

CASE STUDY

# Asset Manager & Fund Selection

How pension funds use technology  
to simplify the RFI, RFP & due diligence process

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# The Case Study

This Case Study describes how investRFP.com supported the manager search process

## The Objective

A pension fund investment team was searching for a Global Equity asset manager with a focus on ESG and sustainability based on minimum requirements, criteria and a set of questions.

## The Challenge

The specific challenge was that data on new ESG requirements were not available and the asset manager universe was changing in a very dynamic way.

## The Solution

For the pension fund the most time- and resource-efficient solution was using the investRFP.com platform again and following the best practice process for asset manager selection.

# The investRFP.com Platform

## Best practice in asset manager & fund selection

investRFP.com is an innovative web-based platform and best practice implementation tool which supports asset owners in their asset manager and fund selection as well as due diligence process.

e-fundresearch.com Data GmbH as the operator of the investRFP.com platform was founded in 2000 and ranks among the leading digital fund information providers.

The company also operates the investESG.eu platform and is the majority shareholder of e-fundresearch.com AG, which manages platforms for institutional investors and fund selectors.

Signatory of:



investRFP.com®  
**Best Practice in Asset Manager and Fund Selection**

**Structured Process**  
The regulatory challenges for investors have been rising over the past few years continuously. Selecting an asset manager and implementing the optimal investment strategy in the current market environment requires the application of a disciplined and structured approach. We understand the needs of institutional investors and can offer solutions how to best manage the search and selection process.

**Flexible Request Platform**  
The investRFP platform can be used to issue requests for mandates and due diligence in a flexible way.

- 01 Investors define the format, the timeline, the individual content of the questionnaires and the level of transparency for the request. Investors get access to the universe of all providers.
- 02 After deadline investors get online access to asset managers' responses on the platform for analysis.
- 03 Investors can use analysis and scoring tools to define and confirm the shortlist of asset managers. Further due diligence and selection decisions are finalized outside the platform.

**Benefits for Investors**

- Registration and use of the platform at no cost for institutional investors
- Mandate search requests (RFIs, RFPs, Due Diligence) can be created in a targeted and individual way
- Institutional investors benefit from questionnaire templates available on the platform
- Unbiased and independent access to more than 1700 asset managers and service providers globally
- Institutional investors define the individual provider universe (open or specific requests)
- Data and analysis can be used and documented individually or within the team or company

**Contact** | Presentation and demo of platform functionalities  
Registration (at no cost): [investRFP.com/signup](https://investRFP.com/signup)  
ESG & sustainability information: [Requests > ESG](#)

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[support@investRFP.com](mailto:support@investRFP.com), T +43 1 5333444 10

# Global Asset Manager Search with ESG Focus

Key data of the Search Request which is described in this case study.

## Investor: Pension Fund

DB and DC, AUM >£30bn,  
26 external managers,  
34 mandates & funds

## New Global Equity ESG focused mandate

Size: £500 million, growing  
up to £1 bn within 3 years

Investment in Q1/2022

## Request Timeline

Request Issue: 21 September, 2021  
Response Deadline: 12 October, 2021  
Shortlist & Feedback: 10 December, 2021

## Manager Universe

Global asset manager  
universe, one manager  
excluded (replacement)

## Message System

Activated throughout the  
whole process until the  
final selection decision.

