Guinness Global Innovators

Investment Commentary – April 2025

RISK

This is a marketing communication. Please refer to the Prospectus, Supplement, KID/KIIDs for the Funds, which contain detailed information on their characteristics and objectives and full information on the risks, before making any final investment decisions.

The Funds are equity funds. Investors should be willing and able to assume the risks of equity investing. The value of an investment can fall as well as rise as a result of market and currency movement, and you may not get back the amount originally invested.

Past performance does not predict future returns.

ABOUT THE STRATEGY

Launch	01.05.2003
Index	MSCI World
Sector	IA Global
Managers	Dr Ian Mortimer, CFA Matthew Page, CFA
EU Domiciled	Guinness Global Innovators Fund
UK Domiciled	WS Guinness Global Innovators Fund

INVESTMENT POLICY

The Guinness Global Innovators Funds are designed to provide investors with global exposure to companies benefiting from innovations in technology, communication, globalisation or innovative management strategies. Innovation can take many forms, and not just in disruptive tech-driven products. It is the intelligent application of ideas and is found in most industries and at different stages in the company lifecycle. The Funds are actively managed and use the MSCI World Index as a comparator benchmark only.

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COMMENTARY

In the first quarter of 2025, the Guinness Global Innovators Fund returned -6.5% (in GBP), the MSCI World Index returned -4.7%, and the IA Global sector average return was -4.5%. The Fund therefore underperformed the Index by 1.8 percentage points and underperformed its peer group by 2.0 percentage points.

Global equity markets delivered a mixed performance in the first quarter of 2025, marking a notable shift in investor sentiment compared to the optimism that prevailed at the turn of the year. While US equities posted a negative quarter, dragged down by weakness in large-cap technology and consumer discretionary sectors, European markets surged, supported by renewed fiscal optimism in Germany and more attractive relative valuations. The US market came under pressure as President Trump's tariff announcements, targeting key trading partners such as Mexico and Canada and levying new duties on autos, steel, and aluminium, sparked fears of a potential trade war. These concerns were exacerbated by softer consumer sentiment and business sentiment, with March's University of Michigan survey falling sharply by 12% from February, to 57.0. At the same time, a disruptive announcement from China's DeepSeek, which unveiled a low-cost AI model rivalling current leaders, triggered a reassessment of AI stock valuations, contributing to a pullback in some of the market's biggest names.

Overall, the quarter reflected a reversal of prevailing expectations at the start of the year. With investors initially favouring US equities driven by economic resilience and outperformance particularly in large-cap tech stocks, sentiment rotated toward Europe as policy dynamics shifted. Amid this complex backdrop, we take a deeper look at the events over the quarter and review the drivers of US equity markets.

The Fund's relative performance over the third quarter can be attributed to the following:

- The Fund's overweight position to the Information Technology sector created a drag on performance given the increasing competition within the AI theme and a general rotation away from growth-oriented sectors. However, the Fund benefited from strong stock selection within the sector. Fund holdings Roper Technologies (+13.6% in USD) and KLA (+8.1%) delivered robust returns and outperformed the broader MSCI World Information Technology sector (-11.9%).

- From an asset allocation perspective, the Fund benefited from an overweight position to the Healthcare sector as it outperformed the wider Index (+5.3% vs -1.7% in USD). This was partially offset by negative stock selection, with Novo Nordisk (-21.3%) underperforming amid growing competition with its flagship obesity product.

- The Fund saw a headwind from a zero-weight allocation to some of the benchmark's best performing sectors, including Energy (+10.3%), Utilities (+7.3%) and Consumer Staples (+6.1%), as investors sought out more defensive stocks in the face of heightened uncertainty.

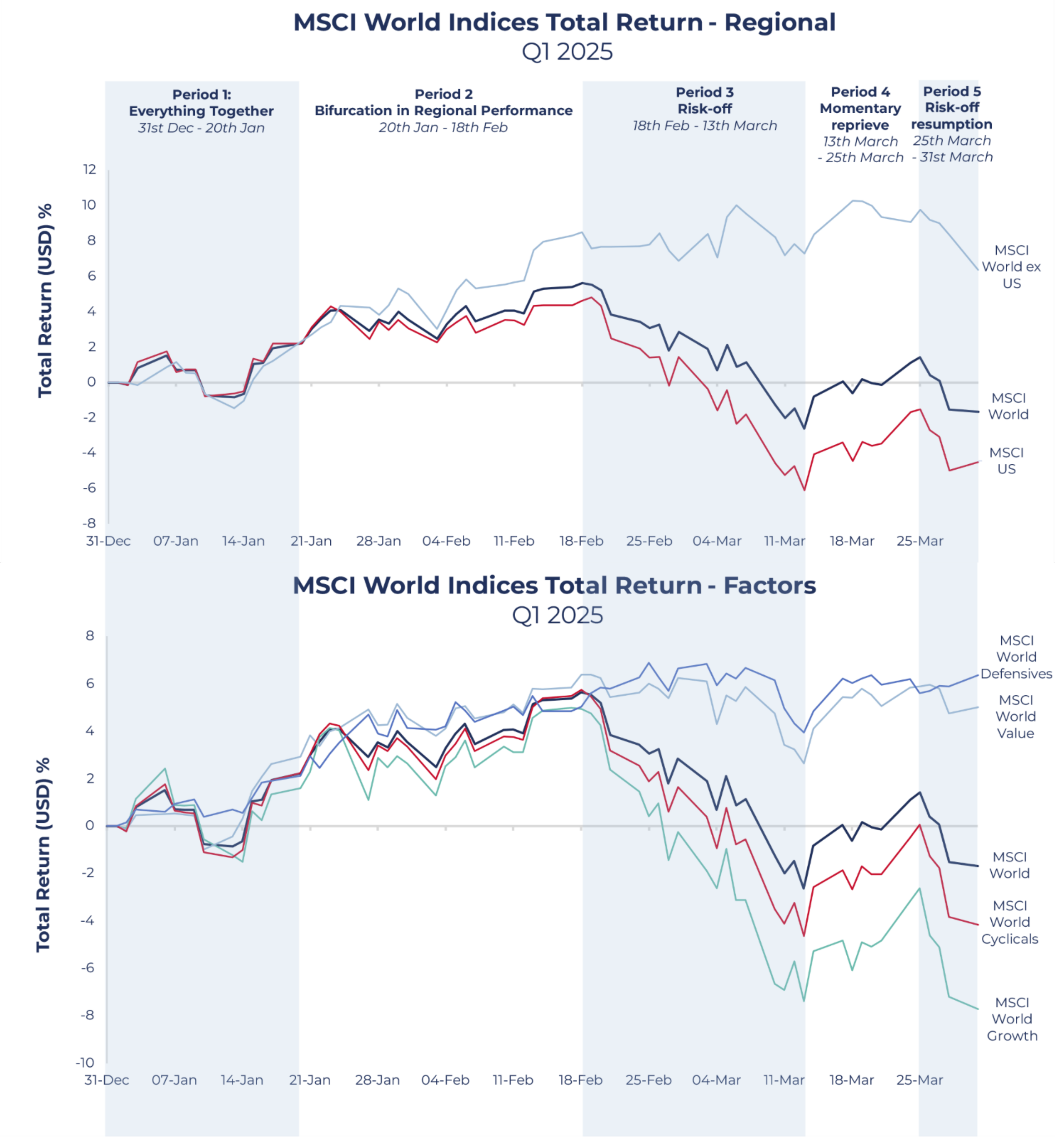
It is pleasing to see the Fund in the top quartile versus the IA Global Sector over the longer time frames of 3, 5, 10, 15 and 20-year periods, as well as since launch.

Past performance does not predict future returns.

Cumulative % total return, in GBP, to 31st March 2025	YTD	1 yr	3 yrs	5 yrs	10 yrs	15 yrs*	20 yrs*	Launch*
Guinness Global Innovators	-6.5	0.6	31.0	115.9	235.3	578.5	1132.2	1299.1
MSCI World	-4.7	4.8	27.0	102.9	185.0	369.1	573.8	737.5
IA Global (average)	-4.5	-0.3	13.4	72.7	125.5	236.2	384.7	527.3
IA Global (ranking)	**	282/539	39/485	30/414	7/258	1/162	1/97	3/88
IA Global (quartile)	**	3	1	1	1	1	1	1

*Source: FE fundinfo. Cumulative Total Return in GBP, as of 31st March 2025. *Simulated past performance. Performance prior to the launch of the Guinness Global Innovators Fund (31.10.14) reflects the Guinness Atkinson Global Innovators Fund (IWIRX), a US mutual fund with the same investment process since 01/05/2003. **Ranking not shown in order to comply with European Securities and Marketing Authority rules*

MARKET COMMENTARY



Source: Guinness Global Investors, MSCI; data as of 31.03.2025

Period 1 – Everything Together (31st Dec – 20th Jan): *performance in line across factors and regions.*

It was a shaky start to the year as global equity markets scaled back expectations of US rate cuts for 2025, following strong jobs data and a better-than-expected manufacturing print. US inflation data in mid-January showed signs of softening, causing rate cut expectations to climb once more, and a positive corporate earnings season in the banking sector drove a short period of strong equity performance.

Fund performance: The Fund outperformed as strong stock selection offset a negative allocation effect. In particular, our Semiconductor equipment manufacturers (KLA, Lam Research and Applied Materials) performed particularly strongly, despite weak sector performance from our largest overweight sector position, Information Technology.

Period 2 – Bifurcation in Regional Performance (20th Jan – 18th Feb): *performance broadly in line across factors, but the US moved sideways, and the rest of the world trended upwards.*

Trump was inaugurated on 20th January, and volatility in equity markets soon followed. US stocks outperformed in the following days as markets grappled with a blitz of executive orders, surprise threats of tariffs, and corporate earnings for a number of blue-chip companies. This outperformance was short-lived however, as the MSCI USA moved sideways for the rest of the period. Markets instead showed a preference for the value on offer in Europe, given the lack of immediate US tariffs on the region (Europe was expected to be a primary target of Trump's 'America First' trade policies), the rising prospect of peace talks in Ukraine, and improving economic growth expectations. European defence stocks performed particularly strongly on the prospect of increased European military expenditure following pressure from the US on NATO. Volatility in big tech stocks at the end of January was driven by the release of DeepSeek – a Chinese large language model (LLM) supposedly developed at the fraction of the cost of leading Western models but with comparable performance – as markets weighed the likely implications on big tech's capital expenditure plans. Hong Kong's Hang Seng outperformed all other main markets over the period, fuelled by this AI optimism.

