

# **Annual Management Report of Fund Performance**

for the financial year ended December 31, 2024

All figures are reported in Canadian dollars unless otherwise noted.

This annual management report of fund performance contains financial highlights but does not contain the complete annual financial statements of the investment fund. You can get a copy of the annual financial statements at your request, and at no cost, by calling toll-free at <u>1-800-465-3863</u>, by emailing us at <u>info@cibcassetmanagement.com</u>, by writing to us at CIBC Square, 81 Bay Street, 20th floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5J 0E7, or by visiting our website at www.cibc.com/mutualfunds or SEDAR+ at www.sedarplus.ca.

Unitholders may also contact us using one of these methods to request a copy of the investment fund's interim financial report, proxy voting policies and procedures, proxy voting disclosure record, or quarterly portfolio disclosure.

#### **Management Discussion of Fund Performance**

## **Investment Objective and Strategies**

Investment Objective: CIBC International Small Companies Fund (the *Fund*) seeks to provide long-term growth through capital appreciation by investing primarily in smaller companies located around the world.

Investment Strategies: The Fund uses a bottom-up approach for company selection based on individual merits, giving consideration to themes and trends that may impact future performance. The approach identifies companies that exhibit extraordinary growth potential or that are undervalued based on established parameters.

#### Risk

The Fund is a global small/mid cap equity fund that is suitable for long term investors who can tolerate medium to high investment risk.

For the period ended December 31, 2024, the Fund's overall level of risk remained as discussed in the simplified prospectus.

#### **Results of Operations**

The Fund's portfolio sub-advisor is American Century Investment Management, Inc. (the *Sub-Advisor*). The commentary that follows provides a summary of the results of operations for the period ended December 31, 2024. All dollar figures are expressed in thousands, unless otherwise indicated.

The Fund's net asset value decreased by 8% during the period, from \$25,410 as at December 31, 2023 to \$23,398 as at December 31, 2024. Net redemptions of \$4,269 were partially offset by positive investment performance, resulting in an overall decrease in net asset value.

Class A units of the Fund posted a return of 9.1% for the period. The Fund's benchmarks, the MSCI EAFE Index and the MSCI EAFE Small-Cap Index (the *benchmarks*), returned 13.8% and 11.6%, respectively, for the same period. The Fund's return is after the deduction of fees and expenses, unlike the benchmarks' returns. See the section *Past Performance* for the returns of other classes of units offered by the Fund.

Non-U.S. equities delivered positive performance for the year despite periods of volatility. Optimism about moderating inflation and relatively

stable economic growth supported equity performance. Corporate earnings also appeared relatively resilient despite global economic growth challenges.

Investors welcomed interest-rate cuts by the European Central Bank, the Bank of England and the U.S. Federal Reserve Board. The Bank of Japan shifted to tightening mode as Japan faced its highest inflation in decades. In the third quarter of 2024, China announced a stimulus package aimed at addressing an extended economic downturn.

Small-capitalization stocks lagged large-cap stocks over the year.

Stock selection in the financials sector detracted from performance, partly due to select insurance holdings. An underweight allocation to financials also detracted from performance, as did stock selection in the industrials sector and within Japan.

A holding in FP Partner Inc. detracted from performance as a result of a Financial Services Agency investigation. The company refuted the allegations, but the Sub-Advisor sold the holding and redeployed the capital into other holdings. A holding in Paladin Energy Ltd. detracted from performance as uranium spot prices declined and after the company reported lower-than-expected production. Fugro NV was another notable detractor from performance. It reported weaker-than-expected earnings driven by delays in U.S. offshore wind projects and turmoil in the Middle East.

An underweight allocation in the real estate sector contributed to the Fund's performance, aided by stock selection. Stock selection in the consumer discretionary sector contributed to the Fund's performance, as did exposure to India.

