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CCS Fundraising
Philanthropy
Pulse

MARCH 2022

22

Human Services Spotlight

CCS
FUNDRAISING
75
YEARS



A Window into Human Services Fundraising Today

As trusted advisors to a wide range of Human Services organizations, from local community centers to global federated nonprofit networks, CCS Fundraising is devoted to helping Human Services nonprofits maximize their fundraising to accomplish their missions.

Part of setting an informed fundraising strategy is understanding the context in which your organization operates. That is why CCS has undertaken two survey efforts aimed at understanding the experiences of Human Services organizations:

1. **The CCS Philanthropy Pulse**, a cross-sector survey of 877 organizations, including 195 Human Services respondents, conducted in October through November 2021
2. **A Benchmarking Survey for Organizations Serving the LGBTQIA+ Community**, which received 98 responses from May to July 2021

This report summarizes findings from both research efforts. It is our hope that this data helps Human Services organizations understand how peers are approaching fundraising today, allowing organizations to set data-informed fundraising strategies for 2022 and beyond.



To read the main CCS Philanthropy Pulse survey report and explore more CCS research, visit our [Insights Library](#).

Executive Summary

1. 7 in 10 Human Services respondents saw an increase in new donors since 2020.
→ [Read more on page 9](#)
2. Among respondents that saw an increase in new donors, **one-quarter expect to retain more than 41% of those new donors.**
→ [Read more on page 10](#)
3. **Donor acquisition was the most frequently cited top fundraising challenge at 49%**, followed by 46% citing donor retention and stewardship.
→ [Read more on page 11](#)
4. **More than half of respondents have received gifts from family foundations, donor-advised funds, appreciated assets, and bequests** in the past two calendar years.
→ [Read more on page 12](#)
5. Looking ahead to expectations for 2022 fundraising results, **respondents expressed the most confidence in major gifts**, with 62% expecting an increase.
→ [Read more on page 13](#)
6. **About 1 in 2 survey participants (56%) intend to undertake some level of campaign activity this year**, whether that is planning, launching, continuing, or restarting a major campaign.
→ [Read more on page 15](#)
7. **Sixty-two percent of Human Services organizations had at least partially returned to in-person donor meetings and events** as of November 2021.
→ [Read more on page 16](#)
8. **Three-quarters (75%) of respondents report that they plan to continue some level of remote work beyond the pandemic**, though only 35% plan to keep full-time remote work.
→ [Read more on page 17](#)
9. **Nearly all respondents (94%) discuss the concepts of diversity, equity, and/or inclusion (DEI) with their donors** at least occasionally, and nearly 7 in 10 (69%) have included DEI in their strategic plans for future fundraising priorities.
→ [Read more on page 19](#)
10. **The most popular tactic reported to make development more diverse, equitable, and inclusive was changing board recruitment and/or relations practices** (cited by 55% of respondents), followed by DEI trainings (51%) and modifying donor messaging (51%).
→ [Read more on page 20](#)
11. **Respondents were most likely to rate their organization's fundraising staff as skilled in event planning** (46% rated as completely knowledgeable) and **least likely to report competency in gift planning** (8% rated as completely knowledgeable).
→ [Read more on page 22](#)
12. **Participating organizations commonly supplement staff capacity with external vendors and consultants. Graphic design was the most frequently-cited outsourced service (48%)**, followed by strategic planning (44%).
→ [Read more on page 23](#)
13. **Almost two-thirds (65%) of respondents reported being satisfied with their organization's donor database** or customer relationship management (CRM) system use. Among satisfied organizations, 69% reported that clear expectations for data entry made the difference for their system satisfaction.
→ [Read more on page 24](#)
14. **In a special separate survey for organizations serving the LGBTQIA+ community, respondents on average reported a 14% growth in the number of people served from 2019 to 2020** and 47% of participants reported hiring staff during the pandemic. Respondents described fundraising and financial resources as top concerns for long-term sustainability.
→ [Read more on page 27](#)

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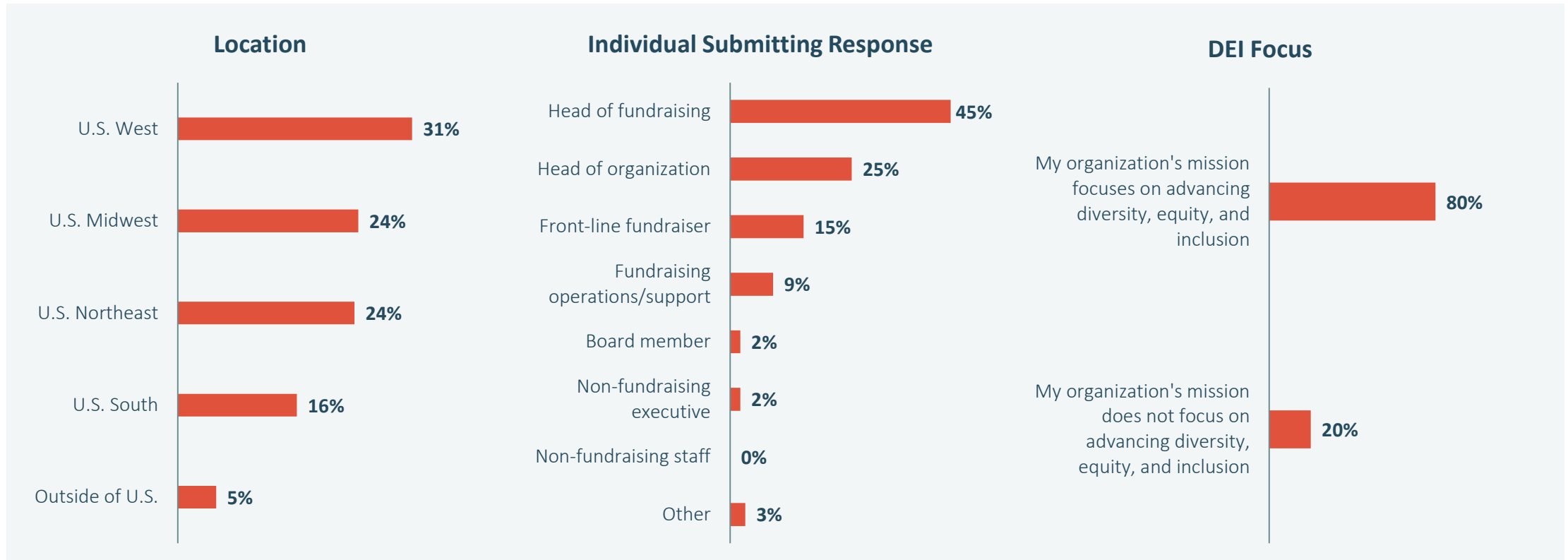
About CCS Fundraising 32

