

SumOfUs 2019 Annual Report



OVERVIEW

SumOfUs is a global community of 15 million people committed to curbing the growing power of corporations. Since 2011, we have leveraged the power of consumers, workers, and investors to demand the biggest companies in the world prioritize people and planet over profit. Over the past year, we have taken on Big Tech corporations such as Google and Facebook, financial powerhouses such as JP Morgan and Credit Suisse, union busters such as cosmetics giant Yves Rocher, and far-right extremists such as the U.S.-based Proud Boys and the UK's Tommy Robinson—and we've won. We have mobilized millions of members to sign petitions, email their elected representatives, and pressure companies through social media, shareholder advocacy, in-person actions, and more. With the support of our global membership and institutional partners, we are excited to continue to challenge corporations that disregard human rights, foment inequality, or harm the planet.

OUR WORK IN 2019

Big Tech

PayPal: Online payment companies have been processing contributions for hate groups and far-right extremists, thus enabling the proliferation of harmful and discriminatory ideologies.

We waged a campaign to urge PayPal to stop accepting donations for far-right UK extremist [Tommy Robinson](#). In November 2018, PayPal caved to public pressure and stopped processing payments for him. Building on this successful campaign, we expanded our efforts to include funding for “Identitarian” groups in France and Germany.

This fall, we launched a petition [mobilizing more than 100,000](#) members to demand PayPal shutdown the account of German neo-Nazis group Pro Chemnitz. We mobilized our members to protest outside of PayPal’s HQ in Berlin and amplified our efforts with a mobile billboard that spotlighted their relationship with right-wing extremists. Following the protest, PayPal filed a libel lawsuit against SumOfUs. This was a scare tactic to silence us, and a sign that our tactics were having an impact on the company. With the law and facts on our side, we continued to pressure the multi-billion dollar corporation to stop funding hate groups. In December, PayPal caved to our demands and will no longer process donations for the hate group Pro Chemnitz.

Google: In December 2018, over 86,000 of our members demanded that [Google immediately drop “Project Dragonfly”](#), the censored China search engine. This action received over 400 clips globally that mentioned SumOfUs, including [NBC News](#), [The Intercept](#), [The Tibet Sun](#), [Business Insider](#), [The Globe and Mail](#), and [The Daily Mail](#). We worked with the Free Tibet coalition to engage more than 100,000 SumOfUs members around Google’s annual general meeting, and amplified the efforts of our partners Open Mic and Azzad, who filed a shareholder resolution. This July, Google gave in to our demands and has no plans to offer a search engine in China. We are currently evaluating the best strategy to replicate this success.

Facebook: The horrific attacks in Christchurch, Pittsburgh, and Charleston are just the latest proof that white nationalism is deadly. This March, as a result of ongoing efforts by SumOfUs and our partners in the Freedom From Facebook coalition, Facebook has agreed to implement policies to ban all forms of white nationalist and white supremacist content across its platforms. This decision is a first step, and we ramped up the pressure on Facebook at its annual general meeting in May. We delivered 125,000 petition signatures to oust Mark Zuckerberg, and 10,000 signatures to demand that major Facebook investor BlackRock vote “no” on Zuckerberg. We also flew a huge “angry emoji” balloon outside of the meeting. This eye-catching tactic made us stand out and our efforts garnered a tremendous amount of media attention from [Reuters](#) to [Mashable](#) to the [Financial Times](#) and reaching as far as [Japan](#) and Pakistan.

YouTube: We pushed YouTube to [restrict UK far-right extremist Tommy Robinson's channel](#), removing his videos from search results and prohibiting him from live-streaming to the platform. The company's decision to place these far-reaching restrictions is a huge step in the right direction. SumOfUs will continue to advocate for his complete ban from the site, and for a commitment from YouTube to develop robust, transparent policies to stop its use as a platform for the far-right.

Amazon (Minnesota): Amazon has a long history of violating worker's rights, from inhumane working conditions in its warehouses to wage theft from employees who are not even making a living wage. Through previous campaigns, we have learned that Amazon is good at resisting national campaign pressure, but is more vulnerable against local campaigns that have strong ties with the community. Workers at Amazon's [Awood Center](#) in Minnesota and the state branch of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters have been organizing to address wage theft and unpaid medical bills related to on-the-job injuries.

