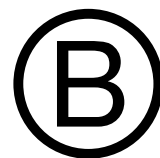




Annual Impact Report 2021

Society

Certified



Corporation



Contents

Our Purpose

“We bring about positive change around the world by placing exceptional people into meaningful roles within good organisations”

Our Mission

“Society will be the retained recruitment partner of choice for responsible businesses and purpose-driven organisations”

Section 1 4-13

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Introduction | 4 |
| The Story So Far | 6 |
| Our 2021 Clients and the SDGs | 8 |
| Search Highlights from 2021 | 10 |
| 2021's Vital Statistics | 11 |
| Last Year's Goals | 12 |

Section 2 14-19

| | |
|--------|----|
| People | 14 |
| Planet | 16 |
| Profit | 18 |

Section 3 20-22

| | |
|---------------|----|
| Looking Ahead | 22 |
|---------------|----|

Section 4 24-31

| | |
|--|----|
| Our Structure, Governance, and Ownership | 24 |
| Our Values | 26 |
| Our Strategy | 28 |
| Our Partners | 30 |



Introduction

Society has produced annual impact reports like this for nearly a decade. We see them as our chance to take stock at the end of each year, and as an opportunity to update our stakeholders on the work and activities of the firm.

In this year's Impact Report, we have sought to cover all the usual ground, but also to put a tighter focus on three areas of crucial importance:



People



Planet



Profit

After the tumultuous experience of 2020, it was a relief to see the business return to growth and profitability in 2021. A particular highlight of the year was opening an office in New Zealand at the end of Q1. For me, this marked the point where we truly 'came of age' as a global business. From when the sun rises in Auckland on Monday morning until it sets in New York on Friday evening, we now have colleagues working continually somewhere around the world. That's a hugely exciting development that will enable us to assist an ever more international portfolio of clients in the years ahead.

2021 was far from plain sailing though. As well as the ongoing trials of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was also the year where climate change roared back onto the agenda. A run of devastating draughts, wildfires, and floods looked briefly like they might galvanise the world for decisive action at last. Sadly, the disappointing half-measures of COP26 fell short of what was needed. As a business though, we are entirely clear about the existential level of the threat our planet is facing. We are therefore doing everything we can to rise to the moment. This includes conducting the first thorough audit of our emissions footprint, but also supporting wider campaigns like the [Better Business Act](#) that might encourage more companies to join the movement for a cleaner, greener, and fairer future.

The following report captures some of that story. We hope you are encouraged by what you read, but would also welcome feedback and suggestions about further improvements we can embrace.



Simon Lucas
Managing Director

The Story So Far

- 2009 Society Ltd incorporates in the UK
- 2010 Society hires its first full-time colleagues
- 2011 Society becomes a founding signatory of the Voluntary Code of Conduct for Executive Search Firm
- 2014 Society establishes The Society Foundation
- 2015 Society becomes an accredited Living Wage employer
- 2016 Society launches an office in New York, USA
- 2019 Society becomes a certified B Corporation, declares a Climate Emergency, and commits to Net Zero by 2030
- 2020 Society survives the COVID-19 pandemic without a single redundancy
- 2021 Society launches an office in Auckland, New Zealand



As a certified B Corporation, Society is part of a global movement of companies reinventing business as a force for good. Our commitment to responsibility is now baked into our very Articles of Association. Society is also independently audited every three years in line with rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency. Being a B Corp gives us a framework to measure our approach and to keep driving continual improvements.





















The Society Foundation is an independent charity we helped to set up. We fund it with an annual donation equal to at least 10% of our profits. It then gives grants to organisations that help potentially vulnerable people back into paid employment. The beneficiaries it seeks to prioritise include the recently homeless or vulnerably housed, ex-offenders, and 16-24 year-olds not in employment, education, or training.

