

# Fundraising Best Practices for Giving Tuesday



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# Key Findings and Trends

Ahead of the 10th annual GivingTuesday, RallyUp conducted its first-ever “Fundraising Best Practices for GivingTuesday” survey. The study aims to help individuals and organizations raising funds this year gain insight into what’s working, what’s not, and what trends are emerging. While the survey is specific to GivingTuesday, people can apply most of the best practices outlined in this report throughout the year.

More than 400 respondents completed the survey. Survey takers include individual or small group fundraisers (18%), nonprofit organizations (78%), and enterprise CSR programs (3%). The majority of respondents specifically represented small nonprofits (60%).

GivingTuesday is a global generosity movement that follows Black Friday and Cyber Monday by inviting people to donate to causes they care about. GivingTuesday was created in 2012 to encourage people to do good.

The GivingTuesday movement has gained fantastic momentum in the last 10 years. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of nonprofits in the survey say it’s a significant part of their annual fundraising efforts. Forty-five percent (45%) say they will be fundraising on GivingTuesday for the first time this year, suggesting that many understand just how valuable it is for charities.

The report further reveals the meteoric rise of GivingTuesday in the breakdown of first-time participants by organization. Seventy-six percent (76%) of individuals and small groups are fundraising on GivingTuesday for the first time this year, an incredible pace of adoption. Over half (60%) of corporate CSRs are participating for the first time, showing that enterprises are finally recognizing the opportunity. Not only does 2021 look to be the biggest GivingTuesday to date, the trend seems almost certain to continue.

# Promotion

Three-quarters (76%) of respondents pointed to email marketing as the most effective online fundraising tool. While fundraisers struggle to keep up with constant advances in digital marketing, many will be glad to know that some things never change (or at least haven't yet). Email still rules. Organic social media is nipping at its heels, though, with 67% counting it among the most effective marketing tools.

Most survey takers (87%) consider Facebook more effective than any other social media platform. Instagram is next at 49%. Twitter and LinkedIn represent the next tier at 19% and 13%, respectively. For such a new platform, TikTok made a respectable showing at 5% and could rise radically in the coming year.

How organizations show donors the impact of their contributions is shifting. Video success stories are the best way to do that, according to our survey takers. Two-thirds (67%) reported video success stories as the most effective way to show donors how their money is having an impact. Cited by 55% of respondents, reports showing how money was spent were next. Blogs of success stories came in at a tepid 41%. This poor showing reveals that video has become an essential marketing tool while blogging is waning slightly.

# Technology

Many common types of fundraising activities have emerged over the years. These include raffles, auctions, a-thons, and crowdfunding. Among these, raffles are the big winner. Fifty-four percent (54%) of respondents said raffles raise the most funds. This result is not surprising as raffles have been the most popular online fundraising tool for some time.

After raffles, auctions are the most popular activity type at 33%. Crowdfunding and virtual events (livestreaming) are tied at 20%. This makes virtual events the big mover in fundraising activity types, as it has only been a blip on the radar in the past.



When it comes to promotional efforts, 81% of respondents said peer-to-peer advocacy is the most valuable tool for maximizing their fundraising. In peer-to-peer, participants ask their friends, family, coworkers, and acquaintances to donate to causes they care about. Peer-to-peer's effectiveness underscores the value of one-on-one connections.

## Events

The pandemic has driven a sharp rise in virtual events, making them more viable this GivingTuesday than any before. Fifty-six percent (56%) cited "more virtual events" as an impact the pandemic has had on their fundraising, greater than any other pandemic impact.

For those planning to favor virtual events even when the pandemic is no longer a factor, reasons include the need for less staff and volunteers (63%), fewer upfront costs (54%), and the ability to attract more new donors (31%).

Despite the rise of virtual events, in-person events were identified as the biggest fundraiser (61%). Because of this, we're likely to see a substantial rise in hybrid technology adoption both on GivingTuesday and throughout 2022 as pandemic restrictions ease. Hybrid events leverage online and offline fundraising with a single effort that yields the benefits of both types.

Write-in comments from respondents about in-person events point to human connection, community, and fun. Fundraising technology vendors are aware of this, so expect to see rapid innovations in interactive hybrid event technology in 2022. Look for livestreaming solutions that allow in-person and online attendees to donate together in paddle raises, trivia games, flash raffles and auctions, and other live activities.

# Challenges

Two-thirds (67%) of respondents said technology is an obstacle to their GivingTuesday fundraising. The top reason cited is a lack of technical skills (46%). The second most-cited reason is the time it takes to comparison shop each technology tool that's needed (26%).

Making donating easy is critical for every nonprofit, which presents another technology problem. Twenty-five percent of respondents lamented the poor donor experience of using a different URL for each separate activity (25%). Finally, 23% are held back by having too many programs to learn.

Respondents identified several general needs to raise more funds, starting with better marketing (56%). Fifty-four percent (54%) said they need more staff and volunteers. Forty-three percent (43%) lack enough seed money to launch fundraising activities. They say they need a bigger fundraising budget to hold events, promote fundraising activities, acquire items to raffle or auction, etc.

# The Future

Every sign points to this year being the biggest GivingTuesday ever. Combined with GivingTuesday's history of steady growth, it's a low-risk investment of time on the part of nonprofits. Those who aren't participating should very seriously consider it.

One overriding conclusion shows up throughout RallyUp's survey: working for the greater good is hard work. It's also important and gratifying work. GivingTuesday makes it a little easier.

In this report, you will learn best practices and other insights to help you get the best results from your fundraising efforts this GivingTuesday and beyond.

# Best Practices

Best Practice 1

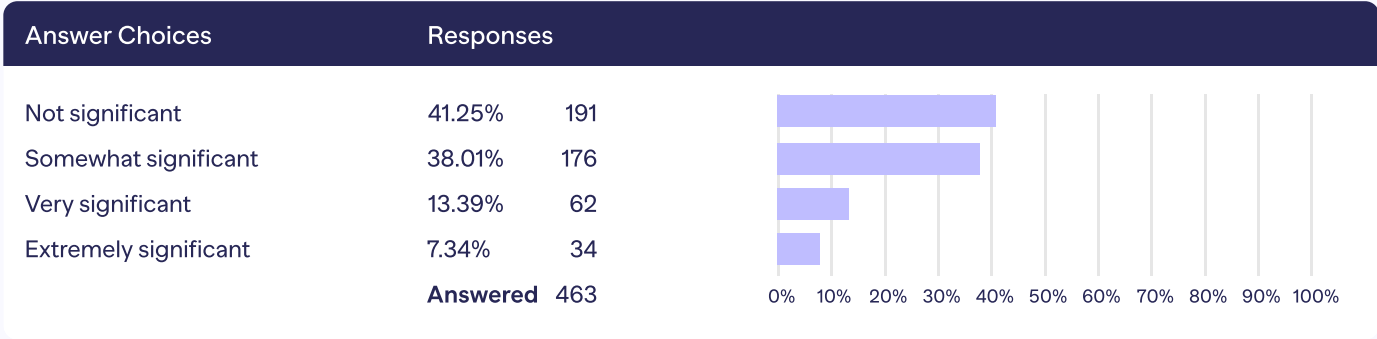
# How significant is GivingTuesday to your annual total fundraising efforts?

