

STANFORD SURVEY ON LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR



IN COLLABORATION WITH

STANFORD GRADUATE
BUSINESS SCHOOL OF
Center for
Social Innovation

 **Stanford PACS**
Center on Philanthropy
and Civil Society

Stanford **SOCIAL**
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **Stanford Survey on Leadership and Management in the Nonprofit Sector** was conducted in collaboration with the Center for Social Innovation at Stanford Graduate School of Business, the Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, GuideStar, and BoardSource. In this survey, more than 3,000 stakeholders from the nonprofit sector—including nonprofit executives and staff, board members, and donors—provided detailed information about the leadership and management practices of a nonprofit organization with which they are involved. William F. Meehan III and Kim Starkey Jonker oversaw this survey to inform research for their book, *Engine of Impact: Essentials of Strategic Leadership in the Nonprofit Sector*.¹ “This comprehensive survey generated highly informative empirical data that highlights our observations from decades of experience in the sector. In order to be best in class, a nonprofit needs to excel in all areas of nonprofit leadership and management. And our survey found that most nonprofits fall far short in their efforts to achieve significant impact,” explains Meehan.

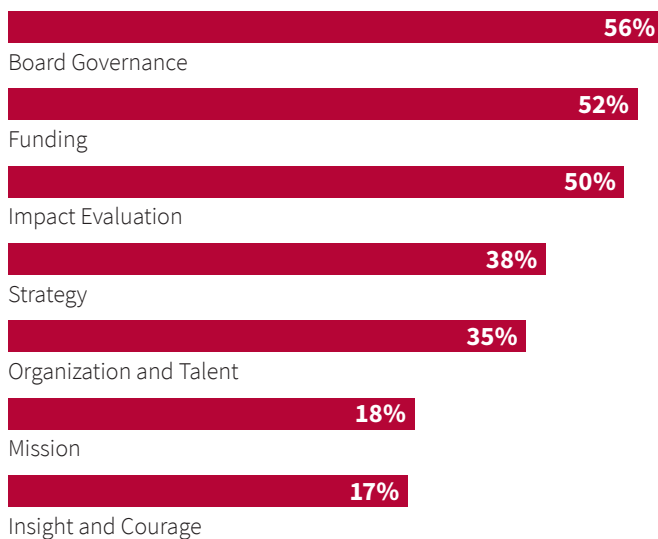
More than 80 percent of nonprofit organizations struggle with at least one of the seven fundamental elements of nonprofit leadership and management, thus hampering their overall performance and their ability to achieve their goals.

In *Engine of Impact*, Meehan and Jonker delineate seven essential components of strategic leadership that a nonprofit must master in order to maximize its impact: mission, strategy, impact evaluation, insight and courage, organization and talent, funding, and board governance. Meehan and Jonker posit that to be truly high performing, a nonprofit needs to be strong in all seven of these areas and cannot have a weakness in any of them. As they explain in *Engine of Impact*, “an inability to master even one component can prevent an organization from achieving its goals.”²

Statistical analysis of responses from executives, staff, and board members at nonprofit organizations revealed that only 11 percent of these organizations are strong in all seven elements of strategic leadership.³ The analysis also found that more than 80 percent of organizations struggle in at least one of these areas.⁴ More than one-quarter (28 percent) of respondents indicated that their organization performs well in two or fewer of these areas.

Analysis of responses from nonprofit executives, staff, and board members revealed that the three leading challenges facing their organizations are board governance, funding, and impact evaluation. In each of these areas, more than half of respondents indicated that their organization struggles to perform well.⁵

Percentage of organizations struggling with each of the 7 elements of strategic leadership



We will now turn to each of these three leading challenges:

1. More than half of nonprofits have weak board governance.

A nonprofit cannot thrive for long without strong board governance. Yet governance is one of the most challenging areas for nonprofits to get right. Survey responses indicate that 56 percent of organizations struggle with board governance.

This finding is also supported by other studies and credible recent data. For example, the 2015 Survey on Board of Directors of Nonprofit Organizations, sponsored by Stanford Graduate School of Business and the Rock Center for Corporate Governance and overseen by David F. Larcker, Nicholas E. Donatiello, William F. Meehan III, and Bryan Tayan, found that “[t]he skills, resources, and experience of directors are not sufficient to meet the needs of most nonprofit organizations” and that “[b]oard processes fall short”:

Over a quarter of nonprofit directors do not have a deep understanding of their organization’s mission and strategy. Nearly a third are dissatisfied with the board’s ability to evaluate organizational performance. A majority do not believe their fellow board members are very experienced or engaged in their work.⁶

Designed to build on the Rock Center study, the Stanford Survey on Leadership and Management in the Nonprofit Sector also explores board members’ roles, responsibilities, and overall performance. The Stanford Survey on Leadership and Management in the Nonprofit Sector found that nonprofit board members often do not play the roles that they should, especially with respect to fundraising and succession planning.

Each nonprofit board member has a responsibility to give money and participate in fundraising activities. Not every board member can give large amounts of money, but all board members have a responsibility to give generously according to their ability and to participate in fundraising activities. Yet many board members fall short with respect to these responsibilities. In the survey, less than half (49 percent) of nonprofit executives and staff members concurred with the statement “The financial giving to my nonprofit by its board members is currently very strong (i.e., all board members donate consistently/ generously, and their donations are large enough to make a real difference to the organization).” And only 42 percent believe that their nonprofit’s board plays a very strong role in fundraising activities.

One of the most important roles of any nonprofit board is to hire, fire, and plan for the succession of the executive director and to ensure that the organization conducts succession planning for the senior management team. Despite its importance, succession planning is not prevalent in the nonprofit sector, and many boards fall short in this area. In fact, 53 percent of nonprofit executives and staff disagreed to varying degrees with the statement “My organization conducts thorough and proactive succession planning for the executive director and top executives.” And 31 percent do not believe that “the founder/executive director of my organization has a realistic sense of when and how succession should occur.”

Effective nonprofit boards periodically review and assess the performance of each board member (typically through their governance committee). Unfortunately, frank discussions and board self-assessments happen rarely in today’s nonprofit sector. Only half (51 percent) of respondents who are nonprofit board members indicated that they receive regular and specific feedback on their participation and involvement that helps them to improve their performance.



2. More than half of nonprofits struggle with fundraising. Many organizations have difficulty meeting fundraising goals and have limited capacity to generate major gifts from individuals or to fully leverage their board in “giving and getting.”

Fundraising is a significant challenge for many nonprofit organizations. Analysis of survey responses found that 52 percent of organizations struggle in this area. The Rock Center survey of nonprofit board directors underscored these challenges. In that survey, 40 percent of nonprofit directors admitted that their organizations had been unable to meet fundraising targets, and 29 percent said that they had experienced serious financial difficulty.

Individuals are a critically important source of potential donations for most nonprofits—more so than corporations or foundations. A mere 5 percent of the \$373 billion of philanthropic giving in 2015 came from corporations, and only 15 percent of that sum came from foundations, whereas 71 percent of the total came from living individuals. (The remaining 9 percent came in the form of bequests from individuals).⁷ Yet the nonprofit sector

largely fails to appreciate the importance of individual giving. This is reflected in fundraising strategies that place greater priority on foundations than on individuals, and in organizations’ limited efforts to build their capacity to raise money (especially major gifts) from individuals.

Data from the Stanford Survey on Leadership and Management in the Nonprofit Sector underscored these challenges. Only half (50 percent) of respondents believe that their organization’s efforts to obtain donations from individuals are very effective. And only 40 percent of nonprofit executives and staff agreed to some degree with the statement “My organization’s current efforts to raise major gifts from individuals (according to my organization’s definition of ‘major gifts’) are very effective.”

A cardinal principle of fundraising is to start with your board—the best source of funding for any nonprofit. Yet many nonprofit organizations do not fully leverage their boards in “giving and getting.” As discussed above, only 49 percent of nonprofit executives and staff indicated that the financial giving by board members to their organization is very strong, and only 42 percent believe that that their board plays a very strong role in fundraising activities.



3. Half of nonprofits struggle with impact evaluation. In many organizations, impact evaluation is inadequate or unreliable, and its usefulness for refining program strategy remains limited.

The survey found that 50 percent of organizations struggle with impact evaluation.⁸ While impact evaluation is becoming more prevalent across the nonprofit sector, many organizations still do not conduct regular, external impact evaluations and do not use the findings to refine their organization's theory of change or its overall strategy.

Many nonprofit organizations do not rely on external evaluators or conduct evaluations regularly. While more than three-quarters (80 percent) of respondents agreed (to some degree) that their organization measures/evaluates its impact and performance, only half (52 percent) indicated that their organization uses external evaluations (e.g., third-party evaluators) for measurement and evaluation. And an even smaller number (40 percent) said that their organization conducts external evaluations regularly.

Importantly, the usefulness of evaluations is limited because many organizations do not incorporate the results of their evaluations into a feedback loop that informs their strategy and programmatic approach. By discovering what works and what does not, an organization can hone its theory of change and its strategy over time. The survey revealed that only 57 percent of nonprofit executives and staff regularly use findings from their impact evaluation and performance measurement efforts to refine their organization's theory of change or its overall strategy.

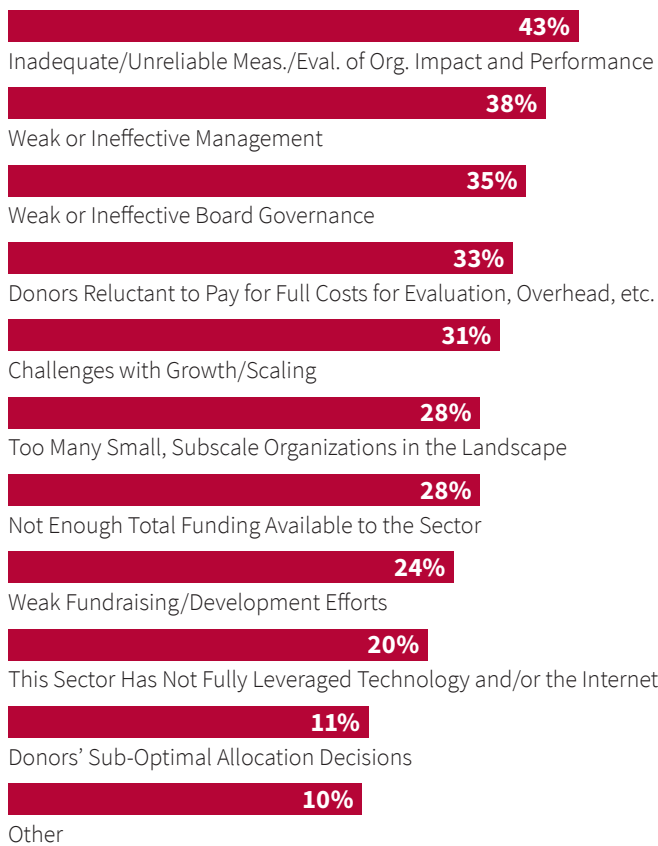
Funders play a critical role in the nonprofit sector, but the survey found that they often do not provide the support needed to foster strategic leadership in their grantees. For example, many funders do not demand impact evaluations, and few of them fund such evaluations: only 42 percent of nonprofit executives and staff said that more than half of their donors demand impact evaluation, and only 11 percent said that more than half of their donors are willing to pay for such efforts. For rigorous and reliable impact evaluation to become the norm in the nonprofit sector, funders must start demanding and paying for impact evaluations.

Other notable findings from the Stanford Survey on Leadership and Management in the Nonprofit Sector:

Survey respondents indicated that impact evaluation and board governance are leading challenges for the overall nonprofit sector. They also cited “weak or ineffective management” as a leading challenge for the sector.

The survey asked, “What do you think are the top challenges facing the overall nonprofit sector as a whole today (not just your own organization)?” Respondents were instructed to select the top three challenges from a list. The percentage of respondents (out of 2,984 who answered this question) selecting each option appears below.

Percentage of respondents selecting each item from a list of challenges facing the overall nonprofit sector



Many nonprofits engage in program activities that lack focus, impairing performance.

In *Engine of Impact*, Meehan and Jonker explain that a fundamental axiom of corporate strategy is that more-focused strategies outperform less-focused ones. Countless studies of firms in the private sector, they

write, have “demonstrated that a strategy of focus beats diversification. Companies that performed best were those focused on a single business, or set of closely related businesses, in which their core competencies provided them with identifiable competitive advantage.”⁹ Focus is as important in the nonprofit sector as it is in the private sector, Meehan and Jonker argue: “In guarding against mission creep, it is critical that nonprofits shun the urge to diversify their program areas and activities.”¹⁰

Yet many organizations follow a diversified strategy. In the Stanford Survey on Leadership and Management in the Nonprofit Sector, nonprofit executives and staff were asked, “Would you characterize your organization’s program activities as focused or diversified?” More than one-third (37 percent) of respondents indicated that their organization is diversified to some degree. Notably, a large proportion of nonprofit executives and staff indicated that they do not view diversification as a problem. When asked, “How focused or diversified do you think your organization’s program activities should be?” 24 percent said that their organization’s program activities should be diversified to some degree.

Many nonprofits struggle with fundamental organization and talent management practices.

Basic practices necessary for creating a high-performing organization, such as setting clear expectations for performance, providing feedback, and firing low-performing employees, are persistent challenges for many nonprofit organizations. In the Stanford Survey on Leadership and Management in the Nonprofit Sector, nearly one-quarter (24 percent) of nonprofit executives and staff indicated that they do not believe that their organization sets clear expectations for performance. Moreover, 27 percent indicated that they do not believe that their organization’s culture encourages and rewards high performance.

Almost one-third (32 percent) of nonprofit executives and staff indicated that they do not receive regular and specific feedback that helps them improve. Nearly one-quarter (22 percent) indicated that they do not receive enough positive feedback and recognition for their contributions to keep them feeling highly motivated. And only 53 percent agreed with the statement “When employees are underperforming consistently according to clear expectations for performance, they do not stay for long in my organization.”

The majority of nonprofit organizations are not ready to scale their impact.

In recent years, scaling has become perhaps the most researched, discussed, and written-about topic in the nonprofit sector. Yet it remains a core challenge across the sector. When asked to identify the top three challenges facing the nonprofit sector as a whole today, 31 percent of respondents cited “challenges with growth/scaling,” and 28 percent cited “too many small, subscale organizations in the landscape.”

For certain nonprofits under certain conditions, scaling is a powerful way to increase impact. But the critical yet oft-neglected first step in scaling is to dispassionately assess an organization’s *readiness* to scale its impact. The model of strategic leadership provides a lens for doing so. Strategic leadership combines strategic thinking and strategic management. *Strategic thinking* (which encompasses mission, strategy, impact evaluation, and insight and courage) pivots around a commitment to fact-based problem solving. *Strategic management* (which encompasses organization and talent, funding, and board governance) involves a keen-eyed focus on execution.

Analysis of responses from nonprofit executives, staff, and board members yields these findings.¹¹

- More than half (52 percent) of nonprofit organizations are not ready to scale their impact because they have a weakness in strategic thinking (i.e., in mission, strategy, impact evaluation, or insight and courage).
- Roughly one-quarter (27 percent) of nonprofit organizations exhibit strong strategic thinking but have a weakness in strategic management (i.e., in organization and talent, funding, or board governance) that hampers their ability to scale.
- Only a small share (11 percent) of nonprofit organizations have mastered both strategic thinking and strategic management, and are therefore ready and able to scale their impact.

“These survey results reveal many challenges in the nonprofit sector, but the situation is, ultimately, not so bleak,” says Jonker. “Any nonprofit can improve its performance significantly by honing the essentials of strategic leadership.”

Endnotes

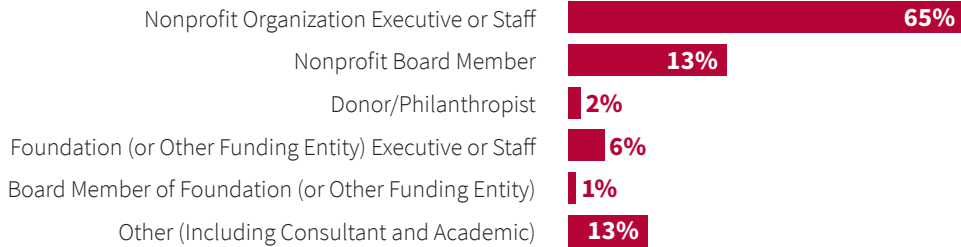
- 1 William F. Meehan III and Kim Starkey Jonker, *Engine of Impact: Essentials of Strategic Leadership in the Nonprofit Sector* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017).
- 2 Ibid., 23.
- 3 Among respondents who completed the survey, more than 2,200 fall into the category of nonprofit executives, staff, and board members. In identifying key findings of the survey, we have focused primarily on responses from people in this category, both because they represent the largest group of respondents and because they are critical actors through which the sector does its work.
- 4 The gap between these two figures (“11 percent” and “more than 80 percent”) reflects the fact that a small percentage of respondents did not complete answers to questions that relate to one or more of the seven elements.
- 5 Based on statistical analysis of responses from more than 2,200 nonprofit executives and staff. More details can be found in the Methodology and Survey Analysis sections of this report.
- 6 David F. Larcker, Nicholas E. Donatiello, William F. Meehan III, and Brian Tayan, 2015 Survey on Board of Directors of Nonprofit Organizations, Stanford Graduate School of Business and Rock Center for Corporate Governance, 2015, 1.
- 7 Giving USA Foundation, *Giving USA 2016: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2015* (Chicago, IL: Giving USA Foundation, 2016), 27. In using Giving USA data, we rounded the contribution amounts in each category, and thus the percentage figures that we provide differ slightly from figures in this report. The findings partly reflect the fact that an estimated \$119 billion of the \$373 billion in charitable giving went to religious congregations. That said, even if giving by living individuals accounted for all of that \$119 billion, individual giving would still account for 57 percent of the remaining amount (roughly \$254 billion).
- 8 Based on statistical analysis of responses from more than 2,200 nonprofit executives and staff. More details can be found in the Methodology and Survey Analysis sections of this report.
- 9 Meehan and Jonker, *Engine of Impact*, 32.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Percentages do not add to 100 percent. Refer to the Survey Analysis section of this report for additional data.

SURVEY RESPONSES

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your primary affiliation/role relating to the nonprofit sector?

All Responses (3,626 responses)



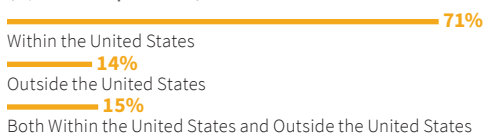
2. Where are your organization's beneficiaries?

All Responses (3,419 responses)



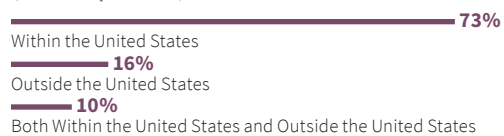
Nonprofit Executives or Staff

(2,253 responses)



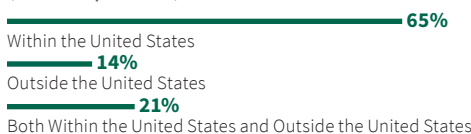
Nonprofit Board Members

(433 responses)



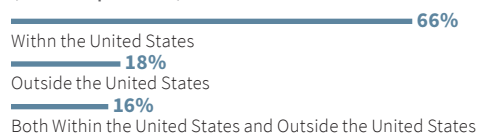
Foundation Executives or Staff

(207 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)

(411 responses)



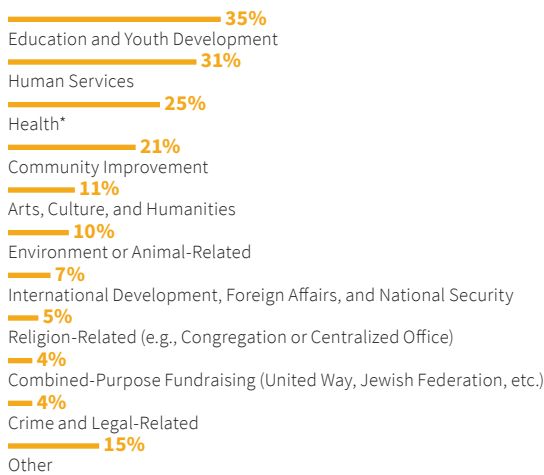
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

3. In which subsector does your organization work?

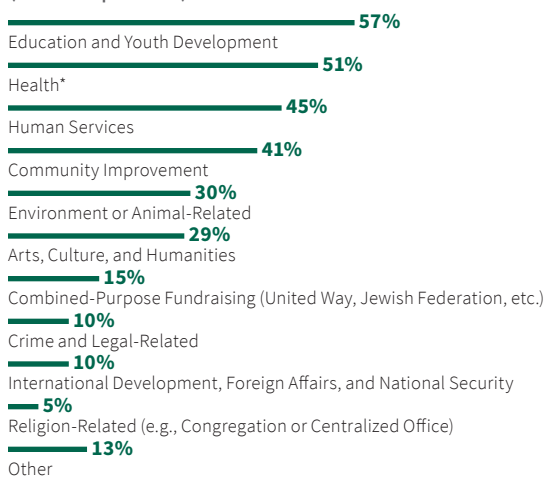
All Responses (3,434 responses)



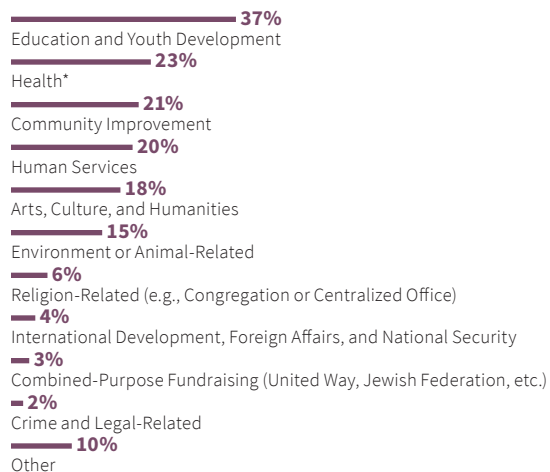
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (2,262 responses)



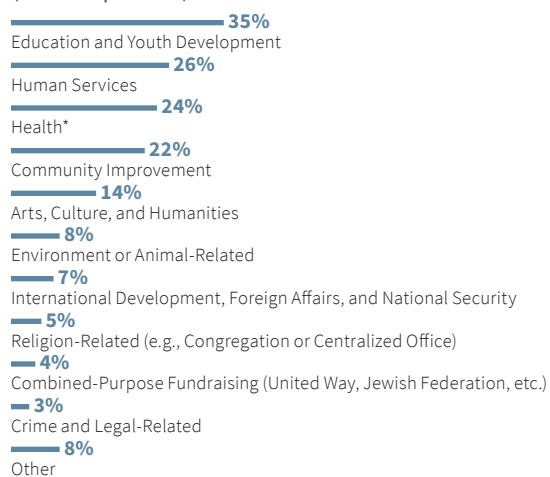
Foundation Executives or Staff (206 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (438 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (412 responses)