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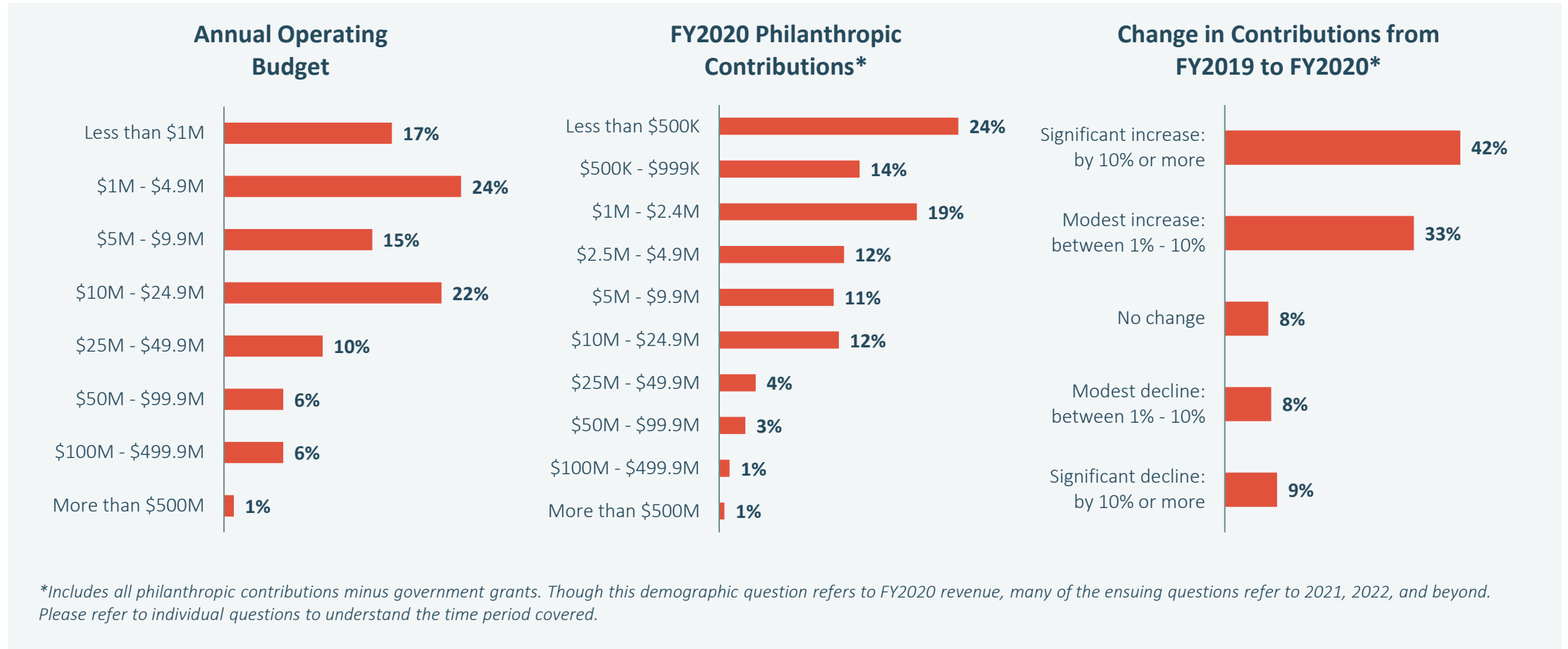
Findings from the CCS Philanthropy Pulse

About the 195 Human Services Respondents

This report was generated based on data collected via an online questionnaire administered by CCS Fundraising between the dates of October 19 and November 17, 2021. All responses analyzed in this report were submitted voluntarily by 195 Human Services organizations, as described on the following two pages. These 195 Human Services responses are a subset of the 877 responses from across sectors, analyzed in CCS's [main survey report](#). Though the makeup of our survey participants does not directly map to the demographics of the Human Services sector overall, this sample provides a window into a wide array of organization sizes and geographic locations.



Three-Quarters of Respondents Saw a Fundraising Increase in Fiscal Year 2020

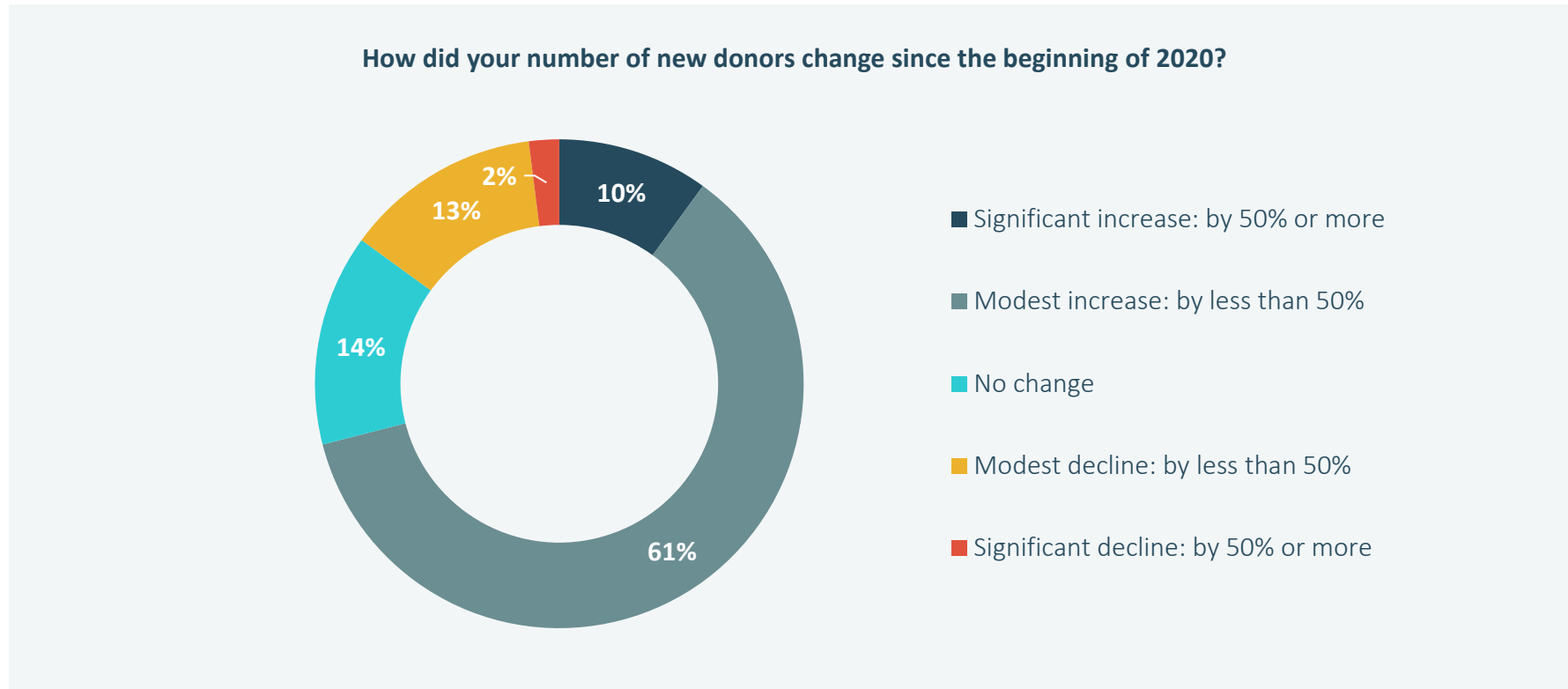




Operational Overview

71% of Human Services Respondents Saw an Increase in New Donors Since the Start of 2020

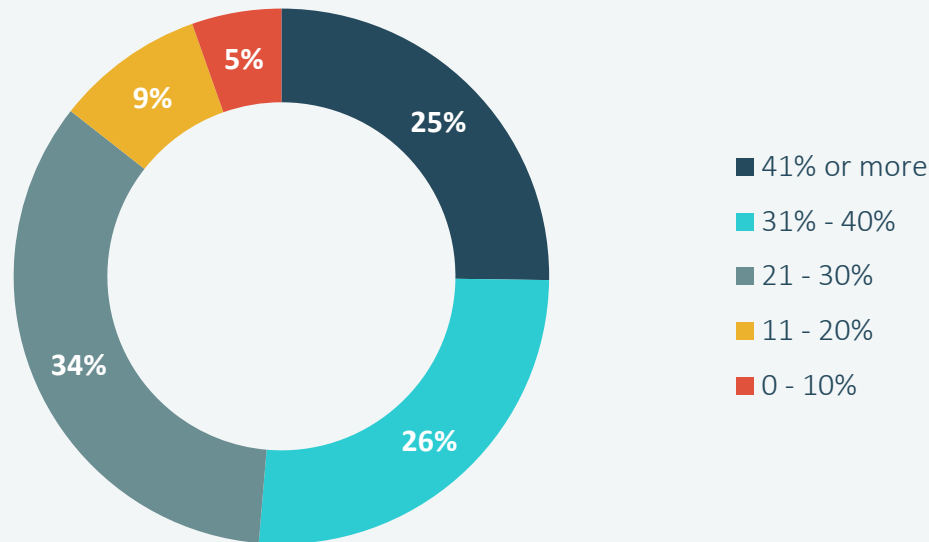
A combined 71% of Human Services respondents to the CCS Philanthropy Pulse survey reported that since 2020, their organization had either seen a significant increase (10%) in the number of new donors or a modest increase (61%) in the number of new donors.



