

2025

# State of nonprofit auctions report

Trends, insights, & data from the field



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# Introduction

Auctions have long been a fusion of entertainment and philanthropy, offering an interactive way for donors to support the causes they care about while bidding on exciting items and experiences.

For many nonprofits, auctions aren't just a key revenue stream—they serve as a vital opportunity to deepen relationships with supporters, cultivate donor loyalty, and create memorable experiences that reinforce their mission.



Over the past decade, the nonprofit auction landscape has experienced remarkable transformation. Digital platforms and mobile bidding have revolutionized auctions, empowering nonprofits to expand their reach and engage a broader audience. The emergence of online and hybrid auctions provided organizations with the flexibility to connect with donors in new ways, driving wider participation, and enhancing the overall experience by offering choice in engagement options.

Despite tremendous growth in technology and accessibility, nonprofit auctions continue to face challenges. Securing high-quality auction items, finding sponsorships, and maintaining a high level of energy to keep attendees engaged remain ongoing hurdles for many organizations. Overcoming these obstacles requires strategic planning, creative approaches, and the right tools to ensure auctions achieve their full potential.

**The 2025 State of Nonprofit Auctions Report** offers the first-ever comprehensive analysis of nonprofit auctions, combining survey responses from auction attendees and nonprofit professionals, along with data from the Bonterra OneCause Fundraising Platform. The report uncovers key trends, challenges, and best practices shaping the nonprofit auction landscape. The insights gathered can help nonprofits refine their auction strategies, improve attendee engagement, and boost fundraising results. In addition to data-driven findings, we'll share actionable recommendations to empower nonprofits to maximize the impact of their auctions and achieve long-term success.

# Key findings

## Auction attendees have strong potential to become long-term donors.

Auction attendees aren't just one-time participants—they're some of the most loyal and engaged donors in the nonprofit space. In fact, 83% of auction attendees said they would attend future events for the same organization, and 62% said they were very likely to become annual donors. What's more, 64% said they were likely to become monthly donors in the future.

## Revenue from nonprofit auctions indicates significant opportunity for growth.

Nonprofit auctions are proving to be effective in driving revenue. With 77% of nonprofit professionals seeing consistent or increased revenue, auctions are firmly established as a reliable source of fundraising. This trend reflects the continued importance of auctions as a key part of the nonprofit fundraising landscape and highlights the opportunities available to organizations that invest in strategies to improve engagement, secure high-quality items, and leverage auction technology.

## The right auction items lead to higher engagement and bidding activity.

Item quality and diversity are key to running a successful auction. The most engaging and profitable auctions offer a range of items that appeal to different tastes and budgets. Notably, 33% of auction attendees bid on gift cards, and 32% bid on dining experiences, with 85% of nonprofits saying they offered these popular items. By offering a well-curated selection of items that cater to both high-end and affordable tastes, organizations can boost engagement and increase revenue, ensuring everyone has something to bid on.

## Auction technology is crucial to increasing engagement—especially with younger donors.

The ways nonprofits engage with supporters is being transformed by auction technology. Mobile bidding, outbid notifications, and online silent auctions have become essential tools for driving participation while making the experience more interactive, enjoyable, and accessible. Many of these features resonate strongly with younger generations—65% of Gen Z and Millennials value receiving outbid notifications via text, while 59% appreciate personalized suggestions for similar items based on their interests. By adopting technology that enhances the auction experience, nonprofits can cultivate a loyal and engaged donor base, making it a must-have for any modern auction.



AUCTION ATTENDEES:  
WHAT THEY WANT & HOW TO ENGAGE THEM

# Overview

In the nonprofit fundraising landscape, auction participants represent a key segment of social donors—a group that contributes through a variety of channels like galas, golf tournaments, peer-to-peer fundraising, and auctions.

This study includes feedback specifically from auction donors—those who have attended, bid in, or donated during a nonprofit auction in the past 12 months.

In the survey, 19% of social donors reported attending or participating in a nonprofit auction. On average, auction donors participated in around 2 live or silent auctions per year (*Figure 1*).

On average these donors participated in

**1.91** live auctions

**1.72** silent auctions

in the last 12 months



of social donors report participating in nonprofit auctions

Figure 1

For nonprofit organizations, engaging auction donors is particularly valuable. Not only do they attend events, but they've also shown they're willing to give more, even during times of economic uncertainty.

In fact, 49% of auction donors reported they gave more than they usually do last year, compared to 37% of social donors overall. Auction donors also stand out for their higher average contributions. The average gift amount from auction donors is \$529, significantly more than the \$191 average for social donors of all types (*Figure 2*).



**49%**  
of auction donors gave more last year



**\$529**  
average donation from auction donors

Figure 2

AUCTION ATTENDEES:  
WHAT THEY WANT & HOW TO ENGAGE THEM

# Loyalty & potential

Auction donors are not only highly engaged; they also report a high level of satisfaction with their experiences. A remarkable 96% of auction attendees rated their last auction experience as “excellent” or “good” (Figure 3).

## Auction attendee satisfaction with last auction

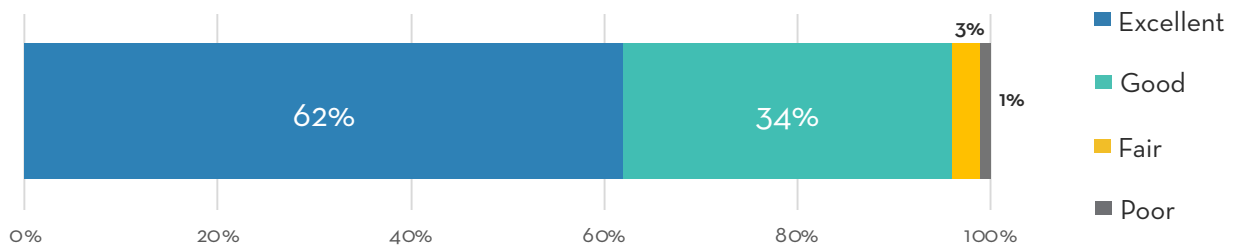


Figure 3: Overall, how would you rate the last nonprofit auction in which you participated?

The high levels of engagement and satisfaction among auction participants show that these events do more than just raise immediate funds. They create a foundation for lasting donor relationships, with many attendees showing an eagerness to support the same nonprofits year after year.