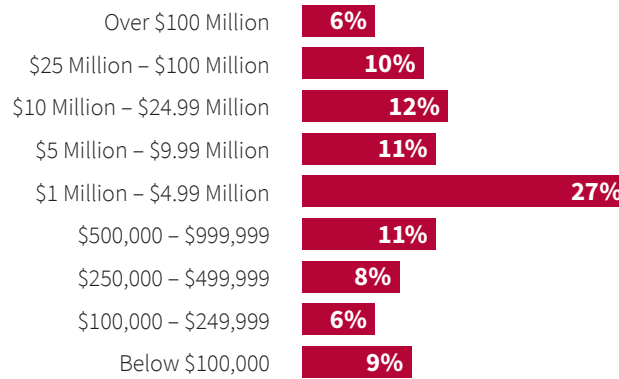


* Includes Health Care, Mental Health, Disease Treatment, and Medical Research

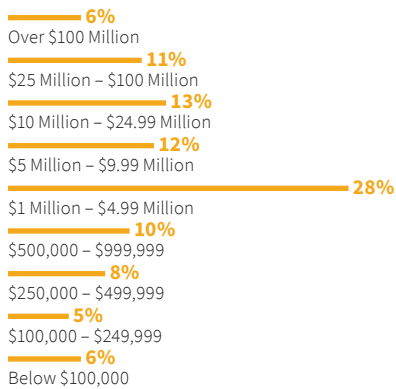
Results do not equal 100% because respondents could select multiple options. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

4. What are the annual expenditures of your organization?

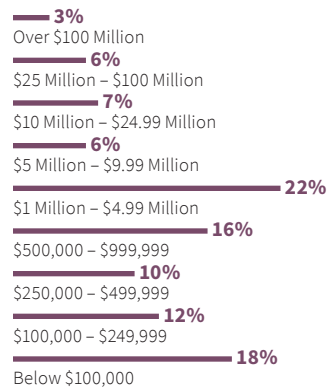
All Responses (3,254 responses)



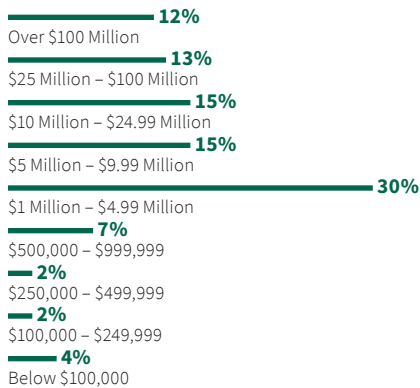
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (2,141 responses)



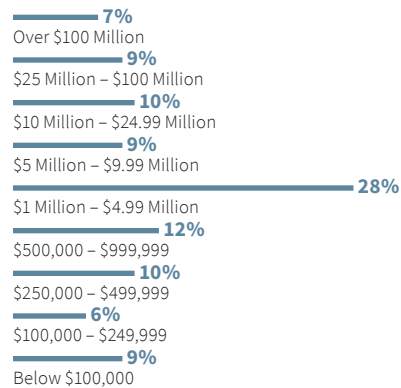
Nonprofit Board Members (433 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (194 responses)



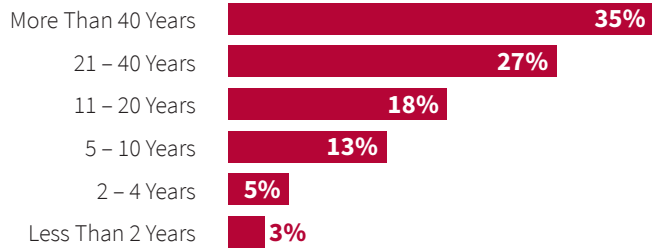
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (386 responses)



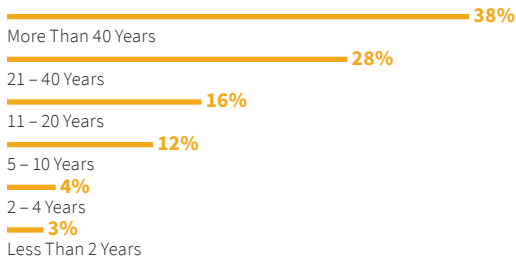
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

5. For how many years has your organization been in existence?

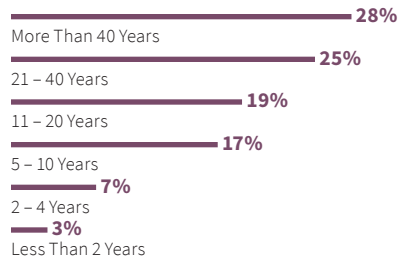
All Responses (3,419 responses)



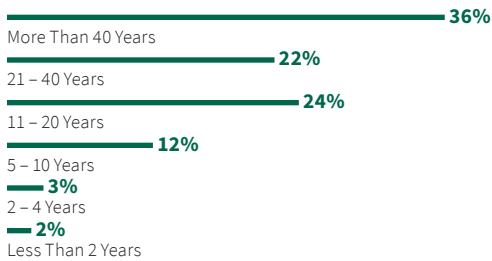
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (2,255 responses)



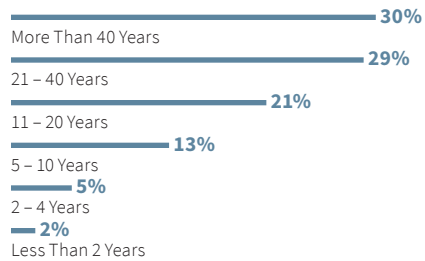
Nonprofit Board Members (438 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (204 responses)



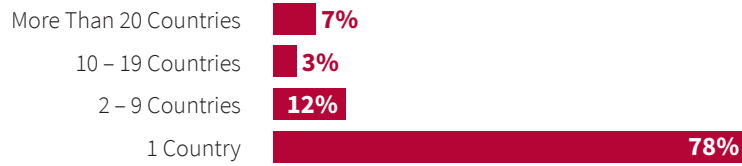
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (407 responses)



Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

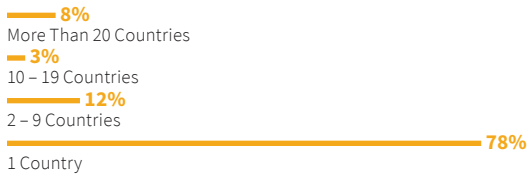
6. My organization currently operates in:

All Responses (2,972 responses)



Nonprofit Executives or Staff

(1,979 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members

(373 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff

(178 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)

(354 responses)



Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

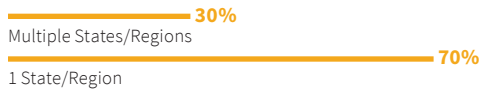
7. My organization currently operates in:

Asked only of respondents who indicated that their organization operates in 1 country.

All Responses (2,226 responses)



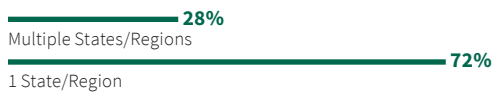
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,481 responses)



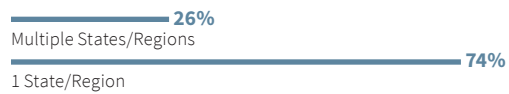
Nonprofit Board Members (299 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (128 responses)



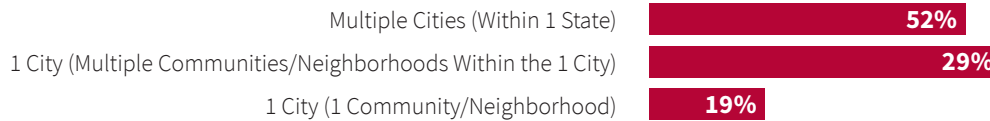
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (261 responses)



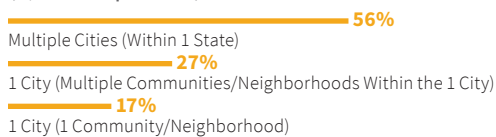
8. Please specify:

Asked only of respondents who indicated that their organization operates in 1 state/region.

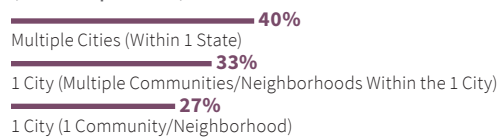
All Responses (1,549 responses)



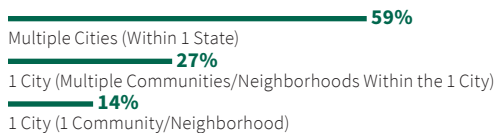
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,015 responses)



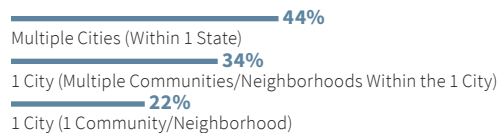
Nonprofit Board Members (222 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (88 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (185 responses)



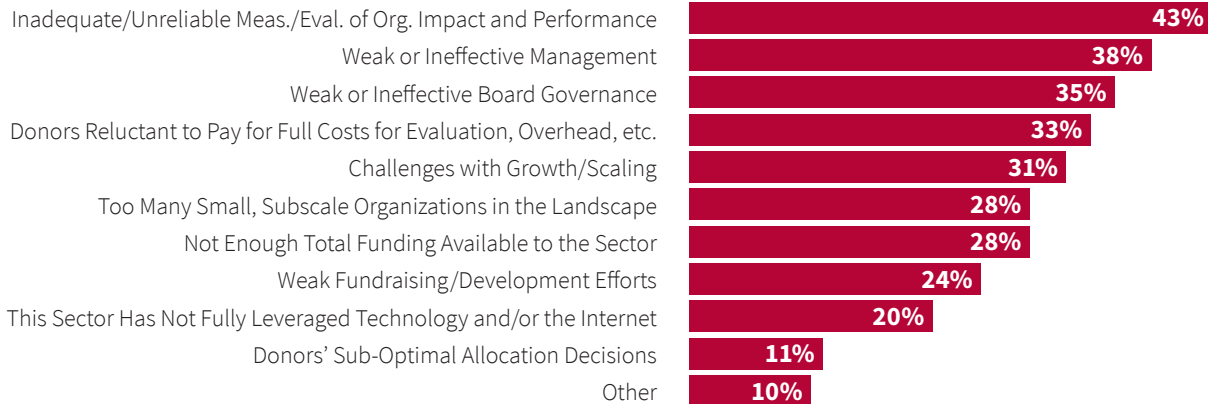
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE SECTOR

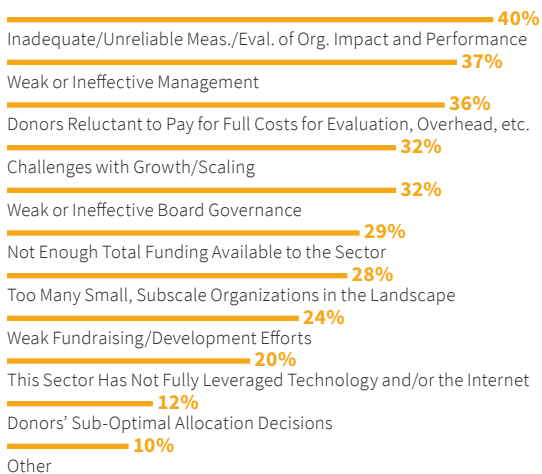
9. What do you think are the top challenges facing the overall nonprofit sector as a whole today (not just your own organization)?

Respondents were asked to select the top three challenges from a list. The percentage of respondents selecting each option appear below.

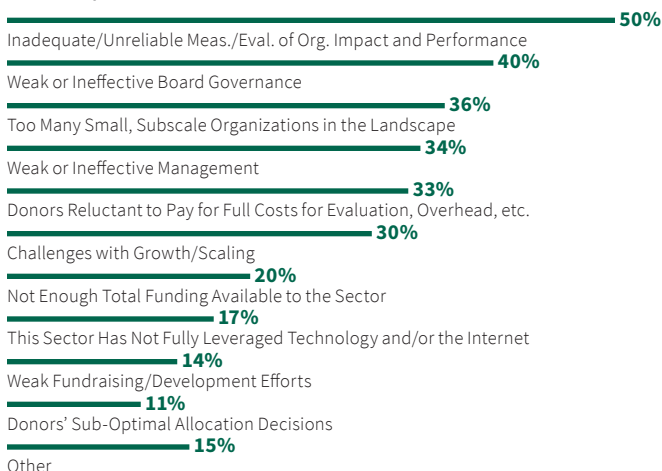
All Responses (2,984 responses)



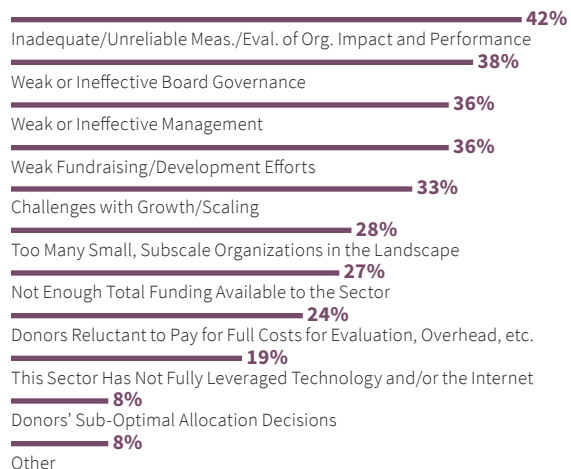
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,935 responses)



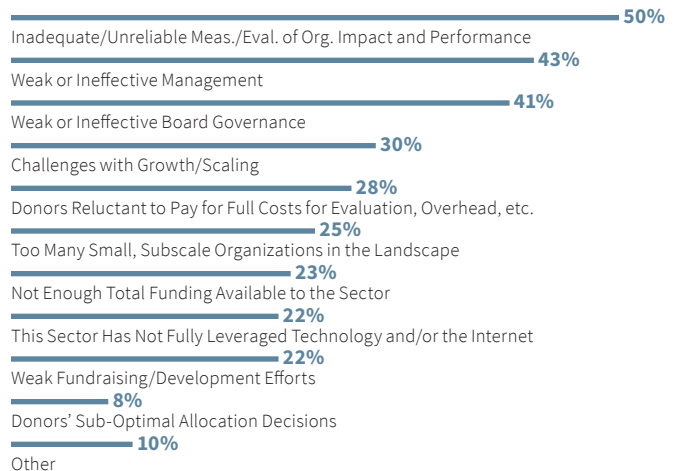
Foundation Executives or Staff (176 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (369 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (371 responses)

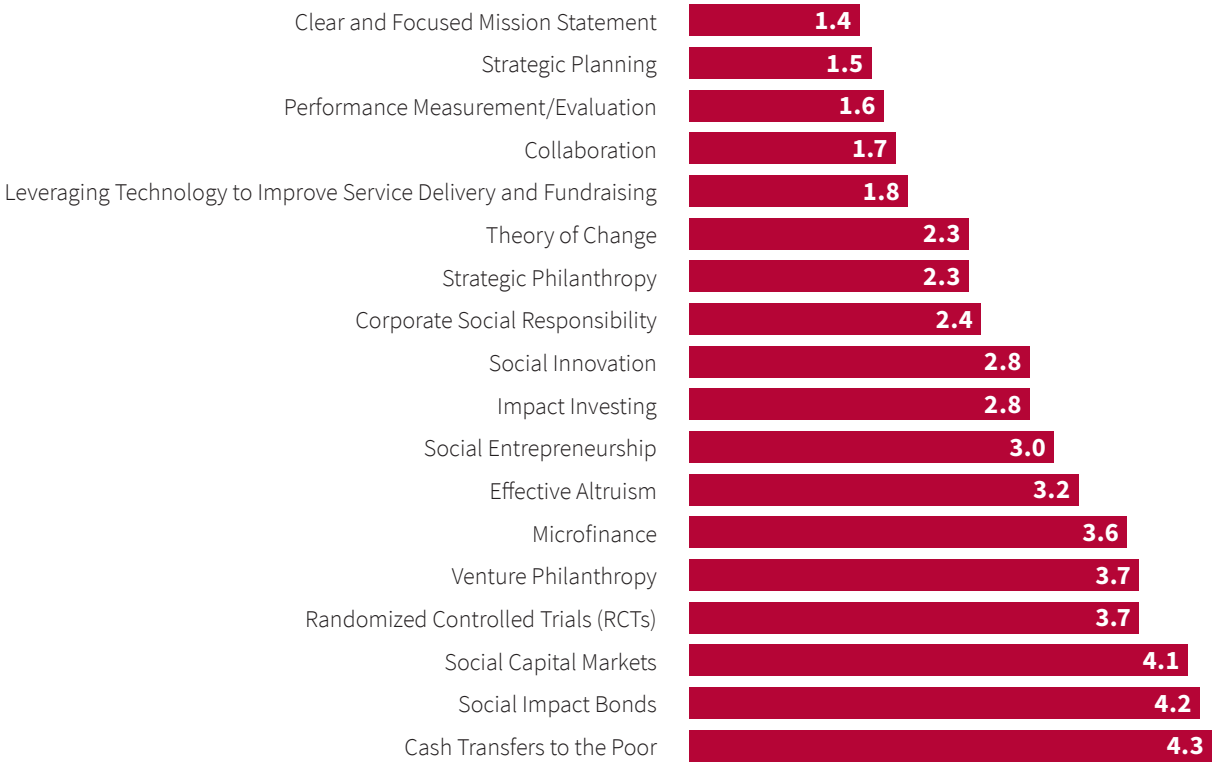


Results do not equal 100% because respondents could select multiple options. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

10. Fads Versus Fundamentals: Some of the concepts and trends emerging in the nonprofit sector in recent years could be classified as “fundamentals” (i.e., significant forces with the staying power to transform the sector over the long term). By contrast, other concepts/trends could be viewed as merely “fads” (i.e., they will pass by without major impact on the sector when the next popular trend comes along). On the spectrum below, please indicate to what extent you think each of the following concepts is a fundamental or a fad.

Respondents rated each concept from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating a “fundamental” and 7 indicating a “fad.” Average scores appear below. We report a range of respondents because the number of people who responded for each concept/trend was different.

All Responses (1,924 – 2,909 responses)



Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

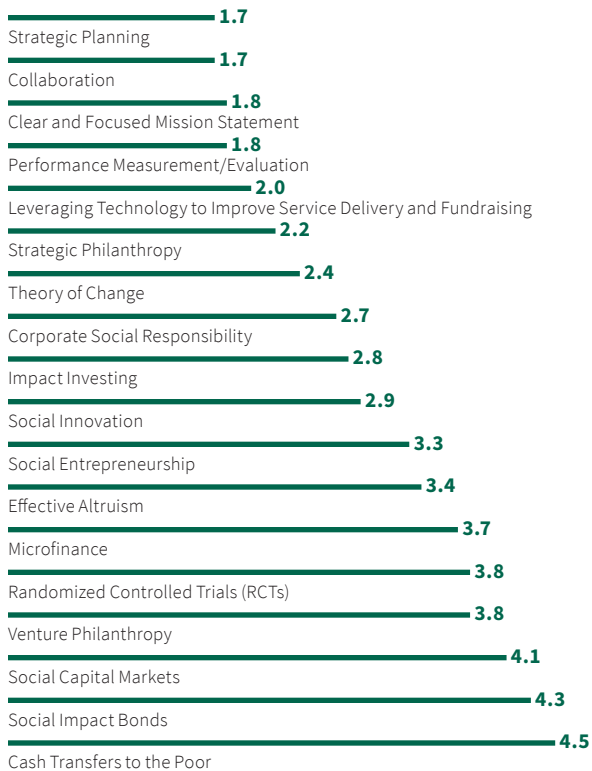
Nonprofit Executives or Staff

(1,237 – 1,892 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff

(114 – 173 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members

(212 – 359 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)

(253 – 359 responses)

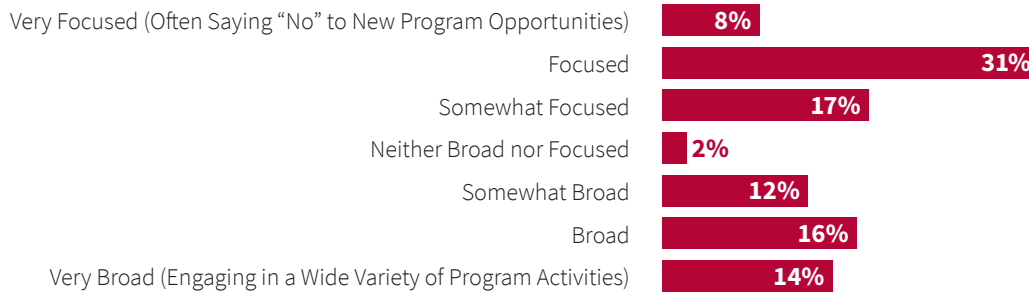


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

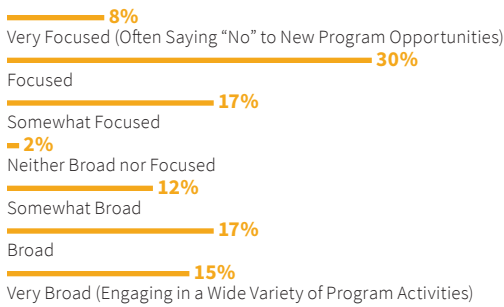
MISSION

11. I would characterize my organization’s mission as:

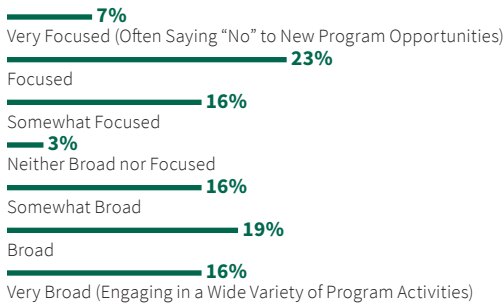
All Responses (3,081 responses)



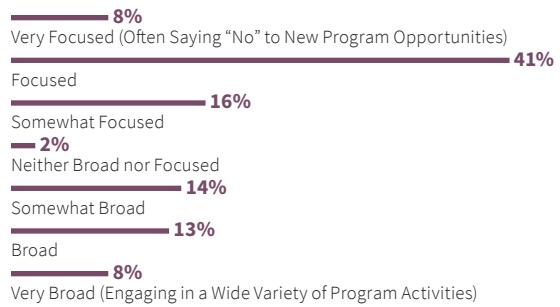
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (2,047 responses)



