

# Portfolio Design Labs, LLC

## Firm Brochure - Form ADV Part 2A

*This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Portfolio Design Labs, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at (310) 755-0411 or by email at: [jason.thomas@portfoliolabs.com](mailto:jason.thomas@portfoliolabs.com). The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any state securities authority.*

*Additional information about Portfolio Design Labs, LLC is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). Portfolio Design Labs, LLC's CRD number is: 318127.*

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*Registration as an investment adviser does not imply a certain level of skill or training.*

Version Date: 12/15/2021

## **Item 2: Material Changes**

Portfolio Design Labs, LLC has not yet filed an annual updating amendment using the Form ADV Part 2A. Therefore, there are no material changes to report.

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## Item 4: Advisory Business

### A. Description of the Advisory Firm

Portfolio Design Labs, LLC (hereinafter “PDL”) is a Limited Liability Company organized in the State of Delaware. The firm was formed in November 2021, and the principal owner is Jason Thomas.

### B. Types of Advisory Services

#### *Portfolio Management Services*

PDL offers ongoing portfolio management services based on the individual goals, objectives, time horizon, and risk tolerance of each client. PDL creates an Investment Policy Statement for each client, which outlines the client’s current situation (income, tax levels, and risk tolerance levels) and then constructs a plan to aid in the selection of a portfolio that matches each client's specific situation. Portfolio management services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Investment strategy
- Asset allocation
- Risk tolerance
- Personal investment policy
- Asset selection
- Regular portfolio monitoring

PDL evaluates the current investments of each client with respect to their risk tolerance levels and time horizon. PDL will require discretionary authority from clients in order to select securities and execute transactions without permission from the client prior to each transaction. Risk tolerance levels are documented in the Investment Policy Statement, which is given to each client.

PDL seeks to provide that investment decisions are made in accordance with the fiduciary duties owed to its accounts and without consideration of PDL’s economic, investment or other financial interests. To meet its fiduciary obligations, PDL attempts to avoid, among other things, investment or trading practices that systematically advantage or disadvantage certain client portfolios, and accordingly, PDL’s policy is to seek fair and equitable allocation of investment opportunities/transactions among its clients to avoid favoring one client over another over time. It is PDL’s policy to allocate investment opportunities and transactions it identifies as being appropriate and prudent among its clients on a fair and equitable basis over time.

#### *Subadvisor Services*

PDL may also act as a subadvisor to advisers unaffiliated with PDL. These third-party advisers would outsource portfolio management services to PDL. This relationship will be memorialized in each contract between PDL and the third-party adviser.

### *Services Limited to Specific Types of Investments*

PDL generally limits its investment advice to mutual funds, fixed income securities, equities and ETFs. PDL may use other securities as well to help diversify a portfolio when applicable.

### **C. Client Tailored Services and Client Imposed Restrictions**

PDL will tailor a program for each individual client. This will include an interview session to get to know the client's specific needs and requirements as well as a plan that will be executed by PDL on behalf of the client. PDL may use model allocations together with a specific set of recommendations for each client based on their personal restrictions, needs, and targets. Clients may impose restrictions in investing in certain securities or types of securities in accordance with their values or beliefs. However, if the restrictions prevent PDL from properly servicing the client account, or if the restrictions would require PDL to deviate from its standard suite of services, PDL reserves the right to end the relationship.

### **D. Wrap Fee Programs**

A wrap fee program is an investment program where the investor pays one stated fee that includes management fees and transaction costs. PDL does not participate in wrap fee programs.

### **E. Assets Under Management**

PDL has the following assets under management:

Discretionary Amounts:	Non-discretionary Amounts:	Date Calculated:
\$0	\$0	December 2021

## **Item 5: Fees and Compensation**

### **A. Fee Schedule**

#### *Portfolio Management Fees*

Total Assets Under Management	Annual Fees
All assets	0.95%

PDL uses an average of the daily balance in the client's account throughout the billing period, after taking into account deposits and withdrawals, for purposes of determining the market value of the assets upon which the advisory fee is based. These fees are negotiable, and the final fee schedule is attached as Exhibit II of the Investment Advisory Contract.

