

# Genome Research Limited Pension Plan

Written Statement of Investment Principles

September 2020

## 1. Background

- 1.1. The purpose of this Statement of Investment Principles (“SIP”) is to set out the policy of the Directors of the Genome Research Pensions Trustee Limited (“the Trustee”) in capacity as Trustee for the Genome Research Pension Plan (the “Plan”) on various matters in connection with the investment of the assets of the Plan. This SIP is designed to meet the requirements of Section 35 of the Pensions Act 1995, and the 1999 Amending Regulations to the Pensions Act.
- 1.2. This SIP has been formulated after obtaining written professional advice from Mercer Limited (“Mercer”) as Investment Advisers to the Plan.
- 1.3. The employer, Genome Research Ltd (GRL), has been consulted on the SIP.
- 1.4. The appointed investment manager is required to exercise its powers of investment with a view to giving effect to the principles contained in this SIP, so far as reasonably practicable. The appointed investment manager will be provided with a copy of this SIP and kept informed of any changes.
- 1.5. The Trustee notes that in March 2017 the Pensions Regulator released ‘Investment Guidance for Pension Schemes’. The Trustee is satisfied that the investment approach adopted by the Plan is consistent with the guidance, so far as it is appropriate to the Plan’s circumstances. The Trustee meets with its investment adviser periodically and monitors developments both in relation to the Plan’s circumstances and evolving guidance, and will revise the Plan’s investment approach if considered appropriate.

## 2. Investment strategy

- 2.1. After consultation between the Trustee, the Investment Sub-Committee and GRL it was agreed that the Plan would continue to invest 100% in passively managed equities. The current broad asset allocation is as follows:
  - 70% in Global Developed Market equities ; and
  - 30% in Emerging Market equities.

However, after further discussions at the Investment Sub-Committee and after consultation with GRL, the Trustee has developed and implemented a framework to switch the assets in the Global Developed Market equities between currency hedged unhedged share classes of the same fund.

Furthermore, after a review and consultation with GRL, the Trustee agreed to switch exposure from the Legal & General FTSE World Developed Equity Index Fund – GBP Hedged to the Legal & General FTSE World Developed (ex Tobacco) Equity Index Fund– GBP Hedged / Unhedged.

- 2.2. The ex-tobacco fund aims to track the performance of a customised index; comprising the FTSE World Developed Equity Index excluding companies classified as ‘Tobacco’

under the industry classification benchmark classifications. The objective of the Fund is to hold a portfolio of securities designed to match the return of the index within a specified tolerance.

- 2.3. Given this investment strategy, GRL has offered a firm commitment to the Trustee to support the Plan financially, which has been evidenced in writing by a Deed of Guarantee.
- 2.4. Importantly, the Deed of Guarantee, signed in 2008, states that GRL is to repay over a period of 5 years or less the Plan's deficit (if any) as set out in any Recovery Plan prepared in respect of the Plan, in accordance with Section 226 Pensions Act 2004.
- 2.5. As mentioned above, the Trustee has implemented a currency hedging strategy, hedging the Plan's developed market equity exposure back to Sterling when GBP fell significantly below purchasing power parity ("PPP") on a trade weighted basis and will reverse that hedge if and when in the opinion of the Trustee GBP rises significantly above purchasing power parity ("PPP").

### 3. Implementation

- 3.1. The Trustee considered the use of both passive and active investment management when reviewing the Plan's strategy. The resultant allocation to passive management only was formed following consideration of the efficiency, liquidity and level of transaction costs likely to prevail within each market as well as the impact of the investment manager fees on future expected returns.
- 3.2. The Trustee has appointed Legal & General Assurance (Pensions Management) Limited ("L&G") as the investment manager of the Plan. The Plan invests in pooled funds with the following benchmarks:

Fund	Benchmark	SORP/IFRS Class
FTSE World Developed (ex Tobacco) Equity Index Fund	FTSE Developed	2
World Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund	FTSE Emerging	2
FTSE World Developed (ex Tobacco) Equity Index Fund – GBP Currency Hedged <sup>1</sup>	FTSE Developed	2

<sup>1</sup> This is the fund to be used in the implementation of the Plan's currency hedging strategy.