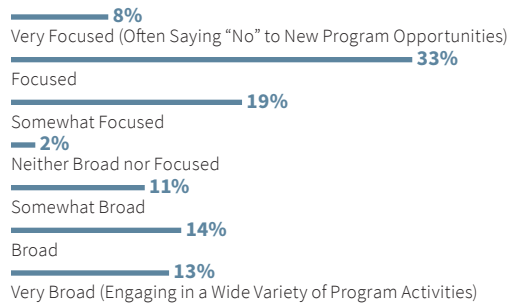
Foundation Executives or Staff (186 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (385 responses)



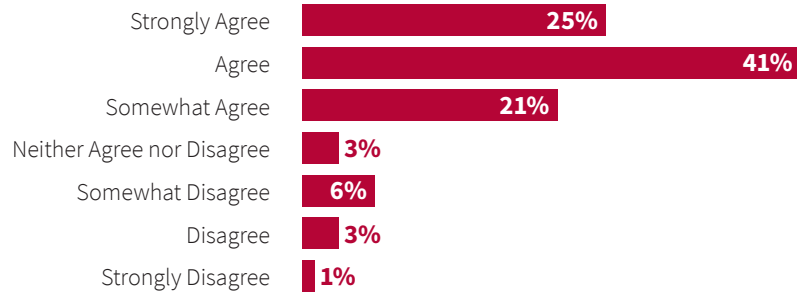
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (372 responses)



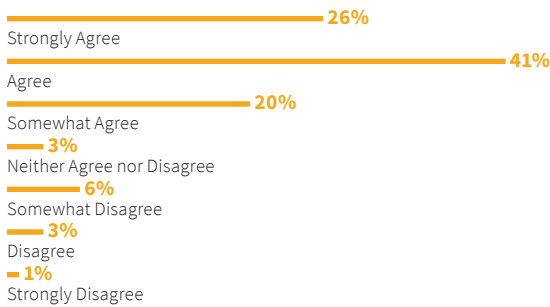
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

12. My organization's mission guides decisions about which programs/initiatives to pursue (and which to avoid).

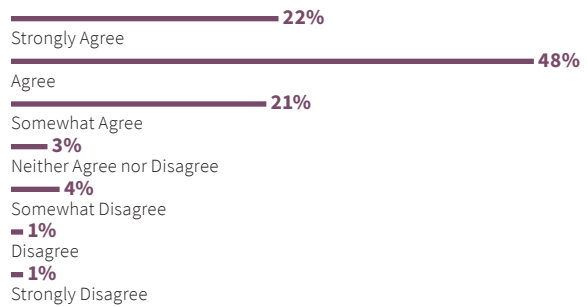
All Responses (3,075 responses)



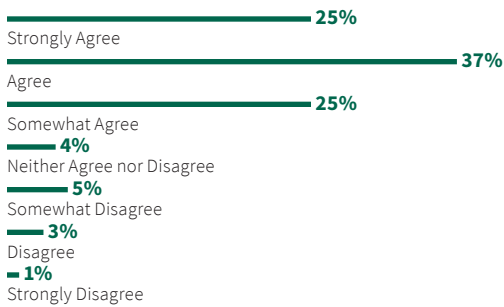
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (2,045 responses)



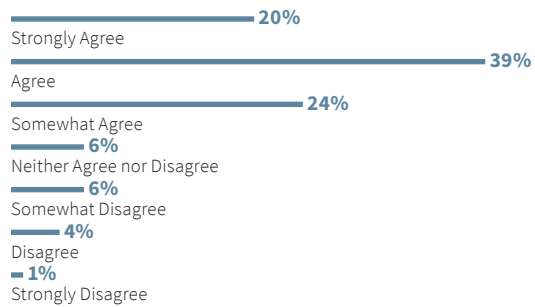
Nonprofit Board Members (383 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (185 responses)



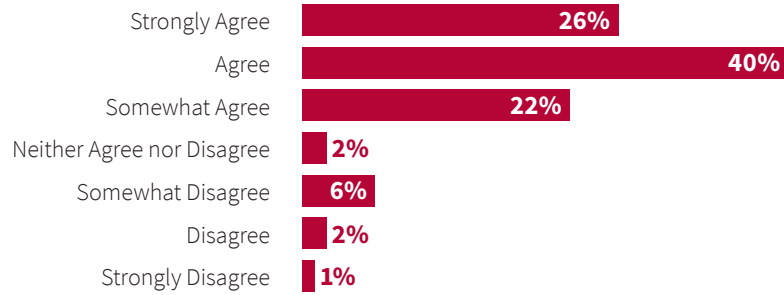
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (371 responses)



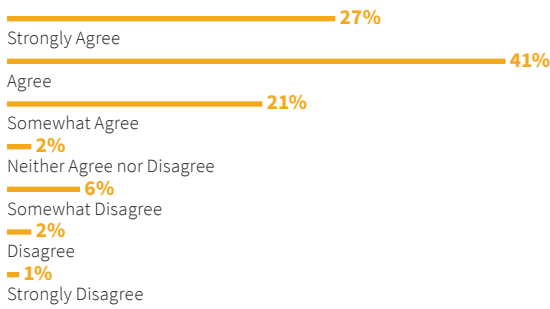
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

13. If someone interviewed a range of stakeholders—board, staff, donors, and clients—there would be broad understanding and appreciation of my organization’s mission.

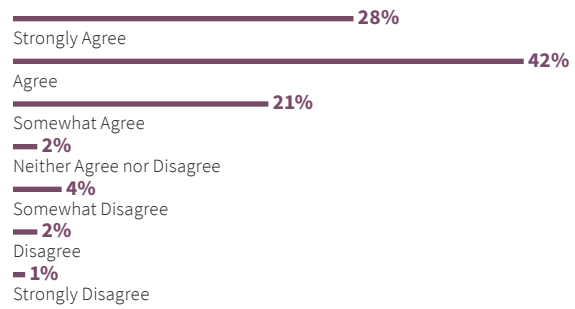
All Responses (3,080 responses)



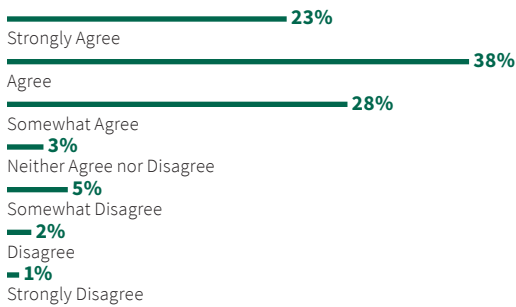
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (2,048 responses)



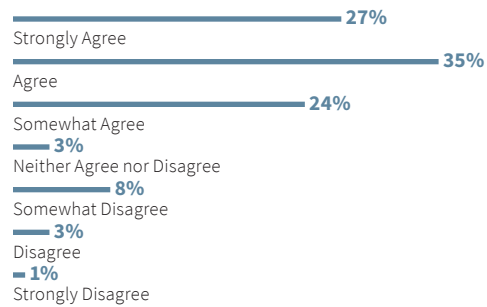
Nonprofit Board Members (382 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (188 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (372 responses)

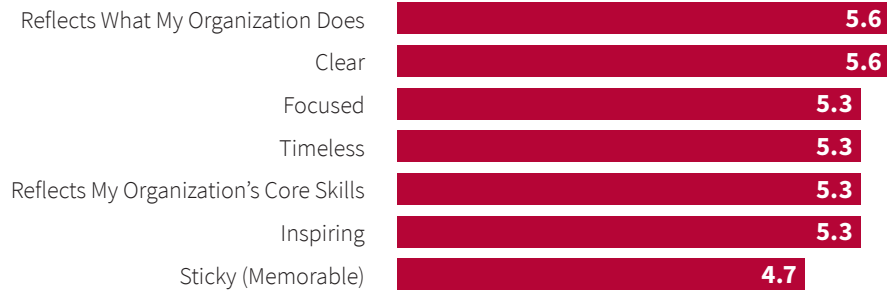


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

14. How would you rank your organization’s mission statement against the following criteria?

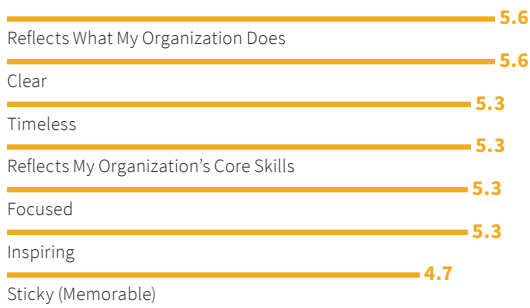
Respondents ranked their organization’s mission statement on a 7-point scale, with 7 indicating “excellent” and 1 indicating “extremely poor.” Weighted average scores appear below. We report a range of respondents because the number of people who responded for each criterion was different.

All Responses (3,000 – 3,060 responses)



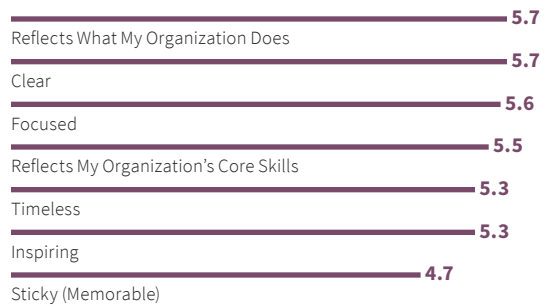
Nonprofit Executives or Staff

(1,999 – 2,032 responses)



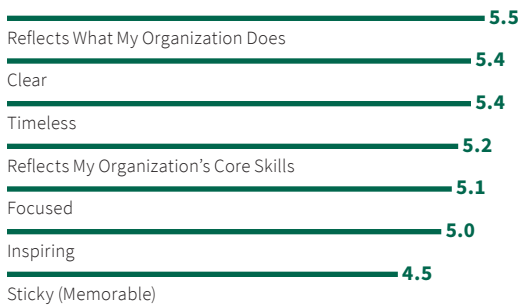
Nonprofit Board Members

(377 – 383 responses)



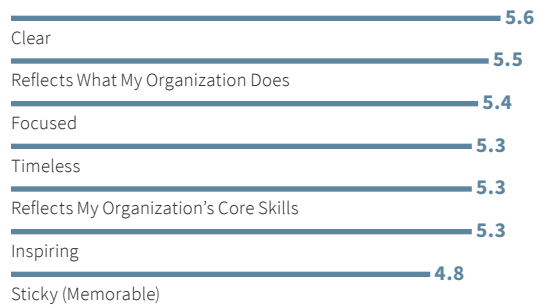
Foundation Executives or Staff

(174 – 182 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)

(362 – 372 responses)



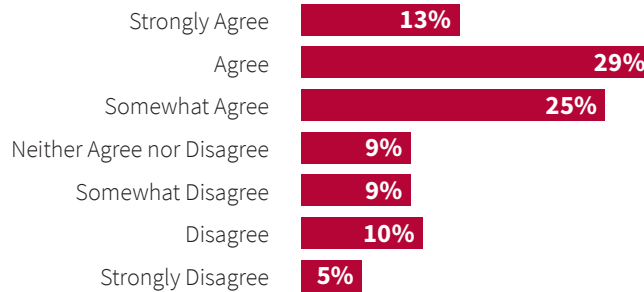
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

STRATEGY

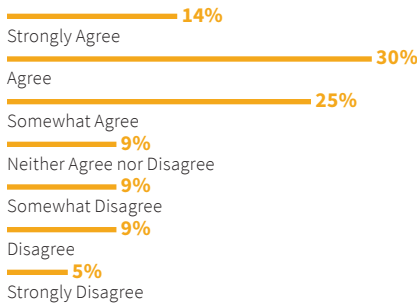
15. My organization has a theory of change or an explicit understanding of the logic of how our strategy will achieve our mission.

We define “theory of change” as the logical articulation of how your organization’s intervention will create its expected outcomes.

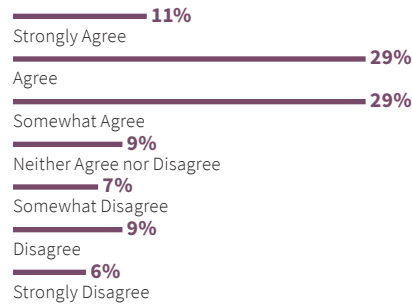
All Responses (2,963 responses)



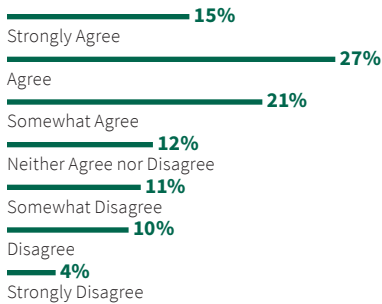
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,971 responses)



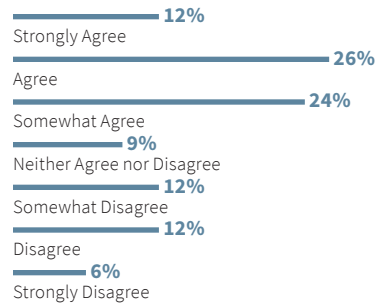
Nonprofit Board Members (363 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (182 responses)



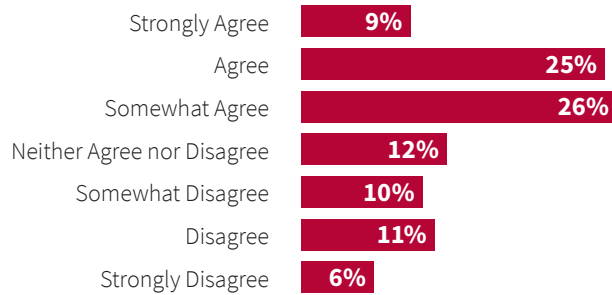
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (360 responses)



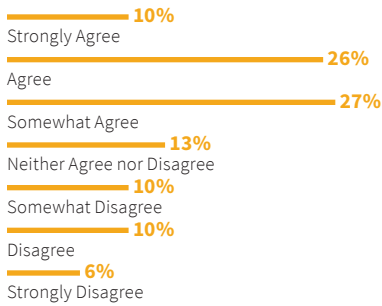
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

16. My organization’s theory of change is empirical/evidence-based. (Empirical evidence informs the description of how your organization’s strategies will achieve your organization’s mission.)

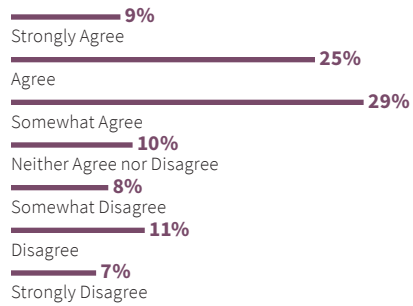
All Responses (2,863 responses)



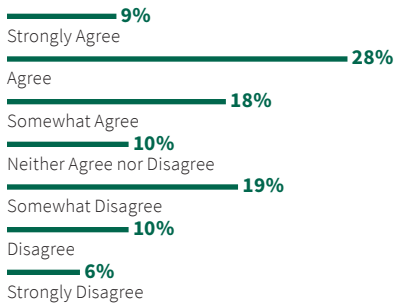
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,901 responses)



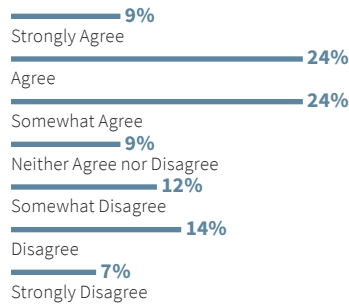
Nonprofit Board Members
(357 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff
(172 responses)



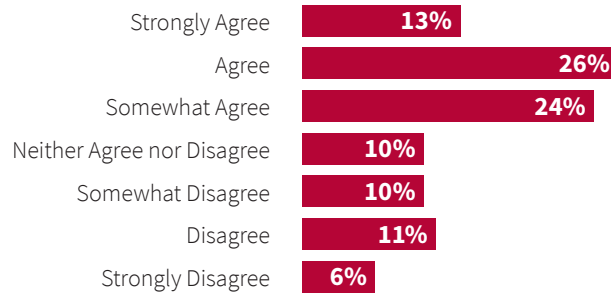
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(346 responses)



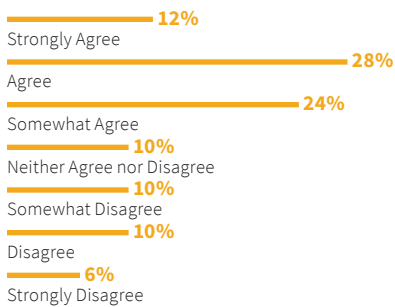
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

17. My organization has a strategic plan that is high-quality.

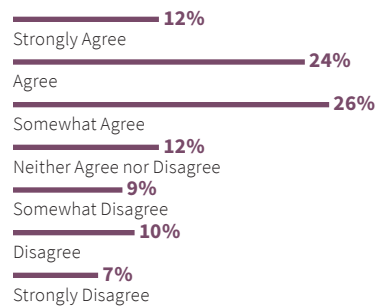
All Responses (2,998 responses)



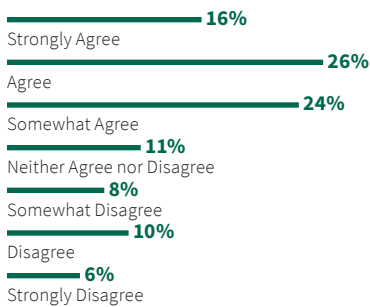
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,994 responses)



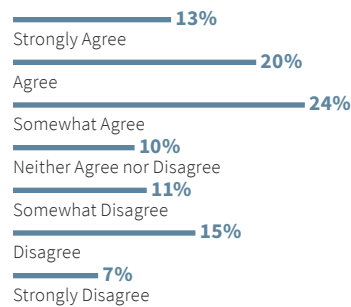
Nonprofit Board Members
(374 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff
(178 responses)



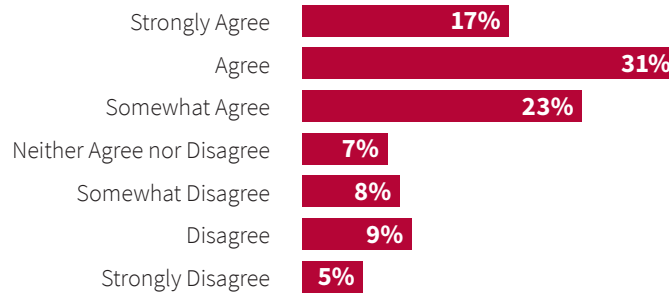
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(361 responses)



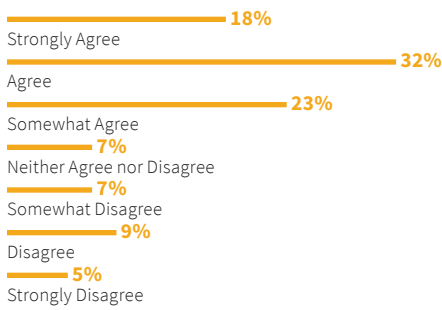
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

18. My organization has a strategic plan that guides our actions.

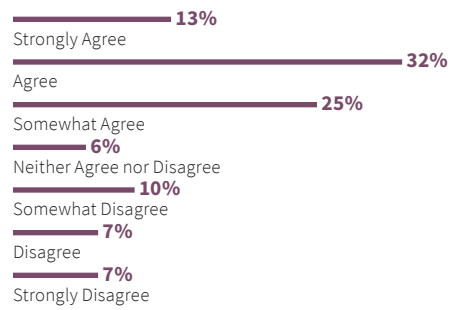
All Responses (2,998 responses)



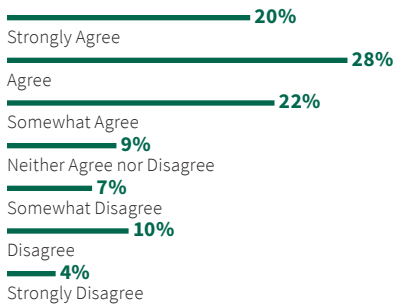
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,995 responses)



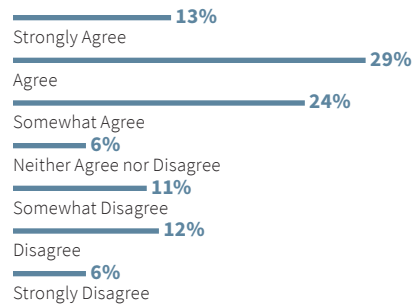
Nonprofit Board Members (376 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (176 responses)



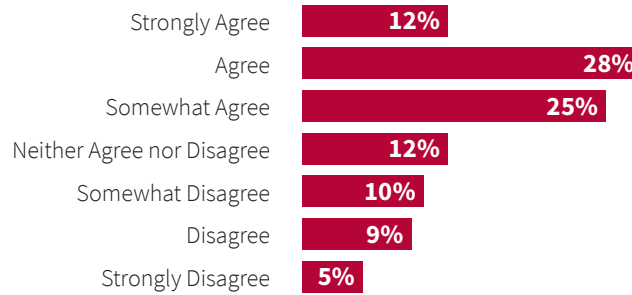
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (361 responses)



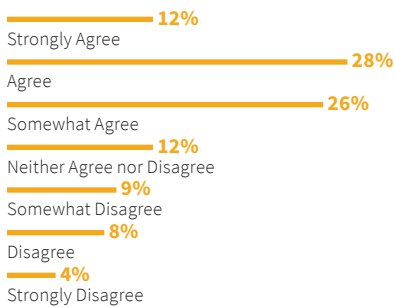
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

19. My organization's strategic planning process is fact-based and objective.

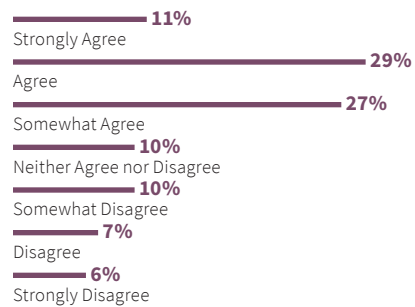
All Responses (2,927 responses)



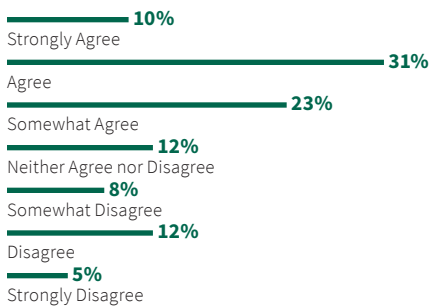
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,947 responses)



