

Rationale

# IMPACT

**Report 2022/23**





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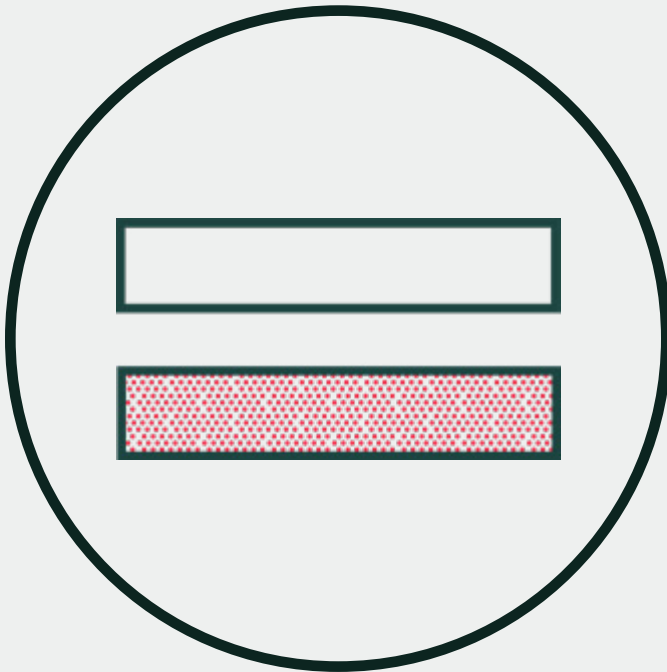
Rationale is a strategic brand and communications agency, supporting clients to define, articulate and amplify what matters most to their audiences. As a **purpose-driven** organisation, our mission is to create impact and grow our agency by making **positive changes** wherever we can.





We are **OPEN**

Our strength lies in our differences. We believe our diverse workforce makes us more innovative, creative and better at problem-solving by allowing us to look at things from a variety of perspectives and offer impactful solutions.



We are **EQUAL**

We encourage our employees to be their unique selves at work and we want everyone to feel a sense of belonging, as well as having an equal voice. Our management team is always open to ideas and input from our team.



We are **POSITIVE**

As a growing business, we aim to play a positive role in the communities in which we operate, and be mindful of the impact our business has on the wider world.



We are **CURIOUS**

We champion curiosity in all its manifestations and provide our team with professional training and personal development opportunities - there's always something new to learn!



We are **ONE**

One team. One shared vision.  
One clear goal.  
  
We are ONE Rationale.



# A message from Rowan

I'm incredibly proud to be providing the introduction to Rationale's first Impact Report! As with everything that comes from our agency, it has been a team effort - which neatly takes me to writing about the golden thread that ties together all our successes over the last year.

When my co-founder, Svein, and I set up Rationale four years ago, we knew what we did and didn't want to create. We had a vision of an organisation with a motivating, fun and inspirational culture. A business where a fully and genuinely empowered team collaborates to produce creative, whip-smart work. And that this work would support an international client base to contribute positively to the world.

B Corp has supported us to achieve just this. We knew from day one that working towards and, of course, achieving accreditation would provide us with a north star, guiding us to do things in the right way. From our HR policies to our supplier choices, our values to our processes - and much, much more - being a B Corp is in Rationale's DNA. It gives our clients the confidence that we're walking it like we talk it, something we're seeing

increasing consideration being put to as they select which agency is best suited to bring their brand story to life. Crucially, it has brought many of our hugely talented team to us - reassuring them, before they even speak with us, that we share their values and will commit to investing in them.

As I read through the pages of this report, I see represented an accumulation of mindful choices; choices about the way our agency operates in the world and choices about how we treat our own people, our suppliers and our clients. I have deep belief in the power of the private sector to deliver real change and impact, and although we of course don't always get it right, we are determined to continue to improve our approach as a B Corp and to hold ourselves accountable.

I'd like to thank the Rationale team for inspiring me to this end every single day, and again underline how proud I am of what we've achieved so far.



A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink.

**Rowan Morrison**  
Managing Director



Rowan at Old Structures for comms plan kick-off

# One year of B Corp certification - and we're just **getting started!**

Becoming an accredited B Corp was something we strived for since Rationale began.

We officially started the process in 2021 and gained B Corp status in February 2022. We're incredibly proud to have achieved an overall impact score of 100.4 upon certification but we have our sights set high on improving our score as we work towards B Corp recertification in 2025.



### Why we decided to become a B Corp

Since 2019, our team has been passionate about gaining our B Corp certification. The B Corp assessment criteria provided us with a framework to build our business in a way that balances profit with purpose and is authentic to our mission as a purpose-driven organisation.



