2014

INDIVIDUAL DONOR BENCHMARK REPORT

Third Space Studio

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Individual Donor Benchmark Report 2014

I'm excited to share this year's Individual Donor Benchmark Report. The 2014 report expands on the work we started in 2012 to help grassroots organizations strengthen fundraising efforts.

I began this project because I believe that successful fundraisers set ambitious yet realistic goals, experiment with new strategies, and invest in the strategies that work. Knowing what works means doing some deep analysis: What is the average gift from our major donors and how does that compare to other organizations? How many monthly donors can we realistically expect to attract?

Unfortunately, small nonprofits often operate in a vacuum, with no way to compare their goals or results to similar organizations. The goal of this project is to take a small slice of the nonprofit universe and create a useful set of metrics. My hope is to create a clear picture of realistic fundraising goals and results that organizations can share with their staff and board.

If you have questions about the data presented in this report, or would like to find out how to be included in next year's survey, please contact Heather at heather@thirdspacestudio.com.

Heather Yandow
Third Space Studio

Third **Space**
STUDIO

(919) 780 4117
heather@thirdspacestudio.com
thirdspacestudio.com

Acknowledgements

I'd like to say a big thank you to the 87 organizations who are tracking their data and were willing to share it with us – and you – in this report.

Thanks also to BC/DC Ideas for their fantastic marketing and communications support for the project.

Many thanks to the sponsors of this year's Individual Donor Benchmark Project, Network for Good, NeonCRM, Delve Analytics, Little Green Light, AGH Strategies, and Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training.

A special thanks to Mike Glover for his expert help with data analysis.

Thanks also to Valerie Costa, Russell Herman, Andy Robinson, Ian Palmquist, Meg Coward, Jerimee Richir, Joanna Joslyn, and Jenny Carillo for their help reaching out to organizations to be part of the project.

Finally, a huge thank you to Meredith Emmett, the founder of Third Space Studio and a steadfast supporter of this crazy project.

Communications partner:
BC/DC Ideas
bcdcideas.com

Other partners:

Network for Good offers innovative online donation and peer fundraising software for nonprofits, plus the expertise, training, and support to drive successful campaigns. The company distributes millions of donations from donors to good causes each year. Since 2001, Network for Good has processed more than $1 billion in donations to over 100,000 charities through its secure online giving platform. Network for Good is a Certified B Corporation and the Network for Good Donor Advised Fund is accredited by the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance, meeting all 20 of its standards for charity accountability. To find out more, please visit www.networkforgood.com

This year's report includes data from 87 organizations with budgets under $2 million from across the US. While we've been warned by data experts that our findings are not 'statistically significant', we find it incredibly interesting – and hope you do, too!

While we love all the data, here are some things that we noticed this year:

There are a few important data points that stayed the same, despite tripling the number of organizations participating in the survey. To us, that says that we may have found some universal truths about individual donor fundraising for small and mighty organizations.

	2013	2014
Number of organizations participating	29	87
Total amount raised from individual donors	$168,042	$170,183
Percentage of revenue from individual donors	36%	36%
Average gift	$403	$435
Percentage of individual donor revenue generated online	16%	17%
Percentage of individual donor revenue generated from donors giving $1,000 or more	51%	49%
Board participation in individual donor fundraising	45%	44%

The single most important thing you can do to strengthen your individual donor fundraising is to create a plan. We tried to find correlations between every piece of data in this report – but the only one that really mattered was whether or not your organization had a fundraising plan. Read more about these findings in the "How can I raise more money?" section on page 18.

There's still a huge opportunity in online giving. Organizations that are just starting online programs have the potential for explosive growth, and those with existing programs (generating $5,000 or more in 2013) saw 25% growth over the past year. If your organization isn't maximizing your ability to solicit and accept online donations, you're missing out.

This year marks the fourth time we've completed the Individual Donor Benchmark Report. Thank you to all the nonprofits that have contributed data over the past four years, including four fantastic groups who have participated every year.

Our numbers and budget size of contributors have changed over the past four years, so please take these comparisons with a grain of salt, but what we find remarkable is how the numbers have grown or remained stable.

STATISTICS	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of nonprofits participating	22	27	29	87
Average gift	$324	$413	$403	$435
Number of individual donors	388	669	552	436
% of total revenue from individual donors	30%	29%	36%	36%
Average online gift	$110	$91	$94	$210
% of individual donor revenue raised online	13%	13%	16%	17%

This report is unique in its focus on individual donors and organizations with budgets under $2 million. But as our sector becomes more data-informed (one of our favorite new buzzwords), there are more and more sources of data out there. Here are a few of the other studies we've paid attention to in the last year:

- M+R releases an annual report focusing on online giving activities of 84 national organizations.

- Blackbaud produces their Charitable Giving Report, which includes a look at the overall fundraising of 2,656 organizations across the US with budgets under $1 million.

- Network for Good regularly releases data on the donations they process as well, including the Digital Giving Index and other reports.

	M+R	Blackbaud	Network for Good	INDIVIDUAL DONOR BENCHMARK STUDY 2014		
				All Groups	Groups with more than $5,000 of online income in 2013*	Groups with more than $10,000 of online income in 2013*
Online revenue growth 2013 to 2014	13%	10.6%	9%	403%	25%	26%
Average online gift	$84	--	$124	$210	$176	$186
Average recurring gift (per year)	$264	--	$624	$520	$389	$361
Percentage of total fundraising from online giving	--	7.4%**	--	17%	17%	19%

*These categories are included to provide a better comparison to the other studies presented, which include more organizations with mature online fundraising programs.
**May include fundraising revenue beyond individual donor revenue.

Another interesting report is UnderDeveloped by Compasspoint, which looks at many challenges to fundraising. They examined 2,722 organizations of all shapes and sizes. They found the average salary for organizations with budgets under $1 million to be $49,141, which compares with $43,066 in our survey.

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

Moving from Data to Action

This report is designed to give you a snapshot of results from organizations like yours, nonprofits with budgets under $2 million. This is a great way for you to see how you measure up against your peers.

You can use this document to:

Celebrate your strengths

Find areas where you are doing well and build on that success. Be sure to share your success with your colleagues and Board!

Identify your challenges

This report is your annual opportunity to check-in on how you are faring against the average and where you might want to grow your fundraising program.

Find markers that motivate your team

If your staff and board are obsessed with increasing online donations, focus there and use the averages in this report as a guide. We recommend picking two to three markers of success for your organization and work on those smaller goals.

We recommend that you don't use this document as your only source of inspiration. Your nonprofit has so many factors and unique aspects that are beyond the numbers shared here.

Glossary

Could vs. should - We've purposely chosen to use "could" versus "should" when talking about fundraising goals. These numbers should be used as a benchmark for where your nonprofit compares to other organizations.

Sizes

We've reported the average of our sample, but we've also broken many of the numbers down to smaller brackets. Find the specific slice that fits your organization:

- ◆ **AVERAGE**
- ○ **SMALL | revenue under $200,000**
- ◎ **MEDIUM | revenue between $200,000 and $499,999**
- ◎ **LARGE | revenue between $500,000 and $999,999**
- ◎ **SUPER | revenue between $1,000,000 and $1,999,999**

HOW MUCH COULD WE BE RAISING FROM INDIVIDUAL DONORS?

Individual Donor Giving

**That's a great question – and there are many ways to answer it. Here are a few statistics to help you develop a better idea of how much you could raise from individuals.**

Percentage of Overall Revenue

On average, organizations under $2 million raise about 36% of their budget from individual donors – the second year in a row that's been true. There is some variation based on budget size, with smaller organizations raising more of their budgets from individuals.

- 36%
- 57%
- 25%
- 29%
- 30%
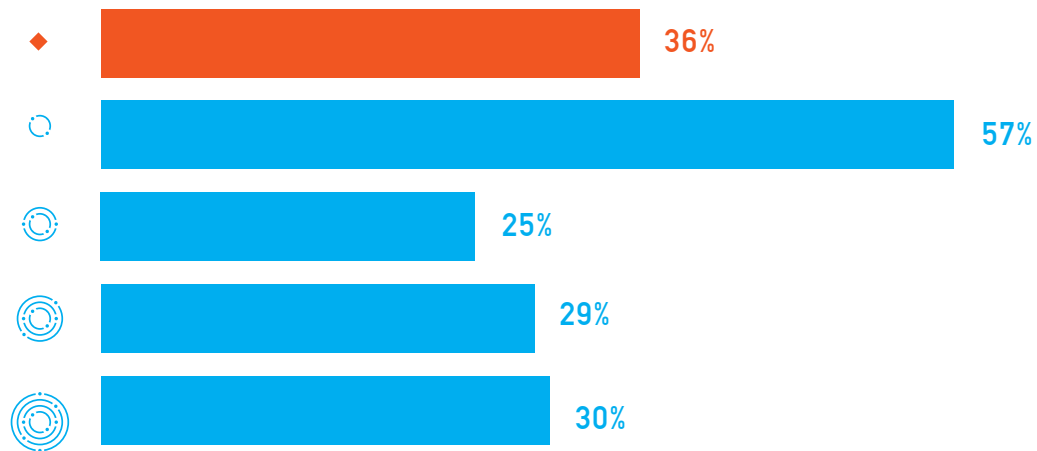
Total Dollars Raised

Another way to benchmark your individual donor fundraising is to look at dollars raised, which is about $170,183 on average. While averages can be useful, they shouldn't stress you out. The amount raised from individuals differs greatly by organizational size:

◆ **AVERAGE**	**$170,183**
○ SMALL | revenue under $200,000	$49,227
◎ MEDIUM | revenue between $200,000 and $499,999	$86,241
◎ LARGE | revenue between $500,000 and $999,999	$205,815
◎ SUPER | revenue between $1,000,000 and $1,999,999	$413,338