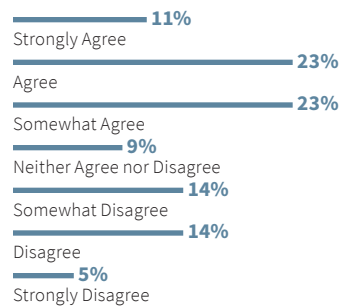
Nonprofit Board Members (368 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (173 responses)



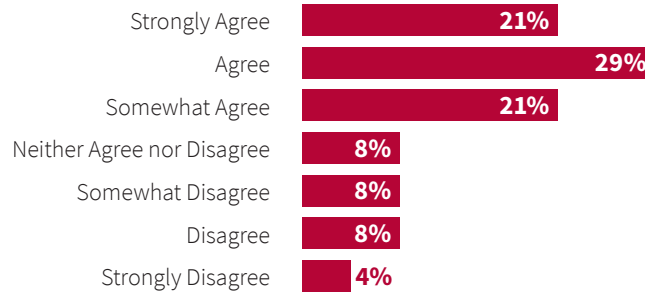
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (352 responses)



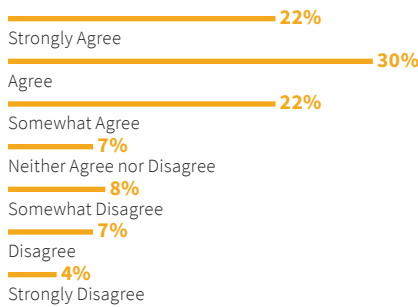
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

20. My organization's strategic planning process engages actively with a range of stakeholders, including the board.

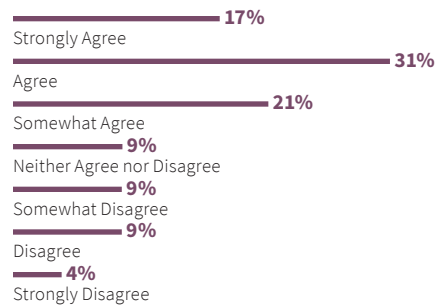
All Responses (2,938 responses)



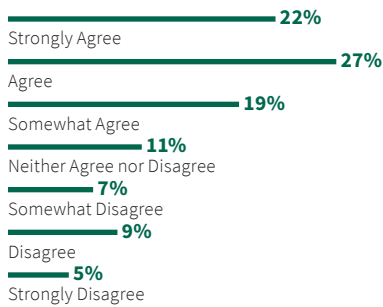
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,961 responses)



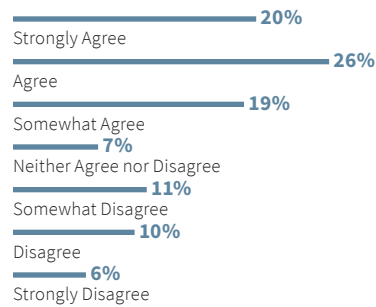
Nonprofit Board Members (370 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (174 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (349 responses)

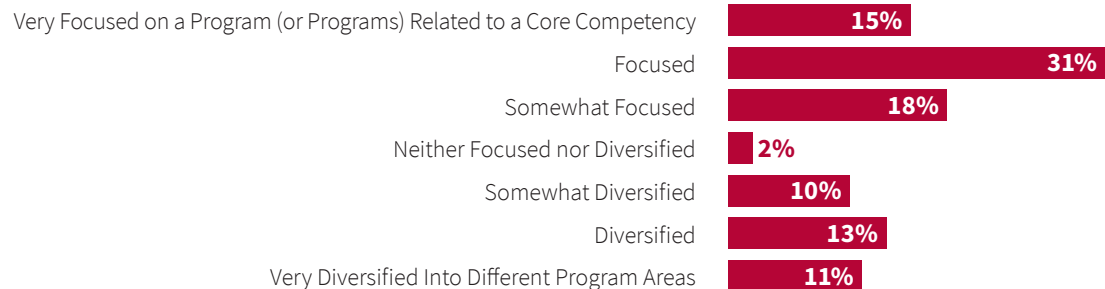


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

21. Would you characterize your organization’s program activities as focused or diversified?

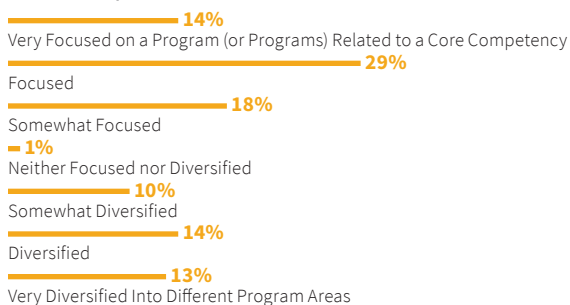
Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, nonprofit board members, and other respondents (including consultants and academics).

All Responses (2,751 responses)



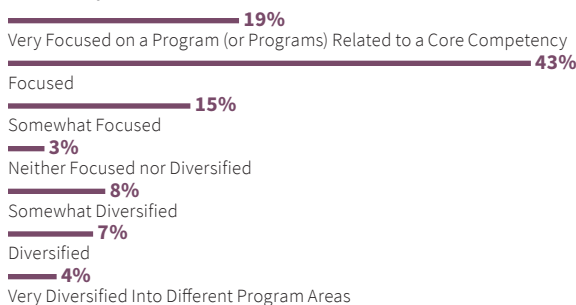
Nonprofit Executives or Staff

(1,978 responses)



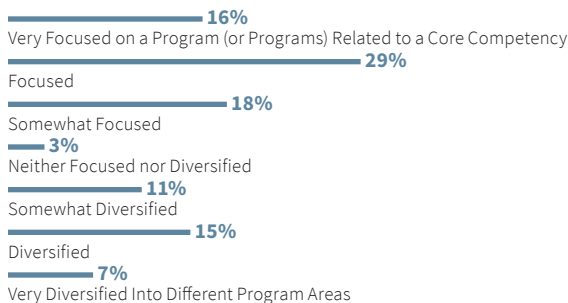
Nonprofit Board Members

(372 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)

(355 responses)

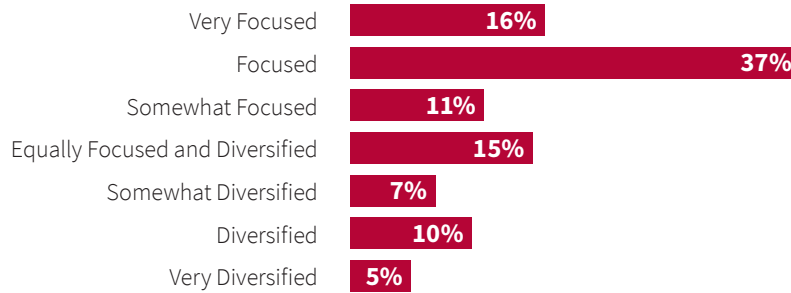


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

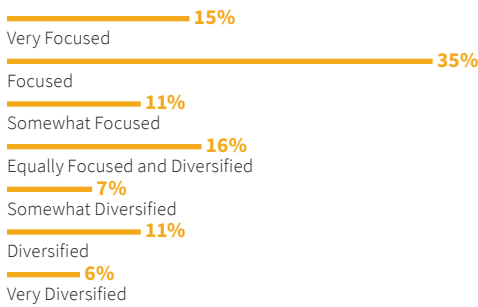
22. How focused or diversified do you think your organization’s program activities should be?

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, nonprofit board members, and other respondents (including consultants and academics).

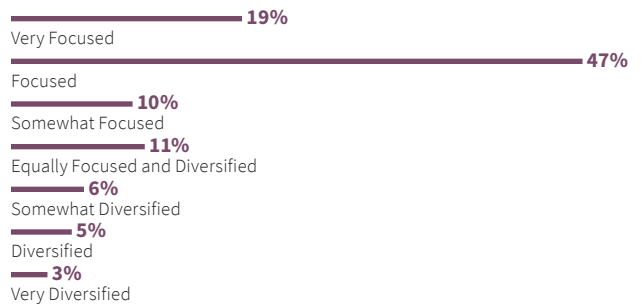
All Responses (2,738 responses)



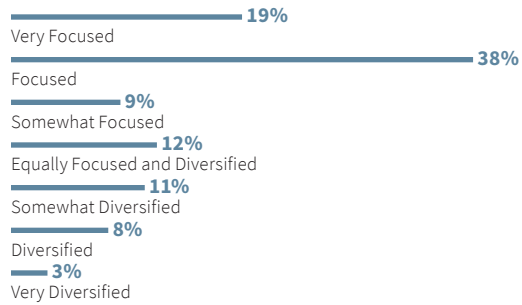
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,966 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (371 responses)



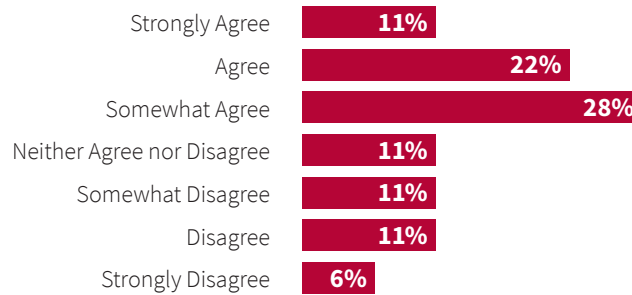
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (355 responses)



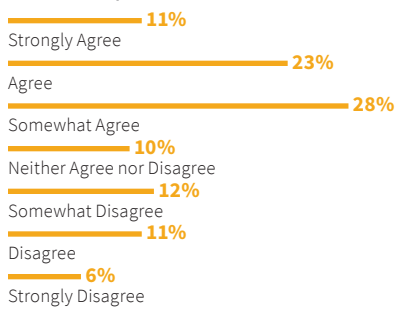
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

23. My organization significantly leverages the Internet and technology so that we can deliver our services more effectively and efficiently.

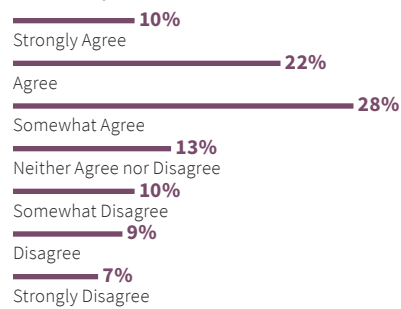
All Responses (2,886 responses)



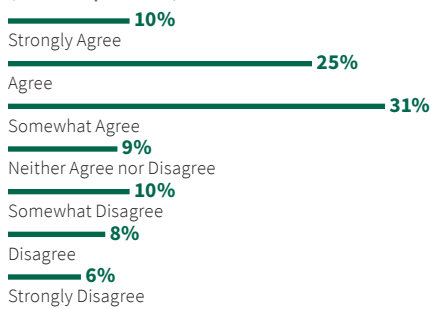
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,931 responses)



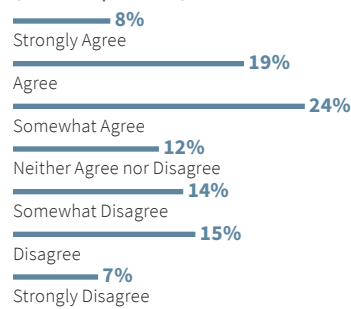
Nonprofit Board Members
(358 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff
(178 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(335 responses)

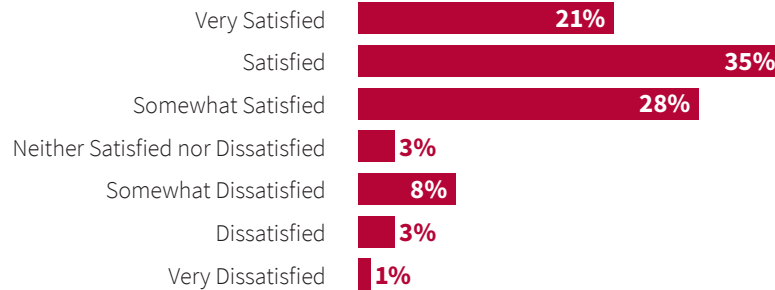


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

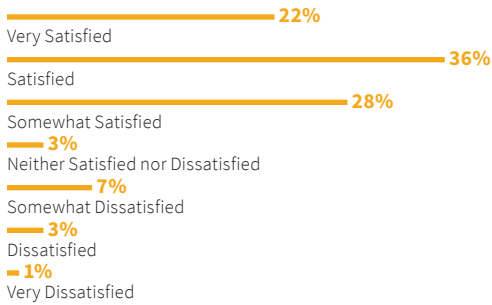
IMPACT EVALUATION

24. How satisfied are you with the overall performance of your organization in achieving significant impact?

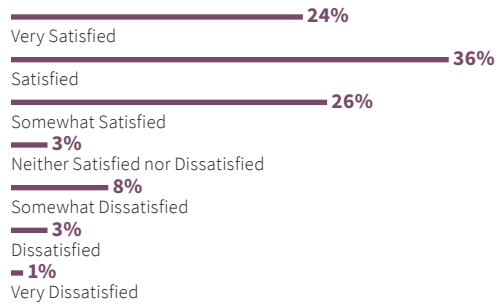
All Responses (3,085 responses)



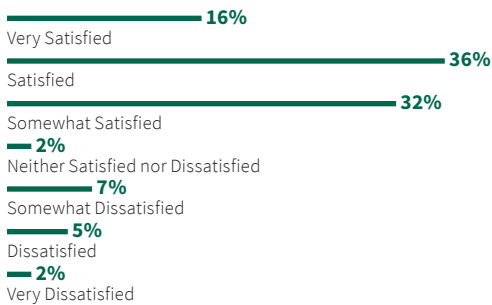
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(2,048 responses)



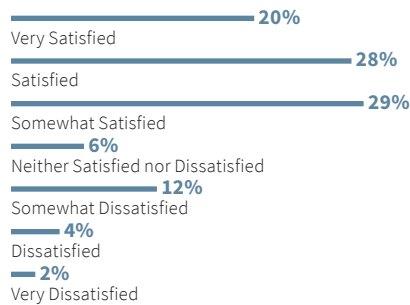
Nonprofit Board Members
(384 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff
(188 responses)



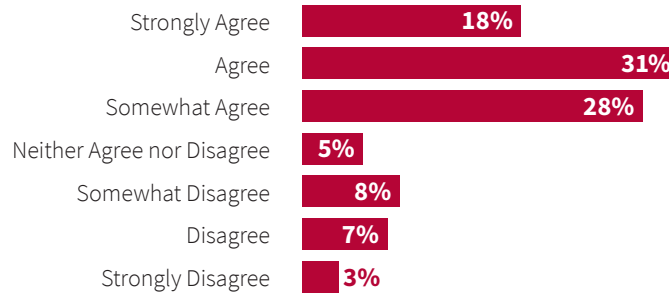
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(373 responses)



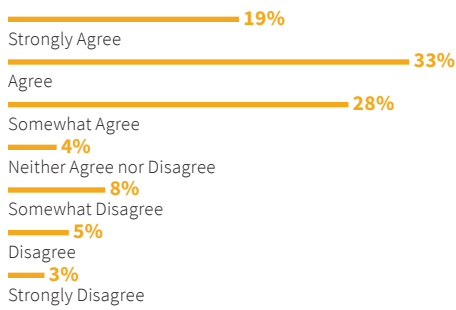
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

25. My organization measures/evaluates its impact and performance.

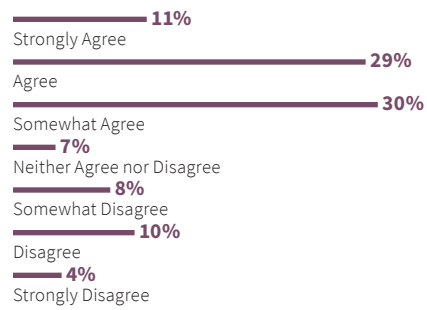
All Responses (3,045 responses)



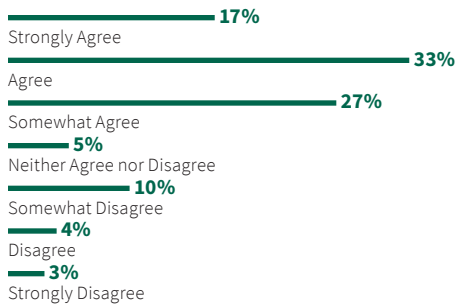
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (2,023 responses)



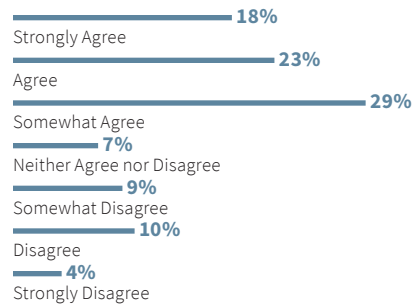
Nonprofit Board Members (379 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (184 responses)



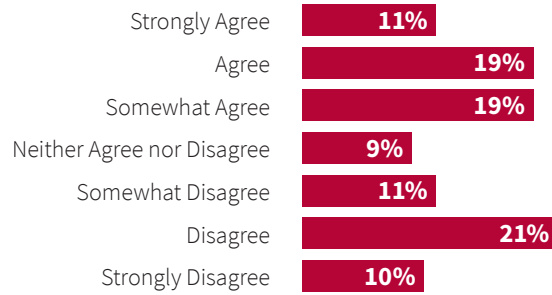
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (367 responses)



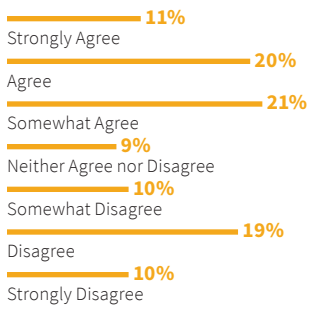
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

26. My organization measures/evaluates its impact and performance, including using external evaluations (e.g., by a third-party evaluator).

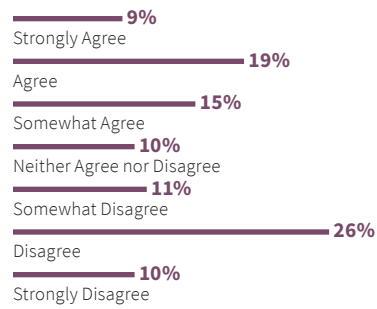
All Responses (2,978 responses)



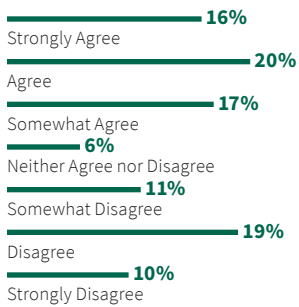
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,983 responses)



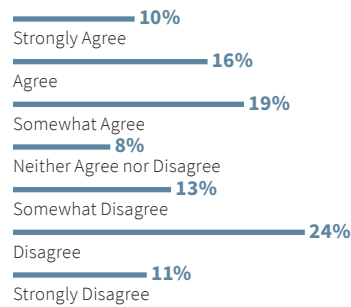
Nonprofit Board Members (371 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (180 responses)



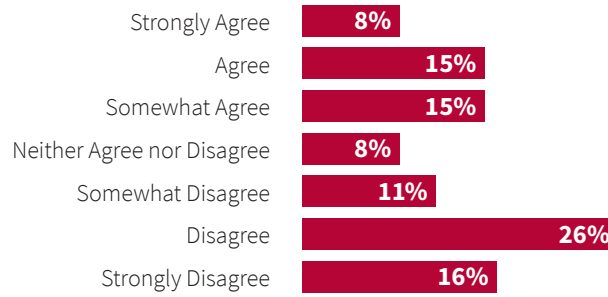
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (355 responses)



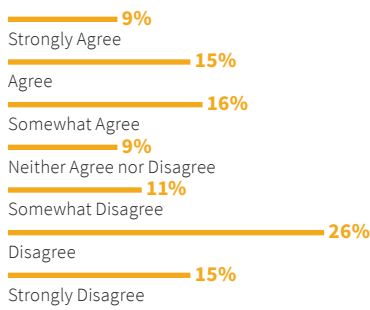
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

27. External evaluations of my organization's impact are conducted regularly.

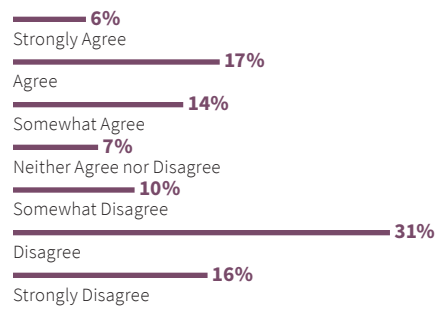
All Responses (2,903 responses)



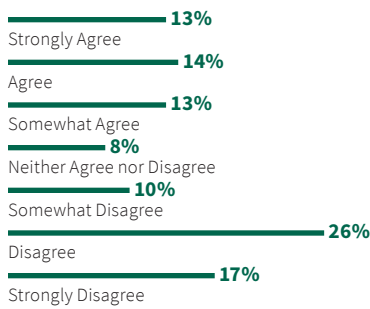
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,930 responses)



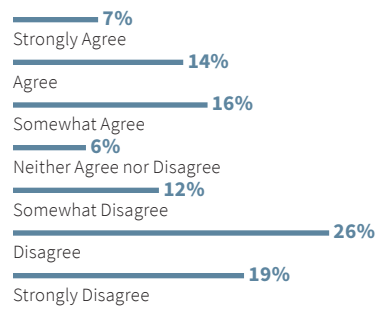
Nonprofit Board Members (367 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (176 responses)



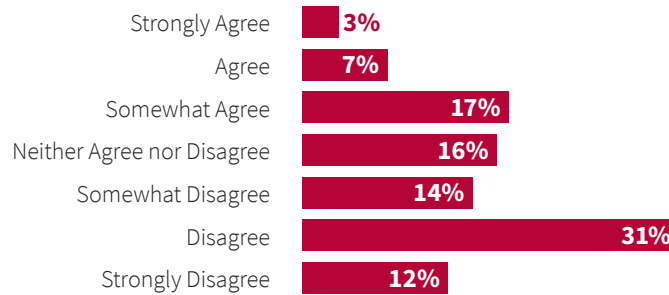
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (344 responses)



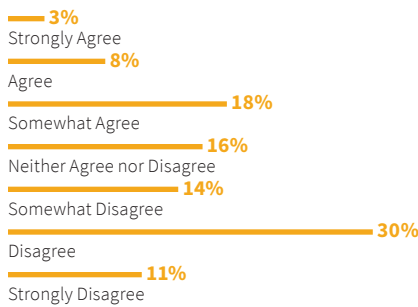
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

28. My organization measures too many things, some of which are not critical to our performance.

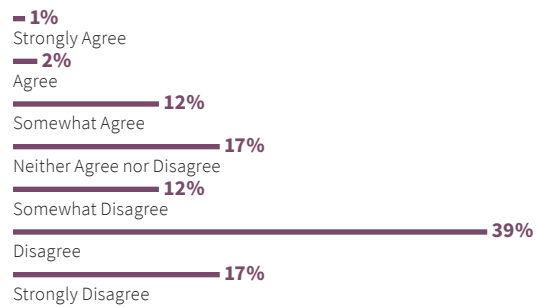
All Responses (2,915 responses)



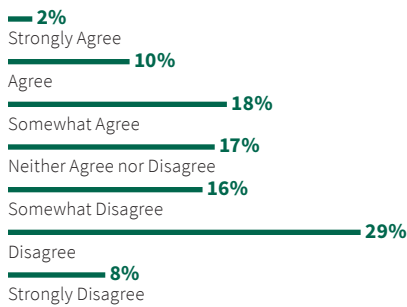
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,943 responses)



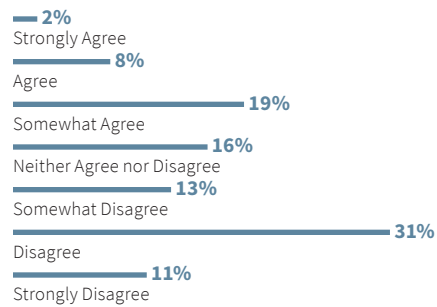
Nonprofit Board Members (365 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (179 responses)



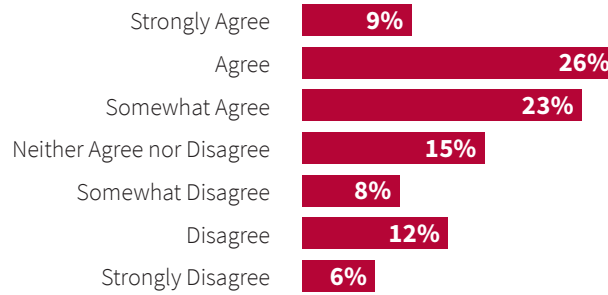
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (343 responses)



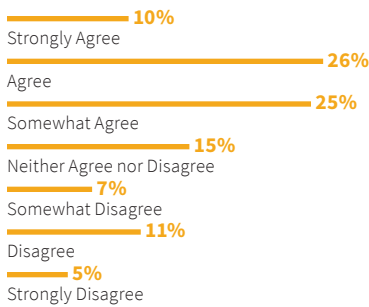
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

29. My organization's impact evaluation and performance measurement process has led to tangible improvements in our performance.