We provided these on the-ground-partners with digital leverage such as launching a [petition](#) that was supported by more than 20,000 of our members, developing [shareable](#) content, and publicizing their efforts across our social media. Our support pushed their campaign across the finish line. Winning this campaign was proof that Amazon does not have the freedom to treat workers poorly. The campaign also built trust and confidence with workers who have been struggling to win against Amazon, and established a roadmap for effective tactics for future campaigns.

Airbnb: In November 2018 Airbnb committed to removing home-sharing lists in illegal Israeli settlements built on occupied Palestinian land in the West Bank. The announcement came after years of sustained advocacy from a coalition of 30+ groups known as the StolenHomes Coalition, which included SumOfUs, the US Palestinian Community Network, Up Lift, Jewish Voice for Peace, and others. Almost 200,000 people from around the world signed our [petition](#) urging Airbnb to stop listing vacation rentals in Israeli settlements built on stolen Palestinian land and deemed illegal under international law. In April 2019, Airbnb reversed its decision to ban these listings, though it did stipulate that it would donate profits from these listings to humanitarian causes. SumOfUs and coalition partners are engaged in efforts to hold Airbnb accountable, and mobilized a global day of action on May 15, 2019 in which more than 80,000 users deactivated their Airbnb accounts. We will continue to ramp up our efforts until Airbnb removes these listings.



Amazon (Washington): Since 2014, we have been filing shareholder proposals at Amazon, first to advocate for human rights and then to advocate for an independent board chair to ensure accountability and transparency. This May, at Amazon's annual general meeting, we partnered with SEIU Local 6 in Seattle to promote their effort to push Amazon to hire unionized security at its headquarters. We amplified SEIU position by mobilizing our members outside of Amazon's annual general meeting and by supporting SEIU Local 6 to present its position to the shareholders during our time allotment. Following the shareholder meeting, an Amazon representative informed SEIU Local 6 that they will be

ending their relationship with non-union Security Industry Specialists (SIS) and are going to hire a union security company to provide their security services. This is another sign that we can push Amazon to respect workers' rights through localized campaigns.

Google, Facebook, and Instagram (Australia): In response to Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election, online platform such as Facebook, Instagram, and Google have been introducing new ways to verify who has paid for political ads, who saw them, and what material is run for a campaign. While, Google and Facebook dominate the digital ad space in Australia, the country is not subject to the new rules. In order to shine a light on political ads, SumOfUs petitioned the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JCSEM) at the Parliament of Australia to have Facebook and Google appear before the committee so we can understand how online political advertising is affecting elections. In September, we received a letter acknowledging our submission and agreeing to request a submission from Facebook and Google. This is a positive first step toward online election ad accountability. Over the upcoming months, we will organize digital actions for our members and prepare questions for senators to ask Facebook and Google executives.

Food and Farming

Bayer-Monsanto: CEO Werner Baumann brokered Bayer's merger with Monsanto, whose business model promotes widespread use of toxic pesticides (i.e. glyphosates) that are linked to the massive global bee die-off and other major environmental harm. SumOfUs mobilized more than 170,000 members to call for Baumann's resignation over his irresponsible and unethical performance. These efforts were complemented by [videos](#) and amplified by our day of action at Bayer's annual general meeting featuring high-profile Monsanto poison victim [Paul Francois](#) who shared his powerful story directly with the Bayer board. Additionally, SumOfUs members with Bayer shares allowed us to vote on their behalf to express disapproval of the CEO's conduct.

As a result, Bayer-Monsanto CEO Werner Baumann suffered a major rebuff after the majority of the company's shareholders voted that they disapproved of his performance. No incumbent CEO at any company listed in Germany's blue-chip index DAX has previously failed this type of vote. Our efforts garnered significant press in French and German media such as [Oekonews.at](#), [Novethic](#), [ZDF](#), and more. In fact, the biggest shareholders (i.e. pension funds representing millions of shares) who spoke at the Bayer annual general meeting cited Baumann's inability to understand the importance of public opinion on glyphosate and the importance of the company acting in the interest of planet and people as a reason they voted against the approval of Baumann and the executive board. This is a major win for SumOfUs members and our partners who have been fighting against the use of toxic pesticides and trying to educate the public about the dangers of the Bayer-Monsanto merger and Monsanto's business practices.