A notable 82% said they would attend another event in the future, 83% reported being likely to become an annual donor, and 64% said the same about becoming a monthly donor (Figure 4). The auction experience not only drives revenue in the short term but also has the potential to cultivate a steady stream of loyal, long-term supporters.

## Auction donor loyalty



Figure 4: Percent of auction participants who said they would attend another event for the same org; percent who were “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to become annual or monthly donors or to make a one-time donation in 12 months after their last auction.

## EASE & ENGAGEMENT

# Ease

Given the significant potential for auction donors to become long-term supporters, it's essential to understand what drives their loyalty. In this section, we'll examine how auction attendees rated the ease of taking various actions during the event and which aspects they found most engaging. By understanding these key elements, nonprofits can create smoother, more enjoyable auction experiences that lead to greater donor satisfaction, increased giving, and a higher chance of auction attendees converting to long-term donors.

Most attendees found core event elements like registering, donating, and making purchases to be easy, with about three-quarters reporting satisfaction with these processes. Similarly, 69% rated check-in and checkout as very easy (Figure 5).

However, there's room for improvement in areas like adding and saving payment info (56%) and setting maximum bids (55%).

Additionally, improving functionalities such as viewing a list of bids (54%), marking favorites (50%), and sorting (45%) and filtering items (42%) can enhance convenience and allow attendees to focus on their top interests.

There's a noticeable gap between nonprofit professionals' perceptions of ease and attendees' actual experiences, particularly with placing a max bid, where there's an 11-point difference (Figure 6). Similar discrepancies exist in areas like viewing bid history, saving payment information, and placing additional bids after being outbid, highlighting opportunities to improve user-friendliness in these auction processes.

<b>Make a donation during the event</b>	<b>76%</b>
Register for the event	74%
Make a purchase at the event	73%
Quickly check in	69%
Check out when the event is over	68%
Bid on live or silent auction items	64%
View categories of items you're interested in	61%
Place another bid after receiving an outbid notification	59%
Indicate how you want to receive or pick up won items	57%
Add and save payment information	56%
Set a max bid on an item	55%
View a list of items you bid on	54%
Mark an item as a "favorite" to return to later	50%
Sort items based on interest	45%
Apply filters to categories and items to view in a way you prefer	42%

Figure 5: How easy was it to do each of the following? (% rated as "very easy," excluding don't know or not applicable)

### Attendees versus Nonprofit Professionals

	Nonprofit professionals who said they think this is very easy for their attendees	Attendee ratings of "very easy"
Set a max bid on an item	66%	55%
Add and save your payment information	65%	56%
Place another bid after receiving an outbid notification	68%	59%
View a list of items you bid on	63%	54%

Figure 6: Comparison of auction activity ease ratings between auction attendees and nonprofit professionals.

# Engagement

Auction attendees find hearing testimonials from those directly impacted by the organization's work to be the most engaging part of the event, with 63% rating it highly (*Figure 7*). Sharing these personal stories during live auctions or on the auction site helps create a strong emotional connection, making the event more impactful and meaningful for participants.

Both silent and live auctions were also rated as highly engaging, with 61% of guests saying silent auctions were very engaging and 59% feeling the same about live auctions. This underscores the importance of having a skilled auctioneer and creating a high-energy environment. Skilled auctioneers know how to read the room, generate excitement, and keep the momentum going, ensuring that bidding stays competitive and guests remain engaged.

Socializing with other guests (58%) and learning about the impact of their donations (54%) were also key factors, underscoring the importance of fostering personal connections and showcasing tangible outcomes of donor support.

<b>Testimonials from people benefiting from the organization's work</b>	<b>63%</b>
The silent auction	61%
The live auction	59%
The speakers	58%
Ability to socialize with other guests	58%
Hearing about the impact of your donation	54%
Live donation match opportunity	52%
Interactive activity or lessons	52%
The theme of the event	51%
Live entertainment (comedy, music, etc.)	51%
Viewing live results of a competition	50%
Ability to track the organization's progress towards fundraising goal	50%
Online posts leading up to the event	48%
Raffles	46%
Live comment/message feed	46%
Instant live recognition of donors	45%
Live viewing of a relevant documentary or film	45%
Interactive challenges or contests to join	44%
Happy hour	44%
A custom hashtag you could share in reference to the event	42%
Pre-recorded content/videos	39%
Casino-style games or games of chance	33%



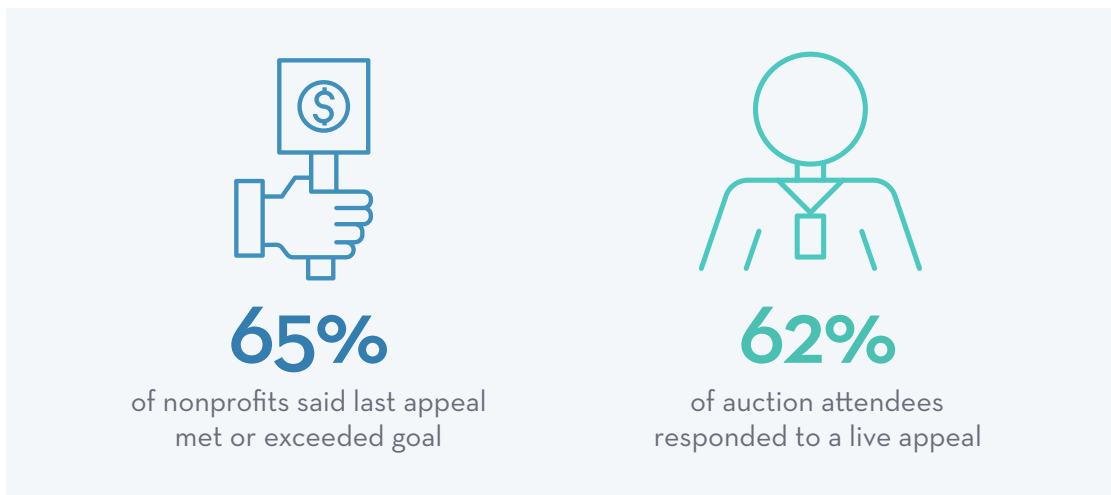
Figure 7: How engaging was each of the following features of this event? (excluding don't know or not applicable)

# Focus on appeals

Live donation appeals are a core element of events that boost engagement and revenue. And the majority of nonprofits reported pairing a live appeal with their auction (*Figure 11*). These appeals leverage the power of live, emotional connections with attendees, inspiring immediate giving.