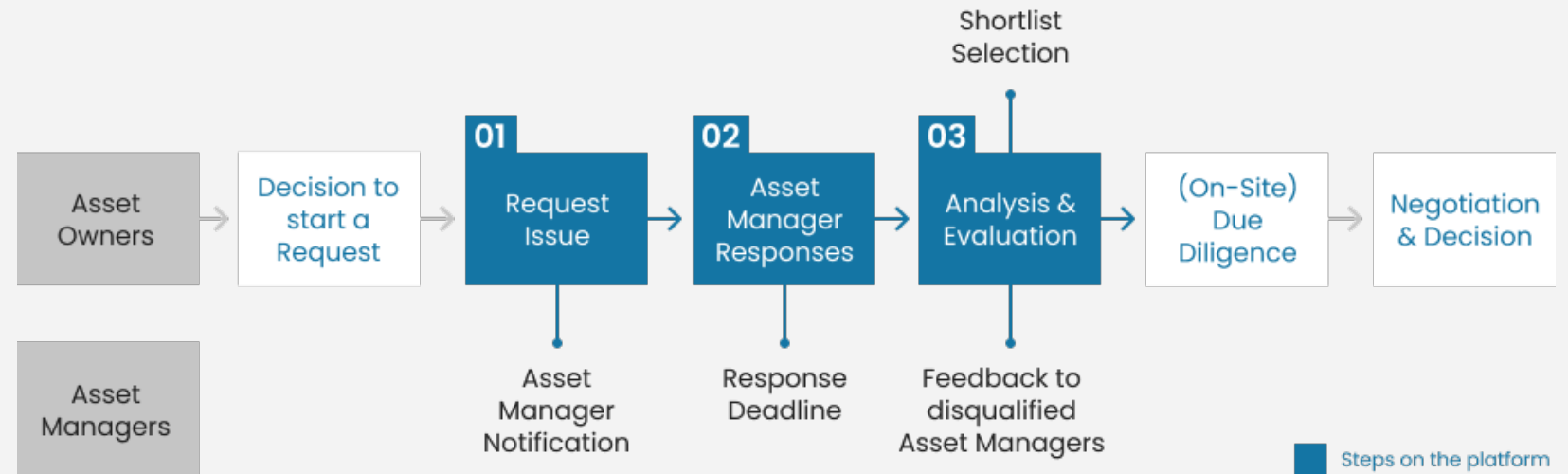
**Please note:** the above data were anonymized due to privacy and confidentiality terms (further references on page 24).

# Three Steps on the investRFP.com Platform

Asset owners and asset managers follow the best practice process

## Flexible Process

The pension fund (asset owner) has full control over the request process (structure, content, timeline, decision-making) and works independently or with external service providers and/or consultants.

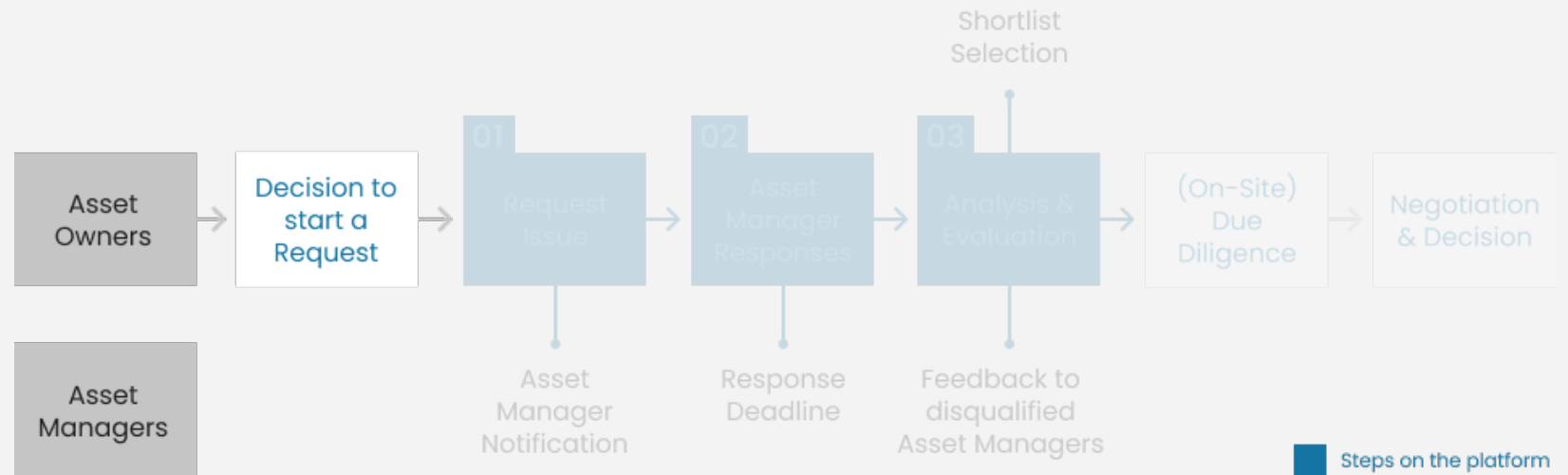


# Decision to Start a Request

It starts with work and decisions outside the platform

## Plan to Invest

Based on the asset allocation the investment team decides to allocate assets and funds in specific asset classes and plans a Request on the investRFP.com platform.