Top individual contributors to performance included holdings in ASICS Corp., Sanrio Co. Ltd. and Kalyan Jewellers India Ltd. ASICS delivered strong revenue and earnings growth, assisted by its improving U.S. market position. The company's management indicated the potential for robust growth in both its Sportstyle and Onitsuka Tiger businesses. Sanrio benefited from strong product sales and licensing revenues, which supported its earnings growth. Kalyan Jewellers India experienced strong sales and earnings growth, bolstered by its franchise store expansion. The company also benefited as Indian consumers started trading up to premium goods.

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The Sub-Advisor added a new holding in SATS Ltd., a holding company that provides food solutions and gateway services. The company is gaining market share in both cargo and food, and it is benefiting from a prior acquisition. An existing holding in Spanish pool manufacturer Fluidra SA was increased.

Elis SA, a provider of workwear, linens and hygiene products, was sold from the Fund. Potential tax increases in France may weigh on the company's earnings growth prospects. A holding in ASICS was trimmed to take profits after strong share price performance.

## **Recent Developments**

The level of geopolitical risk disrupted the global economy and financial markets in unprecedented and unpredictable ways. This has resulted in significant volatility and uncertainty in financial markets. It is unclear what further actions may be taken by governments and the resulting impact on global economies, businesses and financial markets. Inflation has increased in many markets across the globe, leading central banks to raise interest rates in order to counter rapidly rising prices. These factors may adversely affect the Fund's performance. The Manager continues to monitor ongoing developments and the impact to investment strategies.

## **Related Party Transactions**

CIBC and its affiliates have the following roles and responsibilities with respect to the Fund, and receive the fees described below in connection with their roles and responsibilities.

#### Manager

CIBC is the Fund's manager (the *Manager*). CIBC receives management fees with respect to the Fund's day-to-day business and operations, calculated based on the net asset value of each respective class of units of the Fund as described in *Management Fees* section. From time to time, CIBC may invest in units of the Fund.

#### Trustee

CIBC Trust Corporation (*CIBC Trust*), a wholly-owned subsidiary of CIBC, is the Fund's trustee (the *Trustee*). The Trustee holds title to the Fund's property (cash and securities) on behalf of its unitholders.

## Portfolio Advisor

The portfolio advisor provides, or arranges to provide, investment advice and portfolio management services to the Fund. CAMI, a wholly-owned subsidiary of CIBC, is the Fund's portfolio advisor.

## Distributor

Dealers and other firms sell the units of the Fund to investors. These dealers and other firms include CIBC's related dealers such as the principal distributor, CIBC Securities Inc. (CIBC SI), the CIBC Investor's Edge discount brokerage division of CIBC Investor Services Inc. (CIBC ISI), the CIBC Imperial Investor Service division of CIBC ISI, and the CIBC Wood Gundy division of CIBC World Markets Inc. (CIBC WM). CIBC SI, CIBC ISI, and CIBC WM are wholly-owned subsidiaries of CIBC.

CIBC may pay trailing commissions to these dealers and firms, in connection with the sale of units of the Fund. These dealers and other firms may pay a portion of these trailing commissions to their advisors who sell units of the Fund to investors.

Brokerage Arrangements and Soft Dollars

The Portfolio Advisor and any portfolio sub-advisors make decisions, including the selection of markets and dealers and the negotiation of commissions, with respect to the purchase and sale of portfolio securities, certain derivative products and the execution of portfolio transactions. Brokerage business may be allocated by the Portfolio Advisor and any portfolio sub-advisors, to CIBC WM and CIBC World Markets Corp., each a subsidiary of CIBC. CIBC WM and CIBC World Markets Corp. may also earn spreads on the sale of fixed income and other securities and certain derivative products to the Fund. A spread is the difference between the bid and ask prices for a security in the applicable marketplace, with respect to the execution of portfolio transactions. The spread will differ based upon various factors such as the type and liquidity of the security.

Dealers, including CIBC WM and CIBC World Markets Corp., may furnish goods and services, other than order execution, to the Portfolio Advisor and any portfolio sub-advisors, in partial exchange for processing trades through them (referred to in the industry as "soft dollar" arrangements). These goods and services are paid for with a portion of the brokerage commissions and assist the Portfolio Advisor and any portfolio sub-advisors, with investment decision-making services for the Fund or relate directly to the execution of portfolio transactions on behalf of the Fund. As per the terms of the portfolio sub-advisory agreements, such soft dollar arrangements are in compliance with applicable laws.