Organizations That Saw Increases in New Donors Have Strong Expectations for Donor Retention

Among Human Services organizations that reported they experienced either a significant or modest increase in new donors since 2020 (as discussed on page [nine](#)), one-quarter expect to retain 41% or more of those new donors. More than 80% of organizations report that they plan to use targeted (86%) and general-interest (85%) mailings and emails to help retain these new donors.

What percentage of these new donors do you expect to retain?



This question was only posed to the 71% of Human Services respondents that saw an increase in new donors

How do you plan on building relationships to retain these new donors?



*Respondents could select all answers that apply
This question was only posed to the 71% of Human Services respondents that saw an increase in new donors*

Donor Acquisition and Donor Retention/Stewardship Are the Most Frequently Cited Fundraising Challenges

Human Services respondents were most likely to select donor acquisition (49%), donor retention and stewardship (46%), increasing deferred (planned) gifts (28%), or leveraging data to make better decisions (28%) as one of their top three fundraising challenges.



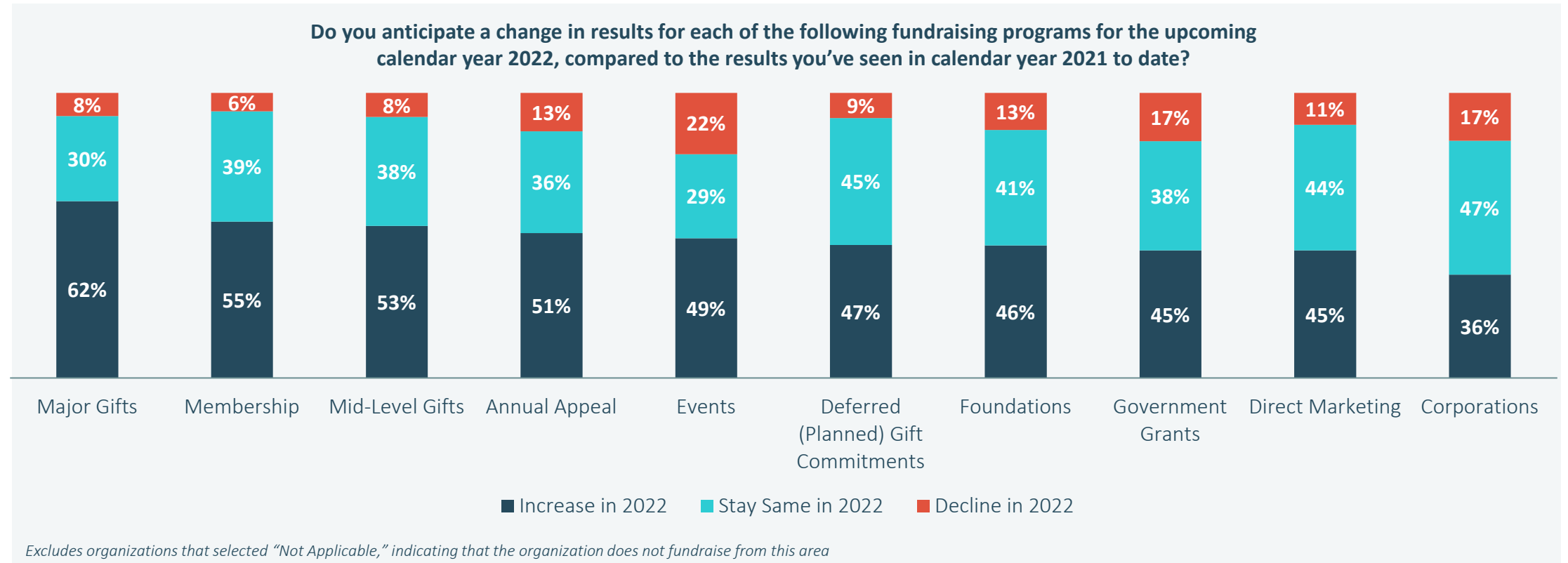
Donations from Family Foundations, Donor-Advised Funds, Appreciated Assets, and Bequests Are Received by a Majority

More than half of Human Services respondents reported receiving gifts and/or pledges from family foundations (87%), donor-advised funds (80%), appreciated assets (57%), and bequests (56%) in the past two calendar years.



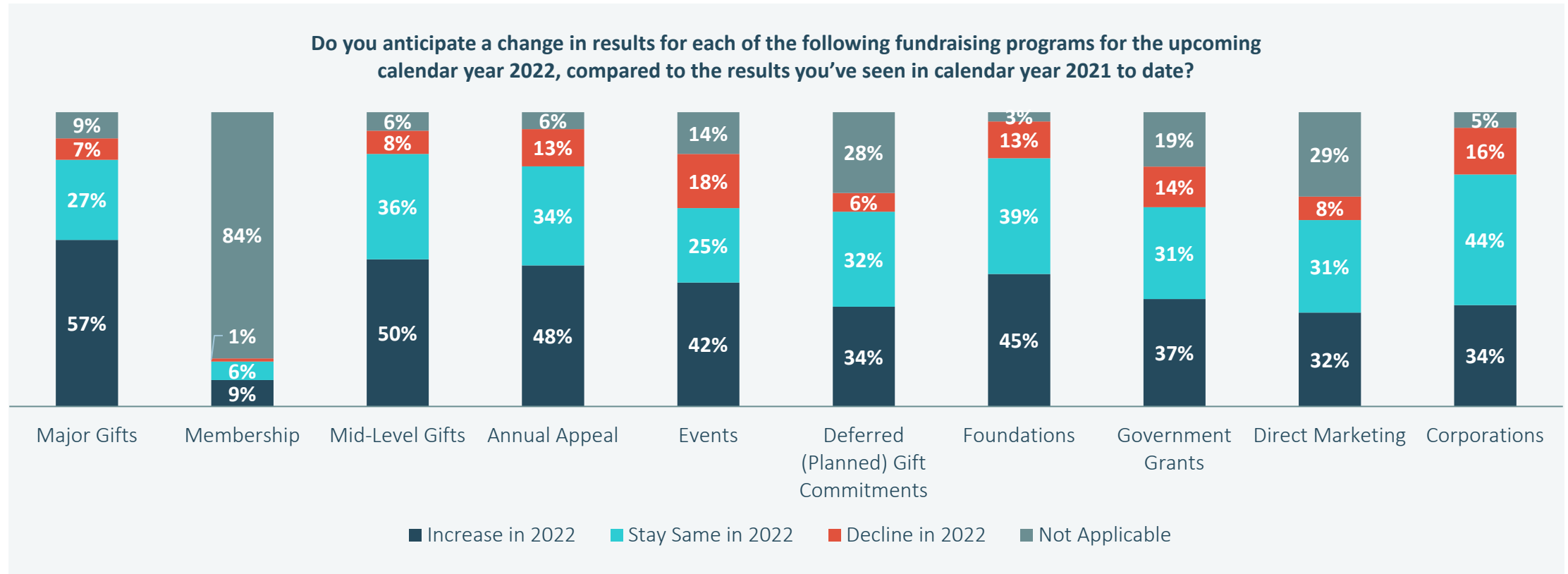
92% of Human Services Respondents Expect Major Gifts Fundraising to Increase or Remain Stable in 2022

The majority of organizations that fundraise from major gifts (62%), membership (55%), mid-level gifts (53%), and annual appeals (51%) reported that they expect a fundraising increase from those categories this year. About one in five Human Services respondents (22%) said they expect a decrease from events, and 17% said they expect declines from government grants and corporations.