# Decision to Start a Request

## 16 September, 2021: Investment Team Meeting

The pension fund investment team reviewed the asset allocation for 2022 and formulated recommendations for the investment committee meeting.

## 17 September, 2021

Research, documents, presentations and a proposal were prepared.

## 20 September, 2021: Investment Committee Meeting

Based on the recommendation from the pension fund investment team the allocation in Global Equities with an ESG focus was approved. Initial mandate size: £500 million.

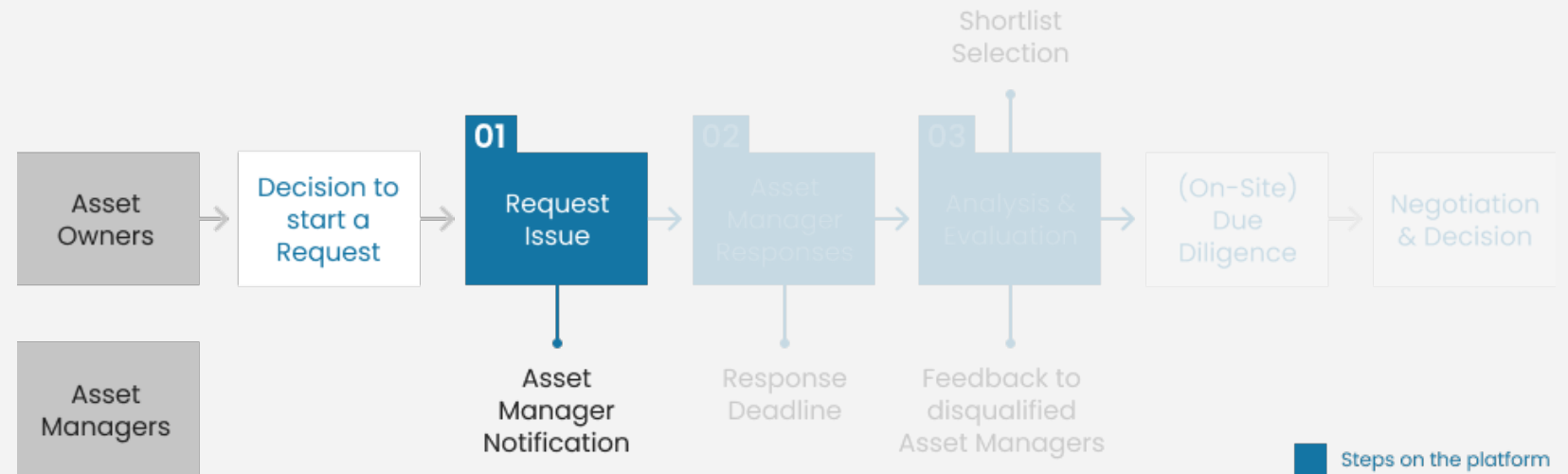


# Step 1: Request Issue

This is the first step on the platform.

## Unique Request

Key search data, min. requirements, timeline, questions, manager universe definition and other relevant details for asset managers who will be notified about the release of the new request.



# Step 1: Request Issue

## Tuesday, 21 September, 2021

The investment team created a Request on the investRFP.com platform including key data (legal structure, asset class, min. AUM, min. track record, investment size, timeline, etc.) specific criteria and ESG requirements and a questionnaire was created. Default templates on the investRFP.com platform and a number of building blocks from the investment team's own set of questions were used (saved in „My Templates“).

The Global Equity ESG Search Request was released to the global asset manager universe on Tuesday, 21 November, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. One asset management company was excluded from the Request as their Global Equity team was recently replaced as the manager of another mandate of the pension fund.