### What's next?

Every year we are required to complete an annual impact report to show our progress and set goals. In 2023/24, we aim to improve our B Corp score to 102 and set ambitious targets to improve our social and environmental impact. The next B Corp milestone is recertification in 2025.



### How we became B Corp certified

Becoming certified was no mean feat, it took time and required input from our entire organisation. Many of our policies were already B Corp friendly, including our Employee Benefit programme, but we had to make some other changes to gain certification, such as using an independent banking service provider.



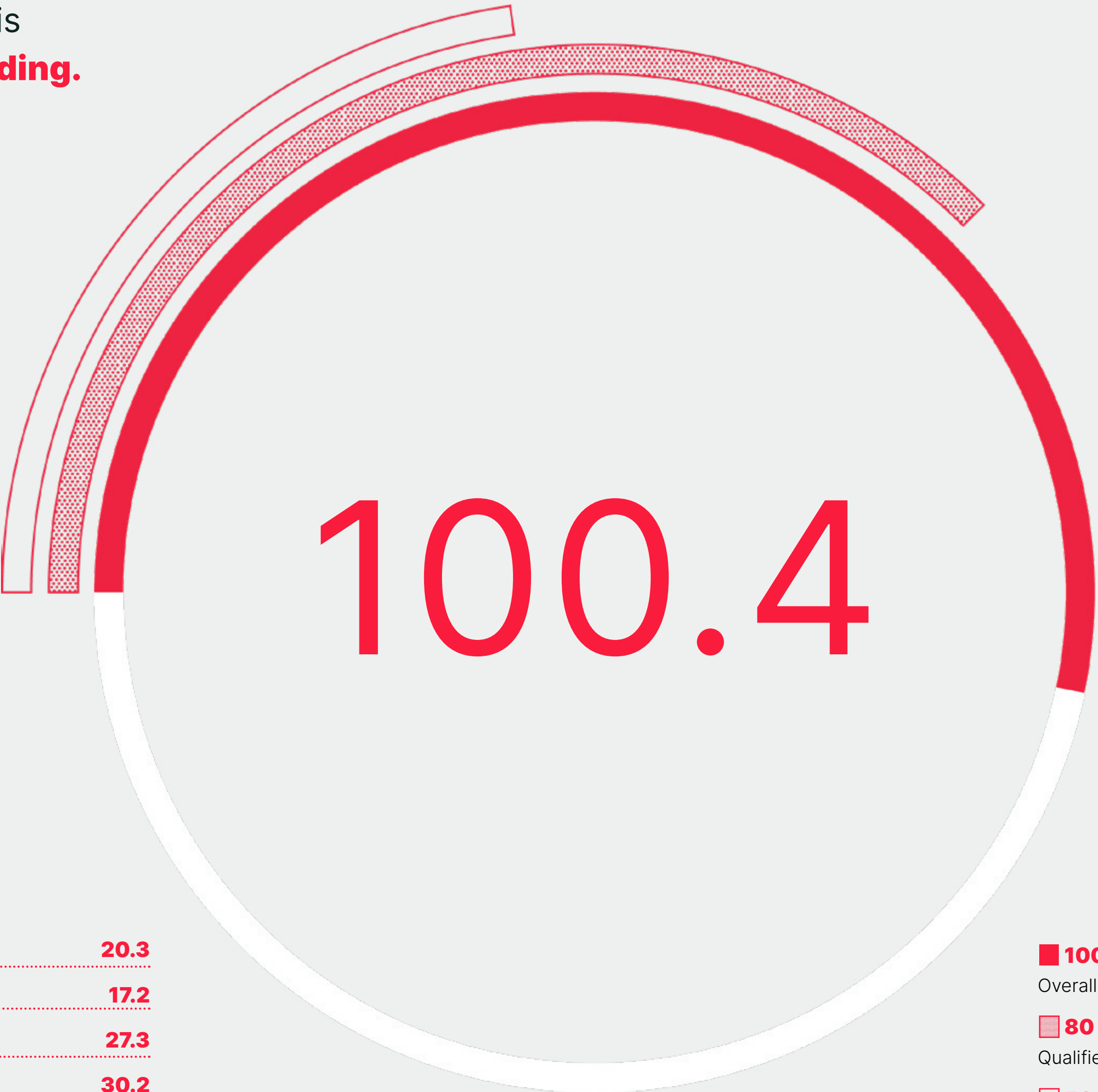
# In 2023 we aim to have a B Corp Impact Score **above 102.**

In our first year as a B Corp we achieved high scores in Workers (30.2) and Community (27.3), as well as earning the Best for the World award for Governance.

