

**Thought Leadership**

# Generation Z and Perspectives on Volunteering

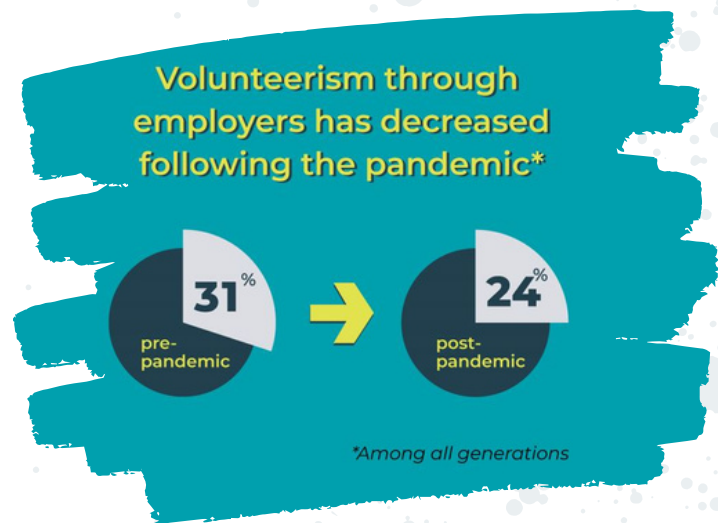


Junior Achievement™

## The New Volunteering Landscape

Much has changed since the pandemic, including the ways we work, but also the ways that we volunteer. While the emergence of Work From Home (WFH) and hybrid work models have impacted corporate volunteerism, a new generation of employees, many of whom had never previously volunteered in the workplace, has entered the workforce. To gain a better understanding of how Generation Z perceives volunteering in and out of a place of employment, Junior Achievement (JA) enlisted the help of research firm Ipsos to conduct a multi-generational survey on volunteering. These are the results of an Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Junior Achievement between June 8-12 2023. For this survey, a sample of 2,294 adults aged 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. The sample includes an oversample of n=285 adults ages 18-27. The sample has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for all respondents.

First and foremost, participation in corporate volunteerism declined from 31 percent before the pandemic to 24 percent now. Not surprisingly, the top reason cited by 39 percent of respondents was the change in their working situation (hybrid, remote). Other factors include not believing they should have to volunteer for an employer program (18%), no interest in the opportunities offered (15%), and not being asked (13%).



Despite these findings, Generation Z is just as inclined to volunteer as other generations. For instance, 66 percent of Gen Z respondents say they have volunteered, compared to 66 percent of Baby Boomers, 57 percent of Millennials, and 54 percent of Generation X.

While other generations tend to volunteer for social services, like food pantries and women's shelters, Gen Z is more inclined to volunteer for causes related to the environment. Gen Z is also more likely to volunteer for causes linked to education, such as mentoring, coaching, in-classroom volunteering, book drive, career day, etc, than are other generations.

## Motivating Factors for Gen Z Volunteerism

In terms of factors that motivate Gen Z to volunteer, many are not significantly different from those that motivate other generations. For instance, the number one reason, "It feels good to help out in the community," is the same for all generations surveyed (GenZ -66%, Millennials-68%, GenX-72%, Baby Boomers-67%). There are similar rankings for "Gives me a sense of purpose," and "reflects my values," though a much higher percentage of Gen Z (42%) responded that "It helps build on my experience/strengthens my resume." In terms of additional factors that could contribute to their interest in volunteering for a specific cause, 38 percent of Gen Z respondents said, "Something I can do with family and friends," which was not as highly rated by other generations.



As for volunteering for an employer-sponsored program, a plurality of Gen Z (37%) said the cause would need to align with their values, followed by convenience to get to (35%), ease of doing (25%), and the need to occur during the workday and not on evenings or weekends (24%).

## Corporate Volunteering and Favorable Workplaces

While this research shows that participation in employer volunteer programs has declined following the pandemic, Gen Z remains highly engaged in volunteering in general, and especially outside of the workplace. Gen Z has a favorable view of companies that offer volunteering opportunities to their employees. For instance, 87 percent of Gen Z believe companies that offer employee volunteer opportunities strengthen the community, 79 percent believe such companies would be good to work for, and 72 percent would want to work for companies that offer employees opportunities to volunteer.

## Our Response

A big consideration for Gen Z when it comes to volunteering is whether or not the cause aligns with their values. This, along with their general interest in volunteering for education-related initiatives, would indicate becoming a Junior Achievement volunteer might be of interest to Gen Z.

As part of the survey, Ipsos asked participants the following question:

*"How interested would you be in volunteering for a cause that lets you teach essential life skills like managing money, how education ties to work and career, or how to start a business to elementary, middle, or high school students if you were properly prepared and it was a limited time commitment?"*



In response, 72 percent of Gen Z participants said they would be "interested" in volunteering for an initiative that matches the description of Junior Achievement.

JA offers a wide array of volunteer opportunities that align with Gen Z's values, allowing them to volunteer with family and friends, providing proper preparation, factoring in their schedules and locations, and adapting to today's more flexible work environment. These turn-key experiences work well with existing employee volunteer programs. Additionally, JA has developed a volunteer engagement toolkit for company coordinators to help them more easily communicate JA opportunities to all company associates.

To learn more about what Junior Achievement has to offer in your community, visit [JA.org/Locations](http://JA.org/Locations).