



# 2015 Young Nonprofit Professionals Survey Report

Prepared by:

**Young Nonprofit Professionals Network of Boston**

Research & Evaluation Team

## About YNPN Boston

The Young Nonprofit Professionals Network of Boston is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to developing a stronger, higher impact nonprofit community in Boston by engaging young talent and their organizations in professional development and human capital management practices.

The nonprofit sector is under-investing in its human capital due to a lack of scale/financial resources and prioritization of talent management. Not all organizations are able to consistently provide robust development opportunities for their staff, leaving individuals, particularly young professionals, wanting more yet lacking the resources and training to drive their own personal growth. Ultimately, this leads to uncultivated potential in the sector and lessens the impact nonprofit professionals can have in delivering against the critical missions of their organizations.

We are focused on closing the professional development gap, empowering young people in their own professional growth and development, and influencing organizations' prioritization of human capital management and best practices.

## Acknowledgements

This survey was made possible with the support and hard work of many individuals and organizations. The Research & Evaluation Team would like to thank everyone who contributed to this effort.

Thank you to the following:

- The 265 survey participants that took the time to share their thoughts with us
- Numerous local nonprofit organizations and networks that promoted the survey on our behalf
- Members of the YNPN Boston Leadership Team that shaped, shared, and completed the survey

A special thanks to the YNPN Boston Communications & Marketing Team for their partnership on this project.

## Table of Contents

Key Highlights	4
Impact on the Sector	5
Objectives	6
Approach	6
Results	7
Current Employment	7
Professional Development	10
Mentorship	12
Professional Organizations	13
Sector Outlook	14
Student Loans	15
Demographics	16
YNPN Boston	20

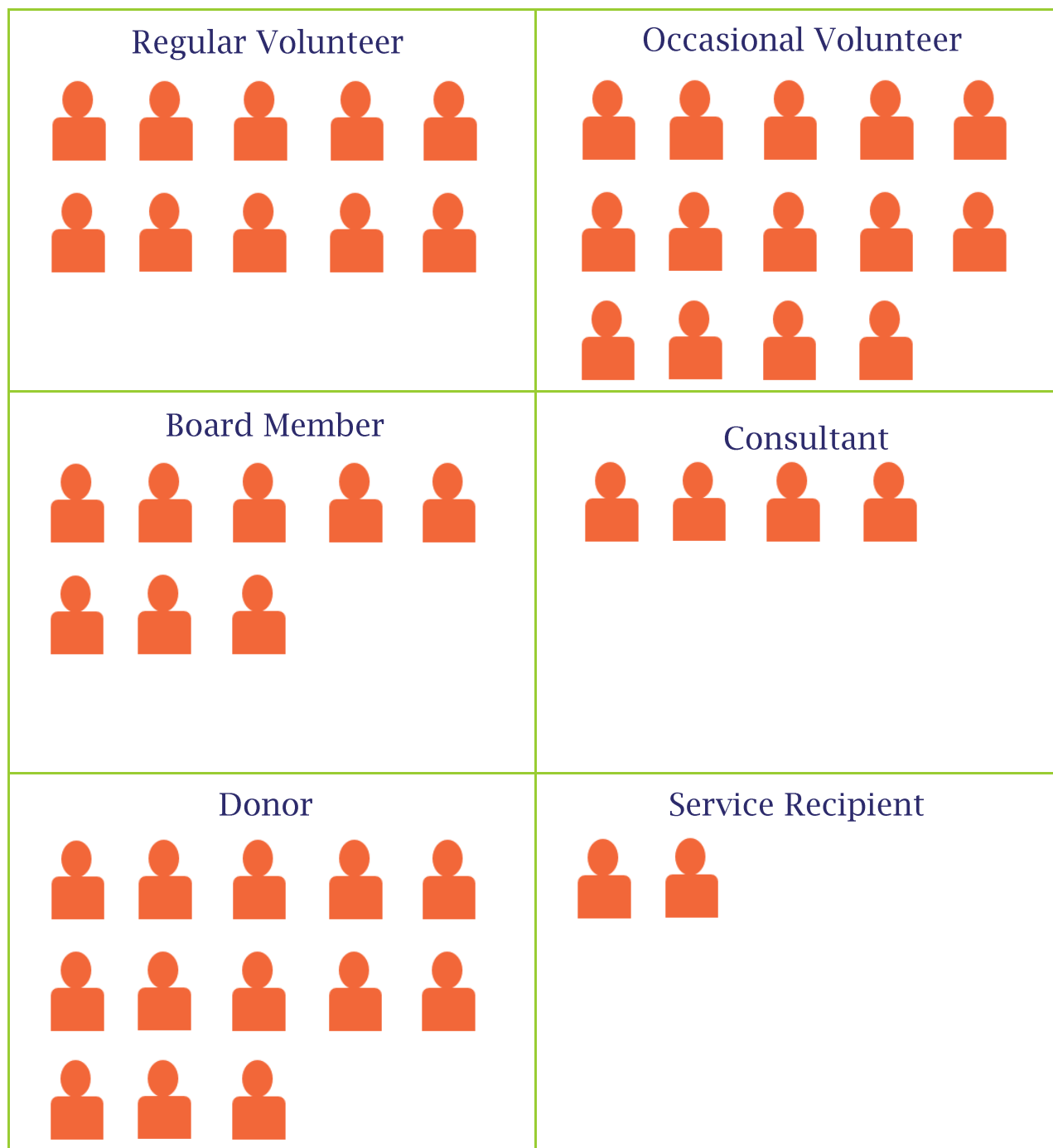
## Key Highlights

<h3>Current Employment</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>85% of participants are employed in nonprofits</li> <li>Top three sub-sectors: education, human services, and health</li> <li>Most are satisfied with their current employment – though one-third are unsatisfied with their compensation</li> <li>75% have basic employer-provided benefits</li> <li>Two-thirds have access to some PD through their employer</li> </ul>	<h3>Professional Development (PD)</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>87% consider expanding their professional network to be an important PD opportunity</li> <li>Top three quantifiable skills: Operations/organizational development, program evaluation, and program management</li> <li>Top three subjective skills: Problem solving/decision making, project management, and leading a team</li> </ul>
<h3>Mentorship</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% want to find a mentor</li> <li>12% already have a mentor</li> <li>Top three interests in a mentor: unbiased feedback, learning specific skills/ knowledge, and access to connections</li> <li>Most would like to engage with a mentor through multiple meetings and email conversations</li> </ul>	<h3>Professional Organizations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most important factor for joining: making new professional connections</li> <li>42% would pay \$50+ for annual membership</li> <li>49% think finding a mentor is an important aspect of joining a professional organization</li> </ul>
<h3>Sector Outlook</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>86% plan to stay in the sector long-term</li> <li>The top reason for leaving would be low salary and/or lack of benefits</li> <li>Those leaving the nonprofit sector would most likely go to the for-profit or government sectors</li> </ul>	<h3>Student Loans</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>61% of participants have student loan debt</li> <li>Three out of four with student loans use 10%+ of their income for student debt, and one out of four use 25%+</li> <li>Almost half with student loans have delayed financial decisions, and one-third have shared housing or delayed family decisions</li> </ul>
<h3>Demographics</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The majority of survey participants are between the ages of 24 and 35, identify as a white/Caucasian female, have a bachelor's degree or higher, and an annual income between \$30,000 and \$59,999</li> </ul>	<h3>YNPN Boston</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most participants follow on social media or subscribe to listserv</li> <li>68% of participants have experienced a positive outcome from their involvement</li> <li>One-third have attended a PD training or applied for a job they found through the listserv</li> </ul>

## Our Impact: How Survey Participants Engage with the Sector

85% of the 265 survey participants are currently employed in the nonprofit sector, but many are involved in the sector in other ways.