Our 2021 Clients and the SDGs

Here is just a small selection of the clients we were fortunate to work with during 2021, and here's how they relate to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 NO POVERTY  |  |
| 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING  |      |
| 4 QUALITY EDUCATION  |      |
| 5 GENDER EQUALITY  |  |
| 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH  |   |
| 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  |    |

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES  |  |
| 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES  |    |
| 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  |  |
| 13 CLIMATE ACTION  |    |
| 15 LIFE ON LAND  |  |
| 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS  |    |

Search Highlights from 2021

Here are just a few of the successful appointments Society advised on during 2021:

Three appointments putting their mark on global education



Dhivya O'Connor joins United World Schools as Chief Executive Officer
[Read more](#)



Faith Abiodun joins United World Colleges (UWC) as International Executive Director
[Read more](#)



Andy Pitchford joins the University of Westminster as Head of CETI
[Read more](#)

Three appointments shaking up the not-for-profit arena



Sherie Holding joins Pancreatic Cancer UK (PCUK) as Director of People and Culture
[Read more](#)



Amy Lavine joins GLAAD as Director of Institutional Giving
[Read more](#)



Toby Wicks joins RE:ACT Disaster Response as Chief Executive
[Read more](#)

Three appointments making an impact in the private sector



David Herbert joins the Lansdowne Club as Chief Executive Officer & Secretary
[Read more](#)