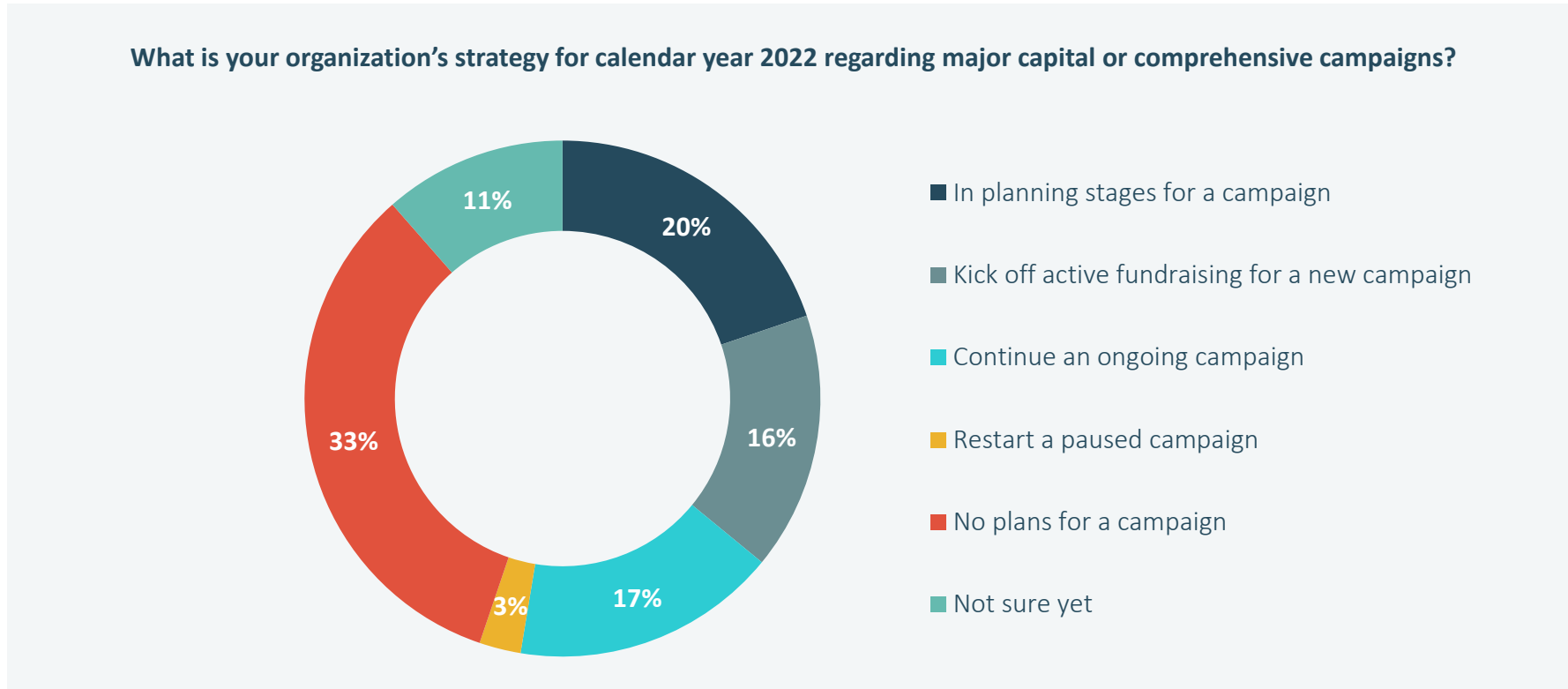
Raw Data Shows the Percentage of Respondents That Fundraise in Each Category

For a fuller picture of the respondent pool, the following chart includes organizations that selected “Not Applicable” in each fundraising program, indicating that their organization does not fundraise in that area.



More Than One-Half of Respondents Intend to Undertake Some Level of Campaign Activity This Year

A combined 56% of Human Services organizations in CCS’s sample reported that they intend to undertake some sort of campaign activity in 2022, whether that activity is planning, launching, continuing, or restarting a campaign. One-third (33%) of the respondents had no plans for a campaign in 2022, and 11% were not yet sure of their organization’s plans at the time of the survey.



62% of Organizations at Least Partially Returned to In-Person Donor Engagement since the Start of the COVID-19 Pandemic

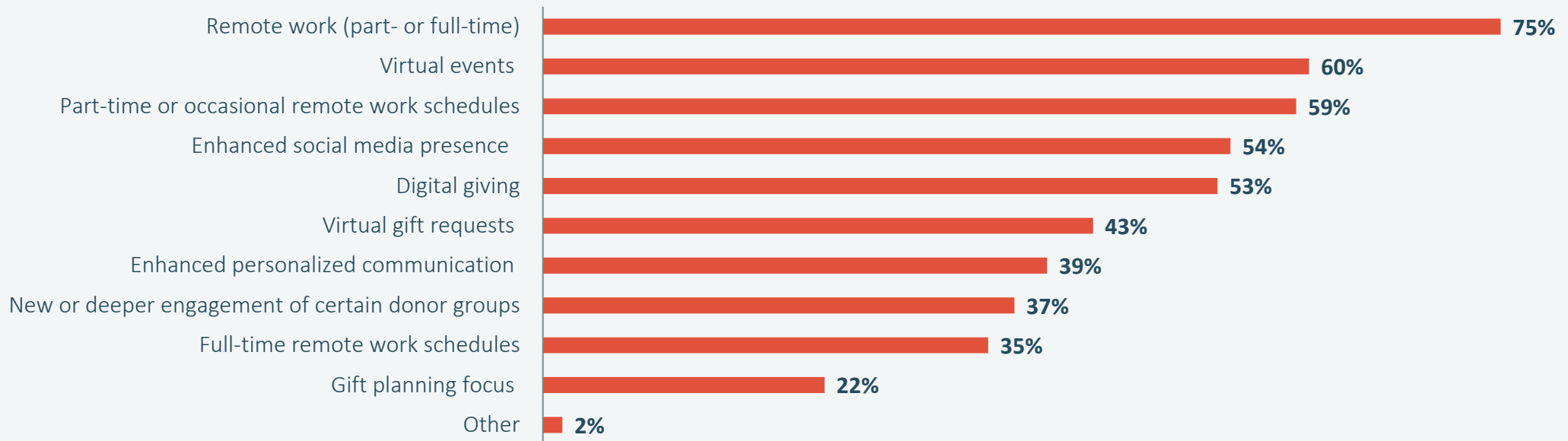
As of November 2021, a combined 62% of Human Services respondents had at least partially resumed in-person donor meetings and/or events. Just under half (49%) of respondents had partially resumed these activities and 13% had completely resumed these activities.



Many Respondents Intend to Permanently Adopt Some Pandemic-Era Adjustments

Many adjustments to operations made during the COVID-19 pandemic could become permanent parts of Human Services respondents' development operations. Three-quarters (75%) of respondents reported that their organization plans to continue remote work, but only 35% indicated that they would continue full-time remote work arrangements. More than half of responding organizations shared that they plan to continue virtual events (60%), part-time or occasional remote work schedules (59%), an enhanced social media presence (54%), and adjusted digital giving practices (53%).

What practices has your organization adjusted during the COVID-19 pandemic that you plan to continue?