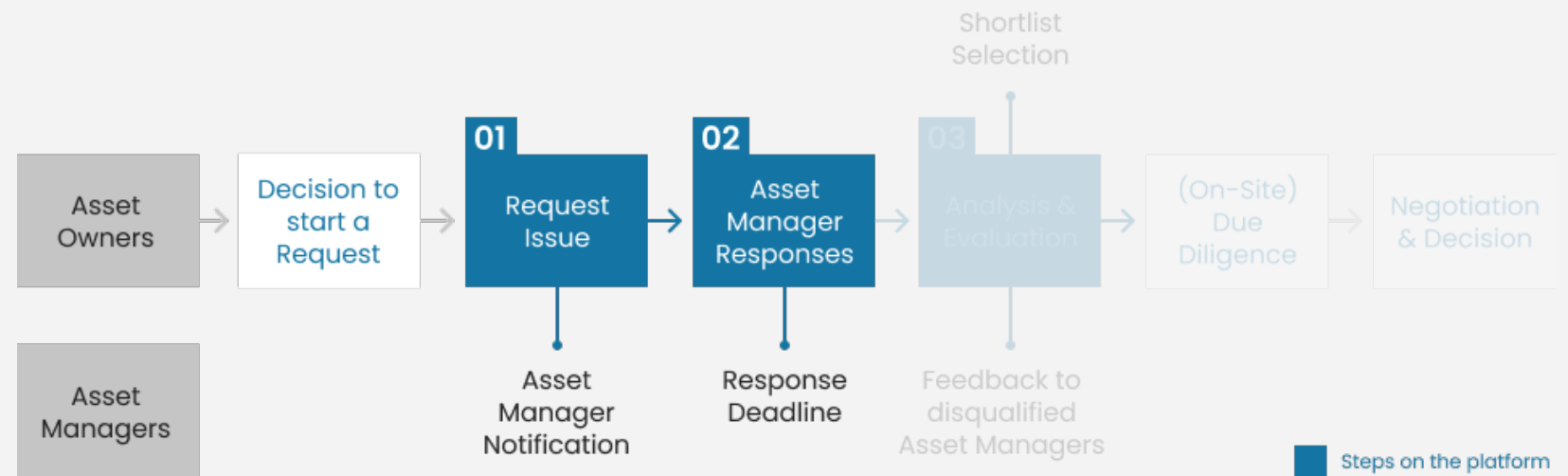
The notification e-mail for the new Request was sent to asset managers at 11:32 am.

## Step 2: Asset Manager Responses

The RFP team coordinates the work across the investment organisation

### RFP Teamwork

Asset managers review the request details, assess the competitiveness of their offering and indicate their participation. Responses are submitted before deadline.



## Step 2: Asset Manager Responses

**Tuesday, 21 September, 2021 until 12 October, 2021**

Asset managers received the notification e-mail and accessed the investRFP.com platform to review the key data, criteria, requirements and questionnaire of the new Request.

Questions for clarification were sent to the pension fund investment team via the integrated Message System on the investRFP.com platform and responses were received from the pension fund team.

The asset manager's business development, fund management and RFP team decided to participate in the Request and indicated this to the pension fund on the platform by selecting the „Yes, we will participate!“ button.

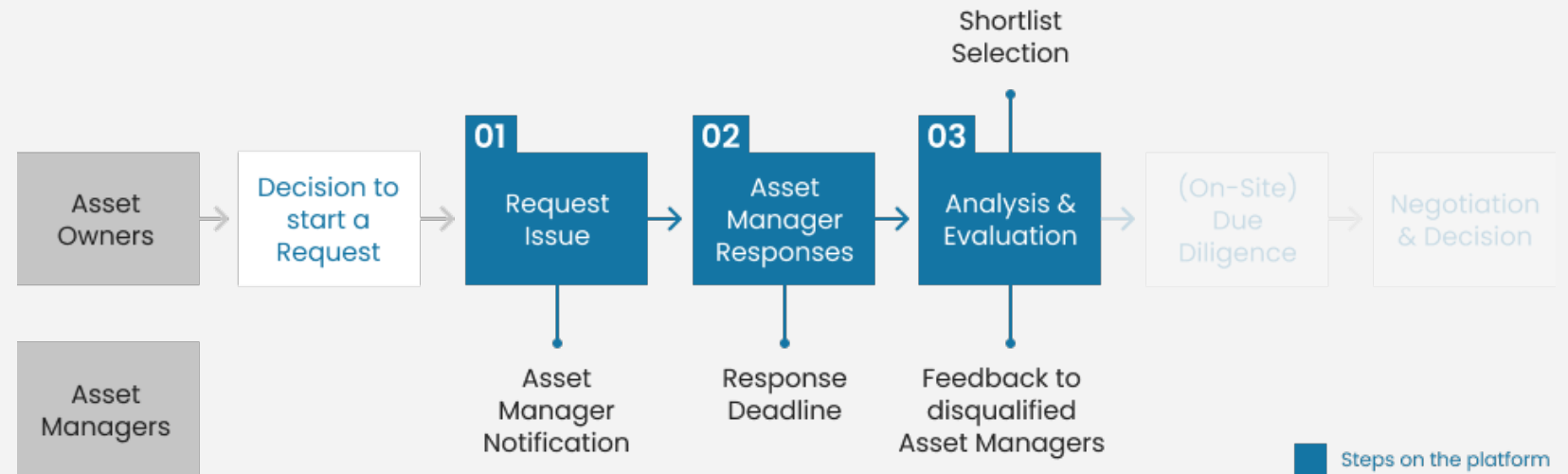
The asset manager's RFP team coordinated the information sourcing within the organisation and submitted the Response on the platform before the deadline.