Fund performance: A small positive allocation effect (no exposure to energy acted as a tailwind) was more than offset by a negative stock selection impact in Health Care (Danaher) and IT (TSMC and Applied Materials), leading to Fund underperformance. Strength in stock selection within Communication Services (Netflix and Meta) was not enough to offset these headwinds.

Period 3 – Risk-off (18th Feb – 13th Mar): *The US begins to fall as risk-off sentiment dominates. Defensives outperform cyclicals, value outperforms growth, the rest of the world outperforms the US, and the 'Magnificent Seven' are sold off.*

The MSCI World fell 7.8% between the market peak (18th February) and trough (13th March). The bifurcation in performance between US and non-US stock performance increased further over the period, as the US faced overwhelmingly weak economic prints across multiple data points. Service Purchasing Managers' Indexes (PMIs) moved into contractionary territory, manufacturing new orders fell steeply, housing data was weak and there was a decline in consumer sentiment. With core inflation coming in hotter than expected, concerns over stagflation were amplified by increasing uncertainty over US trade policy, and the potential negative impact tariffs may have on both US growth and inflation. Trump's comments that a US recession was not "off the table" did little for market confidence. Even as traders priced in more interest rate cuts for 2025, this was not enough to stem the slide. Investors flocked to more defensive areas of the market (Consumer Staples and Utilities were two of three positively performing sectors during the sell-off), growth stocks sold off, and there was particularly weak performance from the Magnificent Seven. Whilst outperformance of non-US stocks was persistent throughout the period, US equity weakness eventually drove positive momentum in non-US markets to stall. European outperformance continued throughout, in part buoyed by fiscal policy changes that would put defence spending outside of debt limits, with the region's value orientation and defensive tilt also offering a tailwind. The Hang Seng performed positively throughout, as China signalled strong stimulus and reform.

Fund performance: Despite having a higher beta than the benchmark, and an overweight to cyclically exposed sectors, the Fund performed in line over the sell-off. A strong negative allocation effect from the Fund's overweight position to Information Technology was more than offset by a strong stock selection effect in the same sector (Intuit, Roper, Infineon). The Fund also benefited from strength in off-benchmark name Anta Sports. Having no exposure to Consumer Staples and Utilities, the benchmark's best performing sectors over the period, acted as a headwind.

Period 4 – Momentary Reprieve (13th Mar – 25th Mar): *A short rebound as trends momentarily reverse.*

There was a brief recovery across factors and regions, and a small reversal in market leadership, as the US outperformed the MSCI World ex US and Cyclicals outperformed Defensives. Growth and value performed relatively in line. The reversal began after the threat of a US government shutdown receded. The Federal Reserve held rates steady, and despite increasing their inflation expectations and cutting growth expectations for 2025, markets were reassured by its Chair Jay Powell's "stay the course" tone with regards to the future path of rate cuts. Accordingly, rate cut expectations did not shift materially (two-three cuts in 2025). There was also brief reprieve on optimism of less aggressive tariffs than feared, following reports that the

White House may water down a number of tariffs planned to be announced on Trumps 'Liberation Day' (2nd April). Better-than-expected economic data was a further source of positive sentiment.

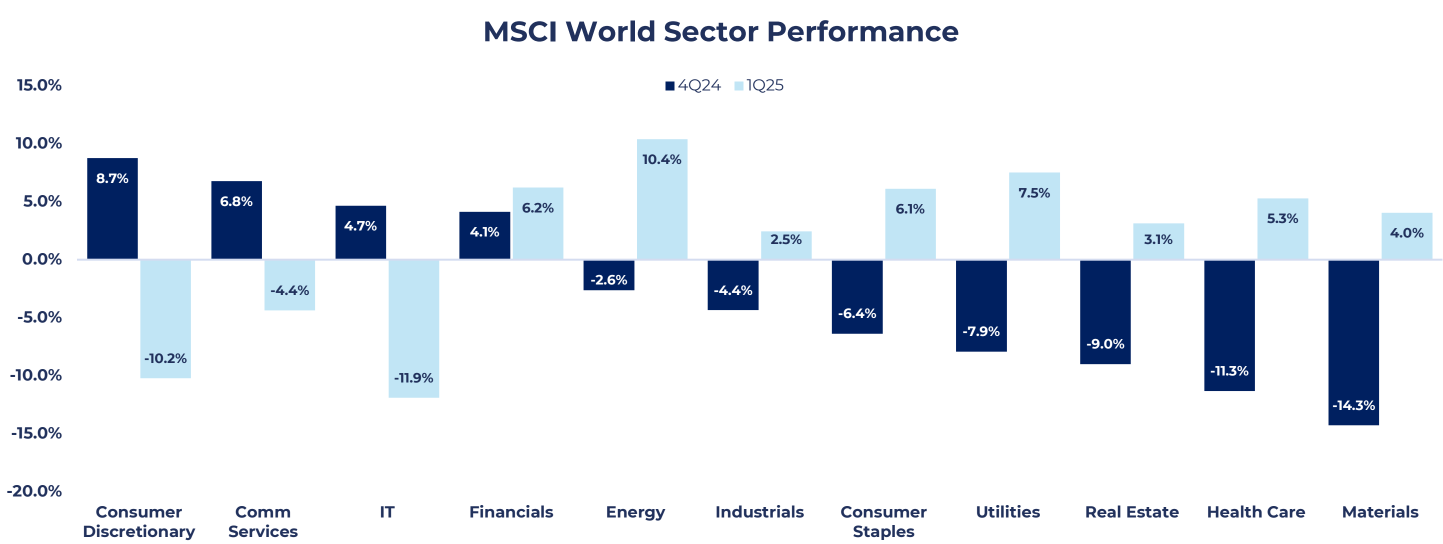
Fund performance: The Fund underperformed, as a positive allocation effect was more than offset by a negative stock selection impact. Our zero-allocation to Consumer Staples and our overweight to IT acted as a tailwind, as did strong stock selection with Communication Services (Netflix), but weakness in names within Consumer Discretionary (Anta Sports), Financials (LSEG), and Health Care (Medtronic) more than offset these tailwinds.

Period 5 – Risk-off Resumption? (25th Mar – 31st Mar): *All regions fall as tariff fears are reignited, and defensives significantly outperform.*

The rebound ended swiftly, and defensives significantly outperformed cyclicals after a perceived escalation in the trade war. Trump announced new tariffs on global autos, US trading partners warned of possible retaliation to said tariffs, and Trump threatened "far larger tariffs" on the EU if it collaborated with Canada. Fresh uncertainty over the extent of Trump's upcoming 'liberation day' weighed heavily on markets. The Conference Board saw measures of expectations in the next six months falling to a 12-year low, whilst consumer confidence and inflation expectations also moved against expectations. The market-cap weighted Magnificent Seven index (by UBS) entered correction territory, falling more than 20% since December 27th.

Fund performance: The rotation away from cyclicals acted as a headwind to Fund performance. The Fund's overweight to Information Technology and zero exposure to Consumer Staples, the benchmark's best and worst performing sectors, acted as a headwind to relative Fund performance. Good stock selection within Information Technology (Roper) and Financials (LSEG) offered some support, but this was offset by weakness in Industrials (Schneider) and Health Care (Siemens Healthineers).

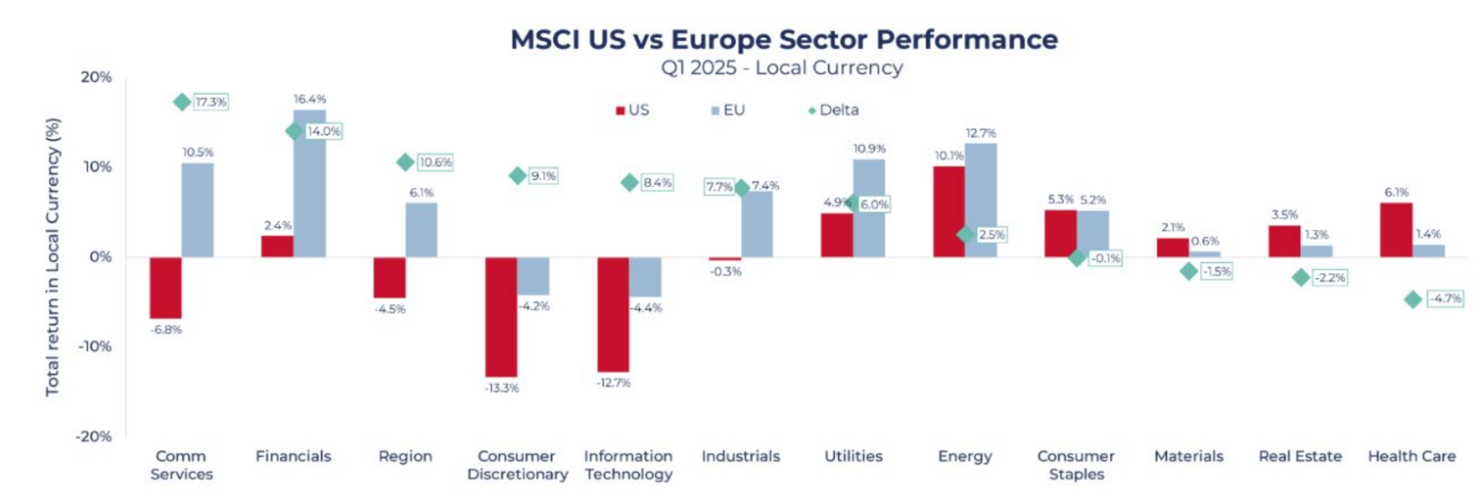
How have markets changed?



