



# CSR Strategies for Elevating Employees as Your Number One Stakeholder

The Role of CSR in People and Culture + A Look at Employee Wellness through a CSR Lens

*In Partnership With:* \_\_\_\_\_



## Introduction

Employees as a stakeholder are often assessed from a human resources lens while at Blackbaud the function is referred to as People and Culture. This whitepaper aims to explore elevating your employees as your number one stakeholder with your corporate social responsibility strategies. It provides an overview of CSR as an inclusive leadership strategy within people and culture written by Rachel Hutchisson, Vice President of Global Social Responsibility at Blackbaud. Dive deeper into topics that look at employee wellness through a CSR lens, focusing on financial wellness and employee belonging with contributions from E4E Relief, From Day One and various authors on the YourCause from Blackbaud team.

The graphic is meant to highlight the interconnectivity between these various topics as well as provide a table of contents. Click a topic to jump to each section or article to learn more.

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# The Role of CSR in People and Culture

## AUTHOR:

**Rachel Hutchisson, Vice President, Global Social Responsibility, Blackbaud**

Companies across the globe have long been dedicated to helping drive positive action through their CSR strategies. There are many examples of this important work, including generous donations and acts of service that help strengthen the communities in which we live and work. But CSR isn't solely dedicated to people and causes outside of the organization.

Today, a company's CSR strategy is first and foremost for its own people, aligning with its role as an employer to ensure that careers with purpose and a commitment to social responsibility are integrated parts of the equation. Whether you are working in person, are hybrid or embracing a remote-first approach like Blackbaud, having a strong CSR commitment at the core of your strategy and operations is fundamental to a thriving culture. It keeps people connected and helps them develop a better sense of belonging.

Looking a bit deeper, CSR intersects quite naturally with employee benefits, diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and broader human resources strategies. At Blackbaud, for example, CSR benefits equip employees with choice to volunteer with nonprofit organizations aligned with their values and interests, earning extra time off and the potential for grants in honor of their service. Our matching gift program follows suit, allowing corporate funding to follow employee passion instead of the other way around. These valued benefits round out more traditional offerings that invest in the health, wellness and financial security of our people. Offering your people "voice and choice" in your CSR portfolio helps them see you care about them as individuals.

In evolving their diversity, equity and inclusion programs, companies can also tap into CSR to help create strong

bonds with community. Volunteerism is a fabulous way to invest in building the skills of your people and exposing them to new perspectives, helping you to understand and acknowledge everyone's capabilities, contributions and gifts. Affinity group and employee resource group leaders can partner with CSR to create meaningful ways to engage and educate employees and make them feel welcome, all while aligning with specific employee interests. Your CSR team is a critical resource in helping you create a work environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources and can contribute fully to the organization's success.

## HOW TO BEGIN?

Looking broadly at your People and Culture function, there are many ways to seek out and deepen collaboration. You can start by considering your CSR programs through the lens of the employee life cycle. You can also bring the teams together to talk about how the company will celebrate holidays and observances, looking for ways to tie service and giving to moments that are truly meaningful to your people and their identities. Invite your employees to serve as grant makers, sitting at the table and engaging in the hard work of how to invest in nonprofits in the community. Invite your people to help you make the good work happen.

## HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?

Again, turn to your people. Make sure you have key questions in your engagement surveys that assess how your employees feel about your CSR work. Track volunteer hours across the company so you can share back the collective impact the team is making. At Blackbaud, we look at this and more. The fact that 91% of our people say it matters to them that we operate in a socially responsible way is both a point of pride and a call for us to keep doing more. And, although we love that 70% of our people volunteer and 1 in 5 serve on a nonprofit board, we keep working to encourage more action, more good. Why? Because it's good for the

world, it invests in our people, and it helps us all learn more about the very customers we serve.

