



# Australian Ethical Super

Ethical Survey, as voted by members of the Ethical Advisers Co-Op



Poor | Disappointing | Average | Appealing | Excellent

As voted by Ethical Adviser Co-op members. Find a specialised ethical adviser near you: [www.ethicaladviserscoop.org/find-an-adviser.html](http://www.ethicaladviserscoop.org/find-an-adviser.html)

## Fund Overview

This encompasses 8 actively managed options within Australian Ethical super and managed funds. They have negative and positive screening.

## Ethical Concerns

### Investments

- ✗ Some investments in the Fund may be problematic for ethical investors, such as:
  - NAB and Westpac. Australian ethical have considered and justified in detail their [reasons for holding these banks](#). These holdings have been reviewed and are being retained.

### Other concerns

- ✗ Australian Ethical has lagged client opinion when divesting from controversial holdings in the past – Tassal, natural gas, AMP, IOOF. In these cases, they did eventually review and divest.

## Good Points

- ✓ Fund excludes coal, coal seam gas, oil, weapons, tobacco, old growth logging, exploitation, gambling, human rights abuses, and harmful products.
- ✓ Commitment to transparency by being [UNPRI](#) signatory and [RIAA](#) certified.
- ✓ Full transparency of [holdings](#) and [voting](#) history, both easily accessed via the public website.
- ✓ Australian Ethical recently co-sponsored a QBE shareholder resolution on climate change reporting.
- ✓ Strong record of voting for climate change and social resolutions.
- ✓ Uses negative and positive screens, and provides evidence of engagement with companies.
- ✓ A strong [ethical charter](#) underlies investment decisions.
- ✓ 10% of yearly profits (after tax and before bonuses) are [donated](#) to charitable organisations and social impact initiatives.
- ✓ Australian Ethical release detailed explanations of their positions on [issues](#) such as mining and fossil fuels.
- ✓ “Advocacy fund” has ethically-screened investments, but also has provision to buy shares in companies that do not pass the ethical charter for the purposes of advocacy. This allows Australian Ethical to engage directly with companies to pursue improved corporate behaviours.
- ✓ Australian Ethical only specialise in ethical investments.
- ✓ Carbon emissions are 66% lower than a standard Australian index benchmark.
- ✓ Australian Ethical is a certified B Corporation.



## About the 'Ethical Survey'

### About the Ethical Advisers Co-Op

The Ethical Advisers Co-op is a group of 35 financial advisers who are passionate about ethics and finance. The Co-op was established as a not-for-profit over 10 years ago to enable likeminded financial advisers to work together to represent the voice of the consumer. We work to shift the super and investment industry into being more ethically aligned with their clients' objectives. The Co-op's nationwide membership of ethical financial advisers help over 3,300 Australians make financial decisions and invest in line with their ethical values.

### How the Leaf-System Works

The ethical rating is voted by Australian financial advisers who specialise in ethical investments (Co-op members). The advisers assess if fund ethics suit their average ethical client, and if it matches with the average client's expectations and objectives. The advisers consider how successful the fund is at; 1) removing industries and stocks harmful to the environment and society 2) including companies with environmental or social benefits, and 3) providing evidence of actions from the fund which benefit society and/or the environment. The quality of information the fund provides on its ethical policies, companies invested in, and proxy voting is important in assessing if a fund is as ethical as claimed. The final rating is an average of these votes.

Financial advisers are voluntarily participating to help ethical consumers gain a quick understanding of how the clients of a group of industry professionals view the ethics of each fund. The Co-op and the advisers do not receive any form of remuneration or reward for participating.

### Further Research

#### *Does your fund walk the talk?*

The Australasian Centre for Corporate Responsibility (ACCR) – a not-for-profit shareholder advocacy organisation – pushes for transparency around whether your super fund 'walks the talk' on issues such as climate and human rights. You can find details on your super fund [here](#).

#### *Is your fund investing in fossil fuels?*

Market Forces is a not-for-profit delivering transparency on fossil fuel lending, insuring and investing within super funds, banks and insurance companies. You can see how exposed your super fund, bank or insurance company is to the fossil fuel industry [here](#).

#### *If the fund is certified by the Responsible Investment Association Australasia (RIAA)*

You can find more ethical and investment information for certified funds [here](#).

#### *More information on this fund*

For exact details of the fund's claimed ethics, costs and legal details see the fund's Product Disclosure Statement - available on their website.

*Vote based on information last updated 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019*