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Cornell Capital Closes Debut Multi-Asset Fund with \$1.3 Billion

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Cornell Capital, the private equity firm managed by former Goldman Sachs Group Inc. executive Henry Cornell, has raised \$1.3 billion for its first multi-asset investment fund.

Cornell Capital Partners LP is the New York-based firm's first pool for holding multiple assets, said Cornell, former vice chairman of Goldman's merchant banking division. The firm has raised prior vehicles on a per-deal basis up until now, he said in an interview.

Bringing on board former colleagues and peers, Cornell started the firm in 2013 to invest in consumer, energy, industrial and financial services companies. The firm is looking to scale businesses internationally by partnering with local providers, particularly in Asia, he said. That strategy reflects Cornell's experience in the region, where he built out Goldman's principal investment business in the 1990s.

"We're old school, conservative investors trying to grow companies," Cornell said. "In today's environment, you're not stealing anything on price. We win on partnership."

Investors continue to pour funds into private equity, looking to deploy capital in asset classes other than stocks and bonds. While many investors are looking to shrink the number of their manager relationships, first-time funds headed by people with strong records are finding success.

First-Time Funds

This year, 12 first-time funds have gathered \$3.3 billion, according to PitchBook Data Inc.

Cornell's investors include insurers, sovereign wealth funds and family offices, he said. More than half of the fund's investors are from outside the U.S.

The firm offers co-investment opportunities to its limited partners on almost every deal. This gives it the chance to collaborate with its investors and pursue larger deals, he said.

The new Cornell fund has already invested about one-third of its capital in three deals. Last year, the firm bought Corelle Brands Holdings Inc., the maker of Pyrex-branded housewares formerly known as World Kitchen.

This year, it invested in Monolith Materials, a maker of an industrial material called carbon black that is used in tires, hoses and roofing, among other products. Last month, Cornell closed the \$2.05 billion purchase of Hartford Financial Services Group Inc.'s annuity unit.

Cornell, which also has an office in Hong Kong, now manages about \$2.2 billion.