The great part about all of this is that, in addition to being a fundamental way you engage your people, it also brings them together in community, builds a positive culture, and provides opportunities for everyone to have fun and be together. This work is no longer a nice to have, something that companies do when they “have the time.” Bringing high quality CSR programs to life within your company is essential, and it makes a lot of sense to do this in partnership with HR. The people working for you – and those you want to have work for you – expect it. And done right, these programs will grow your people and build deeper bonds with the brand.

## Employee Wellness through a CSR Lens

### AUTHORS:

**Steve Koepp, Chief Content Officer and Co-founder, From Day One**

**Emily Nonko, Brooklyn-based Freelance Journalist**

Corporate social responsibility had long been understood as a company’s involvement in philanthropy, charity, volunteering and other external efforts to give back. But what if there were a missing link, a component that could tie a company’s external efforts with the internal well-being of their employees?

“When I look at the missing link in the way CSR has been traditionally positioned, it’s really employee impact,” says Kellie McElhane, the founding director of the Center for Equity, Gender and Leadership (EGAL) and a distinguished teaching fellow at Berkeley Haas. “Covid has laid bare so many things, and lack of well-being has been splattered on corporate windshields.”

The time is right, a growing number of workplace experts believe, to rethink and expand the concept of CSR to actively include employee health and well-being, with

a particular focus on the increased investments in diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

“It’s about purpose,” McElhane notes, “And integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion into any corporate social responsibility work.”

”

CSR began to take hold back in the 1970s, after the concept of the “social contract” between business and society was declared by the Committee for Economic Development. The original social contract actually had employee well-being in mind, through its three core responsibilities:

1. for companies to provide jobs and economic growth through well-run businesses;
2. to run the business fairly and honestly regarding employees and customers;
3. and finally to become more broadly involved in improving the conditions of the community and environment in which it operates.

Over the years, however, the term moved away from employee responsibility and increasingly became associated with external, charitable efforts of the company. But with Covid-19 placing employee well-being front and center, alongside increased discussion about diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, it’s time for a “CSR brand refresh,” as McElhane puts it.

There’s limited research that directly links CSR with employee well-being, but what’s been done suggests that the connection makes sense. There’s the argument to be made that the act of corporate social responsibility, in and of itself, impacts employee well-being. A 2018 study examined hotel industry employees’ perceptions of corporate social responsibility and the influence these perceptions had on their quality of working life, job satisfaction and overall quality of life. The results

suggested that philanthropic and economic corporate social responsibility positively affected employees' quality of working life.

There are also the wellness benefits that come from giving back—[study](#) after [study](#) has shown that giving back makes people feel better. According to a [Deloitte Volunteer IMPACT survey](#), employees who frequently volunteered were almost twice as likely to be prouder, more loyal, and more satisfied with their employer and their job than those who did not participate in volunteering.

To go even further, companies can align company CSR initiatives with employee wellness goals. [A 2017 study](#) made a supportive argument for this, arguing that when companies pay higher attention to CSR programs that include well-being, their reputation for social responsibility is likely to increase.

So what can this alignment look like? Kristina Johnson, the chief people officer from the identity platform [Okta](#), makes an argument in *Forbes* for “systems in place that offer holistic wellness with a CSR component baked in.”

Rachel Hutchisson, the Vice President of Global Social Responsibility at Blackbaud believes: “In a world where employees come to work every day—virtually or in person—bringing their whole selves and seeking a culture where they have voice and choice, taking a broad view of social responsibility is essential. Having what I call a mixed portfolio of offerings—that span from engaging in the community and offering choice in how gifts are matched to helping employees build meaningful relationships with each other and encouraging them to take the time to invest in well-being—matters more than ever before.”

The alignment can also play out in employee benefits, Johnson argues, with employee stipends for wellness programs like volunteering, gym memberships, coaching, student loan advice, legal advice or meditation classes. A volunteer grants program or employee nomination grants program encourages individual social impact by offering employees the flexibility to contribute to

the causes they care about, as opposed to causes of the company's choice. This goes along with the same idea from Rachel Hutchisson to create a culture where employees have a voice and choice in ways to engage the community.