# Step 3: Analysis & Evaluation

## Identifying the the most suitable proposals from asset managers

### Shortlist & Feedback

Analysis and scoring tools are used to evaluate the quality and suitability of managers' responses. Deselected managers receive meaningful feedback. Shortlisted managers are contacted and invited to the next level.



## Step 3: Analysis & Evaluation

### Response Deadline: 12 October, 2021 at 6 pm

The investRFP.com platform reminded asset managers about the upcoming deadline at different points in time. By 6 pm 36 high-quality Responses were received. The Request closed.

The pension fund investment team started the analysis and evaluation process by assigning responsibilities within the team, defining weightings for scoring on a section, question and team member basis as well as setting a timeline for the overall analysis and evaluation process.

Optionally, various tools and functions were used to review asset managers' Responses by efficiently listing, aggregating and comparing quantitative and qualitative data, tagging, scoring, saving internal notes and creating comments and feedback for asset managers.

The pension fund team and asset managers also engaged in Q&A sessions and exchanged supplemental information via the Message System on the platform when necessary.

## Step 3: Shortlist & Feedback

**10 December, 2021**

Based on the results of the analysis and evaluation process, the overall scoring results, the Q&A sessions and qualitative assessments the pension fund investment team recommended a shortlist of five asset managers.

The shortlisted managers were informed via the platform as well as personally. They were invited for final presentations and due diligence meetings at the pension fund's offices and on-site at the asset manager's offices.

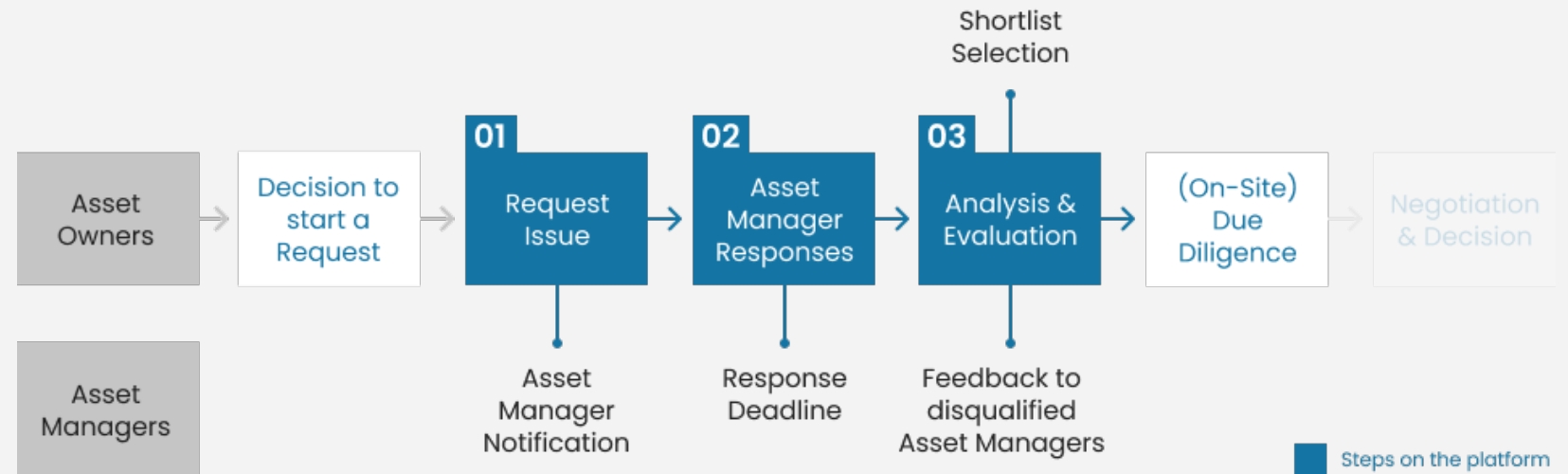
31 deselected asset managers were informed via the feedback function on the investRFP.com platform. The main reasons for deselection and (optionally) additional details were provided. Asset managers got access to this information in the „Feedback section“ of their respective account.

