

# CORPORATE SOCIAL PURPOSE CONTINUUM

Social Purpose is an emerging business trend in which companies bring their unique set of corporate assets to address social challenges and improve social conditions through their business. This benefits companies by growing the business and strengthening the work they do, the environment in which they operate and the relationships they have with customers, community and the public. It also helps create stronger communities and thriving societies.

The Social Purpose Institute at United Way is providing this continuum as a tool to help companies recognize how they can take their CSR, corporate affairs and community relations to the next level – towards embedding Social Purpose at their core. It can help businesses identify where they are today, and what the benefits – and strategies – are to moving up on the continuum.

**A TRANSFORMATIONAL  
TOOL FOR BUSINESS**

	1.0 Philanthropic	2.0 Strategic	3.0 Integrated	4.0 Social Purpose
MOTIVATION	Give back or PR	Achieve results	Be more competitive	Build a better world
ACTIVITY	Ad hoc Donations	CI vision, goals & targets + Volunteering & in-kind	CSR vision Core competencies & assets	Business purpose Mission Whole of enterprise
STRATEGY	Side-lined	Siloed	Component of corporate strategy	Central to / inseparable from corporate strategy
RESOURCES	Grants budget	+ Volunteering & staff skills	+ Other assets, functions, products & services	+ Leveraged collective resources
INVESTMENT MODELS	Profit allocation	Community investments	R&D innovation investments	Value creation
ISSUE SELECTION	Respond to community requests / where most PR value can be gained	Address community needs	Deliver strategic positioning	Address complex social challenges
LEAD	Community relations manager	CSR manager	Chief strategy or sustainability officer	CEO
EMPLOYEE ROLE	Donors via payroll	Skills-based volunteering	Performance plans & daily decision-making	At work, at home & in community
CUSTOMER ROLE	None	Volunteer & donate	Join & co-create	Customer movement
BRAND PROMISE	Quality: aware company donates money	Trust: aware of how company contributes to community	Pride: aware of company's socially beneficial impacts	Meaning: believe society is better off if they do business with the company & that as customers they are part of a social movement
MARKETING	Paid advertising tells story	Earned media / cause marketing tell story	Customers tell story	Everything you do tells story
PARTICIPATION	Passive	Strategic partnerships	Multi-stakeholder collaborations	Innovation labs for system change
TIMELINE	< 1 year	Multi-year	Medium term	Long term
MEASUREMENT	Inputs	Activities	Outcomes	Impact
BUSINESS VALUE	Goodwill	Reputation	Profitability	Long-term viability