

# IMPACT REPORT 2022



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# LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

As I reflect back upon 2022, it strikes me as a year of transition and renewal. We saw team members more excited to get back together in person and, like many organizations, saw our number of days physically on site with clients and Econic team members increase significantly from the previous two years. While there was an air of “getting back to normal” with some travel, other areas continued to evolve.

Econic had a record year of growth and giving and yet, we tried several new things that didn’t work. For instance, we made strides in pay equity and transparency through a revised profit-share model, but hit a plateau on efforts for self-set pay. In client work, we leaned into purpose-driven, exciting client projects in the areas of a waste-free future and home caregiver burnout, yet invested time in some partnership ideas that ended up not making sense. In June, we received official word of our B Corp certification. This is a great affirmation to the journey the team has been on for quite some time.

Like any growing, adapting system, we’ll keep experimenting with how, where, and what we do with intent and humility. This can only happen if you keep taking care of the heart of a business like ours — its people. It brought me great joy to see on our annual engagement survey that 100% of the team feels like they can bring their whole selves to work and that our culture supports their overall mental and physical well-being.

As I write this letter in early Spring, I’m reminded of this passage by author and educator, Parker Palmer: “I’ll wax romantic about the splendors of spring in a moment, but first there’s a hard truth to be told. Before spring becomes beautiful, it’s plug-ugly, nothing but mud and muck.

Of course, there’s a miracle inside that muddy mess: those fields are a seedbed for rebirth. I love the fact that the word *humus*, the decayed organic matter that feeds the roots of plants, comes from the same word-root that gives rise to humility. It’s an etymology in which I find forgiveness, blessing, and grace. It reminds me that the humiliating events of life — events that leave “mud on my face” or “make my name mud” — can create the fertile soil that nourishes new growth.”

Like early spring, I feel the unseen seeds of what’s next at Econic in 2023. Until that unfolds, I hope you are inspired and enjoy reading about some of our humus from 2022.



Joshua Berry  
Founder & Managing Director



# OUR VISION

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At Econic, we strive to live vibrantly and generously while inspiring and strengthening other people, groups, and organizations. Through our mission, we help those who enter our sphere discover their meaning of growth and cultivate the space to achieve it. This means using our roles as facilitators, experts, and coaches to help our community of fellow growth and innovation sojourners unleash their potential.

As we reflect on another year of growth, we have assessed our impact on our clients, team members, and our local Omaha and Lincoln, Nebraska community. We are excited about the work we have accomplished, and we proudly share in our second annual Impact Report the ways we have helped people to thrive and ideas to flourish.



# OUR VALUES

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## SMART + KIND

We want to work with talented people who are warm, fun, and a joy to collaborate with (IQ + EQ).

## GROWTH MINDSET

We continually commit to learning and growing ourselves, our teams, and our work.

## WHOLE PERSON

We care about the whole person—in and outside of business—and see each person as an individual first.

## GIVE MORE

We actively choose a mindset of abundance and search for opportunities to give in our relationships and our communities.



# 2022 AT A GLANCE



**100%**

of team feels they can bring their whole selves to work



**\$42,351**

total amount donated



**100%**

of team feels that Econic's culture supports their overall mental health, physical health, and well-being



**125**

total hours volunteered



**75%**

of team took off 22-28 days from work



**96.1**

B Impact score



**44%**

of vendors majority-owned by women or individuals from underrepresented populations



**5**

new clients



# OUR APPROACH

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In this Impact Report, we explore how Econic defines growth and where we achieve it in the areas of our team, clients, community, and the environment.

As a small, self-managed organization with distributed authority, each team member has a unique opportunity to voice concerns or drive initiatives that directly evolve our internal operating system and consulting practices. Discussions from our team meetings and retreats, feedback from our annual employee engagement survey, and the B Corp framework help us prioritize which areas to improve upon in the upcoming year.

Using our core values and mission to drive our innovation, leadership, and organizational culture work, we continue to increase our impact and actively invest in:



**EMPOWERING  
OUR TEAM**



**ENCOURAGING  
OUR CLIENTS**



**EXPANDING  
OUR REACH**



# B CORP CERTIFICATION



- 96.1 Overall B Impact Score
- 80 Qualifies for B Corp Certification
- 50.9 Median Score for Ordinary Businesses

In June 2022, Econic became a certified B Corp, joining a community of over 6,000 companies recognized worldwide for prioritizing social and environmental impact over profit. Econic is the seventh certified B Corp in Nebraska.

