

# B Corp Impact Report

2022-2023



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The Science of Investment



## 1. Leadership Letter

**We were proud to celebrate Aspect's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September 2022, representing a momentous landmark for our firm. Since inception, we have focused not only on developing a range of systematic investment strategies, but have also emphasised robust corporate governance, a unique culture and a desire to have a broader social impact. In that context, our certification as a B Corporation just a few months before this anniversary, in June 2022, really served to underline the success we have had in creating a business that aligns with the objectives we set ourselves back in 1997.**

This accreditation represents independent validation of our efforts to operate in a manner consistent with the firm's values and confirms that we are running our business thoughtfully and sustainably, with due consideration to our employees, suppliers, investors and the environment. Just as importantly, it also provides a roadmap for our future Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives, as we strive to remain at the forefront of industry best practice and continue to meet the ever-evolving expectations of our clients and current and future employees, who increasingly expect us to demonstrate our wider impact. This represents a huge achievement for the business, and one we are exceptionally proud of.

In the year since certification, we have focused on a number of existing and new initiatives spanning the B Corp impact areas, which are further described in this report. Of particular note, on the environmental front, we have begun offsetting 110% of our carbon footprint in order to become a Climate Positive Business, partnering with Earthly, a fellow BCorp, to invest in the Rimba Raya Peatland Protection project in 2022. For 2023 we put the choice of Earthly projects to an employee vote and our colleagues have chosen to support the Rimba Raya project again.

Two of the impact areas in which we scored most highly in the B Impact Assessment are "Workers" and "Community", and we have continued to look for ways to improve in these areas over the last 12 months as well as continuing a number of existing initiatives. Among other things, we were proud to become certified as a "Disability Confident Employer" under the UK government's scheme, which recognises Aspect as an employer that goes the extra mile to ensure disabled people are given a fair chance. Additionally, under the auspices of our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee we have now formally rolled out a reverse mentoring scheme which seeks to raise awareness of the challenges diverse employees face, to ensure we are doing everything we can to help tackle these issues and to support inclusivity by closing generational, hierarchy and diversity gaps.

Improving diversity remains a key focus for us, as we see it as crucial to driving innovation and to achieving better outcomes for our investors, our people and our business. To that end, we have continued to support a range of grassroots initiatives which aim to increase the pool of diverse talent within our industry, including #10000BlackInterns, GAIN (Girls Are INvestors), SEO (Sponsors for Educational Opportunity) and EmployAbility. The value of these schemes is highlighted by the fact that we hired two new permanent employees into our Research team during 2022 who had previously completed internships with us through such initiatives. To complete this picture, we will also add another apprentice to our ranks this year, consistent with our long-term support of the UK's apprenticeship scheme. This will take our current

*Looking ahead, there are a range of new initiatives already planned which will further align us with industry best practice on a number of fronts, as well as many existing initiatives which we will continue to focus on over the coming 12 months, as outlined in the final section of this report.*



complement to five apprentices, in addition to three now-permanent members of staff who initially joined us as apprentices - one of whom graduated via a degree apprenticeship in May with a first class BSc in Digital and Technology Solutions. Such scope for progression demonstrates the significant value this scheme offers.

Finally, our Charity Committee has been as active as ever in support of a wide range of charitable causes over the last 12 months. It was particularly pleasing to be able to host our first in-person charity event for three years in September 2022, with a “Lapathon” around Hyde Park contributing to almost £20k raised by employees overall for our 2022 Charity of the Year, FareShare - an amount which was matched by Aspect. As well as continuing to support a number of ongoing and employee-nominated causes throughout the year, the Charity Committee is currently in the final stages of planning another company-wide sponsored event in the autumn, for which our employees will once again select a partner charity.

Looking ahead, there are a range of new initiatives already planned which will further align us with industry best practice on a number of fronts, as well as many existing initiatives which we will continue to focus on over the coming 12 months, as outlined in the final section of this report.

Yours faithfully,

## 2. Journey to certification

Since its inception in 1997, Aspect has always sought to operate in the interests of a broad group of stakeholders, including our clients, employees and local community, broader society and the environment. In this respect, the overarching principles of the B Corp movement are closely aligned with Aspect’s values and culture.

The certification process itself provided validation that we are already operating the business to high standards from a social, environmental and governance perspective. However, it also enabled us to identify what we can do better, which we are now focused on addressing. Our ambition is to improve incrementally on our overall score upon recertification every three years, and we also aim to act as a standard-setter for industry best-practice.

