Global Trends and Strategic Time Horizons in Philanthropy 2022

ROCKEFELLER
Philanthropy
Advisors

About this Report

This publication is part of a multiyear initiative that examines the inner workings, trends, practices, and challenges of global philanthropy through a time horizons lens which determines the length of time for which a philanthropic organization chooses to be active. The report includes a global exploration of various dimensions of strategic time horizons and examines strategies and operations, as well as perceived advantages and disadvantages of different philanthropic timeframes. This is the only global research about philanthropy that includes views not only on reasons for giving, but on causes, geographic flow of funding, giving timeframes, decision-making and next-generation involvement. Through the insights from this research, we hope to create resources for funders that advance the field and practice of philanthropy. We are grateful to The Atlantic Philanthropies for their support of, and contributions to, this work.

Visit **https://www.rockpa.org/strategic-time-horizons/** to learn more about this topic and read the full range of publications.

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Executive Summary

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The Global Challenges of 2020-2021 Affected Philanthropic Timelines

Half of responding organizations reported that the global challenges of 2020-2021 prompted them to either accelerate their spending (34%), consider revising philanthropic timeframes (12%) or to switch to a time-limited approach (3%).

Impact is Key Reason for Adoption of Time Limited Model

Organizations that have adopted a time-limited model indicated they were driven by a desire to make a greater impact by narrowing their giving focus (43%), desire to see impact during the founder's lifetime (33%), and urgent need or opportunity (24%).

Founder Intent is a Significant Driver of Strategic Time Horizons

The respondents' strategic time horizons— the length of time for which a philanthropic organization will remain active—were most often defined by the founder's intent (52%). Bylaws, articles of incorporation, or charter of an organization (26%) also played a significant role in determining time horizon.

Most Funders Motivated by Desire for Social Change, Giving Back

About three-quarters of all respondents (76%) cited desire to influence social change as their top motivation for philanthropic giving, followed by desire to give back to society (64%), address urgent needs (57%), and put values into action (56%). Although there was some variation in motivations across geographies, giving back to society emerged as one of the main reasons for giving globally.

Growing Adoption of Time-Limited Giving

Although in perpetuity remained the dominant model for the majority of respondents (74%), findings showed a growing adoption of time-limited philanthropy in the past two decades. Of the responding philanthropies established since 2000, almost one quarter (23%) were established as time-limited, representing an increase of 22 percentage points. Similarly, recently established organizations expressed more interest in time-limited giving that those established in the 1990s. Nonetheless, nearly one quarter (24%) of organizations noted that their time horizon was undefined.

Evaluations, Performance Metrics, and Surveys are Top Ways of Assessing Effectiveness

In assessing effectiveness of their philanthropic interventions, many of the responding organizations relied on evaluations of entire program areas and/or initiatives (69%) or individual grants (58%). Thirty-nine percent of respondents adopted performance metrics, and thirty-five percent conducted grantee satisfaction surveys. North American organizations were much more likely to cite "evaluation of individual grants" as the preferred assessment approach than those in other regions. Approximately half of respondent community foundations, corporate foundations, and private business vehicles reported conducting grantee satisfaction surveys, while a much lower percentage of other types of organizations reported the use of satisfaction surveys as a way of assessing effectiveness.

Education, Community & Economic Development are Top Programmatic Priorities

Most organizations surveyed (85%) supported multiple programmatic priorities. More than half of responding organizations (55%) cited education as a top area of philanthropic focus, followed by community and economic development (45%) and health (36%). Other leading areas of programmatic focus included political, civil, and human rights (28%), arts and culture (27%), environment/conservation (27%), and climate change (23%).

2nd and 3rd Generation Dominate Family Philanthropy Leadership

A majority of family-led foundations (54%) reported being led by the second generation of the family; 38% by the third generation; 33% by the first generation; and 12 % by the fourth generation or higher. Most family-led respondents reported that the next generation of family members were either actively (58%) or somewhat (25%) involved in philanthropic efforts. In contrast, 13% of the respondents noted that the next generation was not involved in family philanthropy. More than 9 in 10 respondents employed tactics to actively encourage next generation's involvement.

Introduction

Introduction

In the last three decades, philanthropic giving has greatly expanded as a result of robust economic development, a growing pace of globalization, and pressing social issues around the world, such as poverty, climate change, and inequality. Many high-net-worth individuals and families, corporations, and foundations used philanthropy to address issues and challenges facing the contemporary world and contribute to the welfare and livelihood of society.

The strategic time horizons, which define the period of time associated with their philanthropic practices, were an important component of an institution's overall strategy. Traditionally, philanthropies operated on the assumption that they would continue to exist indefinitely. However, an increasing number of philanthropies have started to consider the length of time over which they want to engage in philanthropic giving. The changing social norms of the 21st century, as well as growing geopolitical and economic risks and uncertainties, have affected philanthropies' ability to give sustainably in the long run. As such, strategic time horizons can profoundly impact a philanthropy's operational objectives, scope of giving, and relationship with grantees.

This study is a follow-up to Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA)'s previous research in 2019 and 2020 to understand the factors that affect a philanthropy's consideration in choosing its time horizon model. Facing a series of new challenges such as COVID-19, economic uncertainty, and rising geopolitical tensions, we hope to understand how and why philanthropic organizations choose certain strategic timeframes, and what different strategic and operational issues they are intended to address.

Methodology

This survey, designed and sponsored by RPA, was conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. Data were collected using a non-probability sample provided by RPA. The survey was disseminated via RPA's networks, including funders, media, academic institutions and philanthropic service organizations around the world. Recruitment efforts included email, newsletters, personal contact, and social media outreach with a brief description of the study and a link for participation. Outreach for this survey was conducted between June and December 2021 in English and via the Internet. The survey was designed to be taken by a representative of the organization who has knowledge of its operations and philanthropic functions. In total, 150 respondents from 30 countries completed the survey. The responses are anonymous to ensure confidentiality and candor. Responses cannot be linked to any information about the respondents' identities and names of institutions they represent in the survey.

For more information, email **info@rockpa.org**.

Research Limitations

The survey does not represent a random sample. While attempts were made to distribute the survey as broadly as possible, the results are subject to unknown biases and the responses given may not be representative of all philanthropic organizations. The survey features a self-selected sample of participants who chose to respond on a voluntary basis, which may have led to a self-selection bias potentially favoring those more engaged in philanthropy and not representing the entirety of philanthropic approaches and practitioners. Although the survey is global in the sense that organizations from six continents took part, the majority of the responses are from North America and Europe. Additionally, the regional samples do not include all the countries within these regions or a representative mix of respondents amongst the countries included. For these reasons, the findings should be viewed as only illustrations of the general philanthropic landscapes and trends regionally, rather than exhaustive findings. Finally, while the survey was a follow-up to the 2019 report, the wording of some questions was changed in order to improve understanding and applicability. As such, making direct comparisons and using the data for a comparative analysis is challenging.

Because non-probability panels do not start with a frame where there is known probability of selection, standard measures of sampling error and response rates cannot be calculated.
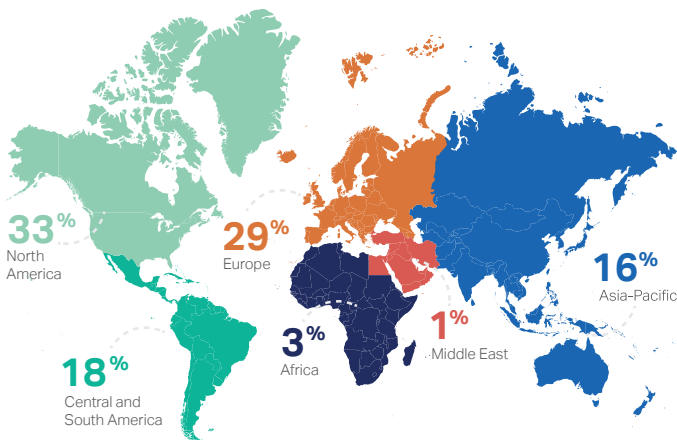
1 | Profile of Responding Organizations

1. Profile of Responding Organizations

As part of the survey, respondents were asked to provide some general background information, including: where their organization is located, what type of organization it is, the organization's age, the size of the organization's endowment and grantmaking budgets, the organization's operational approach, the number of employees the organization has working on its philanthropic efforts, and the number of years they have personally been in the field of philanthropy.

Respondents represented organizations from six continents across the world. The largest proportion of participants surveyed come from North America (33%), followed by Europe (28%) and Central/South America (18%). This survey also includes organizations based in Asia-Pacific (16%), Africa (3%) and Middle East (1%). Organizations located across multiple regions constitute 1% of respondents.

Figure 1: World Regions Where the Philanthropic Program Leadership or Philanthropic Organization is Located (n=146)

33% North America
29% Europe
16% Asia-Pacific
18% Central and South America
3% Africa
1% Middle East

Responding organizations were most commonly family-led philanthropies or independent or privately endowed foundations. Thirty-two percent of all reporting philanthropies were family-led and 31% were independent/private endowed foundations. Fewer were corporate foundations (11%), community-based foundations (11%), or private business vehicles (3%). Twelve percent classified their organization as 'other'.

Responding organizations spanned a wide range of ages. A majority were established in the 2000s or later, with about a quarter of organizations established prior to 1980. Most organizations based in Asia (85%) and North America (54%) were established in the 21st century, while those in Central and South America (56%), European (55%), and Oceania (55%) organizations were most commonly established before the year 2000.

Figure 2: Establishment Date of the Philanthropic Organization or Programs (n=150)

Pre-1949	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s	2020s
5%	7%	6%	5%	11%	13%	27%	23%	2%
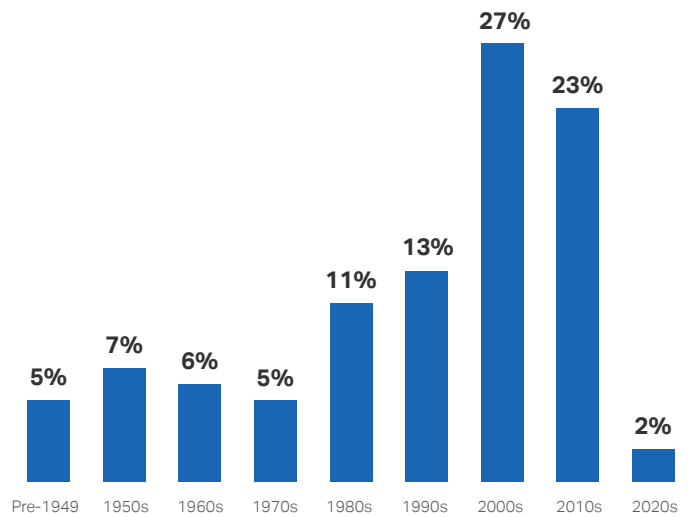
Endowment size of participating organizations ranges from less than $5 million to more than $1 billion.

Most of the responding organizations (79%) self-reported as endowed foundations. Roughly a quarter (24%) reported an endowment of less than $10 million, followed by 18% that reported an endowment of $11 million to $100 million, and 17% that reported from $101 million to $500 million. Twenty percent reported an endowment greater than $501 million, including 15% that reported an endowment greater than $1 billion.