Respondents could select all answers that apply



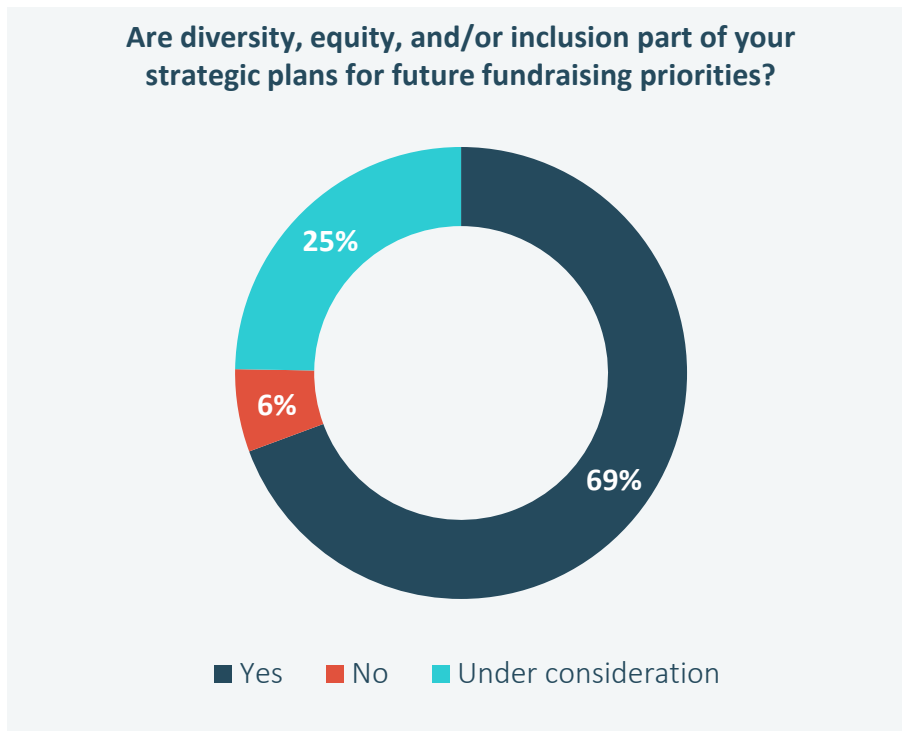
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Donor Relations



69% of Respondents Include DEI in Strategic Plans and 94% Discuss DEI with Donors At Least Occasionally

A combined 94% of Human Services respondents reported that their organization discusses the concepts of diversity, equity, and/or inclusion (DEI) with donors either always, frequently, or occasionally. Moreover, 69% of respondents said that DEI is part of their organization’s strategic plans for future fundraising priorities.

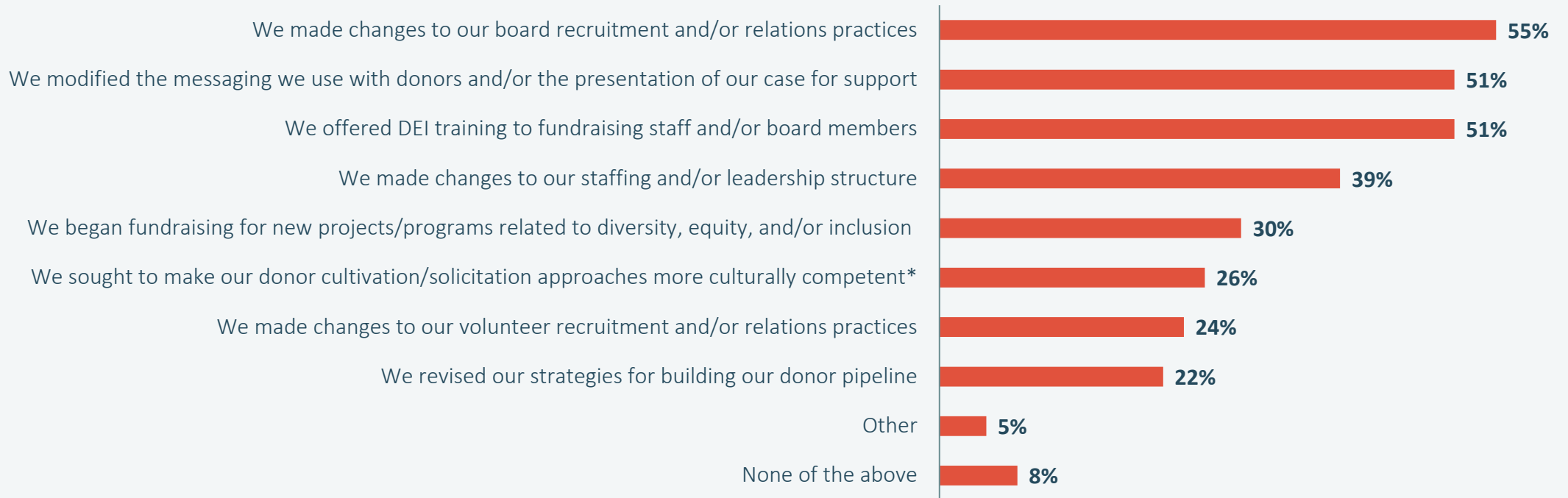
When answering questions in this section, respondents were asked to consider an expansive definition of “diversity, equity, and inclusion” to address a broad set of identities including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, ability, and other visible and invisible traits.



More Than Half of Respondents Made DEI-Driven Changes to Board Practices, Donor Messaging, and Staff Training

When asked what tactics their organization has employed over the past two years to make their fundraising activities more diverse, equitable, and/or inclusive, the most popular responses were making changes to board recruitment and/or relations practices (55%), modifying the messaging used with donors (51%), and offering DEI training to fundraising staff and/or board members (51%).

In the past two years, what tactics has your organization employed to make your fundraising practices/operations more diverse, equitable, and inclusive?



*E.g., tailoring engagement approaches for a major donor based on the complex and intersecting components of the donor's identity

Respondents could select all answers that apply



Staffing, Resourcing, and CRM Technology

Nearly 1 in 5 Organizations Rated Their Fundraising Staff as Not at All Knowledgeable About Gift Planning

Human Services respondents were most likely to report their fundraising staff as completely knowledgeable in event planning (46%), strategic planning (28%), and board relations (26%). Gift planning, prospect research, and data-driven decision-making were the areas in which respondents were least likely to rate their fundraising staff as completely knowledgeable. Moreover, nearly one-fifth (19%) of organizations reported that their fundraising staff is not at all knowledgeable about gift planning.



Graphic Design and Strategic Planning Were the Most Frequently Cited Outsourced Services

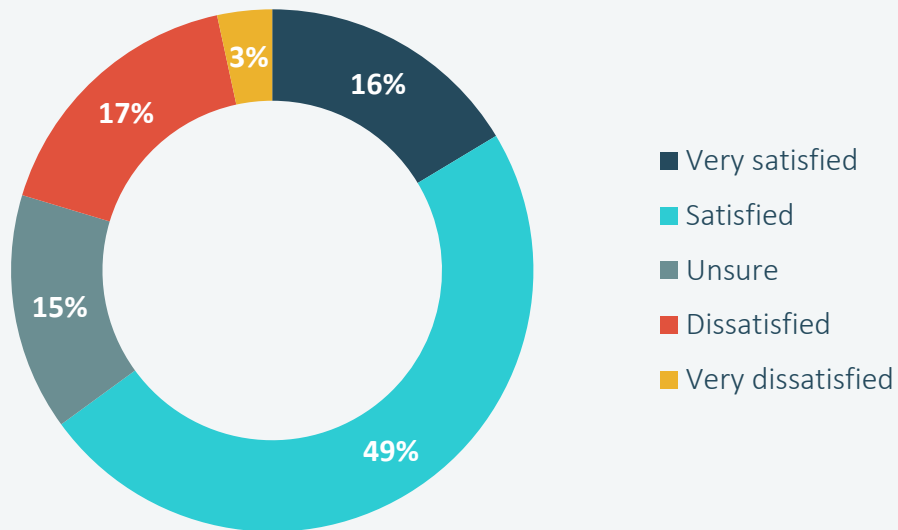
More than a third of Human Services respondents reported using external vendors or consultants for graphic design (48%), strategic planning (44%), DEI initiatives (37%), and staff training (37%) over the past two years. Less than 10% of organizations reported doing so for gift processing, complex gift management, or change management.