The final fee schedule will be memorialized in the client's advisory agreement. Clients may terminate the agreement without penalty for a full refund of PDL's fees within five business days of signing the Investment Advisory Contract. Thereafter, clients may terminate the Investment Advisory Contract generally with 30 days' written notice.

### ***Subadviser Services Fees***

PDL may also act as a subadviser to unaffiliated third-party advisers. The notice of termination requirement and payment of fees for subadviser services will depend on the specific third-party investment adviser engaging PDL as subadviser. This relationship will be memorialized in each contract between PDL and each third-party adviser. The fees will not exceed any limit imposed by any regulatory agency.

## **B. Payment of Fees**

### ***Payment of Portfolio Management Fees***

Asset-based portfolio management fees are withdrawn directly from the client's accounts with client's written authorization on a monthly basis. Fees are paid in arrears.

### ***Payment of Subadviser Fees***

Subadviser fees may be withdrawn from clients' accounts or clients may be invoiced for such fees, as disclosed in each contract between PDL and the applicable third-party adviser.

## **C. Client Responsibility For Third Party Fees**

Clients are responsible for the payment of all third party fees (i.e. custodian fees, brokerage fees, mutual fund fees, transaction fees, etc.). Those fees are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by PDL. Please see Item 12 of this brochure regarding broker-dealer/custodian.

## **D. Prepayment of Fees**

PDL collects its fees in arrears. It does not collect fees in advance.

## **E. Outside Compensation For the Sale of Securities to Clients**

Neither PDL nor its supervised persons accept any compensation for the sale of investment products, including asset-based sales charges or service fees from the sale of mutual funds.

## **Item 6: Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management**

PDL does not accept performance-based fees or other fees based on a share of capital gains on or capital appreciation of the assets of a client.

## **Item 7: Types of Clients**

PDL generally provides advisory services to the following types of clients:

- ❖ High-Net-Worth Individuals
- ❖ Other Investment Advisers

There is no account minimum for any of PDL's services.

## **Item 8: Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies, & Risk of Loss**

### **A. Methods of Analysis and Investment Strategies**

#### ***Methods of Analysis***

PDL's methods of analysis include Modern portfolio theory and Quantitative analysis.

**Modern portfolio theory** is a theory of investment that attempts to maximize portfolio expected return for a given amount of portfolio risk, or equivalently minimize risk for a given level of expected return, each by carefully choosing the proportions of various asset.

**Quantitative analysis** deals with measurable factors as distinguished from qualitative considerations such as the character of management or the state of employee morale, such as the value of assets, the cost of capital, historical projections of sales, and so on.

#### ***Investment Strategies***

PDL uses long term trading and short term trading.

Investing in securities involves a risk of loss that you, as a client, should be prepared to bear.

## **B. Material Risks Involved**

### *Methods of Analysis*

**Modern portfolio theory** assumes that investors are risk averse, meaning that given two portfolios that offer the same expected return, investors will prefer the less risky one. Thus, an investor will take on increased risk only if compensated by higher expected returns. Conversely, an investor who wants higher expected returns must accept more risk. The exact trade-off will be the same for all investors, but different investors will evaluate the trade-off differently based on individual risk aversion characteristics. The implication is that a rational investor will not invest in a portfolio if a second portfolio exists with a more favorable risk-expected return profile – i.e., if for that level of risk an alternative portfolio exists which has better expected returns.

**Quantitative analysis** Investment strategies using quantitative models may perform differently than expected as a result of, among other things, the factors used in the models, the weight placed on each factor, changes from the factors' historical trends, and technical issues in the construction and implementation of the models.

### *Investment Strategies*

**Long term trading** is designed to capture market rates of both return and risk. Due to its nature, the long-term investment strategy can expose clients to various types of risk that will typically surface at various intervals during the time the client owns the investments. These risks include but are not limited to inflation (purchasing power) risk, interest rate risk, economic risk, market risk, and political/regulatory risk.

**Short term trading** risks include liquidity, economic stability, and inflation, in addition to the long term trading risks listed above. Frequent trading can affect investment performance, particularly through increased brokerage and other transaction costs and taxes.

