



# NEI Canadian Small Cap Equity Fund

## Semi-annual Management Report of Fund Performance

### As at March 31, 2024

This Semi-annual Management Report of Fund Performance contains financial highlights but does not contain either semi-annual or annual financial statements of the investment fund. You can obtain a copy of the semi-annual or annual financial statements at your request, and at no cost, by calling 1-888-809-3333, by writing us at Northwest & Ethical Investments L.P., 151 Yonge Street Suite 1200, Toronto, ON M5C 2W7 or by visiting our website at [www.neiinvestments.com](http://www.neiinvestments.com) or SEDAR+ at [www.sedarplus.ca](http://www.sedarplus.ca).

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

## Management Discussion of Performance

### Results of Operations

The NEI Canadian Small Cap Equity Fund's Series A units returned 12.9% for the six-month period ended March 31, 2024 compared with a return of 14.4% for the benchmark explained below.

Unlike the benchmark return, the Fund's returns are after the deduction of fees and expenses paid by the Fund. Performance differences between series of units are mainly attributable to management fees charged to each series. Refer to the Past Performance section for the details of returns by series.

The benchmark for this Fund is the S&P/TSX Small Cap Index.

The Fund's net asset value increased by 2.96% during the period, from \$50,390,813 as at September 30, 2023 to \$51,882,666 as at March 31, 2024. This change in net assets is attributed to net unitholder activity of -\$4,826,340 and \$6,318,193 to investment operations, including market appreciation (depreciation), income and expenses.

### Market Overview

Canadian small-capitalization stocks experienced a strong six months. In the fourth quarter of 2024, market sentiment was driven by interest rate sensitivity, with optimism over the latter half of the quarter owing to expectations of softening central bank positioning. Canadian small-cap stocks performed well in the first quarter of 2024 led by the Energy and Materials sectors. Energy stocks rose steadily throughout the quarter, while gold delivered extremely strong returns in March as Canadian small-cap stocks rose sharply. In addition to commodity price exposures, favourable profitability and capital efficiency attributes were rewarded in the first quarter. The Fund's core investment style is well balanced and designed to be resilient in most market environments.

### Factors That Have Affected Performance

Over the past six months, stock selection decisions in the Industrials sector and being overweight Information Technology stocks were the largest contributors to relative performance. The largest detractors included stock selection decisions in the gold and Materials sectors.

## Portfolio Changes

Driven by its stock selection process, the portfolio sub-advisor increased the Fund's relative sector exposures versus the S&P/TSX Small Cap Index to Health Care and Industrials while decreasing relative exposures to stocks in the Energy and Materials (excluding gold) sectors. Portfolio risk metrics remain conservative with forecast volatility below the S&P/TSX Small Cap Index and a beta below 1.0. The portfolio sub-advisor's ensemble approach to quantitative investing seeks to diversify across style and sector and has consistently delivered a Fund capable of performing well across most market environments.

## Environmental, Social, And Governance (ESG) Activities

In addition to any ESG-related commentary made in the sections above, other ESG-related activities undertaken in the period are described here.

NEI's Responsible Investing team voted against management on 65% of the proxy items at 10 annual general meetings and/or special meetings. There were no shareholder resolutions on the ballots.

## Recent Developments

Quarterly sales growth of 2.9% is positioned above the level for the larger-cap S&P/TSX Composite Index at 1.1%. This favourable growth profile has been maintained despite substantially more reasonable valuations, trading at only 10.0x forward earnings expectations, while the S&P/TSX Small Cap Index trades at 16.1x and the S&P/TSX Composite Index trades at 15.2x today. This valuation also looks favourable from a global context as well, as the MSCI ACWI Small Cap Index trades at 17.2x while larger-cap indices like the MSCI World Index at 19.4x and S&P 500 Index at 22.0x trade well above their historical averages. Ultimately, the portfolio sub-advisor believes these factors suggest a strong outlook for Canadian small-cap stocks in general, and the Canadian Small Cap Equity Mandate in particular, which uses a core, quantitative approach to deliver favourable attributes across value, profitability, sentiment, momentum, and quality.

