WhiteHorse Finance, Inc. Form N-2 June 02, 2014

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on May 30, 2014

Securities Act File No. 333-

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM N-2

REGISTRATION STATEMENT UNDER THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

- o **Pre-effective Amendment No.**
- o **Post-effective Amendment No.**

WHITEHORSE FINANCE, INC.

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Charter)

1450 Brickell Avenue, 31st Floor Miami, Florida 33131

(Address of Principal Executive Offices) (Zip Code)

(305) 381-6999

(Registrant s Telephone Number, Including Area Code)

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Richard Siegel WhiteHorse Finance, Inc. 1450 Brickell Avenue, 31st Floor Miami, Florida 33131

(Name and Address of Agent for Service)

Copies to:

Thomas J. Friedmann David J. Harris Dechert LLP 1900 K Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20006 (202) 261-3300

Approximate date of proposed public offering: As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Registration Statement.

If any of the securities being registered on this form are offered on a delayed or continuous basis in reliance on Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered in connection with a dividend reinvestment plan, check the following box. x

It is proposed that this filing will become effective (check appropriate box):

o when declared effective pursuant to section 8(c).

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE UNDER THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

Title of Securities Being Registered

Amount Being Registered Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Unit

Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price⁽¹⁾

Amount of Registration Fee⁽¹⁾

Common Stock, \$0.001 par value ⁽²⁾ Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value ⁽²⁾ Warrants ⁽²⁾	\$ \$	\$		\$
Subscription Rights ⁽³⁾ Debt Securities ⁽⁴⁾				
Total	\$ \$	\$ 500,000,000	(5)	\$ 61,672 (6)

Estimated pursuant to Rule 457 solely for the purposes of determining the registration fee. The proposed maximum (1) offering price per security will be determined, from time to time, by the Registrant in connection with the sale by the Registrant of the securities registered under this registration statement.

- Subject to Note 5 below, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of shares of common stock, (2)preferred stock, or warrants as may be sold, from time to time. Warrants represent rights to purchase common stock, preferred stock or debt securities.
- (3) Subject to Note 5 below, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of subscription rights as may be sold, from time to time, representing rights to purchase common stock.
 - Subject to Note 5 below, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate principal amount of debt securities as may be sold, from time to time. If any debt securities are issued at an original issue discount,
 - (4) securities as may be sold, nom time to time. If any debt securities are issued at an original issue discount, then the offering price shall be in such greater principal amount as shall result in an aggregate price to investors not to exceed \$500,000,000.
- (5) In no event will the aggregate offering price of all securities issued from time to time pursuant to this registration statement exceed \$500,000,000.

Calculated pursuant to Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended. Pursuant to Rule 415(a)(6) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, this registration statement includes \$20,000,000 of unsold securities of the registrant that have been previously registered on the Registration Statement on Form N-2 (File No. 333-187805) originally filed by the registrant on April 8, 2013 and declared effective on July 16, 2013 (the prior registration

- (6) statement). A filing fee of \$6,820 was paid under the prior registration statement, of which \$2,728 was paid in connection with such unsold securities and is being offset against the total registration fee pursuant to Rule 457(p), resulting in a payment of \$61,672 in connection with the filing of this Registration Statement. Pursuant to Rule 415(a)(6), the offering of the unsold securities registered under the prior registration statement will be deemed terminated as of the effective date of this Registration Statement.
- The Registrant hereby amends this Registration Statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the Registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this Registration Statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 or until the Registration Statement shall become effective on such date as the Securities and Exchange Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. We may not sell these securities until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and it is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.

PRELIMINARY PROSPECTUS

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, 2014 \$500,000,000

WHITEHORSE FINANCE, INC.

Common Stock Preferred Stock Warrants Subscription Rights Debt Securities

We are an externally managed, closed-end, non-diversified management investment company that has elected to be treated as a business development company under the Investment Company Act of 1940. Our investment objective is to generate risk-adjusted returns primarily by originating secured loans to small-capitalization, or small-cap, companies across a broad range of industries, providing our stockholders with current income and capital appreciation.