These live appeals are a critical component of auctions, demonstrating their potential to increase both participation and revenue in real-time. According to our survey, 62% of auction attendees said they made a donation or pledge in response to an appeal, and 65% of nonprofits reported that their last appeal met or exceeded its revenue goal (*Figure 12*).



*Figure 12: Attendees - Was there a live donation appeal at the event, where someone requested you make a donation or pledge in real time? Nonprofits - Did your last live donation appeal meet, exceed, or miss its revenue goals?*

When paired with powerful testimonials or stories, live donation appeals create a sense of urgency and a deeper commitment to the cause. By integrating live donation asks into the auction program, nonprofits can further maximize the impact of their fundraising efforts.



# Auction revenue insights

Nonprofit auctions are a powerful and effective source of revenue, with 40% of survey respondents reporting that auctions make up 10% or more of their fundraising revenue (Figure 8).

## Auctions as percent of fundraising revenue

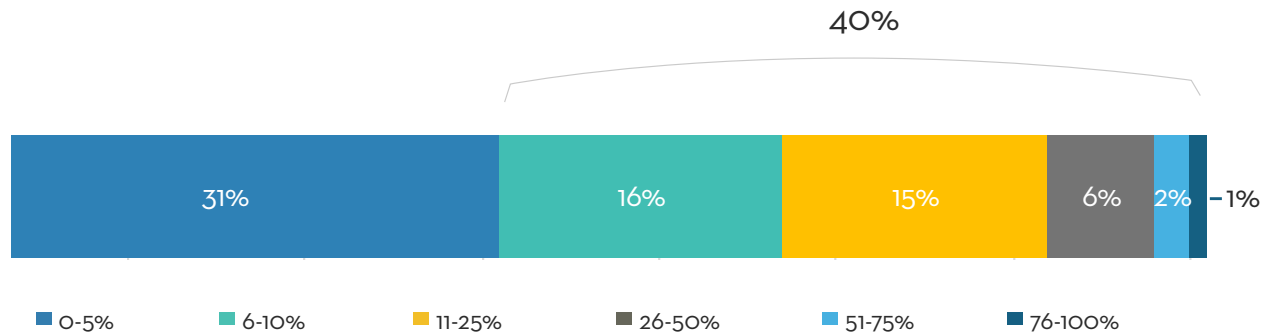


Figure 8: In the last fiscal year, approximately what percentage of your organization's fundraising revenue came from auctions?

A notable positive data point is that 77% of nonprofit professionals reported seeing consistent or increased revenue from auctions in the 12 months before they took the survey, while 90% reported they expect to see the same in the next year (Figure 9). This highlights the reliability of auctions as a core fundraising strategy, even amid the evolving challenges in the nonprofit sector.

## Auction revenue outlook

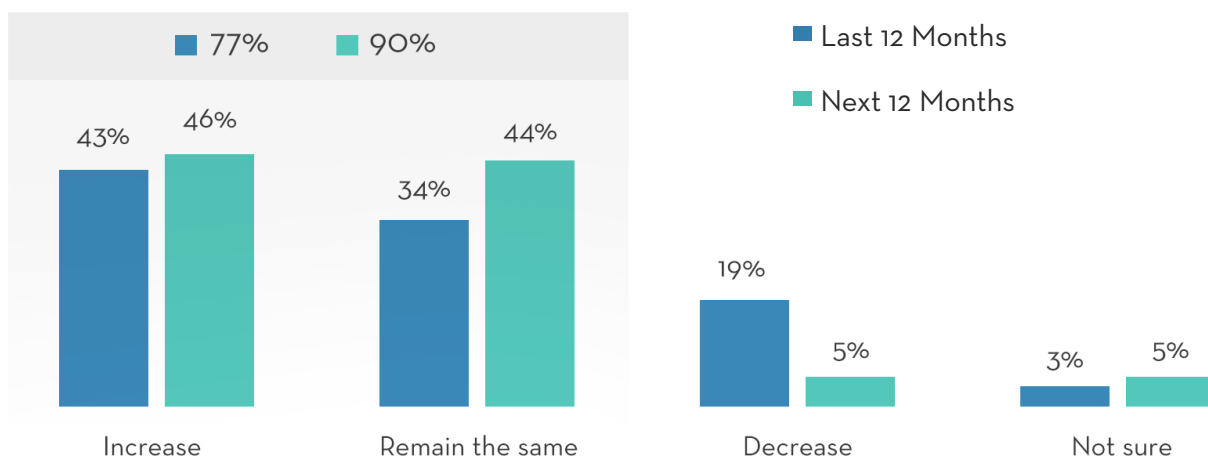


Figure 9: In the LAST 12 months, has your organization's fundraising revenue from auctions increased, stayed the same, or decreased? In the NEXT 12 months, do you think your organization's fundraising revenue from auctions will increase, remain the same, or decrease?

# Auction revenue insights

Nonprofit auctions are a smart strategy for securing year-round funding, with many organizations hosting multiple auctions throughout the year. Most nonprofits reported hosting, on average, 2 live auctions and 2 silent auctions in the past two years (Figure 10). This highlights the growing role of auctions in diversifying revenue streams and engaging donors through dynamic and interactive fundraising experiences.

