

National Center for
Family Philanthropy's

Trends 2025

**RESULTS OF THE THIRD
NATIONAL BENCHMARK SURVEY
OF FAMILY FOUNDATIONS**



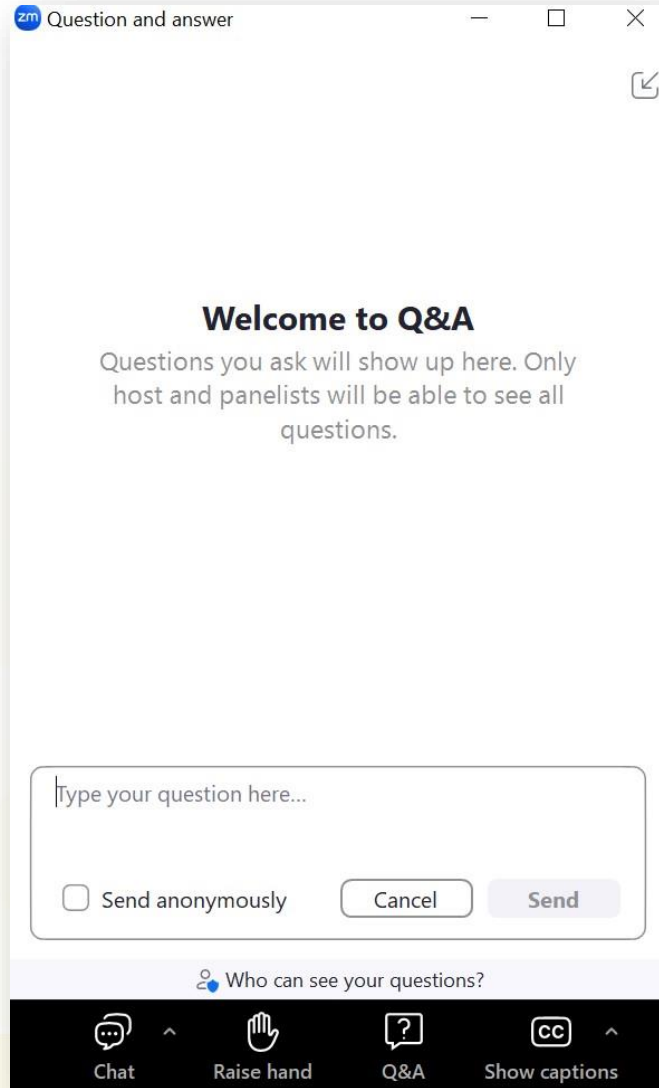
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Zoom Webinar Logistics



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Today's Session

- 1** Explain the context and purpose of the Trends 2025 survey
- 2** Present notable findings and their implications for the field
- 3** Answer questions about the data and high-level trends
- 4** Encourage you to consider how to use these findings in your own organization



Our Speakers



Miki Akimoto

Chief Impact Officer,
National Center for Family
Philanthropy



Erin Hogan

Private Philanthropy Executive,
Bank of America Private Bank



Nicholas Tedesco

CEO,
National Center for Family
Philanthropy

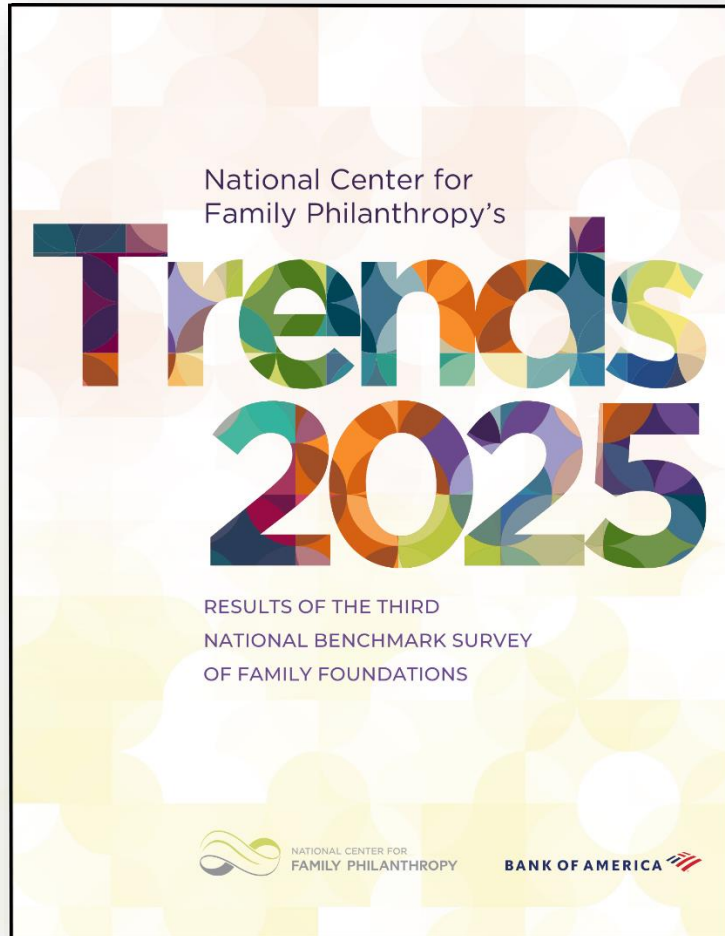


Why this report?

- We are interested in the ways field has—or has not—embraced and applied the four principles of effective family philanthropy we identified through our previous research.
- To provide a snapshot of the field and go beyond anecdotal evidence. To help families understand where they are positioned in relation to the broader landscape.



Topline Finding



The field has made positive, if incremental, progress toward embracing effective practices.

However, the pace of change is too slow to achieve transformational impact.



Principles of Effective Family Philanthropy

Accountability

Reflection/
Learning

Equity

Relationships

Effective family philanthropy makes a collective commitment to meaningful societal change.

