

Community Foundation Kingston & Area

COVID-19 Flash Survey

Summary Report

May 2020



Community Foundation
for Kingston & Area

COVID-19 FLASH SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT

Background

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Community Foundation for Kingston & Area (CFKA) invited 75 charities in Kingston & Area to participate in a Flash Survey (Appendix B). It was open from April 13, 2020 until April 30, 2020. Forty-four completed responses were received (see list Appendix C) – a nearly 60% response rate. Survey limitations include a small sample size, ‘snapshot in time’ data. The data collected is self-reported.

The goal of the survey was to better understand whether, and how, the current circumstances were impacting their work and to understand what the organizations’ current, medium term and long-term anticipated needs may be.

The responses were received from organizations representing all the Foundation’s fields of interest (health and social services, youth, arts & culture, community development, recreation, heritage preservation,



children’s mental health, environment, education & literacy), and/or address CKFA’s Smart and Caring Priorities, which now include: **Emergency response and recovery** – Supporting community resiliency in the event of unanticipated circumstances that affect the health, security, and wellbeing of Kingston & Area residents, in addition to:

Getting Started – Giving children, youth, and newcomers a strong start to life in our community.

Food Security – Supporting systems-level change to reduce food insecurity in our community.

Community Engagement – To increase our collective sense of belonging and wellbeing by inspiring everyone to be active participants in our communities.

The following report contains aggregate data only (see Appendix A) and the comments included have been anonymized.

CFKA intends to be strategic about the best use of our available funds in 2020 to help support local charities to continue to respond to, and recover from, the COVID-19 crisis. Information gleaned from this survey will help to inform the granting strategy for the Foundation for 2020-21.

Introduction

Despite the survey's limitations, what Kingston's charitable sector is experiencing, is being mirrored both nationally and provincially. Imagine Canada's recent survey of over 1400 leaders from across the country in mid-to-late April has shown the immediate financial consequences of the pandemic.

Nearly three quarters of their respondents (73%) reported that their donations were down, 38% has experienced loss to their earned income and another 23% was seeing loss to their investment income.¹

The Ontario Non-profit Network's sector survey² in late March reported very similar findings, with regards to the financial challenges, including identifying that one-third of those surveyed had only 3-6 months of unrestricted reserve dollars.

They also reflected one of our findings: the sector's commitment and resiliency. Almost 50 per cent of non-profits surveyed at the time of their survey were open and operating but had quickly transformed their day to day operations as well as modifying and adapting their service delivery to accommodate the requirement for physical distancing. Kingston's charitable sector has responded and 'pivoted' in the same way, with a special focus in these early weeks of the pandemic working in close collaboration to ensure that Kingston's most vulnerable residents are being looked after.

Current State

As of April 30th, only 16% of respondents have shut down completely until they are permitted to reopen, while over 47% are continuing to deliver some, or all, services in a different way because of physical distancing requirements. These have included connecting with colleagues and clients via telephone, texting, chat applications, and video conferencing.

Challenges Identified: Short term

Well into the second month of lock down, respondents indicated that their most immediate or emergency needs (1-3 months) have been addressed. Remaining staff are adapting to working from home, collaborative efforts in the community have increased. Emergency fundraising efforts and federal income security and basic needs programs have brought funds to the community.

Respondents reported that while their initial panic has subsided it has been replaced with strong feelings of uncertainty.

Challenges Identified: Medium and Long Term

Over the next several months, the challenges identified by respondents fall into three interrelated categories: people (staff and volunteers), operations, and funding.

¹ <https://imaginecanada.ca/sites/default/files/COVID-19%20Sector%20Monitor%20Report%20ENGLISH.pdf>

² https://theonnc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ONNs-COVID-19-Flash-Survey-Report-April-6-2020-1_compressed.pdf

People

64 % of respondents identified both staffing and volunteers as a challenge going forward.

Staff: With few programs currently running, many organizations have had to lay support staff off, although we do not have exact numbers to report. Core functions are being managed by a handful of staff. Offices are closed and limited staff are working at home to deliver some services differently.

Question 4 asked about the changes in organization functions since the COVID-19 pandemic. Some organizations described that they have changed the services they are delivering and have shifted to COVID 19 initiatives. Others have closed some programs and expanded others.

Attrition due to future uncertainty is a strong possibility when programs begin to open again.

Volunteers: Service limitations and the virtual nature of work has some organizations concerned about volunteer engagement and retention. For example, should Queen's and St. Lawrence College deliver the fall semester virtually, as plans indicate, student volunteer rates will be drastically affected. Many organizations rely on their participation in community initiatives on a semester/seasonal basis during the school year.

