

Know Your Donors



Your donor is going to be unique to you. You know that. I know that. That doesn't mean we can't make some generalizations, though. Let's look at what science tells us about the average donor.

Studies tend to show that [females give more than males](#). In fact, one survey found that, while women in every category give more than men in the same category, **Baby Boomers and older women gave 89% more** than similarly aged men and, of those in the top 25% of permanent income, **women gave 156% more than men** in that same category.



[A study suggests](#) that **65% of people who align to a religious affiliation donate to charities** - even charities that aren't the religious organization. Whereas 56% of people with no religious affiliation donate to charities. **About 60% of those who regularly attend church give to non-affiliated charities**. That number is less than 50% for those who don't regularly attend.



[A 2013 survey](#) suggests that, **Baby Boomers** (age 49-67) not only represent the largest group, but also donate the most. In fact, they were credited with donating \$61.9 billion, equaling **about 43% of the donations** of the studied year. The other groups fell in line as follows:



68 and older: 26%
33-48: 20%
18-32: 11%

But wait! [Don't just assume millennials aren't that giving](#). When it comes to crowdfunding campaigns, **millennials make up about 30% of the funds raised**. They are **3x as likely as a baby boomer** to donate through crowdfunding and **70x more likely** than the oldest generation.



Guess what? A good group of your potential donors are probably already right under your nose. [That is because studies suggest](#) **about 2/3 of all volunteers donate to the organization where they volunteer**. Plus, they are **likely to give even more** than donors who don't volunteer.

Congratulations, **USA**, you are the **country that donates the most to charity**.

Following behind in **second and third place** respectively are **New Zealand and Canada**.

These numbers are pulled by [looking at the rate of giving as a percentage of GDP](#).



The **most giving states** in the nation might surprise you. (At least, they did me.)

Top 5:

1. Utah
2. Arkansas
3. Minnesota
4. Alabama
5. Alaska



[According to the same state study](#), **red states were more likely to rank high on the list than blue states**.

States that tended to be red had an **average 24.33 ranking** on the list, whereas **blue states tended to rank at around 27.25**.



[Of the \\$373.25 billion in charitable giving recorded in 2015](#), **\$264.58 BILLION** of that came from **individuals**, making up 71% of the total. Foundations followed at **\$58.46 billion (6.5%)** and **corporations** at **\$18.45 billion (3.9%)**.



Is it true that you give more when you have more? Do the wealthy donate a larger portion of the money? [There are lots of theories on that](#). Some studies say the lower and middle classes give more, or at least higher proportions of total income to donating rates. However other studies suggest that the wealthy do give more.



Because of the inconsistency in data here, [Social Psych Online \(SPO\)](#) suggests that you stop asking, "Do the wealthy give more?" And **start asking why people in each wealth class give**. By targeting the reasons behind donations, you can better plan donation requests and charity events around the psyche of your actual potential donors. For example, SPO suggests that higher class people think of themselves more as an individual. They donate because they think they can actually make a difference in the world. Lower class individuals, on the other hand, think of themselves more in terms of the group. So if your donor base tends to be upper class, then you might want to stroke some egos a little. On the other hand, if their mid- to lower, then you might want to play up how they fit into your overall dream of making a difference.



I'm going to say this again: **your volunteers are unique to you**. After all, I don't care how much more religiously-affiliated people, in general, give to charities, if you are running an Atheist Awareness not-for-profit, then you should still stick to targeting those who have no religious affiliation - you'll probably do better.

Similarly, you should **take some surveys with a grain of salt**. Women may really give more than men, but I do have to take into account that the survey discussed above was conducted by a women's rights group.

What I am saying is this: **use this information to help** decide how you are going to form your plan to ask for donations and conduct your charity events. However, **don't rely on it**. Make sure you do your own research too.