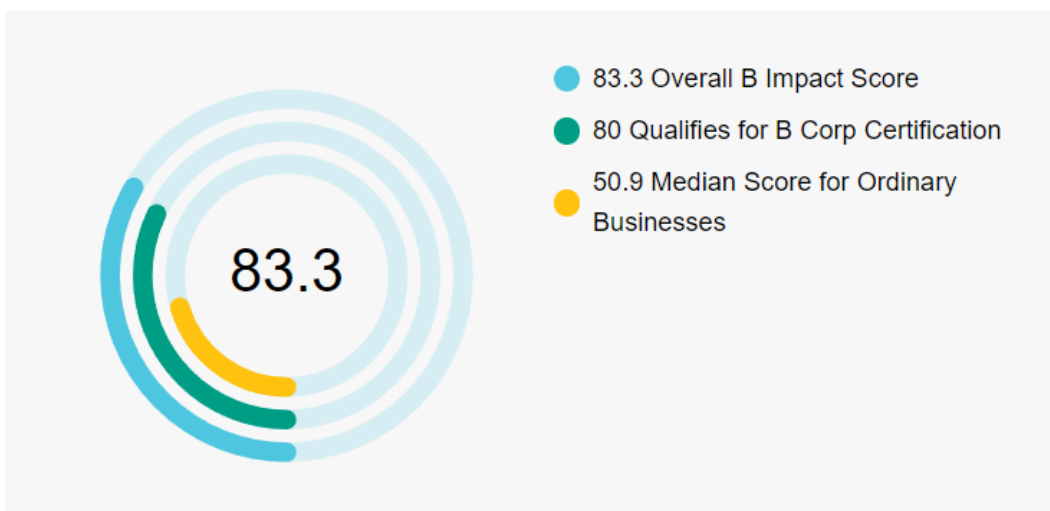
To mark the occasion of our certification, we hosted a “Big Brunch” event in our staff hub, which involved a great selection of B Corp sourced food and drink as well as a display of photo submissions from a B Corp-inspired staff photo competition. This was followed by a presentation covering our journey to certification, what certification means to Aspect and how our staff can all contribute to our ongoing efforts to improve as a business. Employee buy-in is vital to achieving our ambition to continue enhancing our impact, and we have consequently put significant effort into celebrating and communicating our certification internally over the last 12 months, as well as emphasising the role that all employees have to play. It has been great to see our pride in obtaining B Corp certification reflected in that of our employees.



Taken during Aspect's Big Brunch event and a shot from our staff photography competition.

As a certified B Corp, Aspect is now part of a community of likeminded businesses with whom we can engage to share ideas and best practice. Certification as a B Corp officialises our long-term commitment to building a sustainable business and provides us with a framework to ensure we continue to operate the business in accordance with the highest social and environmental standards as these evolve over time. We are proud to be part of the B Corp community and aim to support other members, and prospective members, however possible.

### 3. B Impact score and goals



Governance	Workers	Community	Environment	Customers
17.7	38.2	15.3	9.9	1.7



## 4. Impact Report

Table 1: Impact: Last 12 months

Objective	Impact area(s)	What we did
Enhance approach to carbon offsetting	Environment	<p>Partnered with <a href="#">Earthly</a> to calculate accurate carbon emissions, including a consideration of our supply chain and employees working from home and commuting.</p> <p>Offset 110% of our carbon footprint in order to become a Climate Positive Business.</p> <p>Invested in the <a href="#">Rimba Raya Peatland Protection project</a>, a biodiversity project in Borneo which is protecting the land and working with local communities to contribute to all 17 of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.</p>
Formalise reverse mentoring scheme	Workers	<p>Reverse mentoring scheme was formally rolled out via a series of internal initiatives in H2 2022, following a successful trial involving three pairs of employees.</p> <p>As of 30 June 2023, ten employees have so far participated or are participating in the scheme.</p>
Become a certified "Disability Confident Employer"	Workers/ Community	<p>Disability Confident is a UK government scheme which supports employers to make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to the workplace.</p> <p>The aims of the scheme include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• challenging attitudes towards disability;</li> <li>• increasing understanding of disability;</li> <li>• removing barriers to disabled people and those with long-term health conditions; and</li> <li>• ensuring that disabled people have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.</li> </ul> <p>There are three levels to the scheme, with the "Disability Confident Employer" certification representing Level 2. Aspect obtained this certification in March 2023 following an online self-assessment process.</p> <p>Disability Confident Employers are recognised as going the extra mile to make sure disabled people get a fair chance.</p>
Continue to support employees' financial, physical and mental wellbeing	Workers	<p>Materially increased Aspect's employer contributions to employees' pensions.</p>
Continue to focus on grassroots DEI initiatives	Community	<p>Continued to support a range of grassroots initiatives which aim to increase the pool of diverse talent within our industry, including #10000BlackInterns, GAIN (Girls Are INvestors), SEO (Sponsors for Educational Opportunity) and EmployAbility. A total of seven interns have undertaken summer internships at Aspect via these schemes over the last 12 months, or are due to begin them shortly.</p> <p>We are proud to be founder members of MyBigCareer's "Future Makers" programme. We welcomed a class of young computer scientists from a local school to our</p>



		offices for an Insight Day in 2022 to discuss career paths and options, and we are looking forward to the 2023 Insight Day which is scheduled for July.
Continue to provide material financial support to selected causes via our Charity Committee	Community	<p>Employees raised over £20,000 for our 2022 Charity of the Year, Fareshare, which was matched by Aspect.</p> <p>Additionally, the Charity Committee has provided financial support to over 30 ongoing and employee-nominated causes throughout the last 12 months.</p>

**Table 2: Impact: Next 12 months**

Objective	Impact area(s)
Implement local and environmentally-friendly purchasing policies	Environment
Help employees to reduce the climate impact of their virtual office spaces	Environment
Reduce paper waste by implementing click-to-print printing	Environment
Encourage and more accurately track employee volunteering	Community
Continue to support employees' financial, physical and mental wellbeing, including launching a financial wellness programme	Workers
Review pension plan, look to ensure that a socially-responsible investing option is available	Workers
Review policy around virtual meetings and corporate travel	Environment
Continue to focus on grassroots DEI initiatives	Community
Continue to provide material financial support to selected causes via our Charity Committee	Community

# Notes & Disclaimers

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