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# SPOTLIGHT

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■ **FEATURE**Hedge Funds: 2017 in
Review

### THE FACTS

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### 2017 IN REVIEW



As we approach the end of 2017, we provide insight into the hedge fund industry over the course of the year, taking a month-by-month look at how returns were impacted by political and financial events throughout the year.

Find out more on page 2



All data in this newsletter can be downloaded to Excel for free

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Provider | Africa Global Funds Awards 2016: Best Research and Data Provider | The Queen's
Award for Enterprise: International Trade | HedgeWeek Global Awards: Best Global Hedge
Fund Research Provider | CAIA Corporate Recognition Award







### **HEDGE FUNDS: 2017 IN REVIEW**

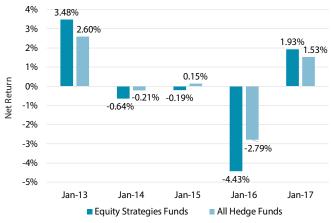
As we approach the end of 2017, we examine the impact of some key events in the hedge fund industry over the year, taking a month-by-month look at how the hedge fund industry was effected by political and financial events throughout the year.

### **JANUARY: POSITIVE BEGINNINGS AS US EQUITY MARKETS POST HIGHS**

Over the course of 2017, US stock markets reached record highs, showing continuous growth as the US economy's potential tax reforms encouraged strong positive market sentiment. This began in January, the month in which the Dow Jones industrial average reached 20,000 for the first time in its history; the index would go on to reach 23,000 in October 2017.

Hedge funds returned 1.53% in January 2017, (Fig. 1) the best start to the year for hedge funds since 2013 (2.60%). Equity strategies beat the wider hedge fund benchmark posting a strong 1.93%, having generated losses in the first month of the year for the past three years.

Fig. 1: January Net Returns of Equity Strategies Hedge Funds vs All Hedge Funds, 2013 - 2017



Source: Pregin Hedge Fund Online

### FEBRUARY: PERFORMANCE HIGHS AND PRESIDENT TRUMP SIGNAL POTENTIAL LOOSENING OF REGULATIONS

February saw the Dow Jones industrial average, S&P 500 Index and the Nasdaq Composite Index close at record levels for five consecutive sessions, a run not seen since 1992.

Hedge funds capitalized and February's return of 1.04% drove the 12-month cumulative return of hedge funds to 13.92% (Fig. 2), the highest figure recorded in the past six years as hedge funds continue to build on the improved performance seen in 2016.

Also in February, President Trump signed executive orders to scale back regulation and conduct a full-scale review of Dodd-Frank.

Fig. 2: Cumulative Returns of Hedge Funds, 2011 - 2017 (As at February 2017)



### **DATA SOURCE:**

Hedge Fund Online is the leading source of intelligence on the hedge fund industry. Hedge Fund Online is Preqin's flagship hedge fund information resource, incorporating all of our hedge fund data, intelligence and functionality, providing you with the most comprehensive coverage of the asset class available.

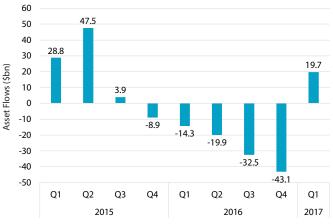
For more information, or to arrange a demonstration, please visit: www.preqin.com/hedge

#### **MARCH: EUROPEAN MARKETS SURGE AND INFLOWS RETURN**

One of the key, ongoing election stories of 2017 reached its conclusion in March as Mark Rutte was re-elected as the Prime Minister of the Netherlands. Markets across Europe reacted positively with the FTSE 100 reaching a record high; Europefocused hedge funds delivered 1.06% versus the 0.53% gain of North America-focused funds.

The improved performance of hedge funds was met with positivity in the investor community in Q1 2017; over the course of the first quarter, investors committed \$19.7bn to hedge funds, reversing the trend seen throughout 2016; a year which saw investors withdraw \$110bn from the asset class.

