

OUR MISSION

The Mission of the Ben & Jerry's Foundation is to engage Ben & Jerry's employees in philanthropy and social change work; to give back to our Vermont communities; and to support grassroots progressive social change organizations around the country.

Our interests are in furthering social justice, protecting the environment and supporting sustainable food systems.

We are committed to supporting non-violent, thoughtful and strategic approaches. Our philanthropy is led by Ben & Jerry's employees who serve on committees that review grants.

Giving back to our Vermont communities happens primarily through the small grants programs and the community service projects of the Community Action Teams at the company's three Vermont sites.

WHAT WE DO?

The Foundation awards about \$1.8 million annually to eligible organizations across the country and in Vermont. Our philanthropy is employee-led by non-management, employee advisory groups who consider

proposals and recommend grants. The Foundation administers five grant programs, listed below. All of our grant programs utilize an on-line application process.



! Giving Is Having More

WHO WE ARE?

In everything we do, the Ben & Jerry's Foundation strives to apply our mission and values, including with our investment policies and our relationships with employees.

HISTORY - THEN AND NOW

Ben & Jerry's Homemade Inc. was founded on a belief in "linked prosperity". It meant that as the company grew and prospered the benefits would go not just to shareholders but also to employees and the community. In 1985 the company undertook a public stock offering to support its ongoing growth. The Ben & Jerry's Foundation was created at the same time, with an initial gift from Ben of 50,000 shares and an unprecedented decision of the company's Board of Directors to commit 7 1/2% of the company's annual pretax profits to philanthropy.

When the Foundation was started, it was with a belief that the company and the Foundation were distinct. The company's role was to generate profits that the Foundation gave away. In 1991 the Foundation and company staff held a retreat with experts in social change work and philanthropy to think about the Foundation's strategies and effectiveness. The message from the retreat was that a real opportunity was being missed by not involving employees in the Foundation's work. What better way to communicate the company's progressive values than by empowering employees to participate in decision-making?

This led to a complete redesign of the grantmaking process to include employees directly in grants decisions. Through the creation of Community Action Teams at each site and employee members on the Employee Advisory Committee, decision-making was placed in employees' hands.

In 2000 the company was acquired by Unilever, a global company with over 400 brands (www.unilever.com). Unilever continues to support the Foundation through an annual grant that takes into account Ben & Jerry's ice cream sales. For 2009 this amounted to \$2 million. The Foundation is deeply grateful to Unilever for this ongoing support.

The history of the Ben & Jerry's Foundation has been and continues to be one of steadfast dedication to involving employees, giving back to Vermont communities and supporting progressive social justice work.