

FIRST TRUST EXCHANGE-TRADED ALPHADDEX® FUND  
 FIRST TRUST EXCHANGE-TRADED ALPHADDEX® FUND II  
 FIRST TRUST EXCHANGE-TRADED FUND II  
 FIRST TRUST EXCHANGE-TRADED FUND III  
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 FIRST TRUST EXCHANGE-TRADED FUND VII  
 FIRST TRUST EXCHANGE-TRADED FUND VIII  
 FIRST TRUST SERIES FUND  
 FIRST TRUST VARIABLE INSURANCE TRUST  
 (the “Trusts,” and each series of the Trusts, a “Fund”)

SUPPLEMENT TO EACH FUND'S STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

AUGUST 20, 2025

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in each Fund's Statement of Additional Information, Mr. Thomas J. Driscoll serves as an Independent Trustee (as such term is defined below) of each Trust's Board of Trustees (collectively, the “Board”), and serves as a member of the following Board Committees: the Nominating and Governance Committee, the Valuation Committee and the Audit Committee. Accordingly, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in each Fund's Statement of Additional Information, there are eight Trustees of each Trust, seven of whom are Trustees who are not officers or employees of First Trust Advisors L.P. (“First Trust”), the Funds' investment advisor, or any of its affiliates (“Independent Trustees”).

The following is a statement of Mr. Driscoll's present position and principal occupations during the past five years, the number of portfolios he oversees and the other directorships he has held during the past five years. Mr. Driscoll has been appointed for an indefinite term.

Name and Year of Birth	Position and Offices with Trust	Term of Office and Year First Elected or Appointed	Principal Occupations During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in the First Trust Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee	Other Trusteeships or Directorships Held by Trustee During the Past 5 Years
Thomas J. Driscoll 1961	Trustee	•Indefinite term •Since 2025	Retired; Partner, Deloitte LLP and Deloitte Tax LLP (1998 to January 2024)	308 Portfolios	None

Thomas J. Driscoll was previously a Partner at Deloitte LLP and Deloitte Tax LLP (collectively, “Deloitte”) from September 1998 to January 2024. As a Partner at Deloitte, Mr. Driscoll served in various roles including as lead client service partner, lead relationship partner and lead tax partner for various clients in the asset management, broker-dealer and financial services businesses. Mr. Driscoll also served as the Vice Chairman, Partner in Charge of Deloitte's international tax and transfer pricing (economics) business responsible for leading and managing Deloitte's international tax and transfer pricing practice with over 1,200 professionals in the United States and India. Finally, as a member of the Board of Deloitte Tax LLP, Mr. Driscoll was a part of the executive committee responsible for overseeing Deloitte's tax practice in the United States.

As noted above, Mr. Driscoll was previously a Partner at Deloitte LLP and Deloitte Tax LLP (previously defined, collectively, as “Deloitte”; for purposes of this paragraph, for the avoidance of doubt, “Deloitte” includes Deloitte affiliated partnerships) from September 1998 until his retirement in January 2024. Deloitte & Touche LLP and Deloitte Tax LLP serve as independent auditors and tax services provider, respectively, of the First Trust Funds (as defined below), First Trust and certain other affiliated entities of First Trust (collectively, “First Trust”). Prior to his retirement, Mr. Driscoll served as a tax partner, and for certain periods as Lead Client Service Partner, on various matters involving First Trust. During the period of his employment with Deloitte, Mr. Driscoll was, and Deloitte was and continues to be, subject to requirements to be independent with respect to First Trust in accordance with the U.S. federal securities laws and applicable rules and regulations of the U.S. SEC and the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States). For the 2023 and 2024 calendar years, amounts paid by First Trust to Deloitte were in excess of \$11.8 million and \$12.6 million, respectively.

In addition, Deloitte provides tax services to The Bank of New York Mellon in connection with unit investment trusts sponsored by First Trust Portfolios L.P., an affiliate of First Trust. Further, in addition to providing the services described above, from time to time, Deloitte may engage in other business relationships with various affiliates of First Trust. Deloitte and Mr. Driscoll have severed all relationships, including settlement of capital accounts and retirement benefits in accordance with the requirements of the SEC's auditor independence rules.

As of December 31, 2024, Mr. Driscoll owned: \$10,001 - \$50,000 of equity securities of each of the First Trust Institutional Preferred Securities and Income ETF and First Trust Preferred Securities and Income ETF, each a series of First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund III; \$10,001 - \$50,000 of equity securities of the First Trust Senior Loan Fund, a series of First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund IV; \$10,001 - \$50,000 of equity securities of each of the First Trust Dorsey Wright Momentum & Dividend ETF, First Trust RBA American Industrial Renaissance<sup>®</sup> ETF and Multi-Asset Diversified Income Index Fund, each a series of First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund VI; and \$10,001 - \$50,000 of equity securities of each of the First Trust Mid Cap Growth AlphaDEX<sup>®</sup> Fund, First Trust Multi Cap Growth AlphaDEX<sup>®</sup> Fund and First Trust Multi Cap Value AlphaDEX<sup>®</sup> Fund, each a series of First Trust Exchange-Traded AlphaDEX<sup>®</sup> Fund. As of December 31, 2024, Mr. Driscoll owned over \$100,000 of equity securities of registered investment companies overseen by the Board.

Mr. Driscoll and his immediate family members do not own beneficially or of record any class of securities of an investment advisor or principal underwriter of the Funds or any person directly or indirectly controlling, controlled by or under common control with an investment advisor or principal underwriter of the Funds.

Additionally, the first paragraph of the section entitled "Unitary Board Leadership Structure" in each Fund's Statement of Additional Information is replaced in its entirety with the following:

Each Trustee serves (or will serve) as a trustee of all open-end and closed-end funds in the First Trust fund complex (each a "*First Trust Fund*" and collectively, the "*First Trust Fund Complex*"), which is known as a "unitary" board leadership structure. Ms. Wright also serves as director of First Trust Global Funds, a public limited company established in Ireland and an open-end umbrella fund representing exchange-traded funds and one or more mutual funds, and advised by First Trust (collectively, the "*First Trust UCITS*"). Ms. Wright had previously served on the board of directors of First Trust Global Portfolios Management Limited, the manager to the First Trust UCITS and an affiliate of First Trust, but resigned such position effective March 6, 2023. Except as noted above, none of the Independent Trustees nor their immediate family members has ever been a director, officer or employee of, or consultant to, First Trust, First Trust Portfolios L.P. or their affiliates.

# STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

INVESTMENT COMPANY ACT FILE NO. 811-22452

## FIRST TRUST SERIES FUND

### FIRST TRUST SHORT DURATION HIGH INCOME FUND

### TICKER SYMBOL

Class A

FDHAX

Class C

FDHCX

Class I

FDHIX

**DATED MARCH 3, 2025**

This Statement of Additional Information ("SAI") is not a prospectus. It should be read in conjunction with the prospectus dated March 3, 2025, as it may be revised from time to time (the "*Prospectus*"), for First Trust Short Duration High Income Fund (the "*Fund*"), a series of First Trust Series Fund (the "*Trust*"). Capitalized terms used herein that are not defined have the same meaning as in the Prospectus, unless otherwise noted. A copy of the Prospectus may be obtained without charge by writing to the Trust's distributor, First Trust Portfolios L.P., 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, or by calling toll free at (800) 621-1675.

The audited financial statements for the Fund's most recent fiscal year appear in the Fund's Form N-CSR dated October 31, 2024, which was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "*SEC*") on January 10, 2025. The financial statements from the Form N-CSR are incorporated herein by reference. The Form N-CSR is available without charge by calling (800) 621-1675 or by visiting the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

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## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE TRUST AND THE FUND

The Trust was organized as a Massachusetts business trust on July 9, 2010 and is authorized to issue an unlimited number of shares in one or more series. The Trust is an open-end management investment company, registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the "1940 Act"). This SAI relates to the Fund, which is a diversified series.

The Fund, as a series of the Trust, represents a beneficial interest in a separate portfolio of securities and other assets, with its own objectives and policies. The Fund is classified as a diversified investment company. The Fund may not in the future operate in a non-diversified manner without first obtaining shareholder approval.

The Board of Trustees of the Trust (the "*Board*," "*Board of Trustees*" or "*Trustees*") has the right to establish additional series in the future, to determine the preferences, voting powers, rights and privileges thereof and to modify such preferences, voting powers, rights and privileges without shareholder approval. Shares of any series may also be divided into one or more classes at the discretion of the Trustees.

The Trust or any series or class thereof may be terminated at any time by the Board of Trustees upon written notice to the shareholders.

Each share has one vote with respect to matters upon which a shareholder vote is required consistent with the requirements of the 1940 Act and the rules promulgated thereunder. Shares of all series of the Trust vote together as a single class except as otherwise required by the 1940 Act or if the matter being voted on affects only a particular series, and, if a matter affects a particular series differently from other series, the shares of that series will vote separately on such matter. The Trust's Declaration of Trust (the "*Declaration*") requires a shareholder vote only on those matters where the 1940 Act requires a vote of shareholders and otherwise permits the Trustees to take actions without seeking the consent of shareholders. For example, the Declaration gives the Trustees broad authority to approve reorganizations between the Fund and another entity or the sale of all or substantially all of the Fund's assets, or the termination of the Trust or the Fund without shareholder approval if the 1940 Act would not require such approval.

The Declaration provides that by becoming a shareholder of the Fund, each shareholder shall be expressly held to have agreed to be bound by the provisions of the Declaration and to any By-laws adopted by the Trust. The Declaration provides that, except as set forth therein and authorized by the Trustees, shareholders have no rights, privileges, claims or remedies under any contract or agreement entered into by the Trust or the Fund with any service provider or other agent to or contractor with the Trust or the Fund including, without limitation, any third party beneficiary rights.

The Declaration may, except in limited circumstances, be amended by the Trustees in any respect without a shareholder vote. The Declaration provides that the Trustees may establish the number of Trustees and that vacancies on the Board of Trustees may be filled by the remaining Trustees, except when election of Trustees by the shareholders is required under the 1940 Act. Trustees are then elected by a plurality of votes cast by shareholders at a meeting at which a quorum is present. The Declaration also provides that Trustees may be removed, with or without cause, by a vote of shareholders holding at least two-thirds of the voting power of the Trust, or by a vote of two-thirds of the remaining Trustees. The provisions of the Declaration relating to the election and removal of Trustees may not be amended without the approval of two-thirds of the Trustees.

The holders of Fund shares are required to disclose information on direct or indirect ownership of Fund shares as may be required to comply with various laws applicable to the Fund or as the Trustees may determine, and ownership of Fund shares may be disclosed by the Fund if so required by law or regulation. In addition, pursuant to the Declaration, the Trustees may, in their discretion, require the Trust to redeem shares held by any shareholder for any reason under terms set by the Trustees.

The Declaration provides a detailed process for the bringing of derivative actions by shareholders in order to permit legitimate inquiries and claims while avoiding the time, expense, distraction and other harm that can be caused to the Fund or its shareholders as a result of spurious shareholder demands and derivative actions. In addition, the Declaration provides that actions that are derivative in nature may not be brought directly. Prior to bringing a derivative action, a demand must first be made on the Trustees. The Declaration details various information, certifications, undertakings and acknowledgements that must be included in the demand. Following receipt of the demand, the Trustees have a period of 90 days, which may be extended by an additional 60 days, to consider the demand. If a majority of the Trustees who are considered independent for the purposes of considering the demand determine that maintaining the suit would not be in the best interests of the Fund, the Trustees are required to reject the demand and the complaining shareholder may not proceed with the derivative action unless the shareholder is able to sustain the burden of proof to a court that the decision of the

Trustees not to pursue the requested action was not a good faith exercise of their business judgment on behalf of the Fund. In making such a determination, a Trustee is not considered to have a personal financial interest by virtue of being compensated for his or her services as a Trustee. If a demand is rejected, the complaining shareholder will be responsible for the costs and expenses (including attorneys' fees) incurred by the Fund in connection with the consideration of the demand under a number of circumstances. In addition, if a court determines that a derivative action was made without reasonable cause or for an improper purpose, or if a derivative or direct action is dismissed on the basis of a failure to comply with the procedural provisions relating to shareholder actions as set forth in the Declaration, or if a direct action is dismissed by a court for failure to state a claim, the shareholder bringing the action may be responsible for the Fund's costs, including attorneys' fees.

The provisions of the Declaration provide that any direct or derivative action commenced by a shareholder must be brought only in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts (Boston Division) or if any such action may not be brought in that court, then in the Business Litigation Session of Suffolk Superior Court in Massachusetts (the "*Chosen Courts*"). Except as prohibited by applicable law, if a shareholder commences an applicable action in a court other than a Chosen Court without the consent of the Fund, then such shareholder may be obligated to reimburse the Fund and any applicable Trustee or officer of the Fund made party to such proceeding for the costs and expenses (including attorneys' fees) incurred in connection with any successful motion to dismiss, stay or transfer of the action. The Declaration also provides that any shareholder bringing an action against the Fund waives the right to trial by jury to the fullest extent permitted by law.

The Trust is not required to and does not intend to hold annual meetings of shareholders.

Under Massachusetts law applicable to Massachusetts business trusts, shareholders of such a trust may, under certain circumstances, be held personally liable as partners for its obligations. However, the Declaration contains an express disclaimer of shareholder liability for acts or obligations of the Trust and requires that notice of this disclaimer be given in each agreement, obligation or instrument entered into or executed by the Trust or the Trustees. The Declaration further provides for indemnification out of the assets and property of the Trust for all losses and expenses of any shareholder held personally liable for the obligations of the Trust. Thus, the risk of a shareholder incurring financial loss on account of shareholder liability is limited to circumstances in which both inadequate insurance existed and the Trust or the Fund itself was unable to meet its obligations.

The Declaration provides that a Trustee acting in his or her capacity as Trustee is liable to the Trust for his or her own bad faith, willful misfeasance, gross negligence, or reckless disregard of his or her duties involved in the conduct of the individual's office, and for nothing else and shall not be liable for errors of judgment or mistakes of fact or law. The Declaration also provides that the Trustees of the Trust will be subject to the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts relating to Massachusetts business trusts, but not to the laws of Massachusetts relating to the trustees of common law trusts, such as donative or probate type trusts.

The Declaration further provides that a Trustee acting in his or her capacity as Trustee is not personally liable to any person other than the Trust, for any act, omission, or obligation of the Trust. The Declaration requires the Trust to indemnify any persons who are or who have been Trustees, officers or employees of the Trust for any liability for actions or failure to act except to the extent prohibited by applicable federal law. In making any determination as to whether any person is entitled to the advancement of expenses in connection with a claim for which indemnification is sought, such person is entitled to a rebuttable presumption that he or she did not engage in conduct for which indemnification is not available. The Declaration provides that any Trustee who serves as chair of the Board of Trustees or of a committee of the Board of Trustees, as lead independent Trustee or as audit committee financial expert, or in any other similar capacity will not be subject to any greater standard of care or liability because of such position.

These provisions are not intended to restrict any shareholder rights under the federal securities laws and the Declaration specifically provides that no provision of the Declaration will restrict any shareholder rights expressly granted by the Securities Act of 1933 (the "*1933 Act*"), as amended, the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "*1934 Act*"), as amended or the 1940 Act, or any valid rule, regulation or order of the Securities Exchange Commission thereunder.

The Fund is advised by First Trust Advisors L.P. (the "*Advisor*" or "*First Trust*").

## INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The Prospectus describes the investment objectives and certain policies of the Fund. The following supplements the information contained in the Prospectus concerning the investment objectives and policies of the Fund.

The Fund is subject to the following fundamental policies, which may not be changed without approval of the holders of a majority of the outstanding voting securities (as such term is defined in the 1940 Act) of the Fund:

- (1) The Fund may not issue senior securities, except as permitted under the 1940 Act.
- (2) The Fund may not borrow money, except as permissible under the 1940 Act.
- (3) The Fund will not underwrite the securities of other issuers except to the extent the Fund may be considered an underwriter under the 1933 Act, in connection with the purchase and sale of portfolio securities.
- (4) The Fund will not purchase or sell real estate or interests therein, unless acquired as a result of ownership of securities or other instruments (but this shall not prohibit the Fund from purchasing or selling securities or other instruments backed by real estate or of issuers engaged in real estate activities).
- (5) The Fund may not make loans to other persons, except through (i) the purchase of debt securities permissible under the Fund's investment policies, (ii) repurchase agreements, or (iii) the lending of portfolio securities, *provided* that no such loan of portfolio securities may be made by the Fund if, as a result, the aggregate of such loans would exceed 33⅓% of the value of the Fund's total assets.
- (6) The Fund may not purchase or sell physical commodities unless acquired as a result of ownership of securities or other instruments (but this shall not prevent the Fund from purchasing or selling options, futures contracts, forward contracts or other derivative instruments, or from investing in securities or other instruments backed by physical commodities).
- (7) The Fund may not invest 25% or more of the value of its net assets in securities of issuers in any one industry. This restriction does not apply to obligations issued or guaranteed by the U.S. government, its agencies or instrumentalities.
- (8) With respect to 75% of its total assets, the Fund may not purchase the securities of any issuer (except securities issued or guaranteed by the United States government or any agency or instrumentality thereof) if, as a result, (i) more than 5% of the Fund's total assets would be invested in securities of that issuer; or (ii) the Fund would hold more than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of that issuer.

For purposes of applying restriction (1) above, under the 1940 Act as currently in effect, the Fund is not permitted to issue senior securities, except that the Fund may borrow from any bank if, immediately after such borrowing and at all times thereafter, the value of the Fund's total assets is at least 300% of the principal amount of all of the Fund's borrowings (*i.e.*, the principal amount of the borrowings may not exceed 33⅓% of the Fund's total assets). In the event that such asset coverage shall at any time fall below 300% the Fund shall, within three days thereafter (not including Sundays and holidays), reduce the amount of its borrowings to an extent that the asset coverage of such borrowings shall be at least 300%.

Except for restriction (2) above, if a percentage restriction is adhered to at the time of investment, a later increase in percentage resulting from a change in market value of the investment or the total assets will not constitute a violation of that restriction. With respect to restriction (2), if the limitations are exceeded as a result of a change in market value then the Fund will reduce the amount of borrowings within three days thereafter to the extent necessary to comply with the limitations (not including Sundays and holidays).

The fundamental investment limitations set forth above limit the Fund's ability to engage in certain investment practices and purchase securities or other instruments to the extent permitted by, or consistent with, applicable law. As such, these limitations will change as the statute, rules, regulations or orders (or, if applicable, interpretations) change, and no shareholder vote will be required or sought.

The Fund's investment objectives and the foregoing fundamental policies of the Fund may not be changed without the affirmative vote of the majority of the outstanding voting securities of the Fund. The 1940 Act defines a majority vote as the vote of the lesser of (i) 67% or more of the voting securities represented at a meeting at which more than 50% of the outstanding securities are represented; or (ii) more than 50% of the outstanding voting securities. Certain matters under the

1940 Act which must be submitted to a vote of the holders of the outstanding voting securities of a series or class, shall not be deemed to have been effectively acted upon unless approved by the holders of a majority of the outstanding voting shares of each series or class affected by such matter.

In addition to the foregoing fundamental policies, the Fund is also subject to strategies and policies discussed herein which, unless otherwise noted, are non-fundamental restrictions and policies and may be changed by the Board of Trustees.

## INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

The following information supplements the discussion of the Fund's investment objectives, policies and strategies that appears in the Prospectus.

### Types of Investments

**Corporate Bonds.** The Fund may invest in corporate bonds. Corporate bonds, also known as fixed-income securities, are debt obligations issued by corporations. Corporate bonds are generally used by corporations to borrow money from investors. Corporate bonds may be either secured or unsecured. Collateral used for secured debt includes, but is not limited to, real property, machinery, equipment, accounts receivable, stocks, bonds or notes. If a corporate bond is unsecured, it is known as a debenture. Holders of corporate bonds, as creditors, have a prior legal claim over common and preferred stockholders as to both income and assets of the issuer for the principal and interest due them and may have a prior claim over other creditors if liens or mortgages are involved. Interest on corporate bonds may be fixed or floating, or the securities may be zero coupon fixed-income securities which pay no interest. Interest on corporate bonds is typically paid semi-annually and is fully taxable to the holder of the bonds. Corporate bonds contain elements of both interest rate risk and credit risk. The market value of a corporate bond generally may be expected to rise and fall inversely with changes in interest rates and may also be affected by the credit rating of the issuer, the issuer's performance and perceptions of the issuer in the marketplace. Corporate bonds usually yield more than government or agency bonds due to the presence of credit risk.

**Delayed-Delivery Transactions.** The Fund may from time to time purchase securities on a "when-issued" or other delayed-delivery basis. The price of securities purchased in such transactions is fixed at the time the commitment to purchase is made, but delivery and payment for the securities take place at a later date. During the period between the purchase and settlement, the Fund does not remit payment to the issuer, no interest is accrued on debt securities and dividend income is not earned on equity securities. Delayed-delivery commitments involve a risk of loss if the value of the security to be purchased declines prior to the settlement date, which risk is in addition to the risk of a decline in value of the Fund's other assets. While securities purchased in delayed-delivery transactions may be sold prior to the settlement date, the Fund intends to purchase such securities with the purpose of actually acquiring them. At the time the Fund makes the commitment to purchase a security in a delayed-delivery transaction, it will record the transaction and reflect the value of the security in determining its net asset value.

**Fixed Income Investments and Cash Equivalents.** Normally, the Fund invests substantially all of its assets to meet its investment objective. However, for temporary or defensive purposes, the Fund may invest in fixed income investments and cash equivalents in order to provide income, liquidity and to preserve capital.

Fixed income investments and cash equivalents held by the Fund may include, without limitation, the types of investments set forth below.

- (1) The Fund may invest in U.S. government securities, including bills, notes and bonds differing as to maturity and rates of interest, which are either issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Treasury or by U.S. government agencies or instrumentalities. U.S. government securities include securities that are issued or guaranteed by the United States Treasury, by various agencies of the U.S. government, or by various instrumentalities that have been established or sponsored by the U.S. government. U.S. Treasury securities are backed by the "full faith and credit" of the United States. Securities issued or guaranteed by federal agencies and U.S. government-sponsored instrumentalities may or may not be backed by the full faith and credit of the United States. Some of the U.S. government agencies that issue or guarantee securities include the Export-Import Bank of the United States, the Farmers Home Administration, the Federal Housing Administration, the Maritime Administration, the Small Business Administration and the Tennessee Valley Authority. An instrumentality of the U.S. government is a government agency organized under federal charter with government supervision. Instrumentalities issuing or guaranteeing securities include, among others, the



Federal Home Loan Banks, the Federal Land Banks, the Central Bank for Cooperatives, Federal Intermediate Credit Banks and FNMA. In the case of those U.S. government securities not backed by the full faith and credit of the United States, the investor must look principally to the agency or instrumentality issuing or guaranteeing the security for ultimate repayment, and may not be able to assert a claim against the United States itself in the event that the agency or instrumentality does not meet its commitment. The U.S. government, its agencies and instrumentalities do not guarantee the market value of their securities, and consequently, the value of such securities may fluctuate.