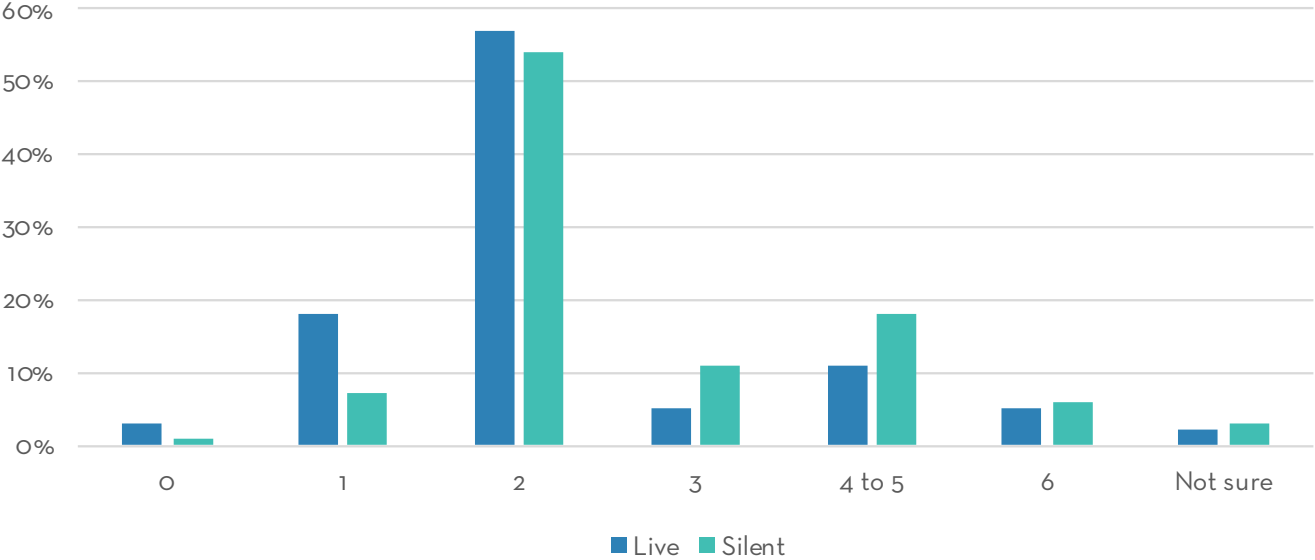


Figure 10: How many live auctions has your organization sponsored in the last two years? How many silent auctions has your organization sponsored in the past two years?

# Bidding and item insights

Whether it's luxury experiences or everyday items, the variety and quality of auction item offerings significantly impact bidder activity and, ultimately, how much revenue an auction can generate. Overall, 90% of auction attendees reported placing bids, with 46% winning an item they bid on. On average, auctions consisted of 67 items, receiving 5.36 bids per item and raising 1.34 times, or 134.5% of an item's value (*Figure 13*).



Figure 13

Auction goers shared their preferences on item variety and price points, with 53% stating that multiple affordable items were a key factor in their participation, and 58% emphasizing the importance of a wide variety of items (*Figure 14*). These preferences suggest that providing a mix of high-end and more budget-friendly options is essential for engaging a wide range of bidders.

**53%**

rated availability of multiple affordable items as important

“Improve future auctions by having a selection of items that are obtainable by people of all wealth levels.”

“Offer a wider range of items & experiences to appeal to broader audiences. This could include unique travel packages, exclusive access to cultural events, or behind-the-scenes experiences in different industries.”

**58%**

rated having a wide range of items as important

Figure 14: Importance ratings of item affordability and variety; feedback from auction donors who participated in survey.

# Bidding and item insights

Auction participants were most likely to bid on gift cards (33%), dining and culinary experiences (32%), travel packages (26%), and sports and entertainment items (25%). Notably, the percentages of nonprofit professionals who offered these item types (as shown at the bottom of the graphic) were generally aligned with the bidding patterns of auction guests (*Figure 15*).

## What types of items did you bid on at the auction?

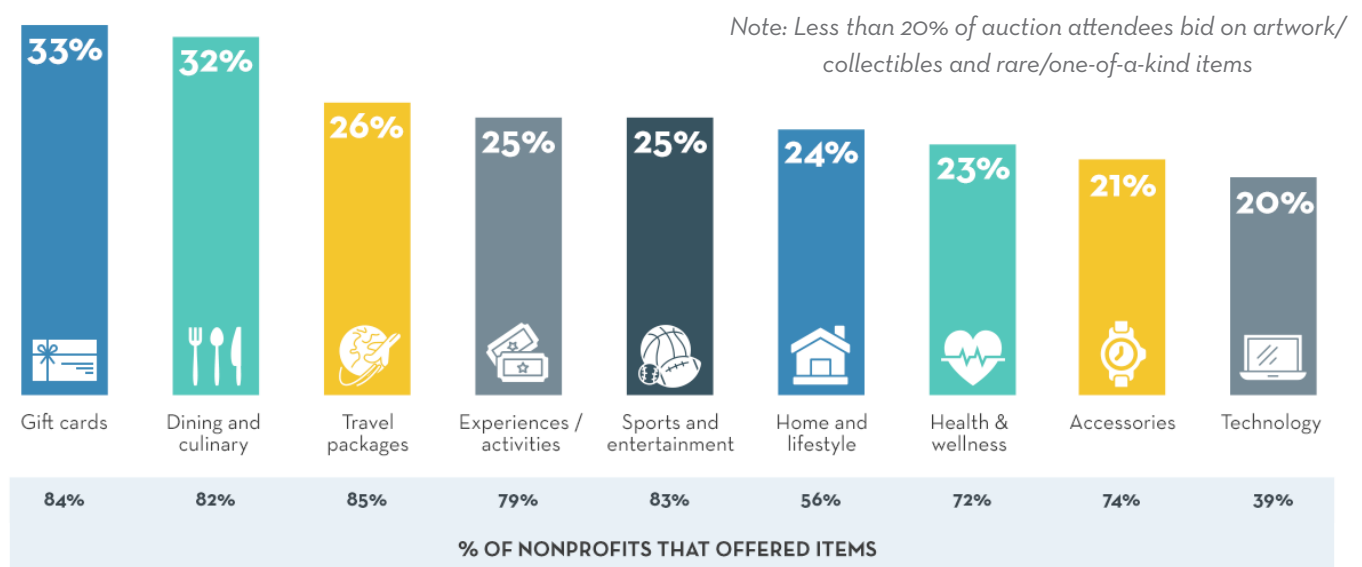


Figure 15: Percentage of item types auction attendees bid on listed above the percentage of nonprofit pros who offered each item type.

### **PRO TIP!**

6 in 10 auction goers said it was important to be able to preview items before bidding opens.

# Measuring auction success

When it comes to overall success rates, 95% of nonprofits rated their last auction as either very or somewhat successful (Figure 16).

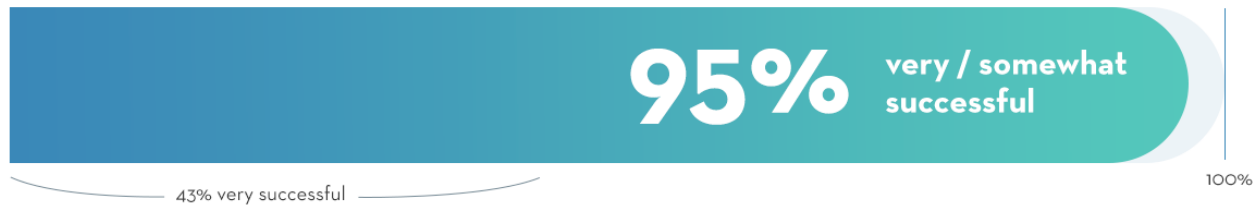


Figure 16: Overall, how successful was your organization's most recent auction?

