

Museum Board Leadership: A National Report

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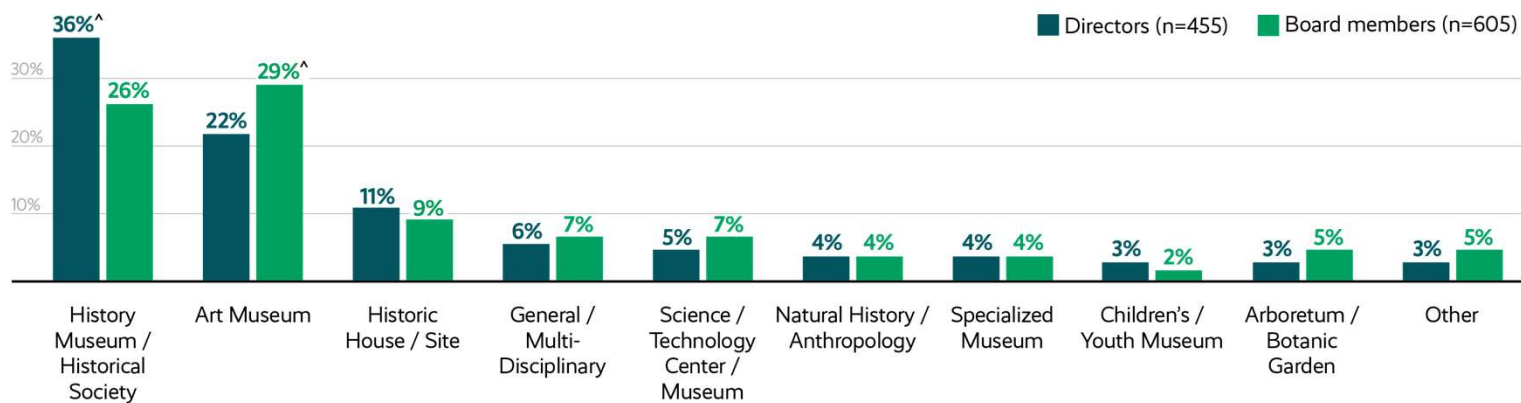


Methodology

- This is the second iteration of a survey originally conducted in 2017.
- The survey was open from September 20, 2023, through November 5, 2023.
- 456 directors and 606 board members representing a broad cross-section of the museum field responded.
- Throughout these charts, the letter “n” indicates the sample size for each question and any statistical significance between side-by-side data are indicated by the caret symbol (^).

Methodology

MUSEUM TYPE



[^]Statistically higher than the other group

*Aquariums, zoos, and nature museums were 1% or less

Key Findings

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- Boards widely can improve their performance regarding fundraising, outreach, advocacy, and government relations.

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- There is relative parity in representation between men and women on boards, and a majority of directors are women.
- Boards widely can improve their performance regarding fundraising, outreach, advocacy, and government relations.
- The museum field continues to face financial strain, with half of museums indicating at least one sign of financial distress.

The People

BOARD ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

The Museum Board Leadership report contains links to actionable resources to support museums tackling the challenges illuminated by this data.

-  [AAM Resource Library: Advocacy](#)
-  [Guidance: Stand for Your Mission](#)
-  [Guidance: Alliance Policy Issues](#)

RESOURCES



Changes in government policy can have a tremendous impact on an organization's operations, yet many boards (43%) do **not** monitor the impact of government policy on their organization's mission and resources. On average, nearly a quarter (24%) of museums' budgets come from local, state, or federal government, and board participation in advocacy can be a powerful driver to support the organization's mission and the museum field writ large. However, few board members are greatly engaged in advocacy activities on behalf of their institutions. One-quarter of boards (24%) do **not** have relationships with their elected officials, and many boards (38%) do **not** educate policymakers on behalf of their organization, its mission, or the nonprofit sector.

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE BOARD ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC POLICY OR ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES?

■ Not at all ■ To some extent ■ To a great extent



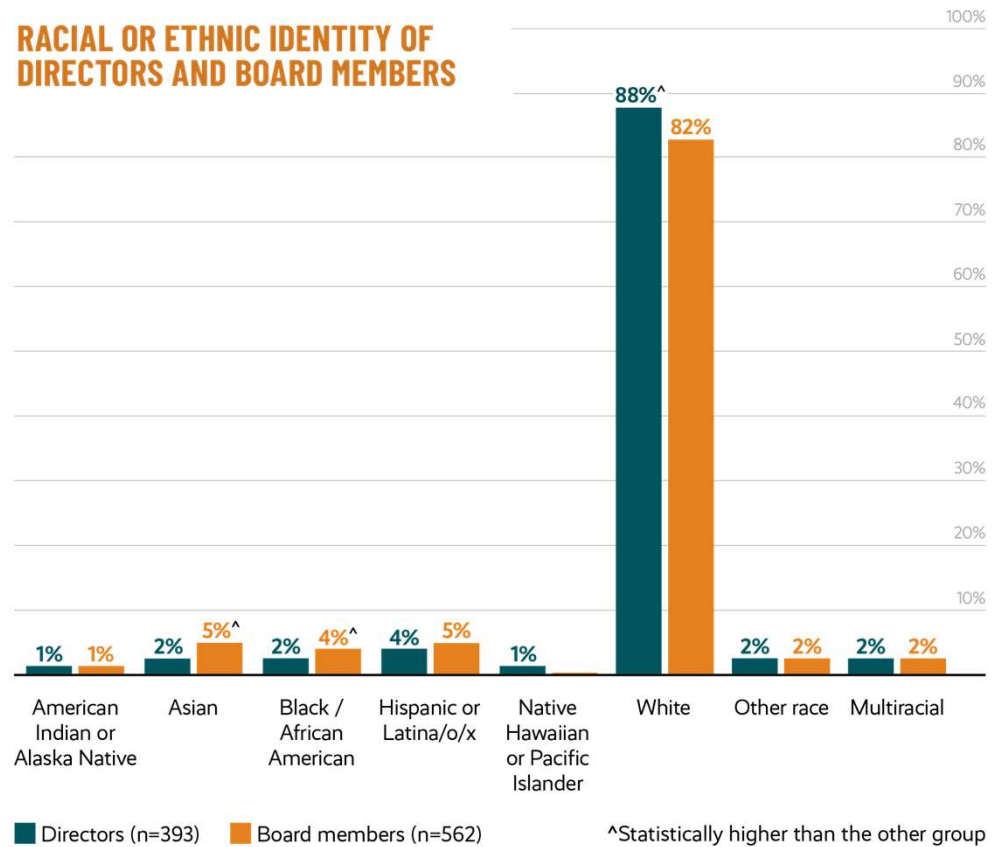
Directors (n=420-422)

Race and Ethnicity

Compared to the last iteration of this survey, fewer directors cite their boards as entirely white: 46% in 2017 and 27% in 2023.