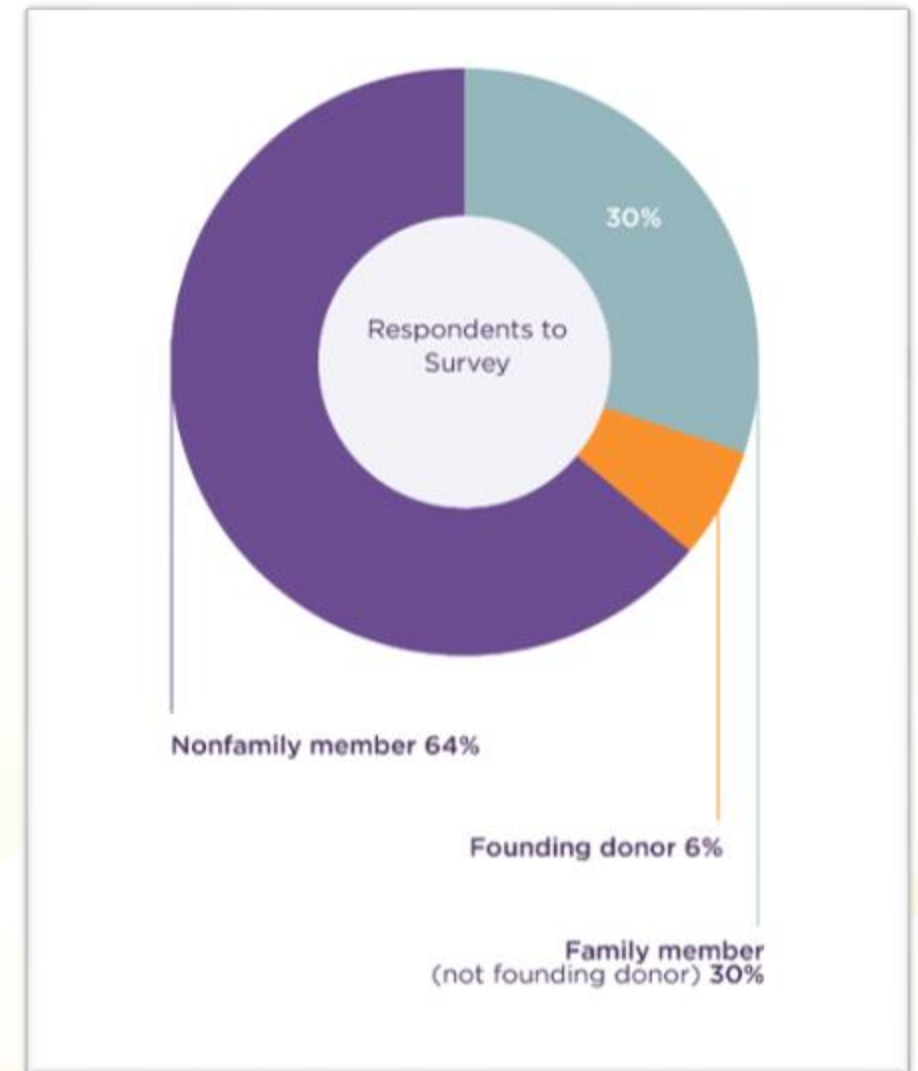
It holds itself accountable to impact as defined by community, and to the proven practices that support it.

It is adaptive, evolving with the family and the broader community or ecosystem.

It shares or cedes power with different family members and generations as well as staff members, communities, and grantees.

Our survey respondents.

- Sample=524 respondents where the family foundation is its primary giving vehicle.
- The majority of survey respondents were nonfamily members (64%).
- 53% had assets less than \$10M.





Notable Findings

Legacy remains the primary motivator for philanthropic families.

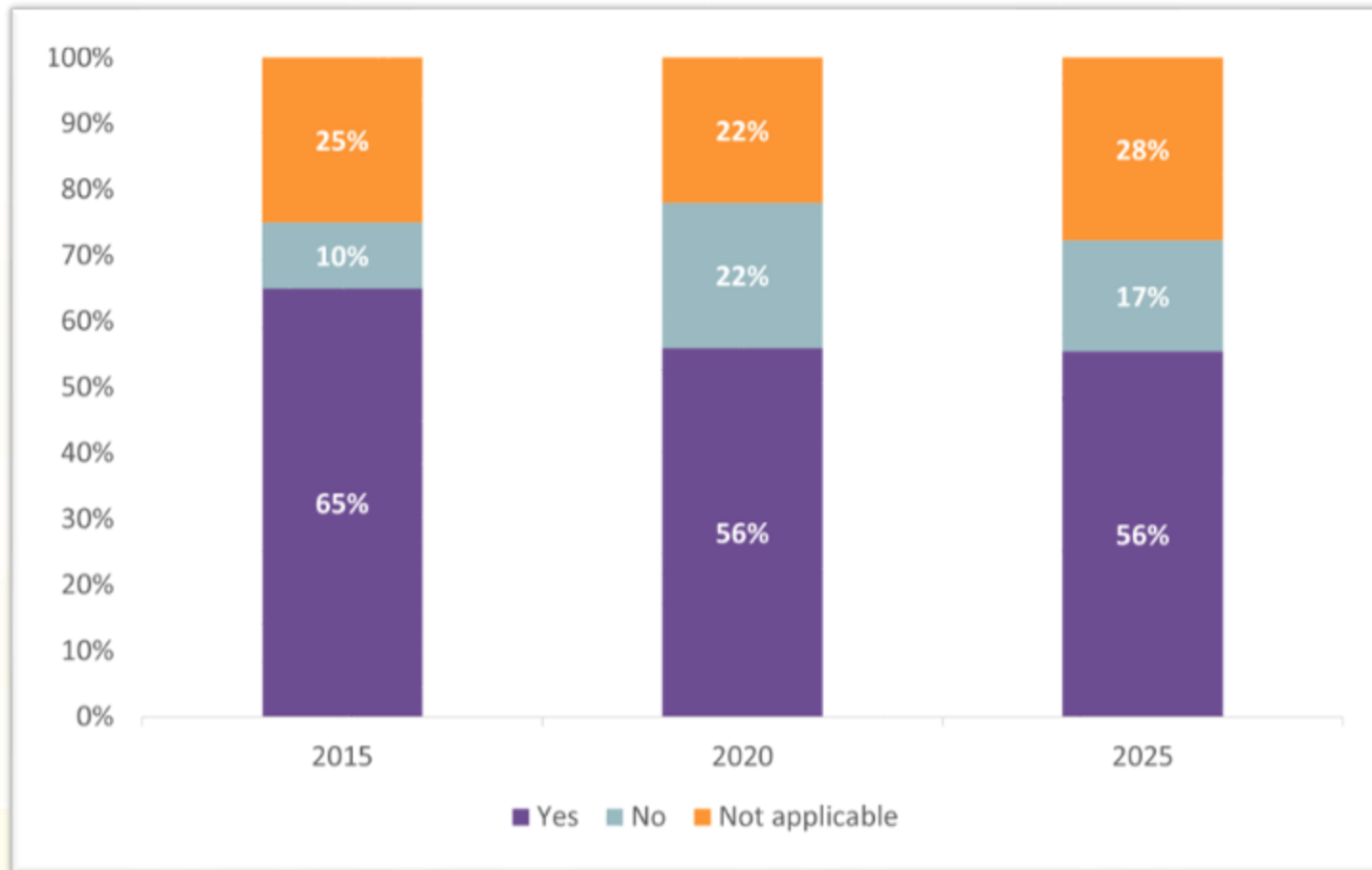
Reason the founder and/or the family chose a foundation as a primary vehicle
Participants selected all that applied

