Institute of Community Directors Australia
(ICDA) NFP Governance Survey 2019

ICDA Spotlight Report:
NFP Impact & Data

June 3, 2019

Key Findings

One in 10
of the not-for-profit organisations that responded to our survey **does not measure success in any way**, and up to one in four does not collect any sort of data.

Arts & Culture and **Sport & Recreation**
organisations are **less likely** than organisations from other sectors **to measure their success**.

Using a **strategic plan** as a yardstick for measuring success is **more common** among **large organisations** than small/medium ones.

Just over half
of the not-for-profit organisations we surveyed **collect outputs** and/or **membership/donor data**, and **38% collect outcomes data**.

Most respondents
consider their organisations **no better than average** when it comes to data collection, analysis and use.

Few respondents
see either **impact evaluation** or data collection/use as a **top training need**.

About The Survey

The Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA) surveyed 1878 senior leaders in the community sector in the six weeks leading to March 26, 2019.

Respondents came from all states and territories in Australia (with Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia dominating the sample), and were roughly evenly spread between the roles of senior management/CEO and board members.

Most respondents were involved in organisations in the community development; human services; education; health; arts and culture; and sports and recreation segments of the community sector.

The majority of respondents identified as women (71%), with 28% identifying as male and 0.48% non-binary.

This ICDA Spotlight Report presents a snapshot of results relating to impact evaluation and data collection/management. Further aspects of the survey will be released progressively over the next few months, with a final report incorporating all results to be released later in the year.

Detailed Results

Most not-for-profit organisations are measuring success in one way or another, though it's worth noting that a not insignificant figure of 13% of respondents say they do not measure success in any way.

Our survey results indicate that organisations working in the arts and culture and sport and recreation sectors are the least likely to be formally tracking their success.

Strategic plans are the most common benchmarks not-for-profit organisations use to track their progress towards success; these are used by 57% of respondents, with 44% saying they measure progress towards their mission/impact, and an identical number saying they use financial indicators to measure their progress.

Other common measures of success include bespoke targets/KPIs (set internally or by funders), membership/participant numbers, and client satisfaction metrics.

Q15 How does your board measure the organisation's success? (pick all that apply)
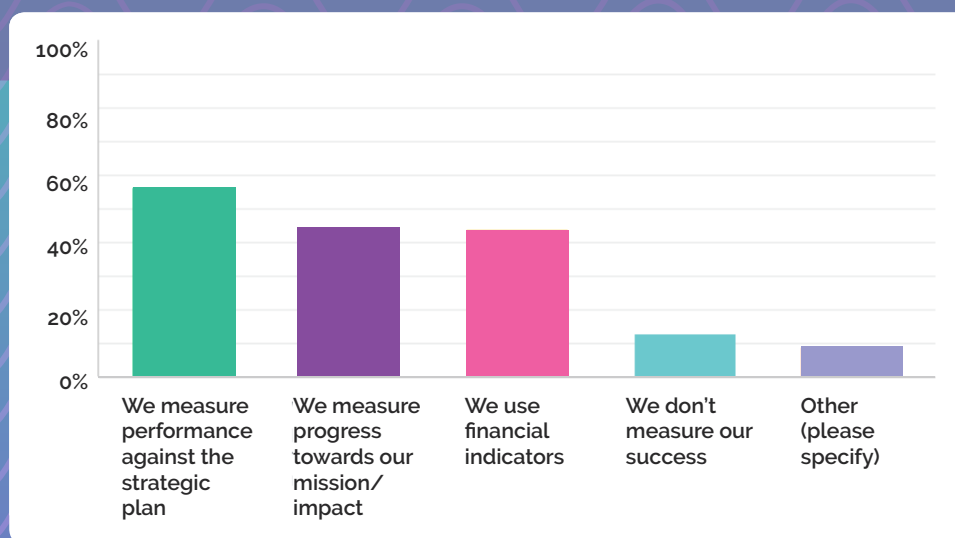
While there was little variation from sector to sector, we did detect some differences in the way organisations of different sizes measure their success. Our results indicate that measuring progress towards mission/impact is a universal practice but measuring performance against a strategic plan seems to be a practice linked to large organisations. When split by annual revenue, the percentage of organisations that track to a strategic plan are as follows:

• Between $10 million and $100 million: 83%
• Between $1 and 10 million: 79%
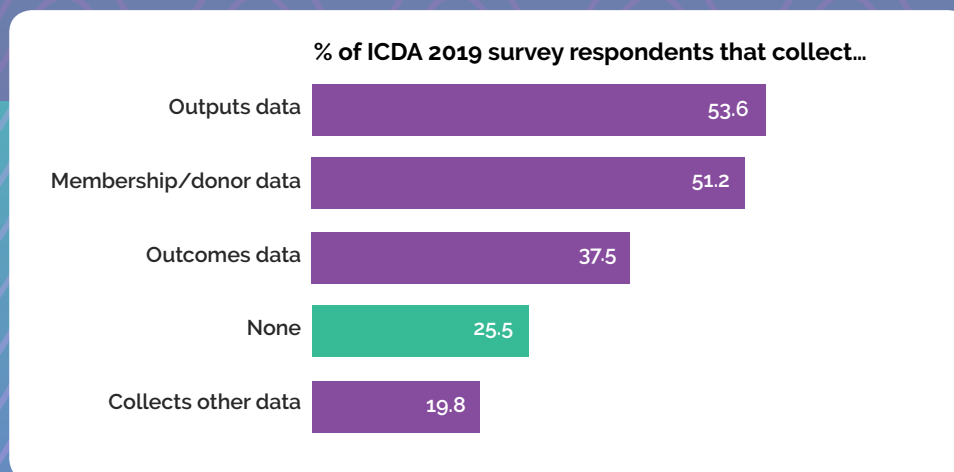• Less than $250,000: 40%

A similar trend was detected in relation to the practice of using financial indicators to measure success, with larger organisations more likely than smaller ones to use these as a benchmark.

A key element of tracking a path to success centres on data collection. However, up to 25.5% of survey respondents indicate that they do not collect any type of data for their organisations.

Still, the majority of organisations are collecting data:

• 54% collect outputs data
• 51% collect membership/donor data
• 38% collect outcomes data
• 20% collect other types of data – including feedback from clients/consultation data; financial data; benchmarking data; government-supplied data; and research data relating to specific projects.
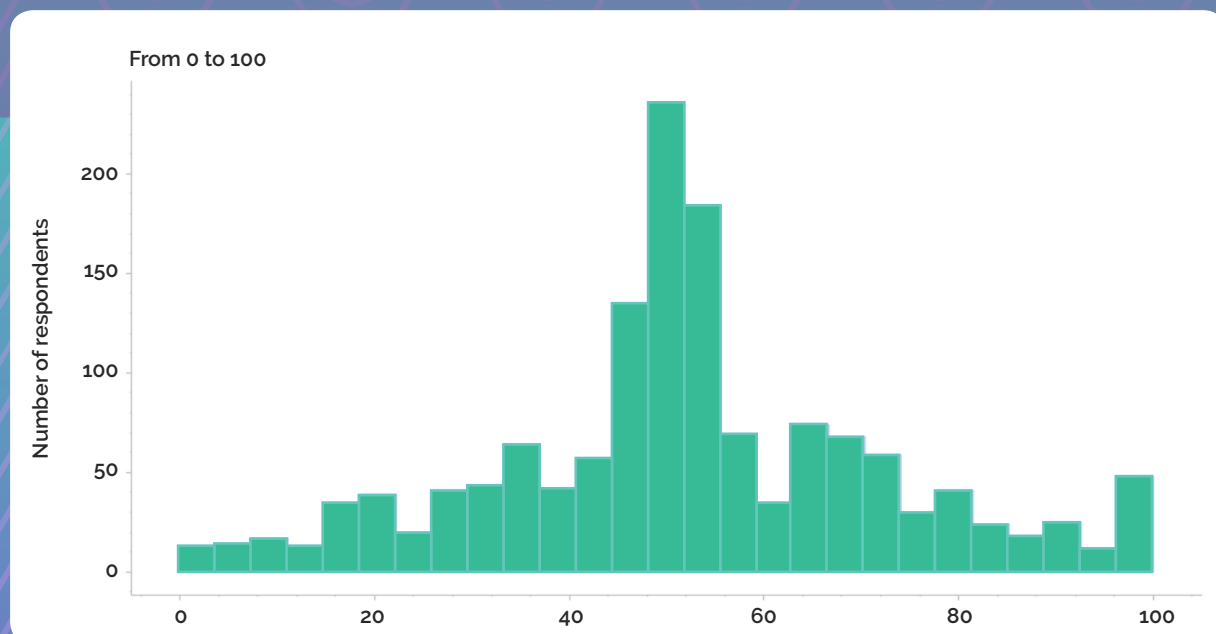
Data Collection

% of ICDA 2019 survey respondents that collect...

