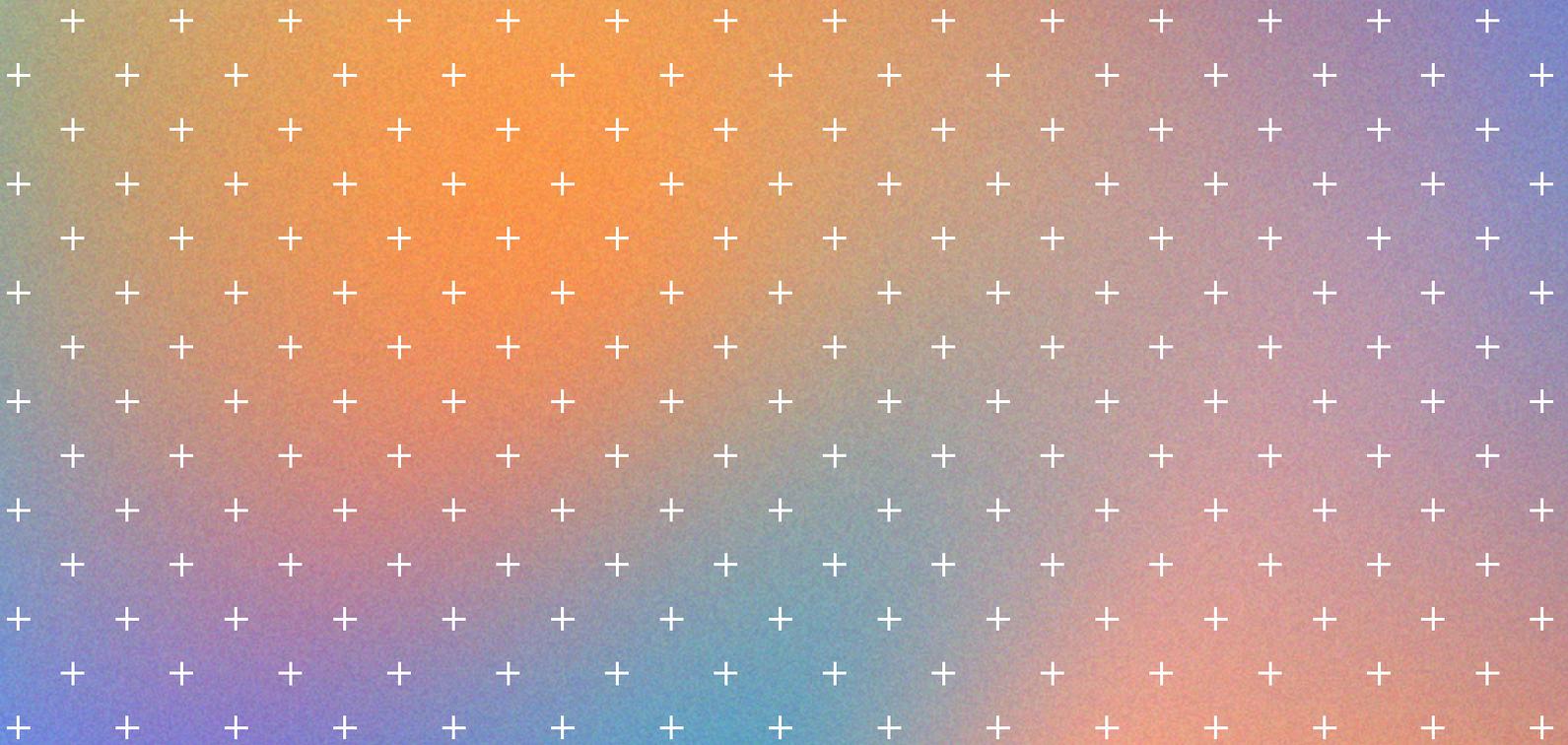


RF | BINDER

# Impact Report

## 2021-2022



# RF | BINDER

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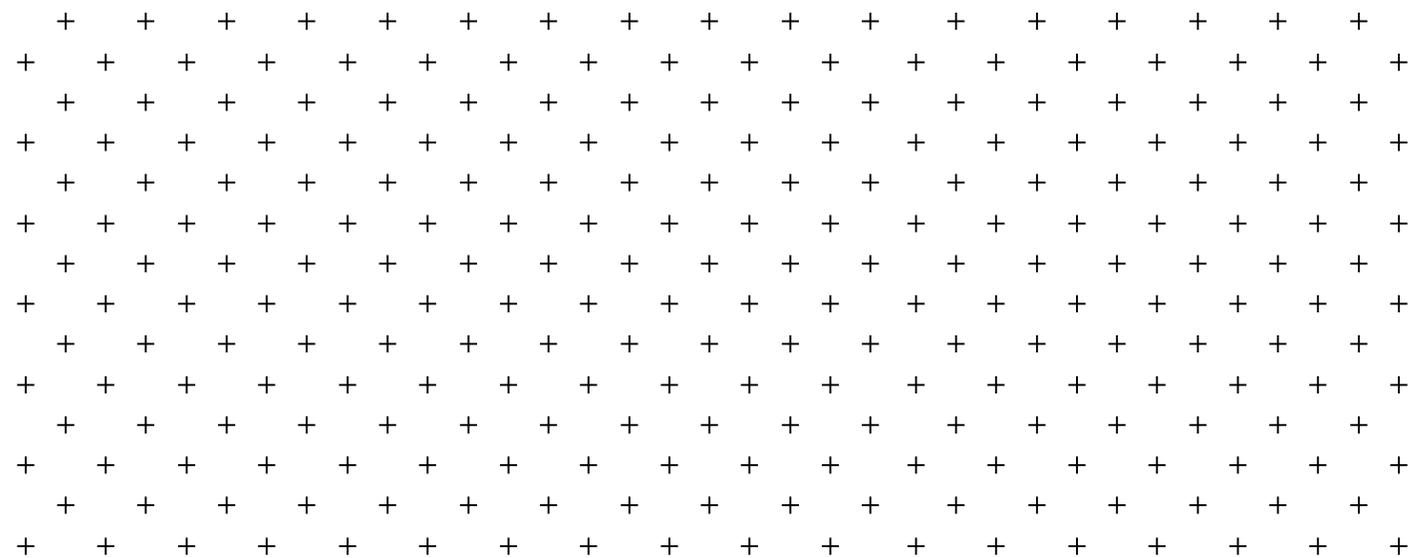
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# Letter from CEO

Since our founding over 20 years ago, RF|Binder, a woman-owned and managed company, has been committed to social impact and sustainability, and building an organization that prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion. We are proud to have built a team that is driven by our purpose to empower our clients and ourselves to have impact, both internally, with every member of our team, and externally, by helping our clients recognize their opportunities for positive impact on society and the environment.



We know how important it is to lead by example. This means fostering a culture and workplace environment where our team can do their best work, be their authentic selves, have the opportunity to grow personally and professionally, and give back to society in a positive way. We have outlined in our Impact Report short and long term goals and recognize while we are proud of the impact we have made collectively and our progress toward achieving our goals, we have more work to do.

Throughout my entire career, I have been committed to the concept that business can be a force for good—one of the most important guiding principles of our firm. We believe that business leaders and brands have the power—and the responsibility—to make important decisions, shift their priorities as the times and events require, and take on initiatives to improve society at large. This may be even more true today than in any other moment in recent times. Recent surveys have shown that the majority of Americans expressed trust in businesses at significantly higher percentages than the number who trusted governments or the media. This has certainly not always been the case and it presents an opportunity for those of us in the communications business as well as for our clients.

Over the past several years as we faced many major social, cultural, and environmental issues and challenges, as diverse as the COVID-19 pandemic, economic disparity, and global warming, our commitment has been further underscored and integrated into our work with our clients. We are proud to work with so many corporations and other institutions that are taking stands on these and other important issues.