Fig. 3: Quarterly Hedge Fund Asset Flows, Q1 2015 - Q1 2017



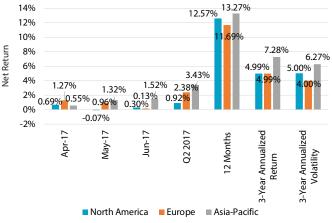
Source: Pregin Hedge Fund Online

#### **APRIL: GAINS IN EUROPE CONTINUE FOLLOWING ELECTION OF MACRON**

April saw more of the same in global equity markets, with another key European election driving positive market sentiment as polls showed Emmanuel Macron leading the French presidential election. Europe-focused hedge funds performed well in April posting 1.27% for the month, outperforming funds focused on North America (+0.69%) and Asia-Pacific (+0.55%).

In addition, we saw one of the biggest fund launches in recent years, Brandon Haley's Holocene Advisors; the Holocene Advisors Master Fund operates \$2bn as at June 2017.

Fig. 4: Performance of Hedge Funds by Geographic Focus (As at June 2017)



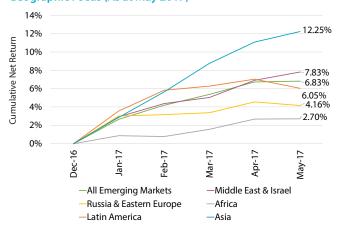
Source: Preqin Hedge Fund Online

### MAY: LATIN AMERICAN LOSSES AMID PRESIDENT TEMER CORRUPTION SCANDAL

While hedge funds remained in the black for the month of May, Latin America-focused funds had a more challenging month and posted their only negative return (-0.90%) of the year. Brazil's economy had been showing positive signs in the first five months of 2017; however, mid-way through the month another political scandal hit the country when President Michel Temer was formally accused of corruption. Hedge funds invested in the region were hit by falling stock prices and a weakening real.

Asia was the standout performer in May. Upbeat economic data in China and the Bank of Korea's decision to keep interest rates at record lows spurred equity gains in major Asian markets. Asia-Pacific-focused hedge funds capitalized and posted gains of 1.34%.

Fig. 5: Cumulative Returns of Hedge Funds in 2017 by Geographic Focus (As at May 2017)



Source: Preqin Hedge Fund Online

#### **JUNE: INVESTOR VIEWS ON PERFORMANCE IMPROVES**

By H1 2017 hedge funds had returned 5.04% (as at June), the highest return in the first half of a year since 2009 (+16.91%). This improved performance did not go unnoticed by the investor community. Among active hedge fund investors interviewed by Preqin in June 2017, nearly half (45%, Fig. 6)) reported that their hedge fund investments had met or exceeded expectations over the past 12 months, a 24-percentage-point increase from the corresponding proportion in June 2016.

Fig. 6: Investor Views on Hedge Fund Portfolio Performance Relative to Expectations over the Past 12 Months, 2015 - 2017

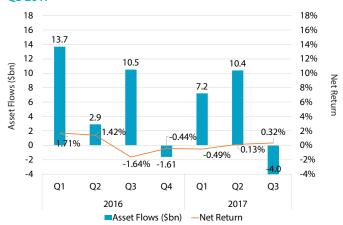


#### **JULY: OIL PRODUCTION CUTS DRIVE CTA GAINS**

July saw significant trend reversals in oil prices as Saudi Arabia and Nigeria announced agreements to cut their production of oil, driving the price of crude oil above \$50. Following this positive trend, CTAs posted 0.99% in July, one of the strategy's strongest monthly returns of the year (Fig. 7).

While the wider hedge fund industry saw net investor outflows of \$110bn over the course of 2016, CTAs attracted \$26bn in net inflows, highlighting the investor demand for this diversifying strategy. This activity has continued throughout 2017 with investors allocating \$18bn to managed futures/CTA strategies in the first half of the year; however, a net outflow of \$4.0bn in Q3 2017 could be a sign of shifting investor sentiment.

