

# SOCIAL IMPACT STATS 2021



A compendium of cause marketing,  
CSR and purpose data

# Introduction

## Data and key trends for partnership success in the year ahead

Welcome to For Momentum’s Social Impact Stats 2021, our annual compendium of cause marketing, CSR and purpose statistics, including our own original research. We created this guide to equip you with the insights and trends you need to bolster your case for cause, especially considering the multitude of challenges brought on by the global pandemic.

This guide is intended to be an easy-to-use reference highlighting the most meaningful and useful data from 2021. In general, the news for social impact initiatives and cause partnership is good. From healthy economic indicators to record levels of giving, the outlook is positive for corporate and nonprofit partnerships in the year ahead.

I hope you find this compendium to be a great resource as you press forward.

In partnership,



*Mollye*

**Mollye Rhea**  
President & Founder



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# Corporate giving



Data points reflect a snapshot of data from social impact industry reports. [See sources page](#) to access full reports and articles.

## CORPORATE GIVING

- Giving by corporations comprised 4% of total charitable giving in 2020. This is a 3.2% decrease since 2018.<sup>1</sup>
- 85% of executives believe that being a purpose-driven company drives profit and 89% believe it gives companies a competitive advantage.<sup>2</sup>
- 76 point of sale cause campaigns raised more than \$605 million in 2020, up 24% from 2018.<sup>3</sup> (Note: this figure only accounts for campaigns that raised \$1 million or more.)
- In total, million-dollar point of sale programs have raised more than \$4.9 billion over three decades.<sup>3</sup>
- Total giving toward community investments increased for 50% of companies surveyed from 2017 to 2019 and 6% of companies reported their giving was flat.<sup>4</sup>
- Corporations accounted for 44% of COVID-19 funding in 2020.<sup>5</sup>
- Human service organizations received the largest share of philanthropic COVID-19 funding (28%) among awards to specified recipients.<sup>5</sup>
- A similar percentage of companies now measure the business value of community investments through employee metrics (40%) as they do brand/customer metrics (38%).<sup>4</sup>
- Nearly nine in 10 global executives (87%) say customer perceptions are important to their company's reputation, closely followed by those of investors (86%) and employees (83%).<sup>6</sup>
- Over the past decade, corporate sustainability reporting has grown from less than 20% of S&P 500 companies publishing sustainability reports to 90% in 2019.<sup>7</sup>
- Globally, up to a quarter of consumer spending is influenced by purpose, putting an estimated U.S. \$5 trillion of revenue at play.<sup>8</sup>
- Charitable giving by corporations totaled \$16.88 billion in 2020, an estimated decrease of 6.1% (7.3% when adjusted for inflation) from the previous year.<sup>1</sup>
- 53% of CSR leaders reported that following the multiple crises of 2020 they are funding new organizations with a racial equity mission.<sup>9</sup>

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## CORPORATE GIVING (CONTINUED)

- Business is now the only institution seen as both competent and ethical compared to government, media and NGOs.<sup>10</sup>
- 36% of companies surveyed created or most recently updated their corporate purpose statement within the last two years. 45% have had it for at least two years, 13% are currently reviewing their statements and 6% do not have a purpose statement.<sup>11</sup>
- Companies that reported having no corporate purpose statement or employees not knowing their purpose also reported lower community investments. Likewise, those companies also had lower rates of volunteerism.<sup>4</sup>
- 55% of companies use metrics that align their business practices with their corporate purpose.<sup>4</sup>

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# Social impact partnership dynamics and trends



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## SOCIAL IMPACT PARTNERSHIP DYNAMICS AND TRENDS

- Despite 2020's tough circumstances, 59% of nonprofit cause partnership professionals reported flat or increased corporate partnership revenue, with the largest group (45%) reporting an increase.<sup>24</sup>
- Partnership activations in 2020 were different than prior years. Over half of respondents (52%) reported simplified partnership activations with more than one-third (36%) reporting more complex activations.<sup>24</sup>
- Most companies participated in partnership activities with nonprofit organizations at both the national and local levels:
  - 89% in local partnerships with nonprofits
  - 82% in national partnerships with nonprofits<sup>15</sup>
- In 2021, 40% of companies reported their area of focus was changing for the long term (12 months or more) due to the multiple crises of 2020.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2021, 64% of companies reported racial justice as a new long-term priority.<sup>9</sup>
- 64% of Best in Class (BIC) Cause Campaigns take four to 12 months to execute.<sup>13</sup>
- Two-thirds of Best in Class (BIC) Cause Campaigns that raised \$1 million or more have been in the marketplace for five or more years.<sup>13</sup>
- 55% of respondents ranked being able to leverage digital strategies and emerging technologies as important to the future of Best in Class (BIC) Cause Campaigns.<sup>13</sup>
- The partnership sales process takes time. Over 80% of multi-year integrated partnerships require one year or more of discussions to close. Typically, the more complex the partnership, the longer the close.<sup>14</sup>
- Prepackaged benefits can speed the sales cycle to within a year 80% of the time.<sup>14</sup>

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## SOCIAL IMPACT PARTNERSHIP DYNAMICS AND TRENDS (CONTINUED)