As we step back again this year to assess what we have achieved and what more needs to be done, we review and revise our goals and continue to do our best to work toward achieving even more progress. Our purpose-directed approach and values guide our work every day, and we strive to listen and solicit feedback with a focus on improvement. This bi-annual Impact Report shows how we are doing in reaching our goals. It also is a way to make us review where we are, to hold ourselves accountable, and to recognize that each of us must take the necessary steps to make a difference, if even a small one, on critical issues.

Let's make progress together,

Amy Binder

CEO

# Our Mission and Guiding Principles

## OUR MISSION

At RF|Binder, we are passionate about our work, our community, and our world. Our mission is to empower our clients and team to have positive and meaningful impact.

Our team members are invigorated by a sense of purpose and embrace business as a force for good – one of our core guiding principles. We are creative, solution-oriented problem solvers undaunted by challenges and inspired by opportunities. We care deeply about our clients, who know they can depend on us to be proactive, collaborative, reliable, and trustworthy partners.

We are proud to be a private, independent woman-owned and operated firm that is deeply committed to women's empowerment and focused on elevating principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Business can be a force for good

Authenticity is a driver of success and a competitive advantage

Every problem and solution should be viewed from multiple perspectives

Challenges are opportunities

Teams are stronger than individuals

Collaboration and curiosity help us push boundaries

Everything should be done with integrity, perseverance, and passion

Our guiding principles were established to encompass not just how we conduct our business, but also to bring to life our values – who we are and what we do.

In developing these guiding principles, we sought input from our team, asking each of us to be thoughtful and reflect the very culture, perspective, and sentiments that represent RF|Binder.

**OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

We are proud of the impact we make every day, our passion to drive positive change, and our people-first approach to everything we do, as well as our successes to date, but we know we still have work to do and have set ambitious targets for the future. As we grow and evolve as an organization, we will identify opportunities to deepen our dedication to the areas we care about and where we know we can make meaningful change.

We also recognize the importance of looking outside of our capabilities to external frameworks to help guide us, including the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

We have aligned our efforts with the following goals: SDG 5 on Gender Equality, SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.



# Our commitments are highlighted through the following key performance indicators (KPIs)

**NEAR TERM KPIs**

By 2021, more than 90% of employees agree that RF|Binder enables a culture of diversity.

**STATUS**  
Achieved since 2019 inception

Complete 200+ hours per year of activities that enable people to have greater access to voting.

**STATUS**  
Achieved since 2019 inception

**LONGER TERM KPIs**

By 2024, 30% BIPOC representation throughout the firm.

**STATUS**  
In progress, BIPOC representation has been between 18-25% in 2021-2022; more work to be done to increase representation at the most senior levels. This is an area of continued focus.

By 2024, 20% of RF|Binder suppliers are diverse businesses.

**STATUS**  
On track

**ONGOING KPIs**

Continue to ensure 100% pay equity across gender, race, and ethnicity.

+ + + +  
+ + + +  
+ + + +

Continue to foster women's empowerment, through firm leadership and additional opportunities.

+ + + +  
+ + + +  
+ + + +



I appreciate being treated as an individual and holistic human rather than just an employee. While there is structure, it's not one-size-fits-all. The flexibility with growth paths, work styles, and personal circumstances is invaluable.

# Commitment to Culture

## Employee Experience and Engagement

RF|Binder cares deeply about its people, focusing on creating an environment where everyone is heard and encouraged to seek opportunities for personal and professional growth, receiving the support they need to succeed.

We have a formalized employee experience to ensure a consistently positive experience for all employees that starts with recruitment and includes onboarding, ongoing career planning, learning and development sessions and ultimately, staying engaged with us as alumni. Every employee has a Development Leader, who is responsible for working with employees on setting and achieving professional goals. We also match mentors and mentees who do not work together daily, but can learn from and guide each other.

RF|Binder recently revamped its Employee Handbook, which describes the firm's expectations of employees and vice versa, as well as information that addresses feedback gleaned from employee engagement surveys.