 = 10 people



62% of participants are engaged in two or more ways

## Objectives

The Young Nonprofit Professionals Survey was developed to gather feedback on the needs and opinions of young nonprofit professionals in the Greater Boston area to inform the strategy of YNPN Boston and provide a greater understanding of young professionals in the local nonprofit sector.

Eight research themes were identified in the development of this survey:

**Current Employment:** Status of and satisfaction with current employment

**Professional Development:** Needs for and access to professional development opportunities

**Mentorship:** Interest in finding and preferred methods for interacting with mentors

**Professional Organizations:** Important factors for membership

**Sector Outlook:** Long-term outlook and commitment to the nonprofit sector

**Student Loans:** Impact of student loans on life and career

**Demographics:** Characteristics of young professionals in the local nonprofit sector

**YNPN Boston:** Involvement and impact of affiliation with YNPN Boston

## Approach

This report is based on online surveys of 265 young nonprofit professionals in the Greater Boston area. Respondents may consider themselves to be members of YNPN Boston, but this was not a prerequisite for participation.

The survey was promoted through the online channels available to YNPN Boston, including our listserv and social media accounts. Members of the leadership team shared the survey through their personal social media accounts and with their personal networks of young nonprofit professionals.

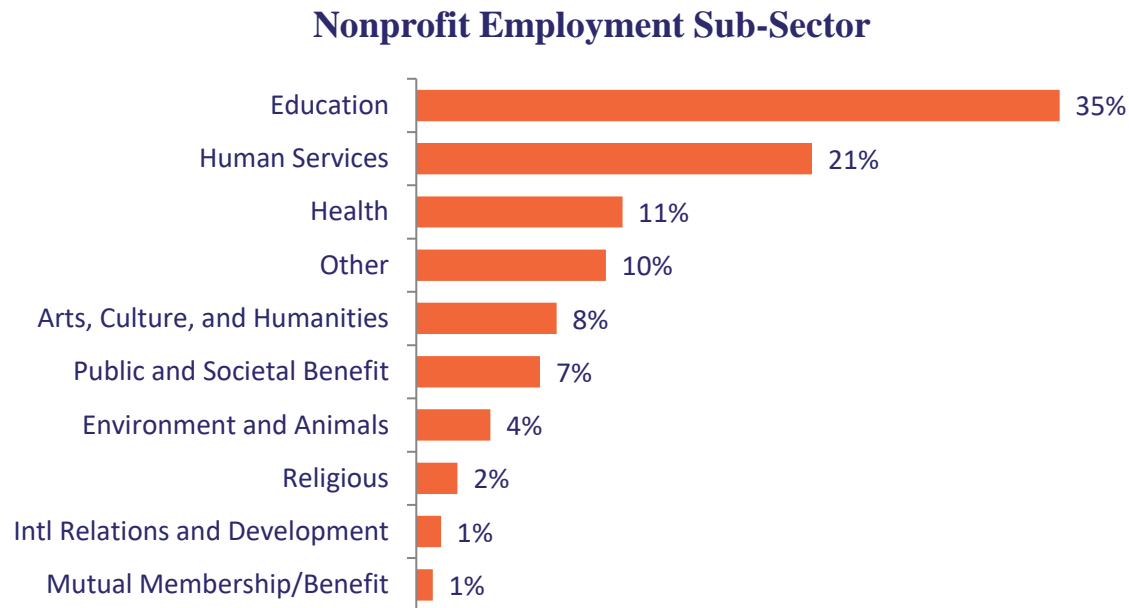
At the request of YNPN Boston, many local nonprofit organizations and networks promoted the survey to their members.

## Results

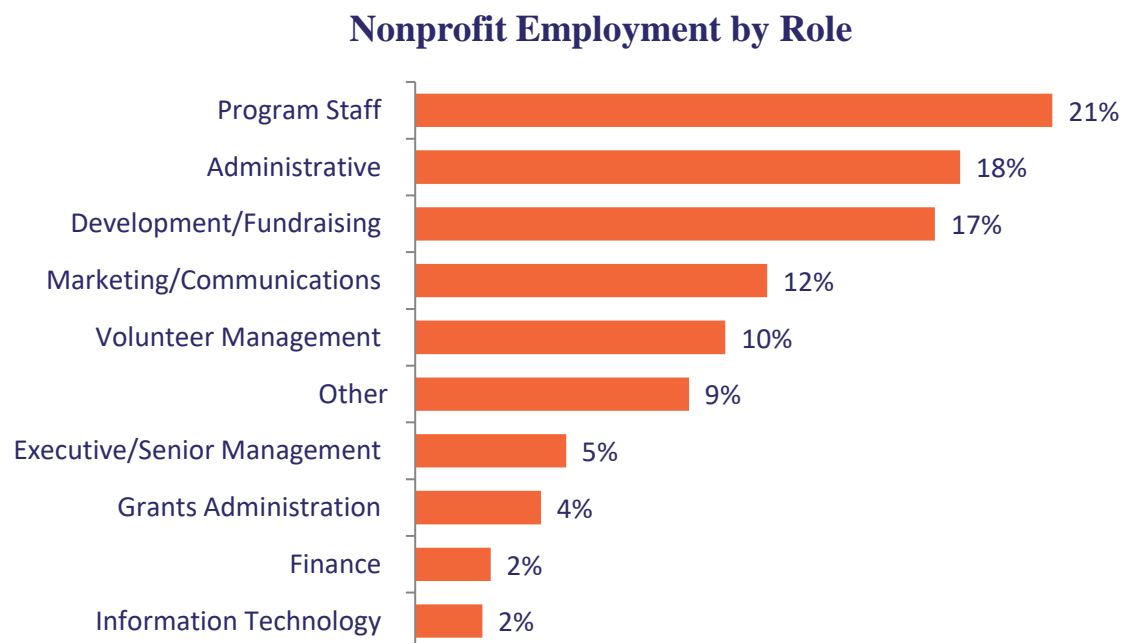
**Current Employment** 85% of survey participants are currently employed in the nonprofit sector.

---

**Education, human services, and healthcare are the top three sub-sectors represented.**

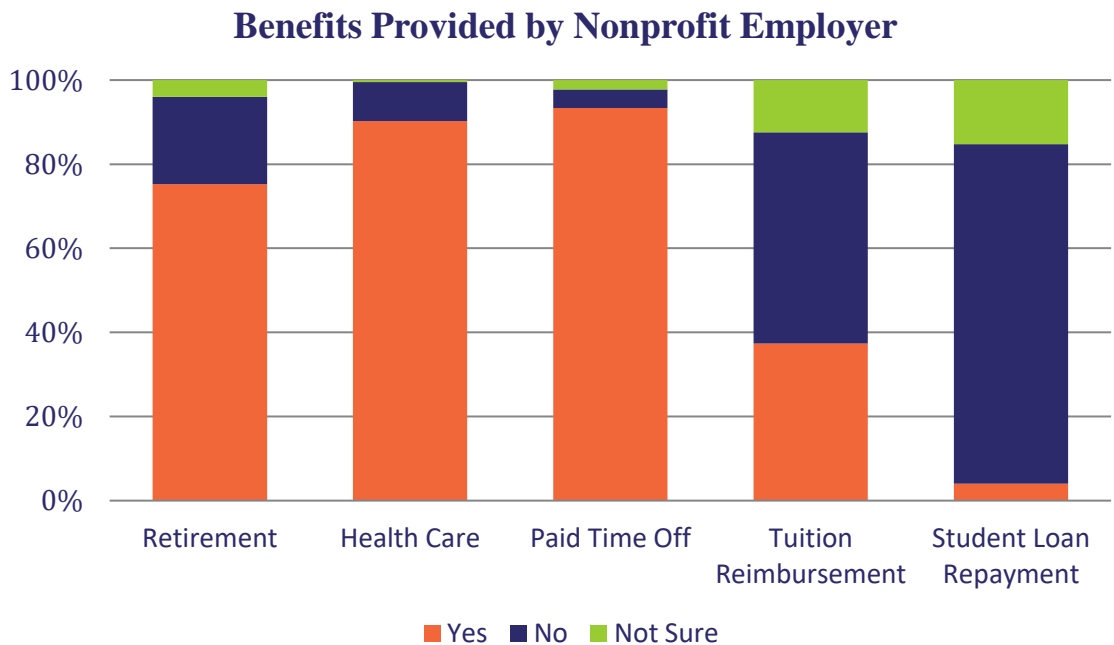


**The top five roles represented were program staff, administrative, development/fundraising, marketing/communications, and volunteer management.**

