

Spring 2021

EPIC CAPITAL

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IMPACT

Increased ESG Demand Among Clients



Financial advisors across all channels are increasingly turning toward environmental, social, and governance products as a direct result of heightened client demand for socially responsible investments.

According to a recent Broadridge Financial Solutions survey conducted by 8 Acre Perspective, 61% of financial advisors across wire, regional, IBD, and RIA channels revealed they were using ESG-related products, and the number was even higher among female advisors at 71% and advisors under the age of 40 at 67%.

Among those advisors who are using ESG products in their client portfolios, 81% plan to raise their exposure over the next two years as more investors actively seek out sustainable investments. Sifting through the various channels, the survey results reveal wirehouse advisors are the most likely of all to incorporate ESG products as they have indicated that both inclusion on their broker-dealer platform and promotion by their home offices were main reasons for doing so.

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“Now more than ever, investors are speaking up about the types of products they want to invest in, whether it be ESG, private markets or other emerging asset classes. As advisors become more focused on providing the best client-centric experience and are optimistic about the year to come, they are looking to be equipped with the right tools and products to service their clients and investments,” Matthew Schiffman, Principal of Distribution Insight at Broadridge Financial Solutions, said in a press release. “Asset managers are primed to step up and address the demand for these products.”

The survey results also reveal adjustments that financial advisors have had to make as the coronavirus pandemic upended our normal lives.

“Forced into a fully remote environment just over a year ago, many advisors dramatically accelerated their digital journey to maintain and grow their business. Today’s advisors are actively focused on business development and client-facing activities, and are increasingly using model portfolios as part of their practice to allow for increased efficiency in a post-COVID world,” Schiffman added. “Advisors were not able to engage with wholesalers in the same way they did before the pandemic and were initially hesitant to engage virtually. Now, as the COVID-19 vaccine rollouts progress and we may see a return to normal sooner than expected, advisors are eager to re-engage with wholesalers and are receptive to new relationships.”



A ‘Climate Apartheid’ if Grassroots Ideas Ignored

Published by Business Insider April 22, 2021

As the business community slowly comes to grips with the economic risk posed by climate change, the search for solutions often ignores the ideas generated by grassroots activists.

That's a problem, said climate justice activist Elizabeth Yeampierre in a discussion with IBM's Ruth Davis about the role of tech companies in tackling climate change. The session, moderated by Insider's Voices of Color Editor Kenya Evelyn, was part of a broader Insider event, "Act to Impact: Keeping our Promise to the Planet," presented by Deloitte.

"People want our ideas, they just don't want us at the table," Yeampierre said. "But we are the ones that are actually changing the landscape in our communities, and nationally, and throughout the global south."

Davis highlighted the fact that the people most affected by climate change — in the US and worldwide — contributed the least to making the problem and have the fewest resources to deal with its effects.

Indeed, a 2019 report by the UN special rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights estimated that 75% of the climate-crisis costs will be borne by developing countries, even though the poorest half of the global population produces just 10% of carbon emissions. If left unchecked, climate change will push 120 million people into poverty by 2030, the report warned.

"Solutions really need to be centered on racial justice and equity," Yeampierre said. "Climate change is demanding a different kind of citizenry, a different kind of interaction between people if we're going to win this together." "We don't want to have a situation of climate apartheid here in the United States," she added. "Folks need to feel about climate change the same way that the people before us felt about the civil rights movement."

The 2019 UN report defined climate apartheid as a scenario where the rich pay to escape the consequences of rising temperatures, pollution, hunger and conflict, while the rest of the world is forced to "choose between starvation and migration."

Davis agreed with the call for inclusive, equitable solutions, and pointed out that IBM's Call for Code tech challenge emphasizes local impact, policy change, and social justice for all of its participants, and that tech tools can be a powerful force for change.

"We're looking for solutions that are accessible, customizable, and scalable," she said.

Davis pointed to a recent environmental justice hackathon at Howard University, a historically Black college, where a finalist drew on personal experience to propose an augmented reality concept to help property owners assess their risk of floods.