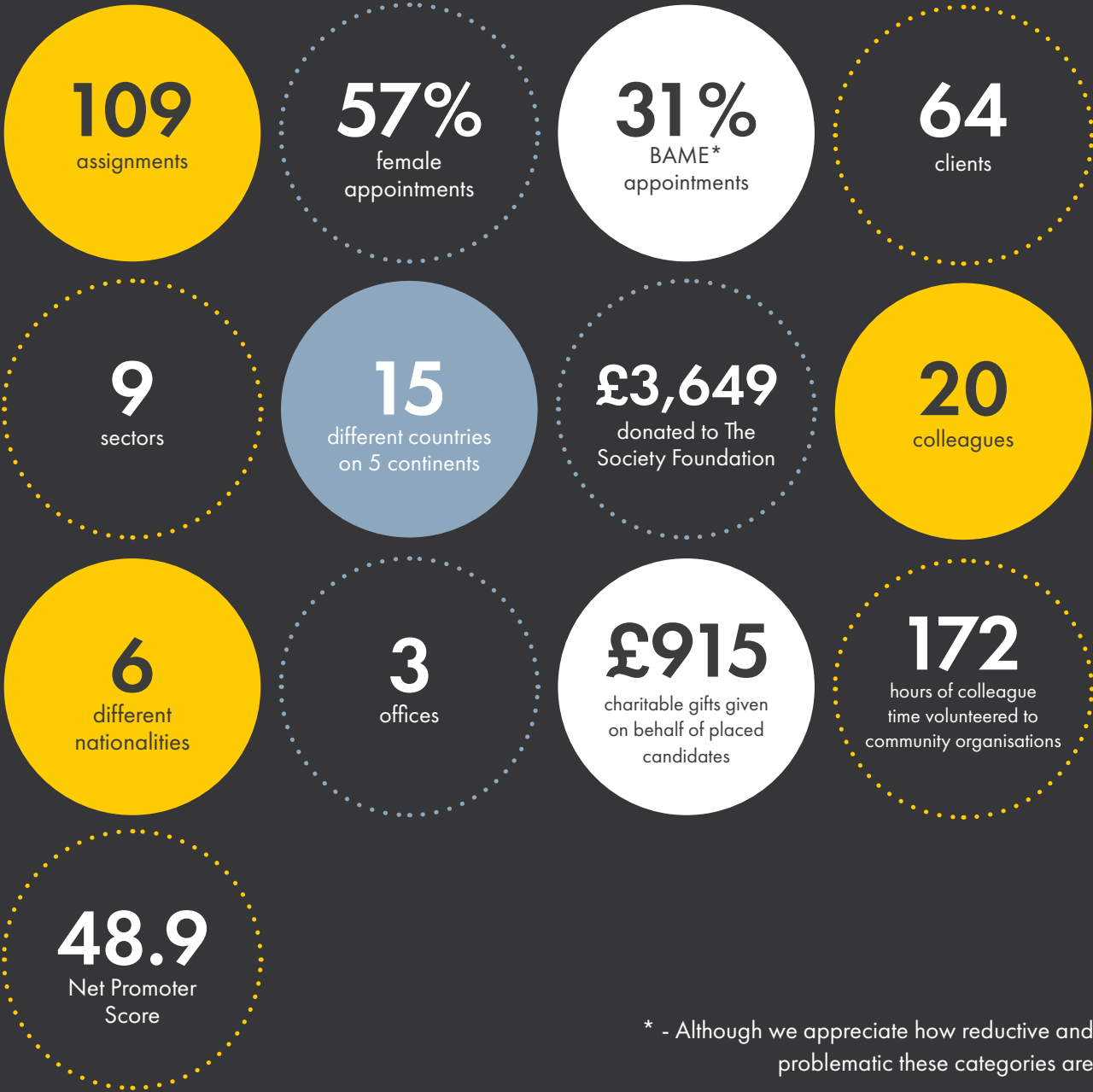


Monica Jandrisits joins re-wrap as Chief Executive
[Read more](#)



Suzanne El-Moursi joins BrightHive as Chief Operating Officer
[Read more](#)

2021's Vital Statistics



* - Although we appreciate how reductive and problematic these categories are

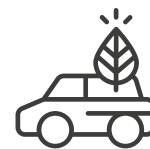
Last Year's Goals

"Working towards our B Corp re-certification with a target score of 95+"

We submitted our re-certification at the end of February 2022 with a provisional score of 98. Even with some adjustment during verification, we feel confident of achieving a marked increase on our current score of 86.9.

"Further fleshing out our Net Zero roadmap"

We have now independently established our baseline emissions (more details on Page 17) and begun setting reduction targets.



"Creating ED&I-specific materials that we can share with clients"

In December 2021, we launched our Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit. This is a succinct compendium of practical actions that any organisation can take in order to improve their hiring practices.



"Organising focus groups with candidates from under-represented demographics"

We held two in-depth focus groups during September and October 2021 which were pivotal in terms of shaping and informing the content of our Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit.



"Giving greater coherence and focus to our commitments around employee Health and Wellbeing by fully embedding our proprietary 'PINCH' model"

We launched our PINCH model in January 2021 with a revised Health and Wellbeing Guide for all colleagues. We have since encouraged colleagues to pair up with internal 'PINCH Buddies' to discuss and monitor their health and wellbeing needs.



"Appointing a group of Non-Executive Advisors to enhance our governance"

We have established the framework for this and appointed our first Advisor, Vikas Pota, the Founder and Chief Executive of T4 Education.

"Organising external anti-racism training for all colleagues"

Martha Awojobi from JMB Consulting joined us in March 2021 to deliver a half day anti-racism training session to the whole global team.



"Getting our work experience programme back up and running"

We have entered into a partnership with the organisation 10,000 Black Interns in order to begin hosting work experience placements once again.

"Finding additional sources of funding for the Society Foundation to enable it to carry on its work even in the immediate aftermath of COVID-19"

Our Managing Director took it upon himself to do a virtual run of the Great Wall of China and raised £1,826 for The Society Foundation through his efforts.



"Holding a whole-company volunteering event again as soon as COVID regulations allow"

On this final point, we admit having failed. The Delta variant of COVID made us overly cautious about scheduling whole-company events at the start of the year. We do now have a whole-company volunteering event scheduled for 2022 though.



People

We were fortunate enough to see our entire workforce vaccinated against COVID-19 before the summer. But even as the severity of the pandemic has gradually waned, it has become clear that the experience of the pandemic has left lasting scars. We have talked a lot internally about the sort of “collective PTSD” that something of this nature might engender. In response, we have redoubled our efforts around Health and Wellbeing, dedicating a portion of our first whole-company off-site day to it in November, and launching a new Health and Wellbeing framework across the firm called ‘PINCH’.

This encourages colleagues to pair up and adopt interventions that are:

**Practical
Individual
Natural
Collaborative
Holistic**

Thankfully there were noticeably more high points and positive milestones for us to celebrate in 2021 than in 2020. This has helped to draw the team closer together despite the majority of our work still being done remotely. In particular, we were all delighted to see three colleagues welcome new babies into their lives during the first half of the year.