71% of directors report that three-quarters or more of their board members are white.

RACIAL OR ETHNIC IDENTITY OF DIRECTORS AND BOARD MEMBERS

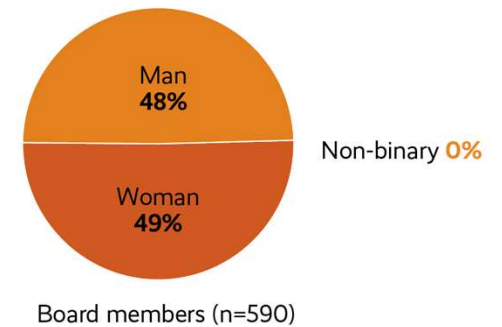
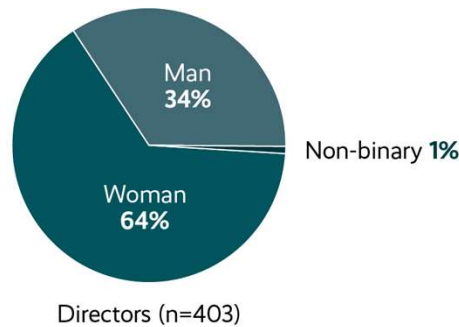


Gender

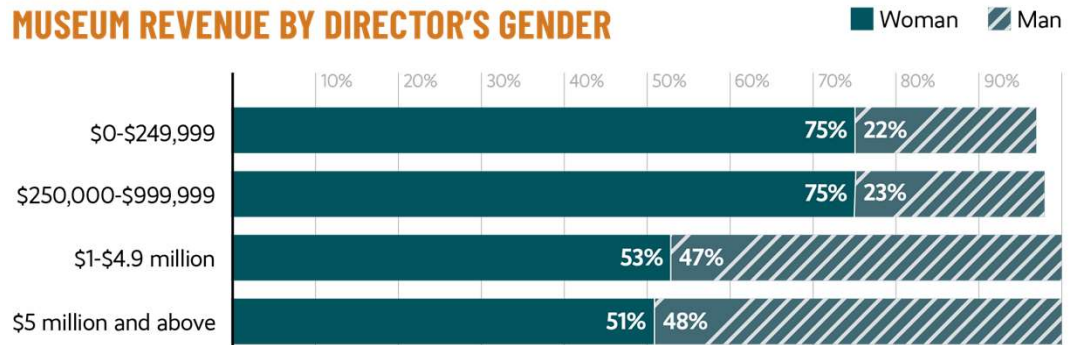
Only 16% of directors report that fewer than 1/3 of their board members are women.

Only 13% of directors report that fewer than 1/3 of their board members are men.

GENDER



MUSEUM REVENUE BY DIRECTOR'S GENDER



LGBTQ+ Identity

LGBTQ+ IDENTITY



20% of directors who are men identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community.

Disability

LIVING WITH A DISABILITY

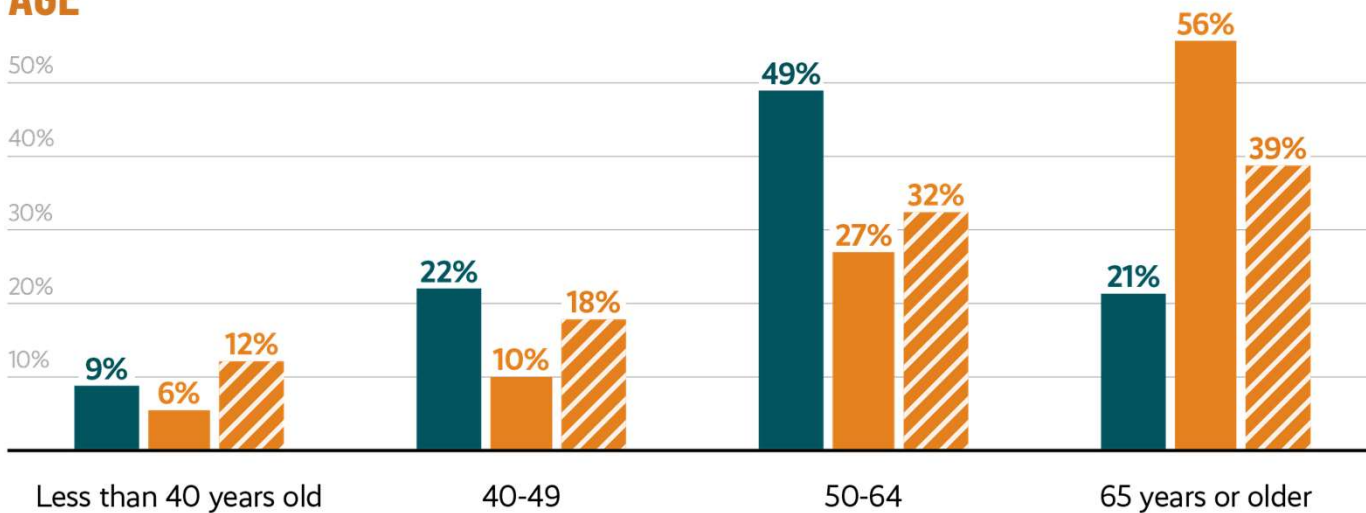


^Statistically higher than the other group

Age

37% of directors report that there is no one under the age of 40 on their board.
82% of directors indicate that there is no one under the age of 30 on their board.