## Related Party Transactions

Northwest & Ethical Investments L.P. ("NEI LP") is the Manager, Trustee, Portfolio Manager and Registrar of the Fund. Northwest & Ethical Investments Inc., the general partner of NEI LP, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Aviso Wealth Inc. ("Aviso"). Aviso is also the sole limited partner of NEI LP. Aviso is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Aviso Wealth LP, which in turn is owned 50% by Desjardins Financial Holding Inc. and 50% by a limited partnership owned by the five Provincial Credit Union Centrals and The CUMIS Group Limited. Desjardins Financial Holding Inc. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec ("Fédération").

NEI LP charges the Fund a fixed administration fee in place of certain variable expenses. NEI LP in turn, pays all operating expenses of the Fund, other than specified Fund costs (e.g. the fees and expense of the Independent Review Committee ("IRC"), taxes, and brokerage commissions) which include payments to related parties. These services are in the normal course of operations and are measured at an exchange amount that is consistent with other independent parties. Desjardins Trust Inc. ("Desjardins Trust") is the custodian of the Fund. Desjardins Trust is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Fédération. The Fund may engage in securities lending and repurchase transactions, and Desjardins Trust may act as the Fund's securities lending and repurchase transactions agent ("Agent"). Any revenue earned on such transactions is split 60%—40% between the Fund and the Agent. Desjardins Securities Inc. ("DSI") is a broker responsible for security transactions on behalf of the Fund. DSI is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Fédération.



# NEI Canadian Small Cap Equity Fund

Where applicable the amounts paid in commission by the Fund to DSI and amounts received from underlying funds managed by NEI LP during the period are presented.

|                                     | March 2024 (\$) | March 2023 (\$) |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Commissions paid by the Fund to DSI | 267             | -               |

The Fund's sub-advisors may place a portion of the Fund's portfolio transactions with brokerage firms which are affiliates of NEI LP, provided that the affiliate's trade execution abilities and costs are comparable to those of non-affiliated qualified brokerage firms.

Effective April 1, 2024, Credential Asset Management Inc. and Credential Qtrade Securities Inc. merged into Aviso Financial Inc. As a result, the Fund is now distributed through Aviso Financial Inc., and members of the Fédération and other nonrelated parties by way of shared ownership. NEI LP pays to these parties distribution and servicing fees based on a percentage of the daily values of the units of each held by the dealer's clients and additionally, in some cases, on the amount of initial purchase.

NEI LP has established the IRC for the Fund in accordance with the requirements of National Instrument 81-107 – Independent Review Committee for Investment Funds in order to review conflicts of interest as they relate to investment fund management. The Fund did not rely on an approval, positive recommendation or standing instruction from the Fund's IRC with respect to any related party transactions.

This document contains forward-looking statements. Such statements are generally identifiable by the terminology used, such as “plan”, “anticipate”, “intend”, “expect”, “estimate”, or other similar wording. These forward-looking statements are subject to known and unknown risks and uncertainties and other factors which may cause actual results, levels of activity and achievements 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, fluctuation in interest rates and foreign currency exchange rates; and actions by governmental authorities. Future events and their effects on the Fund may not be those anticipated by us. Actual results may differ materially from the results anticipated in these forward-looking statements. We do not undertake, and specifically disclaim, any obligation to update or revise any forward-looking information, whether as a result of new information, future developments or otherwise.

## 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 six-month period ended March 31, 2024 and the past five fiscal years or for the periods since inception, as applicable.

