

Give.org
Donor Trust Special Report
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



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BBB WISE GIVING ALLIANCE

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Striving Toward Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

One consequence of the heightened attention on racial injustice in recent years has been increasing public pressure related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in organizations and institutions. As mission-driven organizations funded through public contributions and entrusted with social goals, charities should be tuned to donor voices around issues like DEI.

As is true of DEI issues in society in general, when it comes to DEI in the charitable sector, troubling power dynamics and long-established forms of structural and implicit bias impact and inform organizations throughout the sector. In 2020, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* featured a story examining how energized nonprofits were to work on issues of equity in the workplace after the country was “suddenly riveted by issues of race.”¹ The article highlighted some optimistic opinions, noting that “the country has experienced too much stress and chaos to just go back to the old way of doing things” but also drew attention to the frustration expressed by some regarding the disconnect between “the values many nonprofits espouse and the way they operate.”² While some nonprofits dedicated attention toward having diverse board and staff in 2020 and 2021, there is ample space for greater diversity when it comes to board and chief executive representation. According to BoardSource’s *Leading with Intent* report, nonprofit chief executives are disproportionately likely to be white (87%), heterosexual (90%), and without disability (95%); tellingly, “only 29% of board chairs felt that boards represent the communities they serve.”³

Matters surrounding discrimination in the charitable sector continue to be divisive and politicized. Stories of charities tolerating discrimination against constituents have made headlines over the past couple of years. For example, at the end of 2021, *The Wall Street Journal* and other news outlets covered The Salvation Army’s struggles with some volunteers and donors after releasing a resource titled “Let’s Talk About... Racism,” which intended to “guide The Salvation Army family in gracious discussion about overcoming the damage racism has inflicted upon the world” but alienated constituents who felt the resource was too political and called for people to apologize for their skin color. Similarly, the Associated Press reported a story about how United Way’s new CEO (Angela Williams, the first woman and first African American to lead the organization) had to “deal with the fallout of accusations by three former employees of a toxic workplace culture.”⁵

Some charities have also struggled to engage particular donor groups. For example, while younger generations and people of color are not always thought of as major charitable supporters, our 2021 Give.org Donor Trust Report found that younger generations, African Americans, and Hispanic/Latinos express higher desire to be approached by charities than other potential donors. Our report also found that 51.4% of African Americans and 40.4% of Hispanics prefer to support charities serving specific needs affecting their ethnic community, as compared to 33.6% overall.⁶ Additionally, scholars have pointed out that the generosity of some demographic groups are not necessarily captured by reported charitable contributions.⁷

As many in the sector continue to strive to better support diversity, equity, and inclusion in both organizational practice and in constituent interactions, *our Special Report on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* (DEI) aims to shed light on donor attitudes, beliefs, and behavioral intentions around charities and DEI. **In this special edition of the *Give.org Donor Trust Report*, we explore (1) whether donors value DEI in charities; (2) whether DEI is a meaningful consideration in the giving process; and (3) how different demographic groups (including age, race, sexual orientation, and religious identity) differ in their preferences.**

In this report, we use data gathered through the December 2021 Donor Trust Surveys, with more than 2,100 adult respondents in the United States and 1,100 additional Canadian respondents. BBB®’s Give.org⁹ believes higher trust in charities translates to higher public engagement and confidence in giving. With that in mind, our Donor Trust Surveys track donor beliefs, feelings, and behavioral intentions related to charity trust and generosity.¹⁰

¹Stiffman, E., and Rendon, J. (2020). "A Turning Point." *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, June 25, 2020. Available at: A Turning Point (philanthropy.com).

²Stiffman, E., and Rendon, J. (2020). "A Turning Point." *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, June 25, 2020. Available at: A Turning Point (philanthropy.com).

³BoardSource (2021). *Leading with Intent: Reviewing the State of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion on Nonprofit Boards*. Available at: <https://leadingwithintent.org/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-findings/?hsCtaTracking=65cc7ee2-ab2b-49ca-a3ab-7d466a3cf6d6%7C3b183ff6-9350-43e9-8e99-407e47368f93>.

⁴Xu, K. (2021). "Wokeness Infiltrates the Salvation Army." *The Wall Street Journal*, December 16, 2021.

⁵Parks, D. (2021). "New United Way CEO on Mission to Improve Workplace Culture." Associated Press (initially covered by *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*), November 5, 2021. Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/business-lifestyle-discrimination-workplace-culture-7fa0cea9bbf756a146f55394a71cdf5d>.

⁶Castro, E., Chng-Castor, A., Pessanha, R., Vazquez-D'Amico, E., and Weiner, B. (2021). *The Give.org Donor Trust Report: Profiles in Charity Trust and Giving* (2021).

⁷Gamboa, G. (2021). "Philanthropy Isn't Defined by Money: Stanford Scholar Writes About the Generosity of the Working Class." *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*/Associated Press, October 28, 2021.

⁸The terms "diversity, equity, and inclusion" and its abbreviation "DEI" are used interchangeably in this report. In broad terms, "diversity" refers to fair representation of different demographic groups, "equity" refers to impartial and fair treatment, and "inclusion" is moving beyond integration and into participation and belonging. In the context of the donor survey, the terms were not defined and were open to each respondent's own interpretation.

⁹Also known as BBB Wise Giving Alliance or BBB WGA.

¹⁰BBB's Give.org has conducted a Donor Trust Survey annually since December 2017. The survey includes a set of core questions intended to measure the health of public trust in the charitable sector and to identify shifts across time. Each year, the survey also includes a set of questions on special topics of interest. Special topics have included disaster relief; sexual harassment; COVID-19; charity impact; and now diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Summary of Results

BBB Wise Giving Alliance (BBB WGA) commissioned an electronic survey of more than 2,100 adults across the United States and more than 1,100 adults in Canada. The following are our key findings.



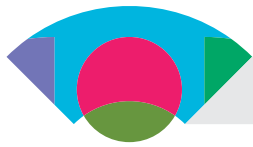


Do potential donors believe a lack of DEI is a problem in U.S. charities?

- **When comparing different workplaces, relatively few respondents believe a lack of DEI is a common problem for charities** (13.2%) as compared to houses of worship (18.0%), businesses (22.6%), or government (27.8%). Still, close to 40% say they believe that lack of DEI is either a common problem (13.2%), or sometimes a problem (25.9%), in charity workplaces.
- **Overall, less than a quarter of respondents (21.9%) heard about a specific charity (excluding houses of worship) having a lack of DEI during 2021. In contrast, 49.8% of participants who report being employed by a charity (and 53.0% of participants employed at government institution), say they heard about a lack of DEI at a specific charity.**
 - Younger generations, people of color¹¹, LGBTQ+ participants¹², and people who identify as Muslim, Mormon, or Jewish were more likely to report hearing about a specific charity (excluding houses of worship) having a lack of DEI during 2021. For example, 40.1% of Gen Zers, 32.6% of African Americans, 65.0% of pansexual respondents, and 63.3% of Muslim participants report hearing about a specific charity lacking DEI.
- People who report donating to arts and culture, educational, and environmental organizations were most likely to report hearing about a specific charity (excluding houses of worship) having a lack of DEI during 2021. For instance, 47.2% of arts and culture donors report hearing about a specific charity lacking DEI. People who report donating to veterans organizations, not-for-profit hospitals, and police and firefighter organizations were least likely to report hearing about a specific charity having lack of DEI. For instance, 13.6% of participants who report donating to veterans organizations say they heard about a specific charity lacking DEI.

¹¹ Here and below, we use the term “people of color” when a statement applies to the African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian American samples. We recognize there are other ethnic and racial minorities (such as Native American and Pacific Islanders) that should be included under the umbrella of “people of color,” but our sample size does not allow for proper analysis of these categories. We also recognize significant limitations with the term; for example, that the Hispanic/Latino sample may include participants that might not be considered people of color, and that each group (and people within each group) has their own experience and attitudes.

¹² In this report, we use the term “LGBTQ+” (which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning) when a statement applies to lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual, and pansexual. Unfortunately, queer (a sexual orientation) and transgender (a gender identity) groups, which fall under the LGBTQ+ umbrella, are not included due to sample size.



How does DEI affect donor perceptions and giving to charities?

- Most people assume that a charity having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive board and staff has positive effects on the organization.** For example, 53.9% of respondents say they assume DEI has a positive effect on how trustworthy a charity is, while only 4.5% say the effect is negative, and the rest say they do not know (11.6%) or think there is no effect (29.9%). Half or more of participants also think DEI has a positive effect on how well the charity serves its constituents (53%), the charity's ability to focus on its core mission (53%), the charity's overall accomplishments (52%), and incorporating broader perspectives and experiences (50%).

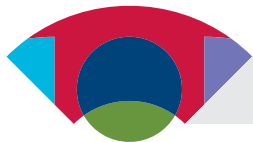
 - Younger generations, people of color, and LGBTQ+ participants are more likely to report that they assume a charity having a diverse, equitable and inclusive board and staff has positive effects on the organization. For example, 64.4% of millennials, as compared to 47.3% of matures, say they assume DEI has a positive effect on how trustworthy a charity is. Similarly, 61.7% of African Americans, as compared to 50.8% of whites, assume DEI has a positive effect on how well the charity serves its constituents.
 - Participants who identify as Muslim are most likely to assume that a charity having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive board and staff has positive effects on the organization, with 76.7% reporting DEI has a positive effect on how trustworthy a charity is, and 68.3% saying DEI has a positive effect on how well the charity serves its constituents. Agnostic participants are also highly likely to say DEI has a positive effect on the charity incorporating broader perspectives and experiences (63.5%) and on how well the charity serves its constituents (61.4%).
- When asked to consider the importance of representation in a charity's board and staff during their giving decision, 21.5% say representation of race and ethnicity is highly important** (rated as 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale). A similar portion of respondents say representation of disability status (21.4%), gender (19.8%), sexual orientation (18.7%), and religious identity (17.4%) are highly important in their giving decision. On the other hand, a higher portion of participants (between 30.0% for religious identity and 25.2% for disability status) attribute low importance (1 or 2 on a 10-point scale) to representation on a charity's board and staff during their giving process.

 - Younger generations, African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos, LGBTQ+ participants, people who identify as Muslim or atheist, and people who report donating more than \$5,000 annually are more likely to place high importance on representation on a charity's board and staff.** For example, more than one-third both of Muslims (36.7%) and of African Americans (34.2%) rate the importance of race and ethnicity representation on a charity's board and staff as highly important in their giving decision. Similarly, 31.4% of bisexual participants attribute high importance to representation of sexual orientation on a charity's board and staff.
 - The average respondent rates the importance of representation on the charity's board and staff during their giving process as 5.0 to 5.4 out of 10 (depending on the demographic category); and the most frequent response across all categories is 1. Among African Americans, the average response varies between 5.9 and 6.6 (depending on the demographic category) and the most frequent response is 10.

- **When asked to consider the importance of representation in the community served during the giving process, 22.6% say representation of race and ethnicity is highly important.** A similar portion of respondents say representation of disability status (23.8%), gender (20.1%), sexual orientation (19.3%), and religious identity (19.5%) are highly important in their giving decision.
 - As with representation on board and staff, **the importance placed on representation in the community served by the charity is higher among younger generations, African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos, LGBTQ+ participants, people who identify as Muslim or atheist, and people who report donating more than \$5,000 annually.** For example, 38.3% of Muslims and 37.1% of African Americans rate the importance of race and ethnicity representation in the community served as highly important in their giving decision. Similarly, 34.3% of bisexual participants attribute high importance to representation of sexual orientation in the community served by the charity.
- When considering how six different discrimination or lack-of-DEI scenarios might influence their willingness to donate to a charity they supported in the past, respondents frequently say that they would no longer donate or would want to know more. At the top end, **upon becoming aware that the charity’s culture tolerates discrimination against people served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion, 40.8% say they would no longer donate and another 18.8% say they would want to know more. A significantly smaller portion of participants would not donate (17.0%) or would want to know more (27.5%) upon becoming aware that the charity’s board of directors is not diverse.**
 - **Older generations; Asian and white participants; people who identify as atheist, agnostic, or unaffiliated; and respondents who report donating more than \$5,000 annually are more likely to say they would stop donating.** For example, 61.6% of atheists and 50.2% of matures say they would not donate upon learning that the charity’s culture tolerates discrimination against people served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion.
 - **Respondents who are employed at a charity, and people who identify as Muslim, are least likely to say they would no longer donate.** For example, 6.7% of Muslim participants and 10.0% of respondents who are employed at a charity say they would not donate upon learning that the charity’s culture tolerates discrimination against people served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion.
- **When asked to imagine learning that a charity they support does not have fair representation of the donor’s race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability status, or religion on the organization’s board and staff, most people say this would not influence their giving decision (38.9%) or that they don’t know how that might influence their giving decision (18.2%). However, 25.5% say they would be less likely to support the organization and 17.4% say they would be more likely to support the organization.**
 - **Younger participants, African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos, LGBTQ+ respondents, and some religious groups (such as Muslims and Mormons) were significantly more likely to say that they are likely to support the organization upon learning that it does not represent their race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability status, or religion.** For example, 26.8% of African Americans and 24.4% of Hispanics say they are more likely to support the organization, compared

to 14.7% of white participants. Similarly, 50.0% of Muslims and 39.6% of asexual respondents say they are more likely to support the organization.

- Among participants who say they would be less likely to contribute, 20.6% say they would not replace their donation and 19.7% say they would likely replace their donation in a different cause area. Positively for charities, many donors are willing to resume support for the charity after proper corrective actions are taken. When asked to imagine that the charity takes actions to address the DEI concern, 47.6% say they would resume normal levels of support as soon as they believe the charity reacted appropriately. 17.8% claim they would never again resume normal support.
- **Of those who would continue to support the charity, 58.6% said the cause is more important to them, 27.8% said all organizations are bound to face issues with DEI, 19.9% said this is an internal organizational issue, and 18.0% said they are not concerned with DEI.** People of color, gay/lesbian respondents, and some religious groups (such as Muslims and Jewish) are relatively less likely to say that the cause is more important to them and relatively more likely to say that this is an internal organizational issue and that all organizations are bound to face issues with DEI. For example, 42.2% of African Americans who would continue to contribute say all organizations are bound to face issues with DEI, as compared to 22.7% of white participants.



How do donors expect charities to react to DEI concerns?

- **Upon learning that a charity they personally support is not diverse, equitable, or inclusive, 30% say they would expect the charity to diversify the staff**, and 28% would expect the charity to diversify the board. Only 9.9% say they would expect the charity to disclose the organization’s DEI statement.
- Some demographic groups are significantly more likely to expect a charity that is not diverse, equitable, and inclusive to diversify their board and staff, report the demographics of individuals served by the charity (if applicable), use culturally appropriate images and language, and actively remove barriers to entry. For example, 37.4% of African Americans would expect the charity to diversify the staff, 46.7% of Muslims would expect the charity to report the demographics of individuals served (when applicable), and 42.5% of pansexual participants would expect the charity to use culturally appropriate images and language.
- When asked to consider who they hold responsible at the charity for addressing DEI, participants are split between the board of directors (24.4%), the chief executive officer (22.6%), all staff (19.2%), and the human resource department (13.3%).
- **One-third (33.5%) of participants would consider demographic information (such as race, age, and gender) reported by the charity about people served by the charity to be “very useful” in their giving decision; another 29.7% state that such information would be “somewhat useful.”** A slightly lower portion of participants consider demographic information about the charity’s staff to be “very useful” (24.8%) or “somewhat useful” (32.6%).

- **Younger participants, people of color, and LGBTQ+ participants are more likely to say that demographic information reported by the charity would be “very useful” in their giving decision.** For example, only 14.9% of matures consider demographic information about the charity’s board to be very useful in their giving process, compared to 35.3% of millennials. 36.4% of African Americans would consider demographic information about the charity’s board to be very useful, compared to 21.7% of white participants. Similarly, 41.9% of bisexual participants would consider demographic information about the population served to be very useful, compared to 33.2% of heterosexual respondents.
- **Across religious categories, Muslim participants are most likely (41.7%) to say charity reporting about board demographics would be very useful; and agnostic participants are most likely (45.8%) to say charity reporting on the community served would be very useful.**
- **Participants who report higher contribution levels are more likely to say demographic reporting by the charity would be very useful in their giving decision.** For example, 45.8% of people who report giving more than \$5,000 a year would consider demographic information about the population served to be very useful, compared to 31.9% respondents that donated between \$1 and \$50.



How do Canadian donor expectations regarding DEI compare?

- When comparing different workplaces, relatively few Canadian respondents (11.3%) believe a lack of DEI is a common problem for Canadian charities.
- While 21.9% of U.S. participants heard about a specific charity (excluding houses of worship) having lack of DEI in their country during 2021, only 11.0% of Canadians heard the same.
 - People who report donating to arts and culture, environmental, and educational organizations were most likely to report hearing about a specific charity (excluding houses of worship) having lack of DEI during 2021. People who report donating to animal welfare charities, health organizations, and not-for-profit hospitals were least likely to report hearing about a specific charity having a lack of DEI.
- Close to half of Canadians assume that a charity having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive board and staff has positive effects on the organization. For example, 49.1% of respondents say they assume DEI has a positive effect on how well the charity serves its constituents, while only 3.0% say the effect is negative, and the rest say they do not know (13.5%) or think there is no effect (34.3%).
- When asked to consider the importance of representation on a charity’s board and staff during their giving decision, 14.8% say representation of race and ethnicity is highly important. Similarly, when asked to consider the importance of representation in the community served during the giving process, 17.1% say representation of race and ethnicity is highly important. Compared to their U.S. counterparts, Canadian respondents attribute moderately less importance to representation in the giving process.

- Upon becoming aware that the charity’s culture tolerates discrimination against people served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion, 45.0% of Canadians say they would no longer donate and another 17.9% say they would want to know more. When considering how different discrimination or lack of DEI scenarios might influence their willingness to donate, Canadians are moderately more likely than U.S. participants to say they would no longer donate.
- When asked to imagine learning that a charity they support does not have fair representation of the donor’s race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability status, or religion on the organization’s board and staff, 42.4% of Canadian respondents say this would not influence their giving decision, 26.0% say they would be less likely to support the organization and 9.6% say they would be more likely to support the organization. Compared to their U.S. counterparts, Canadians are significantly less likely to say they are more likely to support the organization.
- 27.1% of Canadian participants would consider demographic information about people served by the charity (and reported by the charity) to be “very useful” in their giving decision.

