



The Index Standard Adds Jay Watson to Bolster Quantitative Research

Barclays Veteran to Help Provide Deeper Insights & Expand Product Range for Clients

New York—July 22, 2021—[The Index Standard](#), the leading provider of index rating tools and forecasting services to the fund and insurance industries, today announced the hiring of Jay Watson as the company's Managing Director and Head of Analytics. With over two decades of industry experience focused on quantitative investment strategy index development and management, Watson will oversee the company's modeling and research functions and help The Index Standard broaden its ratings coverage as well as deliver high-quality insights to clients.

Prior to joining the company, Watson was Managing Director and previously Head of Multi-asset Index Structuring EMEA at Barclays in London, where he was instrumental in building Barclays' index business globally over the course of more than a decade. Among many activities, he chaired Barclays' index development oversight group, the body responsible for ensuring new indices were well engineered and fit for purpose. Watson held earlier interest rate structuring positions at Bank of America and Gen Re Financial Products, and physics research positions in France and the UK. He holds an MA and a DPhil in theoretical physics from Oxford University, and a Master's degree in mathematics from Cambridge University.

"Having known his work in the index community for many years, we view Jay's expertise and quantitative research skills as the perfect complement to our mission, and we could not be happier to have him join our team," says Laurence Black, founder and CEO at The Index Standard. "We founded our company on the idea that indices have grown more sophisticated and complex, but can also be extremely valuable tools when understood and properly deployed. I know Jay shares that view, and as a genuine pioneer in our space with world-class credentials, no one is better suited to analyze that dichotomy—and help us solve for it—than he."

In June, The Index Standard released its first [comprehensive suite of ratings](#) for fixed index annuities (FIAs) and registered index-linked annuities (RILAs), providing insurance product distributors and financial advisors a first-of-its-kind resource for more efficient index recommendation and selection processes. Watson's insight will provide further avenues for exploration as the company builds out rating and analysis tools for similar structured product families and exchange traded funds (ETFs).

"As someone who has witnessed the index industry evolve and mature, I am delighted to join The Index Standard and begin doing the truly crucial work required to bring transparency and visibility to these products," says Watson. "Understanding how indices are built and how the mechanisms underpinning them function is the best way to assess their comparative performance over time and, ultimately, their value to investors. I am very excited to bring my own experience and knowledge to bear as we get to work on new applications for The Index Standard's innovative methodology and suite of products."



About The Index Standard

Founded in 2020 by Laurence Black and backed by leading executives and academics serving the index community, The Index Standard brings unrivalled expertise and a startup mentality to the independent evaluation of indices, providing accessibility, transparency, and actionable insights into the \$15 trillion index industry. With a strong focus on risk control indices and other sophisticated benchmarks used to build annuities, structured products and thematic exchange traded funds (ETFs), The Index Standard's advocacy for "approachable finance" provides needed clarity and context in support of the development of new financial product innovation, and its successful implementation by investors and their advisors.

More on The Index Standard, its mission and example ratings can be found [here](#).

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