- (2) The Fund may invest in certificates of deposit issued against funds deposited in a bank or savings and loan association. Such certificates are for a definite period of time, earn a specified rate of return, and are normally negotiable. If such certificates of deposit are non-negotiable, they will be considered illiquid investments and be subject to the Fund's 15% restriction on investments in illiquid investments. Pursuant to the certificate of deposit, the issuer agrees to pay the amount deposited plus interest to the bearer of the certificate on the date specified thereon. Under current FDIC regulations, the maximum insurance payable as to any one certificate of deposit is \$250,000; therefore, certificates of deposit purchased by the Fund may not be fully insured. The Fund may only invest in certificates of deposit issued by U.S. banks with at least \$1 billion in assets.
- (3) The Fund may invest in bankers' acceptances, which are short-term credit instruments used to finance commercial transactions. Generally, an acceptance is a time draft drawn on a bank by an exporter or an importer to obtain a stated amount of funds to pay for specific merchandise. The draft is then "accepted" by a bank that, in effect, unconditionally guarantees to pay the face value of the instrument on its maturity date. The acceptance may then be held by the accepting bank as an asset or it may be sold in the secondary market at the going rate of interest for a specific maturity.
- (4) The Fund may invest in repurchase agreements, which involve purchases of debt securities with counterparties that are deemed by the Advisor to present acceptable credit risks. In such an action, at the time the Fund purchases the security, it simultaneously agrees to resell and redeliver the security to the seller, who also simultaneously agrees to buy back the security at a fixed price and time. This assures a predetermined yield for the Fund during its holding period since the resale price is always greater than the purchase price and reflects an agreed-upon market rate. Such actions afford an opportunity for the Fund to invest temporarily available cash. The Fund may enter into repurchase agreements only with respect to obligations of the U.S. government or its agencies or instrumentalities, certificates of deposit, or bankers' acceptances in which the Fund may invest. Repurchase agreements may be considered loans to the seller, collateralized by the underlying securities. The risk to the Fund is limited to the ability of the seller to pay the agreed-upon sum on the repurchase date; in the event of default, the repurchase agreement provides that the Fund is entitled to sell the underlying collateral. If the value of the collateral declines after the agreement is entered into, however, and if the seller defaults under a repurchase agreement when the value of the underlying collateral is less than the repurchase price, the Fund could incur a loss of both principal and interest. The portfolio managers monitor the value of the collateral at the time the action is entered into and at all times during the term of the repurchase agreement. The portfolio managers do so in an effort to determine that the value of the collateral always equals or exceeds the agreed-upon repurchase price to be paid to the Fund. If the seller were to be subject to a federal bankruptcy proceeding, the ability of the Fund to liquidate the collateral could be delayed or impaired because of certain provisions of the bankruptcy laws.
- (5) The Fund may invest in bank time deposits, which are monies kept on deposit with banks or savings and loan associations for a stated period of time at a fixed rate of interest. There may be penalties for the early withdrawal of such time deposits, in which case the yields of these investments will be reduced.
- (6) The Fund may invest in commercial paper, which are short-term unsecured promissory notes, including variable rate master demand notes issued by corporations to finance their current operations. Master demand notes are direct lending arrangements between the Fund and a corporation. There is no secondary market for the notes. However, they are redeemable by the Fund at any time. The Fund's portfolio managers will consider the financial condition of the corporation (e.g., earning power, cash flow and other liquidity ratios) and will continuously monitor the corporation's ability to meet all of its financial obligations, because

the Fund's liquidity might be impaired if the corporation were unable to pay principal and interest on demand. The Fund may invest in commercial paper only if it has received the highest rating from at least one nationally recognized statistical rating organization or, if unrated, judged by First Trust to be of comparable quality.

- (7) The Fund may invest in shares of money market funds, as consistent with its investment objectives and policies. Shares of money market funds are subject to management fees and other expenses of those funds. Therefore, investments in money market funds will cause the Fund to bear proportionately the costs incurred by the money market funds' operations. At the same time, the Fund will continue to pay its own management fees and expenses with respect to all of its assets, including any portion invested in the shares of other investment companies. It is possible for the Fund to lose money by investing in money market funds.

**High Yield Securities.** The Fund will invest in high yield securities, which are commonly referred to as "junk" bonds and are rated below investment grade at the time of purchase. The ratings of a rating agency represent its opinion as to the quality of securities it undertakes to rate. Ratings are not absolute standards of quality; consequently, securities with the same maturity, duration, coupon, and rating may have different yields. For purposes of determining whether a security is below investment grade, the lowest available rating will be considered. If a security owned by the Fund is subsequently downgraded, the Fund will not be required to dispose of such security. If a downgrade occurs, the Advisor will consider what action, including the sale of such security, is in the best interests of the Fund. The Credit Rating Definitions, as published by Standard & Poor's, a division of The McGraw Hill Companies, Inc., Fitch Ratings and Moody's Investors Service, Inc. are set forth in *Exhibit C* to this SAI.

Because the risk of default is higher for below investment grade securities than for investment grade securities, the Advisor's research and credit analysis will be an especially important part of managing securities of this type. The Advisor will attempt to identify those issuers of below investment grade securities whose financial condition the Advisor believes are adequate to meet future obligations or who have improved or are expected to improve in the future. The Advisor's analysis focuses on relative values based on such factors as interest or dividend coverage, asset coverage, earnings prospects and the experience and managerial strength of the issuer.

**Illiquid Investments.** The Fund may invest in illiquid investments (*i.e.*, any investment that the Fund reasonably expects cannot be sold or disposed of in current market conditions in seven calendar days or less without the sale or disposition significantly changing the market value of the investment). For purposes of this restriction, illiquid investments may include, but are not limited to, certain restricted securities (securities the disposition of which is restricted under the federal securities laws), securities that may only be resold pursuant to Rule 144A under the 1933 Act, and repurchase agreements with maturities in excess of seven days, among others. However, the Fund will not acquire illiquid investments if, as a result, such investments would comprise more than 15% of the value of the Fund's net assets. The Advisor, subject to oversight by the Board of Trustees, has the ultimate authority to determine, to the extent permissible under the federal securities laws, which investments are liquid or illiquid for purposes of this 15% limitation under the Fund's liquidity risk management program, adopted pursuant to Rule 22e-4 under the 1940 Act.

Restricted securities may be sold only in privately negotiated transactions or in a public offering with respect to which a registration statement is in effect under the 1933 Act. Where registration is required, the Fund may be obligated to pay all or part of the registration expenses and a considerable period may elapse between the time of the decision to sell and the time the Fund may be permitted to sell a security under an effective registration statement. If, during such a period, adverse market conditions were to develop, the Fund might obtain a less favorable price than that which prevailed when it decided to sell. Illiquid investments will be priced at fair value as determined in good faith under procedures adopted by the Board of Trustees. If, through the appreciation of illiquid investments or the depreciation of liquid investments, the Fund should be in a position where more than 15% of the value of its net assets are invested in illiquid investments, including restricted securities which are not readily marketable, the Advisor will report such occurrence to the Board of Trustees and take such steps as are deemed advisable to protect liquidity in accordance with the Fund's liquidity risk management program.

**Loans.** The Fund may invest in fixed and floating rate loans ("*Loans*"). Loans may include senior floating rate loans ("*Senior Loans*") and secured and unsecured loans, second lien or more junior loans and bridge loans ("*Junior Loans*"). Loans are typically arranged through private negotiations between borrowers in the United States or in foreign or emerging markets which are generally corporate issuers or issuers of sovereign debt obligations ("*Obligors*") and one or more financial institutions and other lenders ("*Lenders*"). The Fund may invest in Loans by purchasing assignments of all or a portion of Loans ("*Assignments*") or Loan participations ("*Participations*") from third parties.

The Fund has direct rights against the Obligor on the Loan when it purchases an Assignment. Assignments are arranged through private negotiations between potential assignees and potential assignors. With respect to Participations, typically, the Fund will have a contractual relationship only with the Lender and not with the Obligor. The agreement governing Participations may limit the rights of the Fund to vote on certain changes which may be made to the Loan agreement, such as waiving a breach of a covenant. However, the holder of a Participation will generally have the right to vote on certain fundamental issues such as changes in principal amount, payment dates and interest rate. Participations may entail certain risks relating to the creditworthiness of the parties from which the participations are obtained.

A Loan is typically originated, negotiated and structured by a U.S. or foreign commercial bank, insurance company, finance company or other financial institution (the "*Agent*") for a group of Loan investors. The Agent typically administers and enforces the Loan on behalf of the other Loan investors in the syndicate. The Agent's duties may include responsibility for the collection of principal and interest payments from the Obligor and the apportionment of these payments to the credit of all Loan investors. The Agent is also typically responsible for monitoring compliance with the covenants contained in the Loan agreement based upon reports prepared by the Obligor. In addition, an institution, typically but not always the Agent, holds any collateral on behalf of the Loan investors. In the event of a default by the Obligor, it is possible, though unlikely, that the Fund could receive a portion of the borrower's collateral. If the Fund receives collateral other than cash, any proceeds received from liquidation of such collateral will be available for investment as part of the Fund's portfolio.

In the process of buying, selling and holding Senior Loans, the Fund may receive and/or pay certain fees. These fees are in addition to interest payments received and may include facility fees, commitment fees, commissions and prepayment penalty fees. When the Fund buys or sells a Loan it may pay a fee. In certain circumstances, the Fund may receive a prepayment penalty fee upon prepayment of a Loan.

There may be instances in which the Fund is required to vote upon amendments to certain of the Loans in which it invests. In these cases, the Fund will attempt to ensure that such amendments are voted consistently and solely in the best interests of the Fund.

**Investment Companies and Pooled Investment Vehicles.** The Fund may invest in other pooled investment vehicles, including open-end or closed-end investment companies, other exchange-traded funds ("*ETFs*") and business development companies that invest primarily in securities of the types in which the Fund may invest directly. An ETF is a fund that holds a portfolio of securities and trades on a securities exchange and its shares may, at times, trade at a premium or discount to its net asset value. As a shareholder in a pooled investment vehicle, the Fund will bear its ratable share of that vehicle's expenses, and would remain subject to payment of the Fund's management fees with respect to assets so invested. Shareholders would therefore be subject to duplicative expenses to the extent the Fund invests in other pooled investment vehicles. In addition, the Fund will incur brokerage costs when purchasing and selling shares of ETFs. Other pooled investment vehicles may be leveraged, and the net asset value and market value of their securities will therefore be more volatile and the yield to shareholders will tend to fluctuate more than the yield of unleveraged pooled investment vehicles.

**Non-U.S. Investments.** The Fund may invest in non-U.S. securities, which may include securities denominated in non-U.S. currencies. Non-U.S. debt securities in which the Fund may invest include debt securities issued or guaranteed by companies organized under the laws of countries other than the United States (including emerging markets), debt securities issued or guaranteed by foreign, national, provincial, state, municipal or other governments with taxing authority or by their agencies or instrumentalities and debt obligations of supra-national governmental entities such as the World Bank or European Union. Non-U.S. debt securities also include U.S. dollar-denominated debt obligations, such as "Yankee Dollar" obligations, of foreign issuers and of supra-national government entities. Yankee Dollar obligations are U.S. dollar-denominated obligations issued in the U.S. capital markets by foreign corporations, banks and governments. Foreign debt securities also may be traded on foreign securities exchanges or in over-the-counter ("*OTC*") capital markets. The Fund's non-U.S. investments may be denominated in currencies other than the U.S. dollar. To the extent the Fund invests in such instruments, the value of the assets of the Fund as measured in U.S. dollars will be affected by changes in exchange rates. Generally, the Fund's currency exchange transactions will be conducted on a spot (*i.e.*, cash) basis at the spot rate prevailing in the currency exchange market. The cost of the Fund's currency exchange transactions will generally be the difference between the bid and offer spot rate of the currency being purchased or sold. In order to protect against uncertainty in the level of future currency exchange rates, the Fund is authorized to enter into various currency exchange transactions.

**Senior Loans.** The Fund invests in Senior Loans, which consist generally of obligations of companies and other entities (collectively, "*borrowers*") incurred for the purpose of reorganizing the assets and liabilities of a borrower; acquiring another company; taking over control of a company (leveraged buyout); temporary refinancing; or financing internal growth

or other general business purposes. Senior Loans are often obligations of borrowers who have incurred a significant percentage of debt compared to equity issued and thus are highly leveraged.

Senior Loans may be acquired by direct investment as a lender at the inception of the loan or by assignment of a portion of a loan previously made to a different lender or by purchase of a participation interest. If the Fund makes a direct investment in a Senior Loan as one of the lenders, it generally acquires the loan at or below par. This means the Fund receives a return at or above the full interest rate for the loan. If the Fund acquires its interest in Senior Loans in the secondary market or acquires a participation interest, the loans may be purchased or sold above, at, or below par, which can result in a yield that is below, equal to, or above the stated interest rate of the loan. At times, the Fund may be able to invest in Senior Loans only through assignments or participations.

When the Fund is a purchaser of an assignment, it succeeds to all the rights and obligations under the loan agreement of the assigning lender and becomes a lender under the loan agreement with the same rights and obligations as the assigning lender. These rights include the ability to vote along with the other lenders on such matters as enforcing the terms of the loan agreement (e.g., declaring defaults, initiating collection action, etc.). Taking such actions typically requires at least a vote of the lenders holding a majority of the investment in the loan and may require a vote by lenders holding two-thirds or more of the investment in the loan. Because the Fund usually does not hold a majority of the investment in any loan, it will not be able by itself to control decisions that require a vote by the lenders.

A participation interest represents a fractional interest in a loan held by the lender selling the Fund the participation interest. In the case of participations, the Fund will not have any direct contractual relationship with the borrower, the Fund's rights to consent to modifications of the loan are limited and it is dependent upon the participating lender to enforce the Fund's rights upon a default. The Fund will have the right to receive payments of principal, interest, and any fees to which it is entitled only from the lender selling the participation and only upon receipt by the lender of the payments from the borrower.

The Fund may be subject to the credit of both the agent and the lender from whom the Fund acquires a participation interest. These credit risks may include delay in receiving payments of principal and interest paid by the borrower to the agent or, in the case of a participation, offsets by the lender's regulator against payments received from the borrower. In the event of the borrower's bankruptcy, the borrower's obligation to repay the loan may be subject to defenses that the borrower can assert as a result of improper conduct by the agent.

Historically, the amount of public information available about a specific Senior Loan has been less extensive than if the loan were registered or exchange-traded.

The loans in which the Fund will invest will, in most instances, be Senior Loans, which are secured and senior to other indebtedness of the borrower. Each Senior Loan will generally be secured by collateral such as accounts receivable, inventory, equipment, real estate, intangible assets such as trademarks, copyrights and patents, and securities of subsidiaries or affiliates. The value of the collateral generally will be determined by reference to financial statements of the borrower, by an independent appraisal, by obtaining the market value of such collateral, in the case of cash or securities if readily ascertainable, or by other customary valuation techniques considered appropriate by the Advisor. The value of collateral may decline after the Fund's investment, and collateral may be difficult to sell in the event of default. Consequently, the Fund may not receive all the payments to which it is entitled. By virtue of their senior position and collateral, Senior Loans typically provide lenders with the first right to cash flows or proceeds from the sale of a borrower's collateral if the borrower becomes insolvent (subject to the limitations of bankruptcy law, which may provide higher priority to certain claims such as employee salaries, employee pensions, and taxes). This means Senior Loans are generally repaid before unsecured bank loans, corporate bonds, subordinated debt, trade creditors, and preferred or common stockholders. To the extent that the Fund invests in unsecured loans, if the borrower defaults on such loan, there is no specific collateral on which the lender can foreclose. If the borrower defaults on a subordinated loan, the collateral may not be sufficient to cover both the senior and subordinated loans.

Senior Loans will usually require, in addition to scheduled payments of interest and principal, the prepayment of the Senior Loan from free cash flow, as further described below. The degree to which borrowers prepay Senior Loans, whether as a contractual requirement or at their election, may be affected by general business conditions, the financial condition of the borrower and competitive conditions among loan investors, among others. As such, prepayments cannot be predicted with accuracy. Recent market conditions, including falling default rates among others, have led to increased prepayment frequency and loan renegotiations. These renegotiations are often on terms more favorable to borrowers. Upon a

prepayment, either in part or in full, the actual outstanding debt on which the Fund derives interest income will be reduced. However, the Fund may receive a prepayment penalty fee assessed against the prepaying borrower.

Senior Loans typically pay interest at least quarterly at rates which equal a fixed percentage spread over a base rate such as the London Interbank Offered Rate ("*LIBOR*") the Secured Overnight Financing Rate ("*SOFR*"), a similar reference rate, or the prime rate offered by one or more major U.S. banks. Although a base rate such as *LIBOR* or *SOFR* can change every day, loan agreements for Senior Loans typically allow the borrower the ability to choose how often the base rate for its loan will reset. A single loan may have multiple reset periods at the same time, with each reset period applicable to a designated portion of the loan. Such reset periods can range from one day to one year, with most borrowers choosing monthly or quarterly reset periods. During periods of rising interest rates, borrowers will tend to choose longer reset periods, and during periods of declining interest rates, borrowers will tend to choose shorter reset periods. The fixed spread over the base rate on a Senior Loan typically does not change.

Senior Loans generally are arranged through private negotiations between a borrower and several financial institutions represented by an agent who is usually one of the originating lenders. In larger transactions, it is common to have several agents; however, generally only one such agent has primary responsibility for ongoing administration of a Senior Loan. Agents are typically paid fees by the borrower for their services.

The agent is primarily responsible for negotiating the loan agreement which establishes the terms and conditions of the Senior Loan and the rights of the borrower and the lenders. The agent also is responsible for monitoring collateral and for exercising remedies available to the lenders such as foreclosure upon collateral.

Loan agreements may provide for the termination of the agent's agency status in the event that it fails to act as required under the relevant loan agreement, becomes insolvent, enters Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("*FDIC*") receivership or, if not *FDIC* insured, enters into bankruptcy. Should such an agent, lender or assignor with respect to an assignment interpositioned between the Fund and the borrower, become insolvent or enter *FDIC* receivership or bankruptcy, any interest in the Senior Loan of such person and any loan payment held by such person for the benefit of the Fund should not be included in such person's or entity's bankruptcy estate. If, however, any such amount were included in such person's or entity's bankruptcy estate, the Fund would incur certain costs and delays in realizing payment or could suffer a loss of principal or interest. In this event, the Fund could experience a decrease in the net asset value.

Most borrowers pay their debts from cash flow generated by their businesses. If a borrower's cash flow is insufficient to pay its debts, it may attempt to restructure its debts rather than sell collateral. Borrowers may try to restructure their debts by filing for protection under the federal bankruptcy laws or negotiating a work-out. If a borrower becomes involved in a bankruptcy proceeding, access to collateral may be limited by bankruptcy and other laws. Such action by a court could be based, for example, on a "fraudulent conveyance" claim to the effect that the borrower did not receive fair consideration for granting the security interest in the loan collateral to the Fund. If a court decides that access to collateral is limited or void, the Fund may not recover the full amount of principal and interest that is due.

A borrower may be required to comply with certain restrictive covenants contained in the loan agreement. In addition to requiring the scheduled payment of principal and interest, these covenants may include restrictions on the payment of dividends and other distributions to the borrower's shareholders, provisions requiring compliance with specific financial ratios, and limits on total indebtedness. The agreement may also require the prepayment of the loans from excess cash flow. A breach of a covenant that is not waived by the agent (or lenders directly) is normally an event of default, which provides the agent and lenders the right to call for repayment of the outstanding loan. The typical practice of an agent or a loan investor in relying exclusively or primarily on reports from the borrower to monitor the borrower's compliance with covenants may involve a risk of fraud by the borrower.

The senior loan market has seen a significant increase in loans with few or none of the financial maintenance covenants (*i.e.*, "covenant-lite loans") that have traditionally protected lenders including more aggressive terms that favor borrowers with respect to restrictions regarding additional debt, payment terms, income requirements and asset dispositions. A substantial amount of the senior loans held by the Fund are expected to be covenant-lite loans, meaning the Fund may be unable to declare an event of default if financial performance deteriorates, renegotiate the terms of the loan based upon the elevated risk levels or take other actions to help mitigate losses.

In the process of buying, selling and holding Senior Loans, the Fund may receive and/or pay certain fees. These fees are in addition to interest payments received and may include facility fees, commitment fees and prepayment penalty fees. When the Fund buys or sells a Senior Loan it may pay an assignment fee. On an ongoing basis, the Fund may receive a



commitment fee based on the undrawn portion of the underlying line of credit portion of a Senior Loan. In certain circumstances, the Fund may receive a prepayment penalty fee upon prepayment of a Senior Loan. Other fees received by the Fund may include covenant waiver fees, covenant modification fees or other consent or amendment fees.

Notwithstanding its intention in certain situations to not receive material, non-public information with respect to its management of investments in Senior Loans, the Advisor may from time to time come into possession of material, non-public information about the issuers of loans that may be held in the Fund's portfolio. Possession of such information may in some instances occur despite the Advisor's efforts to avoid such possession, but in other instances the Advisor may choose to receive such information (for example, in connection with participation in a creditors' committee with respect to a financially distressed issuer). The Advisor's ability to trade in these Senior Loans for the account of the Fund could potentially be limited by its possession of such information. Such limitations on the Advisor's ability to trade could have an adverse effect on the Fund by, for example, preventing the Fund from selling a Senior Loan that is experiencing a material decline in value. In some instances, these trading restrictions could continue in effect for a substantial period of time.

An increase in demand for Senior Loans may benefit the Fund by providing increased liquidity for such loans and higher sales prices, but it may also adversely affect the rate of interest payable on such loans acquired by the Fund and the rights provided to the Fund under the terms of the applicable loan agreement, and may increase the price of loans that the Fund wishes to purchase in the secondary market. A decrease in the demand for Senior Loans may adversely affect the price of loans in the Fund's portfolio, which could cause the Fund's net asset value to decline.

The Fund may acquire interests in Senior Loans which are designed to provide temporary or "bridge" financing to a borrower pending the sale of identified assets or the arrangement of longer-term loans or the issuance and sale of debt obligations. The Fund may also invest in Senior Loans of borrowers that have obtained bridge loans from other parties. A borrower's use of bridge loans involves a risk that the borrower may be unable to locate permanent financing to replace the bridge loan, which may impair the borrower's perceived creditworthiness. Bridge loans may have less liquidity than other Senior Loans that were issued to fund corporate purposes on a longer term basis.

Although not anticipated in the normal course, the Fund may occasionally acquire warrants and other equity securities as part of a unit combining a Senior Loan and equity securities of a borrower or its affiliates. The acquisition of such equity securities will only be incidental to the Fund's purchase of a Senior Loan. The Fund may also acquire equity securities or credit securities (including non-dollar denominated equity or credit securities) issued in exchange for a Senior Loan or issued in connection with the debt restructuring or reorganization of a Borrower, or if such acquisition, in the judgment of the Advisor may enhance the value of a Senior Loan or would otherwise be consistent with the Fund's investment policies. Such warrants and equity securities will typically have limited value and there is no assurance that such securities will ever obtain value.

### **Short Sales**

The Fund may take short positions in securities, which are often referred to as "short sales." A short sale is a sale of a security the Fund has borrowed, with the expectation that the security will underperform the market. To settle the short sale transaction, the Fund buys the same security at a later date and returns it to the lender of the security. The Fund makes money on a short position if the market price of the security goes down after the short sale or if the market price of the securities it buys with the proceeds of the short sale increases more than that of the security sold short. Conversely, if the price of the security sold short goes up after the short sale, the Fund loses money because it has to pay more to replace the borrowed security than it received when it sold the security short. Short-selling is considered "leverage" and may involve substantial risk.

### **Portfolio Turnover**

The Fund buys and sells portfolio securities in the normal course of its investment activities. The proportion of the Fund's investment portfolio that is bought and sold during a year is known as the Fund's portfolio turnover rate. A portfolio turnover rate of 100% would occur, for example, if all of the portfolio securities (other than short-term securities) were replaced once during the fiscal year. A high portfolio turnover rate could result in the payment by the Fund of increased brokerage costs, expenses and taxes. The portfolio turnover rates for the Fund for the specified periods are set forth in the table below. Significant variations in portfolio turnover from year-to-year are generally the result of fluctuations in the size of the Fund or changes to the Fund's portfolio holdings.

## Portfolio Turnover Rate

### Fiscal Year Ended October 31,

<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
64%	51%

## INVESTMENT RISKS

The following risk disclosure supplements the discussion of the Fund's investment risks that appears in the Prospectus.

### **Overview**

An investment in the Fund should be made with an understanding of the risks that an investment in the Fund's shares entails, including the risk that the financial condition of the issuers of the securities held by the Fund or the general condition of the securities market may worsen and the value of the securities and therefore the value of the Fund may decline. The Fund may not be an appropriate investment for those who are unable or unwilling to assume the risks involved generally with such an investment. The past market and earnings performance of any of the securities included in the Fund is not predictive of their future performance.

### **Additional Market Disruption Risk**

In February 2022, Russia commenced a military attack on Ukraine. In response, various countries, including the United States, issued broad-ranging sanctions on Russia and certain Russian companies and individuals. The hostilities between the two countries may escalate and any existing or future sanctions could have a severe adverse effect on Russia's economy, currency, companies and region as well as negatively impact other regional and global economic markets of the world (including Europe and the United States), companies in such countries and various sectors, industries and markets for securities and commodities globally, such as oil and natural gas. Accordingly, the hostilities and sanctions may have a negative effect on the Fund's investments and performance beyond any direct exposure to Russian issuers or those of adjoining geographic regions. Russia may also take retaliatory actions or countermeasures, such as cyberattacks and espionage, which may negatively impact the countries and companies in which the Fund may invest. The extent and duration of the military action or future escalation of such hostilities; the extent and impact of existing and any future sanctions, market disruptions and volatility; and the result of any diplomatic negotiations cannot be predicted. These and any related events could have a significant negative impact on certain of the Fund's investments as well as the Fund's performance, and the value or liquidity of certain securities held by the Fund may decline significantly.