H.I.G. WhiteHorse Advisers, LLC serves as our investment adviser. H.I.G. WhiteHorse Administration, LLC serves as our administrator. These entities are affiliates of H.I.G. Capital, L.L.C., an alternative asset manager founded in 1993 and focused on the small-cap market. H.I.G. Capital, L.L.C. had over \$15 billion of capital under management as of March 31, 2014.

We may offer, from time to time, in one or more offerings or series, together or separately, up to \$500,000,000 of our common stock, preferred stock, warrants representing rights to purchase shares of our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities, subscription rights or debt securities, which we refer to, collectively, as the securities. We may sell our common stock through underwriters or dealers, at-the-market to or through a market maker into an existing trading market or otherwise directly to one or more purchasers or through agents or through a combination of methods of sale. The identities of such underwriters, dealers, market makers or agents, as the case may be, will be described in one or more supplements to this prospectus. The securities may be offered at prices and on terms to be described in one or more supplements to this prospectus. In the event we offer common stock, the offering price per share of our common stock at the time we make the offering except (1) in connection with a rights offering to our existing stockholders, (2) with the consent of the majority of our common stockholders and approval of our board of directors or (3) under such circumstances as the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, may permit. See Risk Factors for more information.

In addition, this prospectus relates to 7,826,284 shares of our common stock that may be sold by the selling stockholders identified under Selling Stockholders . Sales of our common stock by the selling stockholders, which may occur at prices below the net asset value per share of our common stock, may adversely affect the market price of our common stock and may make it more difficult for us to raise capital. Each offering by the selling stockholders of their shares of our common stock through agents, underwriters or dealers will be accompanied by a prospectus supplement that will identify the selling stockholder that is participating in such offering. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock by the selling stockholders.

We are an emerging growth company within the meaning of the recently enacted Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act.

Our common stock is traded on The NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol WHF. The last reported closing price for our common stock on May 29, 2014 was \$13.79 per share. Based on this last reported sales price of our common stock, the aggregate market value of the shares of our common stock held by the selling stockholders identified under Selling Stockholders is approximately \$107.9 million. The net asset value of our common stock on March 31, 2014 (the last date prior to the date of this prospectus on which we determined net asset value) was \$15.23 per share.

This prospectus contains important information you should know before investing in our securities. Please read it before you invest and keep it for future reference. We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information about us with the SEC. We maintain a website at *http://www.whitehorsefinance.com* and make all of our annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other publicly filed information available on or through our website. You may also obtain such information, free of charge, and make shareholder inquiries by contacting us at 1450 Brickell Avenue, 31st Floor, Miami, Florida 33131, Attention: Investor Relations, or by calling us collect at (305) 381-6999. The SEC also maintains a website at *http://www.sec.gov* that contains such information.

Shares of closed-end investment companies, including business development companies, frequently trade at a discount to their net asset value. If our shares trade at a discount to our net asset value, it may increase the risk of loss for purchasers in this offering.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

Investing in our securities involves a high degree of risk. Before buying any securities, you should read the discussion of the material risks of investing in our securities, including the risk of leverage, in Risk Factors beginning on page <u>13</u> of this prospectus.

This prospectus may not be used to consummate sales of securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

You should rely only on the information contained in this prospectus. We have not, and the selling stockholders have not, authorized any other person to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not, and the selling stockholders identified under Selling Stockholders are not, making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not

permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus is accurate only as of the date on the front cover of this prospectus. Our business, financial condition, results of operations, cash flows and prospects may have changed since that date. We will update these documents to reflect material changes only as required by law.