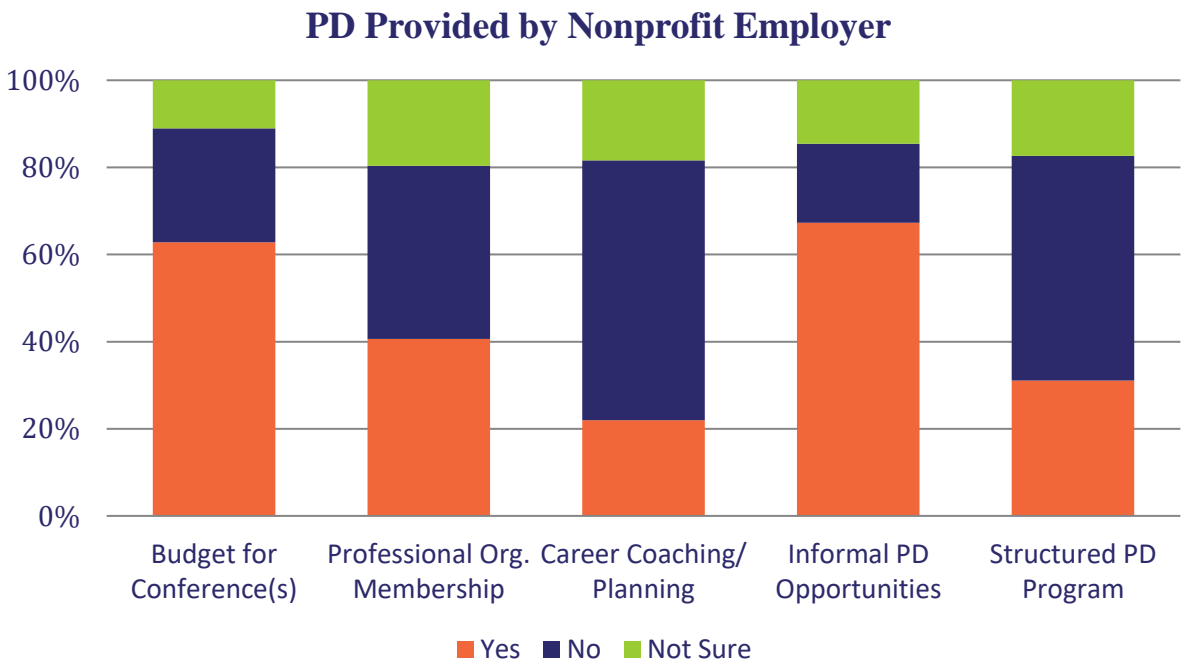


Over 75% have basic employer-provided benefits. Two-thirds have access to some professional development through their employer.

Only 37% have access to tuition reimbursement.



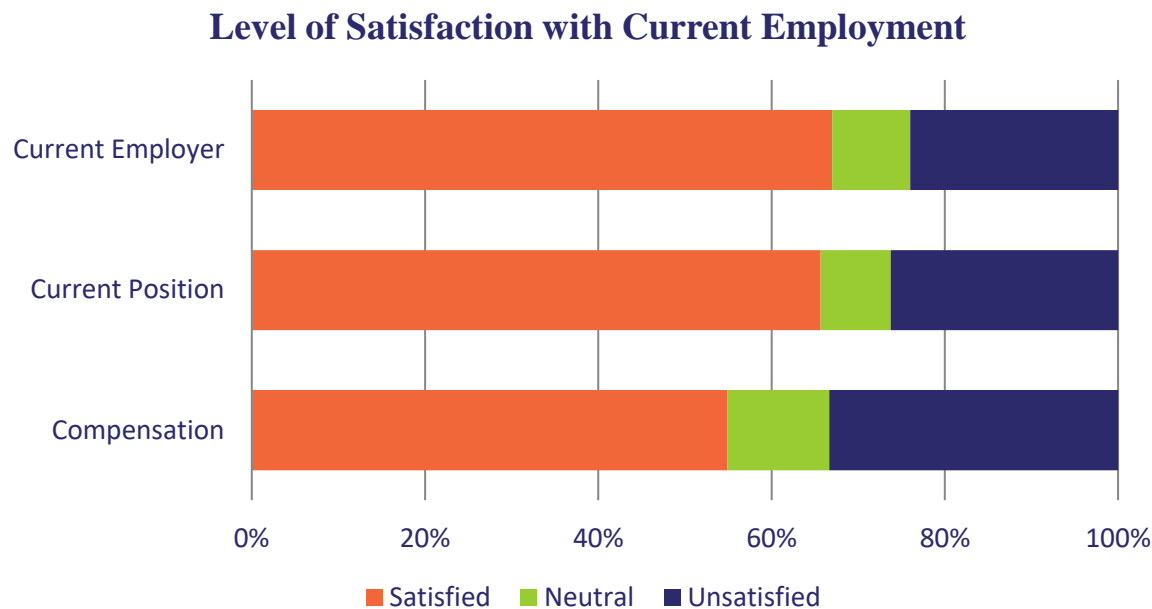
Less than half have access to budget for professional organization membership, structured internal PD opportunities, and career coaching/planning.





Two-thirds of participants are satisfied with their current position and employer.

Over one-third are unsatisfied with their current compensation.



Coworkers/office culture and the mission/ vision of the organization are the most important factors for evaluating employment satisfaction.

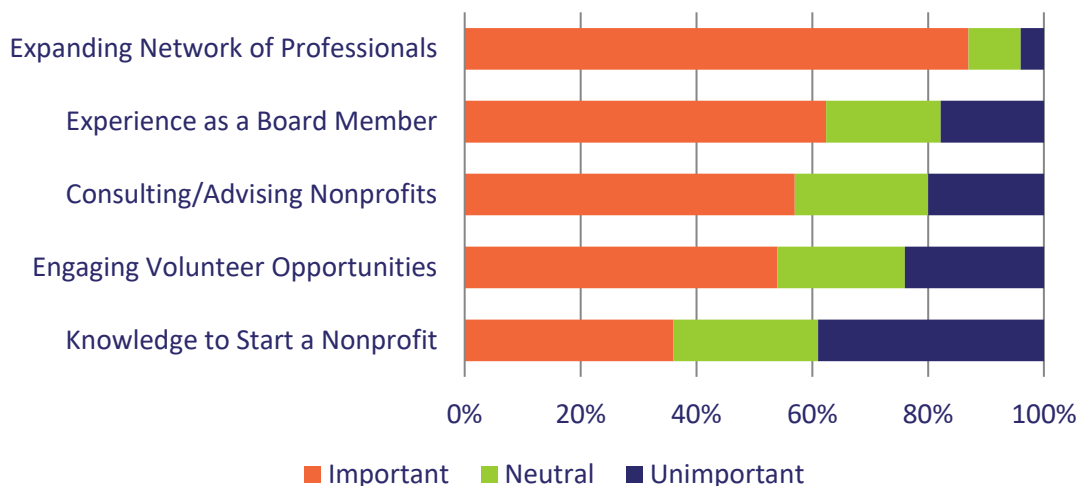


**Professional Development** 87% consider expanding their professional network to be an important professional development opportunity.

