

The Collaborators

Impact Report 2022/2023

We are Collaborators



Our highlights

78%

of our spend took place within
50 miles of our office, demonstrating
our commitment to supporting
the local economy

Flexible working practices and use of
digital technology ensured a modest
2022 environmental footprint –
equivalent to the average UK resident

10.5 tonnes
of CO₂e

We retained all our staff over the
course of the pandemic and are
developing new ways to support them
with new wellbeing activities and

wages adjusted
to the rate
of inflation



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Foreword

Our journey to gain B Corp accreditation has been both enlightening and provocative. It's made us question our entire approach to how we do business and indeed *who* we do business with.

Diving deep into the detail of what kind of business we want to be has felt very natural. How we are structured, how we look after people, thinking about our impact on the environment and our own community aligns with what we always set out to achieve. On the other hand, the degree of data capture, record taking, measuring and gathering evidence has been a huge and surprisingly satisfying undertaking. Our frameworks and structures are so much better now – having everything documented makes us fully accountable.

Below is a summary of some of the things we've been implementing. The report gives you more detail of our impact and ambitions. I hope in a year's time I can be writing about even more positive moves towards becoming a force for good in the business of food and drink branding.

Post-Covid, we've taken the opportunity to think about the advantages hybrid working brings to our team and our work/life balance. Working more flexible hours is better for all of us, but we also enjoy the time we do have in the office together. We're finding this added flexibility so much more productive and rewarding than daily trips to the office. We mainly opt to be in two to three times a week, with Tuesday being one of the most popular days – perhaps because it's the day we offer on-line yoga class, which we usually set up in the board room.

Another change brought in to enhance staff wellbeing is a nine-day fortnight for full-time employees. And on Fridays we have the option of an early open and close, so that we can enjoy a longer weekend.

Our Diversity & Inclusion workstream has seen us undertake a new approach to our internship programme as well as starting important conversations around recruitment and the benefit of a diverse team. Design is seriously lacking in diversity. Only 20% of Creative Directors are women, even fewer run a creative business and the number of designers from minority ethnic groups is shockingly low. We will continue to work hard to help shift this imbalance.

We have always had a light environmental footprint, but we are now much more conscious of every aspect of our impact. How often we travel to see clients, our method of transport or sharing transport, our office energy needs and waste.

One big change for us has been our supply chain. Again, it's a small impact compared to most, but having resorted to Amazon for office supplies during Covid, we now use local businesses with more transparent business models. Nearly 90% of our suppliers are local to us.

This year and future years will see a continued focus on all our B Corp commitments and ensure that everyone in the business has a chance to input on how we do things. We have established both team and individual ESG objectives and that is now written into everyone's review process.

We are also in the early stages of creating a dedicated ESG manager position. This new role will be taken on by our office and financial manager - Lisa. She will undertake a continual stream of training to keep us all better informed, help us question our actions and record our continual journey to being the best business we can possibly be.

But of course, the biggest impact we can have, is our influence on our clients. We are hard-wired to consider ESG criteria in our strategic and creative responses. One small packaging change to a global food client could have an incredibly positive effect. Helping a start-up business to think carefully about their ESG policies and ethics from the get-go can mean one more business on the right path of change.

I believe that when businesses strive for better and are a force for good, financial success naturally follows. When profit is the only marker of success, businesses eventually suffer and are forced to reinvent themselves. Putting people, planet and true purpose at the core of a business, sets it up for the future.

For The Collaborators, the outcome of nearly two years' work has set us up to be the business we want to be for today and tomorrow. We now have the foundations of an eternal business model. A business with ethics and standards that can be passed on from one generation to the next. As a business owner nearing my sixth decade that is incredibly reassuring. And doing the right thing makes for a better night's sleep too!

All the best,

Jayne

Jayne Noblet
Founder



Our purpose

To help remarkable people, achieve remarkable things

Our mission

To inspire, challenge and encourage each other and our clients to drive change for the better

Our values

People First

Together we're stronger. We work as a team.
We look out for each other. We are Collaborators.

Force for Good

Drive positive change and create a better
future for people and planet.

Think Beyond

Strive for better. Add value. Be curious.
Be proactive. Push boundaries.

