

Key takeaways

Returns

- Your 5-year net total return was 9.4%. This was below both the U.S. Public median of 11.2% and the peer median of 11.7%.
- Your 5-year policy return was 9.4%. This was below both the U.S. Public median of 10.7% and the peer median of 10.9%.

Value added

• Your 5-year net value added was 0.0%. This was below both the U.S. Public median of 0.7% and the peer median of 0.9%.

Cost

- Your investment cost of 28.3 bps was below your benchmark cost of 33.3 bps. This suggests that your fund was low cost compared to your peers.
- Your fund was low cost because it paid less than its peers for similar services.
- Your costs decreased by 14.6 bps, from 42.9 bps in 2017 to 28.3 bps in 2021, primarily because you moved to a lower cost asset mix Less private assets, more fixed income.

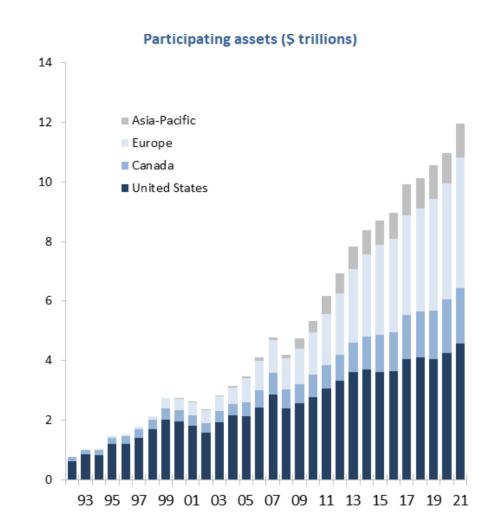
Risk

• Your asset risk of 9.6% was below the U.S. Public median of 11.1%.

This benchmarking report compares your cost and return performance to the 274 funds in CEM's extensive pension database.

- 145 U.S. pension funds participate. The median U.S. fund had assets of \$13.2 billion and the average U.S. fund had assets of \$31.5 billion. Total participating U.S. assets were \$4.6 trillion.
- 67 Canadian funds participate with assets totaling \$1.9 trillion.
- 54 European funds participate with aggregate assets of \$4.3 trillion. Included are funds from the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Ireland, Denmark and the U.K.
- 6 Asia-Pacific funds participate with aggregate assets of \$1.1 trillion. Included are funds from Australia, New Zealand, China and South Korea.
- 2 funds from other regions participate.

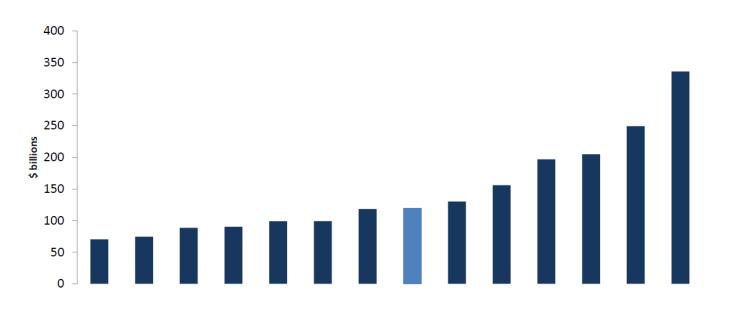
The most meaningful comparisons for your returns and value added are to the U.S. Public universe, which consists of 46 funds."



The most valuable comparisons for cost performance are to your custom peer group because size impacts costs.

Peer group for North Carolina Retirement Systems

- 14 U.S. Public sponsors from \$70.6 billion to \$335.8 billion
- Median size of \$119.1 billion versus your \$119.9 billion



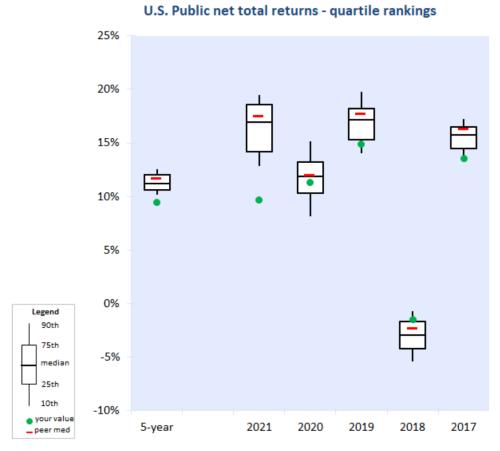
To preserve client confidentiality, given potential access to documents as permitted by the Freedom of Information Act, we do not disclose your peers' names in this document. For some of the peers, 2020 cost data was used as a proxy for 2021.