# Due Diligence

Detailed (on-site) investigation to confirm compliance with the proposals

## Confirm the Facts

The asset owner investment team conducts a detailed virtual or on-site due diligence of the asset manager investment teams, process, operations and the information provided in the Responses.





# Due Diligence & Presentation

**10 December, 2021 until 19 January, 2022**

Due diligence meetings at the pension fund's head office and also at the asset manager's offices and fund manager's desk followed.

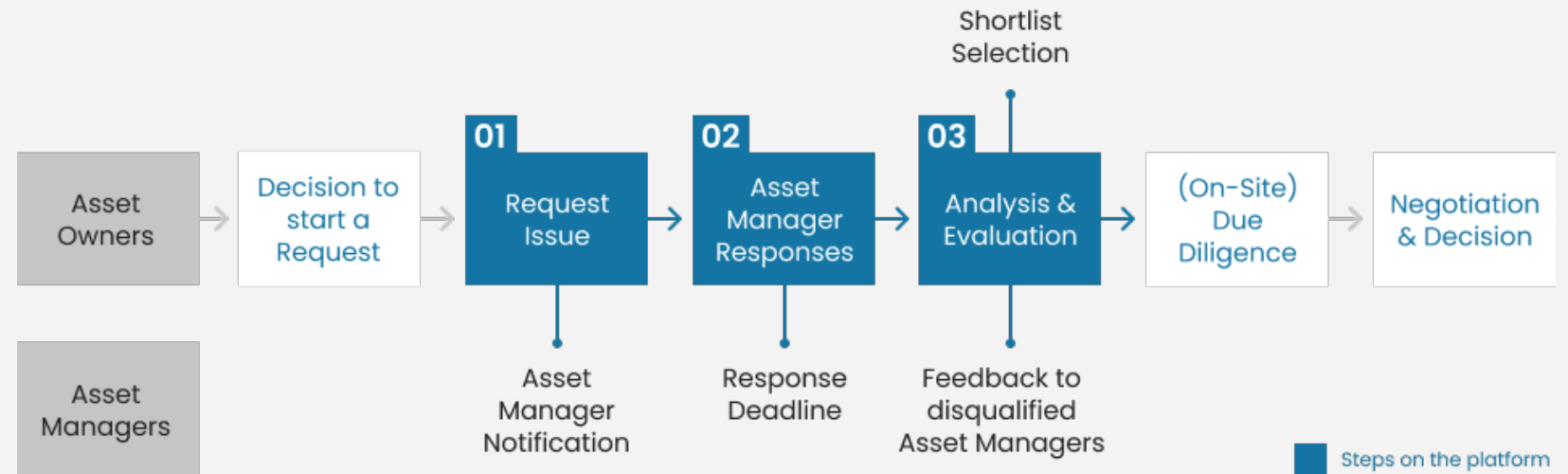
Final presentations in front of the pension fund equity investment team and an external investment consultant were arranged. The opinion of the external investment consultant was considered in the decision-making process.

# Negotiation & Decision

The final step of the process

## Final Decision

The pension fund teams negotiate contract terms, on-going reporting requirements and finalize the selection decision. Individual feedback is given to all shortlisted managers.



# Negotiation & Decision

## 20 January, 2022 until 28 January, 2022

The results of the due diligence meetings and the final presentations of the shortlisted asset managers were reviewed. Negotiations on contract terms, specific reporting requirements, management fees and other issues followed.

The pension fund teams involved within the organisation formulated a recommendation to the decision-making body which approved the proposal on 28 January, 2022.

The selected asset management company was informed and further implementation steps were planned. The four shortlisted – but not selected – managers were informed and relevant details were provided. Their data was kept on the platform for future references.