### Net Assets per Unit (\$) <sup>(1)</sup>

| Series | Period     | Net Assets, Beginning of Period | Increase (Decrease) from Operations |                |                         |                           |  | Distributions                     |                |                       |                    |                   |                                       | Net Assets, End of Period |
|--------|------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
|        |            |                                 | Total Revenue                       | Total Expenses | Realized Gains (Losses) | Unrealized Gains (Losses) | Total Increase (Decrease) from Operations <sup>(2)</sup> | From Income (Excluding Dividends) | From Dividends | From Underlying Funds | From Capital Gains | Return of Capital | Total Distributions <sup>(3)(4)</sup> |                           |
| A      | Mar. 2024  | 33.77                           | 0.41                                | -0.53          | -1.17                   | 5.41                      | 4.12   | 0.00                              | 0.02           | 0.00                  | 2.47               | 0.00              | 2.49                                  | 35.46                     |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 30.89                           | 0.85                                | -0.95          | 3.08                    | 0.48                      | 3.46   | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.33               | 0.00              | 0.33                                  | 33.77                     |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 38.70                           | 0.55                                | -0.99          | 1.59                    | -8.02                     | -6.87  | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.00                                  | 30.89                     |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 31.41                           | 0.73                                | -0.99          | 11.06                   | -3.07                     | 7.73   | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.00                                  | 38.70                     |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 30.22                           | 0.72                                | -0.78          | -1.03                   | 2.12                      | 1.03   | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.00                                  | 31.41                     |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 39.09                           | 0.78                                | -0.86          | 1.64                    | -7.01                     | -5.45  | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 4.28               | 0.00              | 4.28                                  | 30.22                     |
| F      | Mar. 2024  | 15.99                           | 0.19                                | -0.17          | -0.55                   | 2.55                      | 2.02   | 0.00                              | 0.18           | 0.00                  | 1.17               | 0.00              | 1.35                                  | 16.69                     |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 14.48                           | 0.40                                | -0.29          | 1.45                    | 0.16                      | 1.72   | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.15               | 0.00              | 0.15                                  | 15.99                     |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 17.97                           | 0.29                                | -0.27          | 0.68                    | -5.29                     | -4.59  | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.00                                  | 14.48                     |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 14.53                           | 0.33                                | -0.29          | 5.06                    | -0.90                     | 4.20   | 0.00                              | 0.09           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.09                                  | 17.97                     |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 13.96                           | 0.33                                | -0.23          | -0.47                   | 1.29                      | 0.92   | 0.00                              | 0.12           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.12                                  | 14.53                     |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 17.90                           | 0.36                                | -0.24          | 0.75                    | -3.25                     | -2.38  | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 1.98               | 0.00              | 1.98                                  | 13.96                     |
| I      | Mar. 2024  | 17.28                           | 0.20                                | -0.05          | -0.59                   | 2.74                      | 2.30   | 0.00                              | 0.52           | 0.00                  | 1.27               | 0.00              | 1.79                                  | 17.83                     |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 15.40                           | 0.43                                | -0.04          | 1.56                    | 0.20                      | 2.15   | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.16               | 0.00              | 0.16                                  | 17.28                     |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 18.80                           | 0.28                                | -0.01          | 0.77                    | -4.36                     | -3.32  | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.00                                  | 15.40                     |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 18.16                           | 0.38                                | -0.02          | 5.99                    | 0.90                      | 7.25   | 0.00                              | 0.52           | 0.00                  | 3.50               | 0.00              | 4.02                                  | 18.80                     |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 17.34                           | 0.41                                | -0.01          | -0.59                   | 1.44                      | 1.25   | 0.00                              | 0.33           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.33                                  | 18.16                     |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 21.54                           | 0.47                                | -0.03          | 0.91                    | -2.16                     | -0.81  | 0.00                              | 0.02           | 0.00                  | 2.25               | 0.00              | 2.27                                  | 17.34                     |
