

UOB Asset Management wins double at AsianInvestor Asset Management Awards 2016

UOBAM has been named **Asia Fund House of the Year**. This prestigious award is granted to the best overall fund house headquartered in Asia Pacific, which excels in business strategy, execution, investment performance, asset gathering and innovation.

In addition, subsidiary UOBAM (Malaysia) was recognised for having the **Best Institutional Product/Strategy** for an equity mandate focusing on small to mid cap equities in Malaysia. This award recognises the introduction of a product for institutional investors in Asia that is innovative, tailored for local clients and successful.

“We are pleased that our efforts in building up our regional franchise in Asia have been recognised. UOBAM has a long-term commitment to our clients in Asia and we will continue to focus on providing them with relevant and innovative investment solutions,” CEO Thio Boon Kiat says.

This is the third time UOBAM has been honoured by AsianInvestor. In the 2010 and 2011 editions of the AsianInvestor Investment Performance Awards, UOBAM was named Best Onshore Fund House (Singapore).

These awards follow other accolades which recognise UOBAM's strong Asian footprint. Asia Asset Management Best of the Best Awards named UOBAM (Thailand) Rising Star under the country awards in 2015. CEO Thio Boon Kiat was also named CEO of the Year in Asia for two consecutive years in 2014 and 2015.

UOBAM will continue to strive to be the region's top asset management house and we thank our clients and partners for their trust and valuable support.

Please refer to uobam.com.sg for more information.



From left to right: UOBAM CEO Thio Boon Kiat and UOBAM (Malaysia) CEO Lim Suet Ling; receiving the awards at the awards ceremony in Hong Kong on 26 May 2016.

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Building an asset management franchise in Asia

UOB Asset Management (UOBAM) has picked up double honours at *AsianInvestor's* Asset Management Awards 2016. The firm has been named 'Asia Fund House of the Year', and its subsidiary UOBAM (Malaysia) has won 'Best Institutional Product/Strategy'.

From humble beginnings in Singapore in 1986, the wholly-owned subsidiary of United Overseas Bank has grown into a leading asset manager in Asia and celebrates its 30th anniversary this year.

UOBAM has flourished thanks to a strategy of development that has accelerated its growth in the last decade. Headquartered in Singapore, its regional expansion has yielded business and investment offices in seven countries in Asia: Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, Brunei, Japan, and China.

AsianInvestor understands that the firm is now focusing on consolidating and deepening its presence in all these individual markets. On future growth, UOBAM's CEO Mr. Thio Boon Kiat has also mentioned that the firm is looking to expand into countries where it does not have presence.

Consolidating an Asian footprint, the firm is embracing its strong culture of talent and teamwork across the region. Mr. Thio believes in pulling ahead in

one direction. "It is about teamwork and making sure that the individuals collectively add up to more than the sum of the parts," he explains. As a group, UOBAM entities collaborate to share best practices and reap synergies to support their regional growth. That means scaling up business processes, and reinforcing common governance and operating procedures.

UOBAM has capitalised on its regional connectivity through launching products in Singapore and transporting them to the region, including the United Global Durable Equities Fund and United Japan Small and Mid Cap Fund which are offered in Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia.

The expansion of distribution channels has been a significant step in growing UOBAM's regional franchise. The firm has embarked on a barbell distribution strategy to achieve scale and grow assets under management (AUM). Even as it strengthens its relationship with its parent bank UOB, UOBAM has also established a network of distribution channels through 3rd party networks and partnerships with banks, insurance companies and financial advisers.

Notable regional developments include the 2013 integration of UOBAM (Thai) and ING Funds (Thailand) to form UOBAM (Thailand) which has allowed UOBAM to deepen its distribution channels in Thailand. In addition, UOBAM (Malaysia) has expanded its retail and institutional business lines since receiving its licence to manage retail unit trusts in January 2014.

UOBAM has worked hard to cultivate a series of strategic partnerships which bring together complementary strengths and capabilities.

Foremost among its alliances include that with Wellington Management, who has been the sub-manager of the United Global Healthcare Fund since 2000. A significant milestone was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding last year. Collaboratively, UOBAM has since launched products distributed throughout the region, including United Income Focus Trust.

In Japan, UOBAM collaborated with Sumitomo Mitsui Asset Management to establish a joint venture named UOB-SM Asset Management which offers potential for cross-selling in a market that would otherwise present tough barriers to entry. The joint venture has since launched the New Asia Equity Fund, with plans for further launches in the course of the year.

"As we focus on and enhance our core expertise in Asia, we also seek out partnerships to complement our existing capabilities in order to provide investors with a full suite of investment solutions," says Mr. Thio. "Going forward, we take a long-term view and are keen to seek out more partnerships within and outside the region in terms of both distribution and investment capabilities."

Core Asia and emerging markets form the original bedrock of UOBAM's product range. The firm's suite of traditional products is comprehensive, and the firm continues to believe in delivering investment performance. In April 2016, AUM of the United SGD Fund passed the S\$1 billion level. The fund receives a 5-star rating from Morningstar.

Harnessing on-the-ground expertise across its regional offices, the firm is dedicating more resources to enhance certain capabilities further, for example, ASEAN equities. UOBAM has also responded to investors' needs for a more sophisticated global multi-asset offering; they have enhanced their existing capabilities by including strategies which use smart beta investing.

UOBAM has grown gradually to become a significant regional fund house. In the last decade, it spread its wings successfully into the further reaches of Asia. The cornerstone of the strategy in the medium and long term will be a continuation of deepening this regional franchise at a measured pace, reinforcing the build-out within the existing footprint and seeking entry into new geographical markets where appropriate and timely. ■



Mr. Thio Boon Kiat UOBAM CEO