VolunteerPro

2022

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

PROGRESS

REPORT

JANUARY 25, 2022
#vmprogress2022

2022: Challenge & Resilience

There is no doubt about it – volunteerism has been hit hard by the global COVID-19 pandemic, now rolling into it's second year.

In this year's report, we investigate the extent of the impact and find that across the board, the capacity of volunteer-driven organizations has been significantly affected. Available volunteer opportunities, numbers of volunteers engaged, and total volunteer hours per month have all declined significantly over pre-pandemic levels.

But volunteer mangers have not given up. The resilience of these professionals in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds is a thing to be admired.

Our data shows that volunteer managers around the world continue to adapt to their new content, seeking new ways to keep the community engaged in service. Many are also steadily adopting new technology tools to solve their biggest problems.

If there is a silver lining to COVID, it is this – long-held limiting beliefs are being challenged and new ways of doing are now being embraced for the better. For those who are taking the leap forward, their missions will no doubt benefit.

We hope you find it inspiring,

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

Dr. Pam Kappelides, PhD
Senior Lecturer, La Trobe University

Special thanks to Valerie Mercadante, Jason Frenzel, CVA, and Alana Knoppow, MSW for their thoughtful reviews

January 2022

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About the Research

The survey questionnaire was developed with input from two practitioners and a scholar. It included 25 closed and open-ended questions; most questions were optional. It was administered online only using the Zoho Surveys platform.

A link to the questionnaire was distributed through a broad range of volunteer networks. Responses were collected from October 17– November 19, 2020. A total of 1,300 volunteer administrators (paid & volunteer) from 24 countries responded; 41 were disqualified because they had not worked directly with volunteers in the past 12 months, and 1,030 completed most of the questionnaire. 82% completed the questionnaire top to bottom.

Limitations of the Data

For its seventh year, the survey was available globally and promoted widely to previous respondents as well as through distribution partners. The data does not include the experiences and perceptions of those who had stopped working in the field for at least one year.

This year, respondents were asked to share their current volunteer capacities and rate their perceived levels of burnout, and their agency's digital maturity. While these data are self-reported and do not represent an objective and independent assessment, they nonetheless offer subjective insights, trends, and perspectives.

In addition, while respondents do represent a random sample of professionals working in the field, the size of the response sample gives us some level of confidence.

Based on a conservative estimated total population of 1.65 million nonprofits in the United States, our US-based responses (666 or 65% of respondents) represent a confidence level of 95% with a +/- 4% margin of error which is within industry standards for perception surveys.

A Note on Terminology

While no globally-accepted standards for job titles or terminology currently exist in the voluntary sector, we are doing our part to understand some of the current alignments and uses at work in our field.

In lieu of standards, we use the job titles of volunteer coordinator, manager, director, administrator, and leader of volunteers interchangeably throughout this report. No offense is intended nor should be taken.

Project Champions

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 about this work.

- AL!VE (Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement)
- Alana Knoppow, MSW
- All Caring Hospice
- America's Service Commissions
- Children's Wisconsin
- Cindy Whitney, CVA
- City of Bloomington Volunteer Network
- Council For Certification in Volunteer Administration
- DOVIA Greater Akron
- DOVIA-LA
- DOVIA Sacramento
- First Advantage
- Georgia Association for Volunteer Administration, Inc.
- Heritage Volunteering Group
- Forum for Volunteer Administrators
- Jason Frenzel, CVA
- Mariner Management
- Gina Hansen

- Leukeamia Foundation Australia
- Jo Gibney
- Make-A-Wish America
- Nonprofits First
- Ontario Children's Aid Societies - Volunteer Administrators Working Group
- Para la Naturaleza
- Realized Worth
- Rob Jackson Consulting Ltd
- Mary Rogers
- RW Institute
- Nicole R. Smith
- STEM Volunteering
- Sue Carter Kahl Consulting
- Texas Volunteer Management Conference
- Thunder Bay Association of Volunteer Administrators
- Volunteer Alberta
- VolunteerMatch
- VQ Volunteer Strategies

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What We Hoped to Learn

Inside You'll Find ...

- How volunteer managers rate their current levels of burnout (see **pages 15-18**)

- The top challenges for today's volunteer administrators (see **pages 20-21**)

- How COVID-19 has impacted the number of people who volunteer, how many hours they volunteer, and the kind of volunteer roles available (see **pages 22-25**)

- What digital tools are most commonly used by volunteer-involving organizations and how volunteer coordinators rate their digital maturity (see **pages 29-34**)

- The percentage of organizations that currently have a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) plan in place specific to volunteers (see **page 36**)

What Intrigued Us

- **Volunteer Managers Report Relatively Low Levels of Burnout** – While managing volunteer initiatives in the midst of a pandemic may be challenging, our data reveal that most volunteer managers, in general, are not burned out when compared with three key indicators.

- **Losses in Digital Maturity, But Gains In New Tech Tools** – Now in its third year, volunteer managers' self-reported ratings on digital maturity dropped by six percentage points, while the adoption of new technology tools continues to rise.

- **DEI Planning is on the Rise** – Our data show that, between 2018 and 2022, there has been an increase in the percentage of volunteer-involving organizations with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) plans in place related to volunteers (up 12%).

Why conduct a survey like this?
We all need to become better, more informed advocates.

① **Volunteer resource managers** can benefit from seeing how their colleagues rate their own priorities, challenges, and opportunities.

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

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

④ **Our sector** needs to understand recent capacity challenges & issues in order to better advocate for our needs.

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General Impressions

- The characteristics of respondents have been consistent over seven years, and the participation from countries outside the US has continued to expand over time.

   We have continued confidence that these data represent leaders of volunteers, including those outside the US.

- This year, we saw a spike in time devoted to volunteer management as a part of the leader of volunteer's workload, reversing a three-year trend of a decreasing percentage of the work week dedicated to volunteers. In addition, a greater number of agencies are building diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) plans into their operations.

   A complex array of responsibilities and skills are needed to support a robust and effective volunteer effort, particularly when it comes to designing for more inclusive volunteerism. It is promising to see that more organizations may be evolving their understanding of just what it takes to build broad support.

- While many expressed experiences of fatigue, frustration, and burnout in the open-ended comments, results showed limited indication of the key indicators of burnout (occupational depletion or exhaustion, cynicism, or reduced professional efficacy.

   Recent research on employee burnout, in general, shows a more nuanced picture of the warning signs, which we were unable to explore fully. So, we wonder if the field is at risk and which direction we may be trending.

- Now in our second year of the pandemic, COVID continues to have a devasting impact on volunteer participation across organizations. There are fewer volunteer opportunities available, there are fewer volunteers contributing time, and those who are active are also contributing fewer hours.

   These data represent a potential "triple threat" for volunteer organizations as they seek to build back capacity of their volunteer workforce and their ability to meet goals and objectives that are mission critical. Are volunteer managers resourced enough to recoup these losses?

- Despite lockdowns, organizations have embraced the full potential of remote or virtual roles (offering 25% or less volunteer roles over the past two years), and fewer volunteer managers rate their agencies as digitally mature, down 6% from last year.

   As the world evolves, so too must volunteerism. Will organizations keep pace, or risk losing valued community support due to lack of effective use of technology?

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WHO WE SURVEYED

Geographic Representation
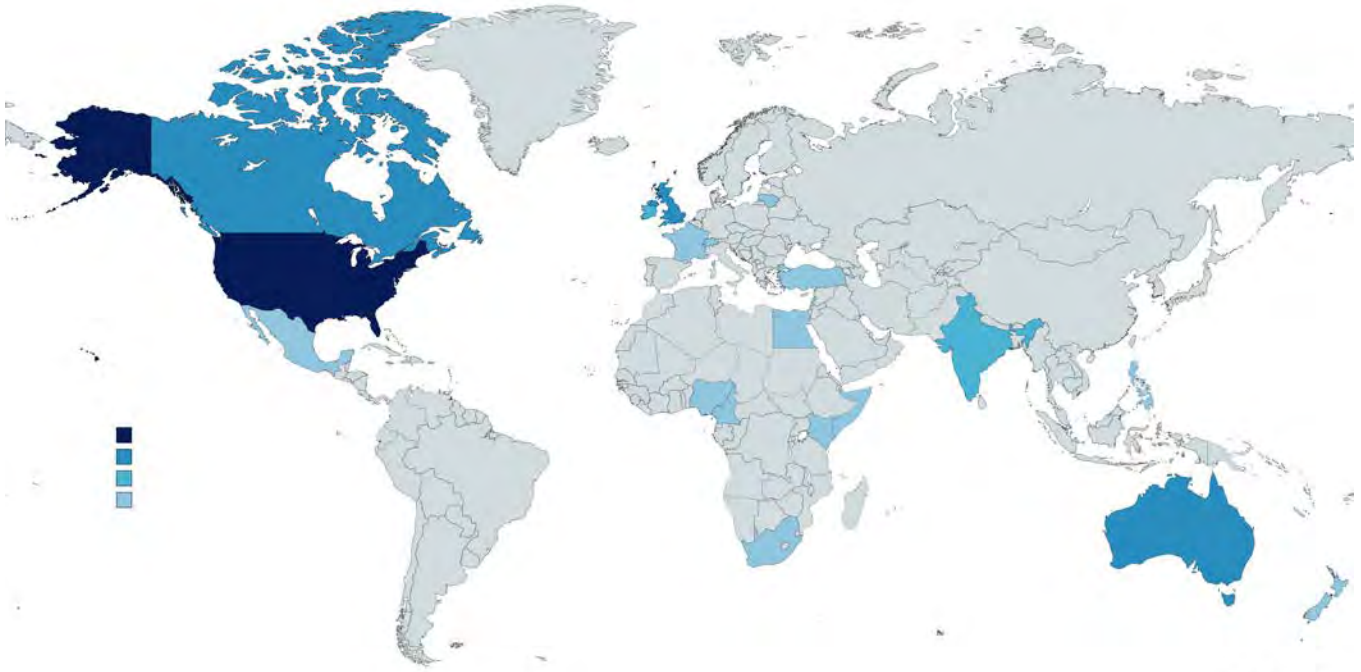
Where Were Respondents Located?

