

# Defined Contribution Plans

## If It Concerns Your Employees, It Concerns You

Most workers are under-prepared for retirement. Surveys indicate that only a minority are “very confident” they’ll have enough money to enjoy a comfortable retirement.

This financial insecurity affects job performance and permeates company culture. But financial wellness, and the confidence that follows, is achievable with a plan and a comprehensive investment management process that considers your interests as plan sponsor and plan fiduciary *and* the engagement of your employees.

## Rely on an Industry Leader

We at Highland understand that your retirement plans must do more because the stakes for you and your organization are increasingly high.

Since 1993, employers have relied on Highland as a fiduciary to their defined contribution plans. We started our consulting practice by advising retirement plan sponsors and, today, we’re one of the largest investment consultants ranked by worldwide institutional assets under advisement,<sup>1</sup> trusted by more than 100 institutional investors.

## Synergy, Not Silos

Highland clients are served by a team of credentialed specialists, current on matters that influence plan success. And we don’t mean specialists isolated in silos. Your Highland team members are owner-associates—colleagues working together daily on your behalf. Not only that, as your Investor Advocates®, we’ll champion your plan. Highland sits on your side of the table as together, we work with your ERISA attorney, recordkeeper, auditor, and other partners you depend on.

## Your On-Staff, Off-Site Resource

Periodic meetings are a given, but relationships are built in the time between. That’s when issues arise and solutions are delivered. Highland’s client-first commitment invites you to lean on us.

*Consider us your colleague—on your side and just down the hall.*



One of the Largest Investment Consultants Worldwide<sup>1</sup>



\$15.7 B in Assets Under Advisement<sup>2</sup>



Advising more than 150 Clients<sup>3</sup>



100% Employee Owned to Serve You with an Owner’s Attention



Co-Fiduciaries Since 1993



Fee-Only, Independent and Unbiased Advice Aligned with Your Goals

## Tailored to Your Organization

From day one, we pledged to advocate for our clients' success by becoming knowledgeable in what matters to them and their plan's success. We believe that complete customization encompasses not only your plan investments, but also thoughtful plan design, compliance monitoring, fee management, and participant communication as well.

Our culture and limited client-to-consultant ratios allow us to provide an experience that fits you. Highland has no buy lists, nor any semi-custom portfolios that standardize investment management. Nor is there any commoditized method for delivering our client-first service. Highland customizes our services to your unique needs.

From a non-discretionary 3(21) relationship to a discretionary 3(38) relationship, you determine the level of service that suits you. Your Highland team will be fluent in the intricacies of your plan and plain-spoken in the counsel we offer to help you achieve success.

## Backstop Your Fiduciary Obligations

With Highland's DC plan scorecard, executive summary, and compliance & education calendar, your committee will have all that's needed to fulfill their duty.

Every quarter you'll receive an updated fiduciary checklist so that you can move ahead with confidence and clarity.

## Enhance Participant Experience

Stellar investment performance doesn't mean much if participants aren't engaged. Your Highland team understands the levers that encourage participation and increased contributions. We can also advise you on strategies to channel inertia for your employees' advantage. Whether by nuanced plan design or targeted communication, we work with you toward the worthy goal of helping your employees to retire comfortably.

## Advising Organizations You Know

From global manufacturers to national retailers, professional service firms, hospitals, universities and foundations, Highland is relied on to provide impartial advice and client-first service. We retain 98% of our clients year-to-year as a result.<sup>3</sup> We invite you to hear about the expertise and service we've become known for from our clients themselves. Let us put you in touch with organizations you'll recognize—organizations benefitting from Highland's promise to be: *Client First. Every Opportunity. Every Interaction.*

<sup>1</sup> – Highland Consulting Associates, inc. is the 47<sup>th</sup> largest investment consultant ranked by worldwide institutional assets under advisement as of 6/30/2022 in *Pensions & Investments* 2022 Consultants Directory published by Crain Communications, Inc. on 11/28/2022. There was no cost for inclusion in the rankings.

<sup>2</sup> – As of 12/31/22

<sup>3</sup> – The average annual client retention rate beginning 1/1/2010 excluding any client relationship terminated due to dissolution, merger, or acquisition.

Highland Consulting Associates, Inc. is a registered investment adviser. Information presented is for educational purposes only and does not intend to make an offer of solicitation for the sale or purchase of specific securities, investments, or investment strategies. Investments involve risk and unless otherwise stated, are not guaranteed. Be sure to first consult with a qualified financial adviser and/or tax professional before implementing any strategy discussed herein. Past performance is not indicative of future performance.



## Advocate

ad·vo·cate Noun /'advəkət/  
*One who pleads the cause of another.*

Since 1993, Highland has been hired for what we know and not what we sell.

We describe that founding principle as "investor advocacy."

As Investor Advocates<sup>®</sup>, Highland ownership, operational and compensation structures align with our clients' best interests.

We are not money managers and have no formal or informal ties to investment products or other service providers of any kind.

**At Highland, our allegiance is to our clients.**