



PORTFOLIO SOLUTION

## RBC SELECT CHOICES CONSERVATIVE PORTFOLIO

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December 31, 2023

**Portfolio Manager** RBC Global Asset Management Inc. ("RBC GAM")

The Board of Directors of RBC Global Asset Management Inc. approved this annual management report of fund performance on March 7, 2024.

### **A Note on Forward-looking Statements**

This report may contain forward-looking statements about the Fund, its future performance, strategies or prospects, and possible future Fund action. The words "may," "could," "should," "would," "suspect," "outlook," "believe," "plan," "anticipate," "estimate," "expect," "intend," "forecast," "objective" and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements.

Forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance. Forward-looking statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties, both about the Fund and general economic factors, so it is possible that predictions, forecasts, projections and other forward-looking statements will not be achieved. We caution you not to place undue reliance on these statements as a number of important factors could cause actual events or results to differ materially from those expressed or implied in any forward-looking statement made in relation to the Fund. These factors include, but are not limited to, general economic, political and market factors in Canada, the United States and internationally, interest and foreign exchange rates, global equity and capital markets, business competition, technological changes, changes in laws and regulations, judicial or regulatory judgments, legal proceedings and catastrophic events.

The above list of important factors that may affect future results is not exhaustive. Before making any investment decisions, we encourage you to consider these and other factors carefully. All opinions contained in forward-looking statements are subject to change without notice and are provided in good faith but without legal responsibility.

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*This annual management report of fund performance ("MRFP") contains financial highlights but does not contain the complete annual financial statements of the Fund. You can get a copy of the financial statements at your request, and at no cost, by calling 1-800-463-FUND (3863), by writing to us at RBC Global Asset Management Inc., P.O. Box 7500, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1P9, or by visiting our website at [www.rbcgam.com/regulatorydocuments](http://www.rbcgam.com/regulatorydocuments) or SEDAR+ at [www.sedarplus.ca](http://www.sedarplus.ca). Security holders may also contact us using one of these methods to request a copy of the Fund's proxy voting policies and procedures, proxy voting disclosure record, or quarterly portfolio disclosure.*



## MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION OF FUND PERFORMANCE

### Investment Objective and Strategies

The Fund is a strategic asset allocation fund, which focuses on providing income and the potential for moderate capital growth. The Fund maintains a balance of investments across several asset classes by investing in funds managed by RBC GAM or an affiliate of RBC GAM, as well as funds of other companies (collectively called the “underlying funds”).

The Fund’s target weightings for each asset class are 60% for fixed income, 13% for Canadian equities, 15% for U.S. equities and 12% for international equities. The actual allocation to each asset class will be no more than 15% above or below its target weighting for the fixed-income asset class, and no more than 10% above or below the target weighting for the equities asset classes.

### Risk

There were no significant changes to the investment objective and strategies that affected the Fund’s overall level of risk during the reporting period. The risks of investing in the Fund and the suitability of the Fund for investors remain as discussed in the Simplified Prospectus.

### Results of Operations

The Fund’s net asset value fell to \$117 million as of December 31, 2023, from \$118 million at the end of 2022. The decrease was due to net redemptions, partially offset by investment returns.

Over the past year, the Fund’s Series F units gained 9.9%, which underperformed the 10.8% rise in the benchmark. The broad-based index 1 rose 6.7% and the broad-based index 2 rose 11.8%. The Fund’s return is after the deduction of fees and expenses, while benchmark and broad-based index returns do not include any costs of investing. See the Financial Highlights section for the management expense ratios and the Past Performance section for the returns of any other series, which may vary because of differences in management fees and expenses.

Economic growth in 2023 was faster than many economists had predicted at the beginning of the year, defying risks that included inflation exceeding central-bank targets, the highest borrowing costs in about 16 years and two wars on Europe’s doorstep. By the end of the period, growth and inflation had begun to slow, prompting investors to anticipate that central banks were moving closer to rolling back a portion of the rate hikes that had taken place since early 2022.