| O      | Mar. 2024  | 9.57                            | 0.12                                | -0.03          | -0.33                   | 1.53                      | 1.29   | 0.00                              | 0.25           | 0.00                  | 0.70               | 0.00              | 0.95                                  | 9.91                      |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 8.53                            | 0.24                                | -0.03          | 0.86                    | 0.05                      | 1.12   | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.09               | 0.00              | 0.09                                  | 9.57                      |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 10.42                           | 0.16                                | -0.01          | 0.42                    | -2.46                     | -1.89  | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.00                                  | 8.53                      |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 8.39                            | 0.20                                | -0.02          | 2.97                    | -0.97                     | 2.18   | 0.00                              | 0.16           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.16                                  | 10.42                     |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 8.03                            | 0.19                                | -0.01          | -0.27                   | 0.61                      | 0.52   | 0.00                              | 0.17           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.17                                  | 8.39                      |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 10.12                           | 0.21                                | -0.02          | 0.43                    | -1.34                     | -0.72  | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 1.11               | 0.00              | 1.11                                  | 8.03                      |
| P      | Mar. 2024  | 10.19                           | 0.12                                | -0.14          | -0.35                   | 1.63                      | 1.26   | 0.00                              | 0.05           | 0.00                  | 0.75               | 0.00              | 0.80                                  | 10.67                     |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 9.28                            | 0.26                                | -0.25          | 0.93                    | 0.14                      | 1.08   | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.10               | 0.00              | 0.10                                  | 10.19                     |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 11.59                           | 0.16                                | -0.25          | 0.48                    | -2.37                     | -1.98  | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.00                                  | 9.28                      |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 9.38                            | 0.22                                | -0.26          | 3.34                    | -1.18                     | 2.12   | 0.00                              | 0.01           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.01                                  | 11.59                     |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 9.01                            | 0.21                                | -0.20          | -0.31                   | 0.68                      | 0.38   | 0.00                              | 0.01           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.01                                  | 9.38                      |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 10.00                           | 0.20                                | -0.18          | 0.47                    | 0.43                      | 0.92   | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 1.27               | 0.00              | 1.27                                  | 9.01                      |
| PF     | Mar. 2024  | 12.12                           | 0.15                                | -0.11          | -0.42                   | 1.93                      | 1.55   | 0.00                              | 0.17           | 0.00                  | 0.89               | 0.00              | 1.06                                  | 12.63                     |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 10.94                           | 0.31                                | -0.19          | 1.10                    | 0.08                      | 1.30   | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.12               | 0.00              | 0.12                                  | 12.12                     |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 13.54                           | 0.21                                | -0.17          | 0.53                    | -3.64                     | -3.07  | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.00                                  | 10.94                     |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 10.95                           | 0.26                                | -0.19          | 3.93                    | -1.75                     | 2.25   | 0.00                              | 0.11           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.11                                  | 13.54                     |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 10.49                           | 0.25                                | -0.14          | -0.36                   | 0.90                      | 0.65   | 0.00                              | 0.08           | 0.00                  | 0.00               | 0.00              | 0.08                                  | 10.95                     |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 10.00                           | 0.25                                | -0.13          | 0.54                    | 0.43                      | 1.09   | 0.00                              | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 0.03               | 0.00              | 0.03                                  | 10.49                     |

