

**higher.**  
**ring**

ETHICAL  
OUTSOURCING

Impact  
Report

2023

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# Letter to the Stakeholders

Like many, 2023 was a challenging year and as a company dependent on our client's success, each client contraction or loss (four of our clients ceased operations) forced us also to adjust our priorities and even roll back some of the investments we made after 2022. We have truly learned (along with many of our clients) the importance of being scrappy, proactive, and doing more with less.

However, throughout these trials, we have remained dedicated to our mission to harness business as a force for good and partner with impact organizations to lighten their load and further their purpose. We are proud that our fractional, full-time, and team-based approaches allowed our clients to remain resilient through the economic challenges as we worked with them to quickly scale various aspects of their business up or down based on their evolving needs.

Our ongoing commitment to nurturing and developing our team members is at the heart of our success. In Q3 2023, we were proud to increase worker pay to address inflation and increase benefits. We prioritize hiring with long-term growth in mind, providing opportunities for skills development, diversified training, and flexible career paths.

Our collaborative environment fosters continuous learning and knowledge-sharing across industries, empowering our team members to thrive and excel.

Despite the challenges we faced, our team demonstrated remarkable resilience, maintaining excellence in customer support and supply chain expertise while operating with efficiency and agility. We thank them each day for their partnership and commitment to building a warm and collaborative community.

As a labor-as-a-service company, our product is the collective work of our talented team members. Their dedication, expertise, and unwavering commitment to our values have been instrumental in driving our success.

If there is anything that this year has taught us, it is that we will continue to find success by remaining rooted in the core principles that define us as an ethical outsourcing partner. As we look forward to 2024, we will continue to maintain our commitment to offer fair treatment of our team members, support our client's missions, and be an agent of positive change for the environment. We are grateful for your continued support and partnership on this journey.

- *Michelle + Higher Ring Team*

# 2023 SDGs

HigherRing continues to be committed to our impact in a variety of areas. We align our actions and advocacy in coordination with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which serve as a universal guiding light for businesses and organizations worldwide to work towards a better, more sustainable future.

At HigherRing, we've chosen to concentrate our efforts on the SDGs where we feel we will make the most significant impact. In this section, we delve into the top four (4) SDGs that we chose to focus on in 2023.

**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY



**8** DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



**13** CLIMATE  
ACTION



**16** PEACE, JUSTICE  
AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS



# 2023 SDGs

5 GENDER EQUALITY



As a women-led company, HigherRing is passionate about advocating for women's reproductive rights in the states where our team members work. After the fall of Roe vs. Wade, we invested in medical travel benefits to ensure our team members experience fewer barriers to the medical care they need regardless of where they reside. We signed onto Don't Ban Equality to join thousands of other companies in an organized advocacy effort. We also volunteer our time and labor with WeTheChange, an organization supporting women-led businesses.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



HigherRing is proud to be working to improve working conditions and setting new standards in the outsourcing industry, especially around contact center work, where working conditions, pay practices, and development opportunities are a real challenge. We are proud to pay at least a living wage in each community where we hire. We hire team members as employees with benefits, ownership, and profit-sharing opportunities. We also are proud to offer paid training and career path opportunities.



# 2023 SDGs

13 CLIMATE ACTION



As a fully remote business, HigherRing was founded to be helpful in the effort to mitigate climate change. We are proud to be a member of 1% for the Planet, where we give 1% of our top-line revenue to organizations working to address the causes and effects of climate change, both environmental and social. In 2023, we also were proud to become climate-neutral certified.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



HigherRing is committed to doing our part to support a functioning democracy. We are a member of the American Sustainable Business Network where co-founder and CEO, Michelle serves on the Business for Democracy working group. We advocate with the elected officials where we do business and have team members living for fair access to the polls and for concepts such as ranked-choice voting and equitable map drawing so that all may be represented fairly. Additionally, in 2023, we were proud to offer all HigherRing employees paid time off for working election polls in their communities.

# What is Ethical Outsourcing?

## Employee Centric

We are a business that ensures fair treatment of our team members including livable wages, benefits, training development and employee stock options.



## Client Mission Aligned

We pair our clients with team members who are passionate about your impact and excited to move your mission forward. We become integrated into your brand as seamlessly as if you had hired internally, resulting in less turnover and higher ROI for our clients.



## Impact Driven

We believe that business really can be used as a force for good and we authenticate that commitment through certifications like B Corp, 1% for the Planet, and Climate Neutral. We know our approach to ethical outsourcing translates into excellent results for our clients, longer retention of our valued team members, and a healthier planet for everyone.





