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Because Nonprofits Are Right There in Their Communities

Occasionally people ask why nonprofits are asked to fill out so many surveys about their experiences and those of the people they serve. The answer is straightforward and unapologetic: Because nonprofits are on the frontlines seeing the problems and innovating the solutions in real time. When nonprofits fill out the surveys and provide honest assessments and commentary, policymakers, the media, and communities need to take note. Here are three examples of survey results reported by state associations of nonprofits about pressing issues of the day: the impact of the pandemic and racial equity.

Last month, the **Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement** (DANA) and partner organizations released the latest results of “[COVID-19 Impact to Delaware Nonprofits](#),” an ongoing survey that began in March 2020 to understand the impacts of COVID-19 and identify nonprofit organizational needs. The survey found that nonprofit concerns about their clients remain consistent with last year, including housing instability, mental health wellbeing, and financial hardship. In addition, nonprofits said they need technology supports, volunteers, technical and consulting supports, improved government communications (funding sources, guidelines, partnerships), and advocacy (ARPA funding and collaboration).

Last week, the **Florida Nonprofit Alliance** released the 2021 edition of “[The Effect of COVID-19 on Florida Nonprofits](#).” The report includes trends in program, fundraising, finance, and planning changes nonprofits made this year. Key findings are broken down by *challenging news* and *bright spots*. Some of the challenging news: nonprofits are not recovering financially; fundraising and funding remain the largest concern and challenge; and the pandemic continues to take a toll on volunteering. However, on the bright side, nonprofits in Florida are starting to provide services in person again and are interested in maintaining partnerships that helped them through the early days of the pandemic.

A recent survey report from **Maryland Nonprofits** illustrates the reality that minority-led nonprofits have struggled disproportionately during the pandemic, fueled by hard-to-reach government funding and catastrophic losses on every income source. [COVID-19 Pandemic and Racial Equity Survey](#) results, for instance, highlight that nonprofits led by people of color were more likely to experience greater than 50% losses in every revenue stream than white-led nonprofits. In response to these findings, more than 200 nonprofits and individuals are [calling on policymakers to allocate \\$1 billion](#) of the state’s budget surplus to aid struggling nonprofits.

The three reports highlighted here are a small sampling of the benefit of asking nonprofits what’s what, what works, and what needs to change in their communities. Respecting the views of nonprofits on the frontlines, the updated report from the National Council of Nonprofits issued today, [The Scope and Impact of Nonprofit Workforce Shortages](#), quotes nearly 100 professionals as they explain the realities of the nonprofit workforce shortages and why they matter to individuals and communities serve. Policymakers and their constituents will benefit if the elected officials heed the calls to action identified in each of these reports from the frontlines.