(1) All per unit figures presented in 2024 are referenced to net assets determined in accordance with IFRS and are derived from the Fund's semi-annual financial statements for the period ended March 31, 2024.

(2) Net assets and distributions are based on the actual number of units outstanding at the relevant time. The increase/decrease from operations is based on the weighted average number of units outstanding over the financial period.

(3) Distributions were paid in cash or reinvested in additional units of the Fund.

(4) Distributions (if any) that may have been made that included return of capital in excess of short term earnings were made to minimize disruption and provide stability to investors who have elected to take their distributions in the form of cash, and as disclosed in the simplified prospectus. These amounts are reviewed at each calendar year-end and management engages in discussions with the sub-advisor to determine the most applicable strategy on a go forward basis and will take any action(s) as needed for the long-term stability of the Fund.

## Ratios and Supplemental Data

| Series | Period     | Total Net Asset Value (000's of \$) | Number of Units Outstanding (000's) | Management Expense Ratio (%) <sup>(1)</sup> | Management Expense Ratio before Waivers and Absorptions (%) | Trading Expense Ratio (%) <sup>(2)</sup> | Portfolio Turnover Rate (%) <sup>(3)</sup> | Net Asset Value per Unit (\$) |
|--------|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|-------------------------------|
| A      | Mar. 2024  | 12,482                              | 352                                 | 2.59  | 2.59  | 0.56                                     | 81.14                                      | 35.46                         |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 12,499                              | 370                                 | 2.59  | 2.59  | 0.23                                     | 126.15                                     | 33.77                         |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 13,021                              | 422                                 | 2.60  | 2.60  | 0.08                                     | 28.38                                      | 30.89                         |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 34,593                              | 894                                 | 2.59  | 2.59  | 0.09                                     | 26.21                                      | 38.70                         |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 35,906                              | 1,143                               | 2.61  | 2.61  | 0.06                                     | 21.52                                      | 31.41                         |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 42,003                              | 1,390                               | 2.59  | 2.59  | 0.19                                     | 101.93                                     | 30.22                         |
| F      | Mar. 2024  | 15,009                              | 899                                 | 1.60  | 1.60  | 0.56                                     | 81.14                                      | 16.69                         |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 14,991                              | 937                                 | 1.60  | 1.60  | 0.23                                     | 126.15                                     | 15.99                         |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 14,458                              | 998                                 | 1.61  | 1.65  | 0.08                                     | 28.38                                      | 14.48                         |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 2,153                               | 120                                 | 1.63  | 1.69  | 0.09                                     | 26.21                                      | 17.97                         |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 3,845                               | 265                                 | 1.64  | 1.70  | 0.06                                     | 21.52                                      | 14.53                         |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 3,799                               | 272                                 | 1.63  | 1.68  | 0.19                                     | 101.93                                     | 13.96                         |
| I      | Mar. 2024  | 9,473                               | 531                                 | N/A   | N/A   | 0.56                                     | 81.14                                      | 17.83                         |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 9,697                               | 561                                 | N/A   | N/A   | 0.23                                     | 126.15                                     | 17.28                         |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 9,768                               | 634                                 | N/A   | N/A   | 0.08                                     | 28.38                                      | 15.40                         |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 13,243                              | 704                                 | N/A   | N/A   | 0.09                                     | 26.21                                      | 18.80                         |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 105,682                             | 5,819                               | N/A   | N/A   | 0.06                                     | 21.52                                      | 18.16                         |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 101,636                             | 5,863                               | N/A   | N/A   | 0.19                                     | 101.93                                     | 17.34                         |
| O      | Mar. 2024  | 1                                   | -                                   | 0.06  | 0.06  | 0.56                                     | 81.14                                      | 9.91                          |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 1                                   | -                                   | 0.06  | 0.06  | 0.23                                     | 126.15                                     | 9.57                          |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 1                                   | -                                   | 0.06  | 0.06  | 0.08                                     | 28.38                                      | 8.53                          |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 1                                   | -                                   | 0.06  | 0.06  | 0.09                                     | 26.21                                      | 10.42                         |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 1                                   | -                                   | 0.06  | 0.06  | 0.06                                     | 21.52                                      | 8.39                          |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 1                                   | -                                   | 0.06  | 0.06  | 0.19                                     | 101.93                                     | 8.03                          |
| P      | Mar. 2024  | 5,039                               | 472                                 | 2.23  | 2.23  | 0.56                                     | 81.14                                      | 10.67                         |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 4,480                               | 440                                 | 2.22  | 2.22  | 0.23                                     | 126.15                                     | 10.19                         |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 4,806                               | 518                                 | 2.21  | 2.21  | 0.08                                     | 28.38                                      | 9.28                          |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 15,659                              | 1,351                               | 2.22  | 2.22  | 0.09                                     | 26.21                                      | 11.59                         |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 10,656                              | 1,136                               | 2.25  | 2.25  | 0.06                                     | 21.52                                      | 9.38                          |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 10,606                              | 1,177                               | 2.29  | 2.29  | 0.19                                     | 101.93                                     | 9.01                          |
| PF     | Mar. 2024  | 9,879                               | 782                                 | 1.34  | 1.34  | 0.56                                     | 81.14                                      | 12.63                         |
|        | Sept. 2023 | 8,724                               | 720                                 | 1.34  | 1.34  | 0.23                                     | 126.15                                     | 12.12                         |
|        | Sept. 2022 | 8,116                               | 742                                 | 1.35  | 1.35  | 0.08                                     | 28.38                                      | 10.94                         |
|        | Sept. 2021 | 3,256                               | 240                                 | 1.32  | 1.32  | 0.09                                     | 26.21                                      | 13.54                         |
|        | Sept. 2020 | 1,488                               | 136                                 | 1.35  | 1.35  | 0.06                                     | 21.52                                      | 10.95                         |
|        | Sept. 2019 | 1,208                               | 115                                 | 1.37  | 1.37  | 0.19                                     | 101.93                                     | 10.49                         |

(1) Management expense ratio is based on total expenses (excluding commissions and other portfolio transaction costs, as well as withholding taxes) for the stated period and is expressed as an annualized percentage of daily average net asset value during the period.

(2) The trading expense ratio represents total commissions and other portfolio transaction costs expressed as an annualized percentage of daily average net asset value during the period.

(3) The portfolio turnover rate indicates how actively the Fund's sub-advisor manages its investment holdings. 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 the 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 period. There is not necessarily a relationship between a high turnover rate and the performance of a Fund.

## Management Fees

The Manager is responsible for the management, supervision and administration of the Fund. The Manager receives from the Fund management fees, before HST, calculated daily on the net asset value of the Fund at an annual rate shown below. The Fund does not pay management fees for Series I and O units. Series I and O unitholders pay a negotiated fee directly to NEI Investments.