Number of Gifts

Another option is to look at the total number of donors and average gift for each donor. Overall, organizations had about 436 donors giving about $435 on average. Again, there are big changes by organizational size:
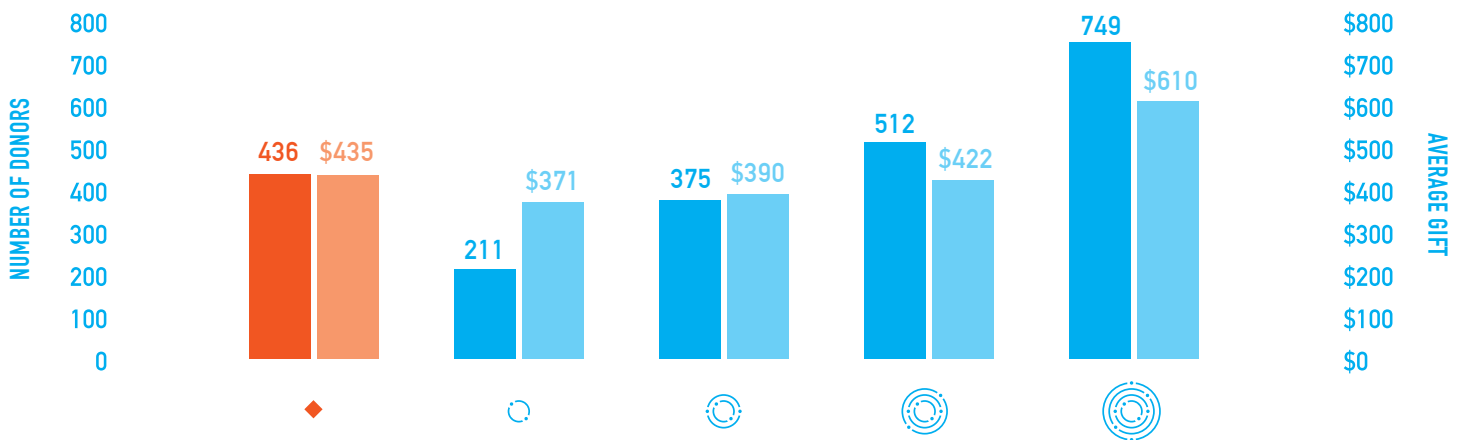
Impact of Memberships

Many organizations use memberships as one of their individual donor strategies, including 16 of our survey respondents. As you might expect, membership organizations had more donors (519 vs. 417) with smaller average gifts ($294 vs. $467), but raised almost the same percentage of their budget from individuals (33% vs. 36%).

Major Gifts

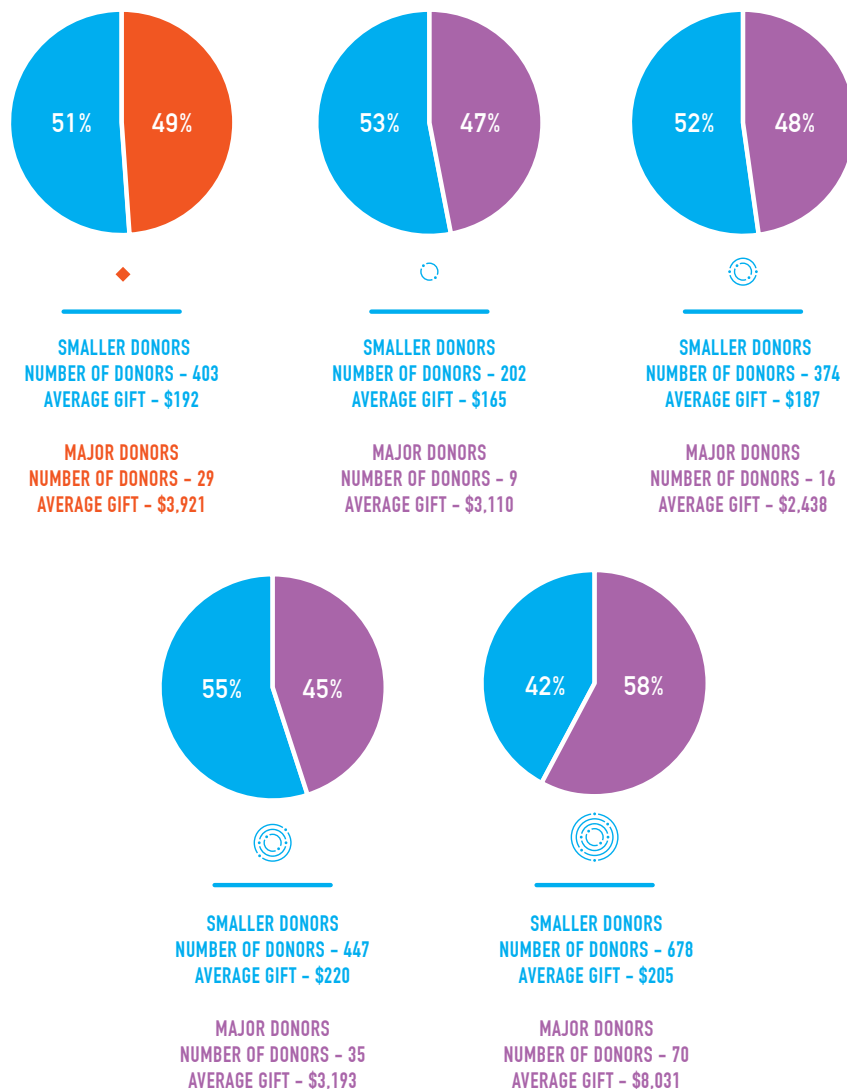We also looked at how gifts broke down by size: those $1,000 or more (often called major gifts) and those under $1,000 (not often given a special name – we will call them smaller gifts).

Organizations averaged 29 major donors giving an average gift of $3,921. The total amount of revenue from major donors was about 49% of all revenue from individuals. These statistics vary across organizational revenue, with larger organizations relying more heavily on large gifts. On the flip side, organizations averaged 403 donors giving $1,000 or less with an average gift of $192. In total, organizations raised an average 51% of their income from donors giving less than $1,000. Here's the breakdown by organizational size:

Percent of Individual Revenue by Gift Size

51% / **49%**

SMALLER DONORS
NUMBER OF DONORS – 403
AVERAGE GIFT – $192

MAJOR DONORS
NUMBER OF DONORS – 29
AVERAGE GIFT – $3,921

53% / **47%**

SMALLER DONORS
NUMBER OF DONORS – 202
AVERAGE GIFT – $165

MAJOR DONORS
NUMBER OF DONORS – 9
AVERAGE GIFT – $3,110

52% / **48%**

SMALLER DONORS
NUMBER OF DONORS – 374
AVERAGE GIFT – $187

MAJOR DONORS
NUMBER OF DONORS – 16
AVERAGE GIFT – $2,438

55% / **45%**

SMALLER DONORS
NUMBER OF DONORS – 447
AVERAGE GIFT – $220

MAJOR DONORS
NUMBER OF DONORS – 35
AVERAGE GIFT – $3,193

42% / **58%**

SMALLER DONORS
NUMBER OF DONORS – 678
AVERAGE GIFT – $205

MAJOR DONORS
NUMBER OF DONORS – 70
AVERAGE GIFT – $8,031

Gifts by Issue Focus

We were curious how issue focus impacted individual donor fundraising, and we found that an organization's pool of individual donors and reliance on revenue from their gifts varies across issue focus. Environmental and animal welfare organizations are the most dependent on individual donations, while arts and culture organizations are the least dependent. These differences are likely due to an organization's business model – arts and culture organizations may get more government or grant funding, while animal welfare groups are more dependent on individuals to pay for their services.

NUMBER OF DONORS / **AVERAGE GIFT**

Issue Focus	Number of Donors	Average Gift
AVERAGE (87)	436	$435
ENVIRONMENTAL/ CONSERVATION (16)	600	$443
PUBLIC-SOCIETY BENEFIT (21)	456	$262
HEALTH (18)	427	$418
HUMAN SERVICES (25)	568	$372
EDUCATION (24)	277	$471
ANIMAL WELFARE (4)	453	$392
INTERNATIONAL (11)	668	$473
ARTS, CULTURE & HUMANITIES (11)	283	$229

