

## STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



# INNOVATOR

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### Innovator Equity Defined Protection ETF — 2 Yr to April 2026 (AAPR)

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**April 1, 2024**

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This Statement of Additional Information (“*SAI*”) describes shares of the Innovator Equity Defined Protection ETF — 2 Yr to April 2026 (the “*Fund*”) which is a series of Innovator ETFs Trust (the “*Trust*”). The Fund’s investment adviser is Innovator Capital Management, LLC (“*Innovator*” or the “*Adviser*”) and investment sub-adviser is Milliman Financial Risk Management LLC (“*Milliman*” or the “*Sub-Adviser*”). The Fund’s distributor is Foreside Fund Services, LLC (the “*Distributor*”). The Fund’s shares are principally listed for trading on Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.

This SAI supplements the information contained in the Fund’s Prospectus, dated April 1, 2024, as they may be amended and supplemented from time to time. This SAI should be read in conjunction with the Prospectus. This SAI is not itself a prospectus but is, in its entirety, incorporated by reference into the Prospectus. A copy of the Fund’s most recent annual report, semi-annual report or the Prospectus for the Fund may be obtained, without charge, by writing the Adviser at the address listed above or by calling (800) 208-5212.

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Trust is a Delaware statutory trust organized on October 17, 2007. On August 11, 2017, the Trust changed its name from Academy Funds Trust to Innovator ETFs Trust. The Trust is an open-end management investment company, registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the “1940 Act”). The Trust currently offers shares of 118 separate series, representing separate portfolios of investments. This SAI relates solely to the Fund, which is classified as a “non-diversified company” as such term is defined in the 1940 Act.

The Fund offers, issues and redeems shares (“Shares”) at net asset value (“NAV”) only in aggregations of a specified number of Shares (each a “Creation Unit”). The Fund may issue or redeem Creation Units in exchange for the securities comprising the Fund (“Deposit Securities”) and/or cash, or some combination thereof. Shares of the Fund are listed and traded on Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc. (“Cboe” or the “Exchange”), a national securities exchange. Fund Shares are traded in the secondary market and elsewhere at market prices that may be at, above, or below the Fund’s NAV. Shares are redeemable only in Creation Units by Authorized Participants (as defined in the section entitled “Disclosure of Portfolio Holdings Information”), and, generally, in exchange for a cash amount. In the event of the liquidation of the Fund, the Trust may lower the number of Shares in a Creation Unit.

The Fund is a separate mutual fund, and each Share represents an equal proportionate interest in the Fund. All consideration received by the Trust for Shares and all assets of the Fund belong solely to the Fund and would be subject to liabilities related thereto.

The Trust reserves the right to permit or require that creations and redemptions of Shares are effected fully or partially in-kind and reserves the right to permit or require the substitution of Deposit Securities in lieu of cash. Shares may be issued in advance of receipt of Deposit Securities, subject to various conditions, including a requirement that the Authorized Participant maintain with the Trust a cash deposit marked to the market value of any omitted Deposit Securities. The Trust may use such cash deposit at any time to purchase Deposit Securities. For more information, please see the section entitled “Creation and Redemption of Creation Units.” Transaction fees and other costs associated with creations or redemptions that include cash may be higher than the transaction fees and other costs associated with in-kind creations or redemptions. In all cases, conditions with respect to creations and redemptions of shares and fees will be limited in accordance with the requirements of Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) rules and regulations applicable to management investment companies offering redeemable securities.

The Trust’s Agreement and Declaration of Trust (the “Declaration of Trust”) provides that by virtue of becoming a shareholder of the Trust, each shareholder is bound by the provisions of the Declaration of Trust. Subject to the provisions of the Declaration of Trust, the Board of Trustees of the Trust may, subject to the requisite vote, engage in and prosecute, defend, compromise, abandon, or adjust, by arbitration, or otherwise, any actions, suits, proceedings, disputes, claims, and demands relating to the Trust. The Board of Trustees may, in the exercise of their or its good faith business judgment, dismiss any action, suit, proceeding, dispute, claim or demand, derivative or otherwise, brought by a shareholder in its own name or in the name of the Trust. The Declaration of Trust further provides a detailed process for the bringing of derivative actions by shareholders. Prior to bringing a derivative action, a written demand by the complaining shareholder must first

be made on the Board of Trustees to bring the subject action unless an effort to cause the Board of Trustees to bring such action is excused. A demand on the Board of Trustees shall only be excused if a majority of the Board of Trustees has a material personal financial interest in the subject action.

There may be questions regarding the enforceability of these provisions based on certain interpretations of the Securities Act of 1933 Act, as amended (the “1933 Act”), the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “1934 Act”) and the 1940 Act. However, the Declaration of Trust provides if any provision shall be held invalid or unenforceable in any jurisdiction, such invalidity or unenforceability shall attach only to that provision in such jurisdiction and shall not in any manner affect such provision in any other jurisdiction or any other provision of the Declaration of Trust.

Capitalized terms used in this SAI, but not otherwise defined, have the meanings ascribed to them in the Prospectus.

### **EXCHANGE LISTING AND TRADING**

There can be no assurance that the requirements of the Exchange necessary to maintain the listing of Shares of the Fund will continue to be met. The Exchange may, but is not required to, remove the Shares of the Fund from listing if (i) following the initial 12-month period beginning upon the commencement of trading of the Fund, there are fewer than 50 beneficial holders of the Shares for 30 or more consecutive trading days, (ii) the “approximate value” of the Fund, as described in the section of the Prospectus entitled “Net Asset Value,” is no longer calculated or available, or (iii) any other event shall occur or condition shall exist that, in the opinion of the Exchange, makes further dealings on the Exchange inadvisable. The Exchange will remove the Shares of the Fund from listing and trading upon termination of the Fund.

As in the case of other stocks traded on the Exchange, brokers’ commissions on transactions will be based on negotiated commission rates at customary levels. Negotiated commission rates only apply to investors who will buy and sell Shares of the Fund in secondary market transactions through brokers on the Exchange and does not apply to investors such as market makers, large investors and institutions who wish to deal in Creation Units directly with the Fund.

The Trust reserves the right to adjust the price levels of the Shares in the future to help maintain convenient trading ranges for investors. Any adjustments would be accomplished through stock splits or reverse stock splits, which would have no effect on the net assets of the Fund.

#### ***Continuous Offering***

The method by which Creation Units are created and traded may raise certain issues under applicable securities laws. Because new Creation Units are issued and sold by the Fund on an ongoing basis, at any point a “distribution,” as such term is used in the 1933 Act, may occur. Broker-dealers and other persons are cautioned that some activities on their part may, depending on the circumstances, result in their being deemed participants in a distribution in a manner that could render them statutory underwriters and subject them to the prospectus delivery requirement and liability provisions of the 1933 Act.

For example, a broker-dealer firm or its client may be deemed a statutory underwriter if it takes Creation Units after placing an order with the Distributor, breaks them down into constituent Shares and sells such Shares directly to customers or if it chooses to couple the creation of new Shares with an active selling effort involving solicitation of secondary market demand for Shares. A determination of whether one is an underwriter for purposes of the 1933 Act must take into account all of the facts and circumstances pertaining to the activities of the broker-dealer or its client in the particular case and the examples mentioned above should not be considered a complete description of all the activities that could lead to a categorization as an underwriter.

Broker-dealer firms should also note that dealers who are not “underwriters” but are effecting transactions in Shares, whether or not participating in the distribution of Shares, generally are required to deliver a prospectus. This is because the prospectus delivery exemption in Section 4(a)(3) of the 1933 Act is not available in respect of such transactions as a result of Section 24(d) of the 1940 Act. As a result, broker-dealer firms should note that dealers who are not underwriters but are participating in a distribution (as contrasted with ordinary secondary market transactions) and thus dealing with the shares that are part of an overallotment within the meaning of Section 4(a)(3)(C) of the 1933 Act would be unable to take advantage of the prospectus delivery exemption provided by Section 4(a)(3) of the 1933 Act. Firms that incur a prospectus delivery obligation with respect to Shares of the Fund are reminded that, pursuant to Rule 153 under the 1933 Act, a prospectus delivery obligation under Section 5(b)(2) of the 1933 Act owed to an exchange member in connection with a sale on the Exchange generally is satisfied by the fact that the prospectus is available at the Exchange upon request. The prospectus delivery mechanism provided in Rule 153 is available only with respect to transactions on a national securities exchange, a trading facility, or an alternative trading system.

Innovator or its affiliates, or a fund for which Innovator or an affiliate serves as investment adviser, (each, as applicable, a “*Selling Shareholder*”) may purchase Creation Units through a broker-dealer to “seed” (in whole or in part) the Fund as they are launched or thereafter, or may purchase Shares of the Fund through a broker-dealer or other investors, including in secondary market transactions. Because the Selling Shareholder may be deemed to be affiliates of the Fund, the Shares are being registered to permit the resale of these shares from time to time after any such purchase. The Fund will not receive any of the proceeds from the resale of such Shares.

## **INVESTMENT RESTRICTIONS AND POLICIES**

### ***Investment Objective***

There can be no assurance that the Fund will achieve its objective. The Fund’s investment objective and policies, and its associated risks, are discussed below and in the Fund’s Prospectus, which should be read carefully before an investment is made. All investment objectives and investment policies not specifically designated as fundamental may be changed without shareholder approval. Additional information about the Fund and its policies is provided below.

The Fund invests in FLEXible Exchange® Options (“*FLEX Options*”) that reference the SPDR® S&P 500® ETF Trust (the “*Underlying ETF*”) and U.S. Treasury bills (“*U.S. Treasuries*”) to employ an income-oriented “defined outcome strategy.” The Underlying ETF is an exchange-traded unit investment trust that seeks to provide investment results that, before expenses, correspond generally to the price and yield performance of the S&P 500® Index (the “*U.S. Equity Index*”).

### ***Fundamental Investment Restrictions***

The investment restrictions set forth below have been adopted by the Trust as fundamental policies that cannot be changed without the affirmative vote of the holders of a majority (as defined in the 1940 Act) of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund. All other investment policies or practices of the Fund are considered by the Trust to be non-fundamental and, accordingly, may be changed without shareholder approval. For purposes of the 1940 Act, a “majority of the outstanding voting securities” means the lesser of the vote of: (i) 67% or more of the shares of the Fund present at a meeting, if the holders of more than 50% of the outstanding shares of the Fund are present or represented by proxy, or (ii) more than 50% of the shares of the Fund.

The Fund shall not:

- (1) Borrow money, except to the extent permitted by the 1940 Act, or any rules, exemptions or interpretations thereunder that may be adopted, granted or issued by the SEC.
- (2) Act as an underwriter, except to the extent the Fund may be deemed to be an underwriter when disposing of securities it owns or when selling its own shares.
- (3) Make loans if, as a result, more than 33 1/3% of its total assets would be lent to other persons, including other investment companies to the extent permitted by the 1940 Act or any rules, exemptions or interpretations thereunder which may be adopted, granted or issued by the SEC.
- (4) Purchase or sell real estate unless acquired as a result of ownership of securities or other instruments and provided that this restriction does not prevent the Fund from (i) purchasing or selling securities or instruments secured by real estate or interests therein, securities or instruments representing interests in real estate or securities or instruments of issuers that invest, deal or otherwise engage in transactions in real estate or interests therein and (ii) making, purchasing or selling real estate mortgage loans.
- (5) Purchase or sell commodities except to the extent permitted by applicable law.
- (6) Issue senior securities, except to the extent permitted by the 1940 Act or any rules, exemptions or interpretations thereunder that may be adopted, granted or issued by the SEC.
- (7) Invest 25% or more of the Fund’s net assets in securities of issuers in any one industry or group of industries (other than securities issued or guaranteed by the U.S. government or any of its agencies or instrumentalities or securities of other investment companies), except that the Fund will concentrate to approximately the

same extent as the U.S. Equity Index concentrates in the securities of a particular industry or group of industries. To the extent the Fund invests in the securities of other investment companies, it will consider the concentrations of those underlying investment companies in determining compliance with its own concentration restrictions.

### ***Notations Regarding the Fund's Fundamental Investment Restrictions***

With respect to the fundamental policy relating to borrowing money set forth in (1) above, the 1940 Act permits the Fund to borrow money in amounts of up to one-third of the Fund's total assets from banks for any purpose, and to borrow up to 5% of the Fund's total assets from banks or other lenders for temporary purposes. (The Fund's total assets include the amounts being borrowed.) To limit the risks attendant to borrowing, the 1940 Act requires the Fund to maintain at all times an "asset coverage" of at least 300% of the amount of its borrowings. Asset coverage means the ratio that the value of the Fund's total assets (including amounts borrowed), minus liabilities other than borrowings, bears to the aggregate amount of all borrowings. Borrowing money to increase portfolio holdings is known as "leveraging."

### ***Non-Fundamental Investment Restrictions***

In addition to the fundamental policies and investment restrictions described above, and the various general investment policies described in the Prospectus, the Fund will be subject to the following investment restrictions, which are considered non-fundamental and may be changed by the Trust's Board of Trustees (the "*Board*") without shareholder approval.

- (1) The Fund may not invest more than 15% of its net assets in securities that it cannot sell or dispose of in the ordinary course of business within seven days at approximately the value at which the Fund has valued the investment.
- (2) The Fund is permitted to invest in other investment companies, including open-end, closed-end or unregistered investment companies, either within the percentage limits set forth in the 1940 Act, any rule or order thereunder, or SEC staff interpretation thereof, or without regard to percentage limits in connection with a merger, reorganization, consolidation or other similar transaction.

\* \* \*

Unless otherwise indicated, all limitations under the Fund's fundamental or non-fundamental investment restrictions apply only at the time that a transaction is undertaken. Any change in the percentage of the Fund's assets invested in certain securities or other instruments resulting from market fluctuations or other changes in the Fund's total assets will not require the Fund to dispose of an investment until the Adviser/Sub-Adviser determines that it is practicable to sell or close out the investment without undue market or tax consequences.



### ***Portfolio Turnover***

The Fund may have a portfolio turnover rate in excess of 100%. Portfolio trading will be undertaken principally to accomplish the Fund's investment objective. The Fund is free to dispose of portfolio securities at any time, subject to complying with the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the "*Internal Revenue Code*") and the 1940 Act, when changes in circumstances or conditions make such a move desirable in light of the Fund's investment objective. Therefore, the Fund will not attempt to achieve or be limited to a predetermined rate of portfolio turnover.

The portfolio turnover rate tells you the amount of trading activity in the Fund's portfolio. A turnover rate of 100% would occur, for example, if all of the Fund's investments held at the beginning of a year were replaced by the end of the year, or if a single investment was frequently traded. The turnover rate also may be affected by cash requirements from purchases and redemptions of Shares. A high rate of portfolio turnover in any year may increase brokerage commissions paid and could generate taxes for shareholders on realized investment gains. Because the Fund has not yet commenced operations, portfolio turnover information is not available at this time.

## **INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND RISKS**

The following information relates to and supplements the description of the Fund's investment strategies and risks that are contained in the Prospectus and includes descriptions of permitted investments and investment practices as well as associated risk factors.

***Borrowing and Leverage.*** The Fund may borrow money to the extent permitted by the 1940 Act. If the Fund borrows money, it must pay interest and other fees, which will reduce the Fund's returns if such costs exceed the returns on the portfolio securities purchased or retained with such borrowings. Any such borrowings are intended to be temporary. However, under certain market conditions, including periods of low demand or decreased liquidity, such borrowings might be outstanding for longer periods of time. As prescribed by the 1940 Act, the Fund will be required to maintain specified asset coverage of at least 300% with respect to any bank borrowing immediately following such borrowing. In the event that such asset coverage shall at any time fall below 300%, the Fund shall, within three days thereafter (not including Sundays and holidays), reduce the amount of its borrowings to an extent that the asset coverage of such borrowings shall be at least 300%. The Fund may be required to dispose of assets on unfavorable terms if market fluctuations or other factors reduce the Fund's asset coverage to less than the prescribed amount.

***Cyber Security Risk.*** The Fund may be more susceptible to operational risks through breaches in cyber security. A cyber security incident may refer to either intentional or unintentional events that allow an unauthorized party to gain access to fund assets, customer data, or proprietary information, or cause the Fund or a service provider to suffer data corruption or lose operational functionality. A cyber security incident could, among other things, result in the loss or theft of customer data or funds, customers or employees being unable to access electronic systems ("*denial of services*"), loss or theft of proprietary information or corporate data, physical damage to a computer or network system, or remediation costs associated with system repairs, data corruption or loss of operational capacity. Any of these results could have a substantial adverse impact on the Fund. For example, if a cyber security incident results in a denial of service, Fund shareholders could lose access to their electronic accounts for an unknown period of time, and employees could be



unable to access electronic systems to perform critical duties for the Fund, such as trading, NAV calculation, shareholder accounting or fulfillment of Share purchases and redemptions. Cyber security incidents could cause the Fund, Adviser, Sub-Adviser or Distributor to incur regulatory penalties, reputational damage, additional compliance costs associated with corrective measures, or financial loss of a significant magnitude. Such incidents may also cause the Fund to violate applicable privacy and other laws. The Fund's service providers have established risk management systems that seek to reduce the risks associated with cyber security, and business continuity plans in the event there is a cybersecurity breach. However, there is no guarantee that such efforts will succeed, especially since the Fund does not directly control the cyber security systems of the issuers of securities in which the Fund invests or the Fund's third-party service providers (including the Fund's transfer agent and custodian), and the Fund and its Shareholders may be negatively impacted as a result.

***FLEX Options.*** FLEX Options are customized option contracts available through national securities exchanges that are guaranteed for settlement by the Options Clearing Corporation ("*OCC*"). FLEX Options are listed on a U.S. national securities exchange. FLEX Options provide investors with the ability to customize assets referenced by the options, exercise prices, exercise styles (i.e., American-style, exercisable any time prior to the expiration date, or European-style, exercisable only on the option expiration date) and expiration dates, while achieving price discovery in competitive, transparent auctions markets and avoiding the counterparty exposure of over-the-counter ("*OTC*") options positions. Each option contract entitles the holder thereof to purchase (for the call options) or sell (for the put options) shares of the reference asset at the strike price.

The OCC guarantees performance by each of the counterparties to the FLEX Options, becoming the "buyer for every seller and the seller for every buyer", with the goal of protecting clearing members and options traders from counterparty risk.

***Certain Considerations Regarding Options.*** The FLEX Options in which the Fund invests will be options on an exchange-traded fund ("*ETF*" and a "*Reference Asset*"). As such, the value of the Fund's FLEX Options will fluctuate with changes in the value of the securities included in, or held by, the Reference Asset, and thus the Reference Asset's price return. In addition to the value of the Reference Asset, the value of an option contract, in general, will reflect, among other things, the time remaining until its expiration date, the relationship of the exercise price to the market price of the underlying investment, and general market conditions. Option contracts that expire unexercised have no value.

Each of the options exchanges has established limitations governing the maximum number of call or put options on the same asset that may be bought or written by a single investor, whether acting alone or in concert with others (regardless of whether such options are written on the same or different exchanges or are held or written on one or more accounts or through one or more brokers). Under these limitations, option positions of all investment companies advised by Innovator are combined for purposes of these limits. Pursuant to these limitations, an exchange may order the liquidation of positions and may impose other sanctions or restrictions. These positions limits may restrict the number of listed options that the Fund may buy or sell.

The puts and calls on the Reference Asset entitle the purchaser of the option the right to purchase (for a call option) or sell (for a put option) the Reference Asset at a predetermined specified price (the “strike price”). When the Fund writes a call on the Reference Asset, it receives a premium and agrees that the purchaser of the call, upon exercise of the call, will receive from the Fund the delivery of an amount of cash or a specified number of shares of the Reference Asset in exchange for the strike price. When the Fund buys a call on the Reference Asset, it pays a premium and has the same rights to such call as indicated above. When the Fund buys a put on the Reference Asset, it pays a premium and has the right to require the seller of the put, upon the Fund’s exercise of the put, to deliver an amount of cash or a specified number of shares of the Reference Asset in exchange for the strike price. When the Fund writes a put on the Reference Asset, it receives a premium and the purchaser of the put has the right to require the Fund to deliver an amount of cash or a specified number of shares of the Reference Asset in exchange for the strike price. Notwithstanding the above, the Fund utilizes FLEX Options that are cash-settled. Cash-settled option contracts give the holder the right to receive an amount (or owe an amount) of cash upon the exercise of the option contract. Gain or loss depends on changes in the value of the Reference Asset’s price return relative to the strike price for a given option contract. The amount of cash is equal to the difference between the closing price of the Reference Asset’s price return and the exercise price of the option contract times a specified multiple (“multiplier”), which determines the total value for each point of such difference.

*Risks of Options on the Reference Asset.* If the Fund has purchased an option and exercises it before the closing value for that day is available, it runs the risk that the Reference Asset’s price return may subsequently change. If such a change causes the exercised option to fall out of the money, the Fund will be required to pay the difference between the closing value of the Reference Asset’s value and the exercise price of the option (times the applicable multiplier) to the assigned writer.

*Rule 18f-4.* Funds that enter into derivatives transactions and certain other transactions notwithstanding the restrictions on the issuance of “senior securities” under Section 18 of the 1940 Act are permitted to do so in accordance with Rule 18f-4 under the 1940 Act (“*Rule 18f-4*” or the “*Derivatives Rule*”). The Derivatives Rule defines the term “derivatives” to include short sales and forward contracts, such as TBA transactions, in addition to instruments traditionally classified as derivatives, such as swaps, futures, and option contracts. Rule 18f-4 also regulates other types of leveraged transactions, such as reverse repurchase transactions and transactions deemed to be “similar to” reverse repurchase transactions, such as certain securities lending transactions in connection with which a fund obtains leverage. Among other things, Rule 18f-4 prohibits a fund from entering into these derivatives transactions except in accordance with the provisions of the Derivatives Rule. The Derivatives Rule requires, among other things, a fund to adopt and implement a written “derivatives risk management program” and comply with limitations on risks relating to its derivatives transactions. The Derivatives Rule establishes limits on the derivatives transactions that a fund may enter into based on the value-at-risk (“*VaR*”) of the fund inclusive of derivatives. A fund generally satisfies the limits under the Derivatives Rule if the VaR of its portfolio (inclusive of derivatives transactions) does not exceed 200% of the VaR of its “designated reference portfolio.” The “designated reference portfolio” is a representative unleveraged index or the fund’s own portfolio absent derivatives holdings, as determined by such fund’s derivatives risk manager (the person or persons appointed by the fund’s board of directors/trustees responsible for administering the derivatives risk management program). This limits test is referred to as the

“Relative VaR Test”. In addition, among other requirements, Rule 18f-4 also requires a fund carry out enhanced reporting to the board of directors/trustees, the SEC and the public regarding a fund’s derivatives activities. These requirements apply unless a fund qualifies as a “limited derivatives user,” which the Derivatives Rule defines as a fund that limits its derivatives exposure to 10% of its net assets. The Fund complies with the requirements of Rule 18f-4 in its usage of option contracts. It is possible that the limits and compliance costs imposed by the Derivatives Rule may adversely affect the Fund’s performance, efficiency in implementing its strategy, liquidity and/or ability to pursue its investment objectives and may increase the costs associated with the operation of the Fund, which could adversely affect investors.

