2018 Volunteer Management Progress Report

January 30, 2018

#vmprogress2018

2018: Year Three of New Insights

I am so grateful to be able to offer our annual "state-of-the-industry" report to the field for a third consecutive year. It is gratifying to see the body of knowledge related to volunteer administration grow and to see a clearer picture emerge.

I've also been inspired that the report has been used to argue for, and gain, additional resources by individuals within organizations. In a profession that requires true and enthusiastic acknowledgement for its strategic value, this is a wonderful sign. We all have the power to influence change.

Trina Willard, of Knowledge Advisory Group in central Virginia and Dr. Pam Kappelides of LaTrobe University in Melbourne, Australia again helped guide the survey design and conduct the data analyses. We are pleased to offer new insights into the important work of volunteer resource professionals and look forward to the ensuing debates discussion.

All the Best,

Tobi Johnson, MA, CVA
Founder, Tobi Johnson & Associates | VolunteerPro

Trina B. Willard, MS
Owner and Principal, Knowledge Advisory Group

Dr. Pam Kappelides, PhD
Lecturer, Centre for Sport and Social Impact
La Trobe University

January 2018

On cover: Word Cloud of open-ended survey question – What is your #1 biggest challenge?

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Tweetable Moments

**@volpronet, #vmprogress2018
http://volpro.net/volunteer-management-progress-report/**

Just Released! #volmgmt trends for 2018 in the Volunteer Management Progress Report - learn what over 1,000 pros from 13 countries said about their work, salary, & satisfaction. Get your free copy here - http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr #vmprogress2018 @volpronet @Trina_Willard

Thank you! @Trina_Willard & @latrobe uni's own Pam Kappelides for their collaboration & analyses of the 2018 #Volunteer Management Progress Report data – we could not have done it without you! http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr #7 @volpronet

THX to all 1,271 #LOVols who participated in our third annual #Volunteer Management Progress Report for the biggest crowdsource of #volmgmt data on the planet! Your responses help us all better advocate for the field we love - http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr #vmprogress2018

THX to all of our distribution partners for promoting industry research & the 2018 Volunteer Management Progress Report around the world as we continue to broaden awareness of the value of #volmgmt. See our entire partner list here - http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr #vmprogress2018

What's the top challenge for #volmgrs? #recruitment #recruitment #recruitment! For the third straight year, connecting with people who want to serve remains the top issue to #LOVols. Get the report here - http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr #vmprogress2018 @volpronet

Volunteer retention is a growing concern for #volmgrs. Retention was noted as a #1 challenge by 13% of survey respondents, up from 8% in 2016 & 6% in 2015. See all of our state-of-the-industry trend data here - http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr @volpronet #vmprogress2018

#volmgrs - Does your job title match your level of responsibility? In our survey, 41% of #volmgrs have the word "coordinator" in their title, 25% have the word 'manager," and only 15% have the word "director." See - http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr @volpronet #vmprogress2018

#Volunteer Coordinators often wear many hats – While 84% of #volmgrs work full time, only 31% spend 100% of their time on volunteer administration #vmprogress2018 - http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr @volpronet

Is it time to focus on full community participation in #volunteerism? Only 52% of #volmgrs believe their volunteers match the diversity of their community & only 27% have a written diversity & inclusion plan. See - http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr @volpronet #vmprogress2018

71% of #volmgrs strongly or somewhat agree they'll be working in volunteer administration in 3 years #vmprogress2018 - http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr @volpronet

#npo #volmgr salaries vary by organization type, but are higher for those who place higher numbers of volunteers each year and those who hold a professional certification. Learn more #salary #trends here - #vmprogress2018 - http://bit.ly/2xWFXbr @volpronet

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About the Research

The survey questionnaire was developed with input from colleagues, an evaluation expert, and a social science researcher. It included 31-35 (depending on country) closed and open-ended questions; most questions were optional. It was administered online only using the SurveyMonkey platform.

A link to the questionnaire was distributed through a broad range of volunteer networks. Responses were collected from October 14 to November 18, 2016. A total of 1,271 volunteer administrators (paid & volunteer) from 12 countries responded; 30 were disqualified because they did not work directly with volunteers, and 1,071 completed most of the questionnaire.

Limitations of the Data

For its third year, the survey was available globally and promoted widely to previous respondents as well as through distribution partners. All respondents to this survey are still working in volunteerism, so the data does not include the experiences and perceptions of those who have left the field (e.g., for tenure, number of jobs, etc.).

It is possible that the same cohort has participated each year and that this data set does not adequately represent, nor can be generalized, to all volunteer resources managers across the countries represented.

However, based on a conservative estimated total population of 1.46 million nonprofits in the United States, our US-based responses represent a confidence level of 95% with a +/- 3.4% margin of error. Moreover, when we polled the participants of our "Early Results" webinar, half said they had participated in the survey for only one year in our poll.

A Note on Terminology

There is a fair amount of debate about what to call leaders of volunteers and how to label their work. Debates abound about which terms are the most appropriate and which might be considered "disrespectful." For one person the use of the word "administration" demeans the field. For another it elevates it.

While no globally-accepted standards for job titles or terminology currently exist in our sector, we are doing our part to understand some of the commonalities at work – note our questions about job title, budget, and salary. In lieu of standards, we use the job titles of volunteer coordinator, manager, director, and administrator interchangeably throughout this report. No offense is intended nor should be taken.

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Champions – We Appreciate You!

Many Thanks to Our Distribution Partners & Reviewers!

The following organizations supported the survey by promoting it to their networks. Thank you for helping us raise awareness of this work.

+ Alberta Health Services
+ America's Service Commissions
+ Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement (AL!VE)
+ Bloodworks Northwest
+ DOVIA Greater Akron
+ Maine Commission for Community Service
+ Make-A-Wish America
+ Michigan Healthcare Volunteer Resource Professionals (MHVRP)
+ Mid-Ohio Foodbank
+ Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration (MAVA)
+ Nevada Volunteers
+ Ohio Association of Foodbanks
+ OAVR (Ottawa Administrators of Volunteer Resources)
+ Palliative Care Victoria
+ Pracademics Section, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA)
+ HandsOn Network | Points of Light
+ Portland Area Volunteer Administrators (PAVA)
+ Professional Association of Volunteer Leaders Ontario (PAVRO)
+ Rob Jackson Consulting Ltd
+ Society for Healthcare Volunteer Leaders
+ The Centre for Volunteering
+ Twenty Hats
+ Volunteer Administrators Network of Central Ohio (VAN)
+ Volunteer East Tennessee
+ VolunteerLinc
+ Volunteering and Contact ACT (VCA)
+ Volunteering South Australia & Northern Territory
+ Wisconsin Volunteer Coordinators Association (WVCA)
+ Volunteer Wisconsin
+ YMCA of the USA

Special thanks to Jason Frenzel, CVA, and Alana Knoppow, MSW, for their review of the questionnaire and useful suggestions, insights, encouragement, and wisdom.

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What We Hoped to Learn

- The top challenges for today's volunteer administrators (see **pages 34-35**)

- How volunteer coordinators rate their level of support from co-workers (see **pages 38-40**)

- Whether or not the diversity of today's volunteers align with the communities they serve and whether intentional volunteer diversity and inclusion is common (see **page 41**)

- Whether we could establish retention benchmarks for short-term, long-term, and project-based volunteers (see **pages 36-37**)

- How the job salaries and number of volunteers engaged compares across organizations of different sizes and types (see **pages 27-32**)

- How volunteer managers compare their work, satisfaction, and intent to continue in the field (see **pages 17-21, 22-26, 42-44**)

What Intrigued Us

- **We Found Consistent Characteristics Over Three Years** – There was a surprising consistency of respondent demographics and responses for three consecutive years of surveys, even with an international cohort, and similar challenges are faced by many.

- **Volunteer Retention is a Challenge on the Rise** – Anecdotally, leaders of volunteers increasingly note the challenge of maintaining volunteer involvement over longer periods of time and point out that volunteers increasingly appear to prefer short-term, episodic assignments. The increase in retention also has increasing relevance in open-ended comments, up 7% in three years, appears to support these perceptions.

- **The Future May Be Bound to the Buy-In of Co-Workers** – Volunteer coordinator job satisfaction and intent to stay working in the field is highly correlated with whether or not fellow employees welcome, or are resistant to, volunteer involvement in their departments.

Why conduct a survey like this? We all need to be better advocates.

① **Volunteer resource managers** can benefit from seeing how their colleagues rate their own priorities, challenges, and opportunities and advocate for themselves, both within their organizations and outside them.

② **Volunteer-led organizations** need clear benchmarks to help them make meaningful comparisons and informed decisions about their volunteer engagement.

③ **Nonprofit consultants, trainers, and capacity builders** need to know which are the greatest needs for our field.

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General Impressions & Questions

■ The characteristics of respondents continue to be similar year to year, even with expanded participation from countries outside the US and an evolving respondent pool.

> **Does this represent the field as a whole globally or at least in the countries represented?**

■ Respondents are white (91%) women (91%), and continue to trend this way, up three and four percent, respectively, in each category over three years. This represents less diversity than in the nonprofit sector as a whole. As a point of comparison, 18% of general nonprofit US employees are people of color, twice as many as work in volunteerism.

> **Does volunteerism continue to have a diversity problem? Does this lack of diversity affect who becomes a volunteer? And, does it affect which volunteers learn of opportunities, thus reinforcing a cycle of sameness?**

■ Moreover, nearly half (48%) *Strongly Disagree*, *Somewhat Disagree*, or are *Neutral* as to whether the diversity of their current volunteer corps matches the community they serve (race/ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, citizenship status, etc.). Over half (55%) of respondents do not have a written diversity and inclusion plan for volunteers; another 18% did not know whether a plan was in place.

> **In an increasingly diverse world, are organizations prepared to promote an inclusive volunteer experience? If so, what are the resources needed, and are they prepared to commit the investment?**

■ Regardless of the many challenges of the job, and the high potential for burnout, 81% of leaders of volunteers are *Somewhat* or *Very Satisfied*, holding steady over three years. Nearly seven out of 10 (67%) respondents *Somewhat* or *Strongly Agree* that they plan to be working in the field three years from now. Each year, the percentage of people with more than 10 years of experience grows, from 40% in 2016, to 43% in 2017, to 44% in this year's survey.

> **How can we tap the immense experience and easily share best practices for this seasoned community of professional practice? Where is progress being made? What are natural career paths as expertise grows?**

■ Leaders of volunteers continue to juggle more than one task area. While 85% of respondents work full-time, only 31% focus entirely on volunteer coordination. Over the past three years, the trend continues. This year, 55% of staff spent three quarters of their time or more on volunteer management, down from 64% three years ago.

> **As those who lead volunteers are asked to juggle competing priorities, and have less time to lead volunteers, will the volunteer experience suffer? What impact will this have on the public's interest in volunteering across the board?**

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Who Did We Survey?

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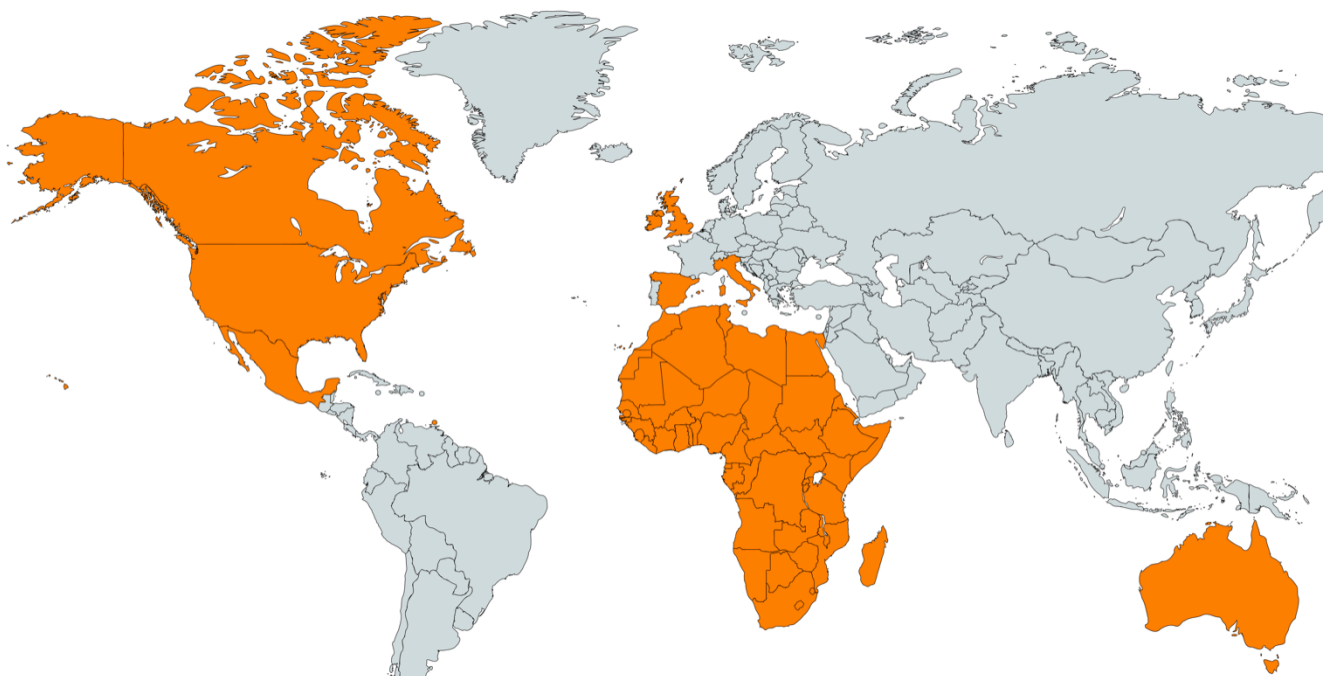
Where Were Respondents Located?

Twelve countries participated (with one reporting the continent of Africa). The vast majority of respondents (74%) were headquartered in the US, with 13% from Canada (up from 8% in 2017), 9% from Australia (down from 14% in 2017), 5% from the United Kingdom (down from 5% in 2017), and 2% from elsewhere (down from 5% in 2017).

This year, the greatest percentage of responses, based on the available estimates of nonprofit organizations and charities by country, came from Canada. (Note: These counts do not generally include public sector organizations or churches/congregations.)

The majority of respondents that serve their local city/county/region within their state or province remains consistent over the past three years (69% in 2018), with much smaller percentages serving wider geographic regions, including their state, multi-state region, country, or beyond.

Where Headquarters Located	# of survey respondents	% of total survey respondents	Total # nonprofits in country	% of total nonprofits who participated
Canada	143	13.1%	170,000	~ .08%
United States	805	73.8%	1,466,026	~ .05%
Australia	96	8.8%	600,000	~ .02%
United Kingdom	30	2.7%	167,443	~ .02%

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Organization Types

What Types of Organizations Were Represented?

Most categorized themselves as *Nonprofit Organizations* (70%), followed by *Hospital/Clinic/Hospice* organizations (13%); *Federal*, *Regional*, *State*, and *Local Governments* combined (12%).