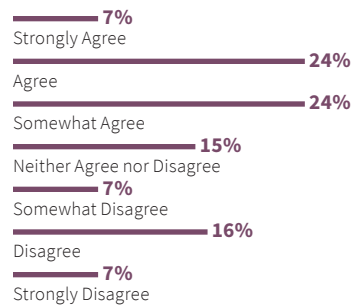
All Responses (2,712 responses)



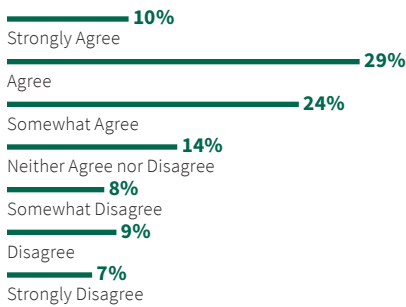
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,803 responses)



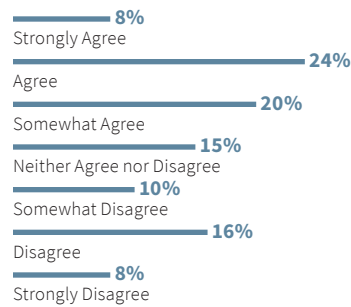
Nonprofit Board Members
(328 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff
(167 responses)



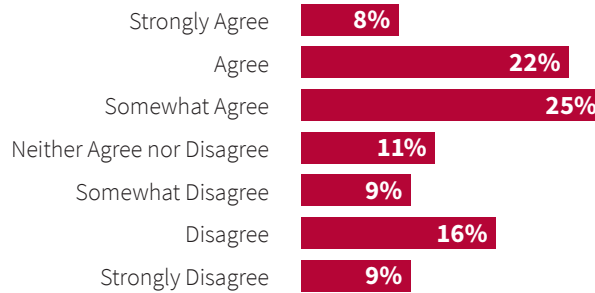
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(333 responses)



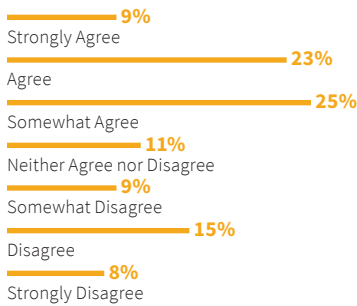
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

30. My organization regularly uses the learnings from our impact evaluations to further refine our organization’s theory of change and/or strategy. (We define “theory of change” as the logical articulation of how your organization’s intervention will create its expected outcomes. We define “strategy” as a plan of actions designed to achieve your organization’s mission.)

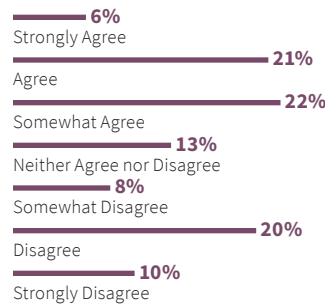
All Responses (2,725 responses)



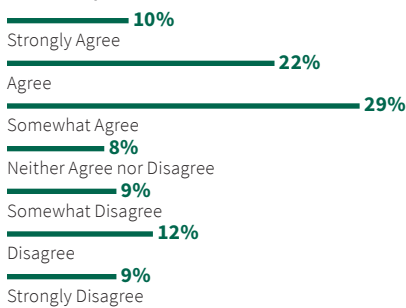
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,814 responses)



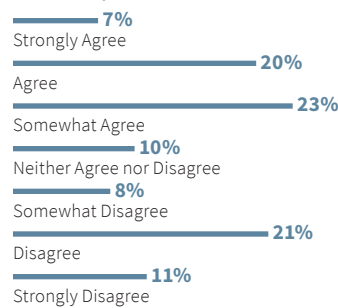
Nonprofit Board Members
(325 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff
(172 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(333 responses)



Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

31. My organization has had at least one randomized evaluation (e.g., randomized controlled trial, or RCT) conducted by an external third party that was pre-announced (i.e., my organization publicly announced that we were conducting the randomized evaluation before the results came in).

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, nonprofit board members, and other respondents (including consultants and academics). Not asked of foundation executives or staff, foundation board members, or donors/philanthropists.

All Responses (2,272 responses)



Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,639 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members
(316 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(284 responses)

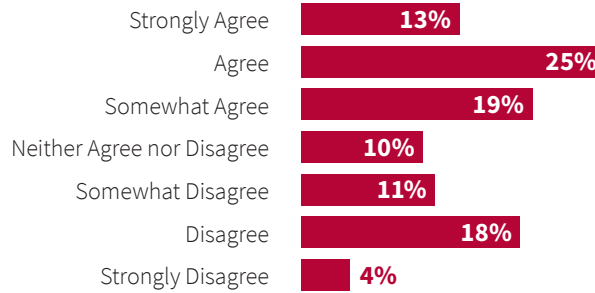


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

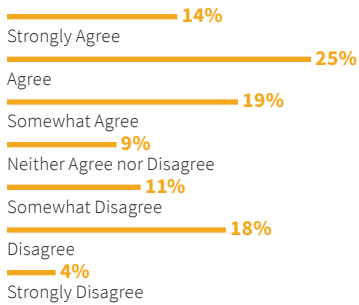
32. My organization regularly undertakes randomized evaluations (e.g., randomized controlled trials, or RCTs) conducted by external third parties that are pre-announced.

Asked only of respondents who indicated that their organization has had at least one randomized evaluation conducted by an external third party that was pre-announced.

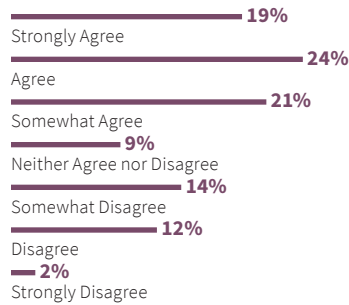
All Responses (454 responses)



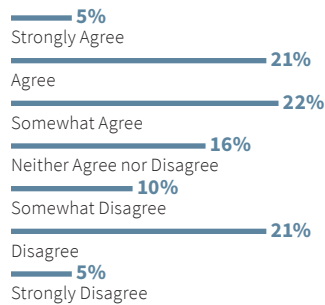
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (329 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (58 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (58 responses)

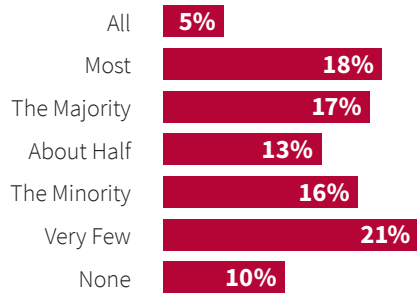


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

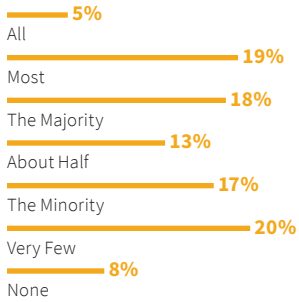
33. Roughly how many of your nonprofit's donors/grantmakers demand performance measurement/impact evaluation?

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, and nonprofit board members.

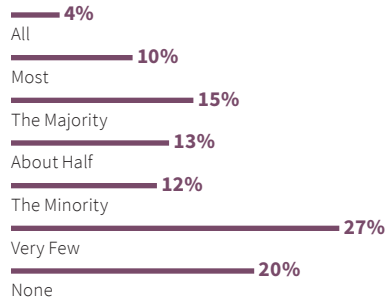
All Responses (2,035 responses)



Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,735 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (300 responses)

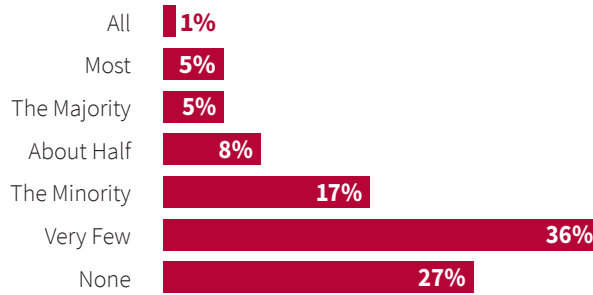


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

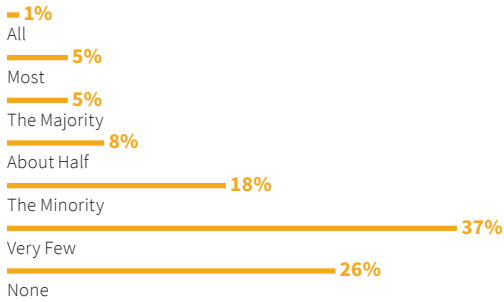
34. Roughly how many of your nonprofit's donors/grantmakers are willing to pay for performance measurement/impact evaluation?

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, and nonprofit board members.

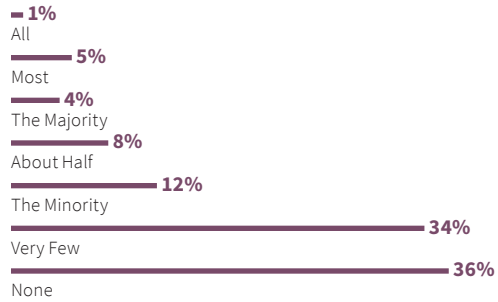
All Responses (1,539 responses)



Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,333 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (206 responses)

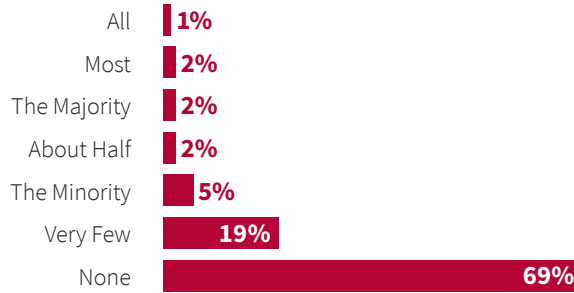


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

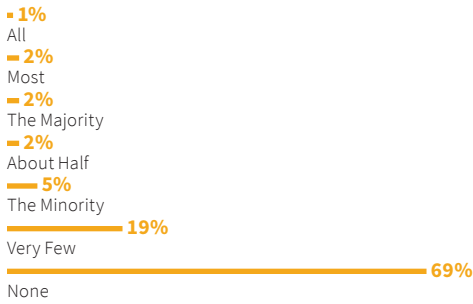
35. Roughly how many of your nonprofit’s donors/grantmakers demand that your organization undertake randomized, pre-announced evaluations (RCTs) conducted by an external third party?

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, and nonprofit board members.

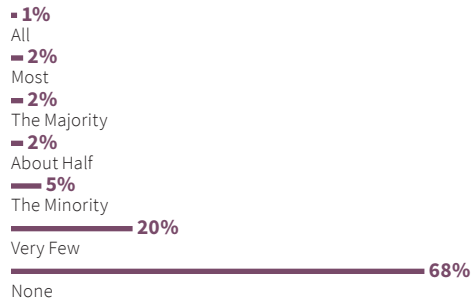
All Responses (1,773 responses)



Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,521 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (252 responses)

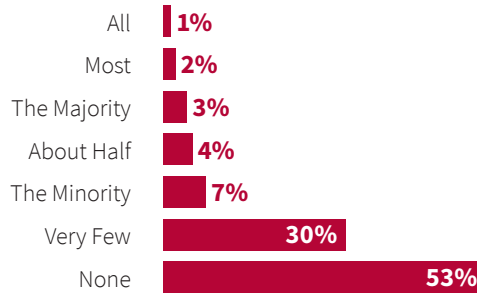


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

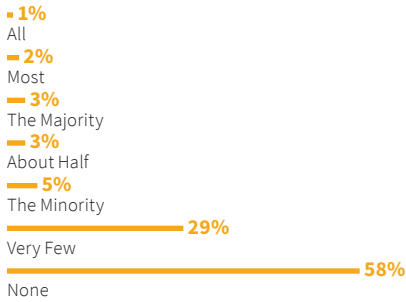
36. Roughly how many of your nonprofit's donors/grantmakers are willing to pay for randomized evaluations conducted by an external third party?

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, nonprofit board members, and other respondents (including consultants and academics).

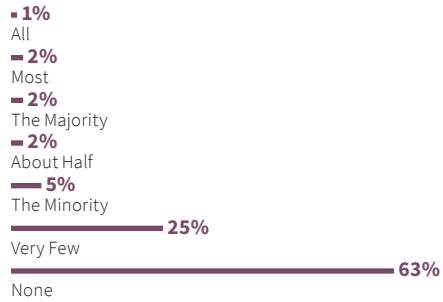
All Responses (1,466 responses)



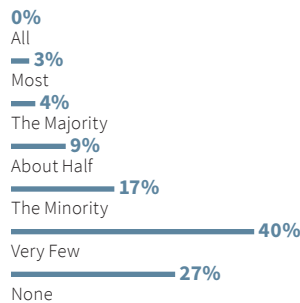
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,036 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (191 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (216 responses)

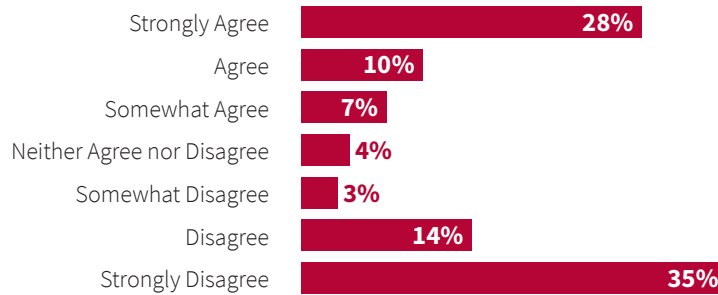


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

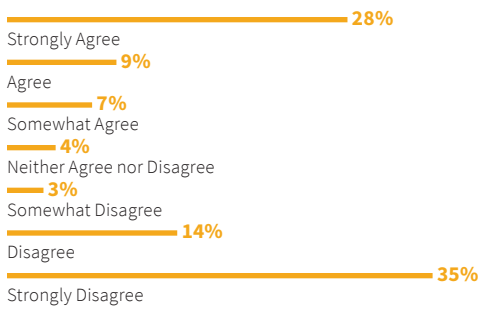
INSIGHT AND COURAGE

37. Our founder is still active in our organization.

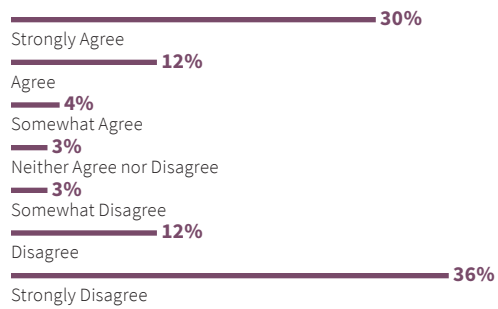
All Responses (2,751 responses)



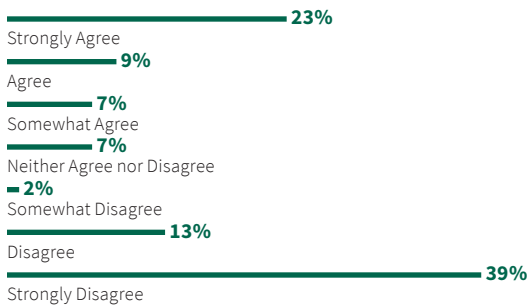
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,841 responses)



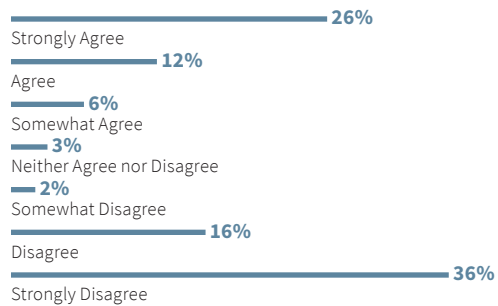
Nonprofit Board Members (348 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (155 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (326 responses)

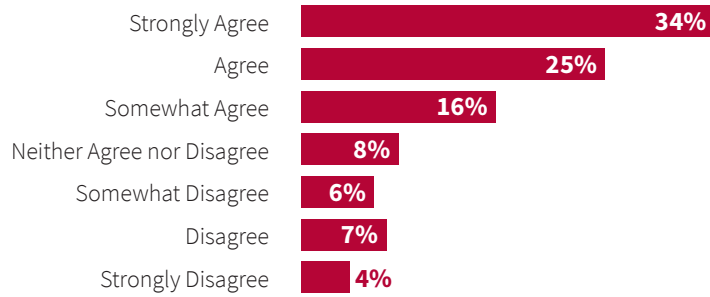


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

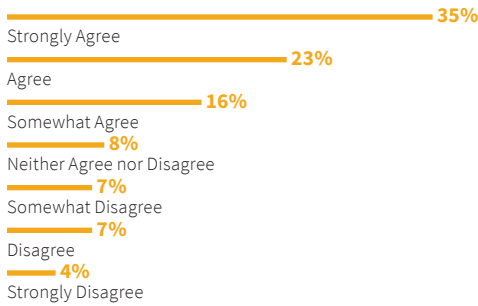
38. The insight and courage of the founder of my organization are essential to the organization's impact.

Asked only of respondents who indicated their founder is still active in their organization.

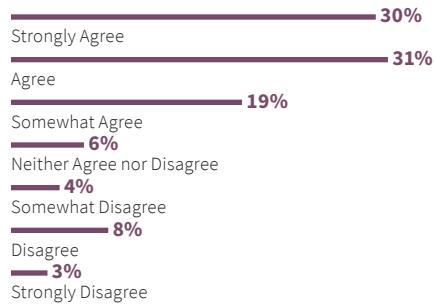
All Responses (1,197 responses)



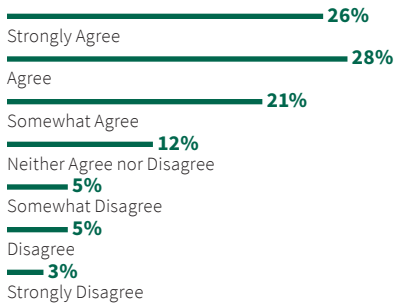
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (794 responses)



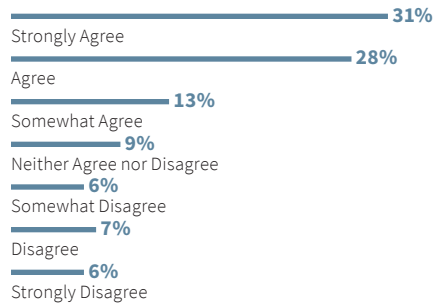
Nonprofit Board Members (159 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (58 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (141 responses)

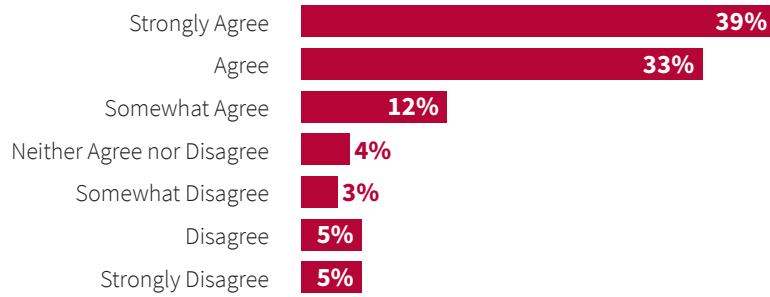


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

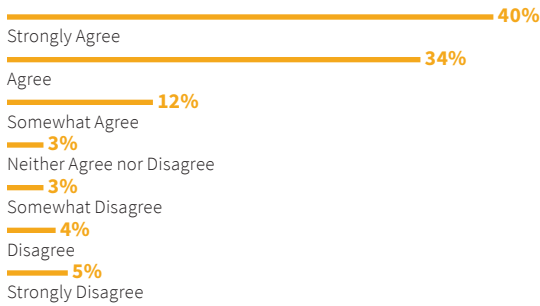
39. The insight and courage of our non-founder executive director/CEO are essential to my organization's impact.

Asked only of respondents who indicated their founder is no longer active in their organization.