Your 5-year net total return of 9.4% was below both the U.S. Public median of 11.2% and the peer median of 11.7%.

Total returns, by themselves, provide little insight into the reasons behind relative performance. Therefore, we separate total return into its more meaningful components: policy return and value added.

	Your 5-year
Net total fund return	9.4%
- Policy return	9.4%
= Net value added	0.0%

This approach enables you to understand the contribution from both policy mix decisions (which tend to be the board's responsibility) and implementation decisions (which tend to be management's responsibility).



Your 5-year policy return of 9.4% was below both the U.S. Public median of 10.7% and the peer median of 10.9%.

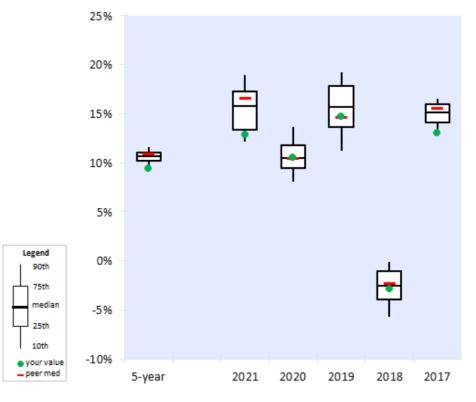
Your policy return is the return you could have earned passively by indexing your investments according to your policy mix.

Having a higher or lower relative policy return is not necessarily good or bad. Your policy return reflects your investment policy, which should reflect your:

- Long term capital market expectations
- Liabilities
- Appetite for risk

Each of these three factors is different across funds. Therefore, it is not surprising that policy returns often vary widely between funds.

U.S. Public policy returns - quartile rankings



To enable fairer comparisons, the policy returns of all participants, including your fund, were adjusted to reflect private equity benchmarks based on lagged, investable, public-market indices. Prior to this adjustment, your 5-year policy return was 9.5%, 0.0% higher than your adjusted 5-year policy return of 9.4%. Mirroring this, your 5-year total fund net value added would be 0.0% lower.

Your 5-year policy return of 9.4% was below the U.S. Public median of 10.7% primarily because of:

- The negative impact of your lower weight in Stock and Private Equity, which were two of the better performing asset classes over the past 5 years.
- The negative impact of your higher weight in Fixed Income, which was one of the poorer performing asset classes over the past 5 years.

5-year average p	5-year mark r				
	Your	U.S. Publ	More/	Your	U.S. Publ
	Fund	Avg.	Less	Fund	Avg.
Stock - U.S.	21%	18%	3%	17.9%	17.6%
Stock - EAFE	0%	4%	-5%	9.5%	9.8%
Stock - ACWI x U.S.	21%	7%	14%	9.8%	9.9%
Stock - Global	0%	13%	-13%	n/a³	14.5%
Other Stock ²	0%	5%	-5%	n/a³	n/a³
Total Stock	42%	46%	-4%	13.9%	14.3%
Fixed Income - U.S.	25%	17%	8%	4.6%	3.7%
Fixed Inc Inflation indexed	2%	3%	-1%	3.0%	5.3%
Cash	4%	-1%	5%	1.1%	1.2%
Other Fixed Income ²	0%	8%	-8%	n/a³	n/a³
Total Fixed Income	31%	27%	4%	4.0%	4.6%
Global TAA	2%	1%	1%	5.5%	7.4%
Hedge funds	3%	3%	0%	4.2%	4.7%
Commodities	1%	1%	0%	3.7%	3.4%
Natural resources	3%	1%	2%	3.9%	5.1%
Real estate ex-REITs	7%	8%	-1%	7.7%	7.4%
Other Real Assets ²	1%	2%	-1%	n/a³	n/a³
Private equity	6%	9%	-3%	13.6%	14.4%
Private debt	4%	2%	2%	4.4%	6.1%
Total	100%	100%			

^{1. 5-}year weights are based only on plans with 5 years of continuous data.