During the period, the Fund paid brokerage commissions and other fees of \$38 to CIBC WM and \$2 to CIBC World Markets Corp. Spreads associated with fixed income and other securities are not ascertainable and, for that reason, cannot be included when determining these amounts.

## **Fund Transactions**

The Fund may enter into one or more of the following transactions (*Related Party Transactions*) in reliance on the standing instructions issued by the IRC:

- invest in or hold equity securities of CIBC or issuers related to a portfolio sub-advisor;
- invest in or hold non-exchange-traded debt securities of CIBC or an issuer related to CIBC, with terms-to-maturity of 365 days or more, issued in a primary offering and in the secondary market;
- make an investment in the securities of an issuer for which CIBC WM, CIBC World Markets Corp., or any affiliate of CIBC (the Related Dealer or Related Dealers) acts as an underwriter during the offering of the securities or at any time during the 60-day period following the completion of the offering of such securities (in the case of a "private placement" offering, in accordance with the exemptive relief order granted by the Canadian securities regulatory authorities and in accordance with the policies and procedures relating to such investment);
- purchase equity or debt securities from or sell them to a Related Dealer, where it is acting as principal;
- undertake currency and currency derivative transactions where a Related Dealer is the counterparty;

- purchase securities from or sell securities to another investment fund or a managed account managed by the Manager or an affiliate; and
- engage in in-specie transfers by receiving portfolio securities from, or delivering portfolio securities to, a managed account or another investment fund managed by the Manager or an affiliate, in respect of a purchase or redemption of units in the fund, subject to certain conditions.

At least annually, the IRC reviews the Related Party Transactions for which they have issued standing instructions. The IRC is required to advise the Canadian securities regulatory authorities, after a matter has been referred or reported to the IRC by the Manager, if it determines that an investment decision was not made in accordance with a condition imposed by securities legislation or the IRC in any Related Party Transactions requiring its approval.

#### Custodian

CIBC Mellon Trust Company is the Fund's custodian (the *Custodian*). The Custodian holds all cash and securities for the Fund and ensures that those assets are kept separate from any other cash or securities that the Custodian might be holding. The Custodian also provides other services to the Fund including record-keeping and processing of foreign exchange transactions. The fees and spreads for the services of the Custodian directly related to the execution of portfolio transactions by the Fund are paid by CAMI and/or the dealer(s) directed by CAMI, up to the amount of the credits generated under soft dollar arrangements from trading on behalf of the Fund during that month. All other fees and spreads for the services of the Custodian are paid by the Manager, in return for receiving a fixed administration fee from the Fund. CIBC owns a 50% interest in the Custodian.

#### Service Provider

The Custodian also provides certain services to the Fund, including securities lending, fund accounting and reporting, and portfolio valuation. The Manager receives a fixed administration fee from the Fund, in return, the Manager pays certain operating expenses which includes custodial fees (including all applicable taxes) and the fees for fund accounting, reporting, and fund valuation (including all applicable taxes) to CIBC Mellon Trust Company. Where applicable, securities lending fees are applied against the revenue received by the Fund.

## **Financial Highlights**

The following tables show selected key financial information about the Fund and are intended to help you understand the Fund's financial performance for the period ended December 31.

