



CHARITY INSIGHTS CANADA PROJECT (CICP)

Collaboration in Canada's Charitable Sector

Collective CICP Survey Results (2023-2025)

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Table of Contents

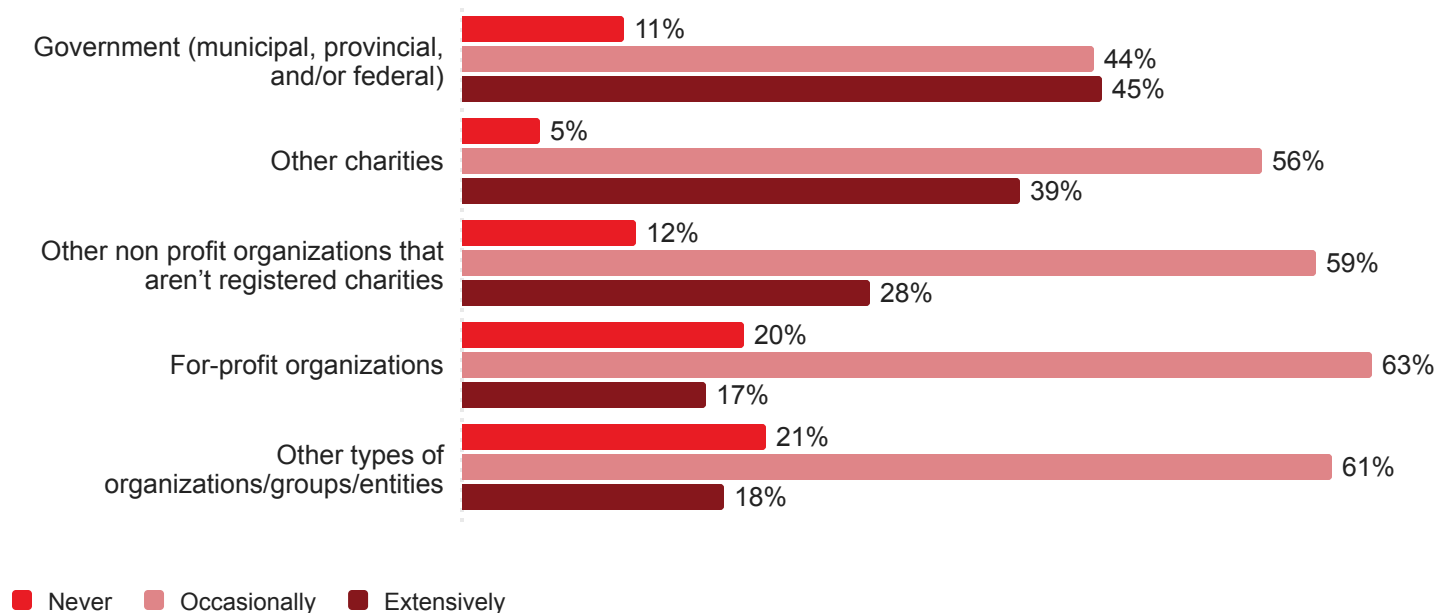
• February 2023 – Collaboration within the sector (1.02.08).....	3
• April 2023 – Service Collaboration & Integration (1.04.18)	4
• August 2023 – Cross-sector collaboration (1.08.34).....	5
• July 2024 – Mergers (2.07.28).....	6
• October 2024 – Charity ‘Co-opetition’ (Cooperative Competition) (2.10.41).....	8
• November 2024 – Sector Collaboration & Unification (2.11.44).....	9
• March 2025 – Coalitions (3.03.08).....	10
• June 2025 – Shared Services & Resource-Sharing (3.06.19).....	12
• July 2025 – Partnership Fatigue? (3.07.25).....	14

February 2023 : Collaboration within the sector

Confidence level: 95%, Margin of error: 4%

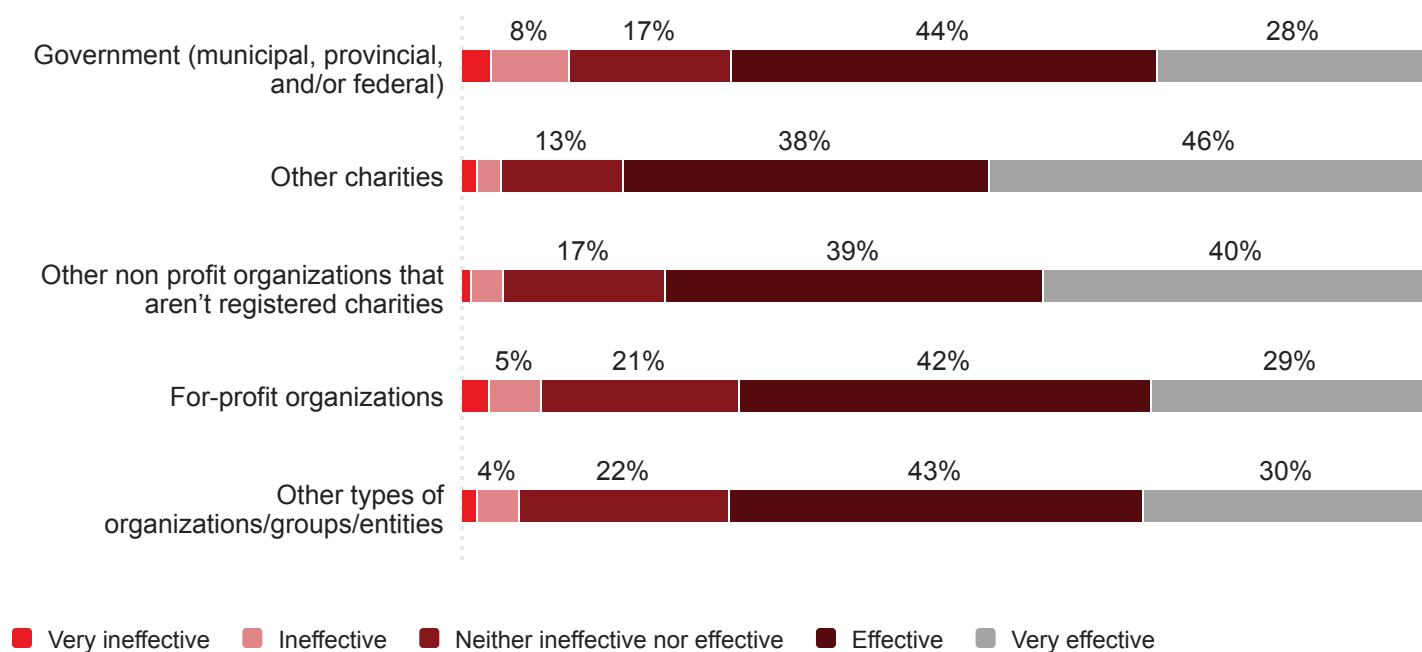
Please select to what degree your organization collaborates with each of the below :

692 Responses



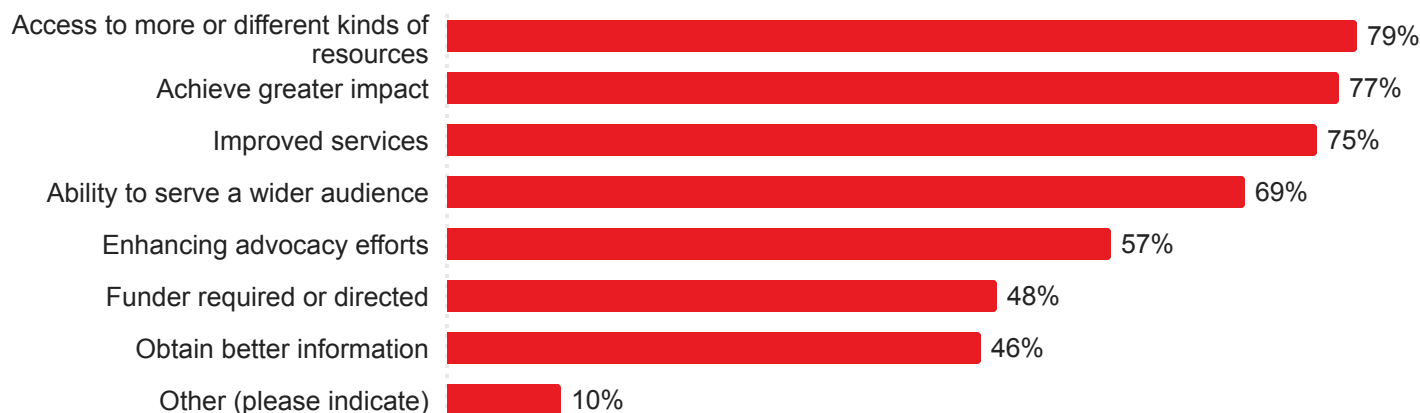
Please evaluate the effectiveness of your collaboration with each of the following :

685 Responses



What motivates your collaborations?