- 3.3. All new contributions / realisations are invested / disinvested so as to move the distribution of the portfolio back towards the prevailing benchmark asset allocation and split between the World Developed (ex Tobacco) Equity Index Fund and the World Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund starting.

- 3.4. No other rebalancing is carried out by the investment manager without specific instructions from the Trustee. Rebalancing will be considered when the allocation moves more than 10% from the starting allocation.
- 3.5. The Trustee decided that the currency hedging strategy would be implemented as and when the GBP fell approximately two standard deviations below PPP on a trade weighted basis. The hedged position will be held until, in the opinion of the Trustee, Sterling moves considerably above its fair value point, at which point the hedges will be removed and the process will be repeated on a range basis. Implementation is likely to be undertaken on a tranching basis, with trigger points agreed in advance by the Trustee. The estimated fair value point and range will be reviewed periodically and the triggers revised, if necessary.

## 4. Policy for choosing investments

- 4.1. In choosing investments, the Trustee has taken into account the following factors:
  - the covenant, the deed of guarantee and commitment of GRL to the Plan;
  - the desire to ensure that the Plan's assets and future contributions are invested in such a manner that the benefits due to members and their beneficiaries can be paid from the Plan as they arise;
  - the circumstances of the Plan (including the relative immaturity of the Plan, the positive cash flow position, and the benefits provided);
  - the degree to which the liabilities of the Plan are covered by the assets of the Plan;
  - the investment characteristics of the available asset classes (including the expected return, the variability of return, and the correlation of asset classes with each other and with the liabilities);
  - the belief that, in the long term, equities will outperform other available asset classes and that this time horizon is consistent with that of the Plan and the employer; and
  - the levels of investment risk.
- 4.2. The Trustee is a long term investor and does not look to change the investment arrangements on a frequent basis.
- 4.3. The investment managers are appointed based on their capabilities and, therefore, their perceived likelihood of achieving the expected return and risk characteristics required for the asset classes being selected.
- 4.4. The Trustee look to their investment adviser for their forward looking assessment of an investment manager's ability to deliver upon its stated objectives over a full market cycle. This view will be based on the adviser assessment of the investment manager's idea generation, portfolio construction, implementation and business management, in relation to the particular investment that the Plan invests in. The investment adviser's

manager research ratings assist with due diligence and questioning managers during presentations to the Trustee. These ratings are used in decisions around selection, retention and removal of manager appointments.

## 5. Kinds of investments to be held

- 5.1. The Plan may invest in any class of asset in such proportions as the Trustee, guided by its investment advisors, consider appropriate from time to time. The Trustee has decided to invest the Plan's assets in equities through a diversified portfolio of marketable securities.
- 5.2. If the investment objective for a particular investment manager changes, the Trustee will review the Plan's appointment to ensure it remains appropriate and consistent with the Trustee's wider investment objectives. As the Plan invests in pooled investment vehicles, they accept that they have no ability to specify the risk profile and return targets of the manager, but believe appropriate mandates can be selected to align with the overall investment strategy.
- 5.3. The investment manager in which the Plan's assets is invested does not have performance based fees which could encourage the manager to make short term investment decisions to hit their profit targets.
- 5.4. The Trustee therefore considers that the method of remunerating investment fund managers is consistent with incentivising them to make decisions governed by their respective indices for their existing passive funds. Should the Trustees invest in active funds at a future date; the investment manager's decisions should be based on assessments of medium to long-term financial and non-financial performance of an issuer of debt or equity. By encouraging a medium to long-term view, the Trustee believes it will in turn encourage the investment managers to engage with issuers of debt or equity in order to improve their performance in the medium to long-term.
- 5.5. The Trustee accepts that they cannot influence the charging structure of the pooled funds in which the Plan is invested, but is satisfied that the ad-valorem charges for the different underlying funds are clear and are consistent with each pooled fund's stated characteristics. The Trustee is therefore satisfied that this the most appropriate basis for remunerating the underlying investment managers and is consistent with the Trustee policies as set out in this SIP.
- 5.6. Members wishing to make Additional Voluntary Contributions to the Plan may currently do so via funds made available through Friends Provident.
- 5.7. In addition, the Trustee may hold insurance policies or other assets that are earmarked for the benefit of certain members.

