

T. ROWE PRICE FUNDS OEIC

# Global Value Equity Fund – ESG Report

Providing transparency on Environment, Social and Governance aspects of the Fund

As at 31 December 2023

#### **ESG INTEGRATION APPROACH**

- The Global Value Equity Fund uses ESG integration as part of its investment process. This means incorporating
  environmental, social, and governance factors to enhance investment decisions. Our philosophy is that ESG factors are
  a component of the investment decision. This means they are not the sole driver of an investment decision, nor are they
  considered separately from more traditional analysis.
- The process of ESG integration takes place on two levels: first, with our research analysts as they incorporate ESG factors into company valuations and ratings, and second, with the portfolio manager as he balances these ESG factor exposures at the portfolio level. Both the analysts and the portfolio manager are able to leverage dedicated, in-house resources to assist in analyzing ESG criteria.
- Our ESG specialist teams provide investment research on ESG issues at the company level and on thematic topics.
  Additionally, they have built tools to help proactively and systematically analyze the environmental, social, and
  governance factors that could impact our investments. The foundation of the analysis is a proprietary flagging tool
  called the Responsible Investing Indicator Model (RIIM). It covers over 15,000 companies and pulls from data sets that
  are not in the wheelhouse of traditional financial analysis. These data sets include:
  - ESG performance data (e.g., number of accidents, carbon emissions, strength of whistle-blower programs, etc.);
  - ESG targets (e.g., plans to reduce carbon emissions, increase diversity, etc.)
  - ESG incidents and controversies (e.g., environmental fines paid, local community controversies/protests against a company, etc.)
- Our approach to environmental and social factor integration is differentiated at the sector and industry levels, where our RIIM model helps us to determine the materiality of any given factor. Material ESG factors play an integral part in our risk/reward assessment of each company. Once all the factors have been assessed, the conclusions can influence whether to include or exclude the company or at what weight to add the company to the portfolio. Usually, ESG factors are considered as a component of the final investment decision.

#### RECENT COMPANY ENGAGEMENTS

We maintain a regular dialogue with the management teams of companies represented across the portfolio. Our investment-driven engagement program frequently identifies targets through our proprietary RIIM analysis, governance screening and analysts' fundamental research. While we engage with companies in a variety of different contexts, ESG engagement focuses on learning about, encouraging or exchanging perspectives on the environmental practices, corporate governance or social issues affecting their business.

While most of the meetings we hold with company managements will include some discussion of ESG topics, we differentiate meetings held with a heavy focus on ESG, meaning ESG issues were the sole items on the agenda or made up a meaningful part of the meeting. Agenda items are classified as "meaningful" when they take up a significant portion of the meeting or are a significant factor in the investment case.

The following are selected examples of recent engagements with companies held in or considered for the portfolio. The examples are not meant to be representative of every engagement held, but to illustrate the types of ESG engagements we are having with the managements of our investment companies.

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# **UnitedHealth (4th Quarter 2023 Engagement)**

Focus	Social				
Company Description	UnitedHealth is a leading U.S. health insurer.				
Engagement Objective	We engaged with UnitedHealth on impact and ESG disclosures.				
Participants	From UnitedHealth: Chief Financial Officer, Sustainability Representative, Investor Relations Representative, Senior Deputy Legal Counsel				
	From T. Rowe Price: Investment Analyst, Impact Analyst, Responsible Investing Analyst				
Engagement Outcome	We engaged with UnitedHealth to discuss how it could build on its existing disclosures to further evidence its impact in future reporting and improve ESG disclosures on a range of other topics.				
	UnitedHealth leads the managed care industry in impact measurement, with the broadest range of impact key performance indicators (KPIs) of any of its peers. Additionally, the company has set four impact targets: (a) 85% of its members will receive preventive care services annually by 2030; (b) 55%+ of its outpatient surgeries and radiology services will be delivered at high-quality, cost-efficient sites of care by 2030; (c) the company will close 600 million gaps in care by the end of FY25; and (d) invest USD 100 million in new partnerships that advance a diverse health workforce by 2033.				
	The company has added additional disclosure on the rationale and progress toward each of these commitments in this year's disclosure, further strengthening its impact reporting.				
	We revisited our discussion from one year ago, focused on the company's "care gaps closed" objective. We again expressed our interest in additional disclosure on the types of care gap closed, split either by disease type or focused on the demographic mix of patients for whom care gaps have been closed. UnitedHealth highlighted health equity as an area the company itself has been seeking to better examine and seemed receptive to including additional disclosure on the type of care gaps closed split by socioeconomic characteristics. We also highlighted detailed KPIs disclosed by rival health insurer Humana, related to value-based care outcomes, which we suggested may also be beneficial for UnitedHealth to disclose in the future.				
	UnitedHealth has included additional reporting on human capital management in this year's sustainability report. The company has further strengthened its offer to employees (e.g., increasing parental leave, improving health benefits, investing in employee well-being) and, combined with wider labor market conditions, this has contributed to voluntary turnover declining by around 4 percentage points from 18% in 2022.				
	We highlighted additional transparency on the company's approach to business ethics and employee compliance (e.g., quantitative KPIs on code of conduct violations, substantiated allegations) and data privacy (e.g., information on ISO 27001 certification, or standards to manage information security) as two topics where existing disclosure could be further strengthened.				
	The engagement allowed us to share our view of best practices on impact and request additional transparency from the company on its care gaps closed target. We also imparted our view on where the company could further improve ESG disclosures, namely in relation to business ethics and data privacy.				