McElhaney makes the argument that diversity and inclusion efforts should closely align with CSR. “The first step is to get together to integrate both teams; who's working on corporate social responsibility and who's working on employee experience,” she suggests. “Since DEI is more current than CSR, and people are really grappling with diversity and inclusion right now, I'd put the employee experience at the center of this work.” The goal: to holistically think about, and create programs around, company purpose, employee well-being and belonging, and company responsibility to both employees and its wider community.

McElhaney believes this is a huge opportunity for companies to seize—and the timing couldn't be more urgent. [A study last year](#) found that Covid-19 had a negative effect on both CSR and employee well-being across 10 companies based in the European Union. This negative effect could be overturned, the study said, if companies pay more attention to that impact and start to holistically address it.

“The window is so wide open,” McElhaney says. “It's time to redefine what CSR is and integrate fully with other functions inside of a company that really elevate the work of well-being.”

**The following sections will dive into specific ways CSR plays a role in employee financial wellness and employee belonging.**

## CSR Role in Financial Wellness

### AUTHOR:

**E4E Relief**

In this section:



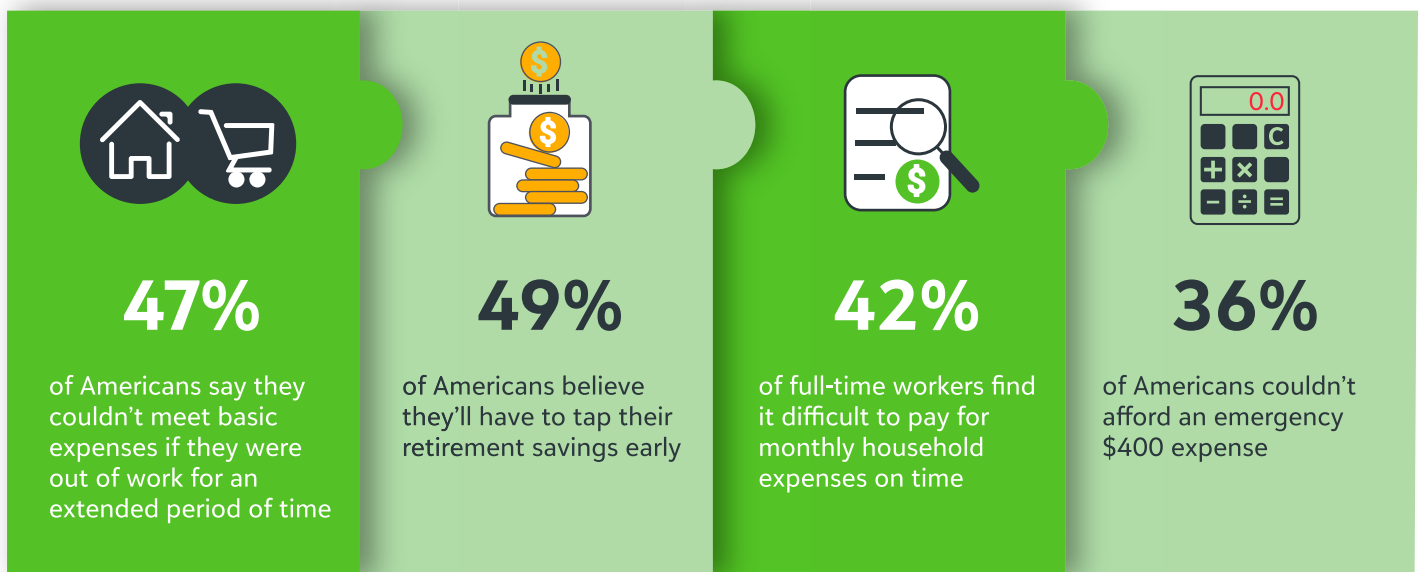
- Why Money Matters
- CSR Impact on Financial Wellness through Employee Relief Programs
- Impact of Employee Relief
- Collecting Employee Feedback | How to assess impact on your employee relief program

## WHY MONEY MATTERS

When it comes to employee well-being, money matters.

