

THE VALUE OF OREGON HERITAGE ORGANIZATIONS' VOLUNTEERS:

An Oregon Heritage Commission Volunteer Study

OCTOBER 2020

PREPARED FOR THE OREGON HERITAGE COMMISSION
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About The Oregon Heritage Commission

Founded in 1995 by the Legislature, the Oregon Heritage Commission is comprised of nine gubernatorial appointments and nine ex-officio members who function as the primary agency designated with the task of coordinating heritage activities in Oregon. This group of leaders from across the state of Oregon works collaboratively to champion resources, recognition, and funding for preserving and interpreting Oregon's past. To fulfill its heritage preservation mission, the Heritage Commission partners with hundreds of heritage organizations from across Oregon—most of which are nonprofit organizations. These organizations in turn partner with thousands of Oregonians who volunteer their time, money, gifts, and talents to help Heritage organizations accomplish their work.

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Since 1995, the Oregon Heritage Commission has been investing in efforts to promote and preserve “Oregon’s heritage,” that is, evidence of Oregon’s past engraved in ideas, artifacts, traditions, and the inherited environment. Such work has ranged from maintaining historical cemeteries, preserving the character of historical downtowns and their unique architectural history, genealogical work and vital records preservation, to maintaining and sharing cultural traditions and practices. To accomplish this historical preservation work, the Heritage Commission partners with diverse “heritage” organizations across the state of Oregon. Heritage organizations include organizations and groups that support history work, such as museums, historical and genealogical societies, historic cemeteries, downtown associations, friends groups, and landmark commissions. The heritage organizations in this report, in turn partner with thousands of dedicated Oregon volunteers who dedicate thousands in volunteer hours to help heritage organizations accomplish their diverse missions.

Based on survey responses from 86 out of 270 heritage organization leaders (32% response rate¹), and 186 volunteers from across approximately 25 heritage organizations, this report highlights the importance of volunteers in supporting and making the work of Oregon’s heritage organizations possible. Specifically, the report addresses:

1. The value and impact of Oregon’s heritage organizations’ volunteers (in terms of, the number of volunteers and volunteer hours, their economic value including donations to heritage organizations, how heritage organizations utilize volunteers, and their impact on heritage organizations’ work).
2. Why volunteers choose to volunteer their time with heritage organizations and the personal benefits they receive from such volunteerism.

The report also highlights the best practices heritage organizations are deploying to manage their volunteers, as well as the barriers that prevent some volunteers from fully engaging. In the Appendix, we outline the study methodology.

¹Online/Email surveys have an average response rate of about 29% or 30%. Web organizational surveys typically receive substantially lower response rates (Lindemann, 2019; Manfreda et al., 2008)

The Value and Impact of Heritage Organizations' Volunteers

Oregon volunteers provide valuable time, skills, and monetary benefits to organizations. And Oregon places third behind Utah and Minnesota in terms of volunteerism². In 2018 for example, 43.2% of Oregonians volunteered their time at an organization, amounting to 177.7 million hours in volunteer service. Monetarily, that amounted to \$4.2 billion.

To the Heritage Commission's partner organizations in this study, volunteers equally made an enormous impact. Below we demonstrate the impact of volunteers in terms of:

- The total number of people volunteering with the heritage Commission's partner organizations
- The total hours volunteered and the estimated monetary value of that labor
- Financial donations by volunteers to heritage organizations
- The roles volunteers perform
- The additional ways volunteers promote heritage organizations
- How heritage organizations' operations would be affected without volunteers

About Heritage Organizations' Volunteers

Total number of volunteers: Across 76 heritage organizations that provided data on volunteer hours, the total number of volunteers in 2019 was **5,376**. The number of volunteers per organization ranged from as low as 3 volunteers, to as high as 338 volunteers.

- **808 volunteers** served as **board of directors (board members)** across the 76 organizations.
- **2,505 volunteers** were considered to be **regular, long-term, or consistent volunteers**.

Governing boards of directors are "legally designated as holding fiduciary responsibility for the nonprofits they serve," that is, ensuring that the operations of the organization are following the rules under which the nonprofit was established, and that resources are being used appropriately (ORS 65; Tschirhart & Bielefeld, 2012). Board members, therefore, play an essential dual-leadership role together with the executive director or leader.

² <https://www.nationalservice.gov/serve/via/states>.

Demographics of the Heritage Volunteers:

Tracking volunteer data allows organizations to track the changing demographics of their volunteers. Based on the demographic data of 1,116 volunteers provided by 42 out of 86 organizations (48.8%), the majority of the volunteers in heritage organizations are female. Only a small percentage identified otherwise (**Chart 1**).

The 42 organizations also provided data on the Age and Race/Ethnicity of 1,203 and 866 volunteers, respectively. Based on this information, volunteers tend to be older (55 years and older), and White/Caucasian (**Charts 2, 3**).

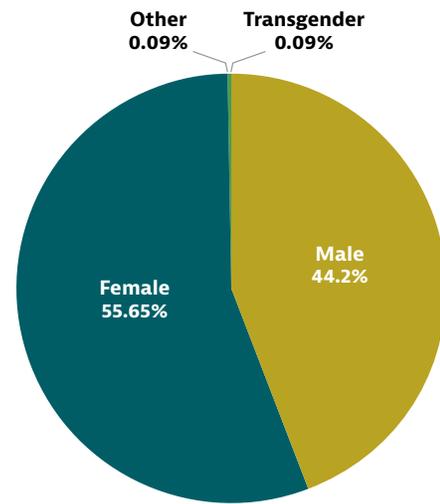


Chart 1 — Volunteer Gender

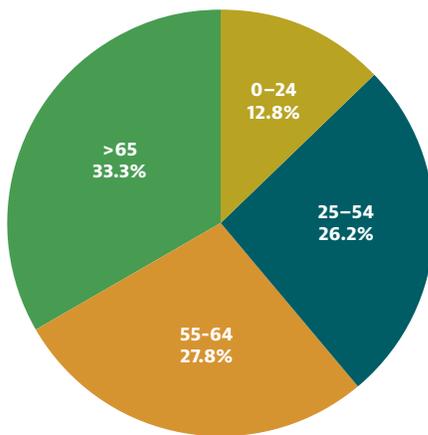


Chart 2 — Volunteer Age in Years

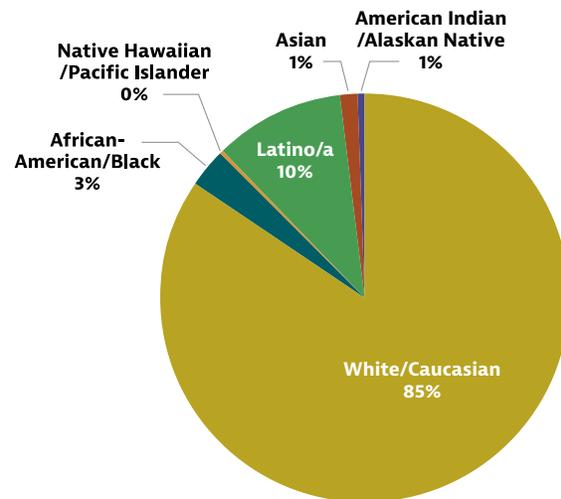


Chart 3 — Volunteer Race/Ethnicity

Economic Value of Volunteers to a Heritage Organization

Total Volunteer Hours: Not all organizations in this study track volunteer hours³, which means that the numbers shown here are an underrepresentation of the true value and impact of heritage organizations' volunteers. In general, however, volunteer hours vary from organization to organization, depending on their need for volunteers and their ability to attract and retain them.