The Fund’s neutral position in equities and overweight position in fixed income had a positive impact on performance. Bonds recovered to post gains in 2023 as signs of economic slowdown, especially in

Canada and Europe, pushed down longer-term yields and triggered the speculation about policy-rate cuts. The lack of a recession made the job of policymakers harder, with fears persisting that lower rates, if they occurred, would rekindle inflation. Canada’s 10-year benchmark yield ended the year down slightly at 3.11% but earlier touched 4.24%, the highest since July 2007. Canadian government bonds, with a return of just under 5%, outperformed U.S. fixed income, as the weaker Canadian economy pushed domestic yields down faster than yields on Treasuries. Eurozone government bonds outperformed those in North America and Japan, with the German bond market returning about 7% and Italy’s about 11%. Returns in the fixed-income segment of the portfolio were boosted by the Russell Investments Fixed Income Pool and the RBC Bond Fund.

A distinguishing characteristic of the U.S. stock-market rally was the small number of issues powering the advance. While the “Magnificent 7” – the seven largest stocks in the S&P 500 by market value – in some cases more than doubled, most stocks lagged the index’s returns significantly. The S&P 500 Index and some benchmarks in Europe reached near-record levels during the period. In emerging markets, China was a significant exception to what was otherwise an upbeat story. The removal of the country’s remaining pandemic restrictions was taken as a positive, but consumers and businesses did not spend and invest as had been expected. Overall, emerging markets underperformed developed markets. Returns were bolstered by the Fidelity U.S. Focused Stock Fund and the NBI International High Conviction Equity Private Portfolio.

### Recent Developments

An economic slowdown appears to be underway, with businesses and consumers feeling the drag of higher interest rates and two years of exceptionally high inflation. Global trade is contracting, businesses are scaling back investments and the frenetic hiring of the past two years is on the wane, albeit gradually. The portfolio manager continues to look for a mild contraction in the U.S., Canada, the UK and the eurozone during the first half of 2024, although pathways to an economic soft landing are evident and the odds of such an outcome are improving as inflation moderates and the cost of borrowing declines.

Against this backdrop, the portfolio manager believes that central banks are likely to cut their benchmark interest rates at some point over the next year, setting up a more positive backdrop for bond returns. While the portfolio manager continues to expect stocks to outperform bonds over the longer term, the premium associated with holding equities relative to fixed income is perhaps not properly compensating investors for the risk of an economic downturn. Given the balance of risks and opportunities against both short-term and



long-term investment horizons, the portfolio manager added to the Fund's fixed-income allocation over the past quarter, boosting the bond weight above neutral for the first time in two decades.

Effective June 27, 2023, the Fund's risk rating changed from "low" to "low to medium."

Effective January 1, 2023, the management fees for Series A units were fixed at 1.68%.

Effective January 1, 2023, Suromitra Sanatani was appointed as Chair of the Independent Review Committee ("the IRC"). Effective February 1, 2023, Joanne Vézina was appointed as a member of the IRC. Effective March 1, 2023, Enrique Cuyegkeng was appointed as a member of the IRC.

### **Related-Party Transactions**

#### ***Manager, Trustee and Portfolio Manager***

RBC GAM is an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of Royal Bank of Canada ("Royal Bank") and is the manager, trustee and portfolio manager of the Fund. RBC GAM is responsible for the Fund's day-to-day operations, holds title to the Fund's property on behalf of its unitholders, provides investment advice and portfolio management services to the Fund and appoints distributors for the Fund. RBC GAM is paid a management fee by the Fund as compensation for its services. The Fund pays a fixed administration fee to RBC GAM, which, in turn, pays certain operating expenses of the Fund. Both the management fee and fixed administration fee are calculated and accrued daily as a percentage of the net asset value of each series of units of the Fund. RBC GAM, as trustee, earns a fee, which is paid by the manager from the fixed administration fee paid by the Fund.

RBC GAM or its affiliates may earn fees and spreads in connection with various services provided to, or transactions with, the Fund, such as banking, brokerage, securities lending, foreign exchange and derivatives transactions. RBC GAM or its affiliates may earn a foreign exchange spread when unitholders switch between series of funds denominated in different currencies. The Fund also maintains bank accounts and overdraft provisions with Royal Bank for which Royal Bank may earn a fee. Affiliates of RBC GAM that provide services to the Fund in the course of their normal businesses are discussed below.

