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Australian Centre for Financial Studies announces Finalists for the Melbourne Financial Services Symposium Investment Stewardship Award - Superannuation Fund category

The prestigious annual Melbourne Financial Services Symposium (MFSS) Investment Stewardship Award recognises long term responsible investment achievement and is sponsored by the Victorian Funds Management Corporation (VFMC).

Finalists for the MFSS 2011 Investment Stewardship Award for Superannuation Funds are:

- Australian Ethical Investment
- Care Super
- Cbus
- Christian Super

Announcing the finalists Professor Deborah Ralston, Director, Australian Centre for Financial Studies remarked that "each of the Award nominees demonstrates all of the qualities that our expert judging panel consider make them excellent stewards of their member's retirement savings".

Prof Ralston stated that each applicant for the Investment Stewardship Award was assessed on their application of environmental, social and governance factors in the areas of investment process, governance, risk management, investment philosophy, service quality, and product innovation.

Ralston ended by noting the special role played by superannuation funds in the lives of their members. "Stretching as it does into retirement, often the relationship between fund and member is the individual's longest relationship outside of family. Not only is it incumbent on a super fund to maximise returns for the member to live comfortably in retirement, it is the fund's duty to ensure that those funds are invested responsibly with the long term in mind."

Investment Stewardship Award winners will be announced on the night of the Gala Dinner of the MFSS on Tuesday 1 March 2011. The dinner will provide an opportunity for the successful superannuation fund to be showcased to industry peers and members as an exemplar of all-round excellence in funds management.

Background

Awards are given for separate Superannuation Fund and Investment Manager categories.

The 2010 Super fund category winner was Cbus, recognising its robust governance structure and very strong membership servicing and communication culture.

The 2010 Investment Manager category winner was AVIVA Investment Management, recognising integrated sustainability into its investment decision making process and ownership. It also demonstrated strong core values of integrity, teamwork, innovation and performance which delivered long term value to its clients.

The 2010 judging panel awarded a "Commendation" to UCA Fund Management for their integration of UNPRI in all their processes.

- Applications were screened under strictest confidentiality, by a Judging Panel of experienced finance professionals chaired by John Gall.
<http://www.melbournefinancialservicesymposium.com.au/symposium-awards/judging-panel-%e2%80%93-investment-stewardship-award/>

The independent judging panel assessed applicants against the following criteria using the application of ESG factors as a benchmark:

- Investment performance
- Governance
- Risk management
- Investment philosophy
- Service quality and
- Product innovation.

MFSS 2010 sponsors were NOT eligible to apply.

The **Melbourne Financial Services Symposium** (MFSS) is hosted by the Australian Centre for Financial Studies (ACFS) on behalf of the Victorian financial services community. The Symposium together with the Gala Dinner is considered the premier annual event for the Funds Management industry in Melbourne. In 2011, it runs as a half day program plus Gala Dinner on Tuesday 1 March at the Park Hyatt Melbourne.

Confirmed MFSS 2011 program speakers include:

- Else F. Bos, Deputy-Chairman, Executive Committee, Chief Institutional Business, PGGM Investments (Netherlands);
- Jane Diplock AO, Chairman of the Executive Committee, IOSCO and Chairman of the Securities Commission (New Zealand);
- Jonathan Green, Head of Investment Facilities, NSW Treasury Corporation;
- Dr Danyelle Guyatt, Global Head of Research, Responsible Investment, Mercer (London); and
- Stephen Hiscock, Managing Director, SG Hiscock & Partners (Australia)

For more details on the MFSS program:

www.melbournefinancialservicesymposium.com.au/

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The Australian Centre for Financial Studies facilitates industry-relevant and rigorous research and consulting, thought leadership and independent commentary. Drawing on expertise from academia, industry and government, the Centre promotes excellence in financial services.

The Centre specialises in leading edge finance and investment research, aiming to boost the global credentials of Australia's finance industry; bridging the gap between research and industry and supporting Australia and Melbourne as an international centre for finance practice, research and education.

The Centre provides access to and links between academics, finance practitioners and government and draws on expertise and experience from across these groups, to facilitate and disseminate knowledge creation and transfer throughout the greater finance community via its various activities.

The Australian Centre for Financial Studies (previously known as the Melbourne Centre for Financial Studies) is a not-for-profit consortium of Monash University, the University of Melbourne, RMIT University and Finsia having commenced in 2005 with seed funding from the Victorian Government. Across the consortium partners ACFS has links with over 100 finance academics and over 200 postgraduate students engaged in finance research.

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