In fact, Gallup identifies financial wellness – defined as a state of financial security and financial freedom of choice – as one of five core elements that play a role in personal well-being, alongside career, social wellness, physical health and a sense of community.

And right now, that financial well-being is in jeopardy. The American Psychological Association’s annual Stress in America survey found that money-related stress is at its highest recorded level since 2015. That stress is rooted in very real struggles:



Companies feel the impact of these financial struggles every day.



In short, companies can't afford not to help.

Data Sources:

- [PwC](#)
- [Federal Reserve Survey](#)
- [Employee Financial Wellness Survey](#)
- [The \\$300B Employee Financial Stress Tax on Employers](#)

## CSR IMPACT ON FINANCIAL WELLNESS THROUGH EMPLOYEE RELIEF PROGRAMS

A strong corporate social responsibility program can help improve financial well-being among an employee population. One powerful solution in the CSR toolkit: employee relief.

Employee relief programs create a financial lifeline for employees in crisis. Natural disasters or personal hardships can strike without warning, leaving employees struggling to cover even the most basic monthly expenses. An employee relief program allows them to apply for grants to use in their time of need, and the impact can be profound.

### Example:

Cynthia is a single mother and the sole breadwinner for her family. She was in the final stages of purchasing a house for her and her two children. She had just used her emergency fund to pay off a few outstanding items when she contracted Covid-19.

Cynthia was bedridden and out of work for a month. At first, she didn't know how she was going to pay her bills. Then she remembered her company's HR department talking about an emergency relief fund earlier in the year. She applied and, once approved, used her grant funds to pay her rent, her electric bill and buy her children groceries.

“When my application was processed, I just started crying. It was a life-saving moment for me,” she said. “When you're working all the time and focused on paying what needs to be paid, you sometimes get wrapped up and don't realize how quickly things can change. Having this fund in place assures me that whatever it is, we can get through it.”

## BY THE NUMBERS: IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE RELIEF

Cynthia's story is not an isolated example. Employee relief programs create this kind of impact for organizations and their employees around the world every day.

E4E Relief specializes in employee relief funding and in studying its impact. Our analysis has identified a few important data points on the impact of employee relief on employee well-being and productivity for organizations to consider.

- 72% of employees felt less stressed after receiving their employee relief grant.
- 27% were able to direct more attention to their work.
- 16% were able to continue working where they otherwise might not have been able to.
- 77% felt supported by their employers.

## COLLECTING EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK

### How to assess the impact of your employee relief program

Impact is measured in numbers and in stories. As companies look to understand the impact of their CSR efforts, they should consider methods to collect both.



Part of that work involves analyzing the impact of employee relief, and we first look for the numbers that will guide the program in the future.

We want to understand:

- The demographics of the employee populations that apply for relief grants
- The challenges employees are facing (ie. why they applied for their grants)
- How are grant dollars put to use? (ie. Rent, utility payments, medical bills, etc.)
- What happened as a result? (ie. Was the employee able to return to work faster as a result of the grant? Did the employee avoid any negative impacts, such as foreclosure or eviction?)
- How the employee feels as a result of receiving the grant (ie. Do they feel more positively toward their employer? Do they feel more supported?)

## The Stories

While the numbers give us data to inform our work moving forward, individual stories give us deeper insight into an employee's experience.

After all, it's one thing to learn that one of your employees applied for a grant after contracting Covid-19. It's another to hear the story of Cynthia. Her grant allowed her to pay her bills and put food on the table, and the gratitude she felt as a result is far better captured in a quote than a data point: "When my application was processed, I just started crying. It was a life-saving moment for me," she said.

That's why we always look for opportunities to interview employees about their experiences. We look for individuals who have shared interesting or insightful feedback and then we engage them in a deeper conversation to understand their personal journey and experience with employee relief. This material is powerful to share internally, in your recruitment process, and externally, where appropriate, to communicate a strong corporate culture.