PERCENT REVENUE FROM INDIVIDUAL DONORS

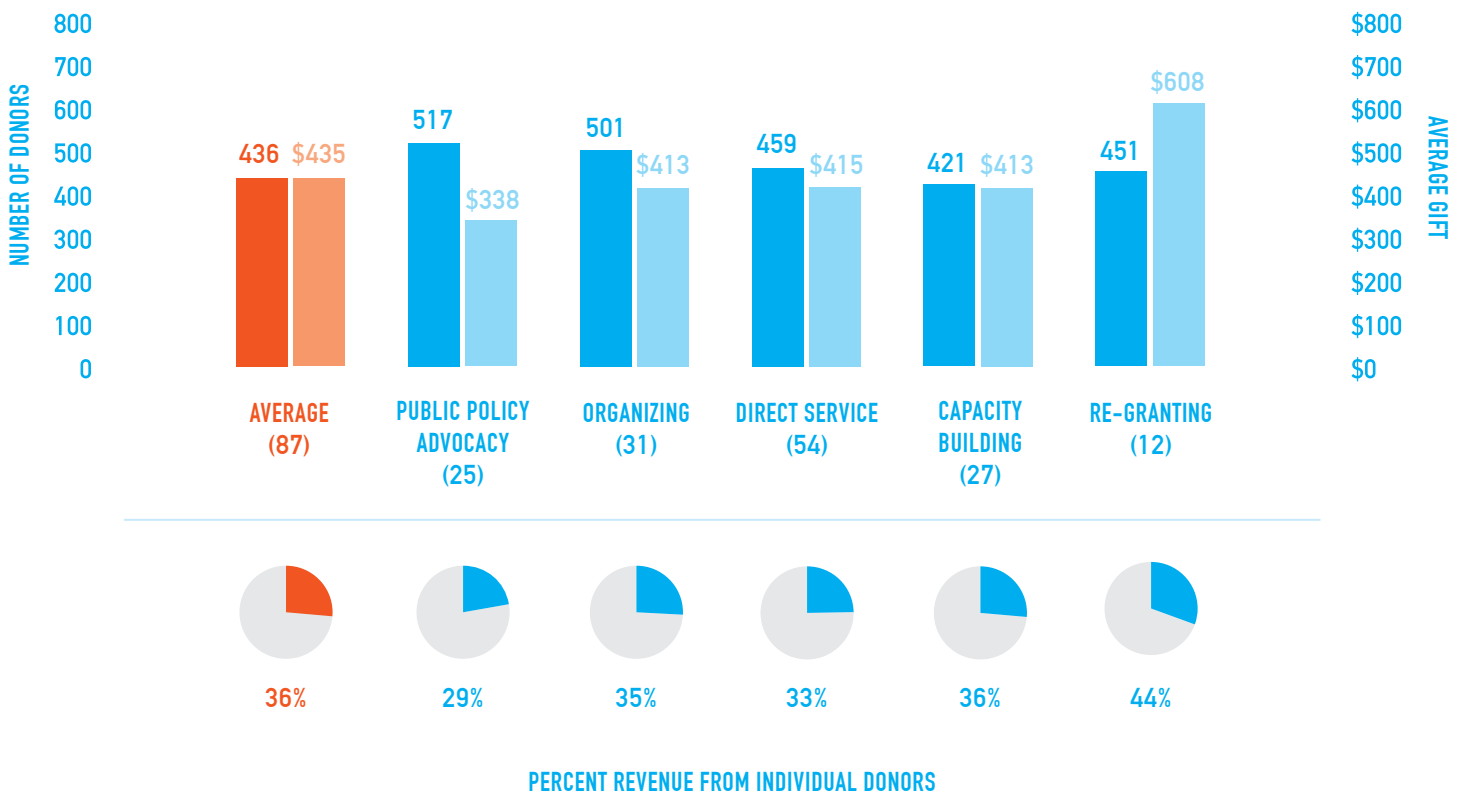| Issue Focus	Percent
AVERAGE	36%
ENVIRONMENTAL/CONSERVATION	41%
PUBLIC-SOCIETY BENEFIT	31%
HEALTH	30%
HUMAN SERVICES	25%
EDUCATION	33%
ANIMAL WELFARE	75%
INTERNATIONAL	52%
ARTS, CULTURE & HUMANITIES	13%

INDIVIDUAL DONOR GIVING

How Much Could We Be Raising From Individual Donors?

Gifts by Organizational Strategy

We also asked for you to help us understand how your organization's tactics influence individual donor giving. Advocacy and organizing groups have the most members, but re-granting organizations are the most dependent on individual donors.

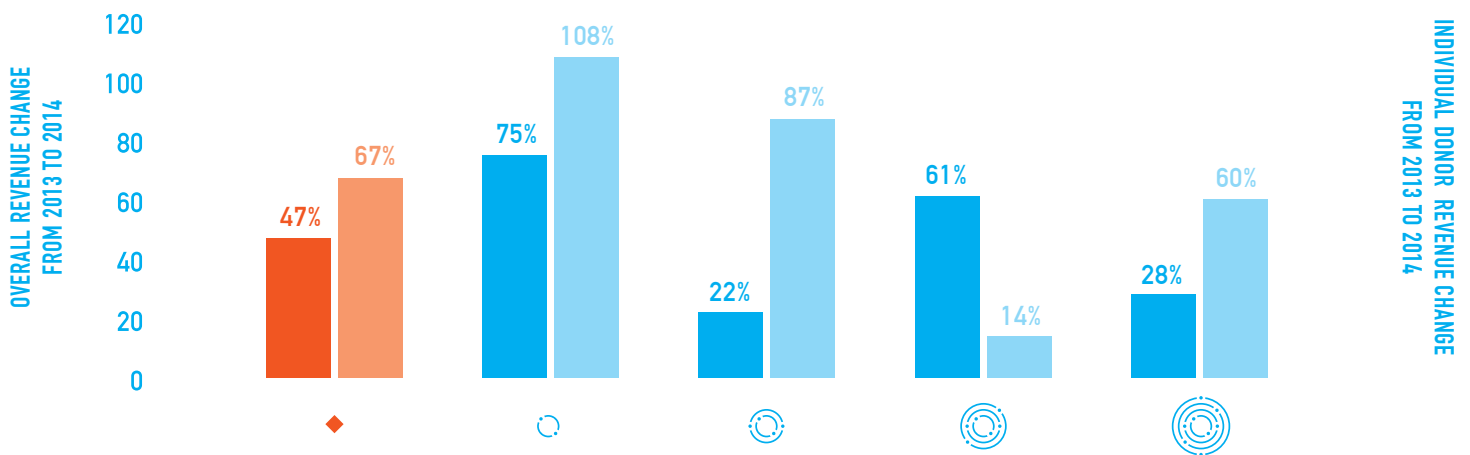|	AVERAGE (87)	PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY (25)	ORGANIZING (31)	DIRECT SERVICE (54)	CAPACITY BUILDING (27)	RE-GRANTING (12)
Number of donors	436	517	501	459	421	451
Average gift	$435	$338	$413	$415	$413	$608
Percent revenue from individual donors	36%	29%	35%	33%	36%	44%

PERCENT REVENUE FROM INDIVIDUAL DONORS

HOW IS
EVERYONE DOING?

Overall Results

It's a good time to be a small but mighty organization. On average, organizations saw overall revenues increase by 47% between 2013 and 2014 and individual donor revenues increase by 67%!

There are some changes by size of organization, but every category saw double-digit growth:

OVERALL REVENUE CHANGE FROM 2013 TO 2014

INDIVIDUAL DONOR REVENUE CHANGE FROM 2013 TO 2014

| | 47% | 67% | 75% | 108% | 22% | 87% | 61% | 14% | 28% | 60% |

We think this means that we are definitely coming out of the recession and organizations are reaching their pre-recession fundraising levels.

Dependence on Foundations

One of the reasons organizations focus on individual donor fundraising is to decrease dependence on foundations, so we wanted to know how that's been going for organizations.

5	19	23	25	9
GREATLY REDUCED	REDUCED	SAME	INCREASED	GREATLY INCREASED
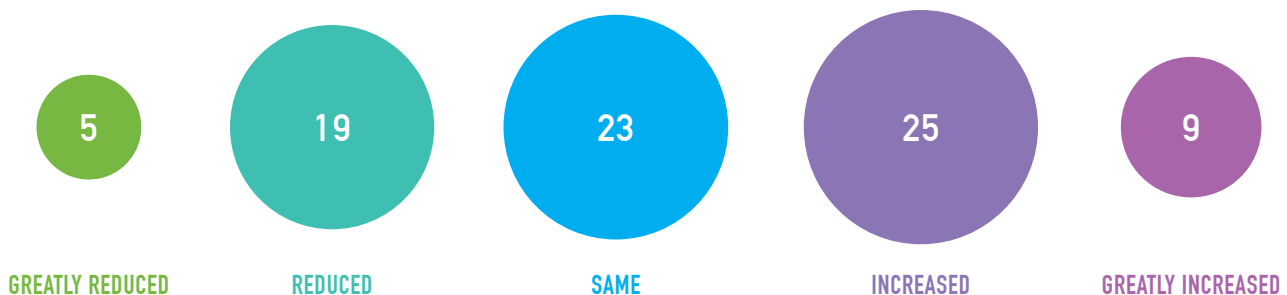
Overall, organizations are still relying on foundation support for their work and have become even more dependent on this revenue source over the past five years – even with significant growth in individual donor revenue.
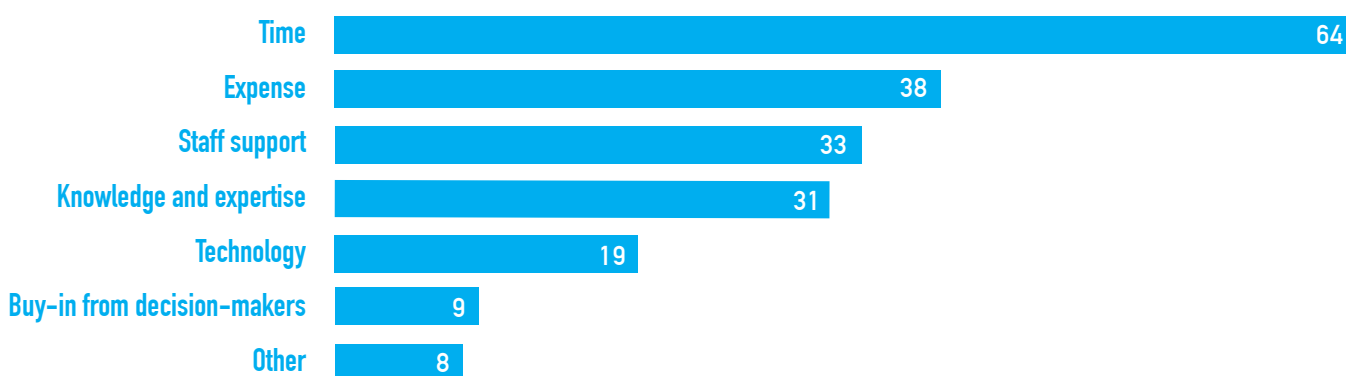
OVERALL RESULTS

How is everyone doing?

Challenges in Executing Individual Fundraising Strategies

We wanted to know what fundraisers see as their biggest challenge to increasing their individual donor work. As it turns out, the biggest obstacle, as organizations develop and execute individual donor fundraising strategies, (like a new direct mail campaign or a recurring giving program) is time.

Category	Value
Time	64
Expense	38
Staff support	33
Knowledge and expertise	31
Technology	19
Buy-in from decision-makers	9
Other	8

Fundraiser's Wish Lists

This year, we also asked our fundraisers *"If you had more time, money, support, etc.: What's the first thing you would do or invest in to further your individual donor work?"*

No surprise that the number one answer was: hire help! The type of support ranged from a full-time Development Director to a staffer focused on major gifts to part-time administrative help. The second priority was getting out to meet and engage with donors more.