688 Responses

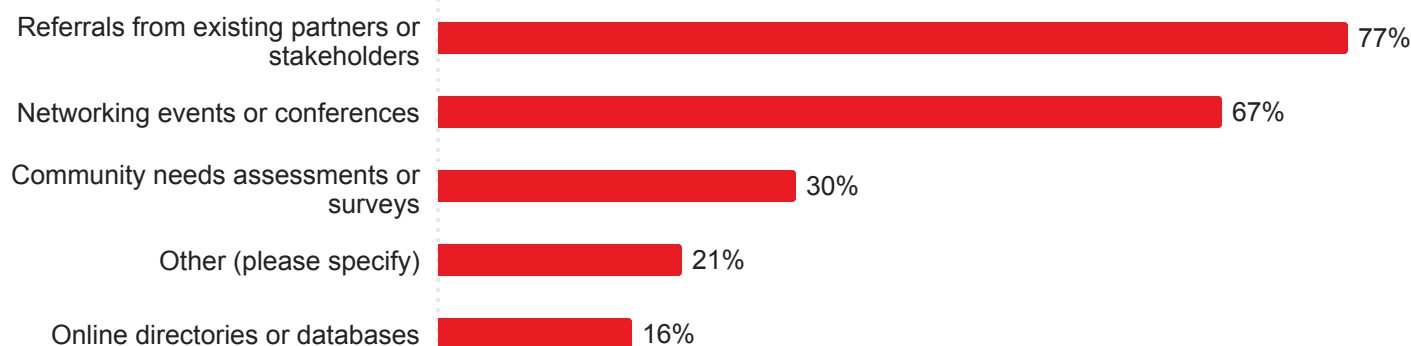


April 2023 : Service Collaboration & Integration

Confidence level: 95%, Margin of error: 4%

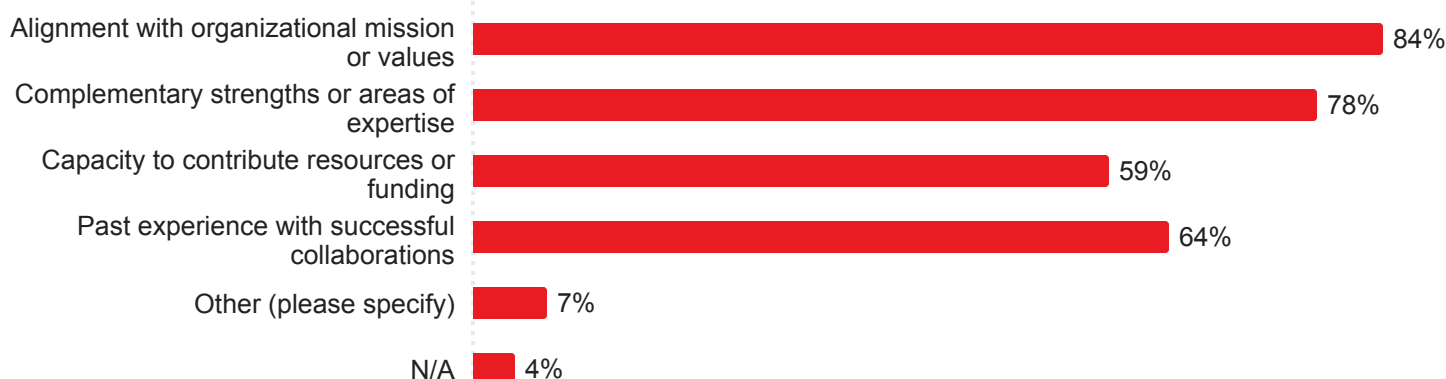
How do you identify potential partners to collaborate with within the sector?

616 Responses



What factors do you consider when selecting partners to collaborate with within the sector?

641 Responses



**In your experience, what are some common challenges that arise when collaborating with other organizations?
(Please rank from most (1) to least (7) challenging)**

630 Responses

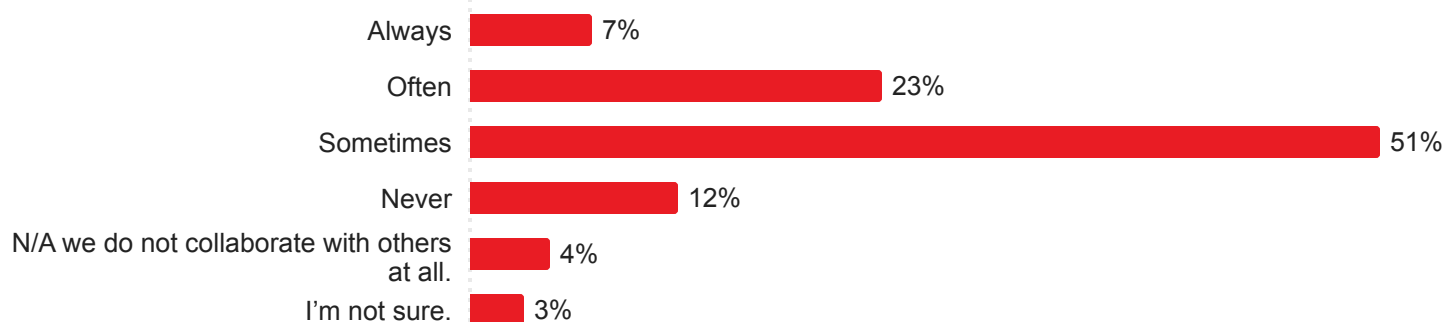
Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Communication breakdowns	39%	10%	10%	14%	13%	13%	0%	0%
Differences in organizational culture or priorities	13%	38%	13%	15%	10%	10%	0%	0%
Challenges in aligning program or service models	3%	9%	41%	15%	18%	12%	1%	0%
Difficulty in securing funding or resources	18%	12%	10%	38%	8%	13%	1%	0%
Lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities	6%	10%	13%	11%	44%	14%	2%	0%
Lack of time and resources required to work effectively with a partner	19%	20%	12%	7%	6%	37%	0%	0%
Other (please specify)	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	94%	2%

August 2023 : Cross-sector Collaboration

Confidence level: 95%, Margin of error: 4-5%

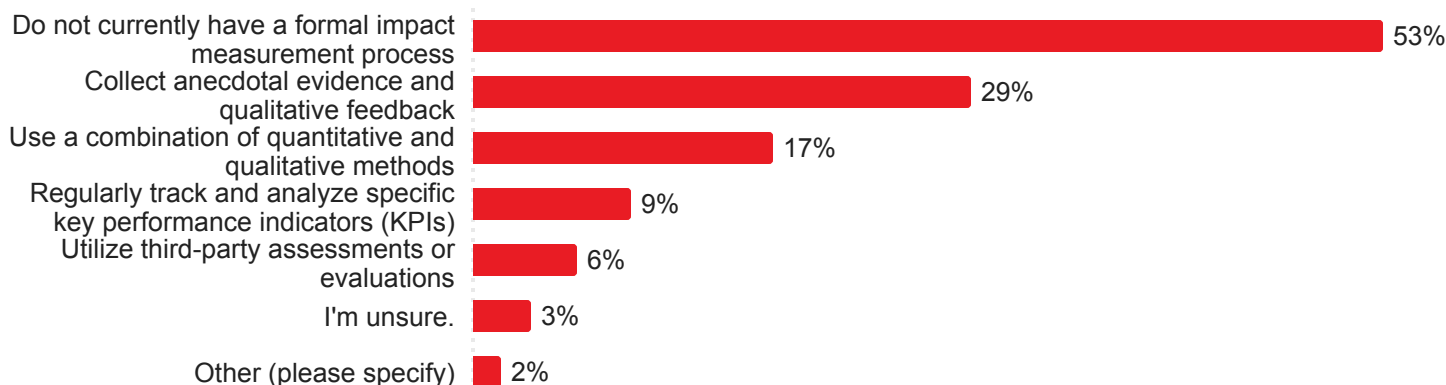
Does your organization collaborate with organizations from outside of your primary sector of activity to address complex issues or problems (ex. you are a health-based organization, and you collaborate with environmental or education-based organizations to address shared challenges)?

559 Responses



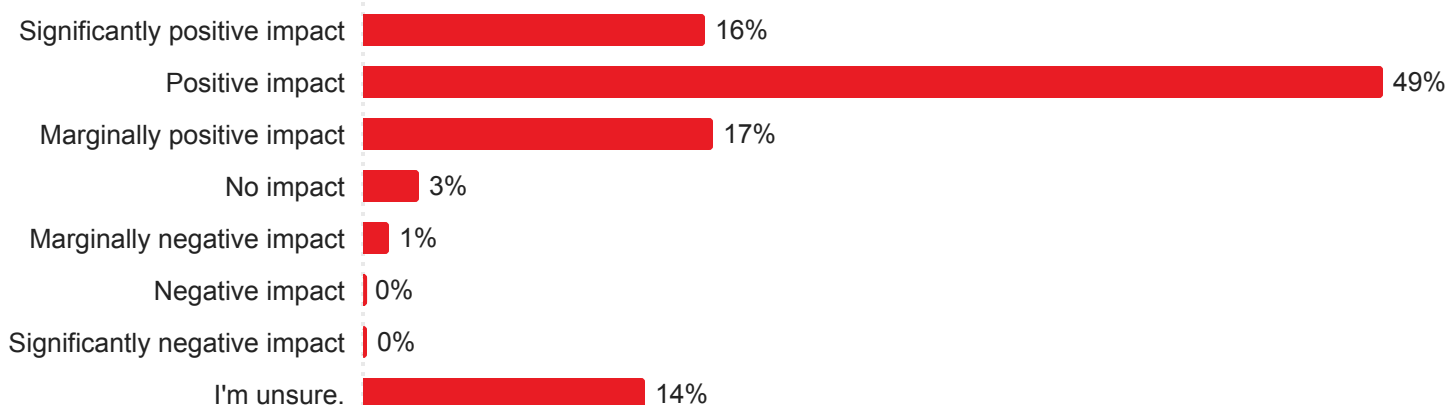
(If Always, Often, or Sometimes) - How does your organization measure the impact(s) of its cross-disciplinary collaborations? :

449 Responses



How do you perceive the impact of cross-disciplinary collaborations on the overall effectiveness of the sector in addressing complex challenges?