A wide range of types of causes participated in the survey (see next page), with health care dominating at 15%. As a point of reference, in the US, 6.2% of all nonprofits are *Health & Medical-related*; 7.5% *Arts, Culture, & Humanities*; 6.3% *Human Services*; 2.2% *Environmental*; 13.4% *Education*; and 7.8% *Community Improvement & Capacity Building*. These do not include government programs, and it is unknown how many organizations, as a whole, involve volunteers (beyond their governing boards of directors).

"I am fortunate to work for an organization that values volunteers and recognizes that resources must be provided for a successful volunteer program."

Leadership at all organizations typically do not understand the work that goes into running an effective/efficient program and how much Volunteer Management is similar to Human Resources. Organizations could leverage getting more resources and support from volunteers if they incorporated volunteer managers into strategic planning and better-supported volunteer management staff. "

"I strongly believe the sector in general needs a higher profile and better support and recognition. I am in the enviable position of being well supported within my organisation but I see that is not so for a number of other Vol Managers. Better funding for volunteer support would be cost effective spending also."

"Governments, funding bodies (and organisations) need to recognise that volunteering is excellent value for money but it is not free - volunteer administration/coordination/management needs to be adequately factored into grant applications, budgets, etc. "

"Community Services is an amazing industry; recognize its power to change lives!"

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Organization Types

Category That Best Describes Organization Structure
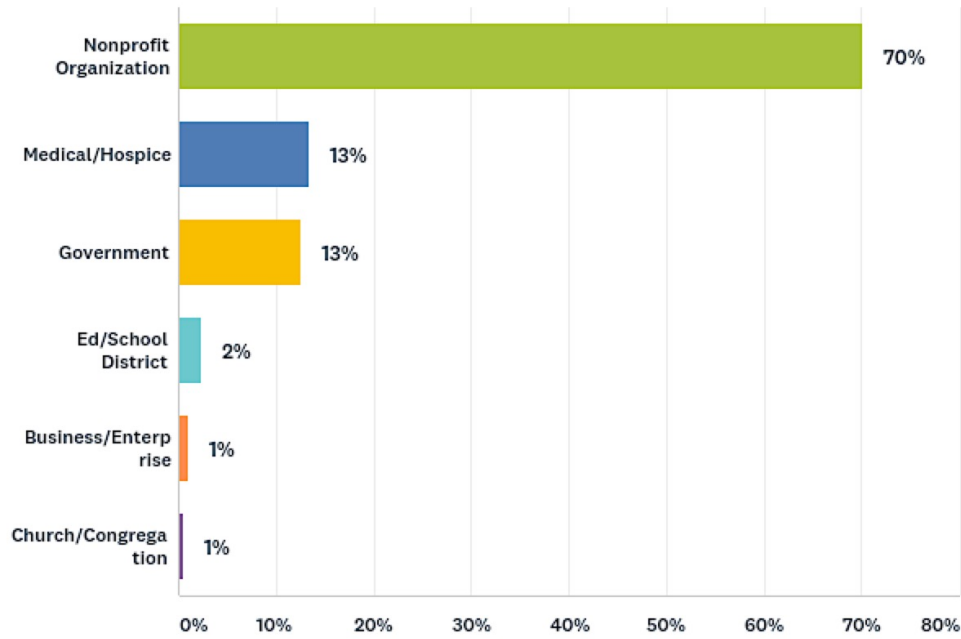
Answer Options	2016	2017	2018
Nonprofit	73.4%	66.2%	70.1%
Hospital/Clinic/Hospice	N/A	12.7%	13.4%
Local Government	10.9%	9.4%	8.7%
State Government	2.9%	2.5%	2.7%
Ed. Institution/School District	N/A	3.0%	2.4%
Federal Government	3.4%	1.3%	0.7%
Corp/Small Business	1.0%	1.0%	0.7%
Church or Congregation	1.0%	0.9%	0.5%
Regional Government	N/A	0.5%	0.5%
Social Enterprise	N/A	N/A	0.3%
Other	5.5%	2.7%	N/A

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Causes

Answer Options	% of Responses	# of Responses
Health Care/Medical Research/Support Services	15.4%	169
Senior & Disability Services	9.8%	107
Arts, Culture, & Humanities/History/Museums	7.3%	80
Hospice	6.7%	73
Multi-Service	6.6%	72
Environment/Parks/Wildlife	6.3%	69
Child Welfare/Family Services/Social Services	6.2%	68
Education/Libraries	5.9%	65
Community Improvement & Capacity Building	4.2%	46
Youth Development	3.8%	42
Housing & Shelter/Homelessness	3.5%	38
Food Pantry & Delivery/Agriculture & Nutrition	3.3%	36
Animal Care & Welfare	3.0%	33
Volunteer Center & Placement	3.0%	33
Recreation & Sports	2.2%	24
Mental Health & Crisis Intervention/Domestic Violence	1.8%	20
Civil Rights, Social Action & Advocacy/Empowerment	1.0%	11
Public Safety, Disaster Preparedness & Relief	0.8%	9
Faith/Spirituality	0.8%	9
Philanthropy & Grantmaking	0.7%	8
Veterans/Military Services	0.7%	8
Business/Professional Associations	0.6%	7
Crime & Other Legal Services	0.6%	6
Science & Technology	0.4%	4
Employment & Training	0.1%	1
Foreign Affairs/International NGO	0.1%	1
Other	5.3%	58

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Number of Paid Employees

Total Number of Paid Employees at Organization

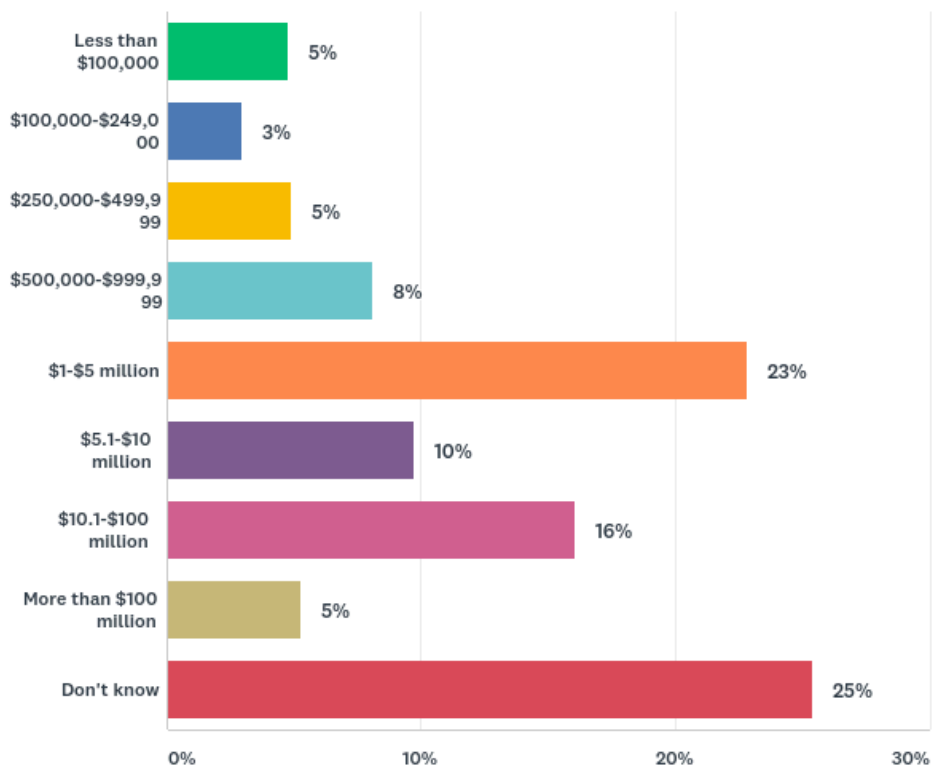| Category	Percentage
0 (all volunteer)	3%
1-5	10%
6-50	32%
51-100	11%
101-250	13%
251-500	10%
501-1,000	7%
Over 1,000	14%
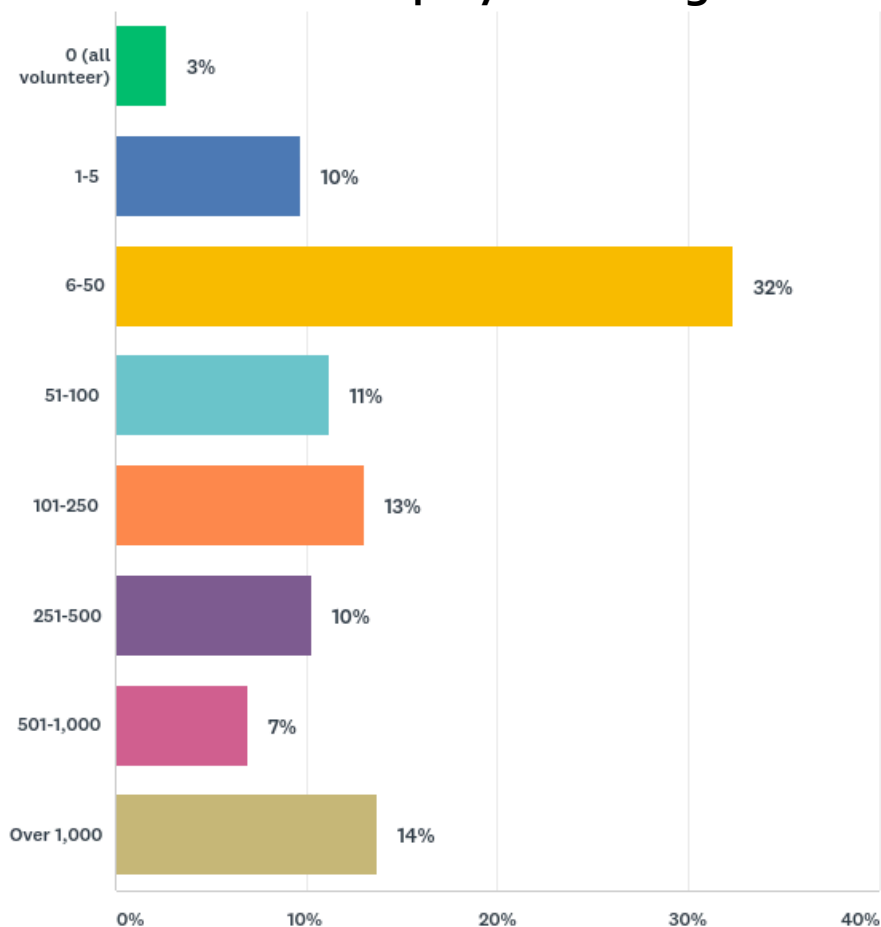
Organization Size

3% were organizations entirely run by unpaid volunteers. 10% of respondents have five or fewer paid staff within the organization.

Nearly one third (32%) are small to medium size organizations, reporting 6 to 50 paid staff. 44% are larger organizations with more than 100 paid employees.

"We are understaffed in our volunteer department and get by with intern and temp help, but could use another employee. There was money in my budget for a part time person, but after a bad experience with the wrong employee, my supervisor has not seen fit to release the money for more staffing. There may be other priorities, such as a more development oriented staff person to work with high value donor/volunteers. There is a push to convert volunteers to donors and so general volunteering may not get the staffing we need."

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Annual Budget – Organization

Organization's Annual Budget (for all departments)

Category	Percentage
Less than $100,000	5%
$100,000-$249,000	3%
$250,000-$499,999	5%
$500,000-$999,999	8%
$1-$5 million	23%
$5.1-$10 million	10%
$10.1-$100 million	16%
More than $100 million	5%
Don't know	25%

Organization Budgets

Similar to last year's results, over half (54%) reported organizational budgets of $1 million or more. 8% were organizations with an annual budget of less than $250,000.

One in five (25%) did not know their organization's budget.

"The job is bigger than it used to be. We've grown our program by 43% since 2013 which is fantastic! Our organization needed more volunteer support. But staffing in our department has stayed the same. How do we continue to do more for more people without watering everything down?"

"Despite overseeing a volunteer program valued at over $10 million annually, I still have not a dedicated budget for the volunteer program."

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Respondent Demographics

Gender

Other
0.5% (5)

Male
8.5% (91)

Female
91.0% (975)

Race/Ethnicity

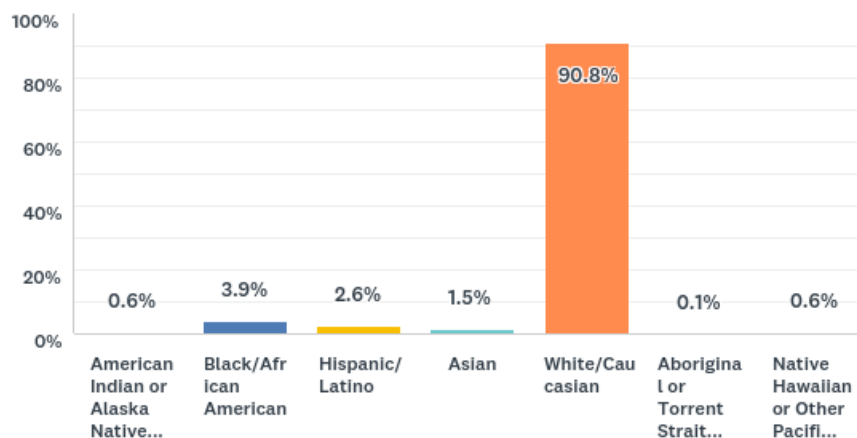|						
0.6%	3.9%	2.6%	1.5%	90.8%	0.1%	0.6%
American Indian or Alaska Native...	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Asian	White/Caucasian	Aboriginal or Torrent Strait...	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacifi...
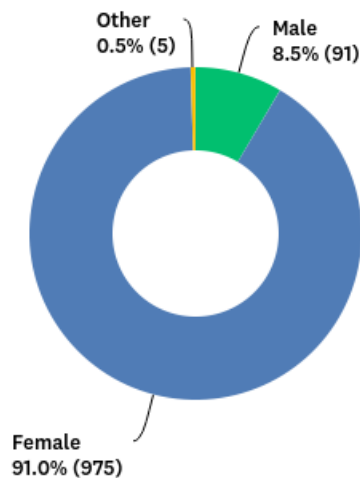
Demographics Remain Consistent

The demographic breakdown was consistent with the 2017 survey, moving slightly more homogenous. The vast majority of survey respondents were *Female* (91%, 88% in 2017), and predominately *White/Caucasian* (91%, 89% in 2017), with very little representation of other ethnicities. (Note: In comparison, people of color comprise 18% of nonprofit US employees, 82% are White/Caucasian).

Note: The race/ethnicity question included in the survey was intended to be open for respondents to select as many options as apply. Unfortunately, the question was erroneously set to accept only one answer. This may have skewed the data slightly.

