

Helping funds manage costs and optimize performance

CEM works with over 400 fund sponsors worldwide. We provide our clients with objective, actionable benchmarking insight into how to maximize value for money in investments and pension administration.

[Our Services](#)

25

COUNTRIES

15

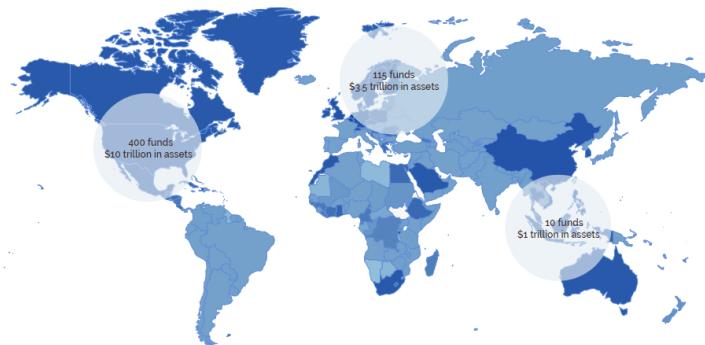
TRILLION PARTICIPATING ASSETS

80

MILLION MEMBERS

27

YEARS OF HISTORY



Our Services

INVESTMENT BENCHMARKING

- Defined Benefit Funds
- Sovereign Wealth Funds
- Other long-term asset owners

[Learn More](#)

PENSION ADMINISTRATION BENCHMARKING

- Administrators of Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution Funds

[Learn More](#)

DEFINED CONTRIBUTION BENCHMARKING

- U.S Corporate and Public Defined Contribution Plans, 401(k), 403(b), 457, and other

[Learn More](#)

GLOBAL LEADERS INVESTMENT BENCHMARKING

- Large funds with complex investment programs

[Learn More](#)

Why CEM?

Unique Global Databases

We have been collecting detailed cost and performance data from the world's top pension and sovereign wealth funds for over 25 years.

Comprehensive Analysis and Reporting

Our reports and insights provide actionable insights and are used strategically as well as to help meet fiduciary responsibilities.



Knowledge Sharing

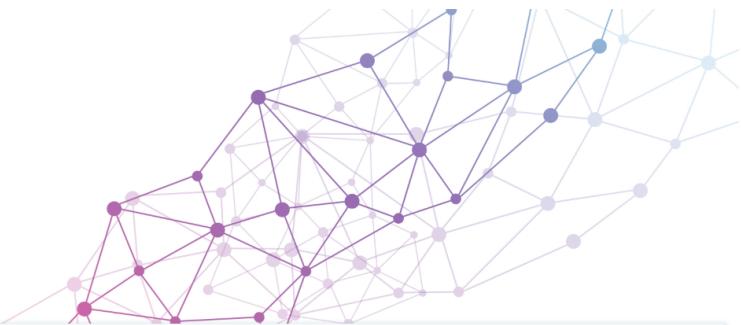
We work closely with hundreds of expert pension practitioners worldwide and are in a unique position to capture and share this expertise amongst our clients.

Independent and Objective

Benchmarking pension and sovereign wealth funds is all we do. We do not manage assets.

Confidentiality

The information that CEM collects is sensitive. We are very careful about how we handle it. We do not disclose individual fund data or results to third parties.



Our Team



TOM SCHEIBELHUT

Managing Principal



SANDY HALIM

Client Relationship Manager



MIKE HEALE

Global Business Development

[Meet Our Team](#)

Client Testimonials

“

CEM has provided CalPERS with a comprehensive report benchmarking our costs to the pension industry for more than 14 years. The report has been an excellent tool to help us measure our success in providing long-term, cost-effective investment returns.

Anne Stausboll

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | CALIFORNIA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (CALPERS)

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Investment Benchmarking Service

Measure • Compare • Learn • Improve • Validate

How Our Clients Use The Service

Demonstrate Value for Money to Stakeholders

Demonstrate to your Board and key stakeholders that your investment costs and staffing levels are reasonable. Clients often cite our benchmarking results in their annual reports.

Plan for Change and Growth

How much will it cost and how many FTE will you need to move into a new asset class or implementation style? How will costs and FTE change as you grow?