Investing in securities involves a risk of loss that you, as a client, should be prepared to bear.

## **C. Risks of Specific Securities Utilized**

Clients should be aware that there is a material risk of loss using any investment strategy. The investment types listed below are not guaranteed or insured by the FDIC or any other government agency.

**Mutual Funds:** Investing in mutual funds carries the risk of capital loss and thus you may lose money investing in mutual funds. All mutual funds have costs that lower investment



returns. The funds can be of bond “fixed income” nature (lower risk) or stock “equity” nature.

**Equity** investment generally refers to buying shares of stocks in return for receiving a future payment of dividends and/or capital gains if the value of the stock increases. The value of equity securities may fluctuate in response to specific situations for each company, industry conditions and the general economic environments.

**Fixed income** investments generally pay a return on a fixed schedule, though the amount of the payments can vary. This type of investment can include corporate and government debt securities, leveraged loans, high yield, and investment grade debt and structured products, such as mortgage and other asset-backed securities, although individual bonds may be the best known type of fixed income security. In general, the fixed income market is volatile and fixed income securities carry interest rate risk. (As interest rates rise, bond prices usually fall, and vice versa. This effect is usually more pronounced for longer-term securities.) Fixed income securities also carry inflation risk, liquidity risk, call risk, and credit and default risks for both issuers and counterparties. The risk of default on treasury inflation protected/inflation linked bonds is dependent upon the U.S. Treasury defaulting (extremely unlikely); however, they carry a potential risk of losing share price value, albeit rather minimal.

**Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs):** An ETF is an investment fund traded on stock exchanges, similar to stocks. Investing in ETFs carries the risk of capital loss (sometimes up to a 100% loss in the case of a stock holding bankruptcy). Areas of concern include the lack of transparency in products and increasing complexity, conflicts of interest and the possibility of inadequate regulatory compliance. Risks in investing in ETFs include trading risks, liquidity and shutdown risks, risks associated with a change in authorized participants and non-participation of authorized participants, risks that trading price differs from indicative net asset value (iNAV), or price fluctuation and disassociation from the index being tracked. With regard to trading risks, regular trading adds cost to your portfolio thus counteracting the low fees that one of the typical benefits of ETFs. Additionally, regular trading to beneficially “time the market” is difficult to achieve. Even paid fund managers struggle to do this every year, with the majority failing to beat the relevant indexes. With regard to liquidity and shutdown risks, not all ETFs have the same level of liquidity. Since ETFs are at least as liquid as their underlying assets, trading conditions are more accurately reflected in implied liquidity rather than the average daily volume of the ETF itself. Implied liquidity is a measure of what can potentially be traded in ETFs based on its underlying assets. ETFs are subject to market volatility and the risks of their underlying securities, which may include the risks associated with investing in smaller companies, foreign securities, commodities, and fixed income investments (as applicable). Foreign securities in particular are subject to interest rate, currency exchange rate, economic, and political risks, all of which are magnified in emerging markets. ETFs that target a small universe of securities, such as a specific region or market sector, are generally subject to greater market volatility, as well as to the specific risks associated with that sector, region, or other focus. ETFs that use derivatives, leverage, or complex investment strategies are subject to additional risks. The return of an index ETF is usually different from that of the index it tracks because of fees, expenses, and tracking error. An

ETF may trade at a premium or discount to its net asset value (NAV) (or indicative value in the case of exchange-traded notes). The degree of liquidity can vary significantly from one ETF to another and losses may be magnified if no liquid market exists for the ETF's shares when attempting to sell them. Each ETF has a unique risk profile, detailed in its prospectus, offering circular, or similar material, which should be considered carefully when making investment decisions.

**Past performance is not indicative of future results. Investing in securities involves a risk of loss that you, as a client, should be prepared to bear.**

## **Item 9: Disciplinary Information**

### **A. Criminal or Civil Actions**

There are no criminal or civil actions to report.

### **B. Administrative Proceedings**

There are no administrative proceedings to report.

