

Citywire Global



Fantasy league attracts top fund managers

by Angus Foote

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Frustrated by the difficulty of comparing like with like among institutional fund managers, a Swiss firm has created a fantasy league of portfolio managers.

The amLeague has so far signed up 37 institutional managers, with each participant agreeing to run a paper portfolio in line with an identical set of guidelines.

Big names taking part in the project include Marc Renaud of Mandarin Gestion, Phillippe Lecoq of Edram, ING's Rob Rodelaar and Jeff Taylor of Invesco.

The project's founder, Antoine Briant, a consultant who set up and ran the AMR business in France before it was sold to the Fitch ratings agency, says that fund rankings too often compare very different kinds of products.

Efforts to compare so-called homogeneous groups of funds are doomed to failure, he says. As a result, he believes, a lack of transparency means institutional investors are often sceptical of the performance generated by asset managers. Meanwhile, the rise of ETFs has added to the pressure on active managers to prove their worth.

Managers who agree to take part will become part of the 'Investors Club', which collectively agrees a common set of mandate rules. The portfolio managers then compete in the amLeague Championship, which started on 30 June and will publish its first set of performance figures on 30 September.

In the long term, the founders of the amLeague aim to encourage the Investors Club to turn the best paper portfolios into real funded ones.