COOLABAH CAPITAL INVESTMENTS™
THE INTELLECTUAL EDGE: MAKING EVERY BASIS POINT COUNT

Fund: **Smarter Money Fund - Base Fee Class**
Strategy: **Smarter Money/Short-Term Fixed-Interest**
Return (since Feb. 2012): **4.38% pa gross (3.56% pa net)**
Net return volatility (since Feb. 2012): **0.59% pa**

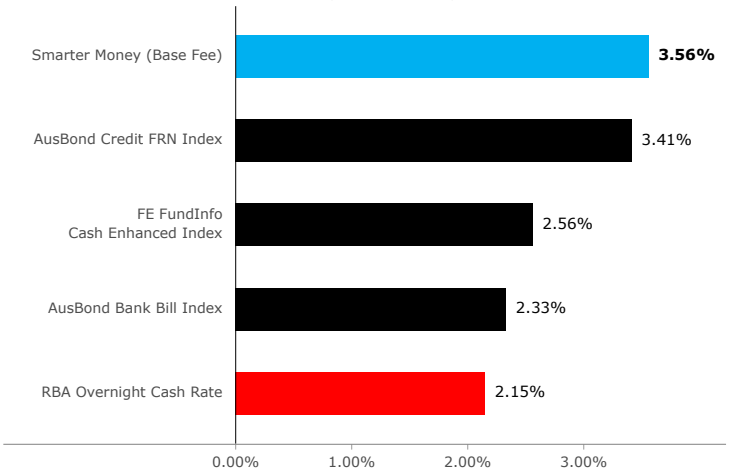
December 2025

Objective: An independently-rated/recommended strategy targeting low-risk cash and fixed-income returns that exceed the RBA's cash rate by 1%-2% pa after fees, over rolling 12 month periods.

Strategy: We actively invest in a diversified portfolio of Australian deposits and investment grade floating-rate notes with a weighted-average "A" credit rating. We do not invest in fixed-rate bonds (unless interest rate risk is hedged), sub-investment grade bonds, direct loans, equities, capital notes, preference shares (eg, hybrids), use leverage, or take currency risk. We add value via active asset-selection using a range of valuation models with the aim of (1) delivering lower portfolio volatility than traditional bond funds and (2) providing superior risk-adjusted returns, or alpha, without explicitly seeking interest rate risk, credit risk or liquidity risk. The strategy is managed by Coolabah Capital Investments, which is a specialist active credit manager.

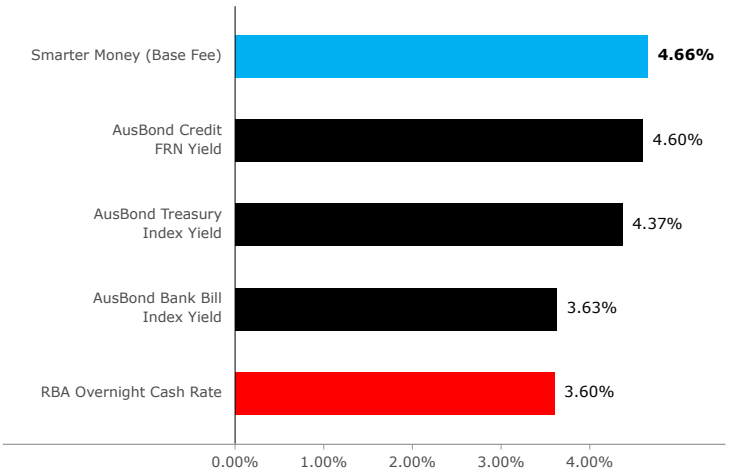
Period Ending 2025-12-31	Gross Return (Base)	Net Return (Base)†	RBA Cash Rate	Gross Excess Return‡	Net Excess Return (Assist.)†‡
1 month	0.45%	0.39%	0.32%	0.13%	0.07%
3 months	1.14%	0.94%	0.90%	0.24%	0.04%
6 months	2.80%	2.40%	1.83%	0.98%	0.57%
1 year	5.35%	4.53%	3.88%	1.48%	0.65%
3 years pa	**6.50%**	**5.67%**	**4.02%**	**2.48%**	**1.65%**
5 years pa	4.21%	3.39%	2.65%	1.56%	0.74%
10 years pa	3.89%	3.07%	1.94%	1.96%	1.14%
Inception pa Feb. 2012	**4.38%**	**3.56%**	**2.15%**	**2.23%**	**1.41%**

Smarter Money Fund Returns (Net) vs Comparisons
Annualized Total Returns Since Inception in February 2012 to December 2025



Data Source: RBA, Bloomberg, Apex Fund Services, Coolabah Capital Investments

Annual Running Yield
31 December 2025



Data Source: RBA, Bloomberg, Coolabah Capital Investments

† Net returns are calculated from the historic gross returns using the current fee structure as displayed in the Product Disclosure Statement. ‡ The Excess Return columns represent the gross and net return above the RBA cash rate.