### **High Yield Securities Risk**

The Fund may invest in securities that are not rated by a Nationally Recognized Statistical Rating Organization ("NRSRO"), registered with the SEC or any state securities commission or listed on any national securities exchange. To the extent that such high-yield securities are rated, they typically will be rated below-investment grade and are subject to an increased risk of default in the payment of principal and interest as well as other risks.

### **Liquidity Risk**

Whether or not the securities held by the Fund are listed on a securities exchange, the principal trading market for certain of the securities in the Fund may be in the OTC market. As a result, the existence of a liquid trading market for the securities may depend on whether dealers will make a market in the securities. Certain regions, countries or asset types may also suffer periods of relative illiquidity. There can be no assurance that a market will be made for any of the securities, that any market for the securities will be maintained or that there will be sufficient liquidity of the securities in any markets made. The price at which the securities are held by the Fund will be adversely affected if trading markets for the securities are limited or absent.

### **Market Risk**

Market risk is the risk that a particular security, or shares of the Fund in general, may fall in value. Securities are subject to market fluctuations caused by such factors as economic, political, regulatory or market developments, changes in interest rates and perceived trends in securities prices. Shares of the Fund could decline in value or underperform other investments due to short-term market movements or any longer periods during more prolonged market downturns. In

addition, local, regional or global events such as war, acts of terrorism, spread of infectious diseases or other public health issues, recessions, natural disasters or other events could have a significant negative impact on the Fund and its investments. Such events may affect certain geographic regions, countries, sectors and industries more significantly than others. Such events could adversely affect the prices and liquidity of the Fund's portfolio securities or other instruments and could result in disruptions in the trading markets. Any of such circumstances could have a materially negative impact on the value of the Fund's shares and result in increased market volatility. During any such events, the Fund's shares may trade at increased premiums or discounts to their net asset value and the bid/ask spread on the Fund's shares may widen.

Health crises caused by the outbreak of infectious diseases or other public health issues, may exacerbate other pre-existing political, social, economic, market and financial risks. The impact of any such events, could negatively affect the global economy, as well as the economies of individual countries or regions, the financial performance of individual companies, sectors and industries, and the markets in general in significant and unforeseen ways. Any such impact could adversely affect the prices and liquidity of the securities and other instruments in which the Fund invests and negatively impact the Fund's investment return. For example, an outbreak of a respiratory disease designated as COVID-19 was first detected in China in December 2019 and subsequently spread internationally. The ensuing policies enacted by governments and central banks have caused and may continue to cause significant volatility and uncertainty in global financial markets, negatively impacting global growth prospects. While vaccines have been developed, there is no guarantee that vaccines will be effective against future variants of the disease. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic may be short term or may last for an extended period of time, and in either case could result in a substantial economic downturn or recession.

In addition, the operations of the Fund, the Advisor and the Fund's other service providers may be significantly impacted, or even temporarily or permanently halted, as a result of government quarantine measures, voluntary and precautionary restrictions on travel or meetings and other factors related to a public health emergency, including its potential adverse impact on the health of any such entity's personnel.

#### ***Non-U.S. Securities Risk***

An investment in non-U.S. securities involves risks in addition to the usual risks inherent in domestic investments, including currency risk. The value of a non-U.S. security in U.S. dollars tends to decrease when the value of the U.S. dollar rises against the non-U.S. currency in which the security is denominated and tends to increase when the value of the U.S. dollar falls against such currency. Non-U.S. securities are affected by the fact that in many countries there is less publicly available information about issuers than is available in the reports and ratings published about companies in the United States and companies may not be subject to uniform accounting, auditing and financial reporting standards. Other risks inherent in non-U.S. investments may include expropriation; confiscatory taxation; withholding taxes on dividends and interest; less extensive regulation of non-U.S. brokers, securities markets and issuers; diplomatic developments; and political or social instability. Non-U.S. economies may differ favorably or unfavorably from the U.S. economy in various respects, and many non-U.S. securities are less liquid and their prices tend to be more volatile than comparable U.S. securities. From time to time, non-U.S. securities may be difficult to liquidate rapidly without adverse price effects.

#### ***Passive Foreign Investment Companies Risk***

The Fund may invest in companies that are considered to be "passive foreign investment companies" ("PFICs"), which are generally certain non-U.S. corporations that receive at least 75% of their annual gross income from passive sources (such as interest, dividends, certain rents and royalties or capital gains) or that hold at least 50% of their assets in investments producing such passive income. Therefore, the Fund could be subject to U.S. federal income tax and additional interest charges on gains and certain distributions with respect to those equity interests, even if all the income or gain is distributed to its shareholders in a timely manner. The Fund will not be able to pass through to its shareholders any credit or deduction for such taxes.

#### ***Risk Factors of Loan Assignments and Participations***

Loans are subject to the risks associated with debt obligations in general including interest rate risk, credit risk and market risk. When a Loan is acquired from a Lender, the risk includes the credit risk associated with the obligor of the underlying loan. A Fund may incur additional credit risk when the Fund acquires a participation in a Loan from another lender because the Fund must assume the risk of insolvency or bankruptcy of the other lender from which the Loan was acquired. To the extent that loans involve obligors in foreign or emerging markets, such Loans are subject to the risks associated with foreign investments or investments in emerging markets in general.



## MANAGEMENT OF THE FUND

### Trustees and Officers

The general supervision of the duties performed for the Fund under the investment management agreement is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. There are seven Trustees of the Trust, one of whom is an "interested person" (as the term is defined in the 1940 Act) and six of whom are Trustees who are not officers or employees of First Trust or any of its affiliates ("*Independent Trustees*"). The Trustees set broad policies for the Fund, choose the Trust's officers and hire the Trust's investment advisor. The officers of the Trust manage its day-to-day operations and are responsible to the Board of Trustees. The following is a list of the Trustees and executive officers of the Trust and a statement of their present positions and principal occupations during the past five years, the number of portfolios each Trustee oversees and the other directorships they have held during the past five years, if applicable. Each Trustee has been elected for an indefinite term. The officers of the Trust serve indefinite terms. Each Trustee, except for James A. Bowen, is an Independent Trustee. Mr. Bowen is deemed an "interested person" (as that term is defined in the 1940 Act) ("*Interested Trustee*") of the Trust due to his position as Chief Executive Officer of First Trust, investment advisor to the Fund. The following table identifies the Trustees and Officers of the Trust. Unless otherwise indicated, the address of all persons below is c/o First Trust Advisors L.P., 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, IL 60187.

Name and Year of Birth	Position and Offices with Trust	Term of Office and Year First Elected or Appointed	Principal Occupations During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in the First Trust Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee	Other Trusteeships or Directorships Held by Trustee During the Past 5 Years
<b>TRUSTEE WHO IS AN INTERESTED PERSON OF THE TRUST</b>					
James A. Bowen <sup>(1)</sup> 1955	Chairman of the Board and Trustee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul>	Chief Executive Officer, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.; Chairman of the Board of Directors, BondWave LLC (Software Development Company) and Stonebridge Advisors LLC (Investment Advisor)	304 Portfolios	None
<b>INDEPENDENT TRUSTEES</b>					
Richard E. Erickson 1951	Trustee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul>	Retired; Physician, Edward-Elmhurst Medical Group (2021 to September 2023); Physician and Officer, Wheaton Orthopedics (1990 to 2021)	304 Portfolios	None
Thomas R. Kadlec 1957	Trustee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul>	Retired; President, ADM Investor Services, Inc. (Futures Commission Merchant) (2010 to July 2022)	304 Portfolios	Director, National Futures Association; formerly, Director of ADM Investor Services, Inc., ADM Investor Services International, ADMIS Hong/Kong Ltd., ADMIS Singapore Ltd. and Futures Industry Association

Name and Year of Birth	Position and Offices with Trust	Term of Office and Year First Elected or Appointed	Principal Occupations During Past 5 Years	Number of Portfolios in the First Trust Fund Complex Overseen by Trustee	Other Trusteeships or Directorships Held by Trustee During the Past 5 Years
<b>INDEPENDENT TRUSTEES</b>					
Denise M. Keefe 1964	Trustee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since 2021</li> </ul>	Executive Vice President, Advocate Aurora Health and President, Advocate Aurora Continuing Health Division (Integrated Healthcare System)	304 Portfolios	Director and Board Chair of Advocate Home Health Services, Advocate Home Care Products and Advocate Hospice; Director and Board Chair of Aurora At Home (since 2018); Director of Advocate Physician Partners Accountable Care Organization; Director of RML Long Term Acute Care Hospitals; Director of Senior Helpers (since 2021); and Director of MobileHelp (since 2022)
Robert F. Keith 1956	Trustee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul>	President, Hibs Enterprises (Financial and Management Consulting)	304 Portfolios	Formerly, Director of Trust Company of Illinois
Niel B. Nielson 1954	Trustee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul>	Senior Advisor (2018 to present), Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer (2015 to 2018), Pelita Harapan Educational Foundation (Educational Products and Services)	304 Portfolios	None
Bronwyn Wright 1971	Trustee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since 2023</li> </ul>	Independent Director to a number of Irish collective investment funds (2009 to present); Various roles at international affiliates of Citibank (1994 to 2009), including Managing Director, Citibank Europe plc and Head of Securities and Fund Services, Citi Ireland (2007 to 2009)	278 Portfolios	None

Name and Year of Birth	Position and Offices with Trust	Term of Office and Length of Service	Principal Occupations During Past 5 Years
<b>OFFICERS OF THE TRUST</b>			
James M. Dykas 1966	President and Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since 2016</li> </ul>	Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.; Chief Financial Officer, BondWave LLC (Software Development Company) and Stonebridge Advisors LLC (Investment Advisor)
W. Scott Jardine 1960	Secretary and Chief Legal Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul>	General Counsel, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.; Secretary and General Counsel, BondWave LLC; and Secretary, Stonebridge Advisors LLC
Daniel J. Lindquist 1970	Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul>	Managing Director, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.
Kristi A. Maher 1966	Chief Compliance Officer and Assistant Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Chief Compliance Officer since January 2011</li> <li>Assistant Secretary since inception</li> </ul>	International General Counsel, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P., February 2025 – present. Previously, Deputy General Counsel, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.

Name and Year of Birth	Position and Offices with Trust	Term of Office and Length of Service	Principal Occupations During Past 5 Years
Derek D. Maltbie 1972	Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Accounting Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since 2023</li> </ul>	Senior Vice President, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P., July 2021 – present. Previously, Vice President, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P., 2014 – 2021.
Roger F. Testin 1966	Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indefinite term</li> <li>Since inception</li> </ul>	Senior Vice President, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.

(1) Mr. Bowen is deemed an “interested person” of the Trust due to his position as Chief Executive Officer of First Trust, investment advisor of the Fund.

## Unitary Board Leadership Structure

Except in certain circumstances (as noted below) under which a Trustee is unable to sit on all the boards of all the funds in the First Trust Fund Complex (as defined below), each Trustee serves as a trustee of all open-end and closed-end funds in the First Trust Fund Complex (as defined below), which is known as a “unitary” board leadership structure. Each Trustee (except as noted below) currently serves as a trustee of First Trust Series Fund and First Trust Variable Insurance Trust, open-end funds with 12 portfolios advised by First Trust; First Trust Senior Floating Rate Income Fund II, First Trust Enhanced Equity Income Fund, First Trust Mortgage Income Fund, First Trust Specialty Finance and Financial Opportunities Fund, First Trust Intermediate Duration Preferred & Income Fund and First Trust High Yield Opportunities 2027 Term Fund, closed-end funds advised by First Trust; and First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund, First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund II, First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund III, First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund IV, First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund V, First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund VI, First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund VII, First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund VIII, First Trust Exchange-Traded AlphaDEX® Fund and First Trust Exchange-Traded AlphaDEX® Fund II, exchange-traded funds with 286 portfolios advised by First Trust (each a “*First Trust Fund*” and collectively, the “*First Trust Fund Complex*”). Ms. Wright also serves as director of First Trust Global Funds, a public limited company established in Ireland and an open-end umbrella fund representing 39 exchange-traded funds and one mutual fund, and advised by First Trust (collectively, the “*First Trust UCITS*”). In addition, Ms. Wright had previously served on the board of directors of First Trust Global Portfolios Management Limited, the manager to the First Trust UCITS and an affiliate of First Trust, but resigned such position effective March 6, 2023. Except as noted above, none of the Independent Trustees nor their immediate family members has ever been a director, officer or employee of, or consultant to, First Trust, First Trust Portfolios L.P. or their affiliates. Due to certain restrictions resulting from the 1940 Act, Ms. Wright does not serve as a Trustee of First Trust Exchange-Traded Fund, with, in the aggregate, 26 portfolios.

The management of the Fund, including general supervision of the duties performed for the Fund under the investment management agreement between the Trust, on behalf of the Fund, and the Advisor, is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. The Trustees set broad policies for the Fund, choose the Trust's officers and hire the Fund's investment advisor, sub-advisors and other service providers. The officers of the Trust manage the day-to-day operations and are responsible to the Board. The Board is composed of six Independent Trustees and one Interested Trustee. The Interested Trustee, James A. Bowen, serves as the Chairman of the Board for each fund in the First Trust Fund Complex.

The unitary board structure was adopted for the First Trust Funds because of the efficiencies it achieves with respect to the governance and oversight of the First Trust Funds. Each First Trust Fund is subject to the rules and regulations of the 1940 Act (and other applicable securities laws), which means that many of the First Trust Funds face similar issues with respect to certain of their fundamental activities, including risk management, portfolio liquidity, portfolio valuation and financial reporting. Because of the similar and often overlapping issues facing the First Trust Funds, the Board of the First Trust Funds believes that maintaining a unitary board structure promotes efficiency and consistency in the governance and oversight of all First Trust Funds and reduces the costs, administrative burdens and possible conflicts that may result from having multiple boards. In adopting a unitary board structure, the Trustees seek to provide effective governance through establishing a board the overall composition of which will, as a body, possess the appropriate skills, diversity, independence and experience to oversee the Fund's business.

Annually, the Board reviews its governance structure and the committee structures, their performance and functions, and it reviews any processes that would enhance Board governance over the Fund's business. The Board has determined that its leadership structure, including the unitary board and committee structure, is appropriate based on the characteristics of the funds it serves and the characteristics of the First Trust Fund Complex as a whole.

In order to streamline communication between the Advisor and the Independent Trustees and create certain efficiencies, the Board has a Lead Independent Trustee who is responsible for: (i) chairing all meetings of the Independent Trustees; (ii) working with the Advisor, Fund counsel and the independent legal counsel to the Independent Trustees to determine the agenda for Board meetings; (iii) serving as the principal contact for and facilitating communication between the Independent Trustees and the Fund's service providers, particularly the Advisor; and (iv) any other duties that the Independent Trustees may delegate to the Lead Independent Trustee. The Lead Independent Trustee is selected by the Independent Trustees and serves for such term as approved by the Independent Trustees or until his or her successor is selected. Robert F. Keith currently serves as the Lead Independent Trustee.

Effective March 12, 2024, the Independent Trustees may select one Independent Trustee to serve as a Vice Lead Independent Trustee for such term as approved by the Independent Trustees or until his or her successor is selected. The Vice Lead Independent Trustee assists the Lead Independent Trustee in the performance of his or her responsibilities and, in the absence of the Lead Independent Trustee, may act in the place of the Lead Independent Trustee. The Vice Lead Independent Trustee is also responsible for any other duties that the Independent Trustees may delegate to him or her. Thomas R. Kadlec was appointed to serve as the Vice Lead Independent Trustee, effective March 12, 2024.

The Board has established five standing committees (as described below) and has delegated certain of its responsibilities to those committees. The Board and its committees meet frequently throughout the year to oversee the Fund's activities, review contractual arrangements with and performance of service providers, oversee compliance with regulatory requirements and review Fund performance. The Independent Trustees are represented by independent legal counsel at all Board and committee meetings (other than meetings of the Dividend Committee). Generally, the Board acts by majority vote of all the Trustees, including a majority vote of the Independent Trustees if required by applicable law.

The five standing committees of the Board are: the Executive Committee, the Dividend Committee, the Nominating and Governance Committee, the Valuation Committee and the Audit Committee. The Dividend Committee, the Nominating and Governance Committee, the Valuation Committee and the Audit Committee each have a Chair and, since March 12, 2024, the Audit Committee has had a Vice Chair. The Committee Chairs, the Audit Committee Vice Chair, the Lead Independent Trustee and the Vice Lead Independent Trustee rotate periodically in serving in such capacities. The next rotation is currently scheduled to be effective January 1, 2026. In addition, the Lead Independent Trustee and the Vice Lead Independent Trustee currently serve on the Executive Committee with the Interested Trustee.

The Nominating and Governance Committee is responsible for appointing and nominating non-interested persons to the Board of Trustees. Messrs. Erickson, Kadlec, Keith, Nielson and Ms. Keefe and Wright are members of the Nominating and Governance Committee. If there is no vacancy on the Board of Trustees, the Board will not actively seek recommendations from other parties, including shareholders. The Board of Trustees has adopted a mandatory retirement age of 75 for Independent Trustees, beyond which age Independent Trustees are ineligible to serve. The Committee will not consider new trustee candidates who are 72 years of age or older or will turn 72 years old during the initial term. When a vacancy on the Board of Trustees occurs or is anticipated to occur and nominations are sought to fill such vacancy, the Nominating and Governance Committee may seek nominations from those sources it deems appropriate in its discretion, including shareholders of the Fund. To submit a recommendation for nomination as a candidate for a position on the Board of Trustees, shareholders of the Fund should mail such recommendation to W. Scott Jardine, Secretary, at the Trust's address, 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, Illinois 60187. Such recommendation shall include the following information: (i) evidence of Fund ownership of the person or entity recommending the candidate (if a Fund shareholder); (ii) a full description of the proposed candidate's background, including education, experience, current employment and date of birth; (iii) names and addresses of at least three professional references for the candidate; (iv) information as to whether the candidate is an "interested person" in relation to the Fund, as such term is defined in the 1940 Act, and such other information that may be considered to impair the candidate's independence; and (v) any other information that may be helpful to the Committee in evaluating the candidate. If a recommendation is received with satisfactorily completed information regarding a candidate during a time when a vacancy exists on the Board or during such other time as the Nominating and Governance Committee is accepting recommendations, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee and to counsel to the Independent Trustees. During the last fiscal year, the Nominating and Governance Committee held four meetings.

The Valuation Committee is responsible for the oversight of the Advisor as the "Valuation Designee" under Rule 2a-5 of the 1940 Act and its implementation of the valuation of the securities held in the Fund's portfolio. Messrs. Erickson, Kadlec, Keith, Nielson and Ms. Keefe and Wright are members of the Valuation Committee. During the last fiscal year, the Valuation Committee held four meetings.

The Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing the Fund's accounting and financial reporting process, the system of internal controls and audit process and for evaluating and appointing independent auditors (subject also to Board approval). Messrs. Erickson, Kadlec, Keith, Nielson and Ms. Keefe and Wright serve on the Audit Committee. Ms. Keefe was appointed to serve as the Vice Chair of the Audit Committee, effective March 12, 2024. During the last fiscal year, the Audit Committee held nine meetings.

The Executive Committee, which meets between Board meetings, is authorized to exercise all powers of and to act in the place of the Board to the extent permitted by each Fund's Declaration of Trust and By-Laws. Mr. Bowen, Mr. Keith and Mr. Kadlec are members of the Executive Committee. During the last fiscal year, the Executive Committee did not hold any meetings.

The Dividend Committee is responsible for assisting the Board in, or assuming the authority and power of the Board with respect to, the declaration and setting of the Fund's dividends. Messrs. Keith and Kadlec serve on the Dividend Committee. During the last fiscal year, the Dividend Committee did not hold any meetings.

## **Executive Officers**

The executive officers of the Trust hold the same positions with each fund in the First Trust Fund Complex (representing 304 portfolios) as they hold with the Trust, except Mr. Testin who is an executive officer of only the ETFs and open-end funds advised by First Trust.

## **Risk Oversight**

As part of the general oversight of the Fund, the Board is involved in the risk oversight of the Fund. The Board has adopted and periodically reviews policies and procedures designed to address the Fund's risks. Oversight of investment and compliance risk is performed primarily at the Board level in conjunction with the Advisor's investment oversight group and the Trust's Chief Compliance Officer ("CCO"). Oversight of other risks also occurs at the committee level. The Advisor's investment oversight group reports to the Board at quarterly meetings regarding, among other things, Fund performance and the various drivers of such performance. The Board reviews reports on the Fund's and the service providers' compliance policies and procedures at each quarterly Board meeting and receives an annual report from the CCO regarding the operations of the Fund's and the service providers' compliance programs. In addition, the Independent Trustees meet privately each quarter with the CCO. The Audit Committee reviews, with the Advisor and the Fund's independent auditors, the Fund's major financial risk exposures and the steps the Advisor has taken to monitor and control these exposures, including the Fund's risk assessment and risk management policies and guidelines. The Audit Committee also, as appropriate, reviews in a general manner the processes other Board committees have in place with respect to risk assessment and risk management. The Nominating and Governance Committee monitors all matters related to the corporate governance of the Trust. The Valuation Committee monitors valuation risk and oversees the Advisor's performance as Valuation Designee.

Not all risks that may affect the Fund can be identified nor can controls be developed to eliminate or mitigate their occurrence or effects. It may not be practical or cost effective to eliminate or mitigate certain risks, the processes and controls employed to address certain risks may be limited in their effectiveness, and some risks are simply beyond the reasonable control of the Fund or the Advisor or other service providers. For instance, as the use of Internet technology has become more prevalent, the Fund and its service providers have become more susceptible to potential operational risks through breaches in cyber security (generally, intentional and unintentional events that may cause the Fund or a service provider to lose proprietary information, suffer data corruption or lose operational capacity). There can be no guarantee that any risk management systems established by the Fund, its service providers, or issuers of the securities in which the Fund invests to reduce cyber security risks will succeed, and the Fund cannot control such systems put in place by service providers, issuers or other third parties whose operations may affect the Fund and/or its shareholders. Moreover, it is necessary to bear certain risks (such as investment-related risks) to achieve the Fund's goals. As a result of the foregoing and other factors, the Fund's ability to manage risk is subject to substantial limitations.

## **Board Diversification and Trustee Qualifications**

As described above, the Nominating and Governance Committee of the Board oversees matters related to the selection and nomination of Trustees. The Nominating and Governance Committee seeks to establish an effective Board with an appropriate range of skills and diversity, including, as appropriate, differences in background, professional experience, education, vocation, and other individual characteristics and traits in the aggregate. Each Trustee must meet

certain basic requirements, including relevant skills and experience, time availability and, if qualifying as an Independent Trustee, independence from the Advisor, underwriters or other service providers, including any affiliates of these entities.

Listed below for each current Trustee are the experiences, qualifications and attributes that led to the conclusion, as of the date of this SAI, that each current Trustee should serve as a Trustee in light of the Trust's business and structure.

Richard E. Erickson, M.D., was previously an orthopedic surgeon with Edward-Elmhurst Medical Group from 2021 to September 2023. Prior thereto, he was President of Wheaton Orthopedics (from 1990 to 2021), a co-owner and director of a fitness center and a limited partner of two real estate companies. Dr. Erickson has served as a Trustee of each First Trust Fund since its inception and of the First Trust Funds since 1999. Dr. Erickson has also served as the Lead Independent Trustee (2008 – 2009 and 2017 – 2019) and on the Executive Committee (2008 – 2009 and 2017 – 2022), Chairman of the Nominating and Governance Committee (2003 – 2007 and 2014 – 2016), Chairman of the Audit Committee (2012 – 2013) and Chairman of the Valuation Committee (June 2006 – 2007; 2010 – 2011 and 2020 – 2022) of the First Trust Funds. He currently serves as Chairman of the Audit Committee (since January 1, 2023) of the First Trust Funds.