We are currently limited in Environment as we are unable to make additional changes to our current office premises but we aim to improve this score by coordinating with our new landlord to make our new workspace more energy efficient.



A score of over 100 is considered **outstanding.**



### Score breakdown

Governance	20.3
Customers	17.2
Community	27.3
Workers	30.2
Enviroment	5.1

- **100.4**  
Overall score out of 200
- **80**  
Qualifies for B Corp Certification
- **50.9**  
Median score for ordinary businesses



# 01 Governance



The Governance impact area evaluates our overall mission, engagement around our social and environmental impact, ethics and transparency.

Our mission statement commits us to positive social change that drives the work we do as well as our decision making. We have a non-hierarchical structure with an open-door policy to senior management and regular opportunities for our staff to play an active role in setting our goals and business objectives. Making sure everyone’s voices are heard in setting the direction of the business is hugely important to us.





# Governance



January 2023 OneWow



### What we do well

- Awarded Best for the World for Governance in 2022
- Our employees contribute to the direction of business with quarterly strategy days
- 50% women-owned and have implemented several women-focused policies
- Switched our banking to an independent bank, Starling Bank
- Updated employee performance reviews to include social and environmental issues and targets



We are proud to have been awarded **Best for the World for Governance** in 2022. This means we scored in the top 5% of all B Corps across the world for exemplary governance practices.



### What we'll improve

- Continue to provide opportunities for employees to positively influence the direction of the company
- Evaluate our social and environmental targets and key performance indicators to measure progress
- Increase transparency around our ethics that govern our decisions and behaviour
- Increase financial transparency with our employees

### How we'll do it

- Create a formal corporate mission statement for positive environmental and social impact
- Disclose specific environmental and social targets to staff and stakeholders, and give regular progress updates
- Create a formal Code of Ethics with input from our team
- Incorporate financial updates into our monthly team meetings



Our Governance impact score in 2022



# 02 Customers



The Customers impact area evaluates our client stewardship through the quality of our services, ethical marketing, data privacy and feedback channels.

Balancing our profit with purpose that is authentic to our proposition, clients and employees is at the heart of who we are as an agency. We are proud to have increased the number of purpose-driven clients we work with in 2022 by 20%, with many addressing social issues related to health and education.





# Customers



Paula at Edinburgh Earth Initiative for branding workshop



### What we do well

- Maintain a ‘four eyes’ quality assurance process to ensure every piece of work we do is of the highest quality
- Increased the number of purpose-driven clients we work with by 20% in 2022
- 87% of our clients projects are purpose-driven
- Continue to expand our client portfolio which has led to an increase in company turnover by 38% from 20/21 to 21/22



### What we'll improve

- Aim to be more transparent around service costs, value, and processes for our clients
- Increase client feedback opportunities so we can improve our offering
- Improve our communication with all users, including clients, about our data usage and storage

### How we'll do it

- Review our services and processes to create more transparent costs for our customers
- Add internal and external debriefs into our project processes so our clients and employees voices are heard
- Inform all users about how we use their information and data, how it is stored and shared



Our Customers impact score in 2022.

“Throughout the branding process, Rationale’s **responsiveness, creativity** and **strategic** consultancy was **invaluable**. They are a lovely group of people to collaborate with.”

Nick Cole, CMO  
Blackford Analysis





Bringing Smplicare’s brand to life

Smplicare is a health-tech company, building digital solutions to support people who are caring for ageing loved ones. We worked with them to create a brand that would make their solutions and benefits clear for both carers and those who need care.

We articulated a visual brand that remained close to their original brand identity with narrative messaging that highlighted their impact. Rationale is committed to supporting Smplicare as they expand their brand, connect with their audience and grow their business.

“Rationale understood us, our company, our vision, and the complexity of the problem we’re trying to solve. **They’re fun, creative, thoughtful people**, who found the right words to bring clarity both to our purpose and the way we communicate it.”

**Garrett Sprague, Co-founder**  
Smplicare



Engaging audiences with a mission for the planet

Edinburgh Earth Initiative’s (EEI) mission is to ensure the University of Edinburgh’s research, teaching and innovation creates just and positive regeneration for the climate.

We support EEI with content strategy and delivery and regularly create content to engage their audiences and encourage people to support EEI’s mission to take a multidisciplinary approach to combat climate change.

“Rationale helped the Edinburgh Earth Initiative finds its brand and voice amidst a noisy ecosystem of internal and external audiences with a range of different needs and expectations. Each member of their team is committed to not only **producing high quality work, but making a difference** through their agency. Rowan’s insights were especially invaluable in helping us develop the confidence to take a strong step forward with our work.”