Manage and Reduce Costs

Many have successfully negotiated lower fees and costs with managers and custodians. Others have used our reports and research to migrate to a more effective cost structure by changing implementation styles.

Support for Changes to Investment Programs

Our report provides external validation of what others are doing, which can be invaluable when trying to get buy in from your stakeholders to make changes to your investment programs.

Setting Performance Targets

What is top quartile value added by asset class? Which asset classes are the most and least efficient?



How It Works



Measure

Our methodology and rigorous data cleaning by our team of analysts ensure like-for-like comparisons of costs, risk and performance.



Compare

You get a comprehensive benchmarking report that compares your returns, value added, risk, costs and FTE to a peer group customize for you and your country universe.



Improve

Insights gained from CEM analysis and research helps you to optimize your performance and manage your costs,

Learn

Understand where and why you are different from your peers. Benefit from our experience and research through a personal presentation and discussion of your results.

Unique Global Investment Database

400 funds, \$10 trillion assets, 27 year history

Global Investment Database	Total Fund	By Asset Class	By Implementation Style
Assets	✓	✓	✓
Returns	✓	✓	✓
Benchmark Returns	✓	✓	
Net Value Added	✓	✓	

Base Fees	✓	✓	✓
Performance Fees	✓	✓	✓
Internal Costs	✓	✓	✓
Transaction Costs	✓	✓	✓
Internal FTE	✓	✓	✓
Policy Weights	✓		
Asset Risk	✓		
Asset-Liability Risk	✓		

The Service Includes Annual Research

Past topics include:

- Real Estate By Implementation
- Asset Allocation and Fund Performance of Defined Benefit Pension Funds in the United States, 1998-2016
- Transaction Costs Amongst Large Asset Owners
- Asset Allocation, Cost of Investing and Performance of European DB Pension Funds: The Impact of Real Estate
- Hedge Fund Reality Check 2018
- Asset Allocation and Fund Performance of Defined Benefit Pension Funds in the United States, 1998-2015 (Updated)
- Asset Allocation and Fund Performance of Defined Benefit Pension Funds in the United States, 1998-2014
- Hedge Fund Reality Check
- Comparing Pension Plan Operating Costs: Correcting the Fraser Institute's Faulty Analysis and Conclusions

[See all research](#)

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Pension Administration Benchmarking Service

Measure • Compare • Learn • Improve • Validate

How Our Clients Use The Service

Demonstrate Value for Money to your Stakeholders

Demonstrate to your Board and key stakeholders that your pension administration costs, staffing levels and the service you provide members are reasonable and providing value. Clients often cite their service score and cost benchmarking results in their annual reports.

Improve Member and Employer Service

Many clients realize substantial improvements in their service scores over multi-year periods by targeting new improvements each year.

Optimize Costs and Staffing Levels

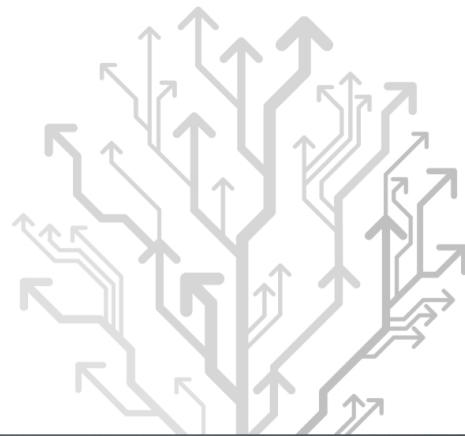
Several clients have used their analysis to support their business case for increased budgets or staffing levels.

Make Better Decisions

Leverage global industry expertise by connecting with like-minded peers.

Save Time by Learning from your Peers

Use the best practice research to jump start your initiatives.



How It Works



Measure

The service metrics and the activity cost and staffing model have been developed over 20 years based on client input into what they find useful and important.



Compare

You get a comprehensive benchmarking report that compares your service levels, costs, volumes and staffing levels in total and by pension activity to a peer group customized for you and the global universe.



Improve

Insights gained from your report, global conference and best practice research can be used to improve your service, how you do things and optimize your staffing level and costs.