Value	Wish
29	Hire more help for fundraising activities
19	Spend more time meeting with and engaging donors
11	Improve my database or other fundraising technology
8	Improve my marketing and communications
8	Create a fundraising plan and clarify my strategies
6	Develop better online and recurring donation options
4	Invest in prospect research and acquisition tools
3	Conduct more fundraising campaigns
2	Participate in training and/or get coaching
1	Talk with donors about bequests
1	Train volunteers to get involved with fundraising

WHAT'S THE SECRET SAUCE FOR RAISING MORE MONEY?
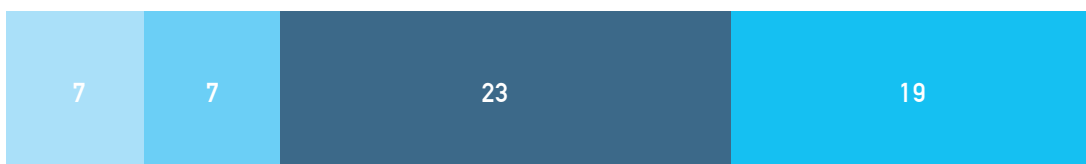
Secret Sauce

Actually it's no secret.

It's just a plan, man.

Our resident data expert poured over the data to find correlations between fundraising results (average gift, number of donors, individual donor revenue, etc.) and fundraising supports and activities (salary, board involvement, meetings, etc.)

What he found is that the ONLY thing that matters is whether or not your organization has a fundraising plan. If you don't have a plan, then hiring new staff, engaging your board, or doing any other activities are, to quote our expert, "no better than a crap shoot."

58 of our 87 respondents had a fundraising plan, and on average, they were using it sometimes – the average turned out to be somewhere between looking at it on a regular basis and checking in on it a couple of times a year.

If you did have a fundraising plan in 2014, how much did you actually use it?

7	7	23	19

- All the time – I often consulted and adjusted our plan
- I looked at it on a regular basis
- I checked in on it a couple of times last year
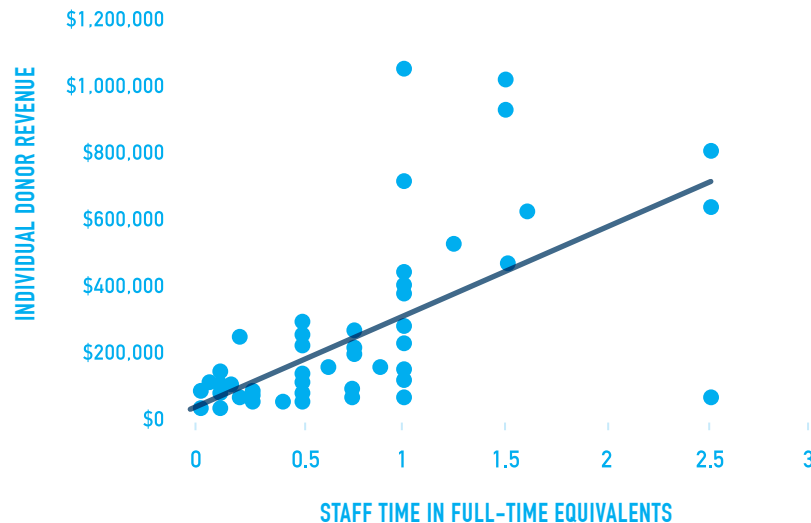- It mostly sat on the shelf

What's the secret sauce for raising more money?

You Can Raise More Money With More Staff If You Have a Plan

With a fundraising plan, you can expect one person working full-time on individual donor fundraising to raise about **$280,000.**
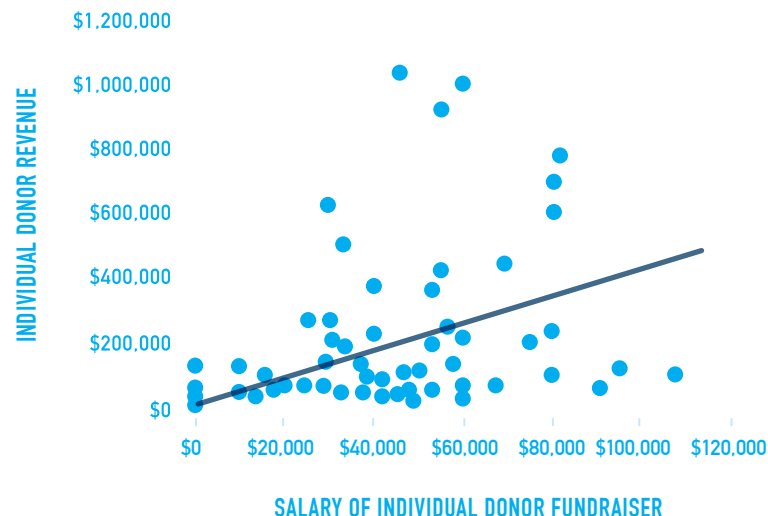
With Fundraising Plan:

Without a fundraising plan, there's not really a correlation between staff timedevoted to individual donor work and revenue.

You Can Raise Money In Proportion to Salary If You Have a Plan.

With a fundraising plan, the more you invest in your staff (using salary as an estimate), the more you are able to raise from individuals. In fact, for every $1 more you pay your primary individual donor fundraiser, you are able to raise another $4.25. Not that you would pay your development staff $1 more – but more investment in staff, including salary, means greater fundraising results.

With Fundraising Plan:

Without a plan, there's no correlation between salary and fundraising success.

With a fundraising plan, a higher investment in staff (again, using salary as a proxy) results in more revenue from high-dollar donors. To be specific:

- Every $1 increase in salary increases the number of $1,000+ donors by 0.007.
- With each major donor giving an average gift of $3,921, that would be an increase of $2.74 in major donor revenue for every $1 in increased salary!

Without a plan, there is no correlation.

Going on More Donor Meetings Can Raise More Money If You Have a Plan

With a plan, each donor meeting yields more than $5,000 in increased donor revenue.

With Fundraising Plan:
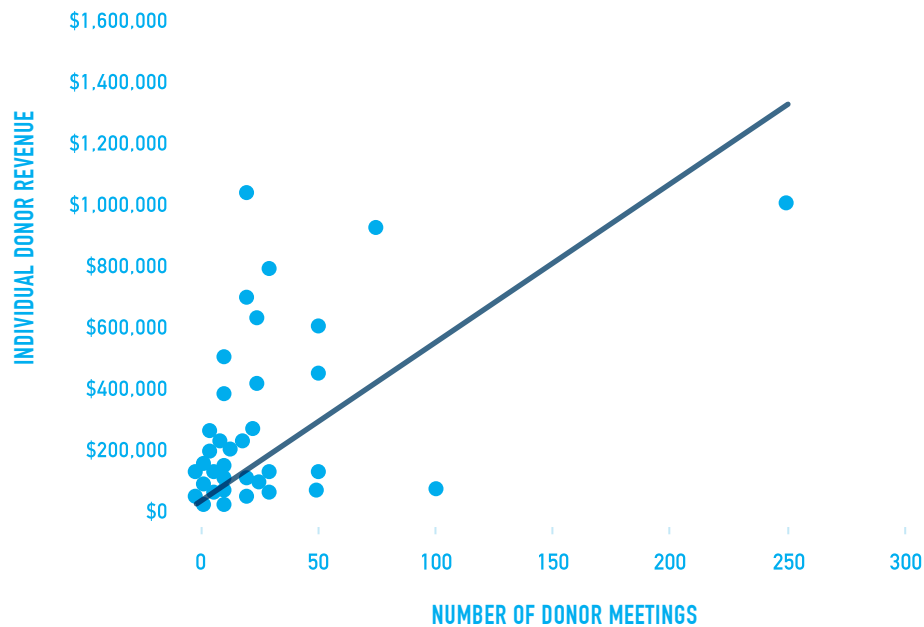
Without a plan, there is no correlation.

Get the point? Get a plan!

HOW MUCH COULD WE BE RAISING ONLINE?
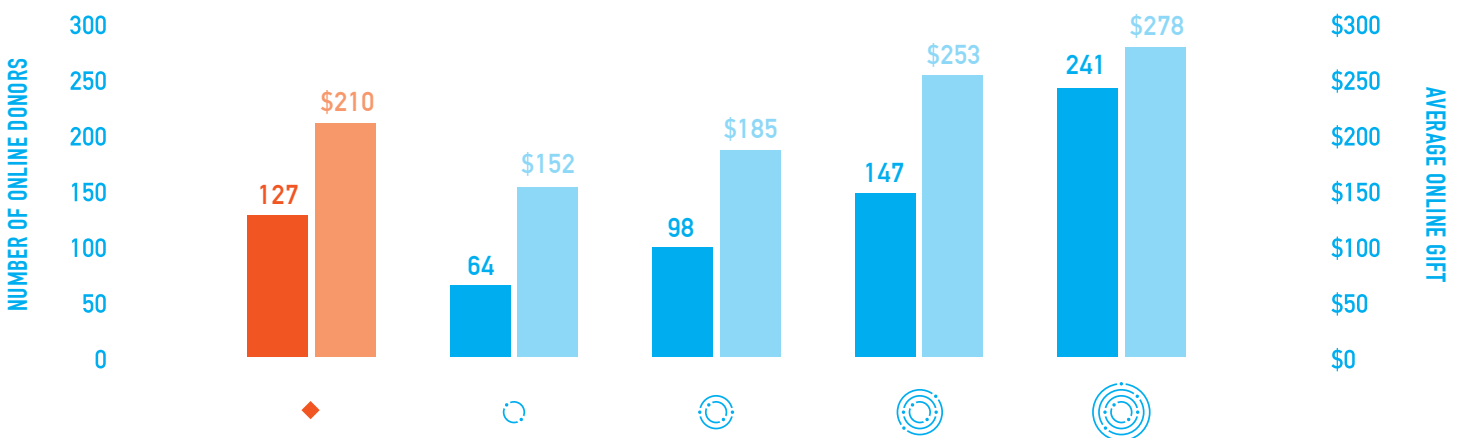
Online Giving

Most organizations are still seeing incredible growth in online fundraising – our average increase between 2013 and 2014 was 403%!

