ACCP
Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals

# Making the Case for Corporate Social Impact


## 2025 Toolkit

**A data-driven toolkit to inform, advocate, and amplify your impact**

# About this Toolkit

The Making the Case for Corporate Social Impact Toolkit will help you, as corporate social impact* practitioners, demonstrate and communicate the long-term business value of your work to your company executives and other key stakeholders.

The toolkit provides current and relevant statistics and stakeholder sentiments curated from the most reputable, influential and consequential research studies published on corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts over the past few years—in a concise and easy-to-use form. These data points speak directly to the benefits corporate social impact efforts deliver, such as employee retention and recruitment, financial advantage, and brand loyalty and trust. Within this context, the data can help you tell the larger story of how successes in these areas create a sustainable competitive advantage for purpose-driven companies.

This toolkit supplements its curated compilation of statistics by also providing you with a messaging framework to make compelling arguments for increased or continued resources for staffing and budget and for greater integration of your team's efforts into the larger corporate strategy and storytelling.

With targeted statistics and practical messaging guidance in hand, we hope you feel empowered to make the case for continued support for your corporate social impact programs and initiatives. The core argument remains the same, and the evidence is clear: **When strategically aligned with business objectives, corporate social impact drives overall business success.**

***A note on terminology**

Terminology related to CSR, ESG and other purpose-driven initiatives varies from company to company and is constantly evolving. In this toolkit, we use corporate social impact as an umbrella term to encompass work commonly called CSR, ESG, community engagement, community impact, and sustainability, among other terms.

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# Introduction

The landscape for corporate social impact is experiencing significant changes due to several factors:

1. The increasing politicization of ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) and DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) initiatives.
2. A more polarized society.
3. Ongoing economic uncertainty.
4. Changing public opinions about corporations speaking out on social issues.

These shifts are reshaping how companies approach and talk about their social impact strategies.

Such drivers are creating a new and highly uncertain environment for practitioners—one marked by greater threats posed by shareholder activism, legal challenges, and divergent (if not outright contradictory) regulatory requirements within the U.S. versus globally. For practitioners, this new environment demands more strategic calculus regarding what types of initiatives to pursue and more care in how they communicate what they are doing and what the benefits to stakeholders are.

## Volunteerism and Giving Remain Bedrocks

Despite these shifts, stakeholder sentiment in favor of the foundational elements of corporate social impact—**volunteerism and corporate giving**—remains strong. That's because evidence of the value that these core initiatives deliver to employee retention and recruitment, financial advantage, and brand loyalty/trust is both abundant and compelling. These advantages remain significant drivers for companies to prioritize and embed CSR programs and initiatives across their businesses.

## A Less Certain Landscape for ESG & DEI

Enthusiasm for ESG and DEI appear to be declining relative to volunteering and giving, due in part to the environmental shifts mentioned above. Within this context, some organizations have begun to reduce or reverse their support for DEI and ESG—particularly those who were late adopters or who had not fully integrated these initiatives into their strategy and operations. Such companies remain in the minority, however. Data shows that **the majority of companies who have committed to DEI and ESG in the past remain committed**. In the DEI space, many companies are doing so because they've seen clear business benefits from their initiatives and because many key stakeholders—from board members and executives to employees and customers—continue to support DEI. In fact, data in this report tells us that companies still risk paying a price for publicly walking back their commitments. For ESG, some companies are scaling back their efforts in response to political backlash in the U.S. However, global companies must still comply with international regulations and reporting requirements.

## A Majority—Standing Firm

Despite the changing landscape, most companies remain committed to corporate social impact as a long-term business strategy. In fact, in a recent survey conducted by ACCP, 90 percent of respondents anticipate that their companies' commitments to corporate social impact will remain the same or increase in the face of recent changes in the environment.[1]

Given these changes, many companies are rethinking their strategies. They are adjusting their messaging, cutting back on external communications, and reviewing programs to reduce legal risks. Some are redirecting focus and resources from certain initiatives to less controversial ones. However, these companies remain committed to their efforts because they understand that when corporate social impact is fully supported and aligned with the company's strategy and purpose, it is a proven business strategy that benefits the business, its stakeholders, the communities it serves, and society as a whole.

