B Lab Research Fellowship
Call for Proposals

B Lab™ is the nonprofit organization behind the B Corp movement. B Lab creates standards, policies, tools, and programs to reimagine capitalism, and build a new economic system that benefits people and the planet. The growth of the B Corp™ movement has also been of interest to researchers, and many seek to utilize the publicly available database "B Corp Impact Data" at [link]. With the introduction of the B Lab Standards V2 in 2025, researchers can now draw on two distinct sources of data:

Data from the previous B Lab Standards V1.6

The first, and more elaborate dataset, is on companies certified under the former V1.6 Standards. Public data already notes which companies are V1.6 certified, but a large part of the data is not easily accessible by researchers due to privacy considerations. Still, this can be an invaluable source of insights extending well beyond the certified B Corp community, as over 300,000 companies have registered on the B Impact Assessment, with many completing significant sections of it. Together, these records represent a large database on corporate sustainability and governance efforts (see appendix below for further description of the data).

Data from the new B Lab Standards V2

In 2026, B Lab began certifying under its new standards. This new dataset focuses on companies that have achieved certification or recertification under the updated requirements. As the new standards introduce a different approach to assessing company performance, the structure and scope of this dataset differ from those of V1.6.

About the Research Fellowship

The Strategy and Learning team at B Lab is committed to advancing research on B Corps and the B Corp movement. Following two successful rounds, we're now seeking two to three new research fellows to join the program's third cohort. These fellows will receive in kind support to explore their research questions using the full datasets B Lab has available, subject to necessary data protection steps and measures (see more on this below). In this call, B Lab is inviting scholars to submit a two-page proposal explaining the questions they would like to explore using the wide range of B Lab data. We're looking to host 2-3 fellows from diverse geographies.

Submission deadline: January 31, 2027

Submission address: [Application link]

We aim to announce the selection of the 2-3 fellows early April 2027, with a start in May 2027

Research topics of interest

We encourage researchers to submit their own unique research questions. While we value research that supports our understanding of how B Lab's movement impacts people, communities, and the planet, we are open to a broad range of research proposals.

Support provided by Strategy and Learning Team at B Lab

To support fellows in their work, and potentially navigate the complexity of the data, they would be supported by the Strategy and Learning Team at B Lab for a one-year period. The resources and support made available by B Lab through the Strategy and Learning team would consist of the following:

- Support in identifying the right methodology and right data sources to use
- Support, where possible, in data analysis and interpretation of findings
- Support, where possible, in drafting and writing deliverables
- Access to relevant B Impact Assessment data, shared by the Strategy and Learning team
    - The B Impact Assessment data to be shared would consists of impact oriented data of companies (potentially all 300,000+ BIA users); internal B Lab process and operations data is out of scope
    - Data would be non-anonymized if required for the research project
- Access to the B Corps literature database - a database the team maintains of known publications on B Corps
- Data analytical support from the Strategy and Learning team to derive and structure datasets for research
- Standards support through (limited) access to Standards Management team to better understand B Labs Standards
- NOTE: B Lab will not be able to provide financial assistance of any kind
- NOTE: Most B Lab, and all Strategy and Learning team, staff are based in Europe and the US.

The engagement will be in English. Note: access to the data could be extended beyond the one-year period of the fellowship to support additional analyses and publications.

Data sharing considerations

To safeguard the integrity and privacy of the data the following steps would be taken:

- Researcher will sign Non Disclosure Agreement to ensure:
    - They will not share any individual company information externally (following our privacy policies, with the assistance/guidance of Strategy and Learning team)
    - Data can only be used with the expressed intent of pursuing a particular research question
- Researcher will sign our computer policy to ensure:
    - Data is maintaining a strong security posture while in Researcher possession
- Data will be shared from Strategy and Learning team via csv files via Google Drive

    - Data files will be generated by the Strategy and Learning team and will contain relevant data to the research question
        - For example, a research question on B Corps vs Non B Corps actions on climate change will only share data relevant to this question
    - Research fellows will not have access to any other data systems at B Lab.

Deliverables:

The fellows would be expected to work on the following deliverables based on the fellowship, which may only be published after the one-year period of the fellowship:

- Journal article (can be published after the fellowship, as this may take longer than a one-year period)
- B Lab Global website blog post
- Presentation to relevant internal BLG stakeholders

Profile

While there is no intention to define very strictly what the profile of a candidate would be there are some traits that are more likely:

- Early career stage researcher (i.e. PhD, Post-doc)
- Quantitatively strong researcher, given the need to work with our big datasets
    - There will not be any SQL/Tableau/Coding language requirements as the Strategy and Learning team will be providing the data
- In the field of economics, business, or related social scientific discipline
- Note: If you are working with an advisor, please provide more details in your proposal about who your advisor is and how they might be able to support you. Having an advisor is not a requirement for this fellowship program.