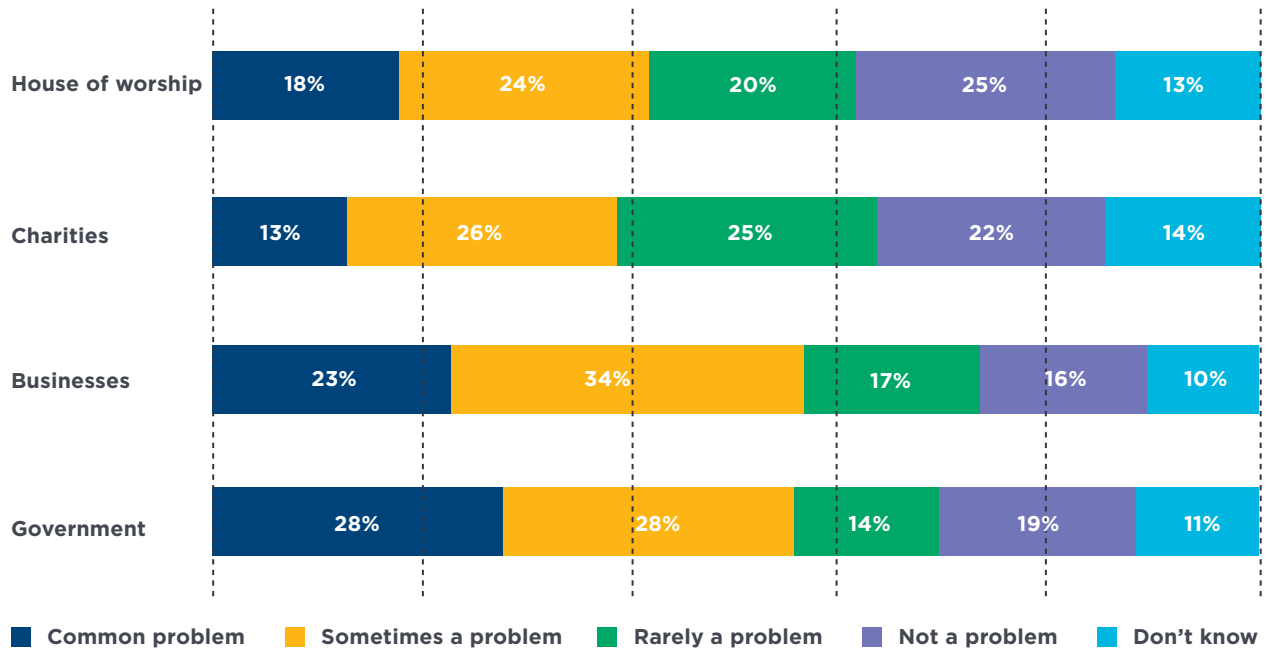
In addition to producing evaluative reports on charities, BBB’s Give.org tracks donor beliefs, feelings, and behavioral intentions related to charity trust and generosity through annual donor surveys. These surveys are the foundation of Give.org Donor Trust Reports. Our Special Report on DEI in the charitable sector aims to shed light on how DEI can build or strain the relationship between donors and charities.

We recognize that survey responses reflect donor perception and intent rather than action. While actual giving behavior may not ultimately be affected as significantly as donors report—partly because many people never find out about DEI at the charities they support and partly because donors don’t always carry through with their intentions—our findings suggest that building DEI at charities can help build trust in charities, particularly among minority communities.

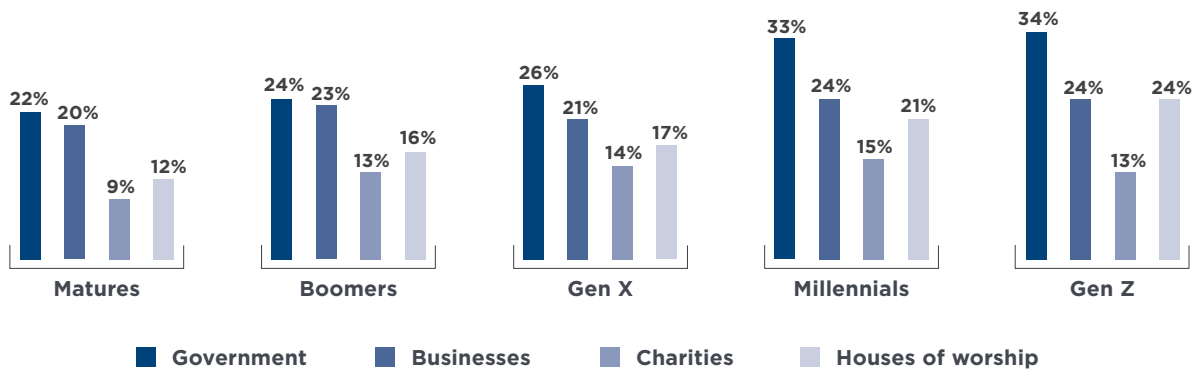


Do potential donors believe a lack of DEI is a problem in U.S. charities?

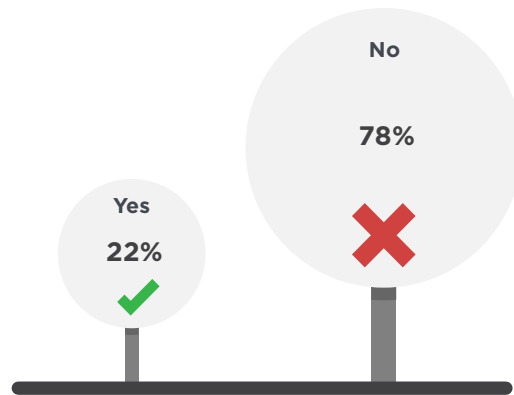
When comparing different workplaces, relatively few respondents believe that lack of DEI is a common problem in charity workplaces.



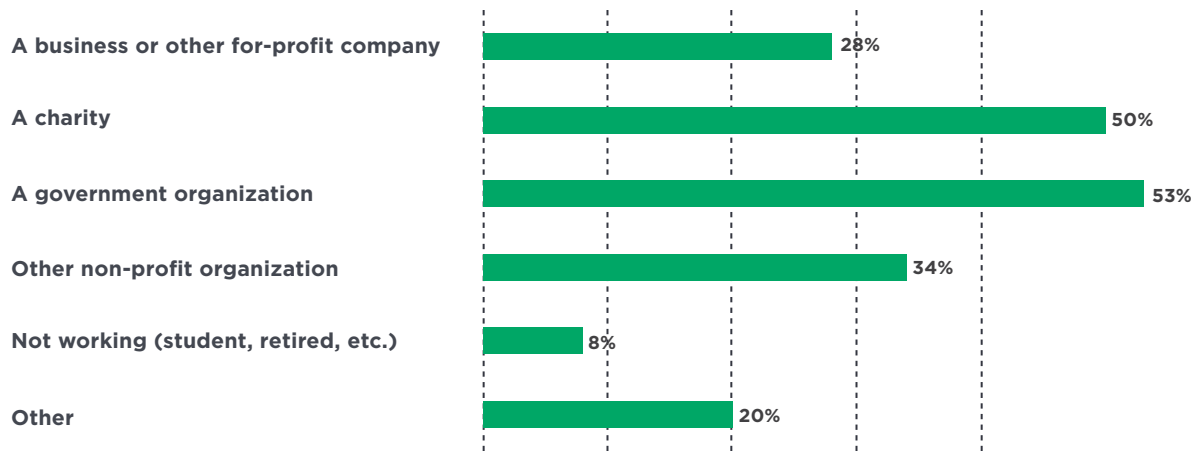
Younger respondents are more likely to believe that lack of DEI is a “common problem” at all workplaces, but the portion of respondents stating that charity workplaces lack DEI is relatively low across generations.



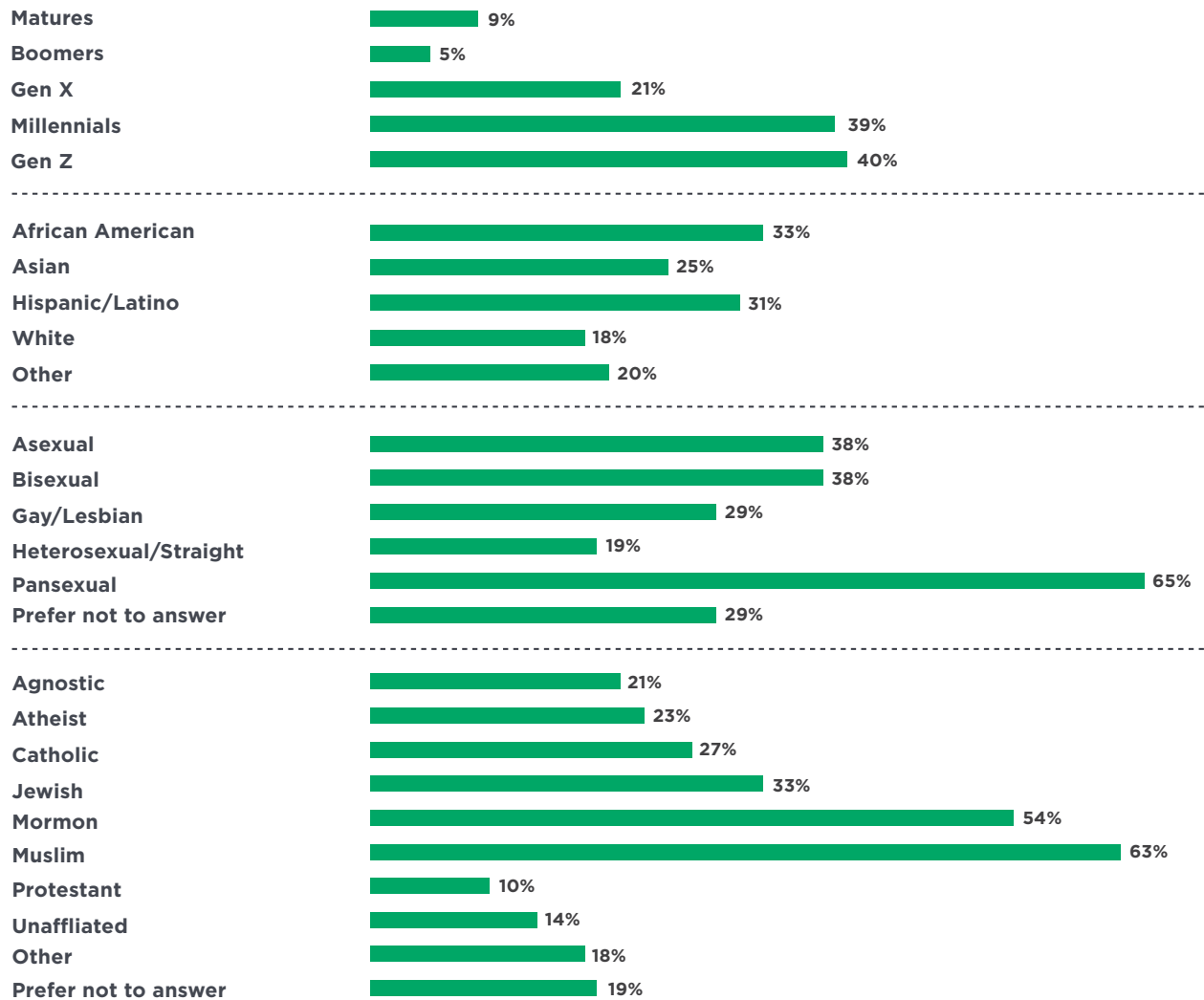
Less than a quarter of respondents heard about a specific charity having a lack of DEI during 2021.



Participants who report being employed by a charity or government institution were substantially more likely to say that they heard about a specific charity having lack of DEI.

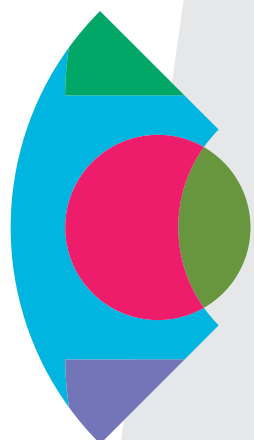


Younger participants, people of color, LGBTQ+ respondents, and some religious groups were more likely to report hearing about lack of DEI at a specific charity.



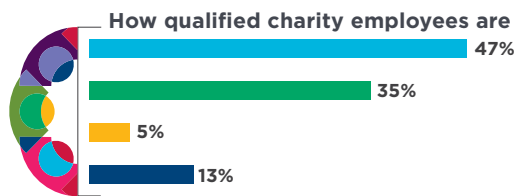
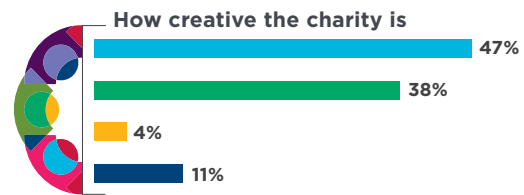
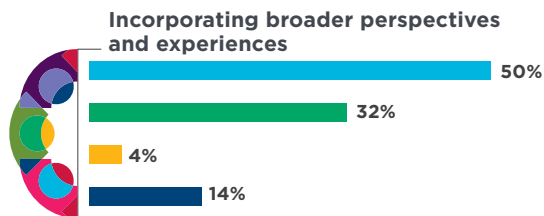
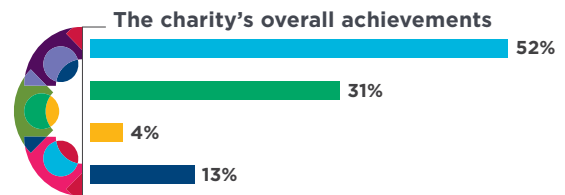
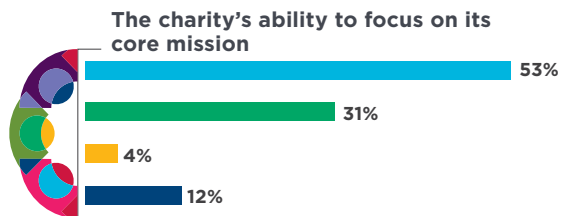
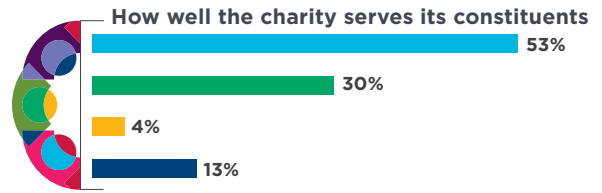
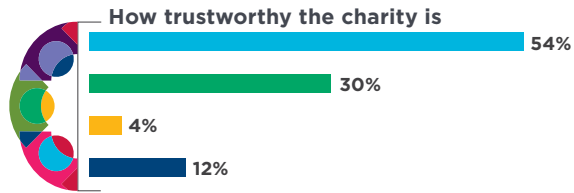
People who report donating to arts and culture, educational, and environmental organizations were most likely to report hearing about a specific charity (excluding houses of worship) having lack of diversity, equity, or inclusion during 2021. People who report donating to veterans organizations, not-for-profit hospitals, and police and firefighter organizations were least likely to report hearing about a specific charity having a lack of DEI.





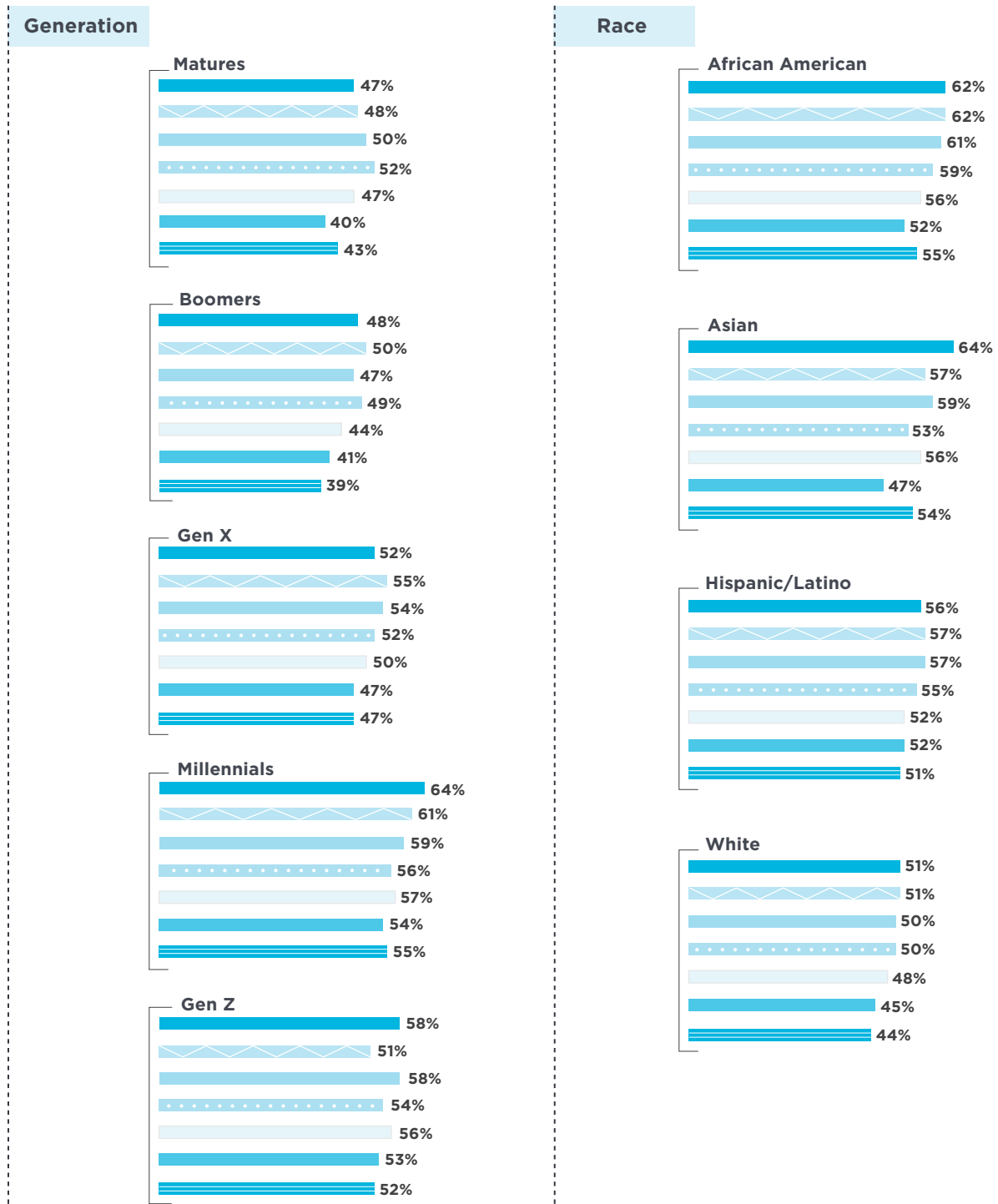
How Does DEI Affect Donor Perceptions and Giving to Charities?