Fig. 7: Quarterly CTA Asset Flows and Performance, Q1 2016 - Q3 2017



Source: Pregin Hedge Fund Online

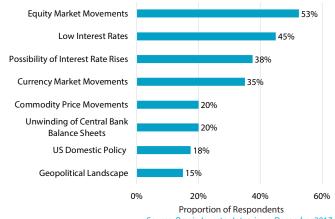
### **AUGUST: GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS CAUSE INTRAMONTH VOLATILITY**

Stock market volatility was seen around the world in August as tensions surrounding North Korea's nuclear missile program intensified. The first half of the month saw investors move from stocks to more safe-haven assets, driving stock prices down and the price of gold up. However, as August drew to a close, markets largely recovered as investors' fears surrounding the geopolitical tension eased.

The majority (53%) of investors interviewed by Preqin in December 2017 felt that equity market volatility had the greatest impact on their hedge fund portfolios over the course of 2017, a greater proportion than those citing the low interest rate environment (45%) and the possibility of interest rate rises (38%, Fig 8).

Europe-focused funds returned 0.21%; North America-focused funds posted a return slightly lower and into the red (-0.22%), while Asia-Pacific-focused funds (+1.07%) were the strongest performers of the three top-level regions.

Fig. 8: Investor Views on the Macroeconomic Factors that Had the Biggest Impact on Their Portfolios in 2017



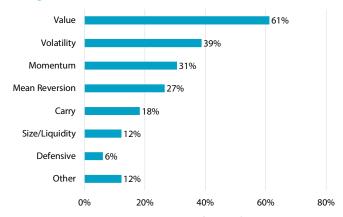
Source: Pregin Investor Interviews, December 2017

#### **SEPTEMBER: HEDGE FUNDS CONTINUE TO RETURN**

In September President Trump unveiled plans for a new US tax system, driving gains in small-cap indices. Returns were seen across major stock indices, with the S&P 500 closing the month at an all-time record high as the dollar rose to a one-month high after strong economic data boosted expectations for a US Federal Reserve rate hike later in the year. These positive market conditions drove hedge funds to their second highest monthly return of the year (+1.24%).

The alternative risk premia sector has been grown rapidly in recent years and September saw one of the largest managers in the world enter the space. Man Group, which operates \$60bn as at June 2017, launched its debut alternative risk premia product Man Alternative Risk Premia; the fund employs carry, defensive, momentum and value strategies.

Fig. 9: Alternative Risk Premia Strategies Offered by Hedge Fund Managers\*



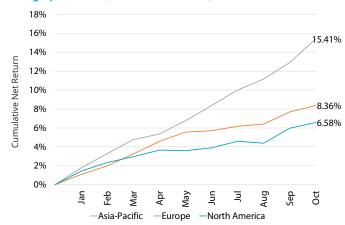
Proportion of Respondents Source: Preain Fund Manager Survey, November 2017

#### **OCTOBER:** ASIAN MARKETS REACH NEAR DECADE-HIGH

South Korea's Kospi Index reached an all-time record high at the end of October after government reports showed that the country's economy grew at its fastest rate in seven years in the third quarter of 2017. Positive trends were also seen in Taiwan, with the country's central bank increasing its economic growth forecast by 4bps. The Nikkei recorded over two weeks of daily gains, reaching its highest close since 1996 following Shinzo Abe's election victory. In the US, the dollar edged higher as investors awaited the outcome of the Fed's two-day policy and a nomination of the next Fed chair.

The Pregin Asia-Pacific Hedge Fund benchmark returned 2.22% in October, twice the level of the wider industry (+1.11%). As at October, Asia-Pacific was the top performing top-level region over 2017, returning 15.41% (Fig. 10).