#### ***Distributors***

RBC GAM, Royal Mutual Funds Inc., RBC Direct Investing Inc., RBC Dominion Securities Inc. and Phillips, Hager & North Investment Funds Ltd. are principal distributors of, or may distribute certain series of units of, the Fund. Dealers may receive an ongoing commission based on the total value of their clients' investment in certain series of units of the Fund.

#### ***Registrars***

RBC GAM, RBC Investor Services Trust ("RBC IS") or Royal Bank (or a combination thereof) are the registrars of the Fund and keep records of who owns units of the Fund. The registrars earn a fee, which is paid by the manager from the fixed administration fee paid by the Fund.

#### ***Custodian***

RBC IS is the custodian and holds the assets of the Fund. RBC IS earns a fee as the custodian, which is paid by the manager from the fixed administration fee paid by the Fund.

#### ***Securities Lending Agent***

To the extent the Fund may engage in securities lending transactions, RBC IS may act as the Fund's securities lending agent. Any revenue earned on such securities lending is split between the Fund and the securities lending agent.

#### ***Other Related-Party Transactions***

Pursuant to applicable securities legislation, the Fund relied on the standing instructions from the Independent Review Committee with respect to one or more of the following transactions:

##### ***Related-Party Trading Activities***

- (a) trades in securities of Royal Bank;
- (b) investments in the securities of issuers for which a related-party dealer acted as an underwriter during the distribution of such securities and the 60-day period following the conclusion of such distribution of the underwritten securities to the public;
- (c) purchases of equity, debt securities or mortgages from or sales of equity, debt securities or mortgages to a related-party dealer, where it acted as principal; and

##### ***Inter-Fund Trading***

- (d) purchases or sales of securities of an issuer from or to another investment fund or managed account managed by RBC GAM.

The applicable standing instructions require that Related-Party Trading Activities and Inter-Fund Trading be conducted in accordance with RBC GAM policy and that RBC GAM advise the Independent Review Committee of a material breach of any standing instruction. RBC GAM policy requires that an investment decision in respect of Related-Party Trading Activities (i) is made free from any influence of Royal Bank or its associates or affiliates and without taking into account any consideration relevant to Royal Bank or its affiliates or associates, (ii) represents the business judgment of the portfolio manager, uninfluenced by considerations other than the best interests of the Fund, (iii) is in compliance with RBC GAM policies and procedures, and (iv) achieves a fair and reasonable result for the Fund. RBC GAM policy requires that an investment decision in respect of Inter-Fund Trading is in the best interests of each Fund.



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The following tables show selected key financial information about the Fund and are intended to help you understand the Fund's financial performance for the past five years or for the periods since inception. This information is derived from the Fund's audited annual financial statements.

### Change in Net Assets Per Unit (\$)

For the Year/ Period Ended	Net Assets Beginning of Year/Period	Increase (Decrease) from Operations <sup>1</sup>					Annual Distributions <sup>2</sup>				Net Assets End of Year/Period	
		Total Revenue (Loss)	Total Expenses	Realized Gains (Losses)	Unrealized Gains (Losses)	Total	From Income (Excluding Dividends)	From Dividends	From Capital Gains	Return of Capital		
<b>Series A</b>												
<b>Dec. 31, 2023</b>	<b>11.60</b>	<b>0.46</b>	<b>(0.23)</b>	<b>0.42</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>(0.05)</b>	<b>(0.09)</b>	<b>(0.51)</b>	<b>(0.02)</b>	<b>(0.67)</b>	<b>11.97</b>
Dec. 31, 2022	13.91	0.40	(0.24)	0.38	(2.13)	(1.59)	(0.01)	(0.10)	(0.67)	–	(0.78)	11.60
Dec. 31, 2021	13.45	0.31	(0.27)	0.78	0.08	0.90	(0.01)	(0.05)	(0.38)	–	(0.44)	13.91
Dec. 31, 2020	12.96	0.34	(0.25)	0.51	0.27	0.87	–	(0.10)	(0.31)	–	(0.41)	13.45
Dec. 31, 2019	11.91	0.35	(0.25)	0.42	0.85	1.37	(0.01)	(0.11)	(0.18)	–	(0.30)	12.96
<b>Series F</b>												
<b>Dec. 31, 2023</b>	<b>9.52</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>(0.11)</b>	<b>0.35</b>	<b>0.31</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>(0.07)</b>	<b>(0.11)</b>	<b>(0.42)</b>	<b>(0.03)</b>	<b>(0.63)</b>	<b>9.82</b>
Dec. 31, 2022	11.37	0.33	(0.11)	0.31	(1.69)	(1.16)	(0.01)	(0.12)	(0.55)	–	(0.68)	9.52
Dec. 31, 2021	10.92	0.25	(0.12)	0.64	0.05	0.82	(0.01)	(0.06)	(0.31)	–	(0.38)	11.37
Dec. 31, 2020	10.46	0.27	(0.12)	0.41	0.25	0.81	–	(0.10)	(0.26)	–	(0.36)	10.92
Dec. 31, 2019	9.56	0.29	(0.11)	0.34	0.58	1.10	(0.01)	(0.11)	(0.15)	–	(0.27)	10.46