PepsiCo: We mobilized more than one million SumOfUs members to call on PepsiCo to cut ties with destructive and exploitative palm oil producer Indofood. We produced a [Super Bowl 2019 video targeting Doritos](#) (PepsiCo) that was released on social media and gained half a million views across YouTube, [Facebook](#), and Instagram. We kept the pressure on through a Twitter campaign on International Workers Day and filed a shareholder resolution. As a result of our sustained efforts, PepsiCo CEO Ramon Laguarta sought out SumOfUs representatives at the PepsiCo annual general meeting to discuss our resolution, a sign that our demands are being taken seriously by top executives at the company. Our shareholder resolution demanding accountability on palm oil was a success, receiving 25 percent of shareholder support, surpassing our 20 percent goal.

Sucden: We pressured major French trading commodity Sucden to support a Living Income Differential by paying a fair cocoa floor price worldwide—and we won. Farmers in Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Nigeria, Indonesia, and Ecuador produce almost all of the world's cocoa, but make under \$1 a day. In September, we launched a campaign to push cocoa giants Sucden, Nestlé, and Pladis to commit to ensuring cocoa farmers earn a living wage by supporting a Living Income Differential. In October, more than [149,000 SumOfUs members signed a petition](#) demanding the companies pay a fair price to farmers.



We brought our demands to the World Cocoa Foundation conference in Berlin, and these efforts pushed Sucden to commit to supporting a Living Income Differential. We are continuing to pressure Pladis and Nestlé to make sure cocoa farmers around the world earn a decent living.

Saputo: In January, SumOfUs launched a campaign to demand Saputo sign on to the food waste reduction pledge like other major food producers, [mobilizing more than 24,000](#) SumOfUs members to sign our petition. We filed a proposal using the shares of our partner, the British Columbian union BCGEU, at food giant Saputo (i.e. Cracker Barrel, Neilsen, Woolwich Dairy, and Armstrong) pushing for a commitment to reduce its food waste. We used the OurPension tool to mobilize nearly 2,000 people to email their pension fund managers to demand they vote in support our efforts. Our proposal was endorsed by the world's largest proxy advisory firm Institutional Shareholder Services (ISS) and generated press in major media outlets such as [Globe and Mail](#), [Les Affaires](#), and more. The proposal received 42% of the non-controlled voting shares, an increase of 22% from our 2018 shareholder proposal. As a result of our actions, Saputo committed to reducing its food waste by 50% by 2025 and it has published this commitment on its website.

Human Rights and Workers' Rights

JP Morgan: JP Morgan is a financier, underwriter, and bond-holder of two of the biggest for-profit prison and detention center corporations in the country. For-profit prisons are not subject to the same freedom of information and open records laws as public prisons, which enables human and workers rights abuses with limited accountability or consequences. This year, we [mobilized more than 17,000](#) members to challenge the Trump administration's immigration detention centers. We joined forces with grassroots advocacy organization Make the Road to protest outside of JP Morgan Chase offices in New York, spotlighting the company's role in enabling Trump's anti-immigrant agenda. In May 2019, JP Morgan announced that it will stop funding private prisons; this includes two of the biggest for-profit prison corporations in the country that hold 60% of all those in immigration detention.

Yves Rocher: We forced cosmetic giant Yves Rocher to stop union-busting in Turkey. In partnership with the IndustriALL Global and ActionAid France, we [mobilized more than 180,000 SumOfUs members to demand cosmetics giant Yves Rocher stop union-busting](#). We amplified worker efforts through online petitions and social media actions that drew international negative attention to the conflict between workers and the company. After ten months of strikes in Turkey, workers obtained back payment of wages, a six-month wage compensation and the reclassification of their dismissal for serious misconduct (i.e. unionising efforts). This last point is crucial because it allows workers to receive unemployment benefits and also makes it easier for them to find work in the region.

Visa: In the last decade, more than half of the deadliest mass shootings in the U.S. were financed with credit cards. We launched a [campaign](#) in December 2018 to push Visa to monitor credit card purchases for potential mass shootings red flags. In pursuit of this goal, we built a coalition of partners to amplify our efforts, which includes Guns Down, MoveOn, DailyKos, Gays Against Guns, Color of Change, and more. Together, we launched a [petition](#) that has been supported by more than 135,000 people. We organized petition deliveries and vigils at Visa's global headquarters in San Francisco, California, following the mass shootings in Gilroy, California and El Paso, Texas. These efforts caught the attention of actress and activist Alyssa Milano who promoted our petition to her 3.7 million Twitter followers and lent her name to engagement emails, which helped to further publicize our efforts.



