The holidays are quickly approaching—a time of year when many make charitable donations to their favorite nonprofit organizations. But very little about 2020 has followed usual patterns. To understand how the pandemic could influence end-of-year decisions, we conducted a survey of Fidelity Charitable donors to ask how they are approaching charitable giving as 2020 comes to a close.
Impact on Financial Support

So far in 2020, have there been changes in how much you have given as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact?

Compared to what I normally give...

- 46% I have given notably more because of COVID-19
- 50% I have given about the same
- 4% I have given notably less because of COVID-19

On a scale of 1 to 7, how much influence has the COVID-19 pandemic had on how you think about giving this year?

- 13% 1
- 11% 2
- 12% 3
- 24% 4
- 16% 5
- 16% 6
- 8% 7

FOLLOW-UP

Which of these factors influenced how you think about giving this year?

- 61% I want to help people suffering from the economic impacts of the pandemic
- 54% I want to help nonprofits suffering from the impact of the pandemic
- 49% The need is so great
- 40% My community is suffering
- 35% I want to help people suffering from the health impacts of the pandemic
- 29% I’m worried about a recession and the economy overall
- 27% I’m directly supporting individuals in my community who need it

Base: Respondents who rated the influence of COVID-19 on their giving in 2020 a 5, 6 or 7
So far in 2020, how has COVID-19 impacted which nonprofits you have supported?

When thinking about the nonprofits I usually support, I have given to...

37% Different nonprofits because of COVID-19
36% The same nonprofits because of COVID-19
27% I haven’t factored COVID-19 into which nonprofits I have supported this year

Before the end of 2020, do you expect you will also give to the organizations you usually support?

I expect to give to...

92% All or most of the organizations I usually support
7% Some of the organizations I usually support
1% Few or none of the organizations I usually support

Base: Respondents who have supported new nonprofits in 2020
Donor Attitudes

How concerned are you that the following types of nonprofits will be able to weather the pandemic?

- **Small or community-based nonprofits in general**
  - Very concerned: 64%
  - Somewhat concerned: 20%
  - Little or not concerned: 16%

- **Human services organizations, such as homeless shelters and food banks**
  - Very concerned: 60%
  - Somewhat concerned: 22%
  - Little or not concerned: 18%

- **Arts organizations**
  - Very concerned: 45%
  - Somewhat concerned: 17%
  - Little or not concerned: 38%

- **Education organizations**
  - Very concerned: 40%
  - Somewhat concerned: 28%
  - Little or not concerned: 32%

- **International aid organizations**
  - Very concerned: 33%
  - Somewhat concerned: 28%
  - Little or not concerned: 39%

- **Environmental organizations**
  - Very concerned: 32%
  - Somewhat concerned: 21%
  - Little or not concerned: 47%

- **Health or medical organizations directly related to COVID-19**
  - Very concerned: 30%
  - Somewhat concerned: 30%
  - Little or not concerned: 40%

- **Health or medical organizations unrelated to COVID-19**
  - Very concerned: 24%
  - Somewhat concerned: 35%
  - Little or not concerned: 41%

- **Large or national nonprofits in general**
  - Very concerned: 13%
  - Somewhat concerned: 30%
  - Little or not concerned: 57%

Thinking of the COVID-19 pandemic, how concerned are you about your personal circumstances?

- **Long-term financial security**
  - Very concerned: 10%
  - Somewhat concerned: 23%
  - Little or not concerned: 67%

- **Risks to physical health**
  - Very concerned: 46%
  - Somewhat concerned: 26%
  - Little or not concerned: 28%
Looking to the Future

On a scale of 1 to 7, how much influence do you expect the COVID-19 pandemic will have on how you think about giving...

...in 2021?

- 26% Little or no influence
- 16% Significant influence

...over the next five years?

- 37% Little or no influence
- 22% Significant influence

FOLLOW-UP

Top three reasons that COVID-19 won’t factor into donors’ giving plans over the next five years

1. I don’t want to change my giving plans
2. COVID-19 has little/no impact on giving
3. I expect a return to normal

Base: Respondents who answered 1 or 2 when asked to rate how much influence COVID-19 will have on their giving over the next five years
Methodology

A survey was conducted about how Fidelity Charitable donors are approaching charitable giving in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. 491 Fidelity Charitable donors were surveyed in August 2020.