### OUR CULTURE

RF|Binder's culture is rooted in camaraderie and collaboration for our employees. We seek out new opportunities and ways to have fun and disconnect from our usual daily routine as well as to work together as one team in new and different ways.

When we went fully remote in March 2020 as a result of the pandemic, we took many steps to ensure everyone felt supported. Since then, we have continued to stay engaged with virtual wine tastings,

cooking classes, popcorn and movie nights, and games; these events are complimented with "care packages" we send throughout the year to our team. Now that we have introduced our new hybrid work schedule in a new space that has been designed for greater collaboration, we look forward to many in-person events, such as biweekly Town Meetings, client-focused team meetings, bagel Wednesdays, informal wine tastings, and more.

Our all-company email alias acts as a channel for knowledge sharing, impromptu brainstorm sessions, weekly "#pickmeupwednesdays" emails containing uplifting stories, and monthly "Employee Spotlights" to allow colleagues to get to know each other better.



## EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

RF|Binder conducts engagement surveys that ask for employee feedback and input and to assess needs and expectations relating to the employee experience. We place tremendous value on the feedback from these surveys, as they help us prioritize and identify new initiatives to ensure we can provide an engaging, supportive, and fulfilling work environment, in alignment with the ambitions outlined by Sustainable Development Goal 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth. Survey results and corresponding next steps are shared with the firm during quarterly updates for full transparency. Because we are a mid-sized firm, we are nimble and respond quickly to employees' needs as they evolve. Our surveys provide the basis for the refinement of the entire employee experience.

We also take time to recognize each other and our team's accomplishments with the following:

### The Deidra Degn Award

Named in memory and recognition of a founding RF|Binder member who unfortunately passed away at a young age, this award is given annually to an individual who embodies RF|Binder's guiding principles. Winners are recognized at a firm-wide meeting.

### The Bindey Award

This award is given quarterly to those who have gone above and beyond what is expected from them. Employees nominate colleagues and submissions are anonymized and reviewed by committee. The winner is announced at our quarterly firm meeting and all nominees see their kudos.

### Biweekly Town Meetings

At the biweekly Town Meetings, our CEO and President recognize key accomplishments by team members. In addition, team members present case studies showcasing their work, impact, and accomplishments, and receive RF|Binder sponsored training certifications.

As RF|Binder focuses on continually improving its culture and work environment, we pride ourselves on being a great place to work and grow. We were recently ranked **#7 out of 100 firms selected as Crain's Best Places to Work NYC** and ranked **#6 on Quartz's Best Companies for Remote Workers 2022**, building upon previous award wins, including the hundreds we have received over the years for our client work.



We have a creative and entrepreneurial work environment where innovation is supported and encouraged. The value of our work environment was underscored during the pandemic, as we seamlessly moved to working remotely. And today it is even clearer as we move to create a new work environment for our future, now in a hybrid structure, focused on flexibility. We hold firm-wide meetings every other week in addition to quarterly update meetings to ensure ongoing communications and that team members are fully engaged and in the know about the latest firm happenings.

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*"You really have the opportunity to build your career at RF|Binder. If you have a vision for where you want to go and what you want to do, your team and leadership will support you on your journey there."*

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## ASSOCIATE PROGRAM

Key to our culture is RF|Binder's longstanding Associate Program, a full-time job for graduates and launch pad to a successful career in communications and business leadership. Working as an Associate is like working at a dynamic start-up — no two days look the same, and every Associate gets the opportunity to be involved with every aspect of an integrated program. As a result, Associates have the opportunity, from the start, to see first-hand the role that communications has in addressing business problems. From building relationships with the media, to brainstorming social media strategy and being an integral part of the team, to understanding the role that paid media can have, there are always opportunities to learn and grow.