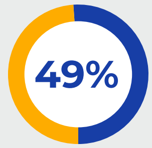
[1] ACCP Releases 2025 Pulse Survey Results—Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals

ISSUE SPOTLIGHT

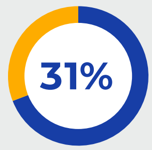
# The Impact of Politicization on Corporate Social Impact Practice

## Politicization → Pressure

The increasing politicization of the ESG and DEI components of corporate social impact has put the work and its practitioners under new and growing pressures. These have come in the form of rising concerns about lawsuits pertaining to corporate DEI programs, the delay or suspension of ESG regulations (even while international regulations remain in effect and continue to multiply), and increased anti-climate sentiment. These pressures may result in some pullback in terms of programming.




49% of companies planning to eliminate or reduce DEI programs in 2025 are doing so primarily **due to shifts in the political climate**.[2]




According to an ACCP Pulse Survey conducted in early 2025, approximately **31% of practitioners expect their company's commitment to DEI to decrease this year**, while 18% anticipate a decrease in commitment to ESG.[3]

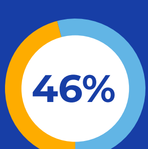
## Pressure → Adjustments (but not Abandonment)

However, social impact programs that are deeply integrated and aligned with a company's strategy and operations are not easily isolated or paused. Many are continuing to deliver important business value. Our research and outreach to members suggest that the main impact of politicization will be on how companies frame and communicate their social impact efforts.


In the ACCP 2025 Pulse Survey, 55% of the respondents stated that they were **changing language to describe their corporate social impact programs and initiatives**.

## Politicization ≠ Public Opinion

Despite the political landscape, data still suggests public support for corporate social impact remains strong.




A November 2024 survey found that **46% of Americans believe businesses should play a "larger role" in addressing social issues**. This view is particularly prevalent among Democrats (61%), Gen Z (58%), Hispanic Americans (52%), and Black Americans (51%), with 33% of Republicans in agreement.[4]


46% represents an increase from a similar study conducted six months earlier, where only 38% of adults believed **businesses should take public stances on social issues**—a decrease of 10 percentage points from 2022.[5]

**Conservatives and liberals alike believe that business can be a force for positive societal change and that certain topics—providing equal pay for equal work, supporting local communities, advancing employee ownership programs—are vital to just business behavior.[6]**

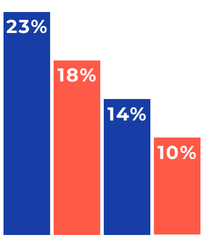
[2] Resume.org
[3] ACCP Releases 2025 Pulse Survey Results—Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals
[4] Carol Cone/Harris
[5] Bentley University
[6] Just Capital

Case Pillar 1

# Corporate Social Impact Helps Companies Retain and Recruit Top Talent

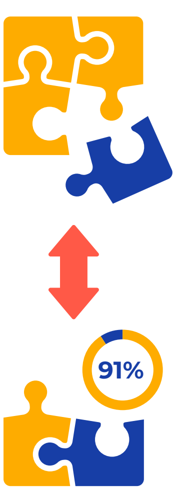
**Companies are increasingly prioritizing employee engagement and wellness as key strategies for improving business outcomes and retaining talent, but they are facing challenges in these areas. Employee giving, volunteer programs, corporate philanthropy, and community investment initiatives can play a crucial role in addressing both.**

## Engagement




A recent study by Gallup reports that business units in the top quartile for employee engagement achieve **23% higher profitability**. Other benefits of relatively higher engagement include an **18% increase in sales productivity** and a **14% increase in overall productivity**, along with an **increase in customer loyalty of 10%**.[7]


By contrast, the same study estimates that **disengaged employees are costing companies $8.8 trillion per year globally** through low productivity, absenteeism and high turnover.