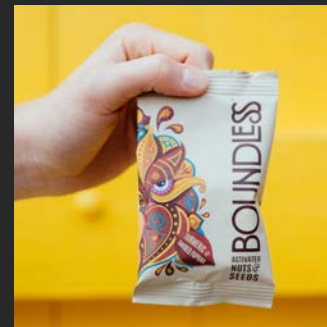
Artistry in Everything

Deliver creativity, craftsmanship and beauty.
Care about the details.



Our business activity

We are specialists in food and drinks branding.
We are on a mission to inspire and support positive change.





Our B Corp
endeavours



Working towards B Corp accreditation

B Corp Certified businesses are audited and verified as having met high standards of performance, accountability and transparency on factors from employee benefits and charitable giving to supply chain practices and input materials.

We are determined to become a *Force for Good* and join a community of like-minded businesses who day-in, day-out, conduct their activities responsibly and have a positive impact on people and planet.

We advocate for B Corp principles with our clients and via The Seed Fund.

B Corp: our five pillars

Governance

Workers

Community

Environment

Customers



Governance

We have sealed our commitment to be a Force for Good by adding our mission statement to our Articles of Association – our mission is locked.

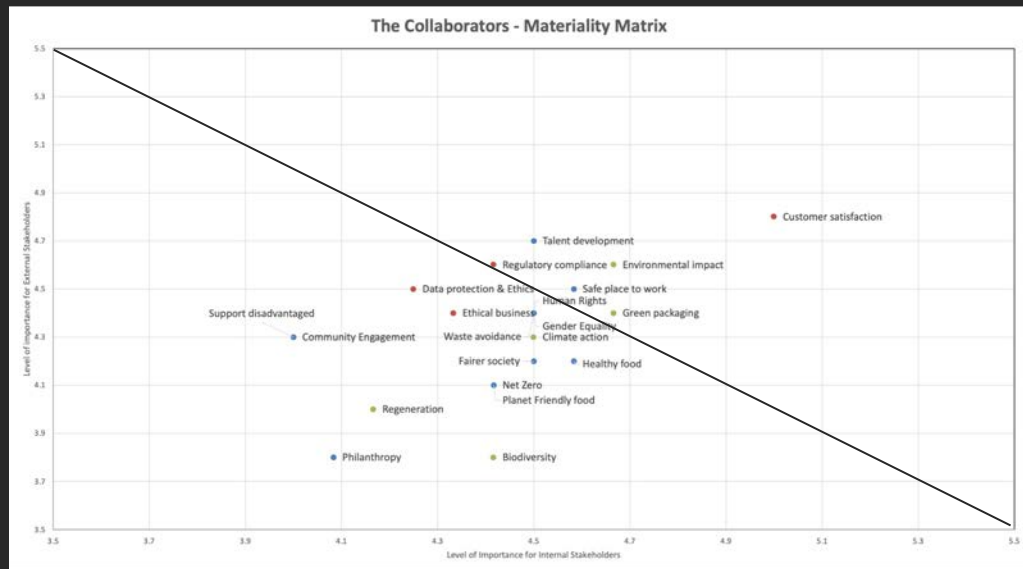
To further our efforts, we have ensured that our entire team have been trained on the basic principles of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG).

We have defined key strategic workstreams to make sure we live our mission day-to-day:

- Promoting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in our company and our industry
- ESG Advocacy within our community and with our clients
- Pro bono work via The Seed Fund and charitable donations to charities that are aligned with our values and our work in food and drink
- Bringing our suppliers on-board and reframing our selection criteria for new suppliers

Materiality Analysis

To ensure that we focus on the things that matter to our stakeholders, we asked them how significant ESG activities were to their success and their relationship with The Collaborators.





Workers

We are a team of 14 (nine employees and five long-term contractors), many of whom have been with The Collaborators for more than ten years. We are proud to have been able to support all of them during the pandemic (including our contractors) and were also able to provide a one-off cost of living bonus.

We pay fair wages to all, and gave pay rises above the UK annual average (5.1%). Our six-monthly reviews and ongoing training and development help everyone achieve their full potential.

We treat full time and part time employees equally and employee satisfaction is at 91%.

We create a safe and secure workplace and are happy to report that there were no Health & Safety incidents over the past year. We provide pastoral care via line managers and look out for each other with daily team catch-ups. Our weekly yoga sessions and lunchtime walks also help improve wellbeing.

With a female-owner and all-women leadership team we are creating visibility and actively contributing to a more balanced and inclusive creative industry.