Thomas R. Kadlec was previously President of ADM Investor Services Inc. ("ADMIS"), a futures commission merchant and wholly-owned subsidiary of the Archer Daniels Midland Company ("ADM") from 2010 to July 2022. Mr. Kadlec was employed by ADMIS and its affiliates since 1990 in various accounting, financial, operations and risk management capacities. Mr. Kadlec served on the boards of several international affiliates of ADMIS until July 2022 and served as a member of ADM's Integrated Risk Committee from 2008 – 2018, which was tasked with the duty of implementing and communicating enterprise-wide risk management. From 2014 to 2022, Mr. Kadlec was on the board of the Futures Industry Association. In 2017, Mr. Kadlec was elected to the board of the National Futures Association. Mr. Kadlec has served as a Trustee of each First Trust Fund since its inception. Mr. Kadlec also served on the Executive Committee from the organization of the first First Trust closed-end fund in 2003 through 2005 (and 2014 – 2019) until he was elected as the first Lead Independent Trustee in December 2005, serving as such through 2007 (and 2014 – 2016). He also served as Chairman of the Valuation Committee (2008 – 2009 and 2017 – 2019), Chairman of the Audit Committee (2010 – 2011 and 2020 – 2022) and Chairman of the Nominating and Governance Committee (2012 – 2013). He currently serves as Vice Lead Independent Trustee (since March 12, 2024), on the Executive Committee (since March 12, 2024), on the Dividend Committee (since March 12, 2024) and as Chairman of the Nominating and Governance Committee (since January 1, 2023) of the First Trust Funds.

Denise M. Keefe has been Senior Vice President of Advocate Health, Continuing Health Division since 2023, and from 2018 to 2023 was Executive Vice President of Advocate Aurora Health (together, with Advocate Health, "Advocate"). Advocate is one of the largest integrated healthcare systems in the U.S. serving Illinois and Wisconsin. Ms. Keefe has been employed by Advocate since 1993 and is responsible for the Continuing Health Division's strategic direction, fiscal management, business development, revenue enhancement, operational efficiencies, and human resource management of 4,000 employees. Ms. Keefe also currently serves on the boards of several organizations within the Advocate Aurora Continuing Health Division and other health care organizations, including RML Long Term Acute Care Hospitals (since 2014). Prior thereto, Ms. Keefe was Corporate Vice President, Marketing and Business Development for the Visiting Nurse Association of Chicago (1989 – 1992) and a former Board Member of Sherman West Court Skilled Nursing Facility. Ms. Keefe has served as a Trustee of the First Trust Funds and on the Audit Committee, Nominating and Governance Committee and Valuation Committee of the First Trust Funds since November 1, 2021. In addition, she currently serves as Audit Committee Vice Chair (since March 12, 2024) of the First Trust Funds.

Robert F. Keith is President of Hibs Enterprises, a financial and management consulting firm. Mr. Keith has been with Hibs Enterprises since 2003. Prior thereto, Mr. Keith spent 18 years with ServiceMaster and Aramark, including three years as President and COO of ServiceMaster Consumer Services, where he led the initial expansion of certain products overseas; five years as President and COO of ServiceMaster Management Services; and two years as President of Aramark ServiceMaster Management Services. Mr. Keith is a certified public accountant and also has held the positions of Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer of ServiceMaster, at which time he oversaw the financial aspects of ServiceMaster's expansion of its Management Services division into Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Mr. Keith has served as a Trustee of the First Trust Funds since 2006. Mr. Keith has also served as the Chairman of the Audit Committee (2008 – 2009 and 2017 – 2019), Chairman of the Nominating and Governance Committee (2010 – 2011 and 2020 – 2022) and Chairman of the Valuation Committee (2014 – 2016) of the First Trust Funds. He served as Lead Independent Trustee and on the Executive Committee (2012 – 2016). He currently serves as Lead Independent Trustee and on the Executive Committee (since January 1, 2023) and as Chairman of the Dividend Committee (since January 1, 2023) of the First Trust Funds.



Niel B. Nielson, Ph.D., has been the Senior Advisor of Pelita Harapan Educational Foundation, a global provider of educational products and services since 2018. Prior thereto, Mr. Nielson served as the Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer of Pelita Harapan Educational Foundation for three years. Mr. Nielson formerly served as the President and Chief Executive Officer of Dew Learning LLC from 2012 through 2014. Mr. Nielson formerly served as President of Covenant College (2002 – 2012), and as a partner and trader (of options and futures contracts for hedging options) for Ritchie Capital Markets Group (1996 – 1997), where he held an administrative management position at this proprietary derivatives trading company. He also held prior positions in new business development for ServiceMaster Management Services Company and in personnel and human resources for NationsBank of North Carolina, N.A. and Chicago Research and Trading Group, Ltd. (“CRT”). His international experience includes serving as a director of CRT Europe, Inc. for two years, directing out of London all aspects of business conducted by the U.K. and European subsidiary of CRT. Prior to that, Mr. Nielson was a trader and manager at CRT in Chicago. Mr. Nielson has served as a Trustee of each First Trust Fund since its inception and of the First Trust Funds since 1999. Mr. Nielson has also served as Chairman of the Audit Committee (2003 – 2007 and 2014 – 2016), Chairman of the Valuation Committee (2012 – 2013), Chairman of the Nominating and Governance Committee (2008 – 2009 and 2017 – 2019), Chairman of the Dividend Committee (2020 – 2022), and Lead Independent Trustee (2010 – 2011 and 2020 – 2022) of the First Trust Funds. Further, he has served as a member of the Executive Committee (2010 – 2011 and January 1, 2020 – March 12, 2024) and the Dividend Committee (October 19, 2020 – March 12, 2024) of the First Trust Funds. He currently serves as Chairman of the Valuation Committee (since January 1, 2023) of the First Trust Funds.

Bronwyn Wright has acted as an independent director to a number of Irish collective investment funds since 2009. Ms. Wright is a former Managing Director of Citibank Europe plc and Head of Securities and Fund Services for Citi Ireland. In these positions, she was responsible for the management and strategic direction of Citi Ireland’s securities and fund services business which included funds, custody, security finance/lending and global agency and trust. She also had responsibility for leading, managing and growing the Trustee, Custodian and Depositary business in Ireland, the United Kingdom, Luxembourg, Jersey and Cayman. Ms. Wright has served as a Trustee of the First Trust Funds and on the Audit Committee, Nominating and Governance Committee and Valuation Committee of the First Trust Funds since September 10, 2023.

James A. Bowen is Chief Executive Officer of First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P. Mr. Bowen is involved in the day-to-day management of the First Trust Funds and serves on the Executive Committee. He has over 35 years of experience in the investment company business in sales, sales management and executive management. Mr. Bowen has served as a Trustee of each First Trust Fund since its inception and of the First Trust Funds since 1999.

Effective January 1, 2024, the fixed annual retainer paid to the Independent Trustees is \$285,000 per year and an annual per fund fee of \$7,500 for each closed-end fund, \$2,000 for each actively managed fund, \$750 for each target outcome fund and \$500 for each index fund. The fixed annual retainer is allocated equally among each fund in the First Trust Fund Complex rather than being allocated pro rata based on each fund’s net assets. Additionally, the Lead Independent Trustee is paid \$30,000 annually, the Vice Lead Independent Trustee is paid up to \$25,000 annually (effective March 12, 2024), the Chairman of the Audit Committee is paid \$25,000 annually, the Chairman of the Valuation Committee is paid \$20,000 annually, the Chairman of the Nominating and Governance Committee is paid \$20,000 annually and the Vice Chair of the Audit Committee is paid \$15,000 annually (effective March 12, 2024) to serve in such capacities with compensation allocated pro rata among each fund in the First Trust Fund Complex based on its net assets. Trustees are also reimbursed by the funds in the First Trust Fund Complex for travel and out-of-pocket expenses incurred in connection with all meetings. Each Committee Chair, the Audit Committee Vice Chair, the Lead Independent Trustee and the Vice Lead Independent Trustee rotate in accordance with the rotation periods established by the Board.

The following table sets forth the total compensation (including reimbursement for travel and out-of-pocket expenses) paid by the Fund and First Trust Fund Complex to each of the Independent Trustees for the fiscal year ended October 31, 2024 and the calendar year ended December 31, 2024, respectively. The Trust has no retirement or pension plans. The officers and Trustee who are “interested persons” as designated above serve without any compensation from the Trust. The Trust has no employees. Its officers are compensated by First Trust.

<b>Name of Trustee</b>	<b>Total Compensation from the Fund <sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>Total Compensation from the First Trust Fund Complex <sup>(2)</sup></b>
Richard E. Erickson	\$3,218	\$653,176
Thomas R. Kadlec	\$3,221	\$666,676
Denise M. Keefe	\$3,209	\$636,112
Robert F. Keith	\$3,221	\$657,442
Niel B. Nielson	\$3,216	\$644,660
Bronwyn Wright	\$3,315	\$617,975

(1) The compensation paid by the Fund to the Independent Trustees for the fiscal year ended October 31, 2024 for services to the Fund.

(2) The total compensation paid to the Independent Trustees for the calendar year ended December 31, 2024 for services to the 307 portfolios existing in 2024, which consisted of 12 open-end mutual funds, 13 closed-end funds and 282 exchange-traded funds.

The following table sets forth the dollar range of equity securities beneficially owned by the Trustees in the Fund and in other funds overseen by the Trustees in the First Trust Fund Complex as of December 31, 2024:

<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Dollar Range of Equity Securities in the Fund (Number of Shares Held)</b>	<b>Aggregate Dollar Range of Equity Securities in All Registered Investment Companies Overseen by Trustee in the First Trust Fund Complex</b>
<b>Interested Trustee</b>		
James A. Bowen	None	Over \$100,000
<b>Independent Trustees</b>		
Richard E. Erickson	None	Over \$100,000
Thomas R. Kadlec	None	Over \$100,000
Denise M. Keefe	None	Over \$100,000
Robert F. Keith	None	Over \$100,000
Niel B. Nielson	None	Over \$100,000
Bronwyn Wright	None	None

As of January 31, 2025, the Independent Trustees of the Trust and their immediate family members did not own beneficially or of record any class of securities of an investment advisor or principal underwriter of the Fund or any person directly or indirectly controlling, controlled by or under common control with an investment advisor or principal underwriter of the Fund.

As of January 31, 2025, the officers and Trustees, in the aggregate, owned less than 1% of the shares of the Fund.

The table set forth in *Exhibit A* shows the percentage ownership of each shareholder or "group" (as that term is used in Section 13(d) of the 1934 Act) who, based on the securities position listing reports as of January 31, 2025, owned of record, or is known by the Trust to have owned of record or beneficially, 5% or more of the shares of the Fund (the "*Principal Holders*"). A control person is one who owns, either directly or indirectly, more than 25% of the voting securities of the Fund or acknowledges the existence of control. A party that controls the Fund may be able to significantly influence the outcome of any item presented to shareholders for approval. The Fund does not have any knowledge of who the ultimate beneficiaries are of the shares.

**Investment Advisor.** First Trust, 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, is the investment advisor to the Fund. First Trust is a limited partnership with one limited partner, Grace Partners of DuPage L.P., and one general partner, The Charger Corporation. Grace Partners of DuPage L.P. is a limited partnership with one general partner, The Charger Corporation, and a number of limited partners. The Charger Corporation is an Illinois corporation controlled by James A. Bowen, the Chief Executive Officer of First Trust. First Trust discharges its responsibilities to the Fund subject to the policies of the Fund.

First Trust provides investment tools and portfolios for advisors and investors. First Trust is committed to theoretically sound portfolio construction and empirically verifiable investment management approaches. Its asset



management philosophy and investment discipline are deeply rooted in the application of intuitive factor analysis and model implementation to enhance investment decisions.

First Trust acts as investment advisor for the Fund and manages the investment and reinvestment of the assets of the Fund. First Trust also administers the Trust's business affairs, provides office facilities and equipment and certain clerical, bookkeeping and administrative services, and permits any of its officers or employees to serve without compensation as Trustees or officers of the Trust if elected to such positions.

Pursuant to an investment management agreement between First Trust and the Trust, on behalf of the Fund (the "*Investment Management Agreement*"), the Fund has agreed to pay First Trust an annual management fee equal to 0.65% of its average daily net assets. First Trust also provides fund reporting services to the Fund for a flat annual fee in the amount of \$9,250, which is included in the annual management fee.

The Fund is responsible for all its expenses, including the investment advisory fees, costs of transfer agency, custody, fund administration, legal, audit and other services, interest, taxes, brokerage commissions and other expenses connected with executions of portfolio transactions, any distribution fees or expenses and extraordinary expenses. First Trust has agreed to waive fees and/or pay Fund expenses to the extent necessary to prevent the operating expenses of the Fund (excluding taxes, interest, all brokerage commissions, other normal charges incident to the purchase and sale of portfolio securities, 12b-1 distribution and service fees and extraordinary expenses) from exceeding 1.00% of average daily net assets of any class of shares of the Fund until February 28, 2025 (the "*Expense Cap*"), and then 1.35% from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2034. Fees waived or expenses borne by the investment advisor and sub-advisor are subject to reimbursement by the Fund for up to three years from the date the fee was waived or expense was incurred, but no reimbursement payment will be made by the Fund at any time if it would result in the Fund's expenses exceeding the applicable expense limitation in place for the most recent fiscal year for which such expense limitation was in place.

Under the Investment Management Agreement, First Trust shall not be liable for any loss sustained by reason of the purchase, sale or retention of any security, whether or not such purchase, sale or retention shall have been based upon the investigation and research made by any other individual, firm or corporation, if such recommendation shall have been selected with due care and in good faith, except loss resulting from willful misfeasance, bad faith, or gross negligence on the part of First Trust in the performance of its obligations and duties, or by reason of its reckless disregard of its obligations and duties. The Investment Management Agreement continues until two years after the initial issuance of Fund shares, and thereafter only if approved annually by the Board of Trustees, including a majority of the Independent Trustees. The Investment Management Agreement terminates automatically upon assignment and is terminable at any time without penalty as to the Fund by the Board of Trustees, including a majority of the Independent Trustees, or by vote of the holders of a majority of the Fund's outstanding voting securities on 60 days' written notice to First Trust, or by First Trust on 60 days' written notice to the Fund.

The following table sets forth the management fees (net of fee waivers and expense reimbursements, where applicable) paid by the Fund to First Trust, and the fees waived and expenses reimbursed by First Trust for the specified periods.

Amount of Management Fees (Net of Fee Waivers and Expense Reimbursements by First Trust)			Amount of Fees Waived and Expenses Reimbursed By First Trust		
Fiscal Year Ended October 31,			Fiscal Year Ended October 31,		
2024	2023	2022	2024	2023	2022
\$393,401	\$562,066	\$999,294	\$130,620	\$156,230	\$16,381

**Portfolio Managers.** The portfolio managers are jointly and primarily responsible for the day-to-day management of the Fund. Each portfolio manager is also a member of the First Trust Leveraged Finance Team (the "*Leveraged Finance Team*") and serves as a portfolio manager of the Fund. There are currently two portfolio managers, as follows:

Name	Position with First Trust	Length of Service with First Trust	Principal Occupation During Past Five Years
William Housey, CFA	Managing Director of Fixed Income and Senior Portfolio Manager	Since 2010	Managing Director of Fixed Income, Senior Vice President and Senior Portfolio Manager, First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.
Jeffrey Scott, CFA	Senior Vice President and Portfolio Manager	Since 2010	Senior Vice President and Portfolio Manager, (March 2020-present), formerly, Deputy Credit Officer (2018-2020), First Trust Advisors L.P. and First Trust Portfolios L.P.

**William Housey, CFA, Managing Director of Fixed Income, Senior Portfolio Manager.** Mr. Housey joined First Trust Advisors L.P. in June 2010 as the Senior Portfolio Manager for the Leveraged Finance Team and has worked in the investment management industry since 1996. Mr. Housey is a Managing Director of Fixed Income and is also a member of the First Trust Strategic Model Investment Committee and the Fixed Income Sub-Committee. Prior to joining First Trust, Mr. Housey was at Morgan Stanley Investment Management and its wholly owned subsidiary, Van Kampen Funds, Inc. for 11 years where he last served as Executive Director and Co-Portfolio Manager. Mr. Housey has extensive experience in the portfolio management of both leveraged and unleveraged credit products, including senior loans, high-yield bonds, credit derivatives and corporate restructurings. Mr. Housey received a B.S. in Finance from Eastern Illinois University and an M.B.A. in Finance as well as Management and Strategy from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Business. He also holds the FINRA Series 7, Series 52 and Series 63 licenses. Mr. Housey also holds the Chartered Financial Analyst designation. He is a member of the CFA Institute and the CFA Society of Chicago. Mr. Housey also serves on the Village of Glen Ellyn, IL Police Pension Board.

**Jeffrey Scott, CFA, Senior Vice President, Portfolio Manager.** Mr. Scott is a Portfolio Manager for the Leveraged Finance Team at First Trust Advisors L.P. He has worked in the investment management industry since 1990 and has extensive experience in credit analysis, product development, and product management. Prior to joining First Trust, Mr. Scott served as an Assistant Portfolio Manager and as a Senior Credit Analyst for Morgan Stanley/Van Kampen from October 2008 to June 2010. As Assistant Portfolio Manager, Mr. Scott served on a team that managed over \$4.0 billion of Senior Loan assets in three separate funds: Van Kampen Senior Loan Fund; Van Kampen Senior Income Trust; and Van Kampen Dynamic Credit Opportunities Fund. His responsibilities included assisting with portfolio construction, buy and sell decision making, and monitoring fund liquidity and leverage. Mr. Scott earned a B.S. in Finance and Economics from Elmhurst College and an M.B.A. with specialization in Analytical Finance and Econometrics and Statistics from the University of Chicago. He also holds the Chartered Financial Analyst designation and is a member of the CFA Institute and the CFA Society of Chicago.

As of October 31, 2024, none of the portfolio managers beneficially owned any shares of the Fund.

**Compensation.** The portfolio managers are compensated with an industry competitive salary and a year-end discretionary bonus based on client service, asset growth and the performance of the Fund. Each portfolio manager's performance is formally evaluated annually based on a variety of factors. Bonus compensation is primarily a function of the firm's overall annual profitability and the individual portfolio manager's contribution as measured by the overall investment performance of client portfolios in the strategy the portfolio manager manages relative to the strategy's general benchmark.

## Accounts Managed By Portfolio Managers

The portfolio managers manage the investment vehicles (other than the Fund) with the number of accounts and assets, as of October 31, 2024, as set forth in the table below:

Portfolio Manager	Registered Investment Companies Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands)	Other Pooled Investment Vehicles Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands)	Other Accounts Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands)	Registered Investment Companies With Performance Fees Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands)	Other Pooled Investment Vehicles With Performance Fees Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands)	Other Accounts With Performance Fees Number of Accounts (\$ Assets in Thousands)
William Housey	9 (\$6,431,749)	1 (\$0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Jeffrey Scott	6 (\$6,417,068)	1 (\$0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Conflicts.** None of the accounts managed by the portfolio managers pay an advisory fee that is based upon the performance of the account. In addition, First Trust believes that there are no material conflicts of interest that may arise in connection with the portfolio manager's management of the Fund's investments and the investments of the other accounts managed by the portfolio managers. However, because the investment strategy of the Fund and the investment strategies of many of the other accounts managed by the portfolio managers are based on fairly mechanical investment processes, the portfolio managers may recommend that certain clients sell and other clients buy a given security at the same time. In addition, because the investment strategies of the Fund and other accounts managed by the portfolio managers generally result in the clients investing in readily available securities, First Trust believes that there should not be material conflicts in the allocation of investment opportunities between the Fund and other accounts managed by the portfolio managers.

## BROKERAGE ALLOCATIONS

First Trust is responsible for decisions to buy and sell securities for the Fund and for the placement of the Fund's securities business, the negotiation of the commissions to be paid on brokered transactions, the prices for principal trades in securities, and the allocation of portfolio brokerage and principal business. It is the policy of First Trust to seek the best execution at the best security price available with respect to each transaction, and with respect to brokered transactions in light of the overall quality of brokerage and research services provided to First Trust and its clients. The best price to the Fund means the best net price without regard to the mix between purchase or sale price and commission, if any. Purchases may be made from underwriters, dealers and, on occasion, the issuers. Commissions will be paid on the Fund's futures and options transactions, if any. The purchase price of portfolio securities purchased from an underwriter or dealer may include underwriting commissions and dealer spreads. The Fund may pay markups on principal transactions. In selecting broker-dealers and in negotiating commissions, First Trust considers, among other things, the firm's reliability, the quality of its execution services on a continuing basis and its financial condition. Fund portfolio transactions may be effected with broker-dealers who have assisted investors in the purchase of shares.

Section 28(e) of the 1934 Act permits an investment advisor, under certain circumstances, to cause an account to pay a broker or dealer who supplies brokerage and research services a commission for effecting a transaction in excess of the amount of commission another broker or dealer would have charged for effecting the transaction. Brokerage and research services include (a) furnishing advice as to the value of securities, the advisability of investing, purchasing or selling securities, and the availability of securities or purchasers or sellers of securities; (b) furnishing analyses and reports concerning issuers, industries, securities, economic factors and trends, portfolio strategy and the performance of accounts; and (c) effecting securities transactions and performing functions incidental thereto (such as clearance, settlement and custody). Such brokerage and research services are often referred to as "soft dollars" or "commission sharing agreements." Currently First Trust does not use soft dollars or commission sharing agreements, but may do so in the future.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, in selecting brokers, First Trust may in the future consider investment and market information and other research, such as economic, securities and performance measurement research, provided by such brokers, and the quality and reliability of brokerage services, including execution capability, performance and financial responsibility. Accordingly, the commissions charged by any such broker may be greater than the amount another firm might charge if First Trust determines in good faith that the amount of such commissions is reasonable in relation to the value of

the research information and brokerage services provided by such broker to First Trust or the Trust. In addition, First Trust must determine that the research information received in this manner provides the Fund with benefits by supplementing the research otherwise available to the Fund. The Investment Management Agreement provides that such higher commissions will not be paid by the Fund unless the Advisor determines in good faith that the amount is reasonable in relation to the services provided. The investment advisory fees paid by the Fund to First Trust under the Investment Management Agreement would not be reduced as a result of receipt by First Trust of research services.

First Trust places portfolio transactions for other advisory accounts advised by it, and research services furnished by firms through which the Fund effects its securities transactions may be used by First Trust in servicing all of its accounts; not all of such services may be used by First Trust in connection with the Fund. First Trust believes it is not possible to measure separately the benefits from research services to each of the accounts (including the Fund) advised by it. Because the volume and nature of the trading activities of the accounts are not uniform, the amount of commissions in excess of those charged by another broker paid by each account for brokerage and research services will vary. However, First Trust believes such costs to the Fund will not be disproportionate to the benefits received by the Fund on a continuing basis. First Trust seeks to allocate portfolio transactions equitably whenever concurrent decisions are made to purchase or sell securities by the Fund and another advisory account. In some cases, this procedure could have an adverse effect on the price or the amount of securities available to the Fund. In making such allocations between the Fund and other advisory accounts, the main factors considered by First Trust are the respective investment objectives, the relative size of portfolio holding of the same or comparable securities, the availability of cash for investment and the size of investment commitments generally held.

## Brokerage Commissions

The following table sets forth the aggregate amount of brokerage commissions paid by the Fund for the specified periods. Significant variations in the amount the Fund paid in brokerage commissions from year-to-year are generally the result of fluctuations in the size of the Fund or changes to the Fund's portfolio holdings.

### Aggregate Amount of Brokerage Commissions

Fiscal Year Ended October 31,		
2024	2023	2022
\$0	\$0	\$146

During the last fiscal year, the Fund held securities of Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC, a regular broker or dealer of the Fund as defined in Rule 10b-1 under the 1940 Act. As of October 31, 2024, the Fund's investment was 2.52% of the Fund's net assets.

## ADMINISTRATOR, FUND ACCOUNTANT, CUSTODIAN, TRANSFER AGENT AND DISTRIBUTOR

**Administrator and Fund Accountant.** The Fund has appointed The Bank of New York Mellon ("BNY"), located at 240 Greenwich Street, New York, New York 10286, to serve as the Fund's administrator and provide the Fund with accounting services pursuant to a fund administration and accounting agreement (the "*Administration and Accounting Agreement*"). Under the Administration and Accounting Agreement, BNY is obligated, on a continuous basis, to provide such administrative services as the Board reasonably deems necessary for the proper administration of the Trust and the Fund. BNY generally will assist in many aspects of the Trust's and the Fund's operations, including accounting, bookkeeping and record keeping services (including, without limitation, the maintenance of such books and records as are required under the 1940 Act and the rules thereunder, except as maintained by other service providers), assist in preparing reports to shareholders or investors, prepare and file tax returns, supply financial information and supporting data for reports to and filings with the SEC and various state Blue Sky authorities and supply supporting documentation for meetings of the Board.

Pursuant to the Administration and Accounting Services Agreement, the Trust on behalf of the Fund has agreed to indemnify the Administrator for certain liabilities, including certain liabilities arising under the federal securities laws, unless such loss or liability results from negligence or willful misconduct in the performance of its duties.