This fall, we had a meeting with top Visa's executive which is proof that our demands are being taken seriously by company leadership. To continue to pressure Visa to meet our demands, we are planning a series of actions around Visa's annual general meeting in

January 2020. We are also pursuing a strategy to push the U.S. Department of Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FINCEN) to mandate that financial institutions, like Visa, provide all data related to firearms purchases, so the government can analyze it and identify red flags linked to mass shootings.

Procter & Gamble: In 2018, we mobilized [almost 158,000 members](#) to demand Procter & Gamble end its business relationship with dirty palm oil producer FGV, which has been found guilty of human trafficking and forced labor on its palm oil plantations. These efforts resulted in FGV being sanctioned by The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), the leading palm oil certifier. This year, RSPO reinstated FGV's certification based on action plans produced by FGV, but there is no publicly available information to demonstrate FGV has sufficiently and credibly addressed forced labor on its plantations.

In August, we re-launched our campaign demanding Procter & Gamble stop working with FGV. We mobilized [more than 160,000 members](#) to sign a petition on the issue, and in November, we leveraged this show of support at the 2019 RSPO Conference to pressure RSPO to suspend FGV's palm oil certification again. In partnership with International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF) and Rainforest Action Network (RAN) we filed a complaint with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), which is required to deny entry of goods made with forced labor. We mobilized more than 100,00 members to pressure CBP to block imports of Felda's palm oil and received global media coverage in [Free Malaysia Today](#). This campaign is ongoing and we are confident that our tactics will be successful in pushing P&G to make these changes to better respect human and workers' rights.

Canada Pension Plan Investment Board: The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) invests more than \$6 million in U.S. private prison companies. We launched a petition with our partners that was signed by more than 55,000 people to push CPP to divest from private prisons. We mobilized hundreds of our members, whose pensions are held by CPP, to attend CPP public meetings to advocate for this issue. Our efforts were quoted in many publications around the world, including [The Guardian](#). In July 2019, CPP agreed to completely divest from the two biggest private prison companies in the U.S., CoreCivic and EO Group.

Climate

CDPQ: The largest meat production company in the world JBS, was found guilty of destroying the Amazon rainforest for livestock production and corruption. We pressured CDPQ, a Quebec pension fund to divest from JBS and stop financing the destruction of the Amazon rainforest—and we won. In late September, we launched a campaign to push CDPQ, the fourth biggest holding shareholder of JBS, to divest from the company. We mobilized more than 2,000 of our members to sign onto our petition and received major media coverage in the biggest paper in Quebec [Journal de Montreal](#). We reached out to CDPQ to discuss our demands and they quickly committed to divesting from JBS.

European Union: We pushed the EU to stop subsidizing dirty palm oil biofuels. Most European biofuel is made using vegetable oil, and cheap palm oil is an industry favorite. While fuel companies make billions in profits, palm oil deforestation is destroying pristine rainforest and carbon-rich peatland in Indonesia and Malaysia. In partnership with European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E), we built a large coalition of more than 15 groups from all over Europe including Environmental Action Germany (DUH) and Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU) in Germany, Ecologistas en Acción in Spain, and the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation.

Last fall, we launched a campaign in seven languages and gathered [more than 660,000 signatures demanding the end of European subsidies in palm oil](#). This winter we co-organized a European day of action with protests in major European capitals such as Paris, Berlin, Brussels, Madrid, Rome, and more. These efforts led to a meeting with Miguel Arias Canete, head of the Energy Committee of the European Commission, in charge of this dossier. In March, we secured a victory with a delegated act from the Commission phasing out most palm oil from biofuels in Europe.

Credit Suisse: Multinational investment bank Credit Suisse is financing at least three companies that dump or plan to dump more than 810 millions tons of toxic mining waste in a beautiful Norwegian fjord, in Papua New Guinea, and in Turkey. These destructive projects are without the consent of indigenous Sámi Parliament or other rights-holders in the territories. In partnership with Earthworks and the Ditch Ocean Dumping coalition, we [mobilized more than 111,000 people](#) to demand Credit Suisse change its funding terms to exclude mining companies that dump toxic waste into the ocean and disrespect Indigenous rights. These efforts amplified the on-the-groundwork of the Sámi people enabling them to secure a commitment from Credit Suisse to include Indigenous rights in their funding terms.



In November, we used this win to push for more structural change at Credit Suisse. In December, the head of Credit Suisse's Sustainable policy has committed to meet with us to discuss our demands. This campaign is ongoing, but we anticipate that Credit Suisse will stop financing the mining project in Norway and will adopt our coalition's demands for policy changes that respect Indigenous rights and protect our planet.

