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Understanding LGBT Donors:

Millennials, Gen Xers, and Older Adults

Understanding LGBT Donors series: Report II of VI



The LGBT Giving Project

October 2017



movement advancement project ▶



Introduction

This report is part of the *Understanding LGBT Donors* project, a series of in-depth analyses of the donation-related behaviors and opinions of several key subpopulations of the LGBT community. Directed and funded by the LGBT Giving Project, the series is intended to advance understanding of indicators and motivators for donating to LGBT organizations among these subpopulations. By focusing on specific subpopulations, the project aims to provide insight and opportunities for organizations to tailor their fundraising strategies to better reach and appeal to various groups of donors. The full series of reports is available to member organizations here: [Understanding LGBT Donors](#).

This report focuses on differences across three age groups of LGBT donors: LGBT Millennials (ages 18 to 34), LGBT Gen Xers (35 to 54), and LGBT Older Adults (ages 55 and up). The aim of the report is to identify the feelings and actions of members of these age groups as donors to LGBT organizations. Included in the report are analyses of various research questions as well as research-based recommendations for increasing engagement among donors of different age groups. The findings from this analysis also point to several areas for future research to understand how these various age groups engage with LGBT organizations and how they view their giving overall.

The report *Understanding LGBT Donors: Millennials, Gen Xers, and Older Adults* is organized into the following sections:

Key Findings and Actionable Insights – A look at the donor behaviors and attitudes of the three age cohorts, presented in key points and comparison data tables.

Sample and Demographics – A detailed description of the methods used to define the sample and divide the age cohorts included in this analysis, as well as demographic information comparing the age groups for contextual purposes.

Key Research Questions – A look at the donor behaviors and attitudes of different age groups, as revealed by the survey.

Future Research Areas – Suggestions for research to explore unanswered questions and provide deeper and broader understanding.

About the LGBT Giving Project

Launched in 2011, the LGBT Giving Project is a research and testing program aimed at increasing giving by LGBT individuals to the LGBT movement for equality and to LGBT community organizations. This research has looked at who has the will and the capacity to give, what motivates them and what message frames could inspire greater giving. The project has also worked with LGBT statewide advocacy groups and community centers to test messaging and strengthen fundraising capacity.

It has received financial support from the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund; Anonymous; Horizons Foundation; Kevin J. Mossier Foundation; Pride Foundation; Small Change Foundation; D-5 Coalition; and Henry Van Ameringen Foundation.

The analysis that informs this report is based on data from the LGBT Donor Survey conducted online between October and December of 2013. The data is based on responses from 8,323 known donors (6,755 LGBT donors) who made a gift to one or more of 56 U.S. LGBT organizations in the six years prior.

Several potential limitations of the data are important to consider. First, respondents to the survey skewed toward the older cohort; 44% of respondents were 55 years or older. Whether or not this is indicative of donors to LGBT organizations more broadly is not known, but it may mean that the findings about older donors, in particular, are generalizable. Second, given the timing of the survey, a number of findings in this memo are to be understood and interpreted within a particular context. The political and cultural landscapes of the LGBT movement have shifted notably since the survey was fielded, particularly under the Trump administration and after the procurement of nationwide same-sex marriage rights, meaning that responses may differ if survey data were collected today. Further, the survey was sent only to those who had already donated to LGBT organizations, and, specifically, only those who donated to the LGBT organizations participating in this research. Therefore, these findings are not entirely representative of the overall LGBT community nor all LGBT donors, though any potential differences between these groups have not been explored.

The LGBT Giving Project Steering Committee:

Richard Burns, LGBT Giving Project
Roger Doughty, Horizons Foundation
Matt Foreman, Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund
Rebecca Fox, Wellspring Advisors
Kris Hermanns, Pride Foundation
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Key Findings and Actionable Insights

FINDING: Mail was the most successful method to solicit donations from LGBT Older Adults (i.e., the method of outreach and contact that resulted in more donations); email and an ask made by someone they knew personally were less successful for members of this subpopulation. In contrast, LGBT Millennials were most likely to donate online or through social media, email, and an ask made by someone they knew personally. Gen X respondents were most responsive to an ask made by someone they knew personally and through email.

In an increasingly digital age and with the relatively low cost of digital communications, organizations should consider maintaining contact with donors in the method or methods that have proven successful in the past. Organizations can modernize their giving platforms to appeal to younger donors but also maintain their other methods (e.g., mail) to appeal to older donors. The survey results suggest that the optimum approach is to engage in multiple modes of communication with various age demographics.

Keeping in mind that revenue from email and social media is substantially lower, organizations also should consider testing different messages when employing those methods of communication vs. direct mail.

FINDING: Considering that LGBT Older Adults are more likely to be retired or working part-time, they may be more likely to volunteer with LGBT organizations. Further, the research suggests that this subpopulation is more likely to donate because they are motivated by the “Stronger Together” message frame, which speaks to the importance of their ties to community.

Taken together, these findings suggest that organizations may be able to strengthen ties with

Older Adults through volunteer opportunities — and increase donations by doing so.

