

# Total return with enhanced stability through focused infrastructure investments and call writing

---

## Strategy overview

The Fund seeks potential enhanced stability of returns over a market cycle – through investments in global companies with potential to benefit from increased infrastructure spending, and by selling call options on select equity Indexes or exchange-traded funds.

## Performance

For the quarter, the Fund provided a total return of 9.49% on a net asset value basis, and a total return of 12.81% on a market price basis. For the same period, the Fund's reference Index, the Voya Infrastructure Industrials and Materials Custom Index, returned 11.71%.

## Equity portfolio

For the reporting period, the equity sleeve of the Fund underperformed its reference Index, the Voya Infrastructure Industrials and Materials Custom Index, due to unfavorable stock selection. On the regional level, portfolio holdings within the Latin American region contributed the most, while portfolio holdings in Europe and North America detracted.

At the sector level, stock selection within the materials and communication services sectors had the largest positive impact on performance. Among the key contributors were overweight positions in U-Haul Holding Co., Companhia Siderurgica Nacional and Operadora de Sites Mexicanos.

Conversely, stock selection in the industrials and information technology sectors detracted from performance. At the stock level, the overweight position in Franco-Nevada Corp., underweight in Shin-Etsu Chemical Co. Ltd. and overweight to Halliburton Co. detracted.

## Option portfolio

During the quarter, the Fund's option strategy had a negative impact on returns. The covered call strategy seeks to generate premiums and retain some potential for upside appreciation. The Fund implemented this strategy by typically writing call options on sector and regional exchange-traded funds (ETFs), the selection and allocation of which resulted from an optimization intended to closely track the Fund's reference Index. The strike prices of the options written were typically at or near the money, with expiration dates around one month at inception.

## Outlook and current strategy

**U.S. equity markets bounced back during the month, bolstered by economic resilience, waning inflation and another pause in the U.S. Federal Reserve's interest rate hiking cycle.** The S&P 500 Index rose by 4.54% and the Nasdaq Composite

Index advanced by 5.52%. Information technology stocks led while utilities lagged. Growth stocks outperformed value stocks during the month, and small caps had a significant lead over large caps.

**The U.S. bond market rallied in December.** The Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Bond Index gained 3.83% on the unexpected strength of the economy. The 10-year U.S. Treasury yield moved from 4.22% at the beginning of the quarter to 3.88% by quarter-end as inflation eased and expectations of interest rate cuts in 2024 grew.

**In our view, the side effects of the pandemic shock have mostly subsided, and inflation is the final piece of the puzzle.**

We view the recovery not as a classic business cycle, but as an economy trying to normalize following a natural disaster. First came the government-mandated lockdowns and the bust. Then came the re-openings and the effects of mega-policy stimulus. Lastly came the 180-degree reversal in monetary policy. Inflation peaked in June 2022 at 9.1%, which means that most of the disinflation we have seen since then has had little to do with Fed policy. We believe that disinflation could continue (and may intensify) over the next 18 months. Corporate earnings are accelerating as the U.S. consumer remains healthy and corporate fundamental factors are sound.

**China continues to disappoint.** There was little (if any) reopening burst of activity, and economic growth is slowing, with retail sales, industrial production and fixed investment

all coming in lower than expected. Exports have plunged, due in part to U.S. companies' efforts to re-shore or move offshored manufacturing elsewhere. Furthermore, China's real estate sector, their main growth engine, is in freefall, with multiple large property developers teetering on the edge of default. However, the country continues to make progress on the technological front (for example, semiconductor chips, electric vehicles, aerospace, etc.). While valuations are at deep discounts (and the government has signaled it may intervene with a stabilization fund to buy stocks), the outlook for Chinese equities remains uncertain. Although other emerging-market (EM) countries have better near-term prospects, it's difficult to be bullish on EM equities overall when China is lagging.

Given these uncertainties in the global market outlook, we expect the Fund to continue to benefit from its option-writing activities.

## Holdings detail

Companies mentioned in this report – percentage of portfolio investments, as of 12/31/23: U-Haul Holding Co. 0.60%, Companhia Siderurgica Nacional 0%, Operadora de Sites Mexicanos 0.25%, Franco-Nevada Corp. 0.36%, Shin-Etsu Chemical Co. Ltd. 0.12% and Halliburton Co. 0.64%; 0% indicates that the security is no longer in the portfolio. Portfolio holdings are subject to change daily.

