



The Alternative Investor

Performance

News

Trends

Regulatory updates

**Real Assets.
Real Returns.
Infrastructure
delivering
sustainable
growth worldwide.**

This month's features explore the evolution of real assets and infrastructure — from the AI-driven energy surge to the convergence of infrastructure, real estate, and sustainability. **IFM Investors' Luba Nikulina** writes that as markets face inflation and volatility, infrastructure is emerging as the cornerstone of portfolio resilience. **Transatlantic Power Holdings' Omar Kodmani** sees US renewables as the smartest play on the AI power boom, while **Nexus Core Systems' Christopher Yoshida** calls it a new industrial revolution measured in "watts of intelligence." **S4E Capital's Jodi Bartin & Stuart Martin** highlight how infrastructure is expanding beyond Earth, with space-based assets emerging as new critical utilities underpinning commerce, security, and impact investing. **Guinness Global Investors' Mark Brennan** and **CSC's Natalie Breen** examine mega-trends reshaping real assets, from ageing demographics to digital infrastructure, creating hybrid opportunities across healthcare, data centres, and social housing. **Iroquois Valley's Chris Zuehlsdorff** looks to regenerative agriculture's next frontier — scalable, resilient "Farmland Hubs." In Opinion, **Enko Capital's Cyrille Nkontchou** argues African private equity must evolve through local expertise, not imported models. And in this month's Letter from America, **Prosek Partners' Mark Kollar** notes US private equity money is flowing to Europe, Japan, and India as domestic deal supply tightens and global opportunities widen. Finally, in collaboration with The Money Maze, **Oxford University Endowment Management CIO Neamul Mohsin** shares how Oxford invests with intellect and discipline — balancing timeless purpose with modern precision.



Hedge Funds Extend Gains as Macro Leads in October

Hedge funds delivered another positive month in October. Year-to-date gains continued as markets digested softer inflation and resilient earnings while navigating pockets of volatility ([see market review](#)). The HFRI Fund Weighted Composite Index rose +0.7%.

In equities, the HFRI Equity Hedge (Total) Index gained +0.6%, with fundamentals outperforming quantitative and momentum-based strategies. EH: Healthcare led with +8.0%, followed by EH: Technology at +2.5%. EH: Quantitative Directional lagged -1.2%, as model-driven portfolios struggled with rapid style rotations and erratic volatility patterns.

Meanwhile, event-driven strategies posted more modest gains, with the HFRI Event-Driven (Total) Index up +0.3%. Credit Arbitrage and Distressed/Restructuring were the highlights, up +1.6% and +1.2%, respectively. Activist funds underperformed, however, as slower M&A pipelines and muted large-cap engagement limited catalysts for value creation; the Activist Index fell -2.9%.

This was a good month for macro, aided by renewed cross-asset volatility. The HFRI Macro (Total) Index advanced +1.3%, with Commodities up +2.7% and Systematic Diversified up +1.5%. Discretionary traders added +0.9%, while Currencies slipped -0.2%, the only sub-strategy in the red.

The HFRI Relative Value (Total) Index rose +0.8%, marking another steady month for arbitrage strategies. Fixed Income – Sovereign led with +1.6%, followed by Volatility at +1.5%. Yield Alternatives declined by -0.6%, as narrowing spreads constrained opportunities.

Regionally, it was China that struggled -3.9%, but remains up +16.5% year-to-date. India, however, outperformed, gaining +3.9% to move into positive territory for the year at +2.0%. North America edged lower and Europe was marginally higher.

UPCOMING EVENTS

12 November 2025
Hydrogen Conference

12 November 2025
London Family Office & High Net Worth Annual Conference

12 November 2025
The 27th European Family Office Forum

12 November 2025
Private Equity Boston Forum

13 November 2025
Pension Bridge Real Assets

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\$1.3tn

Infrastructure assets under management - June 2024

Boston Consulting Group

\$87bn

Infrastructure fund raising in 2024, 12% y-on-y increase from 2023

Boston Consulting Group

Ardian Fund Hits \$13.5bn Cap as Infrastructure Booms

Capital continues to flow to the biggest brands, with Ardian's Infrastructure Fund VI (AIF VI) hitting the \$13.5 billion hard cap. The Paris-based firm, which now manages \$47 billion in the infrastructure strategy, said US institutions accounted for the largest share. AIF VI invests in core and core-plus European infrastructure, targeting energy transition, renewables, digital networks, and sustainable transport, with a focus on decarbonisation and social impact. The fund has deployed more than 40% of its capital.

Manulife Closes \$5.5bn Infrastructure Fund

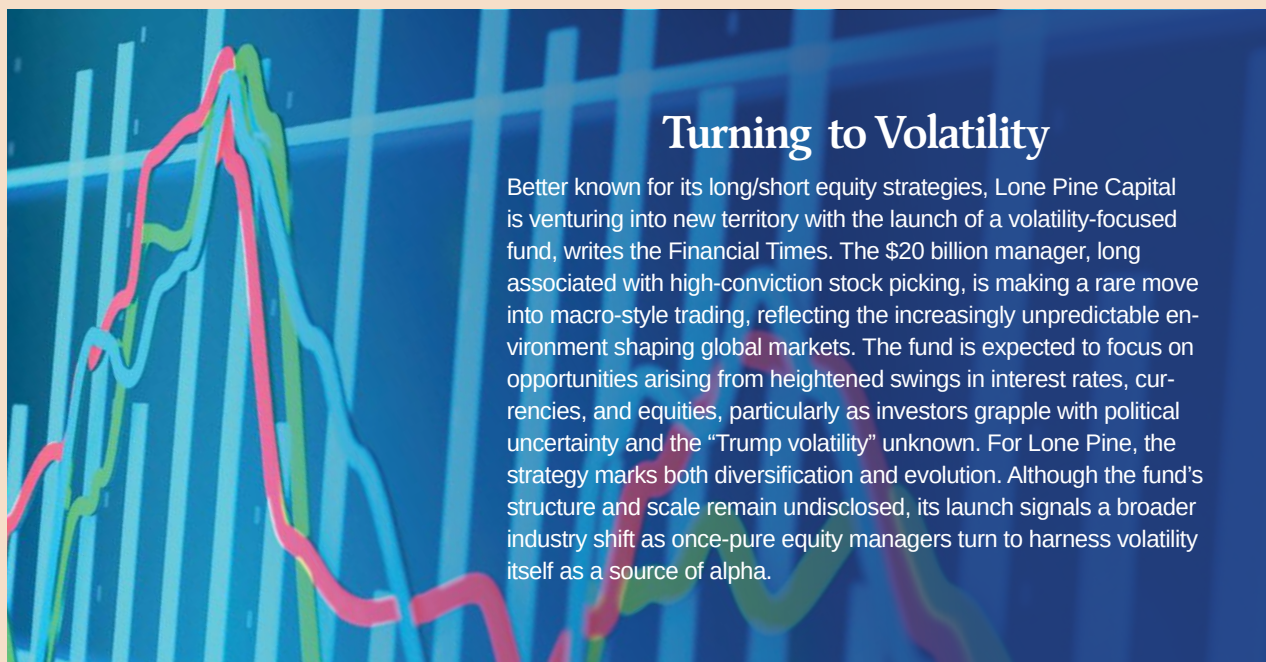
Manulife Investment Management held the final close of its Infrastructure Fund III, raising \$5.5 billion. Focused on core and core-plus assets, the oversubscribed fund targets long-term investments across energy, transportation, digital and social infrastructure, particularly OECD markets. Manulife's infrastructure platform, which has grown significantly over the past decade, looks to combine infrastructure's stable cash-flow assets with sustainability-linked growth opportunities.

Integrum Raises \$2.5bn

Little sign of slowdown in LP tech interest as Integrum closed its second fund, Integrum Capital Partners II, at \$2.5 billion, exceeding the hard cap. The New York firm, founded by former Goldman Sachs and Blackstone execs, targets technology-enabled and services businesses, accelerating growth through operational transformation and digital scaling.

AEA Closes \$550m Credit Continuation Fund

Underscoring strong institutional demand for seasoned private credit strategies, AEA Investors closed a \$550 million private debt continuation vehicle led by The Carlyle Group's Carlyle AlInvest Partners. New York based AEA Private Debt focuses on directly originated senior secured and unitranche loans across diversified sectors in North America.

UPDATES (cont.)**Turning to Volatility**

Better known for its long/short equity strategies, Lone Pine Capital is venturing into new territory with the launch of a volatility-focused fund, writes the Financial Times. The \$20 billion manager, long associated with high-conviction stock picking, is making a rare move into macro-style trading, reflecting the increasingly unpredictable environment shaping global markets. The fund is expected to focus on opportunities arising from heightened swings in interest rates, currencies, and equities, particularly as investors grapple with political uncertainty and the “Trump volatility” unknown. For Lone Pine, the strategy marks both diversification and evolution. Although the fund’s structure and scale remain undisclosed, its launch signals a broader industry shift as once-pure equity managers turn to harness volatility itself as a source of alpha.

Millennium’s \$5bn Push

There is no stopping the big multi-managers. Millennium is in discussions with investors to raise \$5 billion for a new vehicle targeting private-market investments, Bloomberg reported. The planned fund, expected to include \$3 billion from external investors and \$2 billion of internal capital, would mark a significant expansion of Millennium’s multi-strategy platform into longer-dated, less-liquid opportunities such as private credit, secondaries, and

private-company stakes. The move underscores the firm’s scale, confidence, adaptability, and growing ambitions beyond public markets. It also highlights ongoing institutional appetite for established multi-manager platforms that pair rigorous risk controls with steady returns. Millennium’s hybrid model continues to set the tone for the sector, blending diversification and deep infrastructure.

