Sustainability Report

2024-2025



Q. Factorial

Where Quality meets
Science, Technology & Sustainability

Contents

At QFactorial, we believe business should be a force for good – not just in theory, but in actual day-to-day decisions. This Q!mpact Report is our way of showing how we're walking that talk.

We're using the B Corp Impact Assessment as our structure because it helps keep us honest – across governance, workers, community, environment, and customers. It's a tough framework, but a good one. This report is about sharing where we're at, where we're falling short, and what we're doing about it.

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Governance

Good governance, for us, means running the business with clarity, accountability, and integrity. We're a micro-SME, not a corporate machine, but that doesn't mean we take shortcuts. As ISO consultants, we believe in systems that support real decision-making – not just red tape for show.

Giving the Planet a Seat at the Table

This year, we made a key change to how QFactorial is governed by updating our company Articles with the aim to reflect our commitment to balancing profit with purpose.

It's not just a legal formality – it's a statement of intent. From now on, every major decision we make has to take people and the planet into account. It's about building impact into the heart of our business, not bolting it on as an afterthought.



> "Anyone who thinks that you can have infinite growth in a finite environment is either a madman or an economist."
>
> **Sir David Attenborough**

ISO 9001: Governance in Action

Our ISO 9001 certification from BSI is more than a badge — it's a framework that helps us maintain strong governance and deliver consistent quality. The standard requires clear processes, documented responsibilities, and regular reviews to keep us improving.

Audits and management reviews aren't just box-ticking exercises; they're full-team affairs where everyone is accountable, engaged, and involved. This collective ownership helps us spot issues early and drive meaningful improvements.

We've maintained zero non-conformities since certification, including during this year's surveillance and internal audits. To ensure transparency, our internal audits are carried out by a third party.

While we're proud of this record, we also welcome opportunities for improvement — good governance means constantly striving to do better.



Keeping Governance Fresh: Policies That Matter

Governance isn't just about structure; it's about the rules we live by. This year, we've created and updated key policies that keep us aligned with our values and ambitions.

Our Internal Promotion Policy supports fair, impact-driven career growth. The Ethics Check framework guides how we choose clients and projects that meet our integrity standards. We've refined our Environmental Responsibility Policy to ensure our daily actions back our planet commitments.

On top of that, we've introduced a Corporate Philanthropy Statement to clarify how we give back, an Ethical Marketing Policy to keep our communications honest and respectful, a new Employee Handbook to set clear expectations and support, and a refreshed EDI Policy to promote inclusion across the business.

These policies aren't set in stone. We review and update them regularly and make sure everyone on the team knows what they mean in practice. It's how we keep governance real and relevant.

Quality KPIs: Measuring What Matters

At QFactorial, we set clear internal quality KPIs to keep ourselves honest and on track. These targets help us maintain high standards across our work and governance processes.

For 2024-25, our targets were:

KPI	Target	Result	Comment
Number of client complaints related to quality of deliverables.	0	0	Only one complaint in the last four years.
Number of client complaints related to quality of service.	0	1	Only two in the last four years.
Number of unsolicited positive client feedback events.	12	18	Our highest score in the last four years.
Number of new projects awarded by existing or previous clients.	12	15	Our highest score in the last four years.
Number of non conformities found in internal audits.	0	2	Both are being addressed with system improvements.
Number of non conformities found in external audits.	0	0	As audited by BSI.

Looking Ahead: Targets and Ambitions

As we move into 2025-26, our focus remains sharp on maintaining the high standards that define QFactorial. We're committed to retaining our ISO 9001 certification, ensuring our governance and quality management systems stay robust and effective.

A major milestone on the horizon is achieving full B Corp Certification — a formal recognition of the values and impact we've embedded into our business.

We'd like to ensure that our performance this year is maintained into next year whilst we make significant changes elsewhere in the business. Therefore we will track the exact same KPIs and targets to ensure consistency and comparability.

Workers

We may be small, but we put people at the heart of how we work. Our approach to workers is shaped by fairness, flexibility, and mutual respect — not hierarchy or hollow perks.

Whether you're one of our employees or part of our wider Associate network, we aim to create a working environment that's supportive, inclusive, and purpose-driven. We believe good work should feel meaningful, and good workplaces should be built on trust.