***Inflation Risk.*** Inflation may reduce the intrinsic value of increases in the value of the Fund. Inflation risk is the risk that the value of assets or income from investments will be less in the future as inflation decreases the value of money. As inflation increases, the value of the Fund’s assets can decline.

***Legislation and Litigation Risk.*** Legislation or litigation that affects the value of securities held by the Fund and/or that the Fund has exposure to by virtue of its usage of derivatives instruments may reduce the value of the Fund. From time to time, various legislative initiatives are proposed that may have a negative impact on certain securities. In addition, litigation regarding any of the securities owned by the Fund or the Reference Asset may negatively impact the value of the Shares. Such legislation or litigation may cause the Fund to lose value.

***Listing Standards Risk.*** The Fund is required to comply with listing requirements adopted by the Exchange. Non-compliance with such requirements may result in the Fund’s shares being delisted by the Exchange. Any resulting liquidation of the Fund could cause the Fund to incur elevated transaction costs and could result in negative tax consequences for its shareholders.

***Market Risk.*** Market risk is the risk that a particular security, or Shares of a Fund in general, may fall in value. Securities are subject to market fluctuations caused by such factors as economic, political, regulatory or market developments, changes in interest rates and perceived trends in securities prices. Shares of a Fund could decline in value or underperform other investments due to short-term market movements or any longer periods during more prolonged market downturns. In addition, local, regional or global events such as war, acts of terrorism, spread of infectious diseases or other public health issues, recessions, or other events could have a significant negative impact on a Fund and its investments. Such events may affect certain geographic regions, countries, sectors and industries more significantly than others. Such events could adversely affect the prices and liquidity of a Fund’s portfolio securities or other instruments and could result in disruptions in the trading markets. Any of such circumstances could have a materially negative impact on the value of a Fund’s Shares and result in increased market volatility. During any such events, a Fund’s Shares may trade at increased premiums or discounts to their NAV.

Shares of a Fund in general, may fall due to current market conditions or adverse changes in market conditions. Values of securities may change due to factors such as, or changes in circumstances in relation to, inflation, interest rates, regulatory requirements, bank failures, political climate deterioration or developments, armed conflicts or wars, natural disasters or future health crises. As a means to fight inflation, the Federal Reserve and certain foreign central banks have historically raised interest rates which may negatively impact the performance of securities held by a

Fund. Certain market factors may result in central banks changing their approach in the future. U.S. regulators have proposed, in the past, and may further propose in the future, several changes to market and issuer regulations which could directly impact the Funds and/or their ability to implement its investment strategies or make certain investments. Regulatory changes may also increase operational costs, which could impact overall performance. Bank failures, such as the March 2023 failures of Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank (the second- and third-largest bank failures in U.S. history) could result in disruption to the broader banking industry or markets generally and reduce confidence in financial institutions and the economy as a whole, which may also heighten market volatility and reduce liquidity. The political climate in the U.S., as well as political and diplomatic events both domestically and abroad, have and may continue to have an adverse impact on the U.S. regulatory landscape, markets and investor behavior, which could have a negative impact on the Fund's investments and operations. A U.S. federal government shutdown may also significantly impact investor or consumer behavior, which may adversely impact the markets and global economy. Global and domestic authorities and regulators have previously responded to serious economic disruptions with ranging fiscal and monetary policy changes, including, but not limited to, direct capital infusions into companies, new monetary programs and dramatically lower interest rates. Any change in these policies, or the ineffectiveness of these policies, could increase volatility in securities markets, which may adversely impact the fund's investments and performance. Any market disruptions could also delay the Fund from making sound investment decisions in a timely manner. If the Fund concentrates its investments in a region enduring geopolitical market disruption, it may face higher risk of loss, although the increasing interconnectivity between global economies and financial markets can lead to events or conditions in one country, region or financial market, adversely impacting a different country, region or financial market.

Other unexpected political, regulatory and diplomatic events within the U.S. and abroad may affect investor and consumer confidence and may adversely impact financial markets and the broader economy. For example, armed conflicts or wars have and could continue to cause significant market disruptions and volatility within the markets. The hostilities and sanctions resulting from those hostilities could have a significant impact on a Fund's investments, performance and liquidity. The economies of the U.S. and its trading partners, as well as the financial markets generally, may also be adversely impacted by trade disputes and other matters. If any geopolitical conflicts develop or worsen, economies, markets and individual securities may be adversely affected, and the value of the Fund's assets may go down.

Health crises caused by the outbreak of infectious diseases or other public health issues, may exacerbate other pre-existing political, social, economic, market and financial risks. The impact of any such events, could negatively affect the global economy, as well as the economies of individual countries or regions, the financial performance of individual companies, sectors and industries, and the markets in general in significant and unforeseen ways. Any future public health crisis, and the ensuing policies enacted by governments and central banks have caused in the past, and may cause in the future, significant volatility and uncertainty in global financial markets, negatively impacting global growth prospects. As the COVID-19 global pandemic illustrated, such events may affect certain geographic regions, countries, sectors and industries more significantly than others. The Fund's investments and liquidity thereof could be negatively impacted in the event of such health crises.

Advancements in technology may also adversely impact markets and overall performance of the Fund. For instance, the economy may be significantly impacted by the advanced development and increased regulation of artificial intelligence. As the use of technology grows, liquidity and market movements may be affected. As artificial intelligence is used more widely, the profitability and growth of Fund holdings may be impacted, which could significantly impact the overall performance of the Fund.

These events, and any other future events, may adversely affect the prices and liquidity of the Fund's portfolio investments and could result in disruptions in the trading markets.

***Security Issuer Risk.*** Issuer-specific attributes may cause a security held by the Reference Asset to be more volatile than the market generally. The value of an individual security or particular type of security may be more volatile than the market as a whole and may perform differently from the value of the market as a whole.

***Short-Term Instruments and Temporary Investments.*** The Fund may invest in short-term instruments, including money market instruments, on an ongoing basis to provide liquidity or for other reasons. Money market instruments are generally short-term investments that may include, but are not limited to: (i) shares of money market funds; (ii) obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. government, its agencies or instrumentalities (including government-sponsored enterprises); (iii) negotiable certificates of deposit, bankers' acceptances, fixed-time deposits and other obligations of U.S. and non-U.S. banks (including non-U.S. branches) and similar institutions; (iv) commercial paper rated, at the date of purchase, "Prime-1" by Moody's® Investors Service, Inc., "F-1" by Fitch Ratings, Inc., or "A-1" by Standard & Poor's® Financial Services LLC, a subsidiary of S&P Global, Inc., or if unrated, of comparable quality as determined by the Adviser and/or Sub-Adviser; (v) non-convertible corporate debt securities (e.g., bonds and debentures) with remaining maturities at the date of purchase of not more than 397 days and that satisfy the rating requirements set forth in Rule 2a-7 under the 1940 Act; (vi) repurchase agreements; and (vii) short-term U.S. dollar denominated obligations of non-U.S. banks (including U.S. branches) that, in the opinion of the Adviser and/or Sub-Adviser, are of comparable quality to obligations of U.S. banks that may be purchased by the Fund. Any of these instruments may be purchased on a current or forward-settled basis. Time deposits are non-negotiable deposits maintained in banking institutions for specified periods of time at stated interest rates. Bankers' acceptances are time drafts drawn on commercial banks by borrowers, usually in connection with international transactions.

***U.S. Government Securities Risk.*** U.S. government securities are subject to interest rate risk but generally do not involve the credit risks associated with investments in other types of debt securities. As a result, the yields available from U.S. government securities are generally lower than the yields available from other debt securities. U.S. government securities are guaranteed only as to the timely payment of interest and the payment of principal when held to maturity. While securities issued or guaranteed by U.S. federal government agencies are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, securities issued by government sponsored entities are solely the obligation of the issuer and generally do not carry any guarantee from the U.S. government.



## DISCLOSURE OF PORTFOLIO HOLDINGS INFORMATION

The Board has approved portfolio holdings disclosure policies (the “*Disclosure Policies*”) that govern the timing and circumstances of disclosure to shareholders and third parties of information regarding the portfolio investments held by the Fund. It is the policy of the Fund and its service providers, including, without limitation, the Fund’s investment adviser, investment sub-adviser, distributor, administrator, custodian and transfer agent, to protect the confidentiality of the Fund’s holdings and prevent the selective disclosure of nonpublic information about the Fund’s portfolio holdings, which includes the Fund’s portfolio holdings and pending transactions. The Fund and each of its service providers must adhere to the Disclosure Policies.

The Fund and its service providers may not disclose any information concerning the portfolio holdings of the Fund to any unaffiliated third party, with certain exceptions set forth in the Disclosure Policies. The Fund and its service providers may not receive compensation or any other consideration (which includes any agreement to maintain assets in the Fund or in other investment companies or accounts managed by the Adviser or Sub-Adviser, or any affiliated person of the Adviser or Sub-Adviser) in connection with the disclosure of portfolio holdings information.

The Disclosure Policies are not intended to prevent the disclosure of any and all portfolio information for a legitimate business purpose to the Fund’s service providers and others who generally need access to such information in the performance of their contractual duties and responsibilities, such as the Fund’s custodian, fund accountant, investment adviser and sub-adviser, administrator, independent public accountant, attorneys, officers and trustees and each of their respective affiliates and advisers, and are subject to duties of confidentiality, including a duty not to trade on nonpublic information, imposed by law and/or contract.

The Fund, or its duly authorized service providers, may disclose the Fund’s portfolio holdings in the following circumstances:

- *Publicly Available Information/Mandatory Disclosure.* The Fund, or its duly authorized service providers, will publicly disclose holdings of the Fund in accordance with regulatory requirements, such as periodic portfolio disclosure in filings with the SEC.
- *Confidential Dissemination of Portfolio Holdings.* Numerous mutual fund evaluation services regularly analyze the portfolio holdings of mutual funds in order to monitor and report on various attributes including style, capitalization, maturity, yield, and beta. These services then distribute the results of their analysis to the public and/or paid subscribers. In order to facilitate the review of the Fund by these services, the Fund may distribute (or authorize its service providers to distribute) portfolio holdings to such services before their public disclosure is required or authorized provided that: (i) the recipient does not distribute the portfolio holdings or results of the analysis to third parties, other departments, or persons who are likely to use the information for purposes of purchasing or selling shares of the Fund before the portfolio holdings or results of the analysis become public information; and (ii) the recipient signs a written confidentiality agreement. Persons and entities unwilling to execute an acceptable confidentiality agreement may only receive portfolio holdings information that has otherwise been publicly disclosed in accordance with the Disclosure Policies.

- *Analytical Information.* The Fund or its duly authorized service providers may distribute the following information concerning the Fund's portfolio before disclosure of portfolio holdings is required, provided that the information has been publicly disclosed (via the Fund's website or as otherwise permitted by regulatory interpretation or guidance): the Fund's deposit instruments, redemption instruments and with respect to active, long/short and self-indexing ETFs, complete portfolio holdings will be publicly disseminated each business day and before the commencement of trading of shares on the listing exchanges. The Fund's holdings will be disclosed on the Adviser's website showing the portfolio positions and quantities of the securities held that will form the basis for the Fund's NAV calculation for end of the business day.
- *Press Interviews, Broker Discussion, etc.* Portfolio managers and other senior officers or spokespersons of the Fund may disclose or confirm the ownership of any individual portfolio position to reporters, brokers, shareholders, consultants, or other interested persons only if such information has been previously publicly disclosed in accordance with the Disclosure Policies.
- *Shareholder In-Kind Distributions.* The Fund's shareholders may, in some circumstances, elect to redeem their shares of the Fund in exchange for their pro rata share of the securities held by the Fund. In such circumstances, the Fund's shareholders may receive a complete listing of the portfolio holdings of the Fund up to seven (7) calendar days prior to making the redemption request, provided that they agree in writing to maintain the confidentiality of the portfolio holdings information and not to trade on such information.
- *Other Circumstances.* The Fund or the Adviser may disclose non-public portfolio holdings information to a third party who does not fall within the pre-approved categories, and who are not executing broker-dealers; however, prior to the receipt of any nonpublic portfolio holdings information by such third party, (i) the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Compliance Officer (the "CCO") determine that the Fund has a legitimate business purpose for disclosing such information; and (ii) the recipient enters into a confidentiality agreement.

Certain exceptions to the Disclosure Policies permit the non-public disclosure of portfolio holdings to a limited group of third parties so long as the third party has signed a written confidentiality agreement. Such confidentiality agreement should generally provide that: (1) the portfolio information is the confidential property of the Fund (and its service providers, if applicable) and may not be shared or used directly or indirectly for any purpose except as expressly provided in the confidentiality agreement; (2) the recipient of the portfolio information agrees to limit access to the portfolio information to its employees (and agents) who, on a need-to-know basis, are (i) authorized to have access to the portfolio information and (ii) subject to confidentiality obligations, including duties not to trade on nonpublic information, no less restrictive than the confidentiality obligations contained in the confidentiality agreement; (3) upon written request, the recipient agrees to promptly return or destroy, as directed, the portfolio information; and (4) portfolio information may be deemed to no longer be confidential if (i) it is already known to the recipient prior to disclosure by the Fund, (ii) it becomes publicly known without breach of the confidentiality agreement by the recipient, (iii) it is received from a third party and, to the knowledge of the recipient, the disclosure by such third party is not a breach of any agreement to which such third party is subject, or (iv) it is authorized by the Fund or its agents to be disclosed.



The Fund will disclose its complete portfolio holdings schedule for each month in a fiscal quarter in public filings with the SEC within 60 days after the end of the relevant fiscal quarter on Form N-PORT. The Fund's complete schedule of portfolio holdings for the second and fourth quarters of each fiscal year is included in the semi-annual and annual reports to shareholders, respectively, and is filed with the SEC on Form N-CSR. A semi-annual or annual report for the Fund will become available to investors within 60 days after the period to which it relates. The Fund's Forms N-PORT and Forms N-CSR are available on the SEC's website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov).

The Fund's portfolio holdings are publicly disseminated each day the Fund is open for business through financial reporting and news services, including publicly accessible websites. Additionally, a basket composition file, which includes information such as security names and share quantities to deliver in exchange for Fund shares, together with estimates and actual cash components, is publicly disseminated each day the NYSE is open for trading via the National Securities Clearing Corporation.

Pursuant to Rule 6c-11 under the 1940 Act, information regarding the Fund's current portfolio holdings is available on a daily basis at the Fund's website, available at [www.innovatoretfs.com](http://www.innovatoretfs.com). No non-public information concerning the Trust will be disseminated.

## MANAGEMENT OF THE TRUST

### *Trustees and Officers*

The business and affairs of the Trust are managed under the direction of its Board. The Trust's Trustees and principal officers are noted in the tables below along with their ages and their business experience for the past five years. The Trustees serve for indefinite terms until their resignation, death or removal. The Fund's officers are elected annually by the Board and serve at the Board's pleasure. Each Trustee serves as a trustee of all the ETFs issued by Innovator ETFs Trust.

Name, Address and Year of Birth	Position(s) Held with the Trust	Length of Time Served	Principal Occupation(s) During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee or Officer	Other Directorships Held by Trustee or Officer in the Past Five Years
<i>Independent Trustees</i>					
Mark Berg 109 N. Hale Street Wheaton, IL 60187 Year of Birth: 1971	Trustee	Since 2017	Founding Principal (2001 – present), Chief Executive Officer (2019 – present), President (2001 – 2019), Timothy Financial Counsel Inc.	118	Tortazo, LLC (2018 – present)
Joe Stowell 109 N. Hale Street Wheaton, IL 60187 Year of Birth: 1968	Trustee	Since 2017	Chief Operating Officer, Woodman Valley Chapel (2015 – present).	118	Board of Advisors, M4 Europe (2023 – present); Board of Advisors, Westmont College (2016 – 2021)
Brian J. Wildman 109 N. Hale Street Wheaton, IL 60187 Year of Birth: 1963	Trustee	Since 2017	President, Timothy Financial Counsel Inc. (2019 – present); Executive Vice President, Consumer Banking (2016 – 2019), Chief Risk Officer (2013 – 2016), MB Financial Bank.	118	Missionary Furlough Homes (2008 – 2022); MB Financial Bank (2003 – 2019)
<i>Interested Trustee<sup>1</sup> and Officers</i>					
H. Bruce Bond 109 N. Hale Street Wheaton, IL 60187 Year of Birth: 1963	Interested Trustee, President and Principal Executive Officer	Since 2017	Chief Executive Officer, Innovator Capital Management, LLC (2017 – present).	118	None
John W. Southard, Jr. 109 N. Hale Street Wheaton, IL 60187 Year of Birth: 1969	Vice President, Secretary and Assistant Treasurer	Since 2017	Chief Investment Officer, Innovator Capital Management, LLC (2017 – present); Director and Co-Founder, T2 Capital Management, LLC (2010 – present).	118	Independent Trustee, ETF Managers Group, LLC (2012 – 2018)
Kevin P. Hourihan 3 Canal Plaza 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Portland, ME 04101 Year of Birth: 1978	Chief Compliance Officer and Anti-Money Laundering Officer	Since 2023	Senior Principal Consultant, Fund Chief Compliance Officer, ACA Global, LLC (since 2022); Chief Compliance Officer, Ashmore Funds (2017 – 2022); Chief Compliance Officer, Ashmore Investment Management (US) Corp (2014 – 2022); Chief Compliance Officer, Ashmore Equities Investment Management (2015 – 2019).	118	None
Kathy Meyer 109 N. Hale Street Wheaton, IL 60187 Year of Birth: 1964	Vice President, Treasurer and Principal Financial Accounting Officer	Since 2022	Chief Financial Officer, Innovator Capital Management, LLC (2018 – present).	118	None

<sup>1</sup> H. Bruce Bond is deemed to be an interested person of the Trust (as defined in the 1940 Act) because of his affiliation with the Adviser.

### ***Board Leadership***

The Board has overall responsibility for the oversight and management of the Fund. The Board has two standing committees (as described further below): an Audit Committee and a Nominating and Governance Committee. The Chairman of each Board committee is an Independent Trustee.

In order to streamline communication between the Adviser and the Independent Trustees and create certain efficiencies, the Board has a Lead Independent Trustee who is responsible for: (i) coordinating activities of the Independent Trustees; (ii) working with the Adviser, Fund counsel and the independent legal counsel to the Independent Trustees to determine the agenda for Board meetings; (iii) serving as the principal contact for and facilitating communication between the Independent Trustees and the Fund's service providers, particularly the Adviser; and (iv) any other duties that the Independent Trustees may delegate to the Lead Independent Trustee. The Lead Independent Trustee is selected by the Independent Trustees and serves until his or her successor is selected. Mr. Berg serves as the Lead Independent Trustee.

The Chairman of the Board presides at all meetings of the Board, and acts as a liaison with service providers, officers, attorneys, and other Trustees. The Chair of each Board committee performs a similar role with respect to the committee. The Chairman of the Board or the Chair of a Board committee may also perform such other functions as may be delegated by the Board or the committee from time to time. The Independent Trustees meet regularly outside the presence of Trust management, in executive session or with other service providers to the Fund. The Board has regular meetings throughout the year and may hold special meetings if required before its next regular meeting. Each committee meets regularly to conduct the oversight functions delegated to that committee by the Board and reports its findings to the Board. The Board and each standing committee conduct annual assessments of their oversight function and structure. The Board has determined that the Board's leadership structure is appropriate because it allows the Board to exercise independent judgment over management and to allocate areas of responsibility among committees and the full Board to enhance effective oversight. Mr. Stowell serves as the Chairman of the Nominating and Governance Committee and Mr. Wildman serves as the Chairman of the Audit Committee.

### ***Risk Oversight***

Among the Board's general oversight and management functions is to oversee the risks of the Fund. The Fund is subject to various risks, including investment, compliance, operational and valuation risks, among others. The Board addresses its risk oversight function through different Board and committee activities. For instance, the Board has delegated the day-to-day risk management and oversight function to the Adviser, or in certain cases (subject to the Adviser's supervision) and depending on the nature of the risks to other service providers. The Board, or a committee, reviews and evaluates reports from the Adviser or service providers regarding the risks faced by the Fund and regarding the service providers' oversight and management of those risks. In addition to the delegation of the day-to-day risk management and oversight function, the committees of the Board allow the Trustees to quickly and efficiently consider risk matters and facilitate the oversight by the Trustees of Fund activities and the risks related to those activities.

The Board has also appointed a Chief Compliance Officer (“CCO”) who oversees the implementation and evaluation of the Fund’s compliance program. Kevin P. Hourihan serves as CCO and Anti-Money Laundering Officer of the Trust.

Not all risks that may affect the Fund can be identified nor can controls be developed to eliminate or mitigate their occurrence or effects. It may not be practical or cost effective to eliminate or mitigate certain risks, the processes and controls employed to address certain risks may be limited in their effectiveness. Further, some risks are simply beyond the reasonable control of the Fund or the Advisor or other service providers. There can be no guarantee that any risk management systems established by the Fund, its service providers, or issuers of the securities in which the Fund invests will succeed, and the Fund cannot control such systems put in place by service providers, issuers or other third parties whose operations may affect the Fund and/or its shareholders. Moreover, it is necessary to bear certain risks (such as investment related risks) to achieve the Fund’s goals. As a result of the foregoing and other factors, the Fund’s ability to manage risk is subject to substantial limitations.