Let's break that down a little bit: for organizations that raised $5,000 or less online in 2013, they saw explosive growth: 1,083%. For those who raised more than $5,000 in 2013, their revenues grew by 25%. This is likely due to the fact that as organizations are starting online giving programs, they are seeing more exponential growth.

On average, organizations are raising $23,681 online, which represents an average of 17% of their overall individual donor revenue. They've got 127 donors (about 1/3 of the total number of donors) giving an average of $210. As organizations continue to see double-digit growth in online giving, focusing on this tactic can produce serious results.

As with much of the data we collected, there are differences based on budget size:

	Size	Online Revenue	Percent of Individual Revenue Raised Online
◆	AVERAGE	$23,681	17%
○	SMALL	$9,289	18%
◎	MEDIUM	$13,309	20%
◎	LARGE	$28,900	18%
◎	SUPER	$52,349	12%

One note is that the average gift online is about half of the overall average gift. As online giving becomes more popular, continued 'offline' activities – such as major donor visits – will become increasingly important to ensure revenue doesn't dip.

Allentown Mayor Ed Pawlowski joined leaders of Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center to kick-off their 2014 "Campaign for Community", a successful short-term individual donor campaign that raised 142% of its goal!

Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center

You are an online fundraising wiz! What have been the key factors of success for your online program?

Communication is key. We regularly communicate that donations can be made online, and that it's best for us when they are made online since it means we don't have to handle the donation processing manually. We also make sure our messages about why people should donate are compelling, and I think that while it impacts individual donors in general, it especially impacts online donors because the donation can be made right after the person decides to donate.

What have been some of your most successful strategies for recruiting new online donors?

We include information for online donations in every electronic communication. This allows people to simply click through, while our organization is on the top of their mind. But it also doesn't feel like an appeal to the donor. We just make sure they know they can donate if they appreciate what we're doing.

In addition to donation reminders, we kicked off an annual campaign, with a goal of significantly growing our organization, last June with a live appeal that was followed up with personal emails to prospective donors. Many of these donors contributed online since the ask was electronic, but it wasn't a mass-email, these were personal emails to people we knew who we thought would be supportive.

What advice do you have for others trying to raise more money online?

Make it easy to donate online. The donor page needs to be one page (no clicking from one page to another, or needing to have a log in for a certain payment processor), and just keep reminding donors that the easiest way for the donor to support your organization is through an online donation.

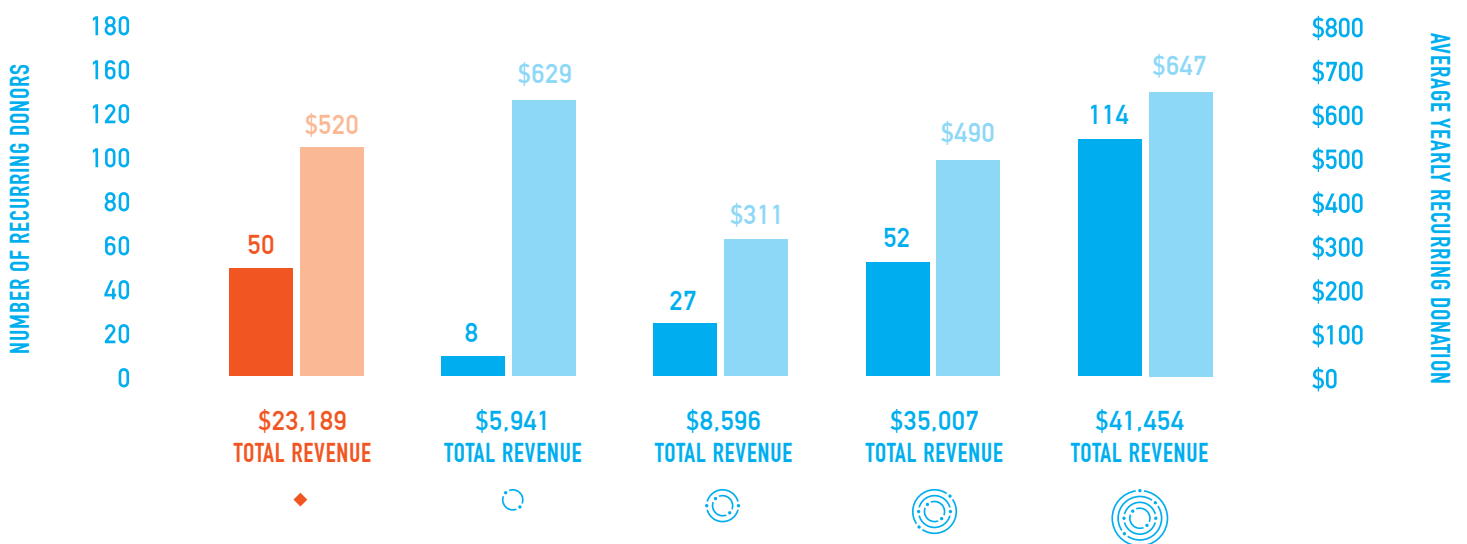# WHAT COULD OUR RECURRING DONOR PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

Recurring Donors

RECURRING DONORS

What could our recurring donor program look like?

By now, most organizations have developed a recurring donor program with options to give monthly or even quarterly. On average, organizations have 50 donors giving an average total of $520 over the course of the year – about 20% higher than the overall average gift.

NUMBER OF RECURRING DONORS | AVERAGE YEARLY RECURRING DONATION

50 / $520	8 / $629	27 / $311	52 / $490	114 / $647
$23,189 TOTAL REVENUE	$5,941 TOTAL REVENUE	$8,596 TOTAL REVENUE	$35,007 TOTAL REVENUE	$41,454 TOTAL REVENUE

Percentage of Individual Donor Revenue from Recurring Donors

vs.

Percentage of Individual Donors Giving Recurring Gifts

	Revenue	Donors
AVERAGE	13%	11%
SMALL	15%	6%
MEDIUM	9%	7%
LARGE	14%	14%
SUPER	12%	18%

What could our recurring donor program look like?

The PCUN team

PCUN – Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste

Everyone is trying to figure out how to get more recurring donors. You seem to have figured a few things out. What have you learned about building a strong recurring donor program?

We've learned that consistent engagement with your donors is key. This can be done in a number of ways but our most effective ways have been face-to-face, phone interactions, and mailings. The main reasons we'vebeen successful is because we've managed to stay alive for more than 30 years. This is hard for a social justice nonprofit.

What are some of the best ways you are finding to recruit new donors? What about upgrading existing donors?

Asking is the best way. If you are not asking enough, you need to. Find people that have shared values with you and make sure to capture their contact information. We need to work on upgrading existing donors. We've done this successfully when we do big campaigns.

What advice do you have for others working to build their recurring donor program?

Engage your donors consistently. Make them feel like partners in your work. Keep asking. Update their contact information as needed. Show them you are making progress. Thank them!

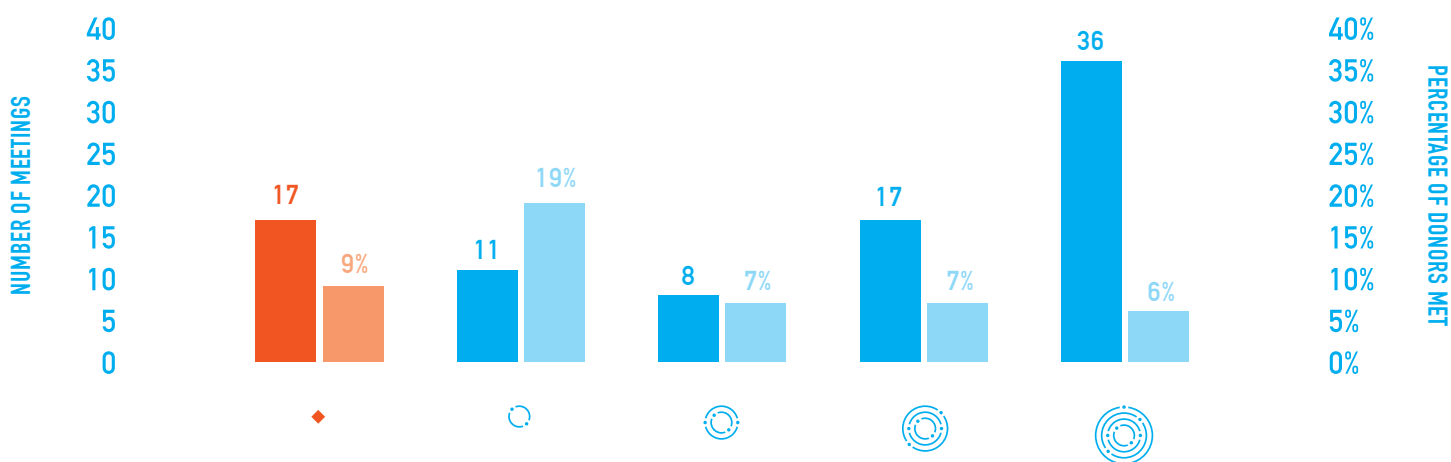# HOW COULD I BE TALKING TO MY DONORS AND POTENTIAL DONORS?

Communications

COMMUNICATIONS

How could I be talking to my donors and potential donors?

Meeting with donors was one of the top priorities if our fundraisers had more time and resources. And it makes sense: for the second year in a row, fundraisers have reported holding only 17 meetings with donors to cultivate, ask, or thank them. To put that into perspective, if each of these meetings was with a current donor, organizations would be meeting with on average 9% of their donor base.