Our Team Structure:

QFactorial has a core team of four at Q!HQ — three of whom are family — working closely together to shape the business and deliver impact.

We maintained a network of 17 Associate Consultants who, while not employees, played a vital role in our client work and professional community.

Attrition in Context:

In 2024–25, QFactorial experienced no staff turnover at Q!HQ and a modest shift in our Associate network: we welcomed one new Associate and saw three depart (one retired, two pursued new career paths).

For a micro consultancy, this level of stability is notable. Industry data indicates that UK consultancies typically face annual attrition rates between 15% and 20% . Additionally, SMEs with fewer than 250 employees often experience turnover rates around 18.2% .

Our lower-than-average attrition suggests that our emphasis on trust, flexibility, and meaningful work resonates with both our core team and our Associates. While we acknowledge that some turnover is natural and can bring fresh perspectives, our goal remains to maintain a stable, engaged team that aligns with our values.



Sources:

audencia.com
management-issues.com
ft.com
stribehq.com

DEI Data and Limitations:

We're committed to building a more inclusive team and aligning with B Corp's DEI expectations. That includes collecting diversity data, but as a micro business working with independent professionals, participation is voluntary.

In our latest survey, only two of our 17 Associates responded. While we respect their choice, it's not enough to protect anonymity or provide meaningful insights.

We'll keep encouraging input, explaining why it matters, and building the kind of culture where people feel comfortable sharing. No pressure. Just progress.

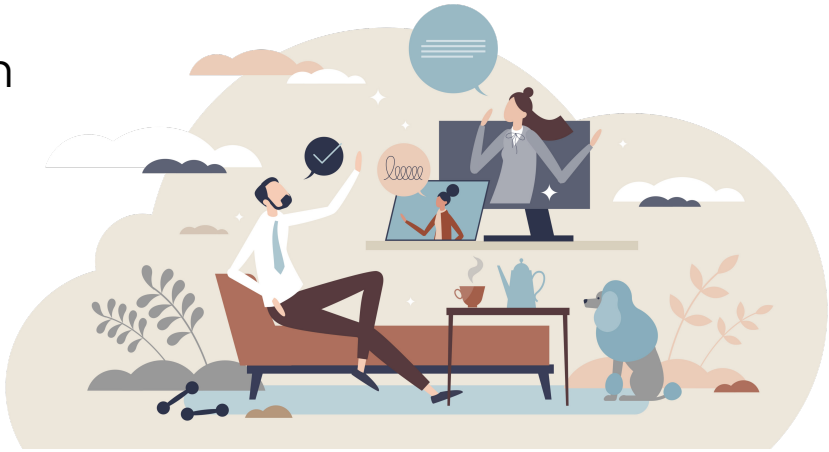
Culture at Work:

At QFactorial, we believe that how we work matters just as much as what we do. We've built a culture that values trust, autonomy, fairness and learning. Not just because it sounds good, but because it helps us thrive as people and as a business.

With a small team and a big mission, we aim to create a working environment that's flexible, supportive and sustainable for the long haul. The following sections highlight some of the ways we put that into practice day to day.

Everyone at Q!HQ works from home and sets their own hours. We trust each other to get the job done in the way that works best for them.

It's simple, flexible and built on mutual respect. And it works.



Flexible Working

The Living Wage

This year, we became an accredited Living Wage Employer. It is a simple commitment to pay fairly and recognise the true cost of living.

For us, it is about backing up our values with action and making sure that good work is properly rewarded.

We're serious about learning, both on the job and formally. Everyone at Q!HQ gets opportunities to build skills and grow.

Our Ops Manager has been working towards a Diploma in Business Sustainability, and our Project Delivery Manager has been developing industry expertise through organised networking. It's all part of staying sharp and driving impact.



