Four trends dramatically reshaping corporate philanthropy

Explore why agile social impact is critical.
Drive greater impact to causes that matter

You see it: The need for corporate philanthropy is skyrocketing. Worthy, urgent causes appear literally overnight. And corporations like yours are responding in a big way, generating positive impact for a host of beneficiaries via grantmaking, employee giving, and volunteering programs.

But today, it’s no longer enough to simply put programs in place and contribute X number of dollars or volunteer hours. We must direct dollars and resources strategically: We must direct dollars and resources strategically to where they will do the most good, and in a way that aligns with your organization’s mission and values.

How do you do it? By achieving agile social impact. Agile social impact occurs by tightly aligning your philanthropy efforts with your corporate objectives, responding faster when the need is greatest, and maximizing the impact of your donations.

Be nimble. Be quick. Be now. Organizations realizing agile social impact accomplish real, positive impact and measurable end-results from their investment in philanthropy. They are not just making contributions but addressing urgent needs. By reacting instantly and responding with a variety of connected programs and resources, your organization can realize significantly greater benefits for your beneficiaries and your organization. As they say, “win-win.”

Take a look at four industry-changing trends that are reshaping philanthropy programs. And how agile social impact addresses the issues posed by those trends.
Trend #1: The rise of recurring giving

Year-round philanthropy is charging ahead of the traditional annual giving campaign. Just half a decade ago, most companies’ annual giving campaigns were their primary philanthropic initiative. These programs would typically run for four to eight weeks and were promoted internally with bursts of marketing activities to encourage employees to sign up.

85% of the largest enterprises operate their giving programs year round.

Now, we’re all acknowledging that the need for philanthropy is year-round; and that co-workers have more contribution options outside employment-based annual giving (not to mention that those options are expedited by the many technology channels and devices available to them).

93% of companies that match gifts do so year-round.

Recurring giving spurs more giving. What’s the measurable significance of the shift to recurring giving? Ultimately, recurring gifts provide a steady source of funding for nonprofits, so corporations and their nonprofit partners are better equipped to respond quickly to natural disasters and other unpredictable events. Furthermore, employees donate significantly more overall when they’re allowed to spread their donations over time as opposed to giving single gifts. Recurring givers are also more likely to continue their generosity over the years, with much higher retention rates among monthly givers as opposed to those who give annually.

Powerful impact requires a powerful platform. Enabling recurring gifts, especially when combined with a matching program, is a powerful motivator for increasing engagement and impact. Obviously, that can pose significant burdens on your organization from an infrastructure standpoint. A platform that enables agile social impact should allow for the automation of recurring giving and matching programs. You get visibility into where the dollars or hours are coming from, where they’re going, and the impact they’re having.

42% of donors give more overall when given the opportunity to give reoccuring gifts.
Trend #2: Aligning causes to wider objectives

Focused efforts drive all-around impact. Many leading organizations are now working with fewer nonprofits, but making larger donations. Organizations are also evolving away from general philanthropy toward causes that are more tightly aligned with their corporate DNA and other company initiatives. This reflects a desire to be strategically consistent and to concentrate giving that produces the most impact.

Here’s a sampling of how industries align to chosen causes.

- The energy sector gives its highest outlays of cash to K-12 education and higher education for support of STEM programs, followed by disaster relief.
- Consumer packaged goods figures highest in contributions to the environment followed by culture and arts.
- Healthcare devotes its greatest efforts to health and social services.

Signature programs are in favor. One way companies pursue cause alignment is through signature programs corporate leaders in philanthropy adopting cause that are tightly aligned to specific causes. According to the ACCP, 28% of members have such programs for grantmaking, employee engagement or both. To best support their signature programs, 36% of CEOs said they would seek deeper impact with fewer partners and bigger grants, while 28% said they would focus on employees’ volunteering and giving.

Good for business. Why are some of the greatest corporate leaders in philanthropy adopting cause alignment as their best practice? Well, it’s good business. Both for the overall business, and to maximize philanthropic impact. This kind of optimization requires a platform that enables agile social impact. Accurate and detailed visibility from a reporting and analytics standpoint, in real time, lets you know exactly where your money is going and, most importantly, the impact it’s actually having.

88% of companies with signature programs tie them directly to business objectives.

40% of companies devote their highest percentage of total giving towards their top-priority strategic focused area.