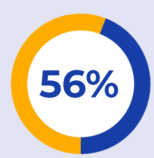



**Employee engagement in the US fell to its lowest level** in a decade in 2024. This matches the figure last seen in 2014, highlighting a growing trend of employee detachment from organizations, particularly among workers younger than 35.[8]

In a recent study on corporate community involvement, 60% of companies reported that they measure the connection between employee volunteering and engagement. Of these, 91% found a **positive link between employee volunteering and employee engagement scores**.[9]

## Wellness

**Businesses reported to JUST Capital that "supporting worker well-being" is one of their top three priorities.**[10]

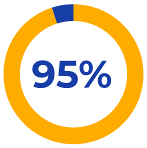



According to a 2025 3BL study,when asked what business should prioritize this year to address sustainability and social impact, the top response (at 56%) identified caring for employees through living wages, worker benefits and protections, **and targeted community development programs**.[11]

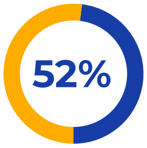
However, a recent large-scale systematic review, in fact, found that a range of workplace wellness offerings had no positive effect on employees' well-being—with one clear exception: **volunteering**.[12]

7 Gallup
8 Gallup
9 BCCCCs Community Involvement Study 2023
10 Just Capital
11 3BL study
12 William Fleming

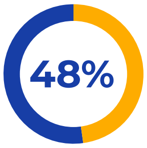
**Employees want to work for companies that make positive social impacts through corporate giving and volunteering programs, and they prefer to participate in these efforts directly.**



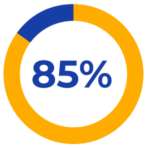

[A] majority **(95%) [of employees] believe it's important that their employer makes a positive impact in their community**. 87% of respondents consider workplace volunteer opportunities a factor in their decision to stay with their current employer or pursue a new one.[13]




52% of respondents indicated that the best way for their company to support their volunteer efforts is by **organizing in-person opportunities with community organizations**—driven by a desire for more direct connection and impact.[13]

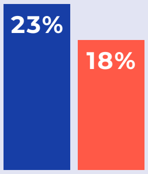



When employees were asked about top areas of focus for their organization regarding ESG integrity over the next two years, **the top response (48%) was social responsibility,** followed by ethical governance and transparency.[14]

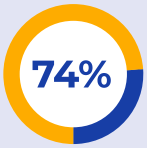



85% of employees agree that the more a business **engages employees in charitable giving decisions**, the more trust employees have in that business.[15]

**Younger workers remain willing to make personal sacrifices to work for purpose-driven companies that share their values.**



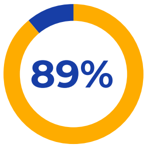

Gen Zers are most likely to say they would **accept moderately less pay to work at a just company** (23% vs 18%). Gen Z makes up 20% of consumers in the U.S. and, in 2021, reportedly had a combined buying power of $360 billion.[16]




74% of Gen Zers **rank purpose ahead of a paycheck** (vs. 70% of millennials, 66% of Gen X and 67% of Boomer respondents).[17]

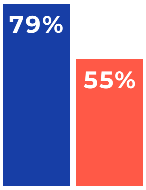
[13] Deloitte Purpose Study 2024
[14] EY Global Integrity Survey
[15] Future of Corporate Purpose: Stakeholder Philanthropy, Benevity, 2022
[16] Just Capital
[17] Monster

**When companies get corporate social impact right, their employees not only remain satisfied, but also feel like they have more opportunities for professional development.**

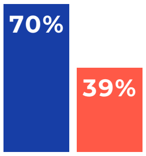



89% of workers who have workplace giving programs available said they were **satisfied with their current employer**, 12 percentage points higher than the satisfaction rate for those without workplace giving [programs].s[18]

Companies see a 52% **lower turnover among newer employees** (2.5 years or less) who participate in their corporate purpose programs.[19]




In a recent study by Bonterra, employees who participate in their organization's **volunteer programs were more satisfied than nonparticipants with their jobs** (79% vs. 55%), the organization's culture (75% vs. 54%) and its leadership team (71% vs. 45%).[20]




Program participants were more likely than nonparticipants to feel that they **have opportunities to grow professionally** (70% vs. 39%) and to develop new skills at work (72% vs. 42%).[21]

**When current employees feel satisfied and have opportunities to develop professionally, they can become their companies' best recruiters.**

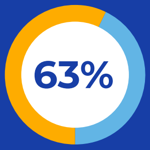
**2X**

Workplace volunteers are twice as likely to **recommend their organization** to job seekers.[22]

**Despite the political backlash against ESG, a majority of workers still have high expectations for their companies when it comes to corporate social impact.**

**3:1**

Workers in America **favor companies that promote social justice** by a 3:1 margin.[23]




63% of respondents globally reported that they **do not think their employers are doing enough to address climate change and sustainability**, up from around 55% in 2021.[23]