Source: Guinness Global Investors, MSCI; data as of 31.03.2025

As we moved into the first quarter of the year, markets were driven by a strong belief in US 'exceptionalism'. The post-election rally in late 2024, buoyed by expectations of pro-growth Trump-era policies returning, led to significant outperformance in sectors typically aligned with that narrative such as Consumer Discretionary, Financials and IT. However, as Q1 unfolded, that optimism faded. Uncertainty grew as Trump began his term with a flurry of policies including extensive tariffs. The result was a market rotation away from the growth-oriented names that had led the 'Trump trade'. The shift was reflected in performance by sector. Consumer Discretionary, IT and Communication Services, typically growth sectors, experienced strong gains in Q4 last year, but this quickly reversed, leading to their underperformance in the Index. Meanwhile, more defensive or sectors such as Consumer Staples (+6.1%) rebounded.

Further, European equity markets, notably outperformed their US counterparts over the quarter. This shift appeared broad based, across sectors, including those traditionally associated with growth, reversing a long-held narrative of US market dominance. While investor sentiment entering the year was largely in favour of the US, driven by expectations of economic resilience and policy clarity, European markets were largely under-owned amid concerns over political headwinds and sluggish growth prospects. However, these themes created ground for a reversal. Notably, defence names surged in response to rising geopolitical risk and heightened defence budgets. Germany's pivot to fiscal expansion supported the economic outlook with opportunity for increased investment and infrastructure spending. This was all helped by attractive relative valuations as European stocks have consistently traded at a lower multiple. This broad-based sector leadership in Europe, across both cyclical and growth-oriented segments stands in stark contrast to the U.S and this reversal has encouraged debate over the sustainability of US exceptionalism, a theme that has dominated the narrative in recent years.



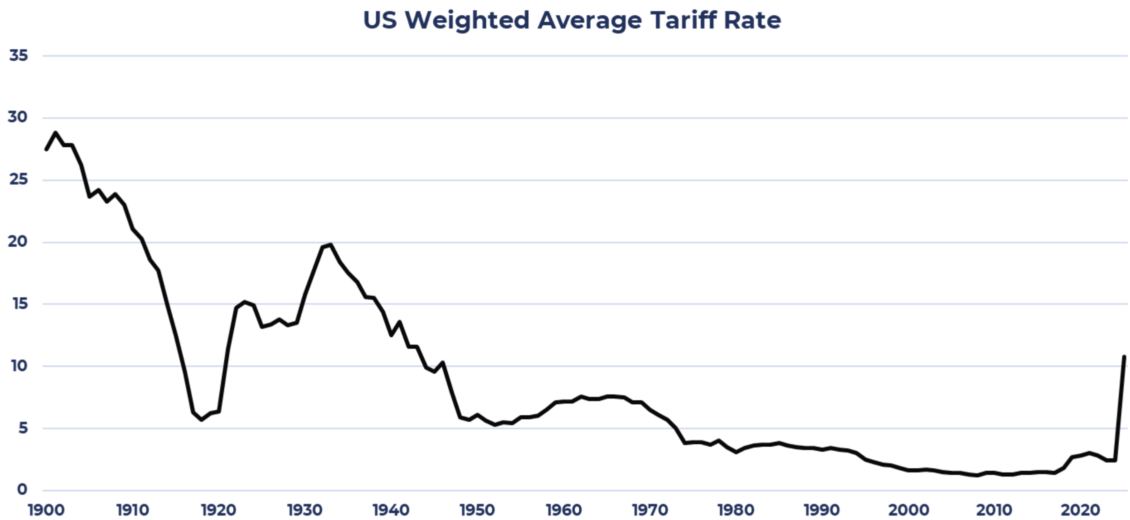
Source: Guinness Global Investors, MSCI; data as of 31.03.2025

What has driven US exceptionalism?

US exceptionalism has been driven by resilient economic fundamentals, supportive policy and dominant corporate performance. The US is the only major economy to have surpassed its pre-pandemic potential GDP, powered by robust consumer spending and a dynamic labour market. Domestic demand rose 3.2% over the past year, and real consumption is up 14% since Q4 2019, well ahead of Europe and Japan. Further, a pro-corporate policy backdrop, with deregulation and tax reform, has significantly improved business conditions in the US. Large fiscal deficits have also played a role, particularly after COVID, supporting corporate profits by sustaining household spending during income shocks and lowering corporate tax burdens. As a result, US companies have captured a larger share of GDP, with strong earnings underpinned by efficient capital deployment and favourable margins. On the equity side, US markets have dramatically outperformed their developed market peers, with much of this strength rooted in superior earnings delivery rather than simply multiple expansion. Much of this performance has been driven by the Magnificent Seven and particularly the top six (the 'Magnificent Six'): Apple, Microsoft, Alphabet, Amazon, Nvidia, and Meta, whose exceptional sales growth, high margins and strong returns lifted index-level earnings. These firms generated annual returns over 20%, far outpacing the broader market. US tech overall has dominated global peers, contributing over half of US outperformance since 2010, reflecting both sector overweight and superior stock-specific performance.

What is driving uncertainty?

Among other macroeconomic concerns, the threat of tariffs has certainly heightened economic uncertainty. Although this was largely anticipated following his presidential campaign, President Trump's term has so far been characterised by extensive and punitive tariffs. In his first month in office, Trump has implemented a series of tariff measures, including a 25% levy on imports from Mexico and Canada (albeit delayed), an additional 10% tariff on Chinese goods, and a 25% tariff on all aluminium and steel imports. As illustrated by the chart above, the US weighted average tariff has seen a significant spike at levels not last seen since the early 1900s. The final data point represents a Bloomberg estimate for the full year 2025 tariff rate, assuming full implementation of all announced trade policies. The policy shift triggered concerns across sectors, particularly those most exposed to global trade, with technology and semiconductor companies facing fresh pressure from disrupted supply chains and elevated input costs. Consumer-facing and industrial firms echoed similar concerns, highlighting the potential margin impact if higher costs cannot be passed on. These challenges could be compounded by a strengthening dollar, often an outcome of escalating trade tensions, which has weighed further on investor sentiment for many multinational companies. Investors grappled with the uncertainty surrounding these protectionist measures, fearing potential escalations into a broader trade war.

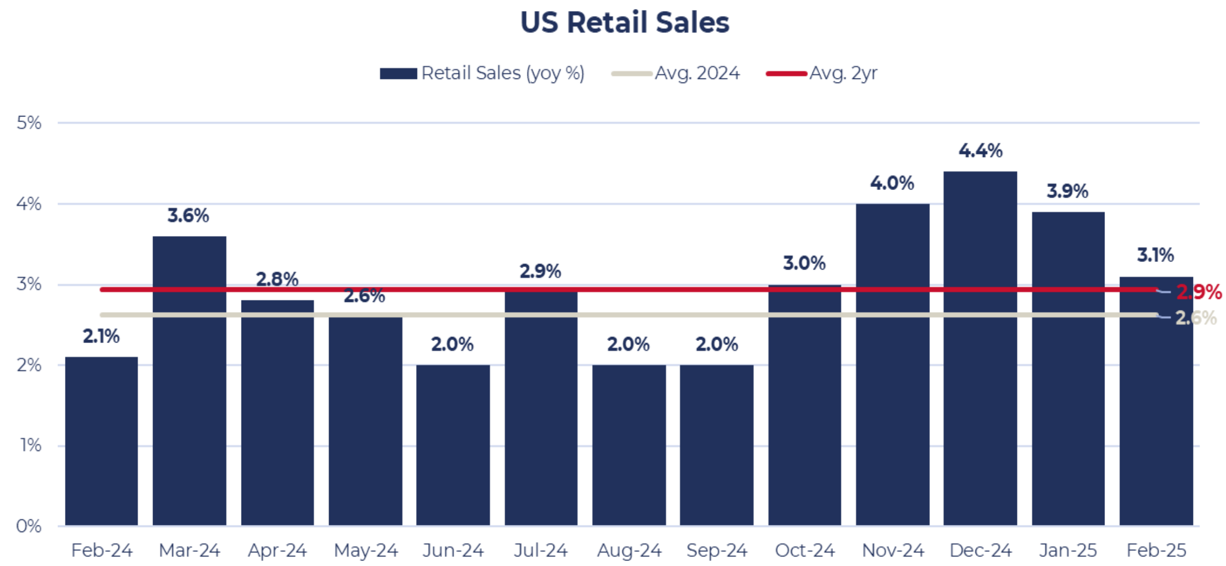


Sources: Guinness Global Investors, USITC, US Bureau of the Census, Bloomberg Economics, April 2025 estimate

At the time of writing, the administration's stance intensified. On April 2, President Trump announced a sweeping 10% baseline tariff on all imports, with higher rates targeting specific nations: 34% on China, 24% on Japan, and 20% on the European Union. These "Liberation Day" policies sent shockwaves through markets. The administration justifies these measures as necessary to address longstanding trade imbalances and to bolster domestic industries. Given this trajectory, it is anticipated that the administration will maintain its assertive stance on trade, potentially introducing further tariffs. This approach contributes to an environment of heightened economic uncertainty and does little to counter the growing narrative questioning the endurance of US market leadership and exceptionalism.