- Nonprofit respondents ranked renewing existing corporate partners as having the fastest close cycle (65% close within 0-6 months), compared to new relationships from a cold call (only 9% close within six months).<sup>14</sup>
- The two most important measures of partnership success are generating impact toward the nonprofit's mission (58%) and success stories that show impact (60%).<sup>15</sup>
- Nonprofits are getting failing grades from corporate decision makers on measures of “bringing new ideas” (59%) and “presenting unique opportunities” (65%).<sup>15</sup>
- Top three audiences that corporations consider when selecting a nonprofit partner:
  - Community (70%)
  - Consumers (62%)
  - Employees (61%)<sup>15</sup>
- Nine in 10 companies rank these in their top three factors for partnership selection:
  - Create awareness/visibility (95%)
  - Brand/mission alignment (91%)
  - Showcase community/social responsibility (91%)<sup>15</sup>
- The No. 1 factor that enhances a nonprofit's ability to secure a partner is understanding the partner's needs (84%), followed by mission fit with the partner's brand (82%) and having a dedicated partnership team (82%).<sup>14</sup>

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# Point of sale and register cause campaigns



Data points reflect a snapshot of data from social impact industry reports. [See sources page](#) to access full reports and articles.

## POINT OF SALE AND REGISTER CAUSE CAMPAIGNS

- In 2021, retail sales are forecast to increase between 6.5% and 8.2%, totaling as much as \$4.4 trillion in retail spending compared to \$4.06 trillion in 2020.<sup>17</sup>
- Online and other non-store retail sales skyrocketed to 21.9% in 2020, or \$969.4 billion, as consumers shifted to ecommerce. The numbers exclude automobile dealers, gasoline stations and restaurants.<sup>17</sup>
- 76 point of sale campaigns raised more than \$605 million in 2020, up 24% from 2018.<sup>3</sup> (Note: this figure only accounts for campaigns that raised \$1 million or more.)
- In total, million-dollar point of sale programs have raised more than \$4.9 billion over three decades.<sup>3</sup>
- The overall number of point of sale campaigns reported that reached the \$1 million or more fundraising mark experienced a small decline, from 79 to 76 campaigns, in 2020 compared to 2018.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2020, 17 point of sale campaigns showed gains over 2018, posting a cumulative increase of \$77.3 million.<sup>3</sup>
- 34% of 2020 point of sale campaigns were impacted in some way by the coin shortage.<sup>3</sup>
- The top five 2020 U.S. point of sale or online register campaigns:
  1. eBay always on fundraising program—\$82 million
  2. Albertsons Companies “Nourishing Neighbors Initiative”—\$67.9 million
  3. PetSmart always on fundraising program—\$44 million
  4. Panda Express “Your Change Makes a Difference”—\$40 million
  5. Walmart and Sam’s Club Miracle Balloon program—\$35.5 million<sup>3</sup>
- Children’s health continued as the cause that persuaded consumers to open their wallets at the register more than any other in 2020, raising \$184.5 million, representing 30% of total dollars raised.<sup>3</sup>
- The social services category, with causes ranging from foster youth to first responders, came in second for amount raised at the register with 22% of fundraising dollars generating \$131 million in donations.<sup>3</sup>
- Hunger causes experienced a big point of sale fundraising jump from 2018, increasing from 4% of point of sale fundraising dollars to 14% in 2020, raising \$86 million in donations.<sup>3</sup>

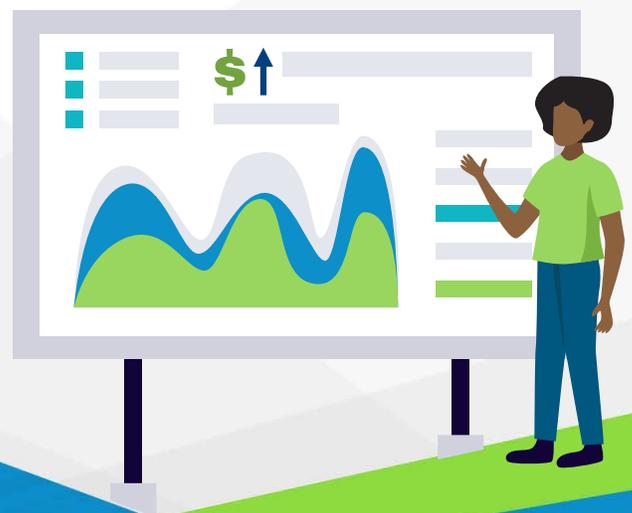
Data points reflect a snapshot of data from social impact industry reports. [See sources page](#) to access full reports and articles.