AGE



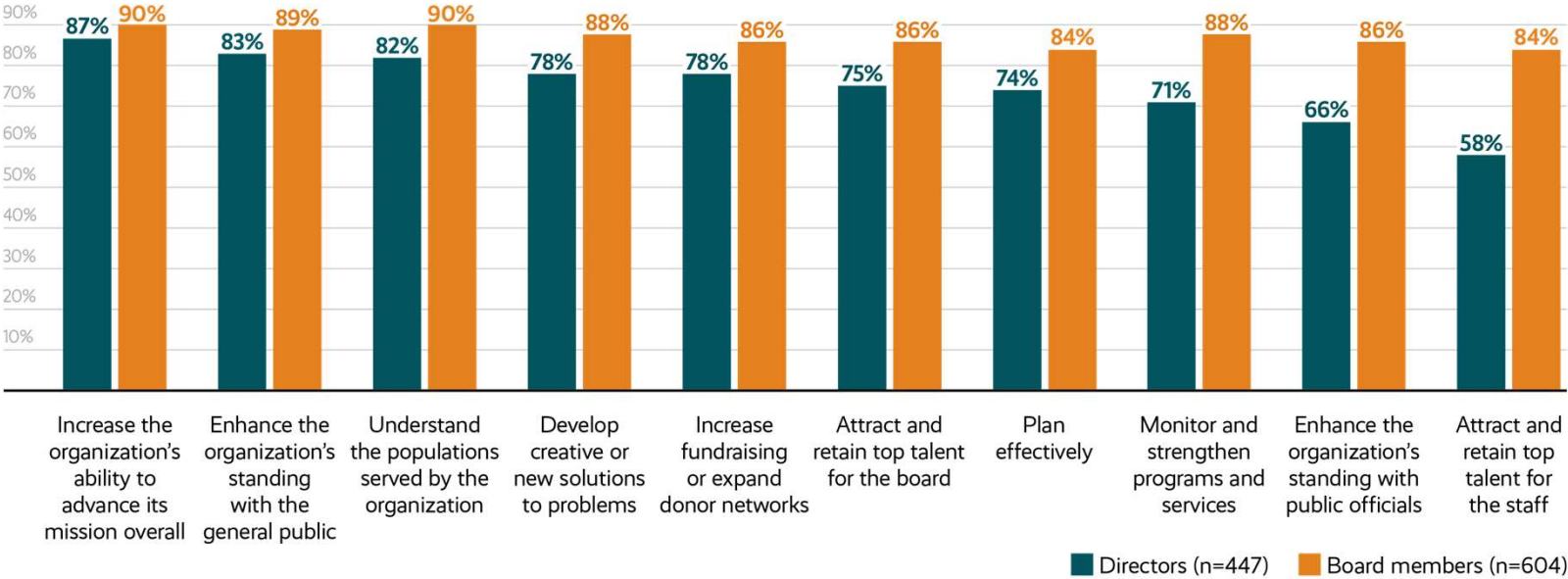
■ Directors as self-reported (n=393) ■ Board members as self-reported (n=557)
▨ Board members as reported by directors (n=429)

Board Diversity and Effectiveness

HOW IMPORTANT?

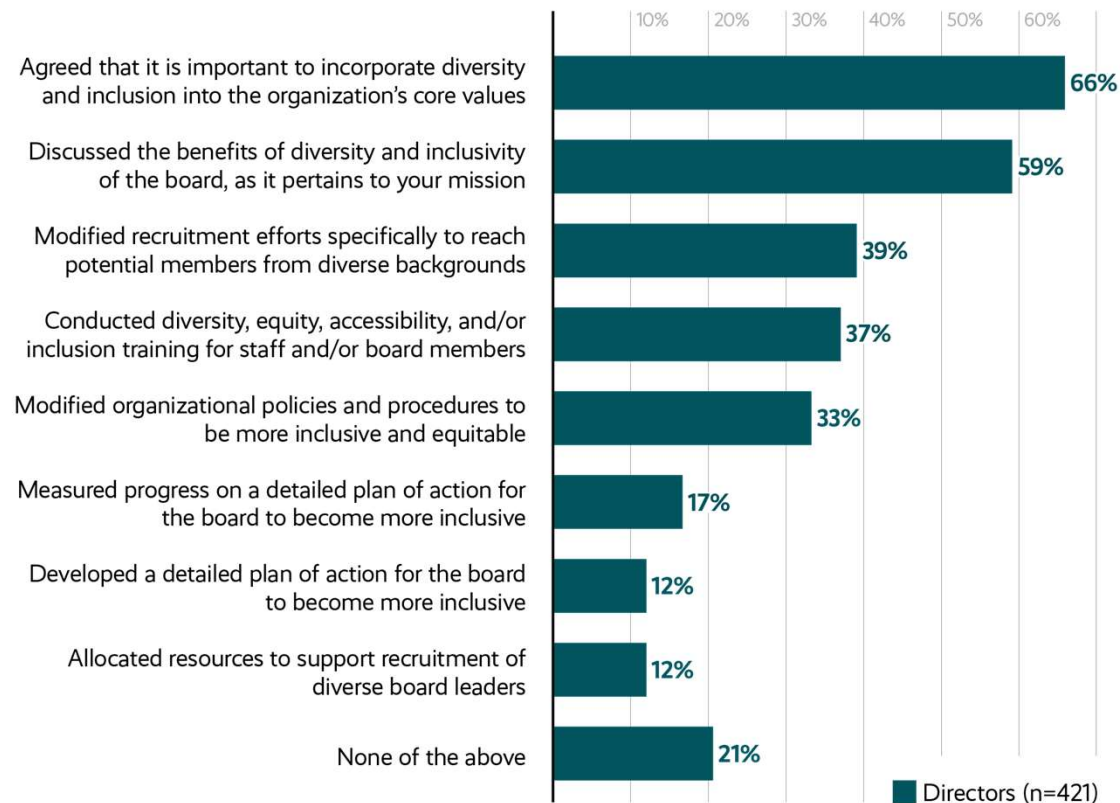
How important is board diversity and inclusivity for increasing your organization's ability to advance on the following issues?

% who select "very important" or "important"



Board DEAI Actions

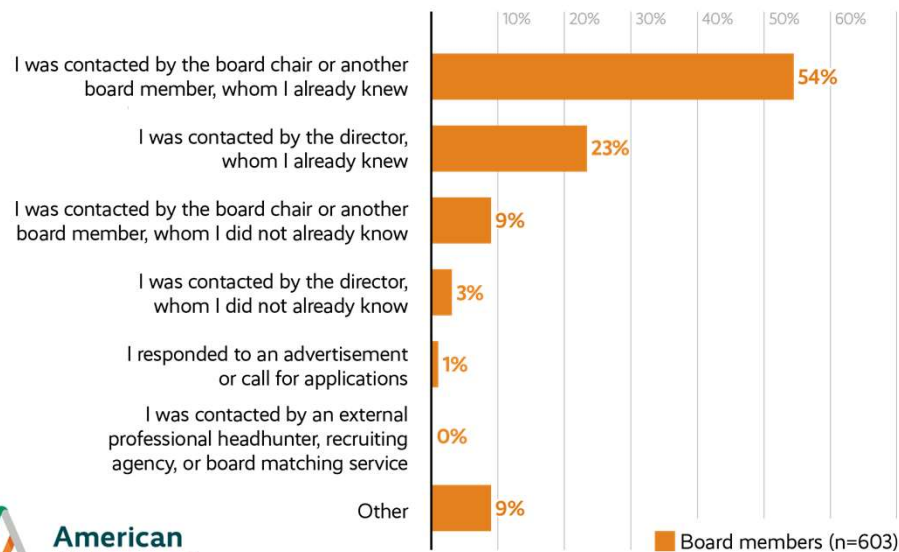
HAS YOUR BOARD DONE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?



