



RESPONSIBLE INVESTING REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Firm Name: BlackRock Inc.
Completed By: Bhoomika Saxena
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PREAMBLE

In accordance with Queen's University's Responsible Investing Policy, as approved in May 2017, we require all of Queen's External Investment Managers to take due regard of environmental, social, and



2) Are sustainable investing and ESG factors integrated into your investment process and portfolio management decisions? If yes, please provide details.

At BlackRock we define ESG integration to be the practice of incorporating financially material ESG data or information into our firmwide processes with the objective of enhancing risk-adjusted returns of our clients' portfolios. This applies regardless of whether a fund or strategy has a sustainable or ESG-specific objective.

For more details, kindly refer to our Firmwide ESG Integration Statement:

<https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/literature/publication/blk-esg-investment-statement-web.pdf>

For more details, kindly refer to our ESG Statement given to Question 1 above.

3) a) Are you a signatory to the UNPRI?

Yes.

b) If you are signatory to other coalitions, please list them.

BlackRock is member of several industry associations, including those that are related to sustainability and the transition to a low-carbon economy, so that we can participate in dialogue with governments, companies, and financial institutions on matters important to many of our clients. By being part of these forums, we are able to represent clients' interests and engage in conversations on their behalf.

We have made it clear that we do not coordinate our votes or investment decisions with any external group or organization.

As an ordinary course of business, BlackRock reviews all of its external memberships on a periodic basis. The firm joins and leaves many working groups and initiatives based on their cadence. The list below reflects updated organizations and initiatives as of 31 December 2023. Please note: this list is not exhaustive.

Organization	Participation
<u>ENERGY TRANSITION COMMITTEE (ETC)</u>	Participating
<u>IMPACT INVESTING INSTITUTE</u>	Participating
<u>WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM'S FUTURE OF ENERGY COUNCIL</u>	Participating
<u>CANADIAN COALITION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE (CCGG)</u>	Participating
<u>BUSINESS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (BSR)</u>	Participating
<u>PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT (PRI)</u>	Participating
<u>FINANCE FOR TOMORROW (FFT)</u>	Participating
<u>SWISS SUSTAINABLE FINANCE (SSF)</u>	Participating
<u>GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE FINANCE CLUSTER GERMANY EV</u>	Participating



<u>INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS GROUP ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IIGCC)</u>	Participating
<u>CLIMATE BONDS INITIATIVE (CBI)</u>	Participating
<u>SPAINSIF FORO ESPANOL DE INVERSION SOCIALMENTE RESPONSABLE</u>	Participating
<u>GLOBAL IMPACT INVESTING NETWORK INC</u>	Participating



which we invest.

Principle 4: Signatories will promote acceptance and implementation of the principles within the investment industry.

Principle 5: Signatories will work together to enhance our effectiveness in implementing the principles.

Principle 6: Signatories will each report on our activities and progress towards implementing the principles.

2023 Assessment Report Results

Overall, BlackRock excelled in the majority of this year's PRI assessment, maintaining or improving its scores across 85% of this year's assessment and receiving a four- or five-star rating for more than 90% of all PRI modules. On average, BlackRock scored 21% above the median PRI module scores. BlackRock scored the highest rating of five stars in seven directly managed asset classes and improved its scores on three Hedge Fund modules, achieving four stars across all categories of the asset class.

BlackRock received a lower score for the passive listed equity modules in 2023, reflecting the constraints of the survey's binary yes/no questions that did not allow us to accurately explain our ESG integration processes or our commitment to our clients. As a result, our score for these two modules dropped from 4 to 1 star.

Please refer to our full Transparency Report and Summary Scorecard in Appendix A and B for additional information.



4) Please describe how ESG oversight and integration responsibilities are structured at your firm, including the process for escalation of key ESG issues. Also, if applicable, describe how



5) How do you obtain ESG information/data (e.g. public information, third party research, reports and statements from the company, direct engagement with the company)? Please provide specific details of what information is obtained from each source, and how this information is acquired.

BlackRock's investment teams have access to a range of third-party data sets and internal materiality-focused ratings across core Aladdin tools, allowing investors to identify financially material ESG data or information for their unique investment process where appropriate. The Aladdin platform also offers a set of analytic tools to assess material ESG-related risks and opportunities. This includes Aladdin Climate, which amongst other analytics, provides scenario analysis capabilities to help investors identify investment risks and opportunities associated with the physical impacts of a changing climate and the uncertain transition to a low-carbon world.

Given the evolving nature and significant growth of the Sustainable data landscape, BlackRock continuously conducts diligence on both new and existing sustainable datasets. Our approach considers both qualitative and quantitative factors as well as a data provider's operating model. This approach enables an impartial substantiation of dataset usefulness, and evaluation of the data for risks, availability, effective use, and governance processes.

6) What channels do you use to communicate ESG-related information to clients and/or the public? Do you produce thought leadership (written reports and publications)? If so, is the information available to the public? Please provide links, if applicable.

Enhancing the transparency of sustainable characteristics for all products is a key priority for BlackRock. Today, BlackRock products (regardless of sustainability objectives) have the following data publicly available on our websites, where sufficient and reliable data is available:

- Sustainability Characteristics provide investors with specific non-traditional metrics. Alongside other metrics and information, these enable investors to evaluate funds on certain environmental, social and governance characteristics.
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[information/blackrock-2021-sasb-disclosure.pdf](#)

BlackRock UN-PRI Report: [BlackRock | Signatory profile | PRI \(unpri.org\)](#)

To access latest thought leadership from BlackRock Investment Institute on sustainable and transition investing, please visit [this website](#).