# Michelle's Advocacy

We are proud to spotlight the personal advocacy efforts of our CEO, Michelle, with WeTheChange. Founded in 2017, WeTheChange is a group of purpose-driven women\* business leaders who believe business can be used to generate abundance and prosperity for all. Less than 4% of investments worldwide go towards women-led companies, and that's a metric Michelle's on a mission to change through education, knowledge-sharing, advocacy, access to capital, and networking.

As the Membership Chair, Michelle dedicated nearly 200 hours in 2023 with WeTheChange, working with the Leadership Circle to launch a membership model that will increase the power and effectiveness of the organization. She is proud to report that fundraising and membership have allowed the organization to hire paid staff to better facilitate internal operations.



**WE**  
*the* **CHANGE**



# New Policies + Benefits

- Employee Support Channel
- Medical Travel Benefit
- Paid Volunteer Time
- Domestic Partner Benefit Policy
- Dress and Virtual Presence Guidelines - Supporting CROWN Act
- Disability Accommodation Policy
- Professional Development Policy
- Whistleblower Policy



# Team Updates

## Volunteer Work

Our Paid Volunteer Policy allows Team Members to take time off (half a day for part-time and a whole day for full-time) to volunteer with their chosen 1% for the Planet environmental partner. We also encourage our team to participate in their local communities beyond our paid policy. Here are some organizations that the HigherRing team supported in 2023!



 PEOPLE FIRST



## Training Hours for 2023

3,102 Hours



## Team Promotions to Date

44% of all employees are promoted



## Employee Tenure to Date

1.61 years



\*This tenure rate includes our seasonal employees and is compared to the typical outsourcing tenure of only 1.2 years (14 months) according to [this Feb 2023 report](#).

Certified



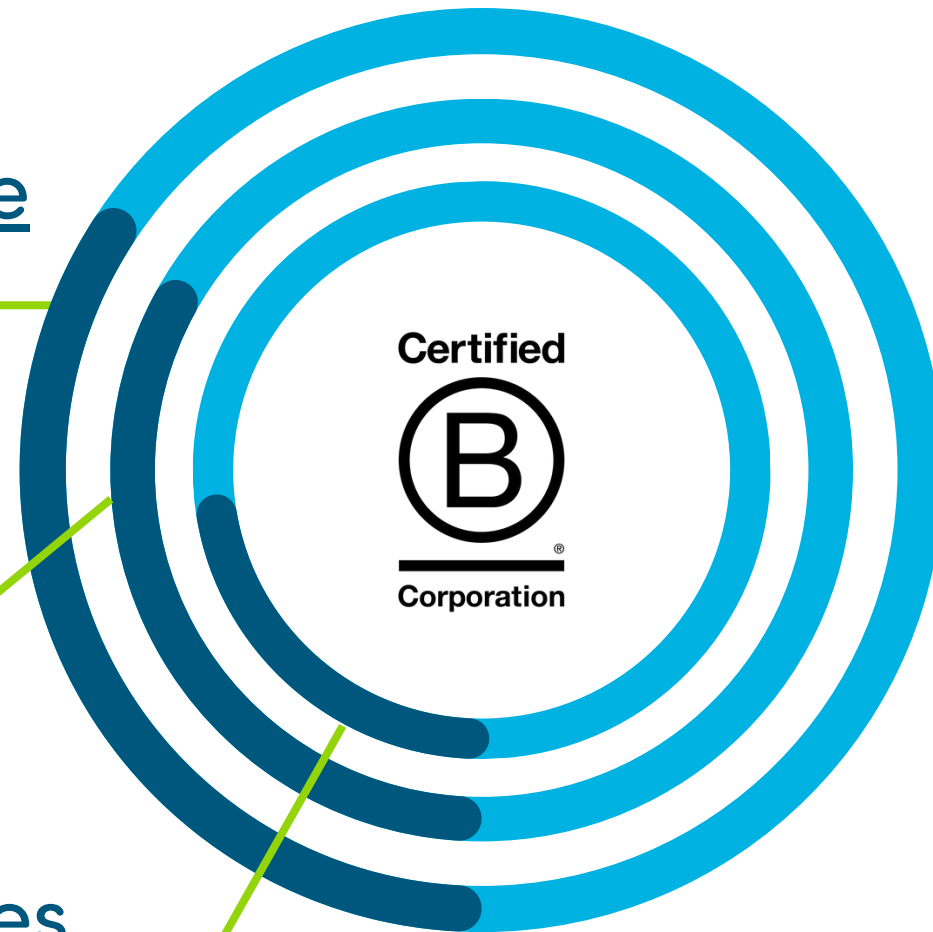
Corporation

## Score Breakdown

88.2 HigherRing's score

80 Qualifies for B Corp Certification

50.9 Median score for ordinary businesses



Governance 17.6

Environment 8.6

Workers 31.2

Community 25.6

Customers 5.0





# 1% for the Planet 2023 Donations

 Monetary  
\$10,513

 Volunteer  
\$10,352

 Advertising  
\$500

**\$21,366**

**Lifetime Donations \$59,615**



**\*HigherRing was a proud sponsor of the 2023 Global Summit in NYC\***





**CLIMATE  
NEUTRAL**

## 1. Measure

HigherRing, Inc. measured its Scope 1, 2, and 3 cradle-to-consumer greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which includes all emissions from making and delivering their products and services. Our total emissions = 157 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