The respondent base represents 24 countries and was more globally diverse than the year before (in 2021, 70% of respondents were from the US, this dropped 5% this year).

- **Other countries included:** India, New Zealand, Singapore, Nigeria, Philippines, Kenya, Egypt, France, Cameroon, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Scotland, Somalia, South Africa, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey

Headquarters Location	# of Respondents	% of Respondents
United States	666	65%
United Kingdom	124	12%
Canada	87	8%
Australia	57	6%
Ireland	33	3%
Other	64	6%

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Organization Types

What Types of Organizations Were Represented?

Most respondents categorized themselves as nonprofit organizations (76.6%), followed by government agency's (14.1%). This break down has been relatively consistent throughout the seven-year history of the survey.

In addition, this year's survey represented organizations of all sizes:

- 4.4% were all volunteer
- 28.1% had 1-19 employees
- 26.2% had 20-99 employees
- 22.3% had 100-499 employees
- 19% had 500 or more employees

The average size was 20-49 employees

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Nonprofit	73.4%	66.2%	70.1%	77.7%	**78.8%**	**77.2%**	**76.6%**
Government Agency	17.7%	13.7%	12.6%	15.6%	**13.9%**	**13.4%**	**14.1%**
Ed. Institution/ School District	N/A	3.0%	2.4%	3.5%	**2.6%**	**2.9%**	**2.8%**
Corp/Small Business	1.0%	1.0%	0.7%	2.9%	**1.9%**	**2.3%**	**2.3%**
Church or Congregation	1.0%	0.9%	0.5%	.2%	**0.5%**	**0.8%**	**2.0%**

Cause Impact Areas

What Types of Organizations Were Represented?

Healthcare & Hospice organizations (23.3%) were by far the largest organizations represented, on average, followed by Social Service organizations (20.3%). These organization types have not changed significantly over the years.

While health and medical-related nonprofits and social services organizations represent on 6.2% and 6.3% of all nonprofits in the US respectively, nearly half of the respondents in this survey work on these sub-sectors. It may be because these types of organizations are more likely to involve volunteers or that volunteers in these areas are more tightly affiliated and, therefore, more likely to have learned of the survey.

Cause Impact Area	2022
Healthcare & Hospice	**23.3%**
Social Services	**20.3%**
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	9.5%
Nonprofit Support & Capacity Building	8.3%
Schools & Educational Services	7.7%
Environmental Stewardship	6.1%
Animal Welfare	5.6%
Faith-based	1.5%
Other	17.7%

Respondent Demographics

Demographics Remain Consistent Over Seven Years

While volunteer managers consistently represent multiple generations, the majority identify as female. This has not changed significantly in the seven years of this survey.

The mean was 3.8 (or average age of all respondents) was 35-44 years old. The median 4.0 (with half of respondents above and half below) was 45 to 54 years old.

Those age 55 to 64 fell by nearly 5%, perhaps indicating that there has been a slight outmigration of older volunteer managers. However, those ages 35-54 increased.
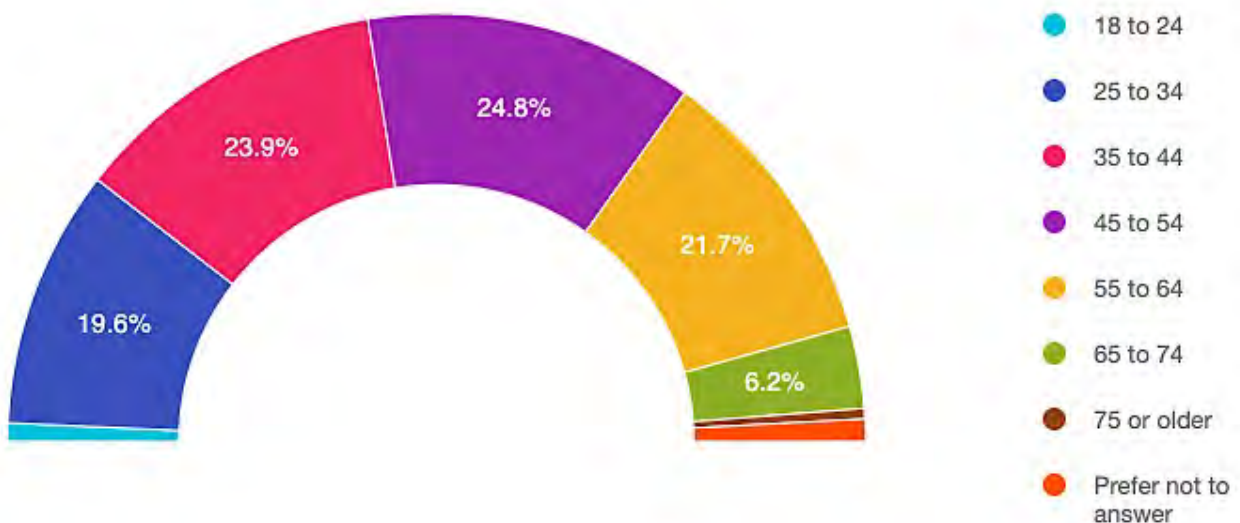
- **Ages of Respondents for 2022** (2021 data is in parentheses):

  - 18 to 24 – 1.4% (3.1%)
  - 25 to 34 – 19.6% (20.5%)
  - 35 to 44 – 23.9% (21.7%)
  - 45 to 54 – 24.8% (21.9%)
  - 55 to 64 – 21.7% (26.2%)
  - 65 to 74 – 6.2% (5.2%)
  - 75+ – 0.8% (0.8%)

- **Gender Identity**

  - Female – 86.6%
  - Male – 11.4%
  - Nonbinary – .6%

Age of Volunteer Managers

Legend:
- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 or older
- Prefer not to answer

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Respondent Tenure

Professional Characteristics Remain Consistent

As far as the years of experience with volunteer management (on a paid or unpaid basis), we have seen a trend toward greater years experience in the field consistently over the past several years.

Also, from past surveys, we know that leaders of volunteers tend to …

• Work Full-Time (80%)
• Be a Paid Employee (93%)
• Hold a Professional Certification (38%)
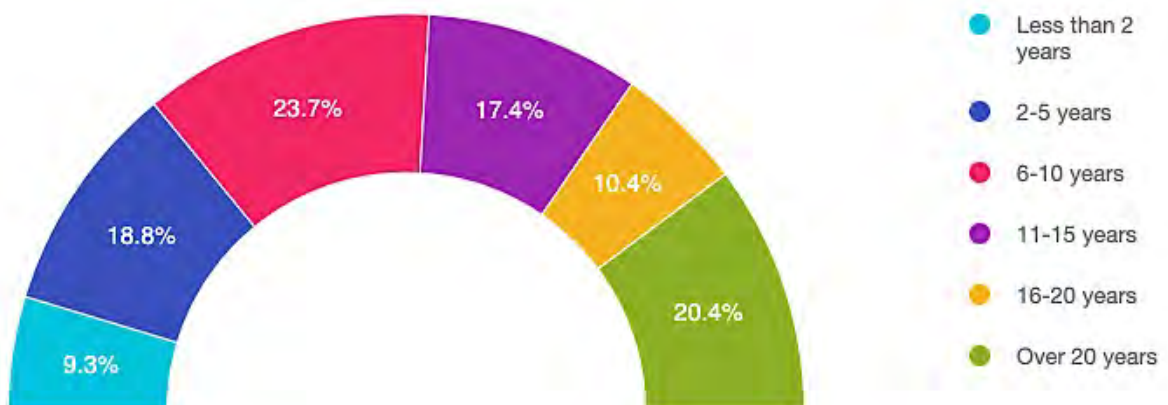• Are of White/European Descent (83.8%)

In last year's survey, one third (33.3%) had 5 years or less experience. Nearly half (44.5%) had over 10 years experience, and 21.4% over 20 years. This year, 28.1% had 5 years or less experience, 48.2% had over 10 years, and 20.4% over 20 years.