---

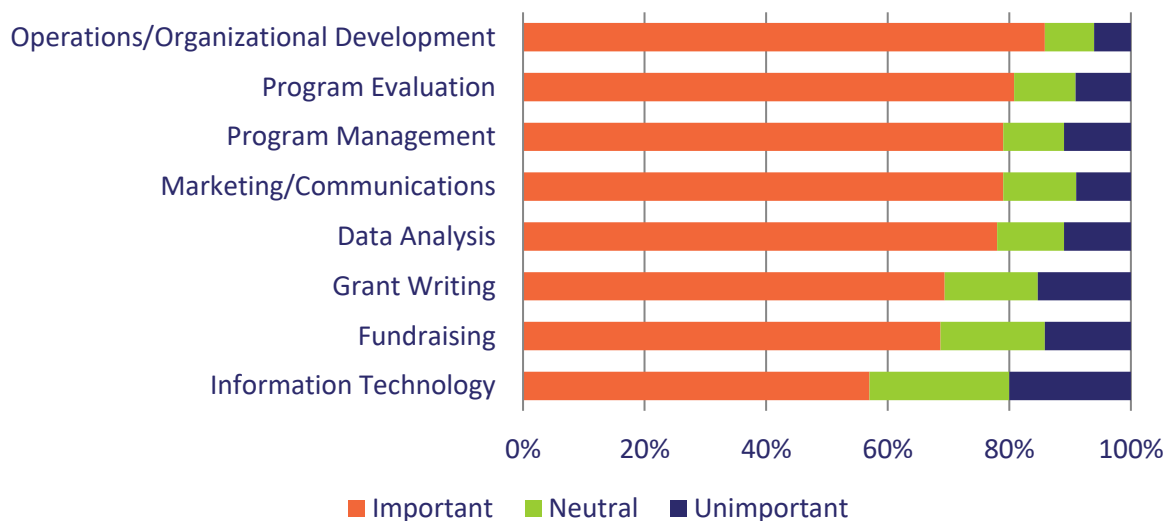
**Board experience, consulting, and volunteer opportunities are also important aspects of PD.**

### Importance of PD Opportunities



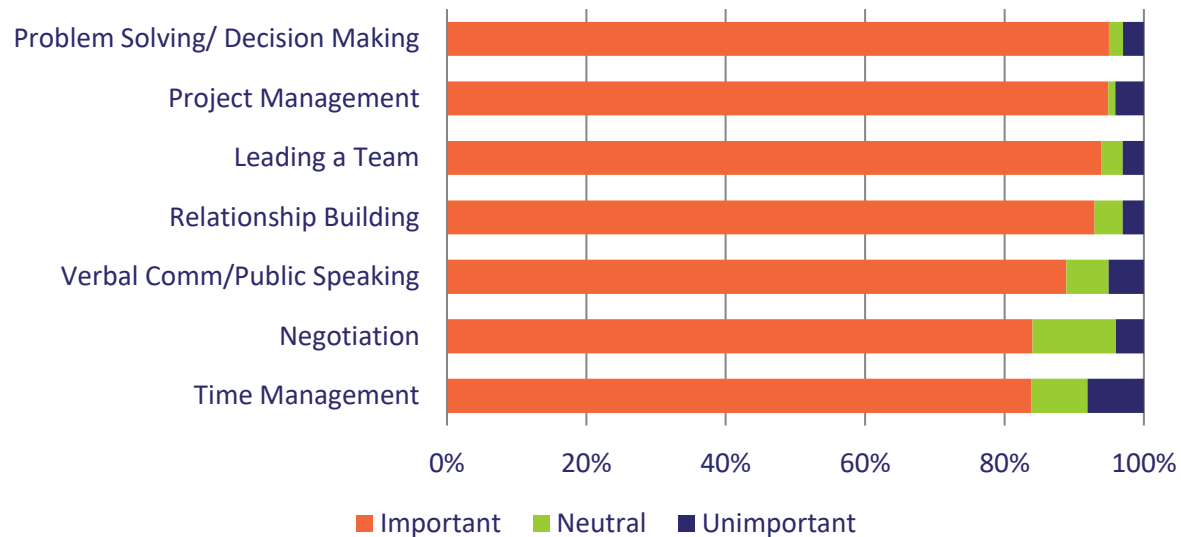
**Operations/organizational development, program evaluation, and program management are the most important quantifiable skills for professional development.**

### PD Needs - Quantifiable Skills



**Problem solving/decision making, project management, and leading a team are the most important subjective skills for professional development.**

### PD Needs - Subjective Skills



**Top five PD services/activities: annual conference, community calendar, mentoring program, leadership institute, peer-rated list of PD opportunities**

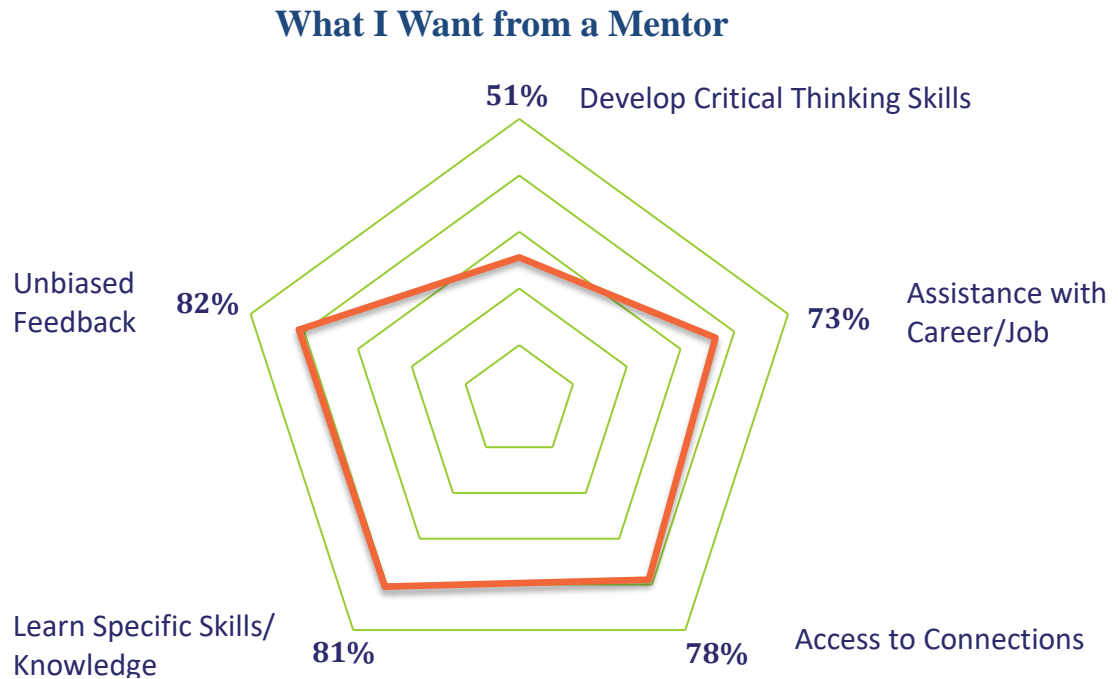
### Percent Interested in PD Services/Activities