We continued with our Personal and Professional Development Allowances (PPDAs) scheme for the second year running: rewarding hard work and commitment across the business through funding investments in colleagues’ personal interests and professional growth. Upon completion of their probation period, every Society colleague was given access to an annual allowance of £250 to use as they want for any kind of course, purchase, activity, or subscription that interested them. This wasn’t intended to cover

work-related training, as that will always be paid for by the company. Instead, it was about supporting Society colleagues to be more rounded, relaxed, and happier versions of themselves.

Throughout 2021, and in spite of various lockdowns and restrictions, Society’s colleagues also continued to volunteer their time and expertise to a range of organisations across London and New York in particular. Volunteering is an excellent way of recharging our batteries and contributing to team building, but it also allows us to forge meaningful and long-lasting partnerships with our communities. Society has colleagues who are Trustees of schools and charities and we are always encouraging and supportive of such long-term voluntary commitments, as it’s a great way to develop inclusive and innovative leaders within the firm.



In June’s bi-annual colleague survey, **100%** of our staff agreed with the statements

“I feel connected to the vision of Society”

and

“I understand how my role contributes to us achieving our goals”

Planet

Society has joined B Corporations from around the world in declaring a climate emergency. We are challenging ourselves to reach Net Zero by 2030 at the absolute latest, which is still 20 years ahead of the targets set by the Paris Agreement. We are committed to collective and immediate action to halt and reverse the current climate trajectory and to build an inclusive, equitable, and regenerative economic system.

During 2021, we worked with a company called Plan A in Germany to calculate our global emissions for the first time. Plan A's methodology is certified on an annual basis to be in line with the GHG Corporate Protocol. They merged the activity data we were able to enter in their system with the most up-to-date emission factors in order to create a detailed picture of our current carbon footprint.

As a point of comparison, 1 tCO₂e is equal to the emissions of a single passenger flying ≈6,500 kilometres, or roughly the distance from Chicago to Paris.

Armed with this information, we are now beginning to set annual science-based reduction targets. For those emissions we cannot eliminate, we have agreed only to use verified offsets, emphasising carbon removal projects.



Reach Net Zero by 2030 at the latest



Worked with Plan A to calculate global emissions for the first time



Annual science-based reduction targets

14.51 tCO₂e of total emissions in 2021

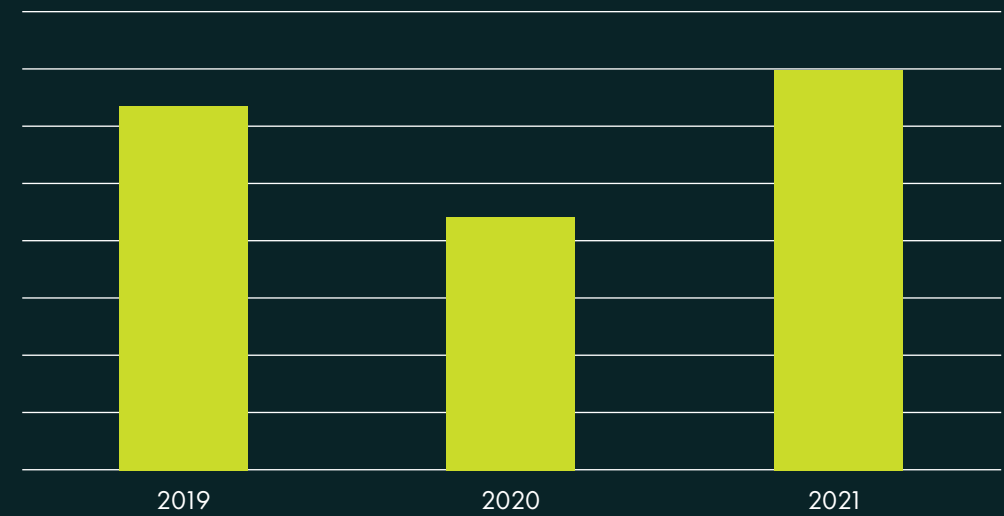


Profit

As the chart below shows, the effect of the pandemic on our revenues in 2020 was undeniably severe, however our recovery in 2021 was correspondingly robust. 2021 became Society’s highest billing and most profitable year to date.