Most people assume that a charity having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive board and staff has positive effects on the organization.



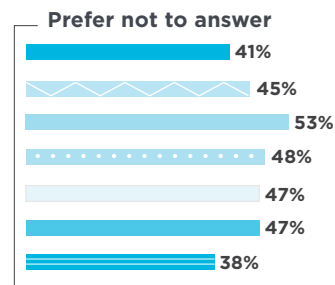
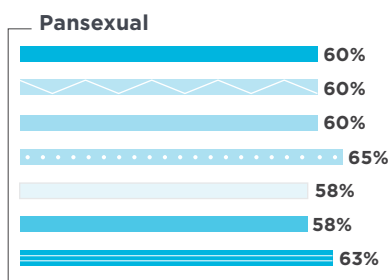
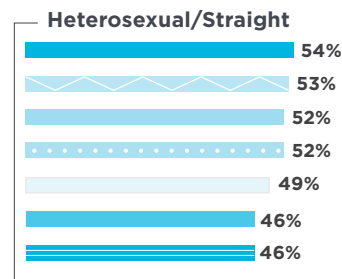
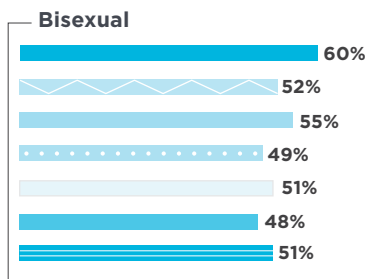
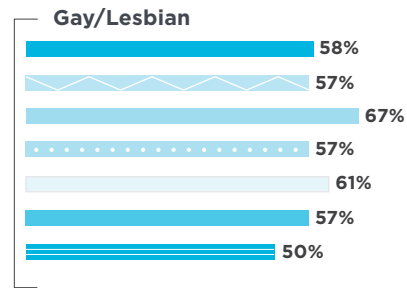
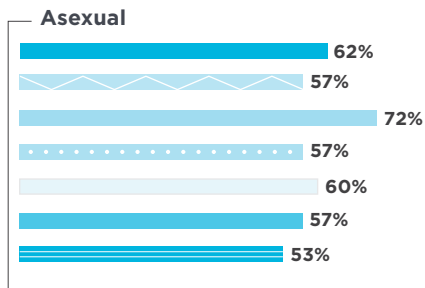
■ Positive ■ No effect ■ Negative ■ Don't know

Younger generations, people of color, and LGBTQ+ participants are more likely to assume that a charity having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive board and staff has positive effects on the organization.



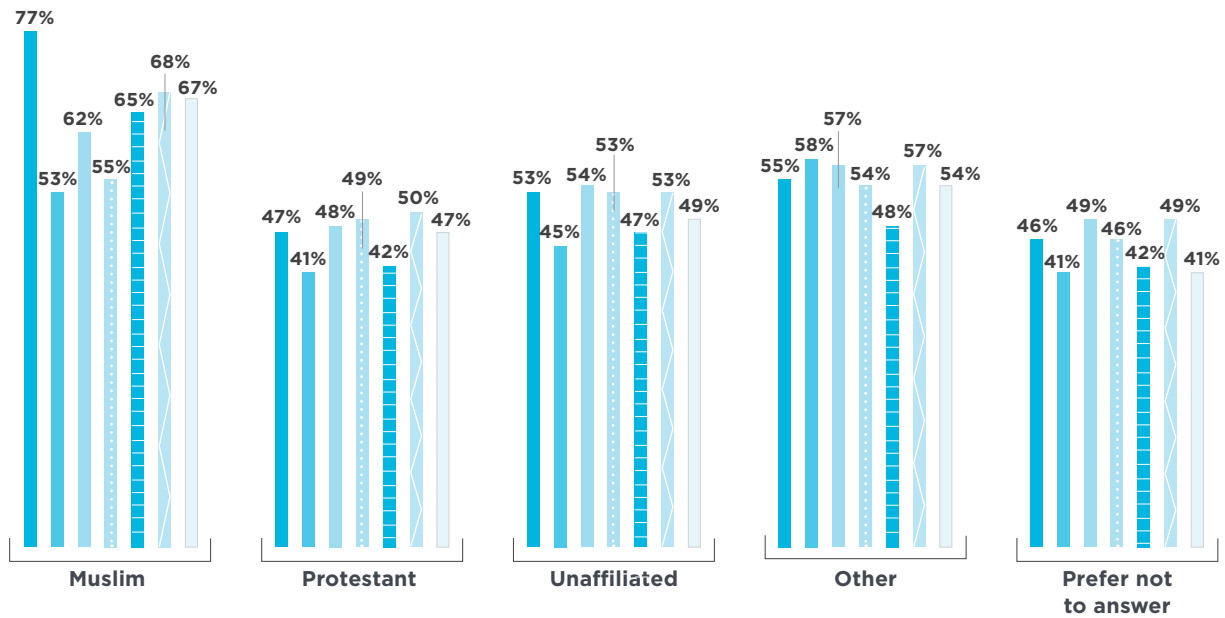
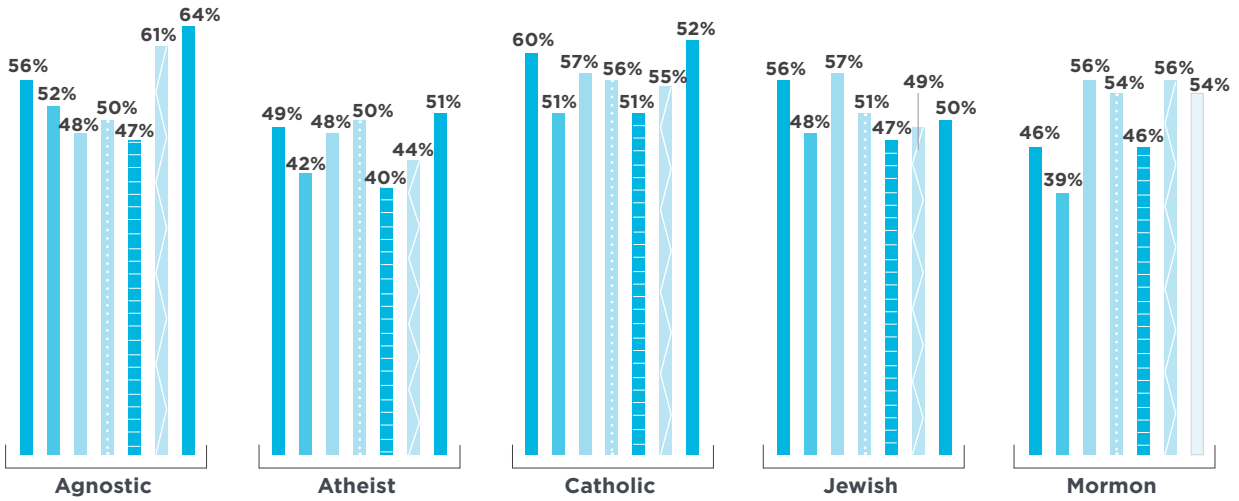
- How trustworthy the charity is
- The charity's ability to focus on its core mission
- Incorporating broader perspectives and experiences
- How creative the charity is
- How well the charity serves its constituents
- The charity's overall achievements
- How qualified charity employees are

Sexual Orientation



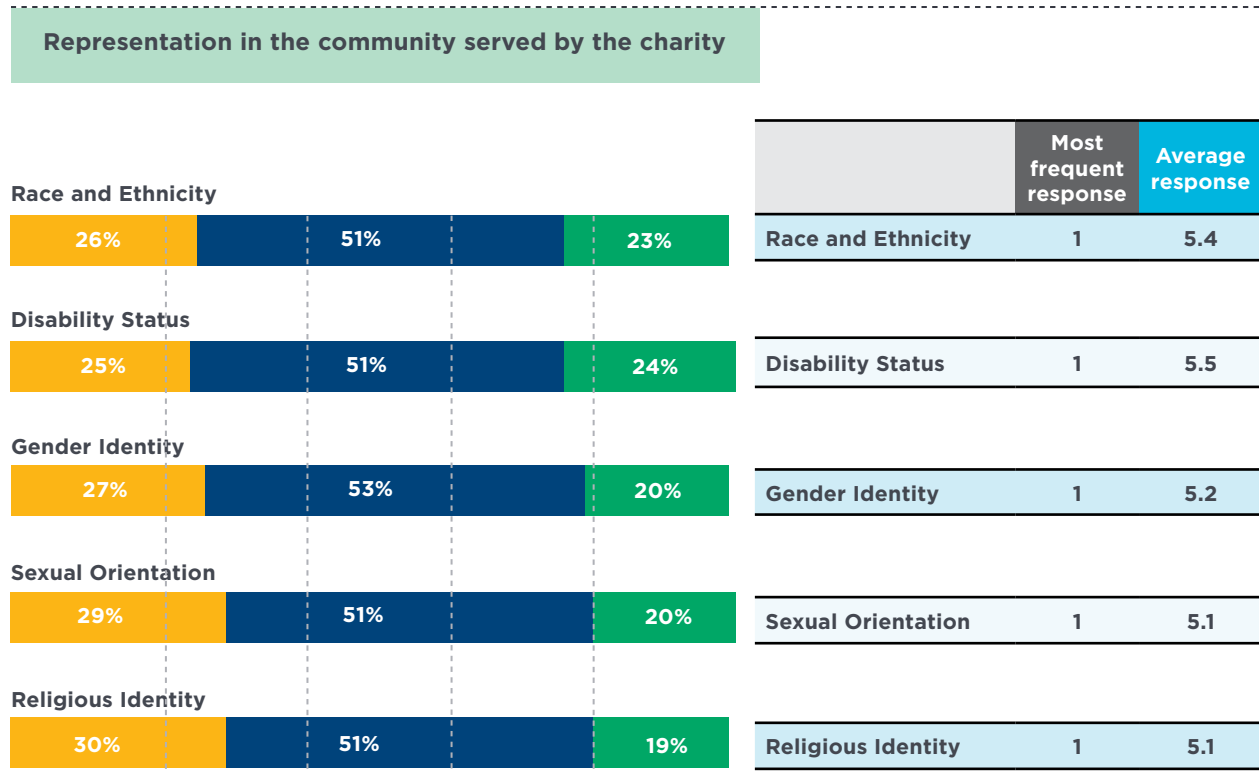
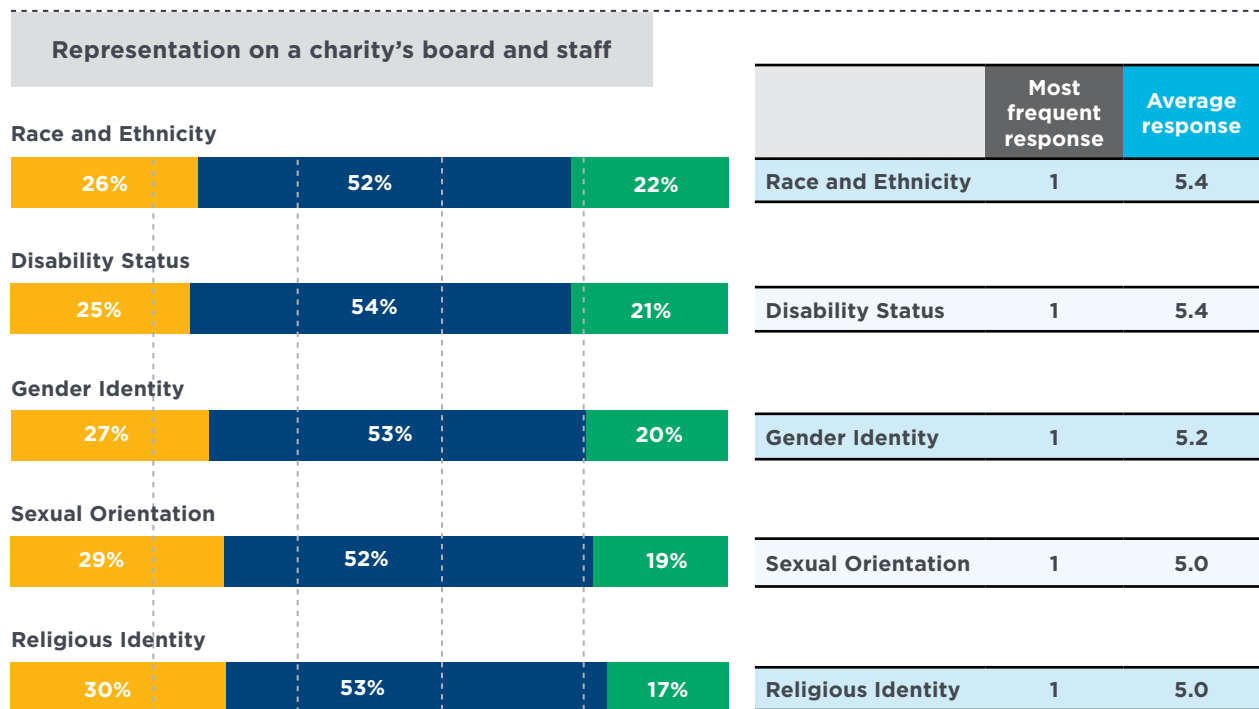
- How trustworthy the charity is
- ▨ How well the charity serves its constituents
- The charity's ability to focus on its core mission
- ▨ The charity's overall achievements
- Incorporating broader perspectives and experiences
- How creative the charity is
- How qualified charity employees are

Participants who identify as Muslim and agnostic are more likely to assume that a charity having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive board and staff has positive effects on the organization.



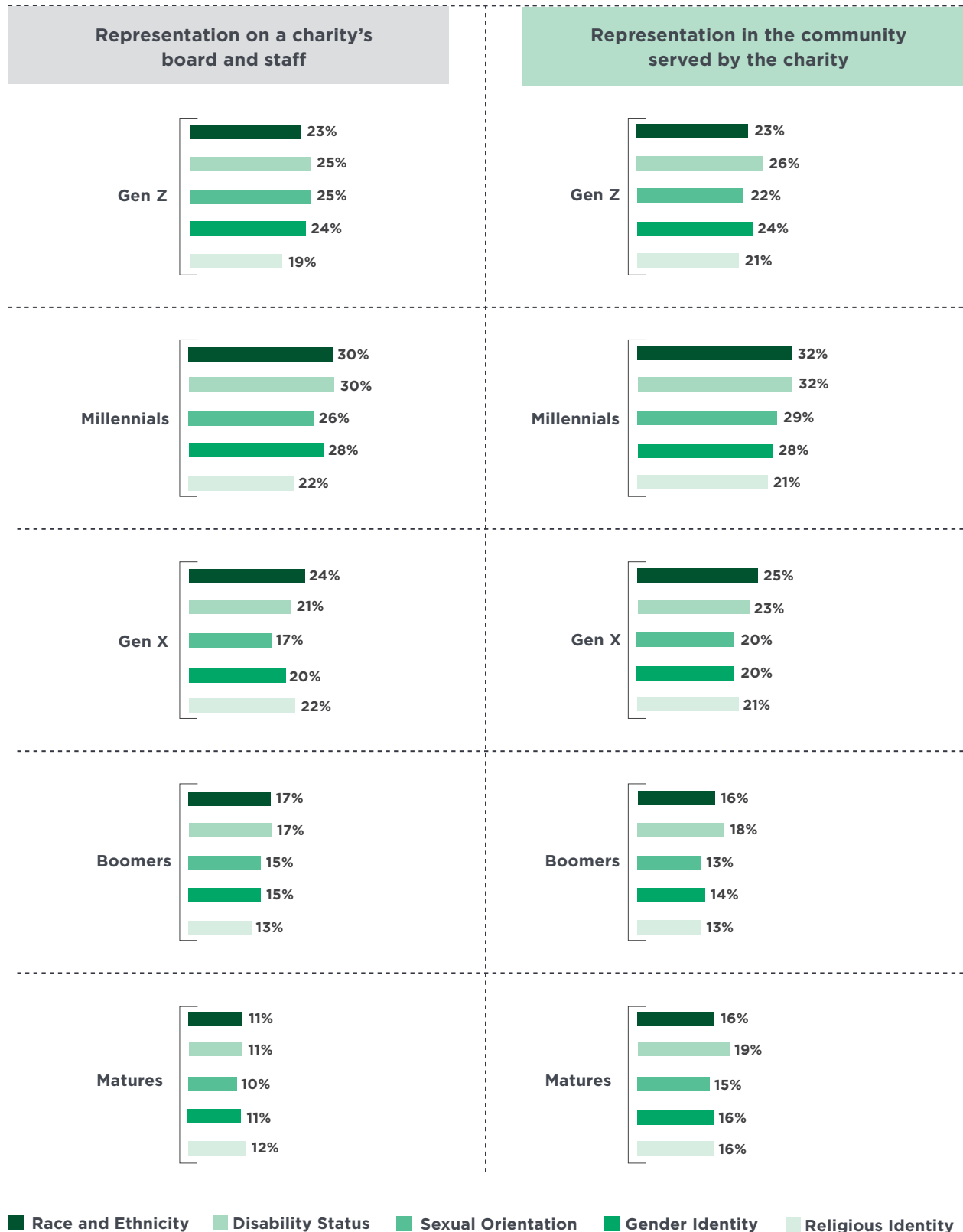
- How trustworthy the charity is
- The charity's ability to focus on its core mission
- How creative the charity is
- The charity's overall achievements
- How qualified charity employees are
- How well the charity serves its constituents
- Incorporating broader perspectives and experiences