Trade

Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS): The private, business-friendly court system Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) allows companies to sue governments for hurting their bottom line. As a result of this system, companies have reaped billions in public money when health standards, environmental, and workers' rights laws restricted their profits. For instance, Philip Morris used ISDS to sue countries over cigarette health warning labels, chemical giant Dow used it to threaten Quebec into weakening a ban on one of its toxic herbicides, and multi-billion-dollar utility provider Veolia sued Egypt over the introduction of a minimum wage. We have launched a multi-pronged campaign to stop ISDS from being included in trade and investment policy and to terminate existing treaties containing it.

We are also pushing for ISDS to be replaced with a global system for holding big companies to account for human rights and environmental violations. We have begun [mobilizing](#) thousands of members on this issue, and will launch a large-scale petition to educate the public about this system, generate more support for efforts to eliminate it, and build a base of engaged supporters prepared to take action through digital and offline mobilizations.

EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement: The EU-Mercosur trade agreement between the European Union and the South American economies of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay would have dangerous implications for health, the environment, animal welfare, and human rights. The agreement would allow commodities from the included South American countries to be fast-tracked into Europe without environmental protections, healthy food standards, or labor rights. In August, we launched a petition that has [mobilized more than 250,000](#) people to pressure the EU to end negotiations.

We will escalate our campaign by mobilizing our members to pressure key targets such as the European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development and launch national-level campaigns in key countries including France, Germany, and Ireland. We will also partner with internal stakeholders at EU institutions and key national-level governments that have signaled opposition.

Government of the United Kingdom: We are pressuring the UK government to maintain high environmental and labor standards in negotiations of bilateral treaties emerging from Brexit. The Trade Bill currently being rushed through Parliament would allow the government to privately negotiate and ratify agreements without oversight from Parliament. This will allow corporations and vested interests to extend their influence over trade policy and priorities, jeopardizing labor standards, public health, food standards, and the environment. We are pushing to amend the Trade Bill to ensure negotiations are transparent, and to require Parliament consent to the terms of trade negotiations. Based on U.S. President Donald Trump's free-market and pro-corporation position on health care systems, our UK team is planning a rapid-response campaign to counter anticipated post-Brexit UK-US trade developments, specifically protecting the UK National Health Care

system from privatization. We are also working with a coalition of dozens of social justice organizations, unions and environmental groups to pressure the UK to not include ISDS (Investor State Dispute Settlement) provisions in new and replacement trade agreements.

LOOKING AHEAD

SumOfUs has run and won dozens of campaigns to push corporations to prioritize people and planet over profit. We plan to continue to deepen our engagement with our principal areas of work:

- **Public Services:** We challenge governments on policies that transfer the delivery of public services to corporations, particularly regarding resources that are necessary for human well-being.
- **Climate:** We challenge the economic viability of industries that accelerate climate change, including by mobilizing investors to back shareholder resolutions that address environmental issues.
- **Food and Farming:** We challenge farming practices that are hazardous to human and environmental health, such as pushing companies to ensure the well-being of workers throughout supply chains.
- **Big Tech:** We challenge Big Tech corporations to improve their ethical practices, taking on issues such as defending employee rights in the “gig” economy.
- **Trade:** We challenge the regressive global trade agenda that undermines human rights and worsens inequality.

We will continue to carry out our work using a suite of tactics that has repeatedly proven powerful in challenging corporate power including mass mobilization, high-profile escalations, in-person actions, shareholder advocacy, and financialization. Some of our upcoming activities include:

- Pushing back against [Nestle's](#) efforts to privatize water supply systems.
- Pressuring major corporations to reduce plastic waste to [protect our oceans](#).
- Defending U.S. Democracy during the 2020 election cycle by running a multi-pronged campaign to challenge disinformation on Big Tech platforms such as Facebook, Google, Instagram, and YouTube.
- Pressuring [Apple](#) to stop complying with the government of China's censorship demands, and commit to upholding human dignity and political freedom.
- Pressuring French insurance giant [AXA](#) to stop investing in Israel's arms trade and occupation of Palestinian land.
- Leveraging the 1.5 million palm oil activists in our membership to take action to support work on labor abuses within the palm oil industry, such as discrimination against women.
- Pressuring the UK government to maintain high environmental and labor standards in negotiations of bilateral trade agreements emerging from Brexit.