Disclaimer: Past performance does not assure future returns. Returns and yields are shown net of management fees and costs unless otherwise stated. All investments carry risks, including that the value of investments may vary, future returns may differ from past returns, and that your capital is not guaranteed. To understand Fund's risks better, please refer to the Product Disclosure Statement available at Coolabah Capital Investments' website.

Net Monthly Returns > RBA Overnight Cash Rate	76%	Av. Interest Rate (Gross Running Yield)	4.66%
Portfolio Weight to Cash Accounts	10.5%	Modified Interest Rate Duration	0.14 years
Portfolio Weight to Bonds	89.3%	Gearing Permitted?	No
Av. Portfolio Credit Rating	AA-	1 Year Av. Portfolio Weight to Cash	10.6%
Portfolio MSCI ESG Rating	AA	Cash Accounts + RBA Repo-Eligible Debt	68.3%
No. Cash Accounts	13	Net Annual Volatility (since incep.)	0.59%
No. Notes and Bonds	165	Net Sharpe Ratio (since incep.)	2.38x

Ratings: Recommended (Zenith); Superior - Relatively Simple (Foresight Analytics)

Signatory of: PRI Principles for Responsible Investment

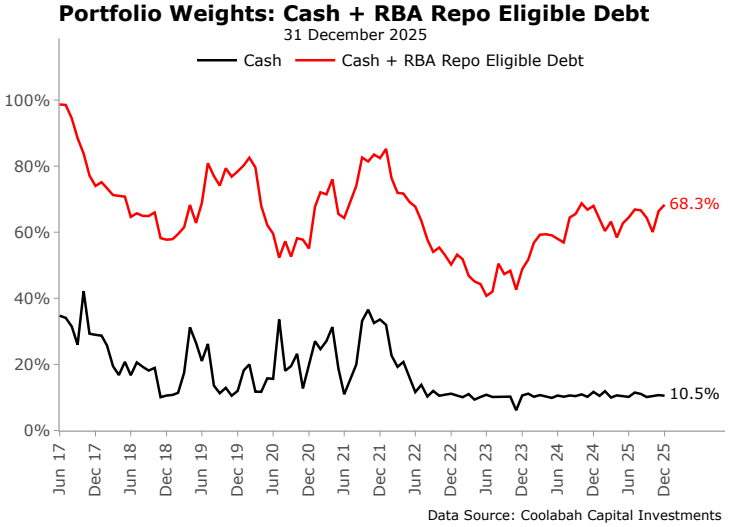
Zenith RECOMMENDED

SUPERIOR RELATIVELY SIMPLE Foresight Analytics

MSCI ESG RATINGS AA
CCC B BB BBB A AA AAA
Asset weighted average rating

Portfolio Weights: Cash + RBA Repo Eligible Debt

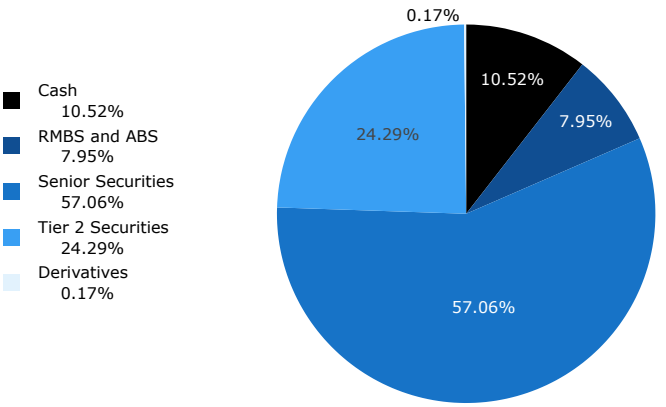
31 December 2025



Data Source: Coolabah Capital Investments

Smarter Money Fund Portfolio Composition (NAV)

