

November 30, 2023

Lendingkart Finance Limited: Provisional [ICRA]A+(SO) assigned to PTC Series A1 issued by Argentum Trust 003, backed by a pool of unsecured small business loans

Summary of rating action

Trust Name	Instrument*	Rated Amount (Rs. crore)	Rating Action
Argentum Trust 003	PTC Series A1	72.08	Provisional [ICRA]A+(SO); Assigned

*Instrument details are provided in Annexure I

Rating in the absence of pending actions/documents	No rating would have been assigned as it would not be meaningful
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Rationale

ICRA has assigned a Provisional [ICRA]A+(SO) rating to the pass-through certificates (PTCs) Series A1 issued under a securitisation transaction originated by Lendingkart Finance Limited {Lendingkart; rated [ICRA]BBB+ (Positive)}. The PTCs are backed by receivables from a Rs. 104.86-crore (pool principal amount of Rs. 80.08 crore) pool of unsecured small business loans (SBLs).

The provisional rating is based on the strength of the cash flows from the selected pool of contracts, the credit enhancement (CE) available in the form of (i) a cash collateral (CC) of 5.00% of the pool principal to be provided by the originator, (ii) subordination of 10.00% of the pool principal, and (iii) excess interest spread (EIS) of 23.07% in the structure. The provisional rating is also based on the integrity of the legal structure. The provisional rating is subject to the fulfilment of all the conditions under the structure and the review of the documentation pertaining to the transaction by ICRA.

Key rating drivers

Credit strengths

- Availability of CE in the form of EIS, subordination and CC
- Absence of overdue contracts as on pool cut-off date

Credit challenges

- Exposed to inherent credit risk associated with the unsecured nature of the asset class; performance of the pool would remain exposed to macro-economic shocks / business disruptions, if any.

Description of key rating drivers highlighted above

According to the transaction structure, the loan pool receivables will be assigned at par to the PTC investors. As per the waterfall mechanism for the transaction, the monthly cash flow schedule comprises the promised interest payment to PTC Series A1 at the predetermined interest rate on the principal outstanding. The principal repayment to PTC Series A1 is promised on the last payout date.

The first line of support for PTC Series A1 in the transaction is in the form of a subordination (equity tranche) of 10.00% of the pool principal. Additionally, the EIS available in the structure will provide CE support to the transaction. The EIS (23.07% of the pool principal initially, based on the indicated PTC yield, for PTC Series A1) will not flow back to the originator and will instead be utilised towards accelerated principal amortisation after the promised and scheduled payouts to the PTCs. All prepayment amounts would be passed on to PTC Series A1 (till PTC Series A1 principal is not fully amortised) every month and future payouts will be revised accordingly. The CC of 5.00% of the initial pool principal, to be provided by Lendingkart, would act as

further CE in the transaction. In the event of a shortfall in meeting the promised PTC payouts during any month, the trustee will utilise the CC to meet the same.

There are no overdues in the pool as on the cut-off date. The geographical concentration of the loan contracts in the current pool is low with the top 3 states constituting ~34% of the pool principal. The pool consists of monthly paying loan contracts, with moderate weighted average seasoning (~8 months) and pre-securitisation amortisation (~17%). The pool has a moderate share of contracts (~44%) with a ticket size of more than Rs. 10 lakh. Further, the CIBIL score of ~88% of the contracts is above 700. The pool has a moderate share of contracts with a high interest rate (IRR) with ~20% of the contracts having an IRR of more than 30%. The pool would be exposed to the inherent credit risk associated with the unsecured nature of the asset class and its performance would remain exposed to macro-economic shocks/business disruptions. The entity's portfolio had seen stress in asset quality due to Covid-19 pandemic as reflected in higher restructuring and write offs.

Performance of past rated pools: ICRA has rated 48 pools originated by Lendingkart. The performance of the live pools (which have completed at least 2 months post securitisation) has been healthy till date with the cumulative collection efficiency in the range of 93-99% for all the transactions. No CC has been utilised till the October 2023 payout in any of the live pools.

Key rating assumptions

ICRA's cash flow modelling for rating asset-backed securitisation (ABS) transactions involves the simulation of potential delinquencies, losses (shortfall in principal collection during the tenor of the pool) and prepayments in the pool. The assumptions for the loss and coefficient of variation (CoV) are arrived at after taking into account the performance of the originator's portfolio as well as the characteristics of the specific pool being evaluated. Additionally, the assumptions may be adjusted to factor in the current operating environment and any industry-specific factors that ICRA believes could impact the performance of the underlying pool of contracts.

After making these adjustments, the expected mean shortfall in principal collection during the tenure of the pool is estimated at 5.75-6.75% of the initial pool principal, with certain variability around it. The prepayment rate for the underlying pool is estimated in the range of 6.0-18.0% per annum.

Liquidity position: Strong

As per the transaction structure, only the interest amount is promised to the PTC holders on a monthly basis while the entire principal amount is promised on the scheduled maturity date of the transaction. The cash flows from the pool and the available CE are expected to be comfortable to meet the promised payouts to the PTC Series A1 investors.