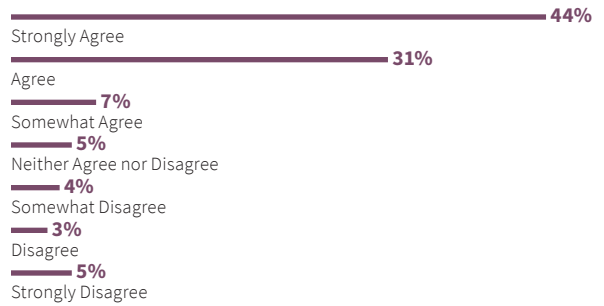
All Responses (1,397 responses)



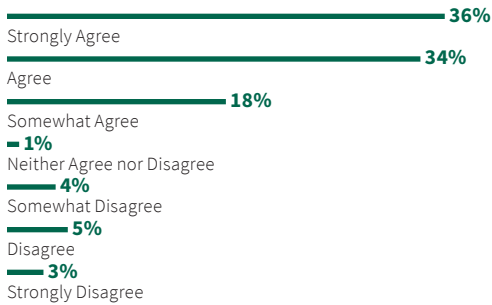
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (940 responses)



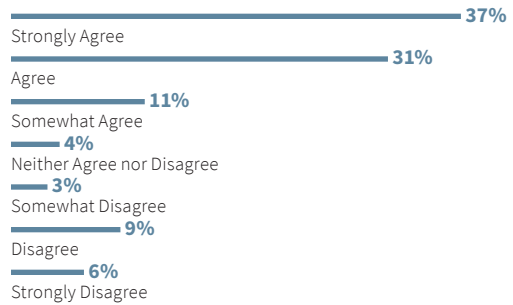
Nonprofit Board Members (174 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (80 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (170 responses)

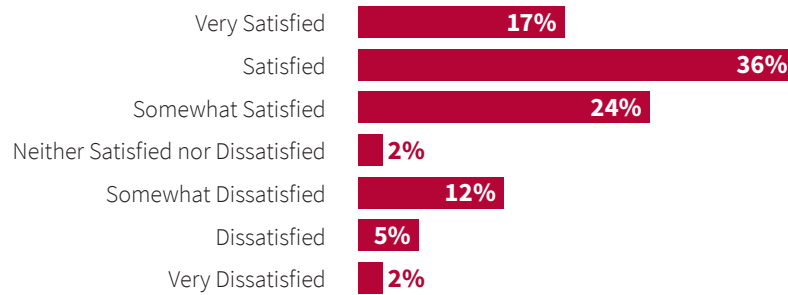


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

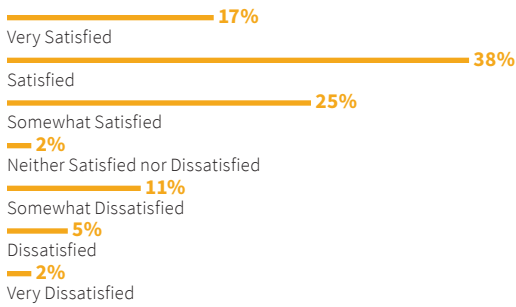
ORGANIZATION AND TALENT

40. How satisfied are you with the way your organization is managed day to day?

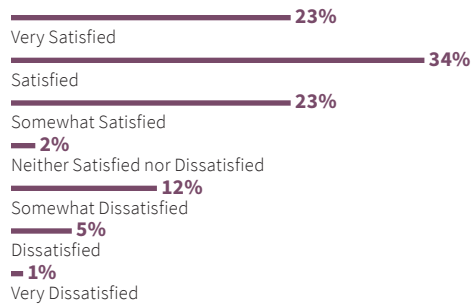
All Responses (3,083 responses)



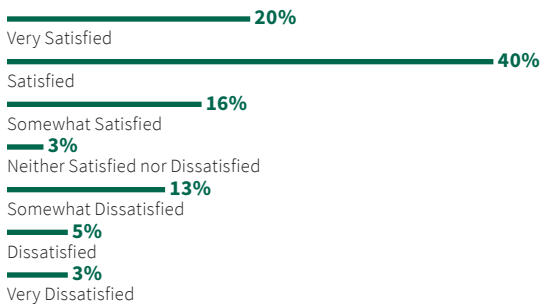
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (2,051 responses)



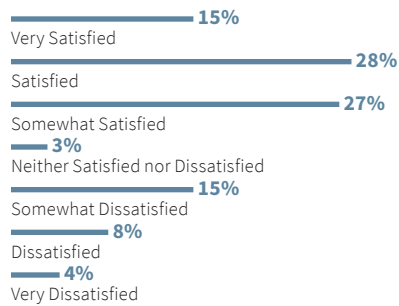
Nonprofit Board Members (382 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (188 responses)



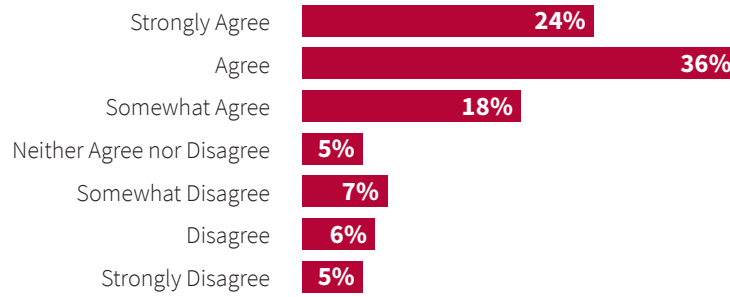
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (369 responses)



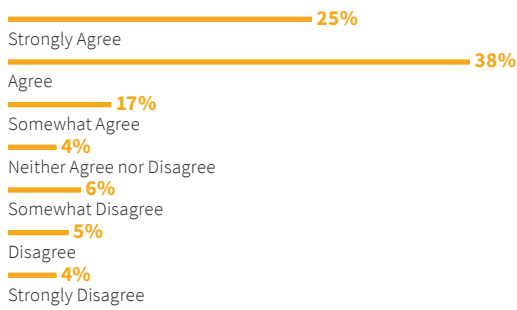
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

41. I feel confident in my organization's leadership.

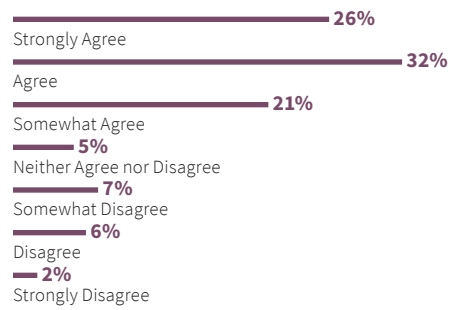
All Responses (2,949 responses)



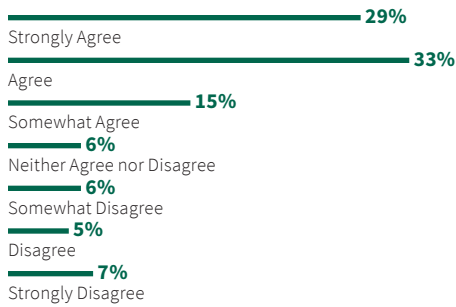
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,968 responses)



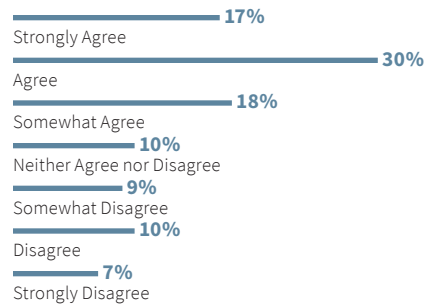
Nonprofit Board Members
(371 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff
(178 responses)



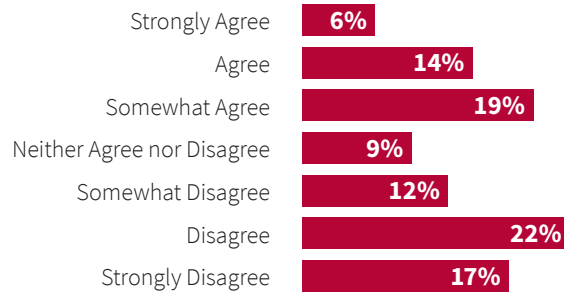
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(348 responses)



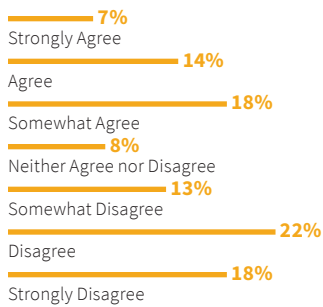
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

42. My organization conducts thorough and proactive succession planning for the executive director and top executives.

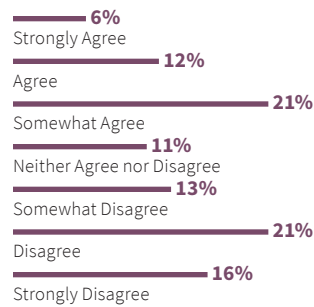
All Responses (2,709 responses)



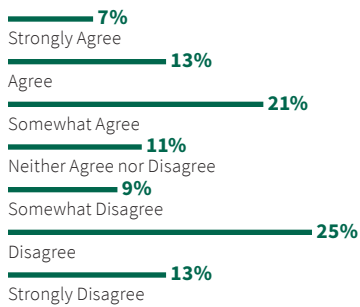
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,803 responses)



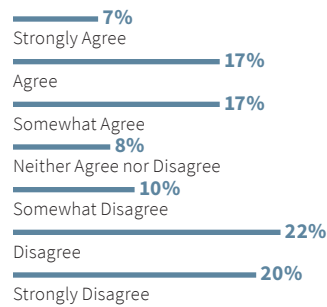
Nonprofit Board Members
(359 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff
(150 responses)



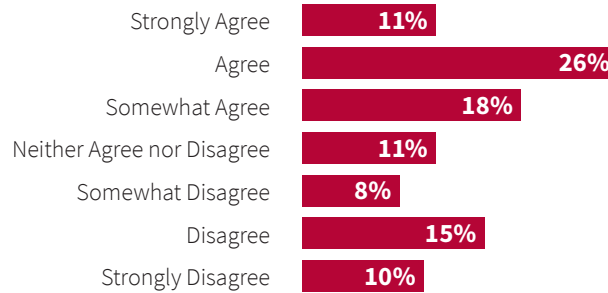
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(317 responses)



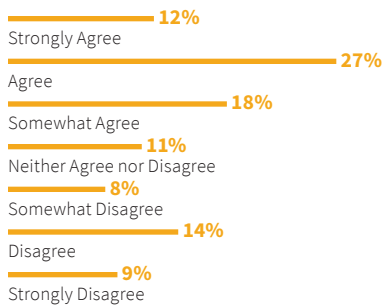
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

43. The founder/executive director of my organization has a realistic sense of when and how succession should occur.

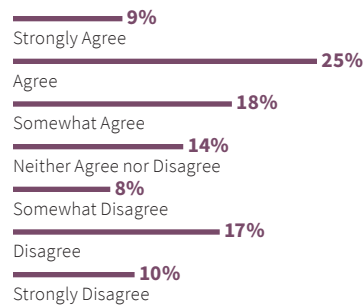
All Responses (2,540 responses)



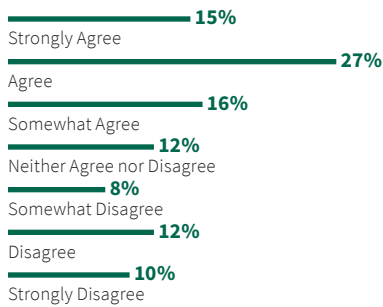
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,701 responses)



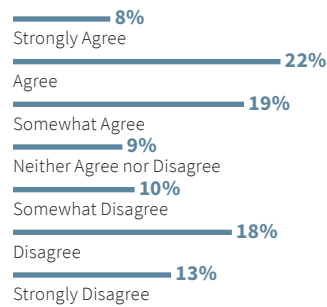
Nonprofit Board Members
(340 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff
(137 responses)



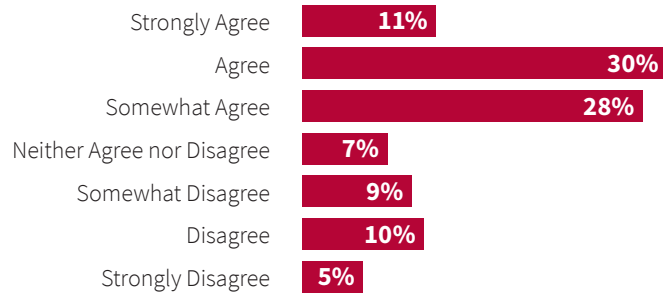
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(301 responses)



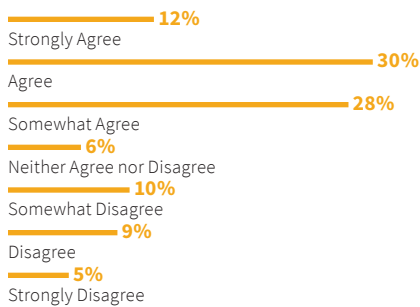
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

44. My organization sets clear expectations for employee performance.

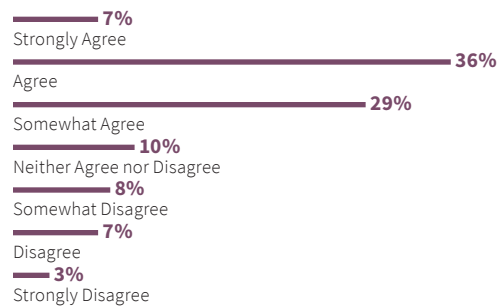
All Responses (2,856 responses)



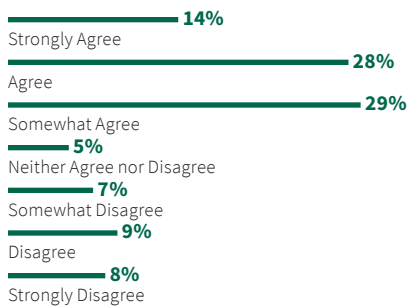
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,955 responses)



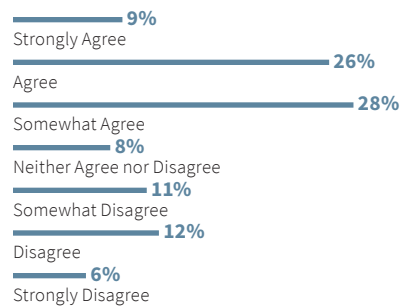
Nonprofit Board Members
(326 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff
(174 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(324 responses)

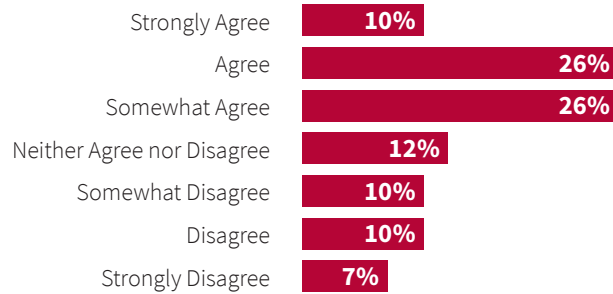


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

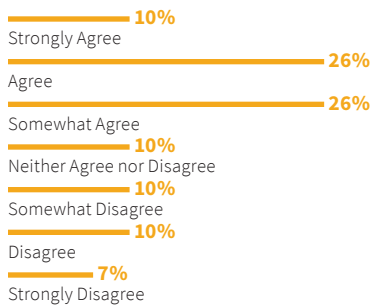
45. My organization's culture encourages and rewards high performance.

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, nonprofit board members, foundation executives or staff, foundation board members, respondents who have a foundation, and other respondents (including consultants and academics). Not asked of donors/philanthropists, unless they pursue giving through an organization.

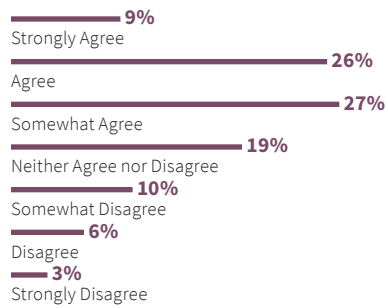
All Responses (2,875 responses)



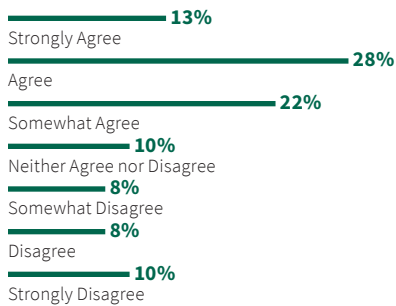
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,945 responses)



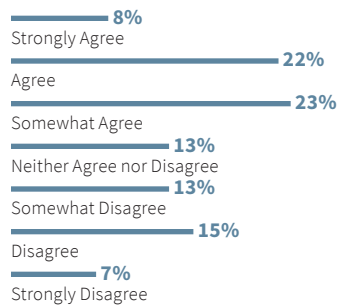
Nonprofit Board Members (343 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (179 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (328 responses)

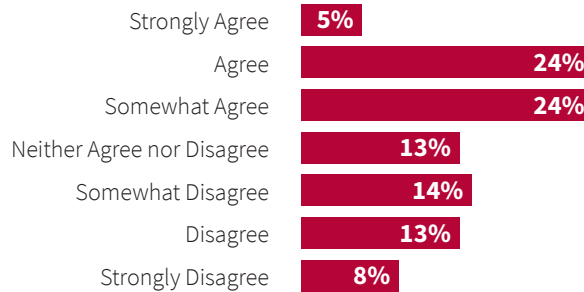


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

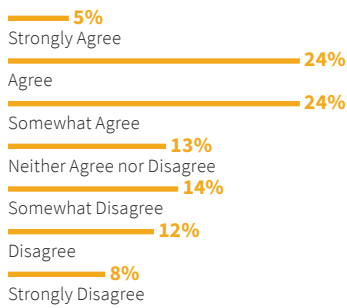
46. When employees are underperforming consistently according to clear expectations for performance, they do not stay for long in my organization.

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, nonprofit board members, foundation executives or staff, foundation board members, respondents who have a foundation, and other respondents (including consultants and academics). Not asked of donors/philanthropists, unless they pursue giving through an organization.

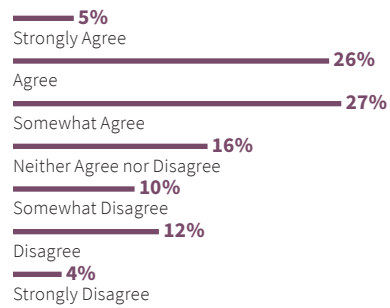
All Responses (2,541 responses)



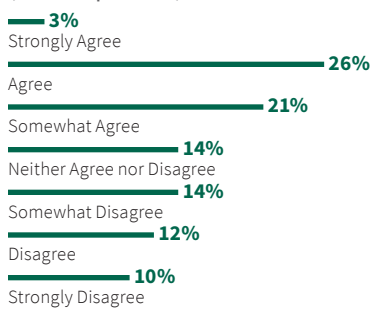
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,752 responses)



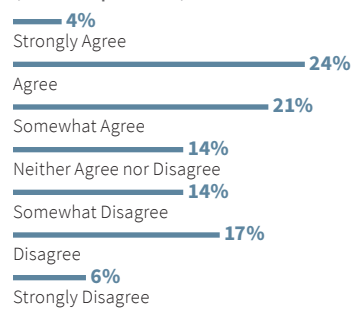
Nonprofit Board Members (286 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (153 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (281 responses)

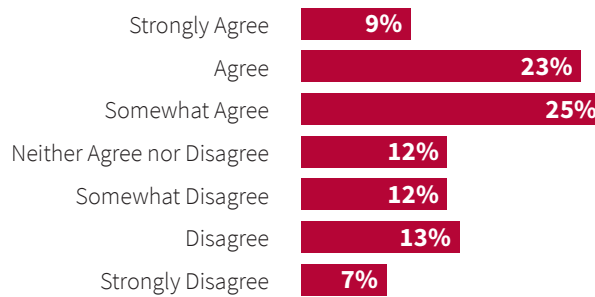


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

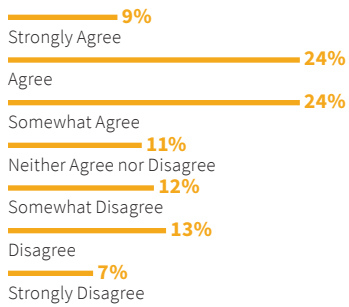
47. I receive regular and specific feedback on my performance that helps me improve.

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, foundation executives or staff, and other respondents (including consultants and academics).
Not asked of nonprofit board members or foundation board members.

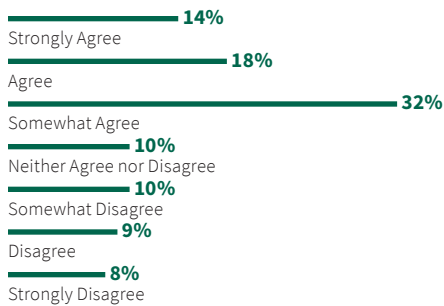
All Responses (2,456 responses)



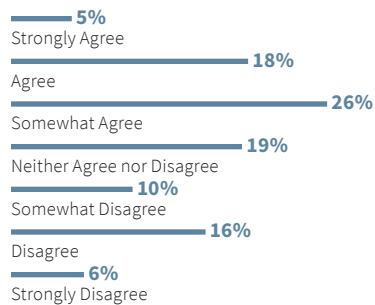
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,957 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (175 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (271 responses)

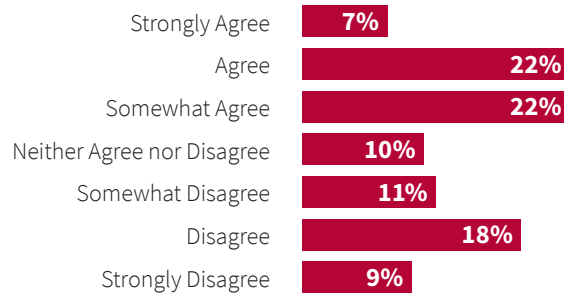


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

48. I receive regular and specific feedback on my participation and involvement that helps me improve.

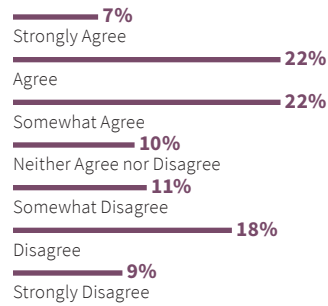
Asked only of nonprofit board members and foundation board members.