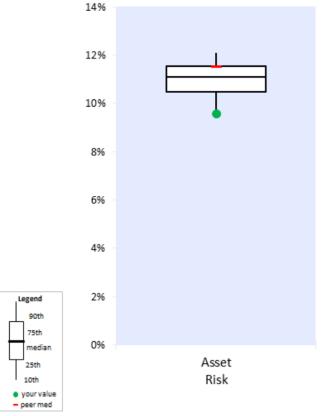
^{2.} Other stock includes Emerging. Other fixed income includes Long Bonds and High Yield. Other real assets includes Infrastructure and REITs.

^{3.} A value of 'n/a' is shown if asset class returns are not available for the full 5 years or if they are broad and incomparable.

Your asset risk of 9.6% was below the U.S. Public median of 11.1%.

 Asset risk is the standard deviation of your policy return. It is based on the historical variance of, and covariance between, the asset classes in your policy mix.

U.S. Public risk levels at December 31, 2021



Net value added is the component of total return from active management. Your 5-year net value added was 0.0%.

Net value added equals total net return minus policy return.

Value added for North Carolina Retirement Systems

	Net	Policy	Net value
Year	return	return	added
2021	9.7%	12.8%	-3.1%
2020	11.3%	10.5%	0.8%
2019	14.9%	14.7%	0.2%
2018	-1.5%	-2.9%	1.4%
2017	13.5%	13.0%	0.5%
5-Year	9.4%	9.4%	0.0%

Your 5-year net value added of 0.0% compares to a median of 0.9% for your peers and 0.7% for the U.S. Public universe.



To enable fairer comparisons, the value added for each participant including your fund was adjusted to reflect private equity benchmarks based on lagged, investable public market indices. Prior to this adjustment, your fund's 5-year total fund net value added was 0.0%.

Your investment costs, excluding private asset performance fees, were \$339.2 million or 28.3 basis points in 2021.

Asset management costs by asset		rnal Mana			nal Managei			
class and style (\$000s)	Passive	Active	Overseeing	Passive	Active	Perform.		
6: 1 116 1 1/ 11			of external	fees	base fees	fees 1	Total	
Stock - U.S. broad/all	440		118		5,362		5,480	
Stock - U.S. large cap	140		00		7.425		140	
Stock - U.S. mid cap	42		89		7,135		7,266	
Stock - U.S. small cap			92		5,825		5,916	
Stock - EAFE			333	0	12,536		12,869	
Stock - Emerging			67		1,969		2,036	
Stock - ACWI x U.S.			812	1,443	27,849		30,103	
Stock - Other			1	927			928	
Fixed income - U.S.		1,374					1,374	
Fixed income - Inflation indexed			117	19	4,431		4,566	
Cash		764					764	
Commodities			21		173		194	
REITS			97		2,441		2,538	
Infrastructure - LP 1			61		6,272	3,494	6,333	
Natural resources - LP 1			250		24,119	14,081	24,370	
Natural resources - Co-invest. 1			23		412	851	435	
Real estate ex-REITs ¹			466		31,136	42,394	31,602	
Real estate ex-REITs - LP 1			293		28,401	22,478	28,693	
Real estate ex-REITs - Co-invest. 1			52		2,196	4,102	2,248	
Real estate ex-REITs - FoFs 1			12		2,214	1,120	2,226	
Global TAA			134		2,000		2,134	
Hedge funds - External active			249		33,555	38,614	72,418	
Hedge funds - FoFs			32		7,088	3,316	10,436	
Private equity - Diversified - FoFs ¹			68		8,413	4,206	8,481	
LBO - LP 1			226		23,356	81,172	23,583	
Venture capital - LP 1			166		12,836	31,827	13,002	
Venture capital - Co-invest. 1			17			3,042	17	
Private credit - LP ¹			232		19,077	14,136	19,309	
Private credit - Co-invest. 1			29		2,151	1,560	2,180	
Private equity - Other - LP ¹			156		13,550	6,479	13,706	
Private equity - Other - Co-invest. 1			2		175		177	
Total excluding private asset perfor	mance fe	es					335,523	28.0bp
Oversight, custodial and other cost	s ²							
Oversight of the fund							2,125	
Trustee & custodial							1,550	
Consulting and performance measu	rement						0	
Audit							38	
Other							0	
Total oversight, custodial & other co	osts						3,713	0.3bp
T-1-12		0			1		220.226	20.21