### ***Trustees’ Qualifications.***

The Nominating and Governance Committee selects and nominates persons for election or appointment by the Board as Independent Trustees. The Board has adopted the Nominating and Governance Committee Charter and Guidelines, which provides the Nominating and Governance Committee with general criteria to guide the Committee’s choice of candidates to nominate to serve on the Board; however, there are no specific qualifications or requirements to serve on the Board. The Board believes that, collectively, the Trustees have balanced and diverse experience, skills, attributes and qualifications, that allow the Board to operate effectively in governing the Trust and protecting the interests of shareholders. Among the attributes common to all Trustees are their ability to review critically, evaluate, question and discuss information provided to them; to interact effectively with the Trust’s investment manager, sub-advisers, other service providers, counsel and independent auditors; and to exercise business judgment in the performance of their duties as Trustees. Each Trustee’s ability to perform his duties effectively is evidenced by his educational background or professional training; business, consulting or public service positions; experience from service as a Board member of the Trust, other investment funds, public companies or non-profit entities or other organizations; and ongoing commitment and participation in Board and committee meetings throughout the years.

While there are no specific required qualifications for Board membership, the Board believes the specific background of each Trustee is appropriate to his or her serving on the Board. The foregoing discussion and the Trustees and officers chart above are included in this Statement of Additional Information pursuant to requirements of the SEC, do not constitute holding out the Board or any Trustee as having special expertise or experience and shall not be deemed to impose any greater responsibility or liability on any Trustee by reason thereof.

***H. Bruce Bond.*** Mr. Bond is the Chief Executive Officer of Innovator, responsible for the firm’s strategic vision. Mr. Bond began his career in 1986 at Griffin, Kubik, Stephens and Thompson, a small boutique firm specializing in municipal bonds. In 1994 he continued his career at First Trust Portfolios as Vice President responsible for wholesale distribution of financial products across the Midwest and Florida. In 1998 Mr. Bond joined Nuveen Investments as a Managing Director to

lead an effort in its Structured Products Group to develop, market and distribute closed-end funds, unit investment trusts and exchange-traded fund products. Mr. Bond became the head of marketing for all Nuveen products before leaving to start PowerShares in early 2003. As Founder and Chief Executive Officer of PowerShares, Mr. Bond pioneered many firsts in the ETF industry. In 2006, PowerShares was acquired by Invesco, a global asset manager. Mr. Bond remained the President and Chief Executive Officer of PowerShares and Chairman of the Board of the PowerShares Funds until September of 2011. During his time at PowerShares, Mr. Bond helped develop, list and distribute over 130 fund products on various exchanges located in the United States and throughout Europe, with assets under management in excess of \$80 billion.

Mark Berg. As Chief Executive Officer and Founding Principal of Timothy Financial Counsel Inc., Mr. Berg's primary role is the leadership and management of Timothy Financial Counsel Inc. He is the primary advisor for select clients, but also oversees the financial planning process for all Timothy Financial clients. Mr. Berg has served in the fee-only financial planning industry since 1995. Mr. Berg is also a founding board member of Tortazo LLC since 2018. He holds a BA in Economics from Wheaton College and is a Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner. He is also a NAPFA Registered Financial Advisor where he has served as the Regional President and Chair, as well as on the National Board of Directors. He speaks regularly at conferences on financial planning and practice management. He has been interviewed and/or quoted by a variety of publications, such as Dow Jones Newswire, The Wall Street Journal, Reader's Digest, and Kiplinger's and has been interviewed on NBC television.

Joe Stowell. Mr. Stowell is currently the Chief Operation Officer of Woodmen Valley Chapel in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He oversees the financial, human resources and congregational management of this multi-campus organization. Prior to joining Woodman in September of 2015, Mr. Stowell served for eight years as the Executive Vice President/COO of the English Language Institute/China (ELIC), a global educational non-profit focused primarily in Asia and the Middle East. Before his work in the non-profit business management sector, Joe traded futures, options and swaps for over a decade, focusing on currencies and bonds both in the US and abroad for McNamara Trading and Chicago Research & Trade. He was on trading floors and desks in Chicago, New York and Tokyo.

Brian J. Wildman. Mr. Wildman is currently the President of Timothy Financial Counsel Inc. From 2016 until 2019, Mr. Wildman served as Executive Vice President, Consumer Banking of MB Financial Bank. During that time, Mr. Wildman also served as a director of MB Financial Bank. From 2013 to 2016, Mr. Wildman was responsible for Risk Management and served as MB Financial Bank's Chief Risk Officer. Prior to 2013, Mr. Wildman was responsible for the MB Financial Bank's Wealth Management and Consumer Services groups. Prior to joining MB Financial Bank in 2003, he was First Vice President of Bank One and served in various management positions with its predecessor organization, American National Bank and Trust Company of Chicago, since 1988. Mr. Wildman was a member of the Board of Trustees of Missionary Furlough Homes from 2008 to 2022. Additionally, Mr. Wildman serves as the "audit committee financial expert" for the Board.

## ***Share Ownership***

The following table provides the dollar range of Shares of the Fund beneficially owned by the Trustees as of December 31, 2023.

<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Aggregate Dollar Range of Equity Securities of the Fund</b>	<b>Aggregate Dollar Range of Equity Securities in all Funds Overseen Within Fund Complex</b>
H. Bruce Bond	None	Over \$100,000
Mark Berg	None	Over \$100,000
Joe Stowell	None	Over \$100,000
Brian J. Wildman	None	Over \$100,000

As of December 31, 2023, the Independent Trustees and immediate family members did not own beneficially or of record any class of securities of an investment adviser or principal underwriter of the Fund or any person directly or indirectly controlling, controlled by, or under common control with an investment adviser or principal underwriter of the Fund.

As of April 1, 2024, the officers and Trustees, in the aggregate, owned less than 1% of the Shares of the Fund.

## ***Trustee Compensation***

Effective January 1, 2024, each Independent Trustee is paid a fixed annual retainer of \$274,000 per year. The fixed annual retainer is allocated pro rata among each Fund in the Trust based upon each Fund's assets under management.

The following table sets forth the estimated compensation (including reimbursement for travel and out-of-pocket expenses) to be paid by the Fund and by the Trust to the Trustees for their services to the Fund for the fiscal year ending October 31, 2024. Only the Trustees of the Trust (the "Trustees") who are not "interested persons" of the Trust or the Adviser, as defined by the 1940 Act (the "Independent Trustees"), receive compensation from the Fund. The Trust has no retirement or pension plans. The Trust has no employees. Its officers are compensated by Innovator.

<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Estimated Compensation from the Fund</b>	<b>Estimated Compensation from the Trust</b>
H. Bruce Bond	None	None
Mark Berg	\$2,322	\$274,000
Joe Stowell	\$2,322	\$274,000
Brian J. Wildman	\$2,322	\$274,000

## ***Board Committees***

***Audit Committee:*** The Trust's Audit Committee consists of each of the Independent Trustees. The Audit Committee monitors accounting and financial reporting policies and practice, and internal controls for the Trust. It also oversees the quality and objectivity of the Trust's financial statements and the independent audit thereof, and acts as a liaison between the Trust's independent registered public accounting firm and the full Board.



*Nominating and Governance Committee:* The Trust's Nominating and Governance Committee consists of each of the Independent Trustees. The Nominating and Governance Committee recommends Board members, fills vacancies and considers the qualifications of Board members. The committee will consider shareholder recommendations for nomination to the Board only in the event that there is a vacancy on the Board. Shareholders who wish to submit recommendations for nominations to the Board to fill a vacancy must submit their recommendations in writing to the Nominating and Governance Committee, c/o Innovator ETFs Trust, 109 North Hale Street, Wheaton, Illinois 60187. Shareholders should include appropriate information on the background and qualifications of any person recommended (*e.g.*, a resume), as well as the candidate's contact information and a written consent from the candidate to serve if nominated and elected. Shareholder recommendations for nominations to the Board will be accepted on an ongoing basis and such recommendations will be kept on file for consideration when there is a vacancy on the Board.

### ***Proxy Voting Policies***

The Trust has adopted a proxy voting policy that seeks to ensure that proxies for securities held by the Fund are voted consistently with the best interests of the Fund.

The Board has delegated to the Adviser the proxy voting responsibilities for the Fund and has directed Innovator to vote proxies consistent with the Fund's best interests. In order to facilitate the proxy voting process, Broadridge Investor Communication Solutions, Inc. ("*Broadridge*") has been retained to provide access to a selection of third-party providers that are available to provide proxy vote recommendations and research. Votes are cast through the Broadridge ProxyEdge® platform ("*ProxyEdge*"). With the assistance of Broadridge, Egan-Jones Proxy Services ("*Egan-Jones*") has been selected to provide vote recommendations based on its own internal guidelines. The services provided to Innovator through Egan Jones include access to Egan-Jones' research analysis and their voting recommendations. Services provided to Innovator through ProxyEdge include receipt of proxy ballots, vote execution based upon the recommendations of Egan-Jones, access to the voting recommendations of Egan-Jones, as well as reporting, auditing, working with custodian banks, and consulting assistance for the handling of proxy voting responsibilities. ProxyEdge also maintains proxy voting records and provides Innovator with reports that reflect the proxy voting activities of client portfolios.

The fundamental guideline followed by the Adviser in voting proxies is to make every effort to confirm that the manner in which shares are voted is in the best interest of clients and the value of the investment. Absent special circumstances of the types described below, it is the policy of Adviser to exercise its proxy voting discretion in accordance with the Egan-Jones Proxy Voting Principles and Guidelines set forth in Exhibit A.

Information regarding how the Fund voted proxies (if any) relating to portfolio securities during the most recent 12-month period ended June 30 is available upon request and without charge on the Fund's website at <https://www.innovatoretf.com>, by calling (800) 208-5212 or by accessing the SEC's website at <https://www.sec.gov>.



## INVESTMENT ADVISER AND OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS

### *Investment Adviser*

Innovator Capital Management, LLC, located at 109 North Hale Street, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, furnishes investment management services to the Fund, subject to the supervision and direction of the Board. Substantially all of the interests of Innovator are owned by Messrs. H. Bruce Bond, John Wilder Southard, Jr. and Jeffrey Brown. Innovator is controlled by a Board of Managers which currently consists of Mr. Bond, Mr. Southard and Mr. Brown. Mr. Bond controls the Board of Managers by virtue of his majority ownership of Innovator. Mr. Southard owns in excess of twenty-five percent of Innovator and Mr. Brown owns a minority interest in Innovator. Innovator compensates all officers (including the chief compliance officer) and employees of Innovator who are affiliated with both Innovator and the Trust. Innovator is registered with the SEC as an investment adviser under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, as amended.

Pursuant to an investment management agreement between Innovator and the Trust, on behalf of the Fund (the “*Investment Management Agreement*”), Innovator oversees the investment of the Fund’s assets by Milliman and is responsible for paying all expenses of the Fund, excluding the fee payments under the Investment Management Agreement, interest, taxes, brokerage commissions, acquired fund fees and expenses and other expenses connected with the execution of portfolio transactions, distribution and service fees payable pursuant to a Rule 12b-1 plan, if any, and extraordinary expenses. As compensation for the investment advisory services rendered under the Investment Management Agreement, the Fund has agreed to pay Innovator an annual management fee equal to 0.79% of its average daily net assets.

### *Sub-Adviser*

Innovator and the Fund have retained Milliman Financial Risk Management LLC, 71 South Wacker Drive, 31<sup>st</sup> Floor, Chicago, Illinois 60606, to serve as the Fund’s investment sub-adviser. Milliman was established in 1998, and also advises other investment companies, insurance companies, financial institutions, other pooled investment vehicles in addition to the Fund. The Sub-Adviser is a wholly owned subsidiary of Milliman, Inc.

Pursuant to an investment sub-advisory agreement between Innovator, Milliman and the Trust, on behalf of the Fund (the “*Investment Sub-Advisory Agreement*”), Milliman manages the investment of the Fund’s assets. As compensation for the sub-advisory services rendered under the Investment Sub-Advisory Agreement, Innovator has agreed to pay Milliman an annual sub-advisory fee that is based upon the Fund’s average daily net assets. Innovator is responsible for paying the entire amount of Milliman’s sub-advisory fee. The Fund does not directly pay Milliman.

Innovator and the Trust have received an exemptive order from the SEC which exempts Innovator and the Trust from certain of the shareholder approval requirements of Section 15(a) of the 1940 Act and allowed the Board, subject to certain conditions, to appoint a new, unaffiliated sub-advisor and approve a new investment sub-advisory agreement on behalf of the Trust without shareholder approval.

*Portfolio Managers.* The portfolio managers are primarily responsible for the day-to-day management of the Fund. There are currently two portfolio managers, as follows: Robert T. Cummings and Yin Bhuyan. As of April 1, 2024, none of the portfolio managers beneficially owned any Shares of the Fund.

Compensation. The portfolio managers are paid competitive salaries by Milliman. In addition, they may receive bonuses based on qualitative considerations, such as an individual’s contribution to the organization, and performance reviews in relation to job responsibilities.

Conflicts of Interest. The portfolio managers have day-to-day management responsibilities with respect to other investments accounts and, accordingly, may be presented with potential or actual conflicts of interest. The management of other accounts may result in the portfolio manager devoting unequal time and attention to the management of the Fund and/or other accounts. In approving the Investment Management Agreement and Investment Sub-Advisory Agreement, the Board was satisfied that the portfolio managers would be able to devote sufficient attention to the management of the Fund and that Innovator and Milliman seek to manage such competing interests for the time and attention of the portfolio managers.

With respect to securities transactions for the Fund, Milliman determines which broker to use to execute each transaction, consistent with its duty to seek best execution of the transaction. For buy or sell transactions considered simultaneously for the Fund and other accounts, orders are placed at the same time. Milliman uses its best efforts to ensure that no client is treated unfairly in relation to any other client over time in the allocation of securities or the order of the execution of transactions. Milliman generally allocates trades on the basis of assets under management so that the securities positions represent equal exposure as a percentage of total assets of each client. The Fund and client accounts are not generally invested in thinly traded or illiquid securities; therefore, conflicts in fulfilling investment opportunities are to some extent minimized. If an aggregated trade order is not substantially filled, it will generally be allocated pro rata.

Other Accounts. The portfolio managers manage the investment vehicles with the number of accounts and assets, as of October 31, 2023, set forth in the table below. None of the accounts managed by the portfolio managers pay an advisory fee that is based upon the performance of the account.

	<b>Registered Investment Companies</b> # of Accounts (\$ Assets)	<b>Other Pooled Investment Vehicles</b> # of Accounts (\$ Assets)	<b>Other Accounts</b> # of Accounts (\$ Assets)
Robert T. Cummings	178 (\$14 billion)	0 (\$0)	0 (\$0)
Yin Bhuyan	95 (\$14 billion)	0 (\$0)	0 (\$0)

### ***Distributor***

Forside Fund Services, LLC, located at Three Canal Plaza, Suite 100, Portland, ME 04101, serves as the principal underwriter of the Shares pursuant to a distribution agreement (the “*Distribution Agreement*”). The Distributor continually distributes Shares on a best effort basis. The Distributor has no obligation to sell any specific quantity of Shares. The Distribution Agreement is renewable annually. Shares are continuously offered for sale by the Fund through the Distributor only in Creation Units, as described in the Fund’s Prospectus and this SAI. Shares amounting to less than a Creation Unit are not distributed by the Distributor. The Distributor is a broker-dealer registered under the 1934 Act and a member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. (“*FINRA*”). The Distributor, its affiliates and officers have no role in determining the investment policies or which securities are to be purchased or sold by the Fund. The Distributor is not affiliated with the Trust, the Adviser, the Sub-Adviser, or any stock exchange.

The Distribution Agreement for the Fund provides that it may be terminated at any time, without the payment of any penalty, on at least 60 days' prior written notice to the other party (i) by vote of a majority of the Independent Trustees or (ii) by vote of a majority of the outstanding voting securities (as defined in the 1940 Act) of the Fund. The Distribution Agreement will terminate automatically in the event of its "assignment," as that term is defined in the 1940 Act.

### Codes of Ethics

In order to mitigate the possibility that the Fund will be adversely affected by personal trading, the Trust, Innovator and Milliman have adopted Codes of Ethics under Rule 17j-1 of the 1940 Act. These Codes of Ethics contain policies restricting securities trading in personal accounts access persons, Trustees and others who normally come into possession of information on portfolio transactions. Personnel subject to the Codes of Ethics may invest in securities that may be purchased or held by the Fund; however, the Codes of Ethics require that each transaction in such securities be reviewed by the Compliance Department. These Codes of Ethics are on public file with, and are available from, the SEC.

The Distributor relies on the principal underwriter's exception under Rule 17j-1(c)(3). Foreside Financial Group, LLC, on behalf of Foreside Fund Officer Services, LLC, has adopted a code of ethics pursuant to Rule 17j-1 of the 1940 Act. These codes of ethics permit, subject to certain conditions, personnel of each of those entities to invest in securities that may be purchased or held by the Fund.

### ***Fund Administrator***

General Information. The Administrator and Fund Accountant for the Fund is U.S. Bancorp Fund Services, LLC ("*USBFS*" or the "*Administrator*"), which has its principal office at 615 East Michigan Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202 and is primarily in the business of providing administrative, fund accounting and stock transfer services to retail and institutional mutual funds. The Administrator performs these services pursuant to two separate agreements, the Fund Administration Servicing Agreement and the Fund Accounting Servicing Agreement.

Administration Agreement. Pursuant to the Fund Administration Servicing Agreement (the "*Administration Agreement*") with the Fund, the Administrator provides all administrative services necessary for the Fund, other than those provided by Innovator, subject to the supervision of the Board of Trustees. Employees of the Administrator generally will not be officers of the Fund for which they provide services.

The Administration Agreement is terminable by the Board or the Administrator on ninety (90) days' written notice and may be assigned provided the non-assigning party provides prior written consent. The Administration Agreement shall remain in effect for three years from the date of its initial approval, unless amended, and its renewal is subject to approval of the Board for periods thereafter. The Administration Agreement provides that in the absence of the Administrator's refusal or willful failure to comply with the Agreement or bad faith, negligence or willful misconduct on the part of the Administrator, the Administrator shall not be liable for any action or failure to act in accordance with its duties thereunder.

Under the Administration Agreement, the Administrator provides all administrative services, including, without limitation: (i) providing services of persons competent to perform such administrative and clerical functions as are necessary to provide effective administration of the

Fund; (ii) overseeing the performance of administrative and professional services to the Fund by others, including the Custodian (as defined below); (iii) preparing, but not paying for, the periodic updating of the Fund's Registration Statement, Prospectus and Statement of Additional Information in conjunction with Fund counsel, including the printing of such documents for the purpose of filings with the SEC and state securities administrators, preparing the Fund's tax returns, and preparing reports to the Fund's shareholders and the SEC; (iv) calculation of yield and total return for the Fund; (v) monitoring and evaluating daily income and expense accruals, and sales and redemptions of Shares of the Fund; (vi) preparing in conjunction with Fund counsel, but not paying for, all filings under the securities or "Blue Sky" laws of such states or countries as are designated by the Distributor, which may be required to register or qualify, or continue the registration or qualification, of the Fund and/or its Shares under such laws; (vii) preparing notices and agendas for meetings of the Board and minutes of such meetings in all matters required by the 1940 Act to be acted upon by the Board; and (viii) monitoring periodic compliance with respect to all requirements and restrictions of the 1940 Act, the Internal Revenue Code and the Prospectus.

*Accounting Agreement.* The Administrator, pursuant to the Fund Accounting Servicing Agreement (the "Accounting Agreement"), also provides the Fund with accounting services, including, without limitation: (i) daily computation of NAV; (ii) maintenance of security ledgers and books and records as required by the 1940 Act; (iii) production of the Fund's listing of portfolio securities and general ledger reports; (iv) reconciliation of accounting records; and (v) maintaining certain books and records described in Rule 31a-1 under the 1940 Act, and reconciling account information and balances among the Custodian and Adviser.

For the administrative and fund accounting services rendered to the Fund by the Administrator, the Administrator is paid an asset-based fee plus certain out-of-pocket expenses. Pursuant to the terms of the Investment Management Agreement, Innovator is responsible for paying for the services provided by the Administrator. The Fund does not directly pay the Administrator.

#### ***Custodian, Transfer Agent and Dividend Agent***

U.S. Bank, N.A., Custody Operations, 1555 N. River Center Drive, Suite 302, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212 (the "Custodian"), serves as custodian for the Fund's cash and securities. Pursuant to a Custodian Servicing Agreement with the Fund, it is responsible for maintaining the books and records of the Fund's portfolio securities and cash. The Custodian receives a minimum annual fee of \$1,000. The Custodian is also entitled to certain out-of-pocket expenses and portfolio transaction fees. The Custodian does not assist in, and is not responsible for, investment decisions involving assets of the Fund. USBFS, the Administrator, also acts as the Fund's transfer and dividend agent.

#### ***Legal Counsel***

Chapman and Cutler LLP, 320 South Canal Street, Chicago, Illinois 60606 serves as the Trust's legal counsel.

#### ***Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm***

Cohen & Company, Ltd., located at 342 North Water Street, Suite 830, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202, has been selected as the independent registered public accounting firm for the Trust. As such, they are responsible for auditing the Trust's annual financial statements.

## ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS TO FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Innovator from time to time makes payments, out of its own resources, to certain financial intermediaries that sell shares of Innovator ETFs (“*Innovator Funds*”) to promote the sales and retention of Fund shares by those firms and their customers. The amounts of these payments vary by intermediary. The level of payments that Innovator is willing to provide to a particular intermediary may be affected by, among other factors: (i) the firm’s total assets or Fund shares held in and recent net investments into Innovator Funds; (ii) the value of the assets invested in the Innovator Funds by the intermediary’s customers; (iii) its ability to attract and retain assets; (iv) the intermediary’s reputation in the industry; (v) the level and/or type of marketing assistance and educational activities provided by the intermediary; (vi) the firm’s level of participation in Innovator Funds’ sales and marketing programs; (vii) the firm’s compensation program for its registered representatives who sell Fund shares and provide services to Fund shareholders; and (viii) the asset class of the Innovator Funds for which these payments are provided. Such payments are generally asset-based but may also include the payment of a lump sum. Innovator makes payments, out of its own assets, to those firms as compensation and/or reimbursement for marketing support, services and access for technology platforms, and/or program servicing.