## POINT OF SALE AND REGISTER CAUSE CAMPAIGNS (CONTINUED)

- For requested donation amounts of less than \$1, participants who were asked for a rounding request were much more likely to donate. Differences in donation rates between the rounding and fixed request treatments appear to be driven by “loose-change effects,” whereby individuals are more likely to donate if they would have less change as a result of the prior cash transaction.<sup>87</sup>
- For those who chose to donate, donations were \$.85 on average across all donation types (rounding request, fixed request and open-ended ask).<sup>87</sup>
- For those who donated, the three most popular reasons for doing so were that they liked the charity (59%), followed by perceiving the amount requested to be reasonable (55%) and it seemed like a better use of their money (53%).<sup>87</sup>
- 25% of survey respondents raised more money at point of sale in 2020 than projected.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2021, 86% of consumers have donated to a charity at in-store or online checkout over the past 12 months, up from 78% in 2020.<sup>18</sup>
- The No. 1 reason consumers donate at the register is because they feel passionate about the cause or charity.<sup>18</sup>
- Nearly one-fourth of consumers want more information about the impact of their donation.<sup>18</sup>
- In 2021, 82% of consumers would be more inclined to donate if the retailer matched the donation.<sup>18</sup>
- When given the choice at checkout, over half of consumers choose to give \$2, \$5 or more than \$5 at the register.<sup>18</sup>
- The average donation is \$7 at ecommerce checkout.<sup>18</sup>
- 86% of older Millennials and Gen X consumers report having donated and 65% love being asked to donate at checkout.<sup>18</sup>
- Men, more than women, feel more positive about a retailer after being asked to donate. 59% of men feel extremely positive compared to 35% of women.<sup>18</sup>
- Men are more likely to return to a retailer who asked them to donate—75% very or more likely compared to 35% of women.<sup>18</sup>

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# Partnership stakeholder perspectives



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## PARTNERSHIP STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

### Employee perspective: engagement, volunteerism and giving

#### Employee engagement

- A similar percentage of companies now measure the business value of community investments through employee metrics (40%) as they do brand/customer metrics (38%).<sup>4</sup>
- Employees (61%) equal consumers (62%) in terms of the audience companies want to influence most with their cause activities.<sup>15</sup>
- Globally, employee engagement decreased by 2% from 22% in 2019 to 20% in 2020.<sup>19</sup>
- Business units with high employee engagement achieve higher profitability, productivity, higher customer loyalty/engagement, better safety and lower turnover among other positive outcomes.<sup>19</sup>
- 88% of employees believe it's no longer acceptable for companies to just make money; companies must positively impact society as well.<sup>20</sup>
- Over the past three years, the trends show that more than 50% of all employees are open to leaving their current company for new roles, but this drops to less than 12% if they believe that their company is making a positive impact in the world.<sup>21</sup>
- 78% of respondents stated they'd be more likely to want to work for a purpose-driven company, while nearly the same would be more likely to trust (76%) and be loyal to (72%) that company.<sup>22</sup>
- Employees want to work for businesses whose values align with their own. 41% of respondents said an employer's ethics and values were important factors in their engagement.<sup>23</sup>
- Since the start of COVID, employees report their motivation to participate in employee engagement programs has increased by 20% on average.<sup>21</sup>
- 59% of young people say they strongly agree that the more socially and environmentally responsible their company becomes, the more motivated and loyal they become to their company.<sup>25</sup>

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## PARTNERSHIP STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

### Employee engagement (continued)

- Employees working at companies with an established employee engagement program are 25% more likely to recommend their employer.<sup>21</sup>
- Two new items have soared to the top in 2021 as drivers of employee engagement: a sense of belonging and a sense of pride in the company's efforts to have a positive impact on the world. (In 2020, the two leading drivers were confidence in senior leadership and opportunities for learning and development.)<sup>26</sup>
- Turnover is reduced by 57% among employees who engage in both giving and volunteering.<sup>27</sup>
- Talent professionals say they're increasingly focused on the employee experience in order to increase employee retention (77%), increase employee productivity (71%), meet expectations of Millennials and Gen Zers (40%) and attract more candidates (29%).<sup>28</sup>
- 70% of companies have a blended match cap, giving their employees a choice of donating time or money.<sup>29</sup>
- 75% of companies that offer both giving and volunteering opportunities have two times more engagement than companies only offering giving or only offering volunteering.<sup>30</sup>

### Employee volunteerism

- 96% of employees say that volunteering in their community is important to them.<sup>18</sup>
- Corporate volunteering has shown to lift employee engagement (16%), increase employees' sense of purpose at work (33%), increase pride in employer's products (18%) and increase job satisfaction (13%).<sup>32</sup>
- 71% of companies reported offering at least one skills-based volunteer program.<sup>4</sup>
- 89% of companies surveyed offered flexible scheduling and/or paid-release time volunteer programs.<sup>4</sup>
- For all companies, the average percentage of employees volunteering at least one hour was 29%.<sup>4</sup>
- 61% of employees have volunteered for 10 or more hours over the past 12 months.<sup>18</sup>

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## PARTNERSHIP STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

### Employee volunteerism (continued)

- Employee-directed partnerships on average take the shortest time of all corporate partnership types to close. 72% of nonprofits report securing commitments for volunteer activities with no financial commitment within six months.<sup>14</sup>
- Skilled volunteerism is on the rise and can be quite valuable, but factor in more planning time for this as 48% of nonprofits report this type of partnership taking 7–18 months to close.<sup>14</sup>
- In 2019, the three most commonly offered number of annual volunteer hours offered to employees on company time were:
  - 8 hours (36%)
  - 16 hours (23%)
  - 40 hours (11%)<sup>4</sup>
- The average number of hours employees volunteered in skills-based programs was 72,000 compared to 20,000 for non-skills-based programs.<sup>4</sup>