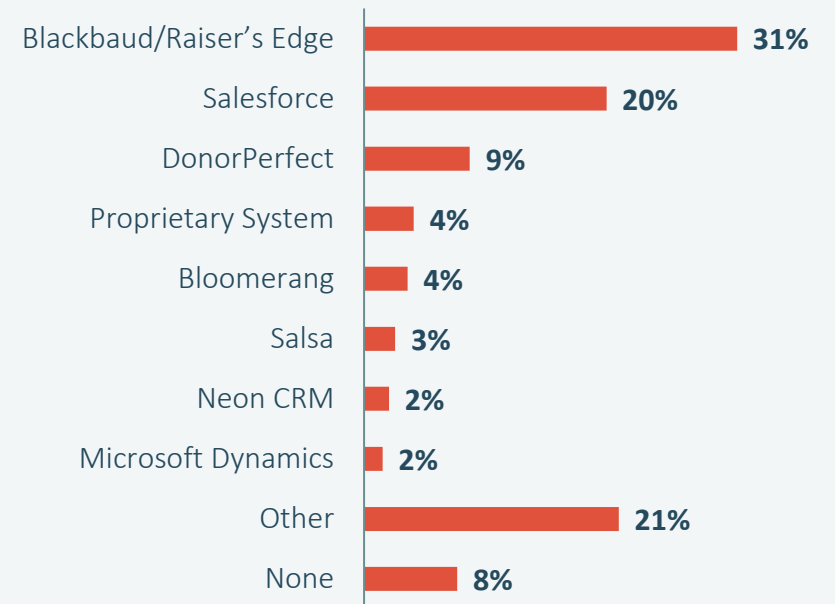
Nearly Two-Thirds of Organizations Are Satisfied with Their Donor Database Use

A combined 65% of Human Services respondents reported that they were either very satisfied (16%) or satisfied (49%) with their organization’s CRM use—inclusive of both the software itself and the processes around using the system. One-fifth (20%) of organizations reported being very dissatisfied (3%) or dissatisfied (17%), and 15% said they were unsure. The most popular CRM systems among respondents were those made by Blackbaud, with 31% of organizations indicating that they currently use this software.

How would you rate your organization’s satisfaction with its donor database use, considering not only the software itself, but also the processes your organization uses to enter, maintain, and use the information in the system?



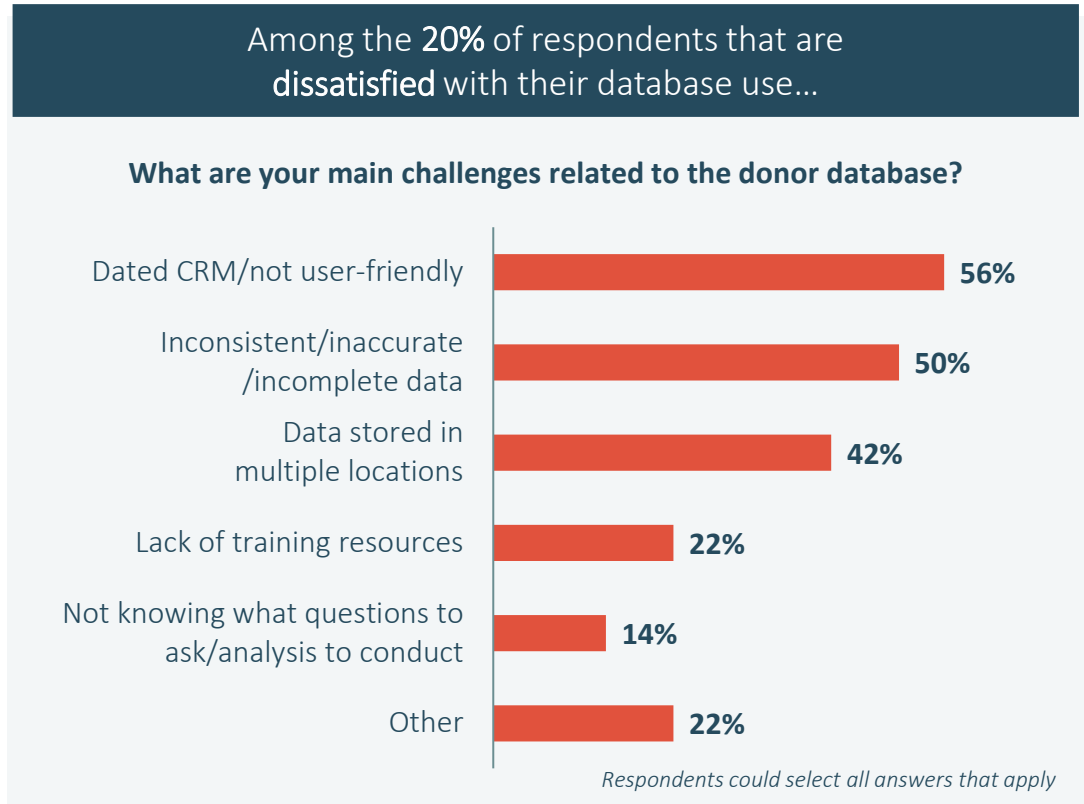
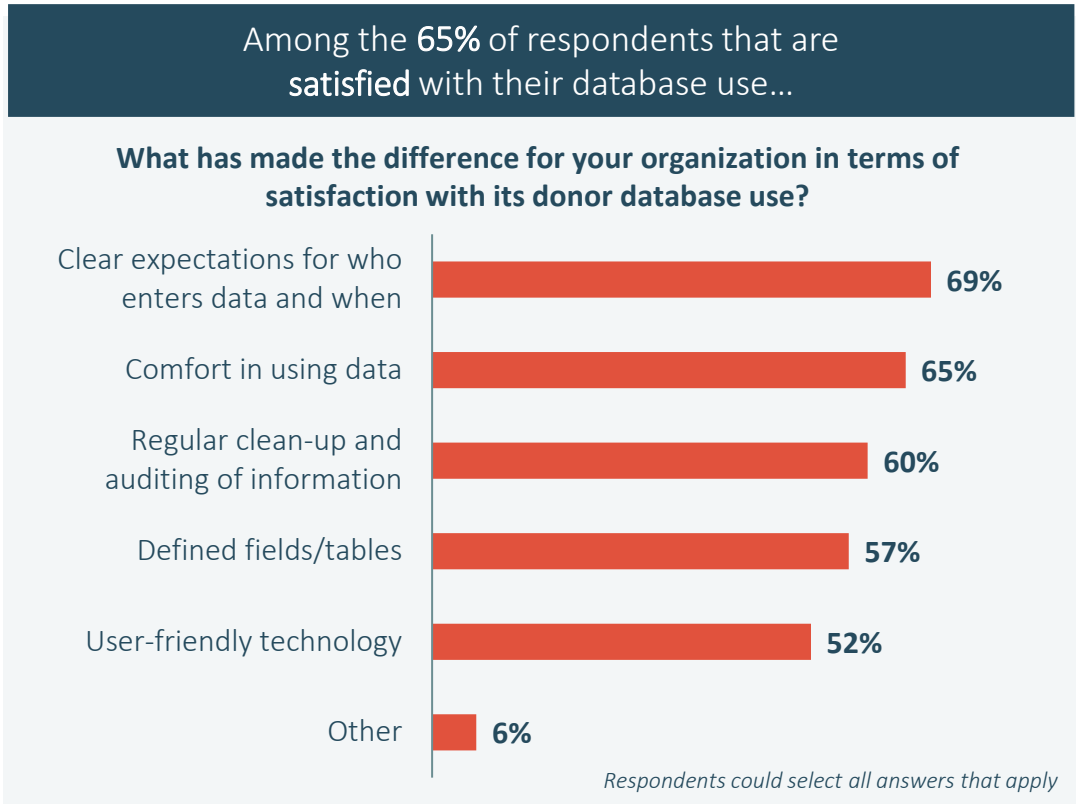
What donor database/CRM (customer relationship management) software does your organization currently use?