What your corporate social responsibility program does matters. So does the impact that is generated as a result. Take the time to understand it, to study it and to bring it to life, through both hard facts and powerful experiences.

If you'd like to learn more about how employee relief programs support the financial well-being of employees, visit our website.

[Learn More](#)

## CSR Impact on Employee Belonging

### VARIOUS AUTHORS FROM YOURCAUSE

The average person spends 1/3 or 90,000 hours of their life at work. We think it is safe to say that our jobs have a huge impact on our quality of life. For companies the costs of mental illness, loss of productivity or mass resignation can be high as more employees struggle with anxiety, depression or loneliness and leave to go work for a company that has strong purpose and aligns with their values.

### Employee engagement and your CSR strategy can support a culture of fulfillment and belonging at work.

A [recent survey](#) polling over 1500 employees across Canada, US and the UK showed that:

- Burnout prevention requires high engagement and high employee well-being
- Cost of turnover as a result of workplace culture was **more than \$223 billion** between 2014 and 2019 even before the pandemic put things in overdrive
- Canadian employees are looking for benefits that foster a shared sense of community – while only 46% of Canadian respondents believe their organization adjusts those benefits

Research and data continue to show that companies are in a position to enhance the lives of their people.

Creating a high-performance culture of engagement and well-being creates a healthy workforce. So how does CSR fit in to employee belonging?

**“embracing community helps us live longer and be happier.” - Harvard Study of Adult Development**

When thinking about belonging, consider how CSR and employee benefits support mental, emotional and social health. In 2022 the UK mental health foundation chose to focus on combating loneliness.

“Loneliness is affecting more people in the UK and has had a huge impact on physical and mental health during the pandemic. Our connection to other people and our community is fundamental to protecting our mental health.” - [UK Mental Health Foundation](#)

CSR plays a vital role in supporting mental health including combating loneliness by creating a sense of belonging at work through volunteer, diversity, equity and inclusion, and employee resource group strategies to bring employees together to support each other and their communities.

This section includes articles on:

1. Deploying technology to promote mental health, wellness and belonging at work
2. Investing in Employee Resource Groups
3. Incentives and Employee Choice in your CSR Program | Strategies for increasing engagement and activating employee participation

## Deploying Technology to Promote Mental Health, Wellness and Belonging at Work

### AUTHOR:

**Heather Sheldon, Account Executive**

The pandemic created physical separations between us and our families, coworkers, and friends, but in some ways the event unified us. Everyone around the

world experienced the same event at the same time. Everyone on some level has been sorting through pain, trauma, loss, anger, grief, anxiety, depression, and other emotions. Many of us may have never experienced the depth or breadth of those emotions before. We can acknowledge that this event was devastating and has impacted us all in different ways and start to look for ways to support each other. I believe we can draw from this shared experience and create opportunities to connect with each other.

In my work, I advise and consult companies on strategies to use employee engagement software to support cultures of fulfillment and belonging. How can companies cultivate these spaces? I'll share a few thoughts for us all to come together (please hear the Beatles song as you say that last line) and find opportunities to connect.

## 3 OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT WITH EMPLOYEES

### Technology is Key

Fully remote-work or hybrid remote-work is here to stay and software and technology infrastructure is an integral part of creating a functional remote workforce. Technology has been able to remove location barriers for employees that don't live and work in the same place, creating opportunities for them to come together and give back to their communities.

Employee engagement software like CSRconnect enables companies to manage giving and volunteering including virtual events and virtual groups offering a place for employees to connect with each other and support nonprofits around the world and in their local communities. The beauty in virtual volunteer events is that you can source opportunities from anywhere in the world, while bringing employees together to support a cause they are passionate about.

### Collaborative Leadership, Training and Development

It's not up to the HR department alone to drive the strategy behind creating an environment where employees feel safe and supported. I've had the opportunity to see some of the strategies behind employee well-being at Blackbaud. Leadership from HR, CSR and training and development collaborate on a cross functional team to plan and execute employee well-being initiatives. One example of an initiative at Blackbaud is Engagement Labs. All managers attend Engagement Labs which are designed to make sure they know how to connect with their employees and what resources are available to support employee well-being. I spoke with Makeva Daniels, the Senior Manager of Benefits at Blackbaud, about the goal behind engagement labs and she said,

“We want managers to be able to respond to an employee having a health crisis and we want employees to feel like they have someone to support them.”