- Based on the 69 heritage organizations that systematically track volunteer hours, their volunteers contributed a total of **321,863 volunteer hours**, in 2019⁴.

Monetary Value of Volunteer Labor: Hypothetically, if heritage organizations could afford to financially compensate their volunteers for their time and labor, they estimated paying them hourly wages ranging from \$10/hour, to as high as \$50/hour. About 64% or 55 organizations, provided us with an hourly wage estimate.

³ 17 organizations did not provide any information.

⁴ Where an organization gave us a range (e.g., 2,000–2,500 volunteer hours), we averaged that range. If we were to calculate total volunteer hours using the highest estimated values in such ranges, the total number of volunteers would increase significantly, as well as the associated monetary value.

- Across these organizations, their combined total volunteer hours amounted to **199,016 hours**.
- Based on **199,016 volunteer hours** and each organization’s hypothetical wage estimate, the total monetary value of volunteer services, in 2019, **was \$3,307,406**.
- The Independent Sector’s (2020) estimated value of volunteer services in Oregon was \$26.39/hr in 2019. Multiplying this rate by 321,863 total volunteer hours reported by 69 organizations, the total monetary value of the volunteer services amounted to **\$8,493,965**.
- **Table 1** shows the monetary values of volunteer labor using different estimates of *volunteer wage rate* and *total volunteer hours*.

Overall, the economic value of volunteers underscores the **labor cost savings**⁵ that heritage organizations may have accrued from volunteer labor in 2019.

	Mean Hypothetical Wage	Diverse Hypothetical Wages	Oregon State Minimum Wage	Independent Sector's Oregon Volunteer Wage
Wage Rate/Hour	\$11.37	\$10–\$50	\$11.25	\$26.39 ⁶
Monetary Value of Volunteer Services	\$3,659,582	\$3,307,406	\$3,620,959	\$8,493,965

Table 1 — Estimated Economic Value of Volunteer Labor to Oregon Heritage Organizations (2019)

Based on FTEs, 23 organizations do not have any full- or part-time paid staff (see **Chart 4**). The majority of the heritage organizations in this study (40 organizations, or 53%), have anywhere from .25 to 5 FTEs, meaning these organizations have fewer paid staff, and therefore, heavily rely on volunteers to substitute or complement their paid staff labor (Brudney, 2009).

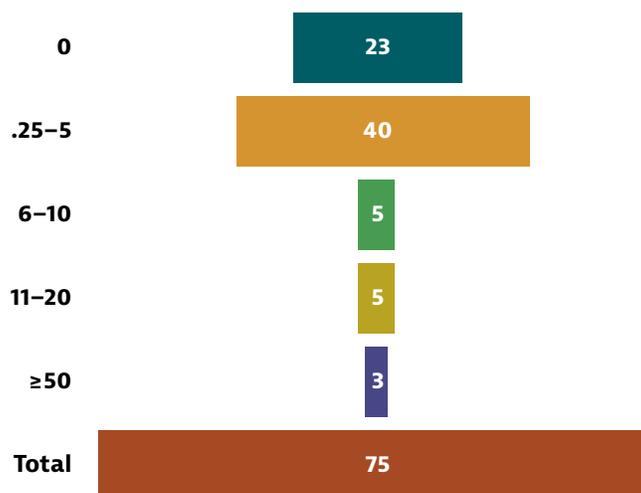


Chart 4 — Full Time Equivalent (FTEs) by Number of Organizations

⁵ Note too that managing volunteers also comes with costs to the organization, in terms of staff time spent recruiting, training, and supervising volunteers. See: Bowman, 2009; Budney & Duncome, 1992.

⁶ The Oregon volunteer wage supplied by the Independent Sector (2020) can be considered the average market wage as applied by others—which may over- or under-estimate certain volunteer tasks (e.g., Mook et al., 2007)..

Volunteer Contributions to Heritage Organization’s Revenues: The heritage organizations in this study are small—in terms of budget size; 71% of the organizations have budgets of less than \$250,000 per year (see **Chart 5**). The survey data show that, in addition to contributing to labor cost savings, volunteers also financially contribute to heritage organization’s revenues. Volunteers from over half of the heritage organizations (57 out of 86, or 66%) make significant financial contributions or donations to the organizations they volunteer with, on top of volunteering their time.

- Approximately 2,654 volunteers made a financial donation to their heritage organization. The value of these financial donations amounted to approximately **\$875,682** in 2019.

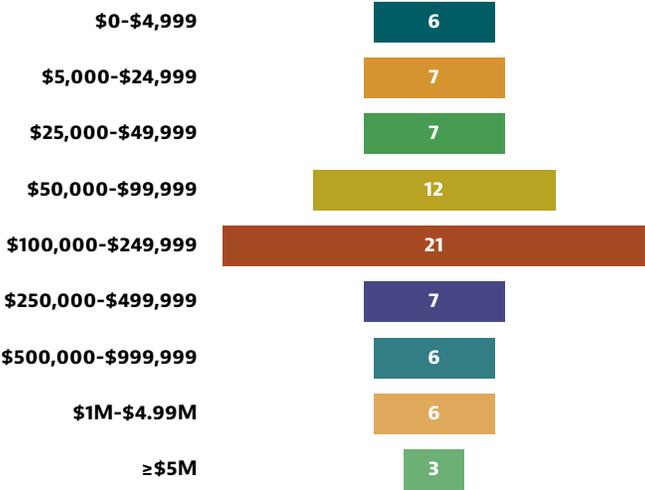


Chart 5 — Heritage Organizations’ Annual Budget Sizes (2019, N=75)

Operational Impact: Volunteers’ Roles in Heritage Organizations

Aside from relying on volunteers to serve as board members (in 88.4% of the organizations), volunteers are also engaged in a variety of administrative, operational, and service delivery roles, as shown in **Chart 6**.