Additionally, many of the active volunteers in Kingston are seniors, a group known to be at higher risk for COVID-19. Many organizations may be reticent to bring them back into the roles previously held that may put them in harms way.

"We depend on volunteers for driving and over 50% of our volunteer drivers are over the age of 70. We anticipate many will not return to the role due to ongoing safety concerns."

Operations

Although programs have been cancelled and staff are working from home, the infrastructure costs remain constant for organizations. Rent, photocopier leases, and internet costs still need to be paid.

Many respondents expressed concerns about meeting fixed operations costs in the medium term as any unrestricted reserves quickly deplete.

The cancellation of fundraising events this year is seriously impacting many organizations. The revenue from these events often cover the upcoming year's operational budgets. These funds are needed to keep the doors open and the lights on. This uncertainty is crippling most medium- and longer-term fundraising plans, and thereby impacting fiscal operations plans.

At the time of the survey, not one respondent indicated that their landlords had offered any rent supports or reductions.

Funding

At the start of the pandemic, many organizations experienced an immediate and precipitous drop in revenue, especially when registrations, memberships, and ticket sales constituted the bulk of their anticipated annual revenues.

At the same time, planned fundraising campaigns and events for the busy Spring 2020 season were cancelled, postponed, or, if possible, reimaged. These fundraising opportunities often provide the dollars for the next fiscal year's day to day operations and thereby seriously affect 2021 budgets.

For some organizations, the pandemic has created a two-fold challenge: loss of revenue or donations at the same time as the demand for their services increases.

Responding to Uncertainty

With no clear end to the lockdown at the time of writing, many organizations are unsure about what their longer-term funding requirements will be.

Considering a second wave of infection (possibly in August/September), the trend for reopening will be in stages and will require that physical distancing be maintained. With no other details available currently, it is very difficult for organizations to plan and budget or anticipate when they may be able to get back to the 'new normal'. One organization cited the new need to provide protective equipment to staff upon their eventual return. Is this our new normal?

"The main problem besides money is knowing when we can start our courses again, and how we will be able to offer them."

The Upside

Despite the many concerns expressed by the survey by the respondents, there have been a few positive developments, such as organizations deciding to partner with existing agencies and programs. And some groups have identified an upside.

"As a rural service provider, I have found that the change to virtual meetings and webinars has made them more accessible to me. I had not appreciated how much travel distance and time for travel was a barrier for me to participate in events, meetings and networks."

Looking Beyond 6 Months

The survey included questions about anticipated needs in the next 6 months and beyond. A significant number of respondents shared their concerns about longer term sustainability. This is true not only for themselves, but also for the entire sector in Kingston & Area.

“We are most concerned about our long-term sustainability and hope that there will be government and foundation supports in place later this year and next year when the immediate emergency has ebbed.”

Despite this community’s effective response to the physical health impacts of COVID 19, the social and financial effects are severe and will linger for many more months. The survey findings, which reflect both the anxiety and the optimism of our charitable sector, will inform the Foundation’s granting strategy for 2020-21. In the meantime, we are responding to immediate needs of several organizations.

Our ‘next stage’ responses will include collaboration with other Kingston foundations to leverage support for our vulnerable populations through local charities and will be announced in the very near future.

“When we come out on the other side of this, agencies who rely on donations/fundraising/grants need to be even more collaborative/strategic as these sources of funds are going to be hard to come by. Now more than ever we need to think about hard decisions such as amalgamation/integration and large-scale fundraising efforts involving as many of us as possible.”

APPENDIX A: CFKA COVID-19 Flash Survey – Immediate Needs

n=44

Question 4. What types of changes have you made in how your organization functions since the COVID-19 pandemic?

*Please select a response below:

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
No changes			0	0.0 %
Office closed/staff working from home			8	18.1 %
Continuing to deliver some services in a different way			16	36.3 %
Continuing to deliver all services in a different way			5	11.3 %
We've closed until told it's safe to open again			7	15.9 %
Other			8	18.1 %
No Response(s)			0	0.0 %
Totals			44	100%

OTHER RESPONSES: Q.4

- Working from home AND delivering services in a different way
- Changed the services we deliver
- Office closed/limited staff working at home/delivering some services differently
- We have closed some programs. Some have expanded.
- We have shifted to COVID 19 initiatives

Question 6: What, if any, of the following does your organization need NOW?