553 Responses

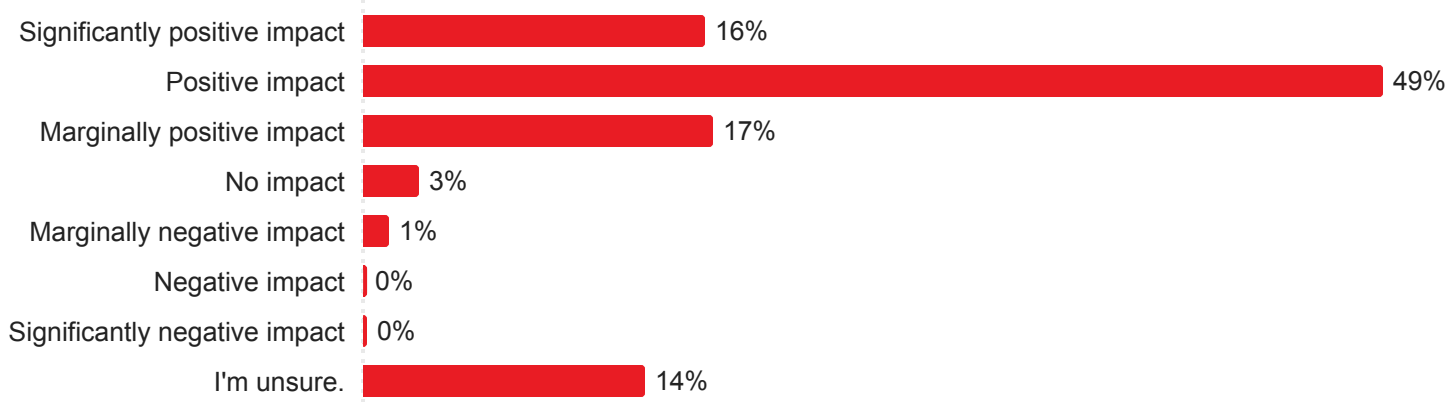


July 2024 : Mergers

Confidence level: 95%, Margin of error: 4%

In the past five years, has your organization been involved in any discussions or actions related to merging with another organization?

553 Responses



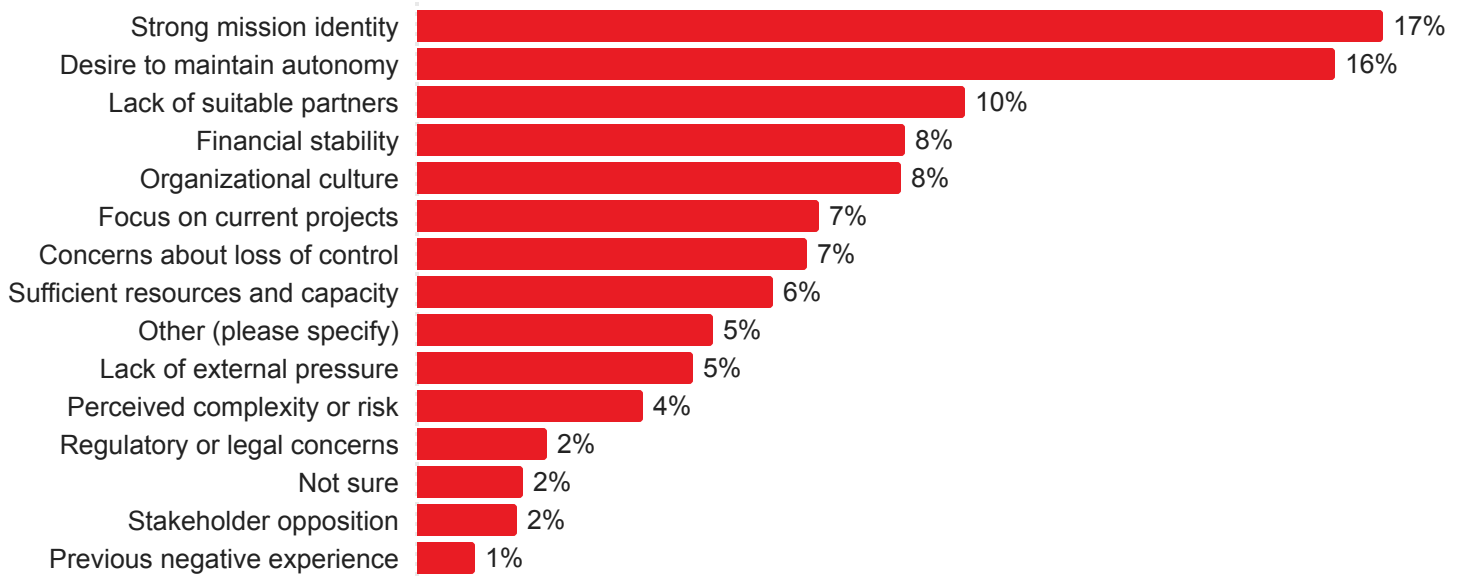
If your organization has been involved in any discussions or actions related to merging, what were the primary reasons for considering or pursuing a merger?

789 Responses

No, we have not been involved in any discussions or actions related to merging	82%
Yes, we discussed it as an option but have not acted on it yet	7%
Yes, we considered it but decided against merging	7%
Yes, we merged with another organization	2%
Not sure	1%
Yes, we are currently in the process of merging	1%

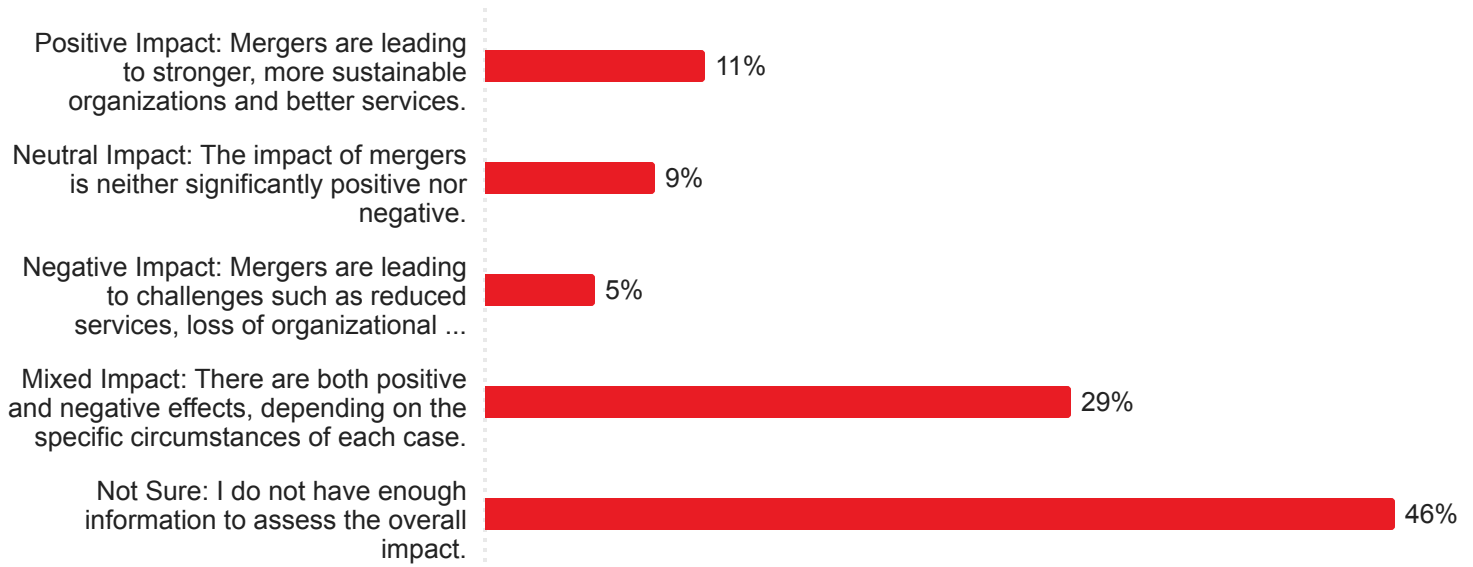
If your organization has not been involved in any discussions or actions related to merging, what are the primary reasons for not considering or pursuing a merger?

633 Responses



Overall, how do you believe mergers are impacting the charitable sector in Canada?

783 Responses

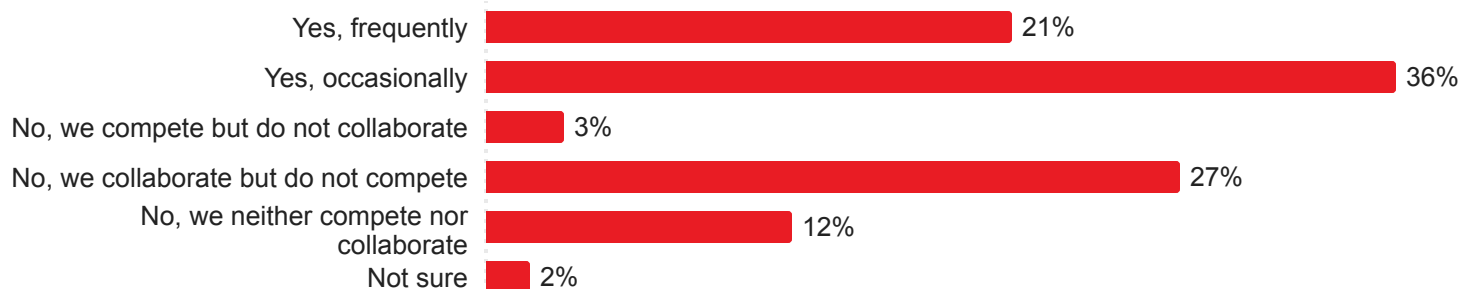


October 2024 : Charity 'Co-opetition' (Cooperative Competition)

Confidence level: 95%, Margin of error: 4%

Does your organization engage in both competition and collaboration with other charities (e.g., competing for funding while working together on projects)?

753 Responses



In which areas does your organization collaborate with other charities despite competing for funding or other resources?