- 67 out of 86 organizations (78%) rely on volunteers to carry out special events, fundraising, and development efforts to help bring in revenue to support the organizations’ mission.
- 51 organizations (59%) also engage volunteers in their program and service delivery.
- Other” roles include, conducting historical, library, and genealogical research.



Chart 6 — Types of Roles Volunteers are Performing at Respondent Organizations

Volunteers also promote heritage organizations through diverse strategies; this is done outside of their formal volunteer roles. For example, among a host of promotional strategies shown in **Chart 7**, volunteers;

- **Brought visitors** (in 58 or 67% of the organizations)
- **Recommended a heritage organization to their friends and family** (in 57 or 66% of the organizations)
- **Shared organizational updates with other community groups** (at the board level) (in 40 or 47% of the organizations)

Even though the remainder of the strategies are only occurring among volunteers from fewer organizations, we urge heritage organizations to formally encourage their volunteers to promote their organizations in the community. Not only will doing so encourage others to donate and support heritage organizations, such points of contact also raise awareness about the organizations' heritage work, as well as volunteer activities and opportunities. Our data shows that many people became volunteers because they were asked by other volunteers, or because they saw others volunteering.

I just noticed people working there once.

—Volunteer G

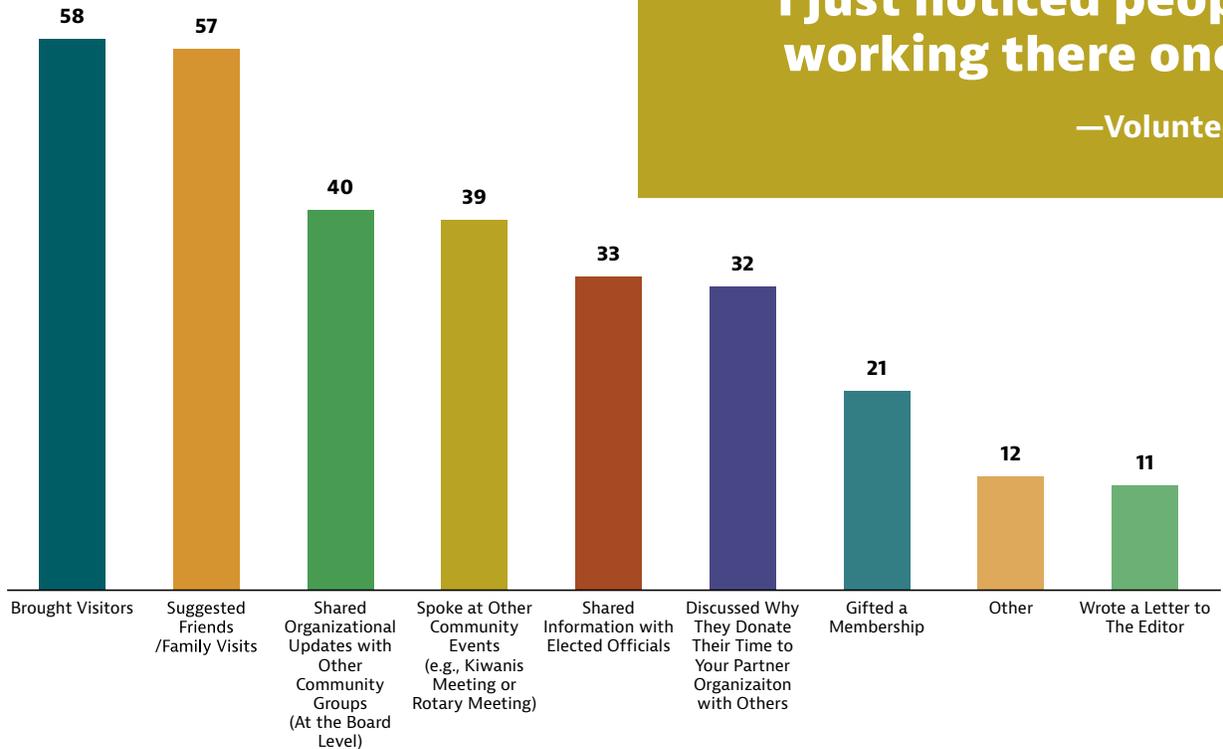


Chart 7 — Number of Heritage Organizations Benefiting from Volunteers' Promotional Activities

Heritage Organizations' Ability to Replace Lost Volunteer Labor

An alternative way of demonstrating the importance of volunteers is to consider heritage organization's ability to replace lost volunteer labor, either through recruiting new volunteers, or hiring paid staff to do the work the volunteers were doing. One can also consider the impact of losing volunteers would have on the quality of heritage organization's services and operations.

- If heritage organizations were to lose all their regular volunteers, 68% of the 76 respondent organizational leaders would "often," or "very often to always" actively seek to replace them (see **Chart 8**).

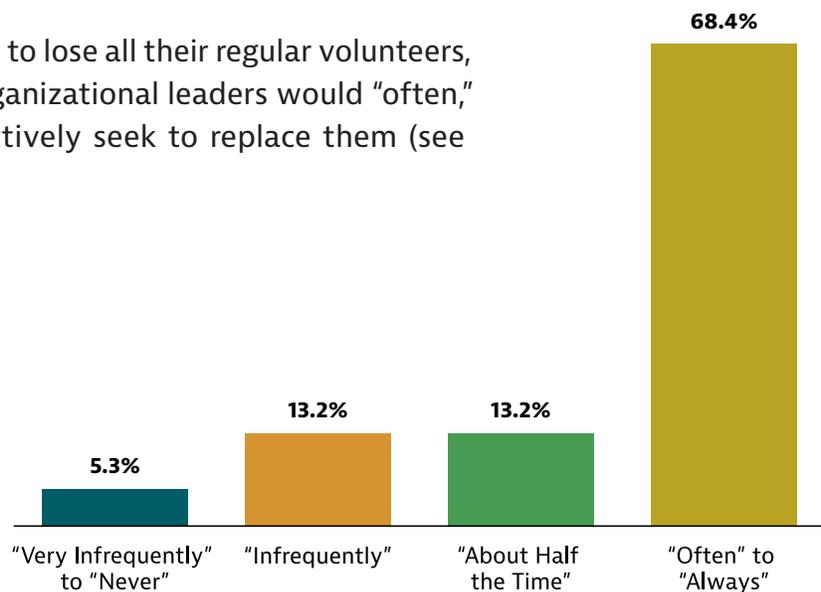


Chart 8 — Likelihood of Replacing Lost Volunteer Labor

Focusing on All-Volunteer-Run Organizations:

These 21 organizations have no choice but to actively recruit replacement volunteers; otherwise, they would have to close, as shown in **Chart 9**.

Focusing on Organizations with both Volunteers and Paid Staff: To this group of 58 organizations we asked whether they would replace volunteer lost hours with paid employees hired to do what the volunteers were doing.

