

CALSTRS

**CALIFORNIA STATE TEACHERS'
RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

**Investment Policy for Mitigating
Environmental, Social, and
Governance Risks (ESG)**

INVESTMENT BRANCH

January 2024

POLICY

The fiduciary responsibility of the Board, as described in detail within the overall Investment Policy Statement, is to discharge its responsibility in a manner that is in the sole and exclusive interest of the participants and beneficiaries and will assure the prompt delivery of benefits and related services.

CalSTRS invests a multi-billion dollar fund in a unique and complex social-economic milieu and recognizes it can neither operate nor invest in a vacuum. As a significant investor with a very long-term investment horizon, the success of CalSTRS is linked to global economic growth and prosperity. The System's investments impact other facets of the global economy and actions and activities that detract from the likelihood and potential of global growth are not in the long-term interests of the Fund.

Consistent with its fiduciary responsibilities to CalSTRS members, the Board has an obligation to ensure that the corporations and entities in which CalSTRS invests strive for long-term sustainability in their operations. Managers of our investments who do not strive for sustainability jeopardize achieving the long-term expected rate of return we expect. Therefore, CalSTRS incorporates ESG considerations into its analysis of the riskiness of its investment decisions and its ownership policies and practices, to the extent that ESG factors are material to the long-term success of an investment.

Since CalSTRS is a long-term investor and may hold an investment in a corporation or entity for many decades, short-term gains at the expense of long-term gains are not in the best interest of the Fund. Sustainable returns over long periods are in the economic interest of the Fund. Conversely, unsustainable practices that hurt long-term profits are risks to the System.

Since CalSTRS must invest huge sums of moneys for long periods of time to pay for future benefits promised to California Teachers, our decision to invest in corporations and other entities predominately reflects a judgment that the ownership will produce a sustainable rate of return which will make it an attractive investment and help CalSTRS meet its long-term obligations. It is important to note that CalSTRS ownership of a security in a company does not signify that CalSTRS approves of all of the company's practices or its products or that CalSTRS believes a particular company is an attractive investment since the security may be owned due to its membership in a particular index. CalSTRS utilizes "index" investing due to its low cost and efficient structure. These "index" investments are broadly diversified and composed of thousands of individual companies.

Since 1978, CalSTRS has used a set of principles known as the Statement of Investment Responsibility, SIR, to navigate the complex landscape of ESG issues. In January 2024, the Teachers' Retirement Board approved the change from SIR to Corporate Governance (CG) Principles. The CG Principles will continue to guide CalSTRS proxy voting; however, the ESG Policy is CalSTRS' preeminent policy on ESG matters and will guide active investment decisions and passive index strategy engagements.

PROCEDURES

To help manage the risk of investing a global portfolio in a complex governance environment, CalSTRS has developed a series of procedures to follow when faced with any major environmental, social or governance issue as identified by the ESG risk factors.

When faced with a decision or other activity that potentially violates CalSTRS ESG Policy; the Investment Staff, CIO and Investment Committee will undertake the following actions:

- A. The CIO will assess the potential ESG policy violation both as an ESG risk and as an impact to the System. The extent of the responsibility of the System to devote resources to address these issues will be determined by: 1) the size of the investment, and 2) the gravity of the violation of CalSTRS ESG Policies.
- B. At the CIO's direction, the Investment Staff will directly engage corporate management or other appropriate parties to seek information and understanding concerning the ESG policy violation and its ramifications on the System.
- C. The CIO and investment staff will provide a report to the Investment Committee of the findings associated with an ESG policy violation engagement and recommend any further action of engagement or need to commit further System resources. The Investment Committee can marshal further resources given the gravity of the situation.

To assist CalSTRS Staff and external investment managers in their investment analysis and decision-making, CalSTRS has developed a list of ESG risk factors that should be considered as part of the financial analysis of any active investment decision. For passive index strategies, CalSTRS uses the ESG risk factors to guide engagement activities. This ESG list is not exhaustive and does not attempt to identify all forms of risk that are appropriate to consider in a given investment transaction or engagement; however, they do provide a framework of other factors that might be overlooked. These risk factors should be reviewed for any CalSTRS investment or engagement in any asset class.

CalSTRS expects all investment managers, both internal and external to assess the risk of each of the following factors when making an active investment. The manager needs to balance the rate of return with all the risks including consideration of the specific investments exposure to each factor in each country in which that investment or company operates.

CALSTRS ESG RISK FACTORS

Monetary Transparency

The investment's long-term profitability by whether or not a country or company has free and open monetary and financial data, and its observance of applicable laws.

Data Dissemination

The investment's long-term profitability by whether or not a country is a member of the IMF (or similar organization) and satisfies the conditions for access, integrity, and quality for most data categories.

Accounting

The investment's long-term profitability by whether or not the accounting standards are formulated in accordance with International Accounting Standards or the U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

Payment System: Central Bank

The investment's long-term profitability by whether the activities of a country's central bank encompass implementing and ensuring compliance with principles and standards which are established to promote safe, sound, and efficient payment and settlement.