FINDING: Although LGBT Older Adults gave larger total amounts to LGBT organizations compared to LGBT Gen Xers and Millennials, members of the older cohort were slightly less likely to devote a majority of their overall charitable giving to LGBT causes. Older Adults gave 30% of their charitable giving to LGBT causes, whereas Gen Xers and Millennials gave 36% and 37%, respectively.

This suggests that there is opportunity to encourage LGBT Older Adults to contribute higher proportions of their charitable giving to LGBT organizations. Further research may be needed into other causes these donors are likely to support, and what motivates them to give those causes.

It is also interesting to note that the increased level of LGBT equality and visibility experienced by LGBT Millennials relative to LGBT Older Adults does not seem to have depressed engagement and support of the movement among the older cohort.

FINDING: The highest issue priorities among LGBT Older Adults were “Ending workplace or employment discrimination,” “Challenging and changing laws to improve the lives of LGBT people,” and “Winning marriage.” Gen Xers ranked the same issues as high priorities with similar proportions. Millennials were more likely than Older Adults and Gen Xers to rank “Increasing acceptance for transgender people” highly and less likely to rank “Winning marriage” highly.

FINDING: Planned giving is a particularly auspicious opportunity for increased giving

among LGBT Older Adults. They are far more likely than their younger counterparts to have a will or trust in place and equally likely to make planned gifts to LGBT organizations as they are to non-LGBT organizations. They also have significantly higher household wealth. Finally, LGBT Older Adults are more likely to indicate that they are motivated by messaging frames that highlight their life's commitment to LGBT work and causes and the organizations they give to.

FINDING: LGBT Millennials were more likely than Older Adults and Gen Xers to indicate that “Supporting LGBT youth” is a high-priority issue. “It’s important to help future LGBT generations” also was more motivating as a planned giving message frame for Millennials, in comparison to Older Adults and Gen Xers. Millennials were also more likely to support organizations that provide direct services to the LGBT community vs. organizations working for policy changes.

One possible explanation for this finding is that Millennials may have received services in the recent past (or currently may be receiving services) through LGBT organizations. This is based on information from the 2016 LGBT Community Center Survey, which showed that among reporting centers, half of their patrons (50%) were between ages 15 and 30.ⁱ As a result, they may be more likely to recognize the importance of these organizations.

Messaging via email and social media could highlight these differences in priority, since Millennials are more likely to donate via those channels.

FINDING: Compared to LGBT Older Adults and Gen Xers, Millennials were far more likely to support efforts by LGBT organizations to prioritize diversity among staff and leadership and to focus more on issues that affect transgender people.

Millennials were also more likely to indicate that transgender rights are an issue priority.

When contacting Millennials, organizations should consider prioritizing inclusion and diversity and emphasize political agendas that center on transgender people.

Given the date of the survey (before some of the recent, high-profile national attention to transgender issues), this finding may suggest that the Gen X and Older Adult respondents were less familiar with transgender people and issues at the time. Research shows that older adults are less likely to personally know a transgender person in comparison to younger populations.ⁱⁱ Therefore, organizations may benefit from educational initiatives aimed at increasing familiarity with transgender people among LGBT Older Adults.

FINDING: LGBT Millennials were far more likely than Older Adults and Gen Xers to identify as bisexual; 30% of Millennials identified as bisexual vs. 13% of Gen Xers and 8% of Older Adults.

Research finds that bisexuals are less likely than lesbian or gay people to be “out” to their family, friends, and co-workers. Only 28% of bisexuals report being “out” to all or most of the important people in their lives, compared to 71% of lesbian women and 77% of gay men.ⁱⁱⁱ

Organizations should explore alternative ways to contact bisexual donors and potential donors who may not be involved in the community like other LGBT people. For example, relying on LGBT organizations’ mailing lists may not be the most effective strategy for reaching bisexuals. Organizations should also consider outreach options that minimize the risk of outing bisexuals.

One-quarter of LGBT Millennials (27%) said they had not yet been asked for a donation by someone they knew personally but would donate if solicited this way. Among bisexual Millennials, a slightly larger portion had not been contacted in this way, but would donate if they were. Bisexual Millennials were also less likely to agree with

statements about feeling connected to the community, which speaks to larger issues of bisexual erasure in the LGBT community.

Organizations may therefore want to consider solicitations that create opportunities for bisexual Millennials to build connections to the community — for example, an individualized donor contact or a personalized invitation to a fundraising event.

In messaging to bisexual people of all ages (and particularly the nearly one-third of Millennial donors who identified as bisexual), it is also important for organizations to avoid making assumptions about a donor's sexual orientation based on their family composition. Many bisexual people are in different-sex relationships.¹ Therefore, a donor or potential donor who identifies as bisexual may be less likely to donate if they are misidentified as a straight ally or as lesbian or gay. One potential way to combat assumptions about a donor's sexual orientation and/or gender identity is to provide opportunities for donors to self-identify through demographic questionnaires that allow the respondent to select multiple checkboxes or reply open-endedly.