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Respondent Demographics

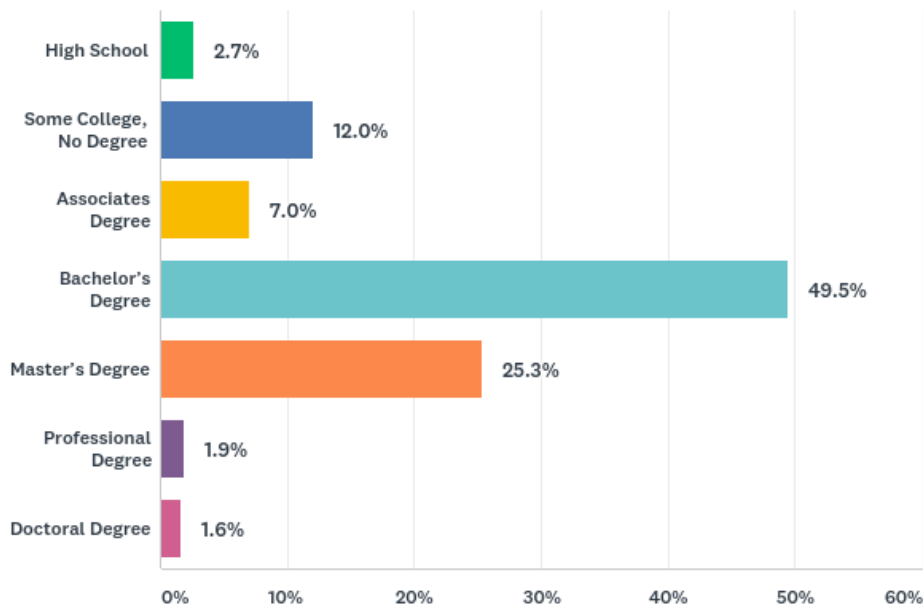## Age
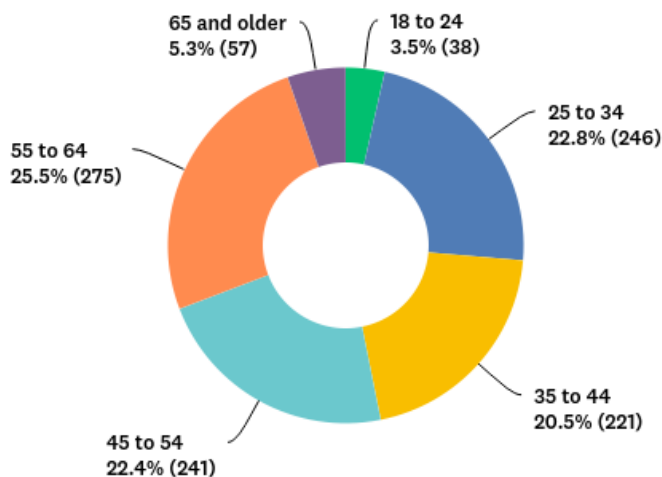
Highest Level of School Achieved

Multi-Generational, Highly-Educated Workforce

Respondents are fairly evenly split amongst age cohorts in the 25-64 year old age range, and most have at least one post-secondary degree. The vast majority (78%) have attained at least a Bachelor's degree (76% in the 2017 survey and 80% in the 2016 survey).

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Job Title & Status

What's in a Name?

Those who lead volunteers go by many job titles, with *Coordinator* appearing as the most common. The top three words included in the job titles of respondents were:

- **Coordinator 41.4%** (43% in 2017, 39% in 2016)

- **Manager 24.6%** (26% in 2017, 27% in 2016)

- **Director 16.7%** (16% 2017, 19% 2016)

The remainder were: *Specialist* (5.0%), *Supervisor* (1.8%), *Officer* (1.8%), *Assistant* (1.2%), *President* (1.1%) *Administrator* (.7%), and *Associate* (.5%). 5.2% selected *Other*.

Structure of the Job & Time Spent on Volunteer Management

The overwhelming majority of leaders of volunteers classify themselves as full-time (84%) paid (92%) employees and 4% are unpaid volunteers. Interestingly, the number with full-time status increased six percentage points from 2017 to 2018 overall.

Paid staff continue to split their time between volunteer resource management and other duties. On average, 31% focus entirely on volunteer coordination, but significant differences exist between countries for this metric.

Percentage of Time Spent on Volunteer Management

	25% or Less	26-50%	51-75%	76-99%	100%
2016	16%	3.80	19%	31%	33%
2017	12%	12%	0%	26%	30%
2018	**12%**	**14%**	**18%**	**24%**	**31%**

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018

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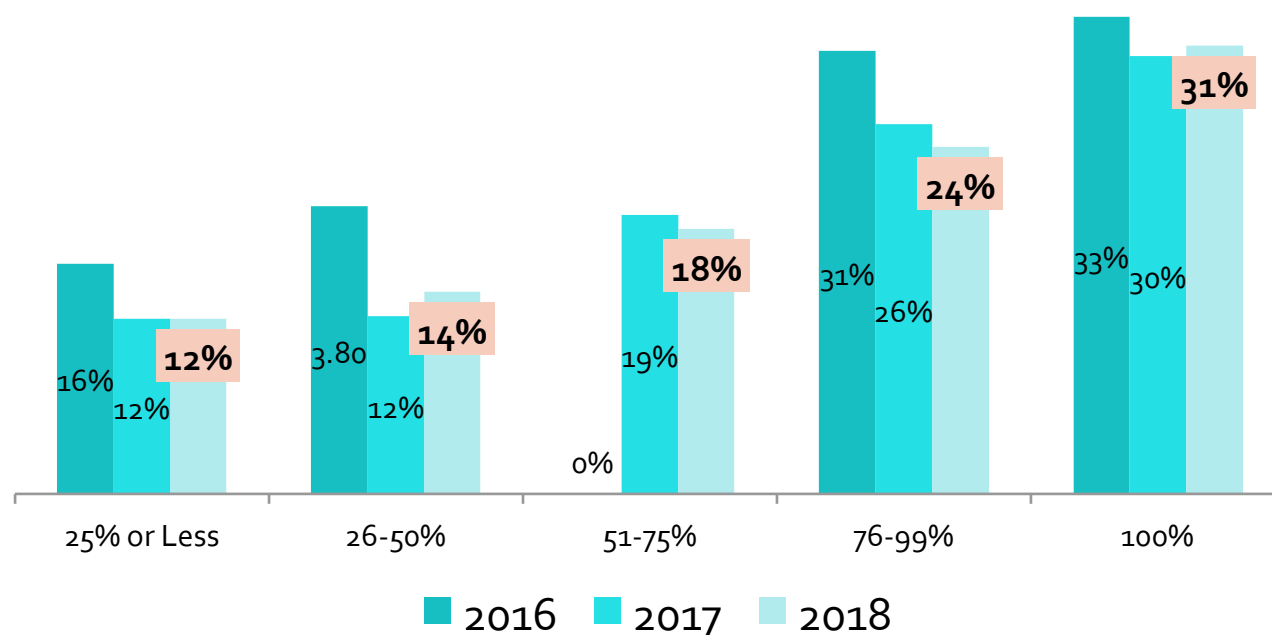
Work Schedule

Percentage Who Work Full Time x Country

United States: 85% (2016), 84% (2017), 87% (2018)
Canada: 84% (2016), 81% (2017), 90% (2018)
United Kingdom: 25% (2016), 65% (2017), 83% (2018)
Australia: 40% (2016), 62% (2017), 66% (2018)

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018
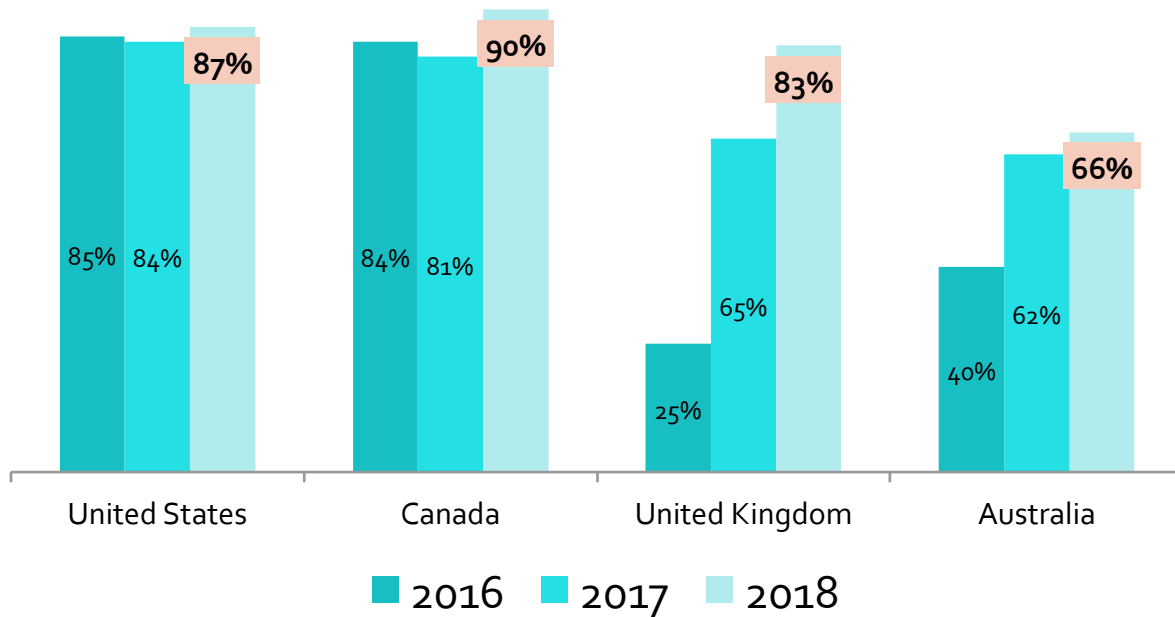
Percentage Who Spend 100% of Their Time on Volunteer Administration x Country

United States: 33% (2016), 32% (2017), 30% (2018)
Canada: 41% (2016), 27% (2017), 40% (2018)
United Kingdom: 20% (2016), 38% (2017), 37% (2018)
Australia: 20% (2016), 28% (2017), 34% (2018)

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018

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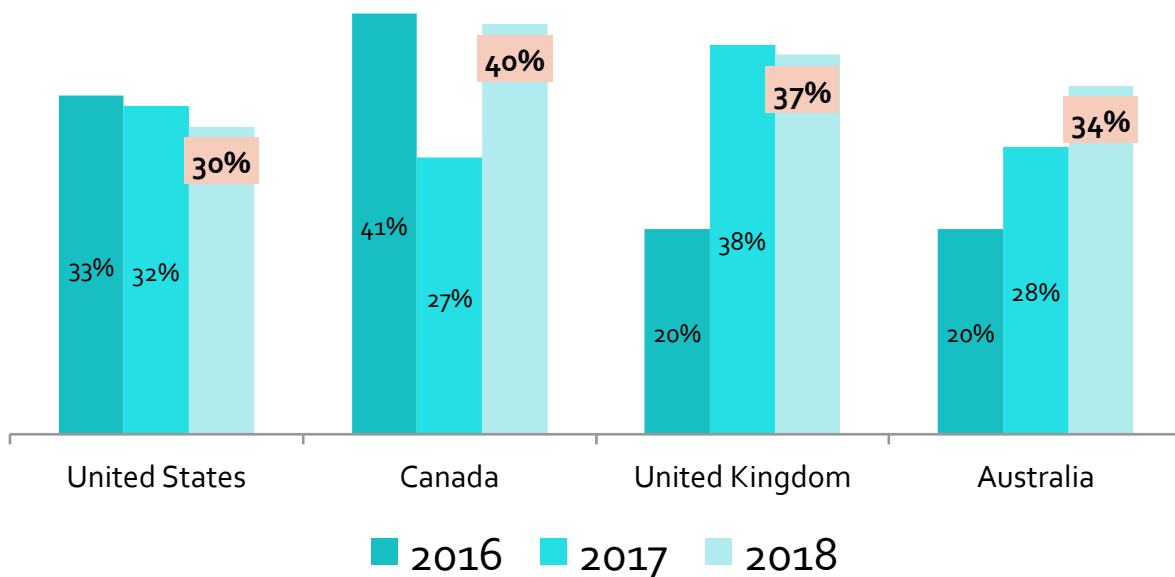
Professional Experience

Field Experience and Tenure is Growing

Respondents represented a wide range of years of experience, many with long tenures in the field. Moreover, the corps of experienced managers is growing, representing a solid foundation of seasoned veterans.

- **In 2018,** 44% had over 10 years experience and 17% over 20 years.

- **In 2017,** 43% had over 10 years experience and 18% over 20 years.

- **In 2016,** 40% had over 10 years experience and 16% over 20 years.

Years Working in the Field of Volunteer Administration

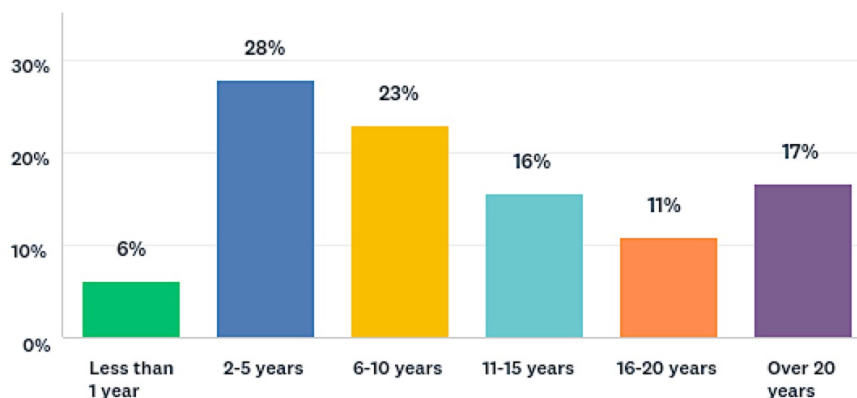"A growing volunteer program has some staff unnerved by the skills being offered for free or irritated by the presence of volunteers in their well-oiled routines. The day staff understand the task and necessity in development terms to welcome and use volunteers, but we are a 24/7 operation and some of the late-night/ overnight and weekend workers do not understand what Development does and can be dismissive of enthusiastic offers of help!"

"We know that not everyone is going to like every component of training, some will find some parts more useful than others, but how do we strike a balance and keep things fresh year after year…..Some students have been volunteering for 3 or 4 years, so how do we keep it new and exciting for them, while also providing the basic information and skills to our new volunteers?!"

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Professional Credentials

Certifications Achieved by Type

Bar chart showing: None 67.1%, Other 15.1%, CVA 12.2%, CVM 3.8%, CAVS 2.0%, MSW 1.7%, CNP 0.5%, CFRE 0.2%, CAE 0.1%
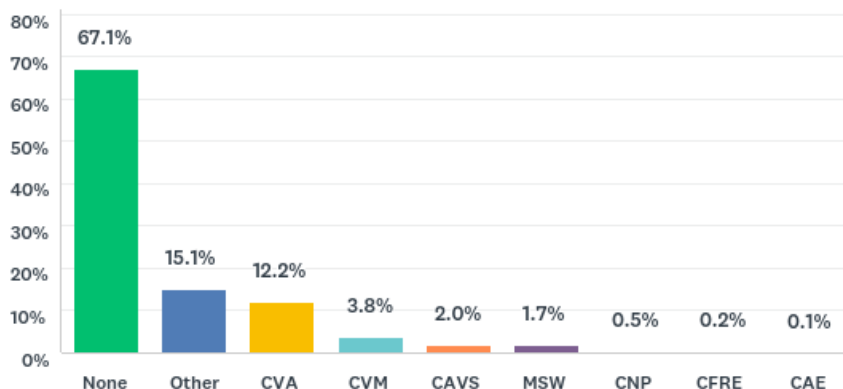
Most Hold No Certifications

Most respondents (67%) do not hold any certifications related to volunteer resource management. Only 12% have obtained the *Certified in Volunteer Administration (CVA)* credential, the only globally-recognized certification for the field.

