

### Investment Strategy

- Bottom up stock picking strategy, based on company interviews/fieldwork and fundamental research/analysis.
- We seek to identify exceptional companies able to sustain consistent earnings growth through economic cycles.
- The strategy seeks to outperform the market by selectively buying and holding stocks over the mid-to-long term, typically three to five years. Consequently, the turnover of our portfolio is low.
- We do not invest in stocks for purposes of managing risk against benchmarks.
- Stable earnings volatility of our holdings allows us to build a concentrated portfolio of 20-30 names.

### Strategy Facts

**Inception Date:** October 1, 2011

**Advisor:** Clearbrook Investment Consulting, LLC.

**Sub-Advisor:** Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking Corporation

**Net Assets as of 12/31/2023:** \$570.2M USD

**Management Fee:** 0.75%

**Benchmark:** TOPIX Total Return Index

### Portfolio Characteristics

	Japan Focus Growth*	TOPIX Total Return Index
Number of Holdings	32	2,155
Wtd. Avg. Mkt. Cap. (\$)	33.5B	46.2B
P/E	21.65	18.35
P/B	3.33	2.35
ROE %	13.57	10.89
Dividend Yield %	1.55	2.32

\*Based on representative portfolio

All data as of 12/31/2023 unless noted

### Contact Information

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### Performance (%) USD as of (12/31/2023)

Composite	1 Mon*	3 Mon*	6 Mon*	YTD*	1 Yr	3 Yr	5 Yr	7 Yr	10 Yr	Since Incept
Focus Growth Gross	6.75	10.90	4.19	13.21	13.21	-8.35	5.44	5.83	8.08	7.73
Focus Growth Net	6.69	10.70	3.80	12.38	12.38	-9.04	4.66	5.05	7.28	6.93
TOPIX Total Return Index	4.63	8.00	7.17	20.04	20.04	1.09	6.85	6.17	5.44	6.76
Excess Return (Gross-TOPIX)	2.13	2.90	-2.98	-6.83	-6.83	-9.44	-1.40	-0.33	2.64	0.97

\*Returns for periods under one year are not annualized.

**Performance data quoted represents past performance; past performance does not guarantee future results.** Gross returns are presented before management and custodial fees, but after all trading expenses and reflect the investment of dividends and other income. Net returns are net of investment management fees in effect for the respective time period and are derived using the maximum highest published rate. Fees charged are at the discretion of Clearbrook. The strategy does not invest in an index. The strategy uses the (TOPIX) Total Return Index as a benchmark only. Performance may be attributable to profits from IPO securities. IPO securities have no trading history and the prices may be volatile. There is no guarantee this level of performance will be repeated. Japanese issuers and underwriters prioritize allocations of IPO securities to domestic investors; therefore, overseas investors (not based in Japan) may have less access to small and mid-cap IPO securities allocations than a domestic investor. The investment return and principal value of an investment will change so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance of the strategy may be lower or higher than the performance quoted. Composite data is calculated in JPY and converted to USD using the WM/Reuters Closing Spot Rates 4pm London close. The TOPIX is also converted from JPY to USD using the same exchange rate source.

### Market and Strategy Commentary: Q4: Oct-Dec 2023, USD Net

#### Japan Markets:

- Japanese equities advanced for the quarter, with the TOPIX Total Return Index returning +8.00% USD.
- Japanese equities declined in October (-4.41%). The Japanese stock market started the month on a negative note, affected by the rising U.S. long-term interest rates amid growing prospects of prolonged monetary tightening by the Fed. Thereafter, the stock market rebounded as growth stocks regained momentum due to a pause in the rate hikes. Mid-month, the 10-year U.S. government bond yield hit multi-year highs weighing down Japanese shares, especially high-tech stocks. The market declined towards the end of the month amid concerns over higher bond yields and escalating tensions in the Middle East.
- Japanese equities rose in November. (+8.00%). The stock market rallied early as the YCC policy revision by the Bank of Japan (BOJ) in late October was in line with market expectations, in addition to weaker-than-expected U.S. jobs report. Growth stocks with high valuations led the market higher due to a steep fall of Japanese long-term bond yields in the wake of a plunge of the U.S. yields, pricing in the Fed's interest rate cuts in 2024.
- Japanese equities gained in December. (+4.63%). In the first half of the month, growth stocks with relatively high P/E ratios advanced amid a sharp drop in U.S. bond yields. On the other hand, external-demand stocks, including automobiles, dragged down the market due to accelerating yen appreciation caused by the shrinking interest rate gap between Japan and the U.S. amid increasing prospects for monetary policy revision by the BOJ. Later in the month, the market rebounded as the BOJ decided to keep its monetary policy intact. Although the market retreated in the local currency base, the performance turned positive due to the yen's strength.

