Advisory Agreement Board Considerations and Fee Evaluation

The Board of Trustees (hereinafter referred to as the "Board" or "Trustees") approved the renewal of DWS CROCI® U.S. Fund's (the "Fund") investment management agreement (the "Agreement") with DWS Investment Management Americas, Inc. ("DIMA") in September 2026.

In terms of the process that the Board followed prior to approving the Agreement, shareholders should know that:

— During the entire process, all of the Fund's Trustees were independent of DIMA and its affiliates (the "Independent Trustees").

— The Board met frequently during the past year to discuss fund matters and dedicated a substantial amount of time to contract review matters. Over the course of several months, the Board reviewed extensive materials received from DIMA, independent third parties and independent counsel, including materials containing information on the Fund's performance, fees and expenses, profitability, economies of scale and fall-out benefits.

— The Board also received extensive information throughout the year regarding performance of the Fund.

— The Independent Trustees regularly met privately with counsel to discuss contract review and other matters.

— In connection with reviewing the Agreement, the Board also reviewed the terms of the Fund's Rule 12b-1 plan, distribution agreement, administrative services agreement, transfer agency agreement, and certain other material service agreements.

In connection with the contract review process, the Board considered the factors discussed below, among others. The Board also considered that DIMA has managed the Fund since its inception, and the Board believes that a long-term relationship with a capable, conscientious advisor is in the best interests of the Fund. The Board considered, generally, that shareholders chose to invest or remain invested in the Fund knowing that DIMA managed the Fund. DIMA is part of DWS Group GmbH & Co. KGaA ("DWS Group"). DWS Group is a global asset management business that offers a wide range of investing expertise and resources, including research capabilities in many countries throughout the world. DWS Group is majority-owned by Deutsche Bank AG, with approximately 20% of its shares publicly traded.

As part of the contract review process, the Board carefully considered the fees and expenses of each DWS fund overseen by the Board in light of the fund's performance. In many cases, this led to the negotiation and implementation of expense caps.

While shareholders may focus primarily on fund performance and fees, the Board considers these and many other factors, including the quality and integrity of DIMA's personnel and administrative support services provided by DIMA, such as back-office operations, fund valuations, and compliance policies and procedures.

Nature, Quality and Extent of Services. The Board considered the terms of the Agreement, including the scope of advisory services provided under the Agreement. The Board noted that, under the Agreement, DIMA provides portfolio management services to the Fund and that, pursuant to a separate administrative services agreement, DIMA provides administrative services to the Fund. The Board considered the experience and skills of senior management and investment personnel and the resources made available to such personnel. The Board also considered the risks to DIMA in sponsoring or managing the Fund, including financial, operational and reputational risks, the potential economic impact to DIMA from such risks and DIMA's approach to addressing such risks. The Board reviewed the Fund's performance over short-term and long-term periods and compared those returns to various agreed-upon performance measures, including market index(es) and a peer universe compiled using information supplied by Morningstar Direct ("Morningstar"), an independent fund data service. The Board also noted that it has put into place a process of identifying "Funds in Review" (e.g., funds performing poorly relative to a peer universe), and receives additional reporting from DIMA regarding such funds and, where appropriate, DIMA's plans to address underperformance. The Board believes this process is an effective manner of identifying and addressing underperforming funds. Based on the information provided, the Board noted that, for the one-, three- and five-year periods ended December 31, 2025, the Fund's performance (Class A shares) was in the 2nd quartile, 1st quartile and 2nd quartile, respectively, of the applicable Morningstar universe (the 1st quartile being the best performers and the 4th quartile being the worst performers). The Board also observed that the Fund has outperformed its benchmark in the one-, three- and five-year periods ended December 31, 2025.