 Data Point

Well over half (59%) of survey-takers said that GivingTuesday is a significant part of their annual fundraising efforts.

 Best Practice

Individuals and organizations that are not participating in GivingTuesday fundraising should seriously consider it.





Best Practice 2

# How far in advance do you typically start planning GivingTuesday fundraisers?



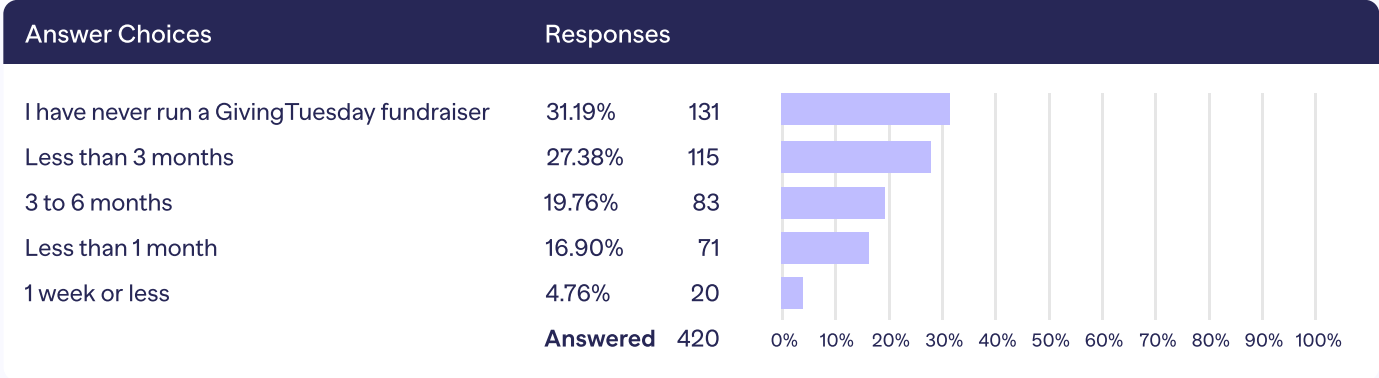
### Data Point

Most fundraisers put their campaigns together late in the game, with 28% starting with less than three months left, 17% with less than a month, and 5% with less than a week.



### Best Practice

Start planning as early as possible, but don't abandon participation if you need to use a short runway.



Best Practice 3

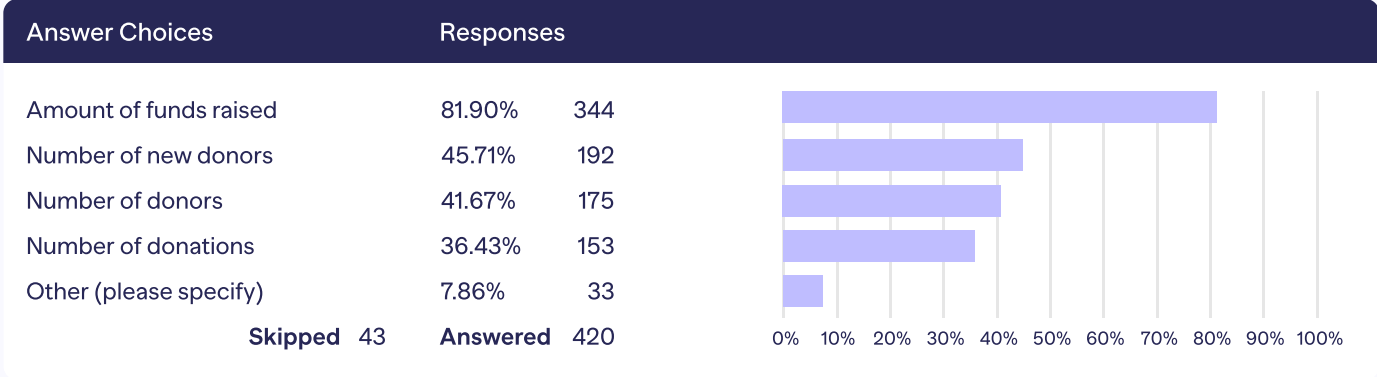
# What goals and targets are most helpful to optimize a campaign such as GivingTuesday? [Select all that apply]

 **Data Point**

The #1 metric fundraisers used to gauge their success is the amount of money raised. However, the second most important is the number of new donors.

 **Best Practice**

Set a fundraising goal, but also use GivingTuesday as an opportunity to attract new donors.



Best Practice 4

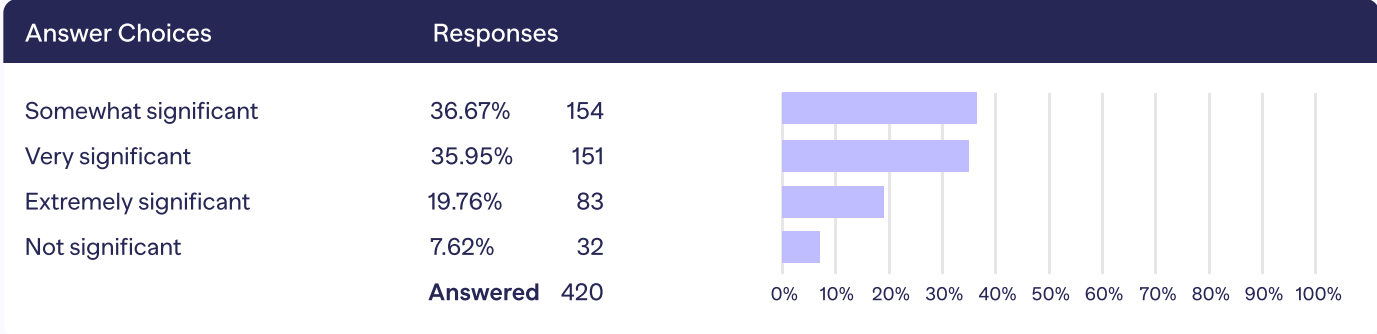
# How helpful is it to show donors your progress toward a goal—such as \$7,000 of \$10,000 goal raised?