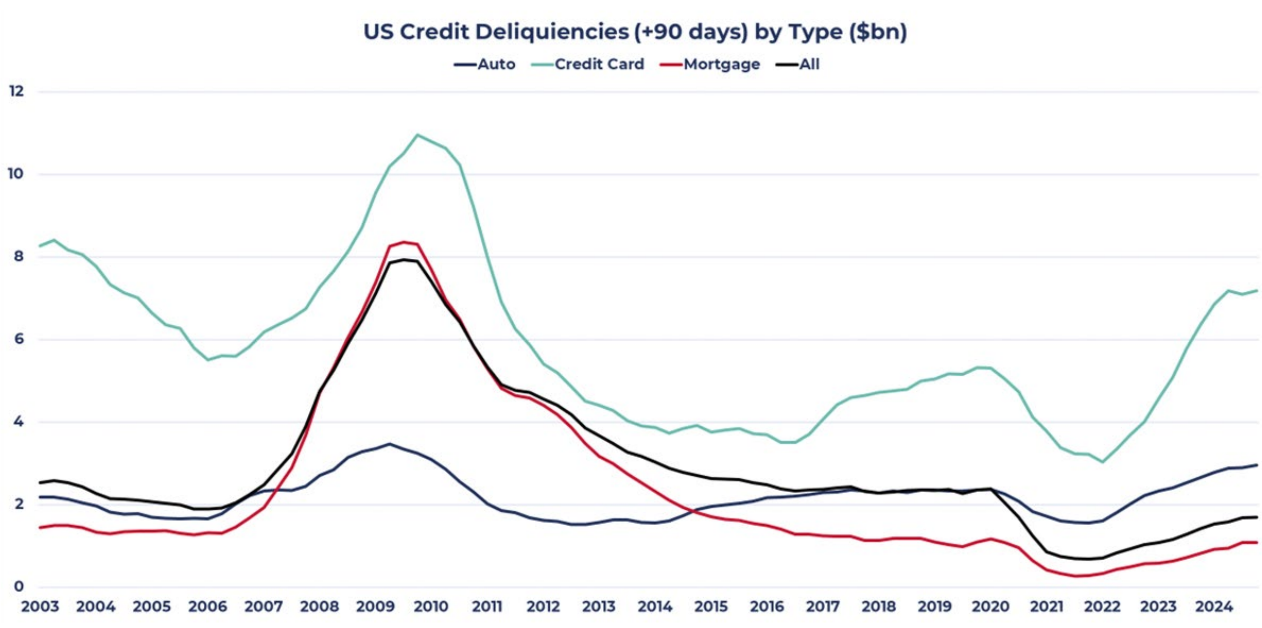
Reasons for optimism

As the largest component of GDP, consumer spending remains a cornerstone of economic growth and recent data provides reason for cautious optimism. Despite ongoing macroeconomic uncertainty and the threat of tariffs, US retail sales have remained resilient. Data posted within the quarter for January and February remains above last year’s average of 2.6% and the two-year average of 2.9%, pointing towards robust consumer activity even in the face of a higher interest rates and uncertain environment.



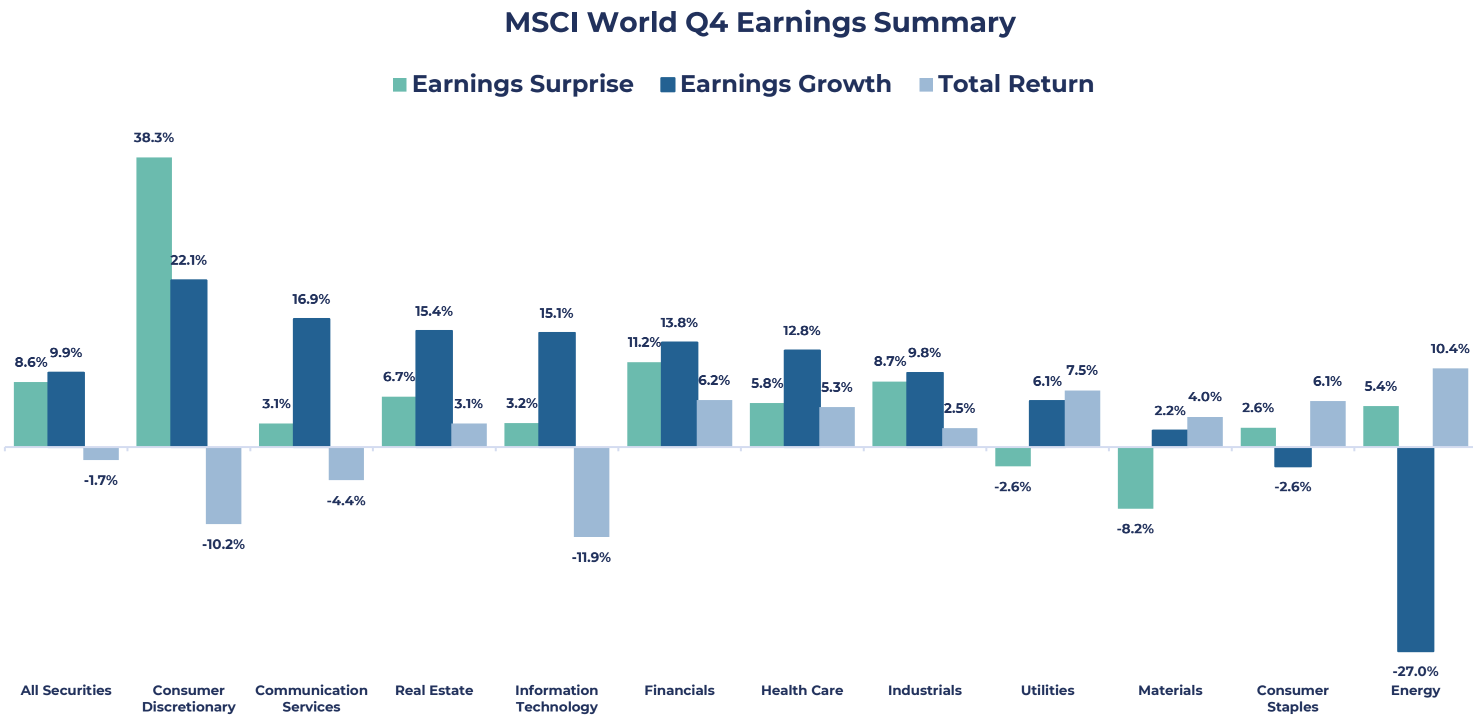
Source: Guinness Global Investors, National Bureau of Economic Analysis, as of 31st March 2025

Concerns over the sustainability of US consumer spending have also stemmed from rising debt burdens and the increasing levels of credit card delinquencies, reaching levels reminiscent of the Financial Crisis. Although this reflects increasing financial stress, the broad picture is nuanced. Short-term debt delinquencies are rising, but mortgage delinquencies, representing the largest share of household debt at almost 70% of total US household debt, remain at cyclical lows, having slightly increased from their pandemic-era trough. Further, the overall delinquency rate remains well below the highs seen during the Financial Crisis, suggesting that households, in aggregate, are not overstretched. Though consumer sentiment is certainly souring, economic data suggest households appear to be stable, providing some confidence in the face of a potential economic slowdown.



Source: Guinness Global Investors, Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax and US Bureau of Economic Analysis, as of 31st March 2025

Corporate Earnings



Source: Guinness Global Investors, MSCI, Bloomberg – date at 28th February 2025

Corporate earnings remain a vital macroeconomic and recessionary indicator, offering real-time insight into the health of the economy and the resilience of business. In the first quarter of 2025, companies began reporting results for the fourth quarter of 2024 and full-year earnings, with overall performance proving stronger than anticipated. Earnings across the benchmark grew by an average of 9.9%, even in the face of persistent macroeconomic headwinds. Notably, the Consumer Discretionary sector led the way, reporting average earnings growth of 22.1% despite modest sales growth of just 4.5%, highlighting substantial margin expansion as a key driver. Amazon, for example, saw North American operating margins expand by 2.1 percentage points in the quarter, reflecting efficiency gains and operating leverage in its e-commerce and cloud divisions. On a broader market level, S&P 500 companies posted resilient earnings growth, with several sectors outperforming expectations. This positive momentum in earnings suggests that, while economic uncertainty remains elevated – driven by policy shifts such as tariffs and tighter financial conditions – corporate America is still adapting effectively. The durability of profit growth supports a more positive outlook for equities and tempers near-term recession fears, reaffirming the importance of earnings trends as a forward-looking economic signal.

In anticipation of tariff impact on businesses, we continue to monitor management commentary which offers valuable insight into how companies are approaching the headwinds and highlight the following Fund holdings:

ABB, the Swiss engineering company that specialises in electrification and automation, earning about 26% and 14% of its revenues from the United States and China respectively. Having faced tariffs in during the first Trump administration, ABB has built up its sourcing structures locally in the countries where it operates. The development of this local-for-local strategy has led to ABB being 95% self-sufficient in both China and Europe, with the minority of products being moved between different regions. Management stated that they are continuing to invest in their operations and expect to increase their self-sufficiency in the United States from 80% to 85%. In response to how they were thinking about the risk of increasing tariffs, its CEO has said it is "not a big issue for ABB".

Amphenol

Amphenol is a leading American designer and manufacturer of electrical, electronic, and fibre-optic connectors and interconnect systems, sensors, and cable. The company has previously stated that approximately 22% of its annual net sales came from China. While the escalating trade war between the United States and China under the Trump administration could present some earnings risk for Amphenol, its localised production strategy should shelter the impact of tariffs. The company faced tariffs directed mostly at China back in 2017 and responded by increasingly making products in the regions where their customers are buying them. Its CEO believes Amphenol is now better positioned to manage the impact of trade policy, due to its expanded manufacturing presence with new factories across Southeast Asia and other regions outside of the United States.

SIEMENS Healthineers

Siemens Healthineers, the German medical technology company, makes physical devices and provides digital health software for imaging, diagnostics, and advanced therapies. Similarly to ABB and Amphenol, its management team has enacted a "twin factory setup" to address the risk of a trade war between the United States and China. This strategy enables Siemens Healthineers to deliver to China from China, and to the United States from the United States. Management also highlight that the company is relatively balanced between Europe and the United States, with these regions representing 33% and 36% of revenues, respectively, and two out of its four divisions being headquartered in the latter. While recognising that the business is not immune to an all-out trade war, its CEO described its risk level versus other sectors as "clearly lower".

Our approach

As we enter a new quarter marked by macroeconomic uncertainty, from evolving tariff implementation to significant policy change and geopolitical tensions, we reiterate our commitment to our investment philosophy. The Guinness Global Innovators Fund seeks to invest in quality growth companies trading at reasonable valuations. By doing so, we look to invest in companies that are experiencing faster profit growth, greater profit margins, and less susceptibility to cyclical pressures. Growth is one of our key tenets, as we believe it drives long-term returns. We focus on companies with exposure to secular growth themes, that are expected to grow faster than the market over time, and which may offer more predictable, sustainable growth.