339,236 28.3bp

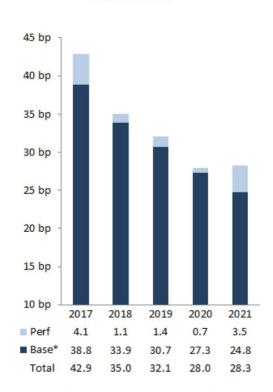
^{1.} Total cost excludes carry/performance fees for real estate, infrastructure, natural resources and private equity. Performance fees are included for the public market asset classes and hedge funds.

2. Excludes non-investment costs, such as

^{2.} Excludes non-investment costs, such as benefit insurance premiums and preparing cheques for retirees.

Your costs decreased from 42.9 bps in 2017 to 28.3 bps in 2021, primarily because you moved to a lower cost asset mix - Less private assets, more fixed income.



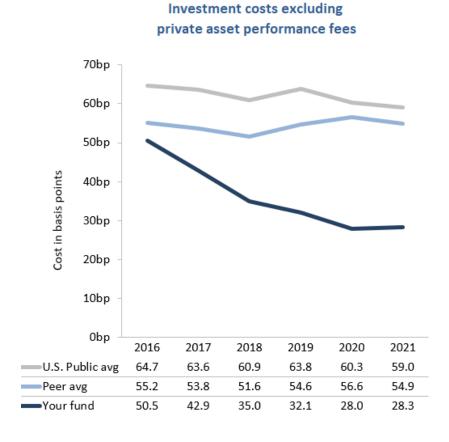


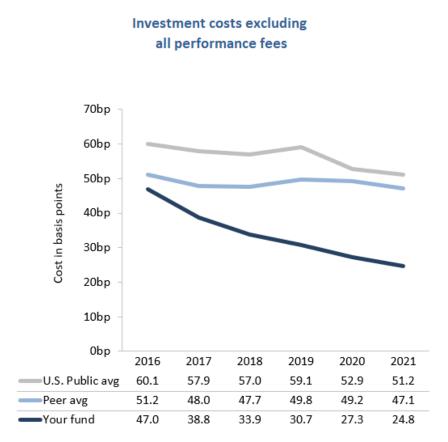
*Includes fees for managing internal assets and internal costs of monitoring external programs, where allocated.

Reasons why your costs decreased by 14.6 bps

		Imp	act in bps
1. Lower cost asset mix			
 Less Real estate ex-REITs: 2017 10% vs 2021 6% 	6		(3.1)
 Less REITs & Commodities & Infrastructure & 			
Natural resources: 2017 7% vs 2021 4%			(2.8)
 Less Hedge funds & multi-asset: 2017 8% vs 202 	21 5%		(5.2)
 Less Private equity: 2017 7% vs 2021 5% 			(3.4)
All other mix changes			(0.3)
ů			(14.8)
			(2)
2. Lower cost implementation style			(0.7)
3. Paid more in total for similar investment styles	2017 cost	2021 cost	
Higher Hedge Funds performance fees	52.6 bp	113.9 bp	1.7
Lower internal investment management costs		-	(0.2)
Lower oversight, custodial & other costs	0.4 bp	0.3 bp	(0.1)
All other differences			(0.5)
		-	0.9
Total decrease		•••	(14.6)