In addition to face-to-face meetings, email and Facebook are useful tools to build relationships with donors. Organizations have on average 4,076 email addresses on their most frequently used email list and 3,180 Facebook fans.

Size	EMAIL LIST	FACEBOOK FANS
◆ AVERAGE	4,076	3,180
◌ SMALL	1,274	1,285
◎ MEDIUM	2,406	1,426
◎ LARGE	2,775	1,799
◎ SUPER	12,139	10,024

COMMUNICATIONS

How could I be talking to my donors and potential donors?

Growing your email list and Facebook fan base can produce a number of good things for your organization – and hopefully one of those things is online revenue. On average, organizations are generating $17 per email address and $20 per Facebook fan in online revenue. Just to be clear: it's not that every subscriber or fan is giving that money, it's just a measure of how much they are potentially 'worth' as online donors – and how much the size of your online universe can impact your online giving.

To take a closer look, we broke the data up by size of email list, rather than size of budget:

Number of People on Email List	Average number of Facebook fans	Online Revenue	Online Revenue Per Email Address	Online Revenue Per Facebook Fan
Under 1,000	938	$12,789.07	$27.31	$20.00
1,000 up to 2,500	1,328	$29,325.71	$17.12	$21.86
2,500 up to 4,999	2,275	$22,643.17	$6.80	$22.40
5,000 and over	11,317	$39,254.18	$4.46	$12.36
Overall	3,180	$23,681	$16.67	$19.80

Online revenue per email address and Facebook fan decrease significantly as the size of the email list grows.

One other important note, if you'd like to use these numbers to calculate how much you could be raising online, choose either your email list or Facebook fans – not both!

Dawn Crawford
Principal Communicator,
BC/DC Ideas

How can nonprofits activate social media followers to give donations?

An issue many nonprofits face as social media use becomes more prevalent is the rise of click-activism. Your social media followers may feel they are doing enough simply because they liked or shared your latest post. Just like it's important to create a fundraising plan, it's also important to create a social media plan with a content calendar. Be sure you're regularly including a fundraising ask in your content stream. We believe devoting 10-15% of your overall content to a fundraising ask is a good place to start.

Think about it this way – your average follower needs to see one piece of content 12 times before they'll recall the message or become compelled to act. The same goes for your fundraising ask! Every universe is different.Track your success with varied posts to see what works best for your audience.

How often should email subscribers receive a fundraising email during a campaign?

Just as it is important to reach your digital supporters at least a dozen times for a piece of content to be effective, it is also important to diversify your ask and remember not to overwhelm them. Limit your email fundraising communications to three emails over the course of a campaign. By sending too many emails, you run the risk of your supporters unsubscribing, and then you've lost them for good. No one wants that!

Also, consider diversifying your email communication, so they don't feel they are only receiving a donation ask. Discuss your latest organizational news and updates, share a recent success story, or simply say thank you.

How can a nonprofit convert Facebook fans to email subscribers?

Leave them wanting more! Your fans are flooded with content to choose from, so make your post stand out with fun, engaging click bait. Always make your posts short, sweet and to the point and focus on showing your value.

To increase the reach and engagement with your post, experimenting is key. Try your post as a link and a photo; share at different times of day; take a note from Buzzfeed, and use engaging vanity URLs. The possibilities are endless!
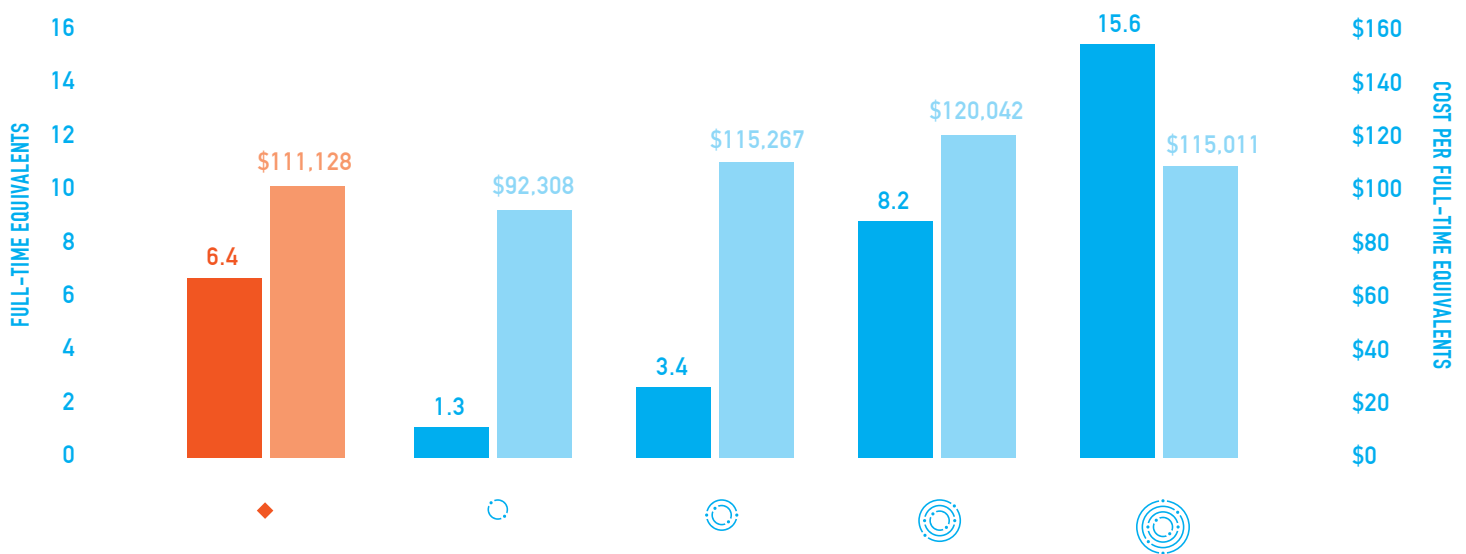
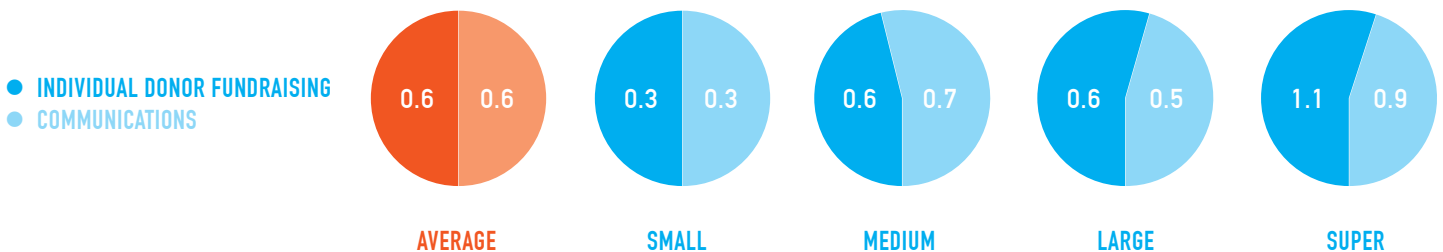# WHO MAKES ALL OF THIS HAPPEN?

Human Resources

Who makes all of this happen?

People give to people – namely your staff and board members. Organizations taking the survey reported an average of 6.4 Full-time Equivalents (FTEs), with an average of 0.6 of a FTE (about 15%) devoted to individual donor fundraising and another 0.6 FTE devoted to communications. A FTE costs an organization an average $111,128 including salary, benefits and program expenses (we just took total expenses divided by FTEs).

Individual Donor FTEs and Communications FTEs

- INDIVIDUAL DONOR FUNDRAISING
- COMMUNICATIONS

AVERAGE	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE	SUPER
0.6 / 0.6	0.3 / 0.3	0.6 / 0.7	0.6 / 0.5	1.1 / 0.9

Salaries

On average, the staff person responsible for managing individual donor work makes $46,575 per year and has been with the organization 3.9 years.

AVERAGE	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE	SUPER
$46,575	**$40,356**	**$41,405**	**$47,185**	**$60,607**

HUMAN RESOURCES

Who makes all of this happen?

Person in Charge

The person in charge of managing individual donor work is most likely a development staff person, as opposed to the organizational leader or other staff.

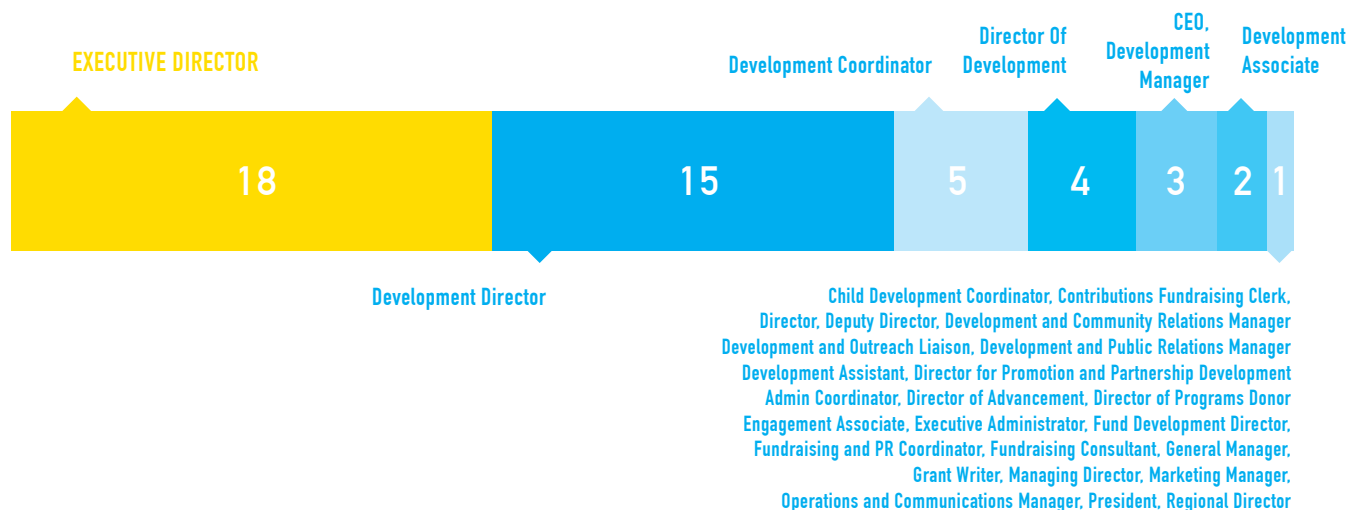**DEVELOPMENT STAFF** 43

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP 27

OTHER STAFF 6

Job Titles

The most popular titles for individual donor staff continue to be Executive Director and Development Director.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 18