Respondents could select all answers that apply

Clear Expectations for Data Entry Make a Difference in CRM Satisfaction Levels

Among Human Services respondents that reported being satisfied with their database use, 69% said that clear expectations for data entry made a difference in their satisfaction, and 65% reported that comfort in using data made a difference. Among the organizations that reported being dissatisfied, the most frequently cited database challenges were a dated, not-user-friendly customer relationship management (CRM) system (56%) and inconsistent, inaccurate, or incomplete data (50%).



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Supplement on Organizations Serving the LGBTQIA+ Community

A Survey Focused on Organizations Serving the LGBTQIA+ Community

To better understand the philanthropic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on nonprofits serving the LGBTQIA+ community, CCS partnered with the [Gill Foundation](#) and [MAP](#) (Movement Advancement Project) to conduct a broad scale fundraising survey—separate from the CCS Philanthropy Pulse—of these nonprofits.

This report reflects responses from nearly 100 professionals at nonprofits organizations serving the LGBTQIA+ community. These responses were collected between May 21 and July 23, 2021.

We want to ensure that organizations can build for a better tomorrow, and we know there is great value to be gained from understanding the organizations working to improve the lives of the LGBTQIA+ community and the impact of the pandemic upon these nonprofits. It is our hope that the information provided here will help guide your organization to make clear, thoughtful decisions in an ever-evolving philanthropic landscape.



About the Respondents

The 98 respondents hail from 31 states within the U.S. and represent organizations that are devoted to serving the LGBTQIA+ community in a variety of ways, from community centers to advocacy organizations to healthcare providers.

\$428K

Median 2020 revenue

\$1.6M

Average 2020 revenue

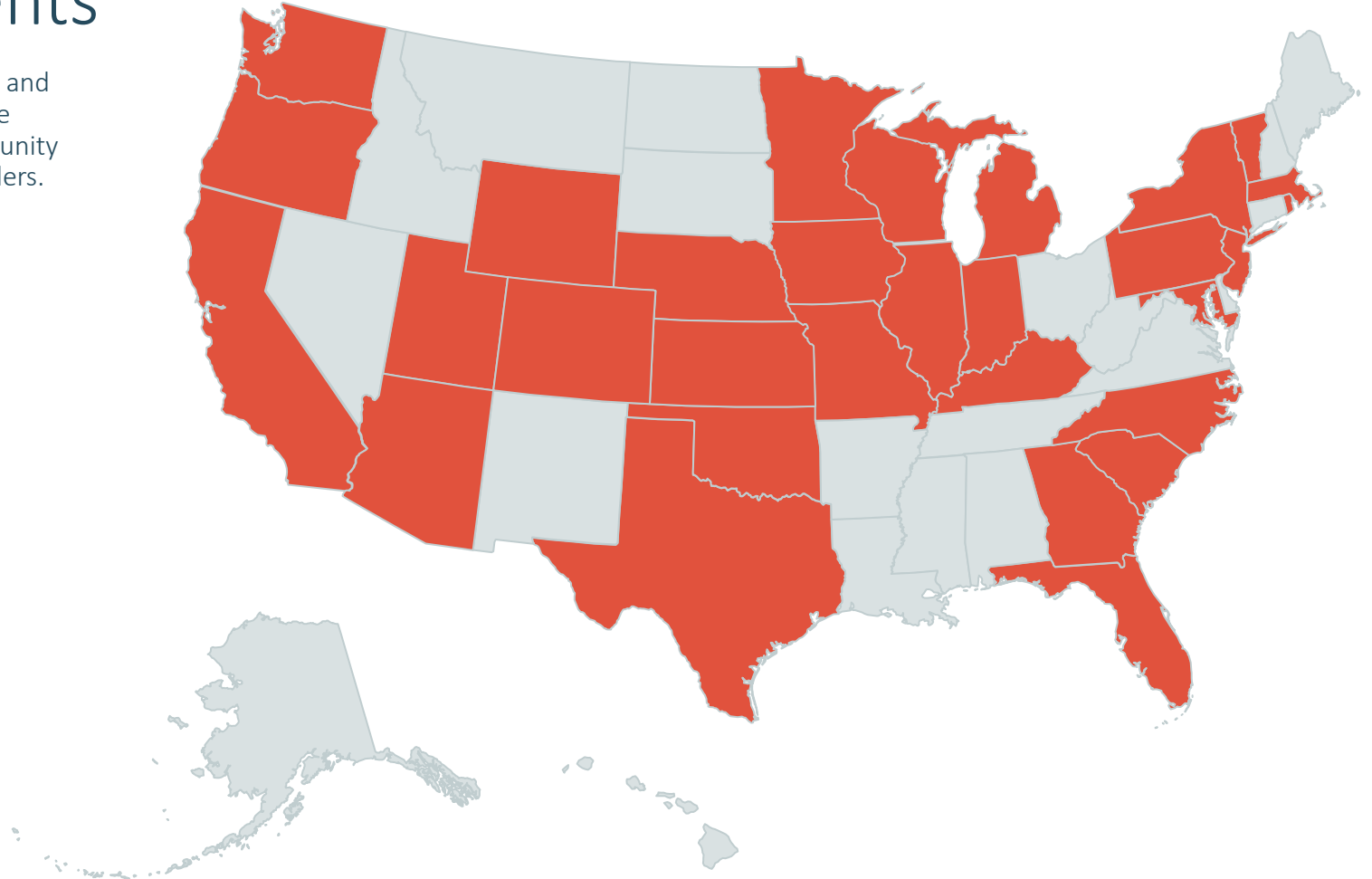
1,842

Average number of donors (most recent fiscal year)

\$812

Average gift size (most recent fiscal year)

Note: not all respondents answered all questions.



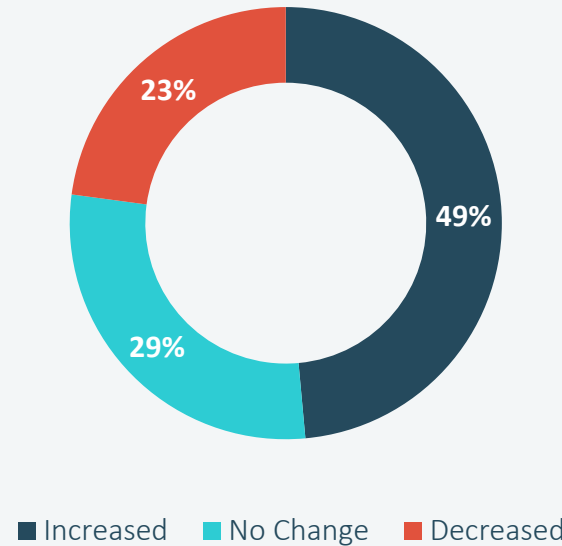
Many Respondents Experienced More Need for Their Services Than Ever Before

With the LGBTQIA+ community hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, many organizations reported that they experienced an increased demand for their services after the pandemic struck. In this unique environment, organizations had to balance serving more people with adapting programs to a changed world—one in which activities needed to go virtual and where budgets may have been cut. As a result, some organizations reported cutting back on programming while others expanded it.