### Fig. 10: Cumulative Returns of Hedge Funds in 2017 by **Geographic Focus (As at October 2017)**



Source: Preqin Hedge Fund Online

#### **NOVEMBER:** BITCOIN REACHES \$11,000 WHILE FCA ISSUES WARNING ON CRYPTOCURRENCIES

2017 has seen a number of cryptocurrency-focused hedge funds enter the market as continued growth in the sector has led to an increase in investor demand for exposure to the instruments. Bitcoin reached a landmark value in the final days of November 2017: one unit of the digital currency became worth over \$10,000 for the first time, with value further increasing to over \$11,000 before falling back.

Earlier in the month the UK's FCA issued a warning aimed at retail investors, highlighting the high levels of volatility seen in the cryptocurrency market and the higher fees involved in trading digital currencies.

Views on the sector from within the hedge fund industry remain mixed. Page 8 shows the results of Pregin's November 2017 survey of over 350 fund managers and 200 investors active in hedge funds, including statistics on investor demand for cryptocurrency strategies and views of industry participants on the market.

\*As a proportion of those hedge fund managers that offer alternative risk premia strategies

**65%** 

of fund managers have seen increased appetite from institutional investors for cryptocurrency products.



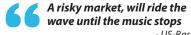
of all investors actively invest in cryptocurrency funds, and a further

6%

are considering investing in 2018.



- US-Based Cryptocurrency Hedge Fund Manager



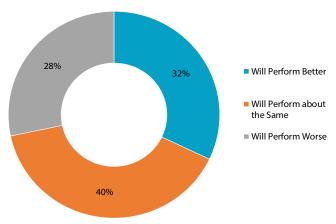
- US-Based

#### **DECEMBER: INVESTORS MIXED ON WHETHER IMPROVED PERFORMANCE WILL CONTINUE**

2017 is on course to deliver the highest annual return for hedge funds since 2013 (12.73%), with the Preqin All-Strategies Hedge Fund benchmark reaching 9.93% by the end of November 2017. Ahead of Preqin's 2018 Global Hedge Fund Report, Preqin interviewed over 200 investors active in hedge funds in December 2017 to ascertain their views on the industry, including their predictions for hedge fund performance in 2018.

Views were mixed as to whether hedge funds would be able to maintain the improved performance seen in the industry since the beginning of 2016. Nearly three-quarters (72%) of investors believe hedge fund performance will either improve in 2018 or remain level with 2017; however, over one-quarter (28%) believe hedge funds will not be able return at the same level of 2017 (Fig. 11).

Fig. 11: Investors' Predictions for Hedge Fund Performance in 2018 Compared with 2017



Source: Preqin Investor Interviews, December 2017



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### PREQIN GLOBAL DATA COVERAGE



ALTERNATIVES	FIRMS	FUNDS	FUNDS OPEN TO INVESTMENT	INVESTORS MONITORED	FUNDS WITH PERFORMANCE	DEALS & EXITS
COVERAGE	29,289	51,756	19,213	15,094	26,842	308,902
	DDIVATE					NATURAL
	PRIVATE EQUITY*	HEDGE FUNDS	REAL ESTATE	INFRASTRUCTURE	PRIVATE DEBT	NATURAL RESOURCES
INVESTOR	6,906	5,265	6,117	3,260	3,098	3,091
COVERAGE	Active Private Equity LPs	Active Hedge Fund Investors	Active Real Estate LPs	Active Infrastructure LPs	Active Private Debt Investors	Active Natural Resources Investors
FUND	18,412	24,995	6,821	1,248	2,452	1,884
COVERAGE	Private Equity Funds	Hedge Funds	PE Real Estate Funds	Infrastructure Funds	Private Debt Funds	Natural Resources Funds
FIRM	12,506	9,180	4,479	538	1,572	1,014
COVERAGE	Private Equity Firms	Hedge Fund Firms	PE Real Estate Firms	Infrastructure Firms	Private Debt Firms	Natural Resources Firms
PERFORMANCE	5,999	17,726	1,742	250	835	535
COVERAGE	Private Equity Funds	Hedge Funds	PE Real Estate Funds	Infrastructure Funds	Private Debt Funds	Natural Resources Funds
FUNDRAISING	2,187	15,833	1,179	173	332	236
COVERAGE	Private Equity Funds	Hedge Funds	PE Real Estate Funds	Infrastructure Funds	Private Debt Funds	Natural Resources Funds
	BUYOUT	VENTURE C	APITAL REAL	ESTATE INF	RASTRUCTURE	PRIVATE DEBT
DEALS & EXITS COVERAGE	<b>81,011</b> Buyout Deals and Exit	Venture Capi and Ex	tal Deals		26,532 rastructure Deals	<b>7,295</b> Private Debt Deals