<sup>1</sup> Net assets and distributions are based on the actual number of units outstanding at the relevant time. The increase/decrease from operations is based on the weighted average number of units outstanding over the financial period. This table is not intended to be a reconciliation of beginning to ending net assets per unit.

<sup>2</sup> Distributions are reinvested in additional units of the Fund or paid in cash.

## Ratios and Supplemental Data

As at	Net Asset Value Per Unit (\$)	Net Asset Value (\$000s)	Number of Units Outstanding (000s)	Management Expense Ratio (%) <sup>1</sup>	MER Before Absorption (%) <sup>1</sup>	Portfolio Turnover Rate (%) <sup>2</sup>	Trading Expense Ratio (%) <sup>3</sup>
<b>Series A</b>							
<b>Dec. 31, 2023</b>	<b>11.97</b>	<b>92 683</b>	<b>7 746</b>	<b>1.96</b>	<b>1.96</b>	<b>12.88</b>	<b>0.02</b>
Dec. 31, 2022	11.60	94 866	8 178	1.95	1.95	19.42	0.02
Dec. 31, 2021	13.91	118 968	8 556	1.95	1.95	4.27	0.02
Dec. 31, 2020	13.45	120 925	8 992	1.96	1.96	24.20	0.02
Dec. 31, 2019	12.96	121 357	9 367	1.95	1.95	6.82	0.02
<b>Series F</b>							
<b>Dec. 31, 2023</b>	<b>9.82</b>	<b>23 814</b>	<b>2 426</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>12.88</b>	<b>0.02</b>
Dec. 31, 2022	9.52	22 662	2 381	1.13	1.13	19.42	0.02
Dec. 31, 2021	11.37	24 223	2 131	1.13	1.13	4.27	0.02
Dec. 31, 2020	10.92	18 404	1 685	1.12	1.12	24.20	0.02
Dec. 31, 2019	10.46	16 433	1 571	1.12	1.12	6.82	0.02

<sup>1</sup> The management expense ratio ("MER") is based on the direct expenses charged to the Fund and the Fund's proportionate share of the expenses of underlying funds, if any, for the stated period, excluding commissions and other portfolio transaction costs, and is expressed as an annualized percentage of the daily average net asset value during the period. RBC GAM may, at its discretion and without notice to unitholders, waive or absorb certain operating expenses. MER includes the waiver or absorption by RBC GAM of certain operating expenses, while the MER before absorption shows the MER prior to operating expenses being waived or absorbed by RBC GAM.

<sup>2</sup> The Fund's portfolio turnover rate gives an indication of the level of activity employed by the portfolio manager. A portfolio turnover rate of 100% is equivalent to the Fund buying and selling all of the securities in its portfolio once in the course of the year. The higher the portfolio turnover rate in a year, the greater the trading costs payable by the Fund in the year, and the greater the chance of an investor receiving taxable capital gains in the year. There is not necessarily a relationship between a high turnover rate and the performance of the Fund. The portfolio turnover rate is not applicable to money market funds.

<sup>3</sup> The trading expense ratio represents total commissions and other portfolio transaction costs of the Fund and the Fund's proportionate share of such costs of underlying funds expressed as an annualized percentage of daily average net asset value during the period. The trading expense ratio is not applicable to fixed-income transactions.