Pursuant to the Administration and Accounting Services Agreement, the Trust on behalf of the Fund has agreed to pay such compensation as is mutually agreed from time to time and such out-of-pocket expenses as incurred by BNY in the

performance of its duties. The following table sets forth the amounts paid by the Fund to BNY under the Administration and Accounting Services Agreement for the specified periods set forth below.

**Aggregate Amount Paid to Administrator**

Fiscal Year Ended October 31,		
2024	2023	2022
\$59,847	\$74,701	\$119,040

**Custodian.** The Trust has appointed BNY to serve as the Fund's custodian pursuant to a custody agreement (the "*Custody Agreement*"). Pursuant to the terms of the Custody Agreement, BNY is generally responsible for the safekeeping of the Fund's assets and performing various other administrative duties set forth in the agreement.

**Transfer Agent.** BNY Mellon Investment Servicing (US) Inc. ("*BNYM IS*") serves as the Fund's transfer agent pursuant to a Transfer Agency and Shareholder Services Agreement. As transfer agent, BNYM IS is responsible for maintaining shareholder records for the Fund. Its principal address is 301 Bellevue Parkway, Wilmington, Delaware 19809.

Shares of the Fund may be purchased through certain financial companies who are agents of the Fund for the limited purpose of completing purchases and sales. For services provided by such a company with respect to Fund shares held by that company on behalf of its customers pursuant to a sub-transfer agency, omnibus account service or sub-accounting agreement, the Fund may pay a fee to such financial service companies for record keeping and sub-accounting services provided to their customers.

**Distributor.** First Trust Portfolios L.P., an affiliate of First Trust, is the distributor ("*FTP*" or the "*Distributor*") and principal underwriter of the shares of the Fund. Its principal address is 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, Illinois 60187.

FTP serves as the principal underwriter of the shares of the Fund pursuant to a "best efforts" arrangement as provided by a distribution agreement with the Trust (the "*Distribution Agreement*"). Pursuant to the Distribution Agreement, the Trust appointed FTP to be its agent for the distribution of the Fund's shares on a continuous offering basis. FTP sells shares to or through brokers, dealers, banks or other qualified financial intermediaries (collectively referred to as "*Dealers*"), or others, in a manner consistent with the then effective registration statement of the Trust for the Fund. Pursuant to the Distribution Agreement, FTP, at its own expense, finances certain activities incident to the sale and distribution of the Fund's shares, including printing and distributing of prospectuses and statements of additional information to other than existing shareholders, the printing and distributing of sales literature, advertising and payment of compensation and giving of concessions to Dealers. FTP receives for its services the excess, if any, of the sales price of the Fund's shares less the net asset value of those shares, and remits a majority or all of such amounts to the Dealers who sold the shares; FTP may act as such a Dealer. First Trust Portfolios also receives compensation pursuant to a distribution plan adopted by the Trust pursuant to Rule 12b-1 and described herein under "Distribution and Service Plan." FTP receives any contingent deferred sales charges ("*CDSCs*") imposed on redemptions of shares, but any amounts as to which a reinstatement privilege is not exercised are set off against and reduce amounts otherwise payable to FTP pursuant to the distribution plan.

The following table sets forth the amount of underwriting commissions paid by the Fund to the Distributor and the amount of compensation on redemptions and repurchases received by the Distributor for the specified periods.

Underwriting Commissions Retained by Distributor			Compensation on Redemptions and Repurchases		
Fiscal Year Ended October 31,			Fiscal Year Ended October 31,		
2024	2023	2022	2024	2023	2022
\$2,390	\$3,204	\$1,159	\$1,086	\$2	\$5,614

The Advisor may, from time to time and from its own resources, pay, defray or absorb costs relating to distribution, including payments out of its own resources to the Distributor, or to otherwise promote the sale of shares. The Advisor's available resources to make these payments may include profits from advisory fees received from the Fund. The services the Advisor may pay for include, but are not limited to, advertising and attaining access to certain conferences and seminars, as well as being presented with the opportunity to address investors and industry professionals through speeches and written marketing materials.

## ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS TO FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

First Trust or its affiliates may from time to time make payments, out of their own resources, to certain broker-dealers, registered investment advisers, banks or other intermediaries (collectively, "*intermediaries*") that sell shares of First Trust mutual funds and ETFs ("*First Trust Funds*") to promote the sales and retention of Fund shares by those firms and their customers. The amounts of these payments vary by intermediary. The level of payments that First Trust is willing to provide to a particular intermediary may be affected by, among other factors, (i) the firm's total assets or Fund shares held in and recent net investments into First Trust Funds, (ii) the value of the assets invested in the First Trust Funds by the intermediary's customers, (iii) redemption rates, (iv) its ability to attract and retain assets, (v) the intermediary's reputation in the industry, (vi) the level and/or type of marketing assistance and educational activities provided by the intermediary, (vii) the firm's level of participation in First Trust Funds' sales and marketing programs, (viii) the firm's compensation program for its registered representatives who sell Fund shares and provide services to Fund shareholders, and (ix) the asset class of the First Trust Funds for which these payments are provided. Such payments are generally asset-based but also may include the payment of a lump sum.

First Trust may also make payments to certain intermediaries for certain administrative services and shareholder processing services, including record keeping and sub-accounting of shareholder accounts pursuant to a sub-transfer agency, omnibus account service or sub-accounting agreement. All fees payable by First Trust under this category of services may be charged back to the Fund, subject to approval by the Board.

First Trust and/or its affiliates may make payments, out of its own assets, to those firms as compensation and/or reimbursement for marketing support and/or program servicing to selected intermediaries that are registered as holders or dealers of record for accounts invested in one or more of the First Trust Funds or that make First Trust Fund shares available through certain selected Fund no-transaction fee institutional platforms and fee-based wrap programs at certain financial intermediaries. Program servicing payments typically apply to employee benefit plans, such as retirement plans, or fee-based advisory programs but may apply to retail sales and assets in certain situations. The payments are based on such factors as the type and nature of services or support furnished by the intermediary and are generally asset-based. Services for which an intermediary receives marketing support payments may include, but are not limited to, business planning assistance, advertising, educating the intermediary's personnel about First Trust Funds in connection with shareholder financial planning needs, placement on the intermediary's preferred or recommended fund list, and access to sales meetings, sales representatives and management representatives of the intermediary. In addition, intermediaries may be compensated for enabling representatives of First Trust and/or its affiliates to participate in and/or present at conferences or seminars, sales or training programs for invited registered representatives and other employees, client and investor events and other events sponsored by the intermediary. Services for which an intermediary receives program servicing payments typically include, but are not limited to, record keeping, reporting or transaction processing and shareholder communications and other account administration services, but may also include services rendered in connection with Fund/investment selection and monitoring, employee enrollment and education, plan balance rollover or separation, or other similar services. An intermediary may perform program services itself or may arrange with a third party to perform program services. These payments, if any, are in addition to the service fee and any applicable omnibus sub-accounting fees paid to these firms with respect to these services by the First Trust Funds out of Fund assets.

From time to time, First Trust and/or its affiliates, at its expense, may provide other compensation to intermediaries that sell or arrange for the sale of shares of the First Trust Funds, which may be in addition to marketing support and program servicing payments described above. For example, First Trust and/or its affiliates may: (i) compensate intermediaries for National Securities Clearing Corporation networking system services (e.g., shareholder communication, account statements, trade confirmations and tax reporting) on an asset-based or per-account basis; (ii) compensate intermediaries for providing Fund shareholder trading information; (iii) make one-time or periodic payments to reimburse selected intermediaries for items such as ticket charges (i.e., fees that an intermediary charges its representatives for effecting transactions in Fund shares) or exchange order, operational charges (e.g., fees that an intermediary charges for establishing the Fund on its trading system), and literature printing and/or distribution costs; (iv) at the direction of a retirement plan's sponsor, reimburse or pay direct expenses of an employee benefit plan that would otherwise be payable by the plan; (v) provide payments to broker-dealers to help defray their technology or infrastructure costs; and (vi) make payments for expenses associated with intermediaries' use of First Trust Funds including, but not limited to, the use of First Trust Funds in model portfolios.

When not provided for in a marketing support or program servicing agreement, First Trust and/or its affiliates may also pay intermediaries for enabling First Trust and/or its affiliates to participate in and/or present at conferences or



seminars, sales or training programs for invited registered representatives and other intermediary employees, client and investor events and other intermediary-sponsored events, and for travel expenses, including lodging incurred by registered representatives and other employees in connection with prospecting, asset retention and due diligence trips. These payments may vary depending upon the nature of the event. First Trust and/or its affiliates make payments for such events as it deems appropriate, subject to its internal guidelines and applicable law.

First Trust and/or its affiliates occasionally sponsor due diligence meetings for registered representatives during which they receive updates on various First Trust Funds and are afforded the opportunity to speak with portfolio managers. Although invitations to these meetings are not conditioned on selling a specific number of shares, those who have shown an interest in First Trust Funds are more likely to be considered. To the extent permitted by their firm's policies and procedures, all or a portion of registered representatives' expenses in attending these meetings may be covered by First Trust and/or its affiliates.

The amounts of payments referenced above made by First Trust and/or its affiliates could be significant and may create an incentive for an intermediary or its representatives to recommend or offer shares of the First Trust Funds to its customers. The intermediary may elevate the prominence or profile of the First Trust Funds within the intermediary's organization by, for example, placing the First Trust Funds on a list of preferred or recommended funds and/or granting First Trust and/or its affiliates preferential or enhanced opportunities to promote the First Trust Funds in various ways within the intermediary's organization. These payments are made pursuant to negotiated agreements with intermediaries. The payments do not change the price paid by investors for the purchase of a share or the amount the Fund will receive as proceeds from such sales. Furthermore, many of these payments are not reflected in the fees and expenses listed in the fee table section of the Fund's Prospectus because they are not paid by the Fund. The types of payments described herein are not mutually exclusive, and a single intermediary may receive some or all types of payments as described.

Other compensation may be offered to the extent not prohibited by state laws or any self-regulatory agency, such as FINRA. Investors can ask their intermediaries for information about any payments they receive from First Trust and/or its affiliates and the services it provides for those payments. Investors may wish to take intermediary payment arrangements into account when considering and evaluating any recommendations relating to Fund shares.

Payments to intermediaries, in certain circumstances, may also be made in connection with the distribution of model portfolios developed by First Trust, such as the inclusion of such model portfolios on an intermediary's platform, as well as in connection with the marketing and sale of, and/or product training regarding such model portfolios, or servicing of accounts tracking such model portfolios. Such payments may be variable or fixed fee payments for platform support, or other payments in the form of a variable or fixed fee or a per position fee, or may relate to the amount of assets an intermediary's clients have invested in the First Trust Funds in such models developed by First Trust, the management fee, the total expense ratio, or sales of the First Trust Funds in such models developed by First Trust. Some intermediaries also provide related data regarding transactions in specific model portfolios, First Trust Funds and investment strategies to First Trust in exchange for a fee.

First Trust and/or its affiliates may enter into arrangements with third parties, such as a software provider, whereby First Trust may license certain technology or other services from such entity in exchange for licensing or other fees which may be, in whole or in part, dependent on the value of First Trust mutual funds or ETFs held through such software or other service. Such third party may also offer price concessions to broker dealers, investment advisers or other financial intermediaries that license technology or other services that may be dependent, in whole or in part, on the value of First Trust mutual funds or ETFs held through such software or other service.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Book Entry Only System.** The following information supplements and should be read in conjunction with the Prospectus.

**DTC Acts as Securities Depository for Fund Shares.** Shares of the Fund are represented by securities registered in the name of The Depository Trust Company ("DTC") or its nominee, Cede & Co., and deposited with, or on behalf of, DTC.

DTC, a limited-purpose trust company, was created to hold securities of its participants (the "DTC Participants") and to facilitate the clearance and settlement of securities transactions among the DTC Participants in such securities through electronic book-entry changes in accounts of the DTC Participants, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of securities certificates. DTC Participants include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations

and certain other organizations, some of whom (and/or their representatives) own DTC. More specifically, DTC is owned by a number of its DTC Participants and by the NYSE and FINRA. Access to the DTC system is also available to others such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a DTC Participant, either directly or indirectly (the “Indirect Participants”).

Beneficial ownership of shares is limited to DTC Participants, Indirect Participants and persons holding interests through DTC Participants and Indirect Participants. Ownership of beneficial interests in shares (owners of such beneficial interests are referred to herein as “Beneficial Owners”) is shown on, and the transfer of ownership is effected only through, records maintained by DTC (with respect to DTC Participants) and on the records of DTC Participants (with respect to Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners that are not DTC Participants). Beneficial Owners will receive from or through the DTC Participant a written confirmation relating to their purchase and sale of shares.

Conveyance of all notices, statements and other communications to Beneficial Owners is effected as follows. Pursuant to a letter agreement between DTC and the Trust, DTC is required to make available to the Trust upon request and for a fee to be charged to the Trust a listing of the shares of the Fund held by each DTC Participant. The Trust shall inquire of each such DTC Participant as to the number of Beneficial Owners holding shares, directly or indirectly, through such DTC Participant. The Trust shall provide each such DTC Participant with copies of such notice, statement or other communication, in such form, number and at such place as such DTC Participant may reasonably request, in order that such notice, statement or communication may be transmitted by such DTC Participant, directly or indirectly, to such Beneficial Owners. In addition, the Trust shall pay to each such DTC Participants a fair and reasonable amount as reimbursement for the expenses attendant to such transmittal, all subject to applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

Fund distributions shall be made to DTC or its nominee, as the registered holder of all Fund shares. DTC or its nominee, upon receipt of any such distributions, shall immediately credit DTC Participants’ accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in shares of the Fund as shown on the records of DTC or its nominee. Payments by DTC Participants to Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners of shares held through such DTC Participants will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in a “street name,” and will be the responsibility of such DTC Participants.

The Trust has no responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to or notices to Beneficial Owners, or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in such shares, or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to such beneficial ownership interests, or for any other aspect of the relationship between DTC and the DTC Participants or the relationship between such DTC Participants and the Indirect Participants and Beneficial Owners owning through such DTC Participants.

DTC may decide to discontinue providing its service with respect to shares at any time by giving reasonable notice to the Trust and discharging its responsibilities with respect thereto under applicable law. Under such circumstances, the Trust shall take action to find a replacement for DTC to perform its functions at a comparable cost.

## **PROXY VOTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Trust has adopted a proxy voting policy that seeks to ensure that proxies for securities held by the Fund are voted consistently with the best interests of the Fund.

The Board has delegated to First Trust the proxy voting responsibilities for the Fund and has directed First Trust to vote proxies consistent with the Fund’s best interests. The First Trust Proxy Voting Policies and Procedures are attached hereto as *Exhibit B*. First Trust has engaged the services of Institutional Shareholder Services Inc. (“ISS”) to make recommendations to First Trust on the voting of proxies relating to securities held by the Fund. If First Trust manages the assets of a company or its pension plan and any of First Trust’s clients hold any securities of that company, First Trust will generally vote proxies relating to such company’s securities in accordance with the ISS recommendations to avoid any conflict of interest.

First Trust has adopted the ISS Proxy Voting Guidelines. While these guidelines are not intended to be all-inclusive, they do provide guidance on First Trust’s general voting policies. First Trust’s use of the ISS Proxy Voting Guidelines is not intended to constrain First Trust’s consideration of any proxy proposal, and there are times when First Trust deviates from the ISS Proxy Voting Guidelines. This includes when required by Rule 12d1-4 under the 1940 Act or when agreed to by the Fund and certain acquired funds as permitted under Rule 12d1-4 under the 1940 Act, if applicable. Generally, First Trust will not rely on ISS Proxy Voting Guidelines to withhold votes or vote against directors solely based on quota criteria or the



exclusion of certain climate-related disclosures, which may or may not relate to the company's core business or may not materially impact shareholder value. First Trust will consider such proxy voting decisions in light of merit-based considerations which it believes may impact shareholder value. First Trust retains final authority and fiduciary responsibility for proxy voting.

Information regarding how the Fund voted proxies (if any) relating to portfolio securities during the most recent 12-month period ended June 30 is available upon request and without charge on the Fund's website at <http://www.ftportfolios.com>, by calling (800) 621-1675 or by accessing the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

**Portfolio Schedule.** The Fund files portfolio holdings information for each month in a fiscal quarter within 60 days after the end of the relevant fiscal quarter on Form N-PORT. Portfolio holdings information for the third month of each fiscal quarter will be publicly available on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. The Fund's complete schedule of portfolio holdings for the second and fourth quarters of each fiscal year is included in the semi-annual and annual financial statements and other information provided to shareholders, respectively, and is filed with the SEC on Form N-CSR. A semi-annual or annual financial statement and other information provided for the Fund will become available to investors within 60 days after the period to which it relates. The Fund's Forms N-PORT and Forms N-CSR are available on the SEC's website listed above.

**Policy Regarding Disclosure of Portfolio Holdings.** The Trust has adopted a policy regarding the disclosure of information about the Fund's portfolio holdings. The Board of Trustees must approve all material amendments to this policy. The Fund's portfolio holdings are publicly disseminated each day the Fund is open for business through financial reporting and news services, including publicly accessible Internet websites. In addition, a basket composition file, which includes the security names and share quantities to deliver in exchange for Fund shares, together with estimates and actual cash components, is publicly disseminated each day the NYSE is open for trading via the National Securities Clearing Corporation ("NSCC"). Pursuant to Rule 6c-11 under the 1940 Act, information regarding the Fund's current portfolio holdings will be available on a daily basis at <http://www.ftportfolios.com/Retail/etf/home.aspx>.

**Codes of Ethics.** In order to mitigate the possibility that the Fund will be adversely affected by personal trading, the Trust, First Trust and the Distributor have adopted Codes of Ethics under Rule 17j-1 of the 1940 Act. These Codes of Ethics contain policies restricting securities trading in personal accounts of the officers, Trustees and others who normally come into possession of information on portfolio transactions. Personnel subject to the Codes of Ethics may invest in securities that may be purchased or held by the Fund; however, the Codes of Ethics require that each transaction in such securities be reviewed by the Chief Compliance Officer or his or her designee. These Codes of Ethics are on public file with, and are available from, the SEC.

## **PURCHASE AND REDEMPTION OF FUND SHARES**

As described in the Prospectus, the Fund provides you with alternative ways of purchasing Fund shares based upon your individual investment needs and preferences.

Each class of shares of the Fund represents an interest in the same portfolio of investments. Each class of shares is identical in all respects except that each class bears its own class expenses, including distribution and service expenses, and each class has exclusive voting rights with respect to any distribution or service plan applicable to its shares. As a result of the differences in the expenses borne by each class of shares, net income per share, dividends per share and net asset value per share will vary among the Fund's classes of shares. There are no conversion, preemptive or other subscription rights.

Shareholders of each class will share expenses proportionately for services that are received equally by all shareholders. A particular class of shares will bear only those expenses that are directly attributable to that class, where the type or amount of services received by a class varies from one class to another. For example, class-specific expenses generally will include distribution and service fees for those classes that pay such fees.

The minimum initial investment is \$2,500 per Fund share class (\$750 for a Traditional/Roth IRA account, \$500 for an Education IRA account and \$250 for accounts opened through fee-based programs). Subsequent investments have a minimum of \$50. There are no minimums for purchases or exchanges into the Fund through employer-sponsored retirement plans. Class I shares have a minimum investment of \$1 million for certain investors. Class I shares are also available for purchase in minimum amounts of \$250 or more for accounts of clients of financial intermediaries who charge an ongoing fee for advisory, investment, consulting or similar services ("wrap" accounts). The Fund reserves the right to reject purchase orders and to waive or increase the minimum investment requirements.

The expenses to be borne by specific classes of shares may include (i) transfer agency fees attributable to a specific class of shares, (ii) printing and postage expenses related to preparing and distributing materials such as shareholder reports, prospectuses and proxy statements to current shareholders of a specific class of shares, (iii) SEC and state securities registration fees incurred by a specific class of shares, (iv) the expense of administrative personnel and services required to support the shareholders of a specific class of shares, (v) litigation or other legal expenses relating to a specific class of shares, (vi) Trustees' fees or expenses incurred as a result of issues relating to a specific class of shares, (vii) accounting expenses relating to a specific class of shares and (viii) any additional incremental expenses subsequently identified and determined to be properly allocated to one or more classes of shares.

Shares will be registered in the name of the investor's financial advisor. A change in registration or transfer of shares held in the name of a financial advisor may only be made by an order in good form from the financial advisor acting on the investor's behalf.

For more information on the procedure for purchasing shares of the Fund and on the special purchase programs available thereunder, see the sections entitled "Investment in Fund Shares" and "Account Services" in the Fund's Prospectus.

The Fund does not issue share certificates.

## Class A Shares

Class A shares may be purchased at a public offering price equal to the applicable net asset value per share plus an up-front sales charge imposed at the time of purchase as set forth in the Prospectus.

Shareholders may qualify for a reduced sales charge, or the sales charge may be waived in its entirety, as described below. Class A shares also are subject to an annual service fee of 0.25%. See the section entitled "Distribution and Service Plan." Set forth below is an example of the method of computing the offering price of the Class A shares of the Fund. The example assumes a purchase on October 31, 2024 of Class A shares of the Fund aggregating less than \$50,000 subject to the schedule of sales charges set forth in the Prospectus at a price based upon the net asset value of the Class A shares.

### ***First Trust Short Duration High Income Fund***

Net Asset Value per Share	\$18.03
Per Share Sales Charge—3.50% of public offering price	0.65
Per Share Offering Price to the Public	\$18.68

The Fund receives the entire net asset value of all Class A shares that are sold.

## Elimination of Up-Front Sales Charge on Class A Shares

Class A shares of the Fund may be purchased at net asset value without a sales charge by the following categories of investors:

- investors purchasing \$250,000 or more (FTP may pay financial intermediaries on Class A sales of \$250,000 and above up to 1.00% of the purchase amounts);
- reinvestment of distributions from Class A Shares of the Fund;
- officers, trustees and former trustees of the First Trust non-ETF open-end funds;
- bona fide, full-time and retired employees of First Trust, and FTP, and subsidiaries thereof, or their immediate family members ("*immediate family members*" are defined as their spouses, parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, parents-in-law, sons-and daughters-in-law, siblings, a sibling's spouse, and a spouse's siblings);
- any person who, for at least the last 90 days, has been an officer, director or bona fide employee of any financial intermediary, or their immediate family members;
- bank or broker-affiliated trust departments investing funds over which they exercise exclusive discretionary investment authority and that are held in a fiduciary, agency, advisory, custodial or similar capacity;
- investors purchasing on a periodic fee, asset-based fee or no transaction fee basis through a broker-dealer sponsored mutual fund purchase program; and

- clients of investment advisors, financial planners or other financial intermediaries that charge periodic or asset-based fees for their services.

### **Intermediary-Defined Sales Charge Waiver Policies**

The availability of certain initial or deferred sales charge waivers and discounts may depend on the particular financial intermediary or type of account through which you purchase or hold Fund shares.

Intermediaries may have different policies and procedures regarding the availability of front-end sales load waivers or contingent deferred (back-end) sales load (“CDSC”) waivers, which are discussed below. In all instances, it is the purchaser’s responsibility to notify the Fund or the purchaser’s financial intermediary at the time of purchase of any relationship or other facts qualifying the purchaser for sales charge waivers or discounts. For waivers and discounts not available through a particular intermediary, shareholders will have to purchase Fund shares directly from the Fund or through another intermediary to receive these waivers or discounts.

### **Raymond James & Associates, Inc., Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., & Raymond James affiliates (“Raymond James”)**

Effective March 1, 2019, shareholders purchasing Fund shares through a Raymond James platform or account will be eligible only for the following load waivers (front-end sales charge waivers and contingent deferred, or back-end, sales charge waivers) and discounts, which may differ from those disclosed elsewhere in this Fund’s prospectus or SAI.

#### **Front-end sales load waivers on Class A shares available at Raymond James**

- Shares purchased in an investment advisory program.
- Shares purchased within the family of First Trust Mutual Funds through a systematic reinvestment of capital gains and dividend distributions.
- Employees and registered representatives of Raymond James or its affiliates and their family members as designated by Raymond James.
- Shares purchased from the proceeds of redemptions within the family of First Trust Mutual Funds, provided (1) the repurchase occurs within 90 days following the redemption, (2) the redemption and purchase occur in the same account, and (3) redeemed shares were subject to a front-end or deferred sales load (known as Rights of Reinstatement).
- A shareholder in the Fund’s Class C shares will have their shares converted at net asset value to Class A shares (or the appropriate share class) of the Fund if the shares are no longer subject to a CDSC and the conversion is in line with the policies and procedures of Raymond James.