Training & Development

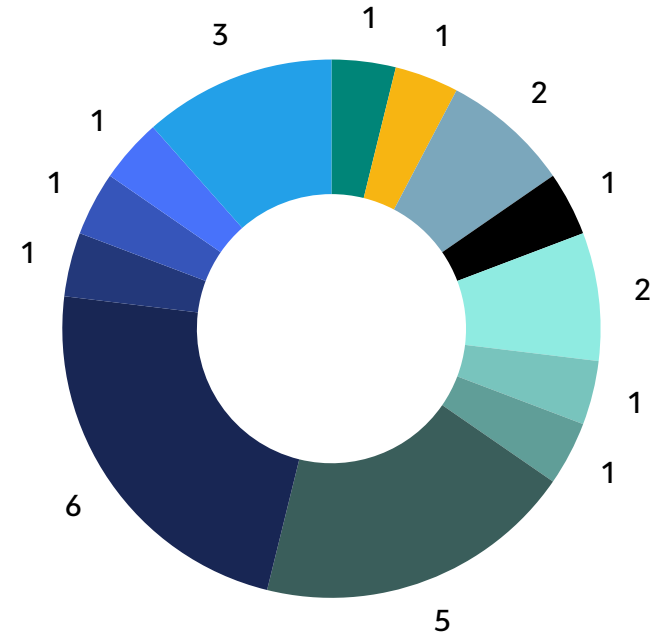
Looking Ahead: Targets and Ambitions

Next year, we'll focus on growing and supporting our team, keeping a healthy balance, and developing our skill base across Q!HQ and our Associates. Setting clear targets for well-being, diversity, and professional growth is a priority, though DEI targets are tricky right now without a solid baseline. We'll keep working to improve how we gather and use this data while building an inclusive culture.

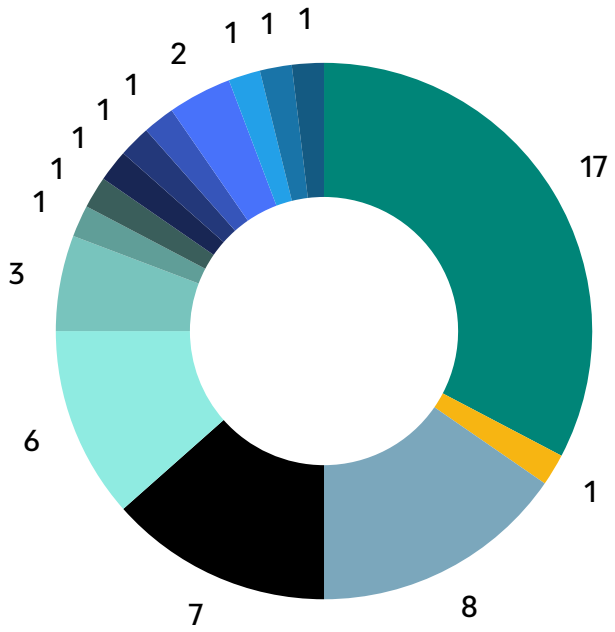
Customers

Our clients are at the heart of everything we do. This section looks at who we worked with this year, the projects we delivered, and how we're keeping satisfaction high and ethics front and centre. We'll also share a bit about our presence at industry events and how that feeds back into our work.

Client Sector Breakdown:



Project Breakdown:



ISO 9001 | ISO 13485 | ISO 14001 | ISO 17025
ISO 27001 | ISO 45001 | ISO 50001 | Achilles
EcoVadis | SSIP | APAR | BS 99001
PAS 8672 | Carbon Calculations | EUDR

Satisfaction (nearly) Guaranteed:

We received a total of 18 pieces of unsolicited customer feedback during this period. A selection of those can be found below:

"The process has been fun..I'm already looking forward to next year...Good to be acknowledged for doing the right things."

"This is a good way to set up a system and no NCs at Stage 2 is unusual in my experience...Everything was slick, evidence always to hand. This is how audits should be conducted."

"I want to record very positive feedback on the effectiveness of QFactorial training in preparation for our successful ISO certification audits."

"Working with you has kept us honest and true to ISO. Love the challenges and how we always look forward to the future. We couldn't practice what we preach without you."

"Thank you for the report and for the time at the workshop day. I found it an almost cathartic experience to be able to talk about our current position out loud and to articulate where we want to get to."

"We really appreciate your support, and we are certain we have hit on a great business relationship with you and qfactorial. We are looking forward to you helping shape our businesses."



Ethics in Action:

Our updated Ethics Policy guides how we choose clients and projects to make sure they align with our values and impact goals. We don't only work with companies creating a positive impact, but we do refuse work that causes clear negative social or environmental harm.

