



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Australian Leadership in Responsible Investment offers opportunities for UK investment firms**

*UK responsible investment managers hear about business opportunities in the Australian superannuation industry and how the new 'RI Academy', developed with support from the Australian Government, will lead the world in responsible investment training.*

**London, 24 March 2011** – UK investment managers will meet at Australia House in London later today to hear how they can benefit from Australian innovation and leadership in responsible investment.

Louise O'Halloran, Executive Director of the Responsible Investment Association Australasia (RIAA) will brief delegates on the business opportunities for UK investment managers and consultants from the demand for responsible investment in Australia. Louise will also cover how firms can benefit from the new "RI Academy" to provide world-leading online responsible investment training to the global investment sector.

The event has been organised jointly by the Australian Trade Commission (Austrade), the Government of Victoria, Australia, RIAA and UKSIF, the UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association. The RI Academy was developed with support from the Australian Government.

Penny Shepherd, UKSIF Chief Executive, said: "Australia's superannuation funds offer an increasingly important market for UK investment managers. This briefing will highlight this opportunity to our members. It will also increase awareness in the UK pensions industry that responsible investment is now the norm for Australian pension funds. Asset owners and asset managers representing over half of all Australian AUM are now signed up to the Principles for Responsible Investment."

Louise O'Halloran said: "Investors in all parts of the world will benefit from Australia's leadership in online responsible investment training. Two years in the making, the RI Academy will enable mainstream investment professionals to develop the skills needed to integrate environmental, social and governance issues into their financial modelling. Using the very best interactive e-learning technology available, the RI Academy will transform the market in responsible investment training."

Gary Johnston, Austrade's Global Leader for Financial Services, said: "Responsible Investment is a growing area of industry interest and expertise in Australia and the Government is pleased to support the development of this sector to further enhance its aim of making Australia a leading regional financial centre."

Sally Capp, Agent-General for Victoria, said: "Melbourne has developed a reputation as a centre of excellence for funds management and, particularly, pension funds management. Responsible investing is an important practice in the Australian industry and UK firms who recognise this will be better placed to attract business from this market."

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## **Notes to Editors**

### **About Responsible Investment in Australia**

Australia is the largest funds management market in Asia, and the fourth-largest in the world, with around A\$1.7 trillion in assets under management. The practice of RI receives strong support from the Australian government, and with over 50% of Australian funds signed up to PRI, it is now considered the norm within the financial community.

### **About the RI Academy**

The RI Academy is the world's first comprehensive, online responsible investment training centre. Established with a grant of A\$2.5 million from the Treasury of the Australian Government, it is a virtual "university" for responsible investment. Every module is delivered entirely online to professionals across the world, using the very best interactive e-learning technology available. The curriculum has been developed in collaboration with subject matter experts, think tanks, universities, research and data providers and in consultation with the United Nations-backed Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI).

Two years in the making, the initiative has now reached an important milestone with the launch of the first group of products - **RI Essentials** and **RI Certificate 1**. Enrolments for the Academy's second group of products, **RI Certificate 2** and **RI for Wealth Managers**, will be open in June 2011. The Academy's online, [musical, interactive e-brochure](#) (and syllabus) provides some idea of the Academy's engaging and focused approach to financial training in the 21st century.

### **About Austrade**

The Australian Trade Commission – Austrade - is the Australian Government's trade and investment development agency. Through our global network of over 100 locations in 55 countries Austrade provides the local knowledge and insight you need to locate and develop Australian trade and investment opportunities. For more info see [www.austrade.gov.au](http://www.austrade.gov.au).

### **About the Victorian Government, Australia**

Invest Victoria provides a single entry point to a range of business investment services for international companies wanting to set up a business in Australia or establish headquarters in Melbourne to service the Asia-Pacific. As the investment promotion agency of the State Government of Victoria, Invest Victoria can assist you as the foreign investor in identifying opportunities for your business. We provide a range of free and confidential services designed to make setting up or expanding your business in Melbourne and Victoria as simple as possible. Our role is to help international companies prosper and grow their foreign investment in Victoria.

### **About UKSIF – the sustainable investment and finance association**

UKSIF, the UK sustainable investment and finance association, promotes responsible investment and other forms of finance that support sustainable economic development, enhance quality of life and safeguard the environment. Its 250+ members include over 60 asset managers and other financial institutions, together with pension funds, investment consultants, research providers, non-governmental organisations and financial advisers. For more information, visit [www.uksif.org](http://www.uksif.org)