While the primary metric for success is typically how much revenue an auction generates compared to goals, nonprofit pros reported taking other factors into account. Positive attendee feedback is crucial, with 74% of organizations citing it as an important success metric, and 67% including meeting or exceeding attendance as a key factor (Figure 17).

Interestingly, only 56% of nonprofits reported that retention of returning donors was considered a success measure, and 54% said the same about acquiring new donors. However, as highlighted earlier in this study, auction donors show strong potential to become long-term supporters. With more than 6 in 10 auction attendees indicating they're likely to become annual or monthly donors, it's clear that tracking both donor retention and acquisition is valuable. Auctions offer a promising path for fostering sustained, recurring giving.

## How organizations measure success

Meeting (or exceeding) fundraising goals	94%
Positive attendee feedback	74%
Meeting (or exceeding) attendance goals	67%
Retention of returning donors to the organization	56%
Acquisition of new donors to the organization	54%
Retention of returning volunteers to the organization	27%
Engagement on social media	25%
Acquisition of new volunteers to the organization	23%
Not sure/None of the above	3%

Figure 17: Which of the following outcomes does your organization use to measure auction success? Select all that apply.

### PRO TIP!

Only 50% of nonprofits reported collecting feedback from attendees and donors, but 74% said positive feedback was viewed as part of auction success. Don't wait for donors to give you feedback - send out a post-event survey to learn what went well and what you can improve next time!

# Nonprofit challenges in auction planning and execution

While auctions are a reliable fundraising tool, many organizations still face challenges in executing successful events. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of respondents cited securing sponsors as the biggest challenge, while 31% struggled to source high-quality auction items—both critical for generating substantial revenue (Figure 18).

Another significant hurdle is limited time and resources, with 30% of nonprofits reporting difficulty managing auction events within their constraints. This often affects other areas, such as securing sponsors and curating desirable items, emphasizing the need for improved efficiency. Tighter budgets also present a challenge, with 22% of professionals identifying these as a key barrier. Smaller organizations, in particular, may find it difficult to balance costs and revenue, making it harder to drive engagement and maximize funds raised.

## Auction challenges

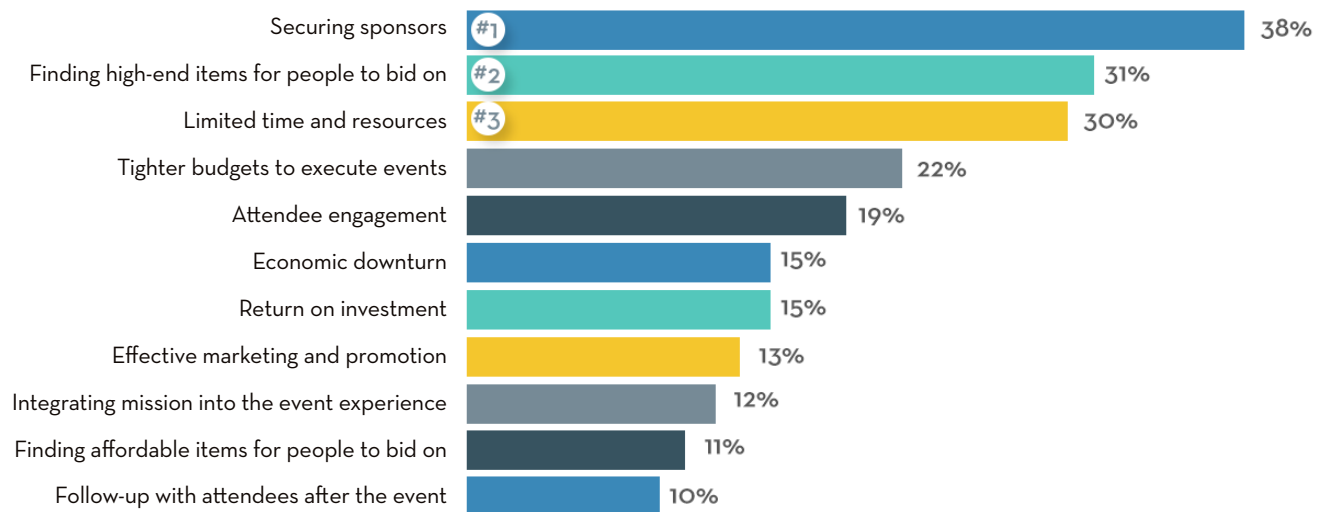


Figure 18: Which of the following, if any, are the biggest challenges to achieving your organization's goals related to events where there are auctions? Pick up to 3.



### PRO TIP!

The right auction technology can help nonprofits save time and resources. Tools that offer easy online sponsorship purchases and track sponsor ROI, along with AI-powered item descriptions and integrated ticketing systems, streamline processes and reduce manual work. These features enhance the donor experience and improve efficiency, so nonprofits can focus on engagement.

# Marketing, promotion & ticketing trends

Gaining insight into how other nonprofits time their ticket sales, promote their events, and use marketing channels effectively can provide valuable guidance for auction planning. By understanding the tactics that have worked for others, nonprofits can benchmark their approach, optimize marketing efforts, and ensure they're leveraging the most impactful channels at the right time.

Knowing which marketing channels resonate most with your audience is key to a successful auction promotion strategy. According to nonprofit professionals, email is by far the most effective marketing tool, with 84% of respondents saying it plays a crucial role in promoting their auctions (Figure 19).

Other highly effective channels include organic social media (56%), auction sites (54%), and printed mailers (43%). While paid social media is used by only 23% of organizations, it's clear that traditional and digital channels can complement each other to increase event visibility and participation.

## Most effective promotion channels

Email	84%
Organic social media	56%
Auction site	54%
Printed mailer	43%
Text message	37%
Paid social media	23%
Press releases	18%
Digital ads	18%
Videos	15%
Print ads	9%
Influencer marketing	4%

Figure 19: Which of the following marketing channels is most effective for promoting your auction(s) to attendees and donors? Select all that apply.