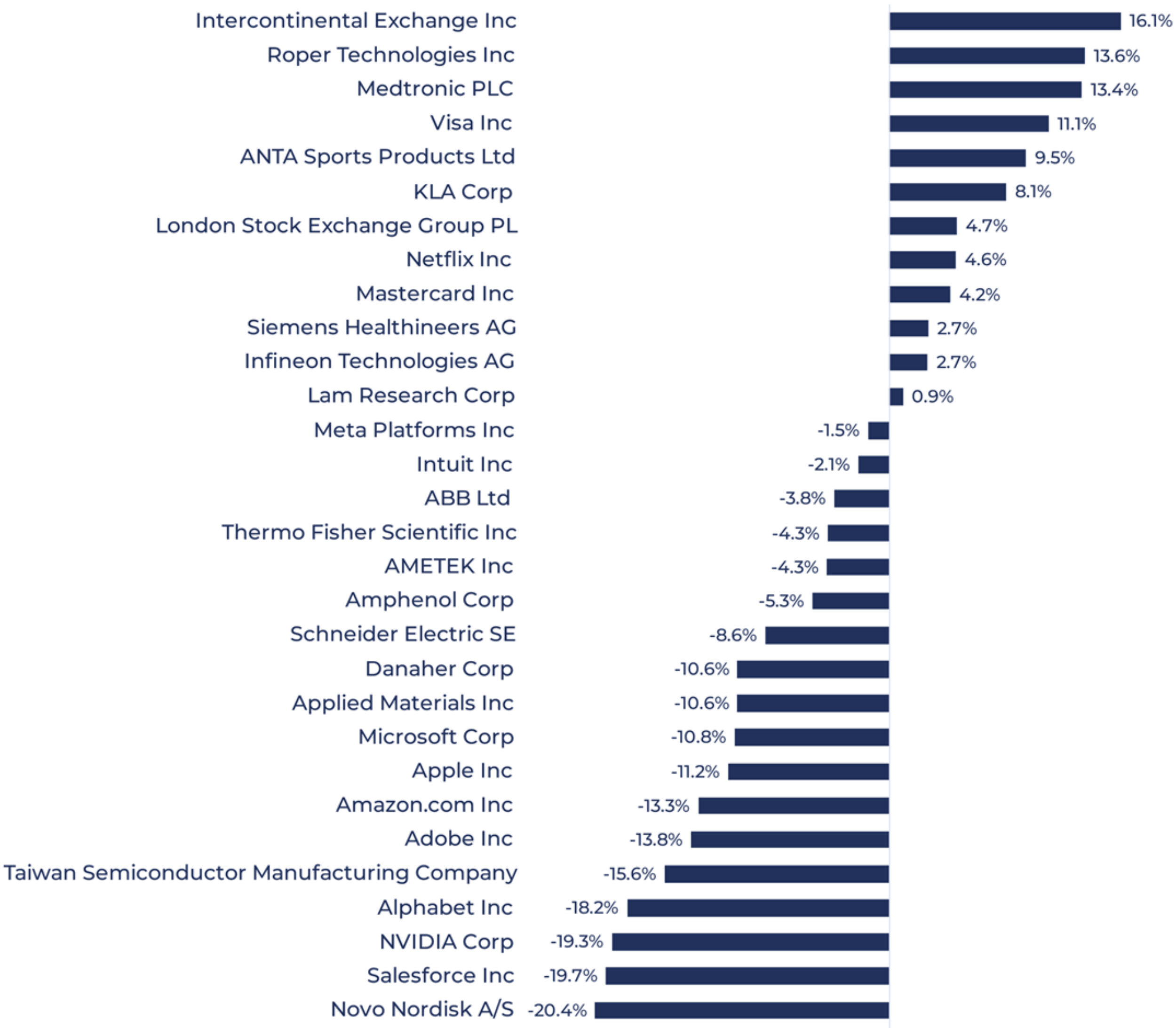
Notably, we focus on finding companies that have economic exposure to nine identified core innovation themes. This provides a source of diversification and prevents overexposure to any one theme, which is further supported by our equally weighted approach. We believe this approach balances marginal increases in diversification benefits, limits stock-specific risk and mitigates any behavioural biases. Additionally, it has a rebalancing effect and encourages the trimming of winners and topping up of underperformers.

Recent years have been illustrative of our approach to portfolio construction and diversification. Developments in generative artificial intelligence have led to rapidly growing demand for chips powerful enough to facilitate the energy intensive requirements of these processes in datacentres, and Nvidia, the dominant provider of graphic processing units, saw annual revenue growth of 126% in 2024 and material share price appreciation. Despite the strong momentum in Nvidia's stock, our equal-weight approach meant we trimmed the position and took profits five times last year. This helped ameliorate the impact on performance when Nvidia and other artificial intelligence enablers reacted negatively to the release of DeepSeek in the first quarter of this year. Similarly, our diversification across innovation themes lessened the blow by ensuring the Fund was not disproportionately exposed to stocks related to artificial intelligence. While the Fund does have an overweight to the Information Technology sector, it also has weights in more defensive areas, such as through the Advanced Healthcare theme. In an environment characterised by volatility, we remain committed to our investment philosophy, offering a disciplined but diversified bottom-up approach to finding quality growth companies.

PORTFOLIO HOLDINGS

We made no buys or sells within the portfolio in the quarter.

The chart below shows the portfolio constituents' returns over Q1 2025 in USD:



Source: Guinness Global Investors, Bloomberg, as of 31st March 2025

The best performing holdings over the quarter were Intercontinental Exchange and Roper Technologies.

Intercontinental Exchange (+16.1% USD)

Intercontinental Exchange generates most of its revenue from offering trading marketplaces, data services and mortgage technology (which facilitates the electronification of home loan processing). The company ended the quarter as the Fund's top performer after posting strong fourth-quarter earnings. In February, it reported record revenues and earnings, with proforma revenue growth of +6% year-on-year. Performance was mainly driven by the Exchanges segment, with high transactional volumes in the fourth quarter continuing to show strength into the new year as January volumes grew 21% year-on-year. This, paired with a low-single-digit reduction in operating expenses, led to growing profitability in the Exchanges segment with margin expansion of +300bps. In addition, Intercontinental Exchange saw strong performance in its Mortgage Technology segment following the Black Knight acquisition. Having achieved run-rate expense synergies of $175 million from the deal, management raised their target from $200 million to $230 million by the end of 2025. Intercontinental Exchange used its cash generation to reduce the debt levels related to the Black Knight acquisition, with the company deleveraging closer towards its target range of three times debt to EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxation, depreciation and amortisation). Due to this progress, management have announced that they plan to start repurchasing shares in the first quarter. While we continue to watch for the growth in recurring revenues, it is positive to see strength in transactional revenues from high volumes in Exchanges and believe there is potential for further upside from a recovery in refinance volumes in the Mortgage Technology business. We retain our view that Intercontinental Exchange is a quality company which has established dominant positions in its core markets and has exposure to a range of growth drivers to support its underlying businesses.

Roper
TECHNOLOGIES

Roper Technologies (+13.6% USD)

Roper Technologies, the diversified technology company operating a portfolio of high-margin, mission-critical software and technology-enabled businesses, posted robust first-quarter results, ending the month as the Fund's second-best performer. The company has successfully pivoted from its industrial roots into an asset-light, software-centric model with a strong focus on recurring revenue, serving defensive end-markets such as healthcare, education, and the public sector. The stock performed well over the quarter, likely driven by robust Q4 earnings, reinforcing confidence in the company. Roper delivered an impressive set of Q4 results, with adjusted earnings per share coming in at $4.81, ahead of the $4.73 consensus estimate. Strength was broad-based across the portfolio, driving total revenue growth of 14% year-on-year, evenly split between organic and inorganic contributions. The standout performer was the Technology Enabled Products division, which beat expectations by growing 12% organically, driven by strong operational execution across product lines, particularly in Neptune and Verathon, which both delivered record revenues. Application Software, the largest and most profitable segment, saw 21% revenue growth for the year, supported by high retention rates, robust enterprise bookings, and the successful integration of recent acquisitions such as Procare Solutions and Transact Campus. Meanwhile, the Network Software segment stabilized after a period of weakness, contributing modestly but positively. Management issued relatively conservative guidance for 2025, with expected organic growth of 6-7%, which can be viewed as prudent given macro uncertainties. Roper's quality attributes are rooted in its decentralized operating model, disciplined capital allocation strategy, and focus on acquiring cash-generative, sticky software businesses in niche markets. The company ended FY24 with $4.6bn in recurring software revenue, expected to grow in the high single digits, and maintains over $5bn in acquisition capacity for 2025. During the quarter, Roper also announced the acquisition of CentralReach, a SaaS provider in behavioural health, exemplifying Roper's strategic M&A approach. This deal, like others before it, reflects Roper's focus on high-retention, vertically integrated software platforms with strong deferred revenue. These attributes, combined with consistently high cash conversion and a track record of deploying capital into durable growth markets, exhibit Roper's wide economic moat and high-quality characteristics that support long-term value creation.

The weakest holdings over the quarter were Salesforce and Novo Nordisk.

salesforce

Salesforce (-19.7% USD):

Salesforce ended the quarter as one of the Fund's weaker performers, as investors sentiment has dampened following a mixed set of quarterly results and a reset in growth expectations. While the company has historically benefited from firstmover advantage in AI-powered enterprise software, most notably through its early adoption of AI tools and more recently with the highly anticipated AgentForce platform, the stock appears to have lost some momentum. Quarterly results posted recently, showed organic revenue growth of 9% year-on-year, broadly in line, but revenue guidance for FY2026 came in at 7-8%, below consensus. Despite strong subscription performance and a record free cash flow, concerns emerged around a maturing core market, soft professional services growth, and an increasingly competitive AI landscape where AgentForce, while promising, remains in early deployment stages. Nevertheless, we continue to view Salesforce as a high-quality business with tangible long-term growth drivers. The company retains market leadership in key cloud categories, boasts a 92% customer retention rate, and benefits from deep integration across its multi-cloud ecosystem also driving strong switching costs and customer stickiness. Salesforce's AI-enabled platforms, particularly Data Cloud and AgentForce, are showing rapid early traction, with combined ARR reaching $900m in FY2025 and growing triple digits. While near-term AI revenue contributions are expected to be modest, the groundwork is being laid for more meaningful growth. Additionally, operating margins continue to expand, free cash flow generation is robust, and a disciplined shift away from large-scale M&A shows a more focused capital allocation strategy. With strong financials, continued product innovation, and a large addressable market, we believe Salesforce remains well positioned to reaccelerate growth and compete effectively as an AI integrator over the long term.