Elliott Builds Latest War Chest

Elliott Investment Management is raising up to \$7 billion for a new draw-down vehicle, effectively a ‘war chest’ to deploy when market dislocations arise. According to Bloomberg, the fund is designed to give the firm flexibility to act opportunistically across distressed, activist or arbitrage investments. Elliott currently manages around \$76 billion. In previous cycles, Elliott raised around \$13 billion in 2022, \$7 billion in 2023 and \$8.5 billion in

May 2024 for its tenth draw-down fund. The current raise marks its eleventh such vehicle, underscoring the firm’s continued appetite for flexible, event-driven capital. Rather than targeting specific companies at launch, these are drawdown structures to be used as opportunities emerge, with a focus on dislocated assets and underperforming corporates for high-conviction activist plays.

Point72 Splits Equities Arm

Point72 Asset Management is reorganising its fundamental equities business into two separate units. According to a memo seen by Bloomberg, the firm will introduce a new brand, Valist, alongside the existing Point72 Equities division from January 2026. Both will operate under the same umbrella but maintain distinct commercial identities, a move intended to build new corporate and research

relationships. This comes as Point72’s assets have nearly quadrupled since its 2018 relaunch, driven by expanding equity and multi-strategy mandates.

The split reflects a broader trend among large multi-manager hedge funds, including Citadel and Balyasny, towards operational segmentation within the equities businesses. Creating separate branded units allows Point72 to manage scale

more effectively, attract and retain top talent with clearer performance accountability, and improve external visibility with corporates and brokers. It also underlines Cohen’s ambition to professionalise and institutionalise Point72’s fundamental stock-picking operations, ensuring they remain competitive.

UPDATES (cont.)

Englander Eases Grip on Millennium

Izzy Englander has begun the gradual handover of his \$65 billion hedge fund empire as Millennium sold a 15% minority stake that values the firm at around \$14 billion. This is the first time since founding Millennium in 1989 that Englander has sold equity in his firm.

The stake has been acquired by a group of institutional investors led by Petershill Partners PLC and other long-term backers.

In an internal memo, Millennium said the transaction represented “the latest step in our evolution and further positions Millennium for the future.”

Plans to sell between 10–15% of the business were first reported in June 2025, when Millennium began exploring ways to broaden ownership among senior executives and external investors as part of a long-term succession plan.

The completed sale effectively institutionalises that strategy, reducing Englander’s sole ownership and aligning the firm more closely with peers that have opened their capital structures to ensure continuity.

OPINION

Why Private Equity in Africa Requires a Distinctly African Approach

African businesses face an enormous funding gap between the amount of capital they need to grow and the amount of loans that are provided by local banks. The relative under-capitalisation of the banking sector in Africa and the fact that the focus of local banks is very often funding the public sector (only about one third of banking loans in Africa go to the private sector) means that local businesses often cannot access the capital they require from traditional banking sources.

This is particularly true of SMEs, who are often the major engine of growth in African economies but who unlike large established companies, can find it particularly difficult to access capital. So private equity can play a critical role in the transformation of African economies by providing not only capital but also know-how and expertise to SMEs who in aggregate, account for the vast majority of private sector jobs.

We should, however, acknowledge that private equity has faced challenges in Africa. The industry does not have a long history in the continent and that means there is a lack of familiarity with it within businesses and indeed governments. Although the absolute number of players in the PE space in Africa, at around 200, is quite large now, the total AUM is still relatively small.

I have seen both sides of the equation of private equity in Africa because I started as an entrepreneur around 25 years ago when the

industry was also just starting. Familiar problems in terms of corporate governance and the rule of law have impacted the industry’s effectiveness. A copy and paste approach that takes the model used in developed markets and seeks to repeat it in Africa has not, and will not, work.

That is because what makes PE succeed in Africa is very different to what makes it succeed in developed markets. In developed markets, financial engineering can transform the value of a company. But in Africa that is not the case, because the high cost of funding and FX cost, which are effectively zero or minimal in developed markets, but significant in Africa.

Instead, what works in Africa is finding the right companies in the right sectors that are able to grow strongly, and then pulling the right levels in terms of strategic focus, people and operations. There is much stronger real growth in Africa than in most developed markets which can power PE investments and value creation. In most successful PE investments in Africa, bottom-line growth accounts for the majority of the value creation. For private equity to work on the continent it needs a distinctly African approach focusing on the tremendous growth and demographic potential available there.

Cyrille Nkontchou, Managing Partner and Co-Founder, Enko Capital

The views expressed are solely those of the author and do not represent the opinions of their employer, affiliated organisations, or The Alternative Investor.

UPDATES (cont.)

EQT Eyes Secondary Push

According to reports, EQT Group is eyeing a strategic move into secondaries, as the Stockholm-listed firm held exploratory talks with several prominent candidates. According to Bloomberg, EQT has engaged in discussions with Collier Capital, HarbourVest Partners and Pantheon, all big players in secondaries investing. The push aligns with EQT's ambitions to boost its capabilities in segments such as secondaries, growth-oriented credit and healthcare platforms, reflecting its broader

strategy to deploy acquisition currency and scale into adjacent asset classes. The move comes after EQT explored a possible deal last year with Arctos Partners, known for liquidity solutions for sports teams and alternative managers, though that effort did not advance. Such discussions underscore EQT's aim to bolster its offering as private capital markets enter an intriguing phase of consolidation and complexity.

Hollyport's \$4.5bn Raise

The continued popularity of private equity secondaries has been underscored by Hollyport Capital's latest \$4.5 billion fundraise, Hollyport Secondary Opportunities IX, which closed 40% above target, according to PitchBook. The London-based firm, founded in 2006, specialises in acquiring mature LP interests across buyout, venture and growth funds, giving investors diversified exposure to "seasoned portfolios". With cumulative assets now exceeding \$10 billion, the firm is well placed to capitalise on a record pipeline of secondary opportunities.

State Street Takes Stake in Collier Capital

Underscoring how traditional financial giants are seeking exposure to established alternative platforms, State Street Investment Management has taken a minority stake in Collier Capital, the London-based pioneer of the private equity secondaries market.

The deal aims to deepen collaboration in private markets and broaden access to alternative strategies for institutional clients, while opening a new source of secondaries for Collier and giving State Street exposure to a leading secondaries franchise.

Founded in 1990 by Jeremy Collier, Collier manages over \$30 billion in assets and operates from offices in London, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul. Its latest vehicle, Collier International Partners IX, closed in 2023 at \$9 billion, ranking among the largest secondaries funds ever raised.

Morgan Stanley Acquires Secondary Platform

Those lines between public and private markets continue to blur, as banks push deeper into the fast-growing world of alternative assets. Morgan Stanley's agreement to acquire EquityZen highlights how Wall Street is repositioning around the expanding universe of private-company investment. This deal — expected to close in early 2026 — will fold EquityZen's secondary-market platform, which connects investors with

shares in late-stage private companies, into Morgan Stanley's wealth-management arm. The deal also marks new CEO Ted Pick's first major move, underscoring the firm's belief that private markets represent a structural growth story. With more companies staying private for longer, demand for liquidity and pre-IPO exposure has surged, alongside investors' growing appetite for broader access to private assets. EquityZen's technology gives

Morgan Stanley a direct channel into that world, allowing it to offer clients access to private-share trading and liquidity solutions for founders and employees. The acquisition reflects a wider trend across global finance, as traditional banks seek new ways to monetise, manage, and democratise exposure to the \$20 trillion-plus private capital market.

UPDATES (cont.)**Horowitz Targets Record \$10bn Raise**

Andreessen Horowitz's a16z is preparing to raise \$10 billion across multiple new funds, its largest capital pool to date.

Around \$6 billion is expected for later-stage tech, with a further \$3 billion allocated to AI infrastructure and applications, underscoring the firm's

conviction that innovation remains the ultimate growth engine. This follows its \$7.2 billion raise in 2024 and \$9 billion in 2022, cementing a16z's position as one of the few venture houses capable of attracting institutional capital at scale during a tighter fundraising cycle.

The size and focus of this raise

signal renewed investor confidence in the next wave of transformative technologies, from GenAI to digital infrastructure, while reaffirming a16z's brand as venture capital's most aggressive and optimistic backer of disruption.

Portfolio Finance Fund Raises \$7.7bn

Dawson Partners' \$7.7 billion fundraising marks an interesting chapter in the evolution of private equity's secondary market, one that reflects how liquidity demand is reshaping the industry's architecture. Rather than buying LP interests outright, Dawson provides portfolio finance by injecting preferred equity into mature private equity portfolios to release liquidity while preserving upside potential. Dawson is one of the world's leading structured-secondaries managers, with more than \$20 billion under management. This raise shows investors now value creativity in how capital returns are managed as much as where they are made.

Goldman Launches PE-style ETF

Goldman Sachs is the latest bank to roll out a more accessible route into private markets, with the launch of an ETF designed to replicate private-equity-style returns. Developed with MSCI Inc., the Goldman Sachs MSCI World Private Equity Return Tracker ETF (GTPE) offers liquid, index-based exposure that 'mirrors' private-equity performance by tracking the MSCI World Private Equity Return Tracker Index, which references about \$7.7 trillion in global private-equity assets. The Goldman quant model identifies listed companies with leverage, size, and value characteristics similar to those of buyout portfolios, creating a tradeable proxy for global private equity returns.

S&P Global Acquires With Intelligence

The acquisition of With Intelligence by S&P Global for \$1.8 billion underscores the value of high-quality alternative fund data. In a world where capital flows increasingly through opaque private markets, access to clean, structured information on fund managers, investors, and deal activity has become indispensable and certainly valuable.

With Intelligence has spent over two decades building precisely that. Founded in 1998 and headquartered in London, the firm has evolved from a niche B2B publisher into a global data powerhouse serving more than 3,000 asset-management clients worldwide. Its rapid growth, backed by the fintech-focused private equity firm Motive

Partners and ICG, positioned it as one of the most valuable independent players in the private markets intelligence space.