Securities Regulation

The investment's long-term profitability by exposure to operations in countries that have not complied with IOSCO objectives, which provide investor protection against manipulation and fraudulent practices.

Auditing

The investment's long-term profitability by whether or not the country uses International Standards on Auditing in setting national standards.

Fiscal Transparency

The investment's long-term profitability by its exposure or business operations in countries that do not have some level of fiscal transparency such as publication of financial statistics, sound standards for budgeting, accounting, and reporting.

Corporate Governance

The investment's long-term profitability by whether or not the government recognizes and supports good corporate governance practices and whether it generally adheres to OECD principles.

Banking Supervision

The investment's long-term profitability from its exposure to countries that have not endorsed/complied with the Basel Core Principles. An endorsement includes an agreement to review supervisory arrangements against the principles and bring legislation in line with the principles where necessary.

Payment System: Principles

The investment's long-term profitability by whether a country complies with the 10 Core Principles for Systemically Important Payment Systems, which includes operational reliability, efficiency, real time settlement, final settlement in central bank money; and whether rules and procedures are clear and permit participants to understand the financial risks resulting from participation in the system.

Insolvency Framework

The investment's long-term profitability from its business operations and activities in specific countries with regard to bankruptcy reform or insolvency legislation.

Money Laundering

The investment's long-term profitability from exposure and whether or not a country has implemented an anti-money laundering regime in line with international standards; consideration should be given to compliance with the 40 recommendations in the Financial Action Task Force, FATF, on Money Laundering; and whether it is a member of FATF.

Insurance Supervision

The investment's long-term profitability from whether or not a country has a regulatory framework in line with International Association of Insurance Supervisors, IAIS, Principles.

Respect for Human Rights

The investment's long-term profitability from its business operations and activities in countries that lack or have a weak judicial System. Assess the risk to an investment's long-term profitability from its business operations and activities in a country that engages in or facilitates the following: arbitrary or unlawful deprivation of life, disappearance, torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile, arbitrary interference with privacy, family, home, or correspondence, use of excessive force and violations of humanitarian law in internal conflicts. Consideration should be given to governmental attitude regarding international and non-governmental investigation of alleged violations of human rights.

Respect for Civil Liberties

The investment's long-term profitability from operations, activities, and business practices in countries or regions that do not allow freedom of speech and press, freedom of peaceful assembly and association, freedom of religion, freedom of movement within the country, allowance for foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation.

Respect for Cultural and Ethnic Identities

The investment's long-term profitability from operations, activities and business practices that do not adequately respect cultural values and ethnic identities.

Respect for Property Rights

The investment's long-term profitability from operations, activities and business practices that dispossesses or degrades peoples' lands, territories or resources, or does not adequately respect established property rights.

Respect for Political Rights

The investment's long-term profitability from business practices and activities in countries that do not allow their citizens the right to advocate for change to their government.

Discrimination Based on Race, Sex, Disability, Language, or Social Status

The investment's long-term profitability from business practices and activities on discrimination, such as discrimination against women, children, and persons with disabilities, national/racial/ethnic minorities, or indigenous people.

Worker Rights

The investment's long-term profitability from management and practices globally in the area of worker's rights; specifically the right of association, the right to organize and bargain collectively, prohibition of forced or bonded labor, status of child labor practices and minimum age for employment, acceptable work conditions, or human trafficking.

Environmental

The investment's long-term profitability from activities and exposure to environmental matters such as; depleting or reducing air quality, water quality, land protection and usage, without regard for remediation.

Climate Change

The investment's long-term profitability from inadequate attention to the impacts of climate change, including attention to relevant climate policy considerations and emerging climate risk mitigating technologies.

Resource Efficiency

The investment's long-term profitability from inadequately managing resource usage in a resource-constrained environment amid growing resource demand.

War/Conflicts/Acts of Terrorism

The investment's long-term profitability from business exposure to a country or region that has an internal or external conflict, war, acts of terrorism or involvement in acts of terrorism, and whether the country is a party to international conventions and protocols.

Human Health

The investment's long-term profitability from business exposure to an industry or company that makes a product which is highly detrimental to human health so that it draws significant product liability lawsuits, government regulation, United Nations sanctions and focus, and avoidance by other institutional investors.

Statement of Investment Responsibility approved by the Teachers' Retirement Board 1978
Revised to align with the Investment Policy and Management Plan and added CalSTRS 20
ESG Risk Factors 2006
Investment policy for mitigating Geopolitical, Environmental and Social Risk adopted by the
Teachers' Retirement Board on April 3, 2008
Revised to add 21st Risk Factor for Human health September 2008
Revised to improve the language used to describe the role that ESG criteria play in investment
decisions, add Respect for Cultural and Ethnic Identities and Respect for Property Rights risk
factors on May 9, 2018
When the IPMP transitioned to the Investment Statement Policy (IPS) this policy was removed
as an attachment and become a stand-alone Policy on September 13, 2023
Revised to replace Statement of Investment Responsibility reference to Corporate Governance
Principles on January 11, 2024