The policy sets clear expectations for transparency, fair treatment, and respect for human rights. It builds trust with clients and protects our reputation by making sure we avoid projects that conflict with our commitment to people and the planet.

Out & About:

This year we've been busy on the expo and events circuit, getting out there to learn, share and connect. From sustainability to manufacturing, quality and innovation, we've been soaking up ideas, meeting future collaborators and staying sharp on emerging trends.



Events we Attended:

Environmental Services & Solutions Expo, Farnborough B2B Expo, Basingstoke B2B Expo, The Business Show London, Venturefest South, Southern Manufacturing & Electronics Expo, Utility Week Live, Thames Valley Expo, and Quality Live.

Events we Exhibited at:

Reading B2B Expo, Oxford B2B Expo, The Big Sustainability Show, The Hampshire Business Show, and at the Unlocking Hampshire's Green Potential event.



Speaking Engagements:

We were invited to share our perspective on the links between quality, sustainability and growth at the Greener for Growth Networking Group, the Hampshire Sustainable Action Network and as a Keynote speaker at The Big Sustainabiity Show.

Looking Ahead: Targets and Ambitions:

Embarking on a year where we're heavily investing in growth strategies, we have set out some objectives, projects and targets which will set us up for continued success:

- We want to increase the number of clients who's main business activities helps with environmental protection.
- We want to increase the number of client projects which include working towards sustainability objectives.
- By kicking off Project Water Cooler, we will identify and engage in the relevant 'water coolers', especially where start-ups are making decisions on growth.
- A full rebuild of the company website alongside a commitment to SEO management will target customers in growth and change mode.
- A commitment to continue our Expo engagements and seek out further speaking opportunities.

Community

This year our focus has been on building the structures that allow us to give back in meaningful ways. We've introduced policies, set targets, and created space within our roles for community action. Whether it's through charitable giving, volunteering, or sharing our expertise pro bono, we're laying the groundwork to ensure these commitments are part of how we work, not just an afterthought.

Profit with Purpose:

We've committed to donating at least 1% of our profits to charity.

This year, we gave £1,005 to causes close to our hearts:

- Woodland Trust – protecting UK forests
- Trussell Trust – tackling food poverty
- The Bumblebee Conservation Trust – our corporate charity
- Severn Charity – through PS Partnership's sponsored row
- Pride – supporting inclusion and visibility

That adds up to 1.7% of our annual profits.

Turning Up & Speaking Up:

We've been working with Portsmouth University for a few years now, and this year the partnership levelled up. Instead of one project, we took on two student consultancy groups. One explored how smarter use of AI could free up time and cost in the business so we can chase better leads. The other took on Project Watercooler which is our ongoing mission to get ourselves into the right rooms and start the conversations that actually move things forward.

We also added our names to two campaigns that line up with our values. We backed the Better Business Act and the Making Space for Water campaign, both signed on 14 July 2025. Simple actions, but the kind we believe add up.

And because community means showing support in ways that genuinely matter, we supported The Big Sustainability Show's Children's Sustainability Award Calendar and continued our support for Basingstoke Pride.

Working With Our Community:

This year we built volunteering into our company policy, giving each team member up to two days to spend on causes that matter to them.

On the pro bono front, we've lent our expertise to two clients, including Basingstoke Pride, offering support on quality and ISO matters without billing a penny.

We also helped a private individual navigate a tricky situation involving a certified lab. There was no business to be had, but our team stepped in to explain the standards and processes, helping them feel informed and supported. The client was grateful and plans to donate to charity as a result.

It's exactly the kind of work that reminds us why we do what we do - using our skills to help, even when it doesn't show up on the invoices.

BASINGSTOKE PRIDE

Looking Ahead: Targets and Ambitions

We are committed to our minimum donation target of 1% of profits, alongside encouraging our staff to use their Volunteering Days allowance.