18 Giving in the Workplace—Fidelity Charitable
19 Talent Retention Study. Benevity, 2022
20 Bonterra
21 Ares Management 2023
22 BSR Pulse Survey October 2024
23 Deloitte

Case Pillar 2

# Integrated Corporate Social Impact Programs Drive Improved Financial Performance

**Strong corporate social impact programs can give companies a competitive advantage in the marketplace, helping to boost sales and revenue.**

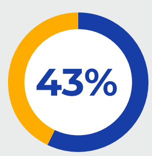

59% of respondents to a study by Edelman believe [that] even if two products are almost identical, **there are brands worth paying more for because of the good they do in the world**.[24]


More than 50% of younger consumers (ages 18–34 from 17 markets) state they are more likely to purchase from brands that **advertise that a portion of the proceeds will be donated to a charitable cause**.[25]

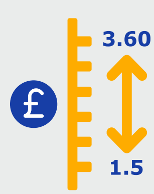
**Across the globe, integrated social impact programs correlate to concrete and measurable benefits to the bottom line in the form of increased profits, productivity, shareholder returns and ROI.**

**Over a 10-year period, companies in the S&P 500 that created the most value for customers, employees, suppliers, and communities also had the highest shareholder returns.[26]**

Companies that had metrics aligning their business practices with their corporate purpose had a **32% higher median revenue and a 45% higher median pre-tax profit** in 2023 than companies without those metrics, indicating that there may be an association between financial success and the integration of corporate purpose into a company's measurement and decision making.[27]




Nearly half (43%) of senior leaders at companies planning to increase their CSR investment over the next 12 months say they are doing so because **CSR initiatives provide a direct return on investment**. This is the third most common reason, following the strong interest among employees to work for companies with impactful CSR (53%) and consumer preference to buy from such companies (49%).[28]




PBE research for Pilotlight revealed that expanding workplace volunteering opportunities to enhance employee wellbeing could **unlock net productivity gains of £1.6bn to £2.8bn for the UK economy**. For every £1 invested, employers are likely to see benefits ranging from £1.50 to £3.60.[29]

[24] Edelman Trust Barometer 2024—Brands and Politics
[25] YouGov
[26] Bain & Co.
[27] CECP's Giving in Numbers 2024
[28] Benevity Executive CSR Report
[29] Probono Economics

Case Pillar 3

# Corporate Social Impact Builds Brand Reputation, Loyalty and Trust That Can Spur Growth and Mitigate Risk

**The public continues to have high expectations for companies to support communities and make a positive impact on society, even in the face of growing political backlash. A company's decision how to engage with society can directly affect its reputation.**

70%

Nearly 70% of people believe **companies should support social issues and causes**.[30]

90%

Approximately 90% of Americans believe that **businesses should take into account the interests of the communities** where they operate.[31]

According to RepTrak's 2024 Report, Citizenship—**measuring a company's positive influence on society, support for good causes, and environmental consciousness**—holds the third highest weight in determining a company's reputation, following Products & Services and Conduct. This highlights that stakeholders care about what companies do nearly as much as how they do it.[32]

88%
77%

88% of Americans approve of companies that have a positive impact on their communities, and 77% agree that corporations **have a responsibility to bring about social change** on society's most important issues.[33]

35% 33%

Most Americans believe that the role of businesses in **addressing sustainability and social impact challenges** will either increase (35%) or remain the same (33%) in 2025 compared to the previous year.[34]

**When companies meet corporate citizenship expectations, they are rewarded with higher levels of brand loyalty and trust. This increased trust persists even when companies make mistakes—but not when they retreat from their values.**

4X

Consumers are 4 times more likely to **stay loyal to brands** supporting social issues.[35]

66%

On average, 66% of respondents across all groups have more **trust in socially responsible companies**.[30]

41%

41% of respondents (on average) across all groups are **likely to forgive a company for the occasional mishap** if the company appears genuinely committed to social issues (Gen X is most likely to forgive).[36]

70%

70% of Americans agree that companies that **walk back their support** for important societal issues **lose consumers' trust**.[36]

[30] Authenticity Imperative
[31] Just Capital
[32] 2024 Global RepTrak 100 Report
[33] GSG Business and Politics 2023
[34] 3BL
[35] BSR, Business Implications of State's Social Policies
[36] JUST Capitals' Americans Views on Business Survey 2023