The amounts of payments referenced above made by Innovator could be significant by comparison and could create an incentive for an intermediary or its representatives to recommend or offer shares of the Innovator Funds to its customers. The intermediary may elevate the prominence or profile of the Innovator Funds within the intermediary’s organization by, for example, placing the Innovator Funds on a list of preferred or recommended funds and/or granting Innovator preferential or enhanced opportunities to promote the Innovator Funds in various ways within the intermediary’s organization. These payments are made pursuant to negotiated agreements with intermediaries. The payments do not change the price paid by investors for the purchase of a share or the amount the Fund will receive as proceeds from such sales. Furthermore, many of these payments are not reflected in the fees and expenses listed in the fee table section of the Fund’s Prospectus because they are not paid by the Fund. The types of payments described herein are not mutually exclusive, and a single intermediary may receive some or all types of payments as described.

Other compensation may be offered to the extent not prohibited by state laws or any self-regulatory agency, such as FINRA. Investors can ask their intermediaries for information about any payments they receive from Innovator and the services it provides for those payments. Investors may wish to take intermediary payment arrangements into account when considering and evaluating any recommendations relating to Fund shares.

Payments to intermediaries, in certain circumstances, may also be made in connection with the distribution of model portfolios developed by Innovator, such as the inclusion of such model portfolios on an intermediary’s platform, as well as in connection with the marketing and sale of, and/or product training regarding such model portfolios, or servicing of accounts tracking such model portfolios. Such payments may be variable or fixed fee payments for platform support, or other payments in the form of a variable or fixed fee or a per position fee, or may relate to the amount of assets an intermediary’s clients have invested in Innovator Funds in such models developed by Innovator, the management fee, the total expense ratio, or sales of the Innovator



Funds in such models developed by Innovator. Some intermediaries also provide related data regarding transactions in specific model portfolios, Innovator Funds and investment strategies to Innovator in exchange for a fee.

Innovator and/or its affiliates may enter into arrangements with third parties, such as a software provider, whereby Innovator may license certain technology or other services from such entity in exchange for licensing or other fees which may be, in whole or in part, dependent on the value of Innovator ETFs held through such software or other service. Such third party may also offer price concessions to broker dealers, investment advisers or other financial intermediaries that license technology or other services that may be dependent, in whole or in part, on the value of Innovator ETFs held through such software or other service.

## **TRADING AND BROKERAGE**

An investment adviser has a fiduciary duty to engage in brokerage practices that are in the best interests of its clients and to place the interests of its clients above all other interests in the broker selection process. Innovator is responsible for the management of the Fund and has delegated trade execution responsibilities to Milliman.

Accordingly, Milliman has an obligation to seek to obtain the “best execution” for the Fund’s transactions. “Best execution” is defined as the most favorable execution possible, considering such factors as the broker’s services, research provided, commissions charged, volume discounts offered, execution capability, reliability and responsiveness of the broker-dealer. Milliman may test the execution quality of the broker-dealer to which Milliman submitted the trade. This may include comparing a sample of executed equity trades and the prices that were in the market at the time of the trade (e.g., by comparing it to a third-party pricing source).

In selecting a broker for each specific transaction, Milliman uses its best judgment to choose the broker most capable of providing the brokerage services necessary to obtain “best execution.” The full range and quality of brokerage services available will be considered in making these determinations. Such services may consist of the following: (i) trading capabilities, including execution speed and ability to provide liquidity; (ii) commissions and/or fees both in aggregate and on a per share basis; (iii) capital strength and stability; (iv) settlement processing; (v) use of technology and other special services; (vi) responsiveness, reliability, and integrity; and, if applicable, (vii) the nature and value of research provided.

Milliman will consider total transaction costs when selecting brokers for trade execution. Total transaction costs include: (i) market impact cost; (ii) lost opportunity to trade cost; (iii) time-to-market cost; (iv) commissions on agency trades or the spreads on principle trades; and (v) bid-ask spread.

As a matter of policy, Milliman has indicated to the Board that it does not intend to maintain any soft dollar arrangements. Milliman may receive research on the economy, derivative instruments, flows and conditions from many broker-dealers. This information is commonly distributed by many broker-dealers to many market participants, is not associated with particular transactions, and does

not obligate Milliman to trade with any particular broker-dealer. As these items are made readily available by many broker-dealers to many market participants and they do not affect Milliman's selection of a particular broker-dealer for a specific transaction, Milliman does not believe that it has conflicts of interest related to soft dollars in the case of OTC or exchange-traded futures transactions.

## CAPITAL STRUCTURE

The Fund has been established as a series of the Trust. The Trust currently has authorized and allocated to the Fund an unlimited number of Shares of beneficial interest with no par value. The Trustees may, at any time and from time to time, by resolution, authorize the establishment and division of additional shares of the Trust into an unlimited number of series and the division of any series (including the Fund) into two or more classes. When issued in accordance with the Trust's registration statement, governing instruments and applicable law (all as may be amended from time to time), all of the Trust's shares are fully paid and non-assessable. Shares do not have preemptive rights.

All Shares of the Fund represent an undivided proportionate interest in the assets of the Fund. Shareholders of the Trust are entitled to one vote for each full Share and to a proportionate fractional vote for each fractional Share standing in the shareholder's name on the books of the Trust. However, matters affecting only one particular fund or class can be voted on only by shareholders in such fund or class. The shares of the Trust are not entitled to cumulative voting, meaning that holders of more than 50% of the Trust's shares may elect the entire Board. All shareholders are entitled to receive dividend and/or capital gains when and as declared by the Trustees from time to time and as discussed in the Prospectus.

Book Entry Only System. The following information supplements and should be read in conjunction with the section of the Prospectus entitled "Book Entry."

DTC Acts as Securities Depository for Fund Shares. Shares of the Fund are represented by securities registered in the name of The Depository Trust Company ("DTC") or its nominee and deposited with, or on behalf of, DTC. DTC, a limited-purpose trust company, was created in 1973 to enable electronic movement of securities between its participants ("DTC Participants"), and National Securities Clearing Corporation ("NSCC") was established in 1976 to provide a single settlement system for securities clearing and to serve as central counterparty for securities trades among DTC Participants. In 1999, DTC and NSCC were consolidated within The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation ("DTCC") and became wholly-owned subsidiaries of DTCC. The common stock of DTCC is owned by the DTC Participants, but the New York Stock Exchange ("NYSE") and FINRA, through subsidiaries, hold preferred shares in DTCC that provide them with the right to elect one member each to the DTCC board of directors. Access to the DTC system is available to entities, such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies, that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a DTC Participant, either directly or indirectly ("*Indirect Participants*").

Beneficial ownership of Shares is limited to DTC Participants, Indirect Participants and persons holding interests through DTC Participants and Indirect Participants. Ownership of beneficial interests in Shares (owners of such beneficial interests are referred to herein as



“Beneficial Owners”) is shown on, and the transfer of ownership is effected only through, records maintained by DTC (with respect to DTC Participants) and on the records of DTC Participants (with respect to Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners that are not DTC Participants). Beneficial Owners will receive from or through the DTC Participant a written confirmation relating to their purchase and sale of Shares.

Conveyance of all notices, statements and other communications to Beneficial Owners is effected as follows. Pursuant to an agreement between the Trust and DTC, DTC is required to make available to the Trust upon request and for a fee to be charged to the Trust a listing of the Shares of the Fund held by each DTC Participant. The Trust shall inquire of each such DTC Participant as to the number of Beneficial Owners holding Shares, directly or indirectly, through such DTC Participant. The Trust shall provide each such DTC Participant with copies of such notice, statement or other communication, in such form, number and at such place as such DTC Participant may reasonably request, in order that such notice, statement or communication may be transmitted by such DTC Participant, directly or indirectly, to such Beneficial Owners. In addition, the Trust shall pay to each such DTC Participant a fair and reasonable amount as reimbursement for the expenses attendant to such transmittal, all subject to applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

Fund distributions shall be made to DTC or its nominee, Cede & Co., as the registered holder of all Shares of the Trust. DTC or its nominee, upon receipt of any such distributions, shall credit immediately DTC Participants’ accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in Shares of the Fund as shown on the records of DTC or its nominee. Payments by DTC Participants to Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners of Shares held through such DTC Participants will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in a “street name,” and will be the responsibility of such DTC Participants.

The Trust has no responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to or notices to Beneficial Owners, or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in such Shares, or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to such beneficial ownership interests, or for any other aspect of the relationship between DTC and the DTC Participants or the relationship between such DTC Participants and the Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners owning through such DTC Participants. DTC may decide to discontinue providing its service with respect to Shares of the Trust at any time by giving reasonable notice to the Trust and discharging its responsibilities with respect thereto under applicable law. Under such circumstances, the Trust shall take action to find a replacement for DTC to perform its functions at a comparable cost.

## **CREATION AND REDEMPTION OF CREATION UNITS**

*General.* ETFs, such as the Fund, do not sell or redeem individual shares, but rather generally issue and redeem their shares in primary market transactions through a creation and redemption mechanism. Financial entities known as “Authorized Participants” (as defined below) have contractual arrangements with an ETF or one of the ETF’s service providers purchase and redeem an ETF’s shares directly with the ETF in large blocks of shares known as “Creation Units.” Prior to start of trading on every business day, an ETF publishes through the National Securities Clearing Corporation (“NSCC”) the “basket” of securities, cash or other assets that it will accept in exchange for a Creation Unit of the ETF’s shares. An authorized participant that wishes to effectuate a

creation of an ETF's shares deposits with the ETF a "basket" of securities, cash or other assets identified by the ETF that day, and then receives the Creation Unit of the ETF's shares in return for those assets. After purchasing a Creation Unit, the authorized participant may continue to hold an ETF's shares or sell them in the secondary market. The redemption process is the reverse of the purchase process: the authorized participant redeems a Creation Unit of an ETF's shares for a basket of securities and other assets. The combination of the creation and redemption process with secondary market trading in Fund shares and underlying securities provides arbitrage opportunities that are designed to help keep the market price of the ETF's shares at or close to the NAV per share of such ETF.

Authorized Participants. An "Authorized Participant" is a member or participant of a clearing agency registered with the SEC that has a written agreement with the Fund or one of the Fund's service providers that allows the Authorized Participant to place orders for the purchase or redemption of Creation Units (a "*Participant Agreement*"). Orders to purchase Creation Units must be delivered through an Authorized Participant that has executed a Participant Agreement and must comply with the applicable provisions of such Participant Agreement. Investors wishing to purchase or sell shares generally do so on an exchange. Institutional investors other than Authorized Participants are responsible for making arrangements for a redemption request to be made through an Authorized Participant.

Business Day. A "Business Day" is generally any day on which the New York Stock Exchange ("*NYSE*"), the Exchange and the Trust are open for business. As of the date of this SAI, the NYSE observes the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. The "*Transmittal Date*" is any Business Day on which an order to purchase or redeem Creation Units is received in proper form.

Basket Composition and Custom Baskets. Rule 6c-11(c)(3) under of the 1940 Act requires an ETF relying on the exemptions offered by Rule 6c-11 to adopt and implement written policies and procedures governing the construction of baskets and the process that the ETF will use for the acceptance of baskets. In general, in connection with the construction and acceptance of baskets, the Adviser may consider various factors, including, but not limited to: (1) whether the securities, assets and other positions comprising a basket are consistent with the ETF's investment objective(s), policies and disclosure; (2) whether the securities, assets and other positions can legally and readily be acquired, transferred and held by the ETF and/or Authorized Participant(s), as applicable; (3) whether to utilize cash, either in lieu of securities or other instruments or as a cash balancing amount; and (4) in the case of an ETF that tracks an index, whether the securities, assets and other positions aid index tracking. The Fund currently intends to effect creations and redemptions only to and from broker-dealers and large institutional investors that have entered into participation agreements, as described further below. The Fund may effect creations and redemptions for in-kind securities or for cash, rather than in-kind securities. Creation Units are sold at their NAV plus a transaction fee.

The Fund may utilize a "pro-rata basket" or a "custom basket" in reliance on Rule 6c-11. A pro-rata basket is a basket that is a pro rata representation of the ETF's portfolio holdings. When utilizing a pro-rata basket, minor deviations may occur when it is not operationally feasible to include a particular instrument within the basket, except to the extent that the Fund utilized different

baskets in transactions on the same Business Day. Rule 6c-11 defines “custom baskets” to include two categories of baskets. First, a basket containing a non-representative selection of the ETF’s portfolio holdings would constitute a custom basket. These types of custom baskets include, but are not limited to, baskets that do not reflect: (i) a pro rata representation of the ETF’s portfolio holdings; (ii) a representative sampling of an ETF’s portfolio holdings; or (iii) changes due to a rebalancing or reconstitution of an ETF’s securities market index, if applicable. Second, if different baskets are used in transactions on the same Business Day, each basket after the initial basket would constitute a custom basket. For example, if an ETF exchanges a basket with either the same or another Authorized Participant that reflects a representative sampling that differs from the initial basket, that basket (and any such subsequent baskets) would be a custom basket. Similarly, if an ETF substitutes cash in lieu of a portion of basket assets for a single Authorized Participant, that basket would be a custom basket. The Adviser’s Rule 6c-11 Committee defines any deviation from a pro-rata basket to be a “custom basket.”

An ETF and its shareholders may benefit from the flexibility afforded by custom baskets under a variety of circumstances. Generally, the usage of custom baskets may reduce costs, improve trading and increase efficiency. ETFs may be able to avoid transaction costs and adverse tax consequences when utilizing custom baskets because it provides a way for the ETF to add, remove, and re-weight portfolio securities without transacting in the market. Rule 6c-11 provides an ETF with flexibility to use “custom baskets” if the ETF has adopted written policies and procedures that: (1) set forth detailed parameters for the construction and acceptance of custom baskets that are in the best interests of the ETF and its shareholders, including the process for any revisions to, or deviations from, those parameters; and (2) specify the titles or roles of employees of the ETF’s investment advisor who are required to review each custom basket for compliance with those parameters.

Historically, the use of baskets that do not correspond pro-rata to an ETF’s portfolio holdings created concern that the Authorized Participant could take advantage of its relationship with an ETF and pressure an ETF to construct a basket that favors the Authorized Participant to the detriment of such ETF’s shareholders. For example, because ETFs rely on Authorized Participants to maintain the secondary market by promoting an effective arbitrage mechanism, an Authorized Participant holding less liquid or less desirable securities potentially could pressure an ETF into accepting those securities in its basket in exchange for liquid ETF shares (*i.e.*, dumping). An Authorized Participant also could pressure the ETF into including in its basket certain desirable securities in exchange for ETF shares tendered for redemption (*i.e.*, cherry-picking). In either case, the ETF’s other investors would be disadvantaged and would be left holding shares of an ETF with a less liquid or less desirable portfolio of securities. In accordance with Rule 6c-11, the Adviser has adopted policies and procedures designed to mitigate concerns that an Authorized Participant could unduly influence the Fund to construct a basket that favors an Authorized Participant to the detriment of the Fund’s shareholders, but there is no guarantee that these policies and procedures will be effective.

*Basket Dissemination.* Basket files are published for consumption through the NSCC, a subsidiary of Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation, and can be utilized for pricing, creations, redemptions, rebalancing and custom scenarios. In most instances, pro-rata baskets are calculated and supplied by the ETF’s custodial bank based on ETF holdings, whereas non-pro rata, custom and forward-looking pro-rata baskets are calculated by the fund’s investment adviser and disseminated by the ETF’s custodial bank through the NSCC process.

Placement of Creation or Redemption Orders. All orders to purchase or redeem Creation Units are to be governed according to the applicable Participant Agreement that each Authorized Participant has executed. Except as set forth below, all orders to purchase or redeem Creation Units must be received by the transfer agent in the proper form required by the Participant Agreement no later than the closing time of the regular trading session of the NYSE (ordinarily 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time) on each day the NYSE is open for business (the “Closing Time”) in order for the purchase or redemption of Creation Units to be effected based on the NAV of shares of the Fund as next determined on such date after receipt of the order in proper form. In the case of a redemption order, such order must also be accompanied or followed by the requisite number of shares of the Fund specified in such order, which delivery must be made through DTC to the transfer agent. All shares of the Funds, however created, will be entered on the records of DTC in the name of Cede & Co. for the account of a DTC Participant.

At its discretion, the Fund may require an Authorized Participant to submit orders to purchase or redeem Creation Units earlier in the day. The Fund, or the Distributor on behalf of the Fund, will provide Authorized Participants with prior notice of any such deadline. Purchase or redemption orders of Creation Units received by the transfer agent after the applicable deadline will not be accepted by the Fund.

The delivery of Creation Units properly created will occur no later than the second Business Day following the day on which the purchase order is deemed received (“T+2”). The requisite Cash Redemption Amount (as defined below) for an order properly submitted to redeem Creation Units will ordinarily be transferred no later than T+2.

Purchase and Issuance of Creation Units. The consideration for the purchase of a Creation Unit of shares of the Fund may consist of the in-kind deposit of a designated portfolio of securities and other instruments (the “Deposit Instruments”) and an amount of cash computed as described below (the “Cash Component”). Together, the Deposit Instruments (and/or any cash with respect to cash purchases and cash-in-lieu amounts) and the Cash Component constitute the “Fund Deposit,” which represents the minimum initial and subsequent investment amount for a Creation Unit of the Fund.

The Cash Component is sometimes also referred to as the Balancing Amount. The Cash Component serves the function of compensating for any differences between the NAV per Creation Unit and the “Deposit Amount” (an amount equal to the aggregate market value of the Deposit Instruments and/or cash in lieu of all or a portion of the Deposit Instruments). The Cash Component is an amount equal to the difference between the NAV of the Fund’s shares (per Creation Unit) and the Deposit Amount. If the Cash Component is a positive number (*i.e.*, the NAV per Creation Unit exceeds the Deposit Amount), the creator will deliver the Cash Component. If the Cash Component is a negative number (*i.e.*, the NAV per Creation Unit is less than the Deposit Amount), the creator will receive the Cash Component.

A Creation Unit will generally not be issued until the transfer of good title to the Fund of the Deposit Instruments and the payment of the Cash Component, the “Creation Transaction Fee” (as defined below) and any other required cash amounts have been completed. To the extent contemplated by the applicable Participant Agreement, Creation Units of the Fund will be issued to such Authorized Participant notwithstanding the fact that the corresponding Fund Deposits have

not been received in part or in whole, in reliance on the undertaking of the Authorized Participant to deliver the missing Deposit Instruments as soon as possible, which undertaking shall be secured by such Authorized Participant's delivery and maintenance of collateral consisting of cash in the form of U.S. dollars in immediately available funds having a value (marked to market daily) at least equal to 105% which Innovator may change from time to time of the value of the missing Deposit Instruments. Such cash collateral must be delivered no later than 2:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on the contractual settlement date. The Participant Agreement will permit the Fund to use such collateral to buy the missing Deposit Instruments at any time and will subject the Authorized Participant to liability for any shortfall between the cost to the Fund of purchasing such securities and the value of the collateral.

*Redemption of Fund Shares in Creation Units.* Beneficial Owners of shares of the Fund may sell their shares in the secondary market, but must accumulate enough shares to constitute a Creation Unit to redeem through the Fund. The Fund will not redeem shares in amounts less than Creation Units and there can be no assurance that there will be sufficient liquidity in the public trading market at any time to permit assembly of a Creation Unit. Investors should expect to incur customary brokerage and other costs in connection with assembling a sufficient number of the Fund's shares to constitute a redeemable Creation Unit. Redemption requests must be placed by or through an Authorized Participant. Creation Units will be redeemable at their NAV per Creation Unit next determined after receipt of a request for redemption by the Fund. To the extent contemplated by a Participant Agreement, in the event the Authorized Participant has submitted a redemption request in proper form but is unable to transfer all or part of the Creation Unit to be redeemed to the Fund's transfer agent, the transfer agent will nonetheless accept the redemption request in reliance on the undertaking by the Authorized Participant to deliver the missing shares as soon as possible. Such undertaking shall be secured by the Authorized Participant's delivery and maintenance of collateral consisting of cash having a value (marked to market daily) at least equal to 105%, which Innovator may change from time to time, of the value of the missing shares.

*Delivery of Redemption Proceeds.* Deliveries of securities to Authorized Participants in connection with redemption orders are generally expected to be made within two Business Days. Due to the schedule of holidays in certain countries, however, the delivery of in-kind redemption proceeds for the Fund may take longer than two Business Days after the day on which the redemption request is received in proper form. Section 22(e) of the 1940 Act generally prohibits a registered open-end management investment company from postponing the date of satisfaction of redemption requests for more than seven days after the tender of a security for redemption. This prohibition can cause operational difficulties for ETFs that hold foreign investments and exchange in-kind baskets for Creation Units. For example, local market delivery cycles for transferring foreign investments to redeeming investors, together with local market holiday schedules, can sometimes require a delivery process in excess of seven days. Rule 6c-11 grants relief from Section 22(e) to permit an ETF to delay satisfaction of a redemption request for more than seven days if a local market holiday, or series of consecutive holidays, or the extended delivery cycles for transferring foreign investments to redeeming Authorized Participants, or the combination thereof prevents timely delivery of the foreign investment included in the ETF's basket. Under this exemption, an ETF must deliver foreign investments as soon as practicable, but in no event later than 15 days after the



tender to the ETF. The exemption therefore will permit a delay only to the extent that additional time for settlement is actually required, when a local market holiday, or series of consecutive holidays, or the extended delivery cycles for transferring foreign investments to redeeming authorized participants prevents timely delivery of the foreign investment included in the ETF's basket. If a foreign investment settles in less than 15 days, Rule 6c-11 requires an ETF to deliver it pursuant to the standard settlement time of the local market where the investment trades. Rule 6c-11 defines "foreign investment" as any security, asset or other position of the ETF issued by a foreign issuer (as defined by Rule 3b-4 under the 1934 Act), and that is traded on a trading market outside of the United States. This definition is not limited to "foreign securities," but also includes other investments that may not be considered securities. Although these other investments may not be securities, they may present the same challenges for timely settlement as foreign securities if they are transferred in kind.