Learn

Understand where and why you are different from your peers. Share ideas at the global peer conference and via the online peer intelligence network. Learn from annual best practice research into areas such as social media, going paperless and client experience surveying.

Unique Global Pension Administation Database

77 administrators, 50 million members, 2 million employers

Activities	Service Levels	Costs	FTE	Activity Volumes
Contact Center	✓	✓	✓	✓
Website	✓	✓	✓	✓
Counseling	✓	✓	✓	✓
Presentations	✓	✓	✓	✓

Pension Payments	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pension Inceptions	✓	✓	✓	✓
Service to Employers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Information Technology		✓	✓	
Governance		✓	✓	
Other Back-Office Support		✓	✓	

The Service Includes Annual Research

Past topics include:

- Cybersecurity - Preventing Financial Fraud
- Economies of Scale in Pension Administration
- Social Media - What are your peers doing?
- Social Media - Case studies
- Call center best practices
- Employer service
- IT modernization: Agile implementation case study
- IT modernization: Portfolio, program and project management
- IT modernization: Change leadership and change management
- Pension communication ideas and best practices
- Dashboards
- Telecommuting
- Mobile apps
- Satisfaction surveying
- Increasing online adoption

Contact us for more details

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Defined Contribution Benchmarking Service

Measure • Compare • Learn • Improve • Validate

Demonstrate Fiduciary Level Review of Costs

Our clients recognize that our benchmarking report, which takes into account all cost drivers and are based on input data that is analyzed and reviewed before it can even be submitted, is the best tool they have to ensure the appropriate higher level of fiduciary review is met.

Target Date Fund Analysis

CEM has the definitive analysis on target date funds, in particular costs because we adjust for asset mix and indexing differences. Given how important target date funds has become in DC plans, this alone is why some clients buy our report.

Manage and Reduce costs

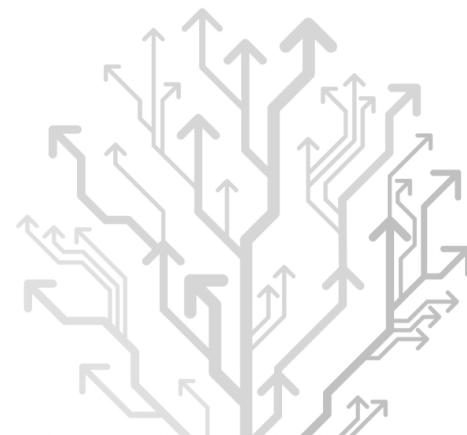
Many have successfully negotiated lower fees and costs with external managers and recordkeepers.

Support for Changes to Plan Design and Investment Programs

Our report provides external validation of what others are doing, which can be invaluable when trying to get buy in from your stakeholders to make changes to your investment programs and plan design.

Demonstrate On-going Monitoring of your Investment Options

Research insights are a big part of CEM's value proposition. We regularly produce research insights. Leverage our global industry expertise to find out what others are doing.



How It Works



Measure

Our analysts and our methodology ensure like-for-like comparisons of costs, risk and performance.



Improve

Insights gained from your report and from our research can be used to optimize your performance and manage your costs.



Compare

You get a comprehensive benchmarking report that compares your returns, value added, risk, costs to a custom peer group and the global universe for your entire DC plan as well as by each investment option. The report is a documentation of your review process and fulfillment of your fiduciary responsibilities.

Learn

Understand where and why you are different from your peers. Benefit from our experience and research through a personal presentation and discussion of your results.

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Global Leaders Investment Benchmarking Service

For large funds with complex investment programs

Key Global Leader Service Components



Comprehensive Benchmarking Report

- Multi-year analysis of costs, performance, risk, and staffing levels using standardized metrics and directly comparable benchmarks
- Comparisons to a custom peer group that we select in consultation with you, and to country and global universes
- Benefit from our experience and research through a personal presentation and discussion of your results

Global Leaders Research

Original research on:

- Organization design and staffing levels
- Functions such as risk, operations, liquidity management
- Benchmarks
- Performance and cost drivers

Annual Global Leaders Conference

- Network with leading global funds
- Review research, discuss topics of interest
- Provide input on CEM metrics, analysis, reporting, and future research studies

