The Baird Way
Imagine Where We Can Go Together
A Different Kind of Firm

We know the ideas behind Baird’s culture and the words we use to talk about them aren’t revolutionary. What makes them special to us and our clients is that they aren’t just words. They’re beliefs we had in common before we ever came to Baird. They’re values we live when we go home at night. They’re behaviors that a century of practice has demonstrated best support Baird’s mission.

“To provide the best financial advice and service to our clients and be the best place to work for our associates.”

Being privately held means we can make these goals our top priorities and determine the best ways to achieve them. What we call The Baird Way is the intersection of what we do and how we do it. It is who we strive to be every day for our clients, for each other and in the communities we care so much about.
For 100 years Baird has guided families and institutions toward better financial futures, helping companies grow in markets around the world and individuals achieve their potential as our associates. Our business success has always depended on the strength of our relationships, which are built on trust. Like all of Baird’s employee-owners, we take that trust very seriously. Our commitment to earning and keeping it is ingrained in the culture we’ve built together from a common set of ideas.
Clients Come First

The financial services industry began as a means for people to improve their lives by participating in the growth of the companies, communities and institutions that underpin society. That idea is still at the core of all we do. Even as the financial world grows more complex, we still make every decision based on what’s best for our clients.

Being employee-owned makes that easier. We can take a longer view when planning for and investing in our businesses and do that with our clients’ needs squarely in mind. That’s why we’ve continued to grow and expand into areas where clients want our expertise and we know we can serve them well. There are certain types of business we don’t do – even though they might be good for our bottom line – because we don’t see a value or benefit for clients. Those are decisions we stand by.

The clearest sign of our clients’ trust is the assets we manage and oversee for them. And we’re committed to earning that trust every day.

Mary Ellen Stanek, President of Baird Funds
Integrity Is Irreplaceable

Our founder, Robert Baird, knew the importance of our clients’ trust when he called for: “Honesty in our business dealings and integrity in everything we do.”

Today these ideas are reinforced by our firm’s well-documented “No A__hole Rule,” enacted by our Chairman, who defines that term in the quote above.

What all of this means to us is that we strive to be good ambassadors of Baird’s brand and culture through our commitment to excellence for clients, respect for our fellow associates’ perspectives, backgrounds and beliefs, and genuine desire to make a difference in the communities we all share.

An a__hole is anyone who puts themselves before the client or before the firm.

Paul Purcell, Chairman
Every day you should ask yourself “Did I do my best for my clients today?”
If you do that, and you can honestly answer yes, then the rest should really take care of itself.

Beth Kavelaris, Director of Culture

In financial services, it’s easy to focus on numbers. But we know what’s really at stake – people’s futures and quality of life. Some clients may be thinking about their families or their communities. Others may be thinking about their investors, customers or the people who work for them. But they’re all focused on the best possible outcomes for those people.

Those clients won’t measure our success just by a number on a statement or a report, but also by the confidence and peace of mind they gain from working with us and the outcomes we create together.

Quality Is Our Measure of Success

“Be a yardstick of quality.”
We are in the business of making decisions and helping our clients make decisions. The more diversity you have around the table when evaluating those decisions, the better those decisions will be.

Gordon Pan, President – Baird Capital

The Best Financial Advice Is the Result of Expertise and Teamwork

An advantage of being employee-owned is our collaborative environment. All of us at Baird are stakeholders with a shared, personal interest in the quality of the outcomes we strive to create for clients and a valued voice in determining the best ways to do that.

A common focus unites us and helps us appreciate the diversity in our backgrounds, perspectives and areas of expertise. We understand our knowledge and skills complement each other, and more eyes and minds working on what matters to our clients yields the best ideas and outcomes.
How We Succeed Is As Important As If We Succeed

Success results from a journey we take together, and it’s important that we get there in a way that’s right for all of us.

This is why our mission has two parts. The first is to provide the best advice for our clients. We don’t apply one-size-fits-all solutions. We get to know the client, their situation, needs and preferences before we offer advice.

The second part of our mission is to be the best place to work for our associates. By design, we all have a voice in the way we do our business and a shared interest in the successes we create together. Because talented people who feel good about what they do, where they do it and who they work with are far more likely to do their best.
We find that most of our people got into this business because they care. We appreciate that, and we know it’s not something that stops at the end of the workday.

Laura Thurow, Director of Wealth Solutions and Operations

We Seek Personal Balance in Home, Work and Community

Part of being a great workplace is making sure our associates live full, balanced lives. We know that when our people and our communities thrive, our business thrives, and we know our associates are passionate about all three.

We have flexible work arrangements to make available more time for family or personal reasons. We support those who share our passion for giving back by matching charitable contributions and providing paid days off to volunteer. We have robust Associate Resource Groups around a wide range of interests that enable our associates to pursue common passions, develop leadership skills and grow their personal networks.
A Century of Growth and Success

Baird started in 1919 as a small bond brokerage in Wisconsin. Our founder, Robert Wilson Baird, believed strongly in integrity, honesty, community involvement and a steadfast client focus. These principles have guided Baird across decades and dramatically different market environments as we’ve grown into the diversified, employee-owned, global financial services company we are today.

1934 – Amidst the Great Depression, purchased $1 million in our own common stock back from our parent corporation, Wisconsin Bankshares, becoming employee-owned and independent for the first time.

1948 – Secured our seat on the New York Stock Exchange.

1994 – Expanded investment banking capabilities with addition of key M&A advisory talent in Chicago.

1999 – Expanded into Europe for the first time via London-based Granville.

2000 – Expanded asset management capabilities through the addition of a nationally recognized team of fixed income managers in Milwaukee.

2003 – Baird Capital, our private equity business, entered the Asia market and opened our first office there.

2004 – Again became an independent and employee-owned firm through the repurchase of the majority of outstanding company shares.

2005 – First honored among FORTUNE’s 100 Best Companies to Work For in the United States, a list on which we’ve continued to appear every year since.

2013 – Baird’s businesses reached a combined $100 billion in assets – a high water mark the firm would double within five years.

2014 – Expanded our private wealth management presence in the Pacific Northwest through acquisition of McAdams Wright Ragen, Inc.

2015 – Chautauqua Capital Management became a division of Baird in Boulder, Colorado, providing global and international equity asset management services.


2019 – Baird celebrates 100 years of clients-first financial advice and service in its offices on three continents as Hilliard Lyons and Hilliard Lyons Trust Company join the firm, significantly increasing our number of Financial Advisors and offices throughout the American Midwest.

Such growth wouldn’t have been possible if not for the strength of our values, our culture and our business model. We’ve always known our success depends on the success of our clients. And we remain focused on our clients as we continue to grow with their needs in mind.
"Honesty in our business dealings and integrity in everything we do."

Robert Wilson Baird