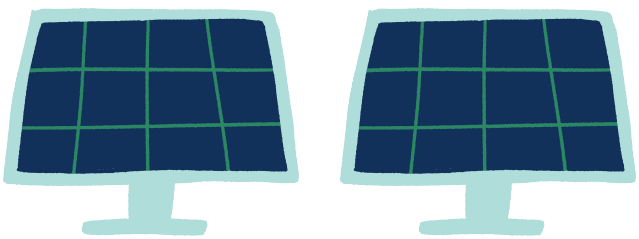
Alongside the above we're also aiming to take on 2 pro bono projects to help our local community, charity or under-represented business owners achieve their goals.

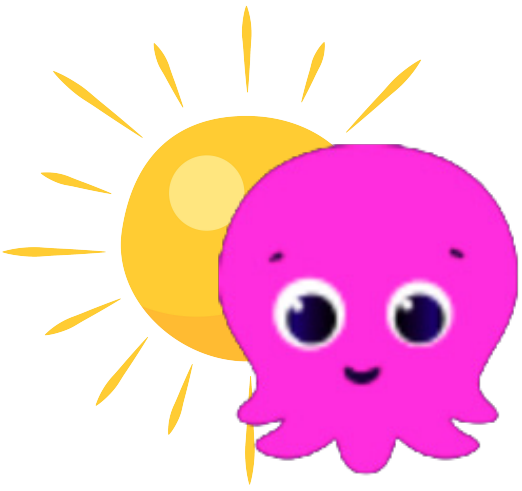
Environment

At QFactorial, we take our environmental impact seriously, but we're also realistic about what we can control. As a tiny team of 3.5 people working from home and not producing any physical products, our direct footprint is minimal. That said, we still make conscious choices around energy, waste and resource use, and use our expertise as sustainability consultants to help clients make meaningful environmental improvements.

Energy:

Our energy use is low because Q!HQ is a home office and we work remotely, but we still make conscious choices about where that power comes from. In February we switched to Octopus so our electricity now comes from renewable sources, and the house already has solar panels that help offset our usage.
Our annual energy data is on the next page, we're currently working on gathering the data to set a benchmark for future targets and action.





Usage Data:

	2023-2024	2024-2025
Electricity	2583 kWh	3240 kWh
Gas	1545 m3	1558 m3

The average amount of energy coming from renewable sources in 2023-4 was 3% and in 2024-5 it was 12%, we're on the up!

Waste Management:

As a remote micro business with no physical products, our waste footprint is tiny. We work around ninety percent paperless, recycle as standard and focus on reducing and reusing whatever we can. We don't generate manufacturing waste and the only hazardous items we handle are the odd batch of household batteries, which are taken to proper collection points.

We haven't yet needed to dispose of IT equipment or anything that requires specialist treatment, but we'll follow best practice when we eventually do.

Small Team, Big Influence:

This year our environmental impact has come less from what we consume and more from what we help others change. We've supported clients on their journeys to stronger environmental standards, including guiding several organisations through ISO 14001 certification and helping another secure an EcoVadis Platinum rating. We also provided clarity on EUDR obligations for a client navigating new supply chain expectations.

We're not just advising from the sidelines either. We're working toward our own certification goals and making small but meaningful choices along the way. One example is switching to seeded business cards from a local supplier using native wildflowers, keeping our materials low impact and close to home.

We see this blend of client work and internal action as the most effective way to multiply our environmental influence.





Message from the Board: "Why we do what we do"

At QFactorial, quality and sustainability aren't just buzzwords—they're what we genuinely care about. And by 'we', we mean the actual people behind the brand, not just some corporate slogan. We're a family business, and anyone who works with us has to pass the ultimate test: the vibe check. That means sharing our values, doing the right thing even when no one's watching, and keeping it real when it comes to ethics and sustainability.

Our work is guided by what we stand for, and we don't shy away from calling out greenwashing or walking away from projects that don't align with our principles. We're here for the businesses that want to do better—not just tick boxes. The real win for us? Helping companies balance people, planet, and profit in a way that actually makes a difference.

Because we care about this stuff personally, we care about it professionally. That means we don't just talk a good game—we put our own advice into practice. If we're going to tell our clients to step up their sustainability and ethics, we have to do the same.

This is our first ever Impact Report, and while we're proud of what we've achieved so far, we know there's plenty more to do. The good news? We're up for the challenge. Next year, we want to push ourselves even further—and we'll be holding ourselves accountable every step of the way.