The Fund's Net Assets per Unit <sup>1</sup> - Class	s A Units					Incept	ion da	te: September 22, 199
		2024	2023	2022		2021		2020
Net Assets, beginning of period	\$	35.05	\$ 33.32	\$ 44.86	\$	43.56	\$	34.46
Increase (decrease) from operations: Total revenue Total expenses Realized gains (losses) for the period Unrealized gains (losses) for the period	\$	0.55 (1.25) 2.66 1.29	\$ 0.58 (0.90) (1.90) 3.98	\$ 0.57 (0.90) (3.80) (8.89)	\$	0.48 (1.43) 5.00 (2.74)	\$	0.48 (1.15) 6.19 3.23
Total increase (decrease) from operations <sup>2</sup>	\$	3.25	\$ 1.76	\$ (13.02)	\$	1.31	\$	8.75
Distributions: From income (excluding dividends) From dividends From capital gains Return of capital	\$	- - - -	\$ - - - -	\$ - - - -	\$	- - - -	\$	- - - -
Total Distributions <sup>3</sup>	\$	_	\$ _	\$ _	\$	_	\$	-
Net Assets, end of period	\$	38.23	\$ 35.05	\$ 33.32	\$	44.86	\$	43.56
Ratios and Supplemental Data - Class A	A Units	0004	0000	0000		0004		0000
T-(-1N-(A(V-1(000-)/	•	2024	 2023	 2022	•	2021		2020
Total Net Asset Value (000s) <sup>4</sup>	\$	18,053	\$ 20,028	\$ 21,797	\$	38,890	\$	38,866
Number of Units Outstanding <sup>4</sup>		472,195	571,524	654,291		866,986		892,299
Management Expense Ratio <sup>5</sup>		2.21%	2.21%	2.21%		2.83%		2.80%
Management Expense Ratio before waivers of absorptions <sup>6</sup>	r	2.21%	2.22%	2.63%		3.30%		3.43%
Trading Expense Ratio <sup>7</sup>		0.23%	0.23%	0.21%		0.25%		0.30%
Portfolio Turnover Rate <sup>8</sup>		119.45%	114.02%	112.44%		123.91%		136.06%
Net Asset Value per Unit	\$	38.23	\$ 35.05	\$ 33.32	\$	44.86	\$	43.56
The Fund's Net Assets per Unit <sup>1</sup> - Class	s F Units						Ince	ption date: July 6, 202
		2024	2023	2022		2021		2020 <sup>a</sup>
Net Assets, beginning of period	\$	9.83	\$ 9.23	\$ 12.28	\$	11.75	\$	10.00 <sup>b</sup>
Increase (decrease) from operations: Total revenue Total expenses Realized gains (losses) for the period Unrealized gains (losses) for the period	\$	0.16 (0.25) 0.76 0.38	\$ 0.16 (0.13) (0.53) 1.09	\$ 0.20 (0.14) (1.04) (0.32)	\$	0.10 (0.22) 0.53 (1.17)	\$	0.02 (0.09) 1.19 0.62
	\$	1.05	\$ 0.59	\$ (1.30)	\$	(0.76)	\$	1.74
Total increase (decrease) from operations <sup>2</sup>	Ψ			, ,		, ,	-	
Distributions: From income (excluding dividends) From dividends From capital gains	\$	- - -	\$ - - -	\$ - - -	\$	- - -	\$	- - -
Distributions: From income (excluding dividends) From dividends		- - - -	\$ - - - -	\$ -	\$	- - - -	\$	- - - -

#### Ratios and Supplemental Data - Class F Units

	20	)24	2023	2022	2021	2020 <sup>a</sup>
Total Net Asset Value (000s) <sup>4</sup>	\$ 5,	345	\$ 5,382	\$ 5,135	\$ 102	\$ -
Number of Units Outstanding <sup>4</sup>	492,	332	547,470	556,206	8,277	1
Management Expense Ratio <sup>5</sup>	1.0	0%	0.99%	1.03%	1.68%	1.68%*
Management Expense Ratio before waivers or						
absorptions <sup>6</sup>	1.0	0%	1.00%	1.33%	2.03%	1.68% <sup>*</sup>
Trading Expense Ratio <sup>7</sup>	0.2	3%	0.23%	0.21%	0.25%	0.30%*
Portfolio Turnover Rate <sup>8</sup>	119.4	5%	114.02%	112.44%	123.91%	136.06%
Net Asset Value per Unit	\$ 10	.86	\$ 9.83	\$ 9.23	\$ 12.28	\$ 11.75