Your investment cost excluding all performance fees has declined every year since 2016



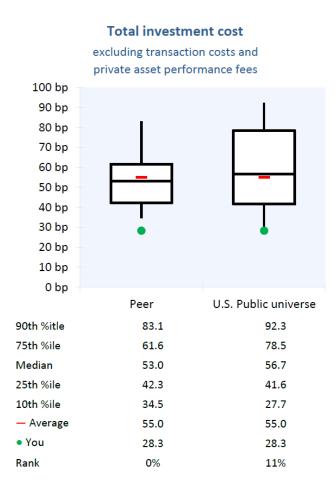


Your total investment cost of 28.3 bps was the lowest of the peers. It was substantially below the peer median of 53.0 bps.

Differences in total investment cost are often caused by two factors that are often outside of management's control:

- Asset mix, particularly holdings of the highest cost asset classes: real estate (excl. REITs), infrastructure, hedge funds, private equity and private credit. These high-cost assets equaled 23% of your fund's assets at the end of 2020 versus a peer average of 29%.
- Fund size. Bigger funds have advantages of scale.

Therefore, to assess whether your costs are high or low given your unique asset mix and size, CEM calculates a benchmark cost for your fund. This analysis is shown on the following page.



Benchmark cost analysis suggests that, after adjusting for fund size and asset mix, your fund was low cost by 5.0 basis points in 2021.

- Your benchmark cost is an estimate of what your cost would be given your actual asset mix and the median costs that your peers pay for similar services. It represents the cost your peers would incur if they had your actual asset mix.
- Your total cost of 28.3 bp was below your benchmark cost of 33.3 bp. Thus, your cost savings were 5.0 bp.

Your cost versus benchmark

	\$000s	basis points
Your total investment cost	339,236	28.3 bp
Your benchmark cost	399,272	33.3 bp
Your excess cost	(60,036)	(5.0) bp

Your fund was low cost because it paid less than peers for similar services.

Reasons for your low cost status

	Excess C (Saving	
	\$000s	bps
Higher cost implementation style	(2.402)	(0.3)
Use of active management vs. lower cost passive	(2,482)	(0.2)
Use of external management vs. lower cost internal	17,552	1.5
 More LPs as a percentage of external 	12,586	1.0
More fund of funds	3,167	0.3
 Less co-investment as a percentage of LP/Co 	8,106	0.7
Less overlays	(2,471)	(0.2)
	36,459	3.0
2. Paying less than peers for similar services		
 External investment management costs 	(82,288)	(6.9)
 Internal investment management costs 	(7,377)	(0.6)
Oversight, custodial & other costs	(6,830)	(0.6)
	(96,494)	(8.0)
Total savings	(60,036)	(5.0)

Details of your \$96.494 million savings from paying less for similar services

Cost impact of paying more/(less) for internal asset management

	Your avg		С	Cost/		
		holdings	Your	Peer	More/	(savings)
	Style	in \$mils	Fund	median	(less)	\$000s
Internal asset management		(A)			(B)	(A X B)
Stock - U.S. large cap	passive	13,065	0.1	0.5	(0.4)	(531)
Stock - U.S. mid cap*	passive	3,906	0.1	1.1	(1.0)	(378)
Fixed income - U.S.	active	29,827	0.5	2.6	(2.2)	(6,468)
Cash	active	16,578	0.5	Excluded		
Total for internal management						(7,377)
Total in bps						(0.6) bp

^{&#}x27;Excluded' indicates that the asset class was excluded from this analysis due to comparability concerns with peers.

*Universe median used as peer data was insufficient.