This again appears to indicate there is not a great out-migration of professionals. In fact, the opposite may be true – volunteer administrators are staying. Note: the amount of movement of staff between organizations was not explored in this survey.

Years of Volunteer Administration/Management Experience

• Less than 2 years – 9.3%
• 2-5 years – 18.8%
• 6-10 years – 23.7%
• 11-15 years – 17.4%
• 16-20 years – 10.4%
• Over 20 years – 20.4%

Years of Volunteer Management Experience

Legend:
- Less than 2 years
- 2-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- Over 20 years

Chart values: 9.3%, 18.8%, 23.7%, 17.4%, 10.4%, 20.4%

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ABOUT THEIR WORK

Time Devoted to Volunteers

How Do Volunteer Managers Spend Their Time?

Many leaders of volunteers continue to split their time between to volunteer resource administration and other job tasks.

However, this year there has been a rebound in the percentage of leaders of volunteers that spend the majority of their time on volunteer administration tasks. 52% reported they devote at least three-quarters of their work schedule to volunteer management.

Alternately, last year, only 47% reported spending three quarters of their time or more on volunteer management, the lowest in six years, And only 24% focused entirely on volunteer coordination, down 6% from four years ago. Not surprising, volunteer managers with longer tenure were more likely to work full-time on volunteer program administration.

Time Spent on Volunteer Management for 2022 (2021 data is in parentheses):

- 25% or Less – 13.9% (17.5%)
- 26-50% – 14.8% (15.5%)
- 51-75% – 16.9% (18.2%)
- 76-99% – 25.6% (23.0%)
- 100% – 26.4% (24.0%)

This is a positive indicator, since the effective engagement and management of volunteer talent involves a complex array of activities that take time to plan and execute effectively. This may also indicate that more organizations understand this.

% of Time Spent on Volunteer Management

52% spend 76-100% of time on volunteer management

Legend: 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022
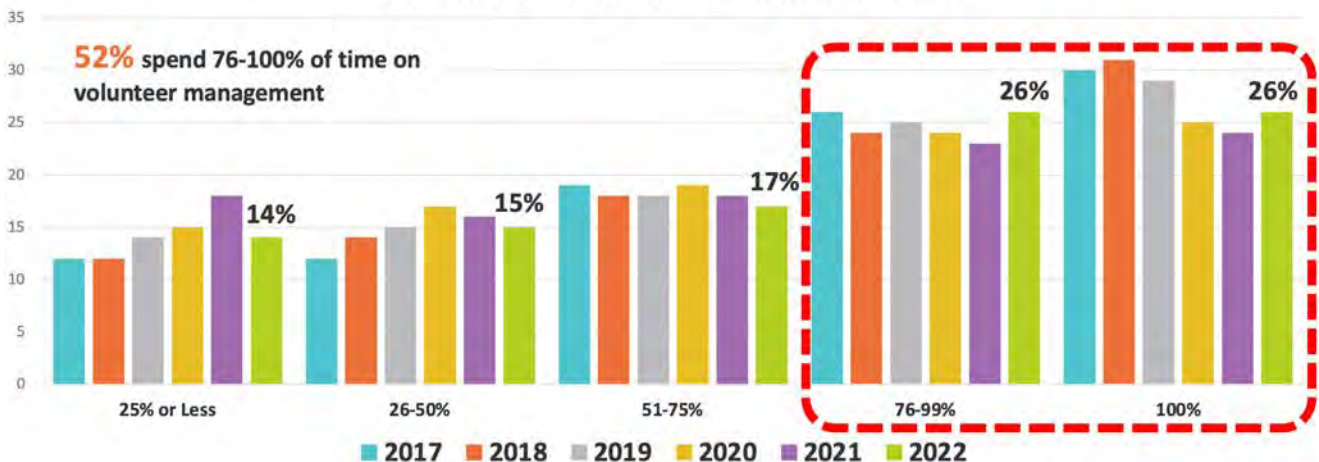
Volunteer Manager Burnout

What is the Current Level of Burnout in Volunteer Managers?

Given the overall fatigue the pandemic has brought to the world, this year we asked about levels of energy and perceptions about their work. While this is not a comprehensive assessment of burnout in volunteer mangers, it does offer surprising insights.

We based our questions on existing research and scales to assess levels of burnout, notably the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) which has been used widely in research studies since 1981. According to Maslach, there are three indicators of burnout:

- Feelings of occupational depletion or exhaustion
- Feelings of depersonalization or distance from one's job, or feelings of negativity or cynicism
- Reduced professional efficacy or lack of personal accomplishment

So, we asked questions aligned with these key signposts.

See: Christina Maslach and Michael P. Leiter, How to Measure Burnout Accurately and Ethically," Harvard Business Review (March 19, 2021) - https://hbr.org/2021/03/how-to-measure-burnout-accurately-and-ethically

Burnout Assessment: Energy Levels

First, we asked respondents to "Rate your current energy and vigor for your work as a leader of volunteers," with 0 as completely exhausted and 10 as full of energy. Much to our surprise, most respondents did not report high levels of burnout or feelings of occupational depletion or exhaustion. Over half (53.1%) leaned toward the energetic side of the scale, rating themselves with a level 6 or greater.

- The Mean was 6.7 (or average score for of all respondents)
- The Median was 7.0 (the middle with half of respondents above and half below)

Current Energy & Vigor for Work

| Completely exhausted | 4.5% | 5.2% | 10.6% | 10.7% | 14.9% | 11.3% | 14.2% | 13.3% | 6.9% | 7.4% | Full of Energy |

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
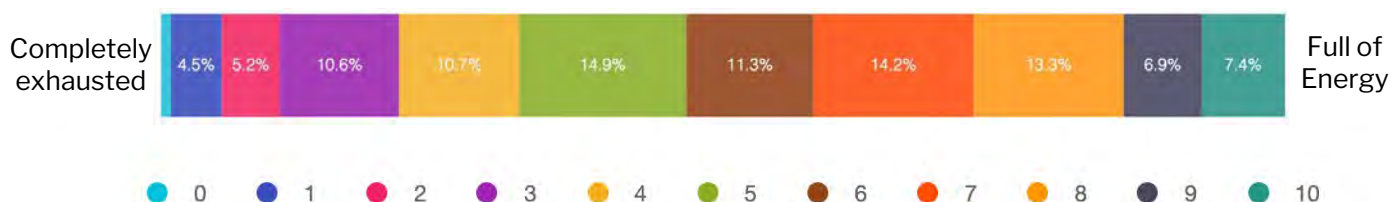
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Volunteer Manager Burnout

What is the Current Level of Burnout in Volunteer Managers?

We included three self-assessment items related to levels of potential burnout. We asked - "What kind of impact has the COVID-19 pandemic had on you and your ability to carry out your work? "

We asked them to rate themselves for each statement across a five-point Likert-Type scale – (1) Never/ Completely Disagree, (2) Rarely/Disagree, Sometimes/Neutral, (4) Very Often/Agree, (5) Always/Completely Agree

Burnout Assessment: Personal Efficacy

We asked respondents to rate their feelings of personal efficacy, focusing on a key aspect of volunteer management – solving problems.

- The Mean was 3.6 (or average score for of all respondents)
- The Median was 4.0 (the middle with half above and half below)

Over half (63.7%) reported that they were able to effectively deal with other people's problems Very Often or Always. Less than one in ten (6.9%) that they were Never or Rarely able to successfully solve other people's problems.

Able to Deal with Other People's Problems

Never | 5.7% | 29.4% | 55.8% | 7.9% | Always

- Never/Completely Disagree
- Rarely/Disagree
- Sometimes/Neutral
- Very Often/Agree
- Always/Completely Agree

'[T]he isolation of working from home was hard on my mental health, being a "people person", but the anxiety of working with others in a building where people may be carrying the disease was difficult to deal with as well. Eventually I got used to it.'

'I have never felt as burned out before in my life as I feel this year. I have always been passionate about my work no matter what I was doing and this year it has been so incredibly hard to stay motivated and to find the passion. Trying to be a volunteer coordinator during the pandemic has been rough. I know it's that way everywhere, but morale at our shelter is at an all time low.'

Volunteer Manager Burnout

What is the Current Level of Burnout in Volunteer Managers?