- a Information presented is for the period from the inception date to December 31.
- b Initial offering price.
- \* Ratio has been annualized.
- <sup>1</sup> This information is derived from the Fund's audited annual financial statements.
- Net assets and distributions are based on the actual number of units outstanding at the relevant time. The total increase (decrease) from operations is based on the weighted average number of units outstanding during the period.
- Distributions were paid in cash, reinvested in additional units of the Fund, or both.
- This information is presented as at December 31 of the period(s) shown.
- <sup>5</sup> Management expense ratio is based on the total expenses of the Fund (excluding commissions and other portfolio transaction costs), incurred by or allocated to a class of units for the period shown, expressed as an annualized percentage of the daily average net asset value of that class during the period. The management expense ratio includes the fees attributable to exchange traded funds, where applicable.
- 6 The decision to waive management fees and/or fixed administration fees is at the discretion of the Manager. The practice of waiving management fees and/or fixed administration fees may continue indefinitely or may be terminated at any time without notice to unitholders. The management expense ratio before waivers or absorptions includes the fees attributable to exchange traded funds, where applicable.
- The trading expense ratio represents total commissions and other portfolio transaction costs before income taxes expressed as an annualized percentage of the daily average net asset value during the period. Spreads associated with fixed income securities trading are not ascertainable and, for that reason, are not included in the trading expense ratio calculation.
- The portfolio turnover rate indicates how actively the portfolio advisor and/or portfolio sub-advisor manages the portfolio investments. A portfolio turnover rate of 100% is equivalent to the Fund buying and selling all of the securities in its portfolio once in the course of the period. The higher a portfolio turnover rate in a period, the greater the trading costs payable by the Fund in the period, and the greater the chance of an investor receiving taxable capital gains in the year. There is not necessarily a relationship between a high turnover rate and the performance of the Fund.

## **Management Fees**

The Fund, either directly or indirectly, pays CIBC an annual management fee to cover the costs of managing the Fund. Management fees are based on the Fund's net asset value and are calculated daily and paid monthly. Management fees are paid to CIBC in consideration for providing, or arranging for the provision of, management, distribution, and portfolio advisory services. Advertising and promotional expenses, office overhead expenses and trailing commissions are paid by CIBC out of the management fees received from the Fund. The Fund is required to pay applicable taxes on the management fees paid to CIBC. Refer to the Simplified Prospectus for the annual management fee rate for each class of units.

The following table shows a breakdown of the services received in consideration of the management fees, as a percentage of the management fees collected from the Fund for the period ended December 31, 2024. These amounts do not include waived fees or absorbed expenses.

	Class A Units	Class F Units
Sales and trailing commissions paid to dealers	49.92%	0.00%
General administration, investment advice, and profit	50.08%	100.00%

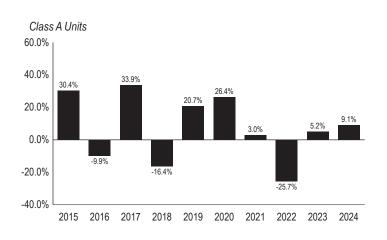
#### **Past Performance**

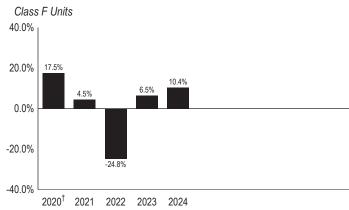
The performance data provided assumes reinvestment of distributions only and does not take into account sales, redemption, distribution, or other optional charges payable by any unitholder that would have reduced returns. Past performance does not necessarily indicate how a fund will perform in the future

The Fund's returns are after the deduction of fees and expenses, and the difference in returns between classes of units is primarily due to differences in the management expense ratio. See the *Financial Highlights* section for the management expense ratio.

## Year-by-Year Returns

These bar charts show the annual performance of each class of units of the Fund for each of the periods shown, and illustrate how the performance has changed from period to period. These bar charts show, in percentage terms, how an investment made on January 1 would have increased or decreased by December 31, unless otherwise indicated.





 $^{\dagger}\,\,$  2020 return is for the period from July 6, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

## **Annual Compound Returns**

This table shows the annual compound return of each class of units of the Fund for each indicated period ended on December 31, 2024. The annual compound total return is also compared to the Fund's benchmark(s).