ISSUE SPOTLIGHT

# Making the Case for AI in Corporate Social Impact

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly emerging as a major priority for businesses and organizations across the economy—due to its potential multiplier effects on productivity, efficiency and creativity.[37]

In fact, recent research by McKinsey "sizes the long-term AI opportunity at $4.4 trillion in added productivity growth potential from corporate use cases." Global tech giants like Meta, Amazon and Microsoft seem to agree, as they plan to allocate up to $320B in investments in AI and data centers in 2025.[38]

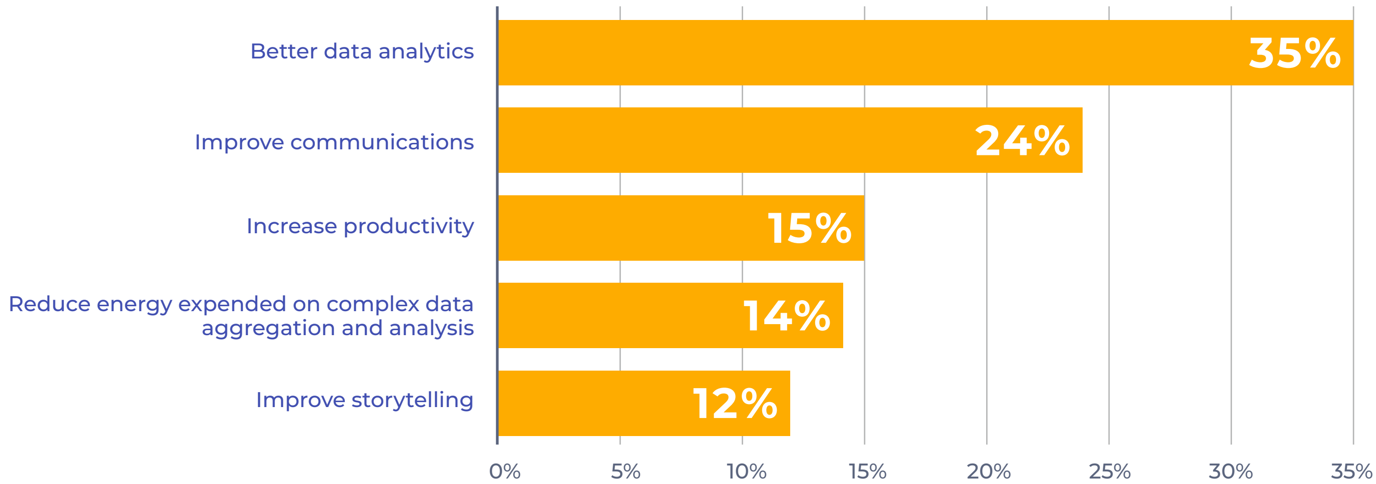
Companies that prioritize AI in these early stages could reap significant benefits: According to LinkedIn's Global Talent Trends, companies that have more employees skilled at using Generative AI (GAI) are 5x more likely to develop skills like creative ideation, design thinking, and emotional intelligence and see a 4x higher leadership promotion rate and 5x higher overall promotion rate compared to companies with fewer such employees.[39]

## Harnessing AI for Social Impact

Social impact practitioners should take note of their companies' approaches to AI and lobby for inclusion in these efforts. AI can generate the same multiplier effects on productivity, efficiency and creativity for corporate social impact work as it does for other functions within the company. Many corporations and their practitioners are taking this view:

- According to a CECP survey fielded in October 2023, at least 56% of respondents indicated that AI could positively impact CSR either though enhance operational efficiency or by making more informed decisions.[40]
- According to Benevity's State of Corporate Purpose 2024 report, 71% of impact leaders say they have a seat at the table on AI discussions and 87% are optimistic about what AI can do for philanthropy. Seven in 10 companies are supporting AI skills learning and adoption in the nonprofit sector.[41]
- In addition, about 40 percent of private capital investments into the 20,000 AI companies analyzed contributed directly or indirectly toward at least one of the 17 SDG thematic areas.[42]
- In 2023, Blackbaud research saw improved efficiency and productivity (26%) as the most significant perceived benefit of AI in the context of social good, but of top concern was ethical decision making (27%).[43]

