



B Lab Statement on aaff's B Corp Certification

B Lab's independent Standards Advisory Council has rendered the following decision and guidance regarding eligibility for B Corp Certification for companies providing tax advisory services:

"Companies in the tax advisory industry are eligible for B Corp Certification if they are able to confirm that their tax philosophy, used to provide services and recommendations to clients, aligns with the company specific principles listed in B Lab's framework, specifically, 1) the tax advice provided appropriately reflects the actual amount of income generated by the client over time; and, 2) the tax advice provided to a client for a jurisdiction appropriately reflects the actual operations of the client in that jurisdiction."

aaff is required to disclose a summary of how it complies with the above requirements as a part of its B Corp Certification. For more information on the review process, please refer to B Lab's position statement on Companies that Provide Tax Advisory Services and B Corp Certification [here](#).

Summary of Company

aaff is an accounting firm based in the Netherlands providing various services such as accountancy, Audit, International Tax Service, Legal Services, Salary & Staffing, Valuation and Mergers and acquisitions. The company's services related to tax includes advisory in Income Tax, Corporate Tax, Wage Tax, Value Added Tax (VAT) for individuals and corporations, and Transfer Pricing, Restructuring/Reorganizing Corporations and Partnerships for international corporations wishing to establish business in the Netherlands. Most clients the company works with are local Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and a small part does include "High-net-worth Individual" (HNWI) and (large) multinational companies. 15% of the company's annual revenue is from the services related to tax advisory. In terms of fees for tax-related services, hourly fees are generally charged. Occasionally, a fixed price is agreed. The fees per hour are mainly based on the wage costs and the experience of the Tax Advisor involved.

aaff Policies and Practices

In alignment with the requirements and principles stated in B Lab's position statement for companies that provide tax advisory services, aaff has a philosophy statement for the tax advice that they provide to their clients and their own engagement with governments and tax regulators, which has been shared with all their employees. The philosophy statement reads as follows:



“aaff is proud of our status as a Certified B Corp. As part of that commitment and in recognition of the role that taxes play in contributing to a healthy society, we use our professional judgment to provide advice regarding tax positions with multiple potential interpretations that accurately reflects the income and operations of the client in each jurisdiction for which the client seeks our advice based on the details of the client’s income and operations provided to us, and do not advise clients to take a position unless we believe it has at least a reasonable basis for being sustained by applicable tax authorities. If a client takes a tax position despite our advice to the contrary, we reserve the right to stop work for and terminate such client. In accordance with this tax philosophy, we engage with government and tax authorities on a collaborative basis and limit our advocacy activities with such authorities to work for specific clients in need of regulatory compliance assistance. We maintain compliance with this policy through regular training of our employees and partners, internal policies on conduct, engagement documentation with our clients, and client retention reviews.”

aaff is compliant with Dutch tax law and regulations. The company works based on a Horizontal Monitoring agreement with the Dutch tax authorities, according to [standards](#) that have been approved by the tax authorities.

All professionals who are authorized as signatories working within the company’s advisory practice are subject to the regulations and standards of the professional organization of which these professionals are members of. As part of their onboarding process, they follow an obligatory course that focuses on issues such as the company’s role as tax advisers, applicable rules & regulations and ethical issues.

In preventing the risks of providing tax advisory services that could result in aggressive tax avoidance, training in dealing with moral dilemmas is provided and ethical issues are a part of regular team meetings. Policy on specific tax issues is also prescribed by the [national Tax Knowledge Centre \(Bureau Vaktechniek Belastingadvies\)](#); ethical aspects are part of such policies. Regular technical training sessions following new fiscal developments, mandatory second review for non-routine advisory are included in this.

The company’s tax professionals are members of the [Register Belastingadviseurs](#) (RB). The RB has issued regulations on professional practice ([code of conduct](#)), to which all its members are subject; these members are also subject to [disciplinary law](#).

In addition, all employees are subject to the code of conduct of the [Royal Netherlands Institute of Chartered Accountants \(NBA\)](#), which in short requires all employees to adhere to the principles of professionalism, integrity, objectivity, professional competence & due diligence, and confidentiality.



The tax professionals are subject to the same quality policy as the other professionals within the organization, with additional rules specifically for tax professionals which are laid down in the Company's Internal Manual for the tax practice. The company ensures annual trainings on business ethics and integrity (including The Dutch Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing [Prevention] Act [WWFT] regulations) and annual formal renewal of the individual commitment to the principles of objectivity, integrity and confidentiality. The manual also provides clear guidelines on the responsibility of reporting any red-flags related to unusual transactions, inaccurate information and other situations that could be used for evasion/tax avoidance such as restructuring or cross-border constructions.

The company does not provide Tax related services to companies/individuals in low tax jurisdictions and does not participate in the development, mass marketing and implementation of tax avoidance schemes for its clients. Furthermore, new Tax Advisory services are first reviewed by the internal expertise, quality and compliance center.

The Netherlands considers tax avoidance to be highly undesirable and implements [European regulations](#), among other things, in national legislation, and the company abides by these principles.

The company aims to be a partner for its clients by helping them to fulfill their legal, fiscal and societal responsibilities, not a facilitator in evading these responsibilities. The company provides its advisory services in line with the philosophy that: "A member is obliged to perform his/her duties in an honest, careful and proper manner, to comply with laws and regulations and to refrain from anything else that is contrary to the honor and dignity of the profession.", as stated by RB in its code of conduct (article 1) on tax advisory services.

B Lab's Public Complaints Process

Any party may submit a complaint about a current B Corp through [B Lab's Public Complaint Process](#). Grounds for complaint include:

1. Intentional misrepresentation of practices, policies, and/or claimed outcomes during the [certification process](#), or
2. Breach of the core values articulated in our [Declaration of Interdependence](#) within the B Corp Community.