All Responses (381 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members

(359 responses)

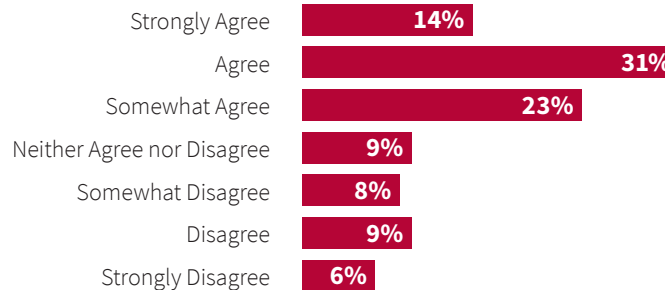


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

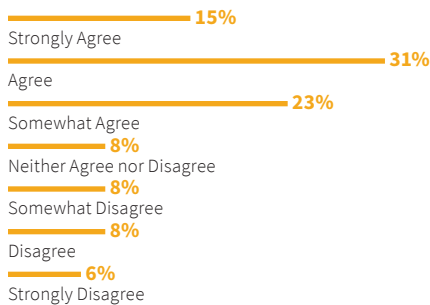
49. I receive enough positive feedback and recognition for my contributions to keep me feeling highly motivated.

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, nonprofit board members, foundation executives or staff, foundation board members, respondents who have a foundation, and other respondents (including consultants and academics). Not asked of donors/philanthropists, unless they pursue giving through an organization.

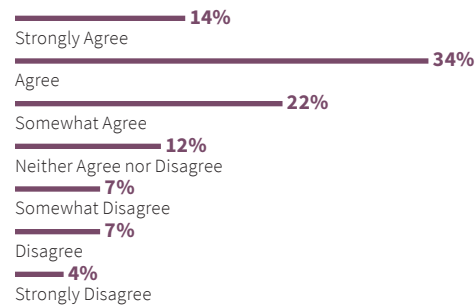
All Responses (2,866 responses)



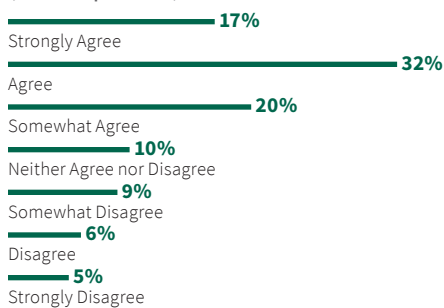
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,960 responses)



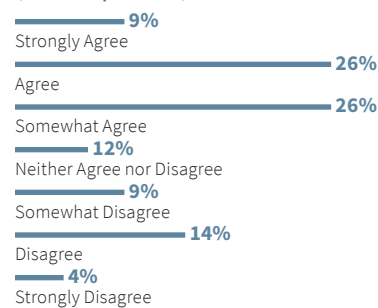
Nonprofit Board Members (359 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff (178 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (291 responses)

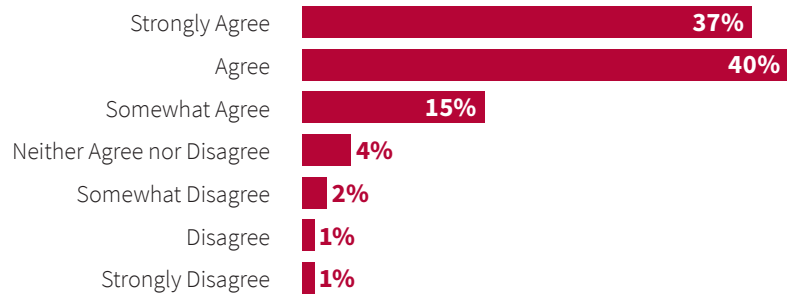


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

50. The impact of my organization is what drives my involvement.

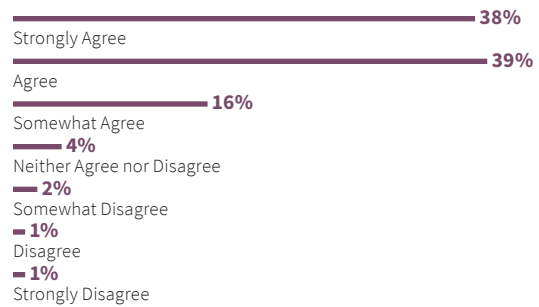
Asked only of nonprofit board members, foundation board members, and donors/philanthropists.

All Responses (414 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members

(373 responses)

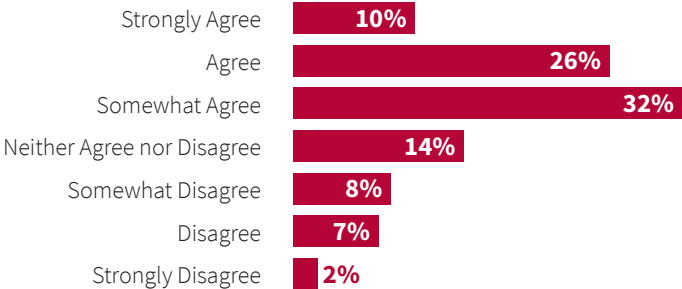


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

51. Involvement with my peers is what drives me to be involved with my organization.

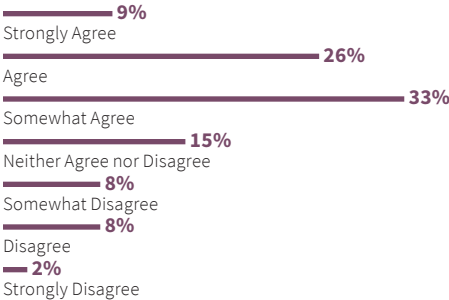
Asked only of nonprofit board members, foundation board members, and donors/philanthropists.

All Responses (393 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members

(371 responses)



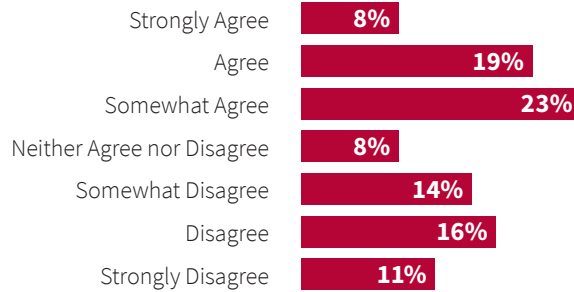
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

FUNDING

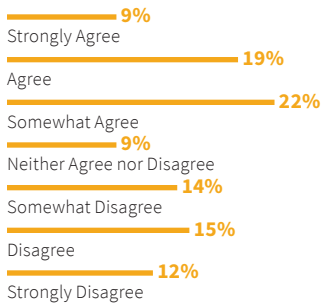
52. My organization's current efforts to obtain donations from individuals are very effective.

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, nonprofit board members, and other respondents (including consultants and academics).

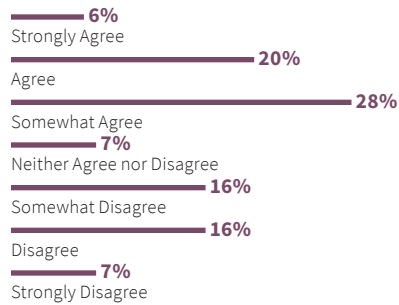
All Responses (2,496 responses)



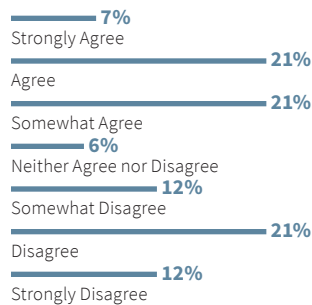
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,784 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (355 responses)



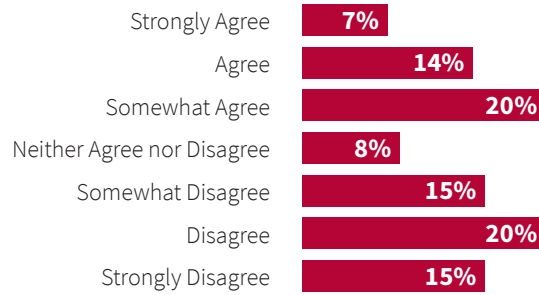
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (316 responses)



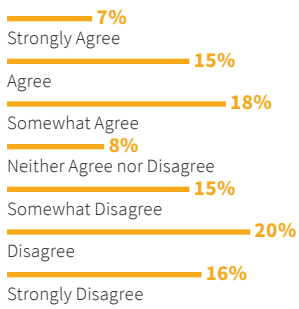
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

53. My organization’s current efforts to raise major gifts from individuals (according to my organization’s definition of “major gifts”) are very effective.

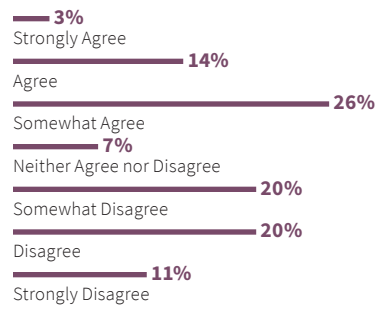
All Responses (2,464 responses)



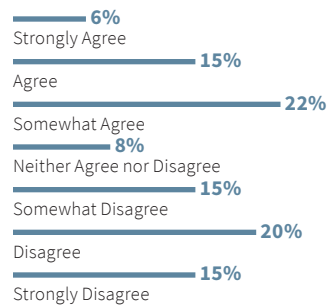
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,756 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members
(353 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(316 responses)

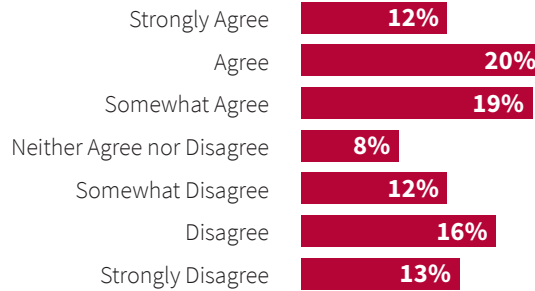


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

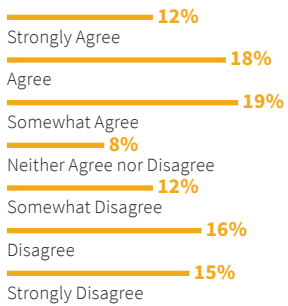
54. The financial giving to my nonprofit by its board members is currently very strong (i.e., all board members donate consistently/generously and the donations are large enough to make a real difference to the organization).

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, nonprofit board members, and other respondents (including consultants and academics).

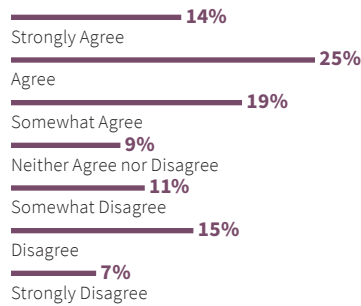
All Responses (2,365 responses)



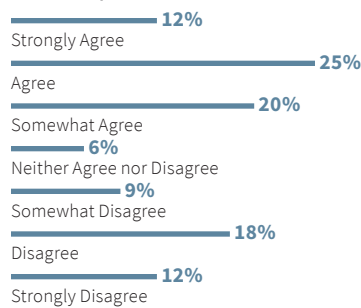
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,682 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members
(349 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(302 responses)

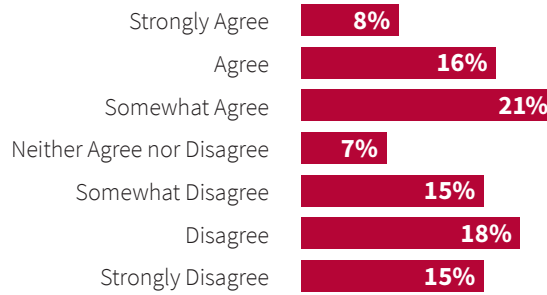


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

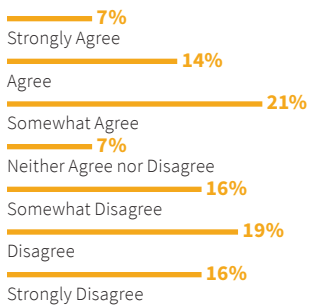
55. My nonprofit's board currently plays a very strong role in fundraising activities.

Asked only of nonprofit executives or staff, nonprofit board members, and other respondents (including consultants and academics).

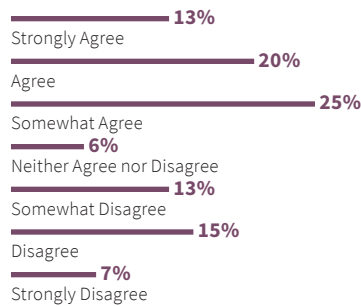
All Responses (2,506 responses)



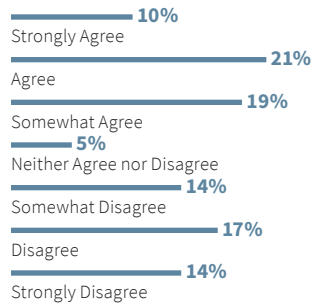
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (1,783 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members (365 responses)



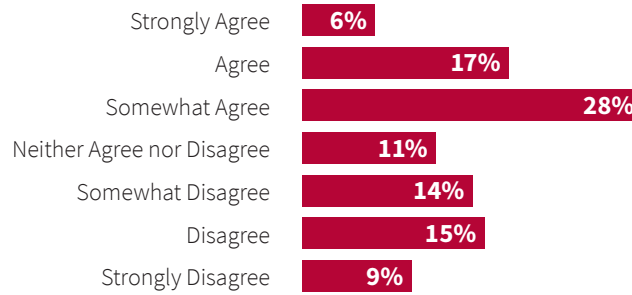
Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (323 responses)



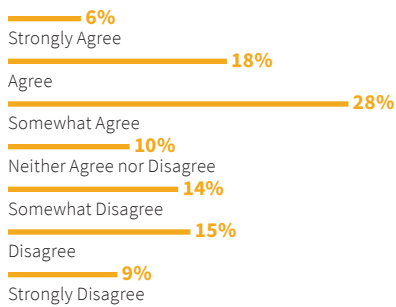
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

56. My organization leverages the Internet and technology to significantly improve our fundraising efforts.

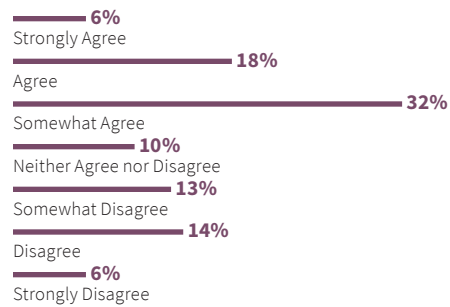
All Responses (2,567 responses)



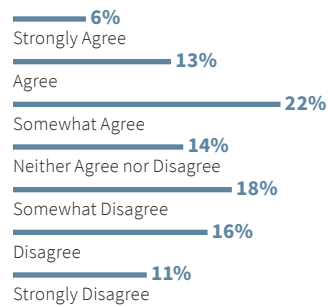
Nonprofit Executives or Staff
(1,844 responses)



Nonprofit Board Members
(357 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)
(327 responses)



Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

BOARD GOVERNANCE

Board Governance questions appear on the following pages:

Page 47

42. My organization conducts thorough and proactive succession planning for the executive director and top executives.

Page 48

43. The founder/executive director of my organization has a realistic sense of when and how succession should occur.

Page 53

48. I receive regular and specific feedback on my participation and involvement that helps me improve.

Page 59

54. The financial giving to my nonprofit by its board members is currently very strong (i.e., all board members donate consistently/generously and the donations are large enough to make a real difference to the organization).

Page 60

55. My nonprofit's board currently plays a very strong role in fundraising activities.

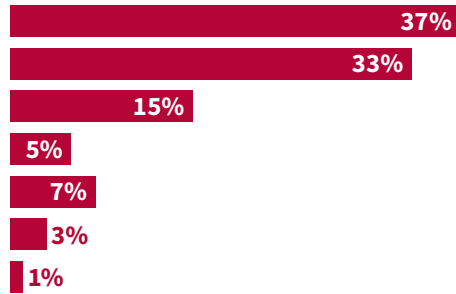
SCALING

57. If your organization has scaled to multiple locations, how much centralization exists in your organization (i.e., how much power and control is there in headquarters vs. field organizations)?

Asked only of selected respondents who work in multiple locations.

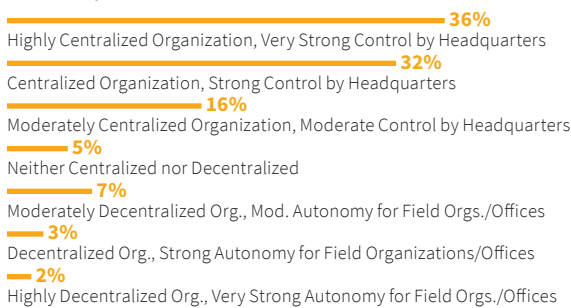
All Responses (840 responses)

Highly Centralized Organization, Very Strong Control by Headquarters
 Centralized Organization, Strong Control by Headquarters
 Moderately Centralized Organization, Moderate Control by Headquarters
 Neither Centralized nor Decentralized
 Moderately Decentralized Org., Mod. Autonomy for Field Orgs./Offices
 Decentralized Org., Strong Autonomy for Field Organizations/Offices
 Highly Decentralized Org., Very Strong Autonomy for Field Orgs./Offices



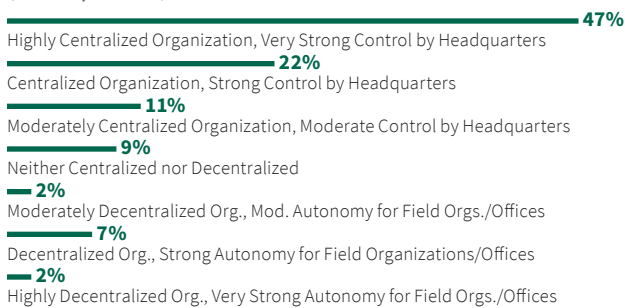
Nonprofit Executives or Staff (571 responses)

Highly Centralized Organization, Very Strong Control by Headquarters
 Centralized Organization, Strong Control by Headquarters
 Moderately Centralized Organization, Moderate Control by Headquarters
 Neither Centralized nor Decentralized
 Moderately Decentralized Org., Mod. Autonomy for Field Orgs./Offices
 Decentralized Org., Strong Autonomy for Field Organizations/Offices
 Highly Decentralized Org., Very Strong Autonomy for Field Orgs./Offices



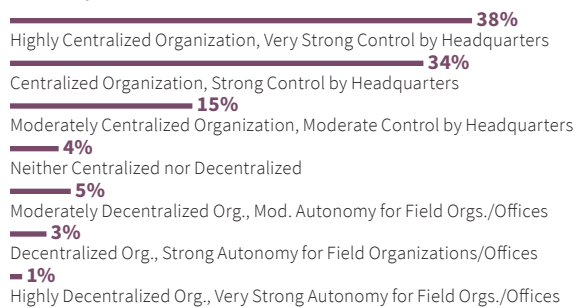
Foundation Executives or Staff (45 responses)

Highly Centralized Organization, Very Strong Control by Headquarters
 Centralized Organization, Strong Control by Headquarters
 Moderately Centralized Organization, Moderate Control by Headquarters
 Neither Centralized nor Decentralized
 Moderately Decentralized Org., Mod. Autonomy for Field Orgs./Offices
 Decentralized Org., Strong Autonomy for Field Organizations/Offices
 Highly Decentralized Org., Very Strong Autonomy for Field Orgs./Offices



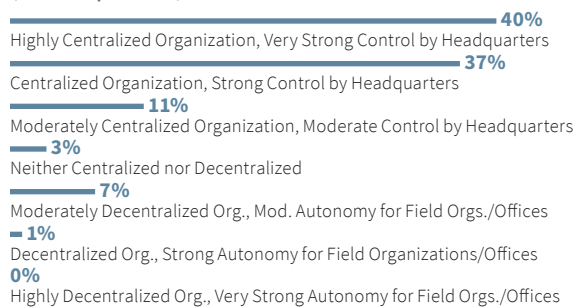
Nonprofit Board Members (98 responses)

Highly Centralized Organization, Very Strong Control by Headquarters
 Centralized Organization, Strong Control by Headquarters
 Moderately Centralized Organization, Moderate Control by Headquarters
 Neither Centralized nor Decentralized
 Moderately Decentralized Org., Mod. Autonomy for Field Orgs./Offices
 Decentralized Org., Strong Autonomy for Field Organizations/Offices
 Highly Decentralized Org., Very Strong Autonomy for Field Orgs./Offices



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit) (107 responses)

Highly Centralized Organization, Very Strong Control by Headquarters
 Centralized Organization, Strong Control by Headquarters
 Moderately Centralized Organization, Moderate Control by Headquarters
 Neither Centralized nor Decentralized
 Moderately Decentralized Org., Mod. Autonomy for Field Orgs./Offices
 Decentralized Org., Strong Autonomy for Field Organizations/Offices
 Highly Decentralized Org., Very Strong Autonomy for Field Orgs./Offices

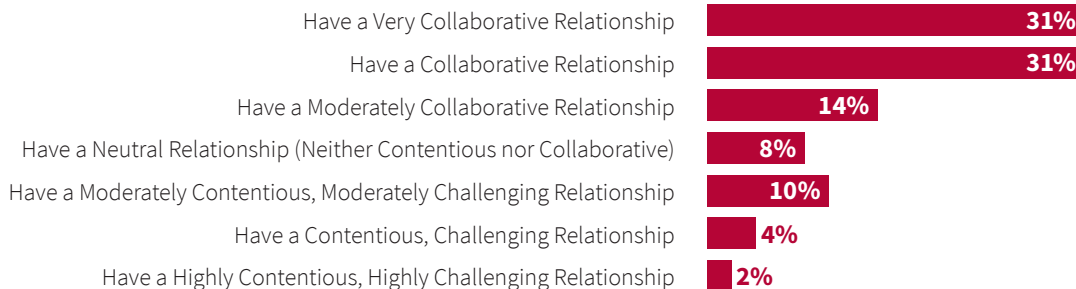


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

58. Our headquarters and field organizations:

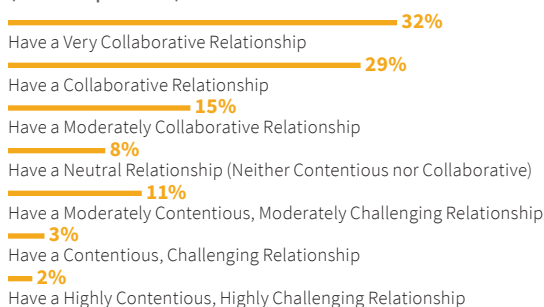
Asked only of selected respondents who work in multiple locations.