Development Director

15

Development Coordinator

Director Of Development 5

CEO, Development Manager 4

Development Associate 3

2

1

Child Development Coordinator, Contributions Fundraising Clerk, Director, Deputy Director, Development and Community Relations Manager Development and Outreach Liaison, Development and Public Relations Manager Development Assistant, Director for Promotion and Partnership Development Admin Coordinator, Director of Advancement, Director of Programs Donor Engagement Associate, Executive Administrator, Fund Development Director, Fundraising and PR Coordinator, Fundraising Consultant, General Manager, Grant Writer, Managing Director, Marketing Manager, Operations and Communications Manager, President, Regional Director

Board Members Playing a Significant Role

44% We asked how many Board members were actively involved in fundraising, and found that on average 44% of board members play some significant role in cultivating and asking individual donors.

People Involved in Donor Meetings

17 Organizations do meet with donors, but not very often. The average organization has 17 meetings with donors throughout the year, with an average of four different people from the organization involved in these kinds of meetings.

A playful celebration in the Aspen Youth Center gym following a dodgeball tournament!

Aspen Youth Center

You had 100% significant board participation in fundraising. How did you do that?

Aspen Youth Center is fortunate to have a board of directors that truly embraces the responsibilities along with the work of leading a nonprofit organization. The members actively participate in fundraising in the following ways:

- **Names of potential donors** – board members provide our organization with the names and contact information of their friends/relatives/acquaintances and business contacts for use in various fundraising efforts and/or campaigns.
- **Personal appeal notes** – board members write personal solicitation notes to their contacts for our annual mail appeals.
- **Event sponsorships** – board members solicit cash sponsorships and in-kind donations for our annual fundraiser event, Spell What?!
- **National Council** – Aspen Youth Center will be launching a National Council in January, 2016 to coincide with our 25th year in existence. The plan is to identify current AYC donors and board contacts who will join during the remainder of this year in order to draw more members next year. The AYC board is committed to leading this effort by providing potential names and making the invitations.
- **Event planning & production** – board members are active in every step of the planning, set-up and execution of Spell What?!
- **Annual gift** – each board member makes an annual financial contribution of an amount that is meaningful to them. We have had 100% participation in this area for more than 7 years.

How is this accomplished?

There is a culture of attentiveness and responsiveness on the AYC board of directors that is rooted in the deliberate and strategic process utilized by the Nominating Committee to identify and recruit new members. From the first contact, the fundraising expectations (and traditions) are made clear so that potential board members are very aware of what the expectations are.

WHAT TECHNOLOGY COULD I USE TO SUPPORT MY FUNDRAISING?

Technology

TECHNOLOGY

What technology could I use to support my fundraising?

This year's survey looked at two different technologies that can assist fundraising: online fundraising platforms and databases.

A majority of the organizations we surveyed – 51 – used some kind of online fundraising platform, including 15 organizations that used more than one platform.

15 NETWORK FOR GOOD
9 RAZOO
5 NEONCRM
5 CROWDRISE

3 NationBuilder
3 PayPal
2 GoFundMe
2 Classy
2 Kimbia
2 Click & Pledge
2 Google One Today
2 Greater Giving
1 Indigogo
1 GlobalGiving
1 Givlet

1 Qgiv
1 FirstGiving
1 JustGiving
1 MobileCause
1 Tilt
1 Kintera
1 Salsa
1 PaySimple
1 GiveMN
1 Give to the Max
1 eTapestry

There was a noticeable increase in individual donor fundraising success for the organizations who reported using one of the above tools, including a higher percentage of revenue from individual donors, more revenue generated online, and better year over year growth of individual and online revenue. In short, using an online fundraising platform just makes your fundraising better!

	Platform	No Platform
Percentage Revenue from Individual Donors	39%	31%
Percentage of Individual Donor Revenue Generated Online	21%	14%
Change in Individual Donor Revenue from 2013 to 2014	86%	39%
Change in Online Revenue from 2013 to 2014	417%	360%

TECHNOLOGY

What technology could I use to support my fundraising?

Almost every organization reported using some kind of database. Of the most popular databases (those with three or more organizations using them), the All Stars are:

- Little Green Light, with high marks from 10 users
- DonorPerfect, who got good scores from 6 users
- NationBuilder, with high marks and very low survey time

Database	Count	Love Score (out of 5)	Ease Score (out of 5)	Time to fill out the survey (in minutes)
NeonCRM	10	♥♥♥	★★★	54.50
Little Green Light	10	♥♥♥♥	★★★★	61.50
eTapestry	7	♥♥♥♥	★★★★	83.57
GiftWorks (now FrontStream)	6	♥♥♥	★★★	80.00
DonorPerfect	6	♥♥♥♥	★★★★	63.33
Salesforce	5	♥♥♥♥	★★★★	43.00
MS Excel	4	♥♥	★★	33.75
NationBuilder	3	♥♥♥♥	★★★★	22.50
FileMaker Pro	3	♥♥♥♥	★★★★	65.00
Salsa	2	♥♥♥♥	★★★	120.00
Raiser's Edge	2	♥♥♥♥	★★★★	140.00
Bloomerang	2	♥♥	★★★	120.00
WaterGrass	1	♥♥♥	★★★★	60.00

TECHNOLOGY

What technology could I use to support my fundraising?

CiviCRM	1	♥♥♥♥	★★★	180.00
QuickBase	1	♥♥♥	★★★	30.00
PowerBase	1	♥♥♥♥	★★★	10.00
Outlook	1	♥♥	★★★	90.00
Network for Good	1	♥♥	★★★	120.00
IMIS	1	♥♥♥	★★★	60.00
GiveMN	1	♥♥	★★	40.00
Fundraiser	1	♥♥♥	★★★	180.00
Fund EZ	1	♥♥	★★★	20.00
Foote Francisco	1	♥	★★	240.00
DonorPro	1	♥♥	★★★	120.00
DonorPath	1	♥♥♥♥	--	960.00
Click & Pledge	1	♥♥♥	★★★★	180.00
BSD	1	♥♥♥	★★★	60.00
BasicFunder	1	♥♥♥	★★★	90.00
Aplos	1	♥♥♥	★★★★	60.00
Access	1	♥♥	★	60.00

Please note: several technology providers – namely Network for Good, NeonCRM, Little Green Light, and AGH Strategies (a CiviCRM provider) – are sponsors of this year's report. They assisted with recruiting participants, and may have affected the number of users of those technologies, although not the rankings or time reporting.

Store To Door provides social connections and access to food so that Minneapolis-Saint Paul area seniors can continue to live in their own homes.

Store To Door

You had one of the shortest times for completing the survey. What's your secret?

Store to Door uses Salesforce to integrate CRM across client, volunteer, and donor groups. For quick fundraising reports and analysis, we export select data from a Salesforce report to Excel. A couple of basic Excel formulas and the use of pivot tables allow us almost unlimited flexibility in digging into data.

How do you use this kind of fundraising data in your organization?

Using data like this allows us to very accurately forecast annual fundraising goals, monitor progress, identify what's working well/what needs work and to personalize our relationship with each donor or donor group based on their histories and behavior. We also generate bi-monthly dashboards on key fundraising metrics for our board. Key strategies right now include converting first-time givers to repeat donors, retention (of course), and building a planned giving program.

What advice do you have for others looking to become data rockstars?

Emphasize data-based planning, evaluation and decision-making into all of your fundraising work. Once you and leadership start realizing the actual benefits of this, it's easier to commit to investments in technology, training and staffing for donor information management.

HOW DID YOU GET THIS DATA?

The Survey

The survey was conducted online in March 2015. Participants were recruited through a number of means including:

- Outreach to past participants and those who downloaded the 2013 report
- Social media outreach
- Emails through sponsoring companies and other partners

Every attempt was made to ensure the survey was available to a wide audience of potential participants.