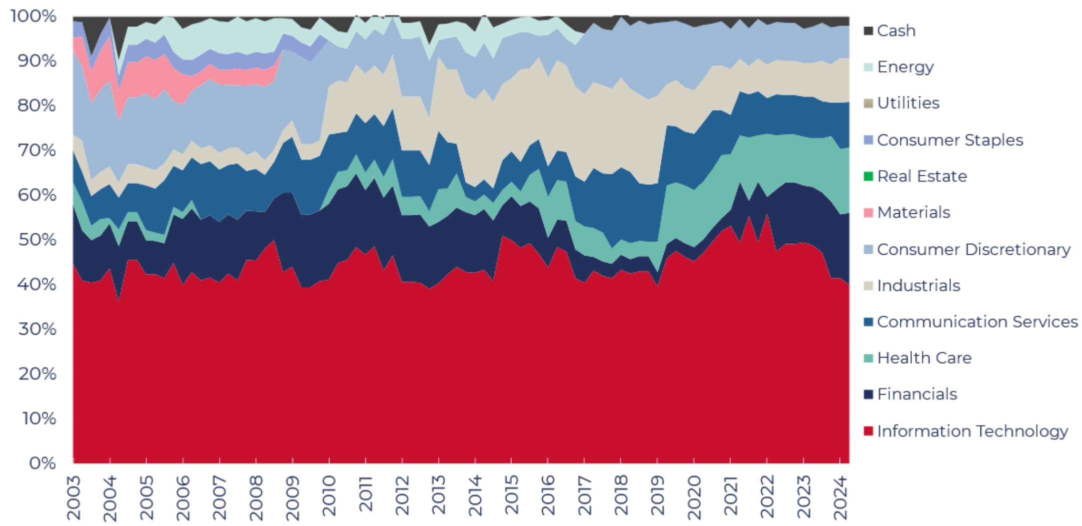
Novo Nordisk (-20.4% USD)

Novo Nordisk, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical providers, ended the quarter as the Fund's weakest performer. The company gained popularity as one of the first movers with its flagship GLP-1 weight-loss drugs Ozempic and Wegovy. Close peer Eli Lilly followed suit with its drugs Mounjaro and Zepbound, but the duopoly of the two pharmaceutical giants has been threatened in recent quarters by new private and public entrants emerging. Notably, major pharmaceutical names like Pfizer, Roche, and AstraZeneca have all shown progress in developing rival obesity medications, although they are behind in terms of the clinical development stage their drugs have reached. These rising competitive pressures have weighed on the stock, resulting in underperformance over the quarter despite the company posting solid full-year earnings, with profit margins coming in ahead of expectations. Obesity care continues to be an important driver of top-line growth (+57% year-on-year) and supported by growth in diabetes care (GLP-1 +22% year-on-year, Insulin +17% year-on-year). Based on these strong results, Novo Nordisk increased its dividend by +21% and marked 29 consecutive years of annual dividend growth. However, management gave a wide guidance range for 2025, stating that competition remains a key area of uncertainty for the business. On theitsir fourth quarter earnings call, competitor Eli Lilly echoed this by stating that it continues to see single-digit erosion in its GLP-1 pricing trends. The threat of new entrants taking market share and generating pricing pressure has weighed on the share price in recent quarters. While pricing pressure is a concern, we would argue that low penetration in the obesity market means volume is of greater relevance. We believe Novo Nordisk has a wide economic moat in the obesity and diabetes markets due to its strong intangible assets in these spaces. While we continue to watch for new developments from upcoming trial data, we remain confident in the competitive positioning of Novo Nordisk and its place as one of the key players in the market.

PORTFOLIO CHARACTERISTICS

The two charts below show how the exposure of the strategy has evolved since launch in 2003. We continue to have no exposure to Real Estate, Energy, Materials, Consumer Staples, and Utilities. Information Technology remains our largest exposure, split between the three sub-sectors of semiconductors, software & services, and technology hardware.

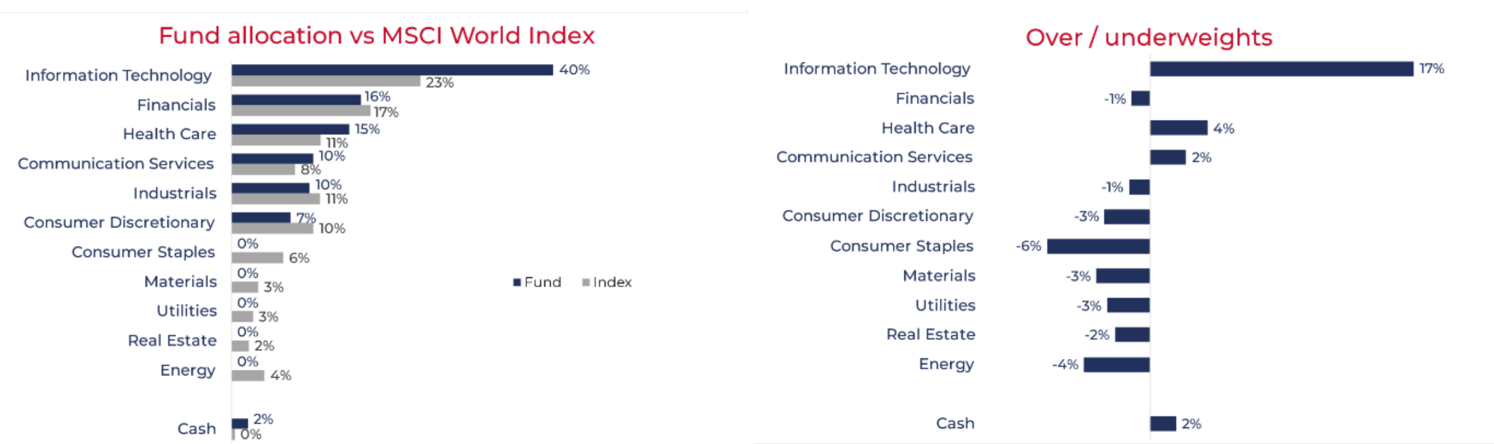
Sector breakdown since strategy launch



Portfolio sector breakdown. Guinness Global Investors, Bloomberg; as of 31.03.2025

The portfolio continues to have a large overweight to IT (17%), while its 0% exposure to Real Estate, Energy, Materials, Consumer Staples, and Utilities leaves these areas underweight relative to the benchmark.

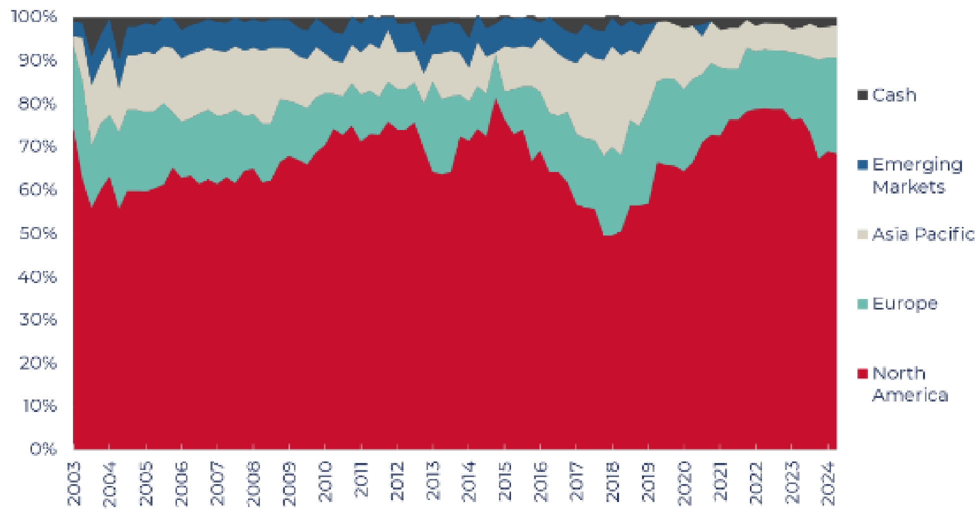
Sector breakdown versus MSCI World Index



Guinness Global Investors, Bloomberg (data as at 31st March 2025)

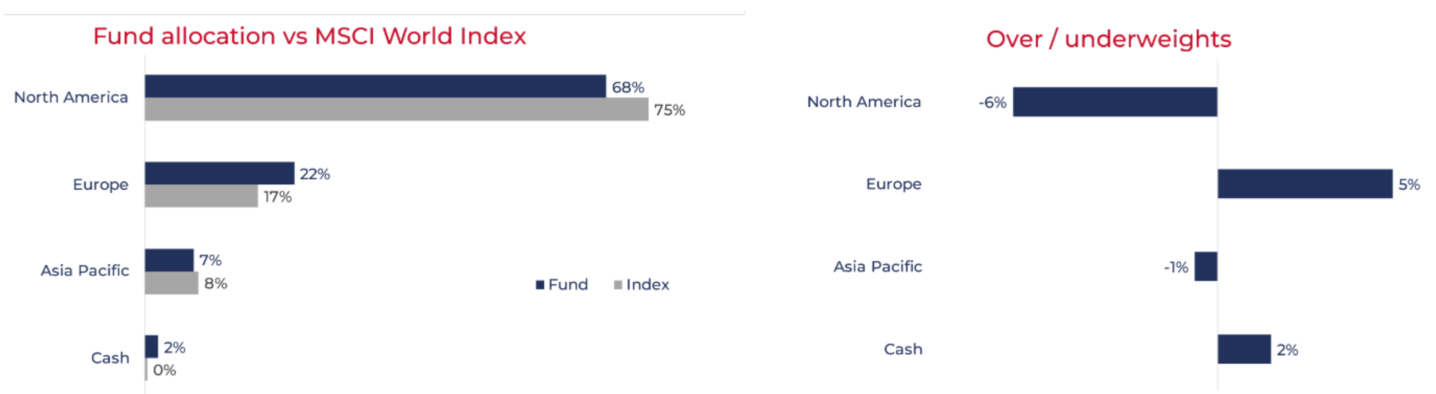
On a regional basis, North America continues to be the largest exposure (68%), followed by Europe (22%) and Asia Pacific (7%). Relative to the benchmark, the portfolio has a small underweight position to North America and a small overweight position to Europe. Asia Pacific remains slightly underweight.