RF|Binder looks for creative, analytical, and entrepreneurial candidates to join our prestigious Associate Program. We celebrate diversity of thought, experience, and background. While a demonstrated interest in marketing, consulting, public relations, or branding can be helpful, we regularly hire Associates with backgrounds that are far afield from these. This allows our team to continue learning from each other — pushing boundaries with new ideas. The program also welcomes as Associates individuals who have a passion for and interest in working in specific industries, from financial services and renewable energy to food and consumer products.

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*"The Associate Program is such a rewarding opportunity and I am extremely grateful to be here. I would rather be at RF|Binder in this program than any other communications firm because here, I am invested in, I am listened to, and I am respected. I don't feel like I am a part of a machine but I am a part of a team. There are so many opportunities to learn and grow if you take advantage of them. I also love the amount of responsibility entrusted to me and the amazing feedback everyone gives really helping me see my growth in real-time."*

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Our program differs from a typical entry-level job because each year graduates enter RF|Binder as a cohort, so they are not alone. Each incoming Associate cohort will dive into the ever-evolving world of communications together while working across client teams as an integral part of our firm. Throughout the first year, Associates will have regular training, mentorship, and formalized learning and development opportunities to learn, grow, and develop core skill sets.

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Since its founding, RF|Binder has been committed to fostering positive social impact and sustainability, and building a team that prioritizes and celebrates diversity, equity, and inclusion, including diversity of thought, perspective, and experience – all dimensions that make us who we are. We are committed to creating a culture of inclusivity and using our social skills for good. We believe leaders of businesses have the power and responsibility to create value for all stakeholders by taking on and supporting initiatives that improve society at large, which especially include supporting and uplifting marginalized communities. This is a commitment that we support and integrate in our work.

RF|Binder still has a lot of work to do as it relates to having more BIPOC representation at the firm, and particularly at the most senior levels. This has been and will continue to be an area of focus for the firm.

As a woman-owned firm, we put an active emphasis on women’s empowerment, thereby contributing to the overarching mission outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality. This comes in the form of providing mentorship, coaching, and leadership opportunities for women across our firm.

## % WORKFORCE BREAKDOWN BY GENDER, RACE/ETHNICITY AT EMPLOYEE LEVELS AND BOARD LEVEL

**50%+**

of our Managing Directors and above are women

**60%**

of our Board of Directors are women

The three highest titles at the firm, including CEO and Founder, Co-Founder, and President are all women.

## % PAY EQUITY ACROSS GENDER, RACE, AND ETHNICITY

**100%**

pay equity across the firm.



“RF|Binder has been the perfect place to start my career. I truly have learned so much, and am surrounded by some of the smartest and most genuine people everyday. RF|Binder is a great place to grow, and Associates are able to gain firsthand experience and insight into many different industries and across client accounts.

At RF|Binder, your growth and passions are accounted for, and people want to see you succeed.”



## SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAM

RF|Binder recently revamped its supplier diversity program, with the goal of proactively identifying, building relationships with, and purchasing goods/services from more diverse suppliers, in recognition of the importance of having a diverse supplier base.

We define diverse suppliers as businesses that are at least 51% owned or operated by the following: minorities, women, veterans, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and persons with disabilities.

To fulfill this goal, we:

- Look for diverse suppliers that can provide competitive, high-quality goods/services.
- Include diverse suppliers as part of our procurement process.
- Ensure that employees in decision-making positions are empowered to advance RF|Binder’s supplier diversity program and goals.
- Educate employees and existing and prospective suppliers about our supplier diversity program.

## PARTNERSHIPS

One key program is our strategic partnership with **Hampton University**, an HBCU, in which we provide scholarships to undergraduate students and provide mentoring and coaching around career development. We actively recruit from Hampton University each year, including for our Associate program.

We have doubled our scholarship program this past year and expanded the career development opportunities provided to the larger Hampton University student body.

We are building relationships with additional universities as well as with professional organizations that promote diversity, to ensure we are bringing diversity at every level, including our senior management team, and filling our talent pipeline.