## 6. The balance between different kinds of investments

- 6.1. The Trustee recognises the advantages of diversification between global equities in terms of reducing the risk that results from investment in any one particular market.

## 7. Expected return on investments

- 7.1. The Trustee is aware of the long-term performance characteristics of the asset classes considered in terms of their expected returns and the variability of those returns. Short-term volatility of returns can be tolerated.

Broadly speaking, the Trustee expects equities to deliver a long run real return (over price inflation) of circa 3%pa in the base case, with lower real returns expected from fixed interest, index-linked gilts and cash. This is reviewed annually.

## 8. Risk

- 8.1. In assessing investment risk, the Trustee has been mindful of the Plan's:
- covenant from GRL;
  - Deed of Guarantee;
  - funding level on an On-going basis; and
  - solvency level on a Discontinuance Basis.
- 8.2. In arriving at their investment strategy, the Trustee is satisfied that they are not assuming unconsidered risk.
- 8.3. Other risks that the Trustee monitors and manages are set out in Annex A.

## 9. Monitoring of investment adviser and managers

- 9.1. The Trustee continually assess and review the performance of its adviser in a quantitative and qualitative way.
- 9.2. The investment managers are appointed by the Trustee based on their capabilities and, therefore, their perceived likelihood of achieving the expected return and desired risk characteristics. The Trustee utilises the investment advisers' forward-looking manager research ratings in decisions around the selection, retention and realisation of manager appointments. These ratings are based on the investment advisers' assessment of the investment manager's idea generation, portfolio construction, implementation and business management.
- 9.3. The Trustee receives quarterly monitoring reports on the performance of the underlying investment managers from their investment adviser, which presents performance information over 3 months, 1 year and 3 years. The reports show the absolute performance and performance against the manager stated benchmark (over the relevant time period) on a net of fees basis. It also provides returns of market indices so that these can also be used to help inform the assessment of the underlying manager' performance.
- 9.4. The reporting reviews the performance of the Plan's individual funds against their benchmarks and of the Plan's assets in aggregate against the Plan's strategic benchmark. The Trustee focus is primarily on long term performance but short term performance is also reviewed. The Trustee may review a manager's appointment if:

- There are sustained periods of underperformance or unexplained outperformance;
  - There is a change in the portfolio manager;
  - There is a change in the underlying objectives of the investment manager;
  - There is a significant change to Mercer's rating of the manager.
- 9.5. If a manager is not meeting its performance objectives, or their investment objectives for the mandates have changes, the Trustee may initially ask the manager to review their fees instead of terminating the appointment.
- 9.6. Portfolio turnover costs refer to those incurred due to the buying, selling, lending or borrowing of investments. Given that the Plan invests in a range of pooled investment vehicles, the Trustee does not have an overall portfolio turnover target.
- 9.7. The Trustee receives MiFID II reporting from the investment managers, which provides this information, but does not actively monitor portfolio turnover costs. This position is kept under review.

## 10. Realisation of investments

- 10.1. The Plan's assets are invested in pooled vehicles, which in turn invest in securities traded on recognised exchanges. The Trustee concludes that the Plan's investments can be realised if necessary.