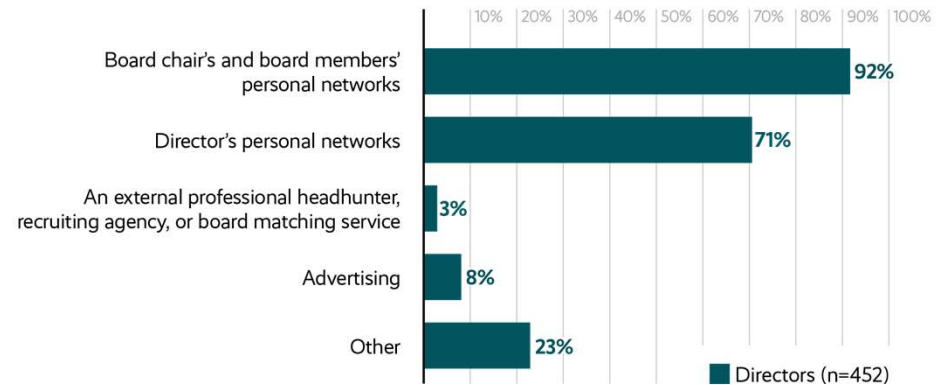
Board Recruitment

Recruiting primarily through personal networks can serve as a barrier to increasing diversity among the board.

HOW WERE YOU RECRUITED TO JOIN THIS BOARD?



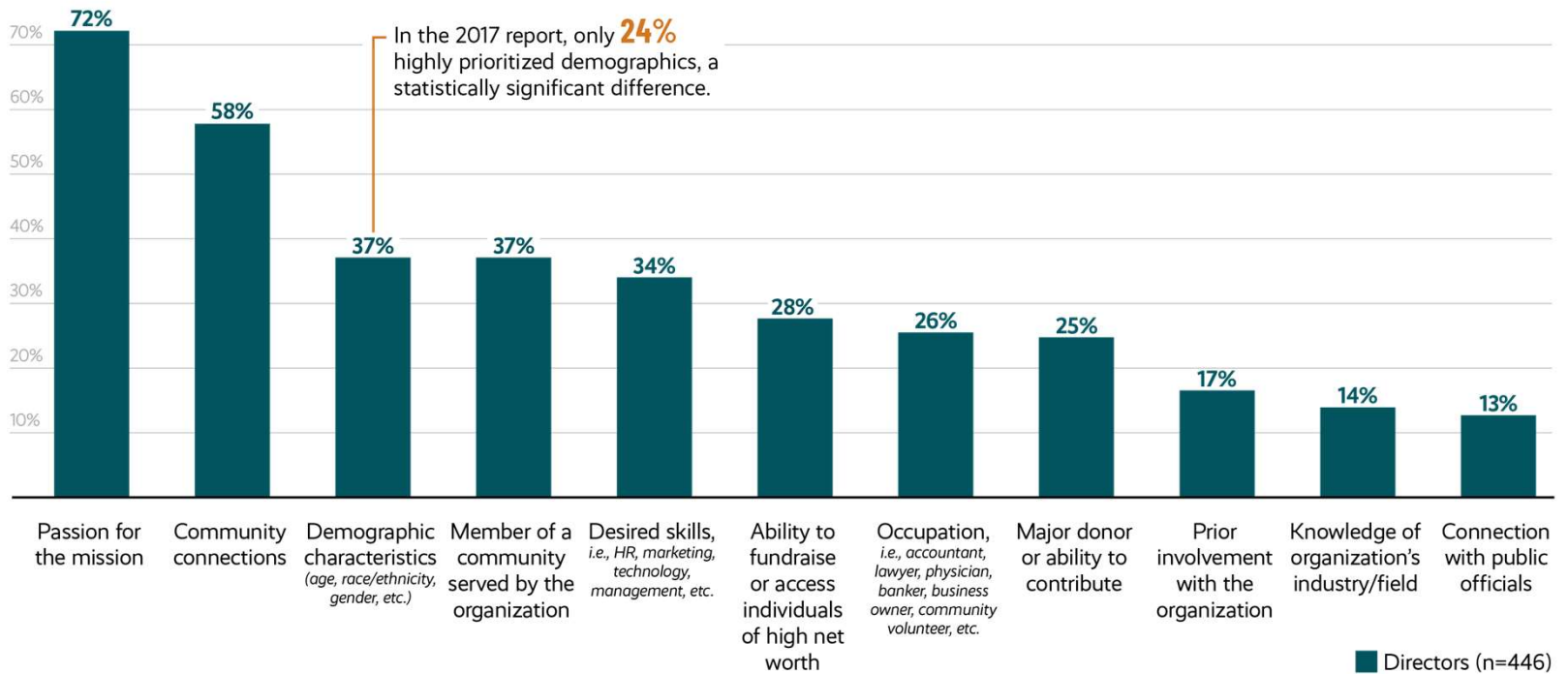
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS DO YOU USE TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL NEW BOARD MEMBERS?



Board Recruitment

WHAT IMPORTANCE DOES THE BOARD ASSIGN TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WHEN RECRUITING BOARD MEMBERS?