The date of this prospectus is May 30, 2014

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we have filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, using the shelf registration process. Under the shelf registration process, we may offer from time to time up to \$500,000,000 of our common stock, preferred stock, warrants representing rights to purchase shares of our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities, subscription rights or debt securities on the terms to be determined at the time of the offering. We may sell our common stock through underwriters or dealers, at-the-market to or through a market maker, into an existing trading market or otherwise directly to one or more purchasers or through agents or through a combination of methods of sale. The identities of such underwriters, dealers, market makers or agents, as the case may be, will be described in one or more supplements to this prospectus. The securities may be offered at prices and on terms described in one or more supplements to this prospectus. In addition, this prospectus relates to 7,826,284 of our common stock that may be sold by the selling stockholders identified under Selling Stockholders. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities that we and the selling stockholders may offer. Each time we or the selling stockholders use this prospectus to offer securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus, and the prospectus and prospectus supplement will together serve as the prospectus. Please carefully read this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, together with any exhibits, before you make an investment decision. Any exhibits will nonetheless be summarized in the prospectus or applicable prospectus supplement.

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PROSPECTUS SUMMARY

This summary highlights some of the information in this prospectus. It is not complete and may not contain all of the information that you may want to consider. You should read the more detailed information set forth under Risk Factors and the other information included in this prospectus carefully.

Except as otherwise indicated, the terms:

we, us, our and WhiteHorse Finance refer (unless the context otherwise requires) to WhiteHorse Finance, Inc., a Delaware corporation, and its consolidated subsidiaries, WhiteHorse Warehouse (as defined below) and Bayside Financing S.A.R.L.;

H.I.G. Capital refers (unless the context otherwise requires), collectively, to H.I.G. Capital, L.L.C., a Delaware limited liability company, and its affiliates. H.I.G. Capital employs all of WhiteHorse Finance s investment professionals, as well as those of WhiteHorse Advisers (as defined below), WhiteHorse Administration (as defined below) and their respective affiliates;

WhiteHorse Warehouse refers to WhiteHorse Finance Warehouse, LLC, a special purpose Delaware limited liability company and a wholly owned subsidiary of WhiteHorse Finance;

WhiteHorse Advisers and the Investment Adviser refer to H.I.G. WhiteHorse Advisers, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company and an affiliate of H.I.G. Capital;

WhiteHorse Administration and the Administrator refer to H.I.G. WhiteHorse Administration, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company and an affiliate of H.I.G. Capital;

Unsecured Term Loan refers to the \$90 million unsecured term loan, as amended, between us, H.I.G. Bayside Loan Opportunity Fund II, L.P., as guarantor, and Citibank, N.A., as sole lead arranger;

Senior Notes refer to the \$30 million senior notes issued on July 23, 2013; and Credit Facility refers to the \$150 million secured revolving credit facility between WhiteHorse Warehouse, as borrower, and the Lender (as defined below), for which Natixis, New York Branch, provides liquidity support, and for which the Lender refers, collectively, to the asset-backed commercial paper conduit, together with any additional lenders that may join the Credit Facility in the future.

On December 3, 2012, we converted from a limited liability company into a Delaware corporation. In this conversion, WhiteHorse Finance, Inc. succeeded to the business of WhiteHorse Finance, LLC, and the members of WhiteHorse Finance, LLC became stockholders of WhiteHorse Finance, Inc. In this prospectus, we refer to these transactions as the BDC Conversion and, where applicable, shares refer to our units prior to the BDC Conversion and to shares of common stock in our corporation afterward.

WhiteHorse Finance

We are an externally managed, non-diversified, closed-end management investment company that has elected to be treated as a business development company under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, or the 1940 Act. In addition, for tax purposes we have elected to be treated as a regulated investment company, or RIC, under

Subchapter M of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the Code, and intend to qualify annually for such treatment.