### Finding “Connect-in” (Connection + Checkin)

I had a recent experience where I felt safe sharing my mental health with a manager and asked for help. On my bad mental health day, I could not focus. I was stressed, anxious and felt a panic attack coming on. I also had a presentation to deliver, so I knew I needed help. I asked a manager to take the lead and shared my true state of mind. Even though I knew the manager would support me I was a little embarrassed and scared to ask for help. I am lucky to have this dynamic, where I could be honest and feel safe in sharing that piece of myself. Not everyone has that. I've experienced first-hand how spending real time and effort in finding those moments to connect and check in, can cultivate this feeling of safety between a manager and their employees. We all deserve to work in a space where asking for help is more than just acceptable but also encouraged.

Another example of an initiative at Blackbaud that aims to create this type of culture is “Well-being Wednesdays”. On Wednesdays, Blackbaud employees receive communication that highlights various mental health resources, well-being tools, stories and connection points. Although all of this information is available to employees on the company intranet, this extra communication serves as a reminder that leadership cares about mental health and employee well-being. This communication also provides another point of reference for employees to find available resources.

## Investing in Employee Resource Groups

### AUTHOR:

Carmen Adamson

Employee Resource Groups are a powerful way to engage employees as they self-identify to join a group they feel connected to. They create a safe space where employees can find support and connect with their peers through shared experiences.

There's a lot of content on how companies use employee resource groups to foster connection among their workforce and advance professional development. Corporations are now leveraging ERG's into a valuable business resource – one that ties back to corporate objectives and impacts their brand in the marketplace.

A recent survey by Tallo reports that **86% of Gen z respondents plan on participating in a diversity equity and inclusion ERG or committee**. “Gen Z expects their employer to have ERGs or DEI strategic working groups they can actively participate in” -[What Companies Need to Know About Gen Z's Diversity Equity and Inclusion Expectations](#).

## IDEAS FOR INVESTING IN YOUR PEOPLE

### Empower

Provide your ERGs and their leaders with the tools, resources and power to get things done. It is important to provide leaders with diversity and inclusion training to ensure they are equipped to lead these groups. If you don't have a formal process for how your ERGs need to make requests from leadership, then consider defining one and setting time aside to review requests and meet with your ERGs to provide ongoing support.

Consider launching a dedicated tool to host ERGs giving them a space to live and grow. CSRconnect offers virtual groups where employees can rally together. Virtual groups within your employee engagement platform helps to streamline resources and communication among the group members. Virtual groups are highly configurable and offer companies a unique place to support a wide range of initiatives through ERGs.

- Create location-based groups and/ or global affinity groups by cause or interest
- Host documents and events to promote activities or training in a central hub and track attendance
- Collect data on overall engagement through groups including giving engagement and volunteer engagement
- Use an engagement element in CSRconnect to list all available groups on a landing page providing employees information on how to join and get involved.

Each year we create a CSR [Industry Report](#) that analyzes data to show various program trends and insights.

14%

In the 2021 CSR Industry Report, companies offering groups saw a higher overall engagement rate

10%

than companies not offering groups at 10% engagement rate.

## Take Action | Recognize Employee Resource Group Contributions

The work that ERG leaders and ambassadors put in, especially during critical times of need like a disaster often times goes above and beyond the call to support. Small actions like announcing ERG contributions in team meetings or company all-hands meetings can also go a long way in showing your appreciation for their efforts and provide a key opportunity to remind all employees that your company actively supports them. Your employees may learn about ERGs during new hire orientation and thought about joining but maybe forgot. These announcements can provide consistent messaging, give employees a burst of excitement to initially join or continue engaging.