The specific securities identified and described do not represent all of the securities purchased, sold, or recommended for the OEIC sub-fund, and no assumption should be made that the securities identified and discussed were or will be profitable.

# Wells Fargo (3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2023 Engagement)

Focus	Environment, Social, Governance			
Company Description	Wells Fargo is a diversified financial services company.			
Engagement Objective	We engaged with Wells Fargo to discuss a range of ESG topics.			
Participants	From Wells Fargo: Sustainability Representative, Legal Representative, Compensation Representatives, Corporate Secretary, Investor Relations Representative			
	From T. Rowe Price: Head of Corporate Governance, Responsible Investing Analyst			
	We engaged with Wells Fargo to discuss a range of ESG topics, including its climate strategy, financial inclusion, a shareholder resolution, and racial equity audit.			
	Wells Fargo is in line with its U.S. peers when it comes to decarbonizing its loan book but falls behind European peers in not having a framework in place to assess the credibility of clients' transition plans. It has a dedicated transition team and is working on providing additional disclosure in its upcoming ESG report. We pointed to examples of peers demonstrating best practice.			
	Wells Fargo was recently dropped from underwriting a municipal bond deal in Texas, following the Texas attorney general reviewing the bank's energy policies and involvement in the Net Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA), a group of leading banks aiming to accelerate the transition of the finance sector and the global economy to net zero emissions by 2050. We discussed how the political landscape in the U.S. could influence both the pace at which Wells Fargo looks to decarbonize its loan book as well as its involvement in ESG initiatives. The company explained that it is taking a balanced approach but provided cautious language about the benefits of being a NZBA signatory; mainly, the value of the alliance as a benchmarking exercise.			
Engagement Outcome	Wells Fargo has begun reporting the "social impact" it is having from various financial inclusion initiatives, including the number of customers with improved FICO (or credit) scores as part of its credit-building grant program. We recommended the bank report similar impact metrics for its Credit Close-Up program, an initiative with 11.2 million customers that provides advice on how to improve their FICO scores.			
	We also discussed governance topics, including an investor-sponsored resolution that was supported by a majority of voters at Wells Fargo's 2023 shareholder meeting. The proposal asked for a report on the effectiveness of the company's programs to combat harassment of employees and discrimination in hiring. The resolution was specifically tied to the revelations in 2022 that some areas within the company had fallen short of upholding internal requirements for diverse slates of candidates to be interviewed for many open positions. The company disclosed it had found some teams were interviewing diverse candidates after the position had already been filled. Some employees who reported the activity were subject to retaliatory actions. Around 52% of shareholders supported the proposal, and the company has agreed to provide some kind of reporting. We provided guidance on what form that might take. Wells Fargo also highlighted that it is nearing completion on a previously commissioned racial equity audit.			
	We made several disclosure recommendations to Wells Fargo to bring its climate strategy and financial inclusion initiatives in line with industry best practice.			

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# **ESG RIIM PROFILE**

The T. Rowe Price Responsible Investing Indicator Model (RIIM) rates companies, governments and securitized assets in a traffic light system measuring their environmental, social, and governance profile and flagging issuers with elevated risks. For certain types of investments, including, but not limited to, cash, currency positions, and particular types of derivatives, an ESG analysis may not be relevant or possible due to a lack of data. Where ESG considerations are integrated into the investment research process, we may conclude that other attributes of an investment outweigh ESG considerations when making investment decisions.

Portfolio		Benchmark	
No. of securities	% weight	No. of securities	% weight
78	81.2	1,267	83.1
19	18.8	203	16.3
0	0.0	5	0.5
0	0.0	5	0.1
0	0.0	0	0.0
1	0.0	0	0.0
98	100.0	1,480	100.0
	No. of securities  78  19  0  0  1	No. of securities         % weight           78         81.2           19         18.8           0         0.0           0         0.0           0         0.0           1         0.0	No. of securities         % weight         No. of securities           78         81.2         1,267           19         18.8         203           0         0.0         5           0         0.0         5           0         0.0         0           1         0.0         0

■ No/few Flags ■ Medium Flags ▲ High Flags

The comparator benchmark of the Fund is the MSCI World Net Index. The manager is not constrained by the fund's benchmark, which is used for performance comparison purposes only.

RISKS - The following risks are materially relevant to the fund (refer to prospectus for further details): Currency - Currency exchange rate movements could reduce investment gains or increase investment losses. Small and mid-cap - Small and mid-size company stock prices can be more volatile than stock prices of larger companies. Style - Style risk may impact performance as different investment styles go in and out of favor depending on market conditions and investor sentiment.

General fund risks - to be read in conjunction with the fund specific risks above. Equity - Equities can lose value rapidly for a variety of reasons and can remain at low prices indefinitely. Geographic concentration - Geographic concentration risk may result in performance being more strongly affected by any social, political, economic, environmental or market conditions affecting those countries or regions in which the fund's assets are concentrated. Investment fund - Investing in funds involves certain risks an investor would not face if investing in markets directly. Management - Management risk may result in potential conflicts of interest relating to the obligations of the investment manager. Market - Market risk may subject the fund to experience losses caused by unexpected changes in a wide variety of factors. Operational - Operational risk may cause losses as a result of incidents caused by people, systems, and/or processes.

### **ADDITIONAL DISCLOSURES**

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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