When asked to consider the importance of representation during their giving decision, donors say:

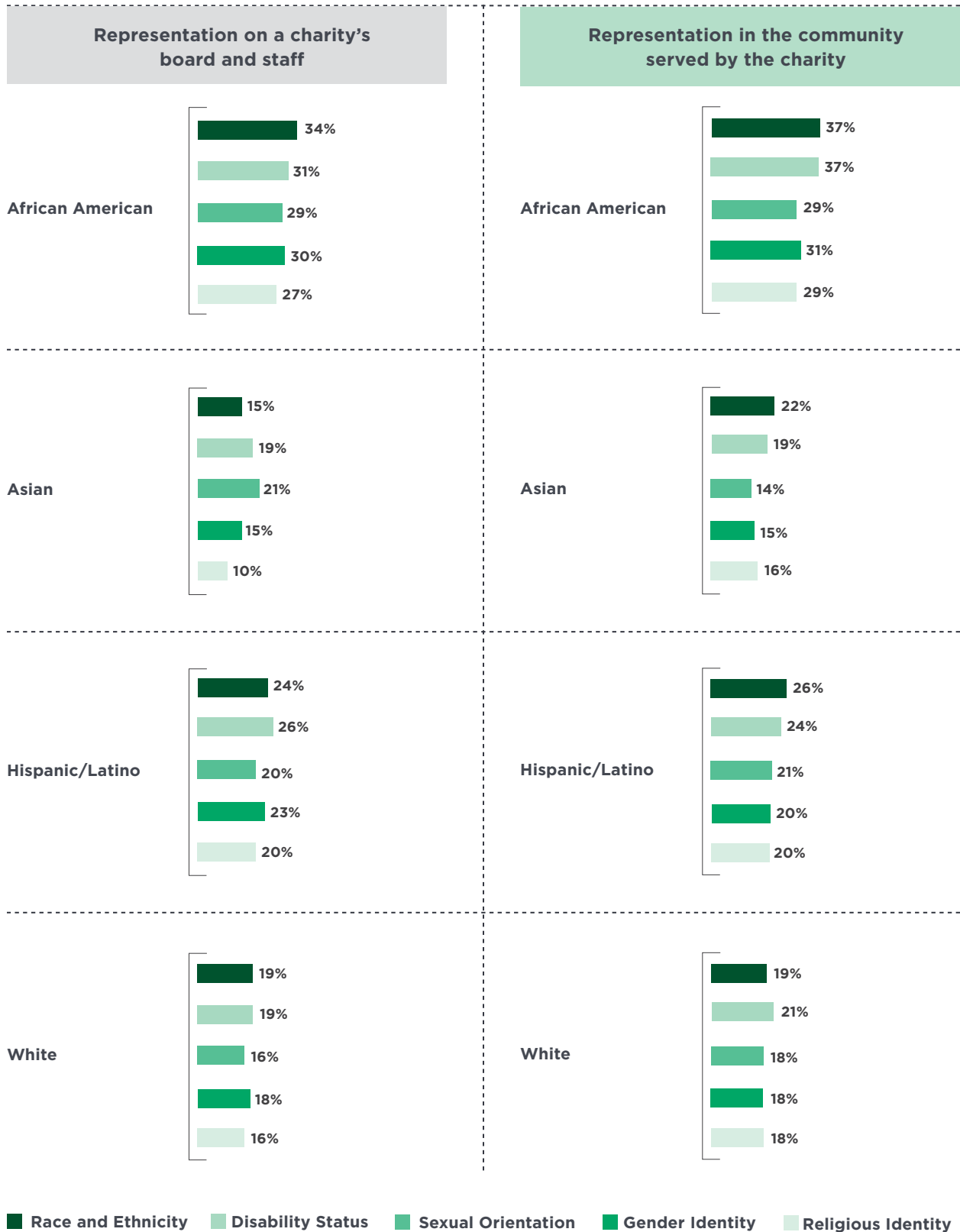


■ Low importance (1 or 2 on a 10-point scale)
 ■ Medium importance (3-8 on a 10-point scale)
 ■ High Importance (9 or 10 on a 10-point scale)

Younger generations are more likely to place high importance on representation during their giving decision.



African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos are more likely to place high importance on representation during their giving decision.



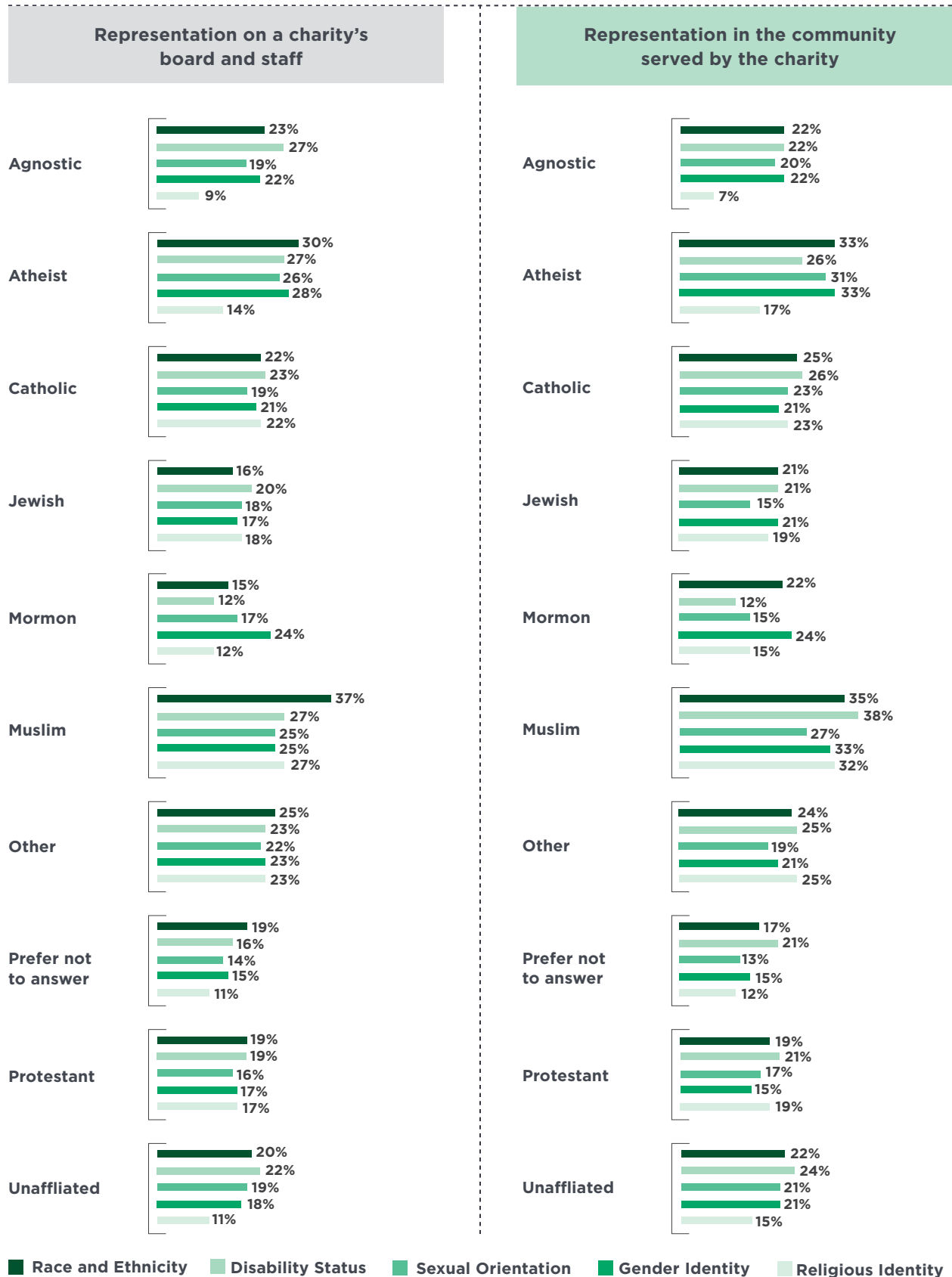
There are noteworthy differences in the most frequent response and average rating across racial lines.

Most frequent response								
	African American		Asian		Hispanic/Latino		White	
Race and Ethnicity	10	10	5	1	10	5	1	1
Disability Status	10	10	5	6	10	5	1	1
Sexual Orientation	10	10	5	6	10	1	1	1
Gender Identity	10	10	5	5	5	5	1	1
Religious Identity	10	10	5	5	5	1	1	1

Average response								
	African American		Asian		Hispanic/Latino		White	
Race and Ethnicity	6.6	6.6	5.7	5.7	6.1	6.1	4.9	4.9
Disability Status	6.4	6.6	5.9	5.6	6.1	5.9	4.9	5.2
Sexual Orientation	6.0	6.2	5.9	5.6	5.8	5.4	4.6	4.8
Gender Identity	6.3	6.3	5.6	5.5	5.9	5.7	4.7	4.9
Religious Identity	5.9	6.1	5.0	5.4	5.4	5.7	4.3	4.5

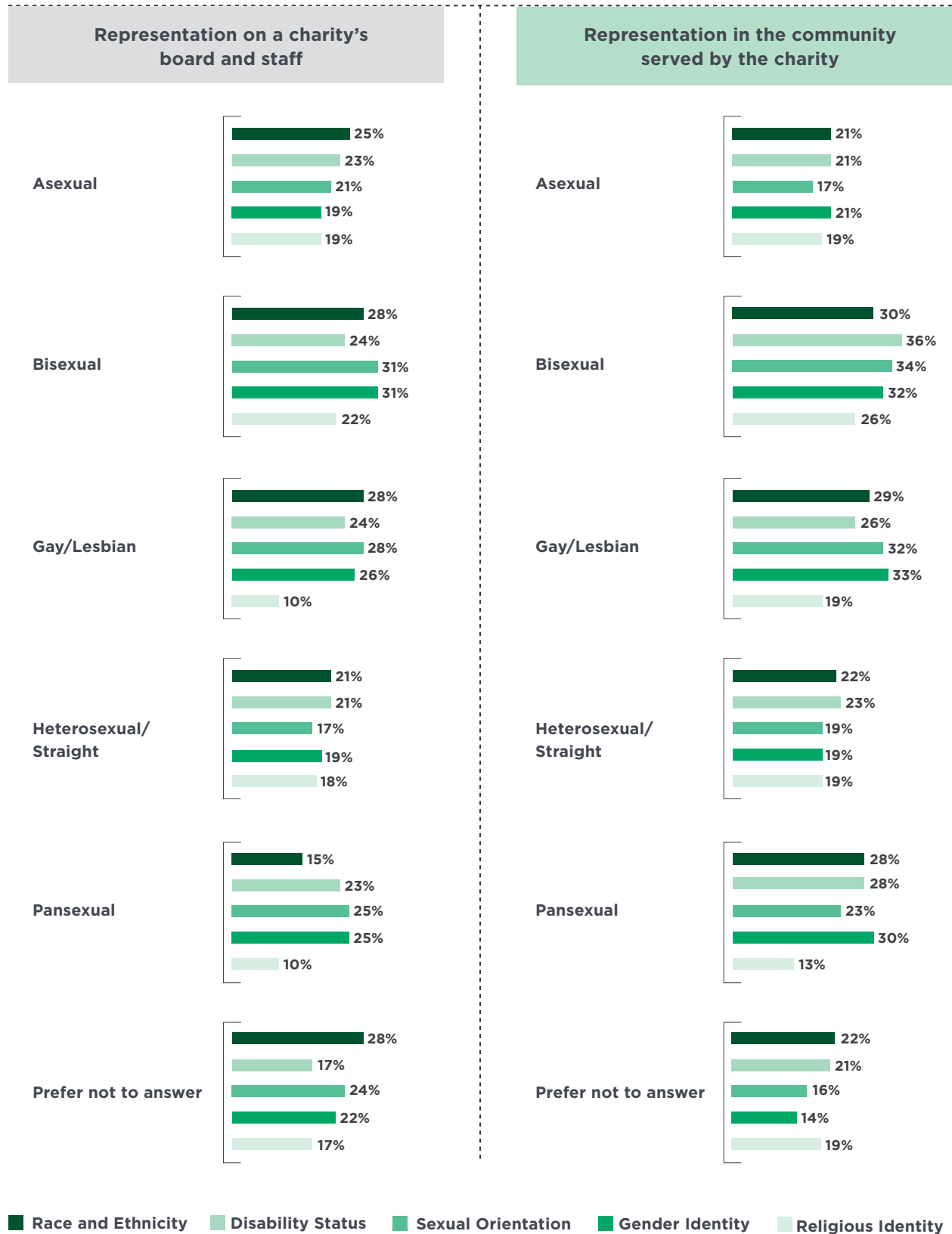
- Importance of representation on a charity’s board and staff during the giving decision
- Importance of representation in the community served by the charity during the giving decision

Participants who identify as Muslim or atheist are more likely to place high importance on representation during their giving decision.



■ Race and Ethnicity ■ Disability Status ■ Sexual Orientation ■ Gender Identity ■ Religious Identity

LGBTQ+ participants are more likely to place high importance on representation during their giving decision.



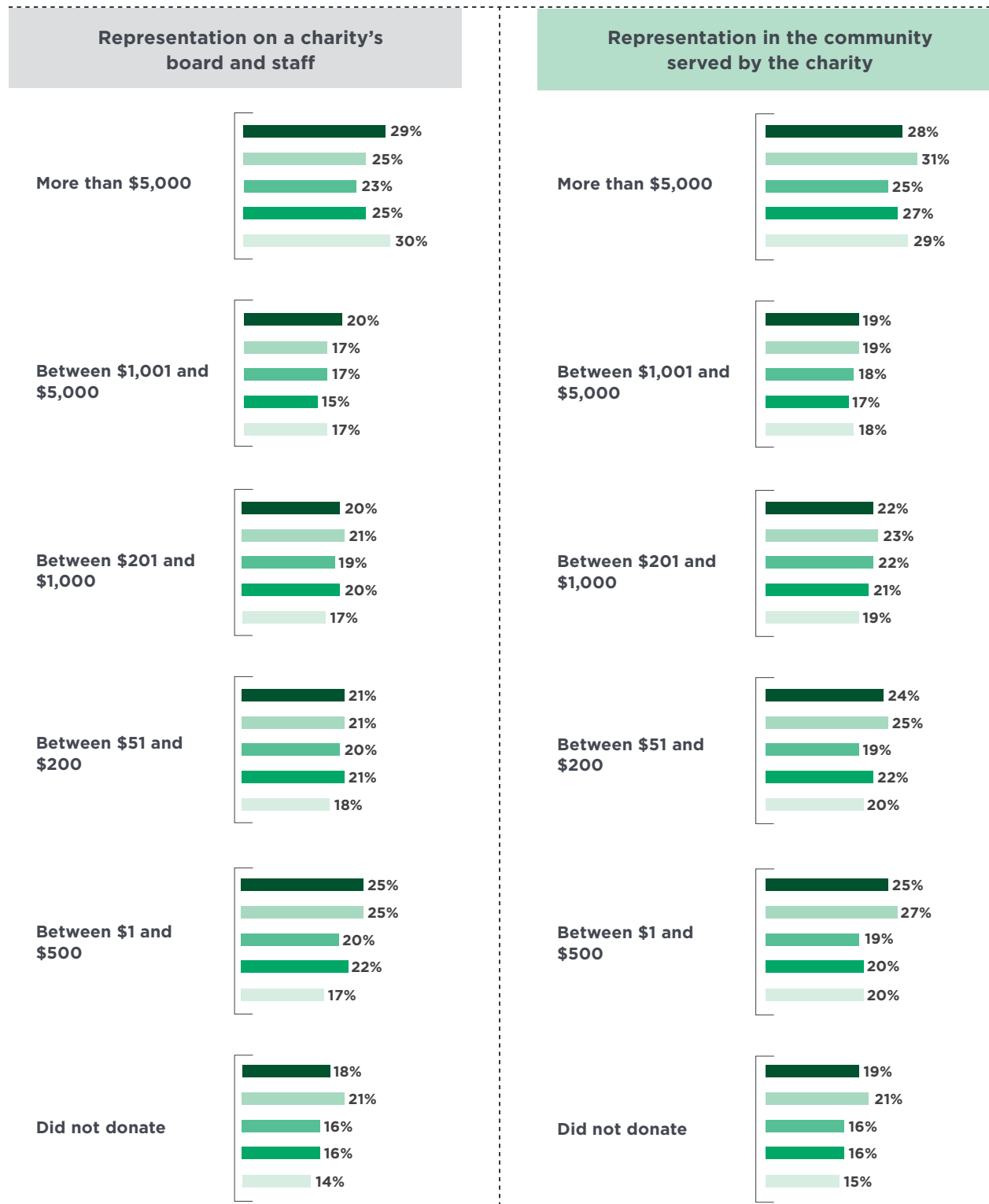
There are noteworthy differences in the most frequent response and average rating across sexual orientation.