## Disclaimer

The **MSCI All Country World Index (MSCI ACWI)** captures large- and mid-cap representation across 23 developed market (DM) and 24 emerging market (EM) countries. With 2,882 constituents, the index covers approximately 85% of the global investable equity opportunity set. **Investors cannot invest directly in an Index.**

The **Voya Infrastructure Industrials and Materials Custom Index** consists of selected Global Industry Classification Standard ("GICS") sectors, industry groups, industries and sub-industries of the MSCI ACWI Index. SM As of December 31, 2022, the Custom Index was comprised of the following GICS sectors: communication services, energy, industrials, information technology, materials and utilities; within the energy sector, the sub-industries of oil and gas drilling, oil and gas equipment and services, oil gas and consumable fuels, oil and gas storage and transportation; and within the information technology (IT) sector, IT services, communications equipment and electronic equipment instruments. **Investors cannot invest directly in an Index.**

**Past performance is no guarantee of future results.** The performance quoted represents past performance. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance data quoted. All investing involves the inherent risks of fluctuating prices and the uncertainties of rates of return and yield. Investment return and principal value of an investment will fluctuate, and shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than their original cost.

**Total investment return at market share price** measures the change in the market value of your investment assuming reinvestment of dividends, capital gain distributions and return of capital distributions/allocations, if any, in accordance with the provisions of the Fund's dividend reinvestment plan. Total investment return at market share price is not annualized for periods less than one year. Closed-end funds like the Fund do not continuously offer shares for sale and are not required to buy shares back from investors upon request. Shares of closed-end funds trade on national stock exchanges. Therefore, market share prices are not directly affected by Fund expenses or fees, which ordinarily have the effect of lowering total return.

**Total investment return at net asset value** has been calculated assuming a purchase at net asset value at the beginning of the period and a sale at net asset value at the end of the period; and assumes reinvestment of dividends, capital gain distributions and return of capital distributions/allocations, if any, in accordance with the provisions of the dividend reinvestment plan. Net asset value equals total assets minus total liabilities, divided by the number of shares outstanding. Net asset value is net of all fund expenses, including operating costs and management fees. Total investment return at net asset value is not annualized for periods less than one year.

**Principal risks:** Price volatility, liquidity, and other risks that accompany an investment in equity securities of domestic and foreign companies, and small and mid-sized capitalized companies. International investing does pose special risks including currency fluctuation, economic and political risks not found in investments that are solely domestic. Risks of foreign investing are generally intensified for investments in emerging markets.

**Options risk:** The Fund may purchase put and call options and may write (sell) put options and call options and is subject to Options Risk. The risk in writing a call option is that the Fund gives up the opportunity for profit if the market price of the security increases and the option is exercised. The risk in buying an option is that the Fund pays a premium whether or not the option is exercised. Risks may also arise from an illiquid secondary market or from the inability of counter-parties to meet the terms of the contract. When an option is exercised or closed out, the Fund may be required to sell portfolio securities or to deliver portfolio securities to satisfy its obligations when it would not otherwise choose to do so, or the Fund may choose to sell portfolio securities to realize gains to offset the losses realized upon option exercise. Such sales or delivery would involve transaction costs borne by the Fund and may also result in realization of taxable capital gains, including short-term capital gains taxed at ordinary income tax rates, and may adversely impact the Fund's after-tax returns.

This Fund has **additional risks** that you should consider, such as market discount risk, investment and market risk, foreign investment and emerging markets risk, foreign (non-US) currency risk, Asia Pacific regional and country risk, issuer risk, equity risk, distribution risk, tax risk, dividend risk, small-cap and mid-cap company risk.

The Fund employs a quantitative model to execute its investment strategy. Data imprecision, software or other technology malfunctions, programming inaccuracies and similar circumstances may impair the performance of these systems, which may negatively affect performance. Furthermore, there can be no assurance that the quantitative models used in managing the strategy will perform as anticipated or enable the strategy to achieve its objective.

This commentary has been prepared by Voya Investment Management for informational purposes. Nothing contained herein should be construed as (i) an offer to sell or solicitation of an offer to buy any security or (ii) a recommendation as to the advisability of investing in, purchasing or selling any security. Any opinions expressed herein reflect our judgment and are subject to change. Certain of the statements contained herein are statements of future expectations and other forward-looking statements that are based on management's current views and assumptions and involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results, performance or events to differ materially from those expressed or implied in such statements. Actual results, performance or events may differ materially from those in such statements due to, without limitation, (1) general economic conditions, (2) performance of financial markets, (3) interest rate levels, (4) increasing levels of loan defaults, (5) changes in laws and regulations and (6) changes in the policies of governments and/or regulatory authorities. **Past performance is no guarantee of future results.**

The opinions, views and information expressed in this commentary regarding holdings are subject to change without notice. The information provided regarding holdings is not a recommendation to buy or sell any security. Portfolio holdings are fluid and are subject to daily change based on market conditions and other factors.

The opinions, views and information expressed in this commentary regarding holdings are subject to change without notice. The information provided regarding holdings is not a recommendation to buy or sell any security. Portfolio holdings are fluid and are subject to daily change based on market conditions and other factors.