Effective January 1, 2023, the management fees for Series A units were fixed at 1.68%. If the changes to the management fees would have been in effect throughout the financial year ended December 31, 2022, the adjusted MER for each series of the Fund would be: Series A – 1.95%.



**FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (cont.)**

**Management Fees and Administration Fees**

Management fees and administration fees of each series of the Fund are payable to RBC GAM and calculated at the following annual percentages, before GST/HST, of the daily net asset value of each series of the Fund. The management fee, breakdown of services received in consideration of the management fee, as a percentage of the management fee, and the administration fee for each series are as follows:

	Management Fees*†	Breakdown of Services		Administration Fees
		Distribution	Other‡	
Series A	1.68%	44%	56%	0.05%
Series F	0.95%	–	100%	0.05%

\* Effective January 1, 2023, the management fees for Series A units were fixed at 1.68%. For the period ended December 31, 2022, the actual average management fee rate was: Series A – 1.68%.

† Prior to January 1, 2023, the management fee payable in respect of Series A units of the Fund was a variable fee and was determined on a basis such that all fees and expenses that comprise the management expense ratio ("MER"), other than the additional cost of the GST/HST, were equal to a specified percentage of the average net asset value of this series of the Fund ("Specified Percentage"). The Specified Percentage included the management fee, administration fee of 0.05%, taxes (other than the additional cost of the GST/HST), other fund costs and any fees and expenses of the underlying funds. The Specified Percentage for Series A units was 1.85%.

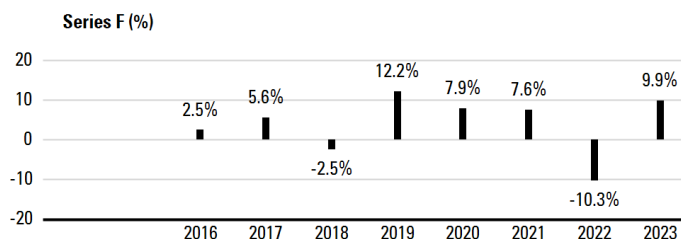
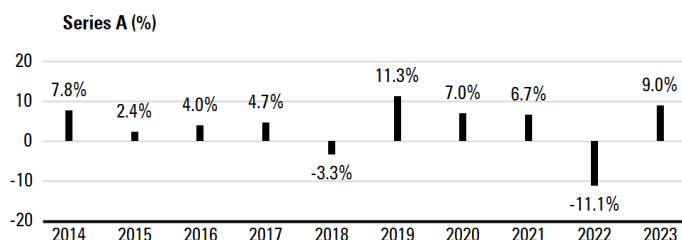
‡ Includes all costs related to management, trustee, investment advisory services, general administration and profit.

**PAST PERFORMANCE**

The performance information shown assumes that all distributions made by the Fund in the periods shown were reinvested in additional units of the Fund and would be lower if distributions were not reinvested. The performance information does not take into account sales, redemption, distribution, optional charges or income taxes payable that would have reduced returns or performance. Past performance does not necessarily indicate how the Fund may perform in the future. A fund with more than 10 years of performance history is only permitted to disclose the past 10 years.

**Year-by-Year Returns (%)**

The bar chart indicates the Fund's performance for each of the years shown, and illustrates how the Fund's performance has changed from year to year. The bar chart shows, in percentage terms, how much an investment made on the first day of each financial year would have grown or decreased by the end of the financial year.



**Annual Compound Returns (%)**

The table shows the annual compound returns for each series of the Fund and for each of the periods indicated ended on December 31, 2023, compared with the following benchmarks:

The benchmark is composed of:

- 58% FTSE Canada Universe Bond Index
- 15% S&P 500 Total Return Index (CAD)
- 13% S&P/TSX Capped Composite Total Return Index
- 12% MSCI EAFE Total Return Net Index (CAD)
- 2% FTSE Canada 30 Day TBill Index

The broad-based indexes are as follows:

- Broad-based index 1 – FTSE Canada Universe Bond Index
- Broad-based index 2 – S&P/TSX Capped Composite Total Return Index