We are a direct lender targeting debt investments in privately held, small-cap companies located in the United States. We define the small-cap market as those companies with enterprise values between \$50 million and \$350 million. Our investment objective is to generate attractive risk-adjusted returns primarily by originating and investing in senior secured loans, including first lien and second lien facilities, to performing small-cap companies across a broad range of industries that typically carry a floating interest rate based on the London Interbank Offered Rate, or LIBOR, and have a term of three to six years. While we focus principally on originating senior secured loans to small-cap companies, we may also make opportunistic investments at other levels of a company s capital structure, including mezzanine loans or equity interests. We also may receive warrants to purchase

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common stock in connection with our debt investments. We generate current income through the receipt of interest payments, as well as origination and other fees, capital appreciation and dividends.

We invest primarily in securities that are rated below investment grade by rating agencies or that may be rated below investment grade if they were so rated. Below investment grade securities, which are often referred to as junk bonds, are viewed as speculative investments because of concerns with respect to the issuer s capacity to pay interest and repay principal.

As of March 31, 2014, our investment portfolio consisted of senior secured loans across 23 positions with an aggregate fair value of approximately \$286.9 million and a principal balance outstanding of approximately \$289.0 million. As of December 31, 2013, our investment portfolio consisted of senior secured loans across 21 positions with an aggregate fair value of approximately \$272.4 million and a principal balance outstanding of approximately \$276.8 million. As of December 31, 2012, our investment portfolio consisted of senior secured loans across eight positions with an aggregate fair value of approximately \$180.5 million and a principal balance outstanding of approximately \$181.6 million. At each date, the majority of our portfolio comprised senior secured loans to small-cap borrowers.

Our Investment Adviser

Our investment activities are managed by our investment adviser, WhiteHorse Advisers. WhiteHorse Advisers is an affiliate of H.I.G. Capital and is responsible for sourcing potential investments, conducting research and diligence on prospective investments and equity sponsors, analyzing investment opportunities, structuring our investments and monitoring our investments and portfolio companies on an ongoing basis. WhiteHorse Advisers has also agreed to provide us with access to personnel and its investment committee, or the investment committee. WhiteHorse Advisers is a registered investment adviser under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, as amended, or the Advisers Act. See The Adviser and the Administrator Investment Advisory Agreement Management Fee for a discussion of the fees that are payable by us to our Investment Adviser.

WhiteHorse Advisers has entered into a staffing agreement, or the Staffing Agreement, with an affiliate of H.I.G.
Capital under which the affiliate has agreed to make experienced investment professionals available to WhiteHorse
Advisers and to provide access to its senior investment personnel to enable WhiteHorse Advisers to perform all of its obligations under the Investment Advisory Agreement. See Related Party Transactions and Certain
Relationships Staffing Agreement for a discussion of the Staffing Agreement. We believe that the Staffing Agreement provides our Investment Adviser with access to investment opportunities, which we refer to in the aggregate as deal flow, generated by H.I.G. Capital in the ordinary course of business and commits certain members of H.I.G. Capital s investment committee to serve as members of WhiteHorse Advisers

An affiliate of our adviser, WhiteHorse Administration, under an administration agreement, or the Administration Agreement, provides administrative services necessary for us to operate. See The Adviser and the Administrator Administration Agreement for a discussion of the fees and expenses for which we are required to reimburse WhiteHorse Administration.

H.I.G. Capital

H.I.G. Capital is one of the leading global alternative asset managers focused on the small-cap market. H.I.G. Capital was founded in 1993 and, for more than 20 years, has grown by continually enhancing its strategic investment capabilities into additional asset classes within the small-cap market. As of March 31, 2014, H.I.G. Capital managed

over \$15 billion of capital through a number of buyout, credit-oriented and growth capital funds, each of which is focused on the small-cap market. As of such date, H.I.G. Capital operated through domestic offices in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Miami, New York and San Francisco and international offices in Hamburg, London, Madrid, Milan, Paris and Rio de Janeiro and had a team of approximately 260 investment professionals. H.I.G. Capital s investment professionals share a common investment philosophy built around a highly analytical, private equity-like framework of rigorous business assessment, extensive due diligence and a disciplined risk valuation methodology that guides investment decisions. H.I.G. Capital has built an extensive and proprietary network of informal and unconventional deal sources in the small-cap business community consisting of accountants, attorneys, and other advisors who

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have access to small-cap companies. We believe that H.I.G. Capital, as an experienced small-cap investor, has a demonstrated ability to identify, source, analyze, invest and monitor investments in the small-cap market. H.I.G. Capital is headquartered in Miami, Florida.