 **Data Point**

Over 90% of survey participants think it’s important to show donors their progress toward a goal. For example, a meter or progress bar showing \$7,000 of \$10,000 raised.

 **Best Practice**

Select a fundraising solution that shows a progress bar (most do) and updates it in real time as donations come in.



Best Practice 5

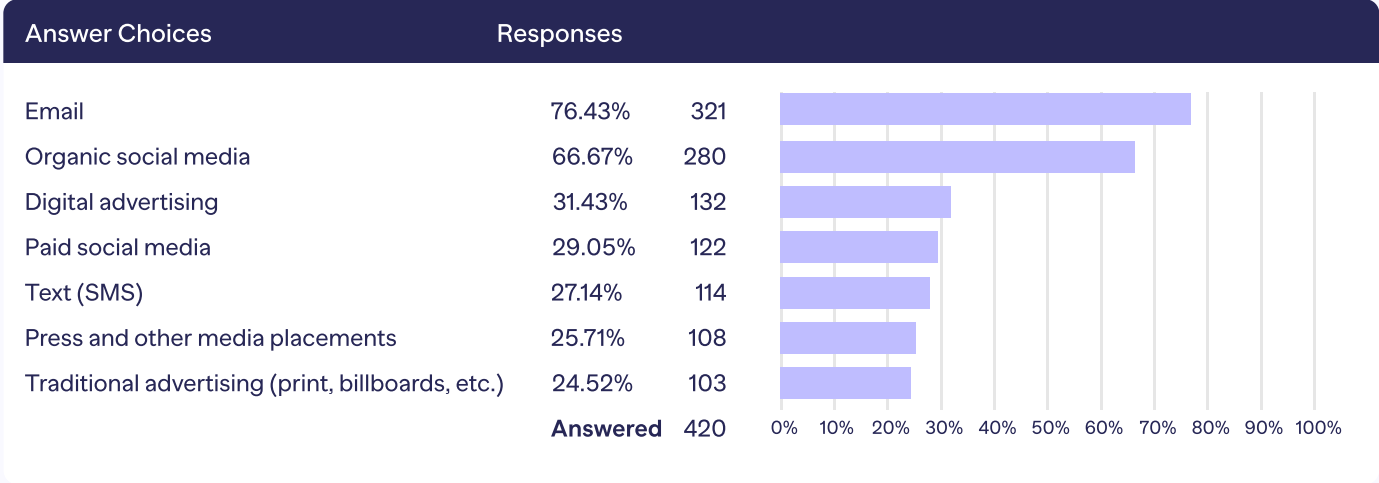
# What types of promotional campaigns do you consider to be the most effective for you/your organization? [Select all that apply]

 Data Point

Email marketing still leads the pack as the most effective marketing tool for nonprofits, but organic social media is nipping at its heels.

 Best Practice

It's easy to write email off as online marketing options and advances flourish, but it's still an extremely effective tool. Make email a key part of your marketing strategy if possible. If you don't have an email list, consider starting one for future fundraising.



Best Practice 6

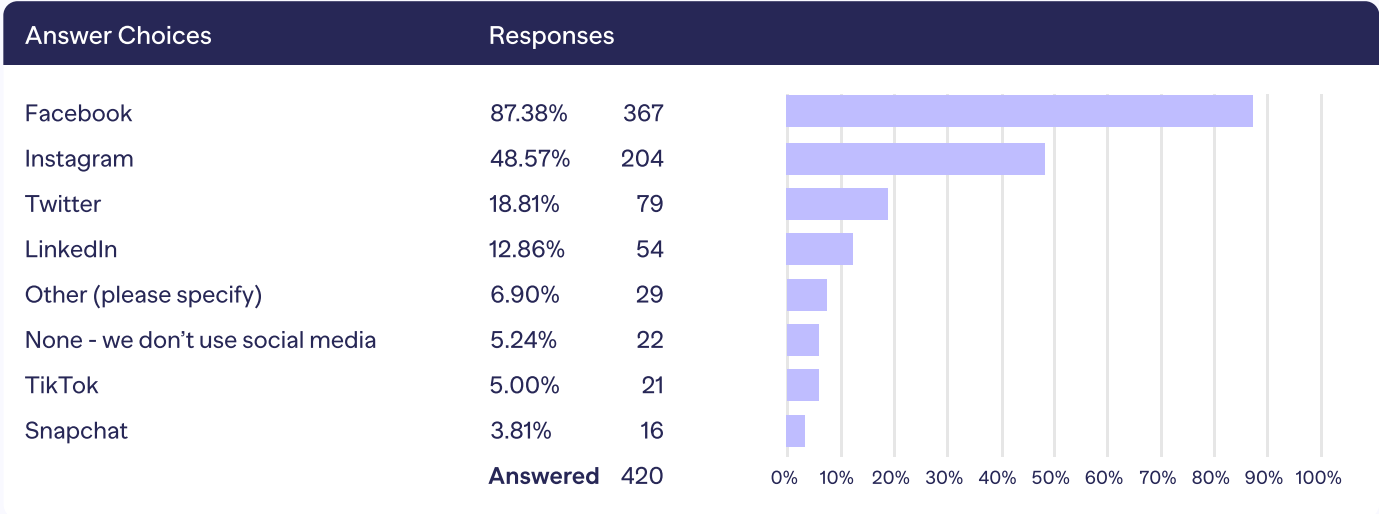
# Which social media platforms have been the most effective for your fundraising efforts? [Select all that apply]

 Data Point

Facebook dominates as the most effective social media platform for our fundraisers, with Instagram a distant second and everything else far behind.

 Best Practice

Facebook and Instagram produce the best results for most people surveyed, so start with them if you have no other insight. However, you should go where you have donors, connections, and savvy. For a given person or organization, that could Snapchat, Tik Tok, or something else entirely.