¹ The 2013 Pew Research LGBT Survey found 84 percent of self-identified bisexuals in committed relationships have a partner of the opposite sex, while only 9 percent are in same-sex relationships.

Sample and Demographics

In this report, we examine LGBT donors in three distinct age groups: Millennials (ages 18 to 34), Generation Xers (ages 35 to 54), and Older Adults (ages 55 and up). The sample of Millennials includes 934 respondents, representing 14% of total respondents. The sample of Older Adults includes 2,920 respondents, representing the largest proportion (44%) of total respondents. The remaining 41% of the sample are adults ages 35 to 54 (Gen X). This is slightly out of proportion with the overall LGBT community’s age breakdown. According to a 2017 report by Gallup, millennials are more than twice as likely as any other generation to identify as LGBT. They account for 58% of LGBT-identified adults and only 32% of the general adult population.

The sample and comparison group definitions are based on those cited by the Pew Research Center^{iv} and are adapted to fit the data collected in the survey, which asked respondents to identify their age according to five-year increments. Due to the large sample size for Older Adults, this report focuses on comparisons between Older Adults and the younger comparison groups (Millennials and Gen Xers). Where relevant, the analysis also splits the samples further and examines age groups divided by 10-year increments.

Below are key demographic points about the survey’s respondents broken out by age cohorts. Percentages refer to the proportion of the responding sample indicating their status in the specified group. Comparison statements (“more likely” or “less likely”) are comparisons between LGBT Older Adults and both LGBT Gen Xers and LGBT Millennials, unless otherwise indicated. Data for LGBT Gen Xers and LGBT Millennials are presented in data tables for clarity. Comparison statements are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level, unless otherwise indicated (e.g. slightly less, slightly more). Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding. Similarly, aggregated percentages in the findings may not match numbers in the tables due to rounding.

Basic information

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults were **more likely** to be male: 67% were male, 32% were female, and only 1% identified as another gender.

	Male	Female	Other
18-34 Millennial	49%	44%	7%
35-54 Gen X	65%	34%	2%
55+ Older Adults	67%	32%	1%

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults were **less likely** to identify as transgender: 4% identified as transgender.

	Yes, Transgender
18-34 Millennial	11%
35-54 Gen X	5%
55+ Older Adults	4%

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults were **more likely** to identify as gay and **far less likely** to identify as bisexual: 65% identified as gay, 27% as lesbian, and 8% as bisexual.

	Gay	Lesbian	Bisexual
18-34 Millennials	48%	22%	30%
35-54 Gen X	63%	23%	13%
55+ Older Adults	65%	27%	8%

- ❖ 93% of LGBT Older Adults identified as white/Caucasian, 2% as mixed-race, 2% as Latino, 1% as African-American, and 1% as Asian/Pacific Islander.

	White/Caucasian	African-American/Black	Hispanic/Latino	API	Mixed Race
18-34 Millennials	78%	4%	5%	3%	7%
35-54 Gen X	86%	3%	4%	3%	4%
55+ Older Adults	93%	1%	2%	1%	2%

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults were **more likely** to identify as Democrats: 84% identified as Democrats, and 12% identified as Independents.

	Democrat	Republican	Independent
18-34 Millennials	67%	2%	19%
35-54 Gen X	77%	2%	15%
55+ Older Adults	84%	2%	12%

Family and Workplace

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults were **more likely** to be married or partnered and less likely to be single: 34% were married, 14% were in a civil union or domestic partnership, and 21% were single.
- ❖ 78% of LGBT Older Adults who said they were not single had been in their current relationship for more than 10 years.

	Married or in a Civil Union or Domestic Partnership	In a relationship, and living together	Widowed	Single
18-34 Millennials	19%	19%	0%	39%
35-54 Gen X	45%	18%	0%	21%
55+ Older Adults	47%	13%	5%	21%

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults were **far more likely** to report having children: 29% reported having children.

	Has Children	No Children
18-34 Millennials	4%	96%
35-54 Gen X	22%	78%
55+ Older Adults	29%	71%

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults were **more likely** to be highly educated: 60% had a master's degree or Ph.D.

	Graduated College	Graduate School (Master's Degree or Ph.D.)
18-34 Millennials	46%	35%
35-54 Gen X	35%	54%
55+ Older Adults	28%	60%

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults were **less likely** to be employed, part-time and full-time, and **far less likely** to be a student, but more likely to be retired: 57% were employed, and 37% were retired.

	Employed Full-time	Employed Part-time	Retired	Unemployed and looking for a job	Student
18-34 Millennials	64%	12%	0%	4%	18%
35-54 Gen X	78%	10%	1%	4%	2%
55+ Older Adults	44%	13%	37%	2%	0%

Financials and Donations

- ❖ LGBT Gen X respondents reported slightly **higher incomes**: 42% reported an income over \$100k; 33% reported an income between \$50k-\$100K; 18% reported an income under \$50k; **Older Adults report much higher household wealth**: 33% reported household wealth over \$1 Mil.