#### MUFG Japan Focus Growth Strategy:

- The strategy returned +10.70% USD, outperforming the index by 2.69% for the quarter.
- The top contributor was Shin-Etsu Chemical Co., Ltd., a global leading company in polyvinyl chloride resins and semiconductor silicon wafers. The share price rallied amid expectations for the Fed to end interest rate hikes and the completion of inventory adjustments in the semiconductor industry.
- Another positive contributor was Recruit Holdings Co., Ltd., a provider of human resource technology, marketing media, and temporary staffing services. The share price advanced in November due to reports that a U.S.-based activist acquired the company's shares and the announcement of share repurchases.
- The bottom contributor was Denso Corp., a manufacturer of electronic parts for automobiles well known as Toyota Motor's top supplier. The stock price declined on the back of anxieties about earnings momentum deterioration caused by accelerating yen appreciations, and concerns over Toyota's sale of Denso's shares.
- Another detractor was Fuji Electric Co., Ltd., an innovator of electric and thermal energy technologies, including sensing technologies, control technologies, power electronics technologies, and optimizing electricity. The firm's Q2 FY3/24 (Apr-Sep) earnings results released in late October exceeded the consensus, but investors were disappointed by its conservative guidance for full-year earnings with downward earnings revisions from their FA component.

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# MUFG Japan Focus Growth Strategy

## About the Portfolio (as of 12/31/2023)

### Returns Based Statistics vs TOPIX Total Return Index

	One Yr	Three Yr	Five Yr	Ten Yr
Excess Return	-6.83	-9.44	-1.40	2.64
Beta	1.15	1.06	0.99	0.96
Information Ratio	-0.89	-1.08	-0.17	0.30
Sharpe Ratio*	0.78	-0.47	0.32	0.51
Tracking Error %	7.65	8.73	8.39	8.68
Std. Dev. (Portfolio) %	16.87	17.73	17.15	15.71
Std. Dev. (Benchmark) %	13.20	14.59	15.16	13.64

\* Sharpe Ratio: the risk free rate is not used in the calculation. The calculation shown here represents Portfolio Return divided by Portfolio Standard Deviation.

### Sector Diversification (%)

	Japan Focus Growth*	TOPIX Total Return
Industrials	24.94	24.24
Information Technology	20.21	13.70
Consumer Staples	15.61	6.74
Health Care	11.11	7.49
Consumer Discretionary	8.86	18.18
Financials	8.66	11.80
Materials	4.95	6.20
Real Estate	3.70	2.06
Communication Services	0.83	7.27
Utilities	0.00	1.45
Energy	0.00	0.87
Cash & Cash Equivalents	1.13of prolonging	-

\*Based on Representative Portfolio

### Our Japan Focus Growth Investment Team



**Shinichiro Hyogo**  
Lead Fund Manager  
25 years experience



**Kosuke Tsuchida**  
Senior Fund Manager  
21 years experience



**Shinichi Okada**  
Analyst  
36 years experience



**Yuichi Yokoyama**  
Analyst  
7 years experience



**Yusuke Michiwaki**  
Strategy Manager/  
Analyst  
11 years experience

\*Clearbrook Investment Consulting is the investment advisor to the MUFG Japan Focus Growth Strategy.

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Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking Corporation (MUTB) claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®). A complete list of firm composites and performance can be requested from Natasha Koprivica at [nkoprivica@clbrk.com](mailto:nkoprivica@clbrk.com) or 857.919.1048. Performance numbers have been provided by MUTB and have not been verified by Clearbrook Investment Consulting.

Please see the GIPS® Compliant Performance Report for further explanation. The comparative benchmark is the TOPIX Total Return Index. TOPIX is a free-float adjusted market capitalization-weighted index that is calculated based on all the domestic common stocks listed on the TSE First Section. TOPIX shows the measure of current market capitalization assuming that market capitalization as of the base date (January 4, 1968) is 100 points. **One cannot invest directly in an index.** **Beta:** systematic risk of a composite; represents sensitivity to the benchmark. **Excess Return (Gross):** amount that gross returns exceed relative benchmark return. **Information Ratio:** ratio of expected return to risk, as measured by standard deviation. **Price to Book (P/B):** ratio of stock price to book value. **Price to Earnings (P/E):** ratio of stock price to earnings. **Return on Equity (ROE):** net income divided by equity. **Standard Deviation:** measures dispersion of a set of data from its mean. **Tracking Error:** measures the active risk of the composite and the annualized standard deviation of the excess returns between the composite and its benchmark. **Weighted Average Market Cap:** total value of all outstanding shares weighted by market capitalization.

\*Clearbrook Investment Consulting, LLC ("CIC") is an SEC-registered investment adviser. CIC primarily provides pensions consulting and family office advisory services for a wide variety of for-profit and nonprofit organizations. All strategy, assets under management and performance data described above refer to professional advisory services which CIC has engaged MUTB to act as subadvisor for the MUFG Japan Focus Growth Strategy. Fees charged are at the discretion of CIC; investment advisory fees are described in CIC's Form ADV Part 2, which is available upon request. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Individual account management and construction will vary depending on each client's investment needs and objectives. A complete list of all recommendations in the MUFG Japan Focus Growth Strategy, within the past year are available free of charge by contacting CIC. Actual securities held in any individual account will vary and are subject to change. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Individual account management and construction will vary depending on each client's investment needs and objectives. A complete list of all recommendations in the MUFG Japan Focus Growth Strategy, within the past year are available free of charge by contacting Clearbrook. Actual securities held in any individual account will vary and are subject to change.