# Online Access to Information

## Great advantage of the online access to data

The pension fund investment team as well as all asset managers benefited from the online-access to Requests and Responses throughout the whole process.

investRFP.com being a cloud-based platform also proved to be of great value for asset owners and asset managers during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

# Benefits for the Pension Fund and Asset Managers

## The main benefits of the digital platform process for this ESG search

### Pension Fund Team

- + gets access to all asset managers' responses online
- + uses evaluation and scoring features
- + works as an individual or team (optionally incl. consultant)
- + keeps track of communication with asset managers (documentation)
- + provides feedback to asset managers online

### Asset Managers

- + get notified about new investor and get access to new business opportunities
- + create Responses online
- + work as individuals or as a team (team members from different departments)
- + keep track of communication with asset owners (documentation)
- + receive feedback from asset owners online

# Case Summary – Global Equity Mandate with ESG Focus

The pension fund investment team achieved it's objective

## The Objective and Challenge

The pension fund team faced the complex task of searching for an ESG manager with new criteria and data points which were not yet available in any database.

## The Solution: investRFP.com

The best practice process on investRFP.com was the most efficient solution. In total 36 competitive Responses were received of which five were shortlisted and one manager was selected.

## Benefits for the Pension Fund Team

The pension fund team achieved substantial time and resource savings and improved the overall quality of their search and selection process.

## Reference: U.S. Public Pension Fund

Investors in 26 countries and asset managers from 69 countries use investRFP.com

„investRFP.com as a digitized evaluation platform was especially useful to me in that it reduced and streamlined the manual effort to capture, compile and manage the overall selection process. The Fund’s Board of Trustees’ selection committee used the platform to effectively and efficiently screen, evaluate and rank RFP respondent’s qualifications and other information that was provided.”

**CFO, U.S. Public Pension Fund**

# Reference ESG Mandates 2021/22

## Selected ESG Mandate Searches on investRFP.com (£50 million – £850 million)

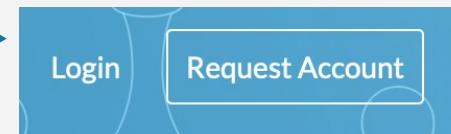
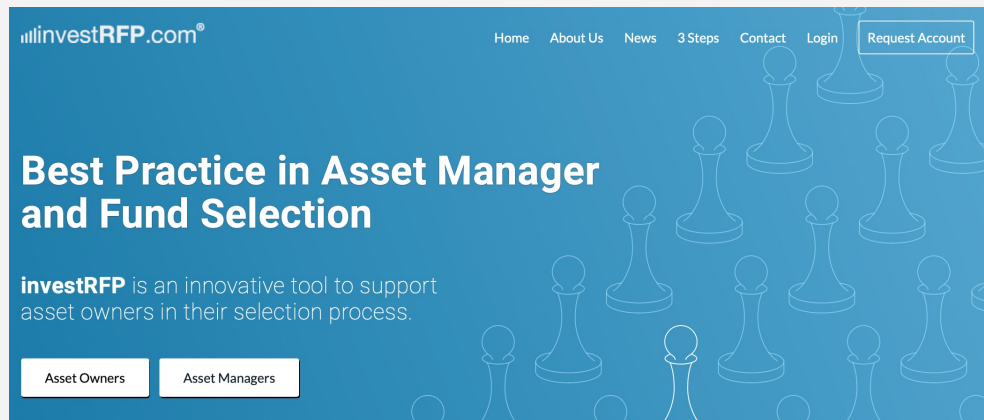
- Global Green Bond Active
- Infrastructure ESG/Impact
- Asset Owner Diversity & Inclusion
- Global Green, Social Sustainability Bonds
- World ex EMU ESG Screened
- Global Emerging Markets ESG Screened
- Passive MSCI EM Equity ESG Leaders
- ESG Impact – All World Equity Strategy
- Net Zero – Part 1: Approach
- Net Zero – Part 2: Strategies
- Global Equity – Low Carbon/Climate Change
- Passive Custom ESG/GHG Small/Mid Cap
- Active ESG Global EM Sovereign Bonds HC
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

*A number of other mandates included ESG/sustainability criteria, such as climate risk, DEI, SDGs, biodiversity, impact, net zero, human rights, active ownership, ESG integration, SFDR and other regulatory frameworks, etc.*



# How to register, log in and get started

Asset owners and asset managers register at no cost



Request Account:  
Select „Investor“ or  
“Asset Manager“

[www.investRFP.com](http://www.investRFP.com)

Please contact us for any  
question(s) you might have.

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