## Auction promotion timing

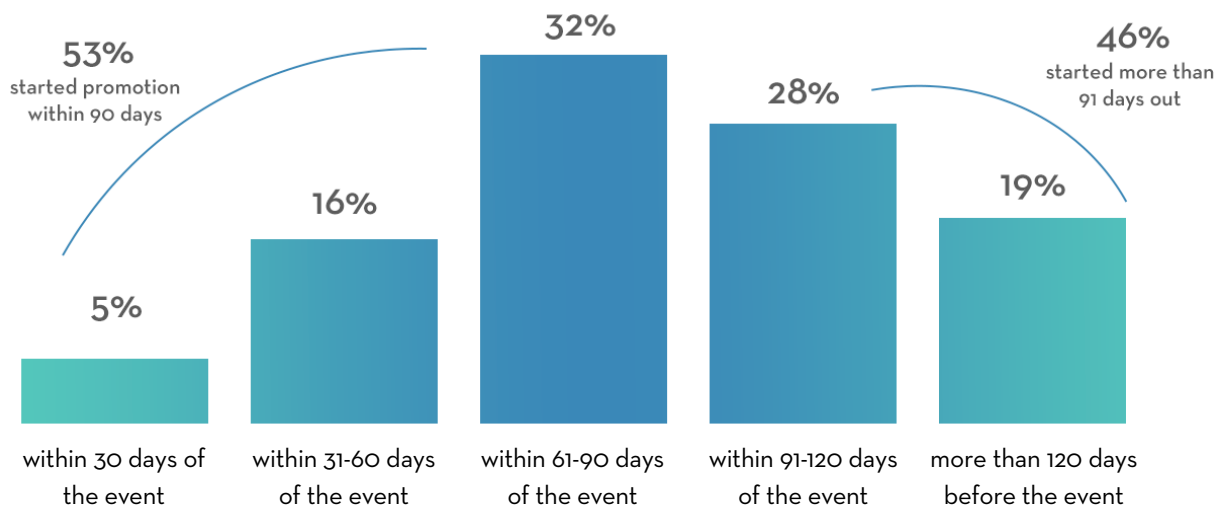


Figure 20: Thinking of your most recent auction, when did your organization start promoting the event? 1% said they were unsure.

## NONPROFIT PRO PERSPECTIVE: SUCCESS & CHALLENGES

When it comes to ticket sales for nonprofit auctions, timing is crucial to maximizing attendance and engagement. According to the data, 68% of organizations begin selling tickets within 90 days of the event, with 33% starting within 31-60 days and 27% within 61-90 days (Figure 21). About a third (30%) of organizations start selling tickets more than 91 days before their event. Opening ticket sales early allows nonprofits to expand their outreach, generate early interest, and ensure a strong turnout for their auction events.

### Auction ticket sales timing

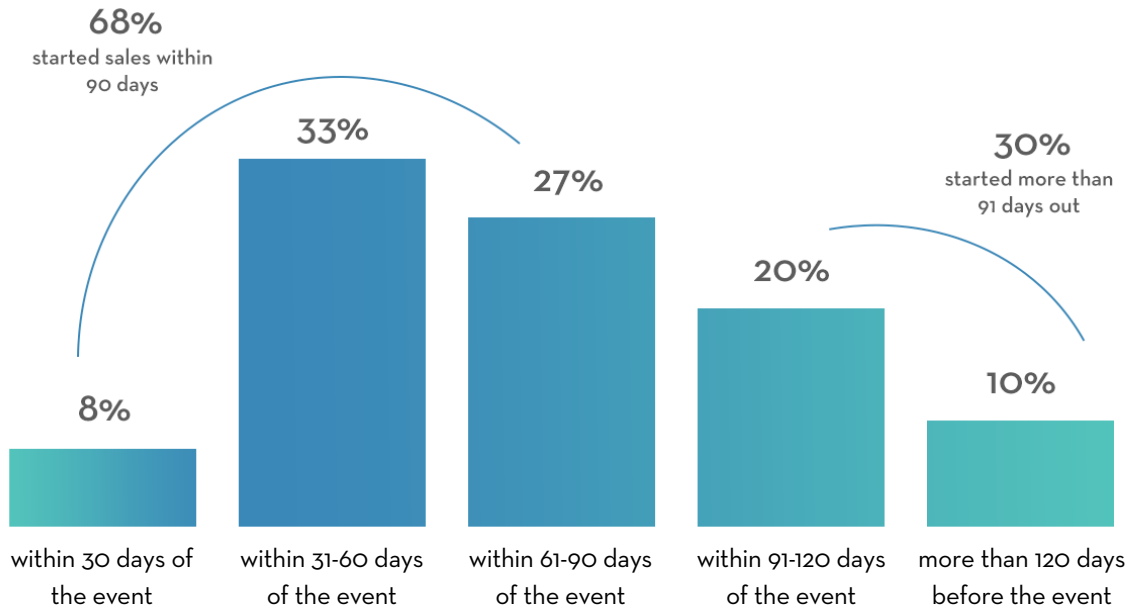


Figure 21: Thinking of your most recent auction, when did your organization start selling tickets? 2% said they were unsure.

On average, organizations offer 2.33 different ticket types for their auctions (Figure 22). The most common ticket option is individual tickets, which are offered by 91% of organizations. Group tickets are also popular, with 57% of nonprofits providing them. VIP tickets or packages are offered by 46% of organizations, presenting an exclusive experience for guests. Approximately 15% of organizations offer discounted tickets using a discount code, while 13% provide discounts for early registration. Including a range of ticket types and discount options can help maximize attendance and cater to a wider variety of donor preferences.

2.33



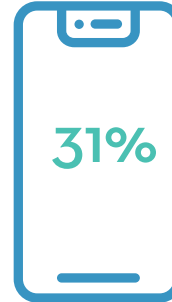
Average number of ticket options offered

Individual tickets	91%
Group tickets	57%
VIP tickets/packages	46%
Discounted tickets using a discount code	15%
Discounted tickets for registering early	13%
Other	11%
Not sure	1%
None of the above	3%

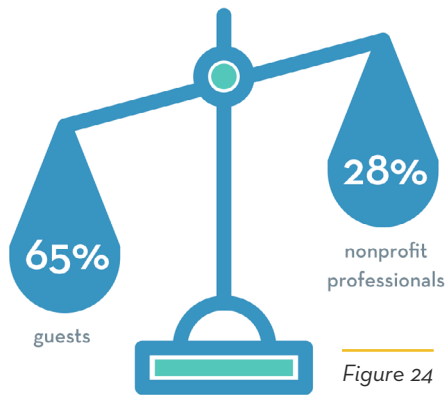
Figure 22: Types of tickets offered by nonprofit pros and average number of options offered.