During the pandemic Capgemini found that their ERGs were tracking more volunteer hours than any year before. In order to show their appreciation to employees that stepped up, created social events and meaningful wellness opportunities they created ERG awards. [Learn more in this customer story.](#)

## Incentives and Employee Choice in Your CSR Program

### AUTHORS:

**Carmen Adamson and Jewell Willet**

### STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ACTIVATING EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

Related to the research are two important cultural dynamics that should shape and inform new thinking and new ideas on incentive programs: consumerism and social media. Consumerism and social media have made indelible marks on employee preferences (or, shall we say, demands). The new consumerism, fueled by e-commerce, has trained employees to expect more choices and more convenience, while social media has given employees more of a voice. Gone are the days of

one-way communication and a “command and control” mindset. In their place are dialogue, collaboration and personal expression. So wouldn't it stand to reason that CSR programs should evolve to directly address these dynamics?

“CSR serves the role of addressing employee concerns and preserving that collective sense of purpose. As company ambassadors, employees are critical in promoting organizational reputation. Their engagement is paramount, particularly with websites like Glassdoor™ offering megaphones to the dissatisfied.”

– Employees as Stakeholders from the Comprehensive Social Responsibility Report

A recent study by Qualtrics surveyed British employees to see how they feel about their company's CSR. The survey aimed to understand how employees felt when consulted about what CSR initiatives the company should take, versus when they were not consulted. The results show that employees want to be involved with CSR programming, and mental health support was a top priority they wanted their employers to address. Find more stats on how UK employees and consumers feel about CSR in this infographic: [Building the Business Case for Social Responsibility in the UK](#).

We've seen a lot of different ways companies have incorporated employee choice in their CSR over the years, from simply asking their opinion before launching new initiatives to letting employees vote on how grant funding should be spent.

## EMPLOYEE CHOICE IN PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Start by gathering ideas from internal and external sources, make a list of how each idea aligns to your mission as a company and then narrow down by what your company has the time and budget to execute well on. There are lots of tools out there for capturing employee feedback. CSRconnect allows companies to setup a voting engagement element which is a great tool that gets employees logging in to the platform to cast their vote to let their voice be heard. Whatever tool you decide to use make sure you show employees how you have incorporated their feedback, so they can see their voice was heard.

## INCENTIVES DRIVE GREATER PARTICIPATION

Incentives that reward and recognize employees for their contribution to the community have tremendous impact on participation. This guide has several examples and strategies for companies to launch incentives and show employees your appreciation for their participation.

### Special Matching Gift Programs

Whether you have a year-round matching gift program or no matching gift program, you could still create a special matching gift with a cap on the amount for a campaign to help encourage donations towards a specific cause during a limited time period. Here are a few examples we've seen.

- Create a matching gift amount, like 2:1 or 1:1, for all donations made on GivingTuesday or during a campaign time frame for a final push to meet campaign goals
- Offer a total match amount for a campaign.

**Example:** Promote matching up to \$10,000 etc. to charities eligible for disaster response or other campaigns. Employees can claim a match on their donation until the \$10,000 amount has been reached.

- Offer a grant for a minimum amount of donations raised. For example, your company will donate a

\$5000 grant to the campaign if employees reach \$10,000 in donations. Get creative and make it \$5000 of in-kind donations or monetary funds for the campaign.

In a recent press release, [Blackbaud Customers Come Together to Raise Millions for Ukraine](#), we showed how companies were stepping up for the cause. “Many companies are running dedicated response programs for Ukraine, of those, 40% have created special match campaigns to maximize employee impact, and 20% are offering a 2:1 match for employee contributions.”

Designated giving days like GivingTuesday or other philanthropic holidays are great times of year to take advantage of the marketing buzz that already exists around the special day to motivate employees to participate and reach a campaign goal.

## Cause Cards

Cause Cards are a program within CSRconnect that function as a gift card that company's can issue to their employees the ability to donate on behalf of the company to a charity of their choosing. You can get creative with the ways to use Cause Cards to incentivize your employees to login to the platform to redeem their gift and choose a charity.