| | 2025 |
|--|------|
| To create a vehicle for long-term family philanthropy legacy | 55% |
| Advised by a lawyer/estate planner | 39% |
| To create a vehicle to engage next generation in philanthropy | 32% |
| To provide structure for the operations and governance of our giving | 20% |



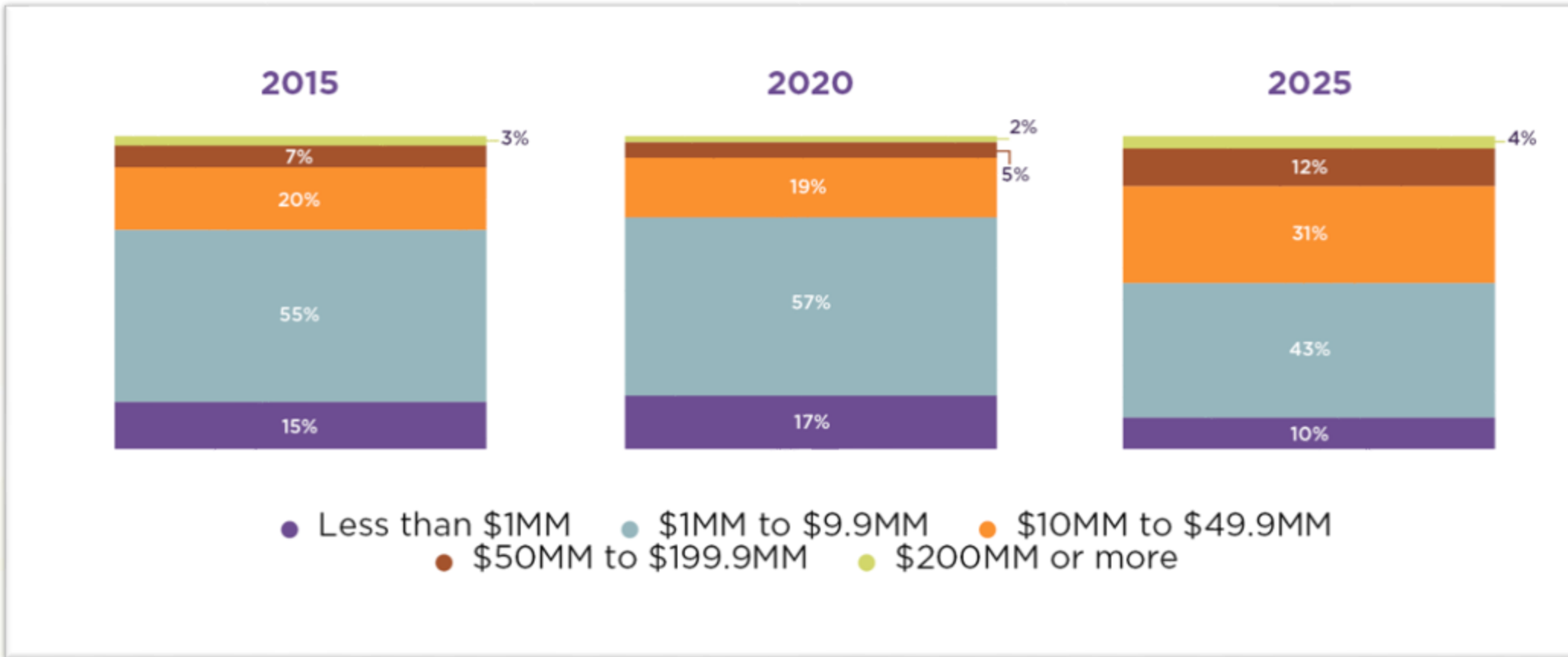
Founding donors are active and influential.

Is one or more of the philanthropy's founding donor(s) still actively involved in the philanthropy?