Cost impact of differences in oversight, custodial & other costs

	Your avg	Cost in bps			Cost/
	holdings	Your	Peer	More/	(savings)
	in \$mils	Fund	median	(less)	\$000s
	(A)			(B)	(A X B)
Oversight	119,931	0.2	0.3	(0.2)	
Consulting	119,931	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Custodial	119,931	0.1	0.2	(0.1)	
Audit	119,931	0.0	0.0	(0.0)	
Other	119,931	0.0	0.1	(0.1)	
Total for oversight, custodial, other ¹		0.3	0.9	(0.6)	(6,830)
Total in bps					(0.6) bp

Cost impact of paying more/-less for external asset management

		Your avg		Cost in bp	c	Cos	+/
		holdings			More/		
	Style	(mils)	Your	median	-less	\$000s	bps
External asset management	otyre	(A)	1001	median	(B)	(A X B)	op5
Stock - U.S. broad/all	active	1,733	31.6	35.4	-3.8	-662	
Stock - U.S. mid cap ¹	active	1,302	55.5	53.5	2.0	263	
Stock - U.S. small cap	active	1,341	44.1	66.5	-22.4	-3,001	
Stock - EAFE	passive	4	0.3	1.6	-1.3	0	
Stock - EAFE	active	4,884	26.3	37.8	-11.5	-5,612	
Stock - Emerging	active	984	20.7	54.9	-34.2	-3,362	
Stock - ACWI x U.S.1	passive	7,063	2.4	3.7	-1.3	-939	
Stock - ACWI x U.S.	active	8,318	34.2	35.0	-0.8	-668	
Stock - Other ⁵	passive	30	305.2	305.2	0.0	0	
Fixed income - Inflation indexed	passive	63	3.9	1.1	2.7	17	
Fixed income - Inflation indexed ¹	active	1,302	34.9	7.7	27.2	3,545	
Commodities ¹	active	246	7.9	46.1	-38.2	-940	
REITs	active	929	27.3	49.0	-21.7	-2,016	
Real estate ex-REITs	active	4,452	71.0	71.0	0.0	0	
Real estate ex-REITs	CO	357	63.0	74.2	-11.1	-397	
Real estate ex-REITs	LP	2,827	101.5	138.2	-36.7	-10,381	
Real estate ex-REITs	FoF	107	75.9	75.9	0.0	0	
Underlying base fees	FoF	107	132.9	132.9	0.0	0	
Infrastructure	LP	431	147.0	147.2	-0.2	-9	
Natural resources	CO	105	41.5	4.5	37.0	388	
Natural resources	LP	2,796	87.2	139.5	-52.3	-14,618	
Hedge funds	active	3,390	99.7	97.9	1.8	601	
Top layer perf. fees	active	3,390	113.9	150.0	-36.1	-12,233	
Hedge funds	FoF	438	89.7	77.2	12.5	549	
Top layer perf. fees ²	FoF	438	0.0	41.0	-41.0	-1,797	
Underlying base fees	FoF	438	72.8	104.2	-31.5	-1,379	
Underlying perf. fees	FoF	438	75.7	140.0	-64.3	-2,820	
Global TAA1	active	1,809	11.8	43.9	-32.1	-5,802	
Private equity - Diversified	FoF	563	56.7	59.5	-2.7	-154	
Underlying base fees	FoF	563	93.8	154.0	-60.2	-3,392	
Venture capital	CO	60	2.8	6.7	-3.9	-23	
Venture capital	LP	932	139.5	167.8	-28.3	-2,641	
LBO	LP	1,545	152.6	167.8	-15.2	-2,354	
Private equity - Other ⁵	CO	55	32.2	32.2	0.0	0	
Private equity - Other ⁵	LP	2,384	57.5	57.5	0.0	0	
Private credit	CO	442	49.3	28.9	20.4	902	
Private credit	LP	2,656	72.7	126.4	-53.7	-14,261	
Total for external management						-83 195	-6.9 hr

Total for external management

-83,195 -6.9 bp

^{1.} Universe median used because peer data was insufficient.

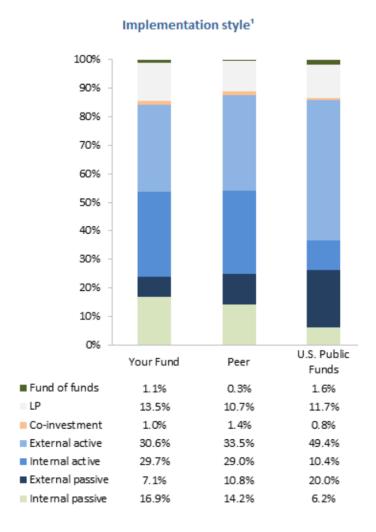
^{2.} Database median are used because peer and universe data were insufficient.