Over the past three years, the average certified is 33%, or one in three respondents.

Percentage Who Hold At Least One Certification in Nonprofit or Volunteer Administration

Line chart showing: 2016 = 36%, 2017 = 29%, 2018 = 33%
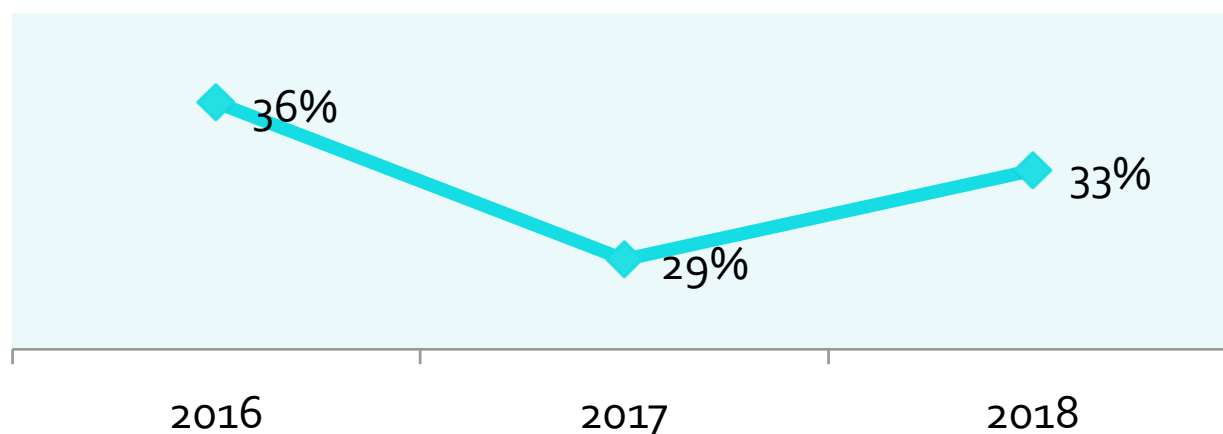
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Annual Budget – Program

Program's Annual Budget

None	8%
$1-$1,000	12%
$1,001-$5,000	20%
$5,001-$10,000	10%
$10,001-$50,000	17%
$50,000-$100,000	6%
Over $100,000	6%
Don't Know	21%
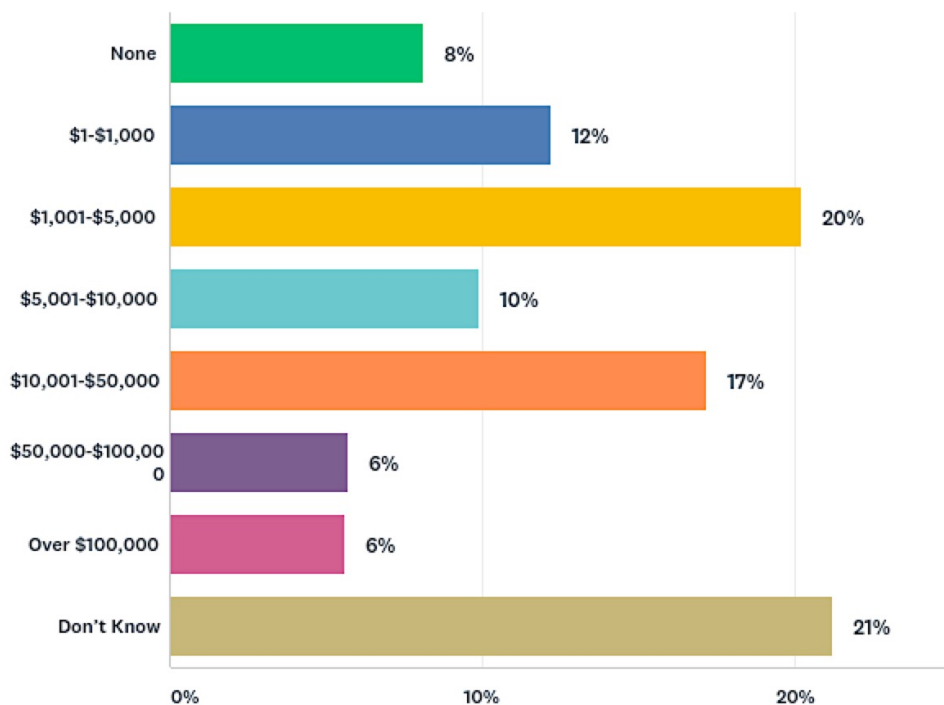
Annual Program Budget (US)

In the US, one-third (32%) reported annual budgets of $1-$5,000 set aside for the volunteer program (not including staff salaries and benefits). The median program budget was $5,001-$10,000. Nearly one in ten (8%) of programs had no budget set aside for the volunteer program.

Consistent across countries, at least one in five (21%) don't know their own program budget.

Country	Means & Rough Averages ($ USD)	% Don't Know
United States	4.61 ($5,001-$10,000)	21%
Canada	5.08 ($8,052-$40,253)	24%
Australia	4.89 ($3,919-$7,838)	21%
United Kingdom	5.55 ($13,564-$67,813)	38%

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How Do They Describe Their Work?

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Volunteer Roles

Volunteer Roles in the Past Year	% of Responses
Special Events	80.0%
Office/Administrative/Customer Service	73.8%
Board/Committee Member	64.6%
Data Entry/Management & Reporting	56.0%
Outreach/Community Education/Booths	53.2%
Fundraising	51.0%
Leading/Supervising Other Volunteers	46.0%
Education/Teaching/Tutoring	43.0%
Direct Client/Patient Service	42.1%
Activity Leaders	38.2%
Volunteer Recruitment	37.9%
Communications/Marketing	36.7%
Training/Coaching/Mentoring	34.9%
Befriending/Support	31.4%
Transportation/Driving/Delivery	30.1%
Landscaping/Conservation	28.2%
Coaching/Mentoring	27.5%
Advocacy	25.6%
Pro-Bono/Professional Services	25.5%
Strategic Planning/Program Development	23.9%
Food Service/Catering	23.5%
Speakers Bureau/Docent/Tour Guide	21.5%
Interpetation/Translation	17.6%
Construction/Maintenance	16.7%
Copywriting/Marketing	15.4%
Assessment/Evaluation	14.3%
Warehouse/Food Packing	12.3%
Animal Care	12.2%
Emergency Services/Disaster Relief	9.6%
Other (please specify)	10.7%

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Volunteer Roles

Types of Volunteer Roles

Volunteers are involved in a wide variety of roles and purposes, as reported by respondents.

The use of volunteers in specific capacities remained relatively consistent over the past three years of surveys. Frequency of use trends are shown below.

The arrows indicate how the ranking of the role has changed from 2017 to 2018, with more volunteers engaged in leadership positions and less being utilized for data entry and reporting.

Volunteer Roles in Past 12 Months	2016	2017	2018
Special Events	84.2%	79.1%	79.9%
Office/Administrative/Reception	72.9%	72.3%	73.8%
Board/Committee Member	66.8%	61.7%	64.6% ⬆
Data Entry/Management & Reporting	N/A	63.1%	56.0% ⬇
Outreach/Community Education/Booths	N/A	55.9%	53.1%
Fundraising	52.3%	51.1%	51.0%
Leading/Supervising Other Volunteers	42.9%	47.5%	46.0% ⬆
Education/Teaching/Tutoring	N/A	N/A	42.9%
Direct Client/Patient Service	71.4%	48.8%	42.1% ⬇
Activity Leaders	N/A	40.7%	38.2% ⬆
Volunteer Recruitment	48.9%	40.4%	37.9% ⬇
Communications/Marketing	N/A	41.9%	36.6% ⬇
Training/Coaching/Mentoring	45.4%	44.1%	34.9% ⬇

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Where Volunteers are Placed

Where the Highest # of Volunteers are Placed Each Year
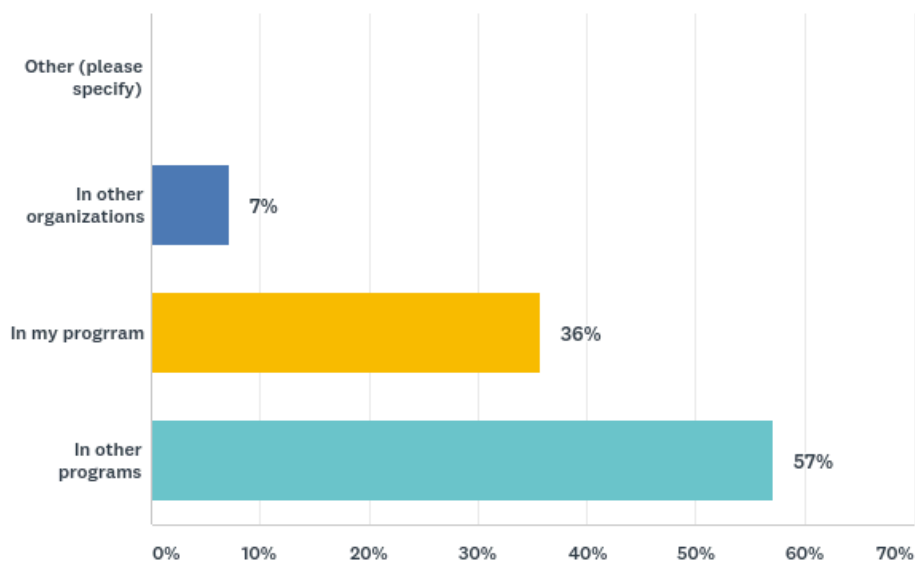
In-Sourcing & Outsourcing Volunteer Talent Placement

For the 2018 survey, over half of respondents (57%) indicated that their primary responsibility is to place volunteers with other departments within their organization. About one-third (36%, same as in 2017) place volunteers in their own programs. Only 7% placed the highest volume of volunteers each year with other organizations outside their own.

In 2017, the trend was similar, with 56% placing the highest volume of volunteers in other programs within their own organizations.

"Volunteers (formal and informal) comprise one of our nation's largest, if not the largest, workforce and contributes significantly to the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being of our nation, but is not well acknowledged, funded, positioned, or supported. As with other workforces volunteering needs investment instead of being seen and expected to be free (even though the act of volunteering is freely given)."

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Volunteers Involved in Program

of Volunteers Involved Annually

Category	Percent
None	0%
1-100	19%
101-250	20%
251-500	19%
501-750	10%
751-1,000	7%
Over 1,000	24%
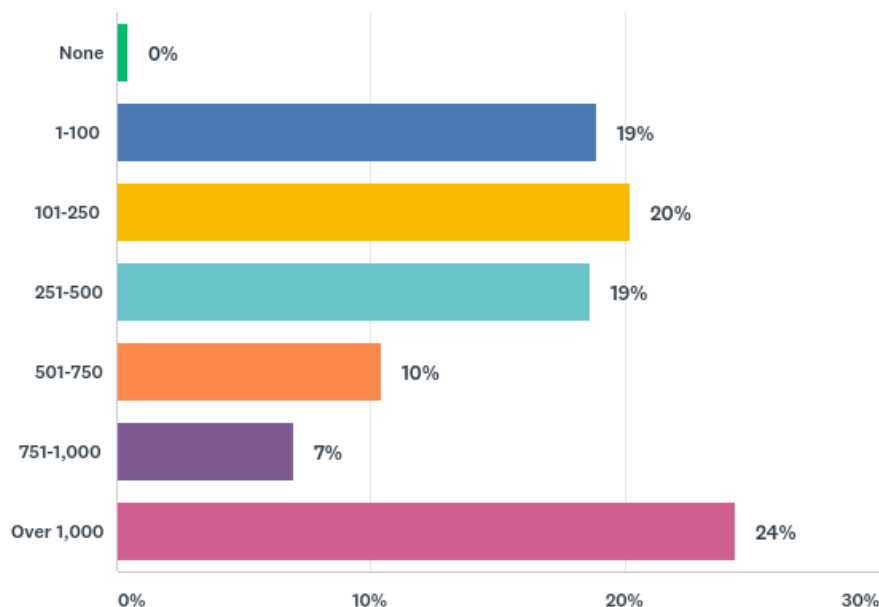
Total Number of Volunteers

Respondents involve a wide range of volunteers, with the average workforce of about 251-500 volunteers across the organization. About one quarter (24%) engage over 1,000 volunteers a year in service.

The survey did not ask whether the respondent was solely responsible for placing all volunteers involved at the organization.

"If we don't create new and unique things for volunteers to assist with, they won't get involved. Staff are so committed to our mission here it is very hard for them to "give away" tasks to volunteers. The whole volunteer program will remain stagnant if I can't create some staff buy-in!"

"I took over at the same time the organization grew exponentially. And there was no time to develop a solid, structured program. And there has continued to be no time or opportunity to do so. The need for volunteers has also grown exponentially, but there has not been the support for me to back up and develop the program so that we KEEP the volunteers we get."

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Salary

Median Salaries

Across the board, salaries are on the rise, in some countries more so than in others. Below are the current averages for this year and last and the equivalents in US dollars for comparison.

United States (US) – $45,703 USD ($45,325 in 2017)

Canada – $56,518 CAD ($45,432 USD, $34,732 in 2017)

Australia (Oz) – $64,816 AUD ($50,982 USD, $46,079 in 2017)

United Kingdom – £27,668 GBP ($37,530 USD, $34,856 in 2017)

Please Note: Beyond the US, insufficient sample sizes were collected from other countries to report reliable data. We, therefore, focused on salaries in the US. Data is being provided for information only. It should not be assumed it is representative.