Figure 3: Size of Your Endowment (in USD) (n=103)

Category	Percentage
Less than $5 million	18%
$5 million to $10 million	6%
$11 million to $50 million	14%
$51 million to $100 million	3%
$101 million to $200 million	12%
$201 million to $300 million	1%
$301 million to $400 million	3%
$401 million to $500 million	1%
$501 million to $1 billion	5%
More than $1 billion	15%
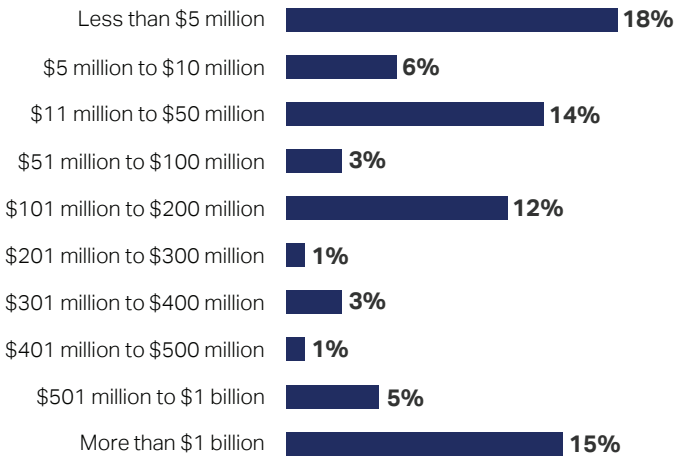
Half of all grantmaking organizations surveyed report an annual grantmaking budget of less than $5 million, and 83% report $50 million or less. Just 11% of grantmaking organizations noted a grantmaking budget of greater than $100 million.

Figure 4: Annual Grantmaking Budget (in USD) (n=133)

Category	Percentage
Less than $5 million	49%
$5 million to $10 million	18%
$11 million to $50 million	15%
$51 million to $100 million	5%
$101 million to $500 million	8%
$501 million to $1 billion	2%
More than $1 billion	2%
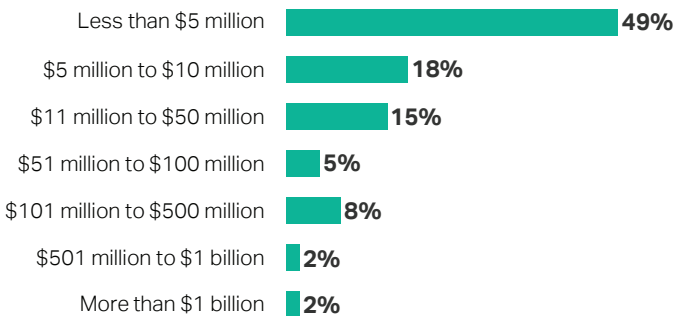
Seventy-nine percent of responding organizations were grantmakers, either fully or as a mixed (grantmaking and operating) philanthropic entity. Just 15% of organizations reported being fully operating foundations, and 5% classified themselves as other.

Figure 5: Primary approach to implement philanthropy (n=132)

- 5% Other
- 43% Grantmaking
- 36% Mixed: Grantmaking and Operating
- 15% Operating
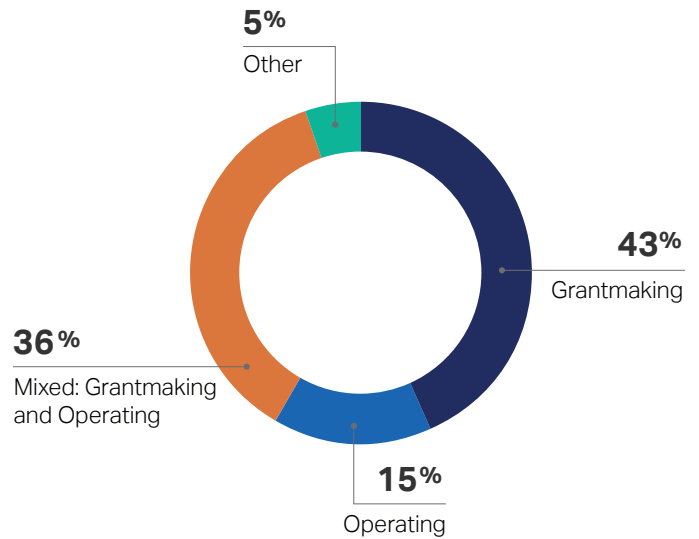
Ninety-seven percent of surveyed organizations reported having full-time staff dedicated to their philanthropic efforts. Among them, 46% had fewer than ten employees, 25% had 11-49 employees, 10% had between 50 and 99 and 19% had more than 100 employees.

Those who responded on behalf of their organizations held senior roles and had a range of philanthropic experience. Seventy-six percent were executive officers, board members, presidents/chief executives, or the founder. The remaining quarter of respondents identified themselves as program staff, operating staff, or as having some other role.

Twenty percent of respondents reported less than 5 years of experience, 26% reported between 5 and 10 years, 32% reported between 11 and 20 years, and 21% reported more than 20 years of experience in the philanthropic sector.

2 | Global Trends in Giving: Key Findings

2. Global Trends in Giving: Key Findings

This section provides a general overview of how sampled institutions think about and engage in philanthropic giving. It covers where their philanthropic activities are funded, their motivations for engaging in philanthropy, the types of causes supported, and how giving effectiveness is measured. The section also provides a more in-depth look at family-led and corporate philanthropic organizations.

2.1 Funding Flows

Most organizations carried out their philanthropic activities in their home regions.

Organizations were asked about their flows of philanthropic giving, i.e., where they carry out their philanthropic activities.

Overall, organizations tended to give in regions where they were headquartered. For example, 96% of North American organizations gave within North America, and 90% of European organizations gave within Europe. 96% of the Central and South American organizations gave within their own region, and 100% of Asia-Pacific organizations gave within their own region.

Despite the finding that the overwhelming amount of giving stays within the region where the philanthropies are headquartered, some giving does flow to other regions. For example, 43% of giving from organizations headquartered in Europe stays in Europe while 57% is given outside the region. In North America, 59% of giving stays in North America while 41% is given outside the region.

Figure 6: Location of Giving by Region

Asia-Pacific
6% Europe
6% North America
6% Middle East
9% Africa

Central and South America
4% Europe

North America
12% Asia-Pacific
11% Central and South America
11% Africa

Europe
15% Asia-Pacific
14% North America
15% Africa
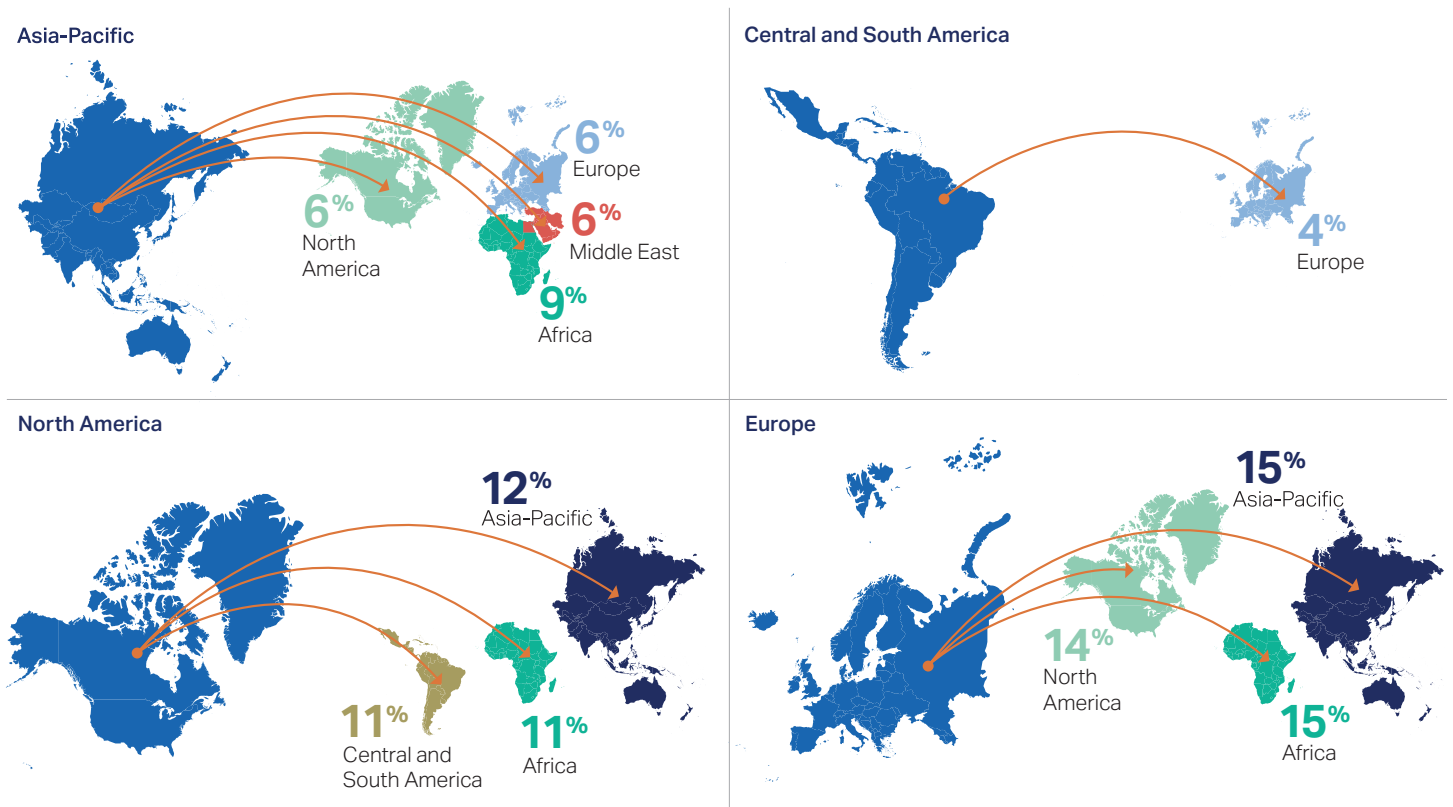
2.2 Funding Motivations

Influencing social change and giving back are top motivations for philanthropic giving.

When asked about the main motivations behind their giving, 76% of organizations specified desire to influence social change, 64% to give back to society, 57% to address urgent needs, and 56% to put values into action. After a considerable drop-off, the fifth top motivation was moral obligation, expressed by 26% of respondents.

When viewed through a regional lens, the survey revealed slight differences in the hierarchy of motivations. In North America, Europe, and Central and South America "to influence social change," "to address urgent needs," and "to give back to society" were the top three motivations for engaging in philanthropy. Similarly, in Asia-Pacific, "to give back to society," "to put values into action," and "to influence social change" were the top three motivations.

In Africa, "to influence social change," "to give back to society," "to put values into action," and "moral obligation" were the top motivations.

