

# Impact of Volunteering on a Community

## How do communities benefit from Volunteers?

By Kathleen M. Dormody, K.D. Content & Copy, LLC  
UR Community Cares, Marketing Chair Executive Committee Member

### The Importance of Volunteering in Local Communities

In addition to offering vital help to people in need, worthwhile causes, and the community, volunteering is a terrific way to meet people and become involved in fulfilling activities which provides the benefit of a healthy mind and body. It also strengthens one's ties to their community, broadening their support network which could advance careers, and exposing them to neighborhood resources. Overall, volunteering strengthens communities.

The major benefits of a healthy mind and body one gets from volunteering include:

1. Counteracting the effects of stress and anxiety
2. Combatting depression
3. Increasing self-confidence
4. Provides a sense of purpose
5. Lowers mortality rates reduces heart disease risk, and alleviates chronic pain

The many ways volunteering advances one's career is by teaching valuable transferrable skills and providing relevant work experience. Benefits to students also include:

1. Supporting academic success
2. Teaching empathy
3. Reinforcing social capital
4. Encourages civic responsibility

Communities benefit from the work of volunteers. Gaps in critical services in local needs are bridged by the resources saved when organizations utilize volunteers.

Nonprofit organizations benefit financially because volunteers save them thousands of dollars yearly. The U.S. has over 1.4 million volunteer organizations and 126, 676 private foundations ([https://2760282.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/2760282/Galaxy\\_Digital\\_February\\_2022/pdf/nonprofit-impact-matters-sept-2019-1.pdf](https://2760282.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/2760282/Galaxy_Digital_February_2022/pdf/nonprofit-impact-matters-sept-2019-1.pdf)). As of 2013, a mere ten years ago, "the National Council of Nonprofits found only 88% of nonprofits have an operating budget of \$500,00 or over" (<https://www.galaxydigital.com/blog/why-is-volunteering-important/>).

### How does inflation effect small businesses?

"As a result of inflation, 89% of small-business owners have had to increase the price of their products or services since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost half of businesses (45%) have raised their prices by more than 20%, while 44% report raising prices no more than 15%" (<https://www.business.org/finance/accounting/effects-of-inflation-on-small-businesses/>).

This year, 2022, has experienced the largest rate of inflation since the 1980s. Over the past ten year alone inflation has risen from a rate of 1.5% to 4.7%, and small business such as nonprofit organizations have had to increase their costs to consumers 20+% to counteract the rise in cost of their supplies. Approximately 50% of those businesses are forced to reduce inventory and staff.

The further effects of inflation on small business and nonprofits include:

1. Higher costs
2. Rising prices
3. Cutting overhead expenses
4. Tightening profit margins

*The Impact Of Inflation On Small Businesses And How To Manage It* published in Forbes Magazine by Joe Camberato, Forbes Councils Member, suggests “staying small and cutting expenses wherever possible” (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesfinancecouncil/2022/05/25/the-impact-of-inflation-on-small-businesses-and-how-to-manage-it/>). However, that is difficult for many. He further suggests:

1. Staying lean by focusing keeping expenses low via on cutting non-essentials and reducing production costs
2. Focus on growth via increasing marketing and revising pricing strategies as a way to generate revenue

## **How does inflation effect nonprofit organizations?**

Nonprofit organizations are especially affected by inflation as donations are less because of the increased cost of goods and services. The costs of holding fundraising events may increase, resulting in higher ticket costs and lower attendance.

The financial success of an economy determines whether nonprofit organizations are successful as they will often not receiving donations if individuals feel they are not having a positive effect on society. According to Pew Research Center, “70% of Americans find inflation a major problem in the U.S.” (<https://www.nonprofitpro.com/post/the-effect-of-inflation-on-charitable-giving/>), causing them to be protective of the monies they spend.

The three major ways nonprofit organizations are affected by inflation include:

1. Rise in costs due to less staff when wages have to be cut
2. Income due to less charitable donation
3. Changes in demand due to adjusting their income projections and service models
4. Eroding budgets leading to less effective providing of services
5. Increased demand for services and less local support
6. Limited-service offerings due to financial constraints

## **How can volunteers support their local communities?**

With over 1.4 million charitable organizations and just as many causes, there are a multitude of ways volunteers can support their local communities. One can even find volunteer projects and

organizations matching their interests with volunteer funnels including Catchafire, VolunteerMatch, and Taproot Foundation.

The best, however, to volunteer is to give back to local foundations through schools, businesses, and community members. One can host events or fundraise.

Some of the best ways to volunteer include:

1. Maintain the environment
2. Package and share meals
3. Gifting Christmas presents
4. Donating unwanted items such as clothing, household goods or furniture, and books

Community services ideas to volunteer for include:

1. Serving the aging population
2. Serving individuals with disabilities
3. Mentoring
4. Helping the sick
5. Coaching
6. Organizing fundraisers

## **RESOURCES**

- A. <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/volunteering-and-its-surprising-benefits.htm>
- B. <https://www.galaxydigital.com/blog/why-is-volunteering-important>
- C. [https://2760282.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/2760282/Galaxy\\_Digital\\_February\\_2022/pdf/nonprofit-impact-matters-sept-2019-1.pdf](https://2760282.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/2760282/Galaxy_Digital_February_2022/pdf/nonprofit-impact-matters-sept-2019-1.pdf)
- D. <https://www.business.org/finance/accounting/effects-of-inflation-on-small-businesses/>
- E. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesfinancecouncil/2022/05/25/the-impact-of-inflation-on-small-businesses-and-how-to-manage-it/>
- F. <https://www.nonprofitpro.com/post/the-effect-of-inflation-on-charitable-giving/>
- G. <https://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/40-year-high-in-inflation-eats-away-at-charitable-effectiveness/>
- H. <https://www.classy.org/blog/what-is-inflation-doing-to-fundraising/>
- I. <https://students.1fbusa.com/pay-it-forward/25-ways-to-volunteer-in-your-community#:~:text=Give%20Back%20to%20Local%20Foundations&text=Local%20foundations%20often%20seek%20volunteers,foundations%20that%20aid%20your%20community.>
- J. <https://www.waldenu.edu/programs/resource/10-creative-ways-to-volunteer>
- K. <https://www.wcsu.edu/community-engagement/tips-for-volunteer/>