The Collaborators: our workforce

14 Strong
Team

8 Years Average
Length of Service

91% Employee
Satisfaction

Salary benchmarking Against Design Business
Association (DBA) Average

Age Range Spanning

5 decades

All-women

Leadership Team

Community

We love the beauty, creativity and independent spirit of the West Country and we find our talent locally. 78% of our total running costs are spent within a 50 mile radius of the office.

Bristol is one of the most diverse cities in the country. Our DEI effort extends to the community in trying to attract talent from all backgrounds to our business.





Community: The Seed Fund

Our main community efforts are built around the time we give to start-ups and local companies to build their brands and businesses.

As founders of The Seed Fund – a purely philanthropic programme to support young food and drink businesses – in 2022 we spent 365 hours of our team's time to mentor and develop The Seed Fund winner.

The Seed Fund was initially established with the support of entrepreneurs who wanted to help local food businesses and give back to the community. Now in its eleventh year, The Seed Fund is a national programme with a focus on supporting businesses that prioritise people and planet over profit.

Environment

At the start of 2022 we were operating from a three-unit office on Greenway Farm on the edge of Bristol. Flexible working enabled us to reduce office space, relinquishing one unit, and consequently, reducing our environmental footprint.

We are working with the team to minimise our use of resources: energy, water, paper. The future of the office printer is still being debated.

We calculated our carbon footprint for the first time in 2022. It amounts to 10.5 tonnes of CO₂e for the calendar year which is equivalent to the output of the average UK resident.

We are however working towards reducing our energy consumption further. We keep our business travel to a minimum and encourage the use of public transport.

We have taken charge of our recycling. Previously it was the responsibility of our landlord and integrated with general waste.



ESG influence: Jamu Wild Water

We approach all our projects with a view to influence positive change both strategically and via the deliverables. Jamu Wild Water was a project where we were able to do both.

We helped Tahi and Patrick to launch an all-natural prebiotic, zero sugar, naturally flavoured sparkling water. We developed the big idea of 'Rewilding from the inside-out' and defined the brand's mission to help young people connect with the magic of nature.

Every aspect of the business, big and small, revolves around this mission: for example Jamu pledges 10% of profits to charities that improve access to nature. Promotional materials are printed on stock seeded with native wild flowers that can be planted or 'rewilded' after use; business cards are printed on recycled cotton paper. Packaging is plastic-free and recyclable. And digital is only ever used to encourage analogue, real-life interactions with nature. The Jamu website for example, is an interactive, practical hub to inspire families to protect, restore and enjoy nature in easy, meaningful ways.



Customers

There's a clue in our name: We are Collaborators. We work as true partners to our clients to deliver the best outcome for their business and to help them achieve their ambitions. Their success is what drives us.

To help create strong and productive working relationships with our clients, on a day-to-day basis we conduct a combination of face-to-face meetings, Zoom meetings and digital tools including the project management portal, Basecamp. Basecamp enables a collaborative and more responsive way of working. It ensures project visibility and alignment on all sides.

The latest engagement survey shows that our clients enjoy working with us and value our contribution to their business.

How do you rate your overall experience working with The Collaborators?

1 = very poor, 5 = excellent



Testimonials

“

Good at understanding complex branding challenges and making things simple. Always deliver what they say they're going to do and sometimes they surprise you, going above and beyond or producing work that was even better than expected.

”

“

Innovative, inventive,
supportive, skillful,
lovely, lovely people.

”

“

Friendly and truly
collaborative team.

”

“

Open and flexible, with
great creative work.

”

“

Personal, agile,
the people, very
high-quality design.

”



Our ambitions for 2023/2024

- DEI targets
- Carbon reduction
- Including ESG criteria to The Seed Fund
- Switching company's ownership to employees

Conclusion

Understanding our impact and working towards B Corp certification has been a hugely rewarding and enlightening experience. So much of what we did instinctively has now been formalised and our commitment to putting people and planet above profit has been set into the foundations of our business.

But there is still so much that we can do to improve things further; creating a secure, inspiring and more diverse workplace. And of course, doubling down on our efforts to support the environment – both within our own business and by encouraging our clients to create positive change in their organisations.

Although we live in uncertain times, we can control what we do and how our behaviour impacts others.
We look forward to a brighter 2023!



Thank you