The redemption proceeds for a Creation Unit generally consist of the Deposit Instruments – as announced on the Business Day of the request for redemption received in proper form – plus or minus cash in an amount equal to the difference between the net asset value of the Fund's shares (per Creation Unit) being redeemed, as next determined after a receipt of a request in proper form, and the aggregate market value of the Deposit Instruments (the "*Cash Redemption Amount*"), less the applicable Redemption Transaction Fee as described below and, if applicable, any operational processing and brokerage costs, transfer fees or stamp taxes. In the event that the Deposit Instruments have an aggregate market value greater than the net asset value of the Fund's shares (per Creation Unit), a compensating cash payment equal to the difference plus the applicable Redemption Transaction Fee and, if applicable, any operational processing and brokerage costs, transfer fees or stamp taxes, is required to be made by or through an Authorized Participant by the redeeming shareholder.

*Creation Transaction Fees.* The Fund imposes fees in connection with the purchase of Creation Units. The Fund, or the Distributor on behalf of the Fund, will provide Authorized Participants with prior notice of such Fees. The Fund may adjust the fee from time to time based upon actual experience. The price for each Creation Unit will equal the daily NAV per share of the Fund times the number of shares in a Creation Unit, plus the fees described above and, if applicable, any operational processing and brokerage costs, transfer fees, stamp taxes and part or all of the spread between the expected bid and offer side of the market related to the securities comprising the creation basket. Shares of the Fund may be issued in advance of receipt of all Deposit Instruments subject to various conditions including a requirement to maintain on deposit with the Fund cash at least equal to a percentage specified by the Fund multiplied by the market value of the missing Deposit Instruments.

*Redemption Transaction Fees.* The Fund imposes fees in connection with the redemption of Creation Units. The Fund, or the Distributor on behalf of the Fund, will provide the Authorized Participants with prior notice of any such fees. The Fund may adjust the fee from time to time based upon actual experience. The price received for each Creation Unit will equal the daily NAV per share of the Fund times the number of shares in a Creation Unit, minus the fees described above and, if applicable, any operational processing and brokerage costs, transfer fees, stamp taxes and part or all of the spread between the expected bid and offer side of the market related to the

securities comprising the redemption basket. Investors who use the services of a broker or other such intermediary in addition to an Authorized Participant to effect a redemption of a Creation Unit may also be assessed an amount to cover the cost of such services. The redemption fee charged by the Fund will comply with Rule 22c-2 of the 1940 Act which limits redemption fees to no more than 2% of the value of the shares redeemed.

*Suspension of Creations.* The SEC has stated its position that an ETF generally may suspend the issuance of Creation Units only for a limited time and only due to extraordinary circumstances, such as when the markets on which the ETF's portfolio holdings are traded are closed for a limited period of time. The SEC has also stated that an ETF cannot set transaction fees so high as to effectively suspend the issuance of Creation Units. The Fund reserves the right, for any legally permissible reason, to reject a creation order transmitted to it if: (i) the order is not in proper form; (ii) the purchaser or group of related purchasers, upon obtaining the Creation Units of Fund shares ordered, would own 80% or more of the currently outstanding shares of the Fund; (iii) the required consideration is not delivered; (iv) the acceptance of the Fund Deposit would, in the opinion of the Fund, be unlawful; or (v) there exist circumstances outside the control of the Fund that make it impossible to process purchases of Creation Units for all practical purposes. Examples of such circumstances include: acts of God or public service or utility problems such as fires, floods, extreme weather conditions and power outages resulting in telephone, telecopy and computer failures; market conditions or activities causing trading halts; systems failures involving computer or other information systems affecting the Fund, Innovator, the Distributor, DTC, NSCC, the transfer agent, the custodian, any sub-custodian or any other participant in the purchase process; and similar extraordinary events. The transfer agent shall notify a prospective creator of a Creation Unit and/or the Authorized Participant acting on behalf of such prospective creator of the rejection of the order of such person. The Trust, the Fund, the transfer agent, the custodian, any sub-custodian and the Distributor are under no duty, however, to give notification of any defects or irregularities in the delivery of Fund Deposits, nor shall any of them incur any liability for the failure to give any such notification.

*Suspension of Redemptions.* An ETF may suspend the redemption of Creation Units only in accordance with Section 22(e) of the 1940 Act. Section 22(e) stipulates that no registered investment company shall suspend the right of redemption, or postpone the date of payment or satisfaction upon redemption of any redeemable security in accordance with its terms for more than seven days after the tender of such security to the company or its agent designated for that purpose for redemption, except (1) for any period (A) during which the NYSE is closed other than customary week-end and holiday closings or (B) during which trading on the NYSE is restricted; (2) for any period during which an emergency exists as a result of which (A) disposal by the investment company of securities owned by it is not reasonably practicable or (B) it is not reasonably practicable for such company fairly to determine the value of its net assets; or (3) for such other periods as the SEC may by order permit for the protection of security holders of the investment company.

*Exceptions to Use of Creation Units.* Pursuant to Rule 6c-11, ETFs are permitted to sell or redeem individual shares on the day of consummation of a reorganization, merger, conversion or liquidation. Under these limited circumstances, an ETF may need to issue or redeem individual shares and may need to transact without utilizing Authorized Participants.



## DETERMINING OFFERING PRICE AND NET ASSET VALUE

The NAV of the Fund will be determined as of the close of regular trading on the NYSE (normally 4:00 p.m. E.T.) on the days specified in the Fund's prospectus or as otherwise determined by resolution adopted by the Board (each, a "valuation day"). If the NYSE closes early on a valuation day, the Fund shall determine its NAV as of that time. Portfolio securities generally shall be valued utilizing prices provided by independent pricing services. The Board has authorized the Fund and USBFS, the Fund's accounting agent (the "Fund Accounting Agent"), to use prices provided by certain pricing service vendors (each, a "Pricing Service"). The securities held by the Fund are valued in accordance with the policies and procedures established by Innovator as the "Valuation Designee" pursuant to Rule 2a-5 under the 1940 Act and approved by and subject to the oversight of the Board of Trustees (the "Valuation Procedures"). If market quotations are not readily available or are not reliable, the securities or other assets of the Fund will be valued at their fair value as determined in good faith by the Valuation Designee in accordance with the Valuation Procedures.

### Equity and Other Non-Fixed Income Securities and Other Assets

The following securities and other assets, for which accurate and reliable market quotations are readily available, will be valued by the Fund Accounting Agent as described:

- A. Common stocks, preferred stocks and other equity securities listed on any national or foreign exchange (excluding the NASDAQ National Market ("NASDAQ") and the London Stock Exchange Alternative Investment Market ("AIM")) will be valued at the last sale price on the exchange on which they are principally traded or, for NASDAQ and AIM securities, the official closing price. Securities traded on more than one securities exchange are valued at the last sale price or official closing price, as applicable, at the close of the exchange representing the principal market for such securities.
- B. Securities traded in the over-the-counter market are valued at the mean of the bid and the asked price, if available, and otherwise at their closing bid price.
- C. Exchange-traded options (other than FLEX Options) and futures contracts will be valued at the closing price in the market where such contracts are principally traded. If no closing price is available, they will be valued at their fair value as determined by the Valuation Designee in accordance with the Valuation Procedures.
- D. Forward foreign currency contracts are valued at the current day's interpolated foreign exchange rate, as calculated using the current day's spot rate, and the thirty, sixty, ninety, and one-hundred eighty day forward rates provided by a Pricing Service or by certain independent dealers in such contracts.
- E. Redeemable securities issued by open-end investment companies shall be valued at the investment company's applicable net asset value, with the exception of exchange-traded open-end investment companies which are priced as equity securities in accordance with the methods outlined in subsection A above.

- F. FLEX Options listed on an exchange (e.g., Cboe) will typically be valued at a model-based price provided by the exchange at the official close of that exchange's trading day. However, when the Fund's option has a same-day market trade price, this same-day market trade price will be used for FLEX Option values instead of the exchange's model-based price. If the exchange on which the option is traded is unable to provide a model price, model-based FLEX Options prices will additionally be provided by a backup third-party pricing provider. In selecting the model prices, the Sub-Adviser may provide a review of the calculation of model prices provided by each vendor, and may note to such vendors of any data errors observed, or where an underlying component value of the model pricing package may be missing or incorrect, prior to publication by the vendor of the model pricing to the Fund Accounting Agent for purposes of that day's NAV. If either pricing vendor is not available to provide a model price for that day, the value of a FLEX Option will be determined by Innovator as Valuation Designee in accordance with the Valuation Procedures. In instances where in the same trading day a particular FLEX Option is both represented in an all-cash basket (either a creation unit or redemption unit), as well as in an in-kind basket (either a creation unit or redemption unit), for valuation purposes that trading day the Fund will default to use the trade price for both instances, rather than using the model price otherwise available for the in-kind transaction.

The Fund Accounting Agent will obtain all market quotations used in valuing securities in accordance with subsection A and E above from a Pricing Service. If no quotation can be obtained from a Pricing Service, then the Fund Accounting Agent will contact Innovator. Innovator is responsible for establishing valuation of portfolio securities and other instruments held by a Fund in accordance with the Valuation Procedures. Innovator will then attempt to obtain one or more broker quotes for the security daily and will value the security accordingly.

If no quotation is available from either a Pricing Service, or one or more brokers, or if Innovator has reason to question the reliability or accuracy of a quotation supplied, Innovator must determine if a "fair value" of such portfolio security must be provided by Innovator pursuant to the Valuation Procedures.

#### Fixed Income Securities, Swaps and Other Instruments

Subject to the special pricing situations set forth below, the following securities will be valued by the Fund Accounting Agent as follows:

- A. Fixed income securities, swaps, currency-, credit- and commodity-linked notes, and other similar instruments will be valued using a Pricing Service.
- B. Fixed income securities having a remaining maturity of 60 days or less when purchased will be valued at cost adjusted for amortization of premiums and accretion of discounts, provided Innovator has determined that the use of amortized cost is an appropriate reflection of fair value given market and issuer specific conditions

existing at the time of the determination. Factors that may be considered in determining the appropriateness of the use of amortized cost include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. the credit conditions in the relevant market and changes thereto;
  - b. the liquidity conditions in the relevant market and changes thereto;
  - c. the interest rate conditions in the relevant market and changes thereto (such as significant changes in interest rates);
  - d. issuer-specific conditions (such as significant credit deterioration); and
  - e. any other market-based data Innovator considers relevant. In this regard, Innovator may use last-obtained market-based data to assist it when valuing portfolio securities using amortized cost.
- C. Repurchase agreements will be valued as follows: Overnight repurchase agreements will be valued at cost. Term repurchase agreements (*i.e.*, those whose maturity exceeds seven days) will be valued by Innovator at the average of the bid quotations obtained daily from at least two recognized dealers.

The Fund Accounting Agent will obtain all pricing data for use in valuing securities in accordance with subsections G through I, as applicable, above from a Pricing Service or, if no price is available from a Pricing Service, then the Fund Accounting Agent will contact Innovator, which will attempt to obtain one or more broker quotes from the selling dealer or financial institution for the security daily and will value the security accordingly. If Innovator has reason to question the accuracy or reliability of a price supplied or the use of the amortized cost methodology, Innovator must determine if a “fair value” of such portfolio security must be provided by Innovator pursuant to the Valuation Procedures. From time to time, Innovator will request that the Fund Accounting Agent submit price challenges to a Pricing Service, usually in response to any updated broker prices received.

#### *Special Pricing Situations*

If no quotation is available from either a Pricing Service or one or more brokers or if Innovator, as Valuation Designee, has reason to question the reliability or accuracy of a quotation supplied or the use of amortized cost, the value of any portfolio security held by a Fund for which reliable market quotations are not readily available will be determined by Innovator in accordance with the Valuation Procedures in a manner that most appropriately reflects fair market value of the security on the valuation date. The use of a fair valuation method may be appropriate if, for example: (i) market quotations do not accurately reflect fair value of an investment; (ii) an investment’s value has been materially affected by events occurring after the close of the exchange or market on which the investment is principally traded (for example, a foreign exchange or market); (iii) a trading halt closes an exchange or market early; or (iv) other events result in an exchange or market delaying its normal close.

Fair valuation of a fixed-income security will be based on the consideration of all available information, including, but not limited to, the following: (a) the fundamental business data relating to the issuer, or economic data relating to the country of issue; (b) an evaluation of the forces which influence the market in which these securities are purchased and sold; (c) the type, size and cost of the security; (d) the financial statements of the issuer, or the financial condition of the

country of issue; (e) the credit quality and cash flow of the issuer, or country of issue, based on the portfolio manager's or external analysis; (f) the information as to any transactions in or offers for the security; (g) the price and extent of public trading in similar securities (or equity securities) of the issuer/borrower, or comparable companies; (h) the coupon payments, yield data/cash flow data; (i) the quality, value and salability of collateral, if any, securing the security; (j) the business prospects of the issuer, including any ability to obtain money or resources from a parent or affiliate and an assessment of the issuer's management (for corporate debt only); (k) the economic, political and social prospects/developments of the country of issue and the assessment of the country's governmental leaders/officials (for sovereign debt only); (l) the prospects for the issuer's industry, and multiples (of earnings and/or cash flows) being paid for similar businesses in that industry (for corporate debt only); and (m) other relevant factors.

Fair valuation of an equity security will be based on the consideration of all available information, including, but not limited to, the following: (a) the type of security; (b) the size of the holding; (c) the initial cost of the security; (d) transactions in comparable securities; (e) price quotes from dealers and/or pricing services; (f) relationships among various securities; (g) information obtained by contacting the issuer, analysts, or the appropriate stock exchange; (h) an analysis of the issuer's financial statements; and (i) the existence of merger proposals or tender offers that might affect the value of the security.

If the equity security in question is a foreign security, the following additional information may be considered: (j) the country's or geographic region's political and economic environment; (k) the value of similar foreign securities traded on other foreign markets; (l) ADR and GDR trading of similar securities; (m) closed-end fund trading of similar securities; (n) foreign currency exchange activity; (o) the trading prices of financial products that are tied to baskets of foreign securities; (p) factors relating to the event that precipitated the pricing problem; (q) whether the event is likely to recur; and (r) whether the effects of the event are isolated or whether they affect entire markets, countries or regions.

In addition, if a "material market movement" occurs between the time a market on which a foreign security is traded closes and the time that the NAV of a Fund is determined, then the foreign security will be valued in accordance with Section VIII of the Valuation Procedures.

Restricted securities (with the exception of Rule 144A Securities for which market quotations are available) will normally be valued at fair value as determined by Innovator in accordance with the Valuation Procedures. The portfolio manager(s) will notify Innovator of the existence of a restricted security in a Fund's portfolio and will present to Innovator a recommendation as to the initial and continuing valuation of such security. Innovator will then determine the fair value of such restricted security.

#### *Foreign Market Closures*

On a day on which a foreign market is closed, but the U.S. markets are open, securities principally trading in those closed markets shall be fair valued. Innovator and the Fund Accounting Agent shall use ICE Data Services, or such other third-party fair valuation pricing vendor as Innovator and the Board may approve from time-to-time, to price the securities principally trading in those closed foreign markets.

## DISTRIBUTIONS AND TAXES

This section summarizes some of the main U.S. federal income tax consequences of owning Shares of the Fund. This section is current as of the date of the SAI. Tax laws and interpretations change frequently, and this summary does not describe all of the tax consequences to all taxpayers. For example, this summary generally does not describe your situation if you are a corporation, a non-U.S. person, a broker-dealer, or other investor with special circumstances. In addition, this section does not describe your state, local or foreign tax consequences.

This federal income tax summary is based in part on the advice of counsel to the Fund. The Internal Revenue Service could disagree with any conclusions set forth in this section. In addition, our counsel was not asked to review, and has not reached a conclusion with respect to the federal income tax treatment of the assets to be deposited in the Fund. This summary may not be sufficient for prospective investors to use for the purpose of avoiding penalties under federal tax law.

As with any investment, prospective investors should seek advice based on their individual circumstances from their own tax advisor.

The Fund intends to qualify annually and to elect to be treated as a regulated investment company under the Internal Revenue Code (the "*Code*").

To qualify for the favorable U.S. federal income tax treatment generally accorded to regulated investment companies, the Fund must, among other things, (a) derive in each taxable year at least 90% of its gross income from dividends, interest, payments with respect to securities loans and gains from the sale or other disposition of stock, securities or foreign currencies or other income derived with respect to its business of investing in such stock, securities or currencies, or net income derived from interests in certain publicly traded partnerships; (b) diversify its holdings so that, at the end of each quarter of the taxable year, (i) at least 50% of the market value of the Fund's assets is represented by cash and cash items (including receivables), U.S. government securities, the securities of other regulated investment companies and other securities, with such other securities of any one issuer generally limited for the purposes of this calculation to an amount not greater than 5% of the value of the Fund's total assets and not greater than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of such issuer, and (ii) not more than 25% of the value of its total assets is invested in the securities (other than U.S. government securities or the securities of other regulated investment companies) of any one issuer, or two or more issuers which the Fund controls which are engaged in the same, similar or related trades or businesses, or the securities of one or more of certain publicly traded partnerships; and (c) distribute at least 90% of its investment company taxable income (which includes, among other items, dividends, interest and net short-term capital gains in excess of net long-term capital losses) and at least 90% of its net tax-exempt interest income each taxable year. There are certain exceptions for failure to qualify if the failure is for reasonable cause or is de minimis, and certain corrective action is taken and certain tax payments are made by the Fund.

As a regulated investment company, the Fund generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on its investment company taxable income (as that term is defined in the Code, but without regard to the deduction for dividends paid) and net capital gain (the excess of net long-term capital gain over net short-term capital loss), if any, that it distributes to shareholders. The Fund intends to distribute to its shareholders, at least annually, substantially all of its investment company taxable



income and net capital gain. If the Fund retains any net capital gain or investment company taxable income, it will generally be subject to federal income tax at regular corporate rates on the amount retained. In addition, amounts not distributed on a timely basis in accordance with a calendar year distribution requirement are subject to a nondeductible 4% excise tax unless, generally, the Fund distributes during each calendar year an amount equal to the sum of (1) at least 98% of its ordinary income (not taking into account any capital gains or losses) for the calendar year, (2) at least 98.2% of its capital gains in excess of its capital losses (adjusted for certain ordinary losses) for the one-year period ending October 31 of the calendar year, and (3) any ordinary income and capital gains for previous years that were not distributed during those years. In order to prevent application of the excise tax, the Fund intends to make its distributions in accordance with the calendar year distribution requirement. A distribution will be treated as paid on December 31 of the current calendar year if it is declared by the Fund in October, November or December with a record date in such a month and paid by the Fund during January of the following calendar year. Such distributions will be taxable to shareholders in the calendar year in which the distributions are declared, rather than the calendar year in which the distributions are received.

Subject to certain reasonable cause and de minimis exceptions, if the Fund fails to qualify as a regulated investment company or fails to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement in any taxable year, the Fund would be taxed as an ordinary corporation on its taxable income (even if such income were distributed to its shareholders) and all distributions out of earnings and profits would be taxed to shareholders as ordinary income.

### ***Distributions***

Dividends paid out of the Fund's investment company taxable income are generally taxable to a shareholder as ordinary income to the extent of the Fund's earnings and profits, whether paid in cash or reinvested in additional Shares.

Income from the Fund may also be subject to a 3.8% "Medicare tax." This tax generally applies to net investment income if the taxpayer's adjusted gross income exceeds certain threshold amounts, which are \$250,000 in the case of married couples filing joint returns and \$200,000 in the case of single individuals.

A corporation that owns Shares generally will not be entitled to the dividends received deduction with respect to many dividends received from the Fund because the dividends received deduction is generally not available for distributions from regulated investment companies. However, certain ordinary income dividends on Shares that are attributable to qualifying dividends received by the Fund from certain domestic corporations may be reported by the Fund as being eligible for the dividends received deduction.

Distributions of net capital gain (the excess of net long-term capital gain over net short-term capital loss), if any, properly reported as capital gain dividends are taxable to a shareholder as long-term capital gains, regardless of how long the shareholder has held Fund Shares. An election may be available to shareholders to defer recognition of the gain attributable to a capital gain dividend if they make certain qualifying investments within a limited time. Shareholders should talk to their tax advisor about the availability of this deferral election and its requirements. Shareholders



receiving distributions in the form of additional Shares, rather than cash, generally will have a tax basis in each such Share equal to the value of a Share of the Fund on the reinvestment date. A distribution of an amount in excess of a Fund's current and accumulated earnings and profits will be treated by a shareholder as a return of capital which is applied against and reduces the shareholder's basis in his or her Shares. To the extent that the amount of any such distribution exceeds the shareholder's basis in his or her Shares, the excess will be treated by the shareholder as gain from a sale or exchange of the Shares.

Shareholders will be notified annually as to the U.S. federal income tax status of distributions, and shareholders receiving distributions in the form of additional Shares will receive a report as to the value of those Shares.

### ***Sale or Exchange of Fund Shares***

Upon the sale or other disposition of Shares of the Fund, which a shareholder holds as a capital asset, such a shareholder may realize a capital gain or loss which will be long-term or short-term, depending upon the shareholder's holding period for the Shares. Generally, a shareholder's gain or loss will be a long-term gain or loss if the Shares have been held for more than one year. An election may be available to shareholders to defer recognition of capital gain if they make certain qualifying investments within a limited time. Shareholders should talk to their tax advisor about the availability of this deferral election and its requirements.

Any loss realized on a sale or exchange will be disallowed to the extent that Shares disposed of are replaced (including through reinvestment of dividends) within a period of 61 days beginning 30 days before and ending 30 days after disposition of Shares or to the extent that the shareholder, during such period, acquires or enters into an option or contract to acquire, substantially identical stock or securities. In such a case, the basis of the Shares acquired will be adjusted to reflect the disallowed loss. Any loss realized by a shareholder on a disposition of Fund Shares held by the shareholder for six months or less will be treated as a long-term capital loss to the extent of any distributions of long-term capital gain received by the shareholder with respect to such Shares.

### ***Taxes on Purchase and Redemption of Creation Units***

If a shareholder exchanges securities for Creation Units the shareholder will generally recognize a gain or a loss. The gain or loss will be equal to the difference between the market value of the Creation Units at the time and the shareholder's aggregate basis in the securities surrendered and the Cash Component paid. If a shareholder exchanges Creation Units for securities, then the shareholder will generally recognize a gain or loss equal to the difference between the shareholder's basis in the Creation Units and the aggregate market value of the securities received and the Cash Redemption Amount. The Internal Revenue Service, however, may assert that a loss realized upon an exchange of securities for Creation Units or Creation Units for securities cannot be deducted currently under the rules governing "wash sales," or on the basis that there has been no significant change in economic position.

