

# Representing Volunteers in Saskatchewan:

Reflections from Volunteers

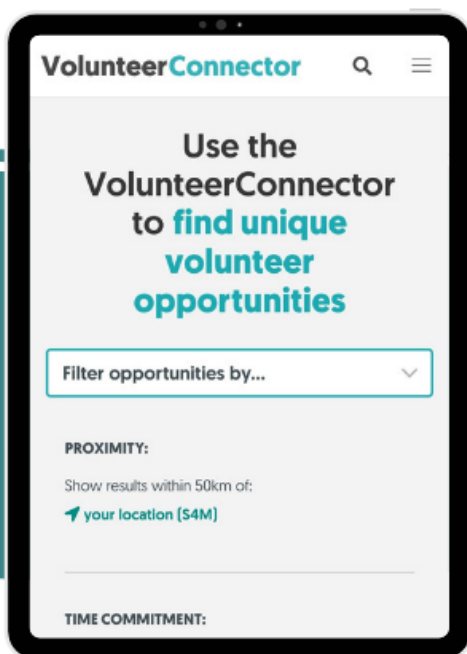
February 2020

## About this Survey

In September 2019 we asked individuals across Saskatchewan to share their perspectives and experiences on volunteering. The survey results provide insights into the types of activities that volunteers are seeking, and how people like to volunteer. We hope this report will provide information that increases our understanding of volunteerism in Saskatchewan, and helps community organizations design opportunities that will engage individuals as volunteers.

## Acknowledgements

The *Representing Volunteers in Saskatchewan: Reflections from Volunteers* report was made possible by a collaboration between the Saskatchewan Nonprofit Network ([www.sasknonprofit.ca](http://www.sasknonprofit.ca)), Community Initiatives Fund ([www.cifsask.org](http://www.cifsask.org)) and Propellus ([www.propellus.org](http://www.propellus.org)). We thank Janet Rock at Propellus for her coordination of the survey and analysis of results.



# Free Online Volunteer Recruitment Platform



To get started, visit [www.VolunteerConnector.org](http://www.VolunteerConnector.org)

## Who did we hear from?

Respondents to the survey represented individuals who are actively volunteering, and those who are not currently active but are planning to be involved in the future. Only a few differences between rural and urban volunteers were reported, which are noted throughout the report. People living in Regina and Saskatoon were considered urban, every other location was considered rural.

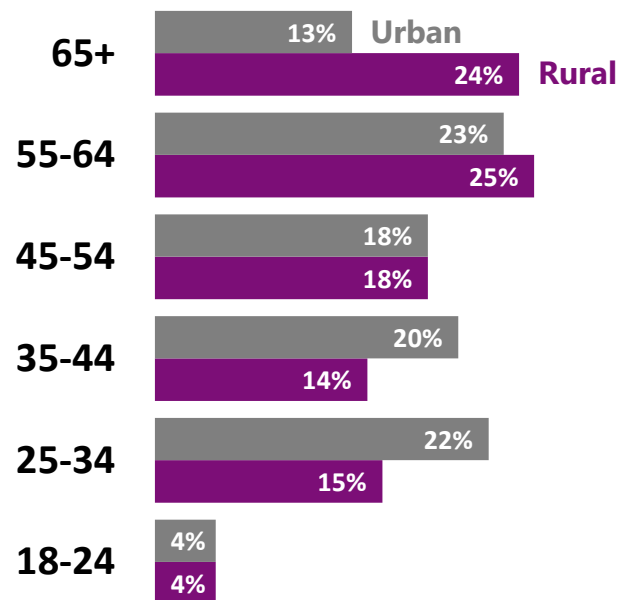
**94%**

**Were born  
in Canada**

**7%**

**Identified  
as a person  
of colour  
or visible  
minority**

### Age Breakdown:



**50%**

**Are active volunteers**

The most active volunteers are between the ages of 18-24 and 65 plus.

Active volunteers volunteer at least once a month in their community.

