

# Amazon's Bezos asks for philanthropic ideas, gets plenty

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Amazon founder Jeff Bezos is asking for ideas to help the world through philanthropy—and is getting an earful.

Bezos, whose estimated \$72 billion net worth makes him the third richest person in the world according to Forbes magazine, sent out a "request for ideas" in a tweet on Thursday, saying he was considering "a philanthropic strategy" for "the long term."

The billionaire said he believes his companies—including Amazon, the Washington Post and space firm Blue Origin—"are contributing to society and civilization in their own ways."

But he hopes to use some of his fortune "to be helping people in the here and now—short term—at the intersection of urgent need and lasting impact."

The appeal came one day ahead of Amazon's announcement it would buy US grocer Whole Foods Market, further expanding the realm of a business empire that includes retail, cloud computer, streaming video and more.

By early Friday, the tweet had generated some 18,000 responses, including a number of serious, whimsical or outlandish ideas.

"Childhood hunger in US is solvable problem. We can end it NOW. We have strategy and the track record," one Twitter user wrote.

Another said, "Buy forest lands to stop deforestation happening right now. Forests are the best carbon capturing tech we have."

Ideas came from around the world, on a variety of global problems.

"East Africa is facing the biggest humanitarian disaster since WWII," one Twitter user said. "Drought has left over 20 million facing starvation—food aid is needed."

Some pointed to the opioid addiction crisis spreading in the United States.

"If you can make a dent in opioid crisis through more effective & targeted treatment, you could save tens of thousands of lives," a tweet said.

While a large number of responses focused on serious matters of health care, pollution and inequality, many used the message to ask Bezos to help them or to simply troll him.

"Pay your workers a living wage and they won't need charity or philanthropy," one tweet said.

Another said, "My employer keeps reducing my work hours so if you would like to pay off my remaining \$5k in student loan debt that'd be appreciated!"

One user made a person pitch: "produce my new album. not so expensive and a lot of joy and happiness for me."

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