Additionally, please see below for recent thought leadership from the BlackRock Investment Institute:

Climate Resilience: An Emerging Investment Theme

In December 2023, BII published 'Climate resilience: an emerging investment theme'. This paper focused on moving beyond risk assessments to climate resilience as an investment theme.

<https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/literature/whitepaper/bii-megaforces-december-2023.pdf>

Emerging markets: financing the transition

In November 2023, BlackRock released our emerging markets focused transition paper. Emerging markets are pivotal to the global transition to a low-carbon economy. Reforms to plug the shortfall in investment could present both opportunities and risks for investors.

<https://www.blackrock.com/institutions/en-zz/literature/whitepaper/bii-investment-perspectives-sustainability-november-2023.pdf>

Investment perspectives Tracking the low-carbon transition

We introduce the BlackRock Investment Institute Transition Scenario. This is our framework for tracking the transition to a low-carbon economy to help assess the investment opportunity and risks it may bring.

<https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/literature/whitepaper/bii-investment-perspectives-sustainability-july-2023.pdf>



On the other side from risks, we have highlighted the long term investment opportunities and themes on our Megaforces Hub, including the Transition to a low-carbon economy: <https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/insights/blackrock-investment-institute/publications/mega-forces>

10) Describe how you engage



alongside other credit information, and is considered to the extent it is financially material to the investment in the time frame our clients have tasked us to invest their assets. For example, where some names might be flagged as Negative Externalities (NEXT) based on our PEXT/NEXT framework and therefore be prohibited from ESG FIGO, inclusion might still be justified for FIGO when assessing the name across a myriad of other fundamental and valuation factors.



12) What are your firm's emissions as of December 31, 2023? Please provide scope 1 and scope 2 emissions, and, separately, scope 3 emissions if available. Please demonstrate how/whether you are taking steps to reduce these emissions.

While 2023 data is not available yet, BlackRock's latest [2022 GHG Emissions Report](https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/literature/continuous-disclosure-and-important-information/blackrock-2022-ghg-emissions) (<https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/literature/continuous-disclosure-and-important-information/blackrock-2022-ghg-emissions>)



20) If the answer to the previous question is no, please describe your proxy voting guidelines.



are material to how they create financial value. Engagement may also inform the stewardship team's voting decisions, particularly on issues where company disclosures are not sufficiently clear or complete, or management's approach seems misaligned with the financial interests of long-term shareholders.

A detailed approach to the BlackRock Investment Stewardship's engagement priorities is available here: <https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/literature/publication/blk-stewardship-priorities-final.pdf>

23) What is your policy around the escalation of engagement; how and why might this happen and what is the ultimate tool you might use (e.g. voting against board re-election, etc.)?*

BlackRock Investment Stewardship tracks its engagement activities in a database, which portfolio managers can also access to deepen their understanding of a company's governance profile. Features in the database allow BlackRock Investment Stewardship to record if a company is in line with the team's global governance standards (as outlined in the BlackRock Investment Stewardship Global Principles and regional voting guidelines), track developments at the companies engaged, and define and note engagement outcomes. This tracking and monitoring mechanism enables the stewardship team to measure improvements over time, especially as many of the engagements are long-



For example, BlackRock Investment Stewardship has engaged Koninklijke Ahold Delhaize NV, a Dutch wholesale and retail conglomerate, to encourage the company to align their executive pay policies with long-term shareholder interests. BlackRock Investment Stewardship did not support the company's remuneration reports at the 2020 and 2021 annual general meetings due to a lack of transparency in their pay policies, particularly performance measures and targets. BlackRock Investment Stewardship engaged again with the company after the 2021 annual general meeting to explain the team's concerns about their policies and reporting on pay. The company improved disclosures with clearly stated targets for short- and long-term incentives in their 2022 report. BlackRock Investment Stewardship supported both reports at the April 2022 and 2023 annual general meetings. BlackRock Investment Stewardship welcomes the progress companies have made to date and will continue to engage leadership in markets where disclosure remains an ongoing and material concern.

SAP SE and Telefonica SA also serve as examples in the Europe, Middle East, and Africa region where engagement contributed to enhanced disclosures on executive remuneration. SAP SE, a German multinational software company, in response to shareholder feedback, improved transparency by outlining specific targets within their long-term incentive plans, revealing actual achievements related to bonuses. The company has also made a series of adjustments to their compensation structure to better align rewards with long-term performance. These positive developments led BlackRock Investment Stewardship to support the remuneration proposals at both the May 2022 and 2023 annual general meetings. In 2023, Telefonica SA, a Spanish multinational telecommunications company, made strides towards transparency, disclosing achievements against bonus targets. The company further introduced a clawback policy and eliminated discretionary awards from their compensation plans. As a result of these improvements, BlackRock Investment Stewardship supported Telefonica's remuneration report at their March 2023 annual general meeting having not supported it in 2022.

To learn more about this issue and progress in the region, please refer to the BlackRock Investment Stewardship 2022-23 Global Voting Spotlight, available here: <https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/literature/publication/2023-investment-stewardship-voting-spotlight.pdf>