**Johanna Holton, Deputy Director**  
The University of Edinburgh (EEI)



Communicating leading expertise

Old Structures Engineering (OSE) provides specialised structural consulting on existing buildings in New York City and beyond.

We worked with OSE to enhance their reputation as leading experts on existing and historical building projects. We found ourselves not only aligned with OSE’s B Corp status and values but also with their respect of the diverse architectural heritage and desire to create a more sustainable building sector.

“Rationale were committed to understanding our business, our brand, and our goals. They used that understanding, gathered from discovery workshops, to create a visual brand and messaging strategy that resonated with our target audience as leading experts in our field. Throughout the project, the Rationale team were **responsive, professional and always willing to go the extra mile** to ensure we were satisfied with the results.”

**Donald Friedman, Professional Engineer**  
Old Structures Engineering



# 03 Community



The Community impact area evaluates our engagement with and impact on our local community covering topics such as diversity, equity & inclusion, economic impact, civic engagement, charitable giving, and supply chain management.

We aim to make a positive impact in our community in a number of ways, from giving our staff one paid day off a year to volunteer for a local charity, to engaging with initiatives such as the UK Government’s Kickstart scheme to increase diversity with our team and creating job opportunities in our local community as our business grows.





# Community

## What we do well

- Make financial contributions to charities, with £3,500 donated in 2022
- Match donate the total raised by employees' fundraising
- Encourage staff volunteering with 40 hours volunteered by our team in 2022
- Create employment opportunities with our job growth rate increased by 100% in 2022
- Offered a marketing internship in 2022 through the Government's Kickstart scheme
- Offer pro bono support by sharing our business and marketing expertise to specific organisations
- Our Managing Director, Rowan, offers mentorship and professional development opportunities for women as a Women's Enterprise Scotland ambassador

## What we'll improve

- Increase our volunteer hours and aim to send 100% of the team on volunteering days
- Increase shared skills volunteering and pro bono support for local charities and organisations
- Increase civic engagement with the local community



“Working with Rowan has been a transformative experience. I engaged Rowan to support several colleagues to develop and hone communication skills for personal and professional impact. **The results have been palpable.**”

**Aileen Appleyard, Head of Account Team**  
The University of Edinburgh


## How we'll do it

- Set annual targets around number of pro bono hours offered across our team, and organisations which benefit from this work
- Set up an annual company service day for an employee-nominated charity
- Partner with charities and find out what they need to thrive
- Create opportunities for partner organisations to use our facilities to host community events



Our Community impact score in 2022.





Every member of the Rationale team is given **one paid day a year** to volunteer for a charity of their choice.

This year our Motion Graphics and Video Editor, Aoife, joined Fresh Start to support them and their mission to help formerly unhoused people to get established in their new homes. Aoife helped to make 24 starter packs which contain essential household items to allow people to kickstart their lives in their new homes.

**FreshStart**  
helping people make a home for themselves



40

Our team volunteered 40 hours to local causes in 2022.

### Kickstart

Rationale hired a marketing intern through the UK Government's Kickstart scheme, which offers people between ages 16-24 who are out-of-work and claiming Universal Credit a work placement. Through the scheme and with support from Creative Access we were able to hire Dieff and offer him support and professional development opportunities as he learned on the job and built up his skills in marketing.





# 04 Workers



The Workers impact area evaluates our contributions to employees’ financial security, health & safety, wellness, career development and engagement and satisfaction.

We work hard to promote a healthy and happy workforce, and established a best practice Employee Benefit scheme. This includes access to private medical insurance, our Living Wage and Disability Confident credentials, our commitments to employee career development and implementing a staff bonus policy.





# Workers



Celebrating 1 year as an accredited B Corp



### What we do well

- Provide staff with private medical insurance from Bupa
- Run weekly and confidential surveys using OfficeVibe to measure employee satisfaction and score an average of 8.4/10
- Dedicated training budget available to everyone
- Allocate a share of the company's revenue to our team with a new bonus policy
- Offer staff free external professional coaching
- Supportive onboarding process with new starts allocated a Rationale Buddy
- Offer hybrid working options to meet the needs of our employees
- Provide free menstrual products in the workplace



### What we'll improve

- Improve transparency and internal communications around our B Corp status and our impact
- Maintain a respectful, inclusive workplace by providing bias training and highlighting barriers to diversity and inclusion for staff
- Provide more opportunities to support employees' professional growth and improvement
- Improve the diversity of our team by working with organisations, including We Are Here Scotland, to highlight and dismantle barriers to employment for individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Review policies around around menstruation and menopause

### How we'll do it

- Take part in B Corp month and promote B Corp internally to increase awareness and engagement
- Organise diversity and inclusion training for all employees
- Review our performance review structure and arrange more regular reviews with line management
- Engage We Are Here Scotland to highlight and dismantle barriers to employment for individual forms diverse backgrounds
- Create policies around menstruation and menopause to support our team members and their evolving needs

Agency ownership  
**50% female.**



Our Workers impact score in 2022.