**Alternatives Investment Consultants** Coverage:

**548** 

Consultants Tracked

Funds Terms Coverage: Analysis Based on Data for Around

16,988

**Funds** 

Best Contacts: Carefully Selected from our Database of over

434,110

Contacts



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- + Dry Powder
- + Fund Administrators
- + Compensation
- + Law Firms
- + Plus much more...
- + Debt Providers



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- + Global presence New York, London, Singapore, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Manila and Guangzhou
- Depth and quality of data from direct contact methods
- + Unlimited data downloads
- The most trusted name in alternative assets











Private equity includes buyout, growth, venture capital, turnaround, private equity fund of funds, private equity secondaries, direct secondaries, balanced, hybrid, hybrid fund of funds, PIPE, co-investment and co-investment multi-manager funds.

## PREQIN HEDGE FUND PERFORMANCE UPDATE: NOVEMBER 2017

SINGLE-MANAGER HEDGE FUNDS	Nov-17	Oct-17	2017 YTD	12 Months	12M Trend
Hedge Funds	0.40	1.17	9.93	11.08	
HF - Equity Strategies	0.73	1.45	13.01	14.17	
HF - Credit Strategies	0.26	0.60	7.06	8.22	
HF - Event Driven Strategies	0.10	0.42	8.62	10.77	
HF - Macro Strategies	0.04	0.82	4.52	5.47	
HF - Multi-Strategy	-0.09	1.01	9.18	10.40	
HF - Relative Value	-0.29	1.06	4.40	4.83	
Systematic	0.72	1.55	7.44	8.18	
Discretionary	0.66	0.80	10.93	12.33	
Activist	0.57	1.05	11.88	14.03	
Volatility	0.40	1.06	8.43	9.20	
HF - Asia-Pacific	1.28	2.26	16.95	16.99	
HF - Developed Markets	1.27	0.94	7.83	9.21	
HF - North America	1.01	0.63	7.79	9.28	
HF - Europe	-0.39	0.64	7.85	9.76	
HF - Emerging Markets	-0.41	1.19	13.36	14.14	
HF - JPY	1.78	1.60	12.98	14.07	
HF - USD	0.47	0.96	10.41	11.52	
HF - GBP	-0.47	0.79	5.17	6.09	
HF - EUR	-0.54	0.77	4.52	5.52	
HF - BRL	-0.62	0.01	12.69	14.44	
HF - Emerging*	0.62	1.12	9.48	10.66	
HF - Small	0.09	1.05	9.64	10.79	
HF - Medium	0.03	0.84	8.70	10.00	
HF - Large	-0.64	1.14	7.86	8.84	

Source: Preqin Hedge Fund Online

MULTI-MANAGER HEDGE FUNDS	Nov-17	Oct-17	2017 YTD	12 Months	12M Trend
Funds of Hedge Funds	0.16	1.24	6.30	7.13	الموارسون
FOHF - Equity Strategies	0.34	1.63	10.31	10.86	_
FOHF - Multi-Strategy	0.06	1.14	5.43	6.36	
FOHF - USD	0.28	1.08	6.85	7.74	
FOHF - EUR	-0.02	1.04	4.08	4.84	
Funds of CTAs	-1.10	5.76	-0.98	0.04	