% who select "high priority"



The Work



Board Engagement & Culture

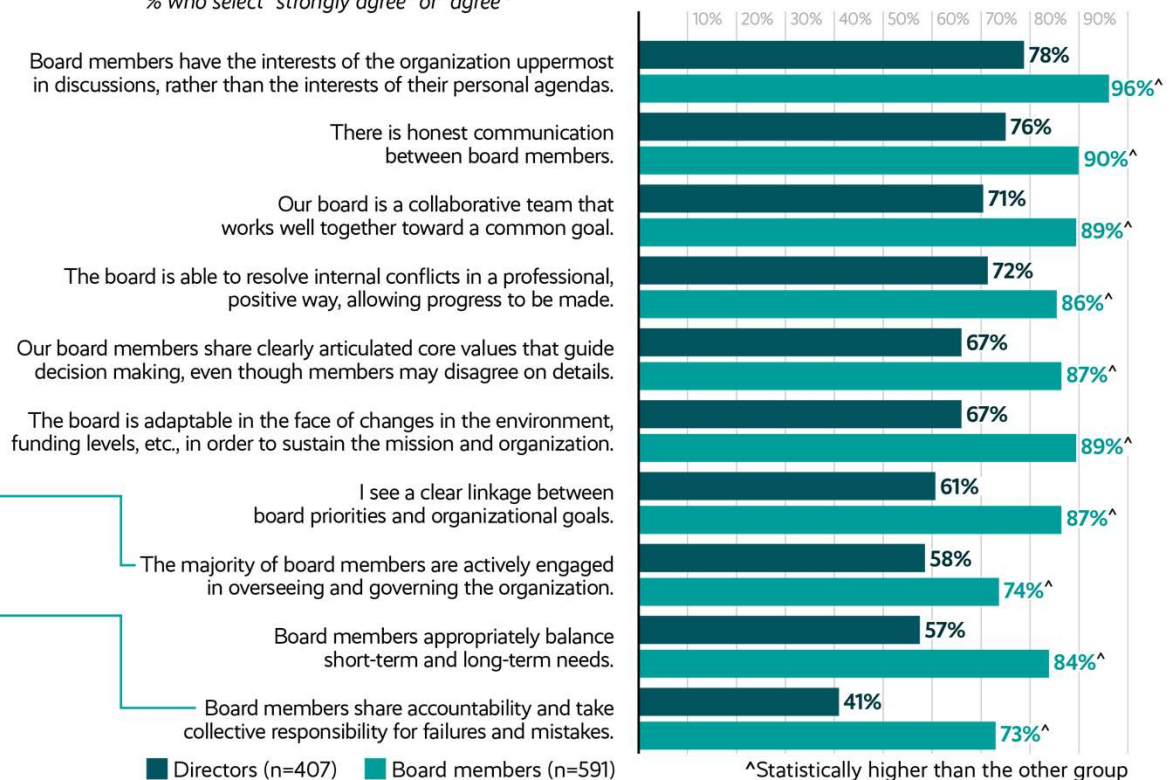
It's common for boards to rate their own performance more highly than directors rate board performance.

However, larger gaps between director and board ratings are notable.

AGREE OR DISAGREE?

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements related to your board's culture?

% who select "strongly agree" or "agree"



29% of directors "Disagree" or "Strongly disagree" with each of these statements.

Job Satisfaction

OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR PERSONAL JOB SATISFACTION ON THE FOLLOWING SCALE?

■ Moderately or extremely dissatisfied (selected 1 or 2 of 7) ■ Somewhere in between ■ Moderately or extremely satisfied (selected 6 or 7 of 7)



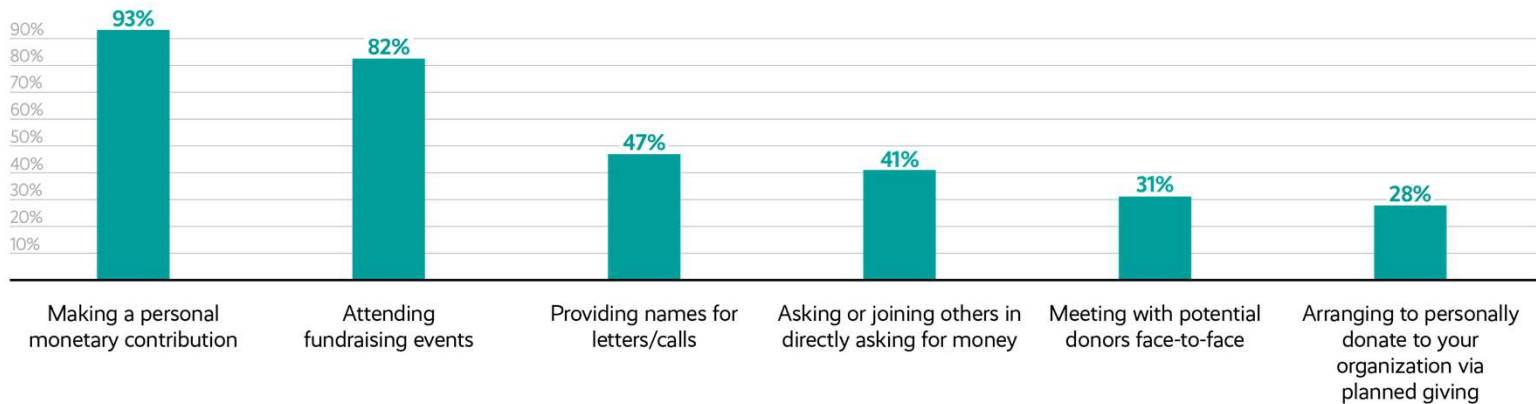
OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A BOARD MEMBER ON THE FOLLOWING SCALE?

■ Moderately or extremely dissatisfied (selected 1 or 2 of 7) ■ Somewhere in between ■ Moderately or extremely satisfied (selected 6 or 7 of 7)



Boards and Fundraising

WHICH OF THESE FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES HAVE YOU TAKEN PART IN DURING THE PAST YEAR?



