

UBS Yarra Microcap Fund

October 2021

Fund description

The Fund is an actively managed fund investing in a portfolio of 35 to 65 predominantly Australian Microcap equity securities across a range on industry sectors.

Investment return objective

The Fund aims to outperform (after management costs) the S&P/ASX Small Ordinaries Accumulation Index over rolling five year periods.

Active security positions

Overweight	Underweight
Janison Education Group	Pilbara Minerals
Pacific Smiles Group	Orocobre Limited
Empired	Steadfast Group
EnviroSuite	Iluka Resources
Eureka Group	ARB Corporation

Active industry positions

Overweight	Underweight
Software & Services	Materials
Capital Goods	Real Estate
Health Care Equipment & Services	Diversified Financials
Consumer Durables & Apparel	Consumer Services
Commercial & Professional Services	Energy

Investment Strategy

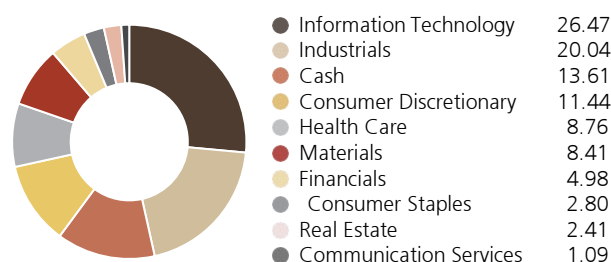
The Portfolio Manager's overarching strategy is to identify those Microcap shares that are believed to be undervalued by the market, based on an assessment of the companies' future cash flows. Normally the Fund will hold between 35–65 stocks in companies with a market capitalisation of generally less than \$250m at the time of initial purchase. The Portfolio Manager searches for businesses that have exposure to growing markets or are benefiting from changes in market structure and are in a rapid growth phase of their life cycle.

Fund information

Inception date	12 August 2014
Fund size	\$ 73.2 m
Management fee	1.20% pa
Performance fee*	Yes
Minimum initial investment	\$500,000
Typical number of holdings	35 to 65
Distributions	Semi-annually
Buy/sell spread	+/- 0.70%
APIR code	UBS0057AU

* The performance fee equals 20% of the amount by which the Fund outperforms the S&P/ASX Small Ordinaries Accumulation Index.

Fund positioning (%)



Investment performance

Fund	1 month %	3 months %	1 year %	3 years % pa	5 years % pa	Since inception* % pa
Total return	4.48	8.10	44.35	23.74	16.10	17.73
Benchmark**	0.92	3.68	31.01	13.51	11.44	9.81
Added Value	3.56	4.42	13.34	10.23	4.66	7.92

*Inception date: 12 August 2014. **S&P/ASX Small Ordinaries Accumulation Index.

Performance figures are net of ongoing fees and expenses. The performance figures quoted are historical, calculated using end of month redemption prices, and do not allow for the effects of income tax or inflation. Total returns assume the reinvestment of all distributions. Performance can be volatile and future returns can vary from past returns.

Portfolio review

After fees and expenses, the Portfolio rose by 4.48% during the month, outperforming its benchmark by 356 bps.

The largest positive contributors were Intega, Class and Envirosuite. Intega has entered into a scheme implementation deed with Kiwa, a Netherlands based quality assurance business. The offer, priced at \$0.90, represents a 58% premium to the pre-bid price and has been supported by major shareholder Crescent Capital. Class also saw an approach from listed peer Hub24, with the scrip and cash-based offer priced at a significant implied premium. Envirosuite delivered a solid quarterly update, with new sales of over \$4m in the quarter and Annualized Recurring Revenue (ARR) increasing 42%.

The largest negative contributors were Alliance Aviation, Eroad and Liantown (not held). Alliance Aviation drifted on concerns around new entrant Bonza and the effects of continued border closures would likely slow the rollout of the excess fleet that AQZ has invested in. We remain confident that Alliance is very well placed to benefit from the re-opening and return of domestic travel. Eroad delivered a disappointing quarterly update, with full year revenue guidance lowered and the market continuing to await NZ Commerce Commission approval for the Coretex acquisition. Liantown (not held) was stronger on continued support for the lithium sector in addition to benefiting from the spin out of the non-lithium assets into the now listed Minerals 260.

Market Review

Australian small caps rose modestly in October, underperforming global equities as Australian bond yields rose sharply in response to higher inflation expectations.

The S&P/ASX Small Ordinaries Accumulation Index rose 0.9% during the month, taking its 12-month return to 26.0%. The local index underperformed global indices – with the MSCI World Index returning 5.5% – as Australian 10-year bond yields lifted 59 bps to 2.08% during the period on expectations the RBA would hike rates earlier amid inflation pressure. Gold (+13.0%) was the top performer during the period, with the sector seen as a beneficiary of stronger inflation. Within the sector, Silver Lake Resources (SLR, +26.5%) and West African Resources (WAF, +34.0%) were the strongest contributors to the benchmark's return.

Information Technology (+3.3%) also delivered a solid return, with the sector likely supported by lower real yields in the US. The best performing stocks included Life360 (360, +22.4%), Appen (APX, +20.0%) and Nearmap (NEA, +16.6%). Conversely, Financials (-1.8%) and Health Care (-3.1%) were the worst performing sectors. The former was weighed down by Pandal (PDL, -19.6%), Zip Co. (Z1p, -7.9%) and Steadfast (SDF, -4.7%), while the latter saw declines from Clinuvel Pharmaceuticals (CUV, -9.9%), Starpharma (SPL, -21.1%) and Nanosonics (NAN, -6.2%).

Outlook

After completing 1H2021 with strong momentum, renewed Covid-related lockdowns in Melbourne and Sydney will see the Australian economy contract in 3Q21, albeit it has been notable how well both business surveys and employment indicators have held up in Q3, suggesting a modest contraction than might have been expected several months ago. Real-time data suggests Q4 economic growth will rebound solidly, led by the service-based industries.

We continue to believe the interruption to economic growth from renewed lockdowns will be an aberration within an improving trend. Indeed, the fundamentals that will drive the economic recovery remain in place. The recovery in labour market income has been sufficient to offset the gradual withdrawal of temporary fiscal support. Moreover, the accumulation of an estimated \$185bn in excess household saving, in concert with strong asset price gains, leaves the consumer uniquely positioned to underpin economic growth in 2021- 2022. Dwelling investment is set to provide solid support for economic growth over the next 6 months as previously approved housing moves through the construction phase, and a broader-based lift in business investment expectations is an important step in ensuring a sustained economic recovery. We expect the global economy to expand 6% and the Australian economy to expand 4.5% in 2021. We expect another strong year of economic growth in 2022 of 4.0%.

Nevertheless, there are some areas that are cause for concern. For over 12 months we have warned about rising US inflation pressures and rising inflation expectations. However, supply chain constraints and energy shortages in the Northern Hemisphere risk inflation pressures becoming more widespread and more entrenched. With the peak in global business surveys having passed, cost inflation continuing to escalate and the Federal Reserve announcing its decision to taper its bond purchases, we expect bond yields will move higher through the remainder of 2021. We expect US 10-year yields to approach 1.80% by the end of 2021, providing some ongoing challenges for risk assets in Q4.

The A\$/US\$ has recently been buffeted by concerns of a peak in global industrial growth indicators, slowing China economic momentum and recent declines in iron ore prices. Nevertheless, Australia's external accounts are in their best position since the early 1970s and despite some moderation in commodity prices, we believe the A\$/US\$ should remain supported by global reflationary forces through 2021-22. We expect the A\$/US\$ to finish the year in the 76-78c range, and remain around that level through 1H22.

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