Source: Pregin Hedge Fund Online

LIQUID ALTERNATIVES	Nov-17	Oct-17	2017 YTD	12 Months	12M Trend
Alternative Mutual Funds	0.69	0.94	6.37	6.91	
UCITS	-0.31	0.78	6.00	6.84	
UCITS - Relative Value	-0.11	0.35	1.58	1.67	•
UCITS - Equity Strategies	-0.41	1.00	10.14	11.12	
UCITS - Macro Strategies	-0.69	1.02	2.96	4.17	
UCITS - USD	0.03	0.86	9.41	9.99	
UCITS - EUR	-0.46	0.78	4.40	5.31	

Source: Pregin Hedge Fund Online

12M Trend

CTAs	Nov-17	Oct-17	2017 YTD	12 Months
CTAs	-0.15	2.65	2.26	2.90
Systematic	-0.03	3.42	1.94	2.79
Discretionary	-0.71	0.45	0.13	0.53
CTA - USD	-0.09	2.82	2.53	3.03
CTA - EUR	-0.10	5.14	4.33	6.18

Source: Preqin Hedge Fund Online

- The Preqin All-Strategies Hedge Fund benchmark generated incremental gains in November of 0.40%, making it the thirteenth consecutive month of positive returns. This has helped increase the year-to-date figure to 9.93%, cementing the expectation that it will be the best annual performance for hedge funds since 2013.
- Equity strategies enjoyed continued success in November, gaining 0.73% helping to bring the year-to-date return to 13.01%. The strategy is currently on track to potentially double its 2016 returns (+7.19%).
- JPY-denominated funds outperformed all other major currencies with a monthly return of 1.78% contributing to a year-to-date return of 12.98%. Comparatively, EUR funds performed poorly, posting a loss of 0.54% in November, making it the poorest performing top-level currency in 2017 (+4.52%).
- UCITS funds also struggled having posted a November return of -0.31%, the first negative monthly return for the benchmark in 2017, which could interfere with the possibility of achieving their greatest annual return since 2009.

### **HEDGE FUND ONLINE**

Preqin's **Hedge Fund Online** is the leading source of intelligence on the hedge fund industry, and contains performance information for over 17,000 hedge funds across all leading strategies and geographies.

For more information, or to arrange a demonstration, please visit:

www.pregin.com/hfo

Please note, all performance information includes preliminary data for November 2017 based on net returns reported to Preqin in early December 2017. Although stated trends and comparisons are not expected to alter significantly, final benchmark values are subject to change.

\*Preqin fund size classifications: Emerging (less than \$100mn); Small (\$100-499mn); Medium (\$500-999mn); Large (\$1bn plus).

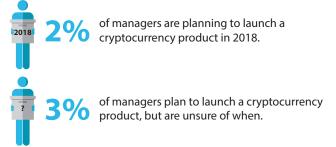
### IN FOCUS: CRYPTOCURRENCY **HEDGE FUNDS**

Here we provide an extract from Preqin's forthcoming 2018 Global Hedge Fund Report, the most in-depth review of the hedge fund industry produced. The publication includes analysis on the improved performance seen in 2017, changing investor sentiment with regards to the asset class and the ever-increasing level of industry assets.

Using the results of Preqin's December surveys of over 350 fund managers and 200 investors active in hedge funds, we present the view from the industry on the cryptocurrency space as well as a sample of launches in 2017.

2%

of managers operate a product with a cryptocurrency overlay.



65%

of fund managers have seen increased appetite from institutional investors for cryptocurrency products.

of all investors have exposure to hedge funds pursuing cryptocurrency strategies, and a further

6%

are considering investing in 2018.

50%

of all investors active in cryptocurrency funds plan to increase their allocation to the strategy in 2018.

Fig. 1: Sample Cryptocurrency Strategies Launched in 2017

(-212VVI)Idital Accets Find ' NOW YORK IIS '	y Digital Assets Fund invests in cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin,
	Coin Offerings (ICOs) and related companies.
i '' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' '	lobal Cryptocurrency Fund launched in 2017 and offers investors s to direct investments in bitcoin, ether and litecoin.
Chromatic Capital Fund LP Chromatic Capital California, US 2017, a	natic capital fund is a cryptocurrency fund that launched in Q4 and is domiciled in Delaware. The fund invests in digital assets as bitcoin, ether and other cryptocurrencies.