Board members (n=582)

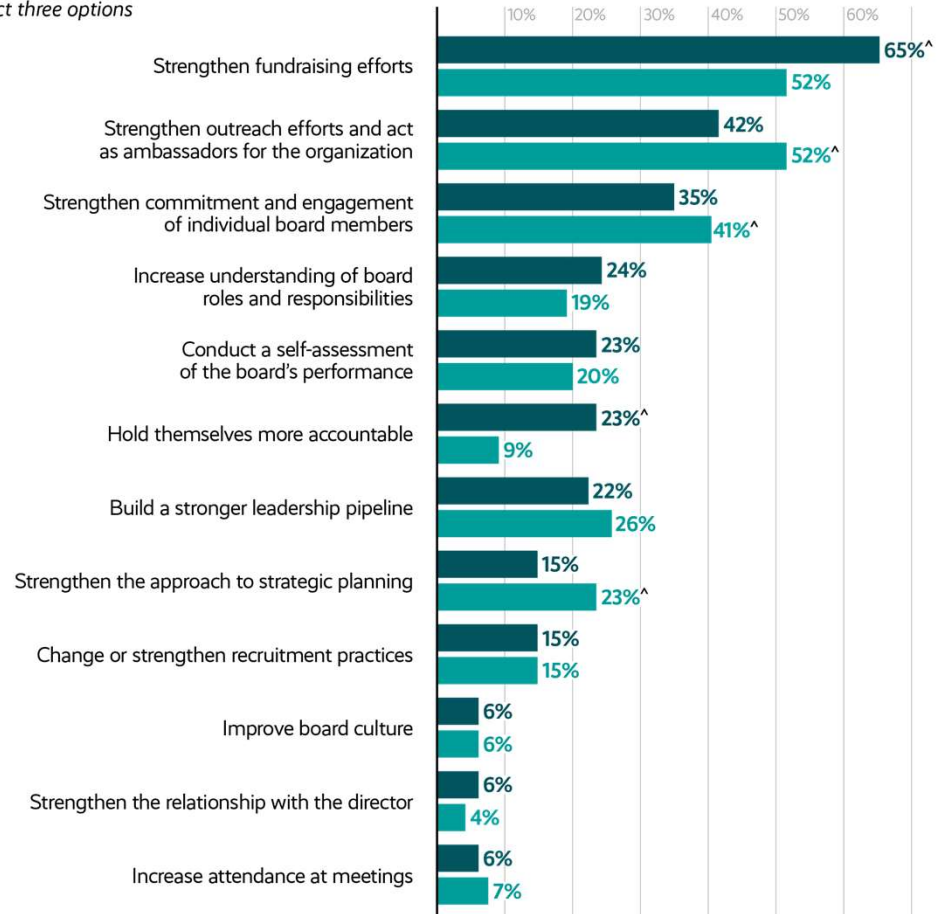
While almost all board members are engaged in some component of fundraising, 84% of directors indicate that their boards rely largely on staff for fundraising.

Only 67% of board members felt that expectations for fundraising were clearly explained during recruitment.

Areas of Growth

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT AREAS THE BOARD SHOULD ADDRESS TO IMPROVE ITS OWN PERFORMANCE?*

Select three options



■ Directors (n=417) ■ Board members (n=593)

[^]Statistically higher than the other group

Board Advocacy Activities

Changes in government policy can have a tremendous impact on an organization's operations.

On average, nearly a quarter (24%) of museums' budgets come from local, state, or federal government.

Board participation in advocacy can be a powerful driver to support the organization's mission and the museum field writ large.



TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE BOARD ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC POLICY OR ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES?

■ Not at all ■ To some extent ■ To a great extent

Monitor the impact of local, state, and federal policy on the organization's mission delivery and resources



Receive information and resources on effective and appropriate advocacy activities on behalf of the organization



Work in concert with the chief executive and leadership team to educate policymakers on behalf of the organization, its mission, and/or the nonprofit sector



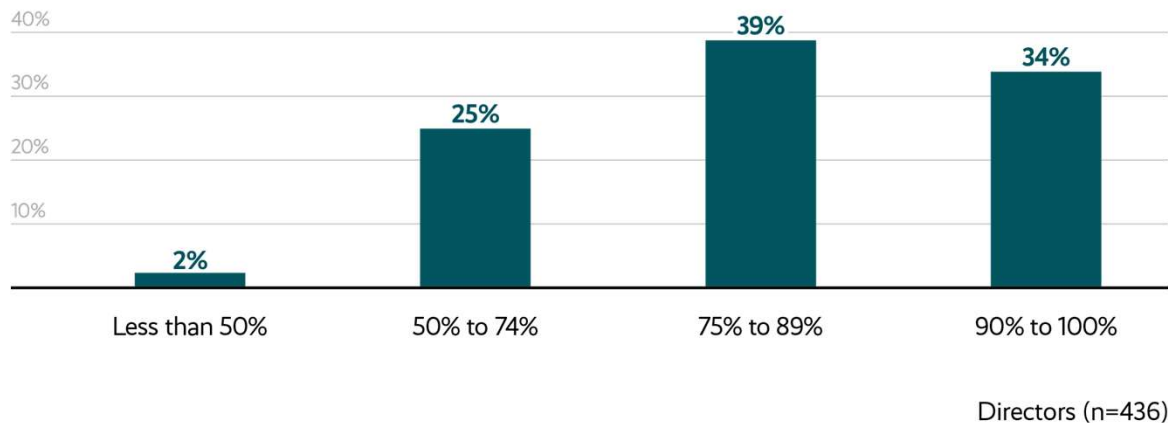
Cultivate and/or maintain ongoing relationships with local, state, and/or federal elected officials



Directors (n=420-422)

Board Meetings

WHAT IS THE AVERAGE ATTENDANCE BY THE VOTING MEMBERS OF THE BOARD AT BOARD MEETINGS?