The management fee covers the cost of investment advisory fees, sales, marketing, and distribution expenses of the Fund. In addition, the Manager may pay a trailer fee to dealers out of this management fee. The trailer fee is a percentage of the average daily value of the units of the Fund held by the dealer’s clients. No trailer fees are paid in respect of any Series F and PF units of the Fund.

The following table shows the major services paid for out of management fees as a percentage of the management fee for all applicable series of the Fund:

|           | Management Fee (%) | Investment Advisory and Other Fees (%) | Trailer Fee (%) |
|-----------|--------------------|--|-----------------|
| Series A  | 1.95               | 66.04                                  | 33.96           |
| Series F  | 1.15               | 100.00                                 | N/A             |
| Series P  | 1.70               | 55.82                                  | 44.18           |
| Series PF | 0.95               | 100.00                                 | N/A             |

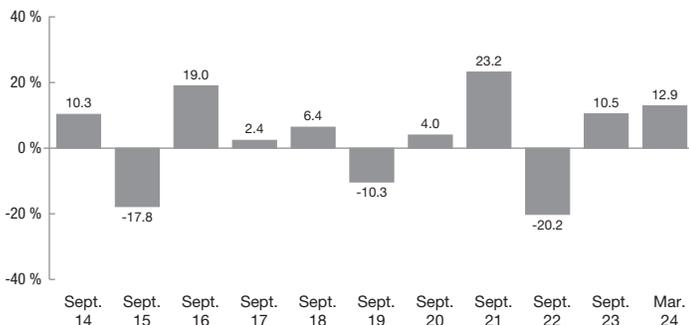
## Past Performance

The performance information provided will not necessarily indicate how the Fund will perform in the future. The information shown assumes that distributions made by the Fund in the periods shown were reinvested in additional units of the relevant series of the Fund. In addition, the information does not take into account sales, redemption, distribution or other optional charges that would have reduced returns or performance.

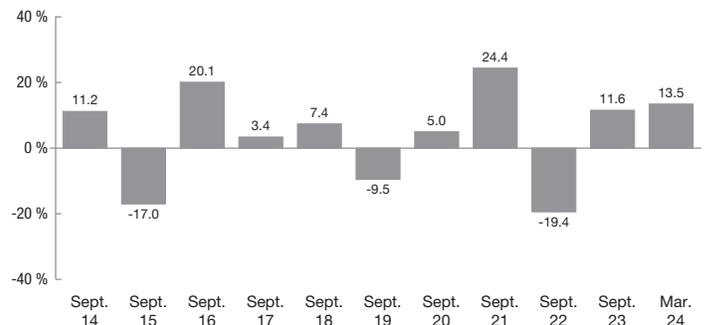
### Year-by-Year Returns

The following charts show the annual performance for each series of units of the Fund for each period shown and illustrate how the Fund’s performance has varied from period to period with the exception of 2024, which shows the six-month return for the period ended March 31, 2024. The charts indicate how much an investment made on the first day of each financial period would have grown or decreased by the last day of each financial period.