31 December 2025

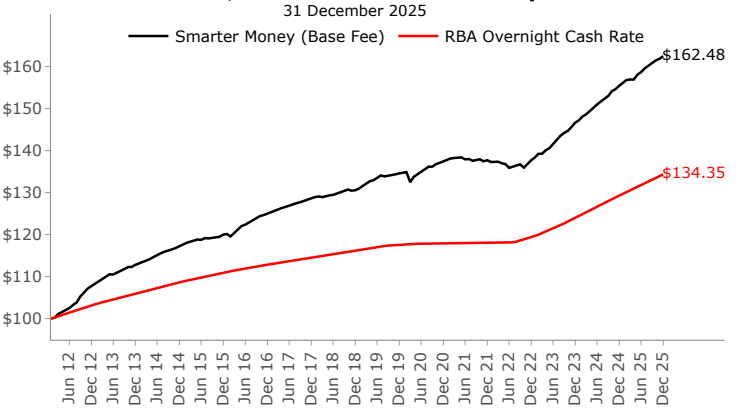


Data Source: Coolabah Capital Investments



Value of $100 Invested Since Inception

31 December 2025



Data Source: Bloomberg, Coolabah Capital Investments

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The since inception gross (net) return of 4.38% pa gross (3.56% pa net) is the total annual return earned by the fund since Feb. 2012, including interest income and movements in the price of the bond portfolio after all fund fees (assuming net returns are calculated from the historic gross returns using the current fee structure as displayed in the Product Disclosure Statement). The net return quoted applies to the Smarter Money Fund - Base Fee Class, with quarterly distributions reinvested. Investment return will vary depending upon investment date and any additional investments and withdrawals made. **The annualised volatility estimate of 0.59% pa** is based on the standard deviation of net daily returns since inception, which are then annualised, attributable to the Smarter Money Fund - Base Fee Class.

Portfolio Managers	Christopher Joye, Ashley Kabel, Roger Douglas, Fionn O'Leary (Coolabah Capital Investments)		
APIR Code	ETL6313AU	Fund Inception	17-Feb-12
mFund Code	-	Distributions	Quarterly
Asset-Class	Smarter Money/Short-Term Fixed-Interest	Unit Pricing	Daily (earnings accrue daily)
Target Return	Net 1-2% pa over RBA cash rate	Min. Investment	$1,000
Investment Manager	Coolabah Capital Investments (Retail)	Withdrawals	Daily Requests (funds normally in 3 days)
Responsible Entity	Equity Trustees	Buy/Sell Spread	0.00%/0.025%
Custodian	Citigroup	Mgt. & Admin Fee	0.79% pa

Signatory of: PRI Principles for Responsible Investment
Zenith RECOMMENDED
SUPERIOR RELATIVELY SIMPLE Foresight Analytics
MSCI ESG RATINGS AA
CCC B BB BBB A AA AAA
Asset weighted average rating

Portfolio commentary: In December, the zero-duration daily liquidity Smarter Money Fund (SMF) returned 0.45% gross (0.39% net), outperforming the AusBond Bank Bill Index (0.31%), the RBA Overnight Cash Rate (0.32%), the FE Cash Enhanced Index (0.33%), and the BetaShares High Interest Cash (AAA) ETF (0.33%). Over the previous 12 months, SMF returned 5.35% gross (4.53% net), outperforming the RBA Overnight Cash Rate (3.88%), the AusBond Bank Bill Index (3.97%), the BetaShares High Interest Cash (AAA) ETF (4.05%), and the FE Cash Enhanced Index (4.35%). SMF ended December with a running yield of 4.66% pa, a weighted-average credit rating of AA-, and a portfolio weighted average MSCI ESG rating of AA.

Since the inception of SMF 13.9 years ago in February 2012, it has returned 4.38% pa gross (3.56% pa net), outperforming the RBA Overnight Cash Rate (2.15% pa), the BetaShares High Interest Cash (AAA) ETF (2.27% pa), the AusBond Bank Bill Index (2.33% pa), and the FE Cash Enhanced Index (2.56% pa). Since inception, SMF's Sharpe Ratio, which measures risk-adjusted returns, has been 3.75x gross (2.38x net). While SMF's return volatility since inception has been low at around 0.59% pa (measured using daily returns), as a daily liquidity product with assets that are marked-to-market using executable prices, volatility does exist. This contrasts with illiquid credit (eg, loans and high yield bonds) wherein assets that have very high risk can appear to have remarkably low volatility, which is, in fact, just a mirage explained by the inability to properly value these assets using executable prices.