**Mentorship** 70% of participants want to find a mentor. 12% already have one.

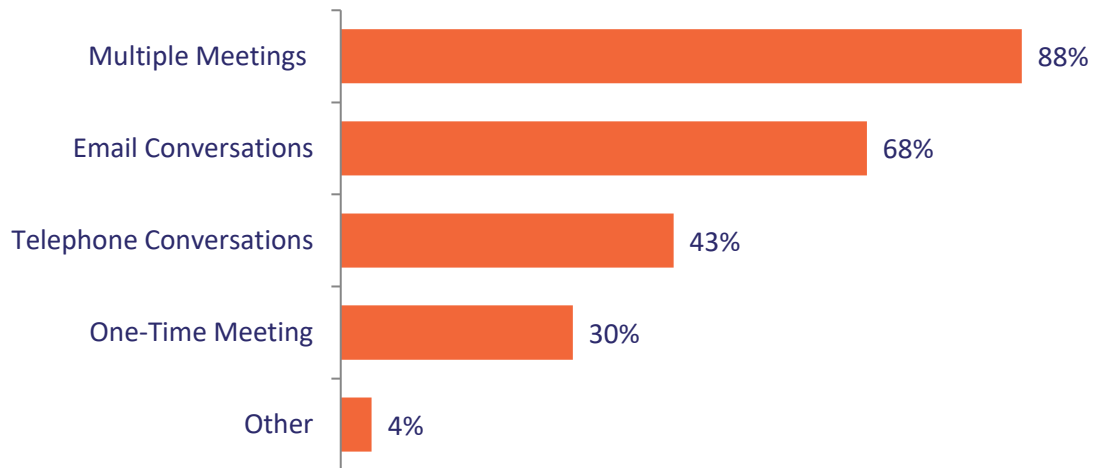
---

**Top three interests in a mentor: unbiased feedback, learning specific skills/ knowledge, and access to connections.**



**Most participants interested in a mentor would like to engage with a mentor through multiple meetings and email conversations.**

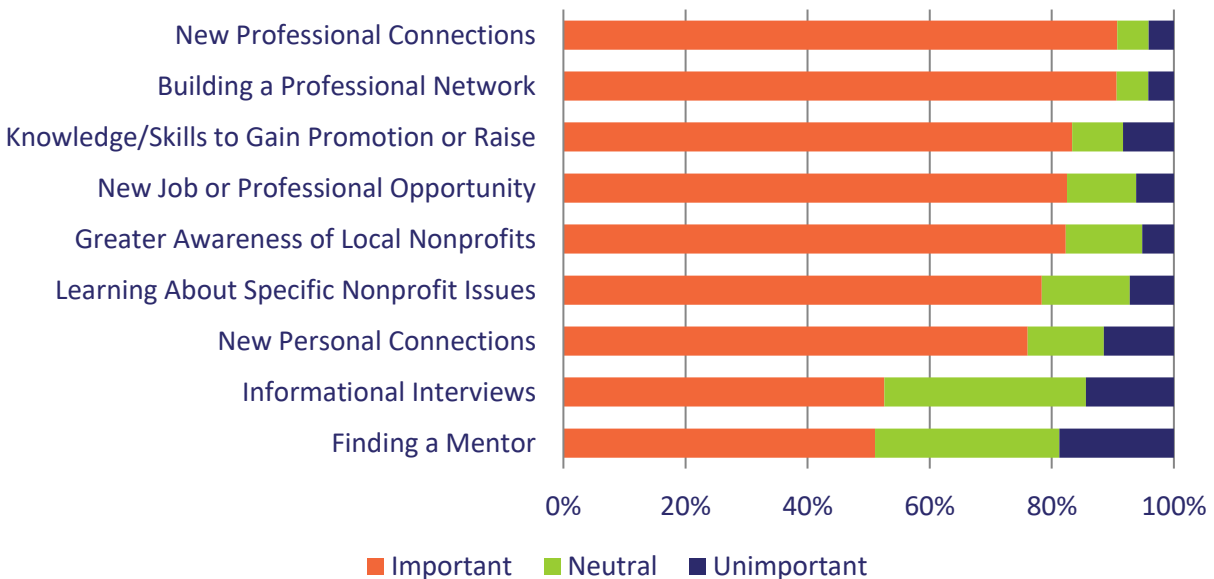
## How I Would Like to Engage with a Mentor



**Professional Organizations** Over 85% think that making new professional connections and network-building are the most important factors for joining.

**Finding a mentor is an important factor for 49% of participants.**

## Factors for Joining a Professional Organization



**42% would pay \$50+ for annual membership to a professional organization.**

### Maximum Fee I Would Pay for Membership

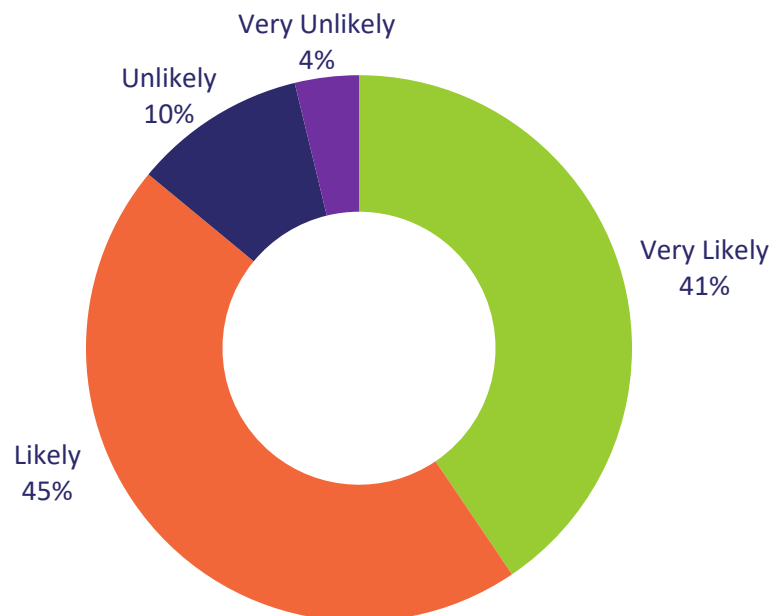


**Sector Outlook** 86% plan to stay in the nonprofit sector long-term (10+ years). Low salary and/or lack of benefits are the primary reasons to consider leaving.