Average Annual Salary (US) x Type of Organization

2018 Median – $45,703

Type of Organization	2017	2018
Church or Congregation	$55,000	$37,925
For Profit Corp/Small Biz	$52,612	$40,704
Nonprofit Organization	$41,033	$42,607
Educational Inst/School	$44,425	$44,150
State Government	$53,045	$53,035
Regional Government	$50,542	$53,657
Hospital/Clinic/Hospice	$54,485	$54,148
Local Government	$54,180	$55,534
Federal Government	$62,823	$64,480

■ 2017 ■ 2018
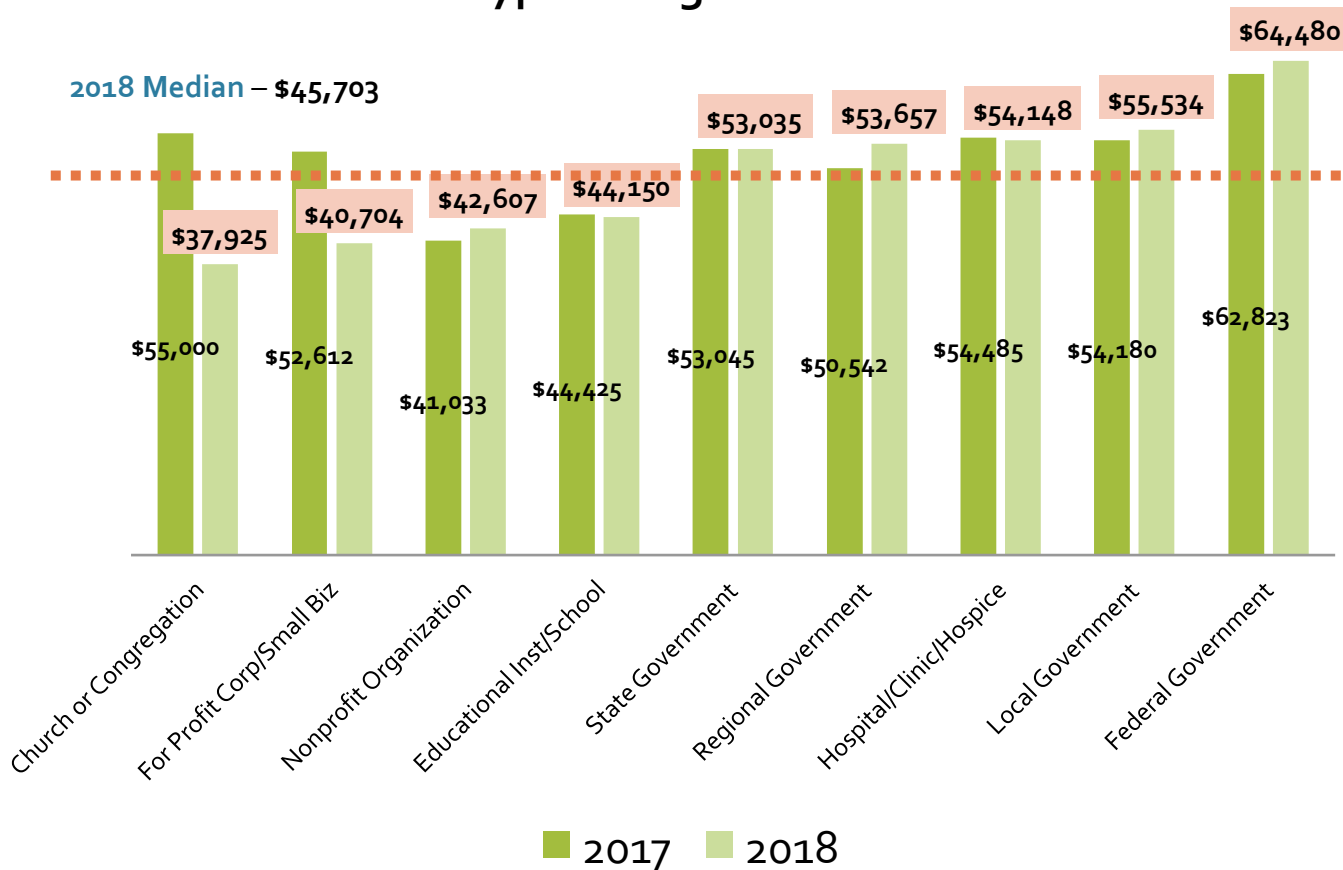
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Salary Variables

Average Annual Salary (US) x Job Title

Bar chart showing 2017 and 2018 average annual salaries by job title:

Job Title	2017	2018
Director	$57,724	$56,147
Administrator	$55,078	$67,813
Manager	$48,209	$50,646
Coordinator	$38,265	$37,361
Supervisor	$42,036	$53,925
Specialist	$41,063	$46,773
Associate	$47,294	$30,462
Assistant	$28,049	$41,109
Officer		$37,677
President		$12,000

2018 Median — $45,703

Legend: 2017, 2018
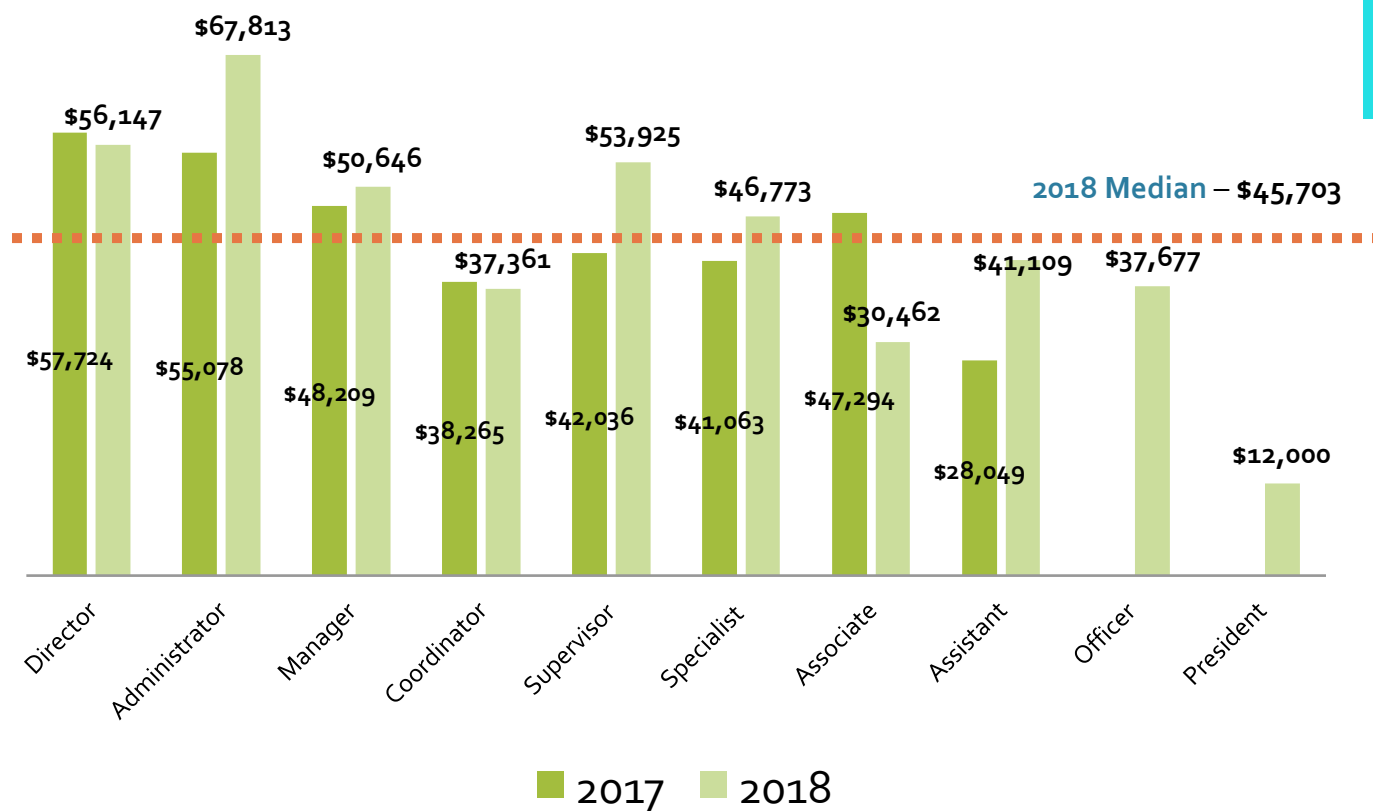
Salary Trends

Volunteer manager salaries in the United States vary by type of organization, ranging from an average of $42,607 per year for church/congregation employees to an average of $64,480 for federal government workers. **The average overall salary in the US was $45,703**.

It appears that there is a correlation between average salary and job title. Directors earned the most at an average of $56,147 per year and Associates the least at $30,462. We did not collect data for titles that included the word Office*r* or President.

"LOVE what I do...love working with those who are so keen and passionate about giving back!!!"

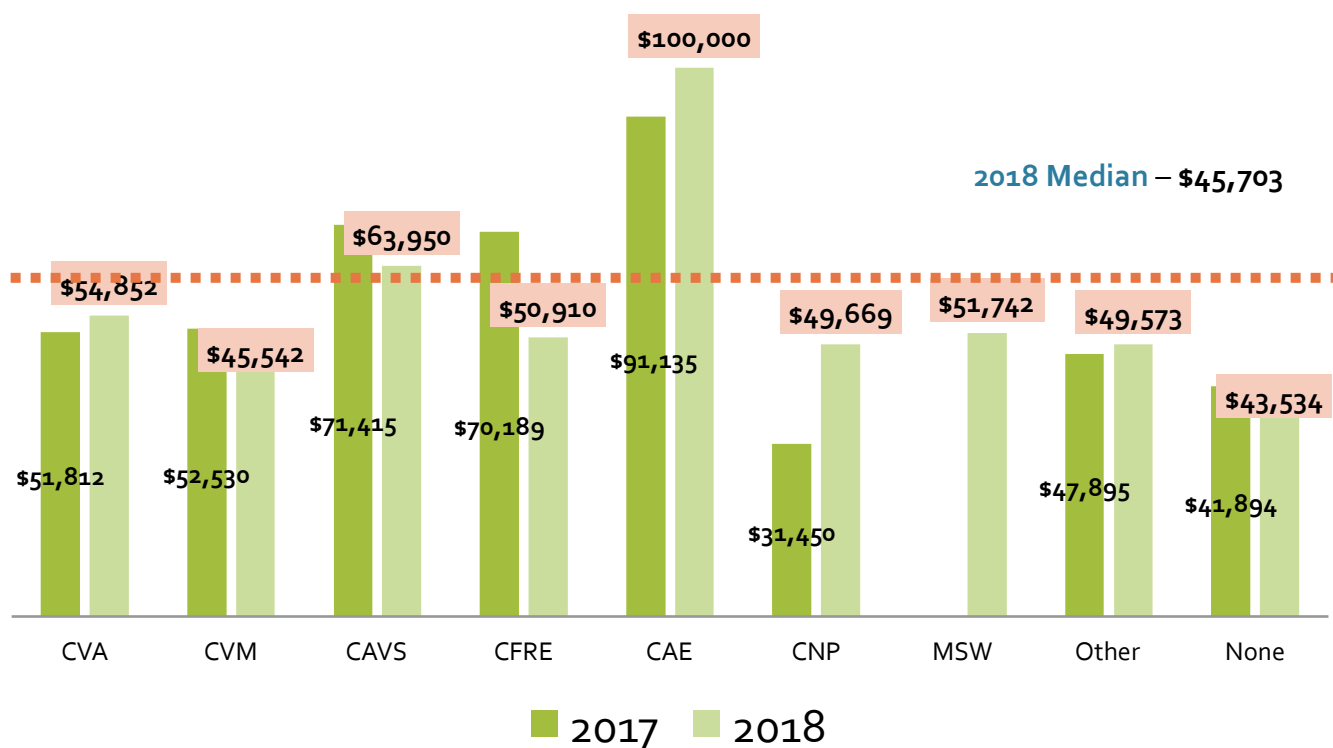VolunteerPro℠

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Salary Variables

Possible Impacts on Salary

There appears to be fairly consistent correlations between salary and type of certification. This may be due, in part, to organizational type. Certifications include:

- **Certified in Volunteer Administration (CVA)**
- **Certified Volunteer Manager (CVM)**
- **Certified Administrator of Volunteer Services (CAVS)** (for healthcare)
- **Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE)**
- **Certified Association Executive (CAE)**
- **Certified Nonprofit Professional (CNP)**
- **Masters in Social Work (MSW)**

There is also a correlation between the number of volunteers placed annually and the total number of volunteers. The higher the number of volunteers, the higher the salary, except for the 751-1,000 volunteers band (for both total placed and total involved). This was relatively consistent with last year's findings.

Average Annual Salary (US)
x Certification

2018 Median – **$45,703**

Certification	2017	2018
CVA	$51,812	$54,852
CVM	$52,530	$45,542
CAVS	$71,415	$63,950
CFRE	$70,189	$50,910
CAE	$91,135	$100,000
CNP	$31,450	$49,669
MSW		$51,742
Other	$47,895	$49,573
None	$41,894	$43,534

■ **2017**   ■ **2018**

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Salary Variables

Average Annual Salary x Total Number of Org Volunteers

$36,623 — $41,797 — $47,349 — $47,864 — $43,606 — $54,201

Median – $45,703

1-100　101-250　251-500　501-750　751-1000　Over 1000
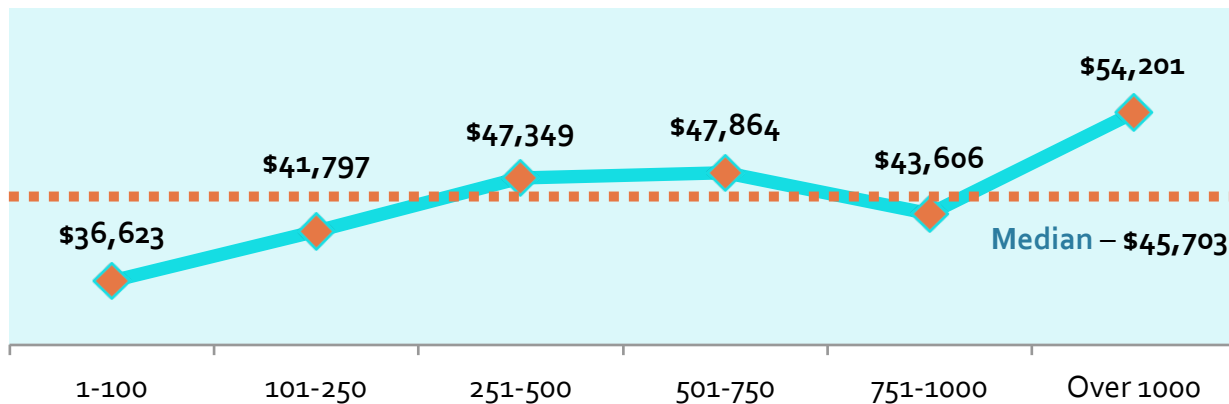
Average Annual Salary x Number of Volunteers Placed Annually

$40,583 — $46,692 — $48,200 — $51,423 — $40,813 — $53,950

Median – $45,703

1-100　101-250　251-500　501-750　751-1000　Over 1000
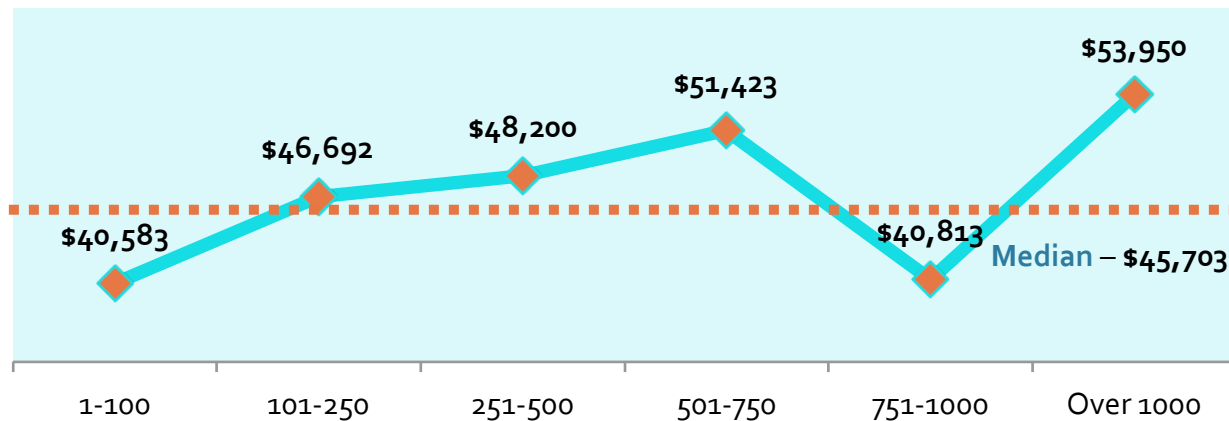
Average Annual Salary x Where Volunteers Are Placed