#### **CDSC Waivers on Classes A and C shares available at Raymond James**

- Death or disability of the shareholder.
- Shares sold as part of a systematic withdrawal plan as described in the Fund’s prospectus.
- Return of excess contributions from an IRA Account.
- Shares sold as part of a required minimum distribution for IRA and retirement accounts due to the shareholder reaching the qualified age based on applicable IRS regulations as described in the Fund’s prospectus.
- Shares sold to pay Raymond James fees but only if the transaction is initiated by Raymond James.
- Shares acquired through a right of reinstatement.

#### **Front-end load discounts available at Raymond James: breakpoints, rights of accumulation, and/or letters of intent**

- Breakpoints as described in the prospectus.

- Rights of accumulation which entitle shareholders to breakpoint discounts will be automatically calculated based on the aggregated holding of fund family assets held by accounts within the purchaser's household at Raymond James. Eligible fund family assets not held at Raymond James may be included in the rights of accumulation calculation only if the shareholder notifies his or her financial advisor about such assets.
- Letters of intent which allow for breakpoint discounts based on anticipated purchases within a fund family, over a 13-month time period. Eligible fund family assets not held at Raymond James may be included in the calculation of letters of intent only if the shareholder notifies his or her financial advisor about such assets.

#### **Janney Montgomery Scott LLC ("Janney")**

Effective May 1, 2020, shareholders purchasing Fund shares through a Janney brokerage account, will only be eligible for the following load waivers (front-end sales load waivers and CDSC waivers) and discounts, which may differ from those disclosed elsewhere in this Fund's Prospectus or SAI.

Any Class A shares purchased pursuant to a special sales charge waiver must be acquired for investment purposes and on the condition that they will not be transferred or resold except through redemption by the Fund. You or your financial advisor must notify FTP or the Fund's transfer agent whenever you make a purchase of Class A shares of any Fund that you wish to be covered under these special sales charge waivers.

Class A shares of the Fund may be issued at net asset value without a sales charge in connection with the acquisition by the Fund of another investment company. All purchases under the special sales charge waivers will be subject to minimum purchase requirements as established by the Fund.

The reduced sales charge programs may be modified or discontinued by the Fund at any time. For more information about the purchase of Class A shares or the reduced sales charge program, or to obtain the required application forms, call First Trust toll-free at (800) 621-1675.

#### **Robert W. Baird & Co. ("Baird")**

##### **Front-End Sales Charge Waivers on Class A shares Available at Baird**

- Shares purchased through reinvestment of capital gains distributions and dividend reinvestment when purchasing shares of the same Fund
- Shares purchased by employees and registered representatives of Baird or its affiliates and their family members as designated by Baird
- Shares purchased using the proceeds of redemptions from within the family of First Trust Mutual Funds, provided (1) the repurchase occurs within 90 days following the redemption, (2) the redemption and purchase occur in the same accounts, and (3) redeemed shares were subject to a front-end or deferred sales charge (known as rights of reinstatement)
- A shareholder in the Fund's Class C Shares will have their shares converted at net asset value to Class A shares of the same Fund if the shares are no longer subject to the CDSC and the conversion is in line with the policies and procedures of Baird
- Employer-sponsored retirement plans or charitable accounts in a transactional brokerage account at Baird, including 401(k) plans, 457 plans, employer-sponsored 403(b) plans, profit sharing and money purchase pension plans and defined benefit plans. For purposes of this provision, employer-sponsored retirement plans do not include SEP IRAs, Simple IRAs or SAR-SEPs

##### **CDSC Waivers on Class A and C shares Available at Baird**

- Shares sold due to death or disability of the shareholder
- Shares sold as part of a systematic withdrawal plan as described in your Fund's prospectus
- Shares bought due to returns of excess contributions from an IRA Account

- Shares sold as part of a required minimum distribution for IRA and retirement accounts due to the shareholder reaching the qualified age based on applicable Internal Revenue Service regulations as described in your Fund's prospectus
- Shares sold to pay Baird fees but only if the transaction is initiated by Baird
- Shares acquired through a right of reinstatement

#### **Front-End Sales Charge Discounts Available at Baird: Breakpoints, Rights of Accumulations and Letters of Intent**

- Breakpoints as described in your Fund's prospectus
- Rights of accumulations which entitle shareholders to breakpoint discounts will be automatically calculated based on the aggregated holding of First Trust Mutual Fund family assets held by accounts within the purchaser's household at Baird. Eligible First Trust Mutual Fund family assets not held at Baird may be included in the rights of accumulations calculation only if the shareholder notifies his or her financial advisor about such assets
- Letters of Intent (LOI) allow for breakpoint discounts based on anticipated purchases of First Trust Mutual Funds through Baird, over a 13-month period of time

#### **Oppenheimer & Co. Inc ("OPCO")**

##### **Front-end Sales Load Waivers on Class A shares available at OPCO**

- Employer-sponsored retirement, deferred compensation and employee benefit plans (including health savings accounts) and trusts used to fund those plans, provided that the shares are not held in a commission-based brokerage account and shares are held for the benefit of the plan
- Shares purchased by or through a 529 Plan
- Shares purchased through a OPCO affiliated investment advisory program
- Shares purchased through reinvestment of capital gains distributions and dividend reinvestment when purchasing shares of the same Fund (but not any other fund within the family of First Trust Mutual Funds)
- Shares purchased from the proceeds of redemptions within the family of First Trust Mutual Funds, provided (1) the repurchase occurs within 90 days following the redemption, (2) the redemption and purchase occur in the same account, and (3) redeemed shares were subject to a front-end or deferred sales load (known as rights of restatement)
- A shareholder in the Fund's Class C shares will have their shares converted at net asset value to Class A shares (or the appropriate share class) of the Fund if the shares are no longer subject to a CDSC and the conversion is in line with the policies and procedures of OPCO
- Employees and registered representatives of OPCO or its affiliates and their family members
- Directors or Trustees of the Fund, and employees of the Fund's investment adviser or any of its affiliates, as described in the prospectus

##### **CDSC Waivers on A and C Shares available at OPCO**

- Death or disability of the shareholder
- Shares sold as part of a systematic withdrawal plan as described in the Fund's prospectus
- Return of excess contributions from an IRA Account
- Shares sold as part of a required minimum distribution for IRA and retirement accounts due to the shareholder reaching the qualified age based on applicable IRS regulations as described in the prospectus
- Shares sold to pay OPCO fees but only if the transaction is initiated by OPCO

- Shares acquired through a right of reinstatement

#### **Front-end load Discounts Available at OPCO: Breakpoints, Rights of Accumulation & Letters of Intent**

- Breakpoints as described in the prospectus
- Rights of Accumulation ("ROA") which entitle shareholders to breakpoint discounts will be automatically calculated based on the aggregated holding of fund family assets held by accounts within the purchaser's household at OPCO. Eligible fund family assets not held at OPCO may be included in the ROA calculation only if the shareholder notifies his or her financial advisor about such assets

#### **Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Incorporated ("Stifel") and its broker dealer affiliates**

Effective March 3, 2025, shareholders purchasing or holding fund shares, including existing fund shareholders, through a Stifel or affiliated platform that provides trade execution, clearance, and/or custody services, will be eligible for the following sales charge load waivers (including front-end sales charge waivers and contingent deferred, or back-end, ("CDSC") sales charge waivers) and discounts, which may differ from those disclosed elsewhere in this SAI or the Fund's prospectus.

#### **Class A Shares**

As described elsewhere in the prospectus, Stifel may receive compensation out of the front-end sales charge if you purchase Class A shares through Stifel.

#### **Rights of accumulation**

- Rights of accumulation ("ROA") that entitle shareholders to breakpoint discounts on front-end sales charges will be calculated by Stifel based on the aggregated holding of eligible assets in all classes of shares of First Trust funds held by accounts within the purchaser's household at Stifel. Ineligible assets include Class A Money Market Funds not assessed a sales charge. Fund Family assets not held at Stifel may be included in the calculation of ROA only if the shareholder notifies his or her financial advisor about such assets.
- The employer maintaining a SEP IRA plan and/or SIMPLE IRA plan may elect to establish or change ROA for the IRA accounts associated with the plan to a plan-level grouping as opposed to including all share classes at a shareholder or pricing group level.

#### **Front-end sales charge waivers on Class A shares available at Stifel**

Sales charges may be waived for the following shareholders and in the following situations:

- Class C shares that have been held for more than seven (7) years may be converted to Class A or other Front-end share class(es) shares of the same fund pursuant to Stifel's policies and procedures. To the extent that the prospectus elsewhere provides for a waiver with respect to the exchange or conversion of such shares following a shorter holding period, those provisions shall continue to apply.
- Shares purchased by employees and registered representatives of Stifel or its affiliates and their family members as designated by Stifel.
- Shares purchased in a Stifel fee-based advisory program, often referred to as a "wrap" program.
- Shares purchased through reinvestment of capital gains distributions and dividend reinvestment when purchasing shares of the same or other fund within the fund family.
- Shares purchased from the proceeds of redeemed shares of the same fund family so long as the proceeds are from the sale of shares from an account with the same owner/beneficiary within 90 days of the purchase. For the absence of doubt, automated transactions (i.e. systematic purchases, including salary deferral transactions and withdrawals) and purchases made after shares are sold to cover Stifel Nicolaus' account maintenance fees are not eligible for rights of reinstatement.
- Shares from rollovers into Stifel from retirement plans to IRAs.



- Shares exchanged into Class A shares from another share class so long as the exchange is into the same fund and was initiated at the direction of Stifel. Stifel is responsible for any remaining CDSC due to the fund company, if applicable. Any future purchases are subject to the applicable sales charge as disclosed in the prospectus.
- Purchases of Class 529-A shares through a rollover from another 529 plan.
- Purchases of Class 529-A shares made for reinvestment of refunded amounts.
- Employer-sponsored retirement plans (e.g., 401(k) plans, 457 plans, employer-sponsored 403(b) plans, profit sharing and money purchase pension plans and defined benefit plans). For purposes of this provision, employer-sponsored retirement plans do not include SEP IRAs, Simple IRAs or SAR-SEPs.

#### **Contingent Deferred Sales Charges Waivers on Class A and C Shares**

- Death or disability of the shareholder or, in the case of 529 plans, the account beneficiary.
- Shares sold as part of a systematic withdrawal plan not to exceed 12% annually.
- Return of excess contributions from an IRA Account.
- Shares sold as part of a required minimum distribution for IRA and retirement accounts due to the shareholder reaching the qualified age based on applicable IRS regulations.
- Shares acquired through a right of reinstatement.
- Shares sold to pay Stifel fees or costs in such cases where the transaction is initiated by Stifel.
- Shares exchanged or sold in a Stifel fee-based program.

#### **Share Class Conversions in Advisory Accounts**

- Stifel continually looks to provide our clients with the lowest cost share class available based on account type. Stifel reserves the right to convert shares to the lowest cost share class available at Stifel upon transfer of shares into an advisory program.

### **Class C Shares**

You may purchase Class C shares at a public offering price equal to the applicable net asset value per share without any up-front sales charge. Class C shares are subject to an annual distribution fee of 0.75% to compensate FTP for paying your financial advisor an ongoing sales commission. Class C shares are also subject to an annual service fee of 0.25% to compensate financial intermediaries for providing you with ongoing financial advice and other account services. FTP compensates financial intermediaries for sales of Class C shares at the time of the sale at a rate of 1% of the amount of Class C shares purchased, which represents an advance of the first year's distribution fee of 0.75% plus an advance on the first year's annual service fee of 0.25%. See the section entitled "Distribution and Service Plan." Purchase orders for shares on behalf of a single purchaser which equal or exceed \$500,000 should be placed only for Class A shares, unless the purchase of another class of shares is determined to be suitable for the purchaser by the financial intermediary. It is the responsibility of the financial intermediary to review and approve as suitable purchases of Class C shares which equal or exceed this limit.

**Automatic Conversion of Class C Shares to Class A Shares After 8-Year Holding Period.** Beginning on August 30, 2021, Class C shares of the Fund that have been held for 8 years or more will automatically convert into Class A shares of the Fund and will be subject to Class A shares' lower distribution and service (12b-1) fees. The conversion will occur on the basis of the relative net asset values of the two classes, meaning the value of your investment will not change, but the number of shares that you own may be higher or lower after the conversion.

After August 30, 2021, Class C shares of the Fund will convert automatically to Class A shares of the Fund on a monthly basis in the month of, or the month following, the 8-year anniversary of the Class C shares' purchase date. Class C shares of the Fund acquired through automatic reinvestment of dividends or distributions will convert to Class A shares of the Fund on the conversion date pro rata with the converting Class C shares of the Fund that were not acquired through reinvestment of dividends or distributions.

Shareholders will not pay a sales charge, including a CDSC, upon the automatic conversion of their Class C shares to Class A shares. The automatic conversion of the Fund's Class C shares into Class A shares after the 8-year holding period is not expected to be a taxable event for federal income tax purposes. Shareholders should consult with their tax advisor regarding the state and local tax consequences of such conversions.

Class C shares held through a financial intermediary in an omnibus account will be automatically converted into Class A shares only if the intermediary can document that the shareholder has met the required holding period. In certain circumstances, when shares are invested through retirement plans, omnibus accounts, and in certain other instances, the Fund and its agents may not have transparency into how long a shareholder has held Class C shares for purposes of determining whether such Class C shares are eligible for automatic conversion into Class A shares and the financial intermediary may not have the ability to track purchases to credit individual shareholders' holding periods. This primarily occurs when shares are invested through certain record keepers for group retirement plans, where the intermediary cannot track share aging at the participant level. In these circumstances, the Fund will not be able to automatically convert Class C shares into Class A shares as described above. In order to determine eligibility for conversion in these circumstances, it is the responsibility of the shareholder or their financial intermediary to notify the Fund that the shareholder is eligible for the conversion of Class C shares to Class A shares, and the shareholder or their financial intermediary may be required to maintain and provide the Fund with records that substantiate the holding period of Class C shares. In these circumstances, it is the financial intermediary's (and not the Fund's) responsibility to keep records and to ensure that the shareholder is credited with the proper holding period. In circumstances where a financial intermediary is unable to track or substantiate the holding period of a Class C shareholder, such shareholder will remain holding Class C shares and will be ineligible to have their shares converted to Class A pursuant to this automatic conversion program. Please consult with your financial intermediary about your shares' eligibility for this conversion feature.

Also beginning on August 30, 2021, new accounts or plans may not be eligible to purchase Class C shares of the Fund if it is determined that the intermediary cannot track shareholder holding periods to determine whether a shareholder's Class C shares are eligible for conversion to Class A shares. Accounts or plans (and their successor, related and affiliated plans) that have Class C shares of the Fund available to participants on or before August 30, 2021, may continue to open accounts for new participants in that share class and purchase additional shares in existing participant accounts. The Fund has no responsibility for overseeing, monitoring or implementing a financial intermediary's process for determining whether a shareholder meets the required holding period for conversion.

Customers of Raymond James (as defined below) may be eligible for an exchange of Class C Shares for Class A shares, less the applicable sales charge, shares after holding their Class C Shares for eight (8) years. Please consult with your financial intermediary if you have any questions regarding your shares' conversion from Class C shares to Class A shares.

## **Reduction or Elimination of Class A and Class C Contingent Deferred Sales Charge**

Class A shares are normally redeemed at net asset value, without any CDSC. However, in the case of Class A shares purchased at net asset value without a sales charge because the purchase amount exceeded \$250,000, a CDSC of 1% may be imposed on any redemption within 12 months of purchase. Class C shares are redeemed at net asset value, without any CDSC, except that a CDSC of 1% is imposed upon redemption of Class C shares that are redeemed within 12 months of purchase (except in cases where the shareholder's financial advisor agreed to waive the right to receive an advance of the first year's distribution and service fee).

In determining whether a CDSC is payable, the Fund will first redeem shares not subject to any charge and then will redeem shares held for the longest period, unless the shareholder specifies another order. No CDSC is charged on shares purchased as a result of automatic reinvestment of dividends or capital gains paid. In addition, no CDSC will be charged on exchanges of shares into another First Trust non-ETF open-end fund. The holding period is calculated on a monthly basis and begins on the date of purchase. The CDSC is assessed on an amount equal to the lower of the then current market value or the cost of the shares being redeemed. Accordingly, no sales charge is imposed on increases of net asset value above the initial purchase price. FTP receives the amount of any CDSC shareholders pay.

The CDSC may be waived or reduced under the following circumstances: (i) in the event of total disability (as evidenced by a determination by the federal Social Security Administration) of the shareholder (including a registered joint owner) occurring after the purchase of the shares being redeemed; (ii) in the event of the death of the shareholder (including a registered joint owner); (iii) for redemptions made pursuant to a systematic withdrawal plan, up to 1% monthly, 3% quarterly, 6% semiannually or 12% annually of an account's net asset value depending on the frequency of the plan as designated by the shareholder; (iv) involuntary redemptions caused by operation of law; (v) redemptions in connection with



a payment of account or plan fees; (vi) redemptions in connection with the exercise of a reinstatement privilege whereby the proceeds of a redemption of the Fund's shares subject to a sales charge are reinvested in shares of certain funds within a specified number of days; (vii) redemptions in connection with the exercise of the Fund's right to redeem all shares in an account that does not maintain a certain minimum balance or that the Board of Trustees has determined may have material adverse consequences to the Fund; (viii) in whole or in part for redemptions of shares by shareholders with accounts in excess of specified breakpoints that correspond to the breakpoints under which the up-front sales charge on Class A shares is reduced pursuant to Rule 22d-1 under the Act; (ix) redemptions of shares purchased under circumstances or by a category of investors for which Class A shares could be purchased at net asset value without a sales charge; (x) redemptions of Class A or Class C shares if the proceeds are transferred to an account managed by an affiliated advisor and the advisor refunds the advanced service and distribution fees to FTP; and (xi) redemptions of Class C shares in cases where (a) you purchase shares after committing to hold the shares for less than one year and (b) your advisor consents up front to receiving the appropriate service and distribution fee on the Class C shares on an ongoing basis instead of having the first year's fees advanced by FTP. If the Fund waives or reduces the CDSC, such waiver or reduction would be uniformly applied to all Fund shares in the particular category. In waiving or reducing a CDSC, the Fund will comply with the requirements of Rule 22d-1 under the 1940 Act.

In addition, the CDSC will be waived in connection with the following redemptions of shares held by an employer-sponsored qualified defined contribution retirement plan: (i) partial or complete redemptions in connection with a distribution without penalty under Section 72(t) of the Code from a retirement plan: (a) upon attaining age 59½, (b) as part of a series of substantially equal periodic payments, or (c) upon separation from service and attaining age 55; (ii) partial or complete redemptions in connection with a qualifying loan or hardship withdrawal; (iii) complete redemptions in connection with termination of employment, plan termination or transfer to another employer's plan or IRA; and (iv) redemptions resulting from the return of an excess contribution. The CDSC will also be waived in connection with the following redemptions of shares held in an IRA account: (i) for redemptions made pursuant to an IRA systematic withdrawal based on the shareholder's life expectancy including, but not limited to, substantially equal periodic payments described in Code Section 72(t)(A)(iv) prior to age 59½; and (ii) for redemptions to satisfy required minimum distributions after age 72 from an IRA account (with the maximum amount subject to this waiver being based only upon the shareholder's First Trust IRA accounts).

## Class I Shares

Class I shares are available for purchases of \$1 million or more directly from the Fund and for purchases using dividends and capital gains distributions on Class I shares. Class I shares may also be available for purchase in amounts of less than \$1 million by the following categories of investors:

- officers, trustees and former trustees of any First Trust non-ETF open-end fund and their immediate family members and officers, directors and former directors of any parent company of First Trust or FTP, affiliates and subsidiaries thereof and their immediate family members (*"immediate family members"* are defined as spouses, parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, parents-in-law, sons- and daughters-in-laws, siblings, a sibling's spouse and a spouse's siblings);
- bona fide, full-time and retired employees of First Trust or FTP, and subsidiaries thereof, or their immediate family members;
- any person who, for at least the last 90 days, has been an officer, director or bona fide employee of any financial intermediary, or their immediate family members;

(Any shares purchased by investors falling within any of the first three categories listed above must be acquired for investment purposes and on the condition that they will not be transferred or resold except through redemption by the applicable Fund.)

- bank or broker-affiliated trust departments investing funds over which they exercise exclusive discretionary investment authority and that are held in a fiduciary, agency, advisory, custodial or similar capacity;
- investors purchasing through a periodic fee or asset-based fee program which is sponsored by a registered broker-dealer or other financial institution that has entered into an agreement with FTP;

- fee paying clients of a registered investment advisor (“RIA”) who invest in First Trust non-ETF open-end funds through a fund “supermarket” or other mutual fund trading platform sponsored by a broker-dealer or trust company with which the RIA is not affiliated and which has not entered into an agreement with FTP; and
- employer-sponsored retirement plans, except SEPs, SAR-SEPs, SIMPLE IRAs and KEOGH plans.

Class I shares are also available for purchase in minimum amounts of \$250 or more for accounts of clients of financial intermediaries who charge an ongoing fee for advisory, investment, consulting or similar services (“wrap” accounts).

Class I shares may be available to investors that purchase shares through financial intermediaries that, acting as agents on behalf of their customers, directly impose on shareholders sales charges or transaction fees (i.e., commissions) determined by the financial intermediary related to the purchase of Class I shares. These charges and fees are not disclosed in the prospectus or statement of additional information. Such purchases are not subject to the Class I minimum purchase requirements disclosed in the prospectus or statement of additional information. Shares of the Fund are available in other share classes that have different fees and expenses.

If you are eligible to purchase either Class A, Class C or Class I shares without a sales charge at net asset value, you should be aware of the differences between these classes of shares. Class A and Class C shares are subject to an annual service fee to compensate financial intermediaries for providing you with ongoing account services. Class I shares are not subject to a distribution or service fee and, consequently, holders of Class I shares may not receive the same types or levels of services from financial intermediaries. In choosing between Class A shares, Class C shares and Class I shares, you should weigh the benefits of the services to be provided by financial intermediaries against the annual service fee imposed upon the Class A and Class C shares.

## Shareholder Programs

**Exchange Privilege.** You may exchange shares of a class of the Fund for shares of the same class of any other First Trust non-ETF open-end fund with reciprocal exchange privileges, at net asset value without a sales charge, by either sending a written request to the Fund, c/o First Trust Portfolios L.P., 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, or by calling First Trust toll free (888) 373-5776. You may also, under certain limited circumstances, exchange between certain classes of shares of the Fund if, after you purchased your shares, you became eligible to purchase a different class of shares; however, the Advisor, the Distributor or any of their affiliates may exchange between classes of shares of the Fund at any time. An exchange between classes of shares of the Fund may not be considered a taxable event; please consult your own tax advisor for further information. An exchange between classes of shares of the Fund may be done in writing to the address stated above.

If you exchange shares between different First Trust non-ETF open-end funds and your shares are subject to a CDSC, no CDSC will be charged at the time of the exchange. However, if you subsequently redeem the shares acquired through the exchange, the redemption may be subject to a CDSC, depending on when you purchased your original shares and the CDSC schedule of the fund from which you exchanged your shares. If you exchange between classes of shares of the Fund and your original shares are subject to a CDSC, the CDSC will be assessed at the time of the exchange.

In addition, you may exchange Class I shares of the Fund for Class A shares of the Fund or Class A shares of either the First Trust Preferred Securities and Income Fund or First Trust Short Duration High Income Fund, each a series of the Trust, without a sales charge if the current net asset value of those Class I shares is at least \$5,000 or you already own Class A shares of the Fund or other series of the Trust.

The shares to be purchased through an exchange must be offered in your state of residence. The total value of exchanged shares must at least equal the minimum investment requirement of the First Trust non-ETF open-end fund being purchased. For federal income tax purposes, an exchange between different First Trust non-ETF open-end funds constitutes a sale and purchase of shares and may result in capital gain or loss. Before making any exchange, you should obtain the Prospectus for the First Trust non-ETF open-end fund you are purchasing and read it carefully. If the registration of the account for the Fund you are purchasing is not exactly the same as that of the fund account from which the exchange is made, written instructions from all holders of the account from which the exchange is being made must be received, with signatures guaranteed by a member of an approved Medallion Guarantee Program or in such other manner as may be acceptable to the Fund. The exchange privilege may be modified or discontinued by the Fund at any time.