Strategy commentary: In the month of December, there was a secular shift in interest rate expectations marked by a bull steepening in many global yield curves, whereby short-term interest rates declined while long-term rates climbed. This reflected several cross-currents, including the US Federal Reserve continuing to ease its policy rate lower, combined with investor anxiety about deteriorating budget deficits, ever-growing government bond issuance, and the specter of inflation rates not mean-reverting sustainably to central bank targets, amongst other things.

Coolabah's main macro ideas for 2026 are best summarized as follows:

- We believe in US economic and strategic exceptionalism and that the short- and medium-term efficacy of President Donald Trump's fiscal, trade, and geopolitical policies have been consistently underestimated by markets;
- We believe that the US economy will surprise with its strength in the years ahead, underpinned by the AI capex boom, reshoring of supply chains, a manufacturing renaissance, aggressive deregulation, reinvigorated entrepreneurial activity, political policy clarity, and renewed public support for business-friendly outcomes given the success of Texas and Florida juxtaposed against California and New York;
- We believe that the political zeitgeist globally remains focused on public spending in the name of winning short-term votes irrespective of the enduring fiscal consequences, which creates material inflation and interest rate risks in the period ahead;
- We believe that the AI revolution is more likely to be inflationary rather than disinflationary in the near-term as a consequence of resource bottlenecks, understated capex spending competition, and the likelihood that AI will generate positive rather than negative net employment demand over the next 1-2 years;
- We believe that the monetary policy easing cycle has run its course and that the risk of interest rate increases in 2026 and 2027 has been underestimated by markets, although a recent reassessment has taken place;
- We believe that government bond term premia and the long-term cost of capital are likely to remain elevated and could drift materially higher in an environment where the US economy expands at a faster-than-expected pace (and other nation-states eventually seek to emulate its policy posture);
- We believe that the probability of stronger-than-anticipated economic outcomes is likely ahead of the midterm elections in the US;
- We believe that risk premia have shifted from corporate to public sector balance sheets, which is why credit spreads have compressed while term premia and long-term risk-free rates have increased;

Strategy commentary cont'd:

- We reckon the US de-dollarization dynamic is a short-term phenomenon and re-dollarization will eventually become a new normal once Trump's policies are better understood;
- We believe that the geopolitical environment is being overhauled by the "America First" mantra, which is predicated on a realpolitik logic that prizes unilateral actions to protect American (and capitalist) interests ahead of failed Western liberal-democratic virtue signalling that hoped to incentivize responsible behaviors from non-democratic actors, which has never played out in practice; and
- We believe that there are many latent inefficiencies in global bond markets that Coolabah is uniquely positioned to capitalize on.

In 2025, Coolabah traded AUD$129bn of bonds and CDS (USD$82bn). This was split by approximately A$71bn of credit trades combined with A$57bn of government and sub-sovereign trades.

In December, 10-year government bond yields rose around the world, led by Japan (+26bps), Australia (+23bps), Germany (+17bps), New Zealand (+15bps), France (+16bps), Italy (+15bps), and the US (+15bps). There were more modest moves in the UK, where 10-year gilt yields appreciated only 4bps.

A seasonal dip in new financial and corporate bond issuance, coupled with higher risk-free rates, helped physical and synthetic credit spreads perform in December. In derivative markets, the benchmark US and European investment-grade credit default swap indices, known as CDX IG and Main, compressed by 1.1bps and 2.1bps, respectively. This was echoed by the US and European high-yield indices, denoted by CDX HY and Xover, which also moved 6bps and 11bps tighter in the month.

In physical (or cash) bonds, investment-grade credit spreads across the US, UK, and European markets similarly drifted 3bps tighter in December. French and Italian government bond spreads to Bunds, which are another risk proxy, also contracted by about 1bp over the month.

In the Antipodes, spread moves were mixed: whereas benchmark 5-year Aussie major bank senior bond spreads climbed 2bps in December, subordinated major bank bond spreads declined 2bps. In the retail-centric ASX-listed hybrid market, 5-year major bank hybrid spreads plunged from 207bps to 171bps over the quarterly bank bill swap rate, albeit on diminishing turnover. This was a seasonally predictable dynamic amplified by scarcity into year-end as bank-issued hybrids are phased out by the regulator.