Figure 7: Main Motivations for Engaging in Philanthropy (n=132)

Motivation	Percentage
To influence social change	76%
To give back to society	64%
To address urgent needs	57%
To put values into action	56%
Moral obligation	26%
To leave a legacy	22%
To engage the next generation of family	17%
Personal experience	9%
Tax consideration	7%
Other	6%
Legal responsibility	5%
Reputation management	3%
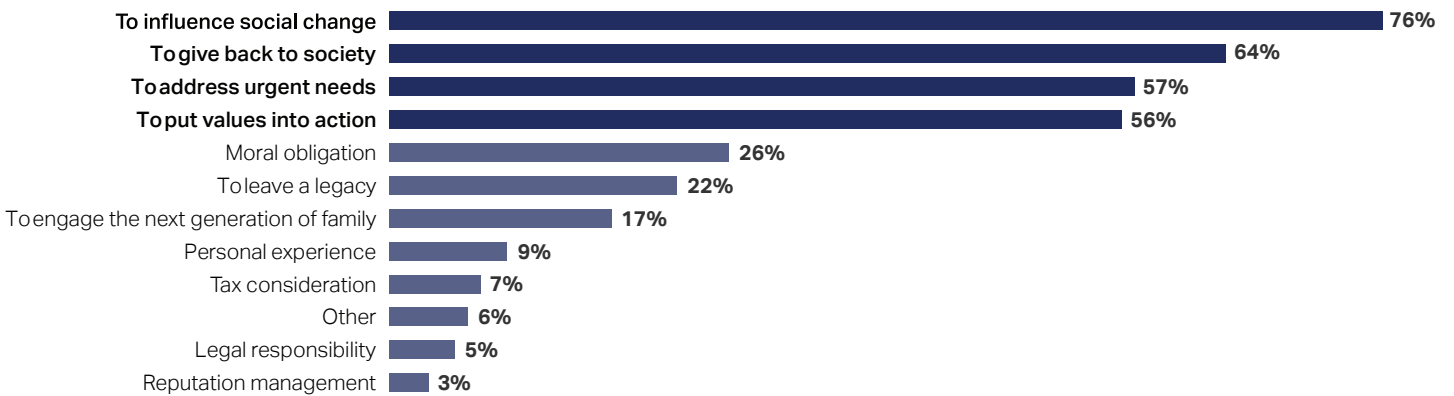
Figure 8: Main Motivations for Engaging in Philanthropy by Region

Region	To influence social change	To give back to society	To address urgent needs	To put values into action
Asia-Pacific (n = 24)	88%	63%		88%
Central/South America (n=20)	75%		45%	55%
Europe (n = 36)	67%		61%	72%
North America (n = 46)	76%		65%	61%
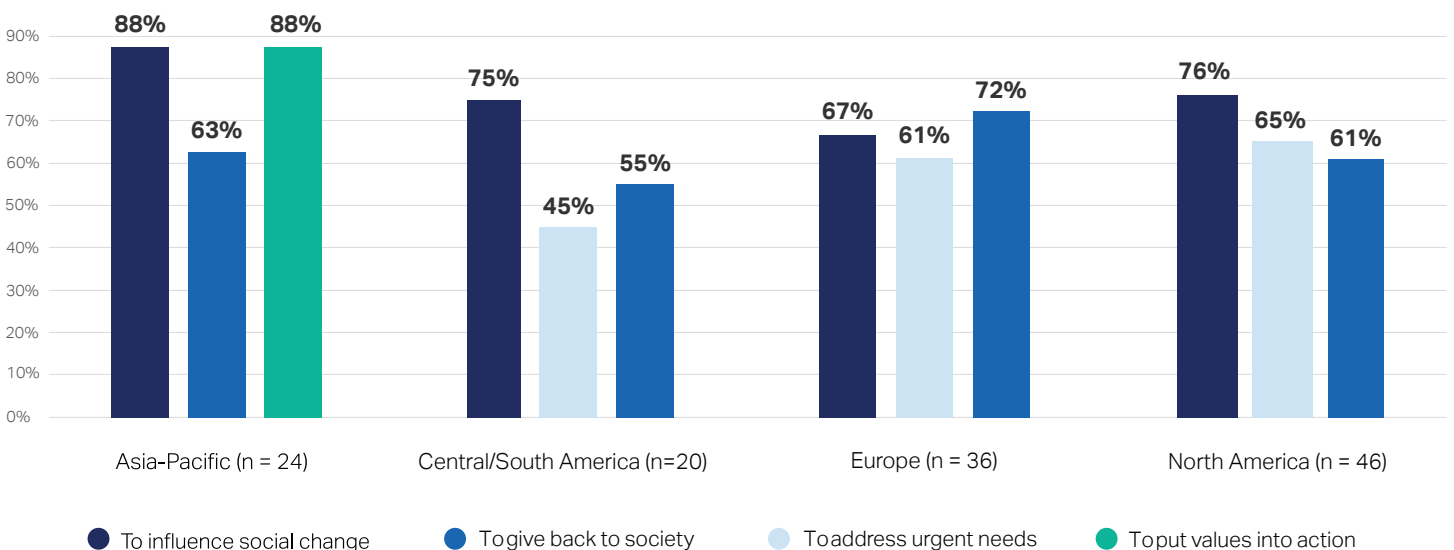
2.3 Focus Areas

Education was a primary focus area for more than half of the organizations surveyed.

Organizations who participated in the survey featured a wide range of philanthropic programs. Fifty-five percent of respondents said education was their primary focus area, followed by community and economic development (45%), and health (36%).

Responding organizations tended to not focus on a single issue area. Instead, the vast majority of those surveyed (85%) featured more than one program area. Globally, education was the top or tied for the top cause supported. Community and economic development was one of the leading two causes in all regions except Europe, where it stood in third place behind education and health.

Figure 9: Primary Program Areas (n=149)

Program Area	Percentage
Education	55%
Community and economic development	45%
Health	36%
Political, civil, and human rights	28%
Arts and culture	27%
Environment/Conservation	27%
Climate Change	23%
Other	19%
Human services	17%
Science and technology	13%
Agriculture, fishing, and forestry	11%
Public affairs	9%
International relations	7%
Information and communications	5%
Social sciences	5%
Religion	4%
Public safety	3%
Sports and recreation	3%

Figure 9B: Primary Program Areas by Region

North America

50% Community and economic development	50% Education	44% Political, civil, and human rights

Europe

50% Education	40% Health	36% Community and economic development

Central and South America

59% Education	52% Community and economic development	30% Other

Asia-Pacific

63% Education	42% Community and economic development	42% Health

Africa

67% Education	67% Community and economic development	67% Health

2.4 Measuring Effectiveness

The vast majority of organizations had systems in place to measure the effectiveness of philanthropic efforts.

When asked how they assessed the effectiveness of philanthropic efforts, most organizations specified evaluations of entire program areas (69%) or individual grants (58%). Fewer had adopted performance metrics (39%), conducted satisfaction surveys with their grantees (35%), or assessed their entire program on an annual basis (35%). Just 5% did not measure the effectiveness of their philanthropic efforts.

Across all regions, organizations cited "evaluations of entire program areas and/or initiatives" as one of the top ways they assessed the effectiveness of their philanthropic efforts.

However, in North America, organizations cited "evaluation of individual grants" as the top way they assessed effectiveness.

Different organizational types handled measuring the effectiveness of their philanthropic programs in varying ways. While every organizational type except for private business vehicles conducted evaluations of entire program areas and/or initiatives. More than half of community foundations (56%) assessed effectiveness "by assessing the entire program of philanthropic giving on an annual basis," but this type of assessment was used much less frequently by other types of organizations. Approximately half of community foundations, corporate foundations, and private business vehicles conducted satisfaction surveys with their grantees, while a much lower percentage of other types of organizations reported the use of satisfaction surveys.

Figure 10: Ways of Assessing the Effectiveness of Philanthropic Efforts (n=148)

Through evaluation of entire program areas and/or initiatives	69%
Through evaluation of individual grants	58%
By implementing performance metrics	39%
By conducting satisfaction surveys with grantees	35%
By assessing the entire program of philanthropic giving on an annual basis	30%
How do you assess the effectiveness of your organization's philanthropic efforts	9%
By formally assessing Return on Investment of our philanthropic giving	7%
By tracking metrics related to employee volunteerism and charitable contribution	5%
We do not measure our philanthropic work	5%

Figure 11: Top Ways Used to Assess the Effectiveness of Philanthropic Efforts by Organization Type

Community foundation (n = 16)	Corporate foundation or corporation (n = 16)	Family-led philanthropy (n = 48)	Independent or private endowed foundations (n = 46)
Through evaluation of entire program areas and/or initiatives (69%)	Through evaluation of entire program areas and/or initiatives (69%)	Through evaluation of entire program areas and/or initiatives (71%)	Through evaluation of entire program areas and/or initiatives (67%)
Through evaluation of individual grants (63%)	By conducting satisfaction surveys with grantees (50%)	Through evaluation of individual grants (60%)	Through evaluation of individual grants (67%)
By assessing the entire program of philanthropic giving on an annual basis (56%)	Through evaluation of individual grants (44%)	By implementing performance metrics (33%)	By conducting satisfaction surveys with grantees (37%)
	By implementing performance metrics (44%)	By conducting satisfaction surveys with grantees (33%)	

2.5 In Focus: Family Philanthropy

Past research focusing on time-limited philanthropy have seen a majority of respondents utilize family foundations for philanthropic giving and a majority of donations directed through such vehicles. In addition, concern over the future generations of family members has been a motivating factor for shifting to a time-limited model in our previous report. This section provides a detailed look at the 48 family-led philanthropic organizations that responded to the survey.

The family-led philanthropic organizations represented in this survey had a long track record in philanthropic giving. Nearly 9 in 10 had been involved in philanthropic giving for more than 10 years, including 54% who had been involved for more than 25 years.

Most of the family-led philanthropic organizations in the sample were led by just one generation. Thirty-five percent reported that at least two generations of family members were involved in the oversight of the family's philanthropic management.

Figure 12: Number of Generations Overseeing the Management of the Family's Philanthropy (n=48)
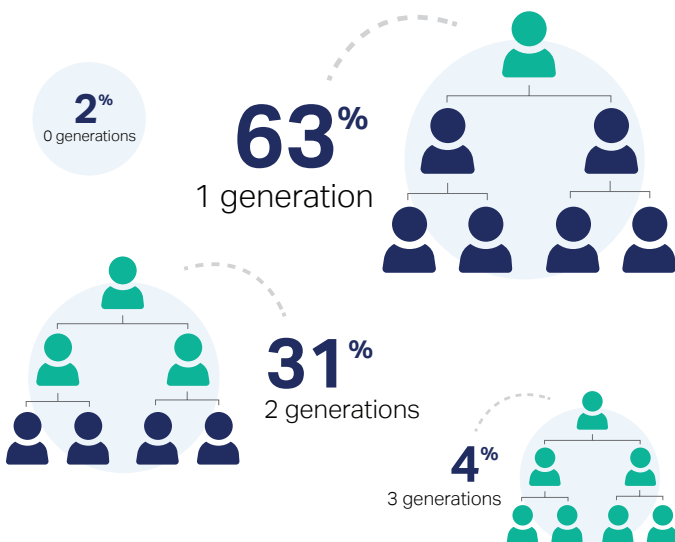
For a majority (54%), the second generation of the family oversaw the family's philanthropy. Thirty-three percent were led by the first generation and 28% were led by the third. Fewer than 10% were led by the fourth generation or higher.

Figure 13: Generation that Currently Manages the Family's Philanthropy
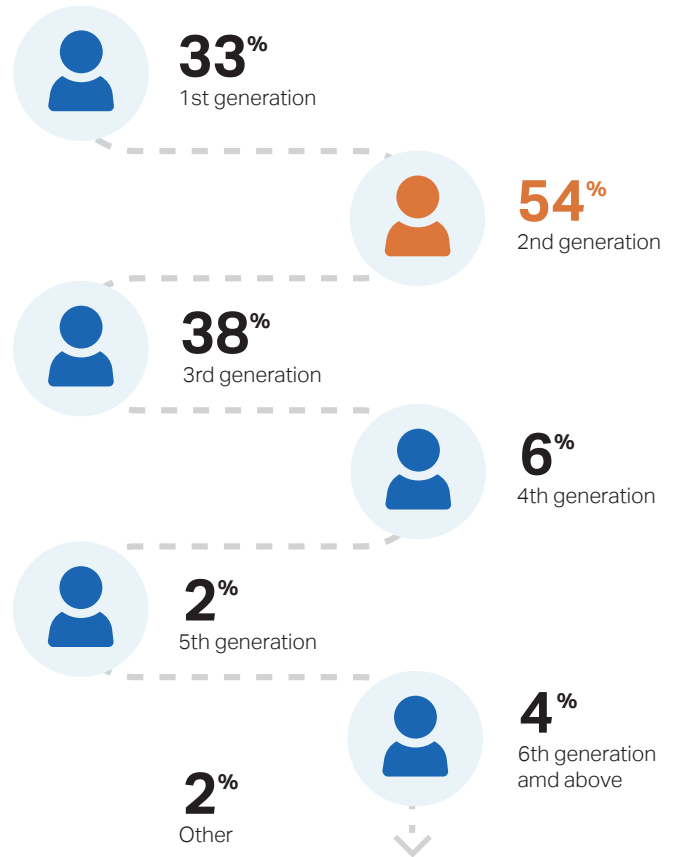
While the second generation managed the philanthropy of more than half of family-led organizations, the "next generation" of philanthropy was emerging. In the survey, the "next generation" was defined as "the latest generation to whom the family's wealth has been or will be transferred." Most family-led organizations that were surveyed have active involvement among next generation family members. Fifty-eight percent said the next generation was actively involved on a regular basis and another 25% were somewhat involved. In contrast, 13% of the respondents noted that the next generation was not involved in those efforts at all. Four percent do not report having a next generation of family members.