Income	\$20,000 or less	\$20,001-\$30,000	\$30,001-\$40,000	\$40,001-\$50,000	\$50,001-\$60,000	\$60,001-\$80,000	\$80,001-\$100,000	\$100,001-\$200,000	\$200,001 or more
18-34 Millennials	22%	12%	13%	11%	8%	11%	5%	9%	2%
35-54 Gen X	4%	3%	5%	6%	8%	13%	12%	26%	16%
55+ Older Adults	4%	5%	6%	7%	7%	14%	11%	25%	12%

Wealth	Less than \$25,000	\$25,001-\$50,000	\$50,001-\$100,000	\$100,001-\$200,000	\$201,000-\$300,000	\$300,001-\$400,000	\$400,001-\$500,000	\$500,001-\$750,000	\$750,001-\$1,000,000	\$1,000,001-\$3,000,000	More Than \$3,000,000
18-34 Millennials	34%	13%	13%	12%	5%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%
35-54 Gen X	8%	6%	9%	12%	8%	6%	5%	7%	6%	14%	5%
55+ Older Adults	4%	2%	4%	7%	6%	4%	5%	9%	11%	23%	10%

❖ LGBT Older Adults were far **more likely** to have a will or trust in place: 76% had a will or trust, and 20% did not have a will or trust but planned to make one.

	Have will or trust	Do not have a will or trust but intend to make one	Do not intend to make a will or trust
18-34 Millennials	10%	73%	10%
35-54 Gen X	45%	48%	4%
55+ Older Adults	76%	20%	2%

❖ LGBT Older Adults were **less likely** to devote a majority of their charitable giving to LGBT causes: 30% donated more than half of their charitable giving to LGBT causes.

What Portion of their charitable giving goes to LGBT causes?	18-34 Millennials	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
0-25%	34%	35%	40%
25.1-50%	29%	30%	30%
50.1-75%	17%	18%	17%
75.1-100%	20%	18%	13%

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults were **more likely** to donate large amounts to LGBT organizations: 29% gave over \$1,000, and 48% gave between \$101-\$1,000.

How much did they give?	18-34 Millennials	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
\$20 or less	10%	4%	3%
\$21 to \$50	14%	6%	4%
\$51 to \$100	19%	11%	9%
\$101 to \$200	16%	14%	13%
\$201 to \$300	9%	11%	10%
\$301 to \$500	8%	11%	13%
\$501 to \$1,000	7%	11%	13%
\$1,001 to \$2,500	4%	13%	13%
\$2,501 to \$5,000	1%	7%	8%
\$5,001 to \$10,000	0%	4%	4%
More than \$10,000	0%	3%	4%
None in the last 12 months	7%	2%	2%

Key Research Questions

Below are data slices aimed at measuring the donor behavior of each age cohort, including what drives LGBT adults by age cohort to donate to LGBT organizations, how they are asked for donations, and what is likely to discourage their continued donations. Responses to each measure are shown in a color-coded table (darker-shaded cells indicating higher proportions of favorable responses) with key data called out.

Each analysis is based on the overall sample of respondents, and scores for subsections of this population (by age range) are pulled out or noted where statistically significant between-group differences were found. Several survey items are referred to by their shortened names (e.g. Message Frames) and the full text of the items is below.

What messages motivate them to give?²

People are motivated to give to LGBT organizations differently based on their own experiences and values. The survey presented a series of statements (see box) describing the motivations that some people have given for why they donate to LGBT organizations. Participants were asked to indicate if they share that motivation or not when thinking about giving to LGBT organizations.

Message Frames

Frame: American Freedom. Freedom is one of America’s most enduring values. It’s a word that gets thrown about a lot, but when you don’t have it, you know it – like when you’re not able to build a life with the person you love. That’s why I give to LGBT organizations.

Frame: Care for Those Less Fortunate. From an early age, I was taught to care for those less fortunate. Though I’m doing well in life, many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, especially those living in more conservative states, don’t have it as easy. That’s why I give to LGBT organizations.

Frame: We’re no Different. I’m no different than anyone else. I work hard, pay taxes, and try to make my community a better place. That’s why, as a **(lesbian/gay person/bisexual person)**, I want to be treated the same as everyone else. That’s why I give to LGBT organizations.

Frame: Equality. The United States is built on the idea of equality for all. Yet, for too many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans, equality is not a reality. That is why I give to LGBT organizations.

Frame: Pride. I’ve always felt really proud to be a **(gay person, lesbian, bisexual person)**. It has shaped who I am and how I live my life. I support LGBT organizations as an expression of my pride and the pride I have in my community.

Frame: Giving Back. I have had so many blessings in my life that it is important to me to give back. I make contributions to LGBT organizations as a way to give back.

Frame: Legacy. When I leave this earth, I’d like to know that I made a difference, even a small one. One reason I contribute to LGBT organizations is to ensure that I leave a legacy behind when I pass on.

Frame: Stronger Together. I believe we are stronger together than alone. I give to LGBT organizations to make sure that we are able to make progress on behalf of all gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

Frame: Who Will Care for Us? As lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, we should take care of one another, because too many of us still face rejection from our families or discrimination in our lives. If we don’t support one another and our community, who will?