**Best Practice 7**

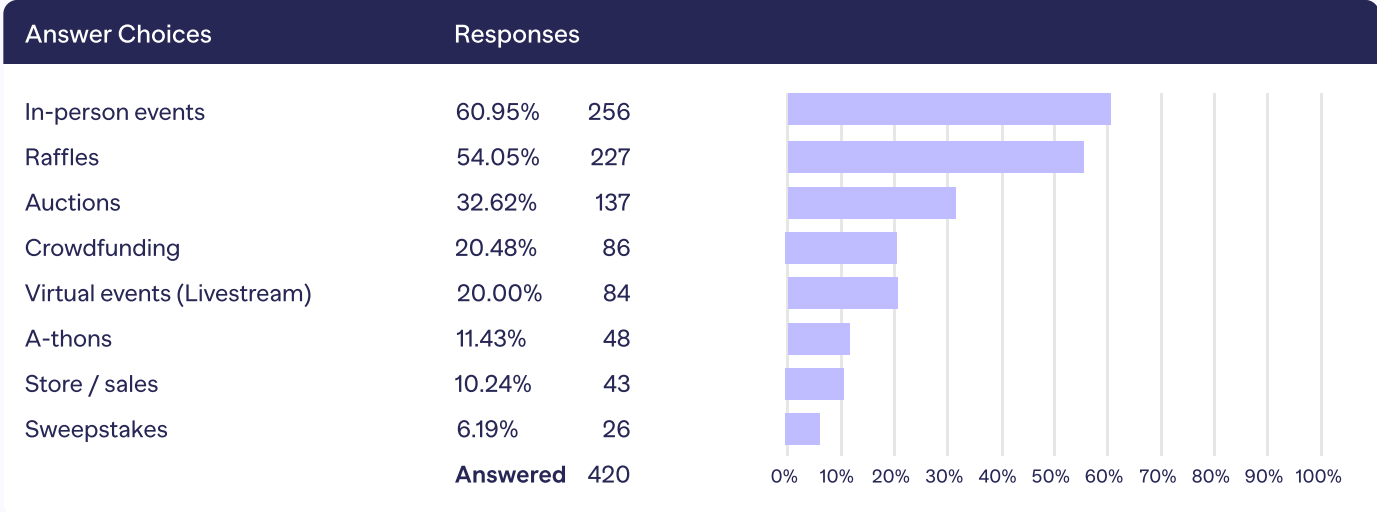
# Which activities have yielded the best fundraising results? [Select all that apply]

 **Data Point**

Survey takers noted that in-person events raised the most funds. The top types of online activities include raffles, a-thons, crowdfunding, and virtual events.

 **Best Practice**

Where possible, include in-person events as a part of your annual fundraising strategy. Consider combining in-person events with virtual event technology to expand your reach to new donors and maximize the total funds raised. Engage donors throughout the year with smaller activities such as raffles, auctions, a-thons, and crowdfunding.





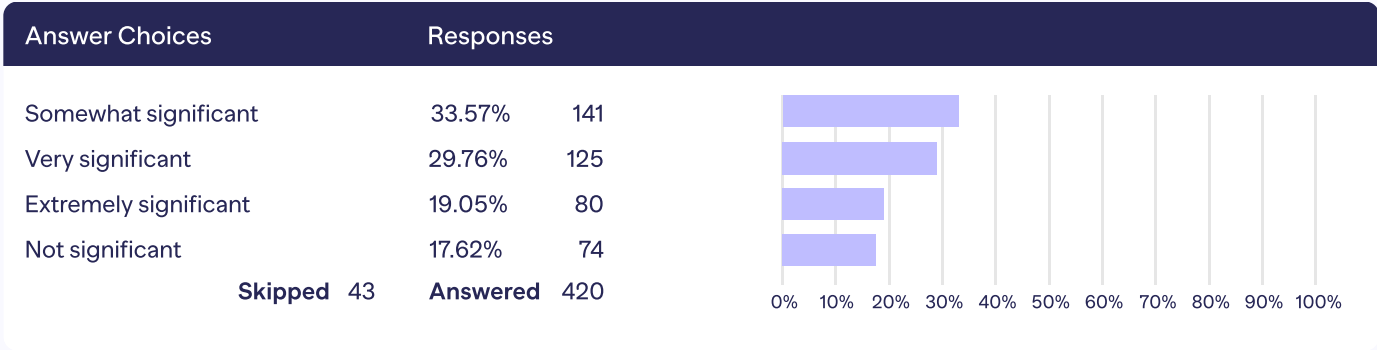
# How important is peer-to-peer outreach to your/your organization’s GivingTuesday fundraising efforts?

 **Data Point**

Over four-fifths (81%) of survey takers cite peer-to-peer fundraising as a significant contributor to their GivingTuesday fundraising efforts. Of those, more than half (59%) reported peer-to-peer outreach as either very significant or extremely significant.

 **Best Practice**

Use peer-to-peer fundraising to empower your donors to reach out to their friends, family, coworkers, and acquaintances to engage them in your cause. This will not only boost donations, it’s a great way to attract new donors. Boost effectiveness by giving your participants their own customizable fundraising pages and encouraging friendly competition to see who can raise the most funds.



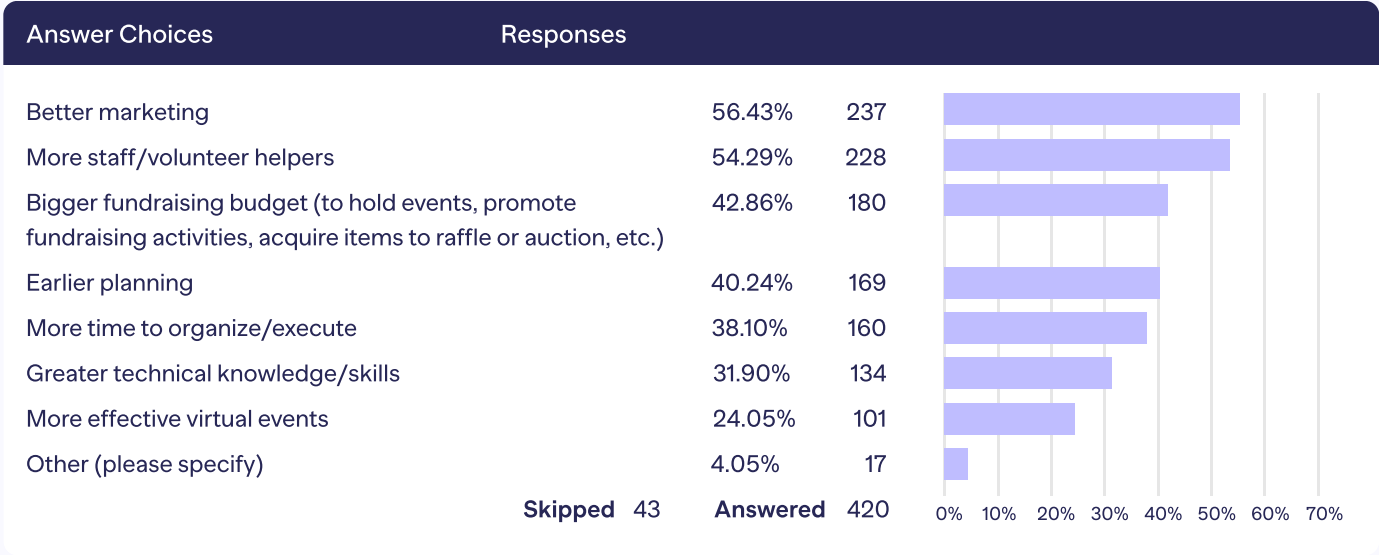
# What do you think would help you/your organization raise more funds? [Select all that apply]