"Climate change is going to disrupt everything," Yeampierre said, stressing the importance of collaboration over winner-take-all competition.

Bank of America to Halt Direct Financing on Oil or Gas Exploration or Production



Published by Trillium News, February 2021

For decades, Trillium has opposed Arctic drilling for oil and gas. Not only would it accelerate climate change, but it is opposed by the Gwich'in people who have lived in the region for thousands of years and depend on the health of the ecosystem for their way of life.

A critical link in the chain of any effort to drill in the Arctic is the banks that may finance the exploration and production. The bank support or rejection are also important signals from the business community and possible indication of a loss of social license. Which is why Trillium pressed Bank of America for more than a year to commit to no Arctic drilling financing. In June, we organized over \$1 trillion in assets to petition Bank of America to make this commitment. And following a prolonged dialogue, Trillium filed a shareholder proposal in October asking the company how it planned to address the risks associated with funding Arctic drilling.

Faced with a combination of a shareholder proposal, vocal public engagement from the Gwich'in people, and August polling showing that about two in three voters oppose moves to open the Arctic Refuge to drilling, the bank announced in late November that it would not directly finance oil or gas exploration or production activities in the Arctic.

We commend Bank of America for taking this important step which is consistent with strong ESG policies that all banks should adopt. Finally, this is an important symbolic moment that conveys the lack of social license for Arctic Drilling.

Impact in the News



- Microsoft

Investing \$1 billion dollars into their climate innovation fund with the goal to become Carbon Negative by 2030.

- TE Connectivity

Since 2010, decreased GHG intensity by 38%, GHG emission by 14%, water usage by 30%, energy usage by 30% and wastewater discharges decreased by 33%.

- Clorox

Focuses on their environmental impact and has funded The Safe Water Project, World Water Day, and Saving the Vanishing Oak among others. Ranked 43 on the 2020 list of America's most responsible companies.

E3 = Epic Time, Talent & Treasure

Epic Capital is a mission-driven firm with a genuine heart for community, both locally and around the world. We focus specifically on social outreach initiatives. We give our time, talent and treasure to organizations that support families in need, the working poor, homeless or impoverished. This is meaningful to us because we recognize the incredible blessings in our lives and the opportunities that we have been given to do work that we love. So we have taken our personal passion for empowering others and made it a part of our corporate charter. We call it **E3**.

- We give **our time** through our quarterly *Epic Outreach* program, serving where the greatest needs are through local charities.
- We give **our talent** through our *Epic-EDU* program, in addition to our partnership with [CommonWealth Charlotte](#), administering financial workshops for organizations and churches that minister to low income families, the working poor and the previously incarcerated.
- And we give **our treasure** through our *Epic Impact Grant* program to local community and global organizations that meet our social outreach criteria.

We believe that we are all called to serve. We also believe that the positive impact one can make by empowering the life of another can alter the direction of that life forever.

We are pleased to announce that we have opened up our quarterly Epic Outreach initiatives to include volunteer participation from clients of Epic Capital. Please consider joining us during one of our upcoming volunteer efforts.



Epic Grant: CharMeck Adopt-a-Stream Clean – Q2 2021

Earth Day volunteer effort: Decided to do our semi-annual Adopt-a-Stream stream clean today in recognition of Earth Day. We were thrilled to see less debris than prior efforts, but still so many plastic bottles, plastic grocery bags, and styrofoam. If you frequent a restaurant that still uses styrofoam, please encourage them to switch to a more earth friendly option (recycled cardboard, biodegradable containers, etc). What a beautiful day as well with nothing but Carolina Blue sky's!! If you'd like to consider volunteering with us please let us know. If you'd like to learn more please visit [Storm Water Services Adopt-a-Stream Program](#)



If you would like to consider other volunteer opportunities, or to learn more about over 400 local non-profits in the Charlotte region, please visit a community partner of ours who we hold in very high regard: [Share Charlotte](#) <https://sharecharlotte.org/>

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Everyone Has a Story, Let Your Legacy Tell Yours™

IMPACT

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