² Excluding items that targeted only transgender respondents, indicated by “- Trans” in the Message Frame name.

- ❖ Equality and Stronger Together were the most compelling message frames among LGBT Older Adults.
- ❖ Among Gen Xers, Equality and Stronger Together were also the most compelling.
- ❖ Equality, Who Will Care for Us, and Stronger Together were the most compelling for Millennials.
- ❖ Equality and American Freedom were slightly more compelling for those ages 40 to 74 than for other age groups.
- ❖ Giving Back, Legacy, and Pride were particularly not compelling across all age groups.

Messaging Frames	18-34 Millennials	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
Equality	43%	47%	50%
Stronger Together	35%	38%	43%
American Freedom	32%	37%	39%
We're no different	30%	37%	39%
Who will care for us?	37%	34%	39%
Care for those less fortunate	28%	26%	28%
Giving Back	18%	20%	25%
Pride	21%	19%	25%
Legacy	13%	15%	17%

Messaging Frames	18-34 Millennials	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
Who will care for us? - Trans	51%	56%	55%
We're no different - Trans	29%	39%	50%
American Freedom - Trans	26%	32%	43%
Pride - Trans	26%	26%	33%

What “identity frames” make them more likely to give?

The survey catalogued a number of statements made by organizations about why it is important to give to a particular LGBT organization; these are known as “identity frames” (see box). Participants were asked to indicate if the frame made them more or less likely to want to give to that organization.

Identity Frames

The Advocate. We must be advocates for our own equality – recognizing the dignity that comes from standing up and being counted.

The Activist. We will only create change in America if we fight back against intolerance and hate.

The Game Changer. To make progress, we must do what some say cannot be done: Transform our nation’s laws on behalf of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

The Caregiver. We must care for those less fortunate than us, including gay and transgender youth who are bullied and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people who face employment discrimination.

Sage. We must work to change the hearts and minds of Americans – from politicians and pastors to mothers and fathers.

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults indicated that The Activist identity frame was the most likely to motivate them to give (53%), followed by The Game Changer frame (50%).
- ❖ LGBT Gen Xers gave highest ratings to The Activist (42%), The Game Changer (38%), and The Advocate (38%) frames.
- ❖ LGBT Millennials indicated less motivation across all identity frames, but rated The Activist, The Advocate, and The Caregiver highest.

	18-34 Millennials	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
The Activist	36%	42%	53%
The Game Changer	30%	38%	50%
The Advocate	34%	38%	45%
Sage	29%	34%	44%
The Caregiver	34%	37%	43%

What messages spur more planned giving?

The survey also presented a number of message frames describing motivations for making planned gifts to LGBT organizations. Respondents were asked which frames resonated most strongly with them.

- ❖ Among LGBT Older Adults, “It’s a way to continue my commitment” (50%), “It’s important to help future LGBT generations” (48%), and “I’ve been a part of the LGBT community” (45%) were ranked as the most important reasons to make a planned gift to an LGBT organization.
- ❖ Gen Xers ranked “It’s important to help future LGBT generations” (56%), “It’s a way to continue my commitment” (50%), and “I’ve been a part of the LGBT community” (45%) as the most important reasons to make a planned gift.
- ❖ These were also the highest-ranked reasons for Millennials, though Millennials were *significantly* more likely to rank “It’s important to help future LGBT generations” highly (67%).

Planned Giving Messaging Frames	18-34 Millennials	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
It’s a way to continue my commitment to an organization or cause I care about, even after I’m gone	48%	50%	50%
It’s important to help future LGBT generations	67%	56%	48%
I’ve been a part of the LGBT community or movement and want to continue to support it, even after I’m gone	52%	45%	45%
I want to leave a legacy that reflects my values and ideals	41%	41%	42%
My friends and relatives don’t need all of it	14%	16%	21%
I’ve built something from my life’s work- and I want to put it to work to make a difference after I’m gone	24%	22%	20%
I don’t have relatives I want to give money to	4%	6%	8%
Other people I respect are making planned gifts	2%	1%	1%

Planned Giving Messaging Frames	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-74	75+
It’s a way to continue my commitment to an organization or cause I care about, even after I’m gone	45%	49%	49%	50%	53%	41%
It’s important to help future LGBT generations	70%	60%	57%	52%	48%	38%
I’ve been a part of the LGBT community or movement and want to continue to support it, even after I’m gone	57%	48%	41%	46%	48%	37%
I want to leave a legacy that reflects my values and ideals	42%	42%	41%	42%	42%	35%
My friends and relatives don’t need all of it	14%	12%	18%	20%	20%	22%
I’ve built something from my life’s work- and I want to put it to work to make a difference after I’m gone	24%	22%	22%	21%	19%	21%
I don’t have relatives I want to give money to	2%	4%	6%	7%	8%	7%
Other people I respect are making planned gifts	3%	3%	1%	1%	1%	2%

What are their issue priorities?

