



# Global Tree Planting with Purpose and Power



## Partnership Study: Social media influencers inspire large-scale action among a new generation of tree planters

What started as a callout on the social media platform Reddit quickly turned into an environmental force, driven by a new audience of tree planters. #TeamTrees — a collective effort with YouTube creators to inspire support for tree planting around the globe — took social media by storm in the fall of 2019. The campaign was one of the fastest-growing environmental fundraising initiatives to date and the largest crowdfunding effort in YouTube’s history.

### A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

#TeamTrees began with YouTube influencers MrBeast (Jimmy Donaldson, widely followed for his creative philanthropy) and Mark Rober (former NASA scientist) accepting a challenge to plant 20 million trees in honor of MrBeast’s 20 millionth subscriber. They chose to collaborate with the Arbor Day Foundation in managing the campaign to leverage three of its key strengths:

- 1 **Unique Position:** The Foundation is uniquely equipped to handle a tree planting project of this scale and scope.
- 2 **Integrity:** A commitment to planting the right tree in the right place for the right reasons.
- 3 **Credibility:** A proven track record of working with a network of partners to deliver results.

The goal was to raise \$20 million by January 1, 2020. Each dollar raised would plant a tree, and trees would be planted on every continent except Antarctica. Hundreds of other content creators on YouTube and other social platforms were recruited to help lead the charge, and everyone involved developed unique content to drive their viewers to donate on TeamTrees.org in support of tree planting.

## ACTIVISM IN ACTION

The campaign launched on October 25, 2019 and donations reached more than \$3.5 million in the first 24 hours. Just 48 hours after launch, more than \$5 million had been donated. The \$20 million goal was reached on December 19, and the ticker continued to climb. As of January 1, the original target date, the #TeamTrees campaign had raised more than \$21.5 million for tree planting around the globe.

More than 800,000 people from around the world — everyone from Elon Musk to third grade classrooms — were inspired to “join the team” and help plant trees. Individual donations varied from \$1 to \$1,000,001.

Between October 25 and January 9, #TeamTrees garnered more than 2,300 media hits. Press coverage spanned 75 different countries and 38 different languages, demonstrating that trees are globally unifying and something that is universally appealing.

## AFFIRMATION THROUGH SUCCESS

The success of #TeamTrees can be attributed to two key factors:

- 1 Trees Resonate:** People understand tree planting. Trees are a simple solution to many of the complex, pressing challenges facing our planet. They provide avenues for people to get involved to create tangible, measurable change.
- 2 Partnerships Matter:** When MrBeast committed to planting 20 million trees, he recognized that he could not do it alone. As he and fellow YouTuber Mark Rober worked to build an unusual coalition of hundreds of the most significant social influencers, the Arbor Day Foundation began tapping into its trusted network to orchestrate the planting of 20 million trees across six continents with our dedicated and passionate tree planting partners. No single government, person, NGO, or strategy can solve these enormous global issues alone. Instead, partnerships will always prevail.

## AN ONGOING LEGACY

The goal has been met and the deadline has passed, but the #TeamTrees initiative lives on. The fundraising effort was only the beginning. Through December 2022, tree planting will take place in North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. The Arbor Day Foundation is well-positioned to tell the story of these planting projects and is committed to continuing a dialog with the people who have supported these efforts.





#TEAMTREES<sup>SM</sup>

# LARGEST

YouTube crowdfunding effort to date

More than

**\$21.5 million**

raised by January 1, 2020

Largest Gift:

**\$1,000,001**

Most Common Gift:

**\$5**

Average of

**\$190**

in donations per minute



More than

**800,000**

unique donors

Gifts from CEOs of

Twitter, YouTube, Tesla & SpaceX, Salesforce, & Shopify

**1.3MM**

visits to TeamTrees.org between October 25, 2019 and January 1, 2020

**2,300**

unpaid media placements, resulting in more than

**6 billion**

media impressions

Based on a U.S. Forest Service analysis, **20 MILLION TREES** have the power to:



Absorb and store **1.6 million metric tons** of carbon, the equivalent of taking 1.24 million cars off the road for a year.



Result in **1.5 billion cubic meters** of avoided water runoff, the equivalent of filling the water bottle of every person on Earth every day for a year.



Remove **115,000 metric tons** of chemical air pollution, enough gaseous pollution to fill 14,000 Goodyear blimps.