---

**41% indicate that they are very likely to be employed in the nonprofit sector in 10 years.**

### Likelihood of Working in the Nonprofit Sector in 10 Years

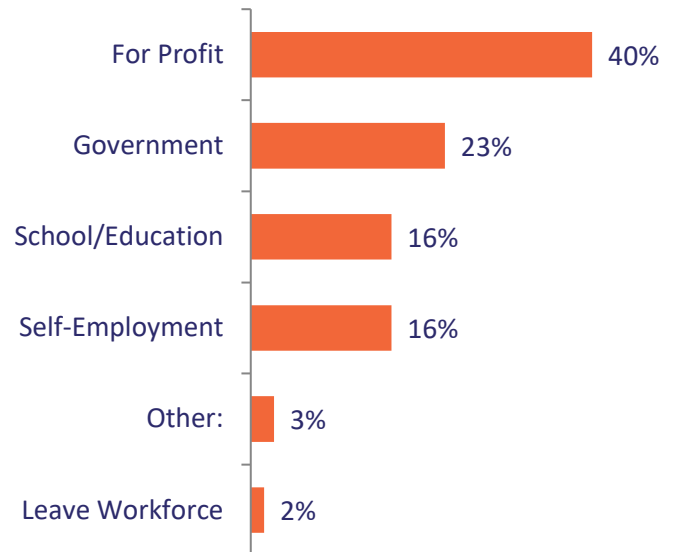


**If participants were to leave the nonprofit sector...**

### This Would Be Why



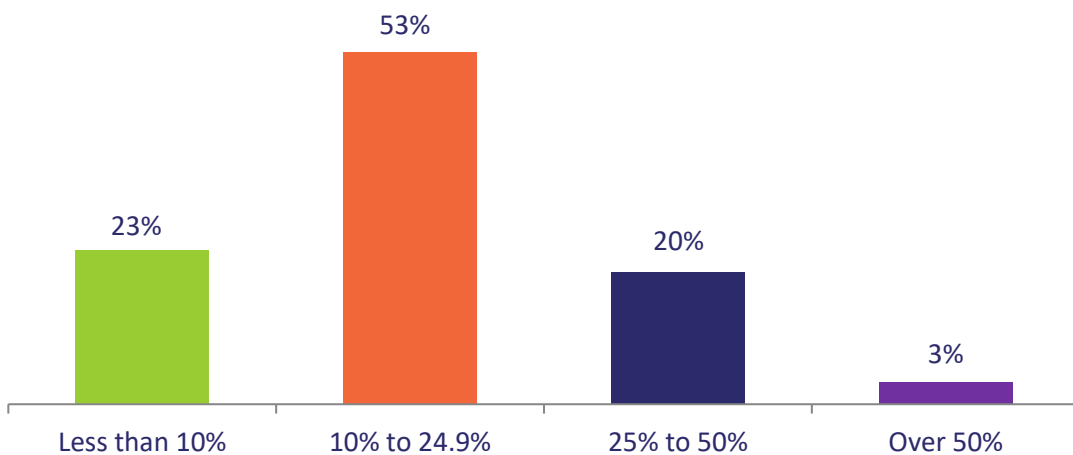
### Where They Would Go



41% nationally for people in their 20s and early 30s\*.

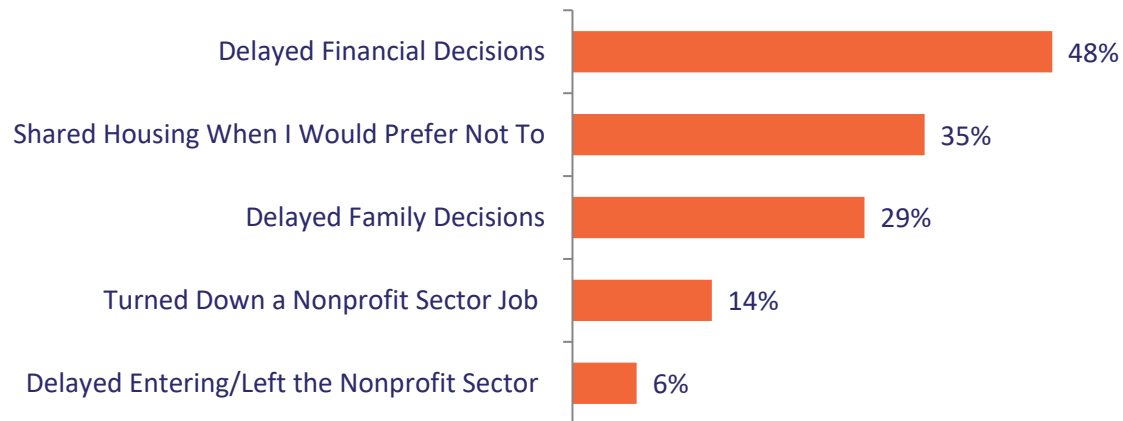
Three out of four participants use 10% or more of their net monthly income for loan payments. One out of four use 25% or more toward student debt.

### Monthly Income Used for Loan Payments



Because of student loan debt, almost half have delayed financial decisions and one-third have shared housing or delayed family decisions.

## Sacrifices Due to Student Loans



\*Jeffrey J. Selingo, "Will You Sprint, Stroll or Stumble Into a Career?" <http://www.nytimes.com>, (April 5, 2016).

**Demographics** The majority of survey participants are between the ages of 24 and 35, identify as a white/Caucasian female, have a bachelor's degree or higher, and an annual income between \$30,000 and \$59,999.

Race	Count	Percent*
White or Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	189	77%
Black or African American	21	9%
Asian	14	6%
Hispanic or Latino	13	5%
Multiracial/Multiethnic	8	3%
Prefer not to say	5	2%
Other	4	2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	1%
Asian Indian	2	1%
African Native	1	0%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	0%

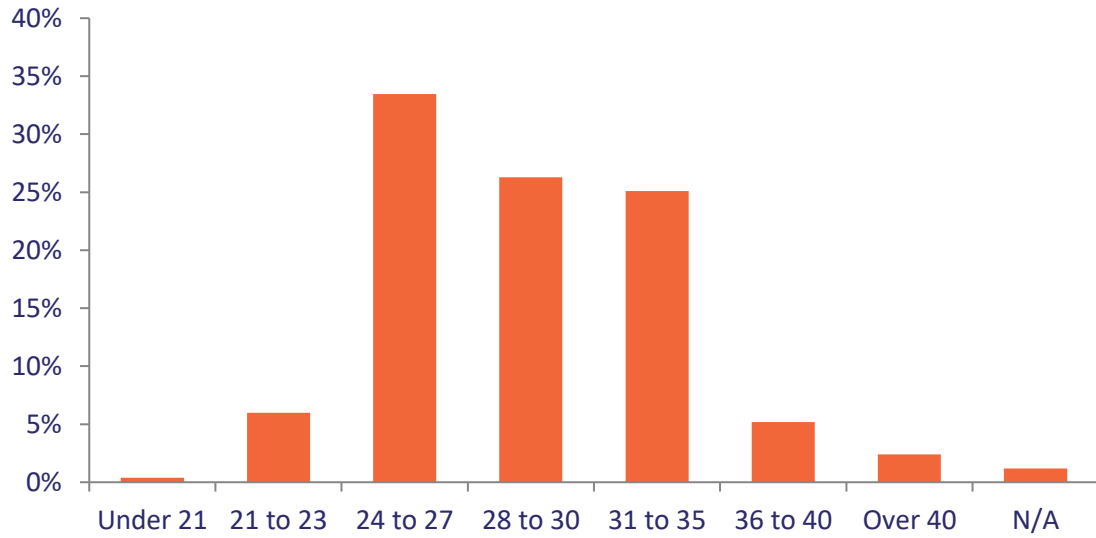
\*Participants were able to select multiple options, so the total percent is greater than 100%