# Auction technology & engagement

Auction technology continues to revolutionize nonprofit fundraising by enhancing bidder engagement and expanding accessibility. Features like mobile bidding, live-streaming, suggested items, and other tech innovations play a critical role in boosting participation and involvement. Considering their last auction, 31% of attendees placed their silent auction bids via mobile devices (*Figure 23*).



of auction attendees placed bids via mobile devices



There appears to be a discrepancy between attendees and nonprofits when it comes to whether participants who used mobile bidding had to download an app to bid at their last auction: 65% of guests reported being required to download an app to participate.

However, only 28% of nonprofit professionals report an app was required for silent auction participation (*Figure 24*).

It's possible that while an app was available, it wasn't mandatory for all guests. For example, some attendees may have been encouraged but not required to download the app, leading to differing perspectives. Nonprofits may perceive the app as optional, while attendees may have felt it was necessary to participate fully in bidding.

## **PRO TIP!**

Select an auction software that makes it easy to place bids on a mobile device without the confusion or hassle of having to download an auction app.

# Auction technology & engagement

Technology is essential for creating a seamless experience for auction attendees. The more intuitive the platform, the easier it is for participants to engage and place bids. Features that simplify the auction process are highly valued by attendees. For example, 58% of auction guests rated the ability to preview items before the auction opens as an important feature (Figure 25). Additional functionalities, such as easy-to-read receipts with tax-deductible information (53%), outbid notifications (46%), or the option to set a maximum bid (45%), enhance bidding and create a more personalized, user-friendly experience.

Features like fixed-price or buy-it-now options (43%) and receiving automatic suggestions for similar items to what auction goers are bidding on (39%) drive participation and help attendees find items that match their interests. By integrating these essential technological features, nonprofits can enhance the auction experience, boost revenue, and create a frictionless environment for both bidders and organizers.

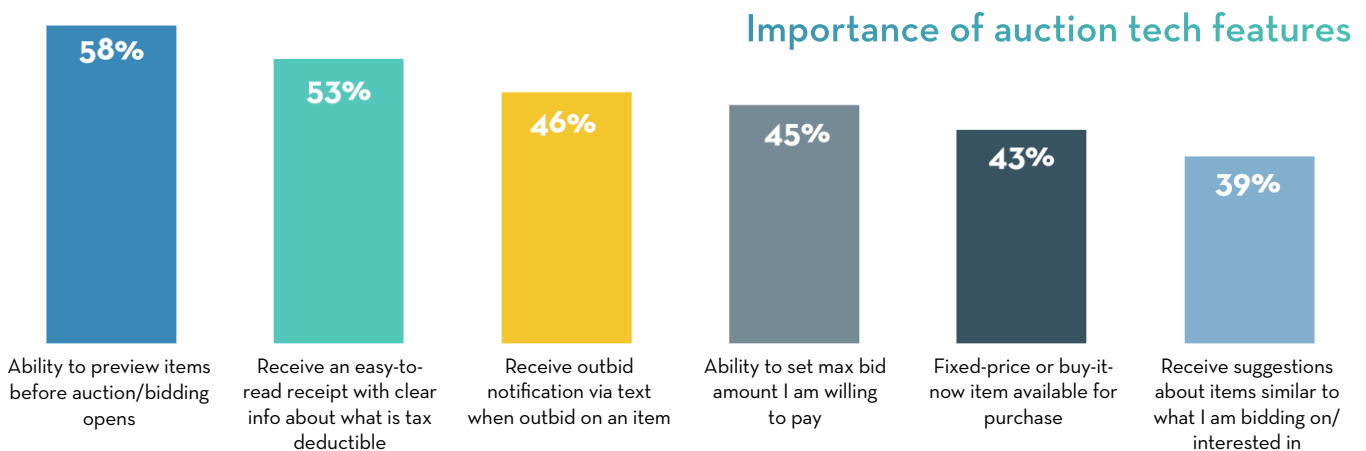


Figure 25: When considering going to a nonprofit auction, how important is each of the following?

Younger generations place higher value on technology innovations that create a seamless auction experience, likely due to growing up in a digitally connected world. Receiving outbid notifications via text is particularly important to Gen Z and Millennials, with 65% valuing this feature (Figure 26).

The convenience of fixed-price or buy-it-now items is another element that resonates strongly with younger donors—61% of Gen Z and Millennials appreciate this option. Additionally, 59% favor automatic suggestions for similar items based on their bidding interests, further emphasizing how digital enhancements can effectively engage and meet the expectations of a younger audience.

	Receive outbid notifications	Fixed-price & buy-it-now items	Receive suggestions for similar items
Gen Z/ Millennials	65%	61%	59%
Gen X	43%	39%	33%
Boomers/ Matures	24%	20%	16%

Figure 26: Auction features more highly rated as “very important,” by generation.

# Recommendations

## 1. Offer a wide variety of items at price points everyone can afford

A successful auction requires a balance of highly sought-after and affordable items. This year, 58% of auction participants emphasized the importance of having a wide variety of items to bid on, while 53% said it's essential to have items they can afford. To increase engagement, ensure your auction features a variety of items at different price points—this will attract both high-end donors and those with more modest budgets. It's also important to know your audience and what items will resonate with them. Certain bidders may appreciate locally sourced or one-of-a-kind items. Including diverse options allows more participants to get involved, ultimately driving increased bidding activity and higher revenue.

## 2. Streamline logistics with seamless check-in and checkout

Seven in ten auction participants rated the ease of check-in and checkout as very important. To enhance the overall event experience, ensure that both are seamless and efficient. Consider digital check-in solutions, pre-registered payment methods, and clear, easy-to-follow instructions for receiving won or purchased items to make the process smooth and stress-free for attendees. Additionally, nearly half of auction participants (46%) appreciated the flexibility of being able to pick up items later or have them shipped. Offering flexible post-auction logistics, such as convenient pick-up times or shipping options, can significantly improve the donor experience and prevent any friction after the event.

