superannuation industry. In addition, HESTA is recognised for their innovations in manager performance measurement, responsible investing and in measuring the cost of achieving alpha.

SunSuper

SunSuper has been nominated as a finalist for the award as a result of their philosophy of long-term sustainability and ESG integration across the investment process. SunSuper's implementation of an internal team of service professionals and excellent internal training programs have also contributed to improved investment stewardship and hence contributed to their nomination for the award.

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Background

The Melbourne Financial Services Symposium (MFSS) for over 14 years has brought together global and local industry leaders and experts to engage with funds management and superannuation professionals across industry, government and academe. The Symposium also plays host to 2 Industry Awards namely - The Victorian Innovation in Funds Management Award and the VFMC Investment Stewardship Award.

The MFSS is hosted by ACFS on behalf of the Victorian financial services community. The Symposium together with the Gala Dinner is considered the premier annual event for the Funds Management industry in Melbourne.

www.melbournefinancialservicessymposium.com.au

About the Australian Centre for Financial Studies

The Australian Centre for Financial Studies (**ACFS**) facilitates industry-relevant and rigorous research and consulting, thought leadership and independent commentary. Drawing on expertise from academia, industry and government, the Centre promotes excellence in financial services. The Centre specialises in leading edge finance and investment research, aiming to boost the global credentials of Australia's finance industry; bridging the gap between research and industry and supporting Australia and Melbourne as an international centre for finance practice, research and education.

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The Centre provides access to and links between academics, finance practitioners and government and draws on expertise and experience from across these groups, to facilitate knowledge creation and transfer.

ACFS is a not-for-profit consortium of Monash University, RMIT University and Finsia (with Associated Universities Deakin and Melbourne) having commenced in 2005 with seed funding from the Victorian Government. Across the consortium partners, ACFS has links with over 100 finance academics and over 200 postgraduate students engaged in finance research.

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