 **Data Point**

Fifty-six percent (56%) of survey takers pointed to better marketing as the #1 change that would increase the total amount of funds raised. More than half (54%) also felt that more staff and volunteers would help them raise more funds.

 **Best Practice**

Develop your marketing strategy alongside your events and activities. Deciding how you will promote a raffle is just as important as deciding to hold the raffle. The smarter you promote, the more funds you'll raise with limited resources.



Best Practice 10

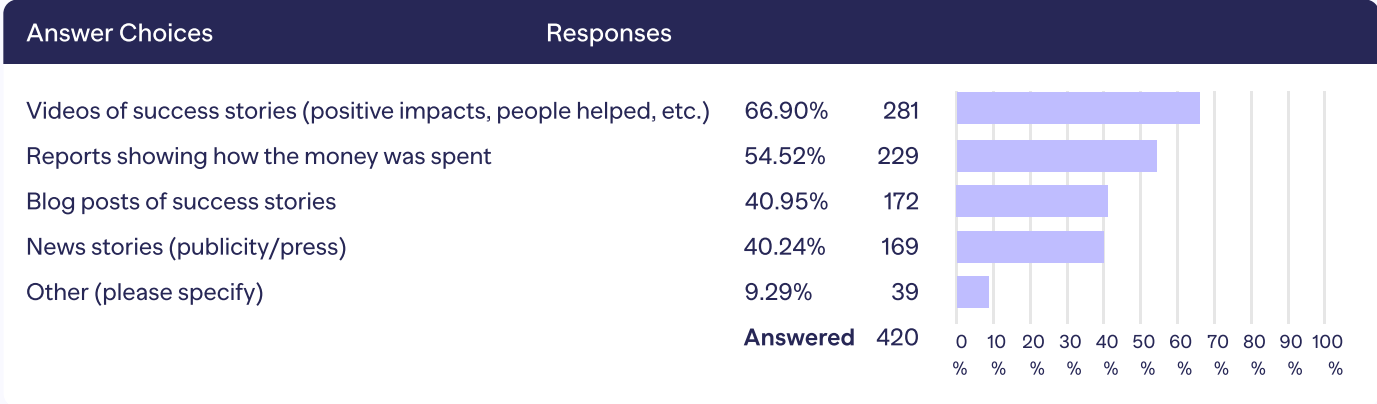
# When it comes to showing your donors how their money is having an impact, what methods do you find to be the most effective? [Select all that apply]

 **Data Point**

Two-thirds (67%) of survey participants report that videos of success stories are the most effective way to show donors their contribution is having an impact. Reports showing how the money was spent (55%) came in second, and blog posts of success stories (41%) rounded out the top three.

 **Best Practice**

Create more video success stories. Donors love to see the “feel good” result of their giving, and video success stories are dramatically more effective than blogs.



# How has the pandemic impacted your fundraising? [Select all that apply]



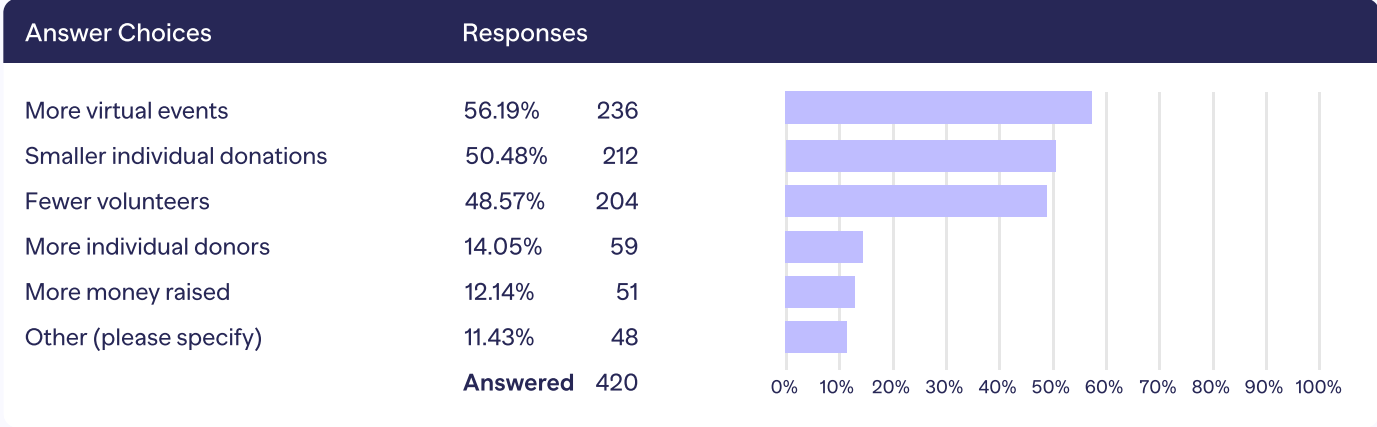
### Data Point

The pandemic has caused organizations to hold more virtual events (56%) while struggling with fewer volunteers (49%). Only a fraction (12%) raised more money during the pandemic.



### Best Practice

Embrace virtual fundraising, even if you maintain a robust in-person component. While it can be challenging, it presents enormous opportunities. Because staffing is a problem, rethink volunteering to entice online supporters to support virtual fundraising.