$42,906 — $48,126 — $41,005

Median – $45,703

In my own program/dept　In other programs/depts within my org　In other orgs outside my own

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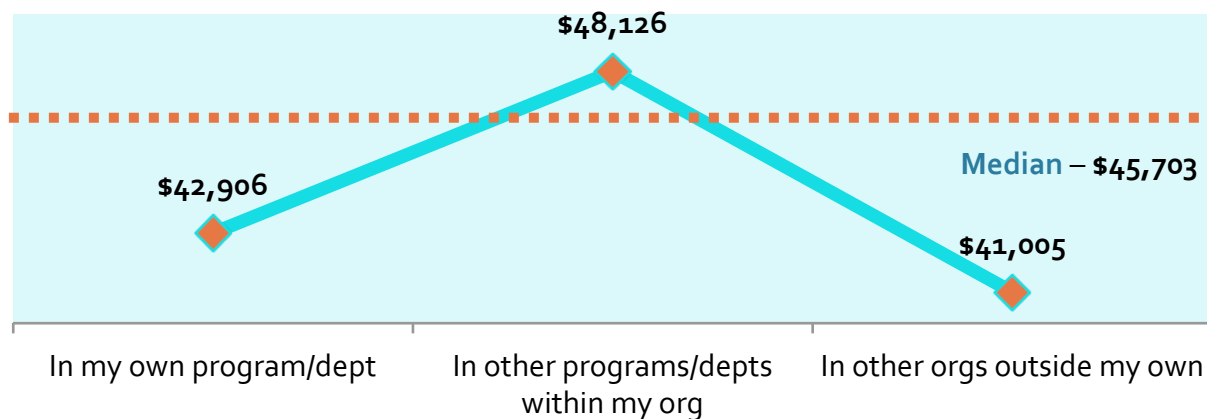
Salary Variables

Salary and Budgets

There is also a positive correlation between program and organization budgets – the higher the annual budget the higher the salary, except for those who do not know their budgets. Earnings drop below the median for those who don't know their budgets.
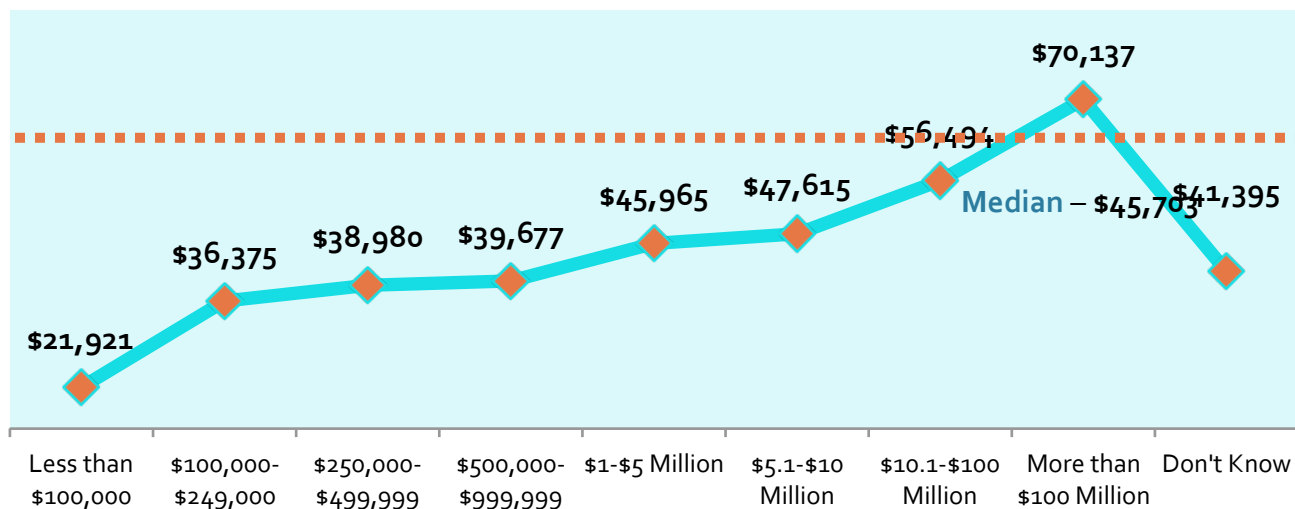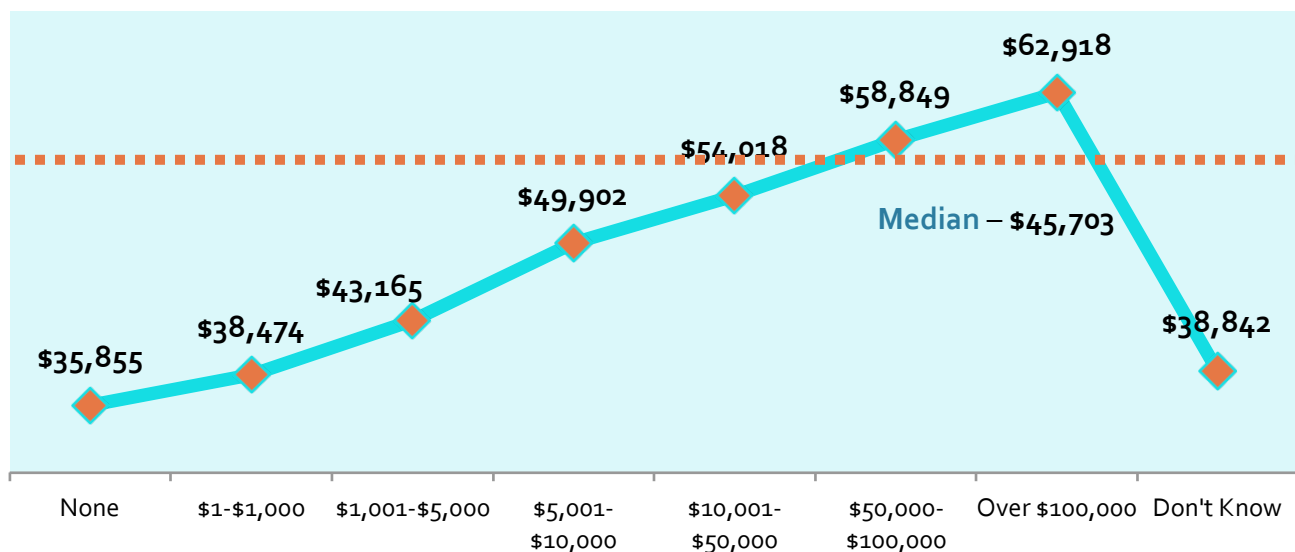
Average Annual Salary x Annual Organizational Budget

$70,137

$56,494

$45,965 $47,615

Median – $45,703 $41,395

$38,980 $39,677

$36,375

$21,921

| Less than $100,000 | $100,000-$249,000 | $250,000-$499,999 | $500,000-$999,999 | $1-$5 Million | $5.1-$10 Million | $10.1-$100 Million | More than $100 Million | Don't Know |

Average Annual Salary x Annual Volunteer Program Budget (without Salary & Benefits)

$62,918

$58,849

$54,018

Median – $45,703

$49,902

$43,165

$38,474 $38,842

$35,855

| None | $1-$1,000 | $1,001-$5,000 | $5,001-$10,000 | $10,001-$50,000 | $50,000-$100,000 | Over $100,000 | Don't Know |

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Salary Variables

Average Annual Salary x Job Satisfaction

$49,375

$43,293

$40,117

$42,385

$44,701

Median – $45,703

Very Dissatisfied   Somewhat Dissatisfied   Neutral   Somewhat Satisfied   Very Satisfied
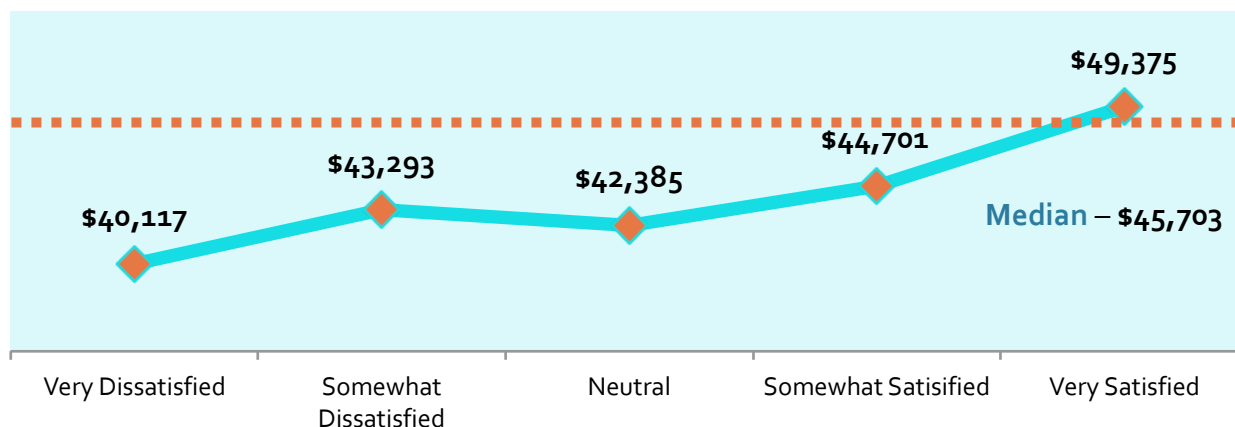
Salary and Satisfaction Appear Related

Not surprising, there also appears to be a slight correlation between satisfaction and salary. Those who report being *Very Satisfied* are the only group that averages over the median salary. Those that are somewhat satisfied earn slightly more than those who are *Very Dissatisfied*, *Somewhat Dissatisfied*, or *Neutral* about their work.

"Currently, the organization has too few resources allocated to volunteer engagement and management. While this is illustrated by the funding level stated in the budget, it goes beyond allocating dollars for my modest salary and overhead costs. It includes a significant lack of paid employees allocated to administrative support, as well as a lack of funding for professional development for all staff working with volunteers. It also includes a lack of commitment from senior managers to provide the infrastructure necessary to carry out our internal volunteer practices."

"As many others, I wear a number of hats, while my primary job is coordinating volunteers. However, I also oversee and manage a number of other priorities. This limits the amount of time I can spend engaging volunteers the way I would like to or need to…As a coordinator, I have the opportunity to place volunteers at five different locations and among six different programs. I simply do not have the capacity to effectively manage a volunteer program the way it should be run."

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What Are Their Needs?

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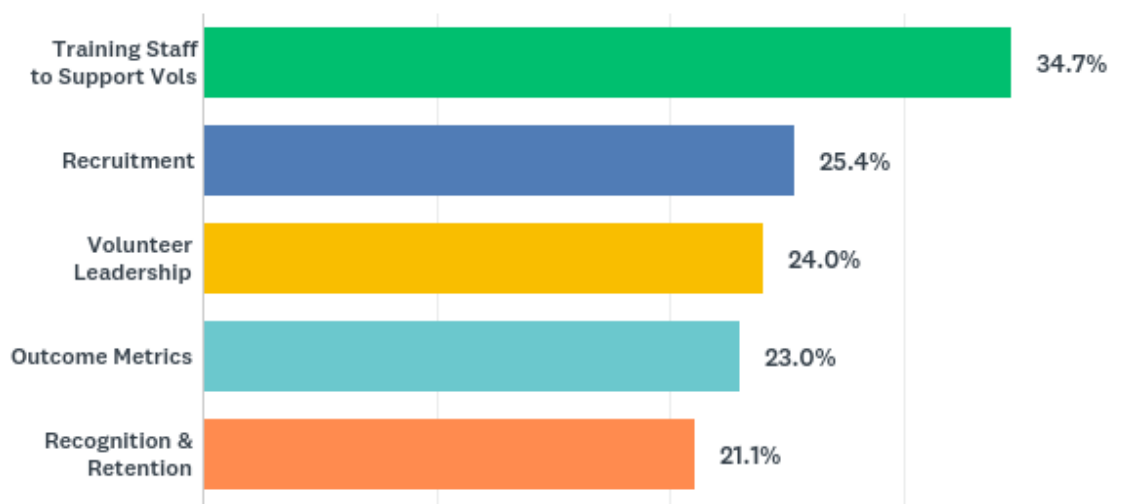
Professional Development Needs

Top Five Training Needs

The top training needs have remained relatively similar from 2015 to 2017. Over one-third of respondents (34.7%) selected *Training Staff to Support Volunteers* as one of a maximum of four training needs. This was the most cited need in 2017 as well. One in four (25.4%) selected *Volunteer Recruitment*, which rose from third to second ranking this year.

In addition, we added *Developing Volunteer Leadership* as a new category. We're glad we did because it emerged as a clear training need. Nearly one in four respondents (24%) noted volunteer leadership development as a top training theme.

Note: The arrows indicate changes in ranking from 2017 to 2018.

Most Frequently Cited Current Training Needs

Training Need	Percentage
Training Staff to Support Vols	34.7%
Recruitment	25.4%
Volunteer Leadership	24.0%
Outcome Metrics	23.0%
Recognition & Retention	21.1%

Top Training Needs	2016	2017	2018
Training Staff to Work with Volunteers	N/A	45%	**35%**
Volunteer Recruitment	36%	28%	**25%** ⬆
Developing Volunteer Leaders	N/A	N/A	**24%**
Developing Program Outcome Metrics	46%	30%	**23%** ⬇
Volunteer Recognition and Retention	39%	26%	**21%**

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2018 Biggest Challenges

Top Challenges in Open-Ended Comments

Respondents were asked to share their "#1 biggest challenge" in their own words. We asked them to be as detailed as possible. Many of the comments highlighted in this report are excerpted from these responses.

The following were the most frequently cited with the most noted subtopics for each:

- **Recruitment** (31%) – Finding enough volunteers & the right volunteers for specific roles

- **Respect and "Buy-In"** (14%) – Lack of executive support /understanding & co-worker resistance to volunteer involvement

- **Retention** (13%) – Fulfilling commitments to service & volunteers "aging out"

- **Roles & Matching** (10%) – Designing impactful roles & meeting volunteer interests

- **Time** (8%) – Splitting time between competing priorities & not enough paid staff

The table below details how the challenges have evolved over the past three years of surveys. Respondents noted recruitment and respect and reliability as their top two challenges in open-ended comments year after year.