### **C. Self-regulatory Organization (SRO) Proceedings**

There are no self-regulatory organization proceedings to report.

## **Item 10: Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations**

### **A. Registration as a Broker/Dealer or Broker/Dealer Representative**

Neither PDL nor its representatives are registered as, or have pending applications to become, a broker/dealer or a representative of a broker/dealer.

### **B. Registration as a Futures Commission Merchant, Commodity Pool Operator, or a Commodity Trading Advisor**

Neither PDL nor its representatives are registered as or have pending applications to become either a Futures Commission Merchant, Commodity Pool Operator, or Commodity Trading Advisor or an associated person of the foregoing entities.

### **C. Registration Relationships Material to this Advisory Business and Possible Conflicts of Interests**

Neither PDL nor its representatives have any material relationships to this advisory business that would present a possible conflict of interest.

#### **D. Selection of Other Advisers or Managers and How This Adviser is Compensated for Those Selections**

PDL does not utilize nor select third-party investment advisers.

### **Item 11: Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading**

#### **A. Code of Ethics**

PDL has a written Code of Ethics that covers the following areas: Prohibited Purchases and Sales, Insider Trading, Personal Securities Transactions, Exempted Transactions, Prohibited Activities, Conflicts of Interest, Gifts and Entertainment, Confidentiality, Service on a Board of Directors, Compliance Procedures, Compliance with Laws and Regulations, Procedures and Reporting, Certification of Compliance, Reporting Violations, Compliance Officer Duties, Training and Education, Recordkeeping, Annual Review, and Sanctions. PDL's Code of Ethics is available free upon request to any client or prospective client.

#### **B. Recommendations Involving Material Financial Interests**

PDL does not recommend that clients buy or sell any security in which a related person to PDL or PDL has a material financial interest.

#### **C. Investing Personal Money in the Same Securities as Clients**

From time to time, representatives of PDL may buy or sell securities for themselves that they also recommend to clients. This may provide an opportunity for representatives of PDL to buy or sell the same securities before or after recommending the same securities to clients resulting in representatives profiting off the recommendations they provide to clients. Such transactions may create a conflict of interest. PDL will always document any transactions that could be construed as conflicts of interest and will never engage in trading that operates to the client's disadvantage when similar securities are being bought or sold.

#### **D. Trading Securities At/Around the Same Time as Clients' Securities**

From time to time, representatives of PDL may buy or sell securities for themselves at or around the same time as clients. This may provide an opportunity for representatives of PDL to buy or sell securities before or after recommending securities to clients resulting in representatives profiting off the recommendations they provide to clients. Such transactions may create a conflict of interest; however, PDL will never engage in trading that operates to the client's disadvantage if representatives of PDL buy or sell securities at or around the same time as clients.

## **Item 12: Brokerage Practices**

### **A. Factors Used to Select Custodians and/or Broker/Dealers**

Custodians/broker-dealers will be recommended based on PDL's duty to seek "best execution," which is the obligation to seek execution of securities transactions for a client on the most favorable terms for the client under the circumstances. Clients will not necessarily pay the lowest commission or commission equivalent, and PDL may also consider the market expertise and research access provided by the broker-dealer/custodian, including but not limited to access to written research, oral communication with analysts, admittance to research conferences and other resources provided by the brokers that may aid in PDL's research efforts. PDL will never charge a premium or commission on transactions, beyond the actual cost imposed by the broker-dealer/custodian.

PDL will require clients to use TD Ameritrade Institutional, a division of TD Ameritrade, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC.

#### ***1. Research and Other Soft-Dollar Benefits***

While PDL has no formal soft dollars program in which soft dollars are used to pay for third party services, PDL may receive research, products, or other services from custodians and broker-dealers in connection with client securities transactions ("soft dollar benefits"). PDL may enter into soft-dollar arrangements consistent with (and not outside of) the safe harbor contained in Section 28(e) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. There can be no assurance that any particular client will benefit from soft dollar research, whether or not the client's transactions paid for it, and PDL does not seek to allocate benefits to client accounts proportionate to any soft dollar credits generated by the accounts. PDL benefits by not having to produce or pay for the research, products or services, and PDL will have an incentive to recommend a broker-dealer based on receiving research or services. Clients should be aware that PDL's acceptance of soft dollar benefits may result in higher commissions charged to the client.