With Intelligence's business spans a wide range of alternative-investment verticals. It offers proprietary datasets on general and limited partners, deal flow, and fund performance across private equity, private credit, hedge funds, real estate, and infrastructure. The company complements this data with analytics tools, workflow software, and industry-leading events, creating a full-spectrum intelligence platform for allocators, fund managers, and service providers. Its 2025 acquisition of Realfin expanded coverage into infrastructure and real-asset investing,

adding depth to its already rich dataset. By integrating With Intelligence's capabilities, spanning a wide range of alternative investment verticals, with its own public-market ratings, indices, and benchmarks, S&P Global aims to build what it sees as the most comprehensive bridge between public- and private-market intelligence.

The deal highlights a simple but powerful truth: in modern finance, data on where the money moves is every bit as valuable as the money itself.

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Oxford's Quiet Powerhouse: How Neamul Mohsin Is Shaping Endowment Investing

Adapted from a Money Maze Curated Podcast interview conducted by Simon Brewer with Neamul Mohsin, CIO of Oxford University Endowment Management, released on 4 November 2025.

When Simon Brewer sat down with Neamul Mohsin, the newly appointed Chief Investment Officer of Oxford University Endowment Management (OUem), it was clear from the outset that this was no ordinary conversation about asset allocation. Oxford, with its nine-century legacy of intellect and influence, relies on its multi-billion pound endowment to secure its academic and institutional future. Mohsin, who joined OUem in 2012 and became CIO in 2025, now steers that mission with a blend of analytical rigour, human insight, and a refreshing lack of dogma.

The Oxford Endowment Fund's (OEF) mandate remains straightforward but formidable: deliver a 5% real return while maintaining a 4.25% annual distribution for over £6 billion assets from 46 investors including Oxford, many of its colleges, charitable trusts and other UK charities. "We're supporting today's scholars and tomorrow's," Mohsin explains. "It's a constant balancing act, meeting today's needs without compromising the spending power of

future generations." This dual challenge defines his investment philosophy: protect the capital base while enabling Oxford's intellectual and social reach to thrive indefinitely.

Mohsin's route to Oxford wasn't preordained. After a formative gap year with Arthur Andersen he trained in corporate finance, valuing businesses across sectors and jurisdictions. "It taught me that valuation is more art than science," he reflects. That appreciation for nuance has shaped his investment thinking. A stint in a London family office introduced him to multi-asset investing before a cold email to OUem's founding CIO, Sandra Robertson, set him on the path that would define his career.

Under Mohsin's leadership, the OEF's asset allocation is deliberately fluid. He resists rigid frameworks: "We don't subscribe to an allocation model that says 'X% in private equity, Y% in public.' We start from first principles: what's the best route to achieve our 5% real return?" Private markets, he believes, can justify their illiquidity: "if they deliver a true premium and we



Money Maze Podcast

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Continued:

can still meet our annual cash obligations.” But he’s equally sceptical of assumptions based on history: “Just because private equity did deliver a premium doesn’t mean it will again.”

In venture capital, Mohsin embraces patience and humility. He acknowledges the “power law” of venture returns, where a few firms and founders capture disproportionate value, and only backs managers with exceptional access and conviction. “You need to be in that top decile, or you may as well not play the game,” he says bluntly. The fund’s 16% allocation to venture capital is a testament to its faith in innovation, from AI to material science, but Mohsin is adamant: access trumps allocation.

Selecting partners, for Mohsin, is as much psychology as analysis. He looks for three traits above all: focus, competitiveness and alignment. “You can’t fake focus,” he says. “The best are single-minded and live by the scoreboard.” Alignment, he adds, goes beyond financial commitment: “I want to see philosophical alignment. Are they still hungry, still willing to take risks, or are they in wealth preservation mode?” Perhaps most intriguingly, he looks for what he calls “the chip on the shoulder,” a personal insecurity that continues to drive elite performance. “We actually ask that question: what’s their chip on the shoulder? Everyone we back has one.”

In public markets, OUem blends active and passive exposure pragmatically. “We’re not ideologues,” Mohsin says. “Most active managers underperform, but there are outliers who consistently beat benchmarks. Our job is to find them.” Passive exposure, meanwhile, provides flexibility when capital isn’t yet deployed. It’s an approach rooted in realism and self-awareness: “Everyone thinks they’re above average; investors, managers, allocators. The key is having a process that recognises how easy it is to be wrong.”

That self-discipline defines OUem’s team culture too. Mohsin prizes curiosity, “we’re still slacking each other at midnight about investment ideas,” but insists on focus, honesty and psychological safety. “People must feel they can admit mistakes. Vulnerability makes us better investors.” He admits he’s learned hard lessons himself: the danger of holding underperforming managers for too long out of loyalty or misplaced patience. “The hardest discipline is selling, knowing when an amber flag is about to turn red.”

Managing an endowment from in Oxford brings unique opportunities and temptations. The university teems with intellectual capital, from quantum

computing to biotechnology, but Mohsin is selective in tapping it. “We’re fortunate to have world-class expertise around us, but we must keep an arm’s length. We’re stewards of capital, not venture scouts for every exciting idea.”

On sustainability, OUem’s philosophy is integrated but pragmatic. ESG, for Mohsin, isn’t about ticking boxes. “We engage with our managers continuously, not just at the start. Some have policies, others don’t, but the best live it in their decision-making. The definitions keep shifting, so we stay flexible.”

As for his tenure ahead, Mohsin sees evolution, not revolution. “The principles won’t change. What I want is to improve our ability to see around corners, to spot amber flags earlier, to act decisively.” That blend of caution and curiosity seems emblematic of OUem’s quiet power: patient, precise, purpose-driven.

Oxford’s endowment has long been a symbol of endurance and intellect. Under Mohsin, it is also a laboratory for disciplined innovation, balancing spreadsheets and psychology, spreadsheets and souls. “This business,” he says with a wry smile, “is part art, part science. The trick is knowing which part matters most at any given moment.”

Click [here](#) to listen to the full interview

About OUem

Oxford University Endowment Management (OUem) is responsible for managing the long-term assets of 46 investors including the University of Oxford, many of its colleges, related trusts and other UK charities. Established in 2007, OUem manages the Oxford Endowment Fund (OEF) of over £6 billion, investing globally across public and private markets.

Its mandate is to achieve a 5% real return above inflation while providing a rolling average 4.25% annual distribution to support teaching, research, scholarship and other charitable causes. The portfolio is deliberately long-term and equity-oriented, with significant allocations to public equities, private equity, and venture capital, alongside other diversifying assets.

OUem is recognised for its flexible, first-principles approach to asset allocation, its emphasis on partnership with top-tier managers, and a culture that blends academic rigour with commercial discipline - ensuring its investors’ financial strength for generations to come.

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LETTER FROM AMERICA**prosek**

Follow the Money as US Investment Dollars Move Slowly Overseas

If you follow the money in US private equity, you may end up outside the US, either in Europe, Japan or India.

Or so goes the conversations on Zooms and industry panels in my world over the last 12-18 months. That talk has not slowed down as we head into year end, which makes now perhaps a good time to tally deals and look into some of the third-quarter earnings transcripts and interviews to find out what some of the “bigs” are doing and saying.

Why are US firms reallocating abroad? For starters, overseas markets have an abundant supply of large, complex deals, from European carve-outs to Japan take-privates while the pipeline in the States has dwindled a bit or at least has become a little more difficult to uncover and diligence.

Next, US investors are looking to diversify their holdings and so turn outside the borders with the economic outlook either uncertain (when and by how much will rates decline?) or conditions too volatile (tariff whipsaw and government shutdowns).

And of course, there is the big growing need for secular capital tied to energy transition, digital infrastructure and defense worldwide, especially in Europe – all fueled, as has been well stated, by the private capital.

Let's take a look at some of the numbers and see how much has happened or is expected to happen.

On the impressive side, KKR invested a record \$20 billion in Europe so far this year, with over \$10 billion from buyouts alone. In a Financial Times article covering the IPEM conference in Paris in September, the Co-head of European PE Philipp Freise called this a “pivotal moment” for a Europe that needs the funding for underinvestment in key industries such as defense. Funds that were likely slated for the US are just now being redirected to the continent, he and others have said.



Why are US firms reallocating abroad? For starters, overseas markets have an abundant supply of large, complex deals, from European carve-outs to Japan take-privates...

But there's more to come: Blackstone has reportedly said it plans to invest up to \$500 billion in Europe alone over the next decade, signaling a long runway of US sponsor dollars.

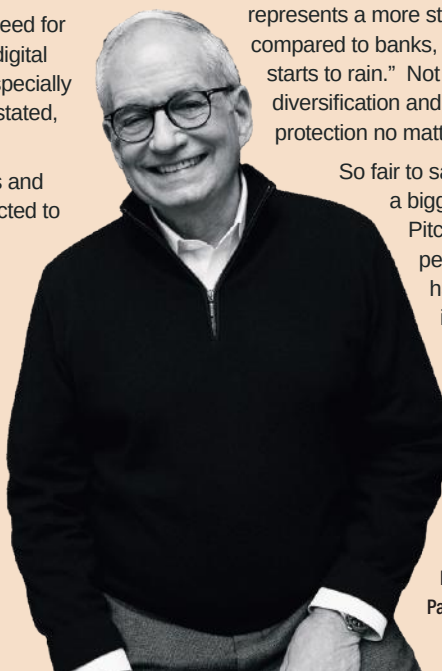
Other recent examples include KKR's \$6.4 billion acquisition of Spectris plc, the UK scientific instruments company and the biggest UK takeover of the year; Blackstone's \$3.4 billion to \$3.5 billion tender offer of TechnoPro Holdings, a Japan IT/engineering services company and the PE firm's largest investment ever in Japan; and Blackstone again with a \$2.4 billion to \$2.5 billion investment in Proudreed French Industrial, a logistics platform and one of France's largest such transactions in recent years. And in India earlier this year, New Mountain Capital took a majority interest (70% to 75% stake) in Access Healthcare Services.