### Employee giving

- Donating funds is the No. 1 way employees prefer to give back to their community.<sup>18</sup>
- An estimated \$2–\$3 billion is donated through matching gift programs annually.<sup>33</sup>
- 65% of Fortune 500 companies offer matching gift programs.<sup>34</sup>
- 84% of donors say they're more likely to donate if a match is offered and one out of three would give a larger gift if matching is applied to their donation.<sup>33</sup>
- For companies that offer matching gift programs, 87% of companies have a 1:1 match year round and up to a 4:1 match during campaigns.<sup>29</sup>
- Once employees become donors, trends show that 87% of those employees will become returning donors year over year.<sup>30</sup>
- 69% higher donor participation is achieved in programs that offer payroll giving.<sup>29</sup>

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## PARTNERSHIP STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

### Employee giving (continued)

- An estimated \$4–\$7 billion in matching gift funds goes unclaimed per year.<sup>36</sup>
- Employees surveyed ranked these as their top five charity types for giving in 2020:
  1. Education
  2. Human services
  3. Leisure
  4. Religion
  5. Youth<sup>30</sup>

### Consumer perspective

- Eight in 10 respondents across all generations agree that companies and their brands are an essential part of the solution for challenges facing humanity today, signaling high expectations for brand leadership.<sup>25</sup>
- Globally, up to a quarter of consumer spending is influenced by purpose, putting an estimated U.S. \$5 trillion of revenue at play.<sup>8</sup>
- 86% of consumers expect CEOs to publicly speak out on one or more of these societal challenges: pandemic impact, job automation, societal issues, local community issues.<sup>10</sup>
- 66% of consumers said they consider a company's purpose when making purchasing decisions and when all things remain equal (cost and quality), 71% said they would purchase from a purpose-driven company over the alternative.<sup>22</sup>
- 47% of consumers have stopped doing business with a company when they felt betrayed by what the company stands for.<sup>37</sup>
- 44% of people under the age of 30 and 32% over 30 strongly agree they try to support companies and brands that have a purpose of making a positive difference in society through their products, services and operations.<sup>25</sup>
- In 2021, business grew to become not only the most trusted institution among the four studied (business, NGO, government and media), but also the only trusted institution with a 61% trust level globally (up from 59% in 2020) and the only institution seen as both ethical and competent.<sup>10</sup>

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## PARTNERSHIP STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

### Consumer perspective (continued)

- 73% of respondents believe that a company can take actions that both increase profits and improve conditions in communities where it operates.<sup>38</sup>
- In the United States, individual company reputation scores improved by an average of eight points when the public was made aware of corporate advocacy efforts.<sup>39</sup>
- 44% of the American public believe it is essential for corporations to provide both actions and words in response to cultural issues.<sup>39</sup>
- 78% of consumers are more likely to remember a company that has a strong purpose.<sup>22</sup>
- Purpose attributes were more likely to drive certain desired consumer behaviors like brand loyalty (40.7%) and brand trust (41.6%).<sup>22</sup>
- Support for purpose-driven brands extends to consumers' willingness to defend (70%) and even forgive (72%) these companies that make a misstep.<sup>22</sup>
- Most consumers prefer purpose brands across categories, but especially when it comes to personal care brands. 81% of consumers prefer personal care brands, 54% prefer food/beverage and 63% prefer quick service café brands that are purpose driven.<sup>22</sup>
- One-third of all consumers today will stop buying their preferred products if they lose trust in the brand.<sup>40</sup>
- 68% of Gen Zers and 76% of the general population say a company doesn't have to be perfect when talking about social justice issues, but it should be open and honest.<sup>41</sup>

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## PARTNERSHIP STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

### Corporate perspective

- 91% of executives believe business must benefit all stakeholders, not just shareholders.<sup>2</sup>
- 85% of executives believe that being a purpose-driven company drives profit and 89% believe it gives companies a competitive advantage.<sup>2</sup>
- Companies rated highly on purposeful mission saw 49% lower employee attrition.<sup>28</sup>
- Eight in 10 executives feel that business has the scale, speed and acumen to solve today's most pressing problems.<sup>2</sup>
- Seven in 10 executives feel that to truly be purpose-driven a brand must be willing to take risks to address social justice.<sup>2</sup>
- 84% of companies' employees perceived that their C-suite executives would frequently or very frequently refer to their company's corporate purpose in documents, emails, meetings or plans whereas only 66% of companies reported that employees perceive middle management to do the same.<sup>4</sup>
- Nearly nine in 10 global executives (87%) say customer perceptions are important to their company's reputation, closely followed by those of investors (86%) and employees (83%).<sup>6</sup>
- A company's ability to communicate and deliver upon its mission, vision and values is a top driver of reputation.<sup>6</sup>
- 62% of companies reported offering socially driven internship programs.<sup>4</sup>
- On average, global executives attribute 63% of their company's market value to their company's overall reputation.<sup>6</sup>
- 79% of global executives say it is important for the CEO to communicate the organization's values in order to be highly regarded.<sup>6</sup>

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## PARTNERSHIP STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