## 11. Socially responsible investment and investment rights

- 11.1. In endeavouring to invest in the best financial interests of the beneficiaries, the Trustee has elected to invest through pooled funds. As such, it cannot directly influence the social, environmental and ethical policies and practices of the companies in which the pooled funds invest. The Trustee will therefore rely on the policies and judgement of its investment manager. The Trustee will periodically review the policies of its investment manager.
- 11.2. However, the Trustee also understands that it must consider all factors that have the ability to impact the financial performance of the Plan's investments over the appropriate time horizon. These include, but are not limited to, environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors.
- 11.3. The Trustee recognises that ESG factors, such as climate change, can influence the investment performance of the Plan's investments and, therefore, it is in the members' and Plan's best interests that such factors are taken into account in the investment process. Consequently, the Trustee will also consider the investment advisers assessment of how each investment manager embeds ESG into its investment process and how the manager's responsible investment philosophy aligns with the Trustee's responsible investment policy. This includes the investment managers' policy on voting and engagement. The Trustee will use this assessment in decisions around selection, retention and realisation of manager appointments.

- 11.4. The Trustee will review available products and approaches to ESG factors and strive for the Plan to continue to deliver strong risk adjusted returns, incorporating responsible investment principles into the process where possible.
- 11.5. The Trustee has received a copy of the investment manager's published corporate governance policy that explains the manager's approach to socially responsible investment and investment rights. The Trustee is satisfied with the policies as described in these documents.
- 11.6. The Trustee had concerns over the fact that tobacco companies currently make up approximately 1.4% of the FTSE Developed Markets Fund. By investing the Plan's developed market equities in a fund that excludes tobacco companies, the Trustee is pursuing a policy that is consistent with the Wellcome Trust's endowment portfolio, which does not invest directly in tobacco companies, as well as Wellcome's mission to improve human and animal health globally.
- 11.7. Apart from the concerns over tobacco companies noted above, which are not expected to have a material financial impact, the Trustee only considers factors that are expected to have a financial impact on the Plan's investments. Other non-financial considerations are not implemented in the current investment strategy.

## 12. Stewardship

- 12.1. The Trustee believes that widespread adoption of good corporate governance practice will improve the quality of management and, as a consequence, is likely to increase the returns available to long term investors.
- 12.2. The Trustee has given the appointed investment manager full discretion when undertaking engagement activities in accordance with their own corporate governance policies and current best practice, including the UK Corporate Governance Code and UK Stewardship Code. The Trustee will review the investment manager's policies and engagement activities (where applicable) on an annual basis'.
- 12.3. The Trustee has undertaken to apply the seven principles of the UK Stewardship Code, given their responsibilities as asset owner. A copy of the Plan's Stewardship Code statement is appended to this document and is hosted on the FRC's website.
- 12.4. The Trustee has reviewed and accepted the investment manager's Stewardship Code statement.

## 13. Decision-making structure

- 13.1. The Plan's assets are held in trust by the Trustee, whose powers of investment are set out in the trust documentation of the Plan.
- 13.2. The Trustee use sub-committees when appropriate so that issues can be considered and with due focus. Sub-committees may have delegated power from the Trustee to take decisions, which are confirmed in specific terms of reference.



13.3. The investment manager appointed by the Trustee is responsible for the day to-day investment management of the Plan's assets and is authorised under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 to carry out such activities.

## 14. Fees, charges and other costs

14.1. The Trustee recognises that the provision of investment management, dealing and advisory services to the Plan results in a range of charges to be met, directly or indirectly, by deduction from the Plan's assets or by payment by the Employer.

14.2. The Trustee has agreed Terms of Business with Mercer, the Plan's investment adviser, actuaries and administrators, under which charges are calculated on a time-cost basis or fixed fee basis as agreed by the Trustee.

14.3. The investment manager receives fees calculated by reference to the market value of the Plan's assets under management in each pooled fund. The Trustee considers that this is the most appropriate fee structure for index tracking pooled fund investment.