That starts appearing like a pretty good tally.

The typical drivers are behind this tilt, but some generational issues may also be at play. As one observer noted, “The younger generation in SE Asia recognizes that private equity represents a more stable and long-term source of finance compared to banks, which can take the umbrella away if it starts to rain.” Not safe to ever predict clear skies ahead but diversification and value creation can always be all-weather protection no matter the conditions

So fair to say, US sponsors are starting to take a bigger slice of Europe but according to Pitchbook, US investors participated in 19 percent of all European PE deals in the first half of 2025, compared with 17.9 percent in 2024. A bigger take but only by a small margin.

Analysts say they expect US investors to take an even bigger slice of Europe (and Japan and India) next year but probably don't expect too big of a slice. History and data show interest still seems to be fixed on the US market.



Mark Kollar
Partner, Prosek Partners

GUEST ARTICLES

Building Resilience: The Investor Case for Infrastructure

Luba Nikulina, Chief Strategy Officer, IFM Investors

In an era defined by geopolitical uncertainty, inflationary pressures, and volatile markets, investors are searching for stability without sacrificing returns. Increasingly, they are finding it in infrastructure.

Our latest PM700 report - a global study capturing insights from more than 700 institutional investors - reveals a striking trend: allocations to infrastructure are expected to rise by 20% over the next five years. By 2030, 60% of institutional investors globally will hold infrastructure assets, up from 49% today. This represents more than a tactical shift; it signals a structural rebalancing of portfolios toward resilience.

Why Infrastructure, Why Now

We believe infrastructure's growing appeal lies in its dual function: the potential to deliver long-term, stable returns while acting as a potential hedge against macroeconomic and geopolitical risks. Alongside returns, nearly half (47%) of investors in our study cited diversification, inflation protection, and resilience as a principal reason for turning to private markets-qualities that infrastructure embodies.

The trend towards increased infrastructure allocation comes as investors report, in PM700, that infrastructure equity and debt investments have met or exceeded return expectations in the last 12-18 months. More than half (57%) said infrastructure equity returns exceeded expectations, while 49% reported the same for debt investments. Net return expectations for infrastructure equity are now 13.4%, up 200bps from 2024, and nearly on par with private equity (13.65%). Infrastructure debt net return expectations are 9.6%, up 170bps from 2024.

The Evolution of Infrastructure Investing

The data suggests investors are no longer viewing infrastructure solely through a "core" lens. While core assets-transport, utilities, digital and social infrastructure-remain popular, there is growing appetite for higher-yielding, value-add opportunities. Our research found that seven in ten investors are now pursuing strategies that straddle the line between private equity and infrastructure. This evolution reflects a deeper sophistication in how investors approach the asset class: not just as a defensive play, but as a growth engine in its own right.



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By 2030, 60% of institutional investors globally will hold infrastructure assets, up from 49% today. This represents more than a tactical shift; it signals a structural rebalancing of portfolios toward resilience.

Luba Nikulina, IFM Investors

GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

Mid-market projects, in particular, are attracting significant attention. Our data shows that two-thirds (67%) of respondents view this space as rich with opportunity-especially where smaller-scale projects can deliver both financial returns and positive societal impact.

A Call for Policy Partnership

Yet even as investor appetite grows, structural barriers persist. Asset allocation constraints and an inadequate pipeline of investible projects remain major challenges. Six in ten investors told us that better access to higher risk/return opportunities would help crowd in more private capital.

This is where policy matters. Owned by pension funds with the sole purpose to invest, protect and grow the long-term retirement savings of working people, IFM works increasingly with governments to shape policies that encourage investment.

Governments and regulators play a critical role in creating the enabling environment for capital to flow into infrastructure. Clear frameworks, predictable regulation, and public-private partnerships can unlock the supply needed

to match the demand we see from investors worldwide.

The Resilient Future

It is my view that infrastructure is more than an investment theme - it is a foundation for sustainable growth. Valued for its potential to deliver equity-like returns with lower volatility, it is an all-weather asset class that comes into its own during uncertain times. As the world navigates ongoing turbulence, I believe the ability of this asset class to deliver stability, resilience, and positive impact makes it one of the defining investment opportunities of our time.

Luba Nikulina, Chief Strategy Officer, IFM Investors

Important Disclosures

This material is provided for informational purposes only. It does not constitute an offer, invitation, solicitation, or recommendation in relation to the subscription, purchase, or sale of securities in any jurisdiction and neither this material nor anything in it will form the basis of any contract or commitment. This material is confidential and should not be distributed or provided to any other person without the written consent of IFM Investors.

Investments in infrastructure are subject to various risks including regulatory risk and market risk, which are outlined in further detail on the “Important Disclosures” page. Prior to making an investment in any infrastructure strategy, investors should refer to the offering documents for a complete discussion of risks.



GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

It's a Power Play - Renewable Energy Investing in the US

Omar Kodmani, President, Transatlantic Power

Question: Watt is going on?

Answer: Exactly!

"AI is consuming a lot of oxygen in the room. That's where the major growth is now. And if you don't have, in some form or fashion, a solution or play in that, it's unfortunate. You're missing out." John Engel, Wesco International.¹

Cutting through the noise, renewable energy investing in the US is an attractive way to play the massive growth in power demand driven by AI and data centers. The sector combines strengthening demand and a buyers' market on the supply side. Yet the market continues to underestimate how quickly AI-driven demand will collide with the slowing clean energy buildout and rising replacement costs. It is this dynamic that makes existing assets more valuable and re-contracting more accretive.

We see an opportunity for outsized returns by acquiring undervalued wind and solar assets

amid a rare dislocation. Regulatory delays, capital scarcity, and high rates have depressed valuations, even for cash-flowing assets with strong fundamentals.

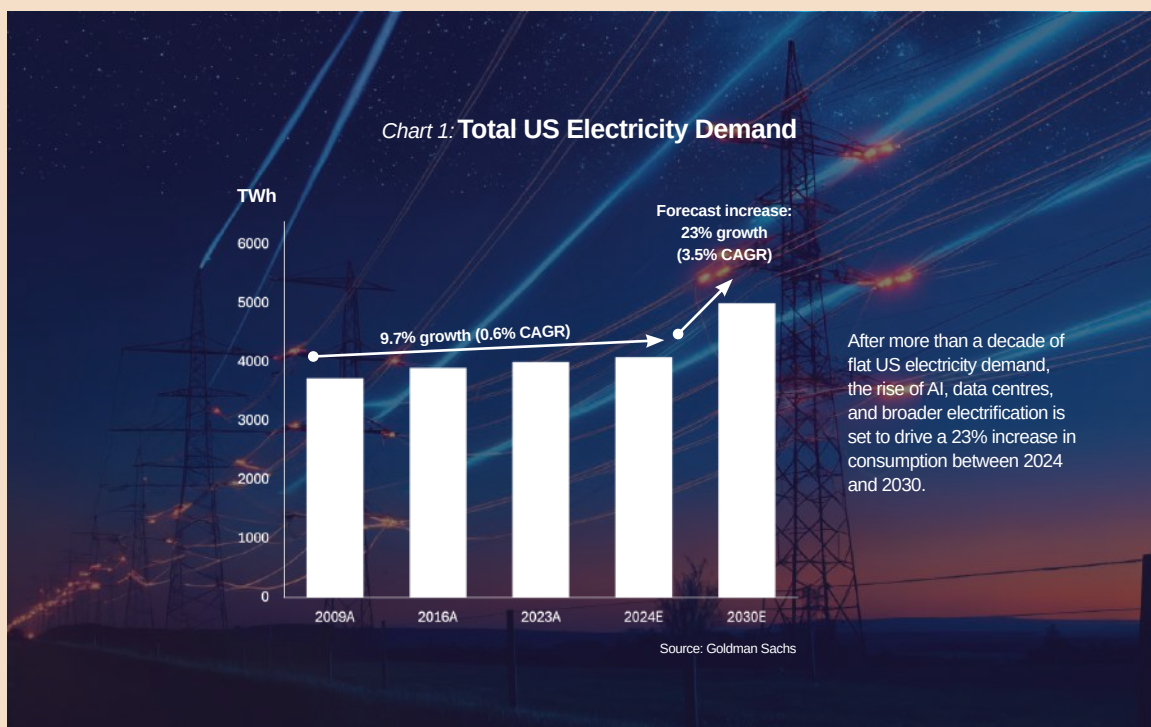
Demand Dynamics

There is no AI without electricity. By owning electricity infrastructure, investors can participate in the AI revolution without taking on technology risk and benefit from downside protection as owners of a real asset with contracted cash flows.

AI/Data Centers are driving a structural shift in US energy markets. Data centers are projected to require 123 GW of new capacity by 2030, up from 4 GW today (*chart 1*). This is the equivalent of building the entire energy stack of California, Texas and Florida combined. Even if all planned projects succeed, the US faces a 15 GW shortfall. Meanwhile, the hyperscalers - Microsoft, Amazon, Google, Meta, Nvidia - are expected to pour as

¹ Bloomberg, Oct 25, 2025

² Deloitte



GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

By owning electricity infrastructure, investors can participate in the AI revolution without taking on technology risk and benefit from downside protection as owners of a real asset with contracted cash flows.

Omar Kodmani, Transatlantic Power

much as \$4 trillion into AI infrastructure through 2030.³ They are already locking in long-term power at premiums, reflecting a scarcity that is now unavoidable. It would not be a surprise for big tech to ultimately buy power assets, not because they want to be in the business, but to secure their access. **“Bring your own power”** is a new slogan of big tech companies as they seek alternative ways to get on the grid.

The electricity demand supercycle is not just driven by the rapid build out of data centers but also rising demand for cooling and growing electrification of transport, buildings, and industry and crypto (*chart 2*). After decades of stagnant electricity demand, these new uses are driving a surge in generation.