**50%**

**Are inactive volunteers**

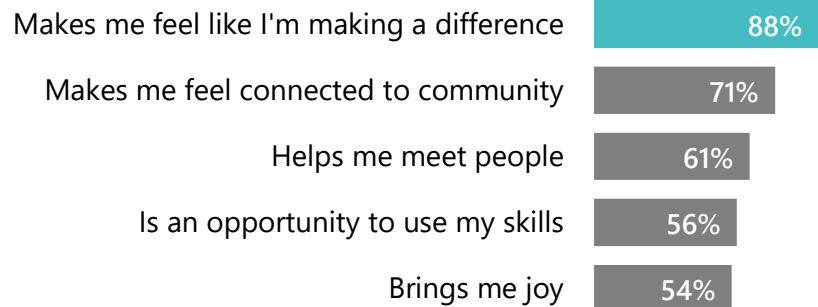
The least active volunteers are between the ages of 55-64.

67% of inactive volunteers intend to volunteer in the next month.



## Why do people volunteer?

The top 5 reasons for getting involved in volunteering across Saskatchewan include:



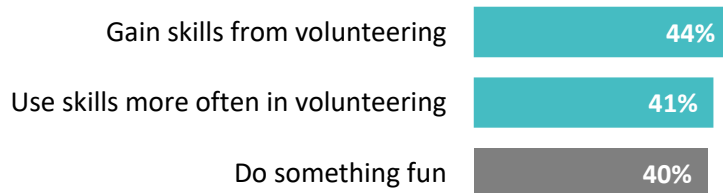
Delving further into motivations, we see some differences emerge. Rural volunteers feel volunteering makes them a better person and helps them feel connected to a higher purpose, whereas urban volunteers and individuals who aren't currently volunteering are looking for the chance to learn something new.

Reflecting on the impact that volunteering has on community rural and urban volunteers agree, stating that the top benefits to community include making the community better for everyone (80%), showing others that they care (61%), and saving organizations and causes money (51%).



**Volunteers are looking for opportunities to use and gain new skills!**

We asked volunteers what would help them volunteer more, with **all reporting the top three things that would get them volunteering:**





**Possible solutions to these time related barriers may entail:**

- **partnering with businesses involved in employer-supported volunteering;**
- **offering family volunteering opportunities.**



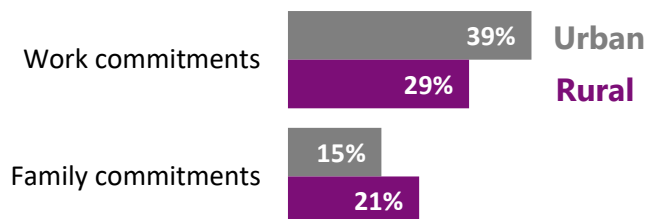
**Today's volunteers are seeking flexible volunteer opportunities.**



**The use of internet to engage volunteers is increasing!**

## What keeps people from volunteering?

Volunteering is the giving of your time for others, and there are many demands on our time. **Respondents highlighted two main barriers to finding time to volunteer:**



Survey respondents report that they like flexible volunteering that fits their own schedule (71%), ongoing regularly scheduled volunteering (52%), and one-time opportunities (37%). Community organizations in Saskatchewan may be more successful in engaging people if they offer both long- and short-term volunteer opportunities.

## How are volunteers already involved?

Half of the people surveyed are already involved in volunteering. They are likely to be found serving on a Board of Directors (54%), informally helping friends and family (39%), and with neighbourhood or community groups or associations (34%). In rural areas individuals are more likely to be found involved in their faith group, whereas in urban areas, it's with their colleagues.

Individuals primarily find opportunities to volunteer through being asked directly or by finding opportunities online, with 65% more urban people finding their opportunities online than in rural Saskatchewan.