# Social Justice and Employee Volunteerism

RF|Binder has established a Social Justice Committee, which focuses on deepening our social justice work and mindset both internally and with our clients and community. This Committee is voluntary and nearly half of our firm participates in it. It now consists of four subcommittees – Culture of Belonging, Recruitment and Talent Pipeline, Voter Access and Right to Vote, and Daily Impact in our Work – who meet regularly and share their progress and initiatives with the full firm.



## THE CULTURE OF BELONGING SUBCOMMITTEE

This subcommittee fosters a workplace celebrating inclusivity and diversity. A recent goal of this subcommittee was to have more than 90% of employees believe that RF|Binder enables a culture of diversity by 2021, which we exceeded last year. This committee, among other things, also spearheads our Diverse Voices Content Club, which recommends readings, movies, or other media from diverse creators, and facilitates open, honest discussions on timely cultural topics during Black History Month, Women’s History Month, AAPI Heritage Month, and other key moments in time.

## THE RECRUITMENT AND TALENT PIPELINE SUBCOMMITTEE

This subcommittee has a long-term vision of a diverse workforce, with a strong representation of BIPOC employees at every level of RF|Binder, including senior levels. We are aiming to have 30% BIPOC representation throughout the firm by 2024. During the 2021-2022 timeframe, RF|Binder’s BIPOC representation ranged from 18-25%.



RF|Binder is continuing to focus on this goal as it looks at its recruitment and talent pipeline. Further, RF|Binder is actively seeking new partnerships and ways to recruit from diverse talent pools at every level.

## THE VOTER ACCESS AND RIGHT TO VOTE SUBCOMMITTEE

This subcommittee strives to play a meaningful role in ensuring all citizens are able to exercise their fundamental right to vote, in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, with a particular emphasis on disenfranchised communities, including Black and Brown communities. This subcommittee leads letter writing, phone banking, and voter registration campaigns, and provides useful resources about elections in states where our team members reside. Through this subcommittee, our aim was to spend over 200 hours each year focused on enabling people to have access to vote (e.g., voter registration, absentee or mail-in voting options, dissemination of voting information, get-out-the-vote drives, etc.) and we exceeded that goal last year.

## THE DAILY IMPACT SUBCOMMITTEE

This subcommittee incorporates a social justice mindset into everything we do to ensure our team is an always-on advocate, enabling confidence in how we do everything from counseling clients to managing operations, suppliers, and partners. By 2024, we aim to have 20% of our suppliers be diverse businesses, meaning they are majority owned by women, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, veteran communities, or individuals with disabilities. Through this team we have a centralized list of diverse influencers and reporters that we source from when building integrated communications campaigns for our clients and have learned best practices for being more inclusive, from working with diverse content creators to our written communications.

 **1200 hours**  
available for  
Civic Engagement

RF|Binder also offers employees up to three paid Civic Engagement Days per year, which are separate from paid time off. The purpose of these days is to volunteer our time to actions that are focused on social justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Examples of activities include volunteering for a nonprofit civil rights advocacy organizations, a get out to vote initiative for disenfranchised communities, or attending a non-violent protest for social justice. We also close our offices on Election Day in November, so all team members have time to vote.

We encourage team members to share their perspectives on societal issues, which includes lending a platform to amplify their voices via RF|Binder’s blog and social media. For example, an Associate recently contributed a piece offering her [perspective](#) on the Dobbs v. Jackson ruling as a woman of color; and a Senior Associate wrote a blog on her [perspective](#) as an Asian-American content writer where she shares how and why communications can shape the dialogue around recent years’ rise of AAPI hate.



“I am empowered to share my opinions and thoughts with my managers and the firm’s senior leadership.”

# Employee Benefits, Health, and Wellbeing

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

RF|Binder offers best-in-class benefits for all employees with low employee contributions, co-payments, and deductibles. RF|Binder also provides employees with paid time off for vacation days to rest, handle personal matters, and for religious observances. Employees accrue vacation days over the course of the calendar year, the amount of which is based on years of professional experience. Paid time off also includes Summer Fridays, in which RF|Binder employees can take one Friday off in each of the months of June, July, and August, based on their date of hire, as well as a day off for their birthday or the birthday of a family member.