Outputs data	53.6
Membership/donor data	51.2
Outcomes data	37.5
None	25.5
Collects other data	19.8

These percentages did not differ markedly when split by organisation sector or size.

Most respondents (80%) consider their organisations no better than average when it comes to data competence. When asked to score their organisation's capacity to collect, analyse and use data to guide activities and pursue their mission, most (60%) entered a score of between 40 and 70 out of 100 (see graph below). Only 9% rated their organisation as excellent (giving a score of more than 80 out of 100), suggesting that community sector leaders believe that there is some room for improvement in this arena.

Rate your organisation's capacity to collect and use data

From 0 to 100

Despite the challenges, few survey respondents see either impact evaluation or data collection/use as a top training need. Only 14% of respondents chose data collection/use as one of their top three training needs, and just 26% selected impact evaluation among their top three. (More information about training needs will be released as part of a future Spotlight Report.)

Feedback/Recommendations/Next Steps

What do you make of these results? How should the sector, and those who work to resource and upskill the sector, respond?

Send your feedback to service@ourcommunity.com.au, tweet us at @OurCommunityAU using the hashtag **#PracticalImpact**, tag us on Facebook at @OurCommunity.com.au, and contribute to the conversation in our Facebook group, Not-for-profit Happy Hour Australia.

We'll incorporate feedback into our final report, which is due for release later in the year.

If you would like to be notified when further ICDA Spotlight Reports are released, join up as a member of the Institute of Community Directors Australia – visit www.icda.com.au to find out more.

About Institute of Community Directors Australia

The Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA) is Australia's best-practice governance network for not-for-profit boards, committees, councils, schools, and their staff.

An Our Community enterprise, ICDA delivers information, tools, training, events, qualifications and credentials to not-for-profits of all kinds. Activities include:

• Spearheading the Festival of Community Directors, a year-long program of events designed to celebrate and educate not-for-profit board members and the senior staff who support them

• Delivering Australia's premier nationally recognised qualification for not-for-profit leaders, the Diploma of Business (Governance) [in partnership with our partner Federation Training]

• Pioneering new governance training methods, including our landmark online compact courses

• Providing a suite of governance tools, including a range of practical helpsheets, templates and books, plus a free Board Matching Service and a free Policy Bank

• Face-to-face and online peer networking and support

• Regular newsletters to keep members informed and in touch

ICDA is led by the innovative members of the Our Community founding team, Denis Moriarty (Our Community Founder and Group Managing Director) and Patrick Moriarty (Institute of Community Directors Australia Executive Director), with input from the Our Community Board, comprising founding Chair Carol Schwartz and ethicist Dr Simon Longstaff.

Its work is guided by the Community Directors Council, which is chaired by Associate Professor Susan Pascoe AM, alongside 10 Australian community sector luminaries.

Find out more about ICDA at www.icda.com.au

**This report has been prepared for ICDA
by the Our Community Innovation Lab.**

**Visit:
www.ourcommunity.com.au/innovationlab**

Appendix: What questions are analysed in this report?

- **Qu 13: What are your board's top three training needs?** (Pick from 10 specified options [Fundraising/grants; Governance; Financial management; Impact evaluation; Compliance; IT; Communications; HR; Data collection/use; Cybersecurity/fraud prevention;], or specify 'Other', or choose 'We do not need any training')

- **Qu 15: How does your board measure the organisation's success?** (Select any or all of four options [We measure performance against the strategic plan; We measure progress towards our mission/impact; We use financial indicators; We don't measure our success] or specify 'Other'.

- **Qu 22: Please tick the appropriate box based on your organisation's conduct.** (Pick all that apply. If no responses apply, leave blank.) My organisation … (Choose from any or all of three options [Collects outputs data; Collects outcomes data; Collects membership/donor data] or specify 'Other data designed to help guide board/management decision-making')

- **Qu 23: How would you rate your organisation's capacity to collect, analyse and use data to guide your activities in pursuit of your mission?** (Move the slider to indicate where you sit on the spectrum – between 0 & 100.)

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