752 Responses

Sharing best practices or knowledge	61%
Program delivery or service provision	54%
Advocacy initiatives	38%
Event planning or fundraising campaigns	31%
Joint research	18%
Shared services (e.g., IT, administrative support)	16%
Other (please specify)	8%
N/A	7%
We do not collaborate with other charities	7%

What is the biggest challenge your organization faces when balancing competition and collaboration with other charities?

751 Responses

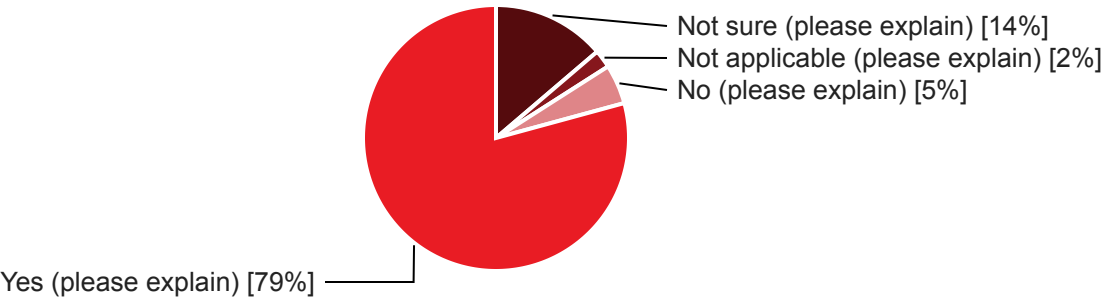
We do not experience challenges balancing both	28%
Tension over limited funding/resources	21%
Differing organizational priorities or goals	16%
N/A	14%
Lack of trust or transparency	8%
Not sure	4%
Other (please specify)	4%
Perception that collaboration weakens competitive advantage	4%
Legal or contractual restrictions	1%

November 2024 : Sector Collaboration & Unification

Confidence level: 95%, Margin of error: 4%

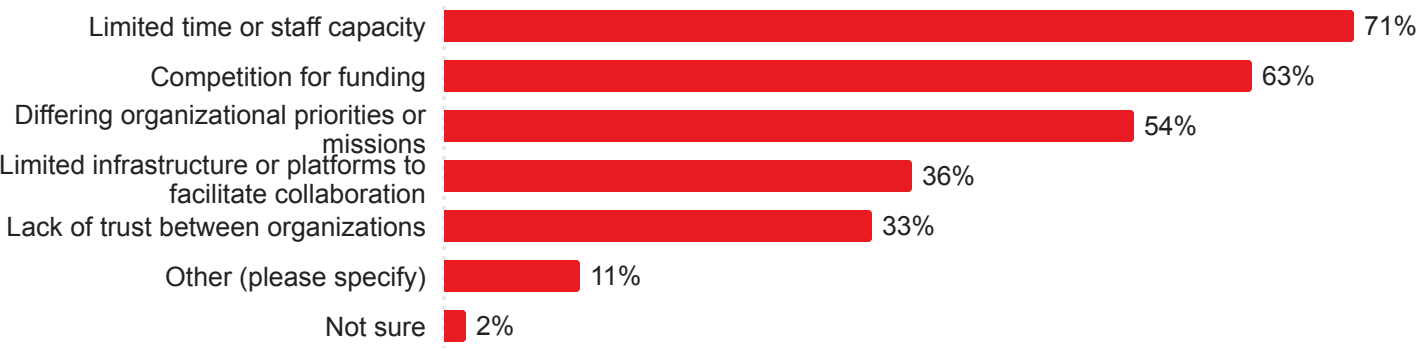
Do you believe greater collaboration among charities in your region would improve outcomes for the communities you serve? (Examples might include shared projects, pooled resources, or joint advocacy efforts.)

727 Responses



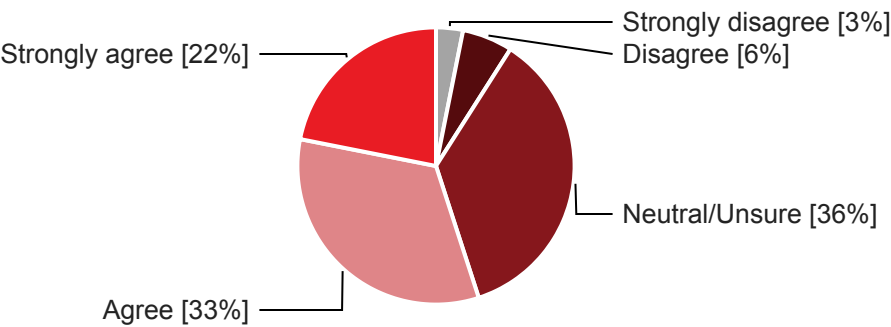
What do you think are the biggest challenges preventing greater collaboration or unification across the charitable sector?

731 Responses



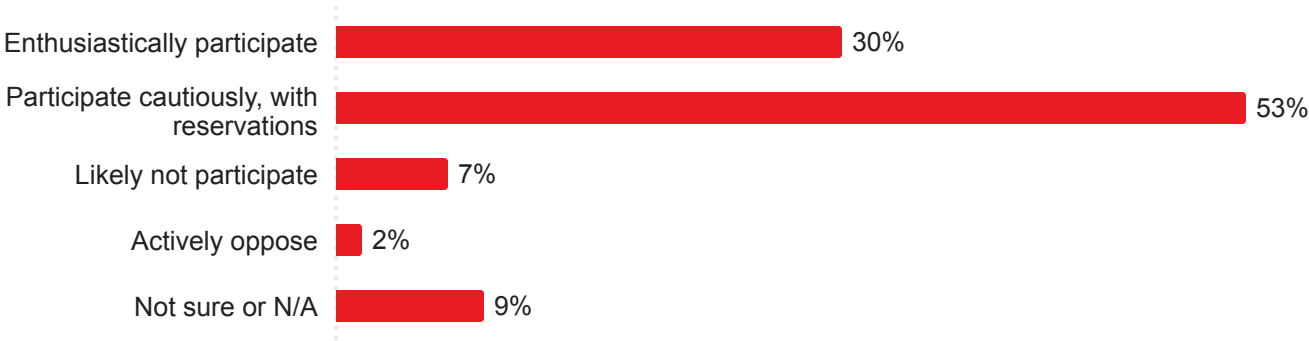
Do you see value in sector-wide standards or certifications (e.g., shared EDI benchmarks, decent work standards for staff and/or volunteers, ethical funding practices)?

731 Responses



If a national-level initiative aimed to strengthen collaboration and unification across the charitable sector were introduced (e.g., creating shared networks, resources, or advocacy platforms), how would your organization respond?

700 Responses

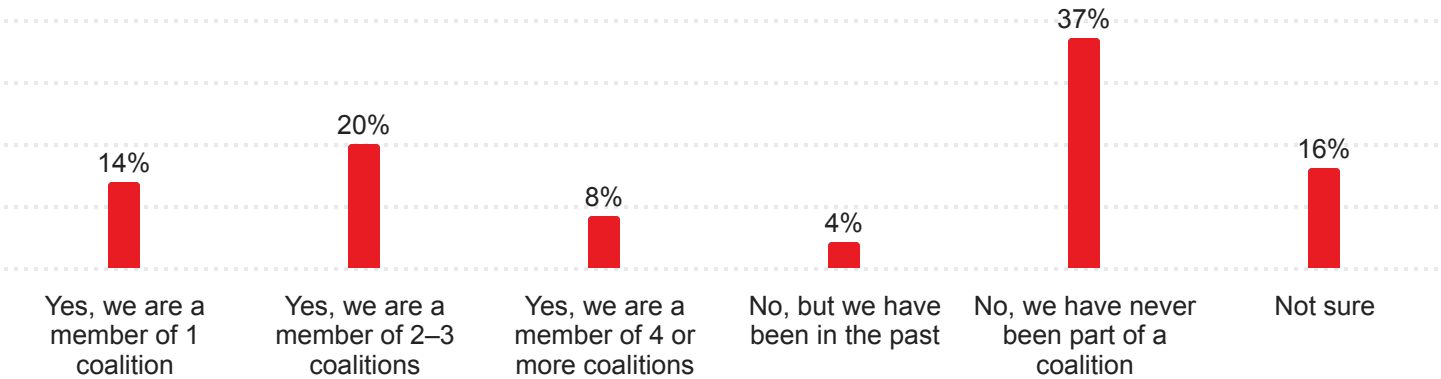


March 2025 : Coalitions

Confidence level: 95%, Margin of error: 4-6%

Is your charity currently a member of any coalitions?