This will enable us to deliver a record sum to The Society Foundation in the months to come, and also to invest in the business’ continued growth. We are actively hiring right now in all three countries where we operate, and we are planning for 2022 to be a year of significant further expansion.

Annual Revenues: 2019-2021



In terms of profitability, the crucial turning point in our fortunes was probably the painful decision to walk away from our London office in Hatton Garden at the end of July. Having failed to renegotiate our lease with the landlord, we felt there was no way we could justify retaining a space of that size and expense in the era of hybrid working. We have since downsized our physical presence in London to a much smaller set-up that better befits the needs of a “work from anywhere business”. Indeed, “work from anywhere” is now undeniably our modus operandi. At various points in 2021, we had colleagues working not just in the UK, the USA, and New Zealand, but also in Pakistan and Russia.

Our post-COVID recovery has however been achieved in the face of significant obstacles. It is worth remembering that we started 2021 on the defensive, with the UK back under lockdown, some colleagues still on Furlough Leave, and all of our other costs cut to the bone. These challenges were compounded by the long-term sickness absence of a senior fee earner during the back half of the year. It is no doubt because of this that “successful but stressful” is the epitaph most members of the team have embraced to describe the past 12 months.

We do however have a lot to be grateful for and proud of. Our launch in APAC was the biggest single commercial highlight of the year. James Lea, our new Director in the region, won his first assignment out there whilst still locked in a quarantine hotel near Auckland Airport and hasn’t stopped since. Now that we have a physical presence in the region we are much better equipped to handle large global searches and can compete more effectively than ever before with some of our longer-established and most international competitors.

10% of Society’s profits go straight to The Society Foundation, an independent grant

making charity that we helped to set up. In 2021, The Society Foundation handed out six grants to the following organisations:



Looking Ahead

Here are some of the projects we are looking forward to tackling in 2022:

Setting clear emissions reduction targets for the business that will move us swiftly and decisively towards Net Zero



Rolling out a new wellbeing-focused employee benefits platform called 'Juno' as an upgrade to our current Personal and Professional Development Allowances



Identifying a new Mental Health First Aider within the business and a new Health and Wellbeing Champion too



Revitalising and potentially reimagining our colleague volunteering activity, aiming for a return to 100% uptake by the end of 2022



Nudging colleagues towards behaviours that will be more responsible and sustainable, including through better pensions investing and the choice of greener home energy suppliers



Creating a clear and regular system for capturing, analysing and sharing statistics from our Diversity Monitoring Website, and identifying specific areas for improvement



Auditing our practice in line with the Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit and making recommendations for any changes that we should adopt to our standard process



Raising our voice by getting colleagues participating in or convening groups to discuss key DEI topics



Revisiting our approach to writing candidate commentaries with a sharper awareness of implicit bias



Increasing the proportion of colleagues undertaking some skills-based training on cross-job functions beyond their regular responsibilities (eg. public speaking training, management training for non-managers, etc...)



Working with others on cooperative initiatives relating to the social and environmental standards in our industry, perhaps through contributing to academic research, participating in panel presentations or other public forums, or providing public resources for other businesses or stakeholders around improving social or environmental performance



Our Social Impact

We think of our social impact holistically, encompassing how we affect our clients, our candidates, our colleagues, our suppliers, our wider community, and the recruitment industry at large.

We see our key social impacts as:

- the **quality** of the appointments we help our clients to make and the impact those individuals subsequently have in-post;

- the **integrity** with which we help candidates to define and to attain their career objectives;

- the **way** in which we look after, and develop our colleagues;

- the **extent** to which our business consumes resources, and the size of our carbon footprint;

- the **impact** and longevity of our work in the community;