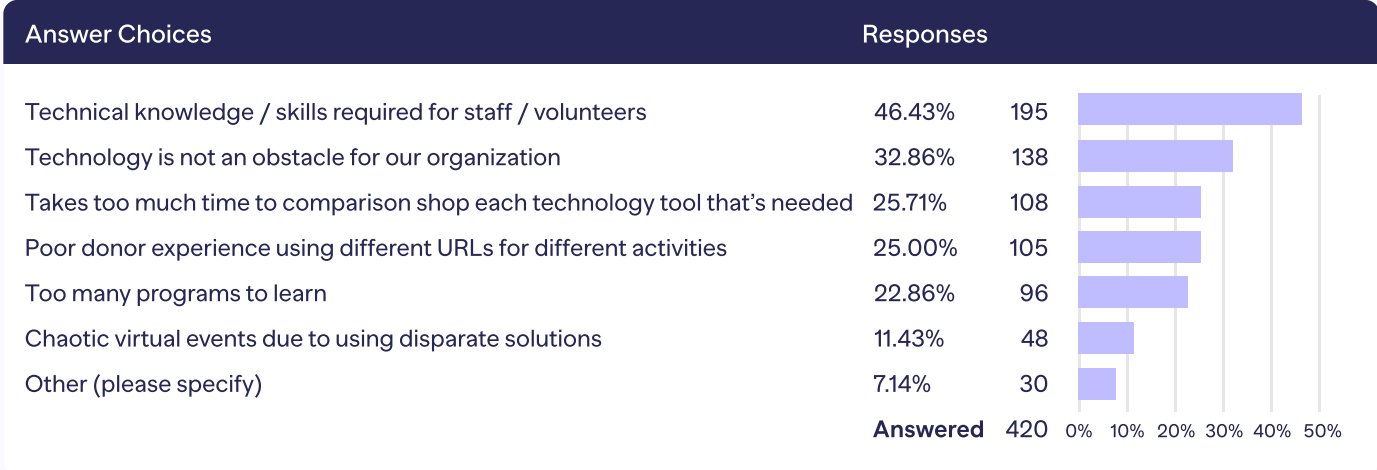
# In what ways is technology an obstacle to your fundraising efforts? [Select all that apply]

 **Data Point**

A lack of technical knowledge and skills are an obstacle to fundraising efforts for nearly half of participants (46%). The next most cited technology problem is the time it takes to comparison shop for a solution to each problem they need to solve.

 **Best Practice**

Make it a priority to educate your staff and volunteers—and maybe yourself—on technology. You can do this by carving out time dedicated to learning and understanding the systems and options. Reduce the number of technologies to juggle by choosing do-it-all solutions where possible.



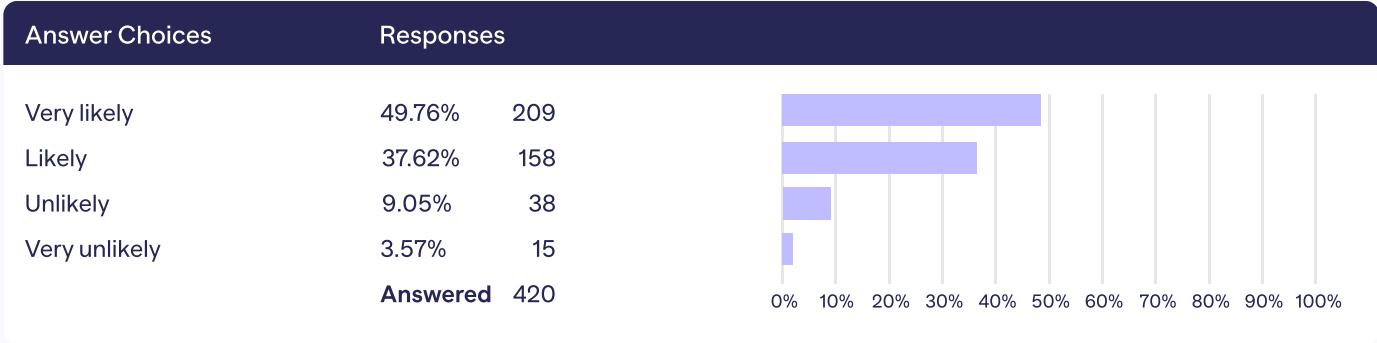
# Do you plan to return to hosting more in-person fundraising events when the pandemic is no longer a consideration?

## Data Point

Eighty-seven percent (87%) of respondents are likely or very likely to return to in-person events when the pandemic is no longer a consideration. Comments predominantly point to reasons such as personal connection, community, and fun.

## Best Practice

As you return to holding more in-person events, leverage the effort by making it a virtual event as well. Advanced hybrid technologies offer livestreaming with interactive games (flash auctions and raffles, paddle raises, trivia contests, etc.) to boost donations and create community.





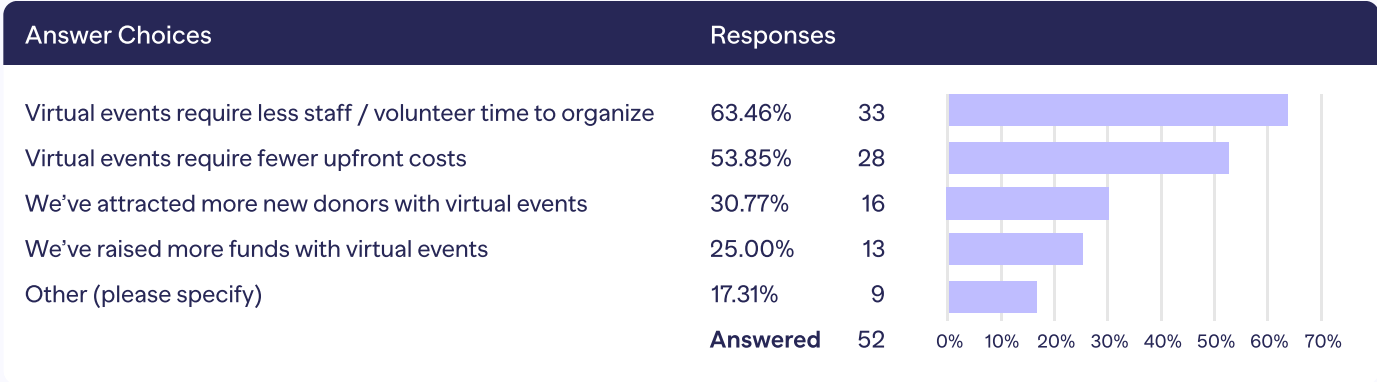
# Why are you unlikely to return to hosting more in-person fundraising events when the pandemic is no longer a consideration? [Select all that apply]

 **Data Point**

Those unlikely to return to hosting more in-person events when the pandemic is no longer a consideration are embracing virtual events. The top reasons are because virtual events can be run with less staff and volunteers (63%) and they offer lower up-front costs (54%).

