



A Commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility

William Blair's values incorporate founder William McCormick Blair's vision of sound financial advice, community engagement, and citizenship. Our responsibilities and opportunities are multifaceted.

William Blair Investment Management's Commitment to ESG Integration

We are proud to manage assets on behalf of institutions at the forefront of sustainable investing in North America, Europe, Australia, and Asia.

Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors are inextricably linked with our fundamental assessment of company management and the sustainability of competitive strengths. Material ESG issues are systematically integrated in our investment process alongside traditional financial factors, facilitating a more holistic assessment of risks and opportunities.

William Blair Investment Management was among the first U.S.-based asset manager signatories of the United Nations-supported Principles for Responsible Investment in 2011, and has formally adopted the U.K., Japan, and Korea Stewardship Codes—demonstrating our global commitment to responsible ownership practices.

As part of our ESG integration at William Blair globally, we take seriously our responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of company management and exert influence on governance practices, in part through the exercise of proxy voting rights.

As environmental and social issues are becoming more prominent areas of focus for our clients and shareholders more broadly, in October 2018 we converted from proxy voting guidelines that focus only on financial metrics to proxy guidelines that are both focused on financial returns and consistent with the objectives of sustainability-minded investors.

Our Commitment to ESG

- A-Rated United Nations-Supported Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) Signatory
- U.S. Investor Stewardship Group Member
- International Corporate Governance Network Member
- U.K. Stewardship Code Signatory
- Japan Stewardship Code Signatory
- Korea Stewardship Code Signatory
- ESG opportunities and risks holistically incorporated into our fundamental equity research platforms

“When our clients succeed, the firm’s success will follow.”

William McCormick Blair

Governance

At William Blair, the independence that comes with being employee-owned, along with a strong balance sheet and diversified business model, allows us to put our clients first. Consistency of leadership is also a firm hallmark, with just five CEOs serving since our founding (and John Ettelson in the role since 2004). These linchpins of our corporate structure are supported by robust policies and practices, from compliance training to business continuity guidelines.

Our Workplace

Within our walls, we believe that diversity of experiences, capabilities, and perspectives lead to innovation and success.

To facilitate diverse thoughts and backgrounds, we have implemented a targeted talent strategy designed to (1) increase the frequency, transparency, and relevance of conversations between employees and managers; (2) create clear firmwide guidelines for what is expected of our employees; (3) support ongoing learning and development opportunities; and (4) foster a culture in which all employees feel included in a community that embraces differences and values and respects each individual.

As part of these efforts, we have also created four business resource groups that promote diversity, raise awareness, support differences, and help deliver a more inclusive culture: the Women’s Alliance, the Veterans’ Alliance, Pride Alliance, and One Alliance. Each plays an important role in the attraction, retention, and development of talent.

Our Communities

In 2020, William Blair and its foundation supported more than 900 charitable organizations with grants, sponsorships, and matching-gifts of more than \$6.6 million. Some of our current locations and signature community partners are: Chicago (Chicago Children’s Choir, Golden Apple, Greenwood Project); New York (BUILD); San Francisco (Refugee & Immigrant Transitions); Atlanta (Cool Girls, Inc.); Boston (Crossroads for Kids); Baltimore (Center for Urban Families); International (Bundesverband Kinderhospiz, City Harvest, Sozialwerk Pfarrer Sieber).

Our Sustainability

We strive to inhabit LEED-certified buildings whenever possible. LEED is a green-building certification program that recognizes best-in-class building practices and speaks to our belief in buildings that are healthy for the environment and their occupants. Our Chicago headquarters, completed in 2017, was pre-certified LEED Gold by the U. S. Green Building Council. A number of other buildings we occupy in the United States and abroad have achieved either LEED certification or a comparable foreign certification.



Stephanie Braming, CFA, Partner
Global Head of Investment
Management Since 2017

William Blair Investment
Management has been led by
a woman for 19 years.

Firm Statistics

900+
Charitable organizations supported

\$6.6M
Amount the firm, its foundation,
and its employees donated in 2020

300+
William Blair employees who
serve on nonprofit boards

\$11,500
Annual amount each employee may
receive in matching gifts

A Recognized Workplace

In great part because of these efforts, William Blair was named one of Pensions & Investments’ Best Places to Work in Money Management in 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, EEMs 2018, 2019, and 2020; one of the Chicago Tribune’s Best Places to Work in Chicago in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020; and one of Fortune’s 30 Best Workplaces in Financial Services and Insurance in 2015 and 2016.