Most frequent response												
	Asexual		Bisexual		Gay/Lesbian		Heterosexual/ Straight		Pansexual		Prefer not to answer	
Race and Ethnicity	1	1	10	10	10	10	1	1	10	10	1	1
Disability Status	1	1	10	10	5	5	1	1	5	10	5	1
Sexual Orientation	1	1	10	10	10	10	1	1	5	7	1	1
Gender Identity	1	1	10	9	5	10	1	1	10	10	1	1
Religious Identity	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	5	5	1	1

Average response												
	Asexual		Bisexual		Gay/Lesbian		Heterosexual/ Straight		Pansexual		Prefer not to answer	
Race and Ethnicity	5.1	4.8	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.2
Disability Status	4.7	4.4	6.0	6.2	6.0	6.2	5.4	5.5	5.8	6.5	4.9	5.3
Sexual Orientation	4.5	4.2	6.4	6.7	6.4	6.7	4.9	5.0	6.2	6.3	4.9	4.9
Gender Identity	4.6	4.8	6.1	6.5	6.1	6.5	5.1	5.1	5.9	6.5	5.1	4.9
Religious Identity	4.2	4.2	5.0	5.7	5.0	5.7	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.4	4.4	4.7

- Importance of representation on a charity’s board and staff during the giving decision
- Importance of representation in the community served by the charity during the giving decision

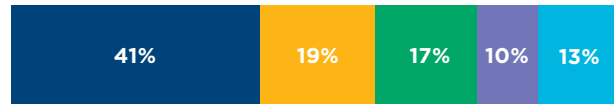
Participants who report donating more than \$5,000 last year are more likely to place high importance on representation during their giving decision.



■ Race and Ethnicity ■ Disability Status ■ Sexual Orientation ■ Gender Identity ■ Religious Identity

When asked to consider how different DEI scenarios might influence a donor’s willingness to donate to a charity they supported in the past, respondents frequently say:

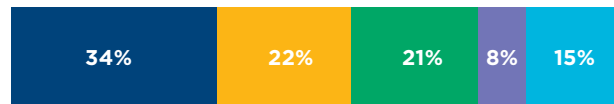
The charity’s culture tolerates discrimination against people served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion.



The charity’s work culture tolerates discrimination against staff based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion.



Images and language in charity solicitation appeals are culturally insensitive.



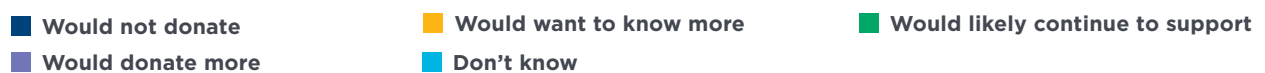
Individuals served by the charity do not represent the diversity in their community.



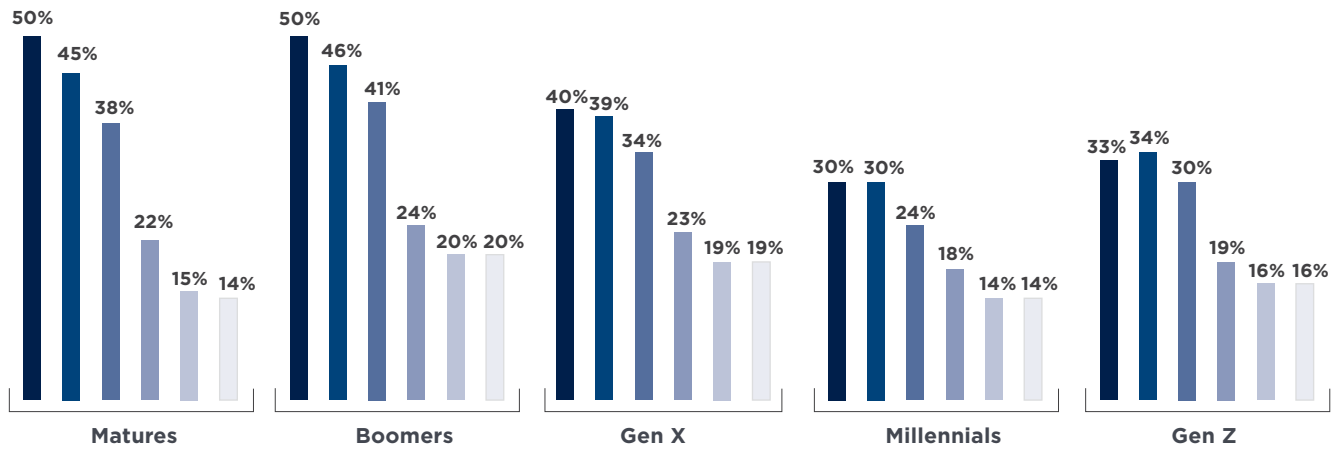
The charity’s staff is not diverse.



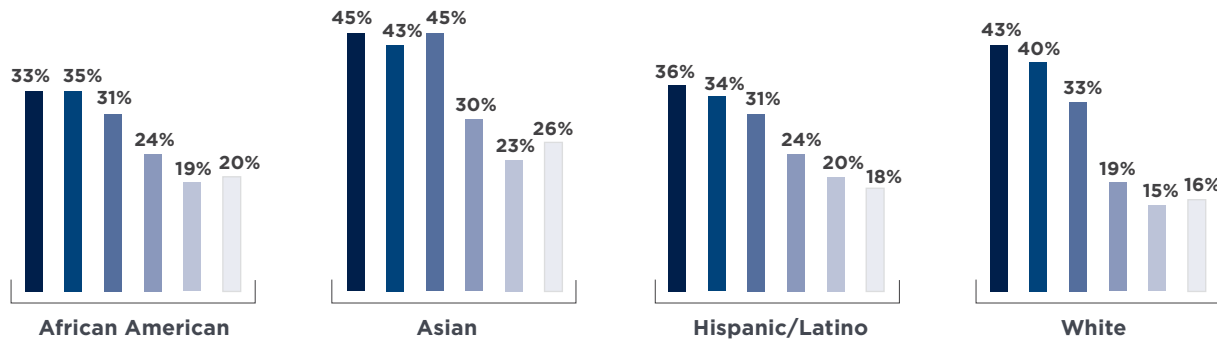
The charity’s board of directors is not diverse



Older generations are more likely to say they would stop donating compared to other generations.

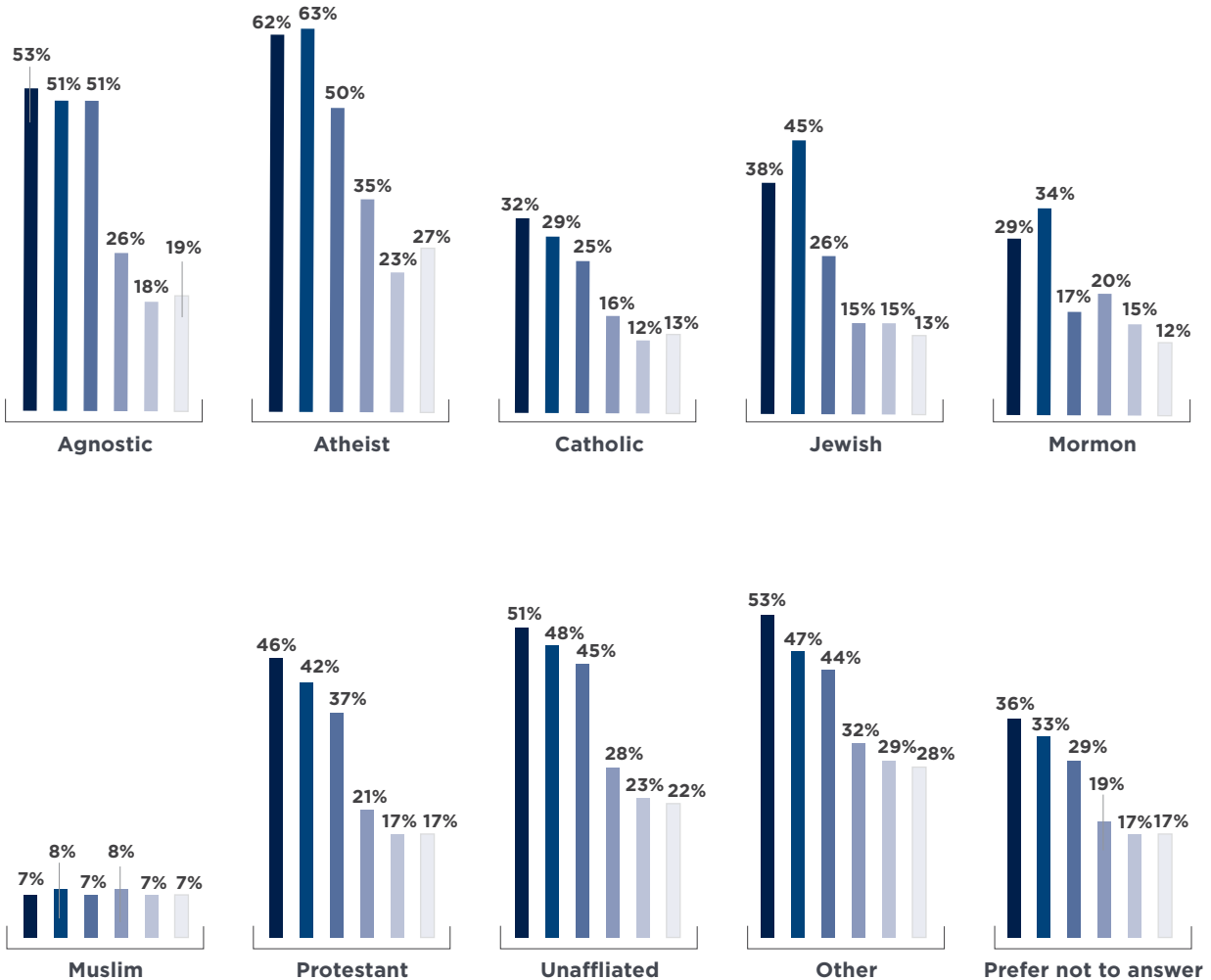


Asian and white participants are more likely to say they would stop donating compared to other groups.



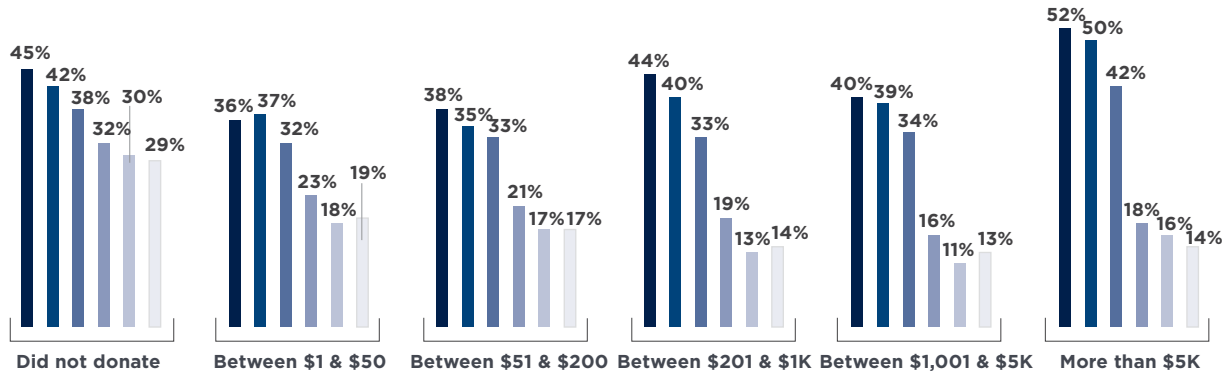
- The charity's culture tolerates discrimination against people served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion.
- The charity's work culture tolerates discrimination against staff served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion.
- Images and language in charity solicitation appeals are culturally sensitive.
- Individuals served by the charity do not represent the diversity in their community.
- The charity's staff is not diverse.
- The charity's board of directors is not diverse

People who identify as atheist, agnostic, or unaffiliated are more likely to say they would stop donating. On the other hand, Muslims are unlikely to say they would stop donating.

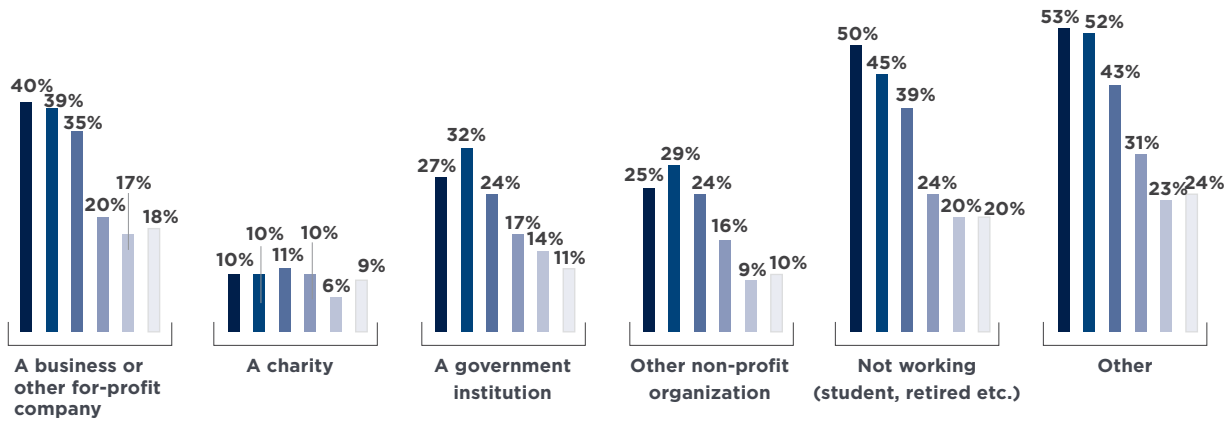


- The charity’s culture tolerates discrimination against people served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion.
- The charity’s work culture tolerates discrimination against staff served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion.
- Images and language in charity solicitation appeals are culturally sensitive.
- Individuals served by the charity do not represent the diversity in their community.
- The charity’s staff is not diverse.
- The charity’s board of directors is not diverse

Respondents who report donating more than \$5,000 annually are more likely to say they would stop donating.



Respondents who are employed at a charity are least likely to say they would no longer donate.

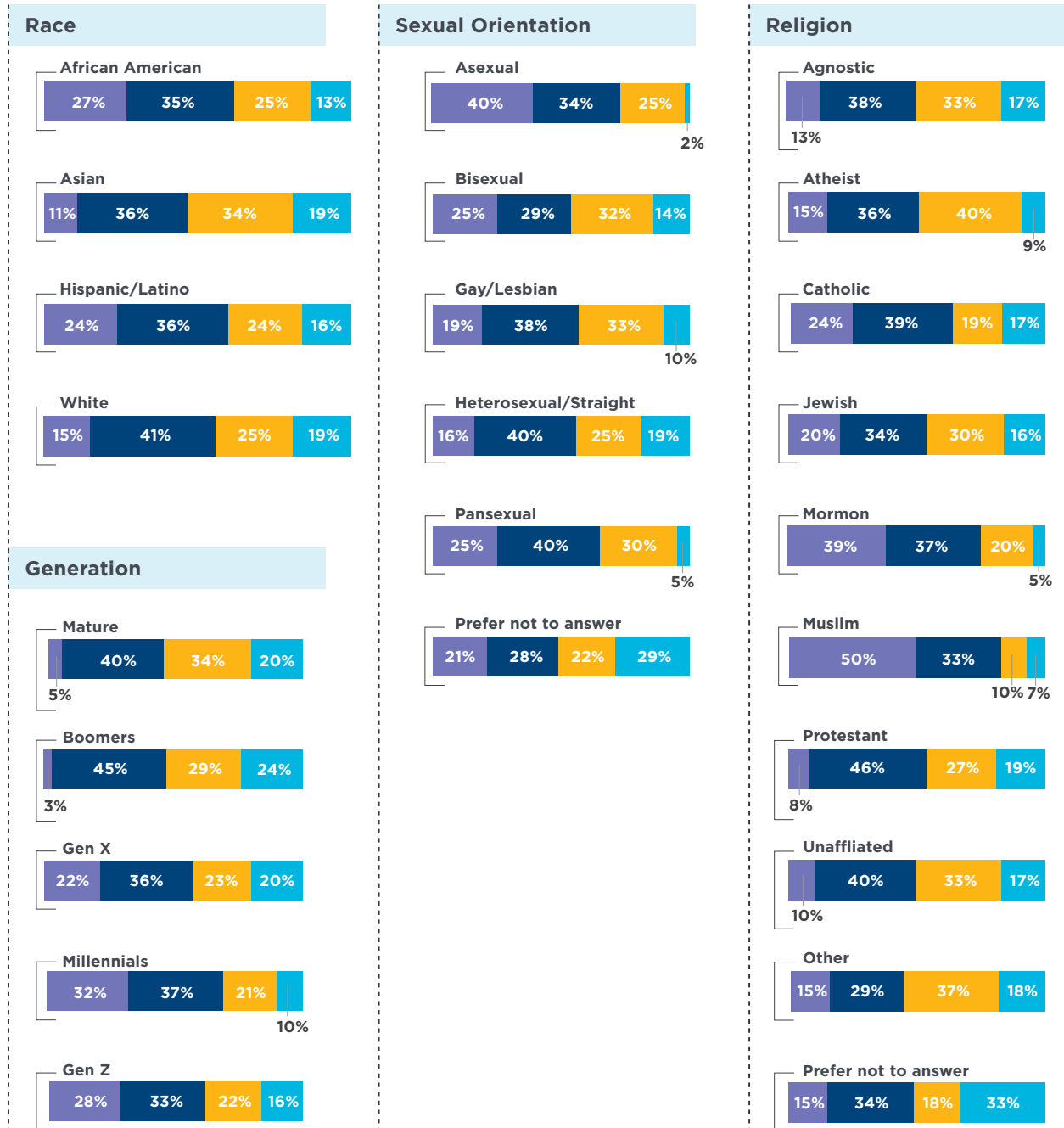


- The charity's culture tolerates discrimination against people served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion.
- The charity's work culture tolerates discrimination against staff served based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion.
- Images and language in charity solicitation appeals are culturally sensitive.
- Individuals served by the charity do not represent the diversity in their community.
- The charity's staff is not diverse.
- The charity's board of directors is not diverse

When asked to imagine learning that a charity they support does not have fair representation of the donor's race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability status, or religion on the organization's board and staff, participants say:



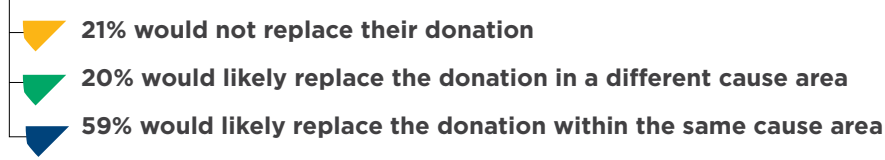
Surprisingly, younger participants, African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos, LGBTQ+ respondents, and some religious groups (such as Muslims and Mormons) were significantly more likely to say that they are more likely to support the organization upon learning that the organization’s board and staff do not fairly represent their race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability status, or religion.