813 Responses



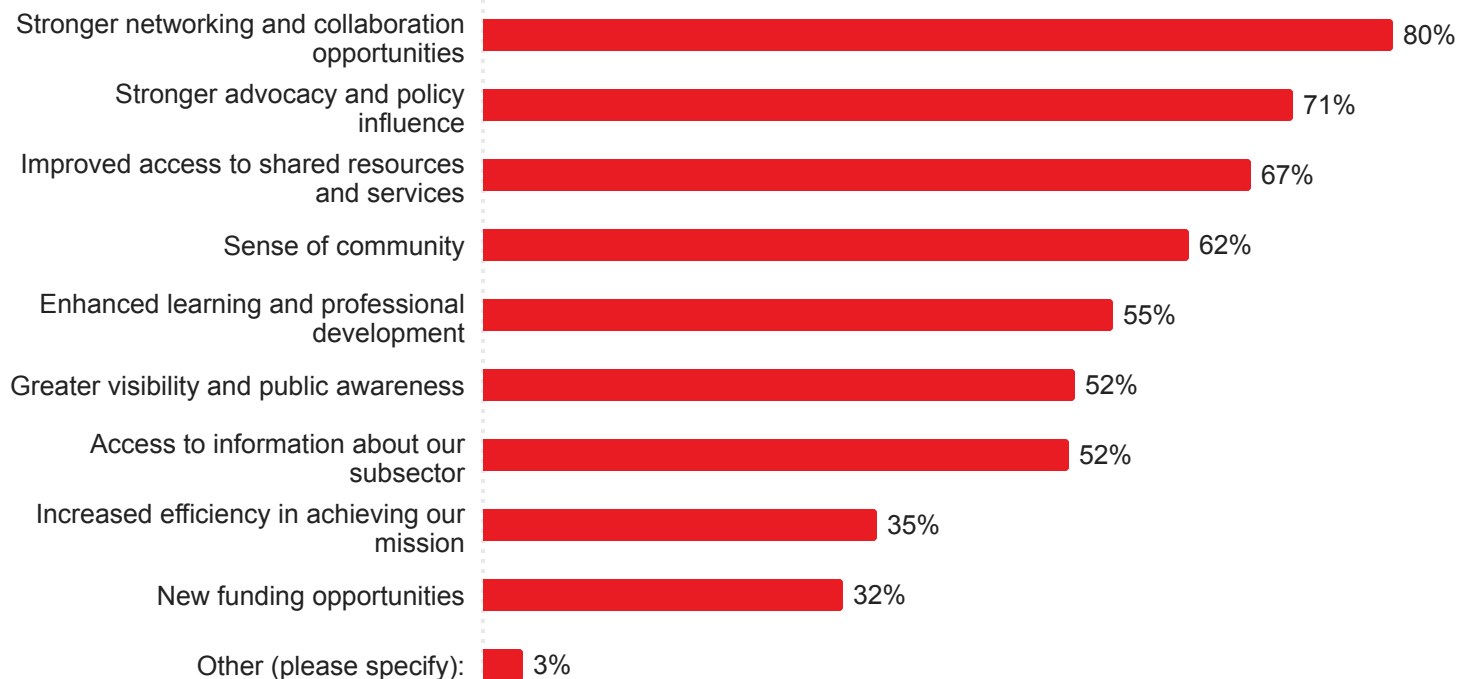
What types of organizations are included in the coalition(s) your charity is (or were) a part of?

374 Responses

Other charities within our subsector (e.g., organizations with a similar mission)	84%
A diverse mix of charities across different subsectors	31%
Nonprofit organizations that are not registered charities	32%
Private sector businesses or corporate partners	11%
Government agencies or departments	14%
Grassroots or community-led organizations	37%
Other (please specify)	7%
Not sure	0%
Academic or research institutions	18%
Unions or professional associations	9%
International organizations	9%

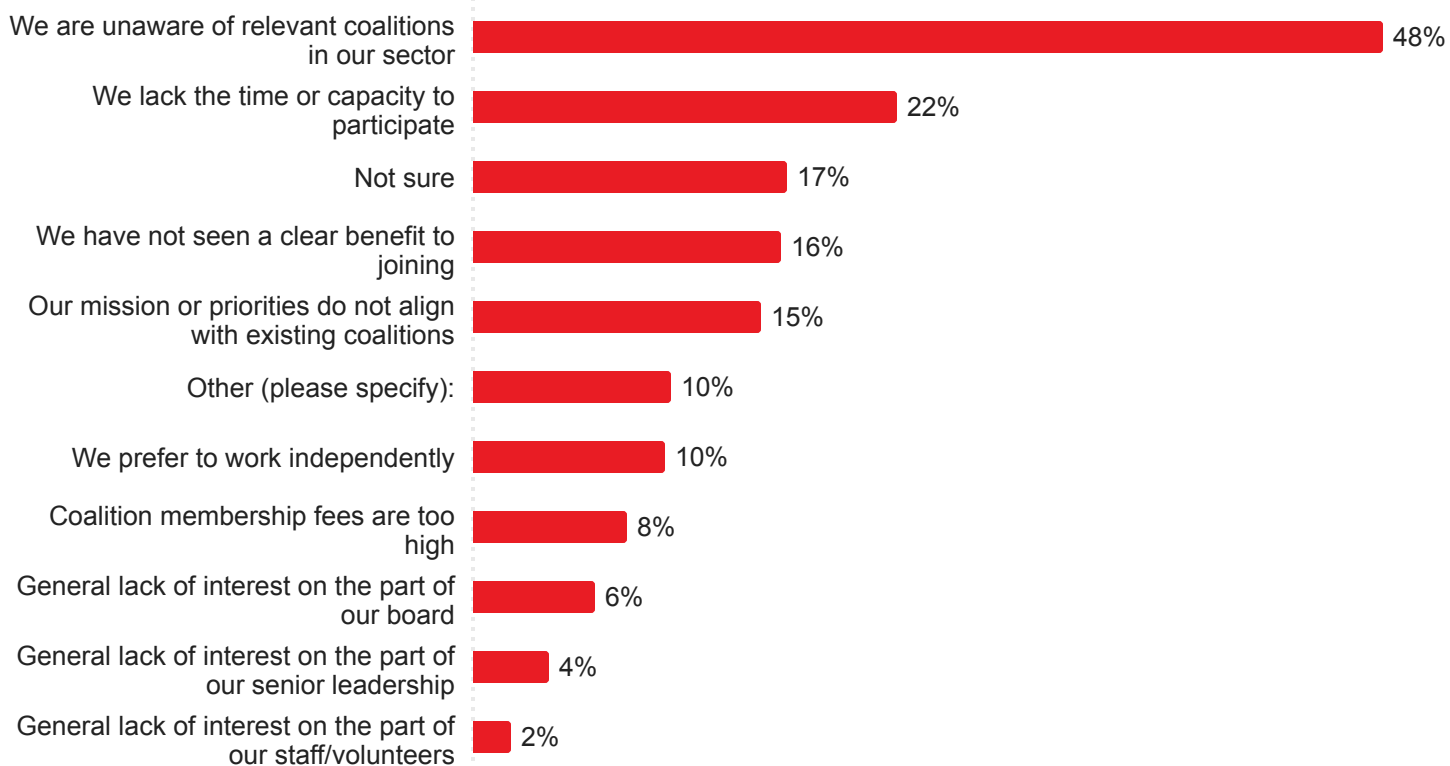
What benefits have you experienced from being a member of a coalition?

372 Responses



(If No, we have never been part of a coalition): Why is your organization not a member of a coalition?