Volunteer retention has risen steadily as a top challenge, climbing seven percentage points over the past three years. This may reinforce what many leaders of volunteers report anecdotally –it may bet getting harder to find and keep volunteers engaged, particularly over longer periods of service.

#1 Biggest Challenge (open-ended)

2016	2017	2018
Recruitment (25%)	Recruitment (24%)	Recruitment (31%)
Support & Buy-In (9%)	Respect & Reliability (16%)	Respect & Buy-In (14%)
Time (9%)	Roles & Matching (9%)	Retention (13%)
Financial Investment (7%)	Retention (8%)	Roles & Matching (10%)
Retention (6%)	Time (8%)	Time (8%)

"It is an honor to work in volunteer services. Volunteers are my favorite group of people because they are everywhere, they are everyone, they are limitless! ."

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Volunteer Retention

Volunteer Engagement Benchmarking – A Start

With this year's survey, we attempted to begin to gather statistics on volunteer recruitment and retention. Currently, there are no standard outcomes metrics for the sector. So, we defined those that most align with how volunteers are utilized, with an attempt to include metrics for both traditional and episodic or short-term roles.

Below is the retention terminology we established for this survey:

- **Volunteer "Conversion" Rate** - What percentage of people who contact you about volunteering begin active volunteer service?

- **Annual Retention Rate -** What percentage of your currently active volunteers were active 12 months ago?

- **Service Event Participation Rate** - On average, what percentage of people who sign up to help at your events actually show up?

- **Project Completion Rate -** What percentage of volunteers who begin a short-term project complete the project successfully?

"It seems that everyone's lives are so busy and full. It's a challenge to continue to engage volunteers to a volunteer commitment. We are very accommodating to schedules so offer great flexibility for availability - this works in our favour!!"

"The biggest challenge facing our organization related to volunteer engagement is creating a consistent culture that values the contributions of volunteers and demonstrates in words and actions an appreciation for all that volunteers do for us. We are a growing organization and many long time volunteers have been relied on to help us achieve that growth. Unfortunately, many of them are now disengaging due to burnout and it has been a challenge to engage new volunteers who are willing to take on the same level of responsibility."

*"We have great measures in place to retain volunteers, and generally have a good retention rate. Lately, an increasing number of volunteers bow out of their role before the term is complete though. We try to communicate commitment at all junctures in their onboarding and training, but other events seem to get in the way and we notice more volunteers are unable to commit or see a project/term through."*

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Volunteer Retention

Engagement Rates by Type
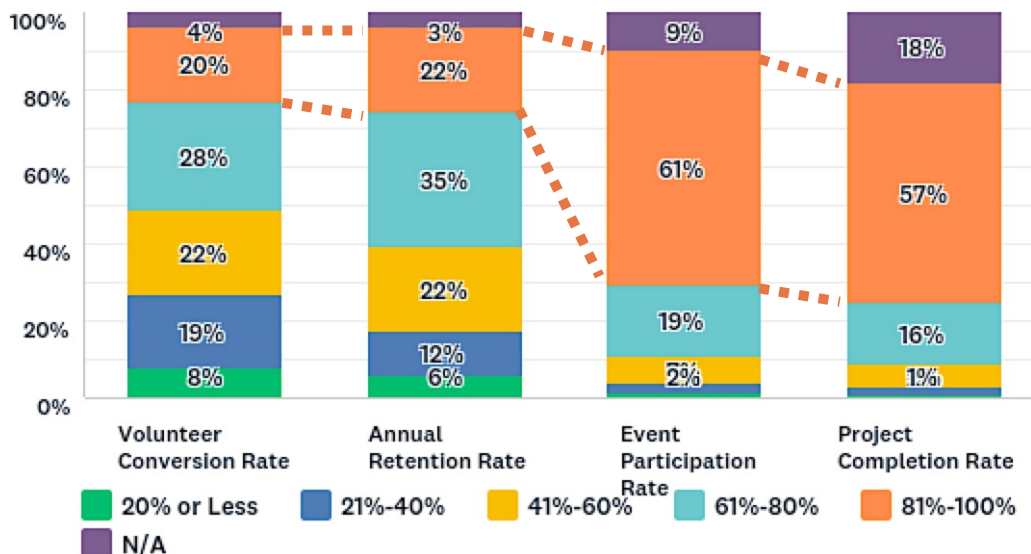
Benchmark	Self Reported Volunteer Retention Rates						
	20% or Less (1)	21%-40% (2)	41%-60% (3)	61%-80% (4)	81%-100% (5)	Total	Mean
Volunteer "Conversion"	8%	19%	22%	**28%**	20%	100%	**3.33**
Annual Retention	6%	12%	22%	**35%**	22%	100%	**3.58**
Event Participation	2%	3%	7%	19%	**61%**	100%	**4.49**
Project Completion	1%	2%	6%	16%	**57%**	100%	**4.53**

"Because of the work my volunteers do, the recruitment and training needs to be fairly rigorous….I do a pretty good job letting people know what the requirements are right at their first inquiry and find that the people who do apply have an understanding that it is a big commitment before they even make their inquiry. It is my belief that there are so many people working multiple jobs that they are more interested in episodic volunteering."

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Agency Support

Buy-In From Co-workers

1% 13%	35%	37%	14%	

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Totally Unacceptable ■ Poor ■ Accceptable ■ Very good
■ Exceptionally Good
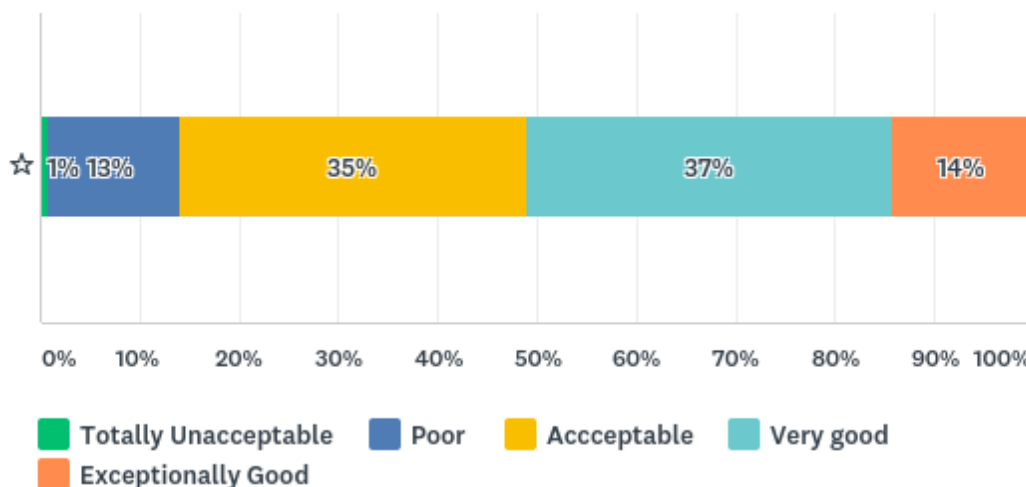
Support From Co-Workers & Executive Leadership

Respondents were asked to rate the level of buy-in from co-workers for involving volunteers in their own departments or programs. Over half of respondents (51%) rated co-workers as *Exceptionally Good* or *Very Good* for their willingness to involve volunteers in their own departments. Over one third (35%) rated paid staff buy-in as *Acceptable*. Less than one in five (14%) rated their colleague support as *Poor* or *Totally Unacceptable*.

Leadership buy-in appears to be more robust than that of co-workers.

- **Co-worker Support (2018):** 51% Very Good to Exceptionally Good

- **Leadership Support (2017):** 57% Very Good to Exceptionally Good

In 2017, over half of respondents (57%) gave their leadership a grade of *A (Exceptionally Good)* or *B (Very Good)* for their support of volunteer initiatives and programming. Only 12.6% gave their leadership a *D (Poor)* or *F (Totally Unacceptable)* grade combined.
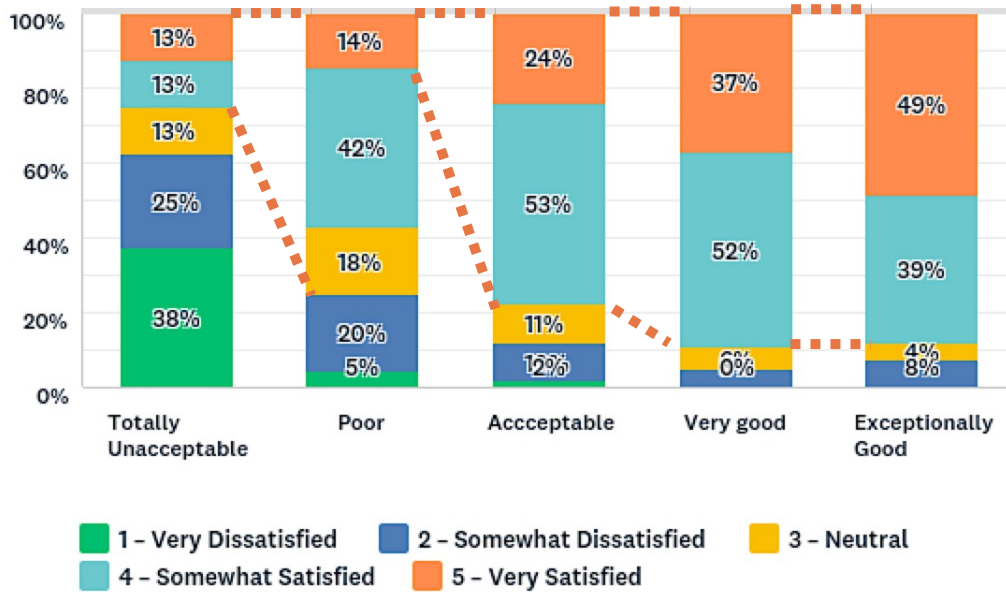
There is a strong correlation between co-worker buy-in and job satisfaction. On the other hand, there appears to be no correlation between satisfaction and where volunteers are most often placed, inside or outside the department.
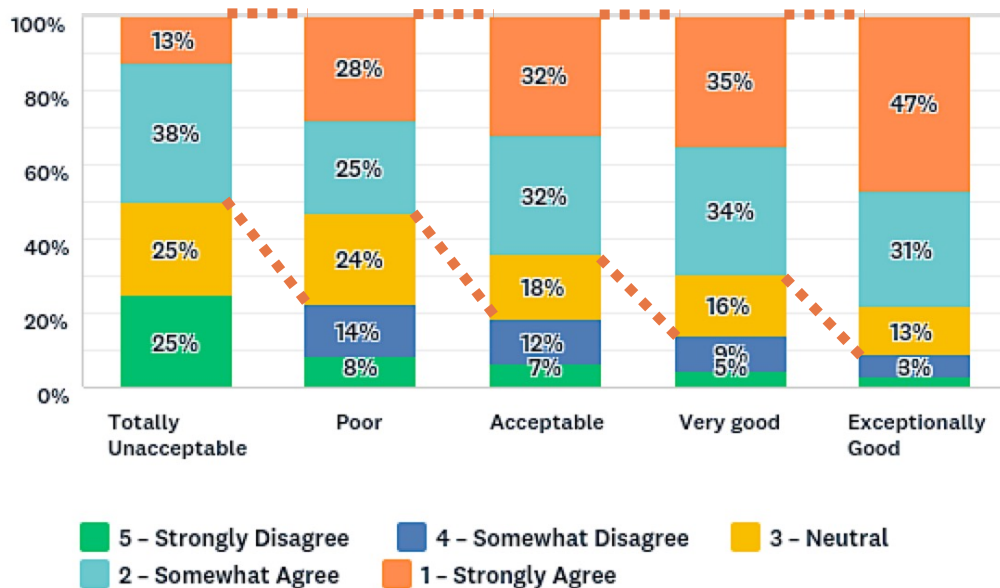
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Agency Support

Buy-In From Co-workers x Satisfaction

	Totally Unacceptable	Poor	Acceptable	Very good	Exceptionally Good
5 – Very Satisfied	13%	14%	24%	37%	49%
4 – Somewhat Satisfied	13%	42%	53%	52%	39%
3 – Neutral	13%	18%	11%	6%	4%
2 – Somewhat Dissatisfied	25%	20%			8%
1 – Very Dissatisfied	38%	5%	12%		

- 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- 2 – Somewhat Dissatisfied
- 3 – Neutral
- 4 – Somewhat Satisfied
- 5 – Very Satisfied

Buy-In From Co-workers x Intent to Stay Working in the Field

	Totally Unacceptable	Poor	Acceptable	Very good	Exceptionally Good
1 – Strongly Agree	13%	28%	32%	35%	47%
2 – Somewhat Agree	38%	25%	32%	34%	31%
3 – Neutral	25%	24%	18%	16%	13%
4 – Somewhat Disagree		14%	12%	9%	3%
5 – Strongly Disagree	25%	8%	7%	5%	

- 5 – Strongly Disagree
- 4 – Somewhat Disagree
- 3 – Neutral
- 2 – Somewhat Agree
- 1 – Strongly Agree

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Agency Support

Where Volunteers Placed x Satisfaction

Chart legend:
- 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- 2 – Somewhat Dissatisfied
- 3 – Neutral
- 4 – Somewhat Satisfied
- 5 – Very Satisfied

	In my own program/department	In other programs/departments within my own organization	In other organizations outside my own
5 – Very Satisfied	33%	30%	27%
4 – Somewhat Satisfied	47%	49%	54%
3 – Neutral	11%	8%	9%
2 – Somewhat Dissatisfied	2%	12%	3%
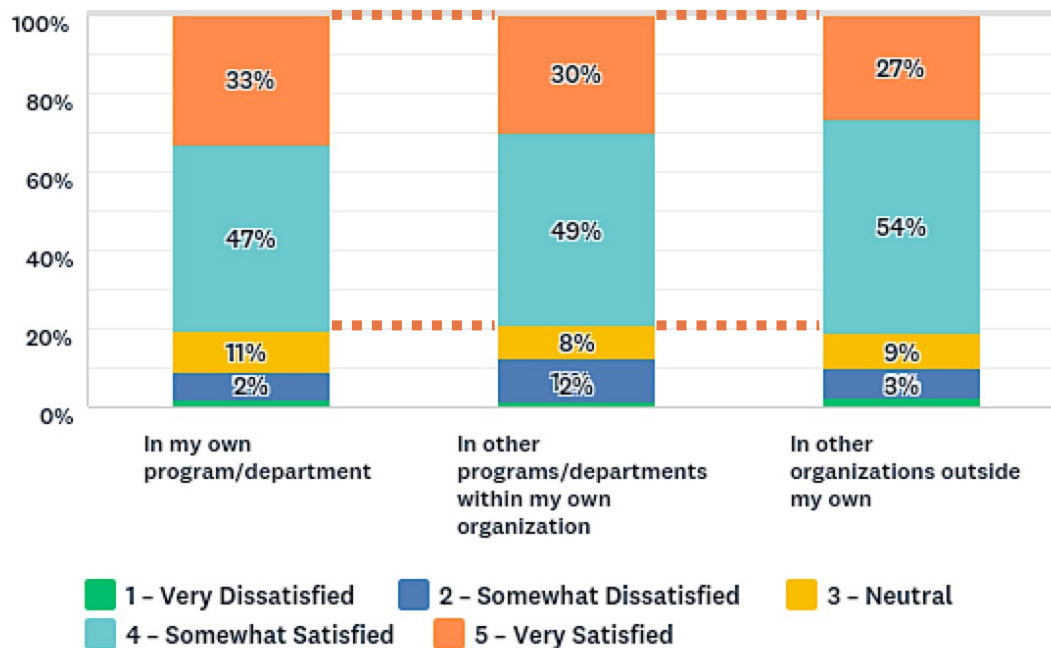
Satisfaction Related to Where Volunteers Work

Where volunteers are placed appears to have little correlation with satisfaction, implying that the lack of support from co-workers may be equally present in all environments, whether volunteers work with other departments, within one's own, or with outside organizations.