- ❖ The highest-priority issues among LGBT Older Adults were “Ending workplace or employment discrimination” (64%), “Challenging and changing laws to improve the lives of LGBT people” (64%), and “Winning marriage” (64%).
- ❖ The lowest-priority issues among LGBT Older Adults were “Improving religious acceptance” (21%) and “Providing more community and social services” (25%).
- ❖ Among Gen Xers, “Winning marriage” (63%), “Ending workplace or employment discrimination” (62%), and “Challenging and changing laws to improve the lives of LGBT people” (60%) were the highest-priority issues.
- ❖ LGBT Millennials ranked “Ending workplace or employment discrimination” (62%), “Supporting LGBT youth” (59%), and “Working for equal rights in general” (58%) as the highest-priority issues. Millennials were more likely than Older Adults to rank “Increasing acceptance for transgender people” highly (54% vs. 35%) and less likely to rank “Winning marriage” highly (50% vs. 64%).

Issue Priorities	18-34 Millennials	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
Ending workplace or employment discrimination	62%	62%	64%
Challenging and changing laws to improve the lives of LGBT people	55%	60%	64%
Winning marriage for same-sex couples	50%	63%	64%
Working for equal rights in general	58%	59%	60%
Supporting LGBT youth	59%	51%	52%
Ending housing and public accommodations discrimination	47%	40%	48%
Increasing support services for aging/elderly LGBT people	30%	32%	47%
Combating negative stereotypes of LGBT people	39%	39%	45%
Winning civil unions or domestic partnerships in your state	26%	31%	35%
Increasing acceptance for people who are transgender	54%	36%	35%
Building a sense of LGBT community and pride	23%	20%	28%
Providing more community and social services for LGBT people	30%	22%	25%
Improving religious acceptance for LGBT people	19%	15%	21%

What are their key motivations for giving to LGBT organizations?

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults indicated that “Fighting discrimination and inequality” was the strongest motivation for giving to LGBT organizations (65%), followed by “Bringing about change on a national level” (58%) and “Making it safer and more supportive for LGBT youth” (50%).
- ❖ These were the top-ranked motivations for LGBT Millennials and Gen X respondents as well; however, the level of support for “Fighting discrimination and inequality” decreased slightly for the younger cohorts.
- ❖ LGBT Millennials were more supportive of youth-focused motivation for giving.

Motivations for Giving to LGBT Orgs	18-34 Millennials	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
To fight discrimination and inequality	59%	61%	65%
To bring about change on a national level	41%	50%	58%
To make it safer and more supportive for LGBT youth	55%	48%	50%
To change hearts and minds	34%	37%	42%
To have a voice	23%	24%	29%
Because someone I know died of AIDS or has AIDS or HIV	11%	17%	24%
To help build a sense of community where I live	22%	21%	23%
To directly see the impact of my donation through services or programs	22%	22%	23%
To support a cause important to a friend or loved one	18%	16%	15%

Do they believe that most challenges facing LGBT people will be solved in next 20-30 years?

- ❖ When asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement that most challenges faced by LGBT people will be solved in the next 20 to 30 years, over 60% in each category over age 40 indicated that they strongly agreed or somewhat agreed. This was more than the number of LGBT people between the ages of 18 and 29 indicating the same (51%).

Do they believe that most challenges facing LGBT people will be solved in the next 20 to 30 years?	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18-29	14%	37%	28%	14%
30-39	13%	44%	27%	11%
40-49	14%	49%	23%	10%
50-59	13%	48%	23%	11%
60-74	13%	49%	23%	12%
75+	15%	46%	20%	12%

What are their opinions of LGBT organizations?

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults did not endorse the belief that LGBT organizations are too focused on winning marriage (65% disagreed), nor did they endorse the belief that focusing on the needs of LGBT people alienates straight people (74% disagreed), with Gen X (75%) and Millennials (79%) concurring.
- ❖ Gen Xers generally held the same opinions of LGBT organizations as LGBT Older Adults. For example, similar proportions of the two groups agreed that other causes or needs are more important than LGBT causes (27% and 28%, respectively).
- ❖ The majority of LGBT Millennials agreed that LGBT organizations are often male-dominated and focused too much on gay men (60%) and that LGBT organizations are too focused on winning marriage (52%).
- ❖ LGBT Millennials were significantly more likely than LGBT Older Adults to agree that LGBT organizations should focus more on issues impacting transgender people; 83% of LGBT Millennials agreed with this statement, compared to 69% of LGBT Gen Xers and 64% of LGBT Older Adults.