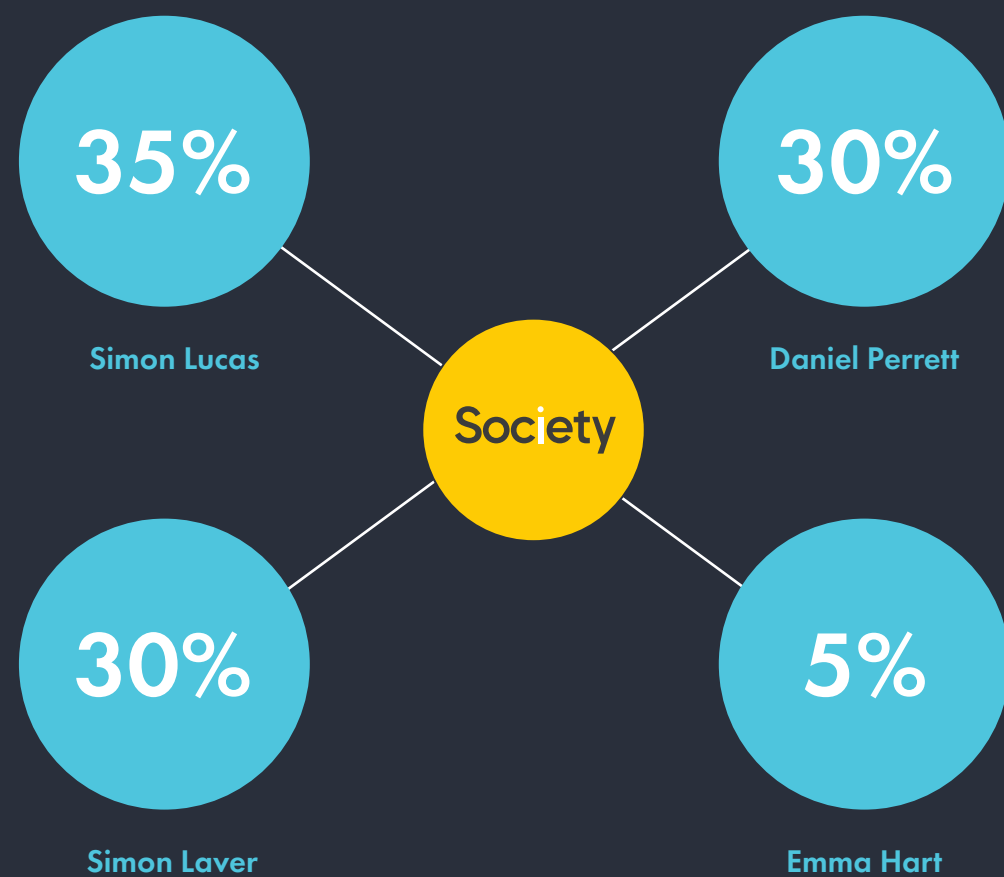
- the **leadership** we show within the wider recruitment industry on issues of responsibility, ethics, sustainability, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We've sought to make tangible improvements in each of these areas over the past year, as this report hopefully illustrates. As ever though, we believe that the most significant way in which we contribute positively towards society is through the appointments we help our clients to make. The impact that those individuals have in-post has undoubtedly been our single most crucial driver since the company's conception.

Our Structure, Governance, and Ownership

Society is a private limited company, registered in England and Wales. We have two wholly-owned subsidiaries: 'Society US Inc', based in New York, and 'Society APAC Ltd', based in Auckland. All three companies are ultimately overseen by a Board consisting of our Managing Director and two Non-Executives.

The current shareholdings within Society are:



As a B Corporation, our Articles of Association contains a pre-amble on 'Responsibility' that states:

"The purposes of the Company are to promote the success of the Company for the benefit of its members as a whole and, through its business and operations, to have a material positive impact on society and the environment, taken as a whole."

The new text goes on to define a series of 'Stakeholder Interests', that the Board must seek to balance as effectively as it can, without assuming any one area should take precedence over the others.


These include:

- the likely long-term consequences of any decision;
- the interests of our employees;
- our need to foster relationships with suppliers, customers and others;
- the impact of our operations on the community and the environment;
- our desire to maintain a reputation for high standards of business conduct.

Our Values

We believe that organisations can have a positive social impact, and that careers should have purpose and meaning. Our goal is to change the world for the better – one appointment at a time. We’ve given a lot of thought to how we want to do business. It boils down to five core values.

Partnership




We work in genuine partnership with our clients, remaining communicative and transparent throughout the appointment process. We’re also a close-knit team, not just a collection of individuals. We collaborate and share expertise across sector boundaries.

