

Dear Colleagues,

As CECP approaches its 20th anniversary as the CEO Force for Good, the organization has been prompted to reflect on the evolution of the corporate social investment space, from the perspective of nearly two decades and, as shared through the year-end edition of [Investing in Society](#), over the last year. To capture the sum of the social investments and impact made by businesses around the world, CECP is pleased to release *Investing in Society*, the industry's biannual report providing a comprehensive look back at the biggest trends and insights that defined the year.

The all-digital and interactive report covers the five focus areas of **Priorities, Performance, People, Planet, and Policies**. Developed from CECP's [original research](#), [thought leadership](#), findings from the [Giving in Numbers: 2018 Edition](#), thousands of discussions with more than 200 of the world's largest companies, and engagement with leading experts and practitioners, *Investing in Society* is a 360-degree view of the corporate sector's role in solving some of the world's most pressing issues. This insights collection delves into **what actions companies are taking to identify and effectively meet stakeholder needs**, and how leading companies are striving to **build a better world through business**.

CECP also recently released the organization's [annual trends](#), which provides a thorough analysis of some of the biggest developments in the corporate social investment field in 2018. These five trends -- **Employee Power, Collaborative Advocacy, Responsible Tech, Long-Term Growth Going Mainstream, and Impact Measured** -- dovetail with the five focus areas explored in *Investing in Society*, offering further supporting evidence that companies are making decisions that consider their role in society and ability to effect meaningful change where it's needed most.

Though 2018 was extraordinary in many ways, the world's leading businesses have emerged as a vital force, increasing their commitments to stakeholders and positive impact on society. Below are some impressive examples of how leading companies are making an impact:

EMPLOYEE POWER

Recognizing the enormous potential in employees, companies are doubling down on support and protection for their workforces in ways such as [education](#), [nonprofit fellowships](#), [healthcare](#), [pro bono sabbaticals](#), and more. At [Google](#), employees used the tools the company gave them—a culture of speaking out and collaborative tech—to make a difference in the world.

COLLABORATIVE ADVOCACY

While advocacy and activism from CEOs and companies continues to grow, many businesses are taking a more thoughtful, business-focused approach, including coming together to move on issues, such as [CEO Action for D&I](#), the [fashion industry](#), [Regeneron-led gene sequencing](#), [Reboot Representation Tech Coalition](#), and more. Another building trend is companies bringing their grantees and nonprofit partners together to solve challenges, encourage collaboration, and build capacity of each to pursue their missions; [Allstate](#), [Wynn Resorts](#), [GE](#), and [CenterPoint](#) offer interesting models.

RESPONSIBLE TECH

Is social media the [new smoking](#)? With all that tech has afforded us, we sense that it can take as much away. We saw [Jana Partners and CalSTRS send a letter](#) to Apple about giving families more options to guide how children and adolescents use devices. [Edelman Trust Barometer](#) noted a 2% drop in trust in search engines and social media platforms. [Security and privacy](#) are high on any company's list of [challenges](#). The public is pushing back and examining the risks of living a digital life. But this is not just an issue for the tech sector; *every* company is a tech and data company. And with that acknowledgment comes responsibility.

LONG-TERM GROWTH GOING MAINSTREAM

Why did **BlackRock** CEO [Larry Fink's](#) sixth company letter in 2018 resonate so much more than the first five? CECP's sense is that the world is ready for companies to take the long-term view, define their purpose, and share their social contributions. Not only are investors encouraging long-term planning, but they are also considering these plans to be decision-relevant. Recent [research](#) from KKS and CECP demonstrated that, when companies present these long-term plans to investors, markets move. We can expect this trend to mount, with leading companies committing in 2019 to publicly, voluntarily, and regularly share their long-term plans.

IMPACT MEASURED

We know from past [Giving in Numbers](#) that companies were trying to measure all their social investment work. Recent [data](#) show that companies are prioritizing focus by measuring outcomes of signature, high-visibility programs and not every partnership in their portfolio. The next big movement by companies is to determine which measurements to track to show meaningful impact. According to a Pulse Survey by CECP, 72% of companies reported that the most important way to improve impact measurement for the field is to measure business and ROI metrics, such as those that affect brand, customer, and employees.

We hope you'll find inspiration for the year ahead in this collection, and as always, we welcome feedback for how to make *Investing in Society* better each time. CECP is proud to work alongside many of the companies highlighted within; we can't wait to see what you do next.

Sincerely,



Daryl Brewster
CEO, CECP