Geographic breakdown since strategy launch



Guinness Global Investors, Bloomberg; as of 31.03.2025

Geographic breakdown versus MSCI World Index



Guinness Global Investors, Bloomberg; as of 31.03.2025

OUTLOOK

The Guinness Global Innovators Fund seeks to invest in quality growth companies trading at reasonable valuations. We seek companies that are experiencing faster profit growth, larger margins and less susceptibility to cyclical pressures. In particular, our focus on quality growth-at-a-reasonable-price has shown it strength in avoiding the highly valued non-profitable tech businesses that have swung between large rises and falls but ultimately underperformed significantly over the post-pandemic period.

The table below illustrates how the portfolio reflects the four key tenets of our approach of growth, quality, valuation, and conviction.

- **Growth** drives long-term returns. We focus on companies with exposure to long-term secular growth themes, that are expected to grow faster than the market over time, and which may offer more predictable, sustainable growth.

- **Quality** protects against downside risks. We focus on high and consistent return on capital, balance sheet strength, and sustainable competitive advantages.

- **Valuation** is important – we will not overpay for future growth.

- **Conviction** is reflected in our high active share, 30-stock, equal-target-weight portfolio, long-term, low-turnover approach.

The Fund has many superior characteristics to the broad market: higher sales and earnings growth, superior return on capital, and greater balance sheet strength, with higher historic growth. It currently trades at a 20.2% premium to the MSCI World Index on a price/earnings (P/E) (2025e) basis, with expected earnings growth (2026 vs 2025) of 21.9% vs the MSCI World of 11.5%. Compared to the MSCI World Growth index, the Fund trades at an 11.0% discount, but with a comparable level of expected earnings growth.

Portfolio metrics versus MSCI World Index		Fund	MSCI World Index
Growth	Trailing 5-year sales growth (annualised)	14.6%	3.3%
	Estimated earnings growth (12M forward)	21.9%	11.5%
Quality	Median Return-on-Capital	23.0%	8.9%
	Median net debt / equity	19.7%	37.2%
Valuation	PE (2025e)	22.6x	18.8x
	PE (2026e)	19.7x	16.9x
Conviction	Number of stocks	30	1480
	Active share	80%	-

Source: Guinness Global Investors, Bloomberg, as of 31st March 2025

While short-term share price moves can reflect temporary disruptions, long-term value creation remains our priority. Even through a quarter of heightened volatility, stock fundamentals have shown resiliency, giving us reassurance in our bottom-up approach to stock-picking in the face of continued macroeconomic uncertainty. We are confident that the Fund's focus on high-quality growth stocks, underpinned by structural innovation themes, stands it in good stead. Our research process helps to identify these quality growth companies whilst also maintaining a valuation discipline, which is particularly important in the context of a market where valuation is front of mind. In addition, our equally weighted positions limit over-reliance on any single company. We continue to focus on these key tenets in the Fund and remain confident of this process over the long term.

We look forward to updating you on the progress of the Fund over the remainder of 2025 and thank you for your continued support.

Portfolio Managers
Matthew Page
Ian Mortimer

Investment Analysts
Sagar Thanki
Joseph Stephens
William van der Weyden
Jack Drew
Loshini Subendran
Eric Santa Menargues

GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND - FUND FACTS

Fund size	$1250.7m
Fund launch	31.10.2014
OCF	0.81%
Benchmark	MSCI World TR

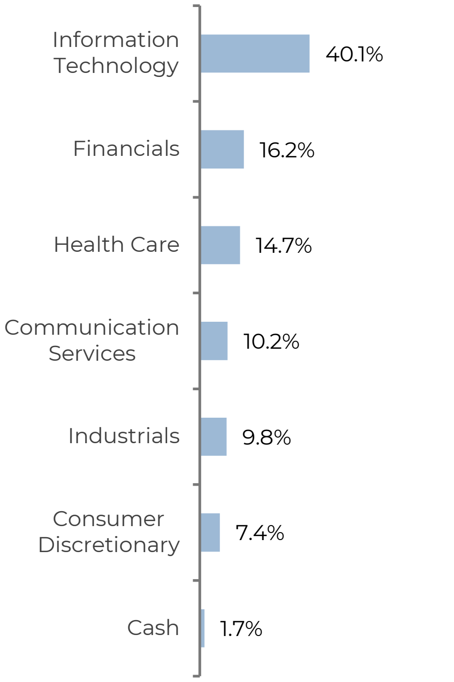
GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND - PORTFOLIO

Top 10 holdings

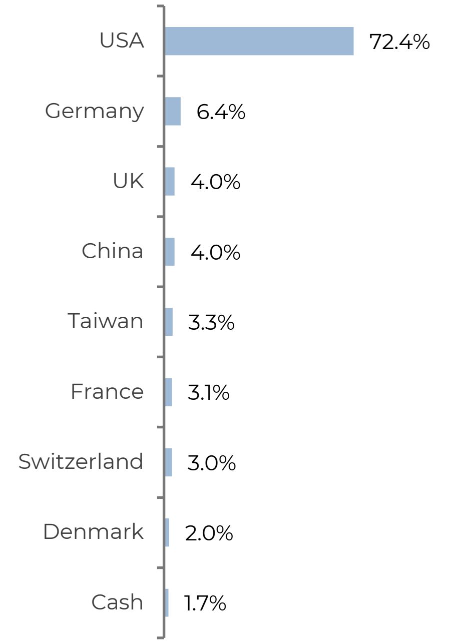
Mastercard Inc	4.1%
Visa	4.1%
London Stock Exchange Group	4.0%
Anta Sports Products	4.0%
Intercontinental Exchange	3.9%
Netflix	3.8%
Medtronic	3.7%
AMETEK	3.6%
Roper Technologies Inc	3.4%
Intuit Inc	3.4%

Top 10 holdings	38.1%
Number of holdings	30

Sector



Country



Past performance does not predict future returns.

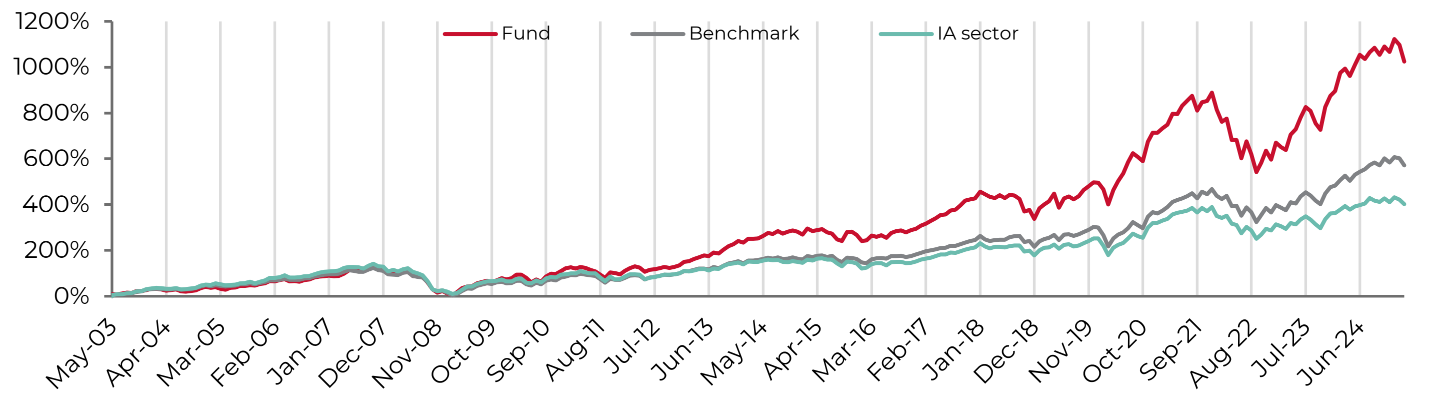
GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND - CUMULATIVE PERFORMANCE

(GBP)	1 Month	YTD	1 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr
Fund	-8.4%	-6.5%	+0.6%	+31.0%	+115.9%	+235.3%
MSCI World TR	-6.8%	-4.7%	+4.8%	+27.0%	+102.9%	+185.0%
IA Global TR	-6.0%	-4.5%	-0.3%	+13.4%	+72.7%	+125.5%
(USD)	**1 Month**	**YTD**	**1 yr**	**3 yr**	**5 yr**	**10 yr**
Fund	-6.1%	-3.7%	+2.8%	+28.5%	+124.8%	+192.2%
MSCI World TR	-4.5%	-1.8%	+7.0%	+24.5%	+111.2%	+147.8%
IA Global TR	-3.6%	-1.6%	+1.9%	+11.1%	+79.8%	+96.1%
(EUR)	**1 Month**	**YTD**	**1 yr**	**3 yr**	**5 yr**	**10 yr**
Fund	-9.6%	-7.6%	+2.8%	+32.3%	+128.3%	+189.7%
MSCI World TR	-8.0%	-5.9%	+7.0%	+28.3%	+114.5%	+146.3%
IA Global TR	-7.2%	-5.7%	+1.9%	+14.5%	+82.6%	+95.0%

GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND - ANNUAL PERFORMANCE

(GBP)	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Fund	+21.9%	+32.1%	-20.7%	+22.6%	+32.1%	+31.3%	-11.9%	+22.0%	+27.7%	+2.0%
MSCI World TR	+20.8%	+16.8%	-7.8%	+22.9%	+12.3%	+22.7%	-3.0%	+11.8%	+28.2%	+4.9%
IA Global TR	+12.6%	+12.7%	-11.1%	+17.7%	+15.3%	+21.9%	-5.7%	+14.0%	+23.3%	+2.8%
(USD)	**2024**	**2023**	**2022**	**2021**	**2020**	**2019**	**2018**	**2017**	**2016**	**2015**
Fund	+19.7%	+40.0%	-29.6%	+21.5%	+36.3%	+36.6%	-17.0%	+33.6%	+7.2%	-3.5%
MSCI World TR	+18.7%	+23.8%	-18.1%	+21.8%	+15.9%	+27.7%	-8.7%	+22.4%	+7.5%	-0.9%
IA Global TR	+10.6%	+19.4%	-21.0%	+16.6%	+18.9%	+26.8%	-11.2%	+24.8%	+3.4%	-2.9%
(EUR)	**2024**	**2023**	**2022**	**2021**	**2020**	**2019**	**2018**	**2017**	**2016**	**2015**
Fund	+27.7%	+35.2%	-25.0%	+30.7%	+25.0%	+39.1%	-12.9%	+17.3%	+10.2%	+7.3%
MSCI World TR	+26.6%	+19.6%	-12.8%	+31.1%	+6.3%	+30.0%	-4.1%	+7.5%	+10.7%	+10.4%
IA Global TR	+18.0%	+15.4%	-15.8%	+25.5%	+9.1%	+29.2%	-6.8%	+9.6%	+6.5%	+8.2%

GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND - PERFORMANCE SINCE LAUNCH (USD)



Simulated past performance prior to the launch of the Guinness Global Innovators Fund (31.10.14) reflecting a US mutual fund which has the same investment process since the strategy's launch on 01.05.03.
Source: FE fundinfo net of fees to 31.03.25. Investors should note that fees and expenses are charged to the capital of the Fund. This reduces the return on your investment by an amount equivalent to the Ongoing Charges Figure (OCF). The OCF used for the Fund performance returns is 0.81%. which was the OCF over the calendar year 2024. Returns for share classes with a different OCF will vary accordingly. Transaction costs also apply and are incurred when a fund buys or sells holdings. The performance returns do not reflect any initial charge; any such charge will also reduce the return. Graph data is in USD from 01.05.03.