296 Responses

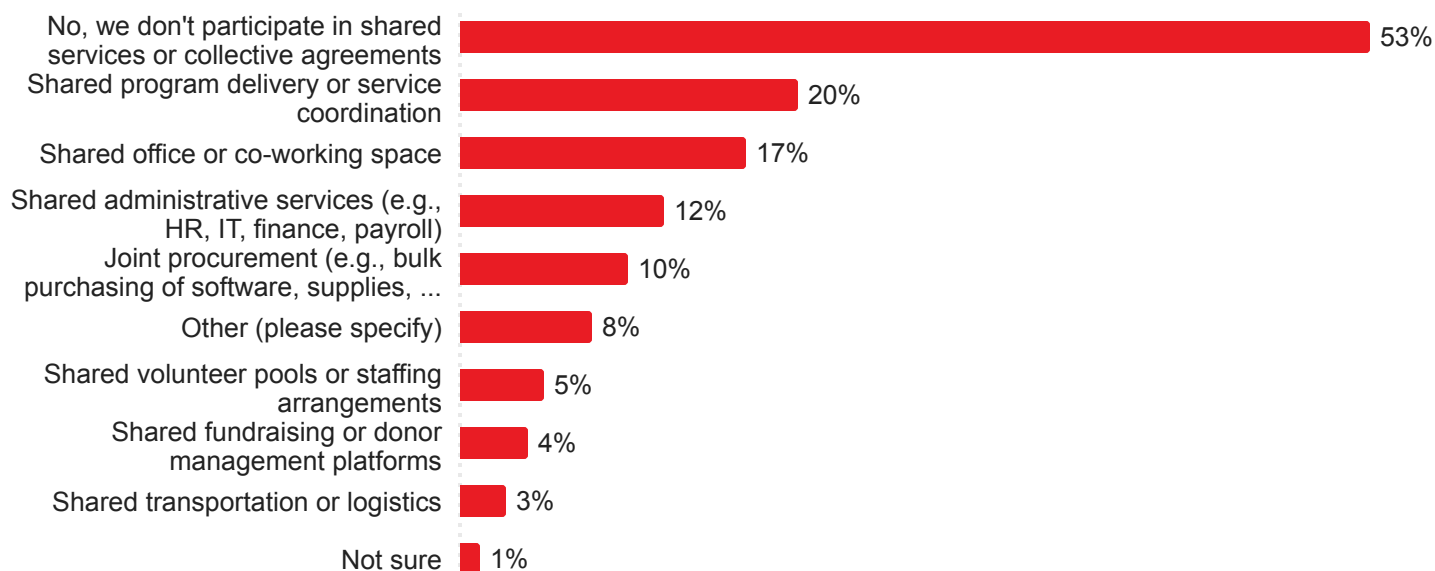


June 2025 : Resource Sharing

Confidence level: 95%, Margin of error: 4%

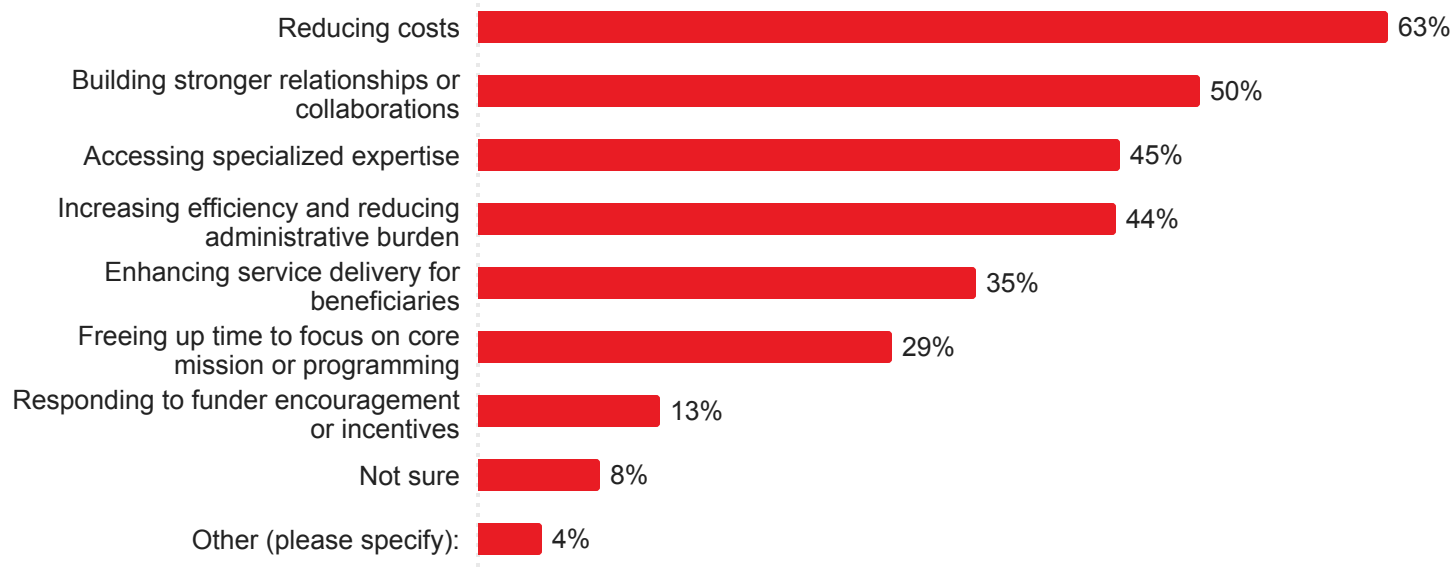
Does your organization currently participate in any shared services or collective purchasing agreements?

715 Responses



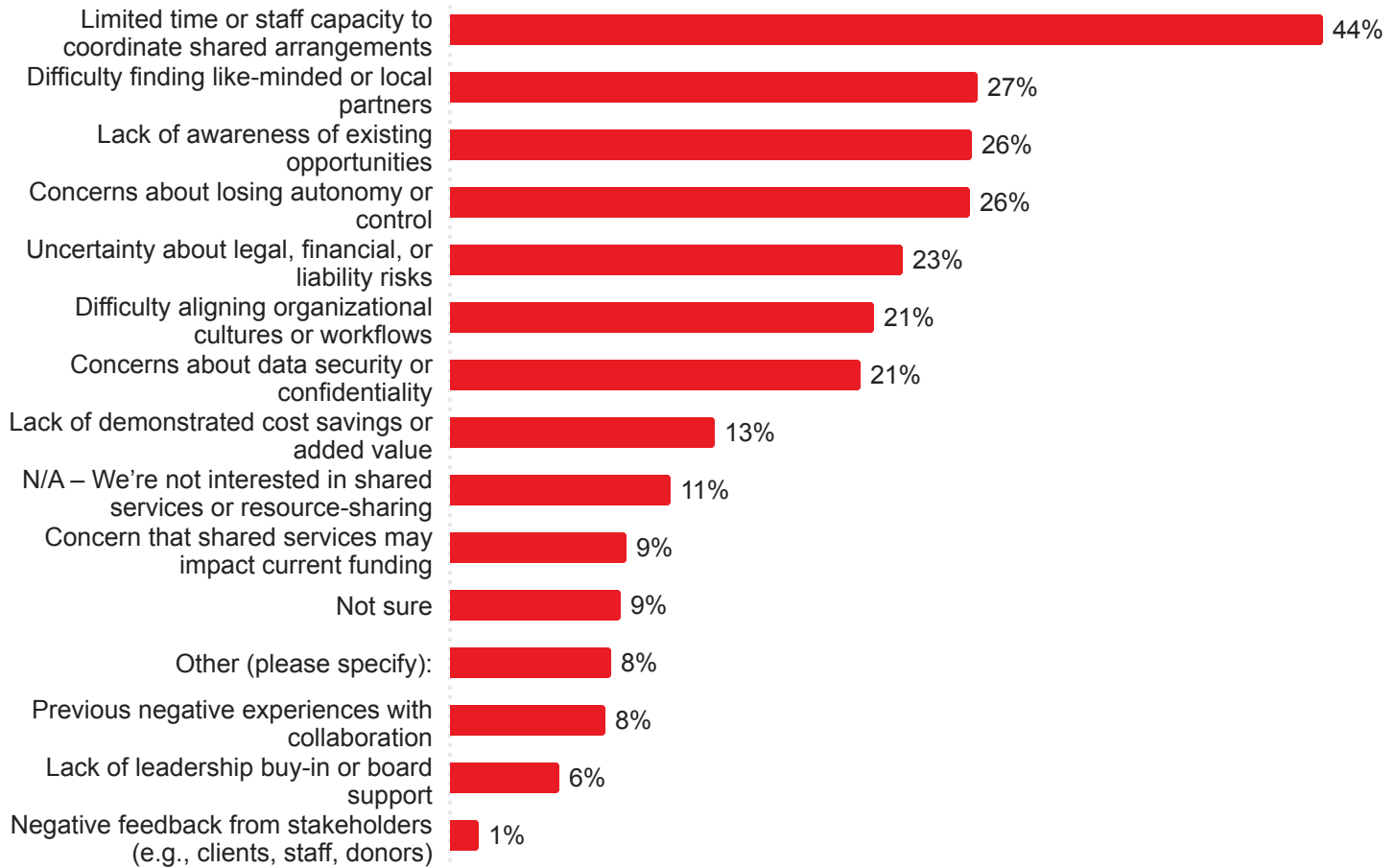
What are the main reasons your organization does (or would consider) participating in shared services or resource-sharing?

708 Responses



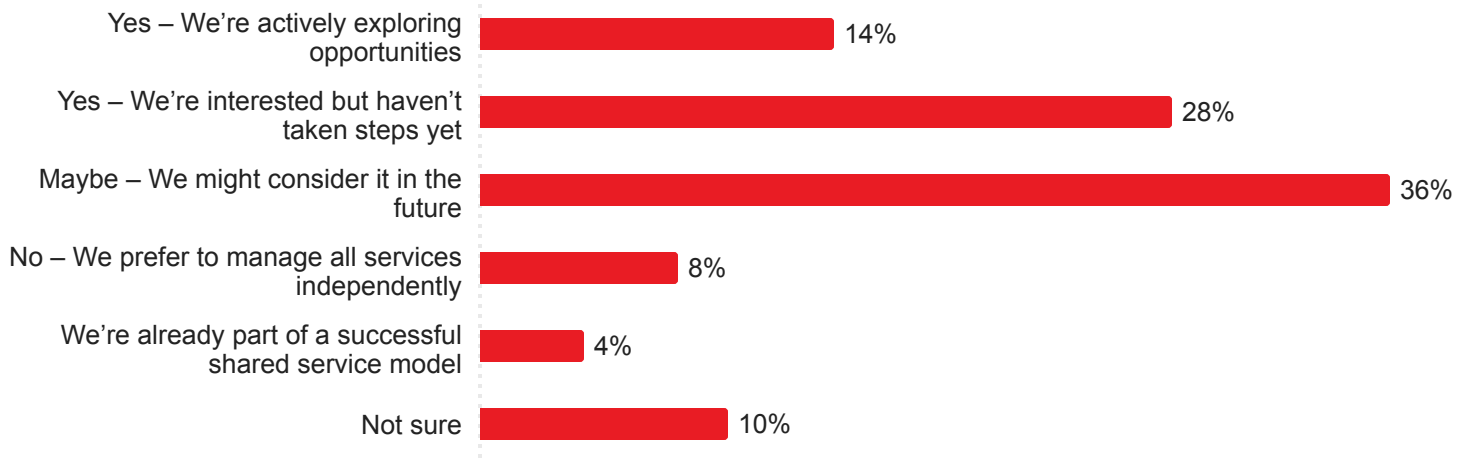
What are the biggest challenges your organization faces in participating in shared services or resource-sharing?