Among those family-led organizations who were surveyed that have a next generation, several different tactics were taken to encourage their interest in philanthropic giving. More than 8 in 10 actively engaged them in the organizations' philanthropic work. Nearly 7 in 10 instilled philanthropic values and a sense of moral responsibility in the next generation. Six in 10 say they created opportunities to transfer intergenerational knowledge and experience. 35% educated the next generation about world challenges and 5% used other tactics. Eight percent did not actively encourage the next generation's engagement.[1]

In the 2020 survey report, Global Trends and Strategic Time Horizons in Family Philanthropy, the most popular strategies families reported to encourage the next generation's interest in philanthropy were "instill in them a sense of moral responsibility" (65%), "Actively engaging them in the organization's philanthropic work" (55%), and "creating meaningful roles for them" (38%). The next generations most often engaged in their families' philanthropy by serving on board (45%), conducting site visits (28%), and developing grants (24%).

Figure 14: Ways to Encourage the Next Generation's Interest in Philanthropy (n=40)

By actively engaging them in the organization's philanthropic work	83%
By instilling philanthropic values and a sense of moral responsibility	68%
By creating opportunities to transfer intergenerational knowledge and experience	60%
By educating them about world challenges	35%
It does not actively encourage their engagement	8%
Other	5%

Among those family-led organizations that actively engaged the next generation in their philanthropic work, most often it was through board service (82%) or providing strategy or program oversight (67%). Fewer provided operational decision-making (36%), served as philanthropic organization staff (30%), or conducted grantee monitoring and evaluation (12%). Only six percent said the next generation was involved in other ways.

2.6 In Focus: Corporate Philanthropy

Corporate foundations account for a steady percentage of philanthropic vehicles, with past research indicating a higher prevalence in Asia-Pacific than Europe and North America. This section provides a detailed look at the 17 corporate philanthropic organizations that responded to the survey.

Corporate philanthropic programs were a small but important group in this study. Their years of involvement in philanthropy varied; just under half said their corporation's philanthropic programs began in the last century, while just over half said their corporation's philanthropic programs began in the new millennia.

Corporate foundations in the sample engaged in a range of philanthropic efforts. More than half were involved with operating programs within their industry, sector, or communities (59%), grantmaking programs within their industry, sector, or communities (59%), and volunteering (53%). Just over a third (35%) engaged with cash donations or sponsorships. Twenty-nine percent worked with operating programs outside of their industry or work with pro bono services. Fewer engaged with staff contributions, grantmaking programs outside of their industry, in-kind donations, and cause-related marketing.

Figure 15: Types of Philanthropic Efforts (n=17)

Operating programs within your industry, sector, or communities	59%
Grantmaking programs within your industry, sector, or communities	59%
Staff volunteering	53%
Cash donations	35%
Sponsorship	35%
Operating programs not related to your industry, sector, or communities	29%
Pro bono services	29%
Staff contributions	24%
Grantmaking programs not related to your industry	18%
In-kind donations	18%
Cause-related marketing	18%

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1   Compared to the 2020 RPA/Campden survey, the means by which the next generation is engaged in a family-led philanthropy have either stayed as or become more common across organizations.

When it came to how corporations structure their philanthropy functions, 71% of responding organizations said their philanthropic entity had a legal structure separate and distinct from the corporation and 29% percent said their philanthropy was part of the corporate social responsibility program. Respondents were asked who the main decision-makers are for the corporation's philanthropic strategy and the vast majority said they are guided by executive staff and/or the board of directors. Far fewer said these decisions were guided by the founder, philanthropic advisors, the communities served or beneficiaries, family members, or regulatory bodies.

Figure 16: **Main Decision-Makers for Corporate Philanthropic strategy (n=17)**

Executive staff	82%
Board of directors	82%
Founder	12%
Philanthropic advisors	12%
Communities served or beneficiaries	12%
Family members	6%
Regulatory bodies	6%
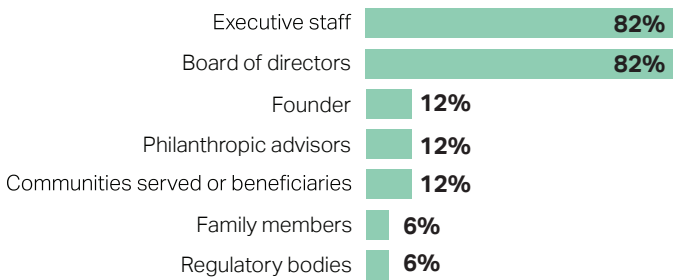
In terms of how the corporate philanthropy efforts were funded, forty-one percent of responding corporations' philanthropic funding was from an endowment, while 29 percent were funded annually by a percentage of profits. Another 29 percent (47%) said it was determined in some other fashion, such as member contributions, donations, and corporate budget planning.

The main motivations of corporate giving in the study were varied. Seventy-six percent said they want to give back to society, and 71% said they want to influence social change. Just over half (53%) said they want to put their values into action and just under half (47%) said they have a moral obligation to engage in philanthropy. Fewer than 10% said they are participating to counteract past harmful effects of their industry (6%), for tax considerations (6%), or out of a legal responsibility (6%).

Among the respondents to the survey, most corporate philanthropy focused on community and economic development. Just under half (47%) said their focus is on health, education, or climate change.

3 | Strategic Time Horizons in Philanthropy: Key Findings

3. Strategic Time Horizons in Philanthropy: Key Findings

3.1 In-Perpetuity

Most Philanthropic Organizations Remain In-Perpetuity

Seventy-four percent of participants identified as in-perpetuity organizations, while 16% reported being time-limited.

Among those that adhere to an in-perpetuity strategic time horizon, 67% stated that their organizations had never considered adopting a time-limited model, 20% said they considered but later decided against the switch, and the remaining 12% reported that they were actively considering switching to a time-limited horizon. Among time-limited organizations, 62% were established as such from inception, while 38% started as perpetual organizations but later switched to a time-limited model.

Figure 17: **Respondents by Srategic Time Horizons (n=133)**
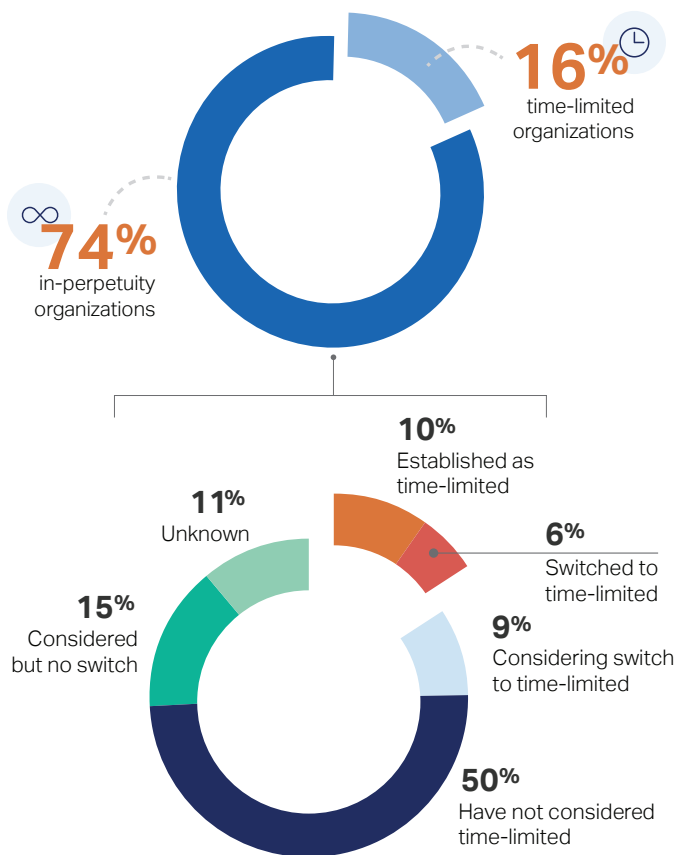
3.2 Time-Limited

The time-limited model is becoming increasingly popular.

The survey results show an upward trend in the popularity of time-limited giving. While only a small fraction of organizations established prior to the 1990s considered a shift to a time-limited model, organizations established more recently have shown a growing interest in this alternative by either switching to a time-limited horizon, considering switching, or establishing as time-limited entities from the outset.

Figure 18: **Current Percentage of Time-Limited Organizations by Establishment Period (n=133)**
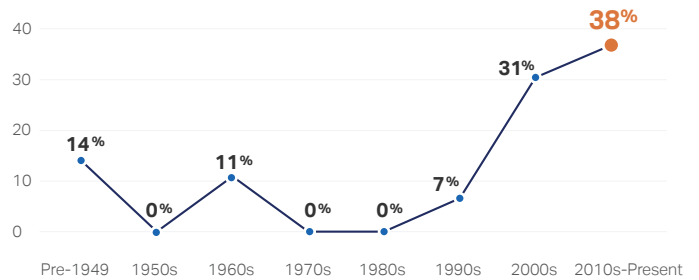
In terms of the popularity of different time horizons across regions, a slightly larger proportion of respondents in Asia-Pacific and North America have adopted or started considering time-limited approaches.

Figure 19: Popularity of Different Time Horizons by Region (n=115)

North America	Europe	Central and South America	Asia-Pacific	Africa
19% 11% 70%	14% 6% 80%	10% 14% 76%	26% 5% 69%	33% 33% 33%

● Time-limited   ● Currently considering time-limited   ○ Not considered or decided against time-limited
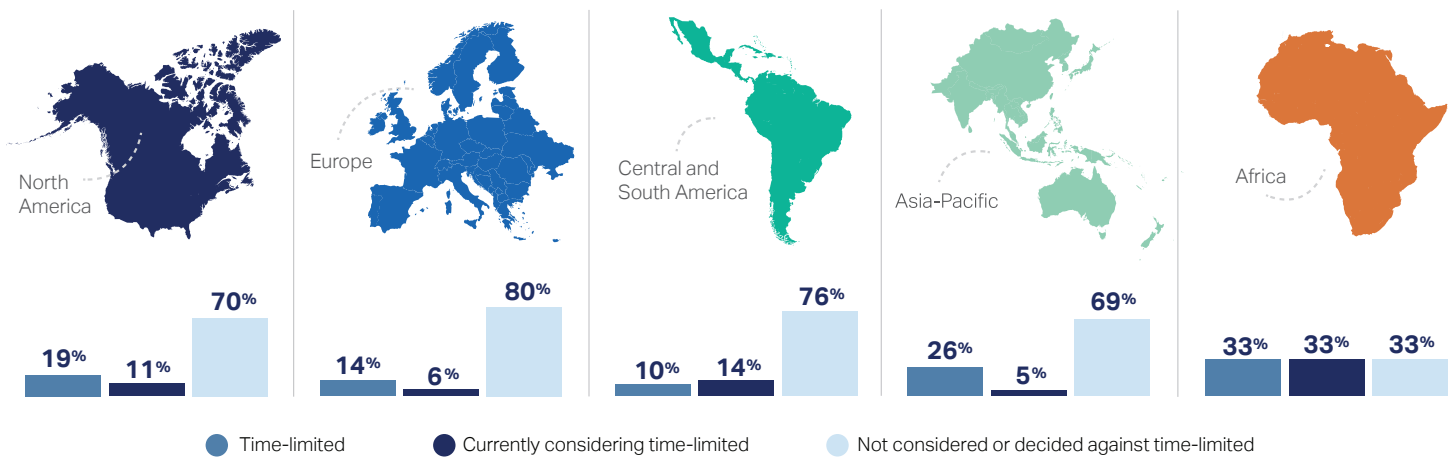
3.3 Influence

Strategic time horizons tended to be defined by the organization's founder.