What, if any, of the following does your organization need NOW?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Skill development (hosting virtual meetings, working remotely)			6	14.2 %
Volunteers			0	0.0 %
Funding			29	69.0 %
Other			8	19.0 %
Totals			42	100%

OTHER REPSONSES FROM Q.6

- Collaboration and community support
- Personal protective equipment for staff
- Hardware and internet access for students
- Reassurance about future funding

Funding

- Close to 70 % of respondents identified that funding would be an issue.
- Fundraising events/campaigns postponed or cancelled
- Decrease in donations as people become more cautious
- Ticket sales/memberships no longer a source of revenue

- New unexpected costs (PPE, cleaning supplies, equipment for virtual work, take out containers)
- Funders redirecting to COVID-19 emergency funds

Question 9: Going forward, what challenges do you expect your organization to face in the next months? i.e. operations, staffing, funding, etc. (please see chart on next page).

Going forward, what challenges do you expect your organization to face in the next months? i.e. operations, staffing, funding, etc.

1 = 1-3 months, 2 = 3-6 months, 3 = 6+ months, 4 = Will be challenging throughout, 5 = Can't say when

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Operations						35	3.6
Staffing						34	3.1
Volunteer recruitment						30	3.4
Funding						42	3.4
Other (please specify below)						9	3.6
Other (please specify below)						2	3.0

*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

OTHER FROM Q9:

- Wait lists for services that can't be offered virtually will grow quite long, huge back log when we return
- The main problem besides money is knowing when we can start our courses again, and how we will be able to offer them.
- We're in the mindset that our operations will be closed till September, and if we reopen it will be gradual, and slow.
- This closure may only be six months, maybe sooner, but we should be getting ourselves ready for a 18-24-month grind once restrictions start to be lifted.
- We need to protect our staff (PPE)
- With the uncertainty of the fall, it is very unclear what our 2020-21 year will look like
- As noted above, we are most concerned about our long-term sustainability and hope that there will be government and foundation supports in place later this year and next year when the immediate emergency has ebbed.
- We have decided to partner with existing agencies and programs
- Volunteer retention is also a worry for us as there is a limited amount of activities and ideas that we can source to our volunteers at this time.



Hold the mouse over each color of the bar to see the number of respondents.

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Responses	Rating Score*
Operations	4%	4%	23%	52%	14%	21	3.7
Staffing	35%	11%	5%	29%	17%	17	2.8
Volunteer recruitment	11%	5%	22%	44%	16%	18	3.5
Funding	4%	8%	12%	62%	12%	24	3.7
Other (please specify below)			20%	80%		5	3.8
Other (please specify below)		50%		50%		2	3.0

1= 1-3 months | 2= 3-6 months | 3=6+ months | 4=challenging throughout | 5=can't say when

APPENDIX B - CFKA Flash Survey COVID – 19: Immediate Needs

(released April 13, 2020)

*Required Question(s)

With the unprecedented uncertainty in our communities, the Community Foundation wants to be very strategic about the best use of our available funds to help the community respond to and recover from the COVID-19 crisis.

Some of you have been in touch with us already about how the current circumstances are impacting your work. We know that it is meant cancelling or postponing planned fundraising events, helping staff teams adapt to working from home or rethinking how to deliver your programs and services in a different way.

We will look to support short, medium- and longer-term community needs to respond to, and recover from, the effects of COVID-19.

Please help us understand your immediate needs by responding to this 5-minute survey.

For any questions about this survey, please contact Penny Scott, Grants Coordinator at the Community Foundation for Kingston & Area. grants@cfka.org

* 1. Please provide your organization name:

* 2. Please provide your name and position:

* 3. What is the best way to reach you? Please provide an email address or phone number.

We understand that the current situation has, and will continue to require you to make adaptations, changes and develop new priorities over the coming months. Please tell us a bit about your current status.

What types of changes have you made in how your organization functions since the COVID-19 pandemic?

* 4. Please select a response below:

- No changes
- Office closed/staff working from home
- Continuing to deliver some services in a different way

- Continuing to deliver all services in a different way
- We've closed until told it's safe to open again
- Other

5. Please use this space to tell us more about types of changes have you made in how your organization functions since the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. What, if any, of the following does your organization need NOW?

- Skill development (hosting virtual meetings, working remotely)
- Volunteers
- Funding
- Other

- Comment:

7. If you answered 'yes' to funding, how much do you need? Please enter a dollar estimate.

8. Please provide details on what the funds are needed for.

9. Going forward, what challenges do you expect your organization to face in the next months? i.e. operations, staffing, funding, etc.

	1-3 months	3-6 months	6+ months	Will be challenging throughout	Can't say when
Operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staffing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer recruitment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify below)

-
- Comment:

10. Do you have any other information that you would like to add?

* 11. And finally, do we have your permission to share your survey information with other local community funders?

Yes

No

Other

Finish