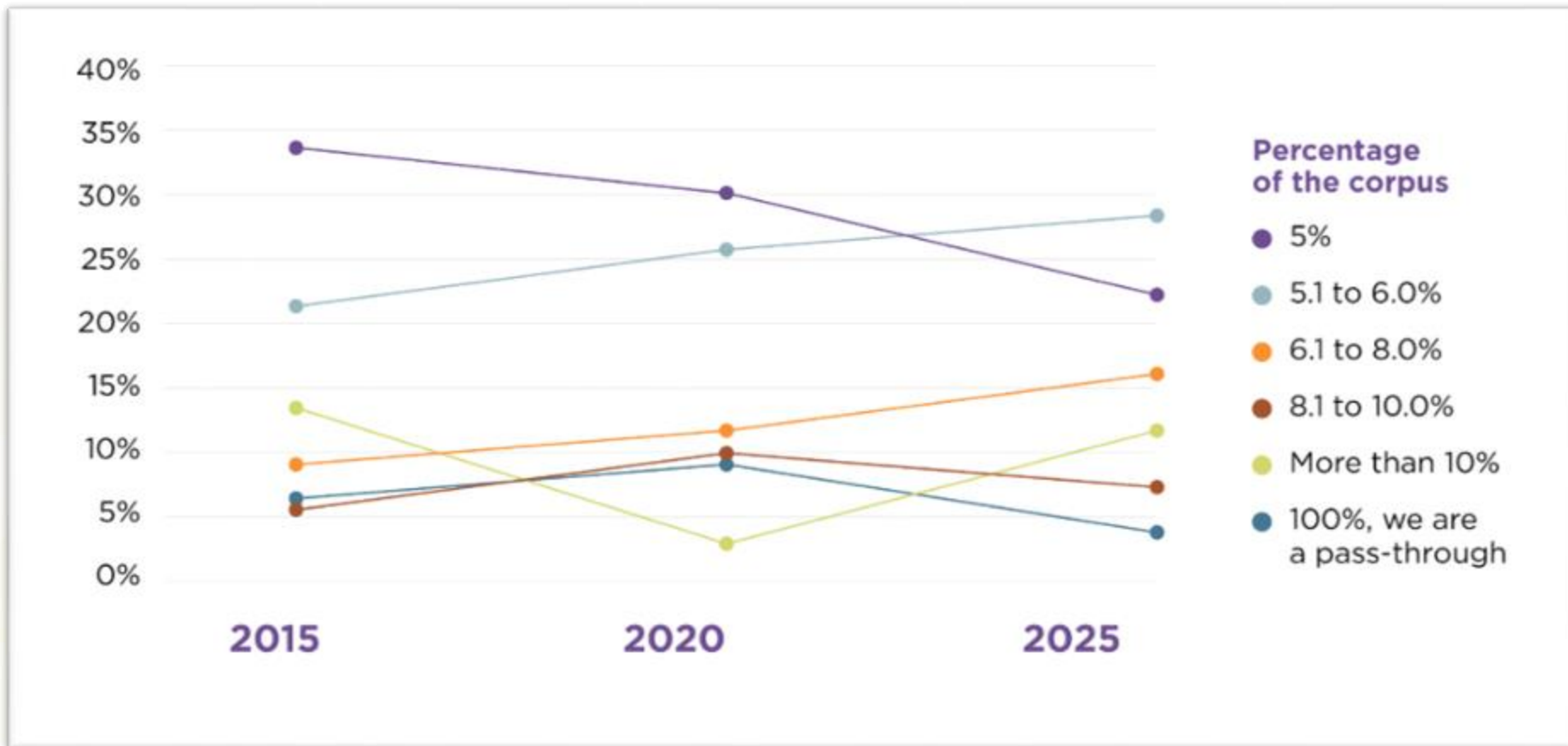
Asset sizes have increased.

Foundation's approximate total assets



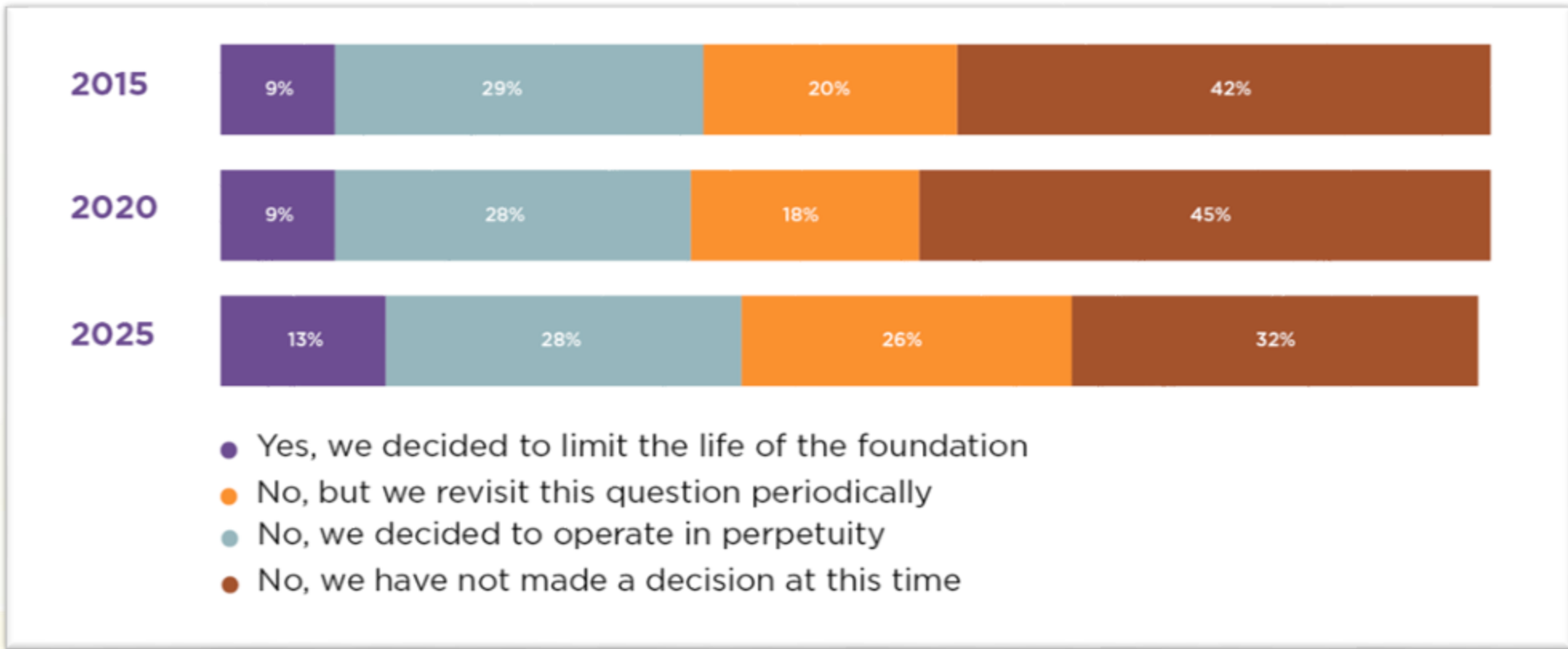
Payouts are increasing.