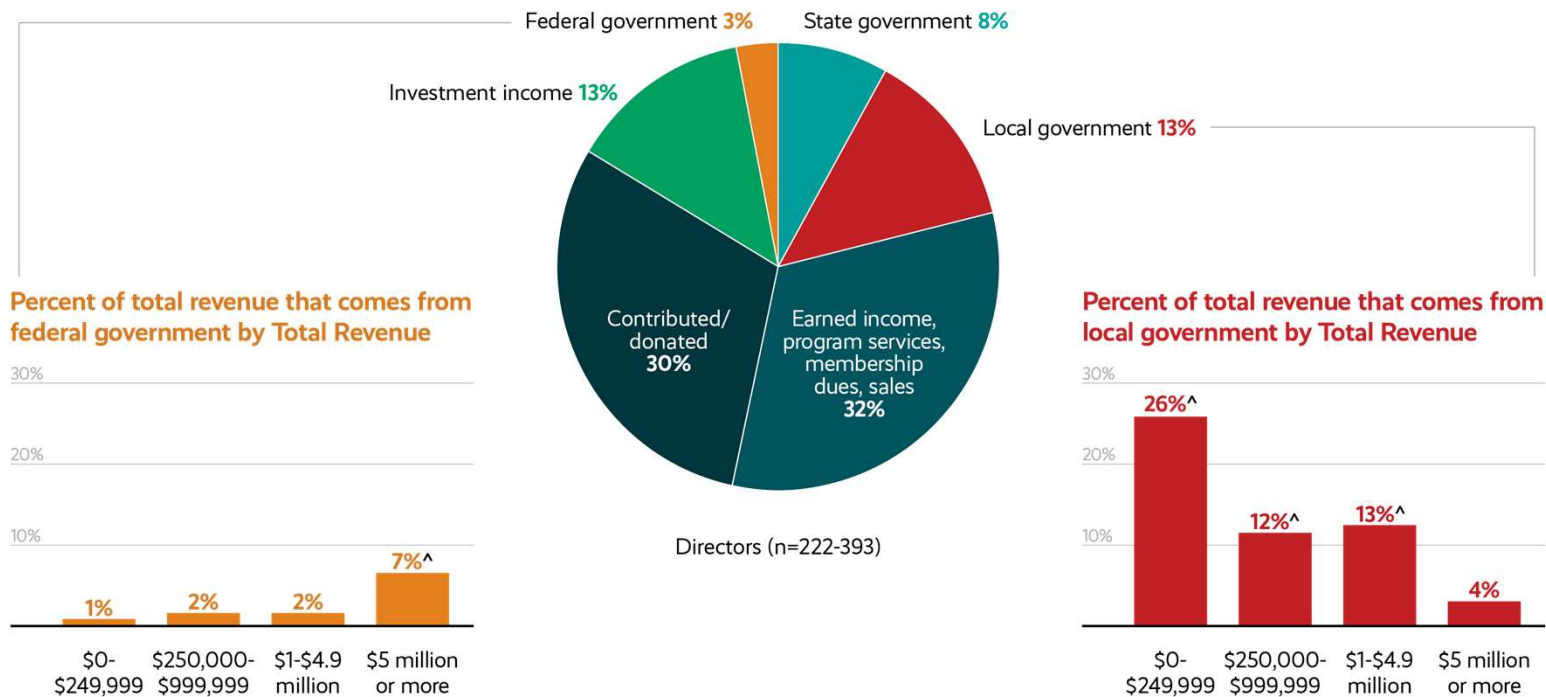


Directors who report average board attendance of 75% or higher are more likely to rate their board as having a very positive impact on the organization's effectiveness (37%) than those who report attendance below 75% (19%).

The Finances

Museum Revenue Sources

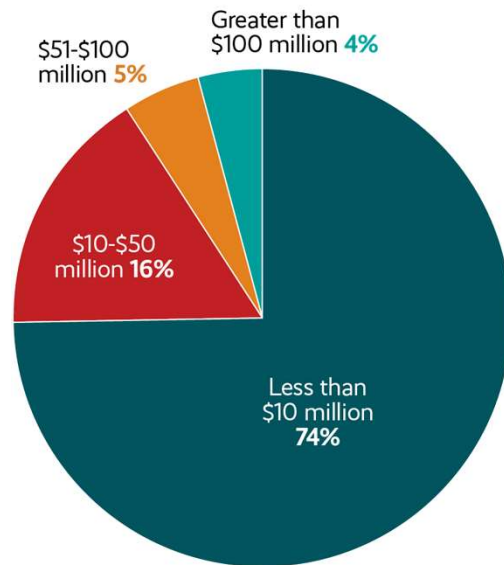
TOTAL REVENUE SOURCES



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Investment Portfolios

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF YOUR INSTITUTION'S INVESTABLE ASSETS?

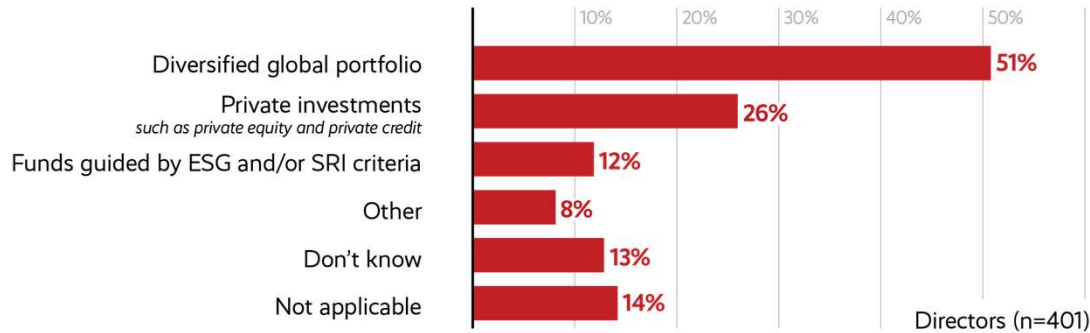


Directors (n=402)

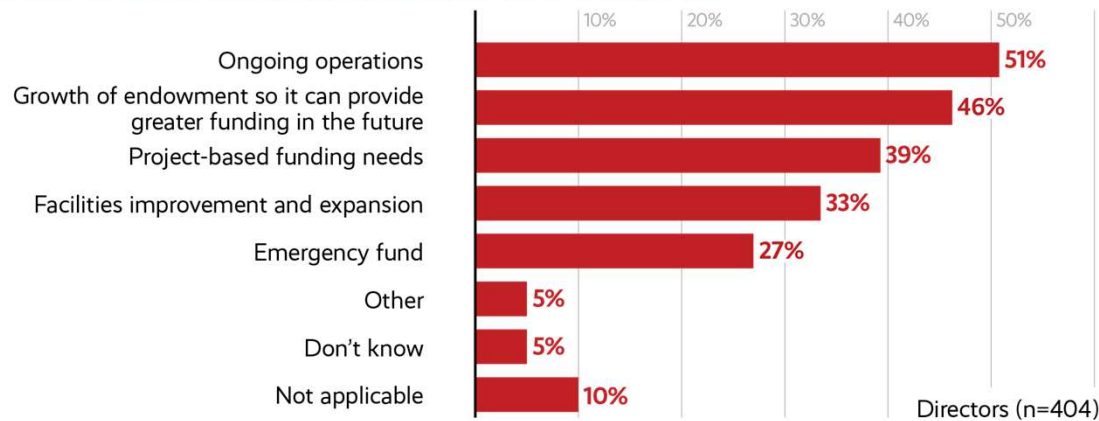
Approximately three-quarters of museums (74%) have investable assets of less than \$10 million in value; this includes museums without investable assets.

Investment Portfolios

HOW ARE YOUR INVESTABLE ASSETS INVESTED?