Global Leader Research Program

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimizing Private Equity Performance • Reporting and Disclosure Practices • Governance Practices • Understanding Transaction Costs • Use of Leverage • Managing Liquidity • Review of Investment Operations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Cost Disclosure for Private Equity • Managing Data and Systems • Hedge Fund Benchmarking and Performance Insights • Total Fund and Asset Class Performance Targets • Benchmarking and Performance Insights for Illiquid Assets • Risk Management Practices • Organizational Design Research |
|--|--|

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Insights

CEM research, CEM hosted events, CEM in the news, CEM speaks

All Insights

 EVENTS

Global Pension Administration Conference

May 2018
Pasadena, California

 SPEAKS

ABRAPP (Brazilian Pension Association) Seminar

June 2018
Toronto, ON



 RESEARCH

Real Estate by Implementation Style

December 2018

The realized allocation to and performance and risk characteristics of twelve major asset classes over a long 19-year period (1998–2016) has been reported on by... [read more](#)

 NEWS

Leverage, risk, and investment performance at large pension funds

March 2019

Leverage (or gearing) remains the unspoken topic in pensions and investments. While risk is top of mind and openly discussed, its little brother leverage remains... [read more](#)

 RESEARCH

Asset Allocation and Fund Performance of Defined Benefit Pension Funds in the United States

December 2018

Of the \$25.3 trillion of retirement assets in the United States at the end of 2016, approximately \$5.5 trillion were held in public sector defined... [read more](#)

 NEWS

Data optimization key for asset owners that insource

November 2018

Overall, AI/ML, data analytics and other software platforms can be key in identifying patterns and helping investment professionals respond effectively... [read more](#)

 SPEAKS

NCPERS Annual Conference & Exhibition

May 2018
New York, NY



 EVENTS

Global Pension Administration Conference

May 2019
Pasadena, California

 SPEAKS

ABRAPP (Brazilian Pension Association) Seminar

June 2018
Toronto, ON

 NEWS

Public Pensions Tweak Approaches to Private Equity

November 2018

Public pensions are changing the way they approach private equity, along with their expectations for the asset class as a provider of outsized returns... [read more](#)

 RESEARCH

Transaction Costs Amongst Large Asset Owners

September 2018

Institutional asset owners across the world, encouraged by regulators, are increasingly interested in 'hidden' transaction costs – costs incurred in trading securities before returns are... [read more](#)

 NEWS

Transaction costs make up nearly 25% of total investment costs – CEM Benchmarking

September 2018

Transaction costs make up nearly a quarter of total investment costs borne by institutional investors, according to a study conducted by CEM Benchmarking... [read more](#)

 NEWS

Schemes must not let consultants hide behind advice excuse

September 2018

 NEWS

Hedge funds and PE are weak performers after creaming off large fees

September 2018

 RESEARCH

Asset Allocation, Cost of Investing and Performance of European DB Pension Funds: The Impact of Real Estate

We all know that trustees should assess the performance and value for money provided by their investment consultants - the real question is how to... [read more](#)

September 2018

The findings by CEM Benchmarking raise more questions about whether lavishly rewarded managers are providing value for money to clients... [read more](#)

September 2018

Real estate is a significant element in the portfolios of large European institutional investors, with allocations making up as much as 10 percent of the... [read more](#)

• NEWS

AP3 hails cost efficiencies fuelling 10% annual gains

August 2018

Sweden's AP3 incurred costs of around a third less than the average for its international peers over five years, according to the state pension buffer... [read more](#)



• NEWS

Fees kill alpha from hedge funds

June 2018

The hedge fund portfolios for nearly 400 large institutional investors do not deliver on their promises of added return or risk mitigation and could be... [read more](#)

• RESEARCH

Hedge Fund Reality Check 2018

May 2018

Pension funds need investment strategies with attractive risk and return characteristics to fund their liabilities. Hedge funds are increasingly popular investments which purport to fill... [read more](#)

• NEWS

Hedge Fund investments often fall short, says CEM Benchmarking research

May 2018

CEM Benchmarking has released the results of an in-depth study on the growth, value and success of hedge funds; 'Hedge Fund Reality Check'... [read more](#)

