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New CECP Research: Corporate Social Impact Teams Are Expanding Their Reach Without Expanding Headcount

Companies managed more nonprofits and more funding per employee in 2025 despite leaner staffing structures

NEW YORK, September 4, 2026 — Corporate social impact teams are managing increasingly complex portfolios without adding staff, according to new findings from Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose® (CECP)'s *Giving in Numbers®: 2026 Edition*, the unrivaled leader in benchmarking of corporate social investments, conducted in partnership with companies. Companies supported more nonprofit organizations, managed more community investment dollars per employee, and maintained robust measurement practices in 2025, even as staffing levels declined among larger social impact functions.

The findings point to a broader shift in how companies manage community investment programs. Rather than scaling through larger teams, organizations are relying on systems, measurement practices, partners, and technology to oversee growing responsibilities. Among companies reporting staffing metrics in both 2024 and 2025, median staffing remained stable at nine full-time employees, while top-quartile staffing declined from 20 to 18 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs). During the same period, median recipient organizations increased from 331 to 358, and recipient organizations managed per FTE rose from 35 to 45. Median cash community investment managed per employee increased 34%, from $1.5 million to $2.0 million.

"The traditional assumption is that managing more grants, nonprofit partnerships, and funding requires larger teams. That's not what we're seeing," **said Kate Stobbe, Director, Corporate Insights & Research, CECP**. *"The organizations that stand out aren't necessarily the ones with the largest teams. They're the ones finding ways to scale their community investments efficiently."*

Key findings:

- **Leaner staffing structures.** Top-quartile staffing declined from 20 to 18 FTEs, while median staffing remained stable.
- **More organizations supported per FTE.** Median recipient organizations increased from 331 to 358, while recipient organizations managed per FTE rose from 35 to 45.
- **Human Resources continues to gain influence.** Human Resources became the most common organizational home for community investment programs, increasing from 20% to 23% of reporting companies.
- **More funding managed per FTE.** Median cash community investment managed per FTE increased 34%, while foundation teams managed $6.4 million per employee.

- **Measurement remains nearly universal.** Ninety-five percent of companies collected outputs or outcomes data, and the average company collected 3.7 types of evaluative information.

The research suggests community investment functions are becoming increasingly institutionalized. As social impact strategies become more targeted and stakeholder expectations continue to rise, operational capability may increasingly depend on the systems, processes, and technology that support teams, rather than headcount growth alone.

Complete the survey to gain access to confidential benchmarking tables that show how your company's giving and social impact investments compare with peers of similar size and industry, helping you make more informed strategic decisions and answer executive questions with confidence.

Companies over $500M in revenue can still participate and it's completely free; see the survey here and email insights@cecp.org for more information. A condensed version of the report will be available to the public in October 2026.

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Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose® (CECP) is the only nonpartisan business counsel and network dedicated to driving measurable returns on purpose. We promote responsible purpose-driven business as it increases customer loyalty, builds employee engagement, improves brand trust, attracts top talent, connects with strategic investors, and contributes to the bottom line.

More than 200 of the world's leading companies seek to improve their return on purpose through access to CECP's solutions in insights and benchmarking. With our companies, we harness the power of purpose for business, stakeholders, and society.

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