Organizations

A Time to Heal
Adult Lutherans Organized for Action
Ampersand Families
Angles for Sexual Health, Identity, and Education
Arts Council Napa Valley
Aspen Youth Center
Association of Nature Center Administrators
Asylee Women Enterprise
Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center
C. Thomas Clagett, Jr. Memorial Clinic and Regatta
Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation*
The Center for Epilepsy and Seizure Education in British Columbia
Christian Evangelistic Association
Clay Art Center
Clean Air Carolina*
Clean Air Coalition of Western New York*
Club Esteem
Columbia Land Trust
Combat Blindness International
Community Advocates for Family and Youth
Community Crops
Delaware Speech and Hearing Center
Democracy North Carolina
The Detroit Creativity Project
Durham Nativity School
Educating Youth Ensures Success
Environmental and Energy Study Institute
El Pueblo

Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association
Eno River Association*
Eos Entrepreneur Foundation
Family Nurturing Center of Florida
Family Reading Partnership
Fayette County Association for the Blind
GAMA Foundation for Education and Research
GLBT Center of Colorado
Health Connected
Health In Harmony
Hillel of San Diego
Hope Pastures
The Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum
Indraloka Animal Sanctuary
Jeannette Rankin Peace and Resource Center
Jumping Mouse Children's Center*
King of the Court Tennis Ministr International
Land Trust of North Alabama
Los Angeles United Methodist Urban Foundation
Lung Cancer Foundation of America
Mangrove Action Project
Mary's Pence
Mayhew Program
Mothers & Babies Perinatal Network
National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty
NC Conservation Network
New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty
North Carolina Rail-Trails*
North Carolinians Against Gun Violence

Oblong Children's Christian Home
Our Family Coalition
Our Saviour's Community Services
Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste
Project V.E.T.S.
Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project
Reading With Pictures
Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South
Roice-Hurst Humane Society
Saint Anthony School
The Seattle Globalist
Sierra Service Project
Sister Schools
Skyline Urban Ministry
Society for Contemporary Craft
Southern Coalition for Social Justice
Sozo Children
Spirit in Action*
St. Helena Public Schools Foundation
Store To Door
Street Youth Ministry of Austin
Student Action with Farmworkers
Sustainable Harvest International
Twin City Stage
U.S.-Japan Bridging Foundation
University Y
WakeUP Wake County
Western Fairfax Christian Ministries
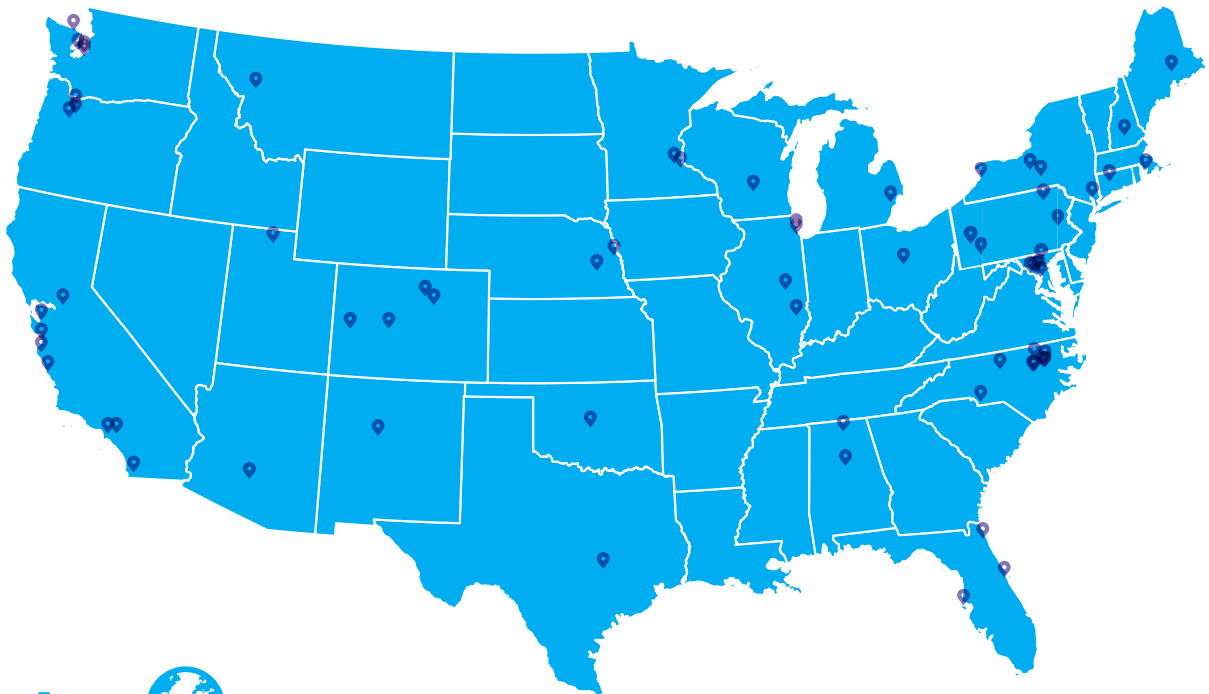Wild West Vets
Witness for Peace Southeast

*Bold participated all four years, italics participated in 2012, 2013, and 2014, * participated in 2013 and 2014.*

Participating organizations came from across the country and across the world, including three international organizations.

Fundraising Focus

27	18	9	10	10	6	4
CITY OR COUNTY	MULTI-COUNTY REGION OF THE STATE	STATEWIDE	MULTI-STATE	NATIONAL	INTERNATIONAL	OTHER

Sizes

17	22	24	24
SUPER	LARGE	MEDIUM	SMALL

Survey Questions: Your Results

1. What was your organization's total income/revenue in 2014?

2. What were your organization's total expenses in 2014?

3. What was the total amount raised from individuals in 2014? *Please include online and offline donations from direct mail, email, major donors, and other individual donor strategies.*

4. How many individuals donated in 2014?

5. How much did you raise online from individuals in 2014? *Please do not include recurring (monthly, quarterly,etc) in this total.*

6. How many people gave online in 2014?

7. How much was given in total through recurring (monthly, quarterly, etc) donations in 2014?

8. How many people made recurring donations in 2014?

9. How much did you raise from people giving $1,000 or more (in total) in 2014?

10. How many people made gifts of $1,000 or more (in total) in 2014?

11. Does your organization offer memberships? *If yes, what are the levels of membership:*

12. Did you use the 2014 calendar year to answer the above questions? *If no, what time period did you use?*

13. What was your organization's total income/revenue in 2013?

14. What was your organization's total income from individual donors in 2013?

15. What was your organization's total income from online donations in 2013?

16. Over the past five years, how has your organization's dependence on foundations changed?

- Greatly Reduced
- Reduced
- Same
- Increased
- Greatly Increased
- Do Not Know

Your People

1. How many people are on your email list? *Choose the list most commonly used for e-newsletters, action alerts, etc. Feel free to estimate.*

2. How many people like your organization on Facebook?

3. How many people are on your postal mail list? *Choose the list most commonly used for newsletters, direct mail appeals, etc. Please feel free to estimate.*

4. How many total Full-Time Equivalents did you have on staff in 2014? *A Full Time Equivalent is equal to one perso working a full week. For example, if you have a full-time Executive Director, a three quarters time program staffer, and a half-time administrator, then you have 2.25 Full Time Equivalents on staff. Please use this definition in the below questions.*

5. How many total Full-Time Equivalents were devoted to individual donor fundraising in 2014?
Please do not include marketing, communications, grantwriting, volunteer management, event planning or other activities not directly focused on individual donor fundraising. If individual donor fundraising work is 50% of someone's full- time job, that is 0.5 FTE.

6. How many total Full-Time Equivalents worked on communications and marketing in 2014?

7. What is the title of the person primarily responsible for individual donor fundraising?

8. What is the approximate annual salary of your lead individual donor fundraiser? *Please feel free to estimate.*

9. How long has your lead individual donor fundraiser been on staff in this position?

10. How many Board members did you have in 2014?

11. How many of your Board members actively participated in individual donor fundraising during 2014?
Active participation includes activities like providing introductions to donors, attending major donor meetings, soliciting donors by phone, writing personal letters to friends, among other significant activities. It does not include writing notes on annual appeals or making thank you phone calls (although those are good things).

12. How many volunteers (other than Board members) are actively involved in individual donor fundraising?
Please use the description of 'active' above.

13. How many face-to-face meetings did you have in 2014 to develop relationships, cultivate prospects, ask for donations, or thank for support? *Feel free to estimate.*

14. How many different people were actively involved in these meetings?

Organizational Background

1. **Did your organization have a fundraising plan in 2014?**

2. **If you did have a fundraising plan in 2014, how much did you actually use it?**
    Be honest! This is a no judgement zone.

    1: All the time - I often consulted and adjusted our plan.
    2: I looked at it on a regular basis.
    3: I checked in on it a couple of times last year.
    4: It mostly sat on the shelf.
    5: Oh yah...I forgot we had a plan...
    6: Not applicable.

3. **What is your biggest challenge in developing and executing individual donor fundraising strategies (like a new direct mail campaign or an recurring giving program)?** *Please choose all that apply.*

    * Time
    * Expense
    * Technology
    * Buy-in from decision-makers
    * Knowledge and expertise
    * Staff support
    * Other

If you chose 'other', please specify:

4. **If you had more time, money, support, etc: What's the first thing you would do or invest in to further your individual donor work?**

5. **In 2014, did you actively use any online fundraising platforms (Network for Good, Razoo, Crowdrise, FirstGiving, etc.)? If so, which ones?**

6. **What is the name of your primary individual donor fundraising database?**

7. **On a scale of one to five, how much do you like your database?**

    1: I love it!
    2: I like it.
    3: It's okay.
    4: I don't really like it.
    5: I hate it!

Why did you rank your database in this way?

8. On a scale of one to five, how easy was it to get the data for this survey from your database and other data sources?

    1: Super easy.
    2: Easy.
    3: Easy for some things, harder for others.
    4: Hard.
    5: Very hard.

Why did you rank your database in this way?

9. How long did it take you and/or your staff to gather this data and complete the survey?

10. What year was your organization founded?

11. What is your organization's zip code? *If you have several locations, use the zip code for the main office.*

12. At what level is your individual donor fundraising primarily focused?

- City or county
- Multi-county region of the state
- Statewide
- Multi-state
- National
- International
- Other
- If you chose 'other', please specify:

13. On what issues does your organization focus its work? Please choose all that apply. Catetories are from Giving USA:

- Environmental/conservation
- Public-society benefit
- Health
- Human services
- Education
- Animal welfare

- International
- Arts, culture, and humanities
- Other
- If you chose 'other', please specify:

14. What strategies does your organization use to pursue its mission? *Please choose all that apply.*

- Public policy advocacy
- Organizing
- Direct service
- Capacity building
- Other
- If you chose 'other', please specify:

15. How did you hear about the Individual Donor Benchmark survey? *Please choose all that apply.*

- Network for Good
- Neoncrm
- Civicrm
- Little Green Light
- Agh Strategies
- Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training (gift)
- Third Space Studio
- BC/DC ideas
- Other
- If you chose 'other', please specify:

16. Last question! Got any feedback on the survey? *We'd love to hear it!*

thirdspacestudio.com