

# Pulse Survey Results

COVID-19 CENTRAL TEXAS

APRIL 8, 2020

As the shock waves of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to disrupt the Austin area, **the challenges faced by our nonprofit sector and the communities they serve are deepening**. This pulse survey launched March 26 and closed March 31, 2020. Record-breaking unemployment claims were just beginning to surge, area shelter-in-place orders were being announced, and local schools communicated what have become prolonged closures. **Survey data thus reflects a “point in time” snapshot**, early in this constantly changing, long-term crisis. **458 unduplicated survey responses** were received.<sup>1</sup>

Two high-level headlines stand out from the survey responses:

- The social sector is **undergoing rapid change** and organizations are **pivoting to meet the needs of their communities**.
- Social sector leaders **need funders, government, and capacity builders to act swiftly** with dollars, resources, and advocacy to help navigate this rapid change.

## TOP TAKEAWAYS / KEY FINDINGS

**Flexible Immediate Funding:** Local organizations need flexible, immediate financial support to help pivot to serve our communities' fast-changing and growing needs now.

**Reduce Barriers through Advocacy:** Organizations need more advocacy support to change the policies and systems that make supporting those they serve more difficult, especially in such volatile times.

**Increase Access to Resources:** Resources and supplies are more expensive and harder to access during this crisis.

**Funding to and through Recovery:** Organizations need funding and advocacy that helps them continue to adapt and provide support throughout the recovery process.

**Transition to Virtual:** Organizations need funding and resources to help adapt to virtual work and service delivery.

**Historical Inequities:** Without intentional support, historical inequities are at high risk of deepening in this crisis.

**Support and Guidance:** Organizations need help for their staff and operations, as they adapt and navigate through constantly evolving environments (e.g. HR guidance, financial guidance, mental health support).

In the many hundreds of open-ended survey entries, respondents' most frequently shared **immediate concerns** as COVID-19 intensifies were:<sup>2</sup>

- Financial (e.g. paying for operations)
- Ability to provide services
- Health and safety of their staff, volunteers, and people they serve

When asked what **resources could help their nonprofits respond** to challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, respondents most frequently cited:<sup>3</sup>

- More funding, funding operations and flexible funding
- Resources and funding to support the transition to virtual work and service delivery
- Support in gaining access to basic supplies.

Even this early in the crisis, the social sector is already **experiencing considerable disruption**:

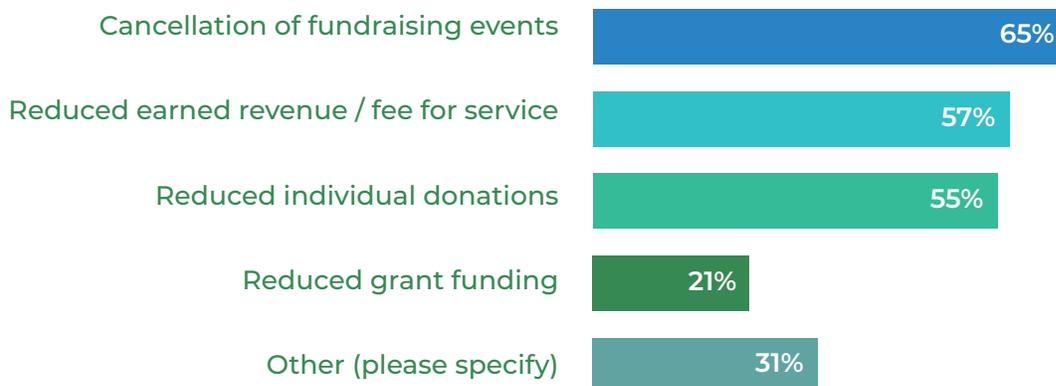
#### DISRUPTION OF SERVICES<sup>4</sup>



#### IMPACT ON STAFFING<sup>4</sup>



#### IMPACT ON FINANCIAL RESOURCES<sup>5</sup>



At the same time organizations are experiencing challenges to funding and delivering services, many are also experiencing **increased demand and changing needs** of those they serve:

#### INCREASED DEMAND AND EVOLVING NEEDS<sup>4</sup>



Respondents indicated that their organization has changed its operations or services so that it can more directly support the COVID-19 response.

As projections for the length of this crisis continue to extend, **the needs of our communities will continue to change and grow**. Without additional funding, how will our local social sector be able to continue to support those in need, not only during the immediate crisis, but also during the recovery effort?