Market Opportunity

We pursue an investment strategy focused on originating senior secured loans to small-cap companies, including first lien and second lien facilities. We may also make investments at other levels of a company s capital structure, including mezzanine loans or equity interests, and receive warrants to purchase common stock in connection with our debt investments. We believe that market inefficiencies and an imbalance between the supply of, and demand for, capital in the small-cap credit market creates an attractive investment opportunity through the origination of primary loans for the following reasons:

Specialized Lending Requirements. In our experience, lending to small-cap companies requires more rigorous due diligence and underwriting processes than lending to larger companies. Small-cap companies typically have fewer management resources to dedicate to the borrowing process, and often receive no assistance from financial advisors in this regard. Because of these and other specialized lending requirements, only a limited segment of the lending community has historically served small-cap borrowers.

Reduced Lending by Commercial Banks. Recent regulatory changes and continued ownership of legacy assets have significantly curtailed banks lending capacities. In response, we believe that many commercial banks have deemphasized their service and product offerings to small-cap companies in favor of lending to larger customers. We believe that the relative decline in competition from commercial banks drives a higher volume of deal flow to us.

Reduced Credit Supply from Non-Bank Lenders. We believe lending to small-cap companies by hedge funds and other non-bank lenders is constrained, as many such lenders have gone out of business, exited this market or are winding down. Along with reduced lending by commercial banks, we believe that reduced credit supply from non-bank lenders provides a promising environment for originating loans to small-cap companies.

Significant Demand for Credit. We believe that demand for debt financing from small-cap companies will remain strong because these companies will continue to require credit to refinance existing debt, to support growth initiatives and to finance acquisitions. We believe the combination of strong demand by small-cap companies and the reduced supply of credit described above should increase lending opportunities for us.

Inefficient Market. We believe there are a number of inefficiencies in the small-cap credit market that will allow us to achieve superior risk-adjusted returns relative to other types of loans. Unlike larger companies, small-cap borrowers may not have a financial advisor and, as a result, may not receive as many financing offers, leading to more favorable financing terms for us, and may be less sophisticated in negotiating the terms of their financing. Moreover, the simpler capital structures frequently found in small-cap companies often enhance protections and reduce or eliminate intercreditor issues. In addition, small-cap lenders face less competition than lenders to larger companies. As a result, small-cap lenders frequently have greater flexibility in structuring favorable transactions.

We believe these factors, taken together, should increase lending opportunities for us.

Competitive Strengths

Leading Small-Cap Market Position. H.I.G. Capital is one of the leading global alternative asset managers focused on the small-cap market. With more than \$15 billion of capital under management and more than 20 years of investment experience focused primarily on small-cap companies as of March 31, 2014, H.I.G. Capital believes it has a specialized knowledge of the small-cap marketplace and expertise in evaluating the issues and opportunities facing small-cap companies throughout economic cycles. We believe that the quality of these resources provides a significant advantage and contributes to the strength of our business.

Large and Experienced Management Team with Substantial Resources. Our Investment Adviser has access through the Staffing Agreement to the resources and expertise of H.I.G. Capital s approximately 416 employees in thirteen offices across the United States, Europe and South America as of March 31, 2014. As of such date, H.I.G. Capital had approximately 260 experienced investment professionals, including more than

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80 professionals dedicated to debt investing. We believe that the quality of these resources provides a significant advantage and will contribute to the strength of our business.