### Corporate perspective (continued)

- The top three departments that corporate partners involve in creating Best in Class (BIC) Cause Campaigns are marketing and communications (90%), public or media relations (72%) and senior leadership or C-suite (70%).<sup>13</sup>
- Top three audiences corporations consider when selecting a nonprofit partner:
  - Community (70%)
  - Consumers (62%)
  - Employees (61%)<sup>15</sup>

### B2B perspective

- 86% of B2B professionals say purpose is important to their business.<sup>42</sup>
- 82% of B2B executives feel that companies with purpose have greater success than those without.<sup>42</sup>
- B2B companies are embracing purpose because it shows values and character in action (51%), drives business growth (47%) and deepens customer relationships (46%).<sup>42</sup>
- 74% of B2B executives consider purpose relevant to business growth, but only 24% of B2B executives indicated their companies are purpose driven.<sup>43</sup>
- 93% of B2B professionals surveyed say that they are somewhere on the purpose journey, with 57% saying they are more focused on purpose today than they were three years ago.<sup>42</sup>
- 75% of B2B companies embrace purpose because it supports recruiting and 39% say it deepens relationships with employees.<sup>42</sup>
- 67% of B2B professionals say that their employees are excited to discuss company purpose on social media.<sup>42</sup>
- 75% of B2B executives say that purpose supports recruiting, while 73% say that it motivates sales teams.<sup>42</sup>

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# Timely topics in social impact



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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and human rights

- 64% of CSR professionals reported racial justice as a new long-term priority.<sup>9</sup>
- Companies donated or pledged about \$8.2 billion of the \$12 billion in total contributions earmarked for racial equity since May of 2020, far outpacing foundations and individual donors.<sup>5</sup>
- To date, the 50 biggest public companies in the United States and their foundations collectively committed at least \$49.5 billion to addressing racial inequality since George Floyd's murder last May—an amount that appears unequaled in sheer scale. Looking deeper, more than 90% of that amount (\$45.2 billion) is allocated to loans or investments they could profit from. More than half are in the form of mortgages. Two banks, JPMorgan Chase and Bank of America, accounted for nearly all of those commitments.<sup>44</sup>
- With the exception of a small dip in 2015, human rights funding has increased steadily from \$1.2 billion in 2010 to \$3.7 billion in 2018.<sup>45</sup>
- 73% of companies' DEI budgets will increase and 83% of companies stated that antiracism actions reinforced their corporate purpose.<sup>4</sup>
- 53% of CSR leaders reported that following the multiple crises of 2020 they are funding new organizations with a racial equity mission.<sup>9</sup>
- 74% of companies surveyed reported that resources to improve DEI efforts were on the rise.<sup>4</sup>
- The racial justice movement in the U.S. in 2020 had an impact on COVID-19 funding for BIPOC communities. Of U.S. COVID-19 philanthropy to specified recipients, 35% of dollars were designated for communities of color.<sup>5</sup>
- Diverse companies, teams and boards outperform their non-diverse counterparts and various forms of diversity directly drive up to 25% greater financial performance.<sup>46</sup>
- 62% of CSR leaders added a racial equity lens to existing funding initiatives.<sup>9</sup>
- 83% of executives say companies must address social justice issues by making changes internally.<sup>7</sup>
- 75% of Americans believe companies should take a stand on issues that are widely discussed in the news and in society like immigration or equal rights.<sup>47</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and human rights (continued)

- As of November 30, 2020, job openings for D&I executive and leadership roles such as “Chief Diversity Officer”, “Head of Diversity & Inclusion” and “Vice President of Diversity & Inclusion” have more than doubled since June 8, 2020 (2.6X). This signals that companies are making diversity and inclusion a priority at the highest levels.<sup>48</sup>
- As of March 2021, 28% of young Americans (25 and younger) rank civil rights/racial discrimination/social justice as one of the top three social issues of interest to them.<sup>49</sup>
- Inclusion is imperative: 50% of consumers and 60% of Twitter users said that brands seeking to be more culturally relevant should be inclusive of all types of people.<sup>16</sup>
- 74% of companies sampled reported that resources to improve DEI efforts were on the rise.<sup>25</sup>
- 70% of Americans said they’d be willing to cancel a brand if it said or did something offensive in relation to racial justice.<sup>50</sup>
- 76% of executives acknowledge the role of business in perpetuating systemic racial inequality and are committing to action now more than ever.<sup>2</sup>
- Black-led nonprofits have 24% less average revenues and 76% smaller unrestricted net assets than their white-led counterparts. For nonprofits that focus on similar issues, the gaps were even larger.<sup>51</sup>
- Among groups focused on improving life outcomes of Black men, revenue at organizations with Black leaders was 45% lower than at groups with white leaders.<sup>51</sup>
- 60% of consumers want the post-COVID recovery to prioritize restructuring our economy to deal with inequality and climate change rather than just getting back to normal as soon as possible.<sup>25</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Environmental, social, governance (ESG)