### ***Treatment of the FLEX Options***

The Fund's investments in offsetting positions with respect to the Reference Asset may be "straddles" for U.S. federal income tax purposes. The straddle rules may affect the character of gains (or losses) realized by the Fund, and losses realized by the Fund on positions that are part of a straddle may be deferred under the straddle rules, rather than being taken into account in calculating taxable income for the taxable year in which the losses are realized. In addition, certain carrying charges (including interest expense) associated with positions in a straddle may be required to be capitalized rather than deducted currently. Certain elections that the Fund may make with respect to its straddle positions may also affect the amount, character and timing of the recognition of gains or losses from the affected positions.

The tax consequences of straddle transactions to the Fund are not entirely clear in all situations under currently available authority. The straddle rules may increase the amount of short-term capital gain realized by the Fund, which is taxed as ordinary income when distributed to U.S. shareholders in a non-liquidating distribution. Because application of the straddle rules may affect the character of gains or losses, defer losses and/or accelerate the recognition of gains or losses from the affected straddle positions, if the Fund makes a non-liquidating distribution of its short-term capital gain, the amount which must be distributed to U.S. shareholders as ordinary income may be increased or decreased substantially as compared to the Fund that did not engage in such transactions.

The FLEX Options included in the portfolio are exchange-traded options. Under Section 1256 of the Code, certain types of exchange-traded options are treated as if they were sold (*i.e.*, "marked to market") at the end of each year. The Fund does not believe that the positions held by the Fund will be subject to Section 1256, which means that the positions will not be marked to market, but the positions will be subject to the straddle rules.

### ***Nature of Fund's Investments***

Certain of the Fund's investment practices are subject to special and complex federal income tax provisions that may, among other things, (i) disallow, suspend or otherwise limit the allowance of certain losses or deductions, (ii) convert lower taxed long-term capital gain into higher taxed short-term capital gain or ordinary income, (iii) convert an ordinary loss or a deduction into a capital loss (the deductibility of which is more limited), (iv) cause the Fund to recognize income or gain without a corresponding receipt of cash, (v) adversely affect the time as to when a purchase or sale of stock or securities is deemed to occur and (vi) adversely alter the characterization of certain complex financial transactions.

### ***Futures Contracts and Options***

The Fund's transactions in futures contracts and options will be subject to special provisions of the Code that, among other things, may affect the character of gains and losses realized by the Fund (*i.e.*, may affect whether gains or losses are ordinary or capital, or short-term or long-term), may accelerate recognition of income to the Fund and may defer Fund losses. These rules could, therefore, affect the character, amount and timing of distributions to shareholders. These provisions also (a) will require the Fund to mark-to-market certain types of the positions in its portfolio (*i.e.*, treat them as if they were closed out), and (b) may cause the Fund to recognize income

without receiving cash with which to make distributions in amounts necessary to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement for qualifying to be taxed as a regulated investment company and the distribution requirements for avoiding excise taxes.

### ***Backup Withholding***

The Fund may be required to withhold U.S. federal income tax from all taxable distributions and sale proceeds payable to shareholders who fail to provide the Fund with their correct taxpayer identification number or fail to make required certifications, or who have been notified by the Internal Revenue Service that they are subject to backup withholding. Corporate shareholders and certain other shareholders specified in the Code generally are exempt from such backup withholding. This withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld may be credited against the shareholder's U.S. federal income tax liability.

### ***Non-U.S. Shareholders***

U.S. taxation of a shareholder who, as to the United States, is a nonresident alien individual, a foreign trust or estate, a foreign corporation or foreign partnership ("*non-U.S. shareholder*") depends on whether the income of the Fund is "effectively connected" with a U.S. trade or business carried on by the shareholder.

In addition to the rules described in this section concerning the potential imposition of withholding on distributions to non-U.S. persons, distributions to non-U.S. persons that are "financial institutions" may be subject to a withholding tax of 30% unless an agreement is in place between the financial institution and the U.S. Treasury to collect and disclose information about accounts, equity investments, or debt interests in the financial institution held by one or more U.S. persons or the institution is resident in a jurisdiction that has entered into such an agreement with the U.S. Treasury. For these purposes, a "financial institution" means any entity that (i) accepts deposits in the ordinary course of a banking or similar business, (ii) holds financial assets for the account of others as a substantial portion of its business, or (iii) is engaged (or holds itself out as being engaged) primarily in the business of investing, reinvesting or trading in securities, partnership interests, commodities or any interest (including a futures contract or option) in such securities, partnership interests or commodities. This withholding tax is also currently scheduled to apply to the gross proceeds from the disposition of securities that produce U.S. source interest or dividends. However, proposed regulations may eliminate the requirement to withhold on payments of gross proceeds from dispositions.

Distributions to non-financial non-U.S. entities (other than publicly traded foreign entities, entities owned by residents of U.S. possessions, foreign governments, international organizations, or foreign central banks) will also be subject to a withholding tax of 30% if the entity does not certify that the entity does not have any substantial U.S. owners or provide the name, address and TIN of each substantial U.S. owner. This withholding tax is also currently scheduled to apply to the gross proceeds from the disposition of securities that produce U.S. source interest or dividends. However, proposed regulations may eliminate the requirement to withhold on payments of gross proceeds from dispositions.

*Income Not Effectively Connected.* If the income from the Fund is not “effectively connected” with a U.S. trade or business carried on by the non-U.S. shareholder, distributions of investment company taxable income will generally be subject to a U.S. tax of 30% (or lower treaty rate), which tax is generally withheld from such distributions.

Distributions of capital gain dividends and any amounts retained by the Fund which are properly reported by the Fund as undistributed capital gains will not be subject to U.S. tax at the rate of 30% (or lower treaty rate) unless the non-U.S. shareholder is a nonresident alien individual and is physically present in the United States for more than 182 days during the taxable year and meets certain other requirements. However, this 30% tax on capital gains of nonresident alien individuals who are physically present in the United States for more than the 182 day period only applies in exceptional cases because any individual present in the United States for more than 182 days during the taxable year is generally treated as a resident for U.S. income tax purposes; in that case, he or she would be subject to U.S. income tax on his or her worldwide income at the graduated rates applicable to U.S. citizens, rather than the 30% U.S. tax. In the case of a non-U.S. shareholder who is a nonresident alien individual, the Fund may be required to withhold U.S. income tax from distributions of net capital gain unless the non-U.S. shareholder certifies his or her non-U.S. status under penalties of perjury or otherwise establishes an exemption. If a non-U.S. shareholder is a nonresident alien individual, any gain such shareholder realizes upon the sale or exchange of such shareholder’s Shares of the Fund in the United States will ordinarily be exempt from U.S. tax unless the gain is U.S. source income and such shareholder is physically present in the United States for more than 182 days during the taxable year and meets certain other requirements.

In addition, capital gain distributions attributable to gains from U.S. real property interests (including certain U.S. real property holding corporations) will generally be subject to United States withholding tax and will give rise to an obligation on the part of the non-U.S. shareholder to file a United States tax return.

Distributions from the Fund that are properly reported by the Fund as an interest-related dividend attributable to certain interest income received by the Fund or as a short-term capital gain dividend attributable to certain net short-term capital gain income received by the Fund may not be subject to U.S. federal income taxes, including withholding taxes when received by certain non-U.S. shareholders, provided that the Fund makes certain elections and certain other conditions are met.

*Income Effectively Connected.* If the income from the Fund is “effectively connected” with a U.S. trade or business carried on by a non-U.S. shareholder, then distributions of investment company taxable income and capital gain dividends, any amounts retained by the Fund which are properly reported by the Fund as undistributed capital gains and any gains realized upon the sale or exchange of Shares of the Fund will be subject to U.S. income tax at the graduated rates applicable to U.S. citizens, residents and domestic corporations. Non-U.S. corporate shareholders may also be subject to the branch profits tax imposed by the Code. The tax consequences to a non-U.S. shareholder entitled to claim the benefits of an applicable tax treaty may differ from those described herein. Non-U.S. shareholders are advised to consult their own tax advisors with respect to the particular tax consequences to them of an investment in the Fund.

### ***Capital Loss Carry-Forward***

Net capital losses of the Fund may be carried forward indefinitely, and their character is retained as short-term and/or long-term losses. To the extent that these loss carry-forwards are used to offset future capital gains, it is probable that the capital gains so offset will not be distributed to Fund shareholders. The Fund is subject to certain limitations, under U.S. tax rules, on the use of capital loss carry-forwards and net unrealized built-in losses. These limitations generally apply when there has been a 50% change in ownership.

### ***Other Taxation***

Fund shareholders may be subject to state, local and foreign taxes on their Fund distributions. Shareholders are advised to consult their own tax advisors with respect to the particular tax consequences to them of an investment in the Fund.

## **PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

To obtain the Fund's most current performance information, please call (800) 208-5212 or visit the Fund's website at [www.innovatoretfs.com](http://www.innovatoretfs.com). From time to time, the Fund's performance information, such as yield or total return, may be quoted in advertisements or in communications to present or prospective shareholders. Performance quotations represent the Fund's past performance and should not be considered as representative of future results. The Fund will calculate its performance in accordance with the requirements of the rules and regulations under the 1940 Act, as they may be revised from time to time.

## **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Fund has not yet commenced investment operations; therefore, financial information is not available at this time.

## **CONTROL PERSONS AND PRINCIPAL HOLDERS OF SHARES**

A principal shareholder is any person who owns (either of record or beneficially) 5% or more of the outstanding shares of the Fund. A control person is one who owns, either directly or indirectly, more than 25% of the voting securities of a company or acknowledges the existence of control.

## EXHIBIT A – PROXY VOTING GUIDELINES

### EGAN-JONES PROXY SERVICES STANDARD PROXY VOTING PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

#### Egan-Jones Proxy Voting Principles

##### Introduction

Our Proxy Voting Principles serve as the background for our Proxy Voting Guidelines, which, in turn, act as general guidelines for the specific recommendations that we make with respect to proxy voting. It is important to recognize that such principles are not intended to dictate but guide. Certain of the principles may be inappropriate for a given Company, or in a given situation. Additionally, the principles are evolving and should be viewed in that light. Our principles are and will be influenced by current and forthcoming legislation, rules and regulations, and stock exchange rules. Examples include:

- the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 and implementing rules promulgated by the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission
- revised corporate governance listing standards of the New York Stock Exchange and resulting SEC rules
- corporate governance reforms and subsequent proposed rule filings made with the SEC by The NASDAQ Stock Market, Inc. and resulting SEC rules

In general:

- Directors should be accountable to shareholders, and management should be accountable to directors.
- Information on the Company supplied to shareholders should be transparent.
- Shareholders should be treated fairly and equitably according to the principle of one share, one vote.

##### **Principles**

###### A. Director independence

It is our view that:

- A two-thirds majority of the board should be comprised of independent directors.
- Independent directors should meet alone at regularly scheduled meetings, no less frequently than semi-annually, without the Chief Executive Officer or other non-independent directors present.
- When the Chairman of the Board also serves as the Company's Chief Executive Officer, the board should designate one independent director to act as a leader to coordinate the activities of the other independent directors.
- Committees of the board dealing with the following responsibilities should consist only of independent directors: audit, compensation, nomination of directors, corporate governance, and compliance.
- No director should serve as a consultant or service provider to the Company.
- Director compensation should be a combination of cash and stock in the Company, with stock constituting a significant component.



In our opinion, an independent director, by definition, has no material relationship with the Company other than his or her directorship. This avoids the potential for conflict of interest. Specifically such director:

- should not have been employed by the Company or an affiliate within the previous five years.
- should not be an immediate family member of an individual who is, or at any time during the past five years was, employed by the Company as an executive officer.
- should not be the founder of the Company.
- should not be a director of the Company serving in an ex officio capacity.
- should not be a member of the Company's Board of Directors for 10 years or more, however, a director who is a diverse nominee may be exempted from this rule on the case-by-case basis. Furthermore, a nominee whose tenure on the Board hasn't reached 10 years by the date of the meeting or up to 90 days after and provided the Company discloses exact appointment date, will be exempted from this rule.
- should have no services contract regarding such matters as aircraft rental contract, real property lease or similar contract with the Company or affiliate, or with a member of the Company's senior management or provide legal or consulting services to the Company within the previous three years.
- should not be employed by a public company at which an executive officer of the Company serves as a director, and thereby be part of an interlocking relationship.
- should not be a member of the *immediate family* (spouse, parents, children, siblings, mothers and fathers-in-law, sons and daughters-in-law, brothers and sisters-in-law, and anyone other than domestic employees who share such person's home) of any director described above.
- a director who receives, or whose immediate family member receives, more than \$120,000 per year in *direct compensation* (base salary plus cash bonus) from the Company, other than director and committee fees and pension or other forms of deferred compensation for prior service (provided such compensation is not contingent in any way on continued service), is not independent until three years after he or she ceases to receive more than \$120,000 per year in such compensation.
- a director who is an executive officer or an employee, or whose immediate family member is an executive officer, of another company (other than a utility) or non-profit organization that makes payments to, or receives payments from, the Company for property or services in an amount which, in any single fiscal year, exceeds the greater of \$1 million, or 2% of the recipient company's consolidated gross revenues, is not "independent" until three years after falling below such threshold. However, the existence of a credit agreement between a bank and the Company shall not affect the independence of a director who is an executive of that bank within the previous three years.

Alternate members of key committees will be subject to the same independence criteria as regular members.

B. Board operating procedures

- The board should adopt a written statement of its governance principles, and regularly re-evaluate them.
- Independent directors should establish performance criteria and compensation incentives for the Chief Executive Officer, and regularly review his or her performance against such criteria. Such criteria should align the interests of the CEO with those of shareholders, and evaluate the CEO against peer groups.
- The independent directors should be provided access to professional advisers of their own choice, independent of management.
- The board should have a CEO succession plan, and receive periodic reports from management on the development of other members of senior management.
- Directors should have access to senior management through a designated liaison person.
- The board should periodically review its own size, and determine a set number of directors between 5 and 15, instead of a range.

C. Requirements for individual directors

We recommend that:

- The board should provide guidelines for directors serving on several Boards addressing competing commitments.
- The board should establish performance criteria for itself and for individual directors regarding director attendance, preparedness, and participation at meetings of the board and of committees of the board, and directors should perform satisfactorily in accordance with such criteria in order to be re-nominated.

D. Shareholder rights

- A simple majority of shareholders should be able to amend the Company's bylaws, call special meetings, or act by written consent.
- "Greenmail" should be prohibited.
- Shareholder approval should be required to enact or amend a "poison pill" (i.e., "shareholder rights") plan
- Directors should be elected annually.
- The board should ordinarily implement a shareholder proposal that is approved by a majority of proxy votes.
- Shareholders should have effective access to the director nomination process

## **Egan-Jones Proxy Voting Guidelines**

Consistent with the above-listed principles, the proxy voting guidelines outlined below are written to guide the specific recommendations that we make to our clients. Ordinarily, we do not recommend that clients ABSTAIN on votes; rather, we recommend that they vote FOR or AGAINST proposals (or, in the case of election of directors, that they vote FOR ALL nominees, AGAINST the nominees, or that they WITHHOLD votes for certain nominees). In the latter instance, the recommendation on our report takes the form ALL, EXCEPT FOR and lists the nominees from whom votes should be withheld.

Whether or not the guideline below indicates “case-by-case basis,” every case is examined to ensure that the recommendation is appropriate.

### **Board of Directors**

#### **Chapter 1 Election of Directors in Uncontested Elections**

Case-by-case basis, examining composition of board and key board committees, attendance history, corporate governance provisions and takeover activity, long-term company financial performance relative to a market index, directors’ investment in the Company, etc..

WITHHOLD votes from nominees who:

- are affiliated outside directors and sit on the Audit, Compensation, or Nominating committees.
- are inside directors and sit on the Audit, Compensation, or Nominating committees.
- are inside directors and the Company does not have Audit, Compensation, or Nominating committees.
- are identified as not independent by the Company and sit on the Audit, Compensation, or Nominating committees.
- attend less than 75 percent of the board and committee meetings. Participation by phone is acceptable.
- ignore a shareholder proposal that is approved by a majority of the shares outstanding.
- ignore a shareholder proposal that is approved by a majority of the votes cast for two consecutive years.
- fail to act on takeover offers where the majority of the shareholders have tendered their shares.
- implement or renew a “dead-hand” or modified “dead-hand” poison pill.
- sit on more than five other public boards.
- serve as both Chairmen of the Board and CEOs and the Company receives a poor Board Score.
- serve as CEOs and hold more than one outside public directorship^.
- serve as Chairmen of the Board and hold more than one outside public directorship^.

- sit on the existing board, which has failed to respond adequately to a say-on-pay vote in which the majority of votes cast voted AGAINST.
- sit on the existing board, which has implemented a less frequent say-on-pay vote than the frequency option which received a majority of votes cast in the previous frequency vote.

*^ CEO/CHAIRMAN over-boarding exemption*

*If CEO or Chairman of the Company holds more than one other public company directorship, but one of these companies is a SPAC, he/she will be exempted from the Egan-Jones over-boarding rule.*

## **Chapter 2 Underperforming Board Policy**

WITHHOLD votes from Compensation Committee members in cases when the Company obtains a questionable result on the Egan-Jones Compensation Score.\*

*\*Recommendation is based on available data and subject to the analysts' discretion to override in cases when a nominee has served as a member of the Compensation Committee for less than 6 months.*

WITHHOLD votes from Compensation Committee members in cases when the Company's Compensation Plans (Cash Bonus Plan or Stock Option Plan) receive an AGAINST recommendation from Egan-Jones.

WITHHOLD votes from Chairman of the Board in cases when the Company obtains the lowest score of *Needs Attention* on the Cyber Security Risk Score.\*\*

*\*\*Recommendation is based on available data and subject to the analysts' discretion to override in cases when the Chairman has served in this capacity for less than 6 months.*

WITHHOLD votes from Compensation Committee members due to insufficient disclosure on executive compensation.\*\*\*

*\*\*\*Including cases when the Company has no employees or none of the executive officers are compensated by the Company and no management fees have been provided.*

WITHHOLD votes from Chairman of the Nominating Committee when there are no women, ethnically or racially diverse directors on the Board.

WITHHOLD from the Board Chair if the company or its board adopted a classified board structure or supermajority vote requirements to amend the bylaws or charter.

## **Chapter 3 Board Accountability**

Case-by-case basis for the following:

- Evidence or belief of failure of the board to properly account and prepare for risk (i.e. carbon or cyber issues)

- A low board score, coupled with poor performance
- Legal or ethical problems in the Company or its management

In cases in which the Company has engaged in the practice commonly referred to as “options backdating,” Egan-Jones may recommend that votes be withheld from nominees serving on the Company’s compensation committee, the Company’s entire board of directors, and/or its chief executive officer. Such recommendations will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration such matters as intent of the individuals involved, scope and timing of the practice, significance of financial restatement required, and corrective action taken.

Furthermore, we may recommend withholding votes from either members of the Company’s compensation committee, its entire board of directors and/or its chief executive officer where the Company has engaged in what we judge to be other unsatisfactory compensation practices. Considerations may include such factors as “pay-for-failure” executive severance provisions, change-in-control payments which are either excessive or which are not tied to loss of job or significant reduction in duties, excessive executive perquisites, unjustified changes in the performance standards applied to performance-based compensation, and executive compensation out of proportion to performance of the Company.

FOR shareholder proposals calling for the Company to name as directors only those who receive a majority of shareholder votes.

#### **Chapter 4 Separating Chairman and CEO**

FOR shareholder proposals requiring that positions of Chairman and CEO be held separately.

#### **Chapter 5 Independent Directors**

FOR shareholder proposals asking that a two-thirds majority of directors be independent.

FOR shareholder proposals asking that the board’s Audit, Compensation, and/or Nominating committees be composed exclusively of independent directors.

FOR shareholder proposals that the Chairman OR lead director be independent.

#### **Chapter 6 Stock Ownership Requirements**

AGAINST shareholder proposals requiring directors to own a minimum amount of the Company stock in order to qualify as a director or to remain on the board.

#### **Chapter 7 Term Limits**

AGAINST shareholder proposals to limit tenure of outside directors.

Egan-Jones strongly encourages diversity and Board turnover without embracing the controversial and problematic approach of term limits or a retirement age. As long as a director nominee, whose tenure exceeds 10 years, is not a member of a key committee we will not recommend a vote to withhold from the nominee.

## **Chapter 8 Retirement Age Limits**

AGAINST shareholder proposals to impose a mandatory retirement age for outside directors.

FOR management proposals requesting the approval to remove the mandatory retirement age for directors and trustees.

AGAINST management and shareholder proposals that request placing age limit for a person to be elected or appointed as a director.

## **Chapter 9 Director and Officer Indemnification and Liability**

Case-by-case basis on management proposals regarding director and officer indemnification and liability, using Delaware law as the standard.

AGAINST management proposals to eliminate entirely directors and officers liability for monetary damages for violating the duty of care.

AGAINST management indemnification proposals that would expand coverage beyond legal expenses to acts, such as negligence, that are more serious violations of fiduciary obligation than mere carelessness.

FOR proposals authorizing exculpation of officers only in connection with direct claims brought by stockholders, including class actions, but without eliminating monetary liability of officers for breach of fiduciary duty arising out of claims brought by the corporation itself or for derivative claims brought by stockholders in the name of the corporation.

FOR management proposals providing such expanded coverage in cases when a director's or officer's legal defense was unsuccessful if (1) the director was found to have acted in good faith and in a manner that he or she reasonably believed was in the best interests of the Company, and (2) only if the director's legal expenses would be covered.

## **Chapter 10 Charitable Contributions**

AGAINST shareholder proposals regarding disclosure of charitable contributions.

## **Chapter 11 Political Contributions**

AGAINST shareholder proposals regarding disclosure of political contributions. FOR management proposals regarding approval of political contributions.

## **Chapter 12 Lobbying Expenditures**

AGAINST shareholder proposals for disclosure of lobbying expenditures.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a report of climate lobbying.

AGAINST shareholder proposal requesting a third party review and report on lobbying activities alignment with position on universal health coverage.



## **Proxy Contests and Other Contested Elections**

### **Chapter 13 Election of Directors in Contested Elections**

Case-by-case basis for voting for directors in contested elections, considering long-term financial performance of the target Company relative to its industry, management's track record, background to the proxy contest, qualifications of director nominees on both slates, evaluation of what each side is offering shareholders as well as likelihood that proposed objectives and goals will be met, and stock ownership positions.