## How can Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology help you with your work?




2024 ACCP CSR Insights Survey

[37] The Economic Times
[38] McKinsey
[39] LinkedIn's Global Talent Trends

[40] CECP Investing in Society
[41] Benevity's State of Corporate Purpose 2024
[42] McKinsey AI for Social Good 2024 Report
[43] Blackbaud research

## While some of these efforts are already in progress, practitioners still have significant opportunities to further integrate AI into their daily work:

According to a World Economic Forum Report on AI for Impact, 70% of social innovators surveyed have deployed some type of Machine Learning capability. **1 in 4 are deploying AI** to advance the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 3, Good Health and Well-Being.[44]

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**25% of practitioners** in ACCP's 2024 CSR Insights Survey reported implementing a new tech solution in 2024, while another 19% cited laying the groundwork or discussing new technology solutions.[45]

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For those grantmakers leveraging AI, most report a basic usage of generative AI for tasks such as meeting notes/video transcription (71 percent) or drafting reports, emails and memos (67 percent).[45]

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**30% of practitioners** responded that they needed improved technology for their teams to meet demands/expectations.[46]

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More than **85% of respondents** to a recent study of AI use by nonprofits conducted by the Tapp Network reported that they are exploring AI tools, but less than a quarter of respondents said they have a formal AI strategy in place.[47]

### Contradictions and Costs

While AI may generate enormous opportunities across an array of business functions (including social impact work), those opportunities do come with some costs—and potential contradictions.

Chief among these is the amount of energy that AI data centers consume. The US Department of Energy recently reported that energy consumption by data centers could triple by 2028, pushing it up to 12% of total US electricity use.[48] Depending on the carbon footprint of the energy feedstock for those data centers, such consumption could work at cross purposes to corporate sustainability initiatives. Perhaps this is why 65% of sustainability professionals in a recent survey by Salesforce believe their company needs to balance the benefits of AI with its environmental costs, with 57% being optimistic that they will be able to do so.[49] In fact, some companies are already making investments into carbon offsets or are seeking the use of renewable energy to power the data centers needed to fuel the expansion of AI.

44 World Economic Forum Report on AI for Impact
45 TagTech.org
46 2024 ACCP CSR Insights Survey
47 Report: How Artificial Intelligence Is Changing the Nonprofit Sector—NonProfit PRO
48 US Department of Energy
49 Salesforce

CASE STUDY

# AT&T Demonstrates the Power of a Fully Funded, Integrated and Aligned Social Impact Strategy

Connectivity has become a key to nearly every door of opportunity, but millions of Americans still don’t have access to high-speed internet, can’t afford it, or don’t have the know-how and tools to use it.

That’s why AT&T has committed $5 billion by 2030 to narrow the digital divide and help 25 million people get and stay connected to affordable, high-speed internet access as well as digital resources and skills.

Focusing their corporate responsibility platform on an issue aligned to the company’s core business allows them to bring together their network expansion, affordable internet offerings, philanthropic community programs, policy advocacy and public-private partnerships. As of the end of 2024, AT&T has connected over 12 million people in need with better internet experiences.

AT&T’s philanthropic and community impact initiatives provide connectivity, devices, digital literacy and digital learning resources. For example, AT&T Connected Learning Centers℠ provide free resources for community members, including high-speed internet, computers, training, and mentoring. As of the end of 2024, AT&T has opened more than 60 Connected Learning Centers and is on track to open at least 100 total by the end of 2027.

AT&T employees share the company’s passion for positive community impact. During the 2024 back-to-school season, 13,000 employees packed and distributed 23,000 backpacks and laptops to children across the country. Offering intuitive, business-aligned volunteer opportunities helps employees understand how their work connects to the company’s purpose and gives them authentic ways to make a difference.

AT&T’s internal research confirms that this purpose-driven commitment garners brand favorability, further showcasing the positive impacts on the business. When a company’s corporate responsibility efforts align with their business, they can leverage their full company resources, better engage employees, and drive a positive reputation with clients and customers.

As of the end of 2024, AT&T has opened more than 60 Connected Learning Centers and is on track to open at least 100 total by the end of 2027.

MAKING YOUR CASE

# How to Use this Toolkit

**2 sample "scenario guides" included!**

## For most corporate social impact teams, the need to justify their work is ongoing.

During times of uncertainty and change, this task becomes even more challenging, as CSR teams often have to work hard to share their stories, demonstrate their impacts, and protect their budgets from cuts. However, persisting in these efforts is crucial during such times—not only to communicate the value of their work but also to help sustain it.