In order to become B Corp-certified, companies must demonstrate a commitment to transparency, accountability, and equity, as well as complete a third-party assessment by B Lab and receive a minimum score of 80 or above. Econic is proud to have scored 96.1 for our first year of certification.

As a people-centered organization, we aim to help those we work with—and those who work for us—practice the behaviors that grow them and their companies. This process requires empathy and care for others and aligns with the B Corp philosophy around valuing and creating a positive impact for employees, customers, and the community.

Many ways Econic measures success have always factored in employee well-being and development, along with client satisfaction. With B Lab's full range of metrics for positive impact performance, we gained additional ways to think about growth and sustainability.

In addition to helping us evolve our work, the B Corp model has given us a framework to go beyond good intentions and commit to action. By agreeing to certify and re-certify every three years, we commit to continually evolving our business behavior, operations, and culture to support social and economic equality, environmental stewardship, and individual well-being.



# EMPOWERING OUR TEAM

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At Econic, we continuously challenge each other to find ways to realize our full potential. We often ask ourselves how we might reimagine *the way we work* – or our operating system – so that we can do our best work and uphold our collective values.

Within every organization, there are processes, policies, and beliefs that make each organizational system unique. Our commitment is to conduct regular maintenance on our operating systems and, more importantly, to upgrade and advance our organizational systems to make Econic a great place to work and a healthy business, so that we have greater impact on people, our communities, and the environment.

As a self-managed organization with distributed authority, each team member has an opportunity to use their voice to help shape our operating system. Through experimentation, individual empowerment, and transparent communication, we attempt to create an environment that can evolve and adjust to the needs of our team each year.

In 2022, we set intentions to critically examine how our operating system could further support team autonomy and wellness, as well as increase equity and transparency in the areas of compensation and benefits.





## CREATING NEW TEAM AGREEMENTS

We continued to practice making decisions in a distributed environment by translating “unwritten rules” and new practices into written agreements to make what we believe and how we intend to act clear and transparent. Using the tool Murmur, anyone at Eonic can propose or modify a team or company agreement for consensual decisioning.

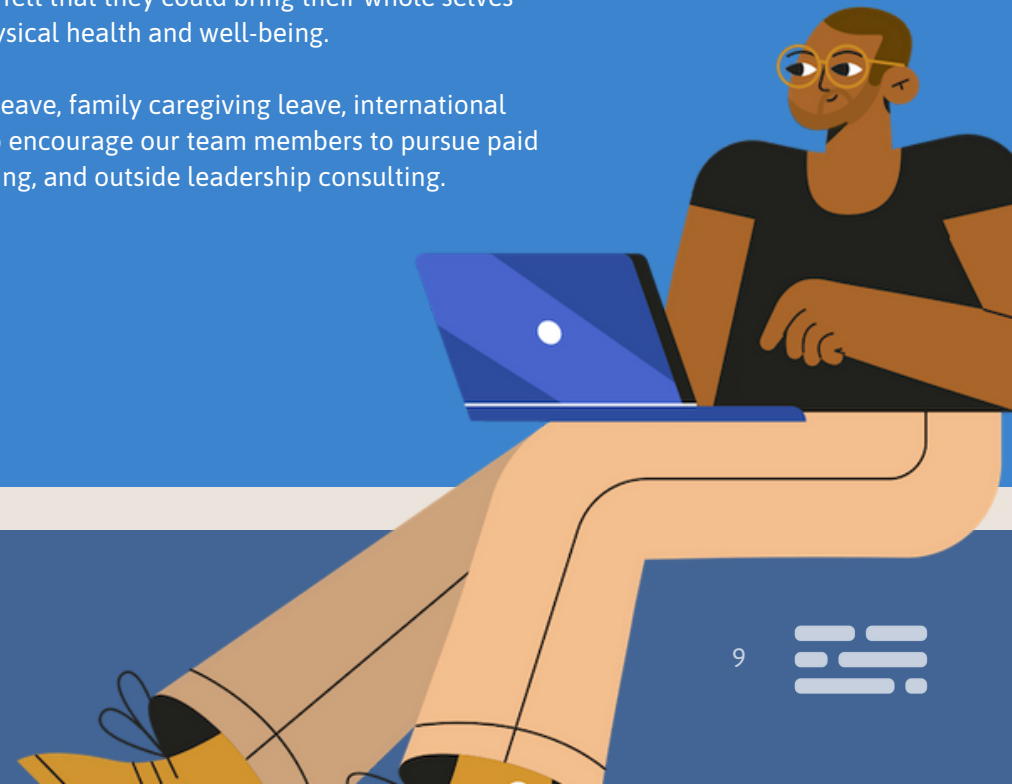
We believe this process allows for more inclusive and democratic decision-making across project teams and our company. New organizational agreements from 2022 cover topics of Leadership, Profit-Sharing, Financial Principles, and Self-Managed Project Teams.