We asked them to rate themselves for another statement across the scale – (1) Never/ Completely Disagree, (2) Rarely/Disagree, Sometimes/Neutral, (4) Very Often/Agree, (5) Always/Completely Agree

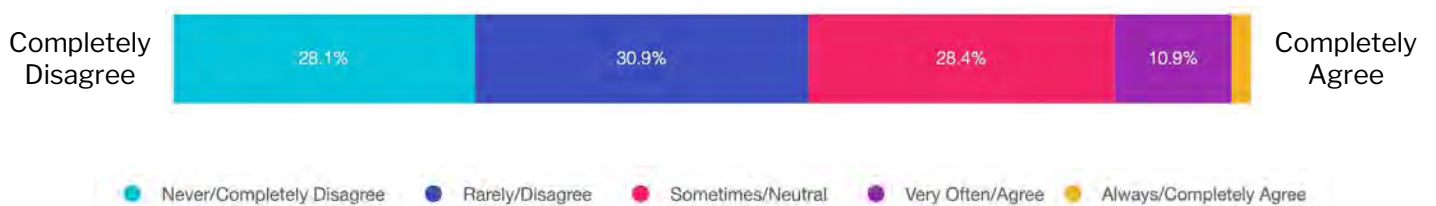**Burnout Assessment: Feelings of Depersonalization**

We asked respondents to rate their feelings of depersonalization or feelings of negativity, focusing on their responses to interpersonal communications during COVID.

- The Mean was 2.3 (or average score for of all respondents)
- The Median was 2.0 (the middle with half above and half below)

Only about one in ten (12.7%) of respondents Agreed or Completely Agreed that they have have become less sympathetic with people since COVID. These feelings may translate to feelings of depersonalization or distance from one's job.

Alternately, nearly six out of ten (59.0%) Completely Disagreed or Disagreed that they have become less sympathetic since COVID started.

Less Sympathetic with People

Completely Disagree | 28.1% | 30.9% | 28.4% | 10.9% | | Completely Agree

● Never/Completely Disagree ● Rarely/Disagree ● Sometimes/Neutral ● Very Often/Agree ● Always/Completely Agree

'After 20 years, 8 years of which in voluntary leadership/management, I am leaving to join a national charity as an advisor on volunteering. Lack of tangible senior leadership and backing, including under funding of the service substantively, has led to burnout.'

'Working with volunteers has been the best career choice and every day I get to work with motivated passionate and amazing individuals which just feeds my soul and encourages me to be the best version of myself every day.'

'Trying times for everyone. Weariness of change, uncertainty and very difficult to plan further than a month or two ahead.'

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Volunteer Manager Burnout

What is the Current Level of Burnout in Volunteer Managers?

We asked volunteer managers to rate themselves for one final statements using the same scale – (1) Never/ Completely Disagree, (2) Rarely/Disagree, Sometimes/Neutral, (4) Very Often/Agree, (5) Always/Completely Agree

Burnout Assessment: Feelings of Depersonalization & Efficacy

We asked respondents to rate their feelings of lack of personal accomplishment or feelings of cynicism toward volunteers and co-workers.

- The Mean was 1.9 (or average score for of all respondents)
- The Median was 2.0 (the middle with half above and half below)

Nearly three-quarters of volunteer managers (73.2%) of respondents Completely Disagreed or Disagreed that they believed volunteers and co-workers blamed them for their problems.

Less than one in ten (8.0%) Agreed or Completely Agreed that people blamed them.

The results from the four indicators of burnout we investigated appear to indicate that volunteer mangers are exhibiting high levels of burnout across the field. These data do not, however, predict what direction on the scale people are headed in the future.

People Blame Me for Their Problems

| Completely Disagree | 40.7% | 32.5% | 18.8% | 7.2% | Completely Agree |

Legend: ● Never/Completely Disagree ● Rarely/Disagree ● Sometimes/Neutral ● Very Often/Agree ● Always/Completely Agree

'This last year and a half has given us so many challenges but also the opportunity to show our perseverance and I am proud to be included in a profession that has been able to grow and develop in some of the toughest times!'

'Throughout this pandemic, I've experienced the roller coaster of burnout. Productivity increased at first, then plummeted as the response went on. Depression, apathy, then recovery and when the vaccine came out, productivity increased once again for me. After a few months, burnout again, but not as bad.'

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CAPACITY & IMPACT

2022 Biggest Challenges

What are the Top Challenges in Open-Ended Comments?

We asked respondents to share their current challenges in their own words.

We received 1,105 total open-ended responses to the question "What's your #1 biggest volunteer management challenge right now? Please describe with details."

In last year's survey, the most frequently cited challenges shifted radically over the previous year, shaking up five years of previously consistent results. This Volunteer recruitment regained its position as the #1 biggest challenge.

The commonly-cited challenges within the top five categories:

- **Recruitment** (18%) – Finding enough volunteers, re-engaging lapsed volunteers, new volunteers reluctant to join due to COVID, too many volunteers, engaging specific populations
- **Change Management** (13%) – Keeping up with trends & managing resistance (9%); in particular, the uncertainty of COVID, how it will impact organizations, & the inability to plan effectively during uncertain times
- **Supervision** (11%) – Scheduling/maintaining shift coverage, motivation od volunteers, keeping volunteers engaged & connected during COVID
- **Retention** (10%) – Volunteers weren't allowed onsite, events cancelled, & program suspensions due to COVID, volunteer turnover in general
- **Respect and Buy-In** (9%) – Lack of executive support/understanding, buy-in from paid staff & resistance to taking volunteers

#1 Biggest Challenge

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Recruitment (25%)	Recruitment (24%)	Recruitment (31%)	Recruitment (33%)	Recruitment (30%)	Supervision (18%)	Recruitment (28%)
Support & Buy-In (9%)	Respect & Reliability (16%)	Respect & Buy-In (14%)	Respect & Buy-In (13%)	Respect & Buy-In (13%)	Retention (16%)	Change Management (13%)
Time (9%)	Roles & Matching (9%)	Retention (13%)	Retention (9%)	Time (11%)	Recruitment (16%)	Supervision (11%)
Financial Investment (7%)	Retention (8%)	Roles & Matching (10%)	Roles & Matching (9%)	Roles & Matching (10%)	Roles & Matching (12%)	Retention (10%)
Retention (6%)	Time (8%)	Time (8%)	Time (7%)	Retention (9%)	Change Management (9%)	Respect & Buy-In (9%)

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2022 Biggest Challenges

What Have Been the Direct Impacts on Professionals?

Below are comments that reflect the emotional impacts leaders of volunteers have experienced when managing multiple challenges during a global pandemic.

'The environment for volunteers working with vulnerable children and adults remains unpredictable during the continuing pandemic. We can only hope that putting relevant and appropriate measures in place will keep both the volunteer and the person/s they engage with safe. However, my greatest personal dread is a phone call saying someone tested positive and assessing who may have been impacted - volunteer or the service they worked in or the person they had contact with.'

'We are a group of local volunteers who work with vulnerable people in the community with an intellectual disability in a congregated setting. I hope we can survive.'

'Organization has adopted an EDI (equity, diversity and inclusion) strategy and many processes involving volunteers are not equitable or inclusive.'

'There is nothing more damaging than unsupportive administration. When you're given a strategic goal by the board of trustees yet have no teeth because the director will not follow through, it imparts a sense of futility. This leads to job dissatisfaction and general anxiety. The damage this lack of leadership has taken on volunteers and public perception of the organization will take years to repair.'

'I wish my supervisor would truly listen and understand what it takes to have a successful volunteer program. Volunteer Coordinator is one of four hats I wear, with a large geographical area. I love our volunteers but constantly feel guilty that my other hats often demand more urgent attention.'

'The majority of our volunteers are older. I am concerned that a number of them will not be returning to service due to aging, failing health, caring for ailing spouses, concern about public contact during the waning pandemic, travel to site, etc. We're trying to think of ways to keep them engaged with new projects if they are interested.'