Supply Situation – Buyers’ Market

To the extent supply cannot keep up, prices will likely see upward pressure. The optimal solution is not solely renewables, nuclear or fossil fuels, but **“all of the above.”** The US is presently going in the other direction, with the IEA halving its projections for renewable energy growth by 2030.⁴

Ironically, while the energy transition broadly continues to build momentum globally, the US has seen public and political “greenlash.” Companies in energy, finance and other sectors have been

emboldened to prioritize a carbon-intensive system. This is amid a Trump administration backdrop of increasing fossil fuel production and constraining new initiatives for renewables – almost \$8 billion in investment were cancelled, closed or downsized in Q1 2025 due to market uncertainty - more than for the same period across 2022-2024 combined.⁵

It used to be that the Renewable sector in the US benefited from sustainability-motivated institutional investor flows. Returns were almost a secondary consideration. As these flows have diminished, the return proposition has increased materially and should appeal to any return-maximizing investor (irrespective of sustainability criteria).

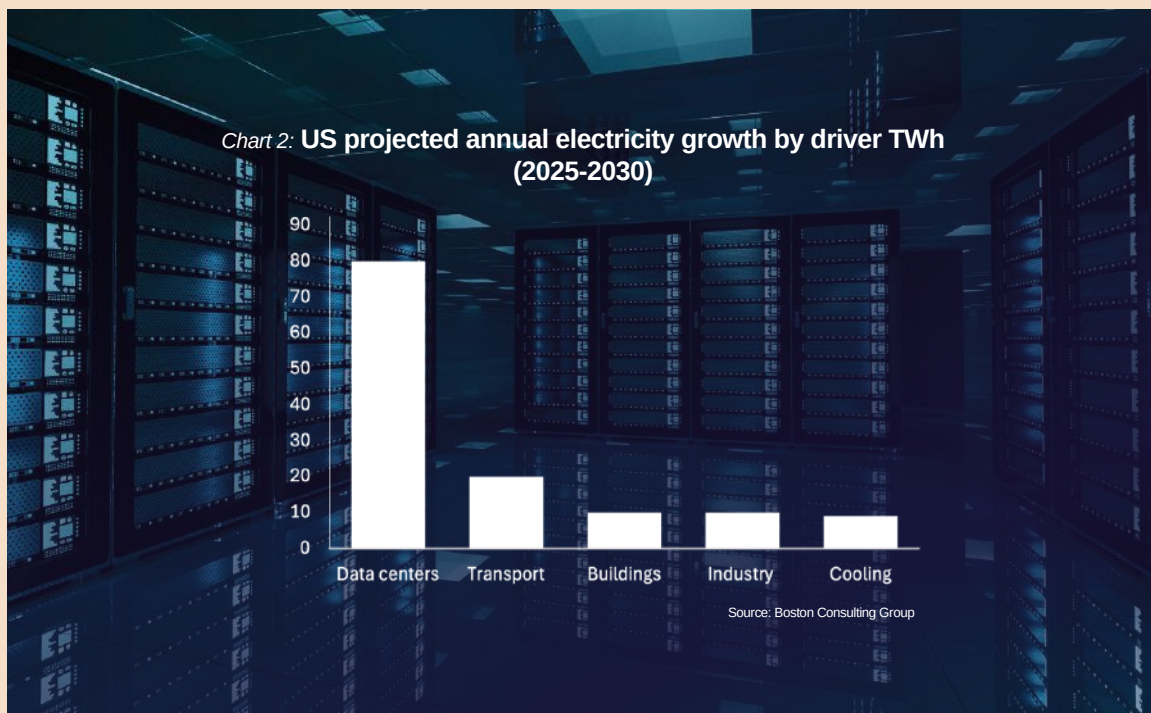
Renewable valuations are depressed. Higher interest rates in 2022-2023 and higher cost of capital were the initial factors that took their toll. More recently, political headwinds, and a less favorable regulatory backdrop (removal of incentives/subsidies) have scared off investors. The expiration of tax subsidies, high development costs, permitting delays, and transmission constraints mean there is a bottleneck in new projects.

³ Bloomberg Economics

⁴ Bloomberg, Oct 14, 2025

⁵ Campbell Lutyens Energy Transition survey, June 2025

GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)



This means that existing operating assets will become scarce and more valuable as replacement cost rises. Operational assets benefit from not being exposed to risks related to construction, permitting, taxes, supply chain, tariffs. Yet we remain in a window where high quality cash-flow generating assets can be acquired at attractive discounts.

The renewed focus on conventional energy assets has resulted in a major pendulum swing. Gas-fired assets, out of favor 18 months ago, have recently seen a dramatic expansion in activity and doubled in value. Recent transaction multiples for gas generation assets are at a premium to historical levels. Many of the scale gas generation platforms / assets have since changed, leaving only a few opportunities remaining.

When will the pendulum swing back in favor of renewables? This moment brings to mind Warren Buffet's mantra: **"be greedy when others are fearful."**

True to form, Berkshire Hathaway Energy is the largest investor-owned generator of renewable electricity in the US, having

recently invested ~\$40bn in renewables & grid infrastructure.

Renewables are the shovels to power the AI gold rush – a smart strategy could begin by acquiring undervalued operating assets, hold them through the scarcity period and optimize their cash flows via recontracting. Within a medium-term horizon, profitable exits could be achieved via sale to big tech or infra/yield investors willing to pay premiums.

Omar Kodmani, President, Transatlantic Power

Transatlantic Power Holdings (TPH), formed in 2017, is a leading U.S. renewable energy company that identifies, acquires, and manages clean energy power generation assets in North America. TPH has a proven track record building a leading independent power producer in the U.S., having sourced and executed nine wind and solar acquisitions totaling more than 1.1 GW of installed capacity.



GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

From Cloud to Compute: Why AI is Rewriting the Rules of Digital Infrastructure Assets

Christopher Yoshida, Executive Chairman and Co-Founder, Nexus Core Systems

The new equation for AI infrastructure

Everyone talks about AI as the rise of a revolutionary business tool. It's more than that. In truth, it's an industrial revolution, one built on compute.

Every technology cycle creates its own kind of infrastructure. The cloud era gave us the warehouses of the internet - built to store, move and monetise data. The AI era is different. It's about transforming that data into intelligence, decisions and action.

And that shift changes everything. These workloads are hungry, pulling power at levels the digital infrastructure market has never seen. Cooling, density, grid access – all of it must be re-engineered.

This is no longer about capacity. It's about performance: how efficiently a facility can turn a watt of power into intelligence. That's the new equation.

When technology becomes the yield curve

Digital infrastructure lives and dies by how well it keeps pace with the technology it enables. In AI, each new generation of computing hardware – most visibly led by NVIDIA's accelerator chips – resets the benchmark for performance and efficiency.

The innovation curve is flattening, but the gains remain significant. Infrastructure must evolve with it. The emerging neo-clouds are doing exactly that: building modular, GPU-native systems that can upgrade in rhythm with hardware cycles. Think of



The innovation curve is flattening, but the gains remain significant. Infrastructure must evolve with it. The emerging neo-clouds are doing exactly that: building modular, GPU-native systems that can upgrade in rhythm with hardware cycles.

Christopher Yoshida, Nexus Core Systems

GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

them as AI factories, not data centres.

In this world, infrastructure behaves less like real estate and more like an industrial process. Output isn't measured in rent or racks, it's measured in throughput – how much intelligence you can produce per watt, per dollar, per second.

From dollars to tokens

Listen to NVIDIA's Jensen Huang and you'll notice he rarely talks about dollars. He talks about tokens – the real unit of productivity in AI.

Every model trained, every query answered, every decision generated consumes tokens. The velocity of those tokens – how fast energy becomes intelligence – now defines competitiveness. For investors, the focus shifts from occupancy and yield to time-to-token.

It's also a sustainability story. The more efficiently tokens are generated, the more value – and less carbon – per unit of energy consumed.

AI is redrawing the map

Of roughly 5,500 US data centres, only a fraction can handle AI-scale workloads. The rest of the world is even further behind and massively under-represented, with limited access to the compute required to train and deploy advanced models.

Power is now the defining factor in digital geography,

and it's creating one of the biggest rebalancing opportunities in modern infrastructure.

New corridors of compute will emerge where energy, stability and policy align, unlocking growth far beyond the traditional hyperscale hubs. That's why new entrants, including Nexus Core Systems, are looking beyond traditional zones to combine long-term power security, renewable supply and global connectivity.

Why it matters

This isn't another speculative cycle. It's a durable, income producing asset class rooted in physical capability – power, hardware and performance.

Yes, the diligence is tougher and the capital requirements higher, but the fundamentals are stronger. Those who secure efficient power, build modularly and stay aligned with the technology curve will endure through market cycles.

In the end, value will be defined by how efficiently power, technology and capital combine to deliver lasting compute capacity for intelligence.

**Christopher Yoshida, Executive Chairman
and Co-Founder, Nexus Core
Systems**



GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

Infrastructure Beyond Earth: The Next Frontier of Real Assets

Jodi Bartin, Founder and General Partner & Stuart Martin, CIO and General Partner, S4E Capital

Infrastructure investing has always been about tangible assets with enduring demand; roads, ports, grids, pipelines. Very “down to Earth”, one might say - essential but unglamorous. Yet, as the global economy moves toward greater resilience, sustainability, and dependency on data, the definition of “infrastructure” is expanding upward. The next generation of critical economic assets may not be anchored to the ground at all.

Space-enabled infrastructure is rapidly becoming as indispensable to modern economies as energy networks or railways. A new generation of satellites, including Elon Musk’s Starlink, is forming the backbone of 21st century communication networks. Constellations of navigation and Earth-observing spacecraft are quietly

underpinning agriculture, climate adaptation, energy efficiency, and logistics. These aren’t speculative science projects. They are sound commercial propositions, and they are happening now.