WS GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND - FUND FACTS

Fund size	£14.6m
Fund launch	30.12.2022
OCF	0.79%
Benchmark	MSCI World TR

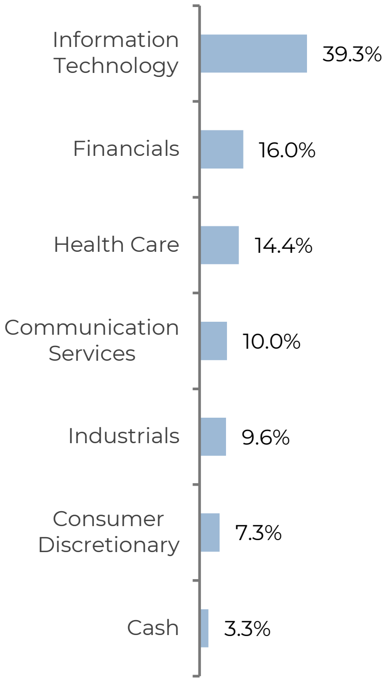
WS GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND - PORTFOLIO

Top 10 holdings

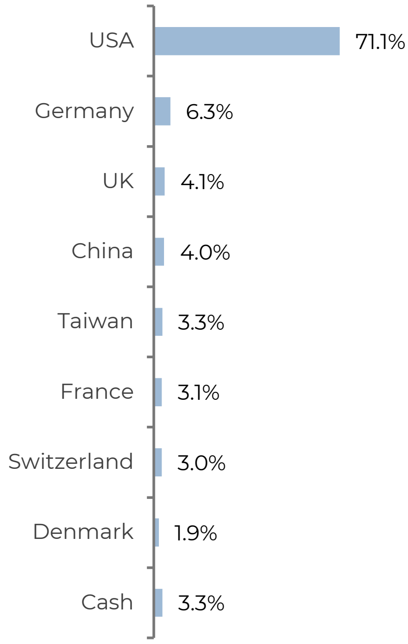
London Stock Exchange Group	4.1%
Mastercard Inc	4.0%
Anta Sports Products	4.0%
Visa	3.9%
Intercontinental Exchange	3.9%
Netflix	3.7%
Medtronic	3.6%
AMETEK	3.5%
Amphenol Corp	3.4%
Amazon.com	3.4%

Top 10 holdings	0.4%
Number of holdings	30

Sector



Country



Past performance does not predict future returns.

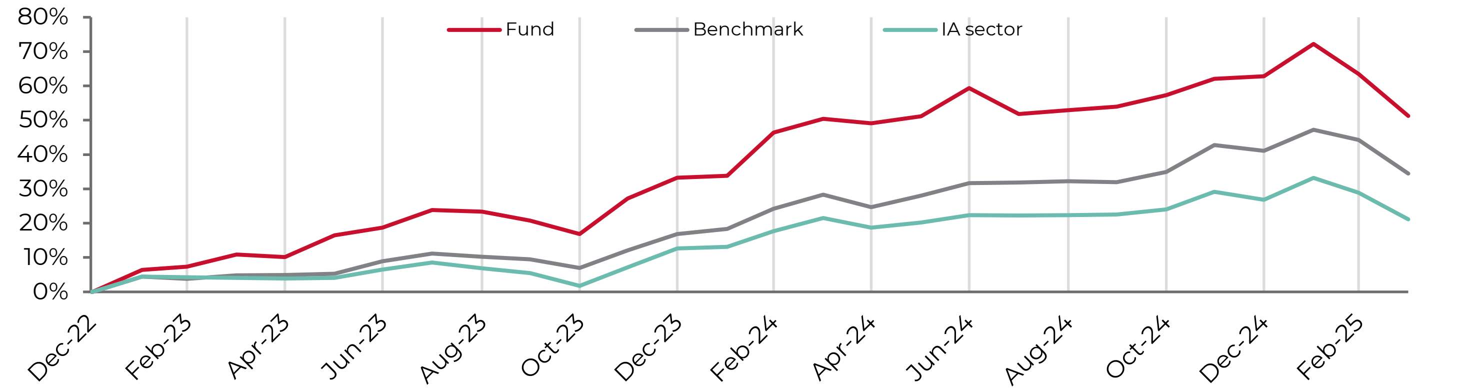
WS GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND - CUMULATIVE PERFORMANCE

(GBP)	1 Month	YTD	1 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr
Fund	-7.5%	-7.1%	+0.5%	-	-	-
MSCI World TR	-6.8%	-4.7%	+4.8%	-	-	-
IA Global TR	-6.0%	-4.5%	-0.3%	-	-	-

WS GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND - ANNUAL PERFORMANCE

(GBP)	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Fund	+22.2%	+33.3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MSCI World TR	+20.8%	+16.8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IA Global TR	+12.6%	+12.7%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

WS GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND - PERFORMANCE SINCE LAUNCH (GBP)



Source: FE fundinfo net of fees to 31.03.25. Investors should note that fees and expenses are charged to the capital of the Fund. This reduces the return on your investment by an amount equivalent to the Ongoing Charges Figure (OCF). The OCF for the calendar year 2024 for the share class used for the fund performance returns was 0.79%. Returns for share classes with a different OCF will vary accordingly. Transaction costs also apply and are incurred when a fund buys or sells holdings. The performance returns do not reflect any initial charge; any such charge will also reduce the return.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Issued by Guinness Global Investors which is a trading name of Guinness Asset Management Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

This report is primarily designed to inform you about the Guinness Global Innovators Fund and the WS Guinness Global Innovators Fund. It may provide information about the Funds' portfolio, including recent activity and performance. It contains facts relating to the equity markets and our own interpretation. Any investment decision should take account of the subjectivity of the comments contained in the report. OCFs for all share classes are available on www.guinnessgi.com.

This document is provided for information only and all the information contained in it is believed to be reliable but may be inaccurate or incomplete; any opinions stated are honestly held at the time of writing, but are not guaranteed. The contents of the document should not therefore be relied upon. It should not be taken as a recommendation to make an investment in the Funds or to buy or sell individual securities, nor does it constitute an offer for sale.

GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND

Documentation

The documentation needed to make an investment, including the Prospectus, Supplement, Key Information Document (KID), Key Investor Information Document (KIID) and the Application Form, is available in English from www.guinnessgi.com or free of charge from:

- the Manager: Waystone Management Company (IE) Limited (Waystone IE) 2nd Floor 35 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 A4E0, Ireland or the Promoter and Investment Manager: Guinness Asset Management Ltd, 18 Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ.

Waystone IE is a company incorporated under the laws of Ireland having its registered office at 35 Shelbourne Rd, Ballsbridge, Dublin, D04 A4E0 Ireland, which is authorised by the Central Bank of Ireland, has appointed Guinness Asset Management Ltd as Investment Manager to this fund, and as Manager has the right to terminate the arrangements made for the marketing of funds in accordance with the UCITS Directive.

Investor Rights

A summary of investor rights in English, including collective redress mechanisms, is available here: https://www.waystone.com/waystone-policies/

Residency

In countries where the Fund is not registered for sale or in any other circumstances where its distribution is not authorised or is unlawful, the Fund should not be distributed to resident Retail Clients. **NOTE: THIS INVESTMENT IS NOT FOR SALE TO U.S. PERSONS.**

Structure & regulation

The Fund is a sub-fund of Guinness Asset Management Funds PLC (the "Company"), an open-ended umbrella-type investment company, incorporated in Ireland and authorised and supervised by the Central Bank of Ireland, which operates under EU legislation. If you are in any doubt about the suitability of investing in this Fund, please consult your investment or other professional adviser.

Switzerland

This is an advertising document. The prospectus and KID for Switzerland, the articles of association, and the annual and semi-annual reports can be obtained free of charge from the representative in Switzerland, REYL & Cie S.A., Rue du Rhône 4, 1204 Geneva, Switzerland. The paying agent is Banque Cantonale de Genève, 17 Quai de l'Ile, 1204 Geneva, Switzerland.

Singapore

The Fund is not authorised or recognised by the Monetary Authority of Singapore ("MAS") and shares are not allowed to be offered to the retail public. The Fund is registered with the MAS as a Restricted Foreign Scheme. Shares of the Fund may only be offered to institutional and accredited investors (as defined in the Securities and Futures Act (Cap.289)) ('SFA') and this material is limited to the investors in those categories.

WS GUINNESS GLOBAL INNOVATORS FUND

Documentation

The documentation needed to make an investment, including the Prospectus, the Key Investor Information Document (KIID) and the Application Form, is available in English from www.fundsolutions.net/uk/guinness-global-investors/ or free of charge from:-

Waystone Management (UK) Limited
PO Box 389
Darlington
DL1 9UF
General Enquiries: 0345 922 0044
E-Mail: wtas-investorservices@waystone.com
Dealing: ordergroup@waystone.com

Waystone Management (UK) Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Residency

In countries where the Fund is not registered for sale or in any other circumstances where its distribution is not authorised or is unlawful, the Fund should not be distributed to resident Retail Clients.

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Structure & regulation

The Fund is a sub-fund of WS Guinness Investment Funds, an investment company with variable capital incorporated with limited liability and registered by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Telephone calls will be recorded and monitored.