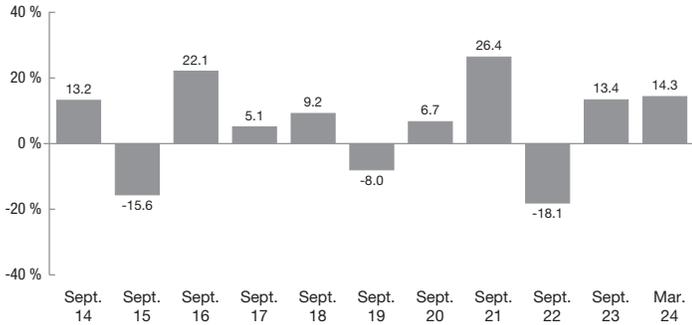
**Series A**



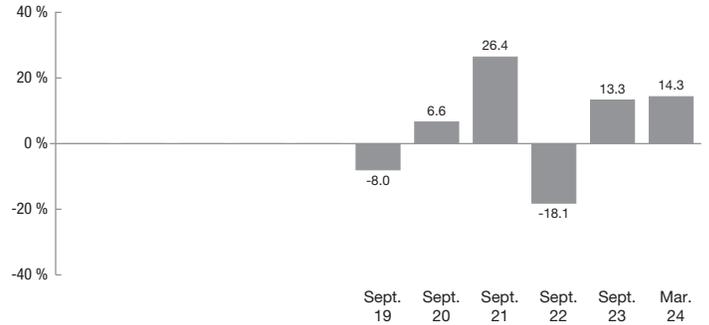
**Series F**



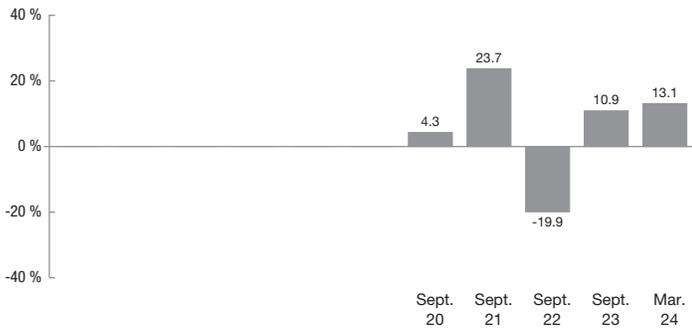
**Series I**



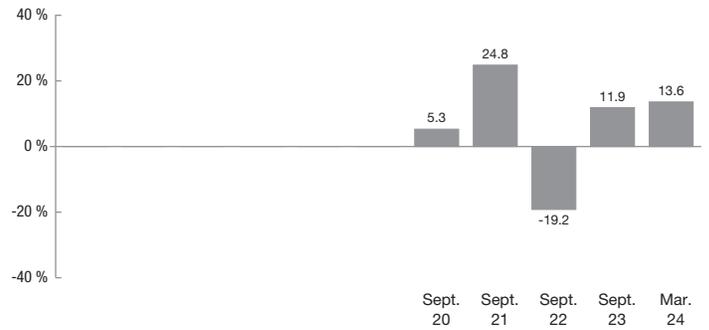
**Series O**



**Series P**



**Series PF**



## Summary of Investment Portfolio as at March 31, 2024

Total Net Asset Value: \$51,882,666

| Top Holdings                           | %    |
|--|------|
| Hammond Power Solutions                | 4.4  |
| Celestica                              | 3.4  |
| Bausch Health Companies                | 3.2  |
| Linamar                                | 3.0  |
| CI Financial                           | 3.0  |
| Docebo                                 | 3.0  |
| Converge Technology Solutions          | 2.9  |
| MDA                                    | 2.8  |
| Centamin                               | 2.7  |
| Torex Gold Resources                   | 2.7  |
| Athabasca Oil Corp                     | 2.7  |
| Wesdome Gold Mines                     | 2.7  |
| Boardwalk Real Estate Investment Trust | 2.7  |
| Perseus Mining                         | 2.6  |
| Dundee Precious Metals                 | 2.6  |
| Bird Construction                      | 2.5  |
| Secure Energy Services                 | 2.3  |
| goeasy                                 | 2.2  |
| Transcontinental, Class A              | 2.2  |
| North West Company                     | 2.2  |
| Eldorado Gold                          | 2.2  |
| North American Construction Group      | 2.1  |
| Cash and Equivalents                   | 2.0  |
| Badger Infrastructure Solution         | 1.9  |
| CES Energy Solutions                   | 1.8  |
| Total                                  | 65.8 |

| Net Asset Value Mix  | %     |
|----------------------|-------|
| Equity               | 93.9  |
| Unit Trust           | 4.1   |
| Cash and Equivalents | 2.0   |
| Total                | 100.0 |

| Sector Allocation       | %     |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Materials               | 20.3  |
| Industrials             | 18.6  |
| Energy                  | 13.7  |
| Information Technology  | 11.0  |
| Financials              | 10.5  |
| Health Care             | 7.2   |
| Consumer Discretionary  | 5.4   |
| Real Estate             | 4.0   |
| Consumer Staples        | 3.6   |
| Communication Services  | 2.5   |
| Cash and Equivalents    | 2.0   |
| Index-Based Investments | 1.2   |
| Total                   | 100.0 |

| Geographic Distribution | %     |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Canada                  | 94.9  |
| Other Countries         | 3.1   |
| Cash and Equivalents    | 2.0   |
| Total                   | 100.0 |

"Unit Trust" includes REITs, ETFs, and other similarly structured investment vehicles.

"Other Countries" geographic category includes all countries individually representing less than 5% of the Fund's net asset value.

The Summary of Investment Portfolio may change due to ongoing portfolio transactions of the investment fund. Updates are available quarterly.