## 3. Highlight digital tools to attract and engage younger generations

Younger donors, particularly Gen Z and Millennials, are driving demand for a more streamlined, digital auction experience. Gen Z, in particular, values receiving outbid notifications, having fixed-price or buy-it-now options, and receiving item suggestions based on their interests. By integrating these functionalities, you'll create a frictionless, engaging experience that aligns with younger donors' expectations. Offering digital enhancements not only caters to these tech-savvy generations but also keeps them actively participating throughout the auction, increasing engagement and overall revenue.

## 4. Close the gap between perception and reality

Review discrepancies between your perception of auction processes and attendee feedback. While nonprofit professionals may assume certain features, like setting a max bid or adding payment information, are easy to use, attendees often report less satisfaction in these areas. To address this, consider gathering more direct attendee feedback post-event, testing auction platforms from the donor's perspective, and making incremental improvements that simplify the process. By aligning attendee experiences with nonprofit expectations, organizations can improve overall satisfaction, enhance the bidding experience, and encourage greater participation in future auctions.



# Recommendations

## 5. Leverage testimonials to deepen engagement

Testimonials from individuals directly impacted by a nonprofit's work are considered the most engaging auction feature by attendees. However, many nonprofits may overlook the power of incorporating real-life stories into their auctions. Make testimonials a core part of your auction strategy, whether through live presentations, pre-recorded videos, or written stories displayed at the event. These personal narratives help attendees connect emotionally with your cause, driving deeper engagement and inspiring higher levels of giving.

## 6. Implement early engagement tactics

Building momentum early can help maximize both event attendance and excitement. With 89% of nonprofits promoting their auctions at least 61 days in advance, starting marketing efforts early gives potential bidders time to get excited about the event. Consider using email and organic social media as key promotion channels, as 84% and 56% of nonprofits report them as the most effective ways to promote auctions, respectively. A longer lead time allows your auction to reach a wider audience and increases visibility for the event.

## 7. Leverage fixed-price or buy-it-now options for immediate participation

Fixed-price or buy-it-now auction items are especially appealing to bidders who want to secure their desired items without competing in a bidding war. Forty-three percent of auction participants value these options, making them a powerful way to boost engagement. By offering both competitive bidding and instant purchase opportunities, nonprofits can attract a wider audience and drive higher overall revenue.

## 8. Utilize AI to simplify auction preparation and execution

Incorporating AI-powered tools into your auction planning and execution can significantly reduce manual work and save valuable time. From automatically generating item descriptions to optimizing bidder engagement, AI tools help create a more efficient and effective auction process. Choosing an auction platform that integrates AI capabilities means nonprofits can focus more on strategy and less on administrative tasks, ultimately enhancing the donor experience and driving greater revenue.





# Conclusion

**Nonprofit auctions are a powerful and effective fundraising tool, offering a unique opportunity to engage donors, generate significant revenue, and build long-lasting relationships.** By combining exciting items, compelling storytelling, and seamless auction technology, these events create memorable experiences for attendees and inspire greater generosity. With innovations like mobile bidding and AI-driven features to boost revenue, nonprofits are increasingly tapping into digital tools to enhance their auction events and streamline operations, ensuring a smooth experience for both guests and organizers.

**Looking ahead, the future of nonprofit auctions is bright. As technology continues to advance, nonprofits have an exciting opportunity to further elevate engagement and expand their reach, especially among younger, tech-savvy generations.** By embracing digital tools and prioritizing attendee satisfaction, nonprofits can unlock the potential of their auction events, drive continued success, and cultivate a community of loyal, recurring donors. The insights shared in this report provide actionable recommendations that can empower organizations to refine their strategies, overcome challenges, and thrive in the ever-evolving landscape of nonprofit auctions.

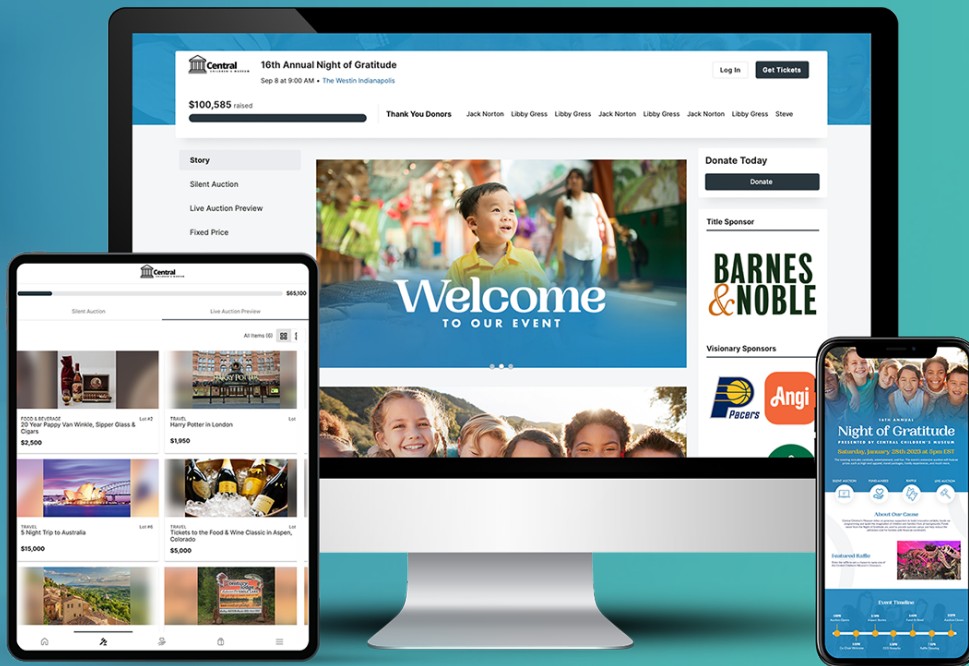
## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The online surveys of 1,036 social donors aged 18 or older, and of 149 of nonprofit professionals were conducted by Edge Research between June 26 and July 19, 2024. Social donors are defined as anyone who self-reports giving to at least one charitable organization by attending a fundraising event or auction; participating or sponsoring someone in a fundraising activity like a run, walk, or ride; or donating or requesting donations for an occasion, challenge, or giving month or day within the last 12 months. Data is self-reported, not transactional. Edge Research worked with an established industry sampling partner, consisting of opt-in research participants. This is a non-probability/convenience sample. Quotas were set to ensure incoming data (prior to screening for charitable donations) was census representative in terms of age, gender, region, and race/ethnicity. Data from nonprofit auctions was obtained from the OneCause Fundraising Platform.

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