Impact of COVID-19
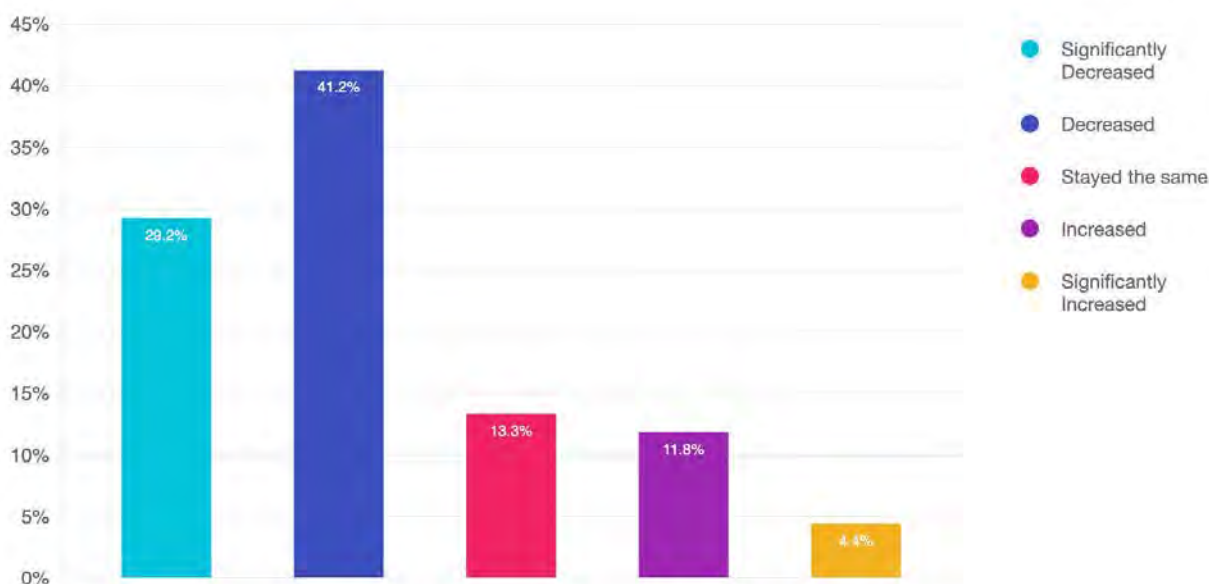
How Has COVID-19 Affected Organizations?

The pandemic has had a significant impact om the ability or willingness of organizations to be able to keep their doors open for volunteer involvement.

According to our data from this year's 2022 Volunteer Management Progress Report (VMPR) survey, the majority of organizations (70%) Decreased or Significantly Decreased the number of opportunities available to volunteers as a result of COVID. However, for some organization, COVID generated a surge in open opportunities. 16.2% Increased or Significantly Increased the availability of volunteer opportunities.

We also checked to see if there were other variables that might be affecting the number of volunteer opportunities. We found very little correlation between volunteer manager tenure on the number of available volunteer opportunities.

Nor were there correlations between cause impact area and how the availability of volunteer opportunities, except for Faith-based and Nonprofit Support & Capacity Building organizations who tended to have continued to involve volunteers during COVID. However, these data may be skewed due to the smaller number of respondents in these categories.

Impact of COVID on Volunteer Opportunities

Legend:
- Significantly Decreased
- Decreased
- Stayed the same
- Increased
- Significantly Increased

Bar values: 29.2%, 41.2%, 13.3%, 11.8%, 4.4%

'We're a large hunger relief organization that has fared pretty well with volunteers during COVID ... We also are very resourced and networked, especially when it comes to technology. However, I know my experience does not reflect the majority of our smaller agency partners.'

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Volunteer Capacity

How Many People are Volunteering?

In past years surveys, the average number of active volunteers was 101-250. In this year's survey, volunteer managers confirmed that estimate. However, over the past two years, COVID has has a significant and persistent impact on volunteer capacity, in terms of active volunteers.

As of last Fall, nearly one-third (30.5%) of organizations reported only 1-25 active volunteers. Before COVID, the number was only 18%. Also, before COVID, 21% of organizations reported 101-250 active volunteers. This has dropped to 13% in the Fall of 2020 and 15% in the Fall of 2021.

In terms of averages:

- Pre-COVID Mean was 4.8 (approx. 101-250 active volunteers)
- COVID Year 1 (VMPR 2021) Mean was 3.9 (approx. 51-100 active volunteers)
- COVID Year 2 (VMPR 2022) Mean was 3.9 (approx. 51-100 active volunteers)

Prior to COVID, Healthcare & Hospice, Animal Welfare, and Environmental Stewardship organizations tended to have larger volunteer teams than other causes. These gains were virtually eliminated during COVID, with only Animal Welfare organizations maintaining more volunteers than other organization types. However, no cause type maintained the same level of volunteers during the first two years of COVID.

Impact of COVID on Number of Active Volunteers

	None	1-25	26-50	51-100	101-250	251-500	501-750	751-1,000	1,001-1,500	1,501-2,000	Over 2,000

Pre-COVID: 17.0% | 12.7% | 17.0% | 21.2% | 13.3% | 5.3% | 3.5% | 5.4%

Fall 2020: 6.4% | 29.6% | 16.3% | 16.3% | 13.1% | 7.1% | 3.5%

Fall 2021: 30.5% | 17.3% | 18.6% | 14.5% | 6.9%

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Volunteer Capacity

How Many Hours are People are Volunteering?

We also asked – "This year, what was the average number of hours contributed per volunteer per month at your agency, across all roles?" Respondents reported the average number of hours contributed per volunteer per month, across all roles. The depth of volunteer participation remains at a decreased rate during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In our 2020 VMPR survey, the average number of hours contributed per volunteer per month was 30 hours (Note: In the 2020 survey we collected exact numbers of hours. In 2021, we requested that respondents select a specific range of hours). In the 2021 survey, those numbers dropped to an average of 10-20 hours per month per volunteer. This trend has continued in this year's report with only a slight increase in the mean.
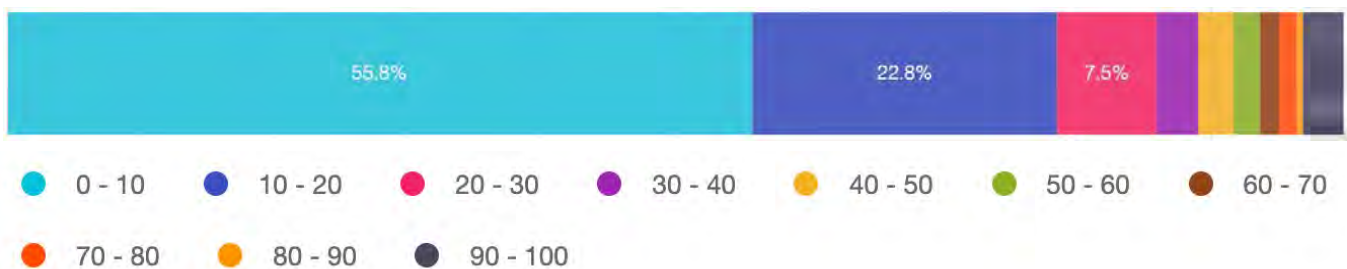
In terms of averages:

- Pre-COVID Mean was 30 hours per month
- COVID Year 1 (VMPR 2021) Mean was 1.7 (approx. 10-20 hours per month)
- COVID Year 2 (VMPR 2022) Mean was 2.2 (approx. 10-20 active volunteers)

What's more, 55.8% of volunteer managers in this year's survey reported 0-10 average volunteer hours per month. 22.8% reported 10-20 hours, and 21.4% reported that volunteers contributed more than 30 hours per month.

These data represent a potential "triple threat" for volunteer organizations as they seek to build back capacity of their volunteer workforce and their ability to meet goals and objectives that are mission critical.

There are not only fewer opportunities available at nonprofits and other volunteer-driven organizations, there are also fewer volunteers contributing time. In addition, those volunteers who are active are also contributing fewer hours.

Average Volunteer Hours Per Month

| 55.8% | 22.8% | 7.5% | | | | |

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

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Volunteer Capacity

What Does Full Capacity Looks Like Post-COVID?

In order to assess whether the pandemic had permanently changed how volunteer-involving organizations viewed volunteer involvement, we asked about their plans for the future. We asked – "After COVID-19, how many active volunteers would represent full capacity, best case scenario, at your agency?"

The results pointed to an intention to return to pre-COVID capacity levels (101-250 volunteers).

In terms of averages:

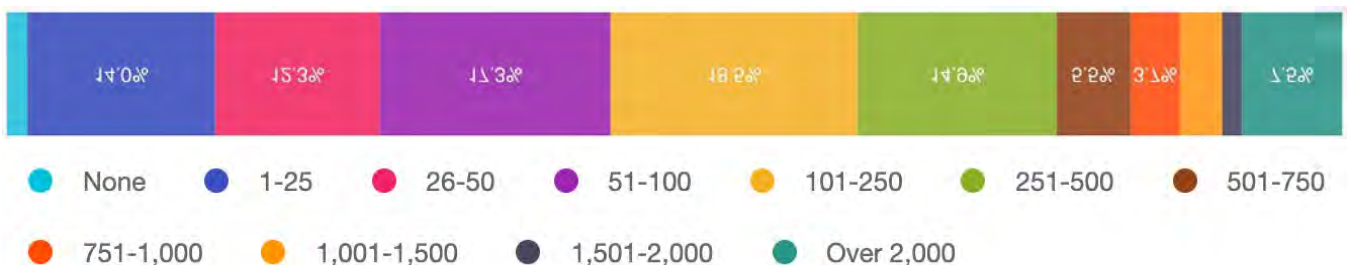- Post-COVID Mean was 5.1 (approx. 101-250 active volunteers)

It's clear that experience and expertise of volunteer management staff can have an impact on how many volunteers are engaged by a nonprofit.