The New Global Infrastructure

Consider the value chain behind a single data point: soil moisture in Kenya, methane emissions in the Persian Gulf, or vessel congestion at the Port of Singapore. Increasingly, that intelligence originates hundreds of kilometres above Earth. Satellites are now data utilities, delivering the real-time visibility that governments, insurers, and supply chains rely on.

In effect, orbital infrastructure has become the connective tissue of global commerce. And like traditional real assets, it offers long-term contracts, stable returns, and defensible barriers to entry. Sovereigns, corporates, and investors are waking up to the fact that space-based



Jodi Bartin, S4E Capital



...as the global economy moves toward greater resilience, sustainability, and dependency on data, the definition of “infrastructure” is expanding upward. The next generation of critical economic assets may not be anchored to the ground at all.

Jodi Bartin & Stuart Martin, S4E Capital

GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

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...space infrastructure is a force multiplier. It's enabling deforestation monitoring, carbon accounting, clean energy integration, and disaster-response strategies at planetary scale.

Jodi Bartin & Stuart Martin, S4E Capital

infrastructure is not an exotic asset class, it's an essential one.

What's more, this trend is only set to continue. Plans are already underway to locate a new generation of data centres, high-value manufacturing plants, and even energy production facilities in space. A new era of asset-rich, off-world commerce is just around the corner.

Impact With Orbit

For investors seeking measurable impact, space infrastructure is a force multiplier. It's enabling deforestation monitoring, carbon accounting, clean energy integration, and disaster-response strategies at planetary scale. These aren't abstract benefits; they are quantifiable, auditable, and increasingly demanded by regulators and LPs alike.

Crucially, this is dual-use infrastructure: it enhances national resilience (defence, communications, security) while advancing sustainability goals. In a capital market fatigued by vague ESG narratives, this combination of utility and impact is compelling.

Rethinking Real Assets

Traditional valuation models struggle with assets that appreciate through network effects rather than depreciation schedules. A bridge loses value over time; a satellite

constellation gains utility with every new data partnership. That inversion challenges how investors categorise “core” and “growth.”

It also invites longer duration, mission-aligned capital; a hybrid of infrastructure and venture finance that's beginning to take shape through new funds and public-private collaborations.

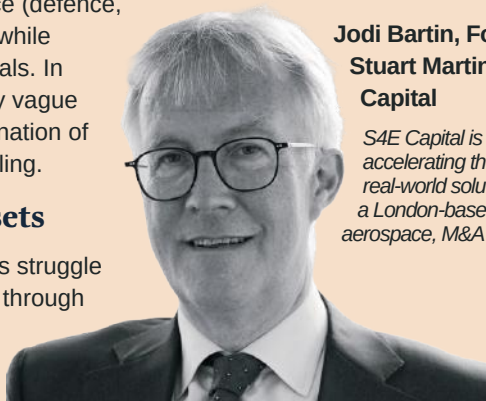
Infrastructure That Looks Up

In a decade defined by climate volatility and digital interdependence, infrastructure's ultimate test is adaptability. The assets that matter most won't just move goods or electrons, they will move information and secure resilience.

The infrastructure of the future may orbit, but its purpose remains grounded: to connect, protect, and sustain life on Earth. The smart capital is already adjusting its trajectory accordingly.

Jodi Bartin, Founder and General Partner & Stuart Martin, CIO and General Partner, S4E Capital

S4E Capital is a visionary investment fund dedicated to accelerating the transformation of space technologies into real-world solutions. The fund is advised by Citicourt & Co, a London-based investment bank specialising in space, aerospace, M&A transactions, and institutional fundraisings.



Stuart Martin, S4E Capital

GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

The Convergence of Infrastructure and Real Estate

Mark Brennan, Portfolio Manager, Guinness Global Real Assets Fund

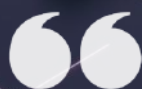
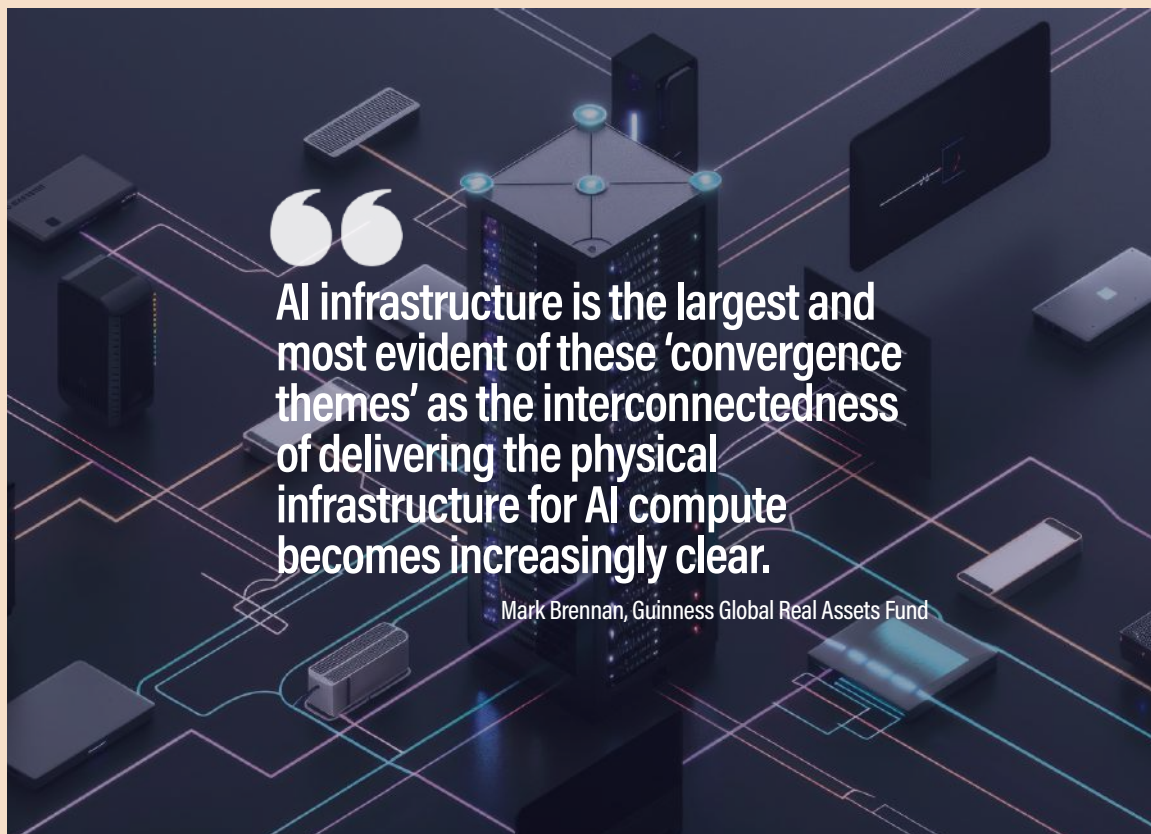
The infrastructure investment market, along with its underlying sectors, has always presented an evolving opportunity set. Definitions and sector inclusion of core, core-plus and value-add have matured as certain sectors have developed and reached operational stabilisation. At the same time, the rising cost of capital over recent years has put pressure on returns, transaction activity, and capital formation. One area that infrastructure investors are paying closer attention to within this context is the growing convergence between traditional infrastructure and parts of the real estate market. This convergence is being driven principally by mega-trends that are touching areas that might historically have been seen by investors as separate.

AI infrastructure is the largest and most evident of these 'convergence themes' as the interconnectedness of delivering the physical infrastructure for AI compute becomes increasingly

clear. The build-out of data centres worldwide requires investment across traditional infrastructure sectors such as utilities and power production in order to ramp up the availability of power and support grid resilience. At the same time, securing the land and developing the data centres themselves remains a more obvious real estate play. One cannot succeed without the other, and infrastructure investors are recognising this. The IPO of Fermi America is a great recent example, as it seeks to develop an off-grid energy and data centre campus in Texas to satisfy growing demand. Fermi America will effectively be a private grid with its own generation and substantial footprint of data centres, combining utility-like assets with traditional real estate and structured as a Real Estate Investment Trust. The driver of this platform approach is accelerating solutions that can meet the demands of AI growth, but a highly segmented view on the part of investors may not support that acceleration.



GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)



AI infrastructure is the largest and most evident of these 'convergence themes' as the interconnectedness of delivering the physical infrastructure for AI compute becomes increasingly clear.

Mark Brennan, Guinness Global Real Assets Fund

The broader backdrop is that the traditional qualities and characteristics of infrastructure assets – such as contractual cash flows, inflation linkage, high-credit counterparties, and inherent criticality – are increasingly visible in select areas of real estate, particularly where supported by structural demographic changes. The ageing of the baby-boomer generation in the US and the emergence of the 'longevity economy' are areas creating healthcare real estate opportunities with infrastructure-like characteristics, for example. The demand growth for senior housing and associated health needs is stable and visible, and the supply context is favourable for incumbent operators. Many of those underlying operators are private, rather than government-backed; however, there are various markets, such as the UK, where healthcare assets with public-sector tenants can be accessed. For more traditional infrastructure investors, this offers a range of exposures and risks to be considered within a more holistic view of a real assets allocation.

As we move into a more favourable macro environment for the sector, and we see mega-trends around AI and

demographics gain momentum, considering the convergence of infrastructure and real estate could unlock broader opportunities and better returns for investors.

Mark Brennan, Portfolio Manager, Guinness Global Real Assets Fund

Guinness Global Investors is an independent active fund manager which specialises in long-only equity funds. The Guinness Global Real Assets Fund, launched in 2025 and managed by Mark Brennan, invests in listed Real Estate and Infrastructure assets worldwide with a focus on high-quality companies generating persistent returns on capital.



GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

Infrastructure Capital's New Frontier: The Race for Resilient, Essential Real Estate

Natalie Breen, Global Market Leader - Real Assets, CSC

The blurring line between traditional real estate and essential infrastructure is rapidly redefining institutional investment strategy.

