

Citadel BCorp 2024 Impact Report

A Word from our MD.....

I started this business with the goal to achieve great outcomes for my clients. As time progressed, I realised I also had the opportunity to positively impact the lives of others through offering a positive employment experience and using the business to create wider benefits and practices that aligned with my personal ethos.

Becoming B Corporation certified has enabled the Citadel team to increase our focus on how we make a positive impact across key areas and create measurement, support and increased impetus to continually improve.

I hope in reading this report you feel the pride and energy that the Citadel team has and can see how we are progressing on our journey to positively impact our people, our clients and our wider environment.

Matthew



Our Purpose

Our Impact on people and more widely our living environment are core to the ethos of Citadel, and to us all working here.

We are a team of friends and pride ourselves on forging close relationships with our clients that we value and enjoy. Our policies reflect having a positive work life balance and encouraging teamwork and full participation to achieve our goals.

We have a strong welfare approach to our people and clients, providing support that quite frankly is often just about treating others as you would like to be treated, but also adopting specific best practices through policies such as the vulnerability charter.

Investing money is a powerful catalyst for change and we are mindful of ensuring our client's hard-earned investments are tailored to deliver returns and impact aligned to their individual needs.

No longer is impactful investing only about the future, it is also now in the present. We see our role as pivotal in providing education and options to clients to allow them to invest in an impactful way.

Measuring our Impacts

Where did we start the year from

We had been developing positive work practices internally and investment strategies with our clients for several years, working closely with investment managers to achieve these.

We were extremely proud to achieve B Corp certification in June 2023 with a score of 86.6 with the minimum pass being a score of 80. For perspective the average non B Corp verified company would score 50.9. Whilst this was fantastic to achieve and reflected our efforts towards creating a positively impactful business, we are focused on how we can continually deliver improvement that aligns with our purpose.

We set out some key objectives linked to the impact areas measured by B Corporation assessments and recertifications. The following pages provide a summary of where we were, where we are, and where we are heading!

Overall B Impact Score

Based on the B Impact assessment, Citadel Financial Solutions Ltd earned an overall score of 86.6. The median score for ordinary businesses who complete the assessment is currently 50.9.



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



Workers – 28.8

We said we would.....

At Citadel we aspire to be a workplace where we all love coming to work and are inspired to deliver strong outcomes for our clients. But we look beyond this in how we can create a family feel that supports and is enjoyed by not just our employed team but also their immediate family.

What we've achieved so far;

Implemented flat management structure where all of our team participate in monthly management meetings and are encouraged to think out of the box and share ideas.

If your Birthday is on a workday.... Enjoy the day off as an extra days leave!

Annual staff convention.... 3-4 days away in a team building environment

Lunches covered by the company each month after the monthly management meeting to build team morale and allow the sharing of ideas to continue in an informal environment.

Employer sponsored lunches when we have guest providers coming to visit us.

Bring your partner..... meals and events where partners are encouraged to attend, building strong wider support mechanisms for our team



Customers -19.7

We said we would.....

Provide education and advice to our clients on the benefits of impactful investing. By increasing client awareness, we anticipated an increase in the take up of specific ESG investments with our clients.

Educate our corporate clients and their people on sustainable investing so they can make informed choices.

What we've achieved so far;

We have run presentations to our corporate clients workforce explaining how their providers integrate people and planet considerations into their Workplace pension schemes.

Highlighted funds that are fully tailored to environmental investing.

Created an ESG focused questionnaire to filter down clients key objectives and worked with some of the key investment managers such as Rathbones/Investec /LGT to provide tailored solutions.

Educated clients on the benefits of sustainable investing. As a result, at the end of May 24 **over 11% of our clients are now invested in sustainable portfolios or funds.** We are also delighted to be working with other B Corp certified companies.