Approximate payout rate in past two years



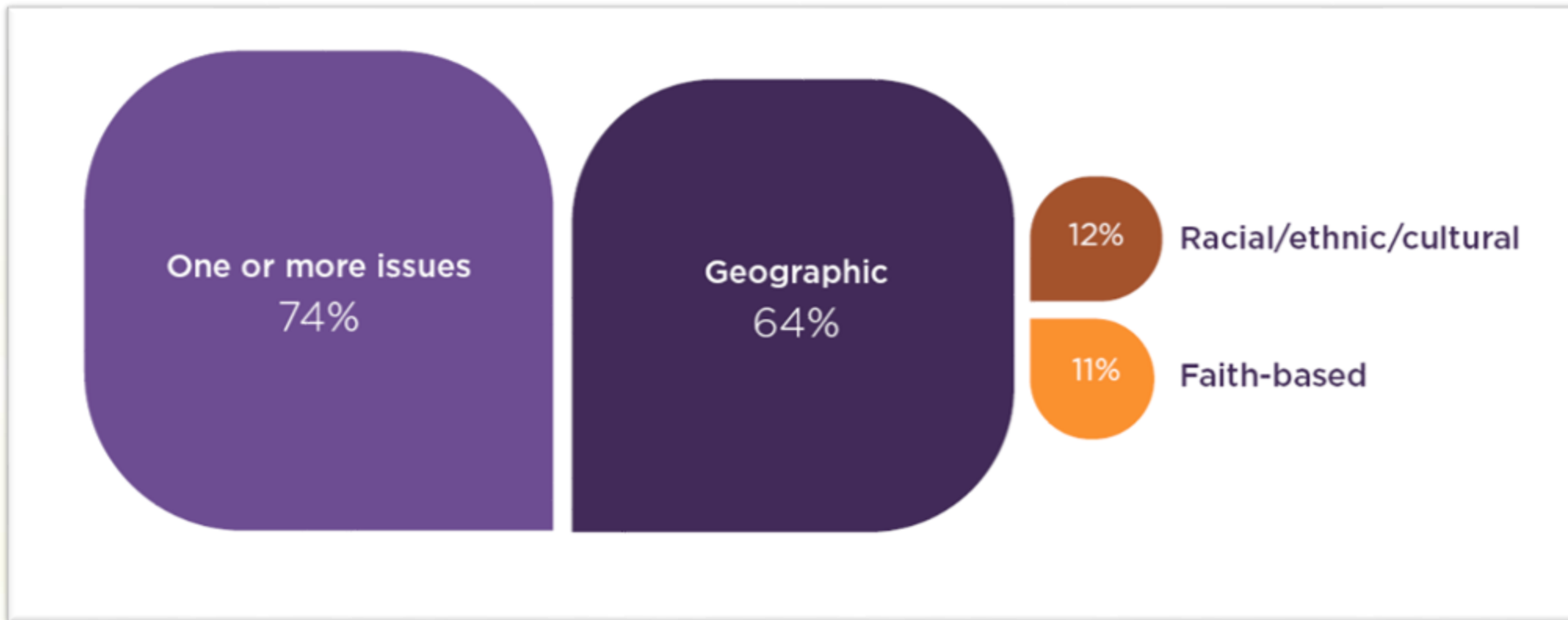
Foundations are more intentional about their lifespan.

Decision to limit the life of the foundation



More foundations have become issue focused.

Foundation areas of focus in 2025
Foundations selected all that applied



Many foundations have taken initial steps to become more grantee focused.

Principle-based grantmaking practices adopted and sustained since 2020

Foundations selected all that applied



Are you considering any of these practices in the future? (yes)

73%



Philanthropy is being more proactive.

Factors that influence foundation's general giving approach

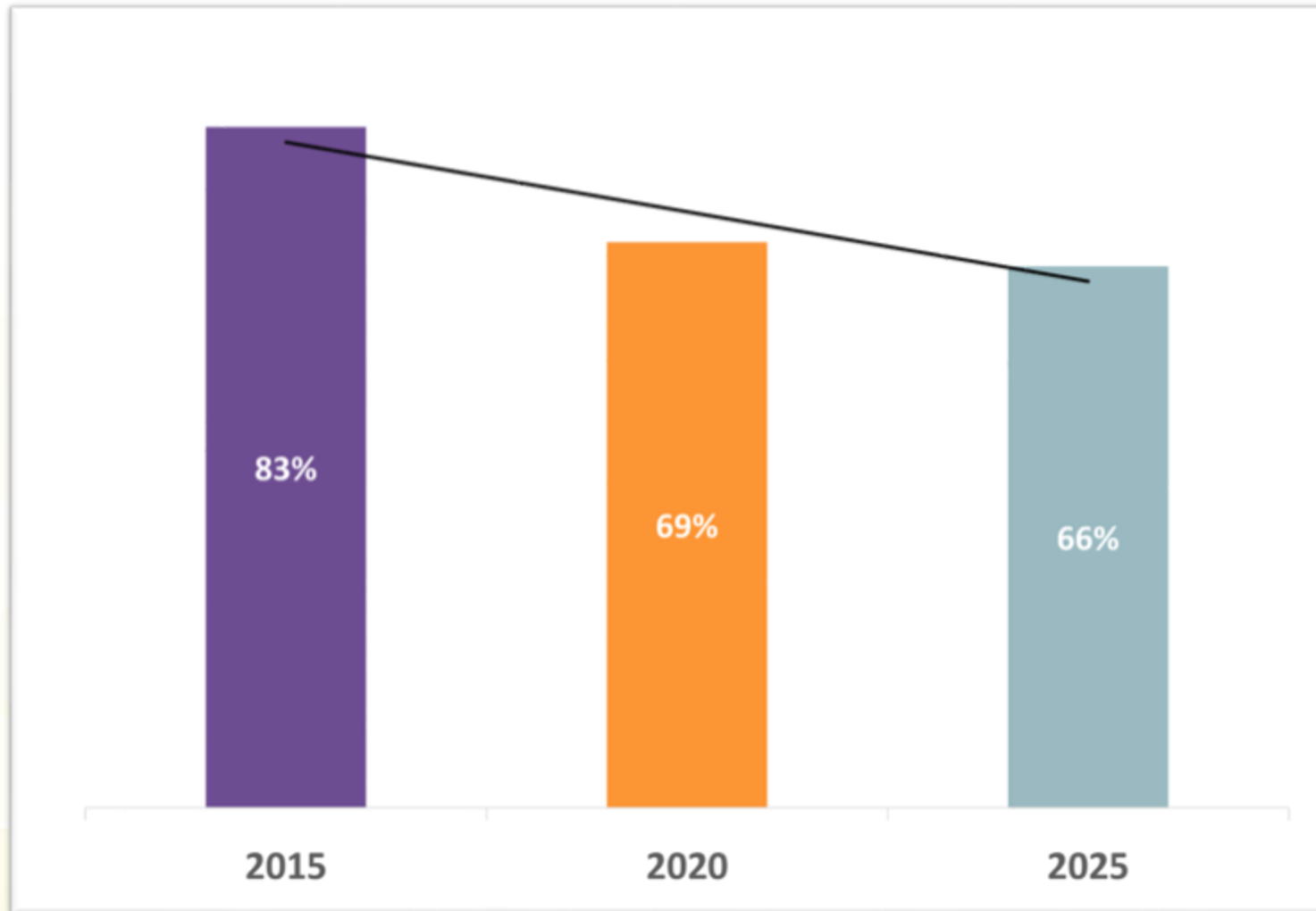
Only includes data on those who responded that the factor influences their giving approach "a lot"

| | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Historic funding patterns | 51% | 52% | 42% |
| Founding donors' values and wishes | 76% | 67% | 58% |
| Family's values and wishes | 63% | 61% | 57% |
| Interests of individual board members | 49% | 36% | 39% |
| Philanthropy's mission/program areas | 57% | 59% | 72% |
| Needs of grantseekers | 23% | 26% | 43% |
| Response to community needs/trends | 25% | 37% | 42% |



General operating grants are down.

