

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Investment Responsibility**

**August 23, 2024**

The eighth meeting of the Advisory Committee on Investment Responsibility (ACIR) of the University of Southern California was held by video conference at 9:00 a.m. on August 23, 2024.

The following people participated in the meeting:

**Committee Members Participating:**

Stacy Giwa, Chair

Marlon Boarnet, Faculty

Kathleen Burns Campos, Alumni

Monica Dean, Staff

Howard Kern, Alumni

Richard Sloan, Faculty

Undergraduate Student Member

Graduate Student Member

**University Administrators Participating:**

Hannah Findling, Sustainability Program Administrator

ACIR Investment Sustainability Intern

## **Call to Order**

The eighth meeting of the Advisory Committee on Investment Responsibility (ACIR) of the University of Southern California was convened via video conference at 9:00 a.m. on August 23, 2024. Chair Stacy Giwa called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. by reviewing the agenda. All participants confirmed their presence, ensuring clear communication throughout the meeting. Stacy noted that the Chief Investment Officer and Managing Director of the Investment Office would not join the meeting as the committee is still discussing the proposal. She emphasized that while meeting minutes are made public, individual comments or questions from participants are not disclosed.

## **Discussion**

The committee discussed key considerations and principles that should anchor the ACIR's discussion and recommendation. They reviewed the purpose of the endowment, which is to support the educational mission of USC in perpetuity, including funding scholarships, financial aid, research, facilities, and programs for students, faculty, and staff. The committee considered whether the proposal aligns with USC's mission as an educational institution dedicated to the development of human beings and society. Additionally, the committee evaluated the alignment of the proposal with the perspectives of the broader USC community and acknowledged the presence of strong dissenting opinions. They discussed whether the proposal conflicts with USC's role as an impartial institution that provides space for community engagement in protest and political activity without taking an institutional position. The committee also considered the scope of the companies listed in the proposal, particularly whether these companies also contribute positively to society, especially in the context of the U.S. defense industry. Lastly, the committee assessed the practical implications of the proposal, including the impact on fund managers and the feasibility of using screening tools.

The committee discussed a recent campus-wide letter from President Carol Folt, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Andrew Guzman, and Senior Vice President for Health Affairs Steven Shapiro sent to the campus community on August 20, 2024, regarding the policy of institutional restraint and neutrality. The committee discussed this policy and how it impacts the work of the ACIR. The chair of the committee emphasized the importance of discussing each issue individually and determining the issue's relationship to the university's mission.

## **Action on the Proposal**

The committee recognized the various potential actions that it could take: endorse the proposal and recommend it to the Board of Trustees for consideration; endorse the proposal in part and recommend it with modifications; defer the proposal and request further information or clarification from the proposer, the Investment Office, or other relevant parties; or decline the

proposal and provide a rationale for the decision. The committee members each shared their conclusions and discussed ways to share additional education resources with the USC community. After discussion and review, the ACIR determined the proposal should not be recommended to the Investment Committee.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

**Dated: August 23, 2024**