Fees and Expenses. The Board considered the Fund's investment management fee schedule, operating expenses and total expense ratios, and comparative information provided by Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc. ("Broadridge") regarding investment management fee rates paid to other investment advisors by similar funds (1st quartile being the most favorable and 4th quartile being the least favorable). With respect to management fees paid to other investment advisors by similar funds, the Board noted that the contractual fee rates paid by the Fund, which include a 0.097% fee paid to DIMA under the Fund's administrative services agreement, were lower than the median (1st quartile) of the applicable Broadridge peer group (based on Broadridge data provided as of December 31, 2025). The Board noted that the Fund's Class A shares total

(net) operating expenses (excluding 12b-1 fees) were expected to be lower than the median (2nd quartile) of the applicable Broadridge expense universe (based on Broadridge data provided as of December 31, 2025, and analyzing Broadridge expense universe Class A (net) expenses less any applicable 12b-1 fees) ("Broadridge Universe Expenses"). The Board also reviewed data comparing each other operational share class's total (net) operating expenses to the applicable Broadridge Universe Expenses. The Board noted that the expense limitations agreed to by DIMA were expected to help the Fund's total (net) operating expenses remain competitive. The Board considered the Fund's management fee rate as compared to fees charged by DIMA to comparable DWS U.S. registered funds ("DWS Funds") and considered differences between the Fund and the comparable DWS Funds. The information requested by the Board as part of its review of fees and expenses also included information about institutional accounts (including any sub-advised funds and accounts) and funds offered primarily to European investors ("DWS Europe Funds") managed by DWS Group. The Board noted that DIMA indicated that DWS Group does not manage any institutional accounts or DWS Europe Funds comparable to the Fund.

On the basis of the information provided, the Board concluded that management fees were reasonable and appropriate in light of the nature, quality and extent of services provided by DIMA.

Profitability. The Board reviewed detailed information regarding revenues received by DIMA under the Agreement. The Board considered the estimated costs to DIMA, and pre-tax profits realized by DIMA, from advising the DWS Funds, as well as estimates of the pre-tax profits attributable to managing the Fund in particular. The Board also received information regarding the estimated enterprise-wide profitability of DIMA and its affiliates with respect to all fund services in totality and by fund. The Board reviewed DIMA's methodology in allocating its costs to the management of the Fund. Based on the information provided, the Board concluded that the pre-tax profits realized by DIMA in connection with the management of the Fund were not unreasonable. The Board also reviewed certain publicly available information regarding the profitability of certain similar investment management firms. The Board noted that, while information regarding the profitability of such firms is limited (and in some cases is not necessarily prepared on a comparable basis), DIMA and its affiliates' overall profitability with respect to the DWS Funds (after taking into account distribution and other services provided to the funds by DIMA and its affiliates) was in line with the overall profitability levels of most comparable firms for which such data was available.

Economies of Scale. The Board considered whether there are economies of scale with respect to the management of the Fund and whether the Fund benefits from any economies of scale. The Board noted that the

Fund's investment management fee schedule includes fee breakpoints. The Board concluded that the Fund's fee schedule represents an appropriate sharing between the Fund and DIMA of such economies of scale as may exist in the management of the Fund at current asset levels.

Other Benefits to DIMA and Its Affiliates. The Board also considered the character and amount of other incidental or "fall-out" benefits received by DIMA and its affiliates, including any fees received by DIMA for administrative services provided to the Fund, any fees received by an affiliate of DIMA for transfer agency services provided to the Fund and any fees received by an affiliate of DIMA for distribution services. The Board noted that DIMA pays a licensing fee to an affiliate related to the Fund's use of the CROCI® strategy. The Board also considered benefits to DIMA related to brokerage and soft-dollar allocations, including allocating brokerage to pay for research generated by parties other than the executing broker dealers, which pertain primarily to funds investing in equity securities. In addition, the Board considered the incidental public relations benefits to DIMA related to DWS Funds advertising and cross-selling opportunities among DIMA products and services. The Board considered these benefits in reaching its conclusion that the Fund's management fees were reasonable.

Compliance. The Board considered the significant attention and resources dedicated by DIMA to its compliance processes. The Board noted in particular (i) the experience, seniority and time commitment of the individuals serving as DIMA's and the Fund's chief compliance officers; (ii) the substantial commitment of resources by DIMA and its affiliates to compliance matters; and (iii) ongoing efforts to enhance the compliance program.

Based on all of the information considered and the conclusions reached, the Board determined that the continuation of the Agreement is in the best interests of the Fund. In making this determination, the Board did not give particular weight to any single factor identified above and individual Independent Trustees may have weighed these factors differently in reaching their individual decisions to approve the continuation of the Agreement. The Board considered these factors over the course of numerous meetings, certain of which were in executive session with only the Independent Trustees and counsel present.

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