With this in mind, we present **two sample "scenario guides"** to provide you with tips for building a robust argument that goes beyond talking and data points to crafting a compelling case specific to your company and its stakeholders.

Across all the scenarios you may encounter, our top recommendation remains the same: **Make sure that your corporate social impact initiatives align closely with your business goals**—and be prepared to explain exactly how they do so. This is your best opportunity to build a compelling case.

Make sure that your corporate social impact initiatives align closely with your business goals—**and be prepared to explain exactly how they do.**

### What does this mean in practice?

First, make sure you thoroughly **understand your business**—how it generates revenue, the challenges and opportunities within the industry, the goals and risks for each business segment, and the company's core competencies. This may require regular stakeholder meetings to gain insights and **build cross-functional relationships** for success.

Next, **assess the potential levers** within your program, such as existing policies, in-kind giving, product donations, types of volunteerism, and grant programs. With this understanding, you can **strategically design** your social impact program to address or contribute to these key areas. For example, if employee engagement and recruitment are top priorities for the business, a significant portion of your social impact investment might focus on employee volunteerism, volunteer councils, and employee-led grantmaking or matching gift programs.

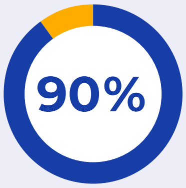
SCENARIO GUIDE #1

# Defending/Increasing Your Budget in the Face of Impending Cuts

PRACTICE 1

## Use Recent Data to Normalize Your Request

- According to Benevity's Executive CSR Report, "76% of leaders anticipate an increase in their company's investment in CSR initiatives over the next 12 months (15% anticipate an increase of more than 15%). 44% anticipate an increase in support for employee volunteerism."[50]
- The 2024 Giving in Numbers Report reveals that total community investments as a percentage of pre-tax profit increased by 38%, with the median contribution from companies reaching 0.92%.[51]




Despite political pressures under the new administration, according to an ACCP Pulse survey in 2025, 90% of respondents anticipate their company's **commitment to CSR** will remain the same or increase.

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PRACTICE 2

## Know Your Audience and their Motivations

Identify the key stakeholders you'll be addressing and tailor your case to align with their business drivers and goals.

For Senior Executives, use stats that emphasize financial value:

- In 2023, companies that aligned their business practices with corporate purpose metrics saw a 32% higher median revenue and a 45% higher median pre-tax profit compared to those without such metrics.[52]

For HR teams, data points that speak to employee retention may resonate better:

- Companies see a 52% lower turnover among newer employees (2.5 years or less) who participate in their corporate purpose programs.[52]

For marketing communications teams, point to brand loyalty and sales:

- 59% of respondents to a study by Edelman believe [that] even if two products are almost identical, there are brands worth paying more for because of the good they do in the world.[53]

50 Benevity's Executive CSR Report
51 CECP's Giving in Numbers 2024
52 Talent Retention Study. Benevity, 2022
53 Edelman Trust Barometer 2024—Brands and Politics

PRACTICE 3

## Provide Competitor/ Industry Benchmarks

- Audit your competitors' social impact communications and/or ESG reports to understand their priorities, contribution levels, and other relevant details. Compare these with your company's goals and performance.
- Reach out to any organizations you are members of to gather information you can use to show where your company stands versus peer groups (e.g. size, revenue, industry).

PRACTICE 4

## Build your own company-tailored data case

- Your story will be more impactful if you use standardized metrics across your giving portfolio, allowing you to report on your overall contribution toward a specific KPI. For example, how many individuals have you helped gain access to employment?
- Gather data from employees about their sentiments toward and experiences with corporate social impact through your engagement surveys.

**Sample questions could include:**

- Do you believe that our corporate social impact programs make a meaningful difference in the community?
- Have these programs influenced your level of commitment and motivation at work?
- How important is it to you that your employer supports social and environmental causes?
- Would you be more likely to stay at the company because of its commitment to social impact?

- Where possible, collect and analyze data on retention, promotions, skill development, increased community support (such as board service or additional giving), and overall employee engagement for employees who have participated in volunteering or giving programs. Then, compare this data with that of employees who have not participated.

