

### Performance

The Fund (Series I) underperformed its benchmark over the quarter.

### Returns

Fund	3 months	6 months	YTD	1 year	3 years	5 years	10 years	Since inception <sup>1</sup>
NEI Canadian Equity I	7.73	5.36	12.81	12.81	7.21	9.25	8.11	
NEI Canadian Equity A	7.01	3.98	9.92	9.92	4.47	6.46	5.31	
NEI Canadian Equity F	7.39	4.69	11.41	11.41	5.88	7.90	6.69	
<i>Benchmark 1: 80% S&amp;P/TSX Composite TR Index, 20% S&amp;P 500 Index (C\$)</i>	8.28	6.13	13.97	13.97	9.99	12.08	9.04	

<sup>1</sup>Source: Morningstar. As of Dec 31, 2023. Since inception is only provided for Funds with less than 10 years of performance.

On November 21, 2023, the NEI Canadian Equity Fund changed its sub-advisor without altering its investment objectives. Nevertheless, this transition introduced an immaterial adjustment in the fund's investment strategy. All other aspects of the investment strategy remain consistent. Please be aware that the past performance of this Fund before this change may differ if the new investment strategy had been in place during that period.

### Portfolio commentary

Evaluating the Funds results, the underperformance against the benchmark was primarily from sector allocation, while stock selection had a minimal overall impact on results for the quarter. Underweighting the Information Technology sector was a key detractor on performance for the quarter, partially offset by a positive benefit from underweighting the Energy and Materials sectors. Looking at individual positions, investments in Franco Nevada, Cogeco Communications and AMS-OSRAM AG were positive contributors to performance for the quarter, where in contrast positions in Cenovus Energy, CI Financial and GFL Environmental were detractors of performance.

### Outlook

Despite fears of recession, concerns over inflation and policy rate uncertainty, equity markets rallied strongly in the fourth quarter and ended the year in positive territory.

The lagged impact of cumulative monetary tightening points to softer economic activity in the year ahead. The IMF forecasts global real GDP growth of 2.9% in 2024. Excess savings of C\$369 billion should help Canadian households navigate a period of higher unemployment and elevated borrowing costs. The subadvisor forecasts Canadian real GDP growth in the range of 0.5-1.5% in 2024. They see many signs that the global economy has turned the corner on high inflation and believe policy interest rates may be at or near their peak in the cycle.

While prospects for aggregate company earnings are tempered by an expected slowdown in economic growth, we believe our portfolio holdings are well-positioned to remain resilient despite more challenging fundamentals. Our equity holdings are well diversified across sectors and trade at a discount to market indexes. The forward price-to-earnings ratio of the Fund is 9.98 times estimated 2024 earnings compared to 13.8 to the TSX /SPX.

This material is for informational and educational purposes and it is not intended to provide specific advice including, without limitation, investment, financial, tax or similar matters. The views expressed herein are subject to change without notice as markets change over time. For complete information about a mutual fund managed by NEI Investments, please refer to the fund's simplified prospectus and/or Fund Facts which can be downloaded at [www.neiinvestments.com](http://www.neiinvestments.com).

Series F units are only available to investors who participate in eligible fee-based programs with their registered dealers that have entered into a Series F Distribution agreement with NEI Investments.

Series I have high minimum investment requirements and are typically aimed at institutional investors (such as pension plans) or investors making large investments in the fund. Funds in these series generally have lower management fees than the retail series of the same fund.

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Commissions, trailing commissions, management fees and expenses all may be associated with mutual fund investments. Please read the prospectus before investing. The indicated rates of return are the historical annual compounded total returns including changes in units value and reinvestment of all distributions and do not take into account sales, redemption, distribution or optional charges or income taxes payable by any security holder that would have reduced returns. Mutual funds are not guaranteed, their values change frequently, and past performance may not be repeated.

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For more performance related information about a mutual fund managed by NEI Investments, please visit [the prices and performance](#) page on [neiinvestments.com](#).