FOR plurality voting standard in contested elections.

### **Chapter 14 Universal Proxy Card in a Contested Election**

FOR proposals requesting that the Company require the use of a universal proxy card in contested elections.

### **Chapter 15 Reimbursement of Proxy Solicitation Expenses**

Case-by-case basis for shareholder proposals for reimbursement of proxy solicitation expenses. FOR reimbursing proxy solicitation expenses where EGAN-JONES recommends in favor of the dissidents.

## **Auditors**

### **Chapter 16 Ratifying Auditors**

FOR management proposals to ratify appointment of independent auditor unless:

- Auditor obtains a questionable result on the Egan-Jones Auditor Score which takes into account a number of factors including but not limited to:
  - Auditor rotation every seven years
  - Non-audit fees exceeding 50% of total fees
  - Significant and material disciplinary actions taken against the Company's Auditor
- Auditor has a financial interest in or association with the Company, and is therefore not independent; or there is reason to believe that the independent auditor has rendered an opinion which is neither accurate nor indicative of the Company's financial position.

## **Proxy Contest Defenses**

### **Chapter 17 Classified Board vs. Annual Election**

AGAINST management proposals to classify the board.

FOR shareholder proposals to repeal ("de-stagger") classified boards and to elect all directors annually.

## **Chapter 18 Removal of Directors**

AGAINST management proposals that provide that directors may be removed only for cause.

FOR shareholder proposals to restore shareholder ability to remove directors with or without cause.

CASE-BY-CASE basis for shareholder proposal to remove a director, usually AGAINST unless there are compelling reasons to remove a director or a director does not fulfill Egan-Jones criteria examining independence, meetings attendance, other board memberships, then in such cases FOR.

AGAINST management proposals that provide that only continuing directors may elect replacements to fill board vacancies.

FOR shareholder proposals that permit shareholders to elect directors to fill board vacancies.

FOR shareholder proposals requesting multiple candidate elections.

## **Chapter 19 Authorization of the Board to Fill (casual) Vacancies**

FOR management proposals requesting that vacancies in the number of directors be designated as casual vacancies and that the Board of Directors be authorized to fill such vacancies as and when it deems fit. On condition that director appointed to fill such a casual vacancy shall hold office until the next annual meeting following his or her election or until his or her election or until his or her successor is elected.

## **Chapter 20 Cumulative Voting**

FOR management proposals to eliminate cumulative voting. AGAINST shareholder proposals to provide for cumulative voting.

## **Chapter 21 Calling Special Meetings**

AGAINST management proposals to restrict or prohibit shareholder ability to call special meetings.

FOR management proposals asking to permit shareholders of record who own at least 10% of the Company's shares, have the ability to call a special meeting.

FOR shareholder proposals to allow shareholders holding at least 10% or more of the Company's shares, to call a special shareholder meeting.

## **Chapter 22 Acting by Written Consent**

Case by case for management proposals to restrict or prohibit shareholder ability to take action by written consent.

FOR shareholder proposals to allow or make easier shareholder action by written consent.

## **Chapter 23 Altering Size of the Board**

Management proposals regarding any Board size changes must require shareholder approval.

FOR management proposals to fix the size of the board as long as the number of directors is between 5 and 15.

FOR management proposals to set range of directors as long as there are not less than 5 and more than 15 directors on the board.

AGAINST management proposals that give management the ability to alter size of the board without shareholder approval.

AGAINST management proposals to allow the Board to fix number of directors without shareholder approval.

AGAINST management proposals to allow the Board to set range of directors without shareholder approval.

Case-by-case management proposals to approve unusual board size.

## **Chapter 24 Virtual-only Meeting**

FOR management proposals to conduct virtual-only annual meeting, considering shareholders' rights to participate electronically as they would have during an in-person meeting.

FOR proposals asking to allow the Company to hold a virtual meeting of shareholders along with an in-person meeting at a designated location.

## **Chapter 25 Quorum Requirements**

FOR proposals seeking approval of a lower quorum requirement if the reduced quorum is at least one-third of shares entitled to vote, either in person or by proxy.

## **Tender Offer Defenses**

### **Chapter 26 Poison Pills**

FOR shareholder proposals that ask the Company to submit its "poison pill" for shareholder ratification.

AGAINST shareholder proposal requesting the Board authorize a self-tender offer.

Case-by-case basis for shareholder proposals to redeem the Company's existing "poison pill".

Case-by-case basis for management proposals to ratify a "poison pill".

## **Chapter 27 Fair Price Provisions**

Case-by-case basis for adopting fair price provisions, considering vote required to approve the proposed acquisition, vote required to repeal the fair price provision, and mechanism for determining the fair price.

AGAINST fair price provisions with shareholder vote requirements greater than a majority of disinterested shares.

## **Chapter 28 Greenmail**

FOR proposals to adopt anti-“greenmail” charter or bylaw amendments or otherwise restrict the Company’s ability to make “greenmail” payments.

Case-by-case basis for anti-“greenmail” proposals which are bundled with other charter or bylaw amendments.

## **Chapter 29 Pale Greenmail**

Case-by-case basis for restructuring plans that involve the payment of pale greenmail.

## **Chapter 30 Unequal Voting Rights**

AGAINST dual-class exchange offers and dual-class recapitalizations.

## **Chapter 31 Supermajority Requirement to Amend Certificate of Incorporation or Bylaws**

FOR management proposals requesting elimination of supermajority voting provisions for amendments to the certificate of incorporation and bylaws.

AGAINST management proposals to require a supermajority shareholder vote to approve charter and bylaw amendments.

FOR shareholder proposals to lower supermajority shareholder vote requirements for charter and bylaw amendments.

FOR shareholder proposals asking that each bylaw amendment adopted by the board of directors not become effective until approved by shareholders.

## **Chapter 32 Supermajority Requirement to Approve Mergers**

AGAINST management proposals to require a supermajority shareholder vote to approve mergers and other significant business combinations.

FOR shareholder proposals to lower supermajority shareholder vote requirements for mergers and other significant business combinations.

## **Other Governance Proposals**

### **Chapter 33 Confidential Voting**

FOR shareholder proposals that request that the Company adopt confidential voting, use independent tabulators, and use independent inspectors of election as long as the proposals include clauses for proxy contests as follows: In the case of a contested election, management should be permitted to request that the dissident group honor its confidential voting policy. If the dissidents agree, the policy remains in place. If the dissidents do not agree, the confidential voting policy is waived.

FOR management proposals to adopt confidential voting.

### **Chapter 34 Equal Access**

AGAINST shareholder proposals that would allow significant Company shareholders equal access to management's proxy material in order to evaluate and propose voting recommendations on proxy proposals and director nominees, and in order to nominate their own candidates to the board.

### **Chapter 35 Proxy Access**

FOR binding shareholder proxy access proposals considering the following criteria:

- 0.5% ownership threshold
- Number of board members that may be elected – cap of 1/3 of board or minimum 2 nominees, if the board size is being lowered the calculation is based upon the original board size, if it is being increased the calculation would be based upon the original board size, with each new slot added to the total, so two plus six if six new board positions are being created
- We prefer no limit or caps on the number of shareowners in the nominations group
- Loaned securities will count towards total
- We prefer that all participants affirm that they intend to be “long term shareholders” of the Company with at least 6 month ownership duration requirement
- Proposals with no re-nominations restrictions are preferred.

FOR shareholder proposals to improve Catch-22 Proxy Access to remove the shareholder group limit – to enable as many shareholders as may be needed to combine their shares to equal 3% of the stock owned continuously for 3-years in order to enable shareholder proxy access.

### **Chapter 36 Bundled Proposals**

Case-by-case basis for bundled or “conditioned” proxy proposals. Where items are conditioned upon each other, examine benefits and costs. AGAINST in instances when the joint effect of the conditioned items is not in shareholders' best interests. FOR if the combined effect is positive.

## **Chapter 37 Shareholder Advisory Committees**

Case-by-case basis for shareholder proposals establishing a shareholder advisory committee.

## **Capital Structure**

### **Chapter 38 Common Stock Authorization**

AGAINST management proposals increasing the number of authorized shares of the class of stock that has superior voting rights in companies that have dual-class capitalization structures.

AGAINST management proposals to increase the number of authorized shares of common stock, or equivalents, that exceeds 50 percent of share capital, without a specified legitimate purpose.

FOR management proposals to increase the number of authorized shares of common stock more than 50 percent of currently issued common share capital, if tied to a specific transaction or financing proposal or if the share pool was used up due to equity plans.

Case-by-case basis on other such management proposals considering the specified purposes of the proposed increase, any explanation of risks to shareholders of failing to approve the request, potential dilution, and recent track record for using authorized shares, in which case judgment is applied to weigh such factors. Factors which are normally weighed in making such judgments include prior performance of the issuer, changes within the industry, relative performance within the industry, client preferences and overall good corporate governance. In general, we view the authorization of additional common shares to be ordinary and necessary and in the best long-term interests of the issuer and its shareholders.

### **Chapter 39 Stock Distributions: Splits and Dividends**

FOR management proposals to increase common share authorization for a stock split, provided that the increase in authorized shares would not result in an excessive number of shares available for issuance, considering the industry and the Company's returns to shareholders.

### **Chapter 40 Reverse Stock Splits**

FOR management proposals to implement a reverse stock split when the number of shares will be proportionately reduced to avoid delisting.

Case-by-case basis on management proposals to implement a reverse stock split that do not proportionately reduce the number of shares authorized for issuance taking into consideration stock price at the record date.

### **Chapter 41 Preferred Stock**

AGAINST management proposals authorizing creation of new classes of "blank check preferred stock" (i.e., classes with unspecified voting, conversion, dividend distribution, and other rights



Case-by-case basis on management proposals to increase the number of “blank check preferred shares” after analyzing the number of preferred shares available for issuance considering the industry and Company’s returns to shareholders.

#### **Chapter 42 Blank Check Preferred Stock**

FOR shareholder proposals to have placements of “blank check preferred stock” submitted for shareholder approval, except when those shares are issued for the purpose of raising capital or making acquisitions in the normal course.

#### **Chapter 43 Adjustments to Par Value of Common Stock**

FOR management proposals to reduce the par value of common stock.

#### **Chapter 44 Preemptive Rights**

Case-by-case basis on shareholder proposals that seek preemptive rights, considering size of the Company and shareholder characteristics.

#### **Chapter 45 Debt Restructurings**

Case-by-case basis on management proposals to increase number of common and/or preferred shares and to issue shares as part of a debt restructuring plan, considering dilution, any resulting change in control

FOR management proposals that facilitate debt restructurings except where signs of self- dealing exist.

#### **Chapter 46 Share Repurchase Programs**

FOR management proposals to institute open-market share repurchase plans in which all shareholders may participate on equal terms.

#### **Chapter 47 Tracking Stock**

Case-by-case basis for management proposals for creation of tracking stock, considering the strategic value of the transaction vs. adverse governance changes, excessive increases in authorized stock, inequitable distribution method, diminution of voting rights, adverse conversion features, negative impact on stock option plans, and other alternatives, such as spin-offs.

#### **Chapter 48 Stock buybacks**

Case-by-case on management proposals requesting stock buybacks. AGAINST in cases when the Company receives a poor Board or Compensation score or when there is insufficient data to generate these scores. FOR otherwise.

## **Compensation of Officers and Directors**

### **Chapter 49 Compensation of Officers and Directors**

FOR compensation plans that result in an amount of dilution (or the equivalent value in cash) that is less than the maximum dilution determined by the Compensation Score.

AGAINST compensation plans that result in an excess amount of dilution (or the equivalent value in cash) that is more than the maximum dilution determined by the Compensation Score.

AGAINST compensation plans involving “pay for failure,” such as excessively long contracts, guaranteed compensation, excessive severance packages, or other problematic practice not accounted for in the Egan-Jones compensation Score.

Case-by-case (but generally FOR) plans that are completely “decoupled” from the CEOs compensation and thus have no impact on the CEO’s current or future total compensation.

### **Chapter 50 Compensation Plan other than a Qualified ESPP at Special Purpose Acquisition Company**

FOR compensation plans of the newly formed Company arising from a business combination with a special purpose acquisition Company (SPAC), unless the authorized share pool exceeds 3% of the newly formed Company’s authorized shares.

### **Chapter 51 Advisory Votes on Executive Compensation (“Say-on-Pay”)**

Case-by-case basis on advisory votes on executive compensation (“Say-on-Pay”), based on the result obtained by the Company in Egan-Jones Compensation Score. AGAINST a non-binding compensation advisory vote when the Company obtains a questionable result on the Egan- Jones Compensation Score, FOR otherwise.\*

*\*In cases when the Company doesn’t have a CEO position Egan-Jones will use the Total Compensation and Salary paid to the highest paid NEO of the Company to calculate a Compensation Rating.*

AGAINST say-on-pay proposal and compensation committee members when executive employment agreements include tax gross-ups.

Relative Compensation is based upon a number of quantitative and qualitative metrics which produce a final score that is both forward looking and based upon the prior performance metrics of the Company’s wealth creation and market capitalization as compared to the CEO’s total compensation package. Higher wealth creation, market capitalization and lower CEO compensation all contribute to a higher compensation score. Additional qualitative measures such as 162m compliance, executive pension plan status and other relevant factors are then used to calculate the final score.

## **Chapter 52 Advisory Votes Regarding Frequency of Advisory Votes on Executive Compensation**

FOR management proposals that recommend that advisory votes on executive compensation take place annually.

AGAINST management proposals that recommend that advisory votes on executive compensation take place every two years or triennially.

## **Chapter 53 Management Proposals Seeking Approval to Re-price Options**

Case-by-case basis on management proposals seeking approval to re-price options.

## **Chapter 54 Director Compensation**

Case-by-case basis on stock-based plans for directors.

AGAINST shareholder proposals regarding advisory vote on directors' compensation.

## **Chapter 55 Employee Stock Purchase Plans**

Case-by-case basis on employee stock purchase plans.

## **Chapter 56 Amendments that Place a Maximum Limit on Annual Grants or Amend Administrative Features**

FOR plans that amend shareholder-approved plans to include administrative features or place maximum limit on annual grants that any participant may receive to comply with the provisions of Section 162(m) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA).

## **Chapter 57 Amendments to Added Performance-Based Goals**

FOR amendments to add performance goals to existing compensation plans to comply with the provisions of Section 162(m) of OBRA.

## **Chapter 58 Amendments to Increase Shares and Retain Tax Deductions under OBRA**

Case-by-case basis on amendments to existing plans to increase shares reserved and to qualify the plan for favorable tax treatment under the provisions of Section 162(m).

## **Chapter 59 Approval of Cash or Cash & Stock Bonus Plans**

Case-by-case basis on cash or cash & stock bonus plans to exempt compensation from taxes under the provisions of Section 162(m) of OBRA.

## **Chapter 60 Limits on Director and Officer Compensation**

FOR shareholder proposals requiring additional disclosure of officer and director compensation.

Case-by-case basis for all other shareholder proposals seeking limits on officer and director compensation.

### **Chapter 61 Golden Parachutes and Tin Parachutes**

FOR shareholder proposals to have “golden and tin parachutes” submitted for shareholder ratification.

Case-by-case basis on proposals to ratify or cancel “golden or tin parachutes.”

### **Chapter 62 Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs)**

FOR proposals that request shareholder approval in order to implement an ESOP or to increase authorized number of shares for existing ESOPs, except in cases when the number of shares allocated to the ESOP is “excessive” (i.e., greater than five percent of outstanding shares).

### **Chapter 63 401(k) Employee Benefit Plans**

FOR proposals to implement a 401(k) savings plan for employees.

## **State of Incorporation**

### **State Takeover Statutes**

Case-by-case basis on proposals to opt in or out of state takeover statutes (including control share acquisition statutes, control share cash-out statutes, freeze-out provisions, fair price provisions, stakeholder laws, poison pill endorsements, severance pay and labor contract provisions, anti-“greenmail” provisions, and disgorgement provisions).

### **Chapter 64 Reincorporation Proposals**

Case-by-case basis on proposals to change the Company’s state of incorporation.

## **Business Combinations and Corporate Restructurings**

### **Chapter 65 Charter Modification**

Case-by-case basis for changes to the charter, considering degree of change, efficiencies that could result, state of incorporation, and regulatory standards and implications.

FOR approval of the amendments to the Company’s bylaws to adopt an exclusive forum for internal corporate claims.

### **Chapter 66 Change of Domicile**

Case-by-case basis for changes in state of domicile, considering state regulations of each state, required fundamental policies of each state; and the increased flexibility available.

## **Chapter 67 Mergers and Acquisitions**

Case-by-case basis on mergers and acquisitions, considering projected financial and operating benefits, offer price, prospects of the combined companies, negotiation process, and changes in corporate governance.

## **Chapter 68 Corporate Restructuring**

Case-by-case basis on corporate restructurings, including minority squeeze-outs, leveraged buyouts, spin-offs, liquidations, and asset sales.

## **Chapter 69 Spin-offs**

Case-by-case basis on spin-offs, considering tax and regulatory advantages, planned use of proceeds, market focus, and managerial incentives.

## **Chapter 70 Asset Sales**

Case-by-case basis on asset sales, considering impact on the balance sheet and working capital, and value received.

## **Chapter 71 Liquidations**

Case-by-case basis on liquidations considering management's efforts to pursue alternatives, appraisal value, and compensation for executives managing the liquidation.

## **Chapter 72 Appraisal Rights**

FOR providing shareholders with appraisal rights.

## **Mutual Fund Proxies**

### **Chapter 73 Election of Directors**

Case-by-case basis for election of directors, considering board structure, director independence, director qualifications, compensation of directors within the fund and the family of funds, and attendance at board and committee meetings.

WITHHOLD votes for directors who:

- are interested directors and sit on key board committees (Audit or Nominating committees)
- are interested directors and the Company does not have one or more of the following committees: Audit or Nominating.
- attend less than 75 percent of the board and committee meetings. Participation by phone is acceptable.
- ignore a shareholder proposal that is approved by a majority of shares outstanding

- ignore a shareholder proposal that is approved by a majority of the votes cast for two consecutive years
- serve as Chairman but are not independent (e.g. serve as an officer of the fund's advisor)

#### **Chapter 74 Converting Closed-end Fund to Open-end Fund**

Case-by-case basis for conversion of closed-end fund to open-end fund, considering past performance as a closed-end fund, market in which the fund invests, measures taken by the board to address the market discount, and past shareholder activism, board activity, and votes on related proposals.

#### **Chapter 75 Change from Diversified to Non-Diversified Fund**

FOR approval of change from diversified to non-diversified fund.

#### **Chapter 76 Proxy Contests**

Case-by-case basis on proxy contests, considering past performance, market in which fund invests, and measures taken by the board to address issues raised, past shareholder activism, board activity, and votes on related proposals.

#### **Chapter 77 Investment Advisory Agreements**

Case-by-case basis on investment advisory agreements, considering proposed and current fee schedules, fund category and investment objective, performance benchmarks, share price performance relative to that of peers; and magnitude of any fee increase.

#### **Chapter 78 New Classes or Series of Shares**

FOR creating new classes or series of shares.

#### **Chapter 79 Preferred Stock Authorization**

Case-by-case basis for authorization for or increase in preferred shares, considering financing purpose and potential dilution for common shares.

#### **Chapter 80 1940 Act Policies**

Case-by-case basis for 1940 Act policies, considering potential competitiveness, regulatory developments, current and potential returns, and current and potential risk.

#### **Chapter 81 Changing Fundamental Restriction to Non-fundamental**

AGAINST on changing fundamental restriction to non-fundamental restriction.

#### **Chapter 82 Changing Fundamental Investment Objective to Non-fundamental**

AGAINST proposals to change the fund's fundamental investment objective to non-fundamental.



### **Chapter 83 Changing Fundamental Investment Policy to Non-Fundamental**

AGAINST proposals to change the fund’s fundamental investment policy to non-fundamental.

### **Chapter 84 Name Rule Proposals**

Case-by-case basis for name rule proposals, considering the following factors: political/economic changes in target market; bundling with quorum requirements or with changes in asset allocation, and consolidation in the fund’s target market.

### **Chapter 85 Disposition of Assets, Termination, Liquidation**

Case-by-case basis for disposition of assets, termination or liquidation, considering strategies employed, Company’s past performance, and terms of liquidation.

### **Chapter 86 Change in Sub-classification**

Case-by-case basis for change in sub-classification, considering potential competitiveness, current and potential returns, risk of concentration, and industry consolidation in the target industry.

### **Chapter 87 Authorizing Board to Hire and Terminate Sub-advisors without Shareholder Approval – “Manager of Managers” Structure**

FOR approval of the use of a “Manager of Managers” structure to appoint and replace sub-advisers without obtaining prior shareholder approval, if proposal is asking to appoint and replace subadvisers that are not affiliated with the Fund.

### **Chapter 88 Distribution Agreements**

Case-by-case basis for approving distribution agreements, considering fees charged to comparably sized funds with similar objectives, proposed distributor’s reputation and past performance, and competitiveness of fund in industry.

### **Chapter 89 Master-Feeder Structure**

FOR establishment of a master-feeder structure.

### **Chapter 90 Mergers**

Case-by-case basis for proposed merger, considering resulting fee structure, performance of each fund, and continuity of management.

### **Chapter 91 Advisory Vote on Merger Related Compensation**

AGAINST “golden parachutes” which are abusive,

- such as those that exceed 3x of the cash severance or
- if the cash severance multiple is greater than 2.99x or
- contain tax gross-ups or

- provide for accelerated vesting of equity awards, (however, pro-rata vesting of awards based on past service is acceptable) or
- are triggered prior to completion of the transaction or
- if the payouts are not contingent on the executive's termination.

## **Miscellaneous Shareholder Proposals**

### **Chapter 92 Independent Directors**

FOR shareholder proposals asking that a three-quarters majority of directors be independent.

FOR shareholder proposals asking that board's Audit, Compensation, and/or Nominating committees be composed exclusively of independent directors.

FOR shareholder proposals that the Chairman OR lead director be independent.

### **Chapter 93 Statement of the Purpose of a Corporation Review**

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a review of the statement of the purpose of a corporation and make recommendations to shareholders on how the purpose of a corporation signed by the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer can be fully implemented.