The exchange privilege is not intended to permit the Fund to be used as a vehicle for short-term trading. Excessive exchange activity may interfere with portfolio management, raise expenses, and otherwise have an adverse effect on all shareholders. In order to limit excessive exchange activity and in other circumstances where Fund management believes doing so would be in the best interest of the Fund, the Fund reserves the right to revise or terminate the exchange privilege, or limit the amount or number of exchanges or reject any exchange. Shareholders would be notified of any such action to the extent required by law. See the section entitled "Frequent Trading Policy" below.

**Reinstatement Privilege.** If you redeemed Class A or Class C shares of the Fund or any other First Trust non-ETF open-end fund that were subject to a sales charge or a CDSC, you have up to one year to reinvest all or part of the full amount of the redemption in the same class of shares of the Fund at net asset value. This reinstatement privilege can be exercised only once for any redemption, and reinvestment will be made at the net asset value next calculated after reinstatement of the appropriate class of Fund shares. If you reinstate shares that were subject to a CDSC, your holding period as of the redemption date also will be reinstated for purposes of calculating a CDSC and the CDSC paid at redemption will be refunded. The federal income tax consequences of any capital gain realized on a redemption will not be affected by reinstatement, but a capital loss may be disallowed in whole or in part depending on the timing, the amount of the reinvestment and the fund from which the redemption occurred.

**Suspension of Right of Redemption.** The Fund may suspend the right of redemption of Fund shares or delay payment more than seven days (a) during any period when the NYSE is closed (other than customary weekend and holiday closings), (b) when trading in the markets the Fund normally utilizes is restricted, or an emergency exists as determined by the SEC so that trading of the Fund's investments or determination of its net asset value is not reasonably practicable, or (c) for any other periods that the SEC by order may permit for protection of Fund shareholders.

**Redemption In-Kind.** The Fund has reserved the right to redeem in-kind (that is, to pay redemption requests in cash and portfolio securities, or wholly in portfolio securities), although the Fund have no present intention to redeem in-kind.

## Frequent Trading Policy

The Fund is intended as a long-term investment and not as a short-term trading vehicle. At the same time, the Fund recognizes the need of investors to periodically make purchases and redemptions of Fund shares when rebalancing their portfolios and as their financial needs or circumstances change. The Trust has adopted the following frequent trading policy (the "*Frequent Trading Policy*" or the "*Policy*") that seeks to balance these needs against the potential for higher operating costs, portfolio management disruption and other inefficiencies that can be caused by excessive trading of Fund shares.

1. **Definition of Round Trip.** A "*Round Trip*" trade is the purchase and subsequent redemption of Fund shares, including by exchange. Each side of a Round Trip trade may be comprised of either a single transaction or a series of closely-spaced transactions.
2. **Round Trip Trade Limitations.** The Trust limits the frequency of Round Trip trades that may be placed in the Fund. Subject to certain exceptions noted below, the Fund limits an investor to two Round Trips per trailing 90-day period and may also restrict the trading privileges of an investor who makes a Round Trip within a 30-day period where the purchase and redemption are of substantially similar dollar amounts.
3. **Enforcement.** Trades placed in violation of the foregoing policies are subject to rejection or cancellation by the Trust. The Trust may also bar an investor (and/or an investor's financial advisor) who has violated these policies from opening new accounts with the Fund and may restrict the investor's existing account(s) to redemptions only. The Trust reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to (a) interpret the terms and application of this Policy, (b) waive unintentional or minor violations (including transactions below certain minimum thresholds) if it determines that doing so does not harm the interests of Fund Shareholders, and (c) exclude certain classes of redemptions from the application of the trading restrictions set forth above.

The Trust reserves the right to impose restrictions on purchases or exchanges that are more restrictive than those stated above if it determines, in its sole discretion that a proposed transaction or series of transactions involve market timing or excessive trading that is likely to be detrimental to the Fund. The Trust may modify or suspend the Frequent Trading Policy without notice during periods of market stress or other unusual circumstances.

The ability of the Trust to implement the Frequent Trading Policy for omnibus accounts at certain financial intermediaries may be dependent on receiving from those intermediaries sufficient shareholder information to permit

monitoring of trade activity and enforcement of the Trust's Frequent Trading Policy. In addition, the Trust may rely on a financial intermediary's policy to restrict market timing and excessive trading if the Trust believes that the policy is reasonably designed to prevent market timing that is detrimental to the Fund. Such policy may be more or less restrictive than the Trust's Policy. The Trust cannot ensure that these financial intermediaries will in all cases apply the Trust's policy or their own policies, as the case may be, to accounts under their control.

The CCO is authorized to set and modify the above-described parameters at any time as required to prevent adverse impact of frequent trading activity on Fund shareholders.

## **Exclusions from the Frequent Trading Policy**

As stated above, certain redemptions are eligible for exclusion from the Frequent Trading Policy, including: (i) redemptions or exchanges by shareholders investing through the fee-based platforms of certain financial intermediaries (where the intermediary charges an asset-based or comprehensive "wrap" fee for its services) that are effected by the financial intermediaries in connection with systematic portfolio rebalancing; (ii) when there is a verified trade error correction, which occurs when a dealer firm sends a trade to correct an earlier trade made in error and then the firm sends an explanation to the Trust confirming that the trade is actually an error correction; (iii) in the event of total disability (as evidenced by a determination by the federal Social Security Administration) of the shareholder (including a registered joint owner) occurring after the purchase of the Fund shares being redeemed; (iv) in the event of the death of the shareholder (including a registered joint owner); (v) redemptions made pursuant to a systematic withdrawal plan, up to 1% monthly, 3% quarterly, 6% semiannually or 12% annually of an account's net asset value depending on the frequency of the plan as designated by the shareholder; (vi) redemptions of Fund shares that were purchased through a systematic investment program; (vii) involuntary redemptions caused by operation of law or Fund Policy; (viii) redemptions in connection with a payment of account or plan fees; (ix) redemptions or exchanges by any "fund of funds" advised by First Trust; and (x) redemptions in connection with the exercise of the Fund's right to redeem all shares in an account that does not maintain a certain minimum balance or that the Board has determined may have material adverse consequences to the shareholders of the Fund.

In addition, the following redemptions of shares by an employer-sponsored qualified defined contribution retirement plan are excluded from the Frequent Trading Policy: (i) partial or complete redemptions in connection with a distribution without penalty under Section 72(t) of the Code from a retirement plan: (a) upon attaining age 59½; (b) as part of a series of substantially equal periodic payments, or (c) upon separation from service and attaining age 55; (ii) partial or complete redemptions in connection with a qualifying loan or hardship withdrawal; (iii) complete redemptions in connection with termination of employment, plan termination, transfer to another employer's plan or IRA or changes in a plan's recordkeeper; and (iv) redemptions resulting from the return of an excess contribution. Also, the following redemptions of shares held in an IRA account are excluded from the application of the Frequent Trading Policy: (i) redemptions made pursuant to an IRA systematic withdrawal based on the shareholder's life expectancy including, but not limited to, substantially equal periodic payments described in Code Section 72(t)(A)(iv) prior to age 59½; and (ii) redemptions to satisfy required minimum distributions after age 72 from an IRA account.

## **General Matters**

The Fund may encourage registered representatives and their firms to help apportion their assets among bonds, stocks and cash, and may seek to participate in programs that recommend a portion of their assets be invested in equity securities, equity and debt securities, or equity and municipal securities.

To help advisors and investors better understand and more efficiently use the Fund to reach their investment goals, the Fund may advertise and create specific investment programs and systems. For example, this may include information on how to use the Fund to accumulate assets for future education needs or periodic payments such as insurance premiums. The Fund may produce software, electronic information sites, or additional sales literature to promote the advantages of using the Fund to meet these and other specific investor needs.

The Fund has authorized one or more brokers to accept on its behalf purchase and redemption orders. Such brokers are authorized to designate other intermediaries to accept purchase and redemption orders on the Fund's behalf. The Fund will be deemed to have received a purchase or redemption order when an authorized broker or, if applicable, a broker's authorized designee accepts the order. Customer orders received by such broker (or their designee) will be priced at the Fund's net asset value next computed after they are accepted by an authorized broker (or their designee). Orders accepted

by an authorized broker (or their designee) before the close of regular trading on the NYSE will receive that day's share price; orders accepted after the close of trading will receive the next business day's share price.

## DISTRIBUTION AND SERVICE PLAN

The Fund has adopted a plan (the "*Plan*") pursuant to Rule 12b-1 under the 1940 Act, which provides that Class C shares are subject to an annual distribution fee, and that Class A and Class C shares are subject to an annual service fee. Class I shares are not subject to either distribution or service fees.

The distribution fee applicable to Class C shares under the Fund's Plan will be payable to compensate FTP for services and expenses incurred in connection with the distribution of Class C shares. These expenses include payments to financial intermediaries, including FTP, who are brokers of record with respect to the Class C shares, as well as, without limitation, expenses of printing and distributing Prospectuses to persons other than current shareholders of the Fund, expenses of preparing, printing and distributing advertising and sales literature and reports to shareholders used in connection with the sale of Class C shares, certain other expenses associated with the distribution of Class C shares, and any distribution-related expenses that may be authorized from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

The Fund incurred 12b-1 fees pursuant to the Plan in the amounts set forth in the table below. 12b-1 fees are calculated and accrued daily and paid monthly or at such other intervals as the Board of Trustees may determine. As noted above, no 12b-1 fees are paid with respect to Class I shares. For the period below, substantially all of the 12b-1 service fees on Class A shares were paid out as compensation to financial intermediaries for providing services to shareholders relating to their investments. To compensate for commissions advanced to financial intermediaries, substantially all 12b-1 fees on Class C shares during the first year following a purchase are retained by the Distributor. After the first year following a purchase, 12b-1 fees on Class C shares are paid to financial intermediaries.

### 12b-1 Fees Incurred by the Fund

Class	Fiscal Year Ended October 31, 2024
Class A	\$ 30,154
Class C	\$105,692
Class I	N/A

The service fee applicable to Class A and Class C shares under the Fund's Plan will be payable to financial intermediaries in connection with the provision of ongoing account services to shareholders. These services may include establishing and maintaining shareholder accounts, answering shareholder inquiries and providing other personal services to shareholders.

The Fund may pay up to 0.25 of 1% per year of the average daily net assets of Class A shares as a service fee under the Plan as applicable to Class A shares. The Fund may pay up to 0.25 of 1% per year of the average daily net assets of Class C shares as a service fee and up to 0.75 of 1% per year of the average daily net assets of Class C shares under the Plan as applicable to Class C shares as a distribution fee. The distribution fees applicable to Class C shares constitute asset-based sales charges whose purpose is the same as an up-front sales charge.

Under the Fund's Plan, the Fund will report quarterly to the Board of Trustees for its review all amounts expended per class of shares under the Plan. The Plan may be terminated at any time with respect to any class of shares, without the payment of any penalty, by a vote of a majority of the Independent Trustees who have no direct or indirect financial interest in the Plan or by vote of a majority of the outstanding voting securities of such class. The Plan may be renewed from year to year if approved by a vote of the Board of Trustees and a vote of the Independent Trustees who have no direct or indirect financial interest in the Plan cast in person at a meeting called for the purpose of voting on the Plan. The Plan may be continued only if the trustees who vote to approve such continuance conclude, in the exercise of reasonable business judgment and in light of their fiduciary duties under applicable law, that there is a reasonable likelihood that the Plan will benefit the Fund and its shareholders. The Plan may not be amended to increase materially the cost which a class of shares may bear under the Plan without the approval of the shareholders of the affected class, and any other material amendments of the Plan must be approved by the Independent Trustees by a vote cast in person at a meeting called for the purpose of



considering such amendments. During the continuance of the Plan, the selection and nomination of the Independent Trustees of the Trust will be committed to the discretion of the Independent Trustees then in office.

## FEDERAL TAX MATTERS

This section summarizes some of the main U.S. federal income tax consequences of owning shares of the Fund. This section is current as of the date of the SAI. Tax laws and interpretations change frequently, and these summaries do not describe all of the tax consequences to all taxpayers. For example, these summaries generally do not describe your situation if you are a corporation, a non-U.S. person, a broker-dealer or other investor with special circumstances. In addition, this section does not describe your state, local or foreign tax consequences.

This federal income tax summary is based in part on the advice of counsel to the Fund. The Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") could disagree with any conclusions set forth in this section. The following disclosure may not be sufficient for prospective investors to use for the purpose of avoiding penalties under federal tax law.

As with any investment, prospective investors should seek advice based on their individual circumstances from their own tax advisor.

The Fund intends to qualify annually and to elect to be treated as a regulated investment company (a "RIC") under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code").

To qualify for the favorable U.S. federal income tax treatment generally accorded to RICs, the Fund must, among other things, (i) derive in each taxable year at least 90% of its gross income from dividends, interest, payments with respect to securities loans and gains from the sale or other disposition of stock, securities or foreign currencies or other income derived with respect to its business of investing in such stock, securities or currencies, or net income derived from interests in certain publicly traded partnerships; (ii) diversify its holdings so that, at the end of each quarter of the taxable year, (a) at least 50% of the market value of the Fund's assets is represented by cash and cash items (including receivables), U.S. government securities, the securities of other RICs and other securities, with such other securities of any one issuer generally limited for the purposes of this calculation to an amount not greater than 5% of the value of the Fund's total assets and not greater than 10% of the outstanding voting securities of such issuer, and (b) not more than 25% of the value of its total assets is invested in the securities (other than U.S. government securities or the securities of other RICs) of any one issuer, or two or more issuers which the Fund controls which are engaged in the same, similar or related trades or businesses, or the securities of one or more of certain publicly traded partnerships; and (iii) distribute at least 90% of its investment company taxable income (which includes, among other items, dividends, interest and net short-term capital gains in excess of net long-term capital losses) and at least 90% of its net tax-exempt interest income each taxable year. There are certain exceptions for failure to qualify if the failure is for reasonable cause or is *de minimis*, and certain corrective action is taken and certain tax payments are made by the Fund.

As a RIC, the Fund generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on its investment company taxable income (as that term is defined in the Code, but without regard to the deduction for dividends paid) and net capital gain (the excess of net long-term capital gain over net short-term capital loss), if any, that it distributes to shareholders. The Fund intends to distribute to its shareholders, at least annually, substantially all of its investment company taxable income and net capital gain. If the Fund retains any net capital gain or investment company taxable income, it will generally be subject to federal income tax at regular corporate rates on the amount retained. In addition, amounts not distributed on a timely basis in accordance with a calendar year distribution requirement are subject to a nondeductible 4% excise tax unless, generally, the Fund distributes during each calendar year an amount equal to the sum of (1) at least 98% of its ordinary income (not taking into account any capital gains or losses) for the calendar year, (2) at least 98.2% of its capital gains in excess of its capital losses (adjusted for certain ordinary losses) for the one-year period ending October 31 of the calendar year, and (3) any ordinary income and capital gains for previous years that were not distributed during those years. In order to prevent application of the excise tax, the Fund intends to make its distributions in accordance with the calendar year distribution requirement. A distribution will be treated as paid on December 31 of the current calendar year if it is declared by the Fund in October, November or December with a record date in such a month and paid by the Fund during January of the following calendar year. Such distributions will be taxable to shareholders in the calendar year in which the distributions are declared, rather than the calendar year in which the distributions are received.

Subject to certain reasonable cause and *de minimis* exceptions, if the Fund fails to qualify as a RIC or fails to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement in any taxable year, the Fund would be taxed as an ordinary corporation on its taxable



income (even if such income were distributed to its shareholders) and all distributions out of earnings and profits would be taxed to shareholders as ordinary income.

## **Distributions**

Dividends paid out of the Fund's investment company taxable income are generally taxable to a shareholder as ordinary income to the extent of the Fund's earnings and profits, whether paid in cash or reinvested in additional shares. However, certain ordinary income distributions received from the Fund may be taxed at capital gains tax rates. In particular, ordinary income dividends received by an individual shareholder from a RIC such as the Fund are generally taxed at the same rates that apply to net capital gain, provided that certain holding period requirements are satisfied and provided the dividends are attributable to qualifying dividends received by the Fund itself. The Fund will provide notice to its shareholders of the amount of any distributions that may be taken into account as a dividend which is eligible for the capital gains tax rates. The Fund cannot make any guarantees as to the amount of any distribution which will be regarded as a qualifying dividend.

Income from the Fund may also be subject to a 3.8% "Medicare tax." This tax generally applies to net investment income if the taxpayer's adjusted gross income exceeds certain threshold amounts, which are \$250,000 in the case of married couples filing joint returns and \$200,000 in the case of single individuals.

A corporation that owns shares generally will not be entitled to the dividends received deduction with respect to many dividends received from the Fund because the dividends received deduction is generally not available for distributions from RICs. However, certain ordinary income dividends on shares that are attributable to qualifying dividends received by the Fund from certain domestic corporations may be reported by the Fund as being eligible for the dividends received deduction.

Distributions of net capital gain (the excess of net long-term capital gain over net short-term capital loss), if any, properly reported as capital gain dividends are taxable to a shareholder as long-term capital gains, regardless of how long the shareholder has held Fund shares. An election may be available to you to defer recognition of the gain attributable to a capital gain dividend if you make certain qualifying investments within a limited time. You should talk to your tax advisor about the availability of this deferral election and its requirements. Shareholders receiving distributions in the form of additional shares, rather than cash, generally will have a tax basis in each such share equal to the value of a share of the Fund on the reinvestment date. A distribution of an amount in excess of the Fund's current and accumulated earnings and profits will be treated by a shareholder as a return of capital which is applied against and reduces the shareholder's basis in his or her shares. To the extent that the amount of any such distribution exceeds the shareholder's basis in his or her shares, the excess will be treated by the shareholder as gain from a sale or exchange of the shares.

Shareholders will be notified annually as to the U.S. federal income tax status of distributions and shareholders receiving distributions in the form of additional shares will receive a report as to the value of those shares.

## **Sale or Exchange of Fund Shares**

Upon the sale or other disposition of shares of the Fund, which a shareholder holds as a capital asset, such shareholder may realize a capital gain or loss which will be long-term or short-term, depending upon the shareholder's holding period for the shares. Generally, a shareholder's gain or loss will be a long-term gain or loss if the shares have been held for more than one year. An election may be available to you to defer recognition of capital gain if you make certain qualifying investments within a limited time. You should talk to your tax advisor about the availability of this deferral election and its requirements.

Any loss realized on a sale or exchange will be disallowed to the extent that shares disposed of are replaced (including through reinvestment of dividends) within a period of 61 days beginning 30 days before and ending 30 days after disposition of shares or to the extent that the shareholder, during such period, acquires or enters into an option or contract to acquire substantially identical stock or securities. In such a case, the basis of the shares acquired will be adjusted to reflect the disallowed loss. Any loss realized by a shareholder on a disposition of Fund shares held by the shareholder for six months or less will be treated as a long-term capital loss to the extent of any distributions of long-term capital gain received by the shareholder with respect to such shares.

## Nature of Fund Investments

Certain of the Fund's investment practices are subject to special and complex federal income tax provisions that may, among other things, (i) disallow, suspend or otherwise limit the allowance of certain losses or deductions; (ii) convert lower taxed long-term capital gain into higher taxed short-term capital gain or ordinary income; (iii) convert an ordinary loss or a deduction into a capital loss (the deductibility of which is more limited); (iv) cause the Fund to recognize income or gain without a corresponding receipt of cash; (v) adversely affect the time as to when a purchase or sale of stock or securities is deemed to occur; and (vi) adversely alter the characterization of certain complex financial transactions.

## Futures Contracts and Options

The Fund's transactions in futures contracts and options will be subject to special provisions of the Code that, among other things, may affect the character of gains and losses realized by the Fund (*i.e.*, may affect whether gains or losses are ordinary or capital, or short-term or long-term), may accelerate recognition of income to the Fund and may defer Fund losses. These rules could, therefore, affect the character, amount and timing of distributions to shareholders. These provisions also (a) will require the Fund to mark-to-market certain types of the positions in its portfolio (*i.e.*, treat them as if they were closed out); and (b) may cause the Fund to recognize income without receiving cash with which to make distributions in amounts necessary to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement for qualifying to be taxed as a RIC and the distribution requirements for avoiding excise taxes.

## Investments in Certain Foreign Corporations

If the Fund holds an equity interest in any "passive foreign investment companies" ("PFICs"), which are generally certain foreign corporations that receive at least 75% of their annual gross income from passive sources (such as interest, dividends, certain rents and royalties or capital gains) or that hold at least 50% of their assets in investments producing such passive income, the Fund could be subject to U.S. federal income tax and additional interest charges on gains and certain distributions with respect to those equity interests, even if all the income or gain is timely distributed to its shareholders. The Fund will not be able to pass through to its shareholders any credit or deduction for such taxes. The Fund may be able to make an election that could ameliorate these adverse tax consequences. In this case, the Fund would recognize as ordinary income any increase in the value of such PFIC shares, and as ordinary loss any decrease in such value to the extent it did not exceed prior increases included in income. Under this election, the Fund might be required to recognize in a year income in excess of its distributions from PFICs and its proceeds from dispositions of PFIC stock during that year, and such income would nevertheless be subject to the distribution requirement and would be taken into account for purposes of the 4% excise tax (described above). Dividends paid by PFICs are not treated as qualified dividend income.

## Backup Withholding

The Fund may be required to withhold U.S. federal income tax from all taxable distributions and sale proceeds payable to shareholders who fail to provide the Fund with their correct taxpayer identification number or fail to make required certifications, or who have been notified by the IRS that they are subject to backup withholding. Corporate shareholders and certain other shareholders specified in the Code generally are exempt from such backup withholding. This withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld may be credited against the shareholder's U.S. federal income tax liability.

## Non-U.S. Shareholders

U.S. taxation of a shareholder who, as to the United States, is a nonresident alien individual, a foreign trust or estate, a foreign corporation or foreign partnership ("*non-U.S. shareholder*") depends on whether the income of the Fund is "effectively connected" with a U.S. trade or business carried on by the shareholder.

In addition to the rules described in this section concerning the potential imposition of withholding on distributions to non-U.S. persons, distributions to non-U.S. persons that are "financial institutions" may be subject to a withholding tax of 30% unless an agreement is in place between the financial institution and the U.S. Treasury to collect and disclose information about accounts, equity investments or debt interests in the financial institution held by one or more U.S. persons or the institution is resident in a jurisdiction that has entered into such an agreement with the U.S. Treasury. For these purposes, a "financial institution" means any entity that (i) accepts deposits in the ordinary course of a banking or similar business; (ii) holds financial assets for the account of others as a substantial portion of its business; or (iii) is engaged (or holds itself out as being engaged) primarily in the business of investing, reinvesting or trading in securities, partnership

interests, commodities or any interest (including a futures contract or option) in such securities, partnership interests or commodities. This withholding tax is also currently scheduled to apply to the gross proceeds from the disposition of securities that produce U.S. source interest or dividends. However, proposed regulations may eliminate the requirement to withhold on payments of gross proceeds from dispositions.

Distributions to non-financial non-U.S. entities (other than publicly traded foreign entities, entities owned by residents of U.S. possessions, foreign governments, international organizations or foreign central banks) will also be subject to a withholding tax of 30% if the entity does not certify that the entity does not have any substantial U.S. owners or provide the name, address and TIN of each substantial U.S. owner. This withholding tax is also currently scheduled to apply to the gross proceeds from the disposition of securities that produce U.S. source interest or dividends. However, proposed regulations may eliminate the requirement to withhold on payments of gross proceeds from dispositions.

**Income Not Effectively Connected.** If the income from the Fund is not “effectively connected” with a U.S. trade or business carried on by the non-U.S. shareholder, distributions of investment company taxable income will generally be subject to a U.S. tax of 30% (or lower treaty rate), which tax is generally withheld from such distributions.

Distributions of capital gain dividends and any amounts retained by the Fund which are properly reported by the Fund as undistributed capital gains will not be subject to U.S. tax at the rate of 30% (or lower treaty rate) unless the non-U.S. shareholder is a nonresident alien individual and is physically present in the United States for more than 182 days during the taxable year and meets certain other requirements. However, this 30% tax on capital gains of nonresident alien individuals who are physically present in the United States for more than the 182 day period only applies in exceptional cases because any individual present in the United States for more than 182 days during the taxable year is generally treated as a resident for U.S. income tax purposes; in that case, he or she would be subject to U.S. income tax on his or her worldwide income at the graduated rates applicable to U.S. citizens, rather than the 30% U.S. tax. In the case of a non-U.S. shareholder who is a nonresident alien individual, the Fund may be required to withhold U.S. income tax from distributions of net capital gain unless the non-U.S. shareholder certifies his or her non-U.S. status under penalties of perjury or otherwise establishes an exemption. If a non-U.S. shareholder is a nonresident alien individual, any gain such shareholder realizes upon the sale or exchange of such shareholder's shares of the Fund in the United States will ordinarily be exempt from U.S. tax unless the gain is U.S. source income and such shareholder is physically present in the United States for more than 182 days during the taxable year and meets certain other requirements.