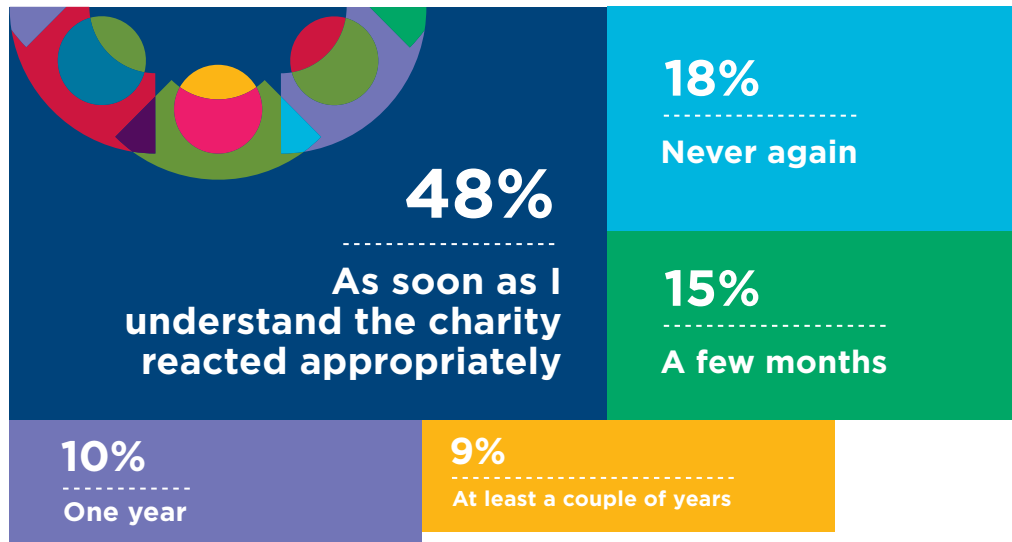
■ I am more likely to support the organization.
 ■ It would not influence my giving.

■ I am less likely to support the organization.
 ■ Don't know

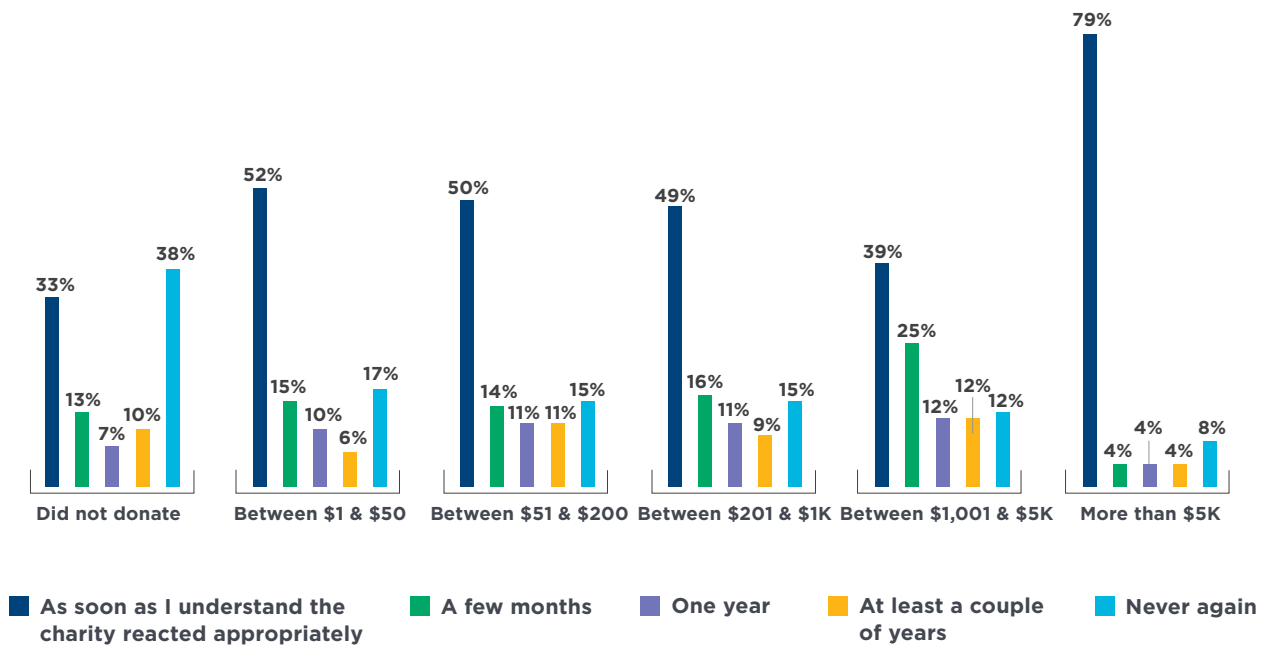
Among participants who say they would be less likely to contribute:



When asked to imagine that the charity takes actions to address the DEI concern, participants would give again:



People who report donating more than \$5,000 annually are most likely to resume support as soon as they understand that the charity reacted appropriately.

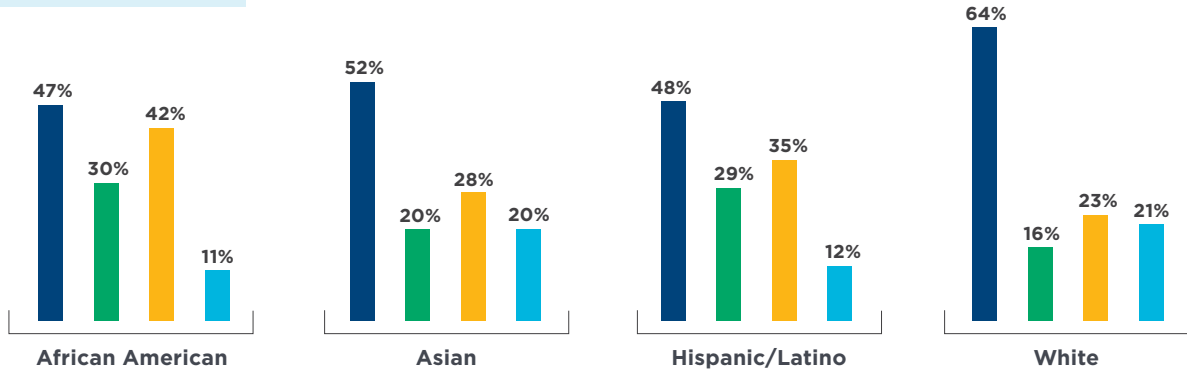


Among those who would continue to support the charity, participants say:

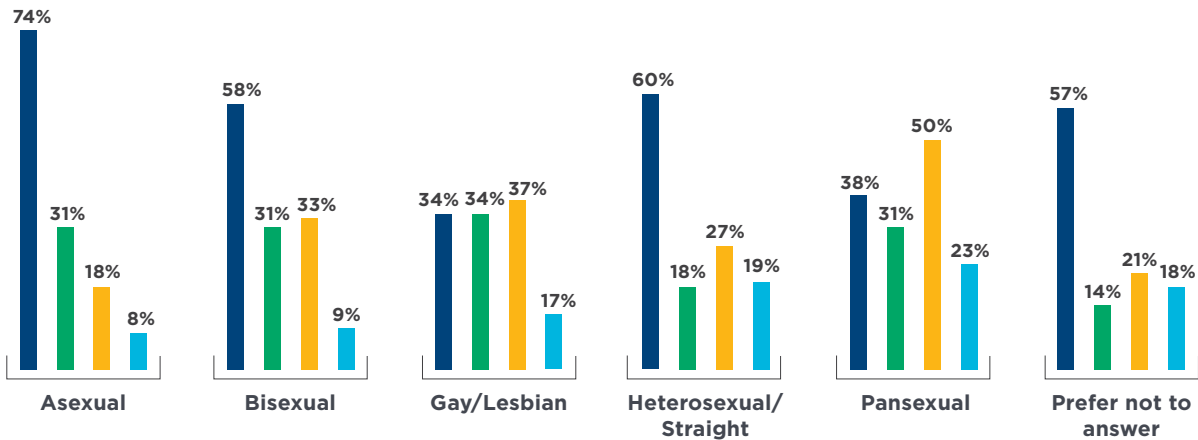


People of color, gay/lesbian respondents, and some religious groups (such as Muslims and Jewish) are relatively less likely to say that the cause is more important to them and relatively more likely to say that this is an internal organizational issue or that all organizations are bound to face issues with DEI.

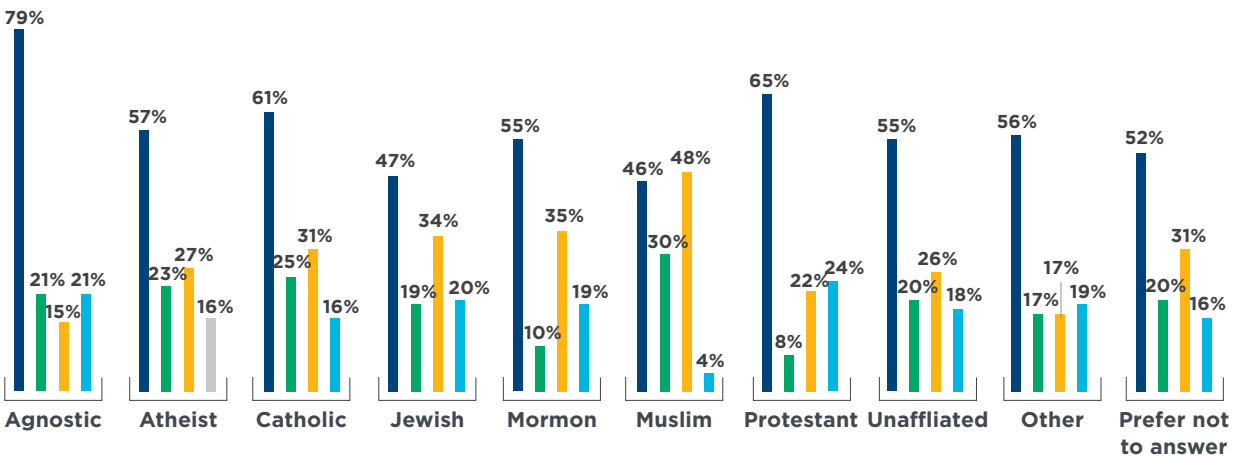
Race



Sexual Orientation



Religion



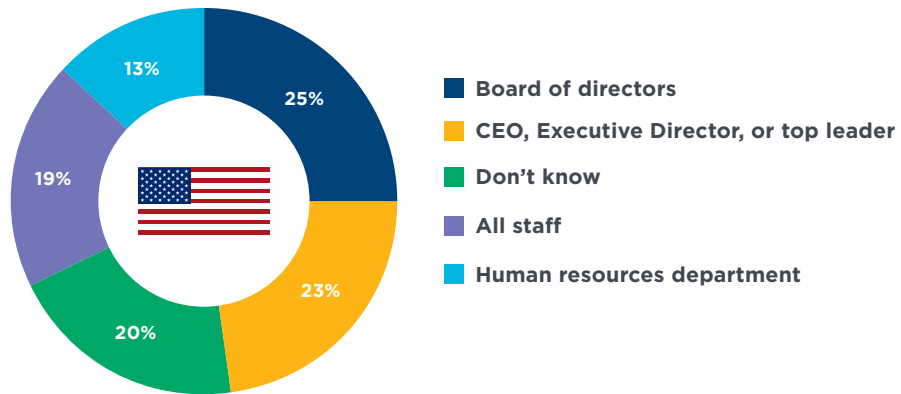
■ The cause is more important to me.
 ■ This is an internal organization issue.
 ■ All organizations are bound to face issues with diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 ■ I am not concerned with diversity, equity, and inclusion.



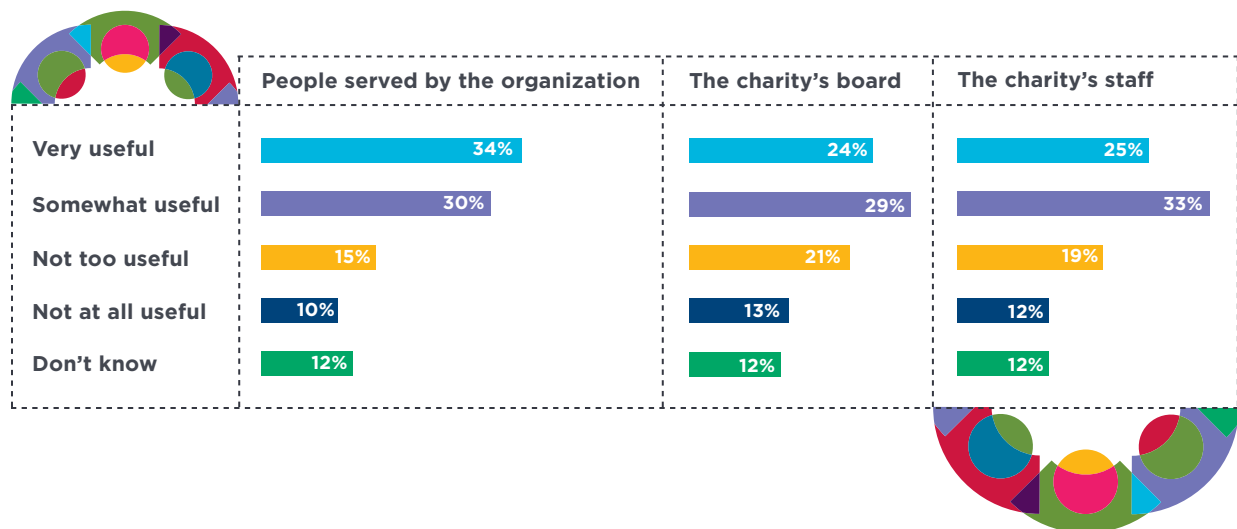
How Do Donors Expect Charities to React to DEI Concerns?

Upon learning that a charity they personally support is not diverse, equitable, or inclusive, participants report expecting the charity to:		There are significant variations across demographic groups. For example:	
30%	Diversify the staff	37%	of African Americans would expect the charity to diversify the staff
28%	Diversify the board	43%	of asexual participants would expect the charity to diversify the board
27%	Offer diversity training and other human resources initiatives to alter the organizational culture	32%	of Gen Zers expect the charity to offer diversity training and other human resources initiatives to alter the organizational culture
26%	Actively remove barriers to entry	32%	of gay/lesbian respondents expect the charity to actively remove barriers to entry
24%	Report the demographics of individuals served (if applicable)	47%	of Muslims would expect the charity to report the demographics of individuals served (when applicable)
20%	Use culturally appropriate images and languages	43%	of pansexual participants would expect the charity to use culturally appropriate images and language
10%	Disclose the organization's DEI statement	—	—
29%	None of the above	—	—

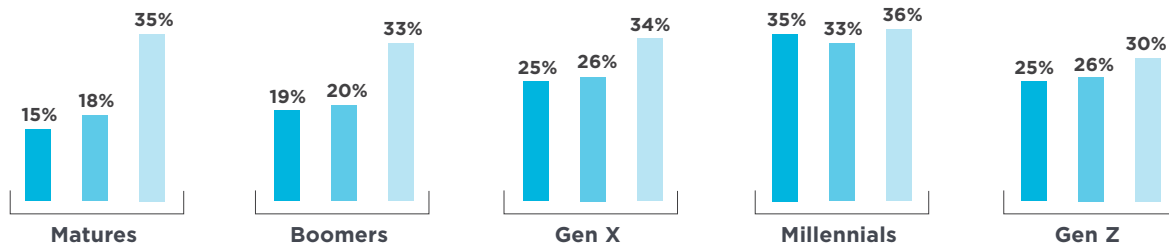
When asked to consider who they hold most responsible at the charity for addressing DEI, participants have divergent answers.



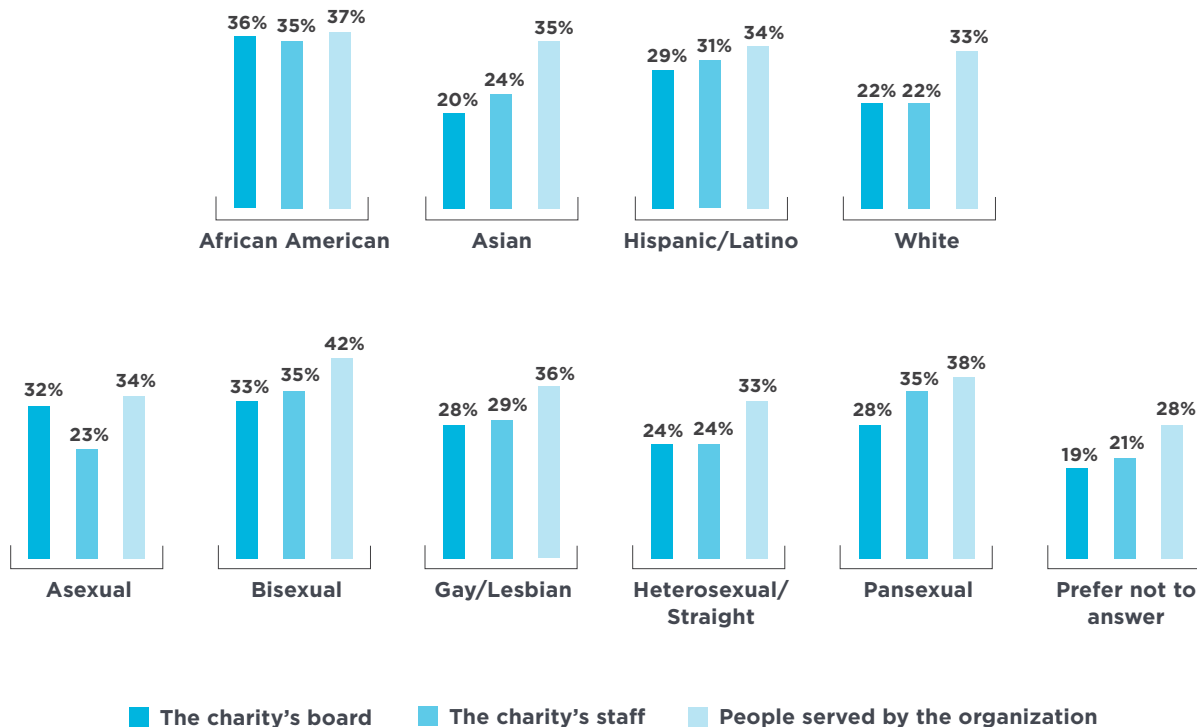
One-third of participants would consider demographic information about people served by the charity (and reported by the charity) to be “very useful” in their giving decision.



