

## Fact File

## INDEPENDENTUCITS

Name: Hugh Hunter  
 Email: hugh@independentucits.com  
 Web Address: www.independentucits.com  
 Address: Suite 3A, 17-20 Ironmonger Lane, London EC2V 8EP  
 Telephone: +44 20 7495 9605

## Best European UCITS Platform

# The Independent UCITS Platform

The Independent UCITS Platform provides flexibility, freedom and independence to specialist managers and entrepreneurs when they establish their own UCITS funds. Hugh Hunter, the platform's founder, told us more

The Independent UCITS Platform is a Luxembourg-based fund infrastructure created to address the needs of specialist managers and entrepreneurs who wish to retain flexibility, freedom and independence when they establish their own UCITS funds.

"The business model of Independent UCITS is simple: we aim to provide a simple and cost-effective way for fund managers to create a fund to address the vitally important UCITS investor base," says Hugh Hunter, Founder of The Independent UCITS Platform. "We have created a UCITS-compliant platform which provides the infrastructure and support which enables managers to launch a fund with the minimum of time, expense and administrative overhead.

"Our clients are asset managers with investment strategies ranging from traditional long-only equity, through long/short hedge-funds to more complex macro-driven and CTA strategies. The factor they have in common is the desire to create a regulated fund which allows them to approach the broadest range of investors around the world."

By offering a platform which is independent of the service providers, including investment banks, asset managers and administrators, The Independent UCITS Platform allows managers full flexibility and control of the branding, distribution and portfolio management of their funds. "Through our platform, managers gain the benefit of using best-of-breed service providers which may not otherwise be accessible to the managers," says Hunter.

"The cost structure of the funds on the platform are very competitive and fully transparent, and managers receive their full entitlement to management and performance fees. Operating costs for a fund, including the formation expenses, are kept to a minimum and we provide intensive support to the managers during the fund creation process, and beyond.

"Our view on fund distribution differs from many other platforms; we believe that managers should be in control of their own marketing strategy and the selection of their marketing and distribution partners. We provide managers with impartial, expert advice on distribution and, where appropriate, introductions to our marketing partners so they can identify who they wish to work with. If the chemistry between a manager and the distributor is not right, the relationship is most unlikely to work. This approach allows managers to select the right distribution partners for their needs."

Now is a challenging, but very rewarding, time for those working in investments, says Hunter. "The regulatory changes in recent years, and most specifically the introduction of AIFMD, have raised awareness among investment managers and investors about the different regulatory regimes now in place

in the EU," he says. "Uncertainty over the true impact which AIFMD will have on fund passporting and distribution, as well as the obligations now being placed on depositaries and investment managers, has focused attention on the relative simplicity of UCITS.

"Although UCITS is primarily aimed at the retail investor market institutions are increasingly investing in UCITS funds because of the transparency of the rules and the degree of investor protection provided by the regulations. This increased demand for UCITS has meant that managers of offshore funds are realising that they need to look at this market to offset the stagnation and decline in interest in their offshore vehicles."

Hunter says the team is honoured and extremely proud to have been named as Best European UCITS Platform in the Hedge Fund Awards. He says he owes this success to the fact that Independent UCITS provides fund managers with everything they require to launch, manage and grow their fund, without creating an unnecessary distraction or diluting their own brand.

"This is extremely important for boutique managers who cherish their identity and individuality. The creation of new funds managed by boutique managers specialising in particular strategies provides a much-needed additional choice of opportunities beyond those provided by the bulge-bracket investment houses. These managers can be more nimble and flexible in their portfolio management process and this is borne out in the statistics which shows that new, smaller funds consistently outperform the larger more established ones. This, therefore, provides investors with additional tools to achieve their return objectives."

In the coming months and years, Hunter says The Independent UCITS Platform is set to grow, bringing new funds to the market and helping these, and its existing funds, to attract investors and raise assets under management. "We also plan to expand our range of vehicles to provide the same opportunities for managers wishing to operate under different regulatory frameworks," he says. "We will, however, maintain our focus on independence, service and value in all our lines of business.

"Further changes to the regulatory framework over the coming years, which are inevitable, will provide both challenges and opportunities to find ways to address the needs of investors – ultimately comprising the world's population – by creating investment products which will allow them to achieve financial security in the face of declining state retirement support, and to fulfil their investment objectives." ■