 **Best Practice**

When running virtual events, consider taking advantage of the ability to raise funds not just during the event, but also beforehand. Fundraisers like raffles and auctions can begin months before the event to keep donors engaged and giving.



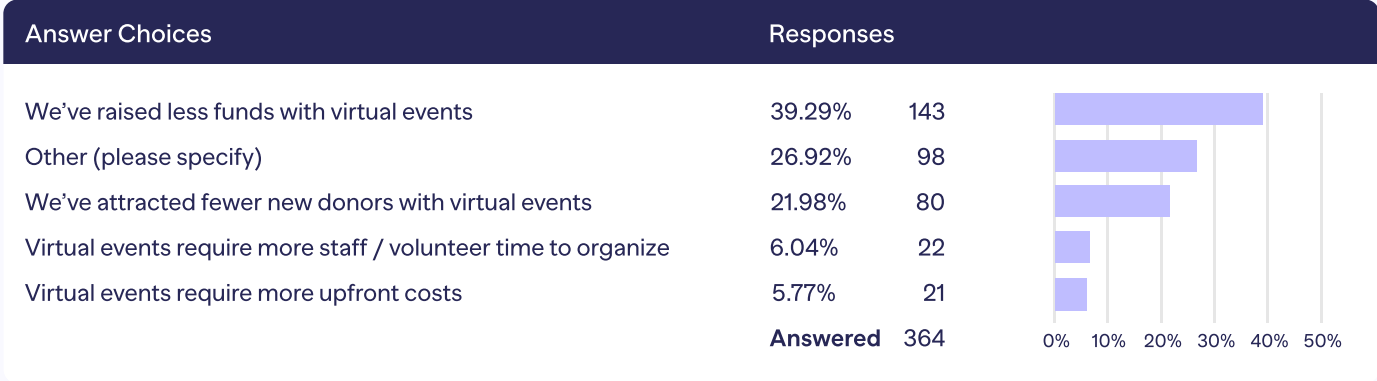
# Why are you likely to return to hosting more in-person fundraising events when the pandemic is no longer a consideration? [Select all that apply]

 **Data Point**

For those likely to return to hosting more in-person events when the pandemic is no longer a consideration, the main reason is to make more money as virtual events had raised less funds.

 **Best Practice**

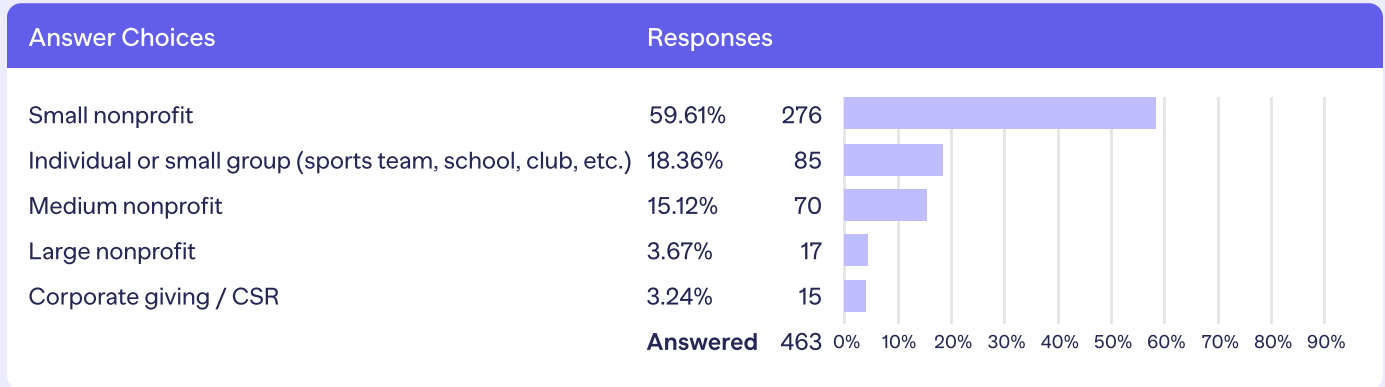
Embrace human connection and create more games and activities that get people interacting with other people. One thing many have taken away from the pandemic is they love connecting with other people. So give them even more than you did before the pandemic.