- Only a few organizations would be able to afford to replace lost volunteers with paid staff. Two organizations would replace “nearly all” to “total replacement,” Five would replace “most” volunteers,” with one replacing about half of the volunteers (see **Chart 10**).
- The majority of the organization (27) would replace hardly “any to none” of the lost volunteer labor with paid staff, **suggesting that hiring paid staff would not be feasible for them.**
- The remaining 12 would simply close because they would not be able to afford to replace lost volunteer labor with paid staff.

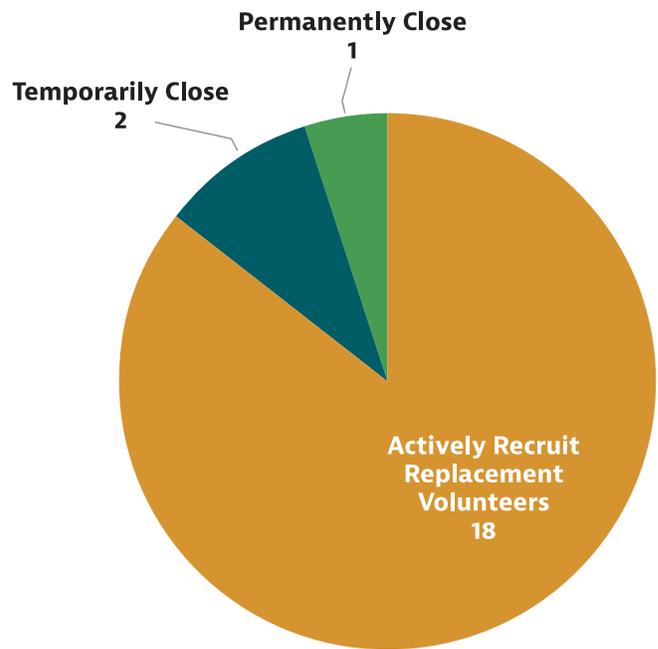


Chart 9 — What all-Volunteer-run organizations would do, should most of their volunteers quit?

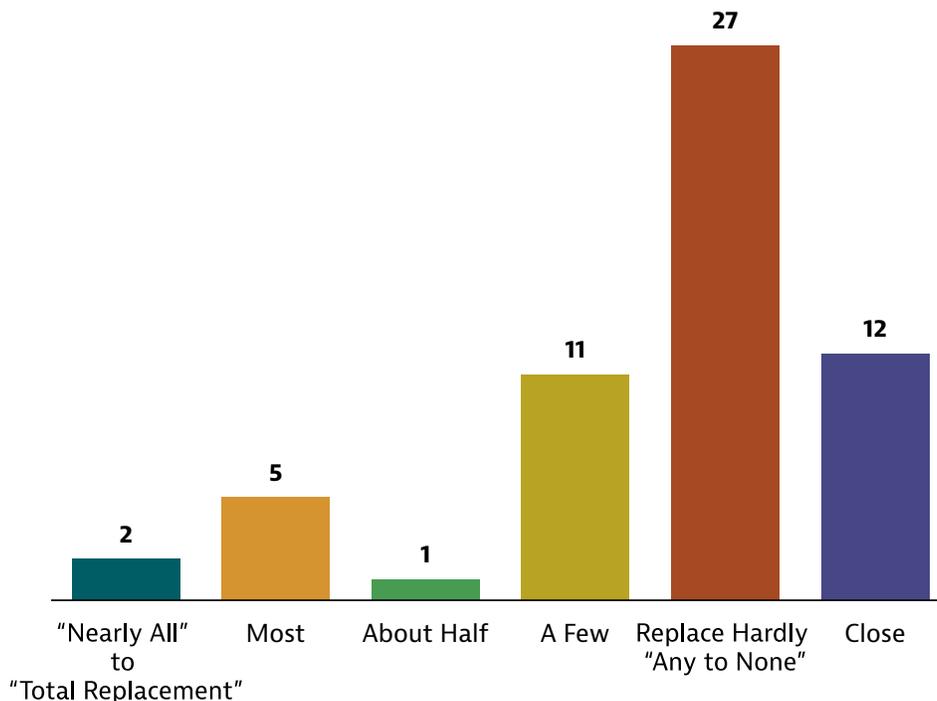


Chart 10 — Organizations with both volunteers and paid staff’s ability to replace volunteers with paid staff

Impact on the Levels and Quality of Programs and Operations: Heritage organizations’ leaders also believe that the levels and quality of their operations and activity would be negatively impacted, if they were to lose their regular, long-term, or consistent volunteers. The results in **Chart 11** are based on responses from 76 organizational leaders:

- 36% and 39% of the leaders respectively believe they would “likely” or “very likely” be forced to operate at lower levels in terms of, shorter hours, serving fewer clients, and holding fewer events. In other words, **75% of the organizations would experience reduced capacity, resulting in reduced levels of operations and activity**, which would ultimately impact the organization revenue generation capacity and reach.
- In terms of quality of program operations and activity, 28% and 53% of the organization leaders believe the quality of their programs would “likely” or “very likely” diminish without volunteers, respectively. Meaning, **the quality of 81% of the organizations’ operations would be compromised, if heritage organizations were to lose their regular and consistent volunteers.**