→ “[We had] to find creative ways to expand virtual services at an increased capacity with no additional funding and a drop in grassroots donors.”

- Healthcare provider in the Midwestern U.S.

Has the size of the population you serve changed as a result of COVID-19?



On average, respondents reported a

14%

growth in the number of people served from 2019 to 2020.

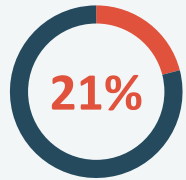
The respondent pool showed mixed effects on programming:

41%

of respondents scaled down certain programs while 34% expanded certain programs.

Staffing Stood Out as a Significant Challenge

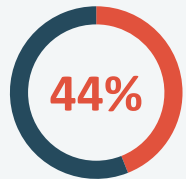
Among the respondent pool, staffing was a challenge both for organizations that had to lay off staff as well as organizations that hired during the pandemic. When this data was collected in summer 2021, a common thread between many respondents was the challenge of finding, hiring, and retaining qualified fundraising staff—likely a continued challenge today amid the Great Resignation.



21% of respondents reported having to lay off staff due to challenges faced from the pandemic.



On average, respondents laid off **3.8** staff members. None of the respondents reported laying off fundraising staff.



44% of respondents reported hiring staff during the pandemic. New hires were most commonly on program and policy/legislative teams.

Most Common Challenges Related to Staffing



Finding, hiring, and retaining qualified fundraising staff
35 respondents



Recruiting volunteers
8 respondents



Compensation and benefits
7 respondents



Office space
5 respondents



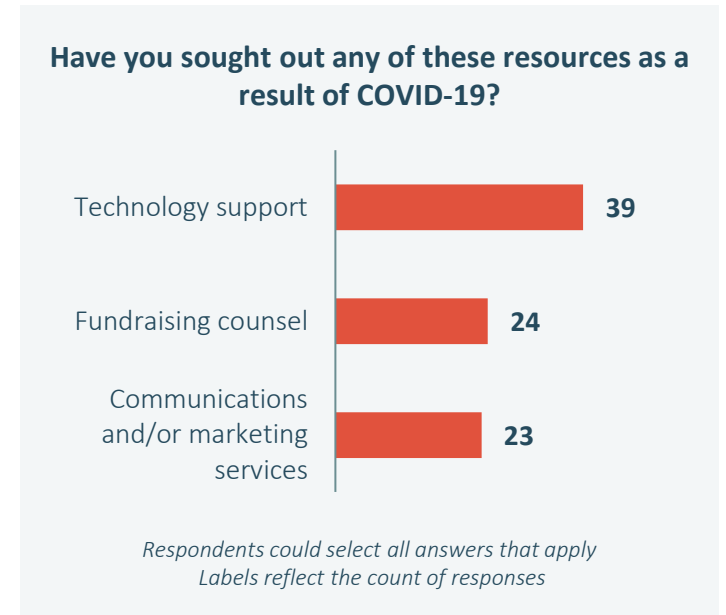
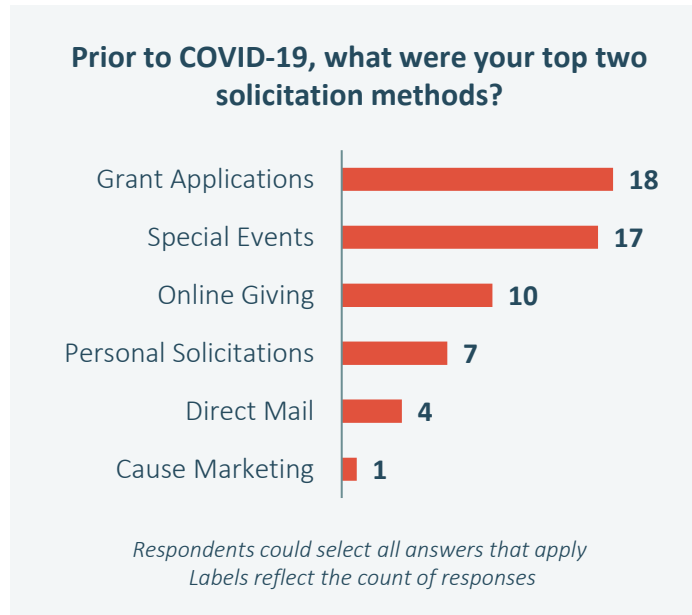
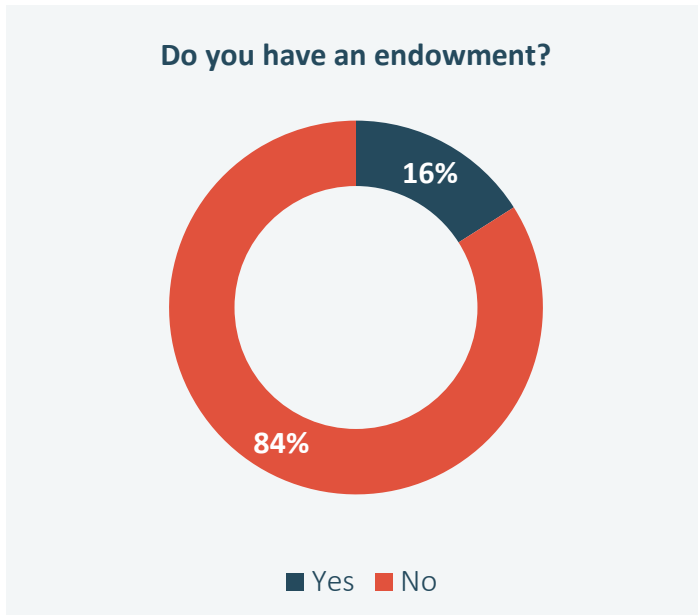
Program support
4 respondents



Burnout
4 respondents

Organizations Have Faced Challenges to Financial Stability in Both the Short- and Long-Term

Respondents reported several shorter-term financial concerns brought on by the pandemic: many organizations described needing more financial support while having to cancel events and connect with donors in a newly virtual way. Yet the survey responses also demonstrated apprehension about longer-term financial stability. When asked to describe their concerns for the sustainability of their organization, respondents commonly expressed worries about fundraising and financial resources. The vast majority (84%) of respondents do not have an endowment. Moreover, personal solicitations—one of the methods with the highest return on investment—were rarely one of respondents’ top methods for raising money prior to the pandemic. As a result of the pandemic, many organizations sought outside counsel on their fundraising.



At CCS, we have seen that nonprofits with sound financial management paired with fundraising best practices are better positioned to respond to crises like the COVID-19 pandemic and achieve the financial sustainability needed to carry out their missions. It is our hope that this data helps organizations serving the LGBTQIA+ community understand not only the challenges that their peers are experiencing, but also the opportunities that exist to develop sustainable fundraising programs.

About CCS Fundraising

For 75 years, CCS Fundraising has empowered many of the world's greatest organizations to advance some of the most important causes in history. As leading consulting experts in development and campaign strategy, we plan and implement fundraising initiatives to help nonprofit organizations make a bigger impact—locally, nationally, and globally.

Our services include:

- Campaign Planning & Management
- Data Analytics
- Systems Projects
- Interim Development Management
- Development Audits & Assessments
- Gift Planning Assessments
- Strategic Planning
- Specialized Development Projects

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FEATURED INSIGHT:

Snapshot of Today's Philanthropic Landscape
Tenth Edition | July 2021

Featuring essential philanthropic research from all major sources in the industry, this exclusive report examines key themes in American philanthropy and data on giving by U.S. individuals, foundations, and corporations.

[Click here to download the report.](#)

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