Fifty-two percent of organizations said that their strategic time horizons were defined by the founders' intent. Fewer said their organization's timeline was defined by their organization's bylaws, articles of incorporation, or charter (26%), by custom or past practices (16%), or by something else (6%). Twenty-four

percent of organizations noted that their time horizon was not yet defined.

The factors that determined strategic time horizons varied across organization types. For community and corporate foundations, bylaws and articles of incorporation most often defined strategic time horizons, followed by the founder's intent. Family-led philanthropy, and independent or private endowed foundations, cited the founder's intent as the single most important factor in determining strategic time horizons.

Figure 20: Determining Factors of Strategic Time Horizons by Organization Type

	Community foundation (n=11)	Corporate foundation or corporation (n=11)	Family-led philanthropy (n=40)	Independent or private endowed foundation (n=44)	Private business vehicle (n=3)
Founder's intent	27%	36%	65%	57%	33%
Set of bylaws/articles of incorporation/charter	45%	45%	18%	27%	
Our strategic time horizon is undefined	27%	27%	18%	25%	67%
Custom/past practices	18%	18%	15%	18%	
Other			8%	5%	

● Founder's intent   ○ Set of bylaws/articles of incorporation/charter   ● Our strategic time horizon is undefined

● Custom/past practices   ● Other

3.4 Influence by Time Mode

Many additional factors influence strategic time horizon decisions across organization types.

Among organizations that adopted a time-limited model (n=21), the founder of the organization (57%) and the board of directors (48%) were the most influential voices in the decision. Twenty-nine percent of organizations also noted the influence of executive staff and 19% cited the influence of family members. Fewer said that philanthropic advisors (10%), communities served (5%), regulatory bodies (5%), or something else (5%) influenced the decision.

Figure 21: Main Influencers in Time-Horizon Decisions by Time Mode

Became time-limited (n=21): Founder 57%, Board of directors 48%, Executive staff 29%, Family members 19%, Philanthropic advisors 10%, Communities served or beneficiaries 5%, Other 5%, Regulatory bodies 5%

Currently considering switching to time-limited (n=11): Founder 9%, Board of directors 73%, Executive staff 36%, Family members 45%, Philanthropic advisors 9%

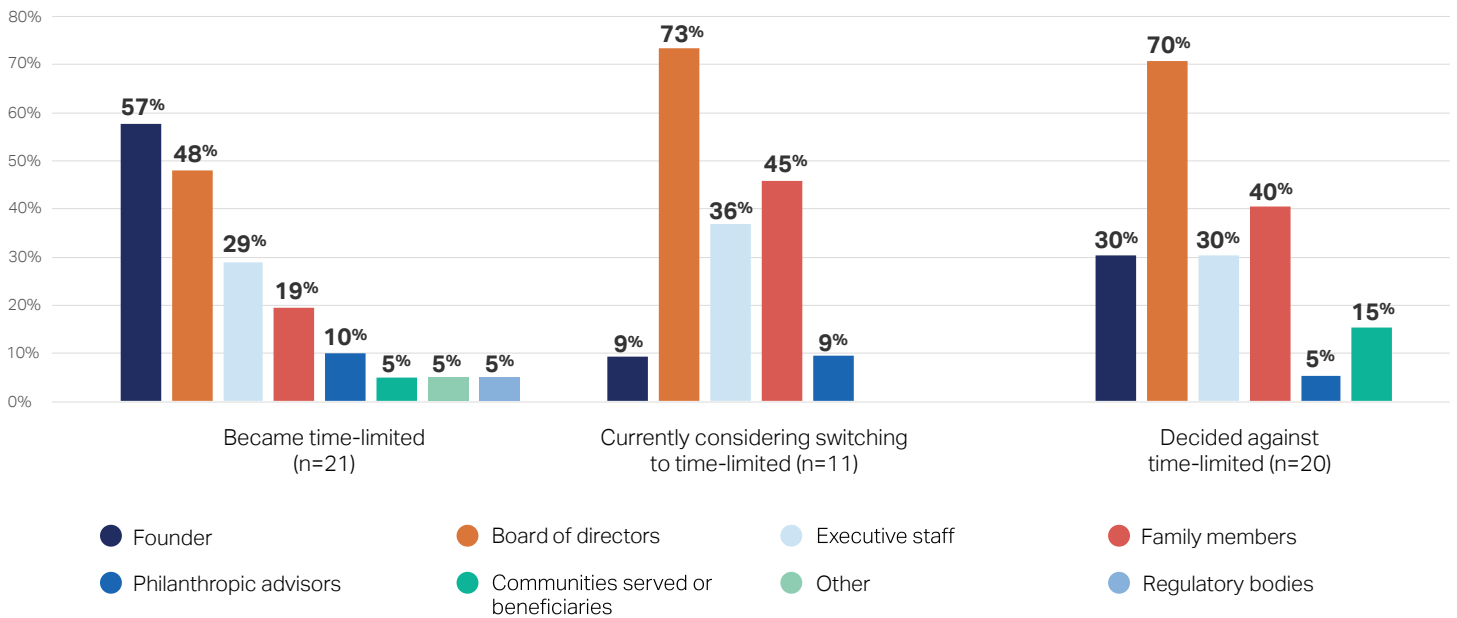Decided against time-limited (n=20): Founder 30%, Board of directors 70%, Executive staff 30%, Family members 40%, Philanthropic advisors 5%, Communities served or beneficiaries 15%

Legend: ● Founder ● Board of directors ● Executive staff ● Family members ● Philanthropic advisors ● Communities served or beneficiaries ● Other ● Regulatory bodies

For in-perpetuity organizations that were actively considering time-limited models (n=11), the board of directors (73%) were the main decision-makers. Family members (45%) and executive staff (36%) were the two other main decision-makers in considering the switch.

Among those organizations that have considered but decided against the time-limited model (n=20), the board of directors and the founder were instrumental in the decision. Seventy percent of these organizations reported the board of directors decided against the switch, while 40% of these organizations said family members decided against a time-limited model. Fewer said the founder (30%), the executive staff (30%), the communities served (15%), or the philanthropic advisors (5%) were the main factors against the decision to switch to a time-limited model.

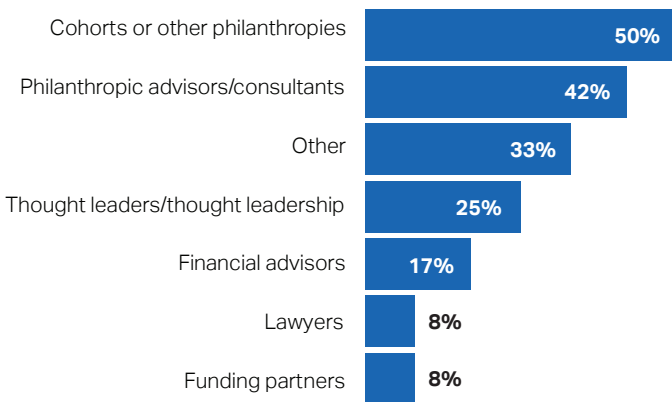**Figure 21B:** Who Was Consulted in Adoption of Time-Limited Model? (n=21)

Funding partners 43%
Philanthropic advisors/consultants 33%
Cohorts or other philanthropies 33%
Tax advisors 29%
Other 24%
Financial advisors 24%
Lawyers 14%
Infrastructure organizations 5%

In weighing the decision to adopt a time-limited model, 43% of time-limited organizations consulted funding partners and one-third consulted philanthropic advisors or other philanthropies. About a quarter consulted their tax and financial advisors. Those who were considering switching to a time-limited model at the time of the survey most often consulted with peer cohorts, other philanthropies, philanthropic advisors or consultants.

For organizations switching from an in-perpetuity to a time-limited model, many such consultations ended after the switch to a time-limited model. In fact, only two out of eight organizations said they required additional expertise after switching to a time-limited model.

3.5 Challenges

The challenges of 2020 and 2021 impacted philanthropic timelines.

Half of respondents said that the challenges faced globally due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other events during 2020-2021 influenced their philanthropic timelines in some way. Thirty-four percent reported an acceleration of their philanthropic giving due to the pandemic and other global events without formally changing their strategic time horizons; and 12% said they started strategic discussions of an alternative spending timeline. Forty-nine percent said the societal challenges had not influenced their philanthropic timelines.

Figure 22: In Considering a Time-Limited Model, Which of the Following Have You Consulted? (n=12)

Cohorts or other philanthropies	50%
Philanthropic advisors/consultants	42%
Other	33%
Thought leaders/thought leadership	25%
Financial advisors	17%
Lawyers	8%
Funding partners	8%

Figure 23: Did 2020/2021 Challenges Influence Your Philanthropic Timelines? (n=145)

1% Don't Know
49% No
50% Yes

Yes, we decided to accelerate giving but have not formally changed our time horizon	34%
Yes, we started strategic discussions of alternative timelines but haven't finalized decisions	12%
Yes, we have changed or plan on changing to a time-limited approach	3%
Yes, we have changed or plan on changing to an in-perpetuity approach	1%
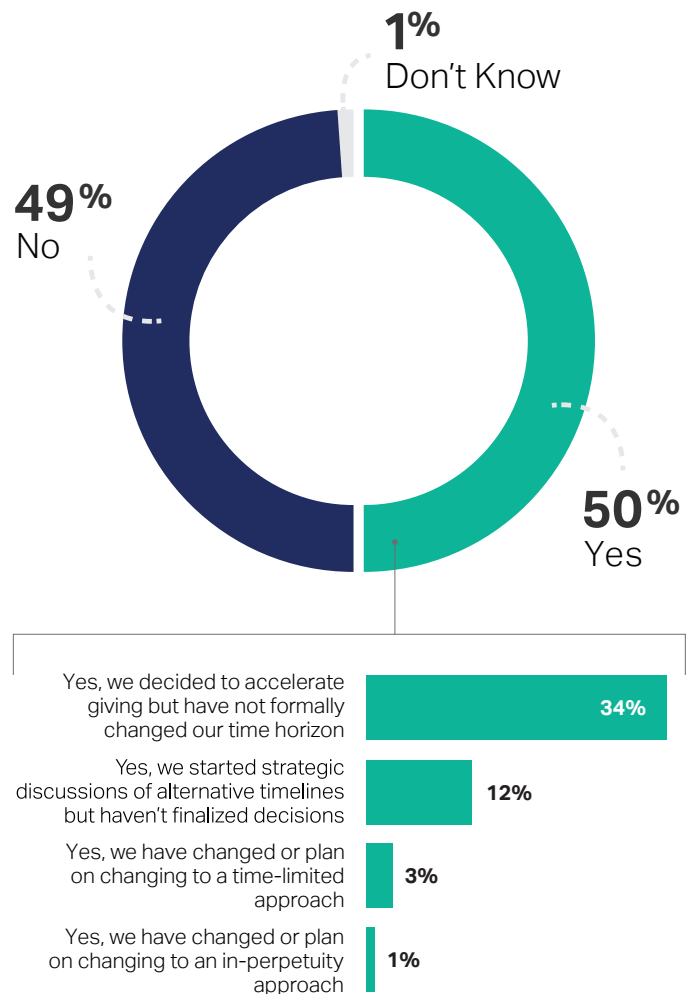
Respondents from corporate foundations were no more or less likely than those from family-led foundations to have had their giving timelines impacted by the pandemic. Organizations that were currently time-limited or actively considering the time-limited model reported that their strategic timelines have been influenced by challenges of 2020 and 2021.