Gender	Count	Percent
Female	164	65%
Male	37	15%
No response	49	20%

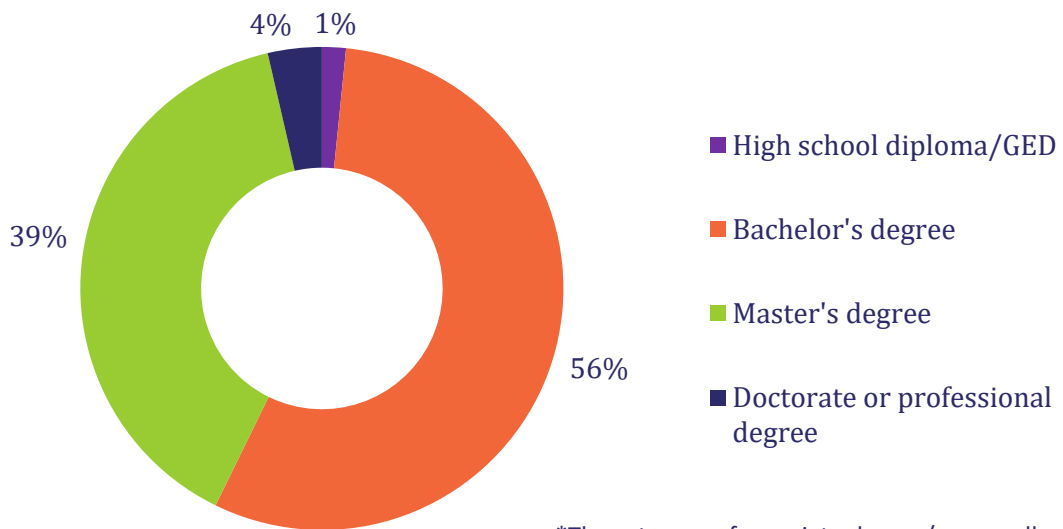


Genderqueer 1 0%

### Age of Participants

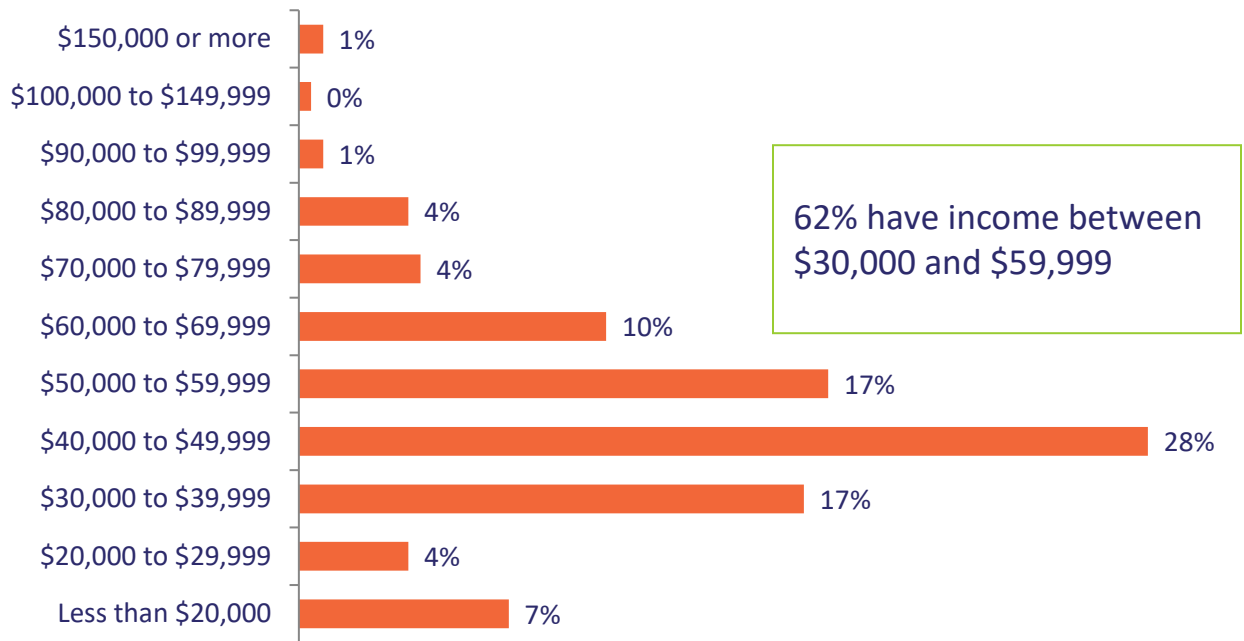


### Highest Level of Education\*

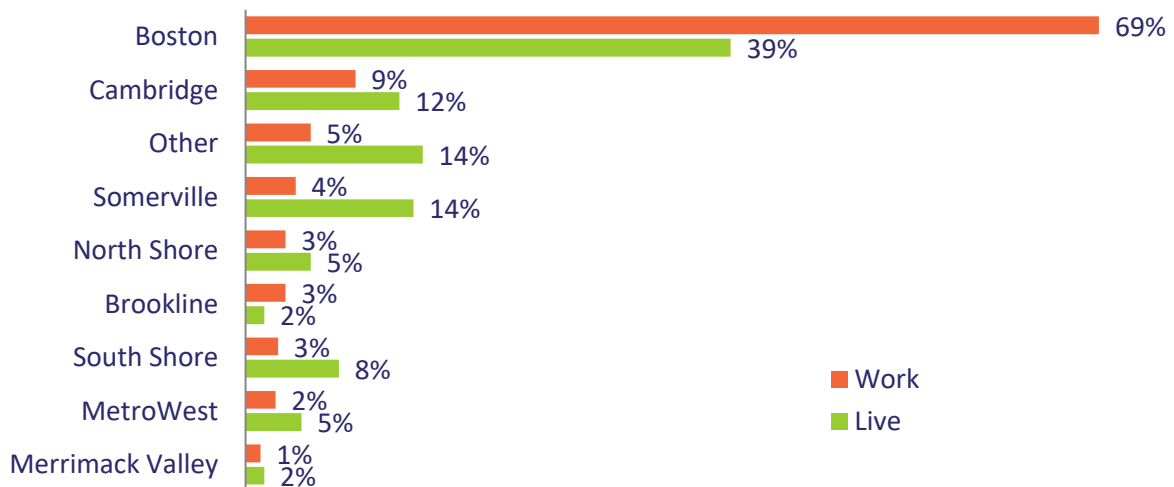


\*The category of associate degree/some college was inadvertently not included in the list of options