Distributions from the Fund that are properly reported by the Fund as an interest-related dividend attributable to certain interest income received by the Fund or as a short-term capital gain dividend attributable to certain net short-term capital gain income received by the Fund may not be subject to U.S. federal income taxes, including withholding taxes when received by certain non-U.S. shareholders, provided that the Fund makes certain elections and certain other conditions are met. For tax years after December 31, 2022, amounts paid to or recognized by a non-U.S. affiliate that are excluded from tax under the portfolio interest, capital gain dividends, short-term capital gains or tax-exempt interest dividend exceptions or applicable treaties, may be taken into consideration in determining whether a corporation is an “applicable corporation” subject to a 15% minimum tax on adjusted financial statement income. In addition, capital gain distributions attributable to gains from U.S. real property interests (including certain U.S. real property holding corporations) will generally be subject to United States withholding tax and will give rise to an obligation on the part of the non-U.S. shareholder to file a United States tax return.

**Income Effectively Connected.** If the income from the Fund is “effectively connected” with a U.S. trade or business carried on by a non-U.S. shareholder, then distributions of investment company taxable income and capital gain dividends, any amounts retained by the Fund which are properly reported by the Fund as undistributed capital gains and any gains realized upon the sale or exchange of shares of the Fund will be subject to U.S. income tax at the graduated rates applicable to U.S. citizens, residents and domestic corporations. Non-U.S. corporate shareholders may also be subject to the branch profits tax imposed by the Code. The tax consequences to a non-U.S. shareholder entitled to claim the benefits of an applicable tax treaty may differ from those described herein. Non-U.S. shareholders are advised to consult their own tax advisors with respect to the particular tax consequences to them of an investment in the Fund.

## Capital Loss Carry-forward

Under the Regulated Investment Company Modernization Act of 2010, net capital losses of the Fund incurred in taxable years beginning after December 22, 2010 may be carried forward indefinitely, and their character is retained as short-term and/or long-term losses. To the extent that these loss carry-forwards are used to offset future capital gains, it is probable that the capital gains so offset will not be distributed to Fund shareholders. As of October 31, 2024, the Fund had

net capital losses for federal income tax purposes as shown in the table below. The Fund is subject to certain limitations, under U.S. tax rules, on the use of capital loss carry-forwards and net unrealized built-in losses. These limitations generally apply when there has been a 50% change in ownership.

**Total  
Non-Expiring  
Capital Loss  
Available**

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\$25,214,365

## **Other Taxation**

Fund shareholders may be subject to state, local and foreign taxes on their Fund distributions. Shareholders are advised to consult their own tax advisors with respect to the particular tax consequences to them of an investment in the Fund.

## **DETERMINATION OF NET ASSET VALUE**

The Fund's net asset value is determined as set forth in the Prospectus in the section entitled "Net Asset Value."

## **DIVIDENDS AND DISTRIBUTIONS**

**Dividend Reinvestment Service.** Unless you request otherwise, the Fund reinvests your dividends and capital gain distributions in additional Fund shares of the same class of shares with respect to which such dividends or distributions are paid. If you do not want your dividends and capital gain distributions reinvested in Fund shares in this manner, you may contact your financial advisor to request that your dividends and capital gain distributions be paid to you by check or deposited directly into your bank account. If adequate information is not received from a shareholder or its financial advisor to permit the Fund to direct reinvestment proceeds into the account from which they were paid, the Fund reserves the right to redirect such amounts into the appropriate account at a later date. For further information, contact your financial advisor or call First Trust Funds at (800) 621-1675.

## **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

**Counsel.** Chapman and Cutler LLP, 320 South Canal Street, Chicago, Illinois 60606, is counsel to the Trust.

**Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm.** Deloitte & Touche LLP, 111 South Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606, serves as the Fund's independent registered public accounting firm. The firm audits the Fund's financial statements and performs other related audit services.

## **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The audited financial statements and notes thereto for the Fund, contained in the Form N-CSR dated October 31, 2024, are incorporated by reference into this Statement of Additional Information and have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, whose report appears in the Form N-CSR and is also incorporated by reference herein. No other parts of the Form N-CSR are incorporated by reference herein. The Form N-CSR is available without charge by calling (800) 621-1675 or by visiting the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

## EXHIBIT A – PRINCIPAL HOLDERS TABLE

NAME OF BENEFICIAL OWNER	% OF OUTSTANDING SHARES OWNED
FIRST TRUST SHORT DURATION HIGH INCOME FUND	
CLASS A	
Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC	60.34%
National Financial Services LLC	9.29%
Raymond James & Associates, Inc.	7.98%
Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.	6.87%
LPL Financial LLC	6.01%
CLASS C	
Wells Fargo Clearing Services, LLC	47.51%
National Financial Services LLC	14.14%
LPL Financial LLC	11.60%
Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.	8.52%
Raymond James & Associates, Inc.	6.17%
UBS Financial Services Inc.	5.24%
CLASS I	
National Financial Services LLC	31.75%
Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC	16.58%
Raymond James & Associates, Inc.	13.41%
Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.	10.49%
Wells Fargo Clearing Services, LLC	8.81%
LPL Financial LLC	7.54%
MSCS FINANCIAL SERVICES LLC	6.28%

- (1) Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.: 2423 E. Lincoln Drive, Phoenix, Arizona 85016
- (2) LPL Financial Corporation: 1055 LPL Way, Fort Mill, South Carolina 29715
- (3) Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC: 1300 Thames Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21231
- (4) MSCS FINANCIAL SERVICES LLC: 717 17th Street, Suite 1300, Denver, Colorado 80202
- (5) National Financial Services LLC: 499 Washington Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey 07310
- (6) Raymond James & Associates, Inc.: 880 Carillon Parkway, St. Petersburg, Florida 33716
- (7) UBS Financial Services Inc.: 1000 Harbor Blvd., Weehawken, New Jersey 07086
- (8) Wells Fargo Clearing Services, LLC: 2801 Market Street, H0006-09B, St. Louis, Missouri 63103

## EXHIBIT B — PROXY VOTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### FIRST TRUST ADVISORS L.P. PROXY VOTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

First Trust Advisors L.P. (“FTA” or the “Adviser”) serves as investment adviser to open- and closed-end investment companies, and other collective investments (“Funds”), as well as separately managed accounts (collectively, “Clients”). As part of these services, the Adviser has, in most cases, agreed to or been delegated proxy voting responsibility on such Clients’ behalf (“Proxy Clients”). FTA is required to adopt and implement policies and procedures reasonably designed to ensure proxy voting on behalf of Proxy Clients is conducted in a manner that is in their best interests and addresses how conflicts of interest between FTA’s interests and Proxy Clients’ interests are managed. FTA has adopted the following policies and procedures to comply with this requirement (the “Policy”).

- (1) It is the Adviser’s policy to seek and to ensure that proxies are voted consistently and in the best economic interests of the Proxy Client. The FTA Investment Committee is responsible for the implementation of the Policy.
- (2) The Adviser engaged Institutional Shareholder Services (“ISS”) to provide proxy research, recommendations, and voting services. ISS provides a password protected website which is accessible to authorized FTA personnel to download upcoming proxy meeting data, including research reports of companies held in Proxy Client portfolios. The website can be used to view proposed proxy votes and to enter votes for upcoming meetings for Proxy Client portfolio securities.
- (3) FTA will generally follow the First Trust U.S. Proxy Voting Guidelines and First Trust International Proxy Voting Guidelines (collectively, the “Guidelines”), as appropriate, to vote proxies for Proxy Clients’ accounts, so long as such Guidelines are considered to be in the best interests of the Proxy Client, and there are no noted or perceived conflicts of interest. FTA’s use of the Guidelines is not intended to constrain FTA’s consideration of any proxy proposal, and there are times when FTA deviates from the Guidelines, including but not limited to when required by Rule 12d1-4 agreements between Fund Proxy clients and certain acquired funds, if applicable. When FTA deviates from the Guidelines, FTA will consider such proxy voting decisions in light of merit-based considerations which it believes may impact shareholder value. The Guidelines are posted on the “News and Literature” page on the website (<http://www.ftportfolios.com>) for each Fund for which FTA votes proxies.
- (4) FTA will also vote against shareholder proposals that are not related to a company’s core business and/or do not appear to be an appropriate use of a company’s resources to maximize shareholder value.
- (5) FTA may vote against the Guidelines in other circumstances as it has final authority and fiduciary responsibility for proxy voting.
- (6) In certain circumstances, where FTA has determined that it is consistent with Proxy Clients’ best interests, FTA will not vote a proxy on behalf of one or more Proxy Clients. Such circumstances include:
  - (a) *Limited Value.* Proxies will not be required to be voted on securities in a Proxy Client’s account if the value of the Proxy Client’s economic interest in the securities is indeterminable or insignificant (less than \$1,000). Proxies will also not be required to be voted for any securities that are no longer held in Proxy Client’s account(s).
  - (b) *Securities Lending Program.* When Fund portfolio securities are out on loan, they are transferred into the borrower’s name and are voted by the borrower, in its discretion. In most cases, FTA will not recall securities on loan in order to vote a proxy. However, where FTA determines that a proxy vote, or other shareholder action, is materially important to the Fund Proxy Client’s account, FTA will make a good faith effort to recall the security for purposes of voting, understanding that in certain cases, the attempt to recall the security may not be effective in time to meet voting deadlines. In certain instances, in FTA’s discretion, disclosure regarding FTA’s process for determining whether or not to recall Fund portfolio securities on loan for proxy voting purposes may be provided as part of the Funds’ annual Form N-PX filing.



- (c) *Unjustifiable Costs.* In certain circumstances, based on cost-benefit analysis, FTA may choose not to vote when the cost of voting on behalf of a Proxy Client would exceed any anticipated benefits of the proxy proposal to such Proxy Client (e.g. foreign securities).
  - (d) *International Markets Share Blocking.* Share blocking is the “freezing” of shares for trading purposes at the custodian/sub-custodian bank level in order to vote proxies. While shares are frozen, they may not be traded. Therefore, the potential exists for a pending trade to fail if trade settlement falls on a date during the blocking period. In international markets where share blocking applies, FTA typically will not, but reserves the right to, vote proxies due to the liquidity constraints associated with share blocking.
- (7) On a regular basis, FTA Research reviews ISS recommendations on matters determined to have a potential impact of shareholder value to decide whether to vote as the Guidelines recommend and advises the FTA Investment Committee of its determination.
  - (8) FTA may determine voting in accordance with the Guidelines is not in the best interests of a Proxy Client. If there is a decision to vote against the Guidelines, the FTA Investment Committee will document the reason and instruct ISS to change the vote to reflect this decision.
  - (9) Whenever a conflict of interest arises between ISS and a target company subject to a proxy vote, the Adviser will consider the recommendation of the company and what the Adviser believes to be in the best interests of the Proxy Client and will vote the proxy without using the Guidelines. If FTA has knowledge of a material conflict of interest between itself and a Proxy Client, the Adviser shall vote the applicable proxy in accordance with the Guidelines to avoid such conflict of interest. If there is a conflict of interest between a Fund Proxy Client and FTA or other Fund service providers, FTA will vote the proxy based on the Guidelines to avoid such conflict of interest.
  - (10) If a Proxy Client requests the Adviser to follow specific voting guidelines or additional guidelines, the Adviser shall review the request and follow such guidelines, unless the Adviser determines that it is unable to do so. In such case, the Adviser shall inform the Proxy Client that it is not able to honor the Proxy Client's request.
  - (11) FTA periodically reviews proxy votes to ensure compliance with this Policy.
  - (12) This Policy, the Guidelines and votes cast for Proxy Clients are available upon request and such Proxy Client requests must be forwarded to FTA Compliance for review and response. This Policy is also provided with each advisory contract and described and provided with the Form ADV, Part 2A.
- Shareholders of Fund Proxy Clients can review the Policy and a Fund's voted proxies (if any) during the most recent 12-month period ended June 30 on the First Trust website at <http://www.ftportfolios.com> or by accessing EDGAR on the SEC website at <http://www.sec.gov>.
- (13) FTA provides reasonable ongoing oversight of ISS. FTA, or ISS on behalf of FTA, maintains the following records relating to proxy voting:
    - (a) a copy of this Policy;
    - (b) a copy of each proxy form for which it is responsible to vote;
    - (c) a copy of each proxy solicitation, including proxy statements and related materials with regard to each proxy issue it votes;
    - (d) documents relating to the identification and resolution of conflicts of interest, if any;
    - (e) any documents created by FTA or ISS that were material to a proxy voting decision or that memorialized the basis for that decision; and
    - (f) a copy of each written request from any Proxy Client for information on how FTA voted proxies on the Proxy Client's behalf, and a copy of any written response by FTA to any written or oral request for information by a Proxy Client on how FTA voted proxies for that Proxy Client's account.

These records are either maintained at FTA's office or are electronically available to FTA through access to the ISS Proxy Exchange portal.

## EXHIBIT C – CREDIT RATING DEFINITIONS

### S&P Global RATINGS

A S&P Global Ratings issue credit rating is a forward-looking opinion about the creditworthiness of an obligor with respect to a specific financial obligation, a specific class of financial obligations, or a specific financial program (including ratings on medium-term note programs and commercial paper programs). It takes into consideration the creditworthiness of guarantors, insurers, or other forms of credit enhancement on the obligation and takes into account the currency in which the obligation is denominated. The opinion reflects S&P Global Rating's view of the obligor's capacity and willingness to meet its financial commitments as they come due, and may assess terms, such as collateral security and subordination, which could affect ultimate payment in the event of default.

### LONG-TERM ISSUE CREDIT RATINGS

Issue credit ratings are based, in varying degrees, on the following considerations:

1. Likelihood of payment: capacity and willingness of the obligor to meet its financial commitment on an obligation in accordance with the terms of the obligation;
2. Nature of and provisions of the obligation and the promise S&P imputes;
3. Protection afforded by, and relative position of, the obligation in the event of bankruptcy, reorganization, or other arrangement under the laws of bankruptcy and other laws affecting creditors' rights.

The issue rating definitions are an assessment of default risk, but may incorporate an assessment of relative seniority or ultimate recovery in the event of default. Junior obligations are typically rated lower than senior obligations, to reflect the lower priority in bankruptcy, as noted above. (Such differentiation may apply when an entity has both senior and subordinated obligations, secured and unsecured obligations, or operating company and holding company obligations.)

<b>AAA</b>	An obligation rated "AAA" has the highest rating assigned by S&P Global Ratings. The obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is extremely strong.
<b>AA</b>	An obligation rated "AA" differs from the highest rated obligations only in small degree. The obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is very strong.
<b>A</b>	An obligation rated "A" is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligations in higher rated categories. However, the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is still strong.
<b>BBB</b>	An obligation rated "BBB" exhibits adequate protection parameters. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to lead to a weakened capacity of the obligor to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.

Obligations rated "BB," "B," "CCC," "CC" and "C" are regarded as having significant speculative characteristics. "BB" indicates the least degree of speculation and "C" the highest. While such obligations will likely have some quality and protective characteristics, these may be outweighed by large uncertainties or major exposures to adverse conditions.

<b>BB</b>	An obligation rated "BB" is less vulnerable to nonpayment than other speculative issues. However, it faces major ongoing uncertainties or exposure to adverse business, financial, or economic conditions which could lead to the obligor's inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.
<b>B</b>	An obligation rated "B" is more vulnerable to nonpayment than obligations rated "BB," but the obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation. Adverse business, financial, or economic conditions will likely impair the obligor's capacity or willingness to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.
<b>CCC</b>	An obligation rated "CCC" is currently vulnerable to nonpayment, and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions for the obligor to meet its financial commitment on the obligation. In the event of adverse business, financial, or economic conditions, the obligor is not likely to have the capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation.
<b>CC</b>	An obligation rated "CC" is currently highly vulnerable to nonpayment. The "CC" rating is used when a default has not yet occurred but S&P expects default to be a virtual certainty regardless of the anticipated time to default.

<b>C</b>	An obligation rated "C" is currently highly vulnerable to nonpayment and the obligation is expected to have lower relative seniority or lower ultimate recovery compared to obligations that are rated higher.
<b>D</b>	An obligation rated "D" is in default or in breach of an imputed promise. For non-hybrid capital instruments, the "D" rating category is used when payments on an obligation are not made on the date due unless S&P believes that such payments will be made within the next five business days in the absence of a stated grace period or within the earlier of the stated grace period or the next 30 calendar days. The "D" rating also will be used upon the filing of a bankruptcy petition or the taking of similar action and where default on an obligation is a virtual certainty, for example due to automatic stay provisions. A rating on an obligation is lowered to 'D' if it is subject to a distressed debt restructuring.

**Plus (+) or Minus (-):** The ratings from "AA" to "CCC" may be modified by the addition of a plus or minus sign to show relative standing within the major rating categories.

## Moody's Investors Service, Inc.

A brief description of the applicable Moody's Investors Service, Inc. ("*Moody's*") rating symbols and their meanings (as published by Moody's) follows.

Ratings assigned on Moody's global long-term and short-term rating scales are forward-looking opinions of the relative credit risks of financial obligations issued by non-financial corporates, financial institutions, structured finance vehicles, project finance vehicles, and public sector entities. Long-term ratings are assigned to issuers or obligations with an original maturity of one year or more and reflect both on the likelihood of a default on contractually promised payments and the expected financial loss suffered in the event of default. Short-term ratings are assigned to obligations with an original maturity of thirteen months or less and reflect the likelihood of a default on contractually promised payments.

## LONG-TERM OBLIGATION RATINGS

<b>Aaa</b>	Obligations rated Aaa are judged to be of the highest quality, subject to the lowest level of credit risk.
<b>Aa</b>	Obligations rated Aa are judged to be of high quality and are subject to very low credit risk.
<b>A</b>	Obligations rated A are judged to be upper-medium grade and are subject to low credit risk.
<b>Baa</b>	Obligations rated Baa are judged to be medium-grade and subject to moderate credit risk and as such may possess certain speculative characteristics.
<b>Ba</b>	Obligations rated Ba are judged to be speculative and are subject to substantial credit risk.
<b>B</b>	Obligations rated B are considered speculative and are subject to high credit risk.
<b>Caa</b>	Obligations rated Caa are judged to be speculative of poor standing and are subject to very high credit risk.
<b>Ca</b>	Obligations rated Ca are highly speculative and are likely in, or very near, default, with some prospect of recovery of principal and interest.
<b>C</b>	Obligations rated C are the lowest rated and are typically in default, with little prospect for recovery of principal or interest.

**Note:** Moody's appends numerical modifiers 1, 2, and 3 to each generic rating classification from Aa through Caa. The modifier 1 indicates that the obligation ranks in the higher end of its generic rating category; the modifier 2 indicates a mid-range ranking; and the modifier 3 indicates a ranking in the lower end of that generic rating category.

## Fitch Ratings

A brief description of the applicable Fitch Ratings ("*Fitch*") ratings symbols and meanings (as published by Fitch) follows:

Fitch's credit ratings provide an opinion on the relative ability of an entity to meet financial commitments, such as interest, preferred dividends, repayment of principal, insurance claims or counterparty obligations. Credit ratings are used by investors as indications of the likelihood of receiving the money owed to them in accordance with the terms on which they invested. The agency's credit ratings cover the global spectrum of corporate, sovereign (including supra-national and sub-national), financial, bank, insurance, municipal and other public finance entities and the securities or other obligations they issue, as well as structured finance securities backed by receivables or other financial assets.

The terms "investment grade" and "speculative grade" have established themselves over time as shorthand to describe the categories 'AAA' to 'BBB' (investment grade) and 'BB' to 'D' (speculative grade). The terms "investment grade" and "speculative grade" are market conventions, and do not imply any recommendation or endorsement of a specific security for

investment purposes. "Investment grade" categories indicate relatively low to moderate credit risk, while ratings in the "speculative" categories either signal a higher level of credit risk or that a default has already occurred.

A designation of "Not Rated" or "NR" is used to denote securities not rated by Fitch where Fitch has rated some, but not all, securities comprising an issuance capital structure.

Credit ratings express risk in relative rank order, which is to say they are ordinal measures of credit risk and are not predictive of a specific frequency of default or loss.

Fitch's credit ratings do not directly address any risk other than credit risk. In particular, ratings do not deal with the risk of a market value loss on a rated security due to changes in interest rates, liquidity and other market considerations. However, in terms of payment obligation on the rated liability, market risk may be considered to the extent that it influences the ability of an issuer to pay upon a commitment. Ratings nonetheless do not reflect market risk to the extent that they influence the size or other conditionality of the obligation to pay upon a commitment (for example, in the case of index-linked bonds).

In the default components of ratings assigned to individual obligations or instruments, the agency typically rates to the likelihood of non-payment or default in accordance with the terms of that instrument's documentation. In limited cases, Fitch may include additional considerations (i.e. rate to a higher or lower standard than that implied in the obligation's documentation). In such cases, the agency will make clear the assumptions underlying the agency's opinion in the accompanying rating commentary.

## INTERNATIONAL LONG-TERM RATINGS

### Issuer Credit Rating Scales

<b>AAA</b>	Highest credit quality. 'AAA' ratings denote the lowest expectation of default risk. They are assigned only in cases of exceptionally strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is highly unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events.
<b>AA</b>	Very high credit quality. 'AA' ratings denote expectations of very low default risk. They indicate very strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.
<b>A</b>	High credit quality. 'A' ratings denote expectations of low default risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.
<b>BBB</b>	Good credit quality. 'BBB' ratings indicate that expectations of default risk are currently low. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered adequate but adverse business or economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.
<b>BB</b>	Speculative. 'BB' ratings indicate an elevated vulnerability to default risk, particularly in the event of adverse changes in business or economic conditions over time; however, business or financial flexibility exists which supports the servicing of financial commitments.
<b>B</b>	Highly speculative. 'B' ratings indicate that material default risk is present, but a limited margin of safety remains. Financial commitments are currently being met; however, capacity for continued payment is vulnerable to deterioration in the business and economic environment.
<b>CCC</b>	Substantial credit risk. Default is a real possibility.
<b>CC</b>	Very high levels of credit risk. Default of some kind appears probable.
<b>C</b>	Exceptionally high levels of credit risk. Default is imminent or inevitable, or the issuer is in standstill. Conditions that are indicative of a 'C' category rating for an issuer include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the issuer has entered into a grace or cure period following non-payment of a material financial obligation;</li> <li>• the issuer has entered into a temporary negotiated waiver or standstill agreement following a payment default on a material financial obligation; or</li> <li>• Fitch otherwise believes a condition of 'RD' or 'D' to be imminent or inevitable, including through the formal announcement of a distressed debt exchange.</li> </ul>

<b>RD</b>	<p>Restricted default. 'RD' ratings indicate an issuer that in Fitch's opinion has experienced an uncured payment default on a bond, loan or other material financial obligation but which has not entered into bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation or other formal winding-up procedure, and which has not otherwise ceased operating. This would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the selective payment default on a specific class or currency of debt;</li> <li>• the uncured expiry of any applicable grace period, cure period or default forbearance period following a payment default on a bank loan, capital markets security or other material financial obligation;</li> <li>• the extension of multiple waivers or forbearance periods upon a payment default on one or more material financial obligations, either in series or in parallel; or</li> <li>• execution of a distressed debt exchange on one or more material financial obligations.</li> </ul>
<b>D</b>	<p>Default. 'D' ratings indicate an issuer that in Fitch's opinion has entered into bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation or other formal winding-up procedure, or which has otherwise ceased business.</p>

Default ratings are not assigned prospectively to entities or their obligations; within this context, non-payment on an instrument that contains a deferral feature or grace period will generally not be considered a default until after the expiration of the deferral or grace period, unless a default is otherwise driven by bankruptcy or other similar circumstance, or by a distressed debt exchange.

"Imminent" default typically refers to the occasion where a payment default has been intimated by the issuer, and is all but inevitable. This may, for example, be where an issuer has missed a scheduled payment, but (as is typical) has a grace period during which it may cure the payment default. Another alternative would be where an issuer has formally announced a distressed debt exchange, but the date of the exchange still lies several days or weeks in the immediate future.

In all cases, the assignment of a default rating reflects the agency's opinion as to the most appropriate rating category consistent with the rest of its universe of ratings, and may differ from the definition of default under the terms of an issuer's financial obligations or local commercial practice.