## SUPPORTING PERSONAL WELL-BEING

Our team consistently upheld our Whole Person value by maintaining our Time Off agreement from 2021, which offers team members the autonomy to manage their paid time in a way that allows for their ideal balance of work and life. We prioritize this flexibility so that our employees develop an ownership mentality, and we trust that each person will consider what is best for both themselves and Eonic.

In 2022, we organized 15 closed office days and 75% of the team took off 22-28 days from work. Results from our annual employee engagement survey also reveal that 100% of the team felt that they could bring their whole selves to work and that Eonic’s culture supported their overall mental and physical health and well-being.

With unlimited time off, our team members were able to take disability leave, family caregiving leave, international adventures, mental health days, and more. Additionally, we continued to encourage our team members to pursue paid side projects, some of which include Enneagram certification and coaching, and outside leadership consulting.



## RE-EVALUATING COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

In 2022, we upgraded our Compensation and Benefits operating system. A company's compensation and benefits, even when generous, are traditionally opaque and fraught with design flaws that lead to gender and/or racial inequity. In the private-sector, the systems and policies of compensation are squarely in a company's control.

Our view at Econic is that we have the opportunity to increase visibility, candor, and transparency around pay practices, in a way that moves us towards equitable compensation practices and allows us to influence the equitable practices of our clients. Tangibly, we tested several new compensation and benefits practices in 2022: profit-sharing, self-set pay, and expanded benefits.

### PROFIT-SHARING

For several years, Econic has operated under a flat bonus structure, which would reward for profitable quarters. While the company enjoyed many profitable quarters and paid a significant amount in bonuses, the structure itself was not responsive to higher or lower quarters and bonuses were paid based on a percentage of income; higher earners enjoyed higher bonuses and lower earners were paid smaller bonuses.

In 2022, in service of pay equity, increased transparency, and collective ownership of the financial health of the company, Econic transitioned to a profit-sharing model. Through a series of experiments and open conversations with core team members, a dynamic profit sharing model was designed and implemented. Each quarter, employees have visibility into the company's top line revenue and cost structure, enabling real-time decision making. Profits are distributed equitably across the company, based on hours contributed.

The system now reflects contribution, not base pay or other subjective factors (e.g. experience, type of work, etc.). This transition is intended to be the first step down a path towards increased employee ownership and high levels of visibility around financials.



## SELF-SET PAY

In 2022, Econic set out to evaluate and test new models on how pay is determined. To do this, we took a systematic approach to understand the model, test assumptions, and experiment with new practices. Below is re-cap of what we did and what we learned:

- Evaluate Econic's current model of pay determination.
- Identify desired pay principles and possible pay models to experiment with at Econic.
- Create a space for open dialogue and feedback with the core team.
- Test a new self-set pay model to align with desired pay principles.

In Q3 of 2022, the self-set pay model was designed and tested. The design included identifying tiers, or job levels, within the organization and associated pay bands. Each individual was invited to identify their tier and pay band and seek feedback from team members.

In the course of testing this pay model, Econic made a significant shift in company structure, where we had to rethink the tiered model. During our experiment, we maintained our existing practice of paying each team member a living wage based on their area of residence and maintaining a 6:1 pay ratio ceiling between the highest-earning employee and the lowest-earning employee. While we didn't get through the finish line on the self-set pay, we've found closer alignment to our values by identifying pay principles and testing a new model. We consider this experiment open to continue testing as Econic grows.

## EXPANDED BENEFITS

In 2022, in service of our Whole Person value, Econic expanded employee benefits to include:

- Employer \$100/month contribution to health savings account.
- Employer coverage for short-term & long-term disability insurance.
- Employer coverage for dental insurance.
- Employer coverage for vision insurance.