ESG Questionnaire

We are all mindful of how we can make a positive impact on our planet and the people on it. Environmental, social and governance (ESG) has become a mainstream consideration for the majority of portfolios that our clients invest in. Our standard approach is to invest with Discretionary Fund Managers who operate screening processes that focus on investing in companies that are the best performing in their field based on their own ESG filtering. They may also exclude companies that they identify as having a detrimental impact on the planet or on people. The information you provide below will help us determine if this overlay of principles is suitable to meet your wishes, or if you have more specific requirements.

There are some investment managers who have portfolios with more specific goals that focus on people and planet. You can choose to invest in these but you should be aware these may exclude you from being invested in sectors of the market which could mean you miss out on some diversity and the potential returns from those sectors. 2022 was a good example of this, with energy and commodity companies outperforming virtually all other sectors.

The questions below help us to understand your preferences and contribute towards investment selection recommendations.

PLANET & PEOPLE - MAKING YOUR INVESTMENTS MATTER

Current awareness and engagement

1. In general, how would you characterise your interest in the topic of sustainability? (Tick the most applicable).

- a. I have not engaged with the concept and know very little about this area.
- b. I consider sustainable practices to some degree.
- c. I incorporate sustainable behaviour into my daily life (e.g. actively purchase sustainable items).
- d. I am completely engaged in sustainability; it is a core consideration in my daily life.

YOUR INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

If you knew you could still potentially meet your current and future financial needs:

2. Would you be interested in investing in companies focused on their internal, operational sustainability? For example, those recycling waste, sourcing raw materials sustainably, engaging with local communities. (Tick the most applicable)

Governance – 14.2

We said we would

Further develop our ethos within our company and out to our clients and wider community. Ensure as a company we live and breathe our ethics. Deliver regular training and discussion with our team to ensure our ethics, vulnerability, social impact and sustainability policies remain core and to highlight areas we can impact further.

What we have achieved so far;

It has been great to see our team embrace the values and we have a great deal of pride talking through what is important to us as a business and how we add value.

All the team have access to accounts and performance data via our intranet.

By implementing our policies and having a review section as part of our monthly team meeting, we have continued to question our impact and make improvements.



Environment – 9.6

We said we would.....

We had implemented solar, Powerwall battery and electric vehicles pre our certification as part of our drive to reduce environmental impact. We committed to reduce our energy consumption at every opportunity.

Our waste policy dictates that we consider our footprint and make recycling a priority.

What we have achieved so far;

All our clients are now offered TEAMS meetings as the norm to reduce travel, although of course we will still travel to see clients should they prefer face to face appointments.

A key focus in the last 12 months was to adopt wherever possible a nil posting policy. This has involved the use of a dedicated client portal and supporting clients to understand and utilise electronic signatures wherever possible.

The office is now 100% electricity self sufficient and produces a surplus which is exported to the grid. **Since installation in August 23 we have generated 3.11 MWh!**



Community – 13.8

We said we would...

We are a small company but are mindful to have a workforce that reflects our community.

Continue our focus on regular fundraising for local charities.

What we have achieved so far

We have a 50/50 male/female split and a range of ages within our team enabling us to relate to our community.

Thanks to the generosity of our clients and providers we work with, in 2024 we have raised in excess of £2,000 for our chosen local charity Devon Freewheelers who provide an emergency out of hours blood courier service to the NHS and Devon and Somerset Air Ambulances.

Sponsorship of the local under 13's rugby team.

Our clients are understanding the value of impact investing, and as detailed earlier in this report we are seeing the rate of investments transitioning to sustainable investments increasing.





Looking ahead

We are looking to improve our score at our next recertification by constantly focusing on how we are impacting on our clients investment strategies, educating employees, focusing on our people and how we impact our planet. We see this as integral to our day to day way of doing business and the policies and processes we build.

In the coming year we will have an even stronger focus on due diligence with providers, and intend to further reduce paper and postage.

We anticipate a further move to sustainable investing and are committed to develop systems to better measure our impact. We are also looking at developing improved opportunities for client feedback from employee presentations to measure success and provide opportunity to follow up with individuals proactively.