There was a strong correlation between volunteer manager tenure and volunteer capacity. On average, volunteer mangers with less than two-years experience engaged 26-50 volunteers before COVID, while those with 16-20 years experience were more likely to engage 101-250 volunteers, and the average number of volunteers engaged increase with each level of tenure and dropped slightly for those with over 20 years experience.

The same trends were true for reported active volunteers in the Fall of 2021. And the same was true for estimated levels of volunteer participation in the future. Except for those with over 20 years, the longer the time on the job, the higher the number of estimated volunteers to be active in the future.

Similar to Pre-COVID levels, Healthcare & Hospice, Animal Welfare, and Environmental Stewardship organizations estimated that they would engage a higher number of active volunteer once COVID had passed.

Post-COVID Number of Active Volunteers

None	1-25	26-50	51-100	101-250	251-500	501-750	751-1,000	1,001-1,500	1,501-2,000	Over 2,000
	14.0%	12.3%	17.3%	18.5%	14.8%	5.5%	3.1%			1.5%

TECH USE & DIGITAL MATURITY

Volunteer Roles

Is Virtual/Remote Volunteerism Prevalent?

In terms of virtual and remote volunteer involvement, organizations have made limited use of remote or virtual volunteers but have not completely converted to virtual volunteering.

Before COVID, nearly half (48.5%) had no virtual or remote roles. In both the first and second year of the pandemic, that number dropped to 15% of organizations with no virtual volunteer opportunities. This year, nearly half (49.4%) of organizations offered only 1-25% of opportunities online or remote. Roughly one-quarter (27.7%) of organizations had moved over half of their opportunities online.

There were no strong correlations between cause impact area and the numbers of virtual volunteers before COVID. However, during COVID, Nonprofit Support & Capacity Building and Schools & Educational Services organizations were more likely to engage remote volunteers and to predict they would continue to engage them after COVID, along with Faith-based organizations.

In terms of averages:

- Pre-COVID Mean was 1.7 (Less than 1% of volunteer roles)
- COVID Year 1 (VMPR 2021) Mean was 2.8 (1-25% of volunteer roles)
- COVID Year 2 (VMPR 2022) Mean was 2.4 (1-25% of volunteer roles)

% of Virtual/Remote Volunteer Roles

Volunteer Roles

## What Impacts Virtual/Remote Volunteerism?

We ran several crosstabs to better understand the underlying drivers of virtual and remote volunteerism in organizations.

We found no correlation between a volunteer manager's years on the job and the utilization of virtual volunteers. Nor was there a correlation between volunteer manager tenure, nor whether volunteers were engaged in remote roles prior to COVID, nor whether there were plans to continue virtual volunteers post-COVID.

Nor was there a strong correlation between volunteer manager age and percentage of virtual volunteers, except for volunteer managers ages 18-24 who worked with a greater number of virtual volunteers (Note: these data may skewed because there were so few respondents in this age band).

We did, however, find a slight correlation between organization size and percentage of virtual/remote volunteer roles. Mid-range organizations, with 20-49 paid employees, were were most likely to engage volunteers online.

% of Virtual/Remote Volunteer Roles x Org Size

Legend:
- 0 (all volunteer)
- 1-5
- 6-9
- 10-19
- 20-49
- 50-99
- 100-249
- 250-499
- 500-999
- Over 1,000
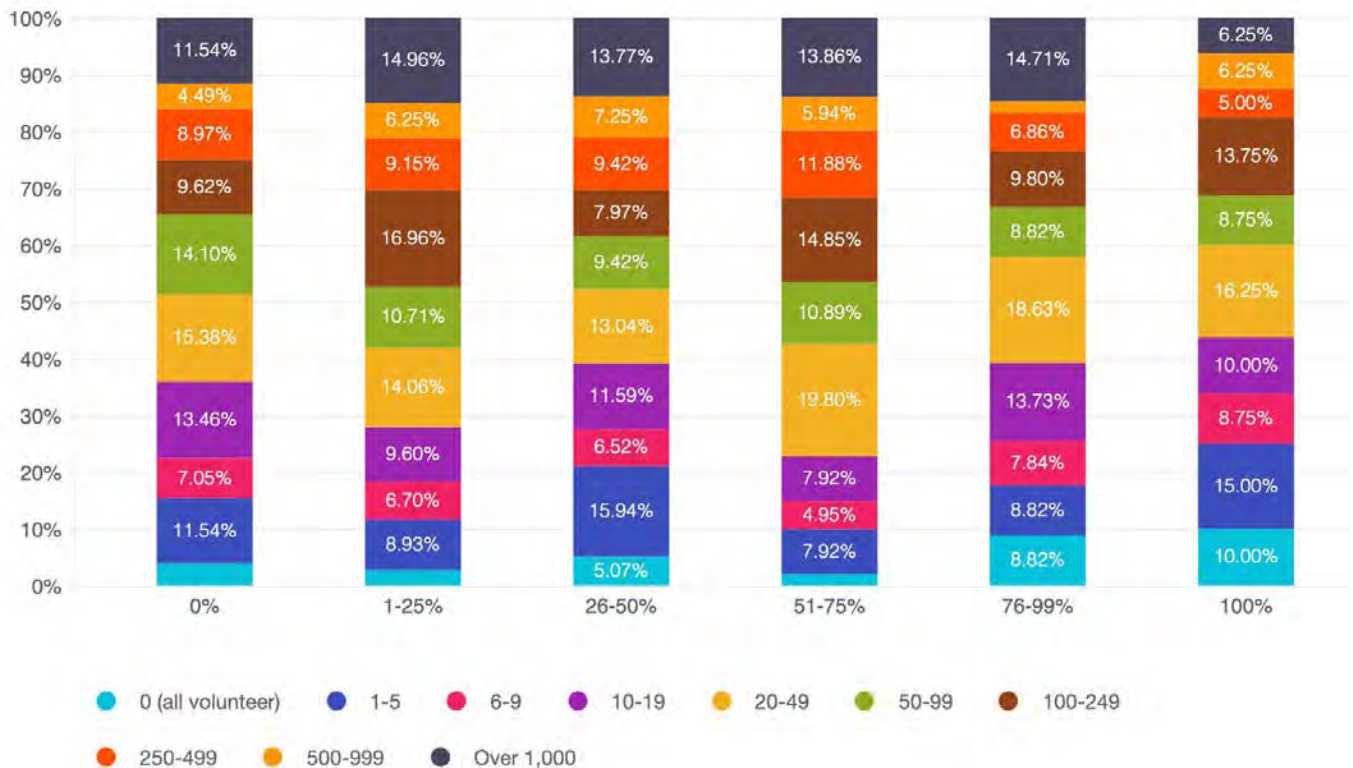
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Technology Tools

How Has Technology Use Changed?

Over the past year, our data indicates that overall technology adoption has increased in volunteer-involving organizations.

We asked – "For which of these activities does your agency use digital tools for volunteer management on a regular basis? Choose any that apply; include what your volunteer management software can do."

For overall technology adoption, last year the adoption rate was 38% of organizations across all tools listed. For this year's report, that number rose to an average of 45% of organizations adoption rate across all tools.

This year, over 60% of nonprofits reported using six top tools. Last year, only two tools were used by over 60% of organizations.

From the 2021 VMPR report, over half of volunteer organizations were using seven technology tools (Online Application Forms, Broadcast Emails/Newsletters, Volunteer Opportunity Listings, Volunteer Contact Record Database, Video Meetings/Conferencing, Online Training, and Social Media Engagement).

From the current 2022 VMPR, half of volunteer organizations reported using eight tools (with Feedback Surveys being added to the mix).

While there has been an increased in adoption of tools, the most sophisticated (and time-saving) tools for building relationships, teamwork, and community (Automated Email Campaigns, Online Collaboration/Editing, Online Resources Hub, Group Texts, Discussion Forum/Chat) remain underutilized.

Rather, organizations have favored more traditional uses of technology to connect with volunteers and track data (Online Application Forms, Volunteer Opportunity Listings, Video Meetings/Conferencing, Volunteer Contact Record Database).

'We have … had funding changes and are required to create more online resources and stakeholder engagement projects. This new program has been great to get more projects for certain staff, but it is missing the volunteer power and resourceful ideas of the wider community due to a ban on volunteers.'

'After 20 years in NHS, 8 years of which in voluntary leadership/management, I am leaving to join a national charity as an advisor … Lack of tangible senior leadership and backing, including under funding of the service substantively, has led to burnout.'