Source: Preain Hedae Fund Online

Some in the industry see potential within the sector:

...as well as great risk:



Cryptocurrencies will become a major asset class in 2018

- US-Based Cryptocurrency Hedge Fund Manager

A risky market, will ride the wave until the music stops

> - US-Based Hedge Fund Manager



New hot market with potential to grow dramatically

- US-Based Hedge Fund Manager

A speculative bubble but can go higher and possibly much higher

- US-Based Hedge Fund Manager

Others have doubts about the quality and longevity of the market:

Cryptocurrencies are a current fad; the lack of transparency and institutional requirements will keep these funds as niche players

> - UK-Based Macro Strategies Manager



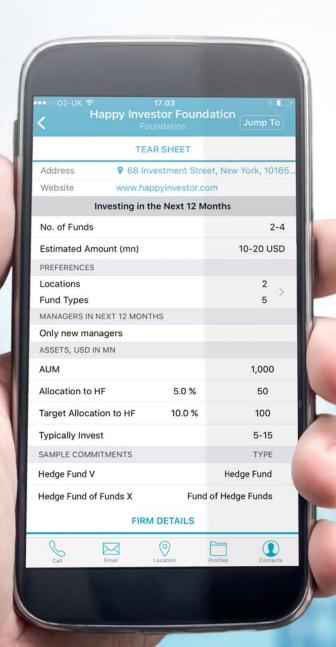
A very immature asset, not institutional quality

> - \$250mn UK-Based Hedge Fund Manager

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### **Key Data Sets:**

Investors:

Assets, allocations, fund portfolios, typical investment amounts, future plans and more

Fund Managers:

Strategies, funds, fund terms, performance, known investors and more











### **CONFERENCES**

### **JANUARY 2018**

Conference	Dates	Location	Organizer	Preqin Speaker	Discount Code
Private Markets Investment Forum	8 - 10 January 2018	Scottsdale, AZ	Opal Financial Group	-	-
LSE Alternative Investments Conference	22 - 23 January 2018	London	LSE	-	-
MFA Network	22 - 24 January 2018	Miami, FL	MFA	Amy Bensted	-
Alternative Investing Funds EAST	29 January 2018	New York, NY	Catalyst Financial Partners	-	-

### **FEBRUARY 2018**

Conference	Dates	Location	Organizer	Preqin Speaker	Discount Code
Preqin Breakfast Seminar: Alternatives in 2018 - London	20 February 2018	London	Preqin	Chris Elvin Elias Latsis	-
Preqin Breakfast Seminar: Alternatives in 2018 - New York	21 February 2018	New York, NY	Preqin	Ryan Flanders Leopold Peavy	-
European Family Office Winter Forum	26 - 27 February 2018	London	Opal Financial Group	-	-
SuperReturn International 2018	26 February - 1 March 2018	Berlin	KNect365	Mark O'Hare Oliver Senchal Ryan Flanders	10% Discount – FKR2455PRQW

### **MARCH 2018**

Conference	Dates	Location	Organizer	Preqin Speaker	Discount Code
Family Office Winter Forum	1 March 2018	New York, NY	Opal Financial Group	-	-
Credit   Fixed Income Alternative Investing	5 March 2018	New York, NY	Catalyst Financial Partners	-	-

### **MADE IN AMERICA TAFT-HARTLEY BENEFITS SUMMIT**

**DATE:** 21 - 23 January 2018 **INFORMATION:** https://goo.gl/GpJUfF

LOCATION: Tropicana Las Vegas | Las Vegas, NV
ORGANIZER: Financial Research Associates

For 15 years Taft Hartley Plans stakeholders have been coming to our event for practical, no-nonsense guidance from experts focused on Pensions + Investments and Health + Welfare issues. Get 15% off to attend with code VRH11 today.