708 Responses



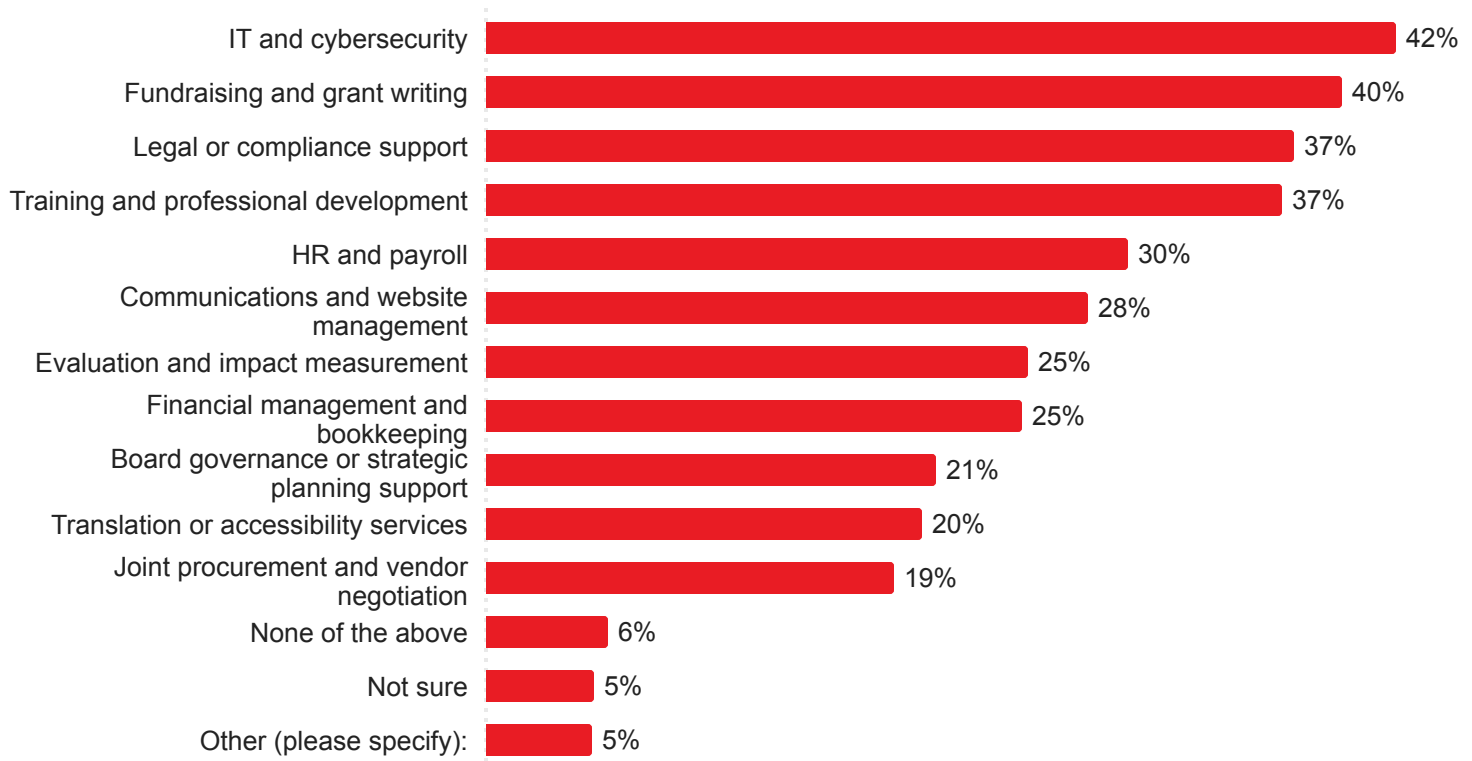
Would your organization be interested in participating in sector-wide initiatives to streamline operations and reduce costs through shared services?

715 Responses



If sector-wide shared service models were available, which areas would be most useful for your organization? (Select up to two)

714 Responses

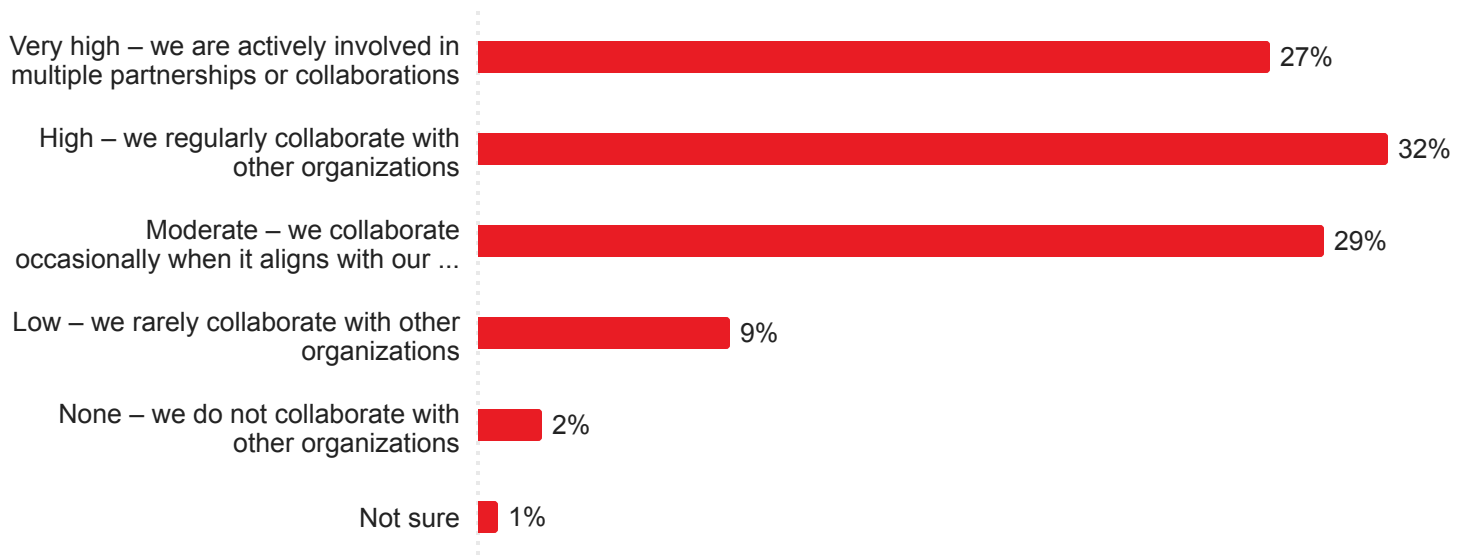


July 2025 : Partnership Fatigue?

Confidence level: 95%, Margin of error: 4%

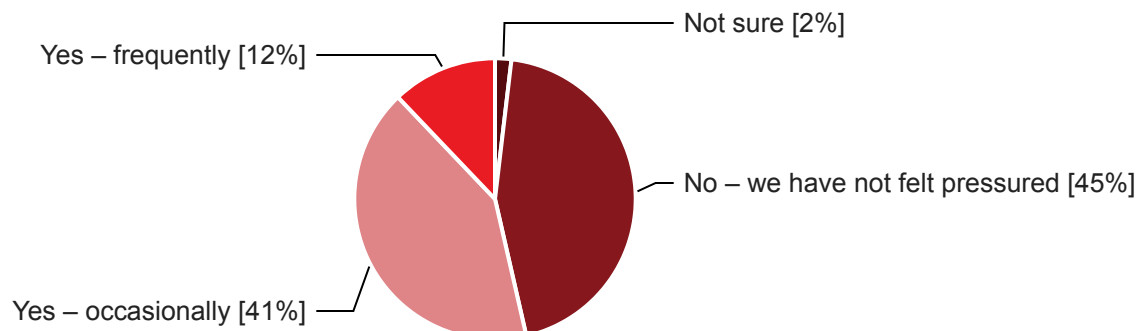
In the past 12 months, how would you describe your organization's level of involvement in collaborative or partnership-based work?

586 Responses



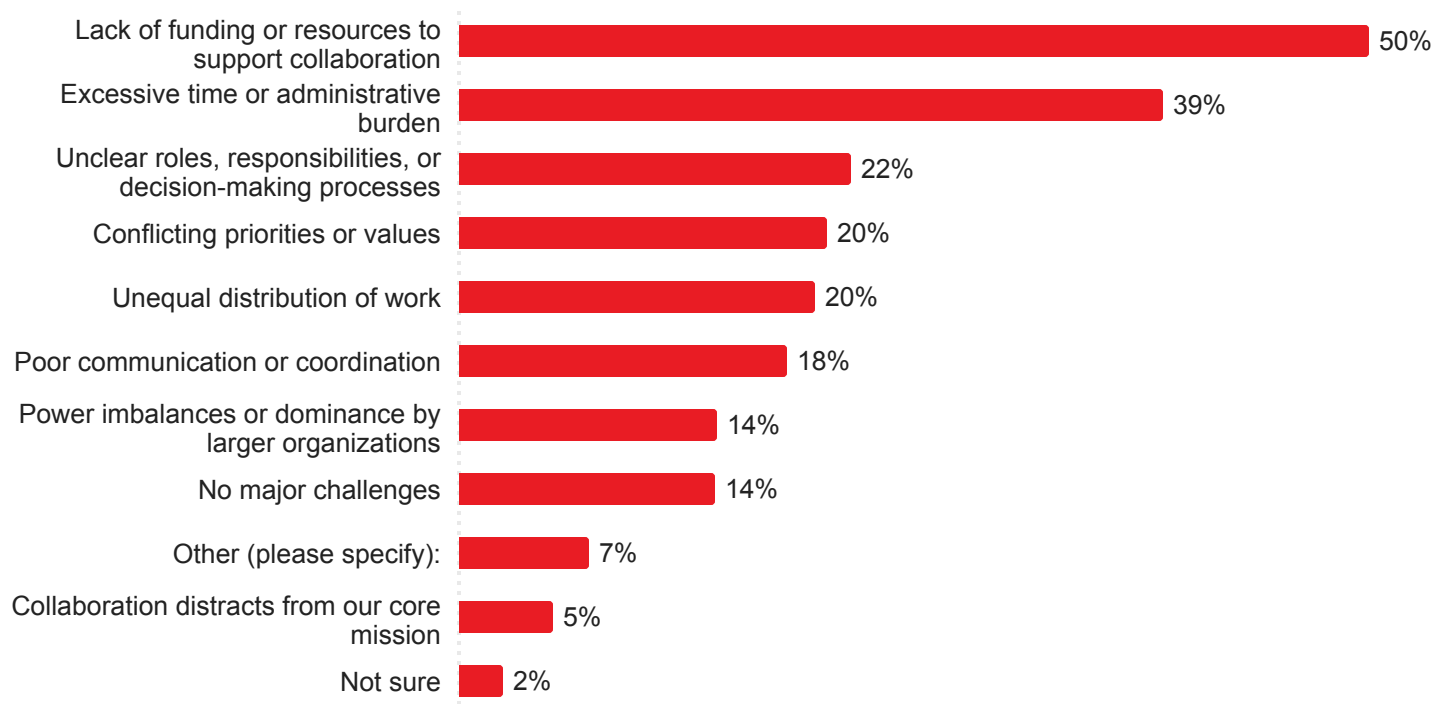
Has your organization ever felt pressured to collaborate (e.g., by funders, governments, or other partners)?