14.4. Other services are or will be paid for on a time cost or fixed fee basis as agreed by the Trustee.

## 15. Review of the SIP

15.1. The Trustee will, from time to time, review the appropriateness of this SIP and will amend it as appropriate in response to any material changes to any aspects of the investment arrangements detailed above.

15.2. This SIP supersedes the SIP prepared and signed by the Trustee in June 2019.

Signed for and on behalf of

Genome Research Pensions Trustee Limited in capacity as Trustee for the Genome Research Limited Pension Plan

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Date

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## Annex A – Investment risk measurement methods and management processes

The Trustee is aware of, and seeks to take account of a number of risks in relation to the Plan's investments, including the following:

Under the Pensions Act 2004, the Trustee is required to state their policy regarding the ways in which risks are to be measured and managed. These are set out below. However, given that the Plan is currently invested 100% in equities, it will not necessarily be exposed to all of these risks at present

### Solvency Risk and Mismatching Risk

- These are measured through a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the expected development of the assets relative to the liabilities.
- These are managed by setting a scheme-specific strategic asset allocation with an appropriate level of risk.

### Manager Risk

- This is assessed as the expected deviation of the prospective risk and return, as set out in the managers' objectives, relative to the investment policy.
- It is measured by monitoring the actual deviation of returns relative to the objective and factors supporting the managers' investment process.

### Liquidity Risk

- This is monitored according to the level of cashflows required by the Scheme over a specified period.
- It is managed by holding an appropriate amount of readily realisable investments. The Plan's assets are invested in pooled funds which are readily realisable.

### Political Risk

- This is measured by the level of concentration in any one market leading to the risk of adverse influence on investment values arising from political intervention.
- It is managed by regular reviews of the investments and through investing in funds which give a wide degree of diversification.

### Environmental, Social and Governance Risk

- This is the risk that Environmental, Social or Corporate Governance concerns, including climate change, have a financially material impact on the return of the Plan's assets.
- The Trustee manages this risk by investing with well-respected investment managers where ESG principles are appropriately included in the investment decision-making process.

- The Trustee is aware that Responsible Investing is one of the core beliefs of the investment managers and the investment adviser. As a result, part of the rating process of the investment adviser and decision making process of the investment managers in relation to the underlying securities held is based on its financial stewardship and how well the investment managers integrate governance and sustainability into its investment process.
- The Trustee delegates the exercise of voting rights to the managers, who exercise this right in accordance with their published corporate governance policies. Summaries of these policies are provided to the Trustee from time to time and take into account the financial interests of the shareholders, which should ultimately be to the Plan's advantage.

#### Sponsor Risk

- This is assessed as the level of ability and degree of willingness of the sponsor to support the continuation of the Scheme and to make good any current or future deficit.
- It is managed by assessing the interaction between the Scheme and the sponsor's business, as measured by a number of factors, including the creditworthiness of the sponsor and the size of the pension liability relative to the sponsor. Regular updates on employer covenant are provided to the Trustee by senior staff of the Sponsoring Employer.

#### Legislative Risk

- This is the risk that legislative changes will require action from the Trustee so as to comply with any such changes in legislation.
- The Trustee acknowledges that this risk is unavoidable but will seek to address any required changes so as to comply with changes in legislation.

#### Credit Risk

- This is the risk that one party to a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party by failing to discharge an obligation.
- The Trustee acknowledges that the assessment of credit risk on individual debt instruments is delegated to the investment manager. The Trustee will however ensure that they are comfortable with the amount of risk that the Plan's investment manager takes.

#### Market Risk

- This is the risk the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk comprises of the following three types of risk

#### Currency Risk

- This is the risk that occurs when the price of one currency moves relative to another (reference) currency. In the context of a UK pension scheme, the scheme may be invested in overseas stocks or assets, which are either directly or indirectly linked to a currency other than Sterling. There is a risk that the price of that overseas currency will

move in such a way that devalues that currency relative to Sterling, thus negatively impacting the overall investment return.