More than half of respondents representing organizations in Africa, North America, and Central and South America said they have at least considered changing their philanthropic timelines due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other challenges. Similarly, just under half of respondents from Europe and Asia-Pacific said they have at least considered changing their philanthropic timelines.

Figure 24: **2020/2021 Challenges by Region**

North America — 44%, 9%, 2%, 46%

Europe — 5%, 35%, 5%, 55%

Central and South America — 8%, 28%, 12%, 4%, 44%

Asia-Pacific — 25%, 21%, 54%

Africa — 75%, 25%

● Yes, we have changed or plan on changing to a time-limited approach

● Yes, we decided to accelerate giving but have not formally changed our time horizon

● Yes, we started strategic discussions of alternative timelines but have not finalized decisions

● Yes, we have changed or plan on changing to an in-perpetuity approach

● No

4 | Through the Time Horizons Lens

4. Through the Time Horizons Lens

4.1 Motivations for Engaging in Philanthropy by Time Horizon

Main motivations for engaging in philanthropy were similar among respondents adhering to different strategic time horizons. Across time-limited organizations, those considering the time-limited approach at the time of this survey, and those that have not considered or have decided against the time-limited model, "to give back to society," "to influence social change," "to address urgent needs," and "to put values into action" were cited as the top motivations. For organizations currently considering a time-limited model, "to leave a legacy" was tied as the third most frequently cited motivation.

4.2 Top Program Areas by Time Horizon

The top three program areas—education, community and economic development and health—were the same across different strategic time horizons. One notable exception was

that "political, civil, and human rights" was cited as the third leading area of programmatic focus among time-limited organizations. Organizations considering a time-limited model reported education (64%), community and economic development (55%), and political, civil and human rights (45%) as the top three programmatic priorities.

"Political, civil, and human rights", which was not among top five programmatic priorities for either in-perpetuity or time-limited organizations in the Strategic Time Horizons: A Global Snapshot of Foundation Approaches (2020), has risen to top five across both time horizons in this survey. This is a significant change which potentially reflects societal challenges faced around the world in 2020-2022.

Figure 25: **Main Motivations for Engaging in Philanthropy by Time Mode**

Legend:
- To influence social change
- To give back to society
- To address urgent needs
- To put values into action
- Moral obligation
- Tax consideration
- To leave a legacy
- Personal experience
- Other
- To engage the next generation of family
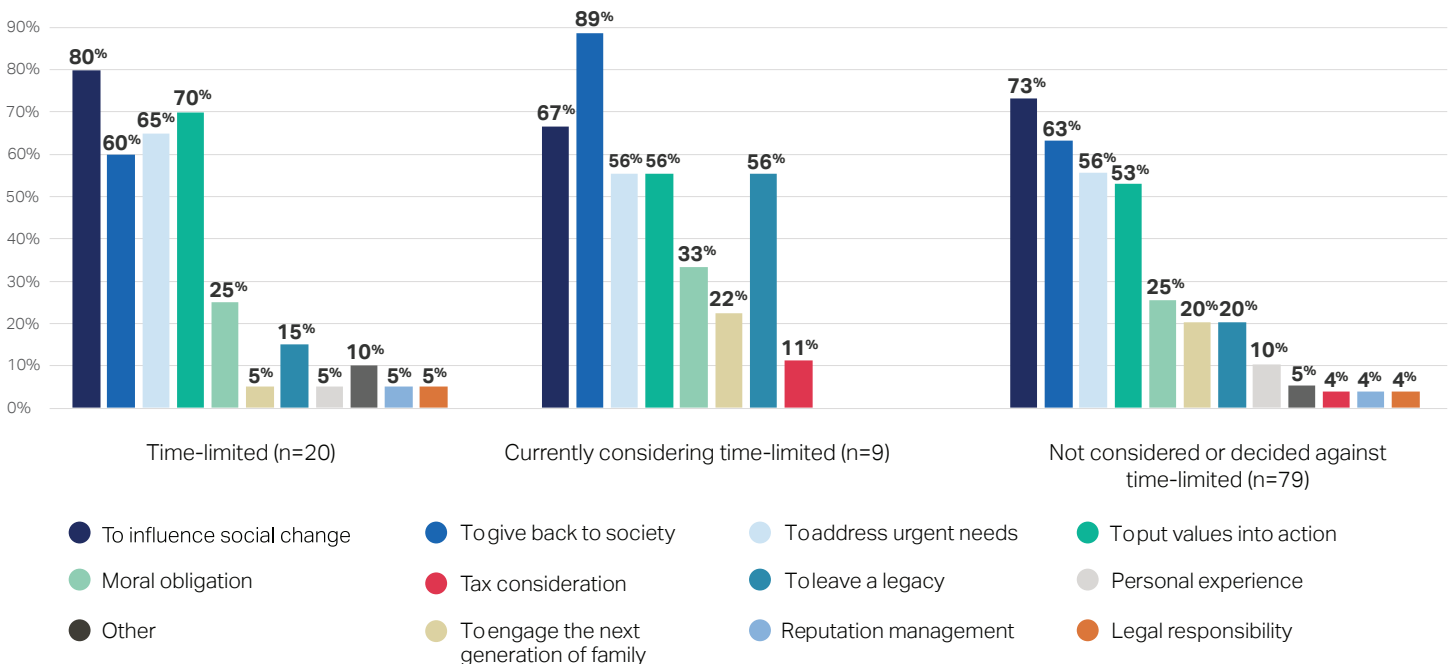- Reputation management
- Legal responsibility

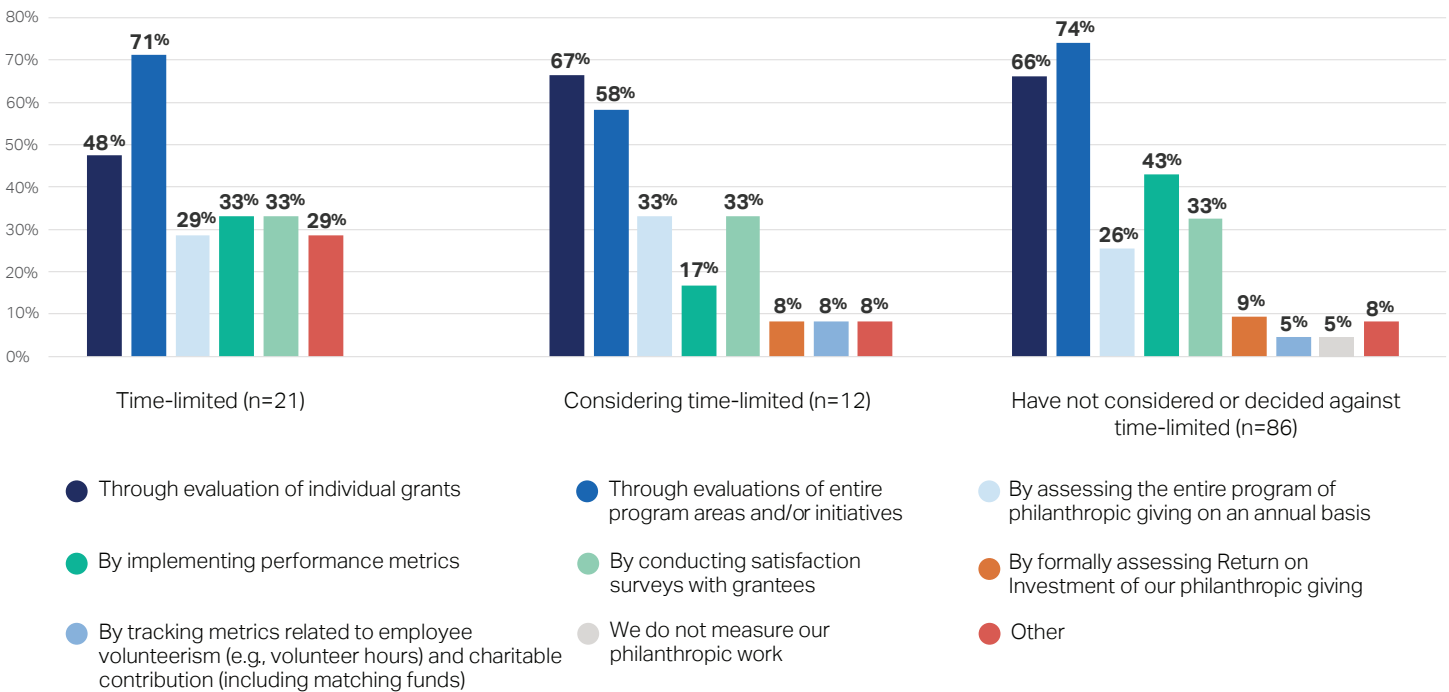Figure 26: **Top Program Areas by Time Horizons**

Time-Limited Organizations (n=21)	Perpetual Organizations (n=86)	Organizations Considering Time-Limited Model (n=11)
1. Education (62%)	1. Education (52%)	1. Education (64%)
2. Community and economic development (38%)	2. Community and economic development (43%)	2. Community and economic development (55%)
3. Health (33%)	3. Health (37%)	3. Political, civil, and human rights (45%)
4. Political, civil, and human rights (33%)	4. Arts and culture (31%)	4. Climate Change (27%)
5. Environment/Conservation (29%)	5. Political, civil, and human rights (27%)	5. Human Services (27%)
	6. Environment/Conservation (27%)	

4.3 Measuring Effectiveness by Time Horizon

In assessing effectiveness of their philanthropic interventions, organizations employing different strategic time horizons relied on evaluations of entire program areas, initiatives, and/or individual grants. Philanthropies currently considering time-limited horizons were more likely to cite "evaluation of individual grants" as the preferred measure whereas a significantly higher proportion of time-limited organizations and those who decided against the time-limited model used "evaluation of entire program area and/or initiatives" as a dominant approach in evaluating effectiveness (71% and 74%, respectively).

Figure 27: **Assessing the Effectiveness of Philanthropic Efforts by Strategic Time Horizon**

Legend:
- Through evaluation of individual grants
- Through evaluations of entire program areas and/or initiatives
- By assessing the entire program of philanthropic giving on an annual basis
- By implementing performance metrics
- By conducting satisfaction surveys with grantees
- By formally assessing Return on Investment of our philanthropic giving
- By tracking metrics related to employee volunteerism (e.g, volunteer hours) and charitable contribution (including matching funds)
- We do not measure our philanthropic work
- Other

5 | Philanthropic Perspectives: Implications and Benefits

5. Philanthropic Perspectives: Implications and Benefits

This final section takes a close look at the reasons organizations choose to switch to a time-limited model and how that choice has impacted their philanthropic giving, the driving factors behind why some organizations are considering the switch, and the reasons why other organizations are not considering switching to the time-limited model. General views on the perceived and anticipated benefits, opportunities, and challenges associated with each time horizon model are also detailed.