Potential financial return of taking a strategic approach to a corporate citizenship portfolio: $1 Billion.
**Trend #3: Viral engagement increases employee participation**

**New techniques tap employees’ shared enthusiasm for doing good.** Let’s face it, your workforce is changing! And with it, so are the dynamics that motivate employees to participate — or not — in corporate giving and volunteer programs. There is no question that today’s workers look to social media channels to make decisions about what causes to support, where they will invest their time, and where they will direct their dollars. bosses don’t always rule. That means the traditional top-down approach where C-suite executives alone set the philanthropic course for the organization is no longer viable. Harnessing the grassroots enthusiasm that employees share for doing good is in.

**These viral engagement techniques** set the best practices standard for the industry. Personalized dashboards allow employees to clearly and immediately see their individual impact on the programs they participate in and care about. That visibility and measurement is critical to deepening their connection to your cause.

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<th>Millennials are more likely to volunteer if their:</th>
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<tr>
<td>co-workers participate</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<td>supervisor participates</td>
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Competition between individuals, teams, regions, or business units drives higher engagement with volunteering and giving programs. In fact, 43% of workers say they are more likely to give if competition (also known as. “gamification”) is involved.

Activity feeds connect workers at an emotional level to corporate causes and allow them to post and share with their peers. Mimicking popular social media platforms, the feeds maximize connection and awareness, and build “buzz” around programs.

**Buy-in and contributions increase.** A platform that enables agile social impact harnesses these powerful, peer-driven techniques. You’ll see immediate increases in buy-in, participation, and contribution. Perhaps most importantly, you’ll directly connect your employees to the highest mission of your company — to make the world a better place for all.
Trend #4: Global optimization with a local spin

As international giving increases, there’s more focus on local (in-country) impact.

Global giving is on the rise with steady increases year-over-year as more companies enter markets overseas. These companies understand the benefits of establishing meaningful connections and addressing local needs when they take their business to new markets. They generate goodwill, build a local reputation, and are often better able to attract local talent. Global philanthropy continues to be business-related. While the largest companies in North America spread their generosity to 189 countries, the countries receiving the most societal investment tend to be the larger economies in Europe, along with India and China.¹¹

It’s not easy to respond to highly variable location conditions while aligning with corporate goals. Organizations that do global programs successfully, don’t dictate to local offices. Instead, they take a collaborative approach. They broadly invest in goodwill across their strategic geographies and give their local teams freedom to allocate 20-30% of the resources to allow for local cultural differences and support region-specific causes. That strikes an excellent balance that delivers on a global strategy while creating the right kind of flexible local impact.

Visibility and agility matter. Optimizing worldwide giving programs to be both globally consistent and locally relevant requires a unique technology platform. One with a highly flexible workflow engine that enforces worldwide policies and approvals while enabling locally relevant decision making. Additionally, it should integrate with other systems for accounting and other essential functions to deliver access to accurate, real-time data at multiple levels for allocating, tracking and measuring impact at the required degree of detail. In combination, these capabilities give local geographies the flexibility to be most-efficient and impactful. In sum, agile social impact.
Achieve agile social impact with Bonterra Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

By adopting a platform that enables agile social impact, you set your organization up to do the following:

Respond immediately to emerging events. The demand for quicker corporate giving is ubiquitous, whether driven by geopolitical or economic factors, human error, or the global impact of climate change. In just a six-week period, Bonterra Corporate Social Responsibility (formerly CyberGrants) customers deployed more than 60 disaster relief programs, hitting $12 million in donations to the Red Cross, with most launched in under 24 hours.

Innovate faster with new programs and initiatives. Every organization is different. Yours has the opportunity to uniquely leverage your own employees, products, and services for donations and volunteering. Employee assistance programs allow employees to aid their fellow employees in time of need. In-kind giving programs, either corporate- or employee-directed, can take an infinite number of forms. Charitable spending accounts allow employees to donate a set-aside amount to the causes of their choice. Service corps programs “loan” corporate talent to nonprofit organizations to help solve business or technology or operational problems. The ability to automate these programs via software is the key to delivering faster innovation.

Optimize continuously to increase impact. Knowing exactly where your dollars are going enables you to constantly fine-tune. Social impact leaders face increasing pressure to demonstrate the impact they are producing for the community and the company. What’s the secret sauce to validating impact? Extensive analytic capabilities that deliver a very clear, and very real-time, picture of where money is going, allowing you to continuously adjust and refine, and deliver even greater and more focused impact.

SEE HOW YOUR ORGANIZATION CAN ACHIEVE AGILE SOCIAL IMPACT.
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