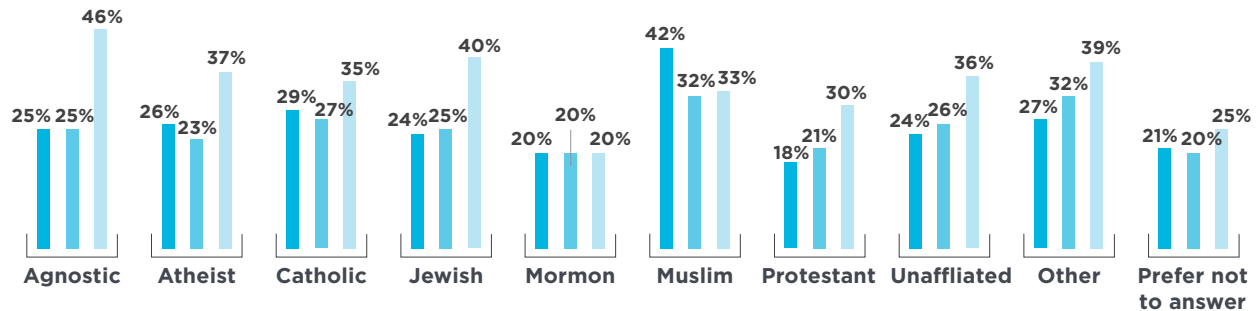
Younger participants are more likely to say charity reporting on board and staff demographics would be very useful in their giving decision.



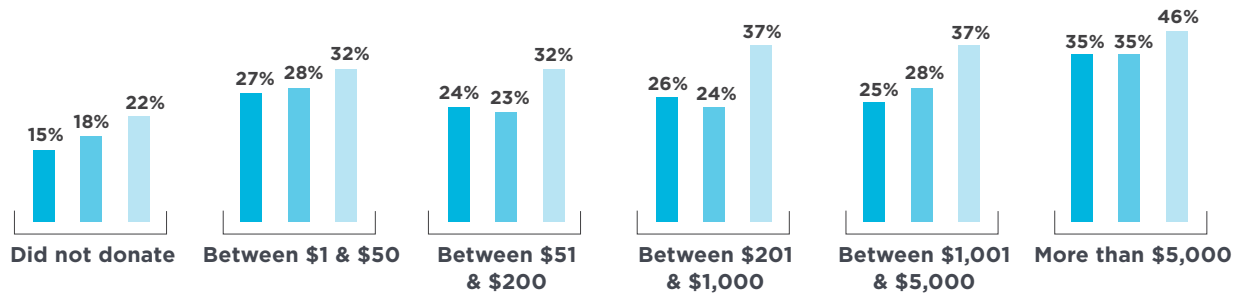
People of color and LGBTQ+ participants are more likely to say that demographic information reported by the charity would be “very useful” in their giving decision.



Across religious categories, Muslim participants are most likely to say charity reporting about board demographics would be very useful; agnostic participants are most likely to say charity reporting on the community served would be very useful.



Participants who report higher contribution levels are more likely to say demographic reporting by the charity would be very useful in their giving decision.

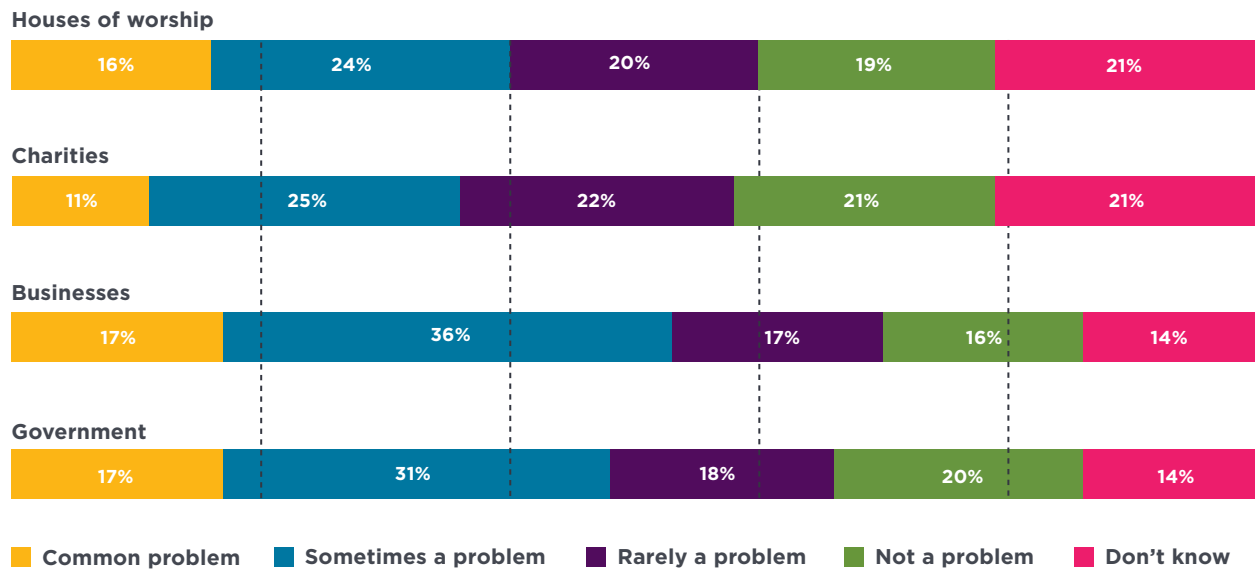


■ The charity's board ■ The charity's staff ■ People served by the organization

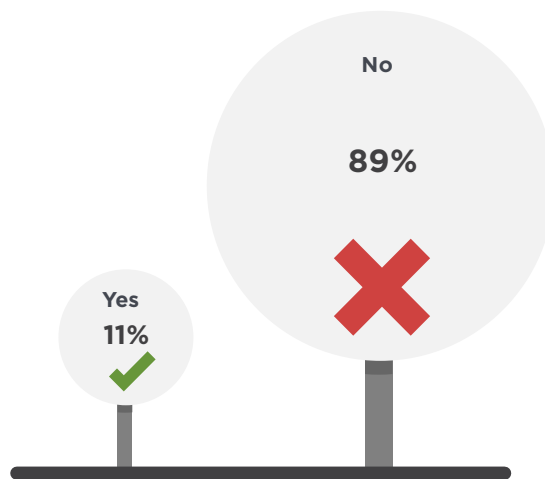


How Do Canadian Donor Expectations Regarding DEI Compare?

As with U.S. participants, when comparing different workplaces, relatively few respondents believe a lack of DEI is a common problem for Canadian charities.



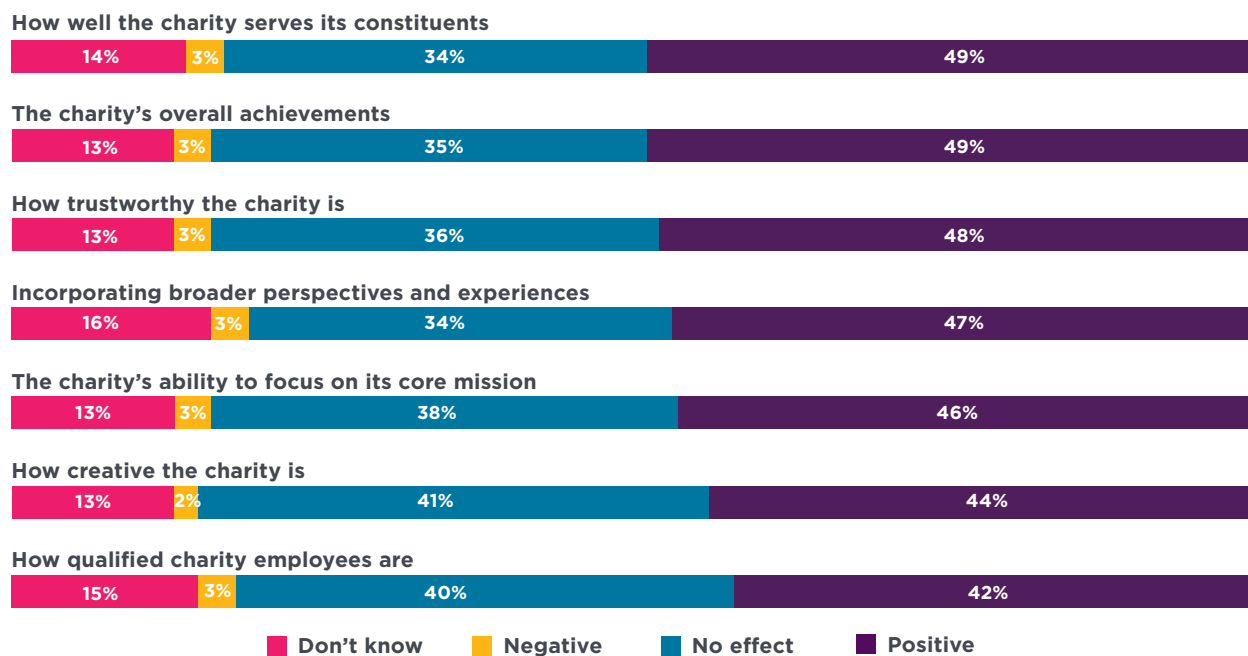
While 22% of U.S. participants heard about a specific charity (excluding houses of worship) having lack of DEI during 2021, only 11% of Canadians heard the same.



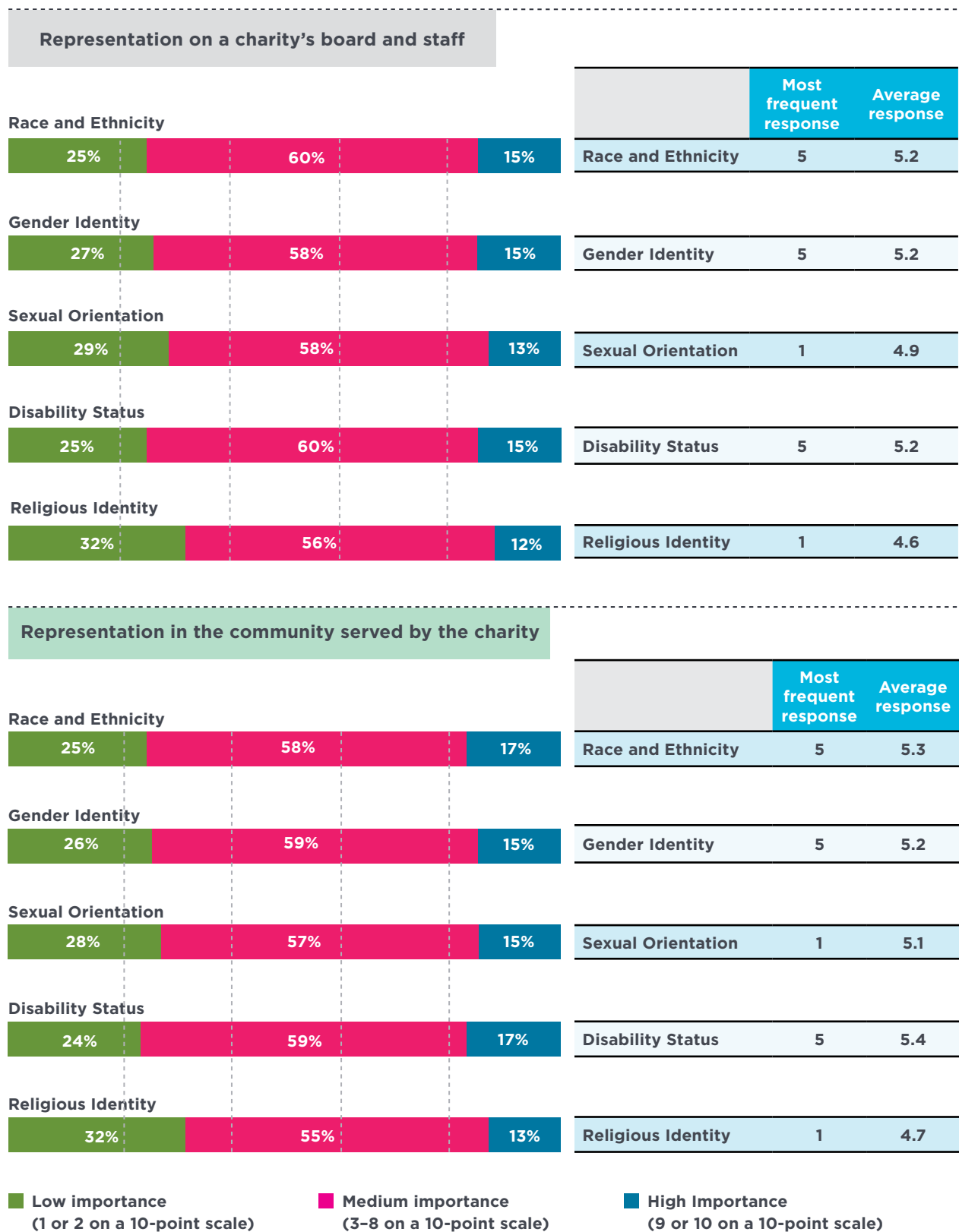
People who report donating to arts and culture, environmental, and educational organizations were most likely to report hearing about a specific charity (excluding houses of worship) having lack of DEI during 2021. People who report donating to animal welfare charities, health organizations, and not-for-profit hospitals were least likely to report hearing about a specific charity having a lack of DEI.



Close to half of Canadians assume that a charity having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive board and staff has positive effects on the organization.



When asked to consider the importance of representation during their giving decision, Canadian donors say:



When asked to consider how different DEI scenarios might influence a donor’s willingness to donate to a charity they supported in the past, Canadians say:

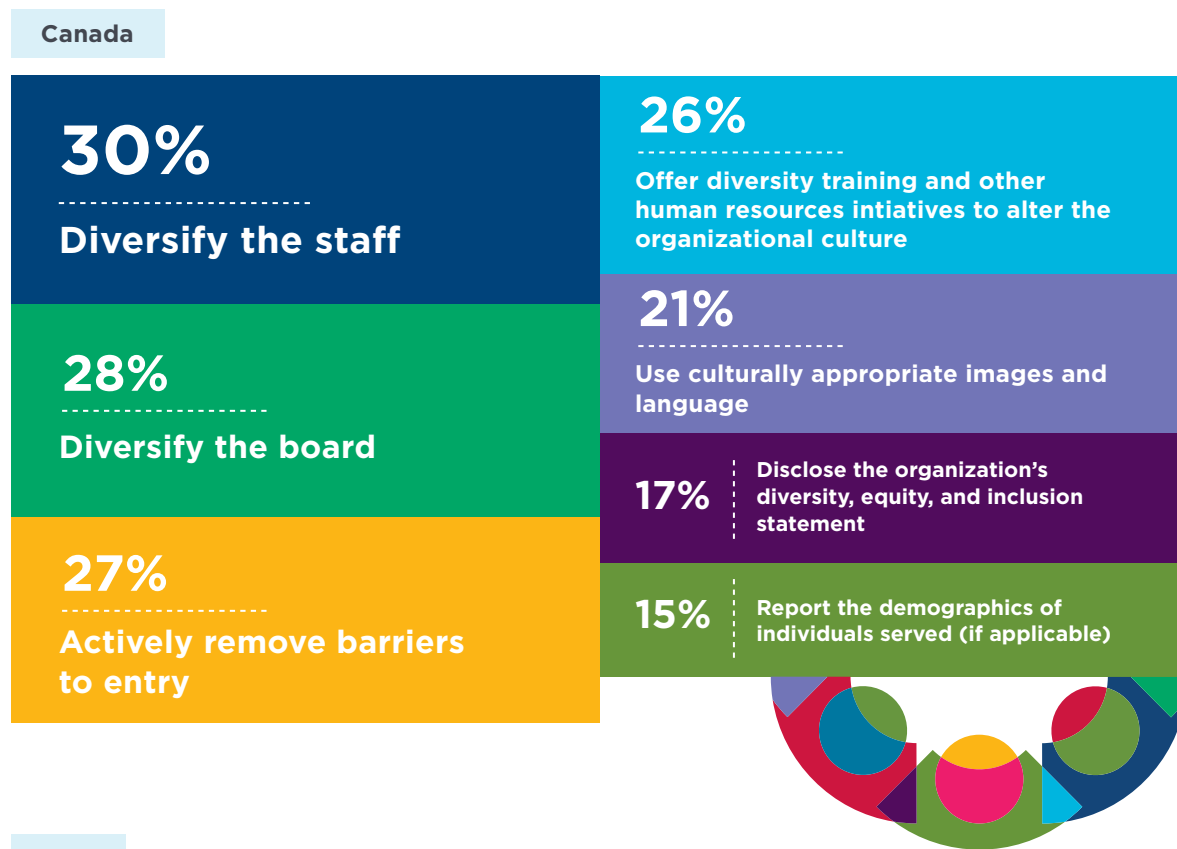


When asked to imagine learning that a charity they support does not have fair representation of the donor’s race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability status, or religion on the organization’s board and staff, Canadian participants say:



Compared to their U.S. counterparts, Canadians are significantly less likely to say they are more likely to support the organization.