586 Responses



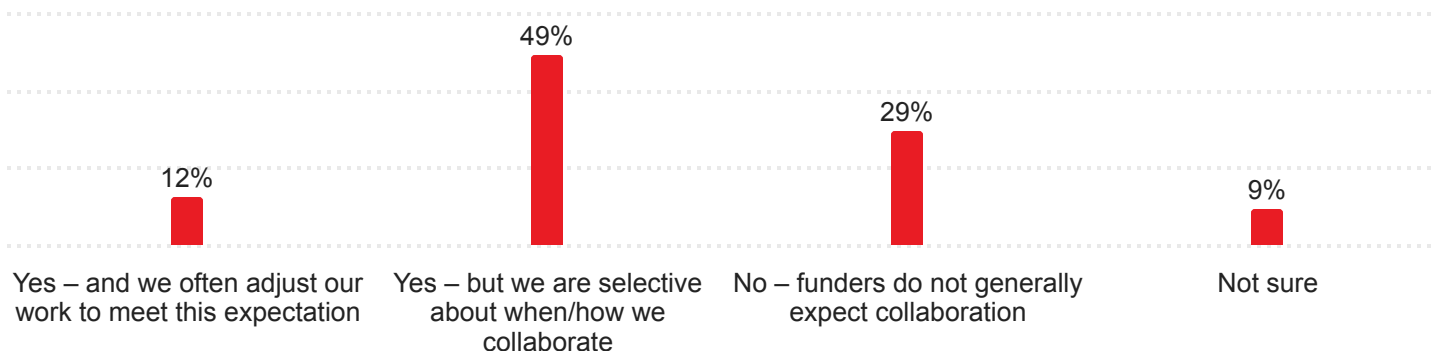
What are the biggest challenges your organization faces when collaborating with other organizations? Select up to 3.

584 Responses



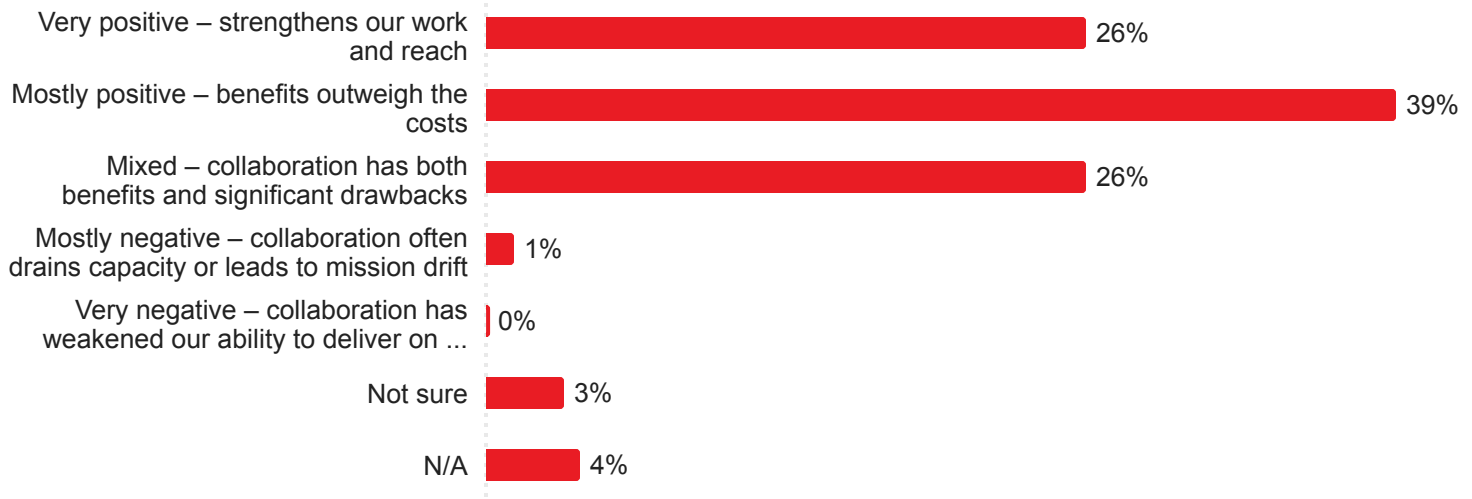
Do you feel that collaboration is often expected by funders as a condition of funding or credibility?

584 Responses



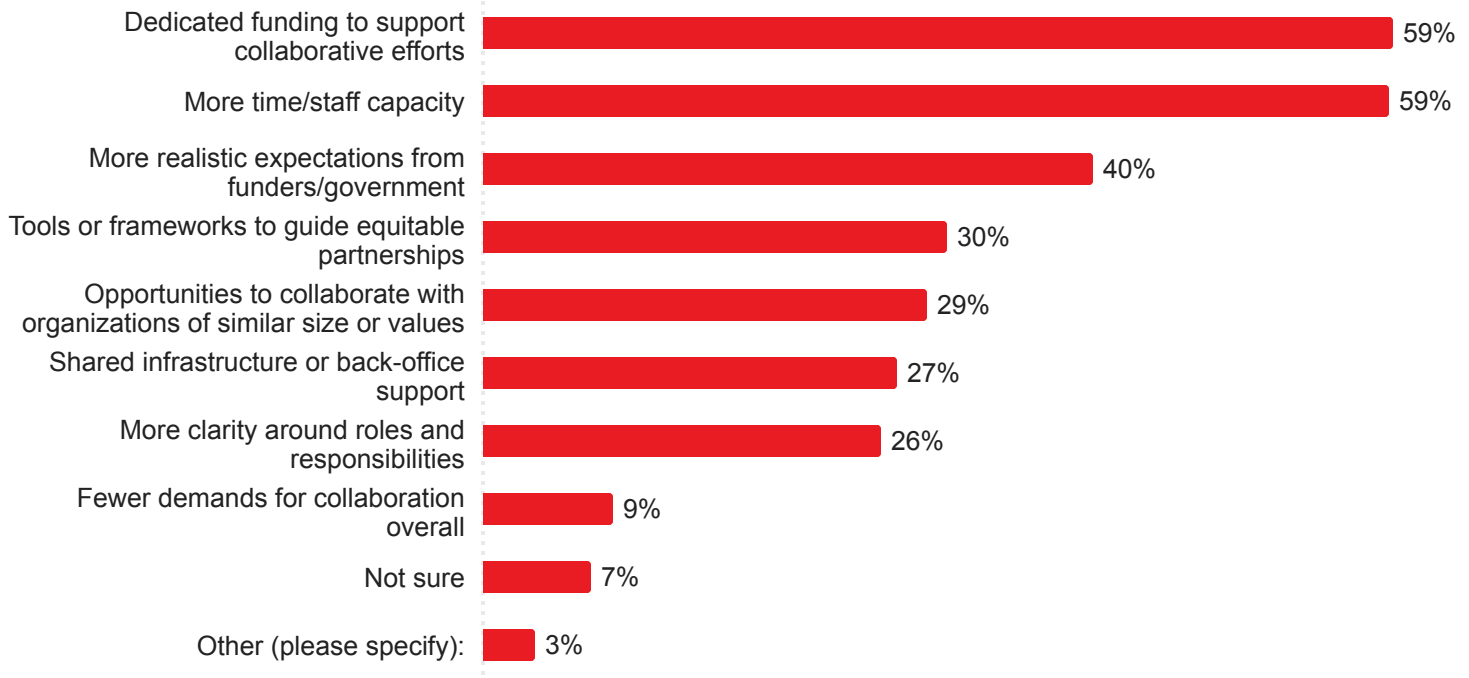
Overall, how would you describe the current impact of collaboration on your organization?

586 Responses



What would help your organization engage in healthier or more sustainable collaboration? Select all that apply.

587 Responses



Survey Methodology

Data Source

The Charity Insights Canada Project (CICP) panel is derived from publicly available T3010 Registered Charity Information Returns administered by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). This dataset is publicly accessible and unaltered. Our lists are copies of an official work published by the Government of Canada and are not endorsed by, or affiliated with, the Government of Canada.

Sample Development

Randomized samples were generated from a population of approximately 84,000 registered charities in Canada. After initial exclusions, the sampling frame included approximately 33,000 organizations.

Excluded from the study were:

- Religious organizations tied to specific places of worship (with limited exceptions)
- Hospitals and schools

Charities were included if they:

- Were designated as Type C (charities)
- Reported at least one full-time employee (FTE)
- Reported annual expenditures greater than \$1
- Targeted sub-samples were also created for:
 - Public and private foundations (Types A & B)
 - Volunteer-run charities (FTE = 0)

Panel Composition

From this refined frame, a primary random sample was drawn and supplemented by seven sub-samples (SS1–SS7) to ensure inclusion of hard-to-reach and diverse groups such as:

- Foundations and volunteer-run organizations
- Charities across different regions (e.g., British Columbia, Québec)
- Organizations engaged in international or religion-focused activities

This approach results in a panel of approximately 1,100 charities annually, representing a broad cross-section of the sector. As of September 2025, about 950 participants remain active.

Recruitment & Participation

Recruitment was conducted via email and phone outreach. All participants completed an information form to verify organizational details and provide additional HR data.

Survey Process

The CICP distributes short surveys every Wednesday at 6:00 a.m. ET, with a 24-hour initial response window and a reminder the following morning. Weekly reports are released each Friday to provide timely insights.

Oversight

Survey topics are developed by the CICP core research team, with guidance from an Advisory Board of sector leaders and practitioners. The Board ensures that the study remains responsive to emerging issues and reflective of the sector's evolving realities.