	Past Year	Past 3 Years	Past 5 Years	Past 10 Years	Since Inception
Series A	9.0	1.1	4.2	3.7	–
Benchmark	10.8	2.0	5.5	5.5	–
Broad-based index 1	6.7	-2.8	1.3	2.4	–
Broad-based index 2	11.8	9.6	11.3	7.6	–
Series F	9.9	2.0	5.1	–	4.1
Benchmark	10.8	2.0	5.5	–	4.9
Broad-based index 1	6.7	-2.8	1.3	–	1.1
Broad-based index 2	11.8	9.6	11.3	–	8.7

The returns of each series may vary because of differences in management fees and expenses. Benchmark and/or broad-based index returns do not include any costs of investing. See Management Discussion of Fund Performance for a discussion of performance relative to benchmark and/or broad-based indexes.

Series F units have been available for sale to unitholders since July 4, 2016.

Inception dates are not provided for series that have been in existence for more than 10 years.

Advisor Series units with a deferred sales charge option were re-designated as Series A units effective April 11, 2022.

**INDEX DESCRIPTIONS**

**FTSE Canada Universe Bond Index** This index is designed as a broad measure of the Canadian investment-grade fixed-income market and includes bonds with maturities of at least one year.

**S&P 500 Total Return Index (CAD)** This index is a capitalization-weighted index measuring the Canadian-dollar performance of 500 widely held common stocks representing all major industries in the United States. The index gives investors a broad measure of the overall performance of the U.S. stock market.

**S&P/TSX Capped Composite Total Return Index** This index is the amended capitalization-weighted index measuring the performance of selected securities listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, with no individual stock exceeding 10% of the overall weight.



## PAST PERFORMANCE (cont.)

**MSCI EAFE Total Return Net Index (CAD)** This index is a broad measure of the Canadian-dollar performance of stocks from developed equity markets covering countries in Europe, Australasia and the Far East. The net total return index reinvests dividends after the deduction of withholding taxes, using (for international indexes) a tax rate applicable to non-resident institutional investors who do not benefit from double taxation treaties.

**FTSE Canada 30 Day TBill Index** This index is a measure of the performance of Canadian short-term cash investments.

## SUMMARY OF INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO

(after consideration of derivative products, if any)

As at December 31, 2023

### Investment Mix

	% of Net Asset Value
Fixed Income Funds	58.9
United States Equity Funds	14.7
Canadian Equity Funds	13.2
International Equity Funds	12.3
Cash/Other	0.9

### Top 25 Holdings\*

	% of Net Asset Value
Russell Investments Fixed Income Pool - Series O	13.5
NBI International High Conviction Equity Private Portfolio	12.3
Phillips, Hager & North Total Return Bond Fund - Series O	9.3
RBC Bond Fund - Series O	9.2
Fidelity U.S. Focused Stock Fund	7.4
Phillips, Hager & North U.S. Multi-Style All-Cap Equity Fund - Series O	7.3
RBC Global Corporate Bond Fund - Series O	6.5
Phillips, Hager & North Short Term Bond & Mortgage Fund - Series O	5.5
RBC Canadian Equity Fund - Series O	4.4
RBC Canadian Dividend Fund - Series O	4.4
Franklin Bissett Canadian Equity Fund	4.3
RBC Global Bond Fund - Series O	3.7
BlueBay European High Yield Bond Fund (Canada) - Series O	2.8
BlueBay Global Sovereign Bond Fund (Canada) - Series O	2.8
RBC Global High Yield Bond Fund - Series O	2.8
BlueBay Global Investment Grade Corporate Bond Fund (Canada) - Series O	2.3
Cash & Cash Equivalents	1.0
RBC Canadian Money Market Fund - Series O	0.5
Total	100.0

\* The Fund holds fewer than 25 holdings.

The Summary of Investment Portfolio may change due to ongoing portfolio transactions of the Fund and a quarterly update is available at [www.rbcgam.com/regulatorydocuments](http://www.rbcgam.com/regulatorydocuments).

The Simplified Prospectus and other information about the underlying funds are available on the investment fund's designated website and on SEDAR+ at [www.sedarplus.ca](http://www.sedarplus.ca).