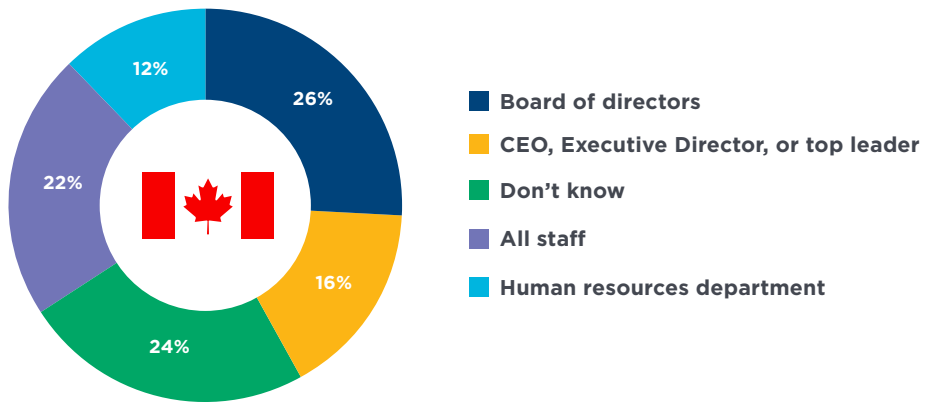
Upon learning that a charity they personally support is not diverse, equitable, or inclusive, the following percentage of participants report expecting the charity to:



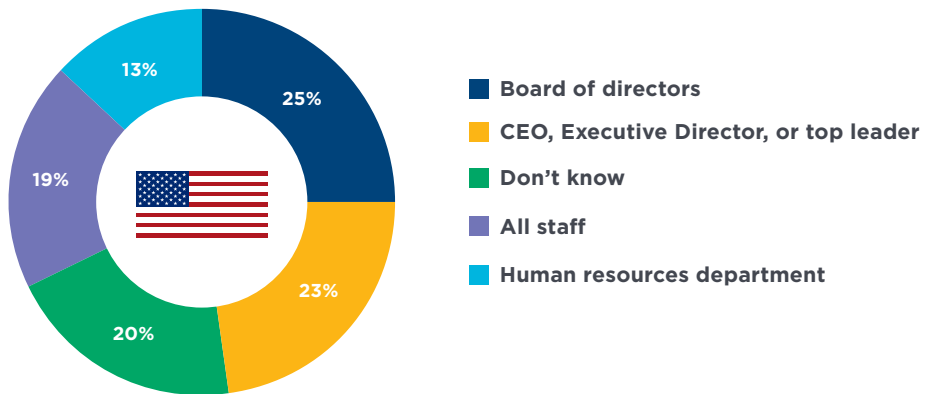
Compared to U.S. participants, Canadians are less likely to want charities to report the demographics of individuals served and more likely to want the charity to disclose their DEI statement.

And when asked to consider who they hold responsible at the charity for addressing DEI, U.S. and Canadian participants had similar responses.

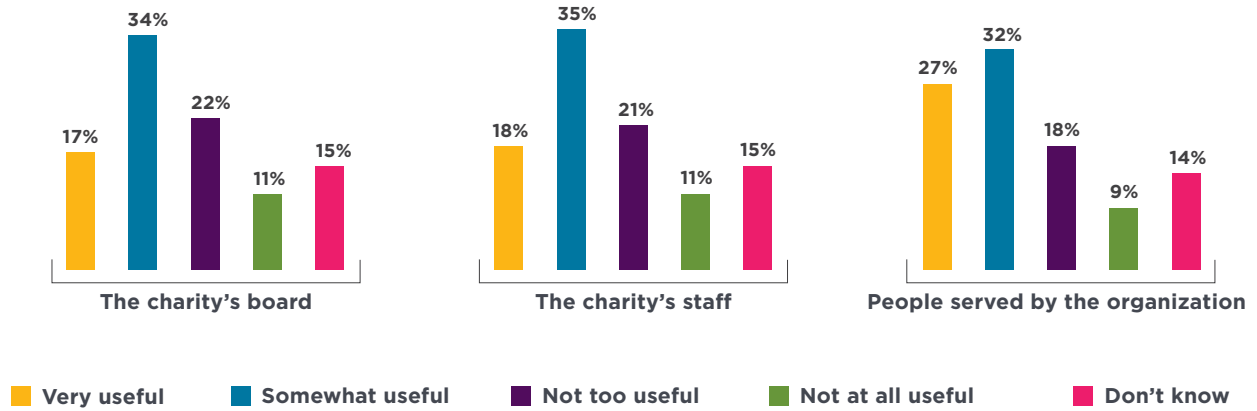
Canada



U.S.



27% of Canadian participants would consider demographic information about people served by the charity (and reported by the charity) to be “very useful” in their giving decision.





Conclusion

Our donor survey set out to find out whether donors value DEI in charities, and whether DEI is a meaningful consideration in the giving process. The key takeaways are:

Donors value DEI in the charities they support.

- Most participants say they assume that a charity having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive board and staff has positive effects on how trustworthy the charity is, how well the charity serves its constituents, the organization's ability to incorporate broader perspectives, and the charity's overall achievements. Such positive associations point to a donor base that appreciates DEI on a charity's board and staff.
- Close to 40% of respondents say they would not donate to a charity they supported in the past should they become aware that the charity's culture tolerates discrimination against either—the board and staff, or people served—based on sex, race, gender, disability, color, creed, national origin, or religion. Also, more than one-third of participants would not donate to a charity that uses culturally insensitive images and language in solicitation appeals.
- A significantly smaller portion of respondents say they would not donate to a charity if individuals served by the charity do not represent the diversity in their community (21%) or if the charity's staff is not diverse.

DEI in a charity's board and staff are not a driving influence for most donors.

- Overall, approximately 1 in 5 participants say that representation of race and ethnicity, disability status, gender identity, sexual orientation, and religious identity on the charity's board and staff are highly important in their giving decision. On the other hand, the average respondent rated the importance of representation on the charity's board and staff during their giving decision slightly above 5 on a 10-point scale, and the most frequent response was a 1 out of 10, suggesting that, for most, representation is not a major concern in their donation process.
- Also, when considering a charity that does not represent the donor's own race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability status, or religion, only 25% say the lack of representation would make them less likely to support the organization. In turn, respondents who continue to support the organization point to competing priorities or forgive lack of DEI as an issue facing all organizations.

Reaching a diverse set of donors requires a deliberate strategy to connect with their preferences, language, and culture.

- Younger respondents, people of color, LGBTQ+ respondents, and participants who identify as Muslim are more likely to (a) report hearing about a specific charity having a lack of DEI, (b) report positive associations related to a charity having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive board and staff, (c) place high importance on representation on a charity's board and staff, and (d) say that demographic information reported by the charity would be "very useful" in their giving decision.
- While, paradoxically, these groups are also more likely to support a charity upon learning that the organization does not represent their race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability status, or religion, survey results suggest that many minority communities are significantly more attentive to DEI than the general public. To connect with these communities, charities would do well to show they are listening, as part of an organization's authentic strategy to reach minority communities involves responding to their particular preferences.

There is a core of potential donors who highly value DEI information in the giving process.

- While, overall, only 22% of survey takers heard about a specific charity having a lack of DEI, half of charity employees report hearing about lack of DEI at a specific charity—suggesting that part of the public’s perception may be rooted in lack of information.
- We have learned that many donors are not particularly focused on DEI during their giving process. Yet, there is thirst for DEI results reporting among some groups. One-third (34%) of participants would consider demographic information (such as race, age and gender) reported by the charity about people served by the charity to be “very useful” in their giving decision, with another 30% stating such information would be “somewhat useful.” Younger generations, people of color, LGBTQ+ participants, and Muslim participants are more likely to say that demographic information reporting by the charity would be “very useful” in their giving decision.

Each charity’s DEI journey is complex and unique. Charities come in many shapes and sizes and have different constituents. As such, DEI goals—and the path toward them—are necessarily different for a large social services organization, a Muslim community organization, a neighborhood animal shelter, or a charitable health provider.

Yet, at a time of increased awareness about DEI issues in society, charities should strive to ignite or maintain momentum around their own DEI path. Our survey shows that when a charity’s culture is known to allow discrimination or exclusion, the trust between the charity and its donors can fracture. **Even if DEI concerns are only central to the giving process among a minority of potential donors, listening to the preferences expressed by this subset of people can be a good example of working against exclusion.** A recent report by Blackbaud on charities aligning with supporters in a changing world sheds light on the importance of paying closer attention to donor expectations, pointing to the promise of “speaking to supporters as individuals.”¹³ Our survey reminds us that sharpening DEI reporting is becoming increasingly important when communicating with some constituents.

For those who value DEI in the charitable sector but are not particularly concerned about board and staff representation in their giving process, it may come down to competing priorities (between the charity’s mission and other ethical good practices). However, board and staff representation may be what propels a charity to become more introspective about discriminatory practices,¹⁴ to make better decisions through diversity,¹⁵ and to strengthen the organization’s outward strategy for constituent inclusivity. That is, even if not driven by an interest in expanding donor communities, DEI strategies can be pursued as part of a strategy to create a more ethical and effective organization.

Ultimately, if public pressure (through donating power) and organizational effectiveness do not provide a strong incentive for change, there is still a moral case to be made: that as organizations dedicated to

¹³ Blackbaud Institute (2021). *Tipping Point: Aligning with Supporters in a Changing World*. Available at: https://institute.blackbaud.com/tippingpoint/?utm_source=mkto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=BBI-2021-RP-Tipping-Point-13134&utm_content=Autoresponder&mkt_tok=MDUzLUYlYSi0xMzEAAAGAzKr_pkKwfl-Q4mW4XByThkuBny513zeRY18j4dXZxDKRj_yVX1zTskX14sHjuN5GxC6p-EK86s-C7LmEzzCq70tmNaKCiql43eVPISoanl4F5UWx

¹⁴ BoardSource (2021). *Leading with Intent: Reviewing the State of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion on Nonprofit Boards*.

¹⁵ Phillips, A. Lijenquist, K., and Neale, M. (2010). “Better Decisions Through Diversity,” *KelloggInsight*, October 2010.

the greater good, charities should hold themselves to a high operating standard. As such, ethical charities should consider DEI—both within the organization and in constituent interactions—to be a core matter of operational concern.

Methodology

We commissioned an electronic survey of more than 2,100 adults across the United States and more than 1,100 adults across Canada during December 2021 (see Tables 1 and 2). The margin of error for the December 2021 survey in the United States is 2% (with 95% confidence level), and the margin of error for the December 2021 Canadian survey is 3% (with 95% confidence level).

Table 1 – Profile of Respondents in the United States

By Age	18-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	>65		
	31.37%	12.85%	12.44%	8.94%	34.41%		
By Gender	Female	Male	Non-binary	Transgender	Prefer not to answer	Other	
	51.63%	46.89%	0.51%	0.55%	0.23%	0.09%	
By Annual Household Income (in thousands)	<30	30-59	60-89	90-119	120-149	150 and more	Prefer not to answer
	20.22%	28.79%	17.92%	12.30%	5.48%	10.73%	4.56%
By Education	Graduate	Bachelor's	Associate's	High School		Prefer not to answer	
	18.06%	18.16%	21.76%	39.52%		2.50%	
By Ethnicity	African American	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native American/Alaska Native	Other	Pacific Islander	White
	14.42%	4.47%	11.70%	0.64%	0.92%	0.14%	67.71%
By Religion Attendance	Never	Rarely	Frequently	Occasionally	Don't know	Prefer not to answer	
	26.44%	22.20%	27.96%	20.45%	1.29%	1.66%	
By Region	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Midwest	West		
	20.87%	24.37%	11.88%	24.27%	18.61%		

Table 2 — Profile of Respondents in Canada

By Age	18-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	>65		
	19.48%	14.89%	17.25%	21.51%	26.89%		
By Gender	Female	Male	Non-binary	Transgender	Other	Prefer not to answer	
	49.57%	49.97%	0.13%	0.07%	0.13%	0.13%	
By Annual Household Income (in thousands)	<30	30-59	60-89	90-119	120-149	150 and more	Prefer not to answer
	10.69%	28.66%	20.92%	15.67%	7.67%	9.97%	6.49%
By Education	Graduate	Bachelor's	Associate's	High School	Prefer not to answer		
	18.92%	10.87%	27.40%	38.96%	3.85%		
By Ethnicity	African American	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Other	White		
	3.41%	16.39%	2.23%	7.67%	70.30%		
By Religion Attendance	Never	Rarely	Frequently	Occasionally	Don't know	Prefer not to answer	
	40.13%	24.13%	14.95%	18.03%	1.25%	1.51%	
By Region	British Columbia	Alberta	Saskatchewan and Manitoba	Ontario			
	14.41%	11.16%	7.01%	36.02%			
	Quebec	Atlantic Canada	Northern Canada				
	22.71%	7.27%	1.43%				

Through our survey, we seek to measure donor beliefs, feelings, and behavioral intentions toward charity trust and giving. Our report identifies some aggregate findings and explores the heterogeneity of donor perceptions. For instance, in this report we reference results based on age, race, contribution level, place of employment, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation to illustrate differences in donor attitudes and gain understanding of the diversity of attitudes toward the sector.¹⁶ We use the self-reported information as provided by survey takers.

While there is no single consistent date range for generational divides, the generational ranges used in this report mirror those used by the Pew Research Center and are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – Generational Ranges

Generation	Generation Z (18 and older)	Millennial Generation	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Matures
Year Born	1998 to 2004	1981 to 1997	1965 to 1980	1946 to 1964	1928 to 1945
Age (in 2021)	18 to 24	25 to 40	41 to 56	57 to 75	76 and above

Survey participants are asked to self-identify the race or ethnicity that best describes them, with options including African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, Native American or Alaska Native, Pacific Islander, white, and other. The sample size for African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, and white allow us to report attitudes expressed by each of these categories. The sample size for Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, and others are not large enough to report with confidence. While census recommendations call for Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Native American/Inuit/Aleut to combine into one category (making up approximately 6% of the sample), these racial categories have not been combined to better reflect attitudes among Asian American survey participants.

In this report, we use the term “people of color” when a statement applies to the African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian American samples. We recognize there are other ethnic and racial minorities (such as Native American and Pacific Islanders) that should be included under the umbrella of “people of color,” but our sample size does not allow for proper analysis of these categories. We also recognize significant limitations with the term. For example, the Hispanic/Latino sample may include participants that might not be considered people of color, and that each group (and people within each group) has their own experience and attitudes.

¹⁶ Our report joins other studies that have recognized untapped opportunities by the philanthropic community in engaging racial minorities and younger generations. For instance, the Giving USA Foundation and the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University highlight that younger generations differ from older people in the way they prefer electronic communication, express different values, and value experiences and voicing their opinions. *Diversity in Giving: The Changing Landscape of American Philanthropy* (a 2015 report by Blackbaud) found that white donors are overrepresented, and that donor values and habits differ by ethnic or racial groups. A study by *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* found that giving patterns vary by location and income level, with red states more generous than blue states and the middle class giving a larger portion of their income than the rich.

While the term Latinx can be used as a gender-neutral and pan-ethnic way to describe the Hispanic population in the United States (tracing their roots to Latin America and Spain), our report uses the term Hispanic/Latino for self-identification. This is in recognition that, according to a recent survey by the Pew Research Center, the majority (76%) of Hispanic/Latinos in the United States are not aware of the term and only 3% report using the term themselves.¹⁷

We also asked donors to pick what religion they belong to or identify with most closely. Choices included: agnostic, atheist, Catholic, Hindu, Jewish, Mormon, Muslim, Protestant, unaffiliated, other, and prefer not to answer. Unfortunately, the December 2021 sample size for Hindu participants is not large enough to report with confidence. Therefore, findings for Hindu participants are not included in our results.

Participants were asked to identify their gender. Choices included female, male, nonbinary, transgender, and “prefer not to answer.” Unfortunately, the December 2021 sample size for nonbinary and transgender participants is not large enough to report with confidence. Male and female samples were analyzed and compared but were not included in the report because differences across other demographic categories were much more significant.

Similarly, respondents were asked to identify their current sexual orientation. Choices included: asexual, bisexual, gay/lesbian, heterosexual/straight, pansexual, queer, other, and “prefer not to answer.” Unfortunately, the December 2021 sample size for queer participants is not large enough to report with confidence. Therefore, findings for queer participants are not included in our results.

In this report, we use the term “LGBTQ+” (which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning) when a statement applies to lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual, and pansexual. Unfortunately, queer (a sexual orientation) and transgender (a gender identity) groups, which fall under the LGBTQ+ umbrella, are not included because of sample size.

As with any electronic survey of this scale, survey results are limited by factors related to response rates and survey size. Issues involving DEI, including terminology, continue to be contested with divergent and often strongly held viewpoints. Our aim is to report survey findings objectively and to help propel the conversation forward.

We recognize there are differences among people within each demographic category. By identifying differences in donor preferences and attitudes across these categories, we aim to find untapped opportunities that support the sector’s efforts to be in tune with the America of the present and future, strengthening the bond between donors and charities.

We know that survey responses reflect donor perceptions and are not an objective measure of the charitable sector’s efforts. Still, understanding donor attitudes toward charities and giving can help identify areas of misinformation and ways to better serve donors, furthering trust in the sector and encouraging increased generosity.

¹⁷ Noe-Bustamante, L., Mora, L., and Hugo Lopez, M. (2020). “About One-in-Four U.S. Hispanics Have Heard of Latinx, but Just 3% Use It.” Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2020/08/11/about-one-in-four-u-s-hispanics-have-heard-of-latinx-but-just-3-use-it/>.

To determine whether a charity is accountable and trustworthy, BBB WGA uses 20 BBB Standards for Charity Accountability, based on charity governance, finances, fundraising practices, and results reporting. BBB WGA produces reports on charities based on these standards, and the reports are available free of charge to the donating public on Give.org. This report aims, in part, to understand disconnects between self-reported triggers and concerted trust criteria. In addition, we hope to identify opportunities that can help the sector build collective trust and succeed in the future.

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About BBB Wise Giving Alliance

BBB Wise Giving Alliance (BBB's Give.org) is a standards-based charity evaluator that seeks to verify the trustworthiness of nationally soliciting charities by completing rigorous evaluations based on 20 holistic standards that address charity governance, results reporting, finances, fundraising, appeal accuracy and other issues. National charity reports are produced by BBB's Give.org and local charity reports are produced by local Better Business Bureaus – all reports are available at [Give.org](https://www.give.org).



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