## FUTURE FOCUS

We strive to be recognized as an equitable and inclusive workplace that promotes self-management, strong work-life balance, transparent communication, diverse thinking and backgrounds, and fair pay and growth opportunities. Moving forward, we will continue to empower each team member to not only define and create their own version of success and well-being, but also make their own decisions at (and for) Econic. In 2023, we will focus on:

- Maintaining our current commitments to work-life balance.
- Refreshing our onboarding process for new team members & contractors.
- Sponsoring and celebrating individual development opportunities.
- Continuing to evaluate equity and transparency in the areas of compensation, benefits, decision-making, & hiring.



# ENCOURAGING OUR CLIENTS

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In 2022, we continued to evaluate the growth potential and social impact of each client partnership. We remained committed to helping our clients practice the behaviors that grow themselves and their organizations. Our B Corp certification has further encouraged us to consider our scale of influence when we create intentional partnerships.

## HOW WE WORK

Every day we embrace our core values as we build meaningful relationships with our clients. Using sound judgment and ethical decision-making, we design programs, workshops, and coaching sessions that align with each client's vision of growth. With every partnership, we are committed to:

- Viewing each engagement with our clients as an opportunity to understand them as people first, not just as a business transaction.
- Listen carefully to our clients' needs and collaborate with them side-by-side to deliver impact wherever we can.
- Taking the time to reflect on accepting assignments for which we can acquire the appropriate experience or competence to perform effectively.
- Addressing our clients' problems with objectivity, accountability, and honesty, and take responsibility to remove any bias or conflict of interest in our work that may influence our professional judgment or responsibilities.



## OUR CLIENTS

In 2022, we gained 5 new clients and retained 62% of our clients from 2021 or prior. With clients in a variety of industries, including healthcare, financial services, engineering, product technology, and government, we embarked on a number of innovation, leadership, and organizational culture projects customized to the needs of each client group.

We designed programs to shape the future of work, facilitated strategy-making and problem-solving workshops, and developed product solutions using design thinking. In all of these projects, we built with people and the human experience at the forefront by bringing empathy and curiosity to our clients, the people they serve, and our collective communities.



## CLIENT STORIES

### SUPPORTING HUMAN-CENTERED HEALTHCARE INNOVATION

In 2022, Econic continued to work closely with Community Launchpad, the innovation company of Community Health Network, to advance their pursuit of human-centered health that works for all. As facilitators, thought leaders, and entrepreneurial talent, Econic supported the development of Steadii, a digitally-delivered coaching service.

Informed by extensive ethnographic research showing a population of people across the United States who are primarily underserved and at significant risk for declining health and depression, Steadii specifically addresses the needs of people caring for a loved one with dementia or Alzheimer's.

In addition to leading ongoing research, Econic supported the development of Steadii with human-centered design experiments, product and brand development, and a go-to-market plan encompassing product, marketing, and operations.

While conducting preliminary product testing in 2022, Steadii shows promise in helping caregivers reduce anxiety, increase their sense of control, and stabilize their psychological health.



*"I'm feeling better about myself both physically and emotionally."*

*– early Steadii tester*



## ENABLING EMPLOYEE-DRIVEN STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) and Econic completed an 18-month engagement to develop a 10-year framework for OPPD's workforce initiative focused on digital dexterity, an enhanced employee experience, and an inclusive, forward-looking work culture. For over a year, we worked alongside a diverse group of OPPD employees to critically examine the organization's existing operating system, so that they could develop recommendations for senior leaders to execute in the coming years.

In the final phase of this project, we coached the team to design and prioritize 23 recommendations that thematically cover employee empowerment, well-being, and development. During this process, team members practiced building long term company-wide strategies and presenting their ideas to senior leaders. Through our facilitation, many of the team members were able to collaborate with different OPPD employees outside of their departments for the first time, and model for the organization how to build a psychologically safe environment.

## CREATING A PATH TO GREATER BELONGING

Senior leaders at a telecommunications client wanted to support employees concerned about social awareness issues they were facing in their personal and professional lives. Focusing on the impact each individual could have on those around them, Econic worked with leadership and a group of employees to customize a series of workshops and discussion groups on topics chosen by employees, such as raising mental health awareness, advocating for others, and creating a culture of inclusivity.

Each session allowed for learning, reflection, and small and large group discussions aligned to individual experiences and how each person might change their behavior to have a more positive impact in interactions with others. Over time, we are building a tool kit for all employees, and a shared language around belonging to amplify already strong cultural values and strategic priorities. Employees report insights gained, impactful stories shared, and gratitude for their employer choosing to approach the work in this way.