Technology Tools

Changes in Use & Rankings of Tech Tools in Use

Digital Tool	2020	2021	2022
Online Application Forms	**63.4%**	**62.1%**	**69.6%**
Volunteer Opportunity Listings	**73.4%**	**59.9%**	**67.0%**
Volunteer Contact Database	N/A	**54.8%**	**64.0%**
Video Meetings/Conferencing	15.7%	**54.7%**	**64.0%**
Broadcast Emails/Newsletters	**54.1%**	**60.0%**	**63.4%** ▼
Online Volunteer Training	**31.7%**	**53.4%**	**61.5%**
Social Media Engagement	**N/A**	**50.7%**	**58.0%**
Feedback Surveys	**N/A**	**47.2%**	**55.4%**
Shift Scheduling & Sign-Ups	40.9%	40.5%	48.3% ▲
Time Tracking	50.5%	46.5%	48.0%
Background Screening	45.3%	41.4%	47.6%
Online Document Sharing	34.3%	36.8%	45.7%
Online Community/FB Group	N/A	32.2%	38.4% ▲
Interview/Appt. Scheduling	N/A	28.6%	37.3%
Volunteer Shift Check-in & Out	N/A	33.3%	35.7% ▼
Automated Email Campaigns	6.0%	22.1%	28.6%
Online Collaboration/Editing	13.6%	15.3%	26.8% ▲
Online Resources Hub	N/A	21.8%	26.6% ▲
Group Texts	13.6%	17.4%	25.4% ▼
Discussion Forum/Chat	11.1%	15.6%	21.1% ▲
Automated Phone Calls	N/A	2.9%	4.3%

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Digital Maturity

How Do Volunteer Managers Rank Their Digital Maturity?

In this year's Volunteer Management Progress Report (VMPR) we again asked – "Rate your agency's current level of digital maturity in the following areas, as it relates to volunteers. Choose N/A if you don't feel qualified to rate an aspect."

Our rating scale was – (1) LAGGING - Little or no use of technology to meet goals, (2) LEARNING – Researching technology tools & building skills, (3) ADAPTING - Moderate use of technology to meet goals (4) - MATURING - Extensive use of technology to meet goals, N/A). NOTE: This year, we added an additional level to our scale – (2) LEARNING – to take into account organizations that had begun to explore digital expansion.

Ratings for overall digital maturity dropped this year in how volunteer coordinators, with less than one in five (18%) rating their agency overall as MATURE in terms of technology use and volunteers, compared to about one in four (24.0%) the year before.

Ratings of MATURING for Overall Agency Digital Maturity:

- 2020 VMPR (Pre-COVID) – 13%
- 2021 VMPR (Year 1 COVID) – 24%
- 2022 VMPR (Year 2 COVID) – 18%

About two in five (43.6%) reported that their overall digital strategy as ADAPTING with moderate technology use to meet goals. About one-quarter (25.5%) reported that they were LEARNING, and another 8.3% felt they were LAGGING. 4.2% did not feel qualified enough to rate their agency's use of technology when it came to volunteers.

These data reveal a clear gap in digital maturity for volunteer-involving organizations who must keep pace with the rest of the world or risk losing brand awareness, volunteer satisfaction, and thus support.

'We are still working remotely; I am finding it a challenge to manage virtually long-term and am worried volunteers do not feel properly supported.'

'Digital policies and use of digital tools are largely limited due to security concerns (we are a policing agency) not from a lack of desire or willingness to use them.'

'Most of the volunteers I work with do not use technology other than a cell phone and some don't even have that. Some don't even know how to text. Less than a 1/4 have email. I would love to use more technology, but most don't have the resources or knowledge to use it.'

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Digital Maturity

What Are the Trends in Digital Maturity?

Self assessments concerning digital maturity vary by key aspects and tasks related to coordinating volunteers.

It's notable that in ALL areas, self reported rating of MATURE dropped in the most recent year, indicating that volunteer managers felt less assured in their agency's use of technology to engage and support volunteers.

The areas where volunteer managers felt strongest were – Communications (weighted average 3.2), Data Collection & Reporting (weighted average 2.9), Recruitment (weighted average 2.8), and Scheduling (weighted average 2.9). These remain the top strategies when compared to last year's results.

Percentage of Organizations Rated as MATURING (rating for previous years in parenthesis)

- Recruitment – 24.7% (32.4% in 2021, 28% in 2020)
- Orientation & Training – 21.2% (26.6% in 2021, 12% 2020)
- Matching & Placement – 15.4% (19.8% in 2021, 15% 2020)
- Scheduling – 30.5% (34.6% in 2021, 27% in 2020)
- Communications – 40.3% (51.0% in 2021, 36% in 2020)
- Document Sharing – 23.3% (25.2% in 2021, 19% in 2020)
- Collaboration & Leadership – 18.5% (21.1% in 2021, 12% in 2020)
- Data Collection & Reporting – 32.4% (39.2% in 2021, 32% in 2020)
- Your Agency's Overall Digital Strategy – 18.4% (24.0% in 2021 , 13% in 2020)

Regardless of the length of their tenure on the job or their age, volunteer coordinators rated their organization's digital maturity similarly. In addition, assessments of digital maturity were similar across cause impact areas.
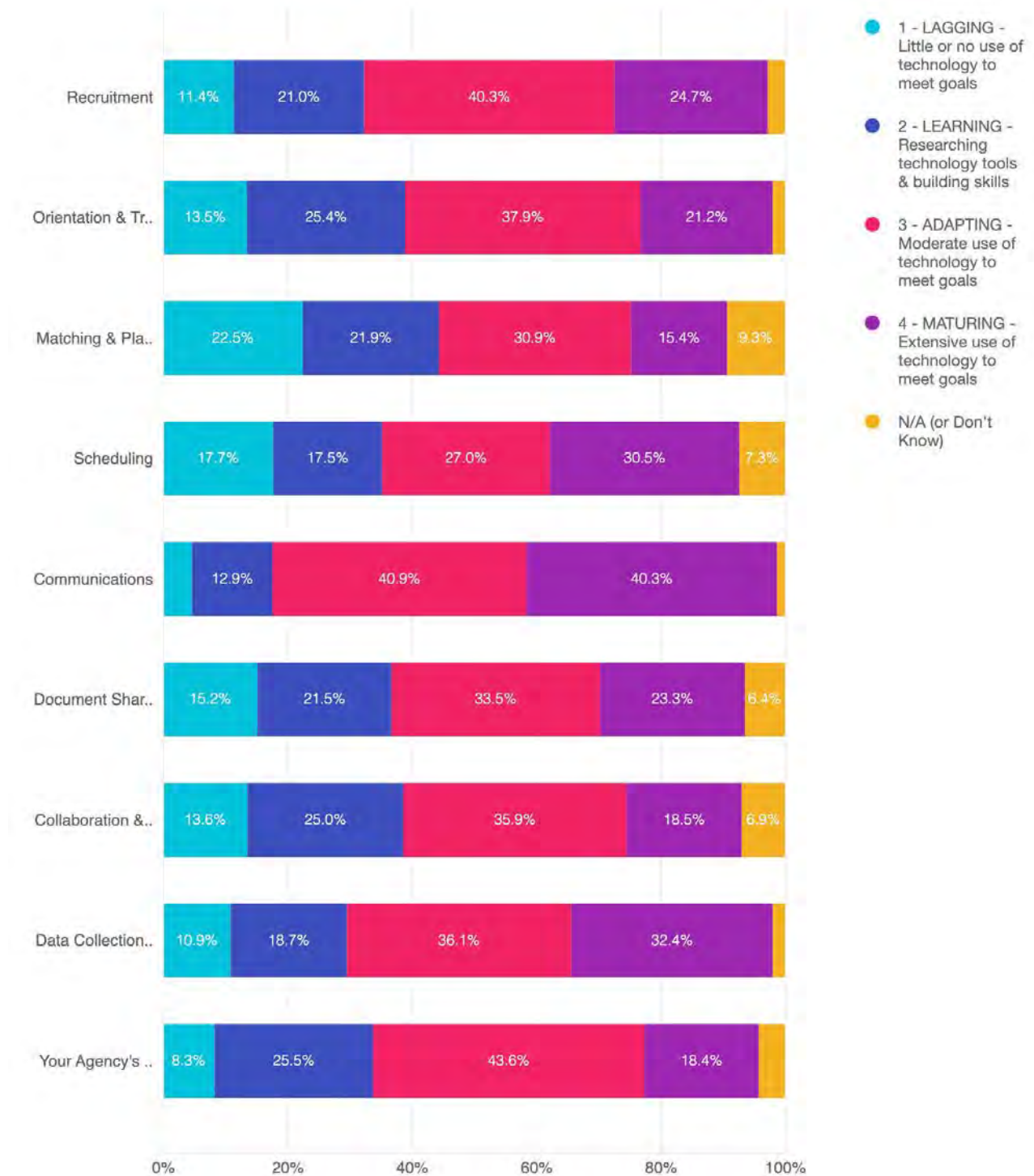
In terms of organization type, both Nonprofit and Government Agencies (comprising 90.7% of all respondents) rated their digital maturity, on average, similarly.

