As the founder and CEO of Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, Bill Drayton is a true social entrepreneur. During his time as a student at Harvard, Balliol College in Oxford University and Yale Law School, he launched a number of organizations, including Yale Legislative Services and Harvard's Ashoka Table, an interdisciplinary weekly forum in the social sciences. In 1970, he graduated from Yale Law School and began his career at McKinsey and Company in New York. From 1977 to 1981, Mr. Drayton served as Assistant Administrator at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, where he launched emissions trading (the basis of the Kyoto Protocol) and other reforms. In 1981, while working part-time at McKinsey and Company, he founded both Ashoka and Save EPA, the predecessor to Environmental Safety. With the support that he received when elected a MacArthur Fellow in 1984, he was able to devote himself fully to Ashoka. Over the past 30 years, Ashoka has elected nearly 3,000 social entrepreneurs as Ashoka Fellows, providing them with living stipends, professional support, and access to a global network of peers. In addition to his current role as Chairman and CEO of Ashoka, Mr. Drayton is the chair of Youth Venture, Community Greens, and Get America Working!

Mr. Drayton has won numerous awards and honors throughout his career. In 1996, he was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in recognition of his leadership in public service. In 1999, Common Cause awarded him its Public Service Achievement Award. In 2005, he received the National Wildlife Federation’s Conservation Achievement Award and was selected as one of America’s Best Leaders by US News & World Report and Harvard’s Center for Public Leadership. In 2006, he was recognized as being one of Harvard University’s 100 “Most Influential Alumni.” In 2007, he received the Duke University Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship’s (CASE) Leadership in Social Entrepreneurship Award, the University of Pennsylvania Law School’s 2007 Honorary Fellow Award, and the Goi Peace Foundation’s Peace Award. In 2009, he was named Honorary Fellow at Oxford’s Balliol College and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Yale University. And in 2010, he received an Honorary Doctorate from NYU, as well as the Essl Social Prize, for his work creating and building the field of social entrepreneurship.