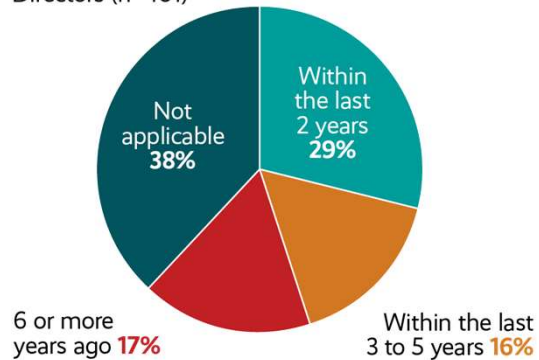
HOW ARE YOUR INVESTABLE ASSETS PURPOSED?



Investment Portfolios

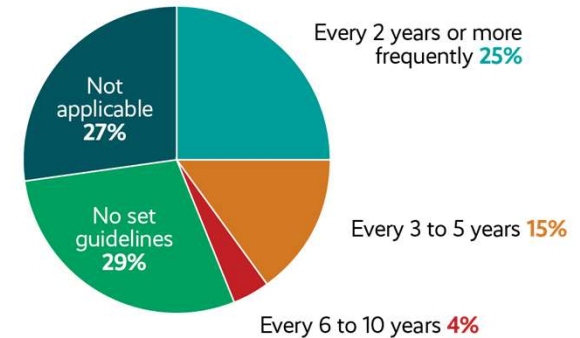
WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU CONSIDERED PROPOSALS FOR YOUR MANAGED PORTFOLIO?

Directors (n=401)



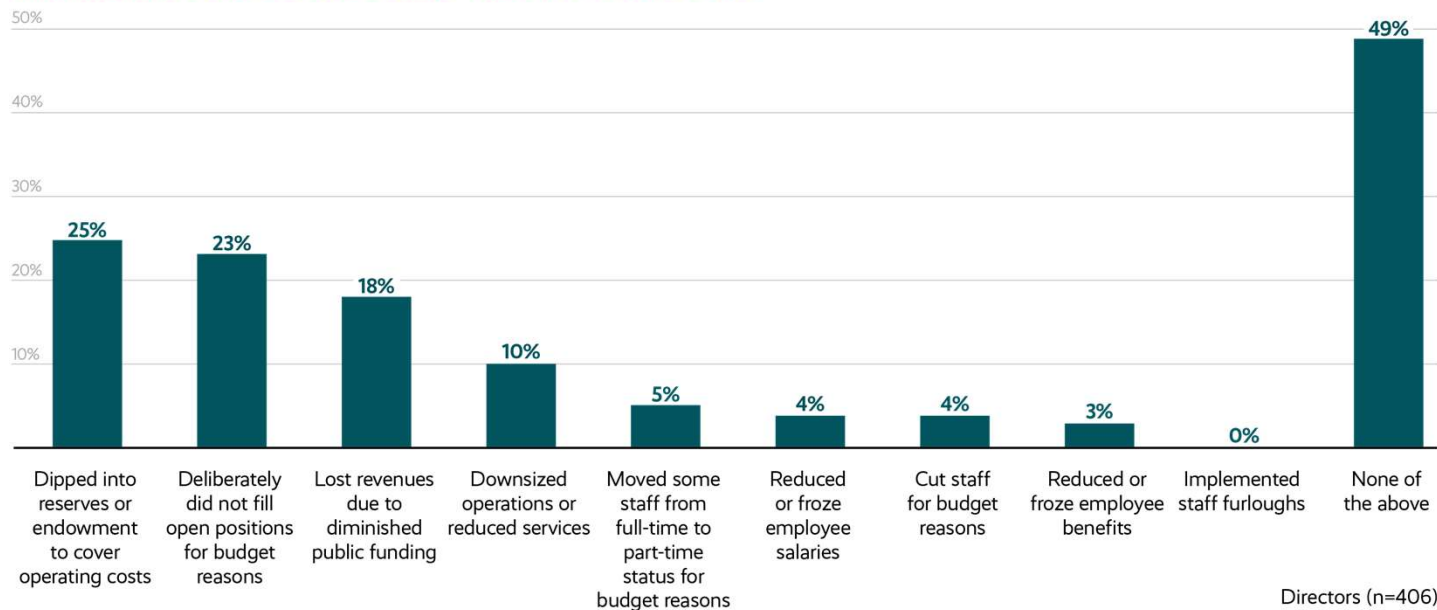
HOW OFTEN DO YOU REVIEW YOUR INVESTMENT ADVISORS AND/OR ISSUE AN RFP FOR INVESTMENT ADVISORS?

Directors (n=403)



Financial Challenges

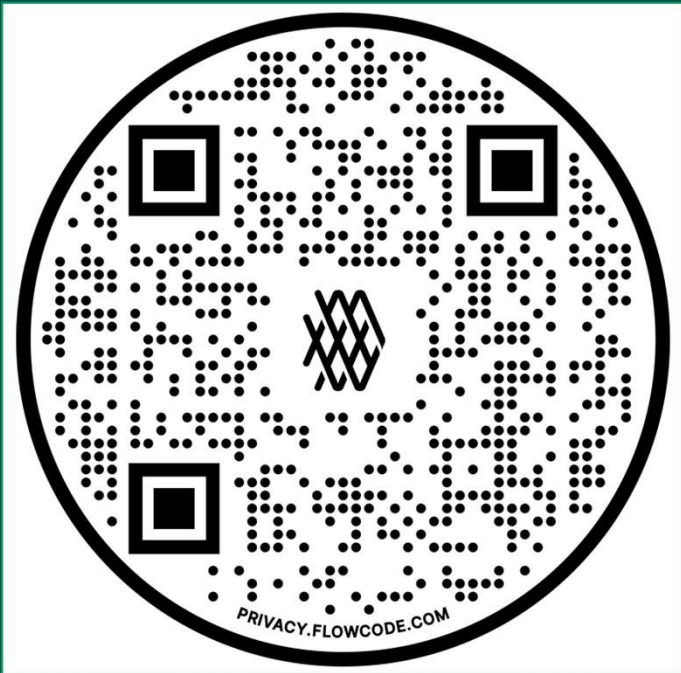
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SIGNIFICANT CHANGES HAS YOUR ORGANIZATION UNDERGONE DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS?



The museum field has long faced financial challenges, which have been exacerbated by the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately half of directors reported that their museum experienced at least one of these indicators of financial challenge during the prior six months.



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