Opinion of LGBT Orgs		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Unsure
LGBT organizations are often male-dominated and focused too much on gay men and not enough on lesbian women	18-34 Millennials	21%	39%	22%	10%	8%
	35-54 Gen X	9%	35%	29%	18%	9%
	55+ Older Adults	6%	33%	32%	20%	9%
LGBT organizations are too focused on winning marriage rights, and should be working on other issues instead	18-34 Millennials	23%	29%	27%	18%	3%
	35-54 Gen X	11%	23%	31%	33%	2%
	55+ Older Adults	8%	24%	30%	35%	3%
I think the kinds of problems that people face because they are LGBT will largely be solved in the next 20 to 30 years	18-34 Millennials	14%	40%	29%	12%	6%
	35-54 Gen X	13%	49%	23%	11%	4%
	55+ Older Adults	13%	48%	23%	12%	4%
I think when it comes to making financial contributions, that other causes or needs are more important than LGBT ones	18-34 Millennials	3%	24%	41%	24%	8%
	35-54 Gen X	4%	23%	41%	27%	5%
	55+ Older Adults	3%	25%	35%	32%	4%
Focusing only on the needs of LGBT people alienates straight people who could be allies, and makes it harder to promote LGBT acceptance and gain equality	18-34 Millennials	4%	14%	31%	48%	3%
	35-54 Gen X	4%	18%	32%	43%	3%
	55+ Older Adults	3%	19%	34%	40%	4%
I support the efforts of many LGBT organizations to focus more on issues impacting transgender people	18-34 Millennials	55%	28%	8%	4%	4%
	35-54 Gen X	32%	37%	17%	8%	6%
	55+ Older Adults	23%	41%	21%	8%	6%

- ❖ The vast majority of LGBT respondents in all age groups indicated a very favorable or somewhat favorable opinion of LGBT organizations, and the likelihood of a very favorable opinion increased with age.

Generally Speaking, what is your opinion of LGBT organizations?	Very Favorable	Somewhat Favorable	Neutral	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable
18-29	41%	49%	7%	2%	0%
30-39	41%	48%	6%	4%	0%
40-49	43%	47%	5%	3%	0%
50-59	47%	45%	5%	2%	0%
60-74	55%	36%	5%	3%	0%
75+	62%	33%	3%	2%	0%

How are they reached for donations?

- ❖ The most successful established methods to solicit donations from LGBT Older Adults (i.e., the methods used to reach LGBT Older Adults that resulted in a donation) were by mail (79%), through email (70%), through an ask made by someone they knew personally (68%), and via fundraising events (68%).
- ❖ An additional 17% of LGBT Older Adults said they had not been asked to donate by someone they know personally but would donate if they were.
- ❖ The most untapped method appears to be reaching out to donors at a center where services are provided; 30% of LGBT Older Adults said they had not yet been asked for a donation at a center where services are provided but would donate if solicited in this way.
- ❖ Responses suggest that street solicitation is the least successful method among LGBT Older Adults.

How are Older Adults reached for Donations?	Have donated	Have not been contacted this way, but would donate	Have not donated	Have not been contacted this way, and would not donate
By mail	79%	4%	11%	4%
Through an email	70%	5%	14%	7%
By someone you know personally	68%	17%	9%	3%
To attend a fundraising event	68%	10%	13%	5%
Online or through social media	52%	10%	19%	15%
At a festival, parade, rally, or march	46%	15%	23%	12%
At a center where services are provided	37%	30%	21%	7%
By a telephone call	31%	6%	32%	28%
At a gay or lesbian bar	20%	19%	25%	29%
Approached on the Street	14%	8%	32%	42%

- ❖ The most successful established methods to solicit donations from LGBT Gen Xers are through an ask made by someone they knew personally (73%), through email (71%), and via fundraising events (70%).
- ❖ An additional 16% of LGBT Gen Xers said they had not been asked to donate by someone they know personally but would donate if they were.
- ❖ The most untapped method appears to be reaching out to donors at a center where services are provided; 33% of LGBT Gen Xers said they had not yet been asked for a donation at a center where services are provided but would donate if solicited in this way.

How are Gen Xers reached for donations?	Have donated	Have not been contacted this way, but would donate	Have not donated	Have not been contacted this way, and would not donate
By someone you know personally	73%	16%	7%	3%
Through an email	71%	5%	17%	5%
To attend a fundraising event	70%	12%	11%	4%
Online or through social media	66%	10%	15%	8%
By mail	64%	6%	22%	7%
At a festival, parade, rally, or march	48%	16%	24%	9%
At a center where services are provided	36%	33%	20%	6%
At a gay or lesbian bar	26%	20%	24%	24%
By a telephone call	24%	6%	36%	31%
Approached on the Street	18%	7%	38%	34%

- ❖ The most successful established methods to solicit donations from LGBT Millennials were online or through social media (64%), through email (60%), and through an ask made by someone they knew personally (59%).
- ❖ An additional 27% of LGBT Millennials said they had not been asked to donate by someone they know personally but would donate if they were.
- ❖ Again, the most untapped method appears to be reaching out to donors at a center where services are provided; 40% of LGBT Millennials said they had not yet been asked for a donation at a center where services are provided but would donate if solicited in this way.
- ❖ Responses suggest that telephone calls and street solicitation are the least successful methods among LGBT Millennials.