- Over the past decade, corporate sustainability reporting has grown from less than 20% of S&P 500 companies publishing sustainability reports to 90% in 2019.<sup>7</sup>
- CSR practitioners are the common owners of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) data used to measure sustainability reporting back to investors.<sup>11</sup>
- Of those companies that have metrics on corporate purpose, the measures they use vary from greenhouse gas emissions to number of underserved communities impacted to volunteer participation.<sup>4</sup>
- Governments, corporations and other groups raised a record \$490 billion last year selling green, social and sustainability bonds. A further \$347 billion poured into ESG-focused investment funds—an all-time high. (Sustainable funds emphasize the use of environmental, social and governance criteria to generate financial return and broader societal impact.)<sup>52</sup>
- Over 10 years, the average annual return for a sustainable fund invested in large global companies has been 6.9% a year, compared to 6.3% for a traditionally invested fund. (Sustainable funds emphasize the use of environmental, social and governance criteria to generate financial return and broader societal impact.)<sup>53</sup>
- Despite volatility in 2020, total returns for sustainable and ESG equity funds in the United States outpaced traditional funds by 4.3%.<sup>54</sup>
- Results from the study of NYSE-listed companies in the United States show that a strong reputation and ESG perception improves the willingness to buy a company's products by as much as 37% compared to industry rivals.<sup>55</sup>
- The results also show that men are influenced by ESG perception twice as much in their buying decisions as women.<sup>55</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Environmental, social, governance (ESG) (continued)

- The 2021 World's Most Ethical Companies honorees outperformed a comparable index of large cap companies by 7.1 percentage points from January 2016 to January 2021.<sup>56</sup>
- Companies that pay close attention to ESG priorities are much less likely to fail than companies that do not.<sup>57</sup>
- 55% of companies use metrics that align their business practices with their corporate purpose.<sup>4</sup>
- 82% of respondents said it is necessary for companies today to advocate for or take a stand on ESG issues. 5% said it was unnecessary.<sup>58</sup>
- Motivators for companies to take stands on ESG topics were to 1) enhance their reputation, 2) show a commitment beyond profit and to 3) meet employee expectations.<sup>58</sup>
- A strong reputation and ESG perception improves the willingness to buy a company's products by as much as 37% compared to industry rivals.<sup>59</sup>

Data points reflect a snapshot of data from social impact industry reports. [See sources page](#) to access full reports and articles.

## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Climate change and sustainability trends

- More than half (54%) of those surveyed across the world believe it's more important to reduce their own carbon footprint since COVID-19.<sup>60</sup>
- 47% of Americans think it is more important than ever for companies to address climate change.<sup>61</sup>
- 62% of Americans think companies have the opportunity due to the pandemic to be more thoughtful about how they incorporate sustainability into their business models moving forward.<sup>61</sup>
- More than three in five consumers (62%) say it's now more important than before that companies behave in a more sustainable and eco-friendly way.<sup>60</sup>
- Consumers are prioritizing companies that are sustainable, transparent and aligned with their core values when making decisions. They're willing to pay more and even change their buying habits for brands that get it right.<sup>40</sup>
- 36% of consumers plan to increase being kind to the environment post pandemic.<sup>62</sup>
- 72% of consumers have been "green" and 67% have reduced consumption post pandemic.<sup>62</sup>
- On average, 70% of purpose-driven shoppers pay a premium of 35% more per upfront cost for sustainable purchases such as recycled or eco-friendly goods.<sup>40</sup>
- 57% of purpose-driven shoppers are willing to change their purchasing habits to help reduce negative environmental impact.<sup>40</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Rising influence of Gen Z and Millennials

- 40% of HR professionals are increasingly focused on employee experience to meet the expectations of Millennials and Gen Zers.<sup>28</sup>
- While people across all generations name COVID-19, the spread of human diseases and climate change as the most serious global problems, young people prioritize equality and mental health more than older generations.<sup>25</sup>
- The expectation for companies to use their power responsibly is increasing with each generation: “I like brands that have a point of view and stand for something.”
  - Elders—47%
  - Middle age—53%
  - Millennial—61%
  - Gen Z—61%<sup>64</sup>
- 92% of Gen Z and 90% of Millennial consumers say they have acted in support of a purposeful brand.<sup>65</sup>
- In 2020, one in five young people in the United States protested publicly at events and rallies.<sup>25</sup>
- 88% of Gen Z and 85% of Millennial consumers said they are motivated to act against companies and brands they disagree with by taking an unfavorable action.<sup>65</sup>
- Both generations (Gen Z and Millennial) said they’ll make a special effort to more actively patronize and support businesses; especially smaller, local sellers; after the pandemic.<sup>66</sup>
- 83% of Millennials and 79% of Gen Zers agreed that climate change is occurring and is primarily caused by humans.<sup>66</sup>
- Four of five young people said that given the environmental impacts resulting from responses to the pandemic, both businesses and governments should make even greater efforts to protect the environment.<sup>66</sup>
- Nearly two-thirds of young people globally (65%) say they feel guilty about their negative impact on the environment compared to only half of older respondents.<sup>25</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Gen Z and social impact