"Collecting and receiving volunteer metrics outside of number of volunteers and hours. It's like pulling teeth to just get the number of hours, now I need to convince staff supervisors they actually have to share the RESULTS of having a volunteer on board, i.e., impact on them/their department, impact on the community, impact for the client."
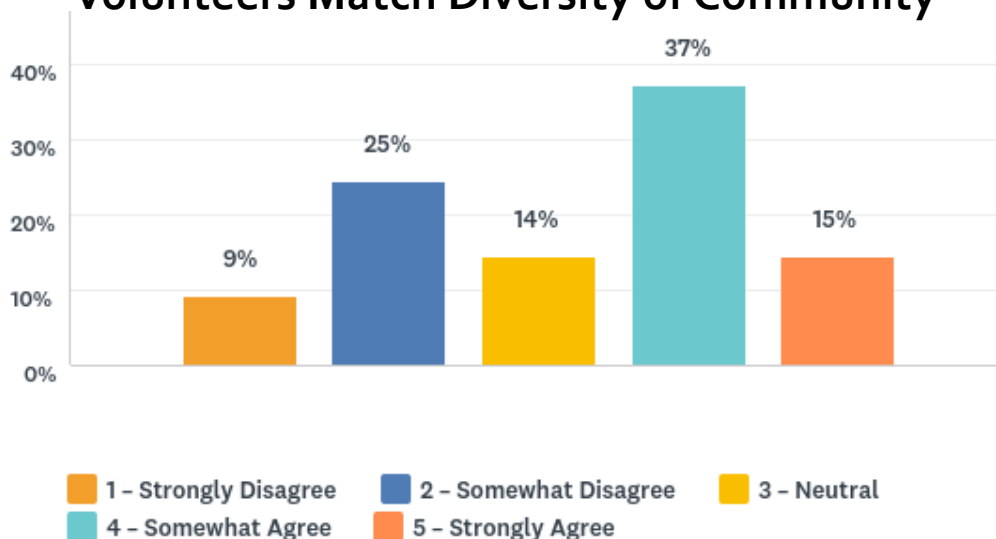
"Volunteer Administrators need to prove the worth of their programs with more than outcome measures. Connecting the public with the human side, the stories and faces of success are critical. Many conservative folks will volunteer if they see worth in the cause or program. These folks will step up with testimony to "save" social programs from budget cuts.!"
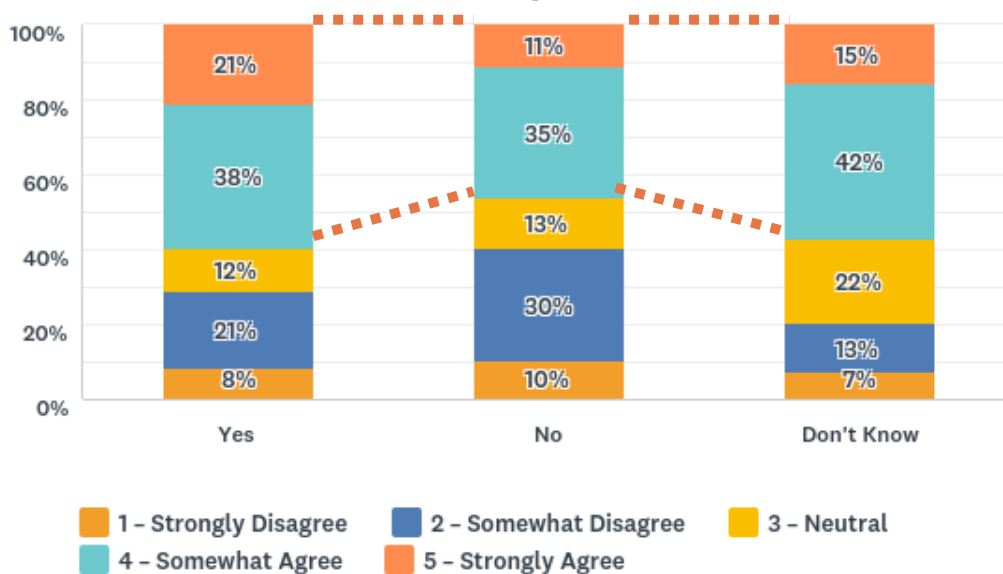
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Diversity & Inclusion

Volunteers Match Diversity of Community

- 1 – Strongly Disagree
- 2 – Somewhat Disagree
- 3 – Neutral
- 4 – Somewhat Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

Volunteer Equity & Inclusion

Over half (52%) *Strongly Agree* or *Somewhat Agree* that the diversity of their current volunteer corps matches the community they serve (race/ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, citizenship status, etc.). For those who have a written diversity & inclusion plan for volunteers, that average rises seven percent (to 59%). For those that do not have a plan, that number drops 5% (to 46%). Perhaps most interesting, the perception of volunteer-community equity is nearly the same for those who don't know if they have a plan (57%) as for those who do (59%).

Volunteers Match Diversity of Community x Written Diversity & Inclusion Plan
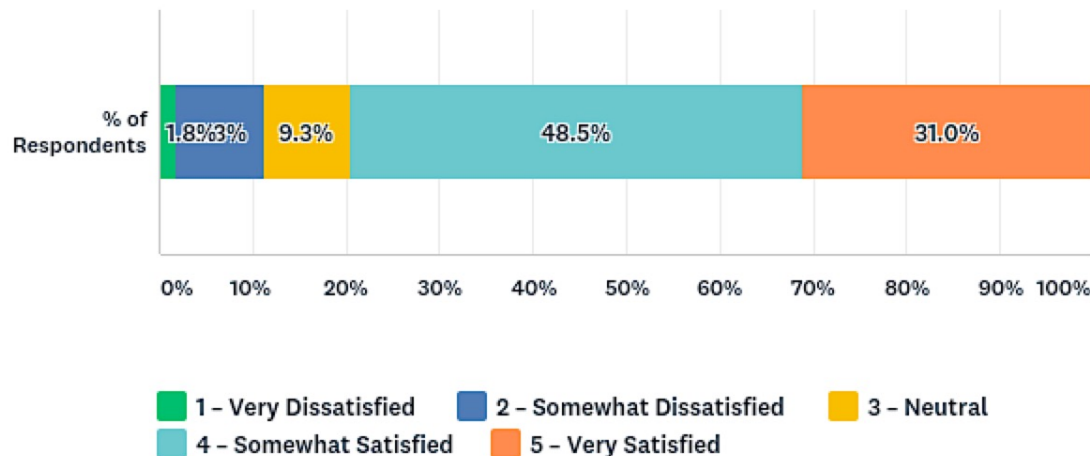

- 1 – Strongly Disagree
- 2 – Somewhat Disagree
- 3 – Neutral
- 4 – Somewhat Agree
- 5 – Strongly Agree

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Are Volunteer Coordinators Satisfied?

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Satisfaction

Satisfaction With Role of Volunteer Manager

% of Respondents | 1.8% 8.3% | 9.3% | 48.5% | 31.0%

- 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- 2 – Somewhat Dissatisfied
- 3 – Neutral
- 4 – Somewhat Satisfied
- 5 – Very Satisfied

Most Volunteer Managers Are Satisfied With Their Profession

Eight out of ten (79.5%, 81% in 2017) are *Very* or *Somewhat Satisfied* with their role as a volunteer program administrator.

"We need to continue to work strengthening national organizations…so our group voices can be heard at the federal level to establish Volunteer Administration as a profession with true leadership abilities."

"….Volunteering is an integral part of our world! There are volunteers helping in every single aspect of our daily lives and without them, our world could not and would not be able to afford to be the world that it is today! Without volunteer administration volunteers would have the inability to raise this awareness as people just don't listen. It is our responsibility as volunteer administration to get this done.!"

"Thank you for doing this survey! I have found the previous survey results really helpful; I feel like other professionals are struggling with the same things I am and you have provided great resources to learn new skills."
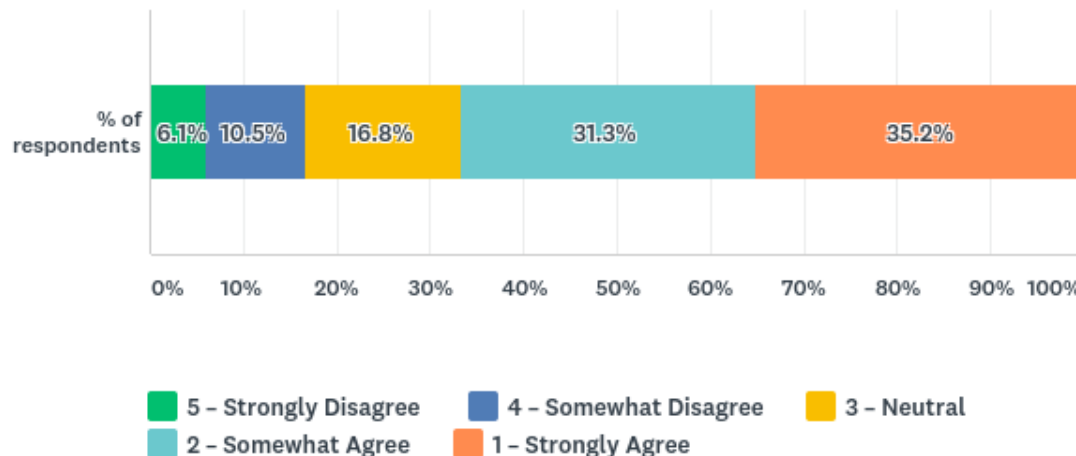
"…One of the biggest needs I see is recognition for the profession. It is with surveys like this that we can continue to elevate the field."

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Intent to Stay

Plan to Be Working in Field Three Years From Now

% of respondents

| 6.1% | 10.5% | 16.8% | 31.3% | 35.2% |

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

- ■ 5 – Strongly Disagree
- ■ 4 – Somewhat Disagree
- ■ 3 – Neutral
- ■ 2 – Somewhat Agree
- ■ 1 – Strongly Agree

Most Volunteer Managers Plan to Continue Working in the Field

Nearly seven out of 10 respondents (67%) *Somewhat* or *Strongly Agree* that they plan to be working in the volunteer administration field three years from now. The 2017 and 2016 surveys generated the same result.

Not surprising, job satisfaction and intent to stay are strongly correlated year after year.

Satisfaction Trends

Average Satisfaction
- 3.99
- 4.02
- 3.98

Average Intent to Stay
- 3.80
- 3.92
- 3.79

- ■ 2016
- ■ 2017
- ■ 2018
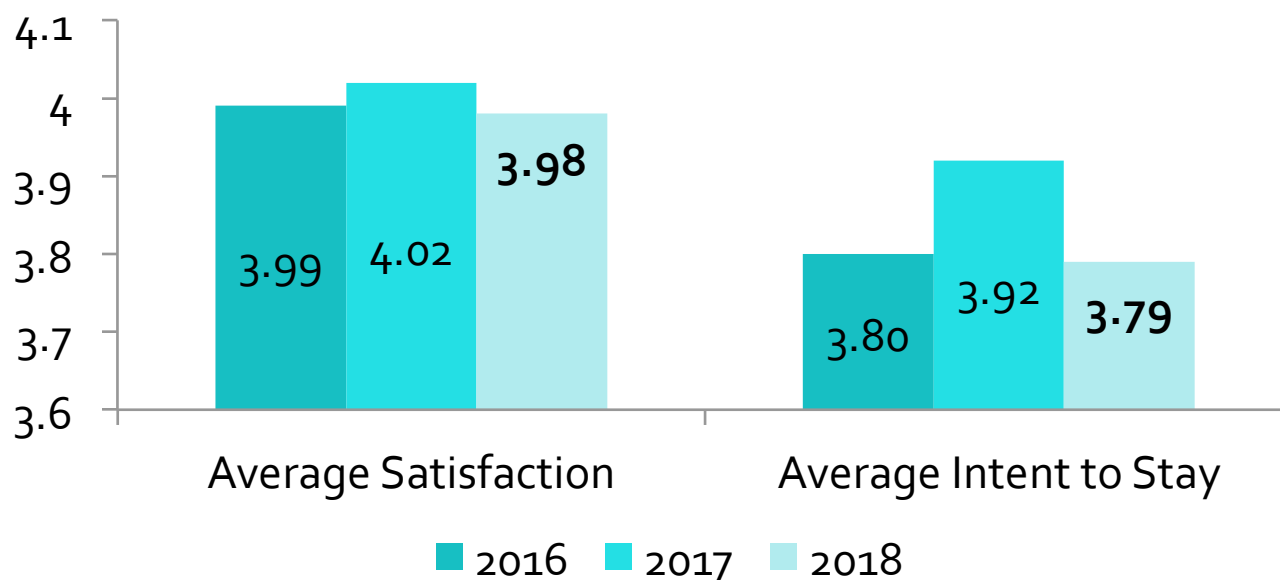
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Come for the Content. Stay for the Community.

Volunteer Management Professionals ...

- Do you struggle to **find the right volunteers** for the roles you need filled?

- Are you frustrated by the **lack of the support** given the complexity of your work?

- Would you like to be part of **a community who understands** what you're going through?

- Are you ready to level up your skills to **lead with authority and confidence**?

Then, VolunteerPro training courses are for you!

What is VolunteerPro?

VolunteerPro is a **volunteer management training hub** designed to save you time and accelerate your skills and impact. As a member, you get 24/7 access to expert, on-demand volunteer management content that will help you offer top-tier experiences that keep volunteers coming back. You can also interact with us via two live webinars and one group coaching call per month. We are always here to help, and no one is left behind.

Member Benefits

- Join two **live educational webinars** per month.

- Get access to our vast **library of over 200 resources and over 60 webinar recordings** that you can access any time it works for you.

- We cover a wide range of **volunteer management topics** including:

  - Training Staff to Partner Effectively With Volunteers
  - Modern Recruitment Practices to Reach Today's Volunteers
  - Developing Outcome Metrics to Track & Communicate Impact

  - Program Audits & Evaluations
  - Volunteer & Member Leadership Development
  - Volunteer Training & Development
  - Strategic Planning & Change Management Strategies

We know you're strapped for time.

That's why we started VolunteerPro. We offer tools and training that give you a jump start on success, **focusing your energy on what matters**, so you don't waste your time and get results quickly.

Visit us today for free tips, tools, and info about our courses.

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