

MILLENNIALS

Born 1981-1996

Ages 39-24 in 2020

Despite haphazard use of the term “millennial” to mean “young person”—or perhaps even worse, “adolescent”—even the youngest Millennials are adults, and the oldest are close to