## 2. Reduce

We've committed to reduction targets and specific action plans to reduce operational and value chain emissions within the next 12-24 months. Our reduction plans include reduced use of private transportation for business travel as well as a commitment to purchase all employee gifts from zero or low-carbon producers or resellers.

## 3. Compensate

We've invested in verified projects that accelerate climate progress and compensate for our GHG emissions. Our carbon credits come from projects that support wind energy and capture methane gas from landfills. We have offset 100% of our emissions.





**CLIMATE  
NEUTRAL**

In accordance with California Assembly Bill AB 1305 - the Voluntary Carbon Market Disclosures Business Regulation Act, HigherRing proudly partners with Bonneville Environmental Foundation in conjunction with our Climate Neutral certification to authenticate our carbon offset claims.



Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) Honors

**HigherRing, Inc.**

For your commitment to creating a healthier planet through your purchase of

**157 Carbon Offsets:**

**Avoided Emissions from Energy and Industry**

This carbon offset purchase supports the  
**50/50 Blend: Ningxia Xiangshan Wind Farm, China (VCS1867, V2020) and Xingyang LFG Project, China (GS1253, V2021)**

Todd Reeve, BEF CEO



February 17, 2023

Date





HigherRing is proud to use our influence as a business to advocate for a free and fair democracy, particularly in the states where we employ team members. Part of that advocacy includes our recent membership with Civic Alliance. Utilizing their helpful toolkits, we exemplify our ongoing commitment to foster civic engagement and strengthen democracy.

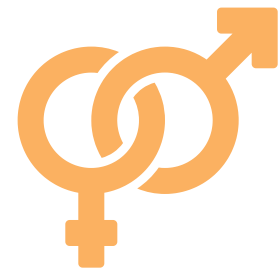
In 2023, we have championed civic education initiatives, empowering individuals with knowledge and resources to actively participate in the democratic process. We encourage employees to volunteer as poll workers by offering paid time off. We actively share election information and celebrate civic holidays. Our efforts extend beyond internal initiatives as we collaborate with nonpartisan civic organizations and incorporate election information into our brand marketing, further amplifying the importance of civic engagement.

Through these endeavors, we not only demonstrate our unwavering commitment to democracy but also empower team members to become advocates for positive change.



# Diversity Breakdown

HigherRing distributed an optional diversity survey to our team and received a 56% response rate. Not all percentages shown will equal 100 as some respondents chose not to answer every question in the survey.



**Male = 13.3%    Female = 86.7%**

\*Respondents were allowed to self-identify their gender rather than select from a preset list.



**Fluency in a language other than English = 20%**



**25 to 34 years = 33.3%**

**35 to 44 years = 26.6%**

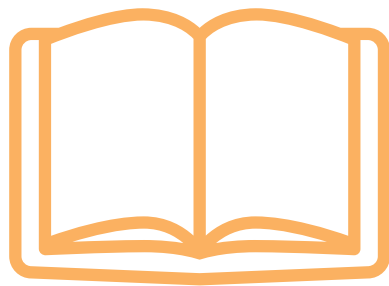
**45 to 54 years = 6.7%**

**55 to 64 years = 13.3%**

**65+ years  
= 13.3%**



# Diversity Breakdown



Masters = 26.6%

Bachelors or some college = 60%

High School = 13.3%



Asian = 6.7%

Hispanic = 13.3%

Black = 13.3%

White = 53.3%



Caregivers = 40%

# Our Ethical Supply Chain



# What's Next?

After a tough year in 2023 we are looking forward to 2024 with determination and excitement.

- In early 2024 we aim to launch our new look and messaging, complete with a brand new website.
- We aim to fully integrate Open Book Management principles into our company culture, fostering transparency, educating our team members, and enhancing team performance.
- We are committed to enhancing our social and environmental impact by introducing a greener 401K plan.
- We will be implementing a time off sick pool to support the well-being of our employees.
- We will continue celebrating civic holidays, and increase our efforts in advocating for voter engagement and promoting civic responsibility.

These initiatives underscore our ongoing commitment to sustainability, transparency, and social responsibility as we strive for continued growth and positive impact in 2024.



- Michelle + Susan