The central premise is that highly specialized physical assets, such as data centres and institutional-grade social housing, are transitioning from being priced based on simple property metrics (like rental yields) to being valued for their indispensable, utility-like function and the remarkably stable, long-duration cash flows they generate. This shift confirms a profound market premium for essentiality, stability, and inflation-hedged income.

The key driver behind this shift is the fundamental change in how the market perceives risk and value in these sectors. Data centres are no longer just warehouses for servers; they are the critical digital infrastructure that powers the global economy, demanding constant power, cooling, and security—services that are non-negotiable and recession-resistant. Similarly, institutional-grade social housing addresses a persistent, structural societal need, providing stable demand and regulatory-backed income streams that are highly resilient to standard economic cycles. This essential, non-discretionary

nature anchors their financial performance, making them attractive substitutes for traditional bonds or core infrastructure.

The Infrastructure Fund Effect and Lower Cost of Capital

The upward valuation pressure on these hybrid assets is fundamentally altered by the participation of large infrastructure funds. These specialized funds possess a decisive competitive advantage: a significantly lower cost of capital and an investment mandate designed for long-duration, inflation-linked assets. Their modelling is less concerned with cyclical property fluctuations and more focused on the terminal value and utility-style returns over a 20–40-year horizon.

When an infrastructure fund enters a bidding process, they are not competing as a real estate buyer; they are acquiring a critical societal backbone. As a result of this demand, the value of similar assets increases. It signals a willingness to pay extra for things that are essential and offer guaranteed, reliable income. The arrival of infrastructure funds confirms that the market now considers and values these assets as crucial infrastructure.



GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)**Operational Complexity: The Barrier to Entry**

While the financial case for these assets is compelling, their nature presents significant barriers to entry by virtue of their inherent operational complexity. Achieving global scale and efficiency in this hybrid space demands specialized knowledge that goes far beyond standard landlord responsibilities.

These sectors demand sophisticated asset management capabilities to navigate complex regulatory frameworks, government funding models, maintenance protocols that meet specific institutional standards, and sensitive tenant engagement practices.

In addition, the deployment of institutional capital into these complex, high-value assets is typically channelled through sophisticated vehicles: dedicated private market funds, bespoke Separate Managed Accounts, or multi-party Strategic Joint Ventures.

This structural complexity, especially when funding cross-border assets can generate a significant administrative burden. Managing multi-jurisdictional SPVs, overseeing complex financing covenants, and executing capital calls requires specialised expertise. This is why leading sponsors increasingly rely on outsourcing to specialist fund administrators and third-party service providers. Delegating crucial, non-core functions—such as statutory accounting, regulatory reporting, and

detailed cross-border tax compliance—is not just an efficiency measure. It is essential for maintaining strict compliance and allows investment teams to remain agile and focused on value creation, maximizing deal flow, and managing operational risks at the asset level.

For institutional investors seeking to capitalize on this trend, success involves strategic partnering with specialised service providers that can efficiently manage the operational and technical complexities associated with these types of assets. This enables the institutional investor to secure the essential cash flows while delegating the nuanced day-to-day management, thereby facilitating global growth and optimizing the returns generated by these essential assets.

In conclusion, this is not a temporary trend, but more of a permanent market shift. The convergence of specialised property (like data centres and social housing) and essential infrastructure is here to stay, driven by core societal needs. Moreover, global capital, searching for stable, inflation-proof returns, has fully entered the race, using its lower cost of funds to drive up demand and therefore, asset values. The new reality is here.

**Natalie Breen, Global Market Leader -
Real Assets, CSC**



The convergence of specialised property (like data centres and social housing) and essential infrastructure is here to stay, driven by core societal needs.

Natalie Breen, CSC

GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

Organic, Regenerative Farmland Hubs Drive Infrastructure Development

The Reshaping of American Agriculture

Chris Zuehlsdorff, CEO, Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT

Across North America, a quiet but powerful shift is reshaping the agricultural landscape. As the demand for organic and regenerative products continues to grow, so too does the recognition that scaling these systems requires more than individual farm conversions. It requires entire regional ecosystems.

Enter the concept of Farmland Hubs: geographically concentrated networks of organic and regenerative farmers, infrastructure, and markets that together create resilient, place-based food economies.

For nearly two decades, as one of the oldest impact investors, Iroquois Valley has been exploring how to support farmers beyond simply providing isolated land access. While long-term leases and farmland

financing remain foundational, the next evolution in sustainable agriculture investment focuses on building clusters of regenerative activity where shared infrastructure, knowledge, and community drive long-term success.

From Individual Farms to Regional Ecosystems

The power of a hub model lies in its agglomeration effects. A single organic farm can struggle to access specialized labor, processing infrastructure, or nearby markets. But when a region reaches critical mass—multiple farmers, shared resources, and supportive local businesses—a self-sustaining ecosystem begins to form.



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...regional clusters allow for the development of shared storage and processing facilities, regional seed and grain networks, local supply chains linking farmers to nearby markets and bakers, and knowledge sharing and mentorship among growers.

Chris Zuehlsdorff, CEO, Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT

GUEST ARTICLES (cont.)

These regional clusters allow for the development of shared storage and processing facilities, regional seed and grain networks, local supply chains linking farmers to nearby markets and bakers, and knowledge sharing and mentorship among growers. This approach reduces risk for both farmers and investors by anchoring capital and infrastructure in regions with proven or emerging organic potential.

A Case in Central Illinois

Central Illinois illustrates how this model can take root. There, a growing network of organic producers has helped establish one of the Midwest's most vibrant organic grain ecosystems. Farmers like Harold and Ross Wilken of [Janie's Farm](#) have transitioned from conventional to organic production, introducing ancient and hybrid wheat varieties in partnership with the University of Illinois. Harold and Ross employ and train additional local organic farmers, as well as regularly host field days for beginning farmers. Their creation of The Mill at Janie's Farm, the region's only organic flour mill, has in turn provided crucial infrastructure for other local producers.

This kind of regional hub not only strengthens the local economy, but also attracts mission-aligned investors seeking to back regenerative systems rather than isolated operations.

Criteria for Thriving Hubs

Iroquois Valley has identified several key factors for successful Farmland Hubs:

- High density of farmers seeking land within a defined region (often a 50-mile radius)
- Strong or emerging organic communities with established market access
- Soils well-suited to organic production without heavy irrigation
- Opportunities for infrastructure investment, such as processing or storage facilities
- Strong succession planning and intergenerational transfer potential

These criteria help concentrate investment where it can have the greatest environmental, social, and economic impact.

**Measuring Impact Beyond Acres**

As investors and agricultural innovators refine this model, four key performance indicators are emerging:

1. Environmental outcomes – measurable soil health and biodiversity improvements.
2. Ecosystem connectivity – depth of collaboration and knowledge exchange.
3. Regional infrastructure growth – expansion of processing, storage, and distribution capacity.
4. Operational efficiency – economies of scale that improve farmer profitability and investor stability.

By focusing on these interconnected metrics, farmland investment is moving beyond traditional financial benchmarks to evaluate holistic system performance.

Building the Future of Regenerative Agriculture

Farmland Hubs represent a growing trend toward place-based investing—the idea that capital can drive transformation by rooting itself deeply in local communities and ecological systems. Whether in Illinois, Montana, or other emerging regions, these hubs are demonstrating that scaling regenerative agriculture will depend not on isolated farms but on thriving, interconnected regions.

As the organic and regenerative sectors mature, the conversation is shifting from “how do we support individual farmers?” to “how do we build the ecosystems that enable them to thrive?”

Farmland Hubs may hold the answer, serving as the connective tissue between capital, land, and the communities that cultivate our food and our future.

Chris Zuehlsdorff, CEO, Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT

Chris Zuehlsdorff is the CEO of Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT, PBC, a pioneering farmland investment company focused on organic, regenerative agriculture. The company provides long-term leases and mortgage financing to organic farmers and works to build a more resilient food system by preserving farmland for organic production.

Find out more about Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT [here](#).

REGULATIONPresented by  **RQC GROUP****UK****Changes to the UK short selling regime,
CP25/29: FCA seeks views****Background**

Back in January 2025, the government published a new legislative framework for short selling - part of a broader strategy to reform the post-Brexit regulatory landscape. Prior to this, the UK Short Selling Regulation (“**UK SSR**”), assimilated law incorporated into UK law, formed the basis of the short selling regime. The Financial Services and Markets Act 2023 provided for the repeal and replacement of assimilated law, allowing HM Treasury to create the new [legislative framework](#), which broadly replicated existing emergency powers, but [conferred on the FCA](#) power to create new firm-facing rules.

Building on this foundation, the FCA on [28 October 2025](#) launched consultation [CP25/29](#) proposing changes to the UK short selling regime. It [seeks feedback](#) until 16 December 2025.

The FCA advocates targeted adjustments to rules to alleviate burdens that might discourage short selling – and its concomitant benefits, such as supporting price formation, liquidity and risk management.

Proposals include:

- **Position reporting:** Amend the deadline for notifying a change in net short positions;
- **Reportable shares list (“RSL”):** Replace the “negative” list of shares whose primary liquidity is overseas and that are exempt from the UK SSR with a “positive” list of shares subject to the UK regime;
- **Market maker exemptions:** Streamline and automate

systems for receiving position reporting and market maker exemption notifications;

- **Aggregate net short position (“ANSP”) disclosure:** Per legislative changes, public named disclosures at $\geq 0.5\%$ to be replaced by FCA-generated ANSPs that will combine, anonymise and disclose all individual reported NSPs $\geq 0.2\%$ (or a lower temporary threshold set under emergency powers) per issuer. Issuing new guidance explaining how the FCA will calculate, publish and update the list of ANSPs reported to it; and
- **Emergency powers and enforcement:** FCA retaining powers to lower thresholds, request additional information (including on UK sovereign debt and credit default swaps) and to prevent or impose conditions on short selling in exceptional circumstances.