How are Millennials reached for Donations?	Have donated	Have not been contacted this way, but would donate	Have not donated	Have not been contacted this way, and would not donate
Online or through social media	64%	12%	15%	7%
Through an email	60%	9%	21%	8%
By someone you know personally	59%	27%	9%	2%
To attend a fundraising event	53%	20%	17%	7%
At a festival, parade, rally, or march	40%	22%	26%	8%
By mail	34%	11%	38%	14%
At a center where services are provided	31%	40%	20%	5%
Approached on the Street	20%	9%	40%	27%
At a gay or lesbian bar	19%	26%	25%	24%
By a telephone call	18%	10%	36%	34%

Which kind of LGBT organizations are they most likely to give to?

- ❖ LGBT Older Adults appeared to prefer donating to LGBT organizations with a national focus (26%) versus those focused on their state (11%) or the local community (8%); however, a majority (52%) would consider donating to all three equally. Older Adults are the only age cohort where more than half selected “all equal”; Gen Xers and Millennials each expressed stronger preferences for organizations with a geographic focus.

What kind of organization are they most likely to give to?	18-34 Millennials	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
All equal	40%	45%	52%
With a national focus	25%	27%	26%
Focused on your own state	16%	15%	11%
Focused on your local community	14%	9%	8%
Would not donate to an organization focused on policy or legal change	1%	1%	1%

- ❖ Similarly, LGBT Older Adults appeared to prefer donating to an organization working to change laws and policies at the national or state level (32%), compared to local organizations providing direct services to the community (12%), although 54% of LGBT Older Adults would consider donating to the two equally.
- ❖ LGBT Millennials preferred direct-service organizations to policy-based organizations, but the difference was slight (28% vs. 25%).

What kind of organization are they most likely to give to?	18-34 Millennials	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
Both equally	44%	49%	54%
An organization working to change laws and policies at the national or state level to promote equality and reduce discrimination	25%	34%	32%
A local organization providing direct services to the community, including health care services, support groups, etc.	28%	15%	12%
Neither	0%	0%	0%

Why did they stop giving?

- ❖ The top reasons cited by LGBT Older Adults when asked why they stopped giving to LGBT organizations were: the impression that the organization was poorly run or seemed ineffective (59%); and too many donation requests (56%). These were the same reasons cited by Gen Xers and among the top reasons cited by Millennials.
- ❖ Compared to LGBT Older Adults and Gen Xers, LGBT Millennials were more likely to stop giving to an organization because of its failure to prioritize issues affecting transgender people (26%) and people of color (34%), and because of concerns that the organization’s staff and leadership did not sufficiently reflect the diversity of LGBT people (36%).

Why did they stop giving?	18-34 Millennial	35-54 Gen X	55+ Older Adults
An organization was poorly run or seemed ineffective	48%	58%	59%
An organization made requests to donate too often	45%	52%	56%
It seemed that the organization had enough support from wealthy donors and corporations, so I felt my donation could make a bigger impact somewhere else	45%	40%	41%
An organization was not transparent or open enough about their finances	30%	35%	37%
An organization became too focused on fringe issues and political correctness	22%	31%	33%
An organization was too elitist	37%	34%	33%
An organization’s staff and leadership did not sufficiently reflect the diversity of LGBT people in terms of things like gender, race, class, or gender identity	36%	22%	22%
An organization excluded or failed to prioritize issues affecting lesbian women	18%	15%	16%
An organization focused too much on gay men	32%	17%	16%
An organization excluded or failed to prioritize issues affecting LGBT people of color	34%	17%	15%
An organization did not acknowledge my donation with a proper thank you	8%	13%	15%
An organization excluded or failed to prioritize issues affecting people who are transgender	41%	18%	13%
An organization did not acknowledge or include my current partner	5%	7%	8%

Future Research Areas

This survey offers some key insights into the perspectives of LGBT people across different age groups and their engagement as donors to LGBT organizations. The above analyses also suggest several directions for future research, including:

- ❖ Focus groups and community surveys could be used to help identify new key issue areas that would motivate more giving across all age cohorts post-marriage equality.
- ❖ More research is necessary to identify which specific issues affecting youth and older adults are considered the highest priorities for donors and potential donors.
- ❖ Further research is needed to ascertain the age range of donors' children and whether they primarily live in donors' households, and any effects on current and planned giving based on parental status.
- ❖ Research also could drill down further on the 40% of respondents who identify strongly with the "Leave a Legacy" message frame. What other messages resonate strongly with them? Do dual messages need to be considered for this donor type?
- ❖ More research is also necessary to identify other, non-LGBT organizations and issues that Older Adults, Gen Xers, and Millennials are supporting.

Endnotes

- i Movement Advancement Project, "2016 LGBT Community Center Report," accessed June 2017, <http://www.lgbtmap.org/file/2016-lgbt-community-center-survey-report.pdf>.
- ii Human Rights Campaign, "HRC National Survey of Likely Voters," <http://www.hrc.org/resources/hrc-national-survey-of-likely-voters>.
- iii Movement Advancement Project, "Understanding Issues Facing Bisexual Americans," accessed June 2017, <http://www.lgbtmap.org/file/understanding-issues-facing-bisexual-americans.pdf>.
- iv Richard Fry, "Millennials overtake Baby Boomer's as America's largest generation" (Pew Research Center, 2016), <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/25/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/>.