Respondents who provide general operating support grants



Grantmaking remains the dominant tool.

Foundations that engage in any type of impact investing



Old and new ways of assessing impact:

How foundations are assessing the impact of their work

Participants selected all that applied

| | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Assess individual grant outcomes | 60% | 38% | 38% |
| Solicit direct feedback from our grantees and/or the communities we serve | | 27% | 38% |
| Strive to assess our impact on issues or program areas | 40% | 47% | 27% |
| Assess the role and performance of the staff | | 26% | 22% |
| Strive to assess the total impact of the foundation's giving | 33% | 39% | 20% |
| Analyze the racial/ethnic or other demographics of our grantee organizations | | 13% | 12% |
| Assess the role and performance of the board | | 21% | 8% |
| Assess diversity, equity, inclusion outcomes | | 16% | 5% |
| We do not do this currently but are exploring how to assess our impact | 41% | 10% | 14% |
| We do not assess the impact of our giving | | 18% | 16% |





Reflection & Insights

Learning is prevalent among foundations.



Almost all foundations (90%) report having at least one practice designed to help them learn about new ideas and approaches.

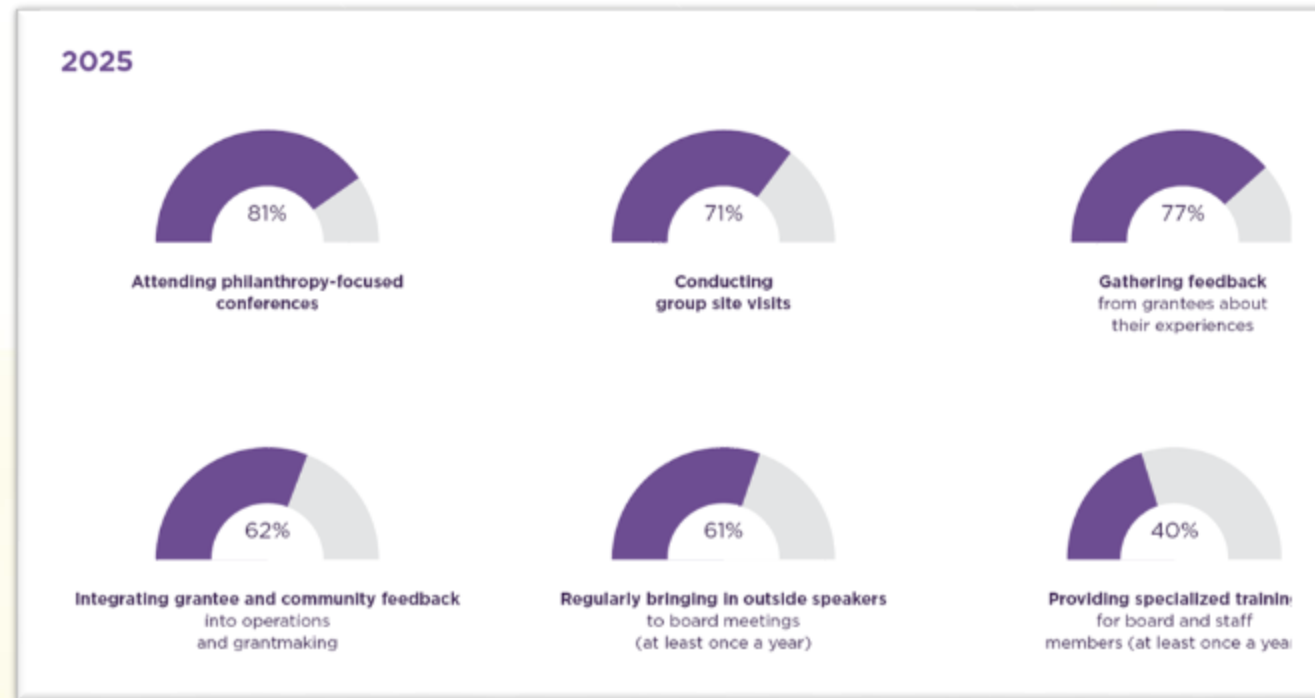


Many foundations are actively Learning

Has the philanthropy taken any steps to expand from grantmaking to becoming an active learning institution?

| | 2020 | 2025 |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|
| Yes | 19% | 33% |
| No, but we are exploring this | 33% | 23% |
| No, and have no plans to explore this | 48% | 44% |

Activities foundation engages in to become an active learning institution (if responded 'yes').



Boards are spending more time learning.

Areas in which the board spends the most of its time and attention

Participants selected their top three

| | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Planning and strategy development | 21% | 42% | 36% |
| Learning about grantmaking and focus areas/issues | 10% | 24% | 34% |
| Evaluation and reflection on the foundation's work | 31% | 38% | 33% |
| Investment management | 45% | 48% | 28% |
| Next-generation engagement | 22% | 17% | 26% |
| Site visits/community tours | 16% | 31% | 26% |
| Governance of the foundation | 17% | 30% | 25% |



Youth engagement remains a stated priority but follow through is uneven.

Ways the foundation encourages younger generations of family members to participate (*Foundations selected all that applied*)

| | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Support a junior board for younger family members | 11% | 9% | 11% |
| Provide discretionary or matching funds for grantmaking by younger generation | 50% | 26% | 31% |
| Have younger-generation members serve as interns at the foundation | 11% | 11% | |
| Take younger generation members on site visits | 56% | 36% | 28% |
| Organize formal discussions about the core values of the family foundation with younger generation members | 62% | 26% | 21% |
| Invite younger generation members to participate in discussions and decisions about board grants | | 40% | 40% |
| Invite younger generation members to participate in decision-making or governance | | 40% | 43% |
| We encourage individual giving back to society as an explicit family value | | 51% | 40% |



Most families are not reporting divisions among generations. Those that do point to shifts in generational dynamics.