The Fund's benchmarks are the MSCI EAFE Index and the MSCI EAFE Small-Cap Index.

Class and Benchmark(s)	1 Year (%)	3 Years (%)	5 Years (%)	10 Years* (%)	or Since Inception* (%)	Inception Date
Class A units	9.1	(5.2)	2.1	5.8		September 22, 1997
MSCI EAFE Index	13.8	6.7	7.4	8.0		•
MSCI EAFE Small-Cap Index	11.6	1.5	4.9	8.3		
Class F units	10.4	(4.0)			1.9	July 6, 2020
MSCI EAFE Index	13.8	6.7			9.9	•
MSCI EAFE Small-Cap Index	11.6	1.5			7.5	

<sup>\*</sup> If a class of units has been outstanding for less than 10 years, the annual compound return since inception is shown.

**MSCI EAFE Index** is a free float-adjusted market capitalization Index of stocks of companies of developed market equity indices covering 21 different countries in Europe, Australia, and the Far East.

MSCI EAFE Small-Cap Index represents the small-cap segment in 21 developed equity markets outside of North America.

A discussion of the Fund's relative performance compared to its benchmark(s) can be found in Results of Operations.

## Summary of Investment Portfolio (as at December 31, 2024)

The summary of investment portfolio may change due to ongoing portfolio transactions of the investment fund. A quarterly update is available by visiting <a href="www.cibc.com/mutualfunds">www.cibc.com/mutualfunds</a>. The Top Positions table shows the Fund's 25 largest positions. If the fund holds fewer than 25 positions in total, all positions are shown.

Portfolio Breakdown	% of Net Asset Value
Other Equities	23.8
Japan	19.7
Canada	13.2
India	11.5
United Kingdom	8.6
Australia	6.0
Taiwan	5.9
Sweden	4.0
Switzerland	3.5
China	3.4
Cash	1.1
Other Assets, less Liabilities	(0.7)

Top Positions	% of Net Asset Value
Embraer SA, ADR	1.8
Vista Energy SAB de CV, ADR	1.7
SATS Ltd.	1.5
AtkinsRealis Group Inc.	1.5
Sanrio Co. Ltd.	1.5
ASICS Corp.	1.5
Diploma PLC	1.4
GDS Holdings Ltd., ADR	1.3
Baycurrent Consulting Inc.	1.3
AAK AB	1.3
KEI Industries Ltd.	1.2
Weir Group PLC (The)	1.2
Descartes Systems Group Inc.	1.2
TransAlta Corp.	1.2
Miura Co. Ltd.	1.2
Marks & Spencer Group PLC	1.2
Amber Enterprises India Ltd.	1.1
Maruwa Co. Ltd.	1.1
Siegfried Holding AG, Registered	1.1
Cash	1.1
Tongcheng Travel Holdings Ltd.	1.1
Supreme Industries Ltd.	1.1
LOTES Co. Ltd.	1.1
Telix Pharmaceuticals Ltd.	1.1
GENDA Inc.	1.1

## A note on forward-looking statements

The management report of fund performance may contain forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements include statements that are predictive in nature, that depend upon or refer to future events or conditions, or that include words such as "expects", "anticipates", "intends", "plans", "believes", "estimates", or other similar wording. In addition, any statements that may be made concerning future performance, strategies, or prospects and possible future actions taken by the fund, are also forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance. These statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties, and other factors that may cause the actual results and achievements of the fund to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such statements. Such factors include, but are not limited to: general economic, market, and business conditions; fluctuations in securities prices, interest rates, and foreign currency exchange rates; changes in government regulations; and catastrophic events.

The above list of important factors that may affect future results is not exhaustive. Before making any investment decisions, we encourage you to consider these and other factors carefully. CIBC does not undertake, and specifically disclaims, any obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future developments, or otherwise prior to the release of the next management report of fund performance.



CIBC Mutual Funds CIBC Family of Portfolios

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