#### ***2. Brokerage for Client Referrals***

PDL receives no referrals from a broker-dealer or third party in exchange for using that broker-dealer or third party.

### ***3. Clients Directing Which Broker/Dealer/Custodian to Use***

PDL will require clients to use a specific broker-dealer to execute transactions. Not all advisers require clients to use a particular broker-dealer.

#### **B. Aggregating (Block) Trading for Multiple Client Accounts**

If PDL buys or sells the same securities on behalf of more than one client, then it may (but would be under no obligation to) aggregate or bunch such securities in a single transaction for multiple clients in order to seek more favorable prices, lower brokerage commissions, or more efficient execution. In such case, PDL would place an aggregate order with the broker on behalf of all such clients in order to ensure fairness for all clients; provided, however, that trades would be reviewed periodically to ensure that accounts are not systematically disadvantaged by this policy. PDL would determine the appropriate number of shares and select the appropriate brokers consistent with its duty to seek best execution, except for those accounts with specific brokerage direction (if any).

## **Item 13: Review of Accounts**

#### **A. Frequency and Nature of Periodic Reviews and Who Makes Those Reviews**

All client accounts for PDL's advisory services provided on an ongoing basis are reviewed at least quarterly by Jason Thomas, Managing Member and Chief Compliance Officer, with regard to clients' respective investment policies and risk tolerance levels. All accounts at PDL are assigned to this reviewer.

#### **B. Factors That Will Trigger a Non-Periodic Review of Client Accounts**

Reviews may be triggered by material market, economic or political events, or by changes in client's financial situations (such as retirement, termination of employment, physical move, or inheritance).

#### **C. Content and Frequency of Regular Reports Provided to Clients**

Each client of PDL's advisory services provided on an ongoing basis will receive a quarterly report detailing the client's account, including assets held, asset value, and calculation of fees. This written report will come from the custodian. PDL will also provide at least quarterly a separate written statement to the client.

## **Item 14: Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

### **A. Economic Benefits Provided by Third Parties for Advice Rendered to Clients (Includes Sales Awards or Other Prizes)**

PDL receives compensation via its arrangement with its underlying subadvisers.

### **B. Compensation to Non - Advisory Personnel for Client Referrals**

PDL does not directly or indirectly compensate any person who is not advisory personnel for client referrals.

## **Item 15: Custody**

When advisory fees are deducted directly from client accounts at client's custodian, PDL will be deemed to have limited custody of client's assets and must have written authorization from the client to do so. Clients will receive all account statements and billing invoices that are required in each jurisdiction, and they should carefully review those statements for accuracy.

## **Item 16: Investment Discretion**

PDL provides discretionary investment advisory services to clients. The advisory contract established with each client sets forth the discretionary authority for trading. Where investment discretion has been granted, PDL generally manages the client's account and makes investment decisions without consultation with the client as to when the securities are to be bought or sold for the account, the total amount of the securities to be bought/sold, what securities to buy or sell, or the price per share. In some instances, PDL's discretionary authority in making these determinations may be limited by conditions imposed by a client (in investment guidelines or objectives, or client instructions otherwise provided to PDL).

## **Item 17: Voting Client Securities (Proxy Voting)**

PDL will not ask for, nor accept voting authority for client securities. Clients will receive proxies directly from the issuer of the security or the custodian. Clients should direct all proxy questions to the issuer of the security.

## **Item 18: Financial Information**

### **A. Balance Sheet**

PDL neither requires nor solicits prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees per client, six months or more in advance, and therefore is not required to include a balance sheet with this brochure.

### **B. Financial Conditions Reasonably Likely to Impair Ability to Meet Contractual Commitments to Clients**

Neither PDL nor its management has any financial condition that is likely to reasonably impair PDL's ability to meet contractual commitments to clients.

### **C. Bankruptcy Petitions in Previous Ten Years**

PDL has not been the subject of a bankruptcy petition in the last ten years.