Generational dynamics that affect the family philanthropy

Participants selected all that applied

| | 2020 | 2025 |
|--|------|------|
| Older and younger generations are interested in different issues | 28% | 21% |
| Older and younger generations have different values | 13% | 10% |
| Younger generation does not have time to be actively involved | 33% | 35% |
| Younger generation has moved away from the primary geographic location of the foundation's funding | 15% | 24% |
| Conflicting political/social/religious views between generations | 8% | 16% |
| Conflicting views about wealth between generations | 6% | 12% |
| Older generation is reluctant to share decision-making power with younger generation | 12% | 10% |



Complex dynamics are a barrier to participation in more families.

Factors that impede family members' participation in the foundation over time

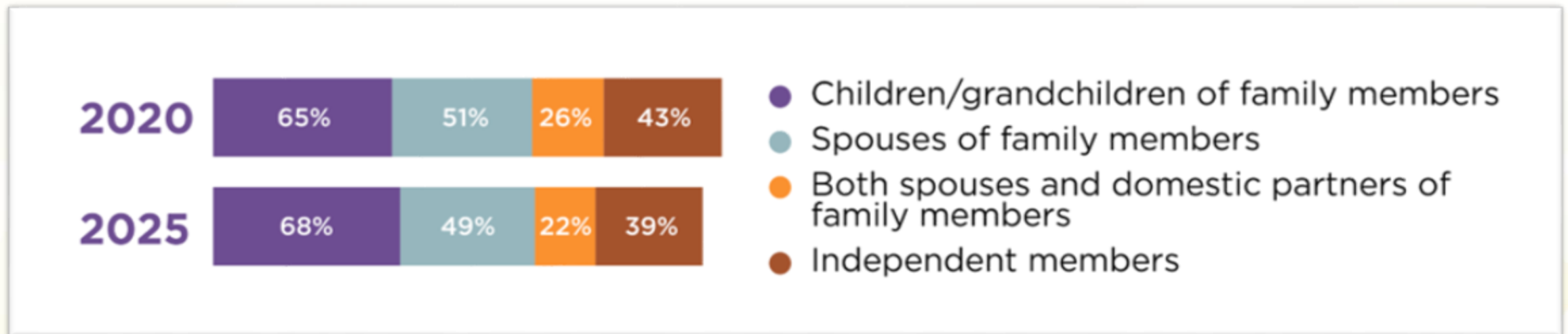
Only includes data on those who responded that the factor impedes family members' participation in the foundation "a lot"

| | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 |
|---|------|------|------|
| Geographic dispersion of family members | 13% | 14% | 17% |
| Disinterest in focus areas among family members | 3% | 8% | 8% |
| Phase of life/other commitments of family members | 17% | 16% | 28% |
| Lack of results | 1% | 3% | 1% |
| Lack of staffing | 1% | 7% | 1% |
| Unclear/inadequate governance structure/policies | 1% | 5% | 2% |
| Lack of planning for the future | 3% | 4% | 1% |
| Dysfunctional family dynamics | | 7% | 14% |
| Disagreement about the primary goal/focus of the philanthropy | | 5% | 3% |



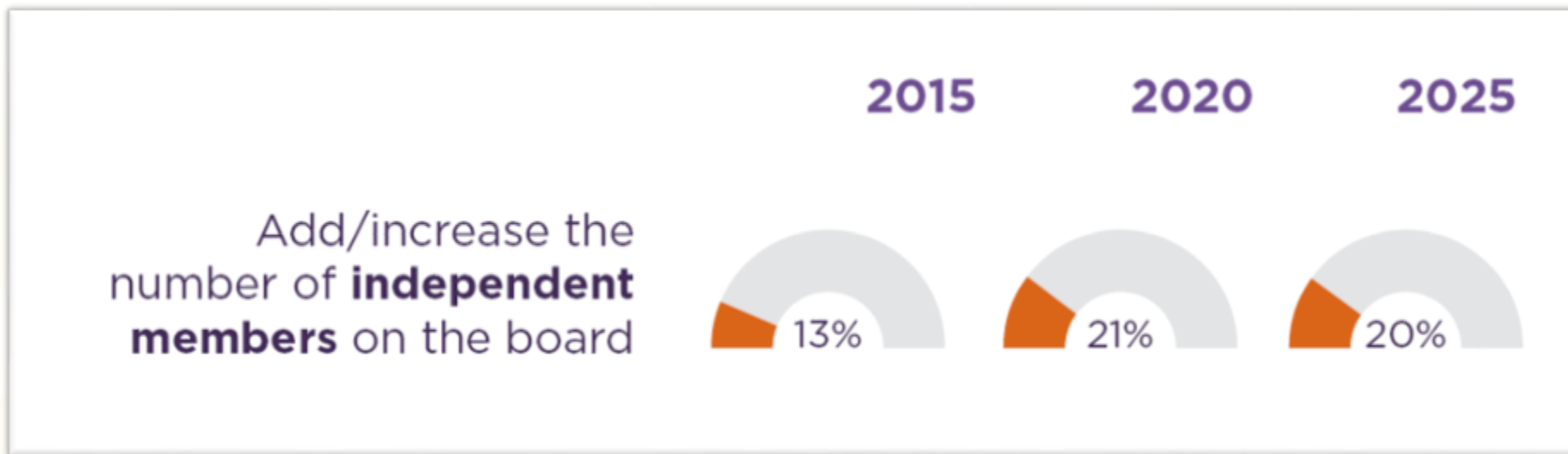
Who is eligible to serve as a board member has remained largely consistent throughout the decade.