^{3.} The impact of this line is neutralized by setting the benchmark cost to You.

Your implementation style was 3.0 bps higher cost than the peer average.

Implementation style is the way in which your fund implements asset allocation. Each implementation choice has a cost. Your first choice is how much to implement passively or actively. The table below summarizes your aggregate choices versus peers and their cost impact.

Implementation choices	Impact
Less passive, more active	(0.2) bp ²
More internal as a % of passive	(0.0) bp
More internal as a % of active	1.5 bp ²
Less evergreen % in private assets, excl. PE	1.0 bp
More fund of funds % of LP/Co/FoF	0.3 bp
Less co-investment % of LP/Co	0.7 bp
Less overlays	(0.2) bp
Total impact	3.0 bp



^{1.} Implementation style is shown as a % of total fund fee basis because the fee basis is the primary driver of cost for private assets (e.g., new private equity LP commitments increase costs before LP NAV increases). Style weights are based on average holdings. Cash and derivatives are excluded. The peer and universe style was adjusted to match your asset mix. It equals their average style for each asset class weighted by your fee basis for the asset class. It shows how the average peer would implement your asset mix.

^{2.} Typically, less passive is higher cost. But your mix of passive versus active by asset class decreased your cost. Typically, more internal as a % of active is lower cost. But your mix of internal by asset class increased your cost.

If your internally managed assets were managed externally and you paid the peer median costs, your costs would have been higher by approximately \$34.6 million.

Additional external investment management costs: assuming North Carolina no longer had internal holdings and paid peer median external costs

		North Carolina RS Avg holdings Internal		Peer median external	Cost sa	avings
	Style	in \$mils	cost (bps)	cost (bps)	in bps	\$000s
Stock - U.S. large cap	passive	13,065	0.1	1.0 ¹	(0.9)	(1,202)
Stock - U.S. mid cap	passive	3,906	0.1	2.71	(2.6)	(1,009)
Fixed income - U.S.	active	29,827	0.5	11.3	(10.9)	(32,431)
Cash	active	16,578	0.5	Excluded		
Total					2.9 bp	(34,643)

^{1.} Universe median was used because insufficient peers had external active U.S. mid-cap and large cap holdings.

This table summarizes where and why your fund is high/low cost relative to the peer median by asset class.

Why are you high/(low) cost by asset class?