### **Chapter 94 Majority Voting in the Election of Directors**

FOR shareholder proposals regarding majority voting in the election of Directors in uncontested meetings.

### **Chapter 95 Election of Non-executive Directors**

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting election of non-executive directors.

### **Chapter 96 Employee Representation on the Board of Directors**

AGAINST shareholder proposals on employee representation on the Board of Directors.

### **Chapter 97 Reimbursement of Shareholder for Expenses Incurred**

CASE-BY-CASE for proposals for reimbursing proxy solicitation expenses in contested meetings.

FOR proposals for reimbursing proxy solicitation expenses in contested meetings in cases where EGAN-JONES recommends in favor of the dissidents.

### **Chapter 98 Terminate the Investment Advisor**

CAS-BY-CASE basis for proposals for terminating the investment advisor, considering fund's performance and history of shareholder relations.

## **Chapter 99 Tax Payments on Restricted Awards**

AGAINST shareholder proposals to adopt a policy that the Company will pay the personal taxes owed on restricted stock awards on behalf of named executive officers.

## **Chapter 100 Recovery of Unearned Management Bonuses**

AGAINST shareholder proposals to adopt an executive compensation recoupment policy.

## **Chapter 101 Senior Executive Stock Retention**

FOR shareholder proposals that request adoption of a policy requiring senior executives to retain a significant percentage of shares.

## **Chapter 102 Deferral Period for Certain Compensation of Senior Executives**

Shareholder proposals that request that the Compensation committee make the following changes to any annual cash incentive program (“Bonus Program”), as applicable to senior executives, in order to promote a longer-term perspective: an award to a senior executive under a Bonus Program that is based on one or more financial measurements whose performance measurement period is one year or shorter shall not be paid in full for a period following the award; and, the Committee shall develop a methodology for (a) determining the length of the Deferral Period and what proportion of a Bonus should be paid immediately; (b) adjusting the remainder of the Bonus over the Deferral Period in a manner that (i) allows accurate assessment of risks taken during the PMP that could have affected performance on the Financial Metric(s) and (ii) allows the Company to recoup Bonus compensation pursuant to its clawback policy; and (c) paying out the remainder of the Bonus at the end of the Deferral Period. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two results on the Compensation Score; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 103 Sustainability Metrics and Executive Compensation**

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on sustainability metrics and executive compensation. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 104 Deduct Impact of Stock Buybacks from Executive Pay**

Shareholder proposals that request the board of directors adopt a policy that the board will not utilize “earnings per share” (“EPS”) or its variations (e.g., diluted or operating EPS) or financial ratios (return on assets or net assets or equity) in determining a senior executive’s incentive compensation or eligibility for such compensation, unless the Board utilizes the number of outstanding shares on the beginning date of the performance period and excludes the effect of stock buybacks that may have occurred between that date and the end of the performance period. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 105 Government Service Golden Parachute**

AGAINST shareholder proposals on policy prohibiting the vesting of equity-based awards (including stock options, restricted stock and other stock awards granted under an equity incentive plan), for senior executives due to a voluntary resignation to enter government service.

## **Chapter 106 Nonqualified Savings Plan Earnings**

AGAINST shareholder proposals to adopt a policy that prohibits the practice of paying above-market earnings on the non-tax-qualified retirement saving or deferred income account balances of senior executive officers.

**GAAP Financial Metrics for Purposes of Determining Executive Compensation.** Shareholder proposals asking to adopt a policy that when using performance metrics to calculate senior executive compensation, the Company shall not adjust performance metrics that are calculated in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Stockholder proposals on non-GAAP measures disclosure, to adopt a policy that when the Company adjusts or modifies any generally accepted accounting principles (“GAAP”) financial performance metric for determining senior executive compensation, it should include a specific explanation for each adjustment and a reconciliation of the adjusted metric to GAAP. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 107 Legal and Compliance Costs in Executive Compensation metrics**

Shareholder proposals requesting that financial performance metrics should not be adjusted to exclude legal or compliance costs in evaluating performance for incentive payouts to senior executives. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposal requesting inclusion of legal and compliance costs in incentive compensation metrics. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 108 Tax Transparency**

Shareholder proposals on tax transparency request that the Company issue a tax transparency report to shareholders, at reasonable expense and excluding confidential information, prepared in consideration of the indicators and guidelines set forth in the Global Reporting Initiative’s (GRI) Tax Standard. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores on the Governance Rating; AGAINST otherwise

## **Chapter 109 ESG Metrics and Executive Compensation**

Shareholder proposals asking that the Company prepare a report, at reasonable cost and omitting proprietary information, describing if, and how, it plans to integrate ESG metrics into the performance measures of named executive officers under the Company's compensation incentive plans. Based on the overall Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 110 Community Impacts and Company's Executive Compensation Program**

Shareholder proposals asking that the Board of directors publish a report, at reasonable expense, within a reasonable time, and omitting confidential or propriety information, assessing the feasibility of integrating community stakeholder concerns and impacts into the Company's executive compensation program. Based on the overall Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 111 Target Amounts for CEO Compensation – Pay Disparity**

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company take into consideration the pay grades and/or salary ranges of all classifications of Company employees when setting target amounts for CEO compensation. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 112 Equity Ratio Disclosure in Executive Compensation**

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company disclose equity ratio disclosure used by the compensation committee to set executive compensation. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST shareholder proposal on reform of executive compensation policy with social responsibility.

FOR shareholder proposals asking to ensure greater independence of compensation advisors. FOR shareholder proposals to discontinue professional services allowance for NEOs.

Shareholder proposals on cessation of Stock Option and Bonus Programs. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores on the Governance Rating; AGAINST otherwise

## **Chapter 113 Executive Perquisites**

Shareholder proposals requesting that payments and/or reimbursements to current and former Named Executive Officers (NEOs) for personal expenses be discontinued. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 114 Incentive Compensation and Risks of Material Losses**

Shareholder proposals asking that the Company prepare a report, at reasonable cost, disclosing whether and how the Company has identified employees or positions, individually or as part of a group, who are eligible to receive incentive-based compensation that is tied to metrics that could have the ability to expose the Company to possible material losses, as determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 115 Advisory Vote on Executive Compensation**

Shareholder proposals on adoption of advisory vote on executive compensation. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise. Change from overall Governance Score.

## **Chapter 116 Drug Pricing Strategies in Incentive Compensation Plans**

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting report on the extent to which risks related to public concern over drug pricing strategies are integrated into incentive compensation arrangements. The report should include, but need not be limited to, discussion of whether incentive compensation arrangements reward, or not penalize, senior executives for (i) adopting pricing strategies, or making and honoring commitments about pricing, that incorporate public concern regarding the level or rate of increase in prescription drug prices; and (ii) considering risks related to drug pricing when allocating capital.

## **Chapter 117 Executive Pay Confidential Voting**

FOR shareholder proposals to adopt a bylaw provision restricting management's access to vote tallies prior to the annual Meeting with respect to certain executive pay matters.

## **Chapter 118 Clawback Provision Amendment**

AGAINST shareholder proposals that request the board of directors amend the Company's clawback policy for executive compensation.

## **Chapter 119 Quantifiable Performance Metrics**

CASE-BY-CASE on shareholder proposals that request the board adopt the policy regarding quantifiable performance metrics. Based on the Compensation Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 120 Accelerated Vesting**

FOR shareholder proposals to implement double triggered with pro-rata vesting of awards.



## **Chapter 121 Dividends**

CASE-BY-CASE basis for shareholder proposals to increase dividends, but generally AGAINST in the absence of a compelling reason for.

## **Chapter 122 Vote Tabulation**

FOR shareholder proposals that request all matters presented to shareholders, other than the election of directors, shall be decided by a simple majority of the shares voted ‘For’ and ‘Against’ an item and abstentions from the vote count be excluded.

## **Chapter 123 Proxy Voting Review**

Shareholder proposal regarding proxy voting review report. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 124 Disclosure of Voting Results**

FOR shareholder proposals requesting separate disclosure of voting results by classes of shares.

## **Chapter 125 Right to Convert a Limited Amount of Class B Common Stock into Class A Common Stock**

FOR shareholder proposals on annual right to convert a limited amount of class B Common Stock (10 votes per share) into Class A Common Stock (1 vote per share).

## **Chapter 126 Maryland’s Unsolicited Takeover Act**

FOR shareholder proposals requesting that the Board opt out of MUTA, which allows the board of directors to make changes by board resolution only, without shareholder approval, to the Company’s capital structure and charter/bylaws. These include, but are not limited to:

- › the ability to re-classify a board;
- › the exclusive right to set the number of directors;
- › limiting shareholders’ ability to call special meetings to a threshold of at least a majority of shares.

## **Chapter 127 Certification of Sound Commercial Practices Related to the Selling of Financial Products and Services**

Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Chapter 128 Risk Oversight Committee / Public Policy Committee**

Shareholder proposals requesting a report, at reasonable cost, omitting proprietary or legally privileged information, discussing the merits of establishing a risk oversight board committee to oversee the Company’s policies including human rights, environment, domestic governmental

regulations, foreign affairs and international relations affecting the Company's business. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

### **Chapter 129 Creation of a New Technology Committee**

Shareholder proposal that requests that the Company create a new technology committee. Based on the Cybersecurity Risk Score, FOR in cases when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

### **Chapter 130 The Board's Nominee Disclosure Policy/ True Diversity Board Policy**

Shareholder proposal requesting a policy to disclose to shareholders the following: a description of the specific minimum qualifications that the Board's nominating committee believes must be met by a nominee to be on the board of directors; and each nominee's skills, ideological perspectives, and experience presented in a chart or matrix form. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise

### **Chapter 131 Content Management Report/Content Enforcement Policies**

Shareholder proposals requesting a report reviewing the efficacy of its enforcement of its terms of service related to content policies and assessing the risks posed by content management controversies. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

### **Chapter 132 Political Advertising and Posts**

Shareholder proposals asking that the Board of Directors prepare, at a reasonable cost and excluding proprietary information, a report on the controversy surrounding political advertising and posts. Such report should evaluate the implications of the Company's policies that may exempt politicians' posts and political advertisements from elements of platform rules such as the Company's Community Standards and its fact-checking process. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

### **Chapter 133 Algorithm Disclosure**

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company provide more quantitative and qualitative information on how algorithm systems are used to target and deliver ads, error rates, and the impact these systems had on user speech and experiences. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

### **Chapter 134 Anticompetitive Practices**

Shareholder proposal regarding a report on board oversight of risks related to anticompetitive practices. Based on the Governance Rating score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores on the Governance Rating; AGAINST otherwise.

### **Chapter 135 Report on Takedown Requests**

Shareholder proposals regarding a report (within a reasonable time frame, at reasonable cost, and excluding confidential information) assessing the feasibility of public disclosing on an annual basis, by jurisdiction, the list of delisted, censored, downgraded, proactively penalized, or blacklisted terms, queries or sites that the Company implements in response to government requests. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

### **Chapter 136 Report on Whistleblower Policies and Practices**

Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

### **Chapter 137 Competitiveness and Protection of Personal Information**

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting that the Board of directors inform the shareholders of the investments the bank/company intends to make to update its computer systems so as to increase its competitiveness while enhancing privacy protection.

### **Chapter 138 Facial Recognition Technology**

Shareholder proposals on prohibition on sales of facial recognition technology to all government entities. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise. Change from AGAINST.

### **Chapter 139 Mandatory Arbitration Bylaw**

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting that the Company adopt to a mandatory arbitration bylaw.

Shareholder proposal regarding a report on the impact of the use of mandatory arbitration on employees and workplace culture. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposal requesting additional reporting on risks associated with the use of certain concealment clauses. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting that shareholders be allowed the opportunity at shareholder meetings to alert board members that the shareholders seek more information or favor a particular approach to corporate policy and that the Company constitution should include the clause: “The Company in general meeting may by ordinary resolution express an opinion or request information about the way in which a power of the Company partially or exclusively vested in the Directors has been or should be exercised. Such a resolution must relate to a material risk identified by the Directors or the Company and cannot advocate action that would violate any law or relate to any personal claim or grievance. Such a resolution is advisory only and does not bind the Directors or the Company”. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

## **Shareholder Proposals on Social and Environmental Issues**

### **Chapter 140 Energy, Environment and Health Issues**

AGAINST shareholder proposals asking the Company to issue a report in support of circular economy.

AGAINST shareholder proposals that request companies to follow the CERES Principles.

Generally AGAINST proposals requesting reports that seek additional information, unless it appears that the Company has not adequately addressed shareholders' relevant environmental concerns but FOR shareholder proposals requesting additional disclosure regarding hydraulic fracturing.

AGAINST shareholder proposals that requests that the Company develop and implement a comprehensive sustainable palm oil sourcing policy.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting that the Company issue an annual report to shareholders, at reasonable cost and omitting proprietary information, on plastic pollution.

AGAINST shareholder proposals promoting recycling.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a report on recyclable packaging.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a report on electronic waste.

AGAINST shareholder proposals on proper disposal of pharmaceuticals.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a report on nanomaterials.

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company adopt GHG emissions reductions goals and issue a report at reasonable cost and omitting proprietary information, on its plans to achieve these goals. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals to encourage energy conservation and the development of alternate renewable and clean energy resources and to reduce or eliminate toxic wastes and greenhouse gas emissions. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on renewable energy adoption. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on distributed – scale clean electricity. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals that request that the Board prepare, at reasonable expense and omitting proprietary information, a sustainability report. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company nominate environmental expert to the Board of Directors. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals on establishing a climate change committee. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on climate change. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company establish an annual advisory vote policy with respect to its environmental and climate change action plan and objectives. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting environmental and social due diligence. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on 2-degree scenario. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company suspend memberships of industry associations that are involved in lobbying inconsistent with the goals of the Paris agreement. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on deforestation impacts in supply chain. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on climate change and business model. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposal requesting a report on investment of retirement funds in companies contributing to climate change. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on public advocacy on climate change and energy by relevant industry associations. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on stranded assets due to climate change. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on risks of petrochemical investments. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST shareholder proposals on new fossil fuel financing requesting adoption of a policy in which the Company takes available actions to help ensure that its financing does not contribute to new fossil fuel supplies.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on reduction of water pollution.

Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposal requesting a report on quantitative metrics identified by the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) as providing material information on water resource risks for the meat, poultry and dairy sector at reasonable expense and excluding confidential information. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on environmental expenditures (voluntary climate-related activities) including incurred costs and associated significant and actual benefits that have accrued to shareholders, the public health and the environment, including the global climate, from the Company's environment-related activities that are voluntary and that exceed

U.S. and foreign compliance and regulatory requirements. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a report on electrification of the transportation sector.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a report on sugar and public health.

AGAINST shareholder proposals regarding cage free egg progress disclosure.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on antibiotics in livestock. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST shareholder proposals to adopt a policy to phase out the routine use of antibiotics in the meat and poultry supply chain.

AGAINST shareholder proposals on protein diversification.



AGAINST shareholder proposal on disclosure of pesticide management data, requesting that the Company disclose, at reasonable expense and omitting proprietary information, quantitative metrics demonstrating measurable progress toward the reduction of synthetic chemical pesticide use in the Company's supply chain.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting that the Company voluntarily label genetically engineered (GE) ingredients in its products.

AGAINST shareholder proposals that request the Company prepare a report, at reasonable expense and omitting proprietary information, assessing actual and potential material financial risks or operational impacts on the Company related to these genetically modified organisms (GMO issues).

Shareholder proposals that request the Company prepare a report, on the social, health, and environmental effects of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST shareholder proposals to eliminate GE ingredients from the Company's products, or proposals asking for reports outlining the steps necessary to eliminate GE ingredients from the Company's products.

Shareholder proposals that request the Company prepare a report disclosing the governance measures the Company has implemented to more effectively monitor and manage financial and reputational risks related to the opioid crisis in the U.S. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals that request the Compensation committee prepare a report on drug pricing. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST shareholders proposals that request fair distribution and access to life-sustaining drugs and vaccines in affordable prices in both the United States and in low-income countries.

Shareholder proposal requesting a report on transfer of intellectual property to potential COVID-19 manufacturers. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposal requesting report on government financial support and access to COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposal requestion a report on public health costs of protecting vaccine technology. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company discontinue global sales of baby powder containing talc. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a report on health risks of continued in-store tobacco sales.

AGAINST shareholder resolutions to move away from the production, marketing, or distribution of addictive or other harmful materials like opioids and tobacco.

AGAINST shareholder proposals seeking support for the descheduling of Cannabis.

AGAINST shareholders proposal requesting that the Company create a committee to prepare a report regarding the impact of plant closure on communities and alternatives to help mitigate the effects.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a report on the Company's efforts, to identify and reduce environmental and health hazards associated with past, present and future handling of coal combustion residuals and how those efforts may reduce legal, reputational and financial risks to the Company.

AGAINST shareholder proposals on transition to a public benefit corporation.

AGAINST shareholder proposals on financial initiatives that promote and strengthen communities, focusing on not only their economic effect but their social impact as well.

#### **Chapter 141 Northern Ireland**

AGAINST proposals related to the MacBride Principles.

#### **Chapter 142 Military Business**

Proposals on defense issues. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Proposals requesting reports that seek additional information on military related operations, unless the Company has been unresponsive to shareholder relevant requests. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on policies regarding military and militarized policing agencies. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise. Change from AGAINST.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on development of products for military. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise. Change from AGAINST.

#### **Chapter 143 Human Rights, Labor Issues and International Operations Policies**

Shareholder proposals on establishing a human rights committee. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company nominate for election at least one director with human/civil rights expertise. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals seeking a human rights report or human rights due diligence process to assess, identify, prevent and mitigate actual and potential adverse human rights impacts. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report evaluating the efficacy of the Company's existing policies and practices to address the human rights impacts of its content management policies to address misinformation and disinformation across its platforms. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals on policies of freedom of expression – to report annually to shareholders, at reasonable expense and excluding confidential and proprietary information, regarding the Company's policies on freedom of expression and access to information, including whether it has publicly committed to respect freedom of expression as a human right; the oversight mechanisms for formulating and administering policies on freedom of expression and access to information.

Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposal regarding adoption of policy on the Company's commitment to respect the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining in its operations. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals seeking reports on the Company's activities affecting indigenous peoples. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST shareholder proposal regarding human and indigenous peoples' rights and asking the Company to modify its committee charters, bylaws and/or articles of incorporation, to articulate the fiduciary duties of Board and management to ensure due diligence on human and indigenous peoples' rights.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting the Board institute transparent procedures to avoid holding investments in companies that, in management's judgment, substantially contribute to genocide or crimes against humanity, the most egregious violations of human rights.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting report on business with conflict-complicit governments.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a report on the Company's activities related to safety measures and mitigation of harm associated with Company products.

Shareholder proposals requesting workplace safety reports: Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company issue a report, at reasonable cost and omitting proprietary information, to include key performance indicators on human capital management related to the Company's portfolio, including reporting on the number and types of complaints received from employees, including contractors and temporary workers, the remedies offered under its grievance mechanism and the percentage of complaints resolved.

Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals to report to shareholders on the Company's minimum requirements and standards related to workforce practices. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST shareholder proposals regarding a slavery and human trafficking report.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report assessing the risk of increased sexual exploitation of children as the Company develops and offers additional privacy tools. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company prepare an annual report regarding sexual harassment complaints. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting that the Company issue a report on prison labor in supply chain. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST on proposals relating to the Maquiladora Standards and international operating policies.

AGAINST proposals requesting reports on international operating policy issues, unless it appears the Company has not adequately addressed shareholder relevant concerns.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting a report, omitting confidential and privileged information and at reasonable expense, detailing any known or potential risks and costs to the company caused by enacted or proposed state policies severely restricting reproductive rights, and detailing any strategies beyond litigation and legal compliance that the company may deploy to minimize or mitigate these risks.

AGAINST shareholder proposals supporting activities that include abortion, euthanasia or assisted suicide.

AGAINST shareholder proposals promoting in vitro fertilization for either assisting conception or for research.

## **Chapter 144 World Debt Crisis**

AGAINST proposals dealing with Third World debt.

AGAINST proposals requesting reports on Third World debt issues, unless it appears the Company has not adequately addressed shareholder relevant concerns.

## **Chapter 145 Equal Employment Opportunity and Discrimination**

Shareholder proposals asking the Company to set a diversity target (of min of 40%) for the composition of its Board. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals relating to diversity report or policy. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting establishment of equal employment opportunity policy. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting that the board of directors oversee a third party racial justice audit. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a racial equity audit or a report on progress toward eliminating racial discrimination at the Company. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals regarding assessing inclusion in the workplace and requesting a report to shareholders on whether written policies or unwritten norms at the Company reinforce racism in the Company culture. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals on gender pay gap. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposal requesting paid sick leave for all employees. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on worker misclassification. Based on the overall Governance Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores; AGAINST otherwise.

AGAINST shareholder proposals requesting that the Company issue a report on ethical recruitment in global supply chains.

AGAINST proposals requesting reports that seek additional information about affirmative action efforts, unless the Company has a past history of issues.

AGAINST shareholder proposal requesting disclosure of languages in which the directors are fluent in the skills and expertise matrix of the circular.

#### **Chapter 146 Holy Land Principles**

AGAINST shareholder proposals to approve the implementation of the Holy Land Principles.

#### **Chapter 147 Animal Rights**

AGAINST proposals that deal with animal rights.

AGAINST shareholder proposal supply chain practices report focusing on animal welfare.

#### **Chapter 148 Product Integrity and Marketing**

AGAINST proposals on ceasing production of socially questionable products.

AGAINST proposals requesting reports that seek additional information regarding product integrity and marketing issues, unless it appears the Company has been unresponsive to shareholder relevant requests.

#### **Chapter 149 Fair Practice/Business Ethics**

Shareholder proposals requesting a policy to pause sourcing of cotton and other raw materials from China. Based on the Governance Rating score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores on the Governance Rating; AGAINST otherwise.

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on external costs of disinformation in digital advertising. Based on the Governance Rating score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores on the Governance Rating; AGAINST otherwise.

#### **Chapter 150 Cybersecurity**

Shareholder proposals requesting a report on cyber risk. Based on the Cyber Security Risk Score: FOR when the Company receives one of the lowest two scores ; AGAINST otherwise.

*In rare cases, Egan-Jones may choose to override the documented guideline recommendation when we believe it to be in the best long-term financial interest of shareholders.*