

# Alternative consultants come down under

*Martin Lawrence*

The Australian alternative consulting market is getting crowded, with US firm Cambridge Associates taking office space in Sydney and specialist private equity consultancy Altius Associates also surveying the local market for clients.

Cambridge is also best known as an alternative investment consultant, especially in private equity, numbering among its clients the Californian State Teachers Retirement System and the Pennsylvania State Employees Retirement System.

The consulting firm has taken offices in Sydney's Chifley Tower and is being represented in the local market by Eugene Snyman.

A number of local private equity players have already met with Snyman, who was unavailable for comment.

It is understood Cambridge, which has offices in Boston, Singapore, Washington DC and London, is in the process of applying for its Australian Financial Services Licence.

Meanwhile, Altius Associates, a specialist private equity adviser, is also understood to be seeking local institutional clients, participating in the search process for some major local advisory mandates.

Last week Altius snared the contract to advise the \$US30 billion Maryland State Retirement & Pension System on its \$US600 million private equity program.

Altius Associates' sister organisation, London-based placement agent Helix Associates, is already represented in Australia through its alliance with boutique private equity adviser and placement

agent, Principle Advisory Services.

Altius' Marcus Simpson was unavailable for comment.

The local private equity advisory market is dominated by Wilshire Associates, which has most of the large super fund private equity investors as clients, with Quentin Ayers and Macquarie Funds Management also advising some major super funds.

Other gatekeepers in the private equity market are the fund-of-funds, including Quay Partners, ING, DAF, with Macquarie also operating a fund.

In the hedge fund sector, Thirty Four South Capital Management, represented by Raymond Cheseldine, is the only known specialist hedge fund consultant.