Implementation and next steps

Comments are [invited](#) until 16 December 2025. The FCA proposes two implementation phases:

- Phase 1, at main commencement day, new systems for calculating and publishing aggregate net short position, reportable shares list and the Sourcebook ready;
- Phase 2, six months later, the FCA will update its systems for position reports and market maker exemption notifications.

The FCA intends to publish its policy statement and the live draft RSL two months before Phase 1 of implementation, allowing firms a short time to acclimatise to the final rules.



REGULATION (cont.)Presented by  **RQC GROUP**

Progressing fund tokenisation, CP25/28: boosting efficiency and innovation in asset management

On [14 October 2025](#), the FCA published its Consultation Paper [CP25/28](#): Progressing fund tokenisation.

This aims to accelerate the adoption of fund tokenisation in the UK. It marks a significant step in modernising the UK's asset management landscape, positioning it as a global leader in digital finance innovation. In 2025, Baillie Gifford became the first asset manager to launch a fully tokenised fund in the UK.

Tokenisation is a way of representing an asset, or ownership of an asset, by recording it on distributed ledger technology ("DLT"); a digital system that records details of transactions in multiple locations at the same time, rather than on a centralised database. Investors are issued with tokens which represent rights to hold fund shares or units.

Tokenisation can make fund management more efficient as it gives firms operating or distributing the fund the same records of information.

The FCA's proposals are for authorised funds such as Undertakings for Collective Investment in Transferable Securities ("UCITS"). Unauthorised funds, including most alternative investment funds, are out of scope.

Building on previous initiatives, the consultation outlines operational and legal frameworks to support tokenised fund structures.

Responses are sought by 21 November 2025 regarding current initiatives, and by 12 December 2025 regarding supporting future tokenisation models.

The FCA has recently published several consultations on blockchain and crypto more generally, including [CP25/14](#) (stablecoin issuance and cryptoasset custody), [CP25/15](#) (a prudential regime for cryptoasset firms) and [CP25/25](#) (regulating cryptoasset activities).



Client categorisation in corporate finance firms: FCA's high-level observations - FCA finds gaps in client categorisation assessments and records

Client categorisation is currently under heightened regulatory scrutiny. The FCA is particularly focused on the boundary between professional and retail clients, driven in part by evolving expectations under the Consumer Duty. This includes assessing how well firms comply with existing categorisation rules and considering updates to those rules, some of which have remained largely unchanged for some time. The FCA has announced plans to consult on proposed changes imminently.

In September [2023](#), the FCA announced plans to review how corporate finance firms apply the client categorisation rules. A portfolio survey followed in 2024, and then the

regulator selected ten firms for a more forensic information request.

The FCA's [findings](#) are of relevance to other investment firm types that take on clients or approve financial promotions; in particular, where a client's categorisation is not immediately obvious.

A corporate finance firm's "client" is typically the issuer it supports to raise funds. The investors it engages with are "corporate finance contacts"; such contacts are only "clients" for the purposes of applying the financial promotion rules.

The FCA found gaps in firms' assessments and records, and

REGULATION (cont.)Presented by  **RQC GROUP**

sets out areas for improvement and good practice.

1. Categorising clients**a. Conducting an assessment**

Whilst most firms conduct a client categorisation assessment, some took a superficial approach and/or did not maintain adequate supporting records.

Furthermore, it was not always clear how firms considered whether to conduct and record a revised client categorisation assessment, either due to the client engaging with a different transaction or the client's characteristics changing.

b. Elective professional categorisation

"Elective professionals" are clients that do not meet prescribed criteria to be classified as "per se professionals"; however, they are deemed to be elective professionals pursuant to the fulfilment of qualitative and sometimes quantitative criteria, and informing the client of their status and loss of protections.

The FCA often saw a lack of sufficient and clearly defined criteria to assess clients' expertise, experience and knowledge. There was also a lack of a clear methodology, or templates used for consistency.

2. Categorising corporate finance contacts**a. Conducting an assessment**

The client categorisation assessment is relevant in the context of communicating financial promotions. Whilst most firms conducted an assessment, the process was not always clear or rigorous.

b. Meeting the requirements to treat an investor as a corporate finance contact

Firms are required to indicate to the contact that they are not advising or acting for them or affording them client protections. Sometimes, these communications are unclear.

c. Using the elective professional categorisation for contacts

The observed shortcomings, and good practice, are similar to those for clients, as set out above.

3. Certifying retail investors as high net worth or sophisticated

Under both the FCA financial rules for high-risk investments and statutory provisions in the Financial Promotions Order, in certain circumstances, financial promotions may be promoted to retail investors who are high net worth or sophisticated.

The FCA observed that there is often a lack of clarity on which set of requirements was relied upon.

Whilst most firms had a process to determine the investor certification, there were sometimes gaps in the process. Furthermore, the investment type was not always clearly considered.

4. Policies and procedures

Policies were not always tailored to the firm's business, and often were high level or copied from the FCA Handbook rules.

Some policies were incomplete, for example omitting requirements on re-categorisation and records.

Financial crime oversight in corporate finance firms "shows gaps": survey findings

The FCA has published the results of its [review](#) of financial crime controls at corporate finance firms. The review included gathering firms' own assessment of their financial crime risks and interviewing senior staff at selected firms. The outcomes were published as areas for improvement and good practice.

Whilst this review focusses solely on corporate finance firms, it is of relevance to other financial institutions that are subject to the Money Laundering Regulations and FCA provisions on financial crime risks.

At a high-level, the FCA asserts the results indicate that approximately two-thirds of responding firms may not be compliant with the Money Laundering Regulations in one or more elements of their anti-financial crime control frameworks.

Key areas for improvement include:

- Lack of a documented business-wide risk assessment;

- Lack of a customer risk assessment form;
- Missing evidence of customer due diligence;
- Lack of ongoing monitoring, required per the Money Laundering Regulations; and
- Gaps in risk assessments for appointed representatives.

Observed areas of good practice include:

- Regular reporting to senior management;
- Using a form to assess customer risk; and
- Use of risk registers and management information.

The FCA will use the survey data as it supervises corporate finance firms and will intervene where firms fall short.

The regulator expects all responding firms to consider the findings and address any gaps. It is also writing to firms falling short of regulatory expectations to set out remedial actions.

REGULATION (cont.)Presented by  **RQC GROUP**

FCA bans and fines advisor £100,281 for insider dealing

Neil Sedgwick Dwane in 2022 worked as an advisor for ITM Power Plc ("ITM"), an AIM-listed company. In this capacity, he had advance knowledge of the details of an announcement ITM would make to the market on 27 October, following which its share price fell by c 37%.

On the day preceding the announcement, Mr Dwane used this insider information and sold his own and a family member's 125,000 shares worth £124,287. He took advantage of the fall in ITM's share price to acquire 180,000 shares worth £140,700, gaining £26,575 from the price difference.

Mr Dwane was required to obtain ITM's permission before dealing in its shares, but did not. Being an experienced financial professional, he knew this conduct amounted to insider dealing, and was abusing his position of trust.

Accordingly, the FCA announced on [23 October 2025](#) that it had fined Mr Dwane £100,281 for insider dealing and [banned](#) him from working in UK financial services. He qualified for a 30% discount, without which the penalty would have been £126,575 plus interest on the £26,575 benefit.



FCA secures \$101m redress for BlueCrest investors

On 14 October 2025, the FCA [announced](#) it had secured US\$101 million in [redress](#) to UK and other non-US investors in a fund sub-managed by BlueCrest Capital Management (UK) LLP ("BlueCrest"), imposing a [public censure](#) on the former hedge fund.

Back in October 2024, the FCA [won](#) its case in the Court of Appeal, which allowed the FCA to amend its case at the Upper Tribunal and upheld the FCA's power to require redress from firms.

Between October 2011 and December 2015, BlueCrest failed to manage fairly a conflict of interest between its dual roles: managing an investment fund exclusively for its partners and employees, and managing a flagship fund open to external investors. Its management allowed UK-based traders to be moved from the external fund to work on the internal fund, in which they were personally invested, and

from whose decisions they stood to benefit personally.

Investor disclosures were found to be inadequate and sometimes misleading. Investors were not informed that a substantial cohort of traders had been moved to the internal fund, and were thus unable to make informed decisions. Since trusted to make decisions for clients, asset managers need systems and controls to ensure conflicts are managed fairly. BlueCrest's failure to manage the conflict led to a sub-standard service for the external fund and its investors.

The [redress requirement](#) seeks to compensate UK and other non-US investors who held shares, units or an interest in the external fund between 1 October 2011 and 31 December 2015, but were not eligible to be compensated by the SEC's [Fair Fund](#). The FCA co-operated with the Securities and Exchange Commission, acknowledging its assistance in this matter.

REGULATION (cont.)Presented by  **RQC GROUP****US****Regulation S-P amendments: compliance deadline approaching**

As a reminder, the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) [has adopted](#) amendments to Regulation S-P, with key compliance deadlines fast approaching.

Who is affected?

- **Larger entities** – SEC registered investment advisers with more than \$1.5 billion AUM must comply by **December 3, 2025**.
- **Smaller entities** – SEC registered advisers with less than \$1.5 billion AUM must comply by **June 3, 2026**.

Key requirements under the amendments

Covered firms must:

- **Establish a written incident response program:** Establish and maintain a written incident response program reasonably designed to detect, respond, and recover from unauthorized access to customer information.

- **Provide breach notification within 30 days:** Notify affected individuals as soon as practicable, and no later than 30 days after discovery, if their sensitive information is accessed or reasonably believed to have been accessed without authorization.
- **Oversee service providers:** Conduct due diligence and ongoing monitoring of service providers to ensure they meet required information security standards and promptly notify of any breach.
- **Maintain relevant records:** Maintain books and records necessary to evidence compliance with the new rule.

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