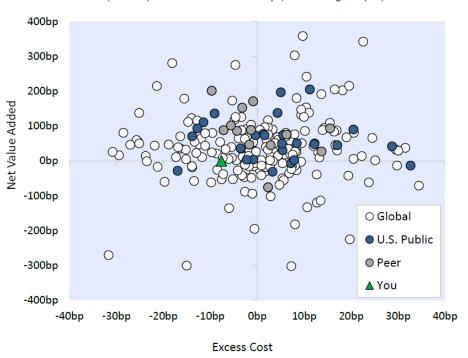
	., ,	8/ (,	,			
				Your			
	Style weig	hted cost		average			
		Peer		assets	Due to	Due to	Total
	Your	median ¹ =	More/	(or fee	impl.	paying	more/
Asset class/category	cost E	Benchmark	(less)	basis) ²	style	more/(less) [:]	(less)
Asset management costs	(A)	(B)	(C = A - B)	(D)			(C x D
Stock - U.S. broad/all	31.6 bp	8.0 bp	23.6 bp	1,733	4,747	(662)	4,085
Stock - U.S. large cap	0.1 bp	3.0 bp	(2.9) bp	13,065	(3,228)	(531)	(3,759
Stock - U.S. mid cap	14.0 bp	10.4 bp	3.6 bp	5,207	1,981	(115)	1,866
Stock - U.S. small cap	44.1 bp	39.7 bp	4.5 bp	1,341	3,598	(3,001)	597
Stock - EAFE	26.3 bp	26.6 bp	(0.3) bp	4,888	5,466	(5,612)	(146
Stock - Emerging	20.7 bp	39.8 bp	(19.1) bp	984	1,486	(3,362)	(1,876)
Stock - ACWI x U.S.	19.6 bp	25.2 bp	(5.6) bp	15,381	(7,029)	(1,607)	(8,636
Stock - Other	305.2 bp	305.2 bp	0.0 bp	30	0	0	(
Fixed income - U.S.	0.5 bp	4.1 bp	(3.6) bp	29,827	(4,276)	(6,468)	(10,743
Fixed income - Inflation indexed	33.5 bp	2.4 bp	31.1 bp	1,365	680	3,562	4,242
Commodities	7.9 bp	26.5 bp	(18.6) bp	246	483	(940)	(457
REITs	27.3 bp	22.9 bp	4.4 bp	929	2,428	(2,016)	411
Real estate ex-REITs	83.7 bp	86.0 bp	(2.4) bp	7,742	8,940	(10,778)	(1,838
Infrastructure	147.0 bp	117.0 bp	30.0 bp	431	1,304	(9)	1,294
Natural resources	85.5 bp	110.6 bp	(25.1) bp	2,900	6,960	(14,230)	(7,270
Hedge funds	106.9 bp	99.2 bp	7.7 bp	3,828	3,583	(16,188)	(12,605
Global TAA	11.8 bp	27.6 bp	(15.8) bp	1,809	2,936	(5,802)	(2,866
Private equity - Diversified	150.5 bp	145.6 bp	4.9 bp	563	3,825	(3,546)	279
Venture capital	131.2 bp	156.0 bp	(24.8) bp	992	203	(2,664)	(2,461
LBO	152.6 bp	157.8 bp	(5.2) bp	1,545	1,550	(2,354)	(804
Private equity - Other	56.9 bp	56.9 bp	(0.0) bp	2,439	0	0	(0
Private credit	69.4 bp	101.8 bp	(32.4) bp	3,098	3,293	(13,342)	(10,049
Derivatives/Overlays	0.0 bp	0.2 bp	(0.2) bp	119,931	(2,471)	0	(2,471
Total asset management	28.0 bp	32.4 bp	(4.4) bp	119,931	36,459	(89,665)	(53,206
Oversight, custody and other o	osts ⁴						
Oversight of the Fund	0.2 bp	0.3 bp	(0.2) bp				
Trustee & Custodial	0.1 bp	0.2 bp	(0.1) bp				
Consulting	0.0 bp	0.0 bp	0.0 bp				
Audit	0.0 bp	0.0 bp	(0.0) bp				
Other	0.0 bp	0.1 bp	(0.1) bp				
Total oversight, custody & othe	0.3 bp	0.9 bp	(0.6) bp	119,931	n/a	(6,830)	(6,830
Total	28.3 bp	33.3 bp	(5.0) bp	119,931	36,459	(96,494)	(60,036

1. The weighted peer median cost for asset management is the style-weighted average of the peer median costs for all implementation styles (e.g., internal passive, external active, fund of fund, etc.). It excludes performance fees on private assets. 2. Total fund average holdings is used as the base when calculating the relative cost impact of the overlay programs. 3. Total more/less differences include the impact of performance fees, which are not shown separately on this page. Refer to section 4 for a comprehensive breakdown of your differences versus benchmark cost. 4. Benchmarks for oversight total and individual lines are based on peer medians. Sum of the lines may be different from the total.

Your fund achieved a 5-year net value added of 0 bps and cost savings of 8 bps on the cost effectiveness chart.

5-year net value added versus excess cost

(Your 5-year: net value added 0 bps, cost savings 8 bps 1)



	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	5-year
et value added	(310.5) bp	79.5bp	22.0bp	141.0bp	48.4bp	(0.3) bp
xcess cost	(5.0) bp	(7.9) bp	(8.0) bp	(10.3) bp	(7.0) bp	(7.6) bp