Submission and selection

In this first pilot we will take the following steps to identify two fellows:

- Proposal submission: we request those interested to submit a max 2 page proposal before the deadline of January 31st 2027 containing:
    - Description of research topic and research question
    - Relevance, including academic relevance, of research topics and research question
    - Proposed methodology and data sources required
    - Short biographical note and current affiliations
- Selection: a small committee will select two fellows for a one year period. For the pilot the committee will consist of at least two members, and possibly more:
    - Academic representative and expert
    - Strategy and Learning Team at B Lab
- Proposals will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:
    - Strength and feasibility of methodology
    - Research gap and contribution to the academic literature

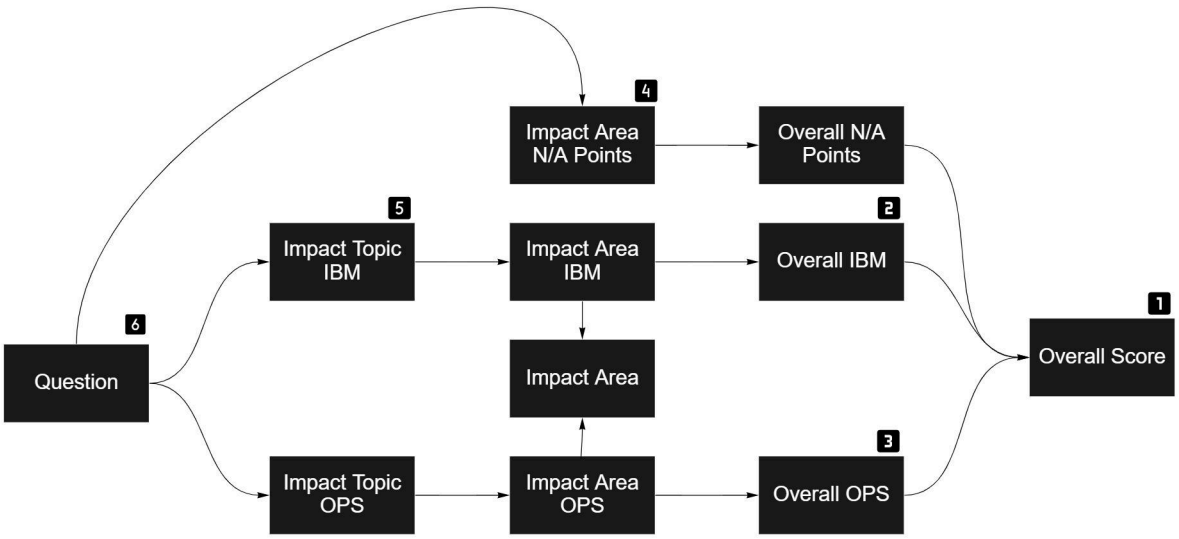
- Contribution to knowledge advancement of B Corps
- Alignment with key topics of interest to B Lab
- Data relevancy of research topic to the data B Lab can provide
- Geographical balance of fellows

Appendix: B Impact Assessment data - Version 1.6

B Lab's data cannot be fully interpreted without first understanding the Standards that B Lab has developed.[1] The Standards are at the core of the B Corp certification and are integrated into the B Impact Assessment. As such, the corresponding database is structured by the Standards.

Each company, as they go through the B Impact Assessment, obtains multiple scores: (1) an overall score (2) an Impact Business Model (IBM) score (3) an Operational (Ops) score, (4) impact area scores and their corresponding IBM and Ops breakdown scores, (5) impact topic scores, and (6) question scores.

At a high level, the hierarchy of the assessment looks like the graphic below, where question scores feed into impact topic scores, which then feed into impact area scores and ultimately, the company's overall score. The difference between IBM and OPS, is that OPS covers common operational aspects of a business, while IBMs capture exceptional impact performance in a diversity of impact areas.[2] In turn, each impact area is divided into several impact topics, which then split out into the questions of the BIA. Impact Topics can be either OPS or IBM. While Ops Impact Topics have a point cap based on size, sector, and geography, companies can earn many points via IBMs. Most individual IBMs have a maximum of 30 points available (for companies with 1 or more employees), companies can earn full credit on multiple IBMs, depending on the company's geography, sector and size.[3]



[1] https://www.bcorporation.net/en-us/standards
[2] The total list of IBMs available can be accessed here: https://kb.bimpactassessment.net/helpdesk/attachments/43140698792
[3] For more information: https://kb.bimpactassessment.net/support/solutions/articles/43000575267-impact-business-model-scoring

Both the Ops and the IBM part are subdivided into the five impact areas of the B Lab Standards, namely:

1. The **Workers Impact Area**, which evaluates a company's contribution to its employees' financial, physical, professional, and social well-being.
2. The **Customers Impact Area**, which evaluates a company's value to their direct customers and the consumers of their products or services covering topics like ethical and positive marketing, warranty and quality assurance of products and services, data privacy, data security, and more.
3. The **Community Impact Area**, which evaluates a company's positive impact on the external communities in which the company operates, covering topics like diversity, economic impact, civic engagement, and supply chain impact.
4. The **Environment Impact Area**, which evaluates the company's overall environmental stewardship, including how the company identifies and manages general environmental impacts, its management of air and climate issues, water sustainability, and impacts on land and life.
5. The **Governance Impact Area**, which evaluates a company's overall mission, ethics, accountability and transparency through topics such as integration of social and environmental goals in employees' performance evaluation, impact reporting and transparency, stakeholder engagement, and more.

To calculate a score for a company, each impact area is assigned a certain number of maximum Ops points, differentiated by sector. Table 1 below shows the scoring table for Ops points across impact areas and by sector. What is clear for example, is that the impact area Environment is assigned relatively fewer points in the services sector than others, as this is deemed to be less material. Table 1 shows the score for companies with at least 1 employee.

Impact Area/Module	Agriculture/Growers	Manufacturing	Service	Service with Significant Environmental Footprint	Wholesale/Retail
Community	40	40	50	40	40
Customers	5	5	5	5	5
Environment	45	45	20	45	45
Governance	10	10	15	10	10
Workers	40	40	50	40	40
	140	140	140	140	140

In turn, each impact area is built up of one or more impact topics. The following two tables show the impact topics that fall under the impact areas for companies with at least 1 employee.

Impact area	Impact topic	Agriculture	Manufacturing	Service	Service w. Significant Operations	Wholesale/ Retail
Governance	Mission & Engagement	4	4	6	4	4
	Ethics & Transparency	6	6	9	6	6
Workers	Financial Security	17	17	20	17	17
	Health, Wellness, & Safety	10	10	12	10	10
	Career Development	5	5	8	5	5
	Engagement & Satisfaction	8	8	10	8	8
Community	Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion	10	10	15	10	10
	Civic Engagement & Giving	8	8	12	8	8
	Economic Impact	10	10	15	10	10
	Supply Chain Management	12	12	8	12	12
Environment	Environmental Management	5	10	7	10	10
	Air & Climate	9	15	7	15	15
	Water	7	8	2	7	7
	Land & Life	24	12	4	13	13
Customer	Customer Stewardship	5	5	5	5	5

As the tables show, there are also five sectors identified within the BIA:

- Manufacturing: A company that manufactures >10% of its own products for sale or manufactures products for sale by another company or brand. (e.g. contract manufacturers, assembly lines, breweries, livestock producers).
- Wholesale/Retail: A company that sells physical products and does not own or operate the manufacturing processes or facilities responsible for the creation of those physical goods. (e.g. grocery stores, e-commerce retailers, consumer goods companies that do not manufacture their own product, wholesalers of physical goods).
- Services with Minor Environmental footprint: A company that earns revenue through the provision of non-physical services. Company does not sell a physical product or does not own/operate a retail, wholesale, or manufacturing facility. (e.g. law firms, marketing/communications agencies, software company).
- Services with Major Environmental footprint: A company that works in a service industry with a material environmental footprint due to its facilities, supply chain, or the intensity of its operations in delivery of services. (e.g. hotels, restaurants, landscaping companies, universities).
- Agricultural Growers: A company that operates a farm, agroprocessing facility, or sources crops directly from farmer-growers for a majority of raw input materials. If your company is a livestock producer, please select 'Manufacturing'. (e.g. fruit or vegetable farms, farmers' markets, coffee plantations, coffee roasters).

Even though the B Impact Assessment is customized to a company's size, sector, and geographic locations, there may be some circumstances where questions are "not applicable" to a particular company. Typically this means that the question is assessing an impact that is not relevant to the particular circumstances of a company—for example the topic of facilities management in the Environment section would not be a relevant impact for a virtual office company.

When a question is "Not Applicable", the points available in that question are redistributed to the remaining questions in that Impact Area rather than a company earning no points. The "N/A Score" that appears on a company's B Impact Report is the equivalent points earned based on this redistribution. An N/A Score might be triggered by selecting the "N/A" answer option in a particular question, or applied automatically when questions are disabled by a gating question in the assessment. Companies should only answer Not Applicable if the particular description in the Not Applicable answer option is true, otherwise, a company should answer None of the Above or Don't Know.

