



“I believe in creating an environment that allows team members to become leaders.”

Michael Stirling
CEO, Stirling Infrastructure

Getting to know the CEO and Chairman of the Investment Board of Stirling Infrastructure

What makes Stirling Infrastructure unique?

What makes Stirling Infrastructure unique is the way we combine the agility and the deep knowledge base of a specialist financial firm with the extensive capital pool of a major investment bank. When clients come to us, they come because they trust our market expertise, our capital relationships and our ability to advise on and close transactions.

What is the firm's mission?

Our core mission is connecting our clients, who are listed companies and institutional investors, to investment opportunities in sectors where we have a competitive advantage and have longstanding market relationships. Working to the highest professional standards, adhering to best practices and being a trusted advisor that provides insightful and independent advice is our mission.

Which geographical markets does Stirling Infrastructure focus on?

We aren't restricted by geographical jurisdiction. We work with a wide range of capital providers. We always go where our pools of capital want to

invest, based on their targets for return on their investment. It is this direct relationship with capital that give us a competitive advantage in market.

We examine transactions on a case-by-case basis; we assess what the best returns available in the market are, at any point in time; and we always take a 360° view of the factors at play. This enables us to achieve better higher, more stable returns for investors, depending on their investment objectives.

What are the firm's areas of expertise?

The firm focuses on core infrastructure, real estate, energy, asset finance, 5G and the technology sectors. The reason we focus on these segments is that the capital we work with is focused on investments that can provide predictable, stable long-term returns or significant capital gains in growth sectors. We aren't swayed by what's fashionable. Instead, we specialise in the sectors where we can add the most value. A cornerstone of our ethos is that we never take on a mandate unless we have confidence in the management team of the client, its strategy and in our ability to successfully close the transaction.

How does Stirling Infrastructure approach new opportunities?

Our strength is that we apply a global macro outlook with local sector analysis to identify both the risks and opportunities in the target markets of interest. We then follow this with a comprehensive assessment of the performance of market participants within those sectors.

What sets us apart from our peers is not only the knowledge and experience we have within the firm, but the quality and personal relationships we have in the markets we operate within. It is the combination of the relationships, expertise and responsiveness that enables us to work so effectively as a firm.

What is your vision for the future of the organisation?

As we've expanded, Stirling Infrastructure has become adaptive in responding to new opportunities where we have a competitive advantage. I like to say that we're stubborn in our vision, but flexible on how we achieve it. We are always eager to work with talented, dedicated people who consistently want to achieve the highest standards of excellence. As long as they share our vision, we are open to reviewing business plans to incorporate new talent and asset classes into our investment bank.

As ever, we are dedicated to widening our fields of interest. We have a strong, diverse group, which is well-represented across many cultures. Our team members have excellent local knowledge as well as links to capital providers, governments and corporations.

In the era of COVID-19 and beyond this, we are well-placed to advise on how to successfully approach portfolio restructuring and capital raising. We will continue expanding our role in arranging debt and equity, as well as acting as a leading M&A transaction adviser.

How would you describe your leadership style?

As a leader, my most important responsibility is creating an environment that allows team members to become leaders themselves. We have many leaders at Stirling Infrastructure, at every level of our firm. It is the success of our teams that makes this firm an exciting and dynamic place to work and this inspires everyone to achieve.

I encourage the empowerment of each employee with responsibilities that suit their talents. We attract the brightest minds from complementary fields to collaborate freely. In this environment there is innovation and insight that adds a much greater value than a constricted top-down structure could provide.

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Leaders need to surround themselves with the best people and always have a grasp of what is happening in the market. We use our international network and diversified sector teams to give reliable, insightful and high-quality advice. I place a great emphasis on taking advice and hearing many perspectives on each issue. Through discussions we find the optimal outcomes.

Together with our sector transaction teams, we are aligned and supported by a formidable Advisory and Investment Board of industry-leading experts who bring their experience to our clients.

Good leadership in our industry requires an awareness of the past to help us navigate the challenges and opportunities of the future. Our research team conducts independent analysis so that we can give informed advice to our clients.

Finally, we invest in our people and we equip them to prioritise the interests of our clients and of society.

What are you passionate about?

I enjoy participating in sports – particularly football and tennis, and I’ve recently taken up golf.

International travel excites me. Getting to know a culture gives me a richer understanding of the viewpoints of others. Although London is home for me, I spend most of the year travelling, meeting government officials and speaking at international panels.

My favourite highlights from last year were my train rides through the snowy mountains towards Davos in January, and also a fantastic visit to NASA after a conference in Texas where I moderated discussions about opportunities in developed and emerging markets.

Wherever I travel, I am reminded of how architecture and infrastructure are a reflection of the culture that I am exploring.

I am a firm believer in inclusivity, and I think discussing ideas with people from all backgrounds adds enormous value to Stirling Infrastructure’s working environment. That is what makes my work such a fulfilling experience.