• NEWS

Post-Crisis Pension Portfolios Include More Fixed Income, LDI Strategies

April 2018

CEM Benchmarking has published a new report analyzing corporate defined benefit (DB) plan investment trends since the financial crisis... [read more](#)

• NEWS

Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan is Fully Funded for Fifth Consecutive Year

April 2018

Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (Ontario Teachers') today announced it was 105%-funded as of January 1, 2018... [read more](#)

• RESEARCH

Funded Status and Investment Policy

April 2018

The financial crisis resulted in severe declines in the funded status of most U.S. corporate pension funds resulting in almost universal pension deficits. These deficits... [read more](#)

• NEWS

Cost disclosure is only valuable if you know how to use it

March 2018

Bond and equity returns over the past 30 years have exceeded long-term averages and are widely regarded as unsustainable.... [read more](#)



• NEWS

Gap between DB and DC pension returns closing: study

March 2018

Net returns in defined benefit pension plans were higher than net returns in defined contribution plans by an average of 0.46 per cent annually over... [read more](#)

• RESEARCH

Defined Contribution plans have come a long way!

February 2018

CEM has been collecting data on DB and DC plans since 1991 and 1997, respectively. As calculated in our 2006 study, DB funds outperformed DC... [read more](#)



• NEWS

Pension fund managers cream 75% off the top

January 2018

Fund managers are siphoning up to 75% off the value accrued on each pension scheme under their administration, according to new research... [read more](#)

• RESEARCH

Asset Allocation and Fund Performance of Defined Benefit Pension Funds in the United States, 1998-2015 (Updated)

August 2017

Of the \$24.0 trillion of retirement assets in the United States at the end of 2015, approximately \$5.1 trillion were held in public sector defined... [read more](#)

• RESEARCH

Asset Allocation and Fund Performance of Defined Benefit Pension Funds in the United States, 1998-2014

June 2016

Of the \$24.7 trillion of retirement assets in the United States at the end of 2014, approximately \$5.2 trillion were held in public sector defined... [read more](#)

• RESEARCH

Hedge Fund Reality Check

May 2016

Pension funds need investment strategies with attractive risk and return characteristics to fund their liabilities. Hedge funds are increasingly popular investments which purport to fill... [read more](#)

• RESEARCH

Comparing Pension Plan Operating Costs: Correcting the Fraser Institute's Faulty Analysis and Conclusions

March 2016

Need a summary... [read more](#)

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Research Insights

Original Research

Real Estate by Implementation Style

Alexander D. Beath, Chris Flynn, December 2018

December 2018

The realized allocation to and performance and risk characteristics of twelve major asset classes over a long 19-year period (1998-2016) has been reported on by us for a set of up to 200 large U.S. defined benefit (DB) pension plans representing nearly \$3.5 trillion USD in assets³. A defining characteristic of our referenced study is that we placed listed assets on the same footing³ as unlisted assets, allowing direct comparison between small cap U.S. stock and private equity for one example, and listed equity real estate investment trusts (REITs) and unlisted real estate for another.

One conclusion of our study is that unlisted assets, often assumed to provide an unrealistic source of diversifying power to portfolios, are not that different from their listed counterparts. Indeed, the great diversifying power of unlisted assets over their listed counterparts is shown to occur because of accounting differences in the reported performance data between them. In an extreme case, as-reported unlisted real estate returns exhibit low volatility in comparison to other asset classes and low correlations to other major asset classes. However, the low as-reported volatility and correlations of unlisted real estate are caused, quite simply, by funds reporting returns a year or more delayed from when they actually occurred, almost guaranteeing the (wrong) conclusions about the asset class.

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Careers

Experience a unique and professional culture within a growing global company

Currently Seeking an Investment Benchmarking Analyst! Click [HERE](#) for more details!

Join our enthusiastic and diverse team of 30 professionals working in downtown Toronto! We work together in a small company ambiance where your contributions are appreciated and your progress is directly related to your ability and effort. Working at CEM you will stretch your creative and analytical abilities while participating in the growth of a headline-making business.

As an employee at CEM you can expect to experience our progressive culture which fosters a flexible and positive lifestyle.

As a global company, we have a diverse group of employees and we welcome employees of many nationalities and cultures. Our technological strength allows employees the flexibility to work anywhere out of the office. We encourage physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle.

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