- Top five societal concerns among Gen Z:
  1. Climate change/protecting the environment (31%)
  2. Unemployment (21%)
  3. Sexual harassment (20%)
  4. Crime/personal safety (17%)
  5. Health care/disease prevention (15%)<sup>66</sup>
- Only 3% of Gen Zers do not expect brands to play a role to address racism in America.<sup>67</sup>
- 64% of Gen Zers (those 25 or younger) are more likely to say they would want to work for a company that is speaking up for or addressing social justice issues (versus 59% of the general population).<sup>68</sup>
- 81% of Gen Zers expect brands to use their platform to advocate for justice, including using their advertisements to raise awareness and call for change.<sup>67</sup>
- 68% of Gen Zers (those 25 or younger) say a company doesn't have to be perfect when talking about social justice issues, but it should be open and honest (versus 76% of the general population).<sup>68</sup>
- 67% of Gen Zers want brands to ensure their products and services are designed to serve all consumers across races equally and do not make racism worse, like racial bias in an internet search engine.<sup>67</sup>
- Gen Zers are two times more likely to say they personally have been greatly or moderately affected by climate change.<sup>25</sup>
- As of March 2021, 28% of young Americans rank civil rights/racial discrimination/social justice as one of the top three social issues of interest to them.<sup>49</sup>
- Gen Zers see a company's purpose as a core consideration in where to work (83%), even more so than what to buy.<sup>31</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Gen Z and social impact (continued)

- 38% of young Americans (those 25 and younger) have taken action to support the Black Lives Matter movement and 28% have taken action to support human rights movements.<sup>49</sup>
- Gen Z is expected to make up 30% of the U.S. workforce by 2022 and they are the first generation to prioritize purpose over salary.<sup>63</sup>
- 64% of Gen Zers believe companies have a role to play in addressing social justice issues (versus 66% of the general population).<sup>68</sup>
- 50% of Gen Zers have done research to see what companies have done to make progress against the commitments they made to social justice issues over the past year (versus 45% of the general population).<sup>68</sup>
- 73% of young Americans indicated they thought companies or brands had a great deal or some influence on people's attitudes toward social issues.<sup>49</sup>
- 93% of Gen Zers say if a company makes a commitment, it should have the appropriate programs and policies in place to back up that commitment.<sup>68</sup>
- 72% of Gen Zers buy with an eye toward purpose, indicating companies should continue providing visible indicators of forward progress on packaging in store and online.<sup>68</sup>
- 91% of Gen Zers say they use social media channels to learn about and participate in issues they care about.<sup>31</sup>
- Since COVID-19 began, three out of four Gen Zers have either taken an action on a cause they care about (47%) or would like to (29%).<sup>67</sup>
- 75% of Gen Zers are concerned that the impacts of COVID-19 are made worse by racism in America with over half (53%) saying they are very concerned.<sup>67</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Millennials and social impact

- Top five societal concerns among Millennials:
  1. Climate change/protecting the environment (28%)
  2. Health care/disease prevention (20%)
  3. Unemployment (20%)
  4. Income inequality/distribution of wealth (19%)
  5. Crime/personal safety (19%)<sup>66</sup>
- Millennials will make up 75% of the workforce by 2025 and they are looking for socially responsible employers.<sup>69</sup>
- Prior to the pandemic, 58% of Millennials said they had increased their use of public transportation, half had reduced “fast fashion” purchases and 64% were cutting back on single-use plastic and recycling more.<sup>66</sup>
- 69% of American Millennials are highly interested in sustainable investing compared to 44% of Boomers.<sup>70</sup>
- 84% of Millennials give to charity, donating an annual average of \$481 across 3.3 organizations.<sup>71</sup>
- 90% of Millennials say they’re driven to donate because of a “compelling mission or cause.”<sup>72</sup>
- Due to COVID-19, 60% of American Millennials are now highly interested in giving to philanthropy.<sup>73</sup>
- 71% of Millennials have taken immediate actions to try to have a positive impact on their community.<sup>66</sup>
- 53% of Millennials are parents.<sup>74</sup>
- 64% of Millennials won’t take a job if their employer doesn’t have a strong CSR policy, and 83% would be more loyal to a company that helps them contribute to social and environmental issues (versus 70% U.S. average).<sup>75</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Millennials and social impact (continued)

- Nearly 40% of Millennials have chosen a job because of company sustainability. Less than a quarter of Gen X respondents and 17% of Baby Boomers said the same.<sup>76</sup>
- Three out of four Millennials choose to buy an experience rather than something desirable.<sup>74</sup>
- 91% of Millennials would switch from a product they typically buy to a new product from a purpose-driven company.<sup>78</sup>
- 42% of Millennials would start or deepen their relationship with a business who has products/ services that positively impact the environment or society.<sup>78</sup>
- 72% of Millennials are influenced to purchase by external sources—articles and blogs, Instagram personas or celebrity endorsements—compared to only 36% of those 55 and older.<sup>79</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### Disaster relief and response