**Sample questions for employee volunteers could include:**

- Have you gained any new skills or experiences from participating in corporate social impact programs?
- Do you feel that participation in these programs has helped with your career growth or networking opportunities?

SCENARIO GUIDE #2

# Sustaining Reporting and Communications Efforts Despite the Risk of Backlash

PRACTICE 1

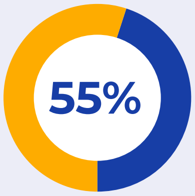
## Use Data to Normalize Your Request

- According to a recent Just Capital report, conservatives and liberals alike agree on the need for increased disclosure on things like a company's product and safety violations; community involvement; political donations and lobbying; AI adoption; and lowest wage levels."[54]
- 81% of Americans favor increased disclosure on Community Involvement (Volunteering and Programs), and 73% on corporate donations—both up from last year.[55]
- Most Americans across the political spectrum think businesses should do more to communicate about their ethics and corporate responsibility efforts. This includes 71% Republicans, 88% Democrats, and 76% Independents.[55]
- 83% of consumers would like brands to be more transparent about their sustainability efforts."[56]

PRACTICE 2

## Assess/ Adjust Your Language to Limit Risk

- Many organizations surveyed plan to remain true to their commitments but are adjusting the language they use to describe their work externally to reduce risk:




According to ACCP's 2025 Pulse Survey, 55% reported a predicted change in language describing the work, where more recent terminology is de-emphasized in favor of softer or less controversial terms. Examples include:

**diversity, equity** **inclusion, belonging**
**ESG, climate change** **sustainability**
**responsible business and community impact**

PRACTICE 3

## Team Up with Legal and/or Compliance

- Work with Legal, Compliance and other internal stakeholders to align on the ways you communicate about your work externally. Develop your own approved language and messaging frameworks to mitigate risk and ensure everyone is on the same page.
- Per practice 2, conduct a language audit of all your materials to ensure that all terminology is consistent with the new frameworks above, represents all stakeholders and initiatives accurately, and is in line with your organization's risk tolerance.

[54] Just Capital report
[55] Carol Cone/Harris Poll
[56] Sharethrough

PRACTICE 4

## Be Detailed, Transparent and Honest in Your Reporting

- Provide as much transparency as possible when reporting your performance metrics.
- Be honest about challenges that may have caused you to fall short of your reported goals.
- Clearly define how you calculate your contributions. In some cases, you may consider defining the methods of data collection (ex: surveys, assumptions, etc.)

### Sample areas of definition you may include:

What types of actions are included in volunteer hours?

What contributions did you directly fund versus catalyze?

Do you also report hours that employees volunteer after work?

Did you fund an entire program or just a portion?

RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT

## Reporting

Demonstrating impact through metrics and other data measures is critical for making a compelling case for your work. But the ins and outs of reporting accurately can be intricate. That's why ACCP and True Impact partnered to develop an impact measurement guide to help you gain a better understanding of reporting concepts like catalytic and contribution claims. You can check it out via the link below—and consider this statement, pulled from our guide, your golden rule:

**"Claim your Impact, No More and No Less"**

# Source Summary

Footnotes were used throughout to share sources. Whenever possible, the direct link—functional at time of publication—is included. This list does not include academic sources.


**3BL**

**Ares Management**

**Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals (ACCP)**

**Authenticity Imperative**

**Bain Capital**

**Benevity**

**Blackbaud**

**Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship (BCCCC)**

**BSR**

**Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose (CECP)**

**Deloitte**

**Edelman**

**EY**

**Fidelity Charitable**

**Gallup**

**Global Strategy Group (GSG)**

**Harris Poll/Carol Cone**

**JUST Capital**

**LinkedIn**

**McKinsey**

**Monster**

**Nonprofit PRO**

**PRWeb**

**ProBono Economics**

**RepTrack**

**Resume.org**

**ShareThrough Equality**

**TagTech**

**The Economic Times**

**William Fleming**

**YouGov Today**


ACCP

Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals

**The Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals (ACCP)** is the preeminent membership organization advancing the practice of corporate social impact. ACCP increases the effectiveness of corporate social impact professionals and their companies by sharing knowledge, fostering solutions, and cultivating inclusive and supportive peer communities. ACCP amplifies the voices of its practitioner network to elevate strategies that work, provide innovative solutions, and expand impact.