## FUTURE FOCUS

As a professional services organization, one of our greatest sources of impact comes from our consulting practice. We continuously seek to equip each consultant with the resources they need to succeed and to co-create projects to fit the needs of each client. In order to further elevate the quality and impact of our services, we have an opportunity to partner with organizations who more clearly align with our mission and values. In 2023, we will focus on:

- Defining what quality work and interactions with Econic means, in a way that considers space for learning/practicing and honoring our core values.
- Upholding our self-managed teaming agreement for stronger project and client relationship management.
- Updating our internal and external feedback system.



# EXPANDING OUR REACH

While our team members reside in multiple states, we actively seek opportunities to support and serve our respective communities and our home base of Nebraska. In 2020, Econic committed to donating 1.1% of our annual revenue to charitable organizations and creating a Time Off agreement that allows team members to use their paid work time for pro bono projects or volunteering. These are some of our ongoing initiatives to drive positive changes outside our everyday client work.

## SURPASSING OUR CHARITABLE GIVING GOAL

Through our charitable giving, we aim to support organizations that align with our core values and demonstrate positive social impact. In 2022, we donated 1.55% of our annual revenue—surpassing our annual goal—to various social justice, environmental, emergency, and non-profit educational agencies, as well as holiday donations to organizations supported by our clients. A significant portion of our donations went to our long-term partners Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties to help fund renovations for their Home for Head Start early childhood education facility.



asian  
mental health  
collective



DOLLAR ENERGY FUND



FOODBANK  
FOR THE HEARTLAND



PRAIRIE  
STEM



World  
Central  
Kitchen



CLEAN AIR  
TASK FORCE



NATIVE AMERICAN  
HERITAGE ASSOCIATION



## EXPLORING OUR ENVIROMENTAL IMPACT

For 2022, another one of our intentions included further examining what sustainability means for Econic. Given our small and remote status, we have concentrated our environmental efforts around opportunities we have control over, such as our carbon footprint and our spending power.

### UNDERSTANDING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

We used a business carbon calculator to estimate our annual greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol's international protocol for carbon accounting. This system calculates science-based emissions using industry average data and a combination of spend-based and activity-based methods to calculate carbon emissions. We learned from this process that scope 3 (i.e. supply chain-related) emissions make up all of Econic's carbon emissions—predominantly from business travel and purchased goods and services.

In the spirit of self-management, we used this knowledge to test asking each team member to self-report their carbon emissions data for every business flight, believing we would capture more accurate primary information. Through this testing, we experienced challenges with gathering timely data throughout the year and learned that accuracy does not need to outweigh movement towards reduction and offsetting (when relevant). This endeavor is one of several steps towards increasing our environmental stewardship in areas that we can control.

### HARNESSING OUR SPENDING POWER

In 2022, we also started examining where we spent our money throughout our value chain. For example, we developed a supplier guide to encourage our team to prioritize working with vendors and suppliers that are third-party certified for advancing positive social or environmental practices, local to our respective communities, and/or women-owned or minority-owned. In 2022, 44% of the vendors we partnered with were majority-owned by women or by individuals from underrepresented populations.



## FUTURE FOCUS

In addition to providing our consulting services, we have an opportunity to use our business to support a wider community that aligns with our mission and values. As a B Corp, we hope to create a more positive economic impact in our communities. In 2023, we will focus on:

- More clearly defining the pillars & principles around our giving program.
- Maintaining our commitment to donate 1.1% of our profit to nonprofit organizations.
- Continuing to measure and offset relevant and unavoidable scope 3 carbon emissions.
- Continuing to make intentional purchasing decisions for supplies and vendors, so that we continue to primarily support local, minority-owned, and/or B Corp-certified businesses.



# CLOSING THOUGHTS

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We view our work and impact as a continuous path of evolution. We are committed to helping our clients and team members practice the behaviors that support their growth. We hope to continue serving as a model for other companies to follow.

Here are the key takeaways that will help inform our impact strategy moving forward:

## **WORDS ARE POWERFUL.**

Our ability to provide the right coaching and facilitate engaging interactions with our clients can create the greatest ripples of change.

## **PEOPLE ARE OUR PRIORITY.**

When we invest in our team, our business as a whole thrives. We will continue to cultivate a workplace that prioritizes flexibility, transparency, whole person, equity, and empowerment.

## **PRACTICE LEADS TO LESSONS.**

When we don't allow perfection to get in the way of progress, we are able to continue learning and iterating on solutions that lead us closer to our goals.





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