See chart on the next page for more detailed data by functional area.

'I was brought on board to help digital transformation. I realized that by digital, they meant fax …'

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Digital Maturity

Ratings of Digital Maturity Across Functional Areas

Functional Area	1 - LAGGING	2 - LEARNING	3 - ADAPTING	4 - MATURING	N/A
Recruitment	11.4%	21.0%	40.3%	24.7%	
Orientation & Tr..	13.5%	25.4%	37.9%	21.2%	
Matching & Pla..	22.5%	21.9%	30.9%	15.4%	9.3%
Scheduling	17.7%	17.5%	27.0%	30.5%	7.3%
Communications	12.9%		40.9%	40.3%	
Document Shar..	15.2%	21.5%	33.5%	23.3%	6.4%
Collaboration &..	13.6%	25.0%	35.9%	18.5%	6.9%
Data Collection..	10.9%	18.7%	36.1%	32.4%	
Your Agency's ..	8.3%	25.5%	43.6%	18.4%	

Legend:
- 1 - LAGGING - Little or no use of technology to meet goals
- 2 - LEARNING - Researching technology tools & building skills
- 3 - ADAPTING - Moderate use of technology to meet goals
- 4 - MATURING - Extensive use of technology to meet goals
- N/A (or Don't Know)

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Digital Maturity

What Do Volunteer Managers Plan to Do Differently?

We also asked volunteer administrators what they planned to differently around technology development and adoption. In this open-ended question, over 700 shared their plans. Many were strategically focused particularly on solving key issues around volunteer engagement. Below are some quotes with a key challenge noted.

'Expand the use of social media to tell the story and impact of volunteers.' [build awareness and buy-in]

'Be more intentional with how we use the varying technology resources available to best communicate with diverse communities.' [promote inclusivity]

'We continue to embrace technology in ways to maximize how we can connect with and engage our volunteers - and to improve and streamline service delivery to our clients.' [improve services and user experience]

'[H]ave a greater online presence and offerings – e.g., more interviews, induction, training, meetings online due to greater convenience and increased accessibility.' [make volunteering more accessible]

'[C]ontinue integrating technology into our processes to automate routine tasks, but without losing the "human touch" and also being careful to provide options for people who don't or can't use technology in the ways that are easiest for us.' [reduce gaps in digital divide]

'We want to offer more remote volunteering opportunities, and more training for our volunteers to increase confidence and ability to use technology.' [boost volunteer competencies and capabilities]

'Investment in a volunteer management system would help to align the tools we're currently using and creating an online hub that is accessible to volunteers would allow us to streamline some current processes and personalise our comms a lot more.' [improve efficiency and productivity]

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

The State of Volunteer Inclusion in 2022

We first asked about and reported on volunteer diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts four years ago in our 2018 Volunteer Management Progress Report.

At that time, nearly half (48%) of volunteer managers Strongly Disagreed, Somewhat Disagreed, or were Neutral as to whether the diversity of their current volunteer corps matched the community that they serve (race/ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, citizenship status, etc.).

In 2018, we also asked - Does your organization have a written diversity and inclusion plan for volunteer involvement? At the time, only 27% had a diversity, equity, and inclusion plan (DEI) plan in place that specifically mentioned volunteers. Another 18% did not know whether such a plan was in place.

Over the past four years, volunteer-involving organizations have increased their interest in ensuring a more inclusive environment for volunteers.

In our 2022 Volunteer Management Progress Report, 39% reported having a DEI plan in place that includes volunteers, an increase of 12% over four years. Another 24% reported that their DEI plan were Being Worked on, But Not Final yet. 14% did not know whether their organizations had a plan in place to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in volunteerism .

We found there were no strong correlations between organization type or cause impact area and whether a DEI plan was in place.

Trends in DEI Planning by Volunteer Organizations

Have a Diversity & Inclusion Plan for Volunteers (2018)

- **Yes – 27%**
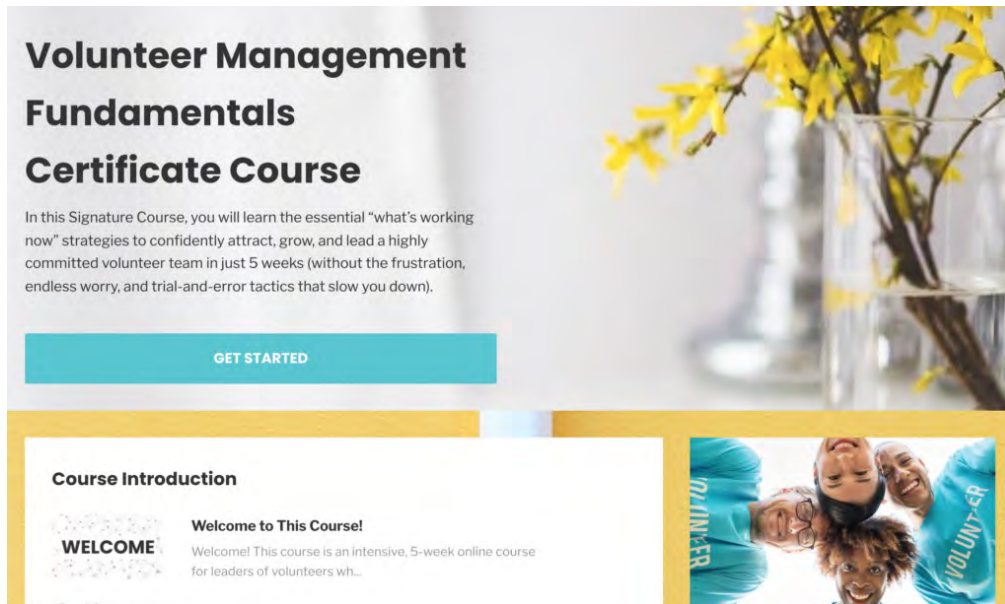- No – 55%
- Don't Know – 18%

Have a Diversity & Inclusion Plan for Volunteers (2022)

- **Yes – 39%**
- Being Worked on, But Not Final – 24%
- No – 24%
- Don't Know – 14%

'This last year and a half has given us so many challenges but also the opportunity to show our perseverance and I am proud to be included in a profession that has been able to grow and develop in some of the toughest times!'

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Build, Grow, Scale Involvement

In this **volunteer management certificate course**, you will learn the essential "what's working now" strategies to confidently attract, grow, and lead a highly committed volunteer team in just 5 weeks (without the frustration, endless worry, and trial-and-error tactics that slow you down).

What's Inside …
- Weekly on-demand lessons to watch at your own pace
- Live Q&A group coaching sessions to get answers & advice directly
- Lesson slides, worksheets, checklists, swipe files, & guides to convert learning into action
- Comment sections in each lesson to post questions & get quick answers directly from the instructor
- An automatic confirmation of completion once coursework is complete
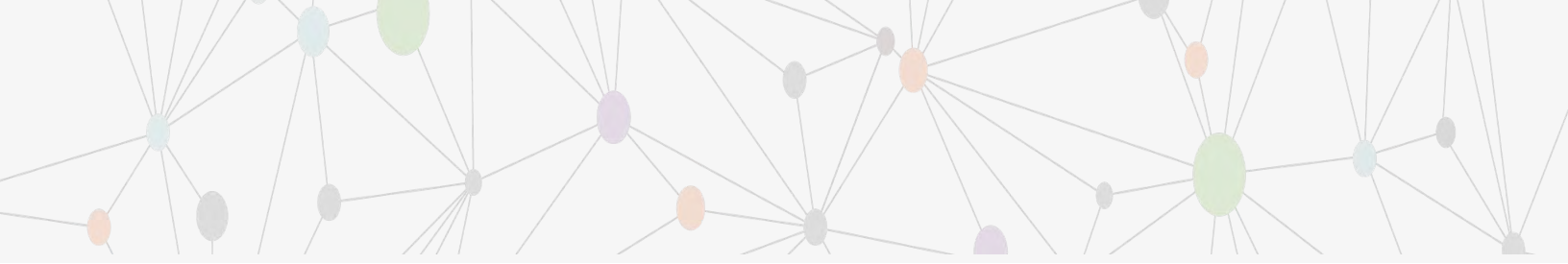- LIFETIME access to the course, & all future updates, for as long as it exists

PLUS, these Bonuses …
- *Bonus #1:* Take Your Volunteer Training Online: A Step-by-Step Guide eBook (a $29 value)
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GOT QUESTIONS?
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2022 VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

To obtain additional copies of this report, please visit -
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