All Responses (768 responses)



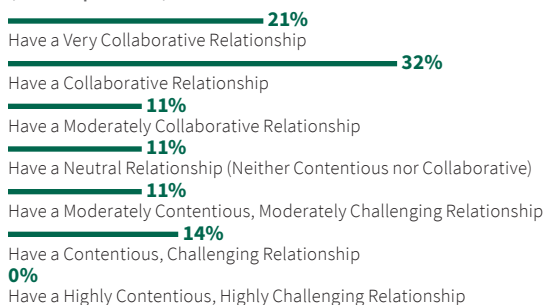
Nonprofit Executives or Staff

(526 responses)



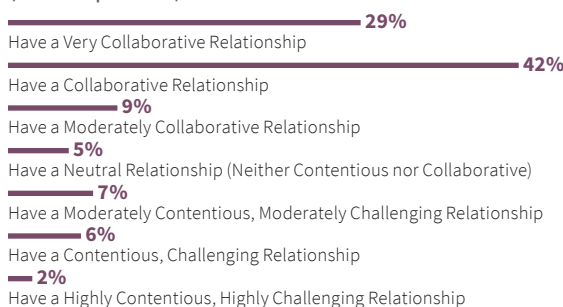
Foundation Executives or Staff

(28 responses)



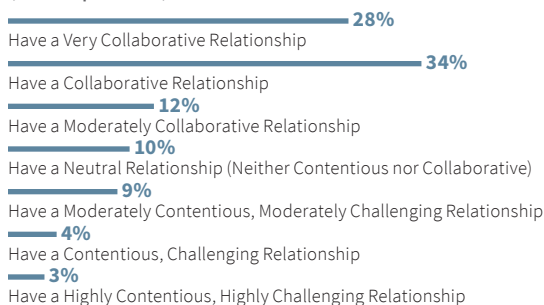
Nonprofit Board Members

(100 responses)



Other (based on knowledge of one nonprofit)

(93 responses)



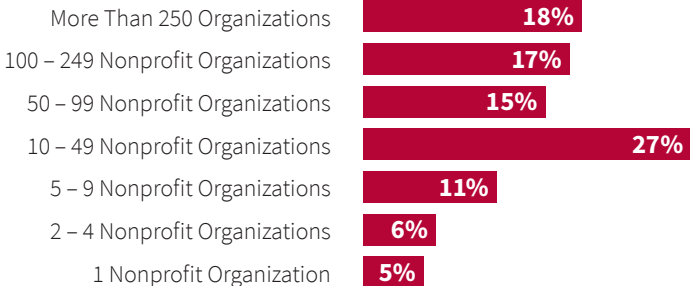
Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

QUESTIONS FOR DONORS/FUNDERS

59. To approximately how many different nonprofits do you make grants each year?

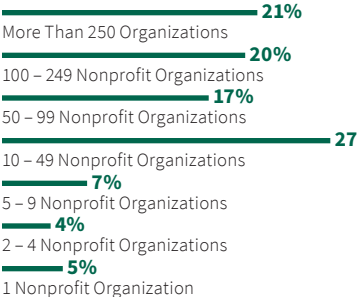
Asked only of donors/philanthropists, foundation executives or staff, and foundation board members.

All Responses (248 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff

(199 responses)

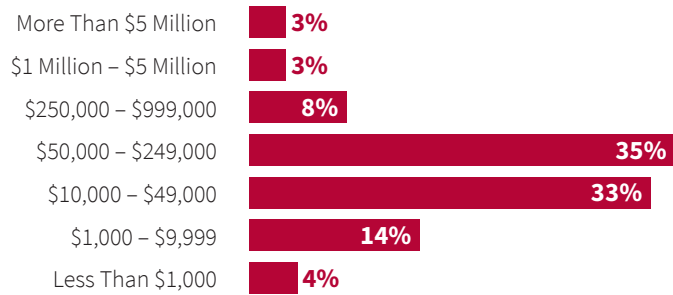


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

60. What is the average size of your annual donation/grant to each nonprofit?

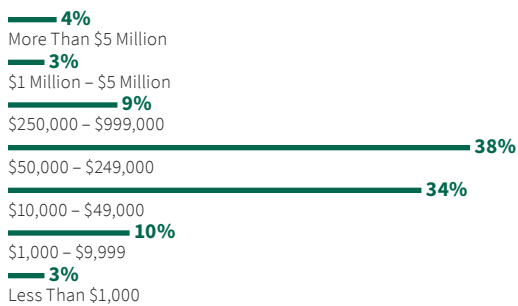
Asked only of donors/philanthropists, foundation executives or staff, and foundation board members.

All Responses (243 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff

(192 responses)

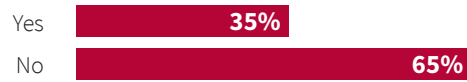


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

61. Do you conduct your giving through an organization (e.g., foundation or other type of grantmaking entity)?

Asked only of donors/philanthropists.

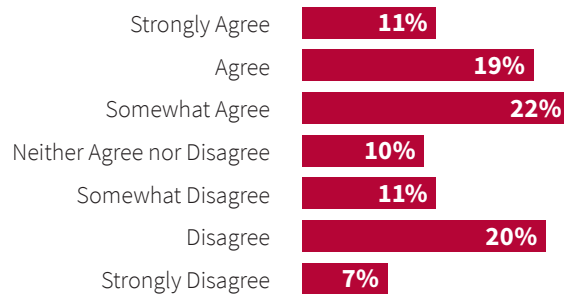
All Responses (68 responses)



62. My organization shares with other funders all of our due diligence [on], and assessments (both positive and negative) of, our grantees and potential grantees.

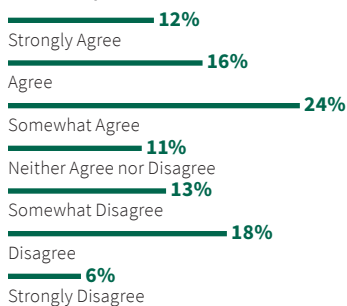
Asked only of foundation executives or staff, foundation board members, and donors/philanthropists who pursue giving through an organization.

All Responses (210 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff

(171 responses)

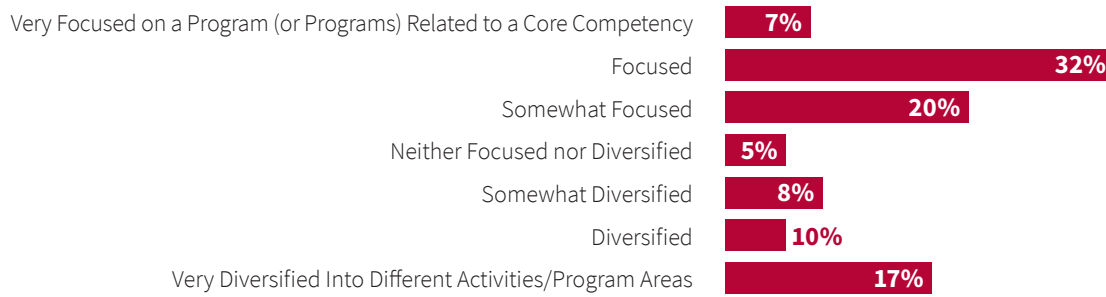


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

63. Would you characterize your organization's funding activities as focused or diversified?

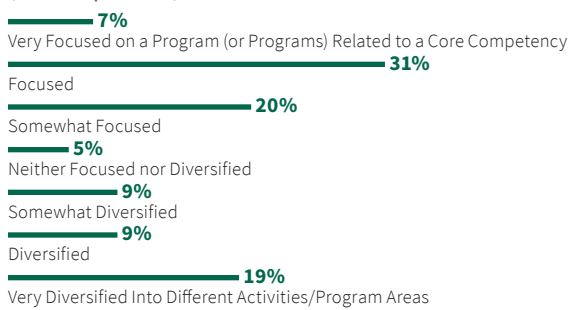
Asked only of foundation executives or staff, foundation board members, and donors/philanthropists who pursue giving through an organization.

All Responses (219 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff

(178 responses)

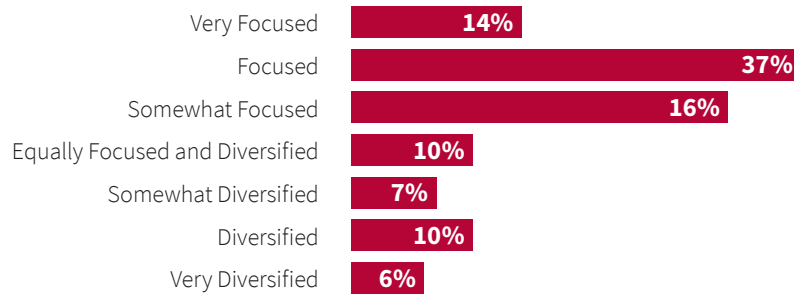


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

64. How focused or diversified do you think your organization's funding activities should be?

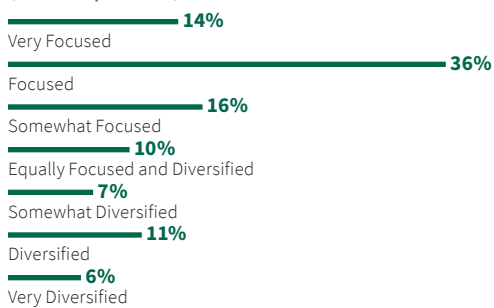
Asked only of foundation executives or staff, foundation board members, and donors/philanthropists who pursue giving through an organization.

All Responses (219 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff

(177 responses)

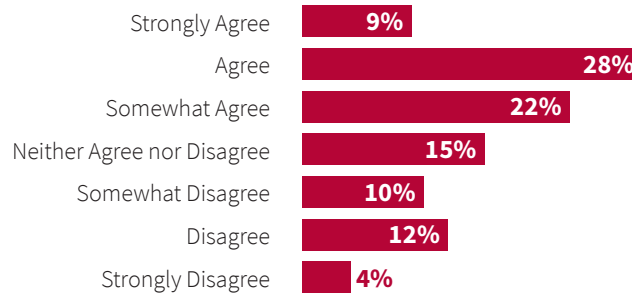


Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.

65. Before funding or re-funding a nonprofit, my funding entity looks at the scope of the nonprofit's program areas to ensure sufficient focus and minimal diversification

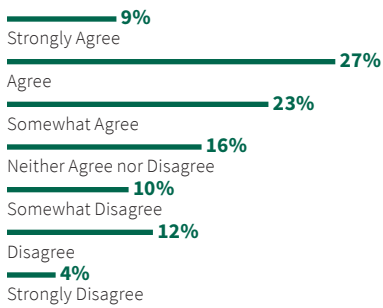
Asked only of foundation executives or staff and foundation board members.

All Responses (180 responses)



Foundation Executives or Staff

(158 responses)



Results may not equal 100% due to rounding. Subgroup data shown only for roles with 100 or more responses.



METHODOLOGY

More than 3,000 stakeholders from the nonprofit sector were surveyed about practices at their organizations and about developments in the sector overall. From November 2015 to March 2016, a wide variety of stakeholders participated in the survey: nonprofit executives and staff, nonprofit board members, foundation executives and staff, foundation board members, donors/philanthropists, and others, including consultants, advisors, academics, writers, and analysts. The survey drew self-reported, anonymous responses in which stakeholders shared perceptions about their organization (or an organization they know well). The results, therefore, reflect internal organizational *perceptions* and do not provide an external assessment of specific organizations or the entire nonprofit sector.

The “Survey Responses” section of this report includes response data on all questions that were put to respondents. Some questions (as noted where relevant) were asked only of certain subgroups. For each question, “All Responses”—which includes all responses of those who were asked that question—are reported first. The responses of subgroups are then reported in cases where the number of respondents in a subgroup was greater than 100. “N/A” (“not applicable”) responses are not included in the reported data. For a small number of questions, response text was adjusted for space and clarity.

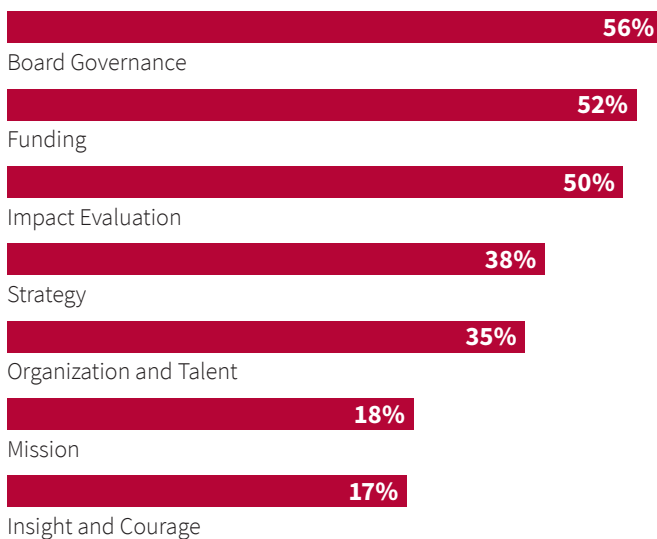
SURVEY ANALYSIS

The research team that designed and conducted the Stanford Survey on Leadership and Management in the Nonprofit Sector prepared the following overview of their efforts to analyze survey response data.

To assess the leadership and management performance of the nonprofit organizations represented by survey respondents, we analyzed responses from more than 2,200 nonprofit executives, staff, and board members. For this analysis, we selected a representative set of questions to serve as indicators for each of the seven areas of strategic leadership that Meehan and Jonker describe in *Engine of Impact*, and we studied responses to those questions. We converted these qualitative responses into points on a numerical scale to establish an average score for each respondent in each of the seven areas. Then, using a predetermined threshold, we examined these scores to assess whether respondents' organizations were strong or weak in each area. If an organization scored below the threshold for one of the seven areas, we concluded that it was struggling in that area.

On the basis of this assessment, we were able to identify certain key data points. For example, we determined the percentage of respondents' organizations that struggled in each of the seven components of strategic leadership. These results appear in the chart below.

Percentage of organizations struggling with each of the seven elements of strategic leadership

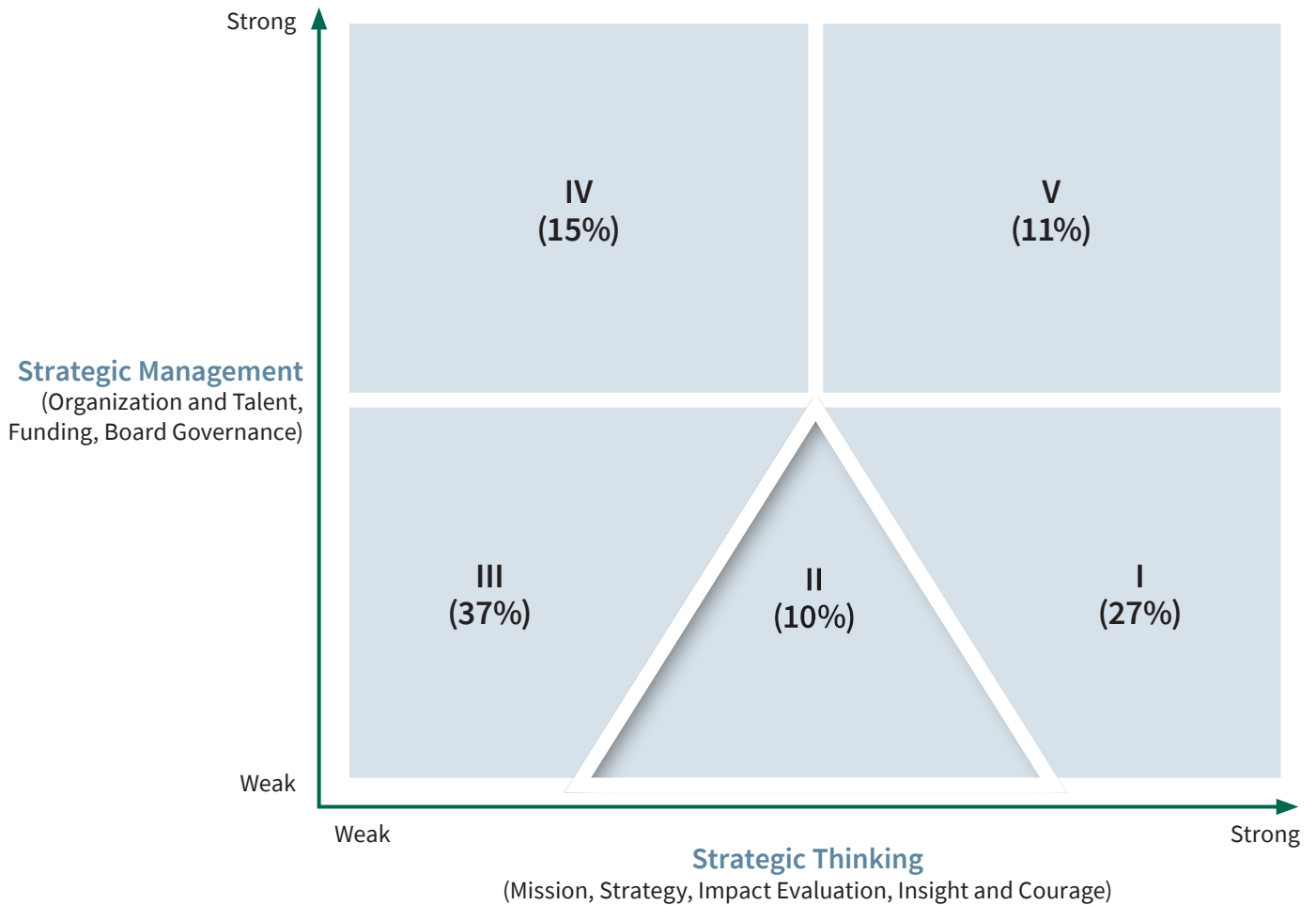


In addition, we determined the number of elements in which each respondent's organization was strong or weak. Significantly, only 11 percent of organizations were strong in all seven elements of strategic leadership. More than 80 percent of organizations struggled with at least one of these elements. (The gap between those two figures reflects the fact that a small percentage of respondents did not complete answers to questions that relate to one or more of the seven elements. Consequently, their organizations could not be definitively scored as strong—or otherwise—in all elements.) More than one-quarter (28 percent) of organizations were strong in two or fewer of the seven elements.

We also evaluated responses to place each respondent's organization on the Readiness to Scale Matrix, a tool that Meehan and Jonker introduce in Chapter 8 of *Engine of Impact*. This matrix sorts organizations according to their performance along two dimensions: strategic thinking (which encompasses mission, strategy, impact evaluation, and insight and courage) and strategic management (which encompasses organization and talent, funding, and board governance). Meehan and Jonker assert that organizations that exhibit weakness in strategic thinking are not yet ready to scale their impact.

To establish the distribution of survey respondents' organizations on the Readiness to Scale Matrix, we conducted additional analysis. Organizations that were strong in at least three of the four elements of strategic thinking were classified as strong in that dimension overall. Similarly, organizations that were strong in at least two of the three elements of strategic management were classified as strong in that dimension overall. (In addition, to qualify as strong in either dimension, all elements in that dimension had to reach a minimum threshold of performance.) If a respondent did not answer any question related to one of the seven elements, we did not assign a rating for that element to the respondent's organization.

Distribution of select survey respondents' organizations on the Readiness to Scale Matrix



We then used these classifications—combined, in certain cases, with data on an organization’s budget and its years of existence—to place each organization in one of five quadrants on the Readiness to Scale matrix.* The percentages of respondents belonging to those categories are as follows:

- Organizations in Quadrant I (27 percent) are strong in strategic thinking but not in strategic management. Meehan and Jonker suggest that these organizations are poised to scale their impact but must first strengthen their performance in strategic management.
- Organizations in Quadrant II (10 percent), like those in Quadrant I, are strong in strategic thinking but not in strategic management. They differ from their Quadrant I counterparts in two important ways: They have annual expenditures of less than \$1 million, and they have been in existence for five or more years. These organizations, Meehan and Jonker posit, are exactly as large as they should be: They lack the resources or the ambition to support an aggressive growth plan, but their strategic thinking is at a level that enables them to provide a needed service in a single locality or to a small target population.
- Organizations in Quadrant III (37 percent) struggle with both strategic thinking and strategic management. Meehan and Jonker posit that these organizations are neither ready nor able to scale their impact anytime soon.
- Organizations in Quadrant IV (15 percent) struggle with strategic thinking but exhibit strong strategic management. Meehan and Jonker argue that these organizations, although they are able to pursue growth, are not truly ready to scale their impact.

- Organizations in Quadrant V (11 percent) excel at all seven components of strategic thinking and strategic management. These organizations, Meehan and Jonker explain, are ready to scale their impact—and, indeed, may already be doing so. This quadrant differs from the other quadrants in one crucial respect: For an organization to fall into this category, it is not enough for that organization to be strong in three of the four elements of strategic thinking, or in two of the three elements of strategic management. To meet the standard that Meehan and Jonker set forth in *Engine of Impact*, an organization must be strong in *all* areas of strategic leadership. Respondents’ organizations, therefore, have been assigned to this category on the basis of that principle.

In *Engine of Impact*, Meehan and Jonker explain that strategic thinking is analogous to “building and tuning the engine” and that strategic management is analogous to “finding the fuel” for that engine. Strategic thinking and strategic management are both necessary to fully scale impact.

Endnote

- * In *Engine of Impact*, Meehan and Jonker assign a name to each of the five quadrants in the Readiness to Scale matrix. For Quadrant I, they use the label Field of Dreams; for Quadrant II, Small Is Beautiful; for Quadrant III, Scale Jail; for Quadrant IV, The Waterfall; and for Quadrant V, Promised Land.



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ABOUT THE SURVEY COLLABORATORS

The Center for Social Innovation (CSI) at Stanford Graduate School of Business

CSI is dedicated to creating social and environmental change in the world. Through research, education, and experiential learning, CSI strengthens the capacity of individuals and organizations to develop innovative solutions in poverty alleviation, access to health care and education, sustainable development, environmental protection, human rights, and other fields.

<http://csi.gsb.stanford.edu>

The Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (PACS)

Stanford PACS is a research center that develops and shares knowledge to improve philanthropy, strengthen civil society, and effect social change. It connects students, scholars, and practitioners and is the publisher of *Stanford Social Innovation Review*.

<https://pacscenter.stanford.edu>

Stanford Social Innovation Review (SSIR)

SSIR informs and inspires millions of social change leaders from around the world and from all sectors of society—nonprofits, business, government, and engaged citizens. Its mission is to advance, educate, and inspire the field of social innovation by seeking out, cultivating, and disseminating the best in research- and practice-based knowledge.

<https://ssir.org>

GuideStar

GuideStar is the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations. More than 8 million people use GuideStar data every year to make more intelligent decisions about the social sector. These decisions drive social innovation and help make the world a better place.

<http://www.guidestar.org>

BoardSource

BoardSource works to inspire excellence in nonprofit governance and board and staff leadership by supporting and educating nonprofit leaders. The support that BoardSource provides is strengthened by its broader work on critical sector issues that involve opportunities for board leaders to make a difference in their communities and throughout the world.

<https://www.boardsource.org>

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