## Use Case Ideas:

**Engage New Employees** - These are a great program to launch to get new employees to use the platform to make a donation for the first time. Consider giving all new employees a Cause Card to be able to make a donation to the charity of their choice. Show them your employee engagement platform during orientation or onboarding to let watch know how to redeem.

**Reward participation goals** – If your goal is to increase number of employees that volunteer or donate in a campaign or throughout the year, this could be a simple initiative to reward departments or groups of employees that meet participation goals. If you don't have the budget to award every participant, you can pool all

participants into a drawing to receive a Cause Card after the goal completion.

Consider giving Cause Cards to help meet goals for number of survey completions, or other initiatives you need employee participation with. This could be a way for you to embed the spirit of giving back in things that aren't as directly CSR related.

## Volunteer for Vacation

This program rewards employees with time off for every hour they volunteer, usually up to a maximum numbers of hours of additional PTO that employees can use. Employees will feel the appreciation and see an added value for spending time volunteering. Implementing this program is another way to engage employees with logging into your employee engagement software where they need to record volunteer hours to claim their time off. You can set criteria and eligibility requirements within CSRconnect on the form where employees log volunteer hours to help manage the unique goals of your program.

## Employee Volunteer and Nomination Grants

These grant programs are another way for companies to incorporate employee choice for where company dollars go to support causes they care about. Types of programs include individual volunteer grants also known as dollars for doers, team volunteer grants and nomination grants. Checkout the corporate grants programs guide for a short description of each program, as well as tips for how to budget and examples of these programs in action. For those companies that have pillar-based programs where you have committed to focusing efforts to make an impact are a few causes, you can still incorporate a level of employee choice. For example, your company is dedicated to providing support for hunger relief and you allow employees to nominate organizations that align to hunger relief by location to receive grant funding.



## Corporate Grants Program Guide

VISIT THE RESOURCE ONLINE

### GAMIFICATION

A recent Forbes article called attention to using gamification to turn CSR into an authentic and fun experience for employees. The article written by a chief creative officer at a game agency provides some tips for how companies can get started with gamification within CSR programs.

[Read the article on Forbes](#) to learn more. We provide some ways to execute some of the tips using CSRconnect.

### Find the right motivation

- Use the voting system in CSRconnect to get feedback from your employees.
- Along with email and other communication designated for the competition, use an Engagement Element to display the winners. This is a way to execute on some of the tips for meeting extrinsic needs. No matter what tool you decide to use, find some way to make sure employees feel recognized for their accomplishments
- Provide Cause Cards to players/ winners to meet intrinsic needs by contributing directly a cause they care about.

### Keep it Simple

- Keep driving employees back to a place they are familiar with, like an Engagement Element in CSRconnect that includes all the information about the goals, rules and rewards for the competition.
- Display totals in an Engagement Element so employees can follow along and see how far they

have to go + get excited to see their group pull ahead of the competition. This also shows employees the collective impact they have made together as they support communities in their own backyard or around the world. They can be proud of the difference they made together (again creating an extrinsic motivator for your employees to continue to participate).

### Global Volunteer Challenge



#### Breakdown by Region

##### North America

509.50  
Total Hours

51% of Hours Goal ( 1000 hrs )

##### Central America

178.00  
Total Hours

Check out the [Southern Glazers Voluncheer of the Year Award](#) to see an example of how they created a monthly volunteer competition, invited employees to vote on a winner and awarded the winner with a grant to donate to a charity of their choice.

At Blackbaud, we are passionate about making the world a better place. Through our YourCause CSRconnect and YourCause GrantsConnect products we help corporate professionals track their grantmaking, employee giving and employee volunteering programs. We have also developed robust reporting tools to help our clients better capture and tell the story of the impact they are making in the community, including measuring against the Sustainable Development Goals. If you're interested in learning more about how we can help power your company's social good, please contact us by emailing [sales@yourcause.com](mailto:sales@yourcause.com)