- In order to address this issue, the Trustee has implemented a currency hedging strategy, as outlined in section 3 of this report.

#### Interest rate and Inflation risk

- This is the risk that an investment's value will change due to a change in the level of interest rates or market implied inflation. This affects debt instruments more directly than growth instruments.
- The Trustee acknowledges that the interest rate and inflation risks exist within the portfolio by its inherent linkage to the Plan's liabilities. The Plan's sponsoring employer through the Deed of Guarantee currently underwrites this risk.

#### Other Price risk

- This is the risk that principally arises in relation to the return seeking portfolio, which could invest in assets such as equities, equities in pooled funds, equity futures, hedge funds, private equity and property.
- The Trustee acknowledges that a scheme can manage its exposure to price risk by investing in a diverse portfolio across various markets.

## Appendix 1 – Stewardship Code statement Genome Research Ltd Pension Plan

### UK Stewardship Code Policy Statement

This document describes how the Trustee of the Genome Research Ltd Pension Plan have undertaken to apply the seven principles of the UK Stewardship Code, given their responsibilities as an asset owner.

The Trustee is satisfied that the investment Manager of the Plan's assets is also a signatory to the Stewardship Code. The Manager endorses the principles and is fully committed to them as they enhance long term value for shareholders and protect the integrity of their clients' assets.

#### 1. Institutional investors should publicly disclose their policy on how they will discharge their stewardship responsibilities

The Trustee believes that widespread adoption of good corporate governance practice will improve the quality of management and, as a consequence, is likely to increase the returns available to long term investors.

The Trustee records their policy on responsible investment in the Plan's Statement of Investment Principles. The Plan's Stewardship Code statement – ie this document – will be appended to the Statement of Investment Principles and hosted on the FRC's website.

#### 2. Institutional investors should have a robust policy on managing conflicts of interest in relation to stewardship and this policy should be publicly disclosed

The Trustee has clear policies which address the identification, management and disclosure of conflicts of interests with the Plan, though these do not currently relate to stewardship issues, given the nature of the investment arrangements.

#### 3. Institutional investors should monitor their investee companies

The Plan only uses pooled funds, and as a result stewardship and voting responsibilities are delegated to the investment Manager. The Trustee regularly monitors the performance of its Manager and engages with them as part of the regular meeting cycle. The Trustee has reviewed and accepted the appointed Manager's corporate governance policy and Stewardship statement.

#### 4. Institutional investors should establish clear guidelines on when and how they will escalate their activities as a method of protecting and enhancing shareholder value

As the Plan invests only in pooled funds, the investment Manager alone determines the activities they use to protect and enhance shareholder value in the underlying companies. The Trustee is satisfied that the investment Manager actively engages with investee companies, monitors this through quarterly reporting, and accepts that the way in which engagement is undertaken is dependent on the circumstances and the issues to be discussed.

#### 5. Institutional investors should be willing to act collectively with other investors where appropriate

As the Plan invests only in pooled funds, the investment Manager alone determines whether collective engagement is appropriate. The Trustee is satisfied that the Manager's membership of the Association of British Insurers (ABI) and Corporate Governance Forum (CGF), and networks such as the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) and the UK Sustainable Investment and Finance (UKSIF) means that they are well positioned to collaborate with other investors on a number of issues.

#### 6. Institutional investors should have a clear policy on voting and disclosure of voting activity

The Trustee expects the investment Manager to exercise voting rights in the best interests of the fund, or should a conflict exist, in the best interests of shareholders generally.

The Trustee relies on voting disclosures made by the investment Manager in its quarterly reports and on its website.

#### 7. Institutional investors should report periodically on their stewardship and voting activities

The Trustee does not additionally disclose voting information to the Plan's membership.

This statement, along with underlying policies, will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated where necessary to reflect changes in actual practice.

September 2020