# Demographics

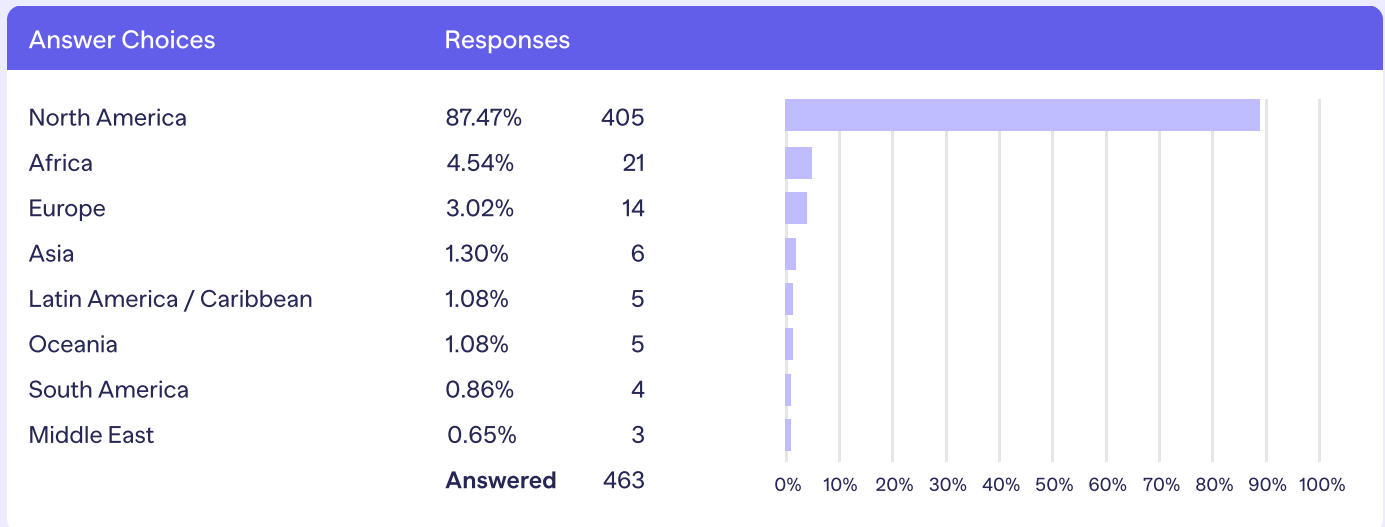
Question 1

# Which of the following best describes your role as a fundraiser?



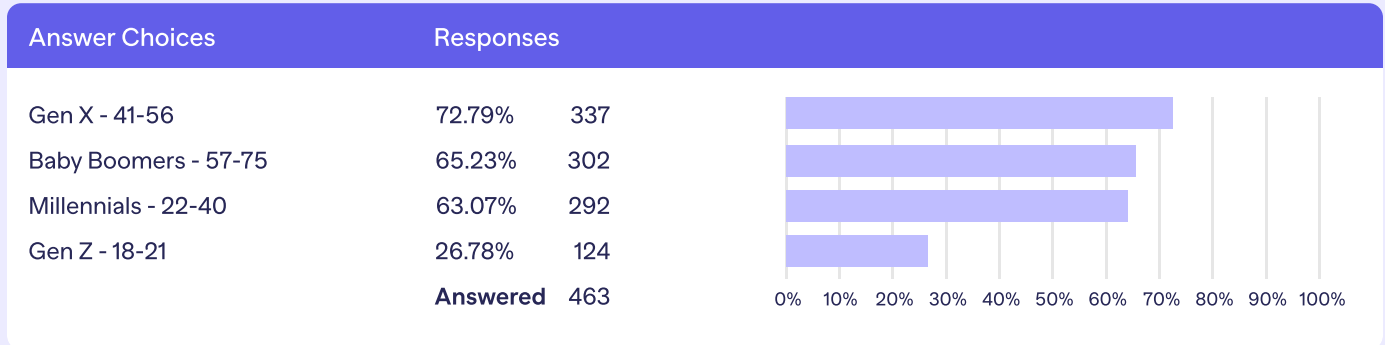
Question 2

# Which region are you/your organization in?



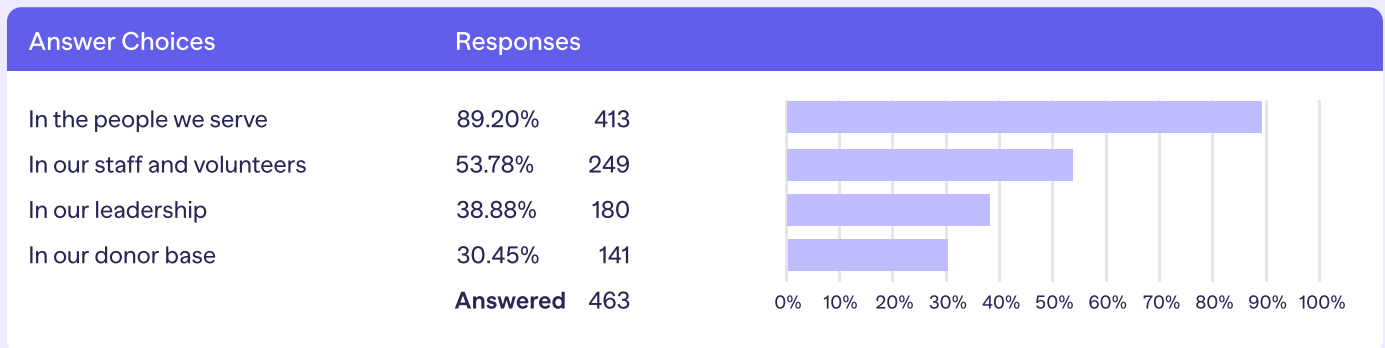
Question 3

What age demographic of donors do you primarily target? [Select all that apply]



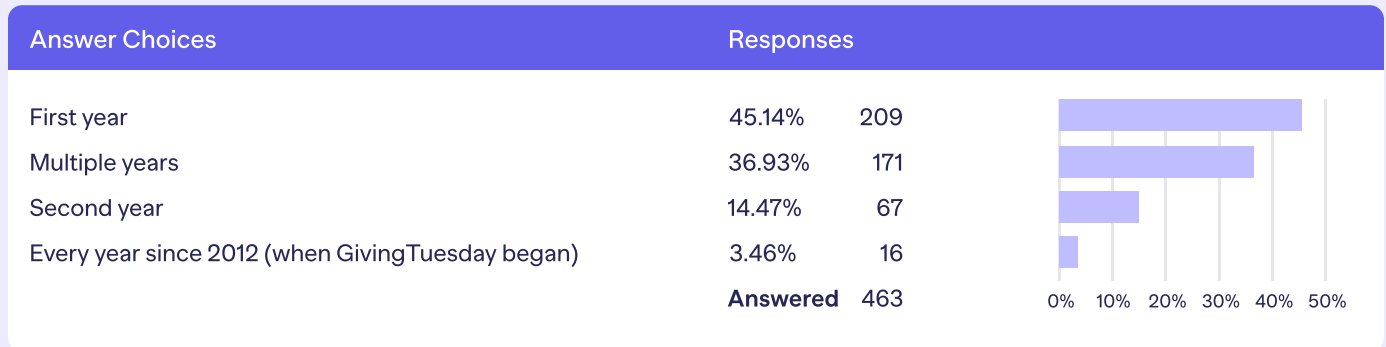
Question 4

In what ways does your organization support and / or represent marginalized communities? [Select all that apply]



Question 5

# How long have you been raising funds on GivingTuesday?





# About RallyUp

RallyUp is a leading fundraising platform for individuals, small groups, nonprofit organizations, and enterprise CSR programs. RallyUp's do-it-all platform helps fundraisers easily create can't miss experiences that delight donors and boost donations. Organizers can select a single, ready-to-launch fundraising activity or combine multiple to create their ideal experience.

RallyUp offers the only livestreaming platform specifically designed for fundraising. During an event, organizers can engage donors with paddle raises, trivia, flash raffles and actions, and other games and activities that unite in-person and online attendees. RallyUp handles everything from ticketing and pre-event fundraising activities to interactive livestreaming.

To learn more, visit [rallyup.com](https://rallyup.com) →



RallyUp

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