To support employees' financial savings and investment for retirement, RF|Binder offers a corporate 401k program administered through T. Rowe Price, which provides for employee deferred contributions, catch-up contributions for employees over the age of 50, and annual discretionary company matching contributions.

RF|Binder also provides different incentive programs, including the Employee Referral Program, which rewards full-time employees, if their eligible employee referral is hired into an approved capacity, and the Business Development Incentive Plan, where all full-time employees at the Senior Managing Director level and below are eligible for a new business referral award if RF|Binder successfully wins the business from a prospective new business lead introduced by that employee.

To support new parents, RF|Binder offers a paid parental leave policy for both mothers and fathers. Regular full-time employees of RF|Binder who are primary caregivers may take up to 12 weeks of paid leave in a 12-month period. A new parent who is not the primary caregiver and has been a regular full-time employee of RF|Binder may take up to four weeks of paid leave. Additionally, in response to the recent Dobbs v. Jackson decision to repeal Roe v. Wade, RF|Binder will reimburse up to \$3,000 in out-of-pocket travel expenses, for employees or spouses who need to go out of state to obtain essential healthcare, including reproductive care, no longer offered in their state. These are all described in more detail in our Employee Handbook.



# \$3,000

reimbursed in response to Dobbs v. Jackson decision to repeal Roe v. Wade

## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Since the pandemic, we have had an increased focus on health and wellness. We offer an annual health and wellness stipend of \$250 to each employee for programs and activities that foster a healthy lifestyle. These programs/activities include support groups, gym or health club memberships, technology such as fitness tracking devices, subscriptions for online/app-based mindfulness sessions or fitness classes, nutritionists, weight loss programs, and other recognized health and wellness programs.

Recognizing that employees may need to take time away from work for health-related issues, if an employee is eligible and has an Extended Health Condition, RF|Binder will pay absences from work for up to a total of three weeks for each calendar year. RF|Binder also has unpaid extended leave of up to 12 weeks if the employee meets certain criteria.

Additionally, RF|Binder seeks to provide a flexible work environment and in 2021, began implementing "meeting free" afternoons once a week, allowing employees more time to focus on daily work and alleviate Zoom fatigue from regularly recurring meetings.

In the spirit of friendly competition and staying healthy, RF|Binder employees engage in a variety of team challenges each year, including our virtual Walk Across America and team triathlon, where teams log their steps from walking and miles from running, biking, or swimming.



# Learning and Development

At RF|Binder, we empower all team members to lead and advance in their career in a way that ensures their personal and professional goals are met. Employees also create personalized development plans and goals and receive ongoing support from mentors and Development Leaders.

We offer learning and development opportunities to ensure all employees feel prepared to tackle their tasks at hand in the evolving work landscape. As part of this, we encourage continuous learning for all teammates including access to learning and development (L&D) sessions led by internal experts and external thought leaders. We also have a Research & Insights training program where employees learn how to leverage cutting edge tools to be data- and insights-driven in everything we do; participants earn certificates upon completion. In addition, employees are required to conduct cybersecurity training from time to time by the RF|Binder IT Department, but at the minimum of once a year.

• • • • • **Research & Insights**  
• • • • • We have a training program  
• • • • • where employees learn how  
• • • • • to leverage cutting edge  
tools to be data- and insights-driven  
in everything we do. Participants earn  
certificates upon completion.

As part of our commitment to developing talent, RF|Binder may recommend outside training for very specific skills and aligned with an employee's development goals and career path, where tuition reimbursement may be offered. We have been flexible with team members who have taken courses or received training that required them to take time off of work. Such opportunities would be discussed during goals and performance reviews.



## HOURLY TO EMPOWER

We also feature diverse voices for monthly "Hour to Empower" workshops, in which we bring professionals from a wide array of disciplines to speak about critical topics in the communications industry, such as bias in the media or evolving business models in news organizations.





