



Judges' Report

Capital Trust Group: Best MENA Private Equity Fund Manager UK 2015

Local presence and knowledge are, of course, essential to many industries. At Capital Trust Group, however, their pursuit and application seem hardwired into the firm's DNA. Its vast reservoir of local knowledge allowed the company to successfully break new ground in 1998 by raising the first-ever regional private equity fund for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Capital Trust Group has now assembled its fourth fund focused on MENA, excluding the Gulf Region. The fund is being managed by the same team of professionals that made previous incarnations into lucrative propositions. The funds are growing in volume as well: satisfied investors have few, if any, reservations in committing additional capital to these exquisitely crafted investment vehicles.

With a firmly established reputation for excellence in the allocation of the monies entrusted, Capital Trust Group now counts the International Finance Corporation (IFC), part of the World Bank Group, amongst its partners. The company adheres to a relatively simple, yet tried-and-true, formula that limits exposure to any single sector to 30% of the fund's raised capital. Investment in a single company is restricted to 15% of the total available.

While Capital Trust Group does not invest in start-ups or Greenfield projects, the firm is not adverse to take positions in markets deemed slightly risky. In Palestine, Capital Trust Group succeeded in exiting successfully – and profitably – from a number of deals.

The CFI.co judging panel applauds the rigorous processes that lay the foundation upon which Capital Trust Group erects its funds. Strict though this decision-making framework may be, it still allows the firm to offer partners the full benefits of one of the most dynamic and promising regions in the world while minimising the associated risks.

By leveraging its local knowledge and presence, and administering both with exceptional diligence, Capital Trust Group is a perfect fit for the CFI.co 2015 Best MENA Private Equity Fund Manager UK Award.