December USD IG issuance slowed sharply from November to US$38bn (YTD US$1.69trn), with muted supply across both financials and corporates. Coolabah selectively participated in attractively priced transactions, notably ANZ's 3-year FRN, multiple tranches of Merck's US$7.25bn multi-tranche deal, and S&P Global's 5-year tranche. These transactions saw strong demand (approximately 5-7x covered) and post-pricing spread tightening.

In EUR investment-grade credit, supply rebounded to €17.5bn (approximately €9.5bn financials), compared with no issuance in December 2024. Despite seasonally light conditions, demand remained healthy, with deals averaging a 2.6x subscription rate. The standout transaction was Goldman Sachs' dual-tranche HoldCo deal, which was well received following a long absence from the EUR market, complemented by solid demand for issues from BFCM and Deutsche Bank.

The rates sell-off hurt the performance of long-duration, or fixed-rate, bond indices. In USD, the Bloomberg Global Aggregate Corporate Index lost 0.10% in December as higher yields taxed fixed-rate bond prices. In contrast, the interest rate-hedged version of this index performed robustly, gaining 0.64%.

Given the relatively aggressive rise in Aussie government bond yields, the AusBond Composite Bond Index underperformed its Global Aggregate equivalent, losing 0.63% in December. The duration-hedged AusBond Floating-Rate Note Index performed better, offering a 0.37% return in the month.

Strategy commentary cont'd: Other risk markets were mixed. In the US, equities struggled to generate positive total returns: the S&P 500 was unchanged (0.06%) while the Nasdaq lost 0.67%. Japanese equities also lost ground, with the Nikkei 225 falling 0.37%. Other equity markets fared better, led by the UK (FTSE 100 up 2.26%), Europe (Euro Stoxx 50 up 2.25%), Australia (ASX 200 up 1.30%), and New Zealand (NZX 50 up 0.44%).

Brent Crude oil prices declined 3.72% in December, which is one disinflationary force in the global economy that could be accentuated by Trumpian interventions in Venezuela. That ultimate inflation hedge, gold, continued its record ascent, rising 1.89% over the month. Bitcoin's slump persisted, dropping 3.59% to USD 87,648.

In 2025, there were several big market thematics, including the advent of the trade war, the AI revolution and related hyperscaler capex boom, the emergence of further Fed cuts, and then burgeoning investor insouciance with President Donald Trump's otherwise radical economic and geopolitical ideas.

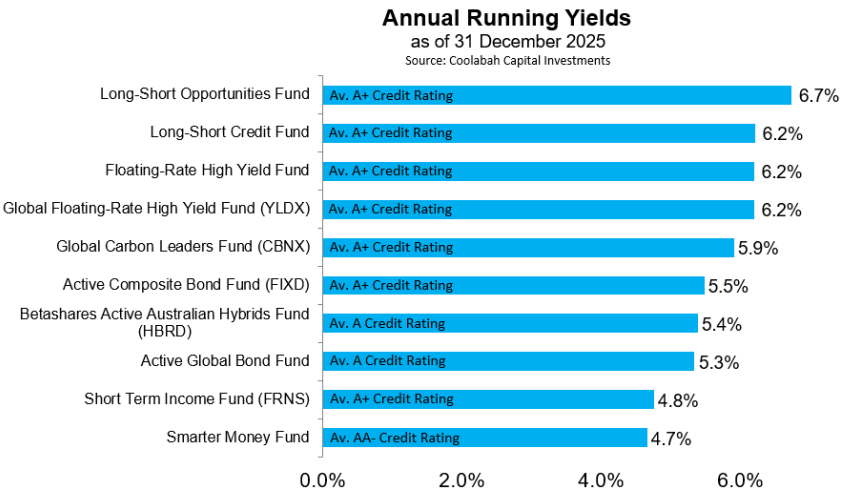
The trade-weighted US dollar depreciated by 7-8% as a result of de-dollarization diversification and the impact of the Fed's cuts, although the damage was done in the first half of the year (in the second half, the trade-weighted USD index tracked sideways).

