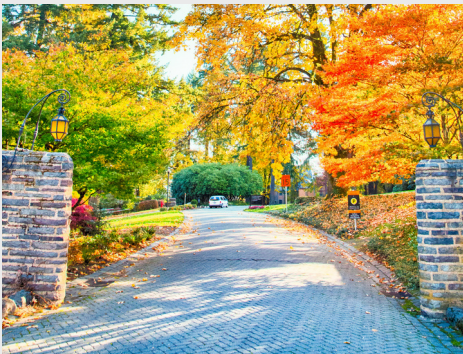




The Endowment Impact Benchmark

2023 Pilot Results





The Endowment Impact Benchmark

2023 Pilot Results

Overview

In 2023, the Intentional Endowments Network (IEN) initiated a pilot to test a new assessment, rating, and benchmarking framework that enables endowments to earn recognition for their commitment to sustainable and impact investing - the Endowment Impact Benchmark (EIB).

The pilot was immensely successful. Participating endowments expressed that they found the verification process effective and the resulting feedback and recommendations to be valuable.

IEN has 15 spots available for endowments and foundations to participate in the second EIB cohort in 2024.



Pilot Participants

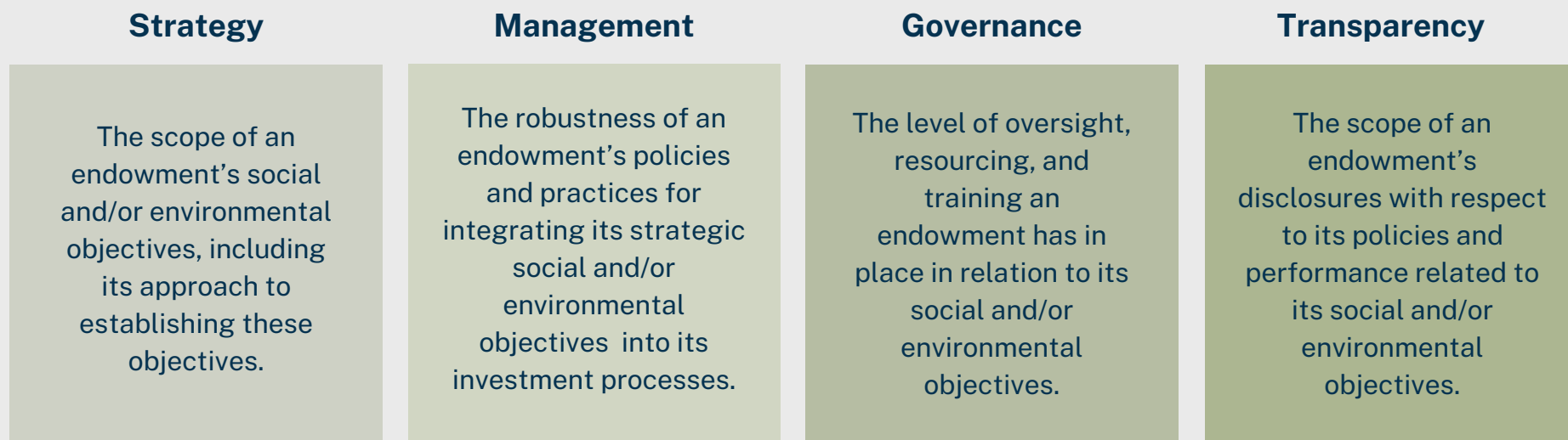
Five leading endowments representing public and private colleges and universities, with assets under management ranging from \$50 million to over \$20 billion, showcased their pioneering institutional leadership by piloting this new instrument:

- Arizona State University Foundation
- California State University Foundation
- Lewis & Clark College
- University of California
- University of Toronto



The Framework

We ultimately designed the assessment framework as a questionnaire organized around four key pillars:



The framework is structured to facilitate data collection on an endowment's practices for each of the pillars. It is designed to be independently completed by endowments (with their investment consultant or OCIO, if applicable), with answers verified by BlueMark after a review of specific documentation and evidence provided by the endowment.

It consists of:

32

Scored Questions

21

Data-Only Questions

Pilot Participant Ratings

The final result includes the endowment being awarded a rating of Participant, Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Platinum following BlueMark's verification and scoring of the answers provided.



Arizona State University Foundation

Public University • Tempe, AZ
Enrollment: 145,655

Endowment Size: \$1.55 Billion*

*As of 12/31/2023

Rating: Gold

Highlights:

- ASU's [Sustainable Responsible Impact Investing Report](#) provides an overview of their holistic approach, their activities around climate change, and their commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) through investment, measurement, and engagement, including investing with diverse managers (85% of the Foundation's managers have at least one woman on their board of directors, and 71% have at least one person of color as a board member).
- [Net Zero Portfolio Commitment](#): In April 2021, the ASU Foundation announced a Net Zero commitment for its endowment portfolio to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035.
- [Proxy Voting Guidelines](#) and [Empowering the Next Generation of Sustainable Investors](#): The ASU Foundation's proxy voting guidelines were developed with the input of 20 ASU undergraduate and graduate students.
- Member of the Intentional Endowments Network



California State University Foundation

Public University System • Long Beach, CA
Enrollment: 457,992

Endowment Size: \$52.2 Million

Rating: Silver



Highlights:

- The California State University Foundation's [Statement of Investment Policy](#) reflects a broad commitment to responsible investing, and encourages its Investment Managers to incorporate ESG analysis in the review of investment risk and opportunities.
- Regular research is conducted to understand the scope and adoption of responsible investment practices across the Foundation's constituent groups.
- Proxy Voting: Managers are responsible for voting proxies in line with the investment philosophy and management of the portfolio, reflecting a commitment to responsible investing.
- Member of the Intentional Endowments Network



Lewis & Clark College

Private College • Portland, OR
Enrollment: 3,509

Endowment Size: \$306.4 Million

Rating: Platinum



Highlights:

- Lewis & Clark's [Investment Policy Statement](#) reflects the College's commitment to net zero portfolio targets, including reducing portfolio emissions by 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2040. It also demonstrates the College's commitment to achieve robust diversity within its investment program and through enhanced inclusive investment practices by fund managers, including hiring diverse investment managers owned or principally led by women and/or people of color.
- The College was an early adopter of a [fossil fuel divestment policy](#), and they continue to annually report on their fossil fuel exposure.
- Regular and consistent [reporting and transparency](#) on the College's website, where they share progress reports on meeting divestment, net zero, and diversity goals.
- Member of the Intentional Endowments Network

University of California

Public University System • Oakland, CA
Enrollment: 294,309

Endowment Size: \$20.7 Billion

Rating: Gold



Highlights:

- UC Investments' [Sustainable Investing Framework](#) provides a comprehensive guide for approaching environmental and social risks and opportunities. These issues include climate change, inequality, human rights, food and water security, diversity, circular economy, demographics, and governance. UC Investments also [reports annually](#) to Financial Stability Board's Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosure (TCFD).
- UC Investments [incorporates diversity, equity and inclusion into investment and operations processes](#), and reports annually on its work as an institutional investor, shareholder and employer to create the conditions for, and benefit from the rewards of, diverse, equitable and inclusive teams.
- Signatory of the Principles for Responsible Investment
- Member of the Intentional Endowments Network

University of Toronto

Public University • Toronto, Ontario
Enrollment: 97,678

Endowment Size: \$3.8 Billion*

* Value in CAD, [as of 12/31/2022](#)

Rating: Gold



Highlights:

- University of Toronto Asset Management Corporation's [Responsible Investment Policy](#) applies to all assets under management and includes integrating ESG factors into all decision-making, being an active owner through stewardship, and engaging with investee companies and the industry at large to share responsible investing practices to collectively achieve climate targets. This is supported by Fossil Fuel Divestment and Net Zero Targets.
- Transparent and [integrated reporting](#) of responsible investing and traditional investment performance, including an annual endowment carbon footprint subject to independent limit assurance audit and Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) reporting.
- Signatory of the Principles for Responsible Investment; Member of the Net Zero Asset Owner's Alliance, Climate Action 100+, Carbon Engagement Canada, and [other engagement groups](#).
- Member of the Intentional Endowments Network

Looking Forward

In 2024, IEN will engage a second cohort of endowments to participate in the EIB, working with BlueMark to conduct the third-party verification process. Participation in the EIB offers unique benefits. Participating endowments will:

- Learn where they are on their sustainable investing journey, relative to best-practices,
- Receive high-value feedback and recommendations from BlueMark, the leading impact investing verification provider, on improving sustainable investing policies,
- Be able to benchmark their progress against that of their peers and access aggregated data of participating endowments, and
- Gain recognition* for their progress by earning a rating of Participant, Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Platinum.

*(*Participants will also have the ability to participate anonymously to realize the benefits of the benchmarking and advisory feedback without being required to make their participation or rating public).*

IEN aims for the EIB to offer participating endowments both a branding tool to demonstrate their leadership and engage students, alumni, donors, and other stakeholders; and an action-oriented feedback mechanism to enable benchmarking against peers and support further improvements on sustainable and impact investing strategies.



“Up to this point, most sustainability surveys were anchored in antiquated ways of assessing alignment of the endowment efforts. The Endowment Impact Benchmark brings the best current and vetted approaches to the forefront in its evaluation. Not only did the process provide a more holistic measurement of what we were doing, we had clear guidance on areas to focus on as we continued our journey in the future. While robust, the process was not as burdensome as initially estimated.”

– JEFF MINDLIN, CIO, **ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION**



Learn More

IEN launched the EIB with anchor support from the Tipping Point Fund for Impact Investing. We formed an Advisory Committee of experts from the field, including leaders from the IEN membership and individuals that support aligned reporting and rating systems. IEN partnered with BlueMark, a leading impact verification firm, to help design, build, and guide participants through the EIB.

To learn more about the Endowment Impact Benchmark, including benefits of participation, timeline, and expectations, or to indicate interest in participating in the second cohort in 2024, [fill out this form](#), or scan the QR code.



About The Intentional Endowments Network

The Intentional Endowments Network (IEN) supports higher education institutions to adopt investment strategies that create an equitable, low-carbon, and regenerative economy. IEN connects endowments, asset managers, investment consultants, nonprofit partners, and individuals, to advance the field of mission-aligned, sustainable investing.

About BlueMark

BlueMark is a leading provider of impact verification services for investors and companies. BlueMark's verification methodologies draw on a range of industry standards, frameworks, and regulations, including the Impact Management Project, the Operating Principles for Impact Management, the Principles for Responsible Investment, SDG Impact, and the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation.