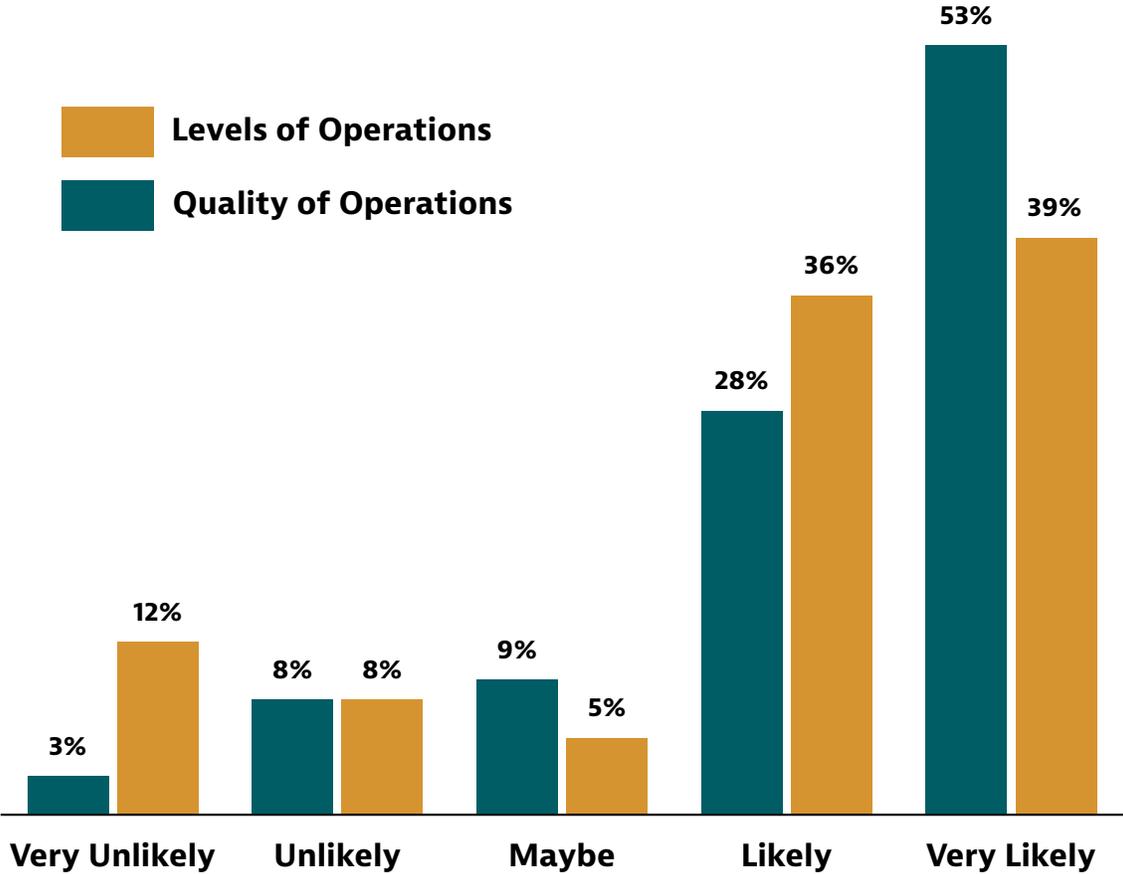


Chart 11 — Likelihood of Reduced Program Quality or Operations Without Volunteer Labor

The following quote from one heritage organization leader and the select quotes depicted in the diagram below, fully capture the vast importance of volunteers to heritage organizations.

Volunteers PRESERVE our history through the care and keeping of the thousands of items... Volunteers PROMOTE our history as interpretive guides and docents sharing the local stories... Volunteers CELEBRATE our history through their enthusiasm and dedication they bring to our organization every day.

—Volunteer T



Based on the preceding results, the value and importance of volunteers to Oregon's heritage organizations is undeniable in economic, programmatic, and qualitative terms.

Motivations and Benefits of Volunteering at Heritage Organizations

To understand the motivations for volunteering and the benefits of volunteering to heritage organizations on volunteers, the study relied on quantitative and qualitative responses from 177 volunteers from at least 25 identified heritage organizations.

- The findings show that **at the epicenter of volunteer motivations or pull factors are the historical and cultural preservation missions of heritage organizations.** In other words, it is the uniquely heritage-centered missions and work that attracts volunteers to heritage organizations. Flowing from these missions are programs and services that engender **uniquely "localized heritage preservation experiences" for the volunteers** in this study.

Figure 1 below shows volunteers’ main pull factors to heritage organizations. These range from, interest in genealogy and the preservation of vital records, in promoting unique horticultural heritages, to interest in the preservation of local historical artifacts and architectural structures and connecting with one’s personal or family heritage.

- Beyond that, volunteers also **choose to volunteer out of a desire to see heritage organizations operate more effectively.** This motivation compels volunteers to lend a hand, share and apply their knowledge and expertise, as well as their financial resources, all in an effort to strengthen heritage organization’s capacities. Why? Because they strongly believe in the heritage preservation work of these organizations.
- In addition, heritage organizations’ locations and proximity to local communities and neighborhoods also **offer unique localized opportunities for volunteers to serve their communities,** while allowing them to learn more, and bond with diverse cultures, pasts, and people.
- Heritage organizations uniquely **offer opportunities for volunteers to learn and “embrace the heritage” of one’s community.**



Figure 1 — What drives or pulls volunteers to volunteer their time (& money) to heritage organizations?

The Benefits of Volunteering: What Do Volunteers Gain?

In terms of benefits to volunteers, we find that in many occasions there was no clear separation between what motivated one to volunteer and the benefits they gained from their volunteerism. In other words, we find that what heritage organizations uniquely offer by way of their missions and work, not only serves as a pull factor for volunteering, but the **doing of the work is sufficiently satisfying to be a benefit in and of itself** for a lot of the volunteers. For example, those volunteers who chose to volunteer *because* they wanted to help heritage organizations function more effectively, found satisfaction in utilizing their resources, in terms of time, money, and expertise to help heritage organizations operate more efficiently. So, the *doing* of that which motivated them to volunteer in the first place becomes the reward. In this way, heritage organizations offer the unique benefit of involving volunteers in the act or work of securing, enhancing, preserving, sustaining, learning, and interpreting Oregon’s heritage.

Nonetheless, one benefit stands out; heritage organizations’ volunteer engagement opportunities provide volunteers with an **enhanced sense of community and belonging to a place**, as shown in the quotes from some of the volunteers that are highlighted in this report.

I moved to this community and embraced the heritage through marriage. I was counseled by my wise mother that “wherever you live embrace the heritage of the location where you reside...this way you will always learn and appreciate a variety of diverse traditions and people.

—Volunteer B

For 96% or 169 out of 177 volunteers, volunteering at heritage organizations strengthens their sense of belonging to a place, community, or society.

- Heritage organizations also offer volunteers opportunities to; **Help preserve important community history and heritage** (92%, or 161 volunteers); **Develop friendships** (90%, 159 volunteers); **Be engaged citizens** (84%, or 147), as well as **help organizations function more effectively** (84%). **Chart 12** lists the top 20 benefits reported by 48% or more volunteers.

I also joined to bring my communications, public relations, marketing and leadership skills to support... projects, events, and programs that engage Oregonians in their democracy and preserve the legacy of Oregon’s Capitol for future generations.