Database

B Lab's B Impact Assessment tool has been used by more than 200,000 companies, and of those, 165,000 have used the latest Version 6 of the assessment. Companies may decide to use the platform to either become B Corp certified, measure their environmental and social impact, or to understand best practices in Corporate Social Responsibility. While this does create some selection biases in B Lab's company database, the foundational data collected on a diverse set of companies, which are located across 229 countries and 184 industries (leading

to more than 11,000 unique combinations of country and industry), gives B Lab a good foundation for understanding the role of business and it's interactions with its workers, communities, customers, and planet.

All analysis has been done in accordance with the B Impact Assessment's terms and conditions to preserve the confidentiality of individual company data. Some performance data for non-certified B Corps has not been verified by B Lab's Certification & Verification process.

Geography

The BIA adapts to three geographic market categories: Developed Market Global, Developed Market US, and Emerging Market. The geography distinction is based on where the majority of the employees are based.

Countries are classified as either Developed or Emerging according to a methodology based on third party development indices, including the human development index, gross national income (GNI) per capita, private capital to GNI availability, gender empowerment index, and the World Bank's Doing Business Report ranking. Specific country classifications are displayed below.

Developed Market Country Classifications				
United States	Denmark	Iceland	Luxembourg	Singapore
Andorra	Estonia	Ireland	Monaco	Slovenia
Australia	Finland	Israel	Netherlands	Spain
Austria	France	Italy	New Zealand	Sweden
Belgium	Germany	Japan	Norway	Switzerland
Bermuda	Greece	Korea (Republic of)	Portugal	Taiwan
Canada	Hong Kong	Liechtenstein	San Marino	United Kingdom
Cyprus				

Emerging Market Country Classifications				
Afghanistan	Comoros	Iran	Mozambique	Slovakia
Albania	Congo (Democratic Republic of the)	Iraq	Myanmar	Solomon Islands
Algeria	Congo (Republic of)	Jamaica	Namibia	Somalia
Angola	Cook Islands	Jordan	Nauru	South Africa

Anguilla	Costa Rica	Kazakhstan	Nepal	Sri Lanka
Antigua and Barbuda	Côte d'Ivoire	Kenya	Netherlands Antilles	Sudan
Argentina	Croatia	Kiribati	Nicaragua	Suriname
Armenia	Cuba	Kosovo	Niger	Swaziland
Aruba	Czech Republic	Kuwait	Nigeria	Syria
Azerbaijan	Djibouti	Kyrgyzstan	Oman	Tajikistan
Bahamas	Dominica	Laos	Pakistan	Tanzania
Bahrain	Dominican Republic	Latvia	Palau	Thailand
Bangladesh	Ecuador	Lebanon	Panama	Timor-Leste
Barbados	Egypt	Lesotho	Papua New Guinea	Togo
Belarus	El Salvador	Liberia	Paraguay	Tonga
Belize	Equatorial Guinea	Libya	Peru	Trinidad and Tobago
Benin	Eritrea	Lithuania	Philippines	Tunisia
Bhutan	Ethiopia	Macedonia	Poland	Turkey
Bolivia	Fiji	Madagascar	Puerto Rico	Turkmenistan
Bosnia and Herzegovina	French Guiana	Malawi	Qatar	Turks & Caicos
Botswana	Gabon	Malaysia	Romania	Tuvalu
Brazil	Gambia	Maldives	Russian Federation	Uganda
Brunei	Georgia	Mali	Rwanda	Ukraine
Bulgaria	Ghana	Malta	Saint Kitts and Nevis	United Arab Emirates
Burkina Faso	Grenada	Marshall Islands	Saint Lucia	Uruguay
Burundi	Guatemala	Mauritania	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Uzbekistan
Cambodia	Guinea	Mauritius	Samoa	Vanuatu
Cameroon	Guinea-Bissau	Mexico	Sao Tome and Principe	Venezuela
Cape Verde	Guyana	Micronesia	Saudi Arabia	Viet Nam
Central African Republic	Haiti	Moldova	Senegal	West Bank and Gaza

Chad	Honduras	Mongolia	Serbia	Yemen
Chile	Hungary	Montenegro	Seychelles	Zambia
China	India	Morocco	Sierra Leone	Zimbabwe
Colombia	Indonesia			

Size

Company size is based on the number of workers in full-time equivalents (FTEs). For example, a company with 25 full-time employees, 50 part-time employees working 20 hours/week, and 10 seasonal workers employed for half of the year are classified as having 55 FTEs. The following size buckets are based on the World Bank's sizing of employment in small and medium-sized enterprises:

- 0
- 1-9
- 10-49
- 50-249
- 250-999
- 1,000+

Note that the "0" category refers to founder-run micro-enterprises that have no additional employees on payroll.

B Lab Standards Questions

To get a better sense of some of the questions asked in the B Impact Assessment, check out our Standards Navigator. In addition, the B Impact Assessment is a public good. Feel free to use the tool with a research lens to better understand how companies measure their impact.