5.1 Why Time-Limited

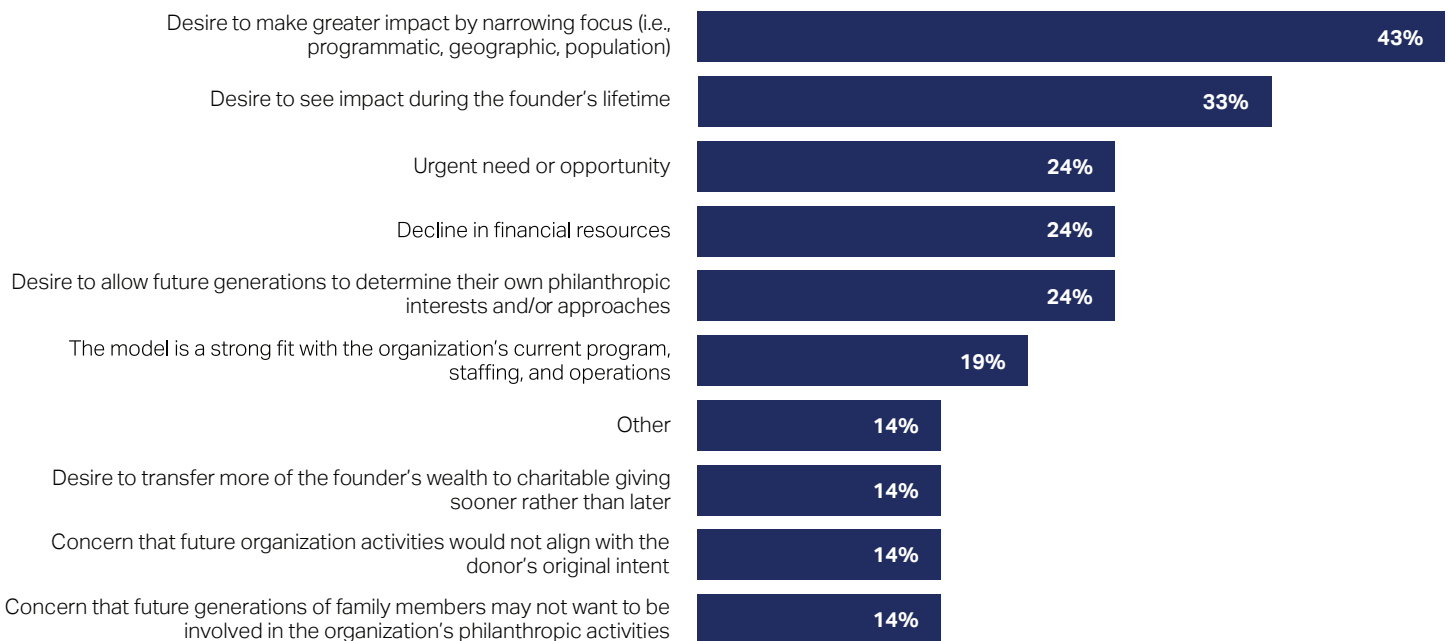**The main reasons for adopting a time-limited model are varied.**

Of the 21 philanthropic organizations that adopted a time-limited model, 43% did so to make a greater impact by narrowing the focus (e.g., programmatic, geographic, population) of its operations. One-third wanted to see the impact of their work during the founder's lifetime, one-fourth adopted a time-limited model due to an urgent need or opportunity, one-fourth did so driven by a decline in financial resources, and one-fourth were motivated by a desire to allow future generations to determine their own philanthropic interests and/or approaches.

Only 14% of organizations adopted a time-limited model out of concern that future generations of family members would not want to be involved in the organization's philanthropic activities or that future organization activities would not align with the donor's original intent.

In Reasons for Adopting a Time-Limited Horizon: a Comparative Look, desire to transfer more of founders' wealth to charitable giving sooner rather than later (38%), desire to make greater impact by narrowing focus (31%), desire to see impact on beneficiaries during founder's lifetime (31%) were the top three reasons mentioned for adopting a time-limited model.

Figure 28: **Main Reasons Adopted a Time-Limited Model (n=21)**

Reason	Percentage
Desire to make greater impact by narrowing focus (i.e., programmatic, geographic, population)	43%
Desire to see impact during the founder's lifetime	33%
Urgent need or opportunity	24%
Decline in financial resources	24%
Desire to allow future generations to determine their own philanthropic interests and/or approaches	24%
The model is a strong fit with the organization's current program, staffing, and operations	19%
Other	14%
Desire to transfer more of the founder's wealth to charitable giving sooner rather than later	14%
Concern that future organization activities would not align with the donor's original intent	14%
Concern that future generations of family members may not want to be involved in the organization's philanthropic activities	14%

Many organizations reported that adopting a time limited model led to improved operational efficiency. Nearly half said it had led to a greater strategic clarity and focus. 38% said they now work with greater urgency, 33% said their work is more aligned with the donor/founder's original intent, and 29% said they work more closely with grantees and communities. In fact, none of the organizations reported that the switch had not improved the efficacy of their philanthropy in at least some way.

Organizations that made the switch to a time-limited model dealt with a variety of challenges in the process. The most common challenges faced were engaging funding partners to continue the work after a set end point (29%), having a lack of alignment among family members, board, leadership, and staff (19%), and financial management (19%).

Figure 29: How Did Adoption to Time-Limited Model Make Philanthropy More Effective? (n=21)
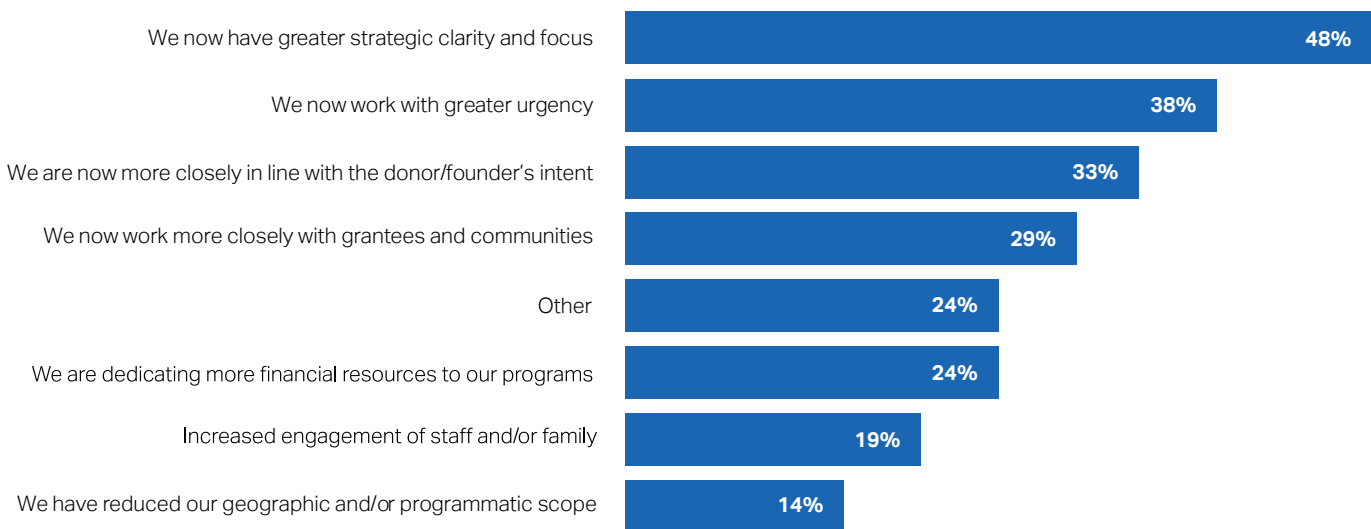
We now have greater strategic clarity and focus	48%
We now work with greater urgency	38%
We are now more closely in line with the donor/founder's intent	33%
We now work more closely with grantees and communities	29%
Other	24%
We are dedicating more financial resources to our programs	24%
Increased engagement of staff and/or family	19%
We have reduced our geographic and/or programmatic scope	14%

Figure 30: Biggest Challenges to Implementing Time-Limited Model (n=21)

Engaging funding partners to continue the work after the set endpoint	29%
Other	24%
Financial management	19%
Lack of alignment among family members, board, leadership, and staff	19%
Instituting regular review and assessment	14%
Communications with staff, grantees, and partners	14%
Providing professional development and advancement opportunities to staff	14%
Unrealistic timeframes	14%
Lack of expertise among board members and leadership on how to spend down	10%
Maintaining engagement of staff and/or family members	10%
Narrowing the programmatic focus or geographic focus	10%

5.2 Drive

Organizations actively considering time-limited model are driven by a desire to make an impact.
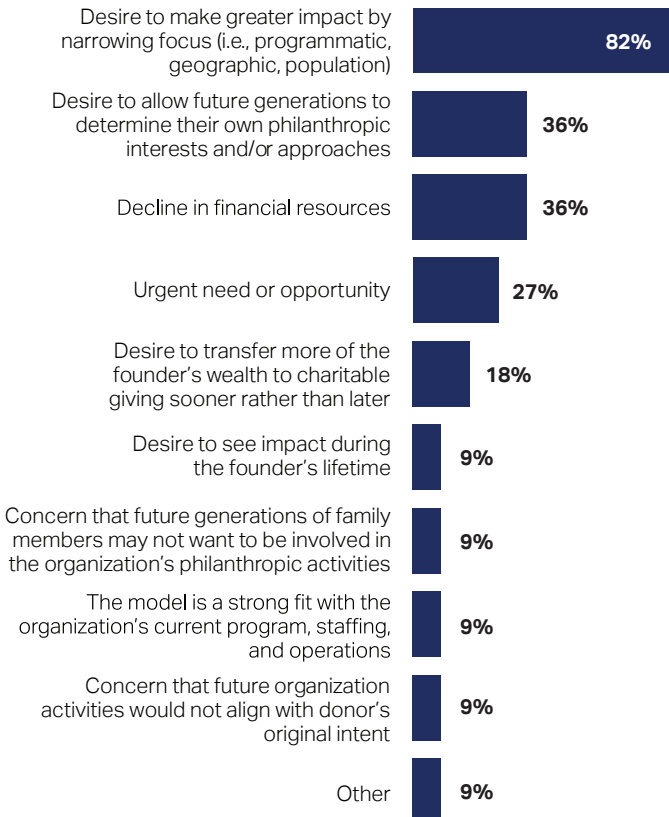
Among the 11 organizations in the sample considering a switch, 82% cited a desire to make greater impact by narrowing focus. Other reasons included an expectation to allow future generations to determine their own philanthropic interest or approaches (36%) and a decline in financial resources (36%).

In the previous survey published in 2020, 0% of respondents mentioned declining financial resources as a reason for considering a switch. This is markedly different from this survey.

Figure 31: Main Reasons for Considering a Time-Limited Model (n=11)

Desire to make greater impact by narrowing focus (i.e., programmatic, geographic, population)	82%
Desire to allow future generations to determine their own philanthropic interests and/or approaches	36%
Decline in financial resources	36%
Urgent need or opportunity	27%
Desire to transfer more of the founder's wealth to charitable giving sooner rather than later	18%
Desire to see impact during the founder's lifetime	9%
Concern that future generations of family members may not want to be involved in the organization's philanthropic activities	9%
The model is a strong fit with the organization's current program, staffing, and operations	9%
Concern that future organization activities would not align with donor's original intent	9%
Other	9%

The length of time these organizations spend weighing the change varied. Of those 11 organizations, four had discussed the switch for less than a year, five for one to two years, and three had discussed the option for more than three years.