Extensive Deal Sourcing Infrastructure. Given the inefficiencies of the small-cap market, finding smaller companies that represent attractive debt investment opportunities requires a different sourcing network than that for larger companies. For more than 20 years, H.I.G. Capital has built an extensive and proprietary network of deal sources in the small-cap market consisting of accountants, attorneys and other advisors who have access to these companies. Each of H.I.G. Capital s approximately 260 investment professionals is involved in deal sourcing, and our in-house business development group of 15 deal sourcing professionals further enhances our sourcing network. We believe H.I.G. Capital s extensive deal sourcing infrastructure provides us with access to investment opportunities that may not be available to many of our competitors.

Deep Credit Expertise. As of March 31, 2014, H.I.G. Capital s credit platform managed approximately \$7 billion of capital across multiple investment funds supported by more than 80 dedicated credit investment professionals. These investment professionals bring a depth of experience across a broad range of transaction types, including primary loan originations and distressed debt investments, and focus on capital preservation by extending loans to portfolio companies with assets that it believes will retain sufficient value to repay us even in depressed markets or under liquidation scenarios. We believe this experience and expertise in credit documentation, loan structuring and restructuring negotiations helps to protect our investments and maximize our recovery value to the extent a portfolio company does not perform as expected.

Disciplined Investment and Underwriting Process. Through its more than 20 years of investment experience, H.I.G. Capital has developed a disciplined investment process entailing intensive bottom-up fundamental analysis in order to generate attractive risk-adjusted returns while preserving downside protection. Our Investment Adviser utilizes the established investment processes developed by H.I.G. Capital to analyze investment opportunities, including structuring loans with appropriate covenants and pricing loans based on its knowledge of the small-cap market and on its rigorous underwriting standards. Each investment is reviewed by the investment committee, which is comprised of senior investment professionals of H.I.G. Capital with an average of more than 20 years of investment experience as of March 31, 2014.

Investment Strategy

Our investment strategy is to generate current income and capital appreciation primarily by originating secured loans. We seek to create a broad portfolio consisting of investments generally in the range of \$10 million to \$50 million primarily in debt securities and loans of U.S. based small-cap companies. We primarily target borrowers in the United States with enterprise values of \$50 million to \$350 million across a broad range of industries. The proceeds of our loans are used for a variety of purposes, including refinancings of existing debt, acquisition financing, or working capital to support growth or realignment.

While we focus principally on originating senior secured loans to small-cap companies that we believe have attractive risk adjusted returns, including first lien and second lien facilities, we may also opportunistically make investments at other levels of a company s capital structure, including mezzanine loans or equity interests. We also may receive warrants to purchase common stock in connection with our debt investments. We may also invest in assets consistent with our investment strategy indirectly through the acquisitions of interests in other investment companies. We generate current income through the receipt of interest payments, origination and other fees, and dividends. Our typical loans carry a floating interest rate based on LIBOR plus a spread, have a term of three to six years, are secured by all tangible and intangible assets of the borrower and include covenants, monitoring and information rights in favor

of the lender.

Target businesses will typically exhibit some or all of the following characteristics:

enterprise value of between \$50 million and \$350 million; organized in the United States; experienced management team; stable and predictable free cash flows; discernible downside protection through recurring revenue or strong tangible asset coverage;

products and services with distinctive competitive advantages or other barriers to entry;

low technology and market risk; and

strong customer relationships.

We expect that, from time to time, our investments may include certain non-qualifying assets, including assets of non-U.S. companies, certain publicly traded companies and, to a lesser extent and subject to certain limits under the 1940 Act, registered or unregistered investment companies, to the extent permissible under the 1940 Act. See Risk Factors Risks Relating to our Business and Structure The lack of experience of our Investment Adviser in operating under the constraints imposed on us as a business development company and RIC may hinder the achievement of our investment objectives. and Regulation Qualifying Assets.

Organizational Structure