Authenticity




We’re not ‘salesy’. We ensure that our clients meet the colleagues who will actually lead our work for them. We hire people who are genuine and personable. We value being trustworthy and approachable.

Integrity



We treat people as people, not as a means to an end. We’re fair and straightforward in our dealings with clients and candidates. We never ‘blag’. If we don’t know something then we’ll admit it. We also seek to practise what we preach.

Creativity



Excellent search involves effective storytelling. We listen to nuance, put bespoke research into every project, and think outside the box when sourcing great people. We’re also continually on the lookout for innovative ways to use technology.

Diligence



We’re all about the details. We take in-depth briefings. We follow up leads and leave no stone unturned when searching. We hold ourselves to the highest quality standards. You can count on us to be thorough.



Our Strategy

Here are some of the projects we are looking forward to tackling in 2022:

Responsible



We must fully occupy the purpose-driven/responsible business space in our sector. We must take our own impact seriously, ensuring we remain values-led and make a tangible positive contribution to the world. This will ensure our work is meaningful and give us a powerful USP.

Connected



We must continually cultivate and refresh our knowledge, networks and relationships. We must build our brand and our credibility to ensure that we are visible to leaders and to people in positions of influence. This will make us a desirable partner for the clients we want to work with.

Global



We must internationalise our client portfolio, our colleague base, and our physical presence. This will increase the reach of our positive impact, reduce our reliance on any one geography/economy, create career opportunities for our colleagues, and provide scope for exciting innovations.

Diversified



We must diversify into new sectors and functional areas, expanding our expertise and capability. We must widen our track record whilst also developing clear functional or thematic areas of strength. This will protect us from over-reliance on any one colleague or sector.

Excellent



We must ensure that we have first-class systems, processes, and quality benchmarks, executed consistently, and underpinned by high levels of productivity and accountability. We must collect and utilise data to improve our performance. This will give us a vital competitive edge.

Society

Global Executive Search



Our Partners

We like to work with organisations that share our values. Here's an introduction to some of our suppliers and why they've become such valued partners of Society.



Our technology partners, Fluid IT, launched their business in 2005 to bring transparent, trustworthy and reliable IT services to charities and social impact organisations. They also provide re-training and on-the-job opportunities for individuals coming from homelessness, prison, rehab, or youth engagement schemes. Fluid IT were one of the founding cohort of UK headquartered B Corporations in 2015.



Our finance partners, Kung Fu Accounting, were the world's first ICAEW accredited B Corporation. They were established in 2016 to offer clients a much deeper engagement than the traditional "end of January one-night stand" favoured by many accountancy firms. As well as providing in-depth business advice, they also actively encourage their clients to adopt greener and more ethical business practices. Their 'Ethical Payslips' model mean that both Society and Kung Fu donate money to worthy projects together at the end of every month.



Our brand new UK landlord, x+why, provides flexible workspaces with a difference. They bring together tenants with a social purpose and seek to unite, inspire, and amplify their work. All of the x+why spaces are designed and operated to industry-leading green standards. x+why are also a certified B Corporation. They require their tenants to sign a 'member pledge' and coordinate various social impact programmes.



Our communications partners, Mammoth, are based in Colchester and were co-founded by one of our former researchers. They integrate stunning visual design with compelling text to deliver outstanding content, creating stories that interest, inspire, and educate. We were delighted to work with them on the creation of our Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit.



At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic we were looking for a way to celebrate colleague birthdays whilst all working remotely. We quickly settled on eCards, but were concerned about their carbon footprint. Ecard Forest gets round this problem by offsetting their emissions by spending part of the revenue from each card on planting trees.





Contact

If you're interested in learning more about Society, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact us on hello@society-search.com or via one of our offices:

Society EMEA

The Fulwood
4 Fulwood Place
London
WC1V 6HZ
United Kingdom
+44 (0)207 935 4052

Society North America

1460 Broadway
Floor 16
New York
NY 10036
United States
+1 (917) 882 9827

Society APAC

Level 9,
45 Queen Street
PO Box 3899, Shortland Street
Auckland, 1140
New Zealand
+64 21 419 727