Figure 32: How Long Has Your Organization's Leadership Been Discussing Potentially Moving to a Time-Limited Model? (n=11)

- **17%** Longer than 4 years
- **8%** 3 to 4 years
- **42%** 1 to 2 years
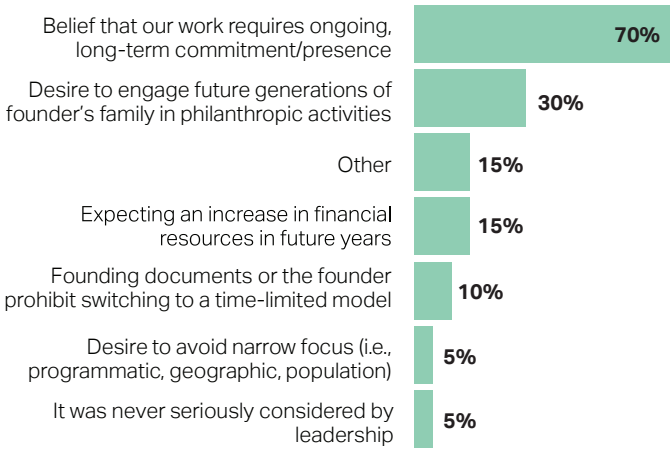- **33%** Less than 1 year
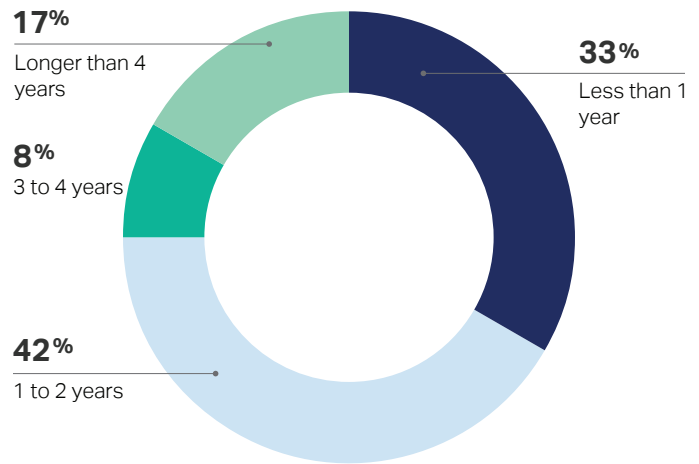
5.3 Why Not Time-Limited

Most organizations that decided against a time-limited model say it does not align with their long-term goals.

When asked about factors that prevented the organization from switching to a time-limited model, 70% said they believed that their work required an ongoing, long-term commitment/presence. Thirty percent of organizations reported that a desire to engage future generations of the founder's family in philanthropic activities prevented a switch.

According to the 2019 RPA survey, "Desire to make impact on beneficiaries over multiple generations" (63%), "Desire to engage future generations of founder's family members in the organization's philanthropic activities" (37%), and "Expecting an increase in financial resources in future years" (14.8%) were also identified as the most prevalent reasons why some perpetual organizations decided against the switch to a time-limited model.

Figure 33: Main Factors that Prevented Switch to Time-Limited Model (n=20)

Factor	Percentage
Belief that our work requires ongoing, long-term commitment/presence	70%
Desire to engage future generations of founder's family in philanthropic activities	30%
Other	15%
Expecting an increase in financial resources in future years	15%
Founding documents or the founder prohibit switching to a time-limited model	10%
Desire to avoid narrow focus (i.e., programmatic, geographic, population)	5%
It was never seriously considered by leadership	5%

Nearly half of the organizations who decided against switching to a time-limited model said they took it under consideration in order to make a greater impact by narrowing focus, and 41% said an urgent need or opportunity presented itself. Fewer mentioned a desire to transfer more of the founder's wealth to charitable giving sooner rather than later or a concern that future generations of family members may not want to be involved in the organization's philanthropic activities.

In the 2019 RPA survey, "Desire to make greater impact by narrowing focus" (33.3%), "Concern that future generations of family members may not want to be involved in the organization's philanthropic activities" (25.9%), and "Decline in financial resources" (22.2%) were flagged as top reasons why organizations who decided against the switch considered a time-limited model first.

Figure 34: Main Reasons Considered a Time-Limited Model in the First Place (n=17)

Reason	Percentage
Desire to make greater impact by narrowing focus (i.e., programmatic, geographic, population)	47%
Urgent need or opportunity	41%
Other	18%
Desire to transfer more of the founder's wealth to charitable giving sooner rather than later	18%
Concern that future generations of family members may not want to be involved in the organization's philanthropic activities	18%
Decline in financial resources	12%
Concern that future organization activities would not align with the donor's original intent	12%
The model is a strong fit with the organization's current program, staffing, and operations	12%
Desire to allow future generations to determine their own philanthropic interests and/or approaches	6%
Desire to see impact during the founder's lifetime	6%

5.4 Views

Both the time-limited and the in-perpetuity models of giving are viewed as effective.

The survey asked respondents to agree or disagree with general statements about each model of giving. Among all organizations surveyed, more than 8 in 10 agreed or strongly agreed that organizations following a time-limited model work with greater urgency (86%) and that they were more likely to spend their resources according to the donor's philanthropic

intent (83%). Seven in 10 agreed that time-limited organizations motivate greater allocation of funds to charitable giving. More than 5 in 10 agreed that time-limited models enabled organizations to establish closer relationships with grantees and communities, encouraged donor's family members to be more involved or engaged in their philanthropy, with only slightly over half of the respondents agreeing with these statements (59%, 51%, and 59%, respectively).

Organizations generally shared similar opinions toward the time-limited model of giving, with two exceptions. Those who used an in-perpetuity model of giving were less likely than those who used a time-limited model of giving to say the time-limited model encouraged the donor's family to be more engaged in the work and establish closer relationships with both grantees and communities.

When it came to attitudes about the effectiveness of in-perpetuity models of giving, all organizations sampled expressed high levels of agreement with each statement. More than 9 in 10 agreed that the in-perpetuity model enabled future generations of family members to participate in the

foundation's work, and more than 8 in 10 agreed that the model achieves social impact over multiple future generations and allows for the adaptation to changes in societal needs over time. Nearly 8 in 10 said this model established closer relationships due to the longer time horizon and inspired the donor's family to become more involved.

Attitudes about the in-perpetuity model of giving do not differ significantly by type of organization. A larger fraction of respondents from in-perpetuity organizations tend to agree with the positive statements concerning the perpetual model, compared to those from time-limited organizations.

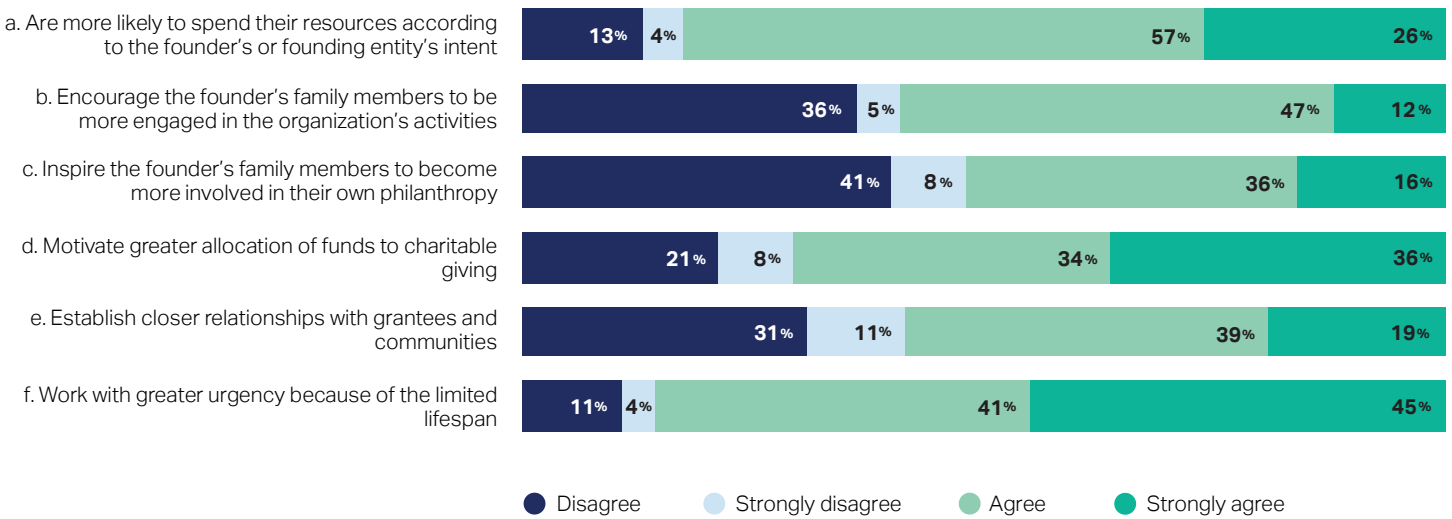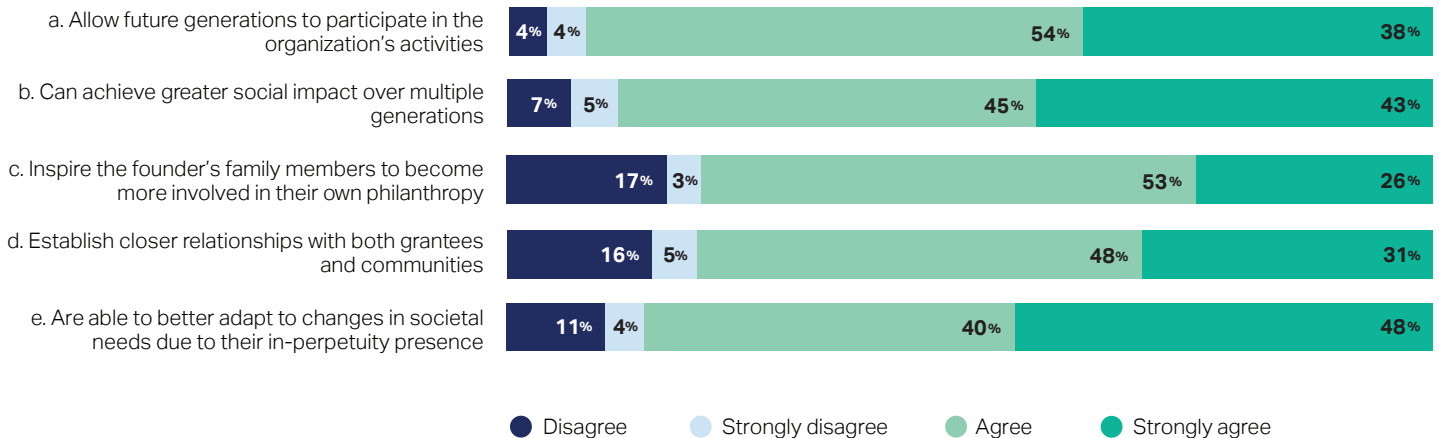**Figure 35: Philanthropic Organizations that Follow a Time-Limited Model… (n=140)**

a. Are more likely to spend their resources according to the founder's or founding entity's intent — Disagree 13%, Strongly disagree 4%, Agree 57%, Strongly agree 26%

b. Encourage the founder's family members to be more engaged in the organization's activities — Disagree 36%, Strongly disagree 5%, Agree 47%, Strongly agree 12%

c. Inspire the founder's family members to become more involved in their own philanthropy — Disagree 41%, Strongly disagree 8%, Agree 36%, Strongly agree 16%

d. Motivate greater allocation of funds to charitable giving — Disagree 21%, Strongly disagree 8%, Agree 34%, Strongly agree 36%

e. Establish closer relationships with grantees and communities — Disagree 31%, Strongly disagree 11%, Agree 39%, Strongly agree 19%

f. Work with greater urgency because of the limited lifespan — Disagree 11%, Strongly disagree 4%, Agree 41%, Strongly agree 45%

● Disagree   ● Strongly disagree   ● Agree   ● Strongly agree

Figure 36: Philanthropic Organizations that Follow an In-Perpetuity Model… (n=142)

a. Allow future generations to participate in the organization's activities — Disagree 4%, Strongly disagree 4%, Agree 54%, Strongly agree 38%

b. Can achieve greater social impact over multiple generations — Disagree 7%, Strongly disagree 5%, Agree 45%, Strongly agree 43%

c. Inspire the founder's family members to become more involved in their own philanthropy — Disagree 17%, Strongly disagree 3%, Agree 53%, Strongly agree 26%

d. Establish closer relationships with both grantees and communities — Disagree 16%, Strongly disagree 5%, Agree 48%, Strongly agree 31%

e. Are able to better adapt to changes in societal needs due to their in-perpetuity presence — Disagree 11%, Strongly disagree 4%, Agree 40%, Strongly agree 48%

● Disagree   ● Strongly disagree   ● Agree   ● Strongly agree

Conclusion

Conclusion

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Acknowledgments

Credits

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