Persons eligible to serve as a board member



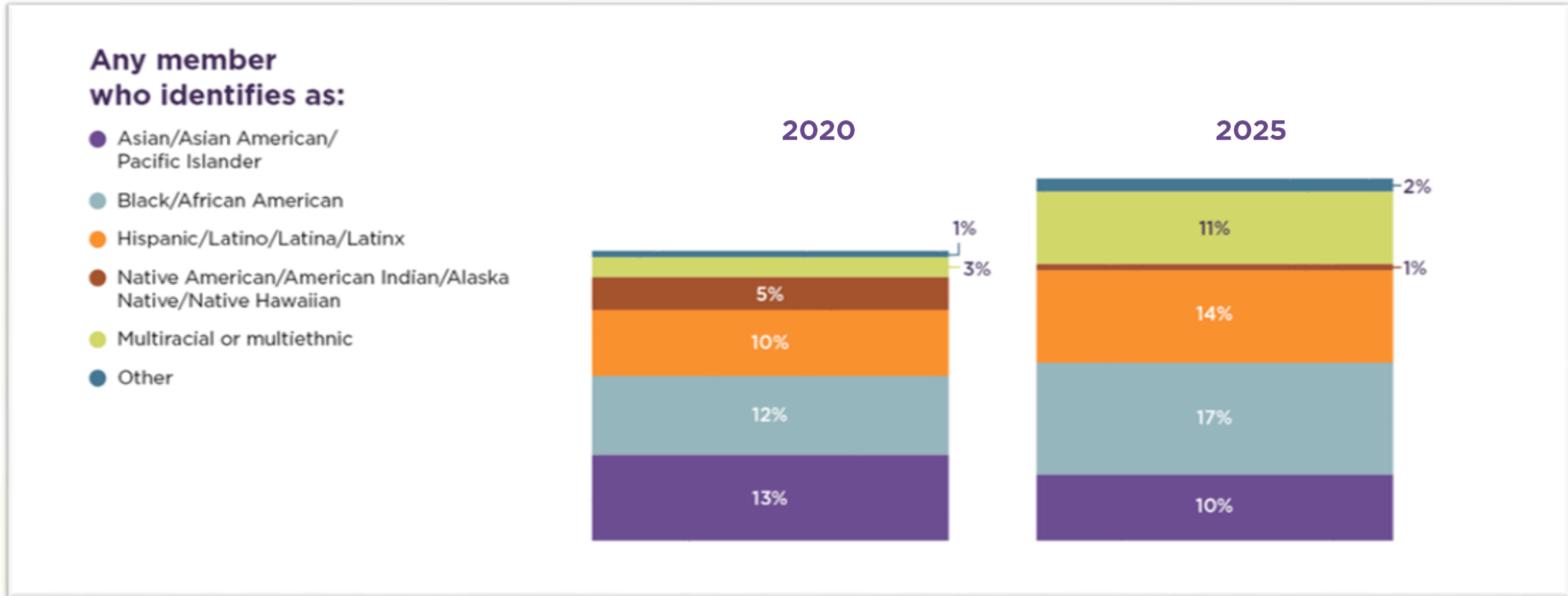
Some foundations expect to add more independent board members in the future.

Changes regarding the board and staff that the foundation is anticipating or considering in the next four years



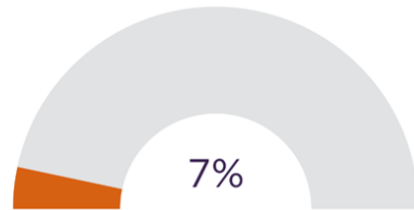
Increased board diversity

Composition of board: Race

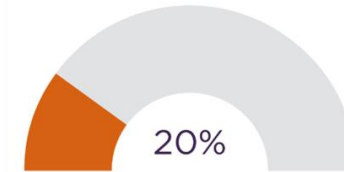


What foundations say they anticipate doing in the next four years.

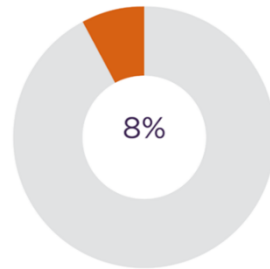
Hire staff
for the first time



Add/increase the
number of
independent members
on the board



Add/increase the **racial/ethnic**
diversity of the board



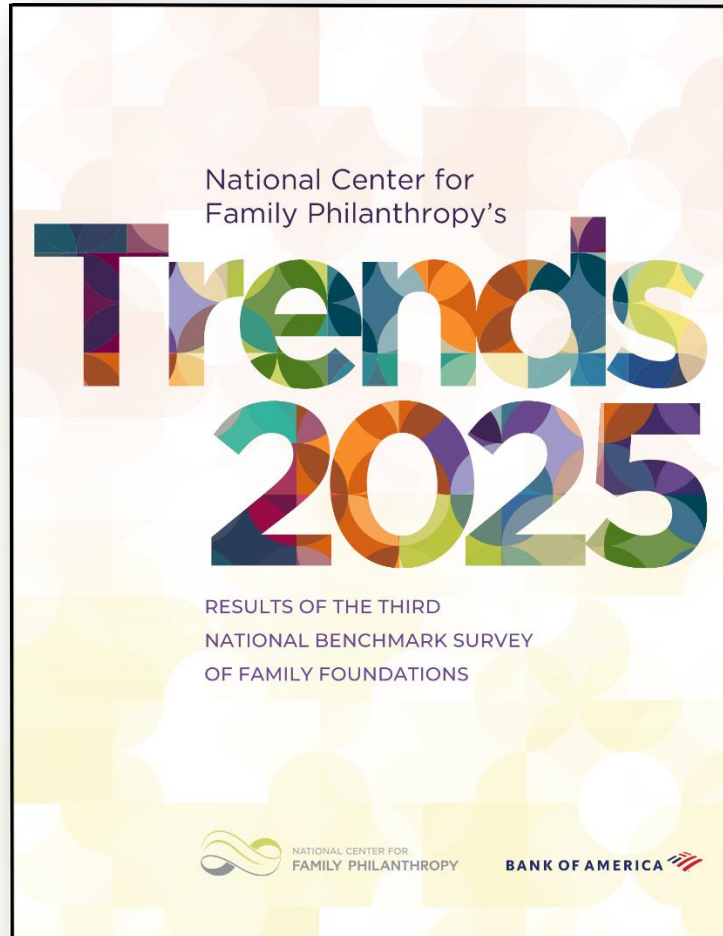
Expand the existing
number of **staff members**





Reflection & Insights

Read the full report



ncfp.org/Trends2025





Questions?



**How might you shape the
story of Trends 2030?**

Fundamentals of Family Philanthropy



Laying the Foundation Part One: Defining Family and Its Role

February 11th | 2-3pm ET



Laying the Foundation Part Two: Governance Structures and Considerations

March 11th | 2-3pm ET



Laying the Foundation Part Three: Aligning your Vehicles with your Values

April 8th | 2-3pm ET





Thank you for joining!