Rating sensitivities

Positive factors – The rating could be upgraded on the sustained strong collection performance of the underlying pool of contracts (monthly collection efficiency of more than 95%), leading to lower-than-expected delinquency levels, and on an increase in the cover available for future investor payouts from the CE.

Negative factors – The rating could be downgraded on the sustained weak collection performance of the underlying pool of contracts (monthly collection efficiency of less than 90%), leading to higher-than-expected delinquency levels and CE utilisation levels. Weakening in the credit profile of the servicer could also exert pressure on the rating.

Analytical approach

The rating action is based on the analysis of the performance of Lendingkart's portfolio till June 2023, the key characteristics and composition of the current pool, the performance expected over the balance tenure of the pool, and the CE cover available in the transaction.

Analytical Approach	
Applicable rating methodologies	Rating Methodology for Securitisation Transactions
Parent/Group support	Not Applicable

Consolidation/Standalone

Not Applicable

Pending actions/documents required to be completed for conversion of the provisional rating into final

The assigned rating is provisional and would be converted into final upon the execution of:

1. Trust deed
2. Assignment agreement
3. Legal opinion
4. Trustee letter
5. Auditor's certificate
6. Any other documents executed for the transaction

Validity of the provisional rating

The Trust is expected to complete the pending actions/execute the pending documents in the near term. However, in case of continued pendency of the actions/documents beyond one year of this publication, the provisional rating would be withdrawn for the transaction even if the instrument has been issued.

Risks associated with the provisional rating

In case the issuance is completed, but the pending actions/documents are not completed for the transaction within one year (validity period) from the assignment of the rating, the provisional rating will be withdrawn in accordance with ICRA's Policy on Provisional Ratings available at www.icra.in.

About the originator

Lendingkart Finance Limited (formerly Aadri Infin Limited) is a Lendingkart Group company, which is registered as an NBFC and provides unsecured small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) loans. Lendingkart Technologies Private Limited, the technology arm of the Ahmedabad-based Lendingkart Group, holds a 100% stake in LFL. Fullerton Financial Holdings Pte Limited had a 38.16% stake in LTPL as on March 31, 2023. The Group was established in 2014 by one of the co-founders, Mr. Harshvardhan Lunia, and raised funds from FFH, Saama Capital, Mayfield India, India Quotient, Bertelsmann India Investments, Sistema Asia Fund and Darrin Capital Management. Loans are given to micro and small enterprises for meeting their working capital needs. The underwriting is based on the scoring by a proprietary algorithm.

Key financial indicators (standalone)

	FY2022	FY2023	Q1FY2024
	Audited	Audited	unaudited
Total income	639	824	242
Profit after tax	(141)	116	26
Total AUM	3,284	4,978	5,492
Gross stage 3	3.9%	2.6%	2.7%
Net stage 3	1.6%	1.4%	1.8%

Source: Lendingkart, ICRA Research; All ratios as per ICRA's calculations; Amount in Rs. crore

Status of non-cooperation with previous CRA: Not applicable

Any other information: None

Rating history for past three years

S. No.	Trust Name	Current Rating (FY2024)				Chronology of Rating History for the Past 3 Years		
		Instrument	Amount Rated (Rs. crore)	Amount Outstanding (Rs. crore)	Date & Rating in FY2024	Date & Rating in FY2023	Date & Rating in FY2022	Date & Rating in FY2021
					November 30, 2023			
1	Argentum Trust 003	PTC Series A1	72.08	72.08	Provisional [ICRA]A+(SO)	-	-	-

Complexity level of the rated instrument

Instrument	Complexity Indicator
PTC Series A1	Moderately Complex

The Complexity Indicator refers to the ease with which the returns associated with the rated instrument could be estimated. It does not indicate the risk related to the timely payments on the instrument, which is rather indicated by the instrument's credit rating. It also does not indicate the complexity associated with analysing an entity's financial, business, industry risks or complexity related to the structural, transactional or legal aspects. Details on the complexity levels of the instruments are available on ICRA's website: [click here](#)

Annexure I: Instrument details

Trust Name	Instrument Name	Date of Issuance / Sanction	Coupon Rate	Maturity Date*	Amount Rated (Rs. crore)	Current Rating
Argentum Trust 003	PTC Series A1	November 2023	10.35% p.a.p.m.	April 2026	72.08	Provisional [ICRA]A+(SO)

Source: Company

*Based on scheduled maturity of the pool contracts; may change on account of prepayment

Annexure II: List of entities considered for consolidated analysis

Not Applicable

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About ICRA Limited:

ICRA Limited was set up in 1991 by leading financial/investment institutions, commercial banks and financial services companies as an independent and professional investment Information and Credit Rating Agency.

Today, ICRA and its subsidiaries together form the ICRA Group of Companies (Group ICRA). ICRA is a Public Limited Company, with its shares listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange and the National Stock Exchange. The international Credit Rating Agency Moody's Investors Service is ICRA's largest shareholder.

For more information, visit www.icra.in

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Branches



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