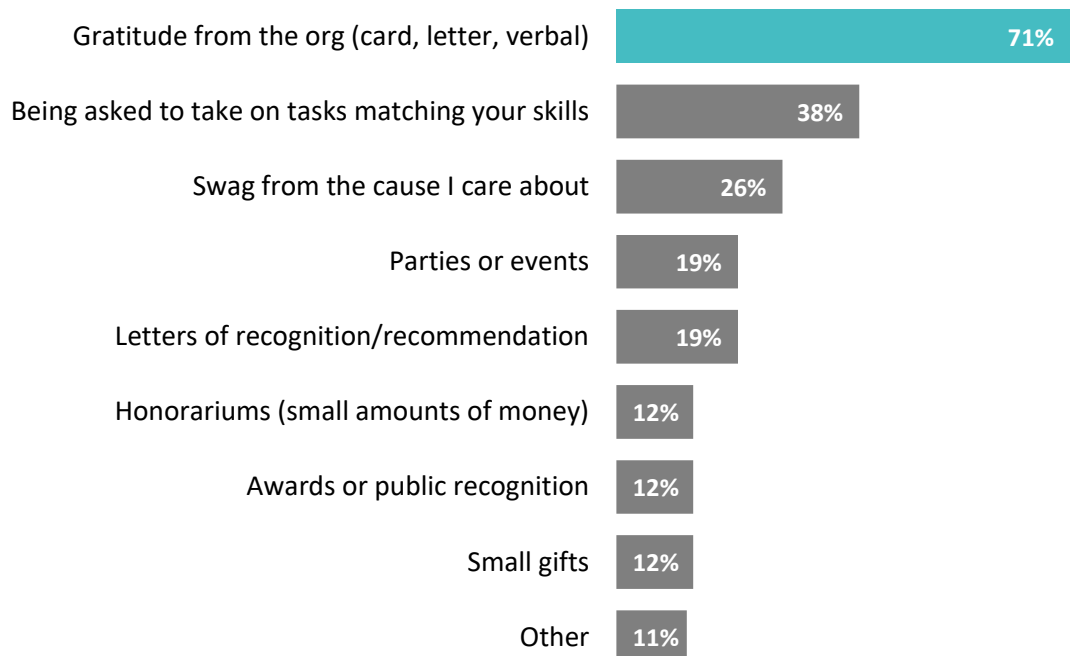


**Saskatchewan's volunteers would like to be recognized for their time and efforts by genuine gratitude in the form of a card, letter, or verbally.**

## Thanking volunteers

People volunteer because they are deeply rooted in their community and beliefs. When asked how they want to be recognized, an overwhelming majority feel a genuine thanks is all that's required. Trailing that, our theme of skills pops up again – volunteers want to be recognized for good work by being rewarded with tasks that showcase their skills. It's worth noting that recognition items that tend to be more costly, like parties and swag, resonate less overall, in line with volunteers' motivation to save organizations money. Organizations should check in with their volunteers to see how they would like to be recognized to ensure it's meaningful to them.

**The majority of respondents would like recognition for their work in the form of a card, letter, or verbally.**



## Take-Aways & Related Resources



**Volunteers are looking for opportunities to use and gain new skills.**

Skills-Based Volunteering | Volunteer Canada  
<https://volunteer.ca/index.php?MenuitemID=350>



**Possible solutions to time related barriers may entail partnering with businesses involved in employer-supported volunteering;**

Employer-Supported Volunteering | Volunteer Canada  
<https://volunteer.ca/index.php?MenuitemID=345>

**& offering family volunteering opportunities.**

Family Volunteering | Volunteer Canada  
<https://volunteer.ca/index.php?MenuitemID=343>



**Today's volunteers are seeking flexible volunteer opportunities.**



**The use of internet to engage volunteers is increasing!**

Volunteer Recruitment Platform | VolunteerConnector  
<https://www.volunteerconnector.org/>



**Saskatchewan's volunteers would like to be recognized for their time and efforts by genuine gratitude in the form of a card, letter, or verbally.**

Volunteer Recognition | Volunteer Canada  
<https://volunteer.ca/index.php?MenuitemID=353>