Cocktail masterclass



The team at our 2022 Away Day



Lunchtime yoga

officevibe



As well as our many face-to-face opportunities, we are able to weekly measure staff happiness and collect feedback through OfficeVibe, a platform which allows staff to be surveyed anonymously. We consistently achieve scores of 8.4/10 or higher.

Being an accredited Living Wage employer is more than long-term investment into our own team; it is based on our core values as an organisation. We are committed to ensuring employees earn a wage that meets the cost of living, not just the government minimum.

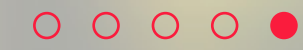
# Here’s what **our team say...**

“From hosting welcome lunches and pairing you up with a Rationale Buddy for new starts, to hosting lunchtime yoga sessions, **Rationale work hard to put our health and wellbeing** in focus by introducing a whole host of benefits that are offered to the whole team.”

“When starting with Rationale, I immediately felt welcome and that my thoughts, opinions and perspectives were valued, regardless of being a Junior. **The opportunities to work collaboratively, and grow independently** have already presented themselves - and I am already extremely comfortable within my working environment. There’s even standing desks!”



# 05 Environment



Environment evaluates our overall environmental management practices as well as our impact on the air, climate, water, land, and biodiversity.

With a growing international presence in Europe and USA, we are mindful of our carbon footprint when travelling to meet new and existing clients. That’s why in 2023, one of our goals is to better measure and improve our environmental impact where we can. Since we gained B Corp certification, we have moved offices and are uprooting again in May 2023 to make room for our growing team. This move presents a new opportunity to better manage and improve our environmental impact.





# Environment



Rowan at The Hermitage in Dunkeld



### What we do well

- Became an official 1% for the Planet organisation and give 1% of our revenue back to the earth
- Use the Cycle to Work scheme to reduce our carbon footprint and promote sustainable and environmentally modes of transportation
- Use ChangeWorks to collect, record and measure our recycling and reduce the carbon footprint of our office premises
- Monitor our energy-use with a Nest in our office premises



### What we'll improve

- Increase our engagement with 1% for the Planet organisations and charities
- Increase our green building standard at our new office premises
- Improve cycle storage spaces at our new office premises
- Better environmental stewardship for our staff and provide guidance on sustainable practices when working from home

### How we'll do it

- Offer pro bono work to support environmental causes and organisations from the 1% for the Planet directory
- Work with our new landlord to switch to green suppliers for electricity and gas
- Create environmental stewardship policies to encourage our staff to implement sustainable practices for hybrid and home working
- Speak to new landlord and Edinburgh City Council about cycle storage options

Since February 2022, we've diverted the equivalent of 459.99km of carbon by using **ChangeWorks Recyling.**



Our Environment impact score in 2022





As an official 1% for the Planet organisation we are committed to giving 1% of our revenue back to the Earth. We are a purpose-driven business and being able to give this back is an important step towards achieving a positive impact as a company, that goes beyond the great work we do for our clients.

This year we’ve worked with Trees for Life and the Bee Conservation Trust to continue our commitment to making a positive environmental impact.

# Trees for L🌱fe

Trees for Life (TfL) is a registered charity working to rewild the Scottish Highlands. TfL are working for the revitalisation of the Caledonian Forest and aim to provide space for wildlife to flourish and communities to thrive.

This year we supported TfL by giving 1% of our revenue to support their mission to rewild the Highlands and uphold our commitment to make a positive environmental impact.



The Bee Conservation Trust (BCT) is working to increase the number and distribution of bumblebees in the UK. BCT also provides education to improve understanding of bumblebee ecology and conservation and aim to inspire people to take action to increase the quality and quantity of bee habitats.



## Goals for **2023/24**

We're proud of all the things we've achieved in our first year as a certified B Corp, but we know there's still a lot of work to be done. In 2023/24 we are aiming to improve the diversity of our team with a focus on working with various organisations to dismantle barriers and create an accessible workplace for members of the LGBTQ+, disabled, Black and ethnic minority communities.

We'll also improve our environmental practices by working with our new landlord to create a sustainable workspace by advocating a switch to a green energy supplier.



# Thank you

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