# Commitment to the Environment and Our Communities

## Environment

At RF|Binder, we are conscious of our environmental footprint and seek ways to reduce negative environmental impacts through different policies and initiatives. Now that we have transitioned from a remote environment to a hybrid one, we will be adding additional environmental targets to our commitments.

The following initiatives are currently being implemented in RF|Binder's offices:

Reduction of energy use through use of motion detectors in all offices and open spaces

LED lighting (no incandescent or halogen light sources)

Reduction of water use through use of motion-controlled water faucets and toilet flushing

Use of energy efficient (e.g. Energy Star rated) appliances

Indoor plants for oxygen-rich office environment and the wellbeing of employees

No plastic utensils or other single-use plastic dishes

Recycle universal wastes and prohibit purchasing hazardous wastes

Reduce waste generated by donating reusable office items (e.g. furniture) to charitable organizations

Promote use of refillable bottles, canvas bags, and reusable to-go containers

Purchase of eco-friendly cleaning products, low VOC paints, markers, and air fresheners

Earth Day clothing drive



The following policies are communicated to RF|Binder employees to encourage more environmentally friendly habits, whether working from home or at the office:

- Turn off computers, speakers, lights, and other electronics before logging off each day to reduce energy consumption.
- Use designated bins to recycle aluminum cans, copy paper, shredded paper, newspapers, and cardboard when in the office.
- Use electronic copies and encourage digital sharing to limit the volume of printing or use double-sided printing for any printing needs.
- Use public transportation whenever possible traveling to and from the office.

## Supporting our Communities

RF|Binder has a strong tradition of giving back to communities and organizations in need on an ongoing basis. During 2021-2022, RF|Binder and its senior management team have donated over \$100,000 across different organizations, including educational institutions, programs for underserved youth, initiatives in response to key events such as the War in Ukraine and institutions supporting reproductive rights.

This past summer, RF|Binder served as the inaugural partner for the New York City chapter of **Project Back 2 School**, a non-profit organization that collects new school supplies and monetary donations to benefit homeless, underprivileged, and disadvantaged children and youth in our local community. They work directly with homeless children, youth and services, underprivileged children, and families, as well as local school counselors. Project Back 2 School wants every student to be fully prepared to return to school with confidence, regardless of their current situation or circumstances.

We coordinated a donation drive where employees had the opportunity to purchase school supplies in support of P.S. 180 Hugo Newman School, with a goal of assisting over 50 students. Several employees gathered together for some team building to stuff backpacks with supplies before they were delivered.

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**\$100,000+**  
donated across  
different organizations

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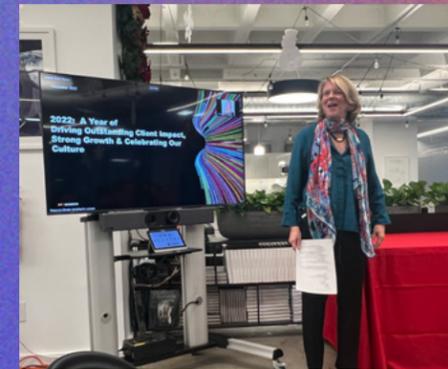


# Looking Ahead

We recognize that we are living in times of great change, unrest, and climate crisis that make us all the more aware of the impact we need to have to create a workplace that is inclusive, diverse, and purpose-driven.

As we look to 2023 and beyond, we are invigorated by the ways in which we as a firm can act as a force for good. While we know we have more to do, that means there is also room to grow and create more meaningful opportunities to achieve this impact. We will continue to look at both internal and external benchmarks to ensure that we strive for the most meaningful impact.

Moving forward, RF|Binder will publish an Impact Report on a bi-annual basis, highlighting new initiatives and communicating progress on existing ones – including our KPIs around creating a culture of diversity and inclusivity, increasing the representation of BIPOC individuals throughout the firm, and further developing our supplier diversity program. We look forward to continuing to share how we lean into our mission and empower those around us to have impact.



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[rfbinder.com](http://rfbinder.com)