## Income of Participants

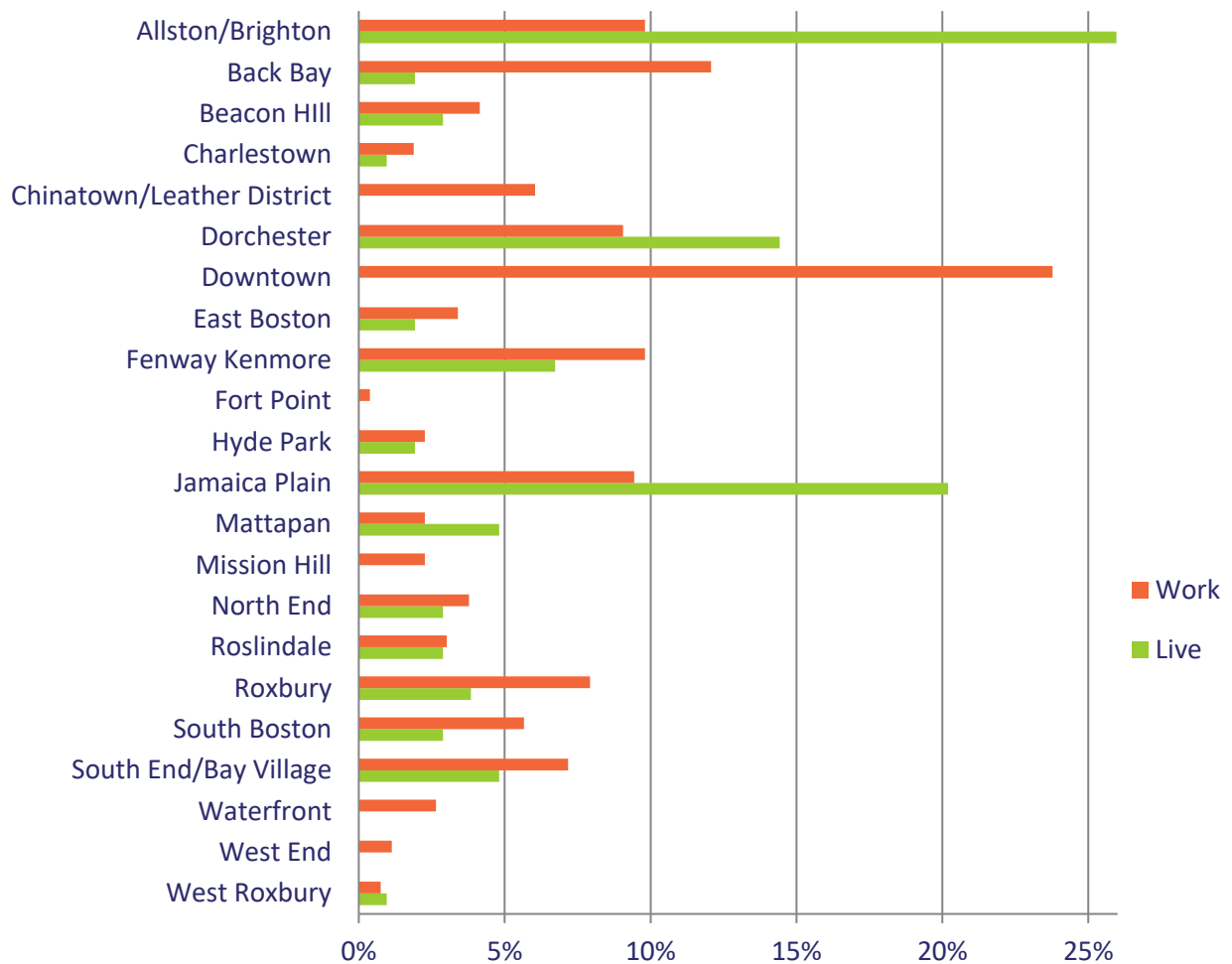


## Where Participants Work and Live



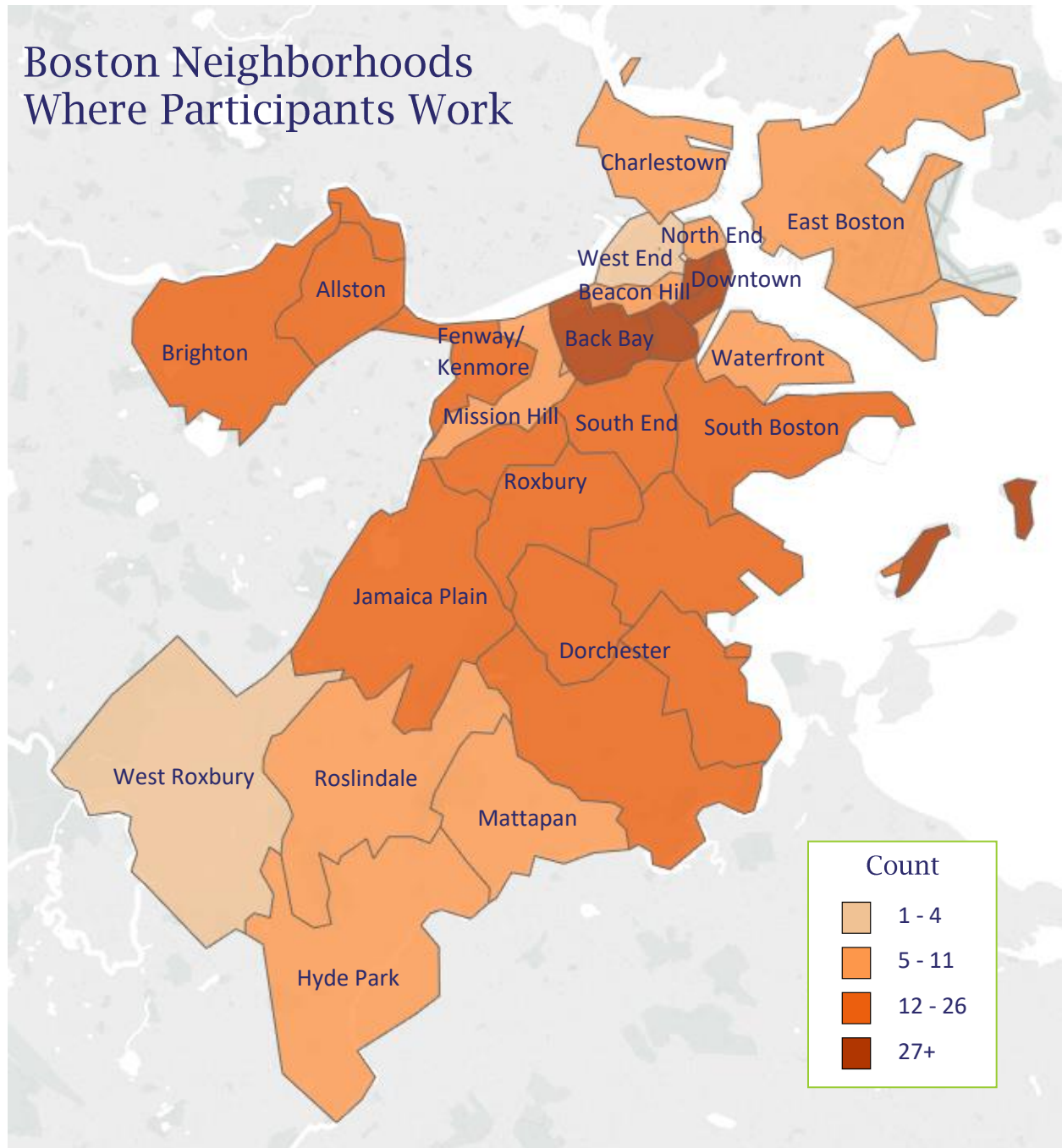
**Allston/Brighton, Jamaica Plain, and Dorchester are the top three neighborhoods where participants live**

### Boston Neighborhoods Where Participants Work and Live



The top Boston neighborhoods where participants work are: Downtown, Fenway/Kenmore, Allston/Brighton, Jamaica Plain and Dorchester.

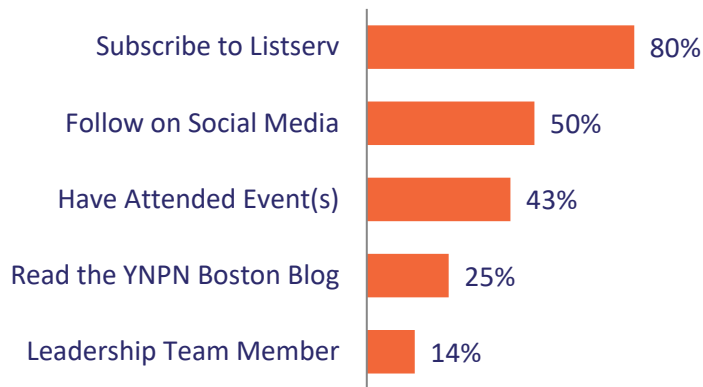
## Boston Neighborhoods Where Participants Work



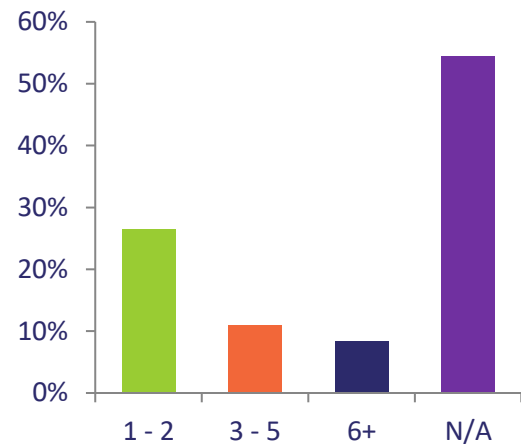
**YNPN Boston** Over half of participants follow YNPN Boston on social media or subscribe to the listserv. 43% have attended a YNPN Boston event in the past two years. One-third have attended a PD training or applied for a job they found through the listserv.

---

### How I Am Engaged with YNPN Boston



### Events Attended in Past Two Years



**68% have experienced at least one outcome from their involvement with YNPN Boston, while 41% have experienced two or more outcomes.**

### Because of YNPN Boston, I Have...