Assuming no significant additional investment or support, how long do you estimate your organization could **operate at current capacity** with your current expenses and income?<sup>6</sup>



**“Now more than ever we need to focus on unrestricted funding to ensure we can remain operational after the crisis and for years to come.”**

## HISTORICAL INEQUITIES

Without intentional support, historical inequities are at high risk of deepening in this crisis.

Respondents described a wide-variety of concerns for the disproportionate and compounding **effects of historical inequities** for multiple communities. Examples include:

- People of color are receiving unequal health care and treatment
- Low-income children and elderly who cannot access digital services
- Homeless populations who cannot shelter in place safely
- Persons with disabilities who cannot access certain technologies to receive services
- Persons involved in the justice system experiencing delayed cases
- Further isolation of immigrant and refugee communities

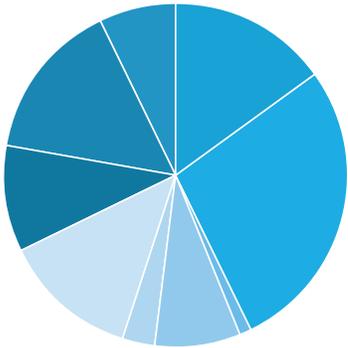


**“Equity issues for low-income communities & communities of color should be front-and-center as we work with local & state government and philanthropy to address the impact of the pandemic.”**

## WHO TOOK THIS SURVEY

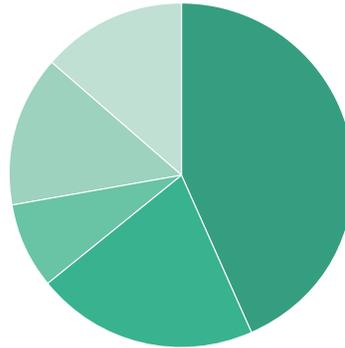
The survey was taken by organizations with **diverse missions, budget sizes and staff sizes** who are impacted in different ways by COVID-19. <sup>7</sup>

### Mission Area Representation



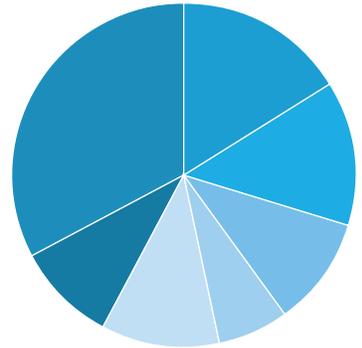
- Arts, Culture & Humanities - 10%
- Education - 15%
- Environment & Animals - 7%
- Health - 15%
- Human Services - 28%
- International - 1%
- Public/Societal Benefit - 8%
- Religion or Faith Based - 3%
- Other - 13%

### Staff Size



- 1 to 5 - 43.4%
- 6 to 10 - 13.4%
- 11 to 20 - 14.4%
- 21 to 30 - 8.2%
- More than 30 - 20.6%

### Budget Size



- \$0 to \$49K - 9.3%
- \$50 to \$499K - 32.7%
- \$500K to \$999K - 16.2%
- \$1M to \$2M - 13.6%
- \$2M to \$4M - 10.4%
- \$4M to \$8M - 6.7%
- More than \$8M - 11.1%

## FOOTNOTES

1. All questions in this survey were optional, including contact information, which was used to identify and remove duplicate responses, where possible, by individual and organization. Given that all items were optional and to account for identified duplication, the number of responses analyzed for each item varies. Contact Mission Capital for more details about how duplication was addressed.
2. This data is from the open-ended item: "As the spread of COVID-19 intensifies, what are your immediate concerns for carrying out your mission and caring for the people you serve?" (survey item n=432).
3. This data is from the open-ended item: "What resources could local funders, capacity builders, businesses, and government entities provide that would help your nonprofit respond to challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic?" (survey item n=418).
4. This data is from "As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, what operational ramifications has your organization experienced to date? Please check all that apply." (survey item n=455).
5. This data is from "As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, what financial ramifications has your organization experienced to date? Please check all that apply." (survey item n=445).
6. Survey item n=449.
7. Budget Size survey item n=450, Mission Area survey item n=456, Annual Staff survey item n=417. Mission Area Categories: Arts, Culture, and Humanities, Education, Environment and Animals (e.g. animal welfare, food banks, food programs), Health (e.g. mental health, substance abuse, crisis intervention), Human Services, International, Public/Societal Benefit (e.g. membership, civil rights, advocacy, capacity building), Religion or Faith Based, Other (open ended).

## COLLABORATING ORGANIZATIONS



To reduce survey duplication, the above organizations collaborated on this sector-wide needs survey. Mission Capital provided the backbone role to design, disseminate, and analyze the survey.

For more information reach out to: [insights@missioncapital.org](mailto:insights@missioncapital.org)