In bond markets, one of the best-performing assets in 2025 was global duration. The 5.9-year duration Bloomberg Global Aggregate Corporate Index returned between 6.62% (AUD) and 7.08% (USD). This exceeded the cash rate in AUD (3.88%) and USD (4.24%), and the duration-hedged version of the Global Aggregate Corporate benchmark, which returned between 5.47% (AUD) and 5.89% (USD).

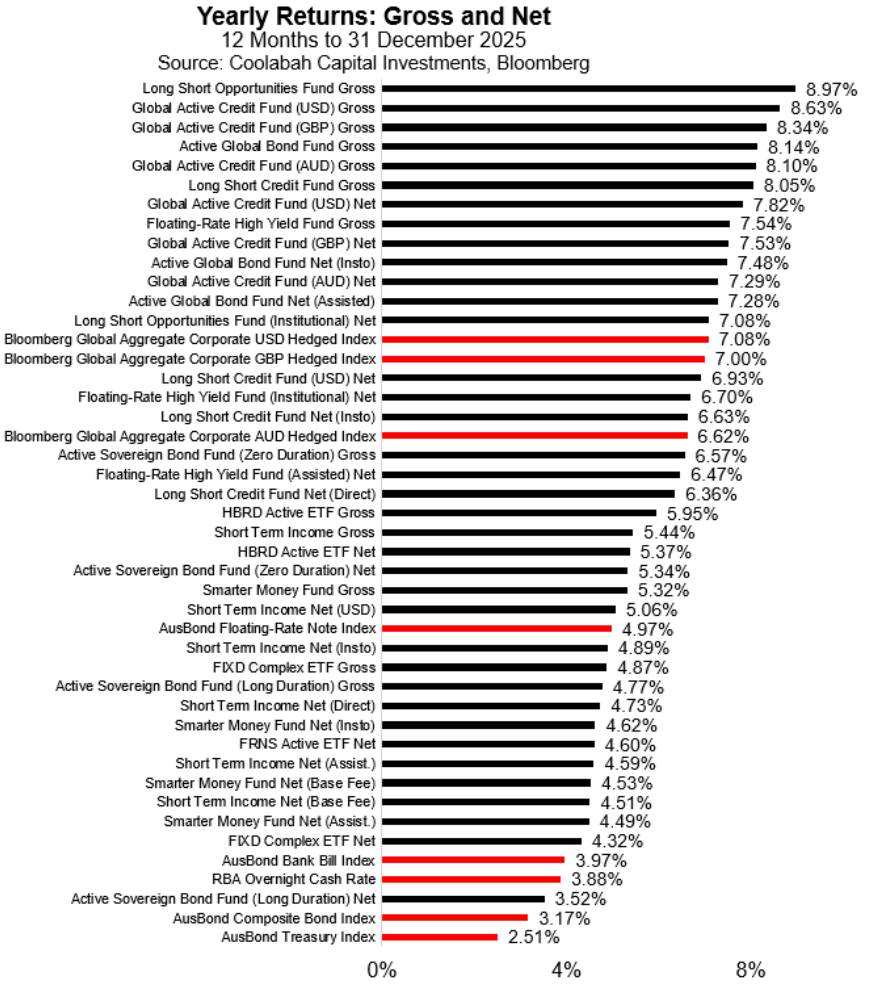
In the Aussie market, both long-duration and floating-rate indices delivered inferior outcomes to their global counterparts: the 4.8-year duration AusBond Composite Bond Index returned only 3.17%, while the AusBond FRN Index rose 4.97%.

Coolabah's best-performing strategies in 2025 were our long-duration funds benchmarked against the Bloomberg Global Aggregate Corporate Index. After fees, the Pacific Coolabah Global Active Credit Fund returned 7.82% in USD compared to the index's 7.08%. The AUD version of this strategy, called the Coolabah Active Global Bond Fund, returned 7.28% net compared to the AUD index's 6.62%.

Not far behind was Coolabah's A+ rated, daily liquidity, and floating-rate Long Short Opportunities Fund, which returned 7.08% after fees. Similar strategies, like the Long Short Credit Fund and the Floating-Rate High Yield Fund, offered comparable outcomes. Please note that past performance is no guide to future returns and investors should read the fund's PDS to better understand its risks.



Strategy commentary cont'd:





Don't forget to listen to Coolabah Capital's popular Complexity Premia podcast. You can listen on your favourite podcast app, or you can find it on Apple Podcasts or Podbean.

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