- According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), 22 “billion-dollar disaster events” caused \$95 billion in total damages and claimed 262 lives in the United States in 2020.<sup>81</sup>
- As of July, the United States has experienced more large wildfires in 2021 than any other year since 2011. During the early months of fire and drought season in 2021, 74,000 acres burned.<sup>35</sup>
- The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season left 430 people dead and affected areas with an aggregate \$47 billion worth of damages.<sup>81</sup>
- Based on available data, corporate giving programs committed at least \$275.4 million to disasters and humanitarian crises in both cash and in-kind donations in 2018.<sup>80</sup>
- Between 2017 and 2019, disaster relief funding experienced the greatest decrease in giving of all program areas. Disaster relief cash giving decreased by 66% in 2019. (Community and economic development saw the highest increase (42%) during this same time period.)<sup>4</sup>
- Disaster-related funding in 2018 decreased by around \$50 million from 2017, based on a year-over-year analysis of grantmaking by 1,000 of the largest U.S. foundations.<sup>81</sup>
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) distributed \$11.2 billion for U.S. disasters in 2018, a \$4.4 billion decrease from 2017, which was a record-breaking year for natural disasters in the United States.<sup>80</sup>
- Among disaster assistance strategies, 64% of dollars were for response and relief; 17% were for reconstruction and recovery; and only 2% each were for resilience and preparedness efforts in 2018.<sup>80</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### COVID-19 and social impact

- As of August 2021, more than 4.4 million people around the world have died from COVID-19 and there have been over 216 million cases globally.<sup>82</sup>
- Corporations accounted for 44% of the \$20.2 billion awarded for COVID-19 response and relief globally in 2020 (\$9.4 billion total). This is a decrease from the first half of the year when corporate foundations and corporate giving programs accounted for 66% of funding dollars.<sup>5</sup>
- The racial justice movement in the U.S. in 2020 had an impact on COVID-19 funding for BIPOC communities. Of U.S. COVID-19 philanthropy to specified recipients, 35% of dollars were designated for communities of color.<sup>5</sup>
- 60% of consumers want the post-COVID recovery to prioritize restructuring our economy to deal with inequality and climate change rather than just getting back to normal as soon as possible.<sup>25</sup>
- The effects of the pandemic were especially harsh for minority and underserved business owners. Black businesses had a 41% decline. Latino businesses had a 32% decline and Asian-owned businesses had a 26% decline.<sup>83</sup>
- Consumers rated the following factors as most important as they considered which brands to support after the pandemic:
  - 76%—how it treated employees, customers and the community during the pandemic
  - 77%—being trustworthy as an organization
  - 78%—protecting my health and safety
  - 64%—the company’s purpose or mission
  - 67%—operating locally in my community
  - 68%—its ability to have a positive impact on society and the environment<sup>62</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### COVID-19 and social impact (continued)

- 29% of consumers will increase buying from socially responsible companies post pandemic.<sup>62</sup>
- 23% of consumers will increase supporting charities post-pandemic.<sup>62</sup>
- Investments in health and savings top the list of post-pandemic consumer priorities.<sup>62</sup>
- Most good consumer behaviors are trending up during the pandemic:
  - 67% have reduced their consumption (gas, energy, overall consumer purchases)
  - 64% have bought goods or services from a socially responsible company
  - 57% have contributed financially to a nonprofit or charity<sup>62</sup>
- Consumers ranked these brands as the first companies that come to mind as being socially responsible during the COVID-19 pandemic:
  - Walmart
  - Amazon
  - Target
  - Kroger
  - Costco<sup>62</sup>
- 75% of Gen Zers are concerned that the impacts of COVID-19 are made worse by racism in America, with over half (53%) saying they are very concerned.<sup>67</sup>
- 53% of people would consider or love to give their time or money to social causes during the pandemic.<sup>84</sup>
- In eight of 10 countries surveyed, “my employer” is seen as better prepared for the virus than “my country.” This finding is confirmed by the high trust in “my employer” to respond effectively and responsibly (62%) to the virus.<sup>85</sup>
- Since COVID-19 began, three out of four Gen Zers have either taken an action on a cause they care about (47%) or would like to (29%).<sup>67</sup>

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## TIMELY TOPICS IN SOCIAL IMPACT

### COVID-19 and social impact (continued)

- 71% of Americans said they'd stop buying products from a company they felt was irresponsible during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>86</sup>
- One-third of Americans have more faith in business to create solutions to address the coronavirus pandemic than other entities including government and nonprofits.<sup>86</sup>
- When asked how behaviors may change in light of what was learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, respondents reported:
  - 29% will increase buying from socially responsible companies
  - 23% will increase supporting charities
  - 36% will increase being kind to the environment<sup>62</sup>
- 75% of Americans say how companies act now to support the COVID-19 response will impact their perceptions of them in the future, and the same amount (75%) said they will remember the companies that stepped up.<sup>86</sup>
- In 2020, 60% of CSR professionals reported that they were looking at new issues to support in their fiscal year. Food insecurity and education are the top issues.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2020, 30% of CSR professionals reported no change to their fiscal year budget, 38% of participants anticipate a decrease in their contributions for next fiscal year, followed closely by a reported 37% of participants who predict no change in their contributions budget.<sup>12</sup>
- Although nearly two-thirds (63%) of employees feel their companies did a good job supporting communities during the coronavirus pandemic, four of 10 feel their company could have acted faster.<sup>86</sup>
- Of the various ways companies can get involved in pandemic relief efforts, Americans feel companies must first ensure employees can continue to receive money and benefits (68%), implement policies to protect the health and safety of employees (68%) and donate products or services to relief efforts (68%).<sup>86</sup>

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