—Volunteer C

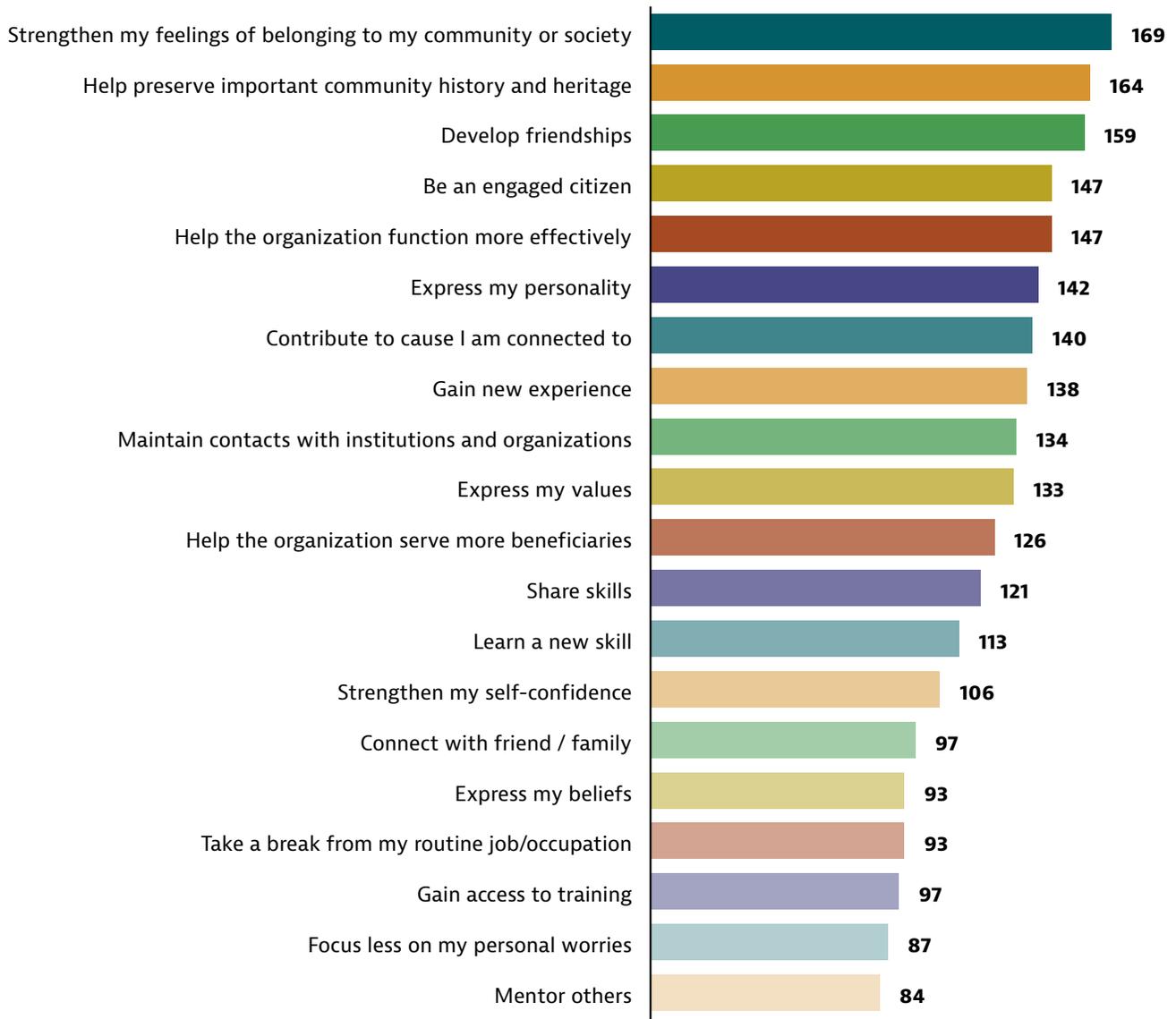


Chart 12 — The Top 20 Benefits of Volunteering at a Heritage Organization

Volunteer Management: Successes & Challenges

In order to attract, recruit, and retain volunteers, organizations need to at least have a designated and trained position in place that is responsible for coordinating volunteer engagement and activities. In Chart 13 below are some of the volunteer management practices heritage organization are (or not) implementing consistently. Up to a point, the general pattern is positive; however, keep in mind that not all organizations responded to every question and so, the results represent relative proportions. The data show that;

- 85% or 62 out of 73 heritage organizations frequently **provide regular supervision or support to their volunteers.**
- 74% or 53 out 72 organizations frequently **communicate clear roles and expectations to their volunteers.**
- 75% or 46 out 61 organizations frequently **conduct volunteer management self-assessments.**

In contrast, based on **Chart 13** below, heritage organizations can do more when it comes to establishing consistency in providing systematic volunteer orientation and training, regularly reviewing volunteer performance, and measuring volunteer impact, among other volunteer management best practices.

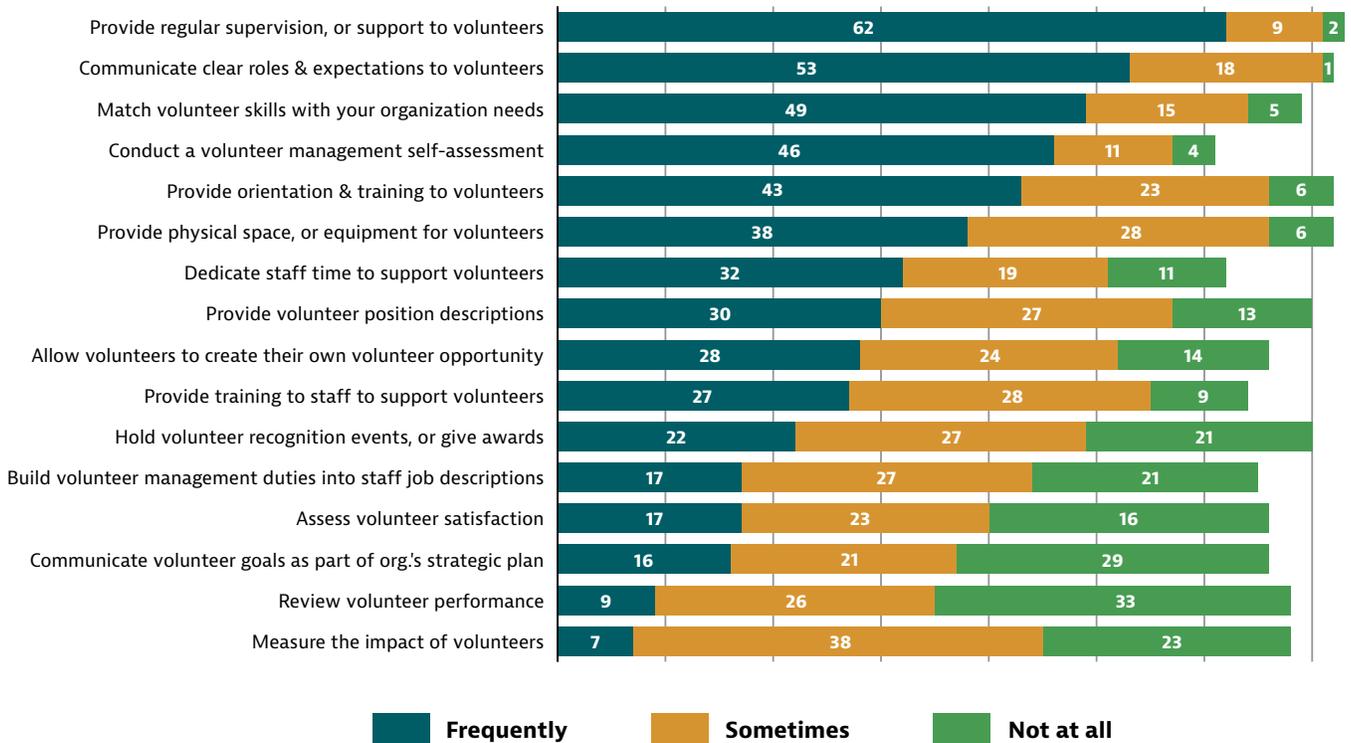


Chart 13 — Heritage Organization’s Volunteer Management Practices

In general, **having a designated and well-trained volunteer manager** will help establish consistency in implementing some of the volunteer management best practices shown above, and this will help enhance organizational success in engaging volunteers in more well-rounded and robust ways (Grossman & Furano, 1999). Per our analysis:

- 36% or 29 out 80 of organizations have a designated full- or part-time volunteer or paid staff position responsible for coordinating volunteers.
- The rest do not have a designated position for this role and/or the responsibility is shared across the organization as shown in **Chart 14**.

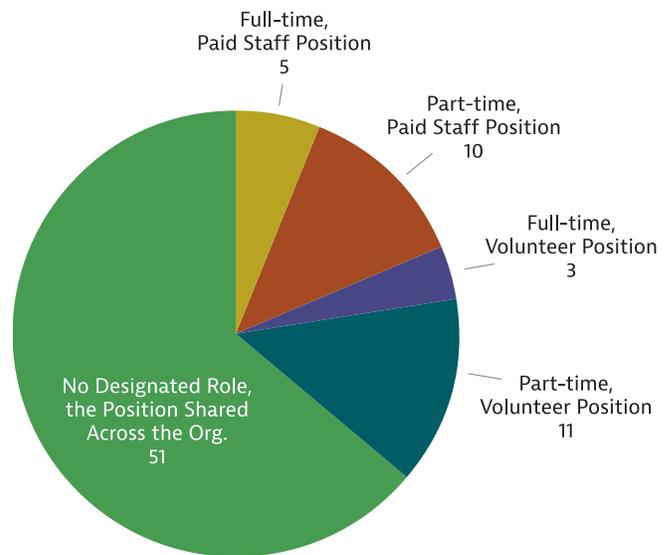


Chart 14 — Organizations and Whether or Not They Have a Designated Volunteer Coordinator

Barriers to Volunteering:

As heritage organizations' leaders consider designating a volunteer manager to coordinate volunteer engagements; it is important to recognize that volunteers often encounter some significant barriers of their own that may inhibit their ability to volunteer or commitment to organizations in need of volunteer labor. One big challenge is that of time, both as a resource for the volunteers and for organizational staff. **Chart 15** shows that:

- 54.4% or 92 out of 169 volunteers "sometimes" or "often" do not have enough time to dedicate to an organization, even when the desire is there. Keeping volunteers in this category informed or updated about the organization's work may help keep them tethered to the organization long enough for them to return at a later point when they have time.
- In contrast, 27% or 44 out of 163 volunteers "sometimes" or "often" feel that the staff does not have sufficient time to provide the necessary attention, guidance, or support they need.

Together, all these barriers underscore the need for designated and well-trained volunteer managers, who are responsible and dedicated to establishing connections with each volunteer in an effort to listen, orient, train, guide, assess, in order to enrich the volunteer engagement experience.

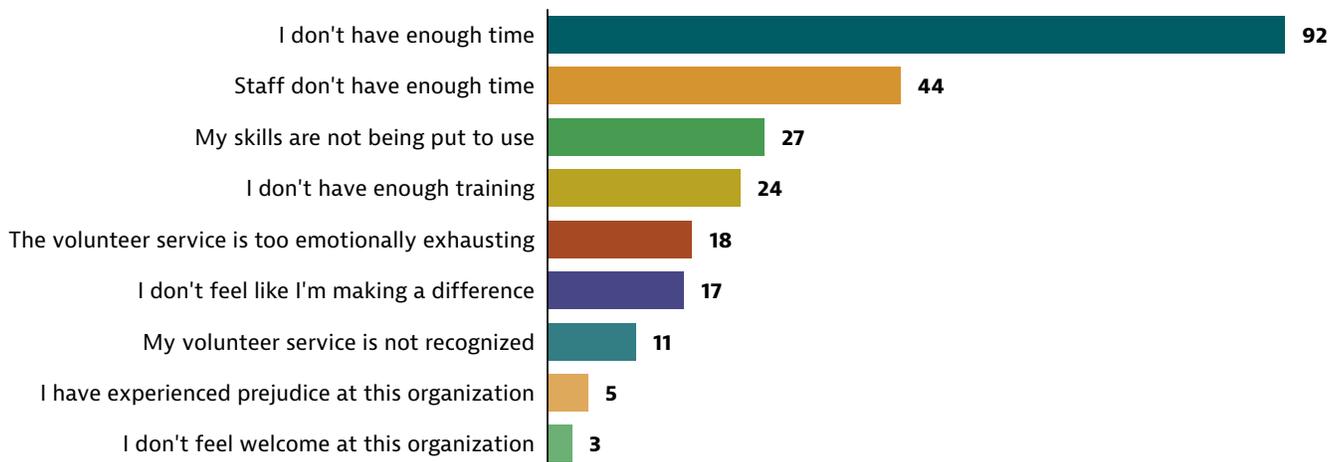


Chart 15 — Barriers to Volunteering

Conclusions

Volunteer labor is very valuable in that, it constitutes a significant and important portion of nonprofit organizations' resources (Toran, 2014; Preston, 2007), and **Oregon's heritage organizations are clearly reaping significant economic, programmatic, and qualitative benefits by embracing and engaging volunteers in their work.** Economically, heritage organizations reap significant labor cost savings of anywhere from \$3.31 million (based on each organization leader's hypothetical wage rates) -to- \$8.49 million (based on the Independent Sector's 2019 volunteer wage for Oregon. This is a big deal since, all the heritage organizations in this study rely on volunteers in some capacity to supplement, complement, or substitute the work paid staff do. In addition, many of the organizations reported not being in a position to replace the regular volunteers with paid staff when they quit. In fact, many, especially, all-volunteer-run organizations, would be forced to permanently close their doors, if they fail to actively recruit replacement volunteers. Please note that, due to a lack of data on the cost of managing volunteers, this study can only speak on the value of volunteer labor, that is, based on total volunteer hours donated to heritage organizations in 2019, and based on the anecdotal information provided by the heritage organizations' leaders.

Heritage organizations' volunteers are also financial donors. In 2019, approximately 2,654 dedicated volunteers also made financial donations to 66% or 57 of the 86 heritage organizations in this study that they volunteer their time to. This amounts to a financial contribution of roughly \$875,862.

However, it is important to state that all these economic value estimates grossly underestimate the true value of volunteer labor and donations since, not all heritage organizations in this study track this data. Systematically tracking such data would allow heritage organizations to routinely and more accurately quantify and gauge the true economic value their volunteers generate for their organizations.

From administrative and operation perspectives, volunteers engender other incredible benefits to heritage organizations. Most heritage organizations, like all nonprofits, need people to serve on nonprofit boards, to contribute to fundraising and development and other special events that help generate revenues to support organizational operations. In addition, volunteers also substitute, supplement, or complement paid staff in their administrative, program and service delivery, and community outreach roles. Pertaining to outreach, the volunteers in this study also perform promotional activities—above and beyond their formal volunteer roles. Such activities include, bringing visitors to heritage organizations, suggesting that friends and family visit heritage organizations, sharing organizational updates with others in the community, and gifting memberships, among other activities. Furthermore, volunteers enrich heritage organizations through their dedication and care, as well as through sharing special knowledge, skills, gifts, and talents.

The benefits of volunteerism, however, are not a one-way street—**the volunteers themselves—driven or pulled by varied motivations, are also rewarded with unique “heritage experiences” when they volunteer at heritage organizations.** As noted in this report, disengaging what motivates volunteers from some of the benefits they gain from their volunteer engagements and experiences is very difficult. We find that what heritage organizations offer by way of their uniquely historical and cultural preservation work, not only serves as a pull factor for attracting particular volunteers; the doing of the work is sufficiently satisfying so much that it serves as a benefit in and of itself for the volunteers. For example, those volunteers who chose to volunteer because they wanted to help heritage organizations function more effectively, found satisfaction in utilizing their resources, in terms of time, money, and expertise to help heritage organizations operate more efficiently. So, doing what motivated them to volunteer in the first place becomes the reward.

In general, however; it is clear from this analysis that volunteers are drawn to the heritage-centered missions of these organizations. And from engaging in “heritage” work, some quite poignant benefits emerge. First, given that heritage organizations consist of groups that support history work, such as museums, historical and genealogical societies, historic cemeteries, downtown associations, friends groups, and landmark commissions—**these organizations offer unique and diverse opportunities to connect with the history of a place, or one’s community.** This ultimately strengthens volunteers’ sense of belonging to their communities or place. Second, the majority of the volunteers (61%), within organizations tracking such demographic information, tend to be older (55 years and older). This is confirmed by the Volunteer survey data in that 87.4% of the volunteer respondents are 55 years and older, and for these, heritage organizations offer avenues to make friends, a place to engage as citizens, whereby they partake in the work of preserving their community’s history and heritage, as well other specialized cultures and activities.

In light of all of the above, crises of the likes of COVID-19 pose significant challenges to heritage organizations’ ability to maintain the dynamic social/physical distancing requirements necessary to safely continue to engage their volunteers. However, this varies from one mission to another—for instance, volunteers taking care of historical cemeteries were better able to continue to do their work while social distancing. The same cannot be said about historic libraries for example, or those organizations that rely on large gatherings, or on volunteer assistance in providing guided tours. We exhort all heritage organizations to plan for such disruptions in the future.

In conclusion, this report clearly demonstrates the economic, programmatic, and qualitative value of volunteerism to heritage organizations, and by extension, to the heritage Commission’s mandate. As such, heritage organizations and their volunteers deserve a resounding applaud for all their contributions in helping to preserve and pass on Oregon’s heritage to future generations.

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Appendix: Methodology

This study sought to understand the value of Oregon's heritage organizations' dedicated volunteers, in terms the economic and non-economic value they generate to these organizations, as well as the benefits that the volunteers themselves gain by volunteering to the heritage organizations.

To gather the data needed for this analysis, we designed two surveys in Qualtrics. The first was an Organizational survey targeting leaders of the heritage organizations that partner with the Oregon Heritage Commission. The second was a Volunteer survey targeting heritage organizations' volunteers. Questions for both surveys were drawn from the Organizational and Volunteer Surveys used in the Oregon Community Foundation's Volunteering in Oregon study, and from several research papers highlighted in the Bibliography (*).

Prior to disseminating the survey, we first shared the Surveys with the Oregon Heritage Commission's representatives for a review of the questions. Following two iterations of reviews, the Surveys were submitted to Portland State University's Office of Research Integrity for an Institutional Review Board approval. And approval for exempt status was granted on July 14, 2020 (IRB Exempt Determination Protocol # 207003-18). Thereafter, we disseminated the surveys for piloting to four organizations leaders identified by the Heritage Commission, and 14 volunteers identified by the organizations. From these, two organizational leaders and four volunteers responded to the pilot surveys. Two respondents provided comments, which we used to refine the Survey tools before launching the Organizational survey on July 15, 2020.

The Organizational survey was emailed through Qualtrics using email addresses of leaders from 290 partner heritage organizations provided by the Heritage Commission. Seven emails bounced back, and three leaders opted out of the survey due to lack of time, or a sentiment that the survey did not pertain to their organizations. We closed the Organizational Survey on August 20, 2020 following 3 reminder emails. This survey yielded responses from 86 out of 270 heritage organizations leaders (32% response rate). As noted earlier, this is a reasonable response rate for online organizational surveys, and more so, especially during a Coronavirus crisis. Online or Email surveys have an average response rate of about 29% or 30%. Online organizational surveys typically yield lower responses than mailed-in surveys, which tend to be relatively more costly (Lindemann, 2019; Manfreda et al., 2008). Following the closure of the survey, we commenced the data cleaning and analysis using multiple platforms; Stata, SPSS, and Microsoft Excel.

To increase receptivity, on August 19, 2020, the Oregon Heritage Commission shared the Volunteer Survey link with all 270 organizations whose emails had not bounced, asking them to forward the link to all their volunteers. We do not know how many organizations shared the survey link with their volunteers. The Volunteer survey closed on September 14, 2020. One volunteer chose to mail-in their survey responses to the principal investigator instead. Overall, we received responses from 186 volunteers, from roughly 25 identified organizations. The limited number of organizations represented by the 186 volunteers limits our ability to speak more comprehensively about all of the heritage organizations' volunteers due to potential (non)response bias. Future follow up surveys should invest time in garnering organizational buy-in on the value of gauging volunteer sentiments on their work with heritage organizations. Nonetheless, the results portrayed in this report, including insights from the 186 volunteers are quite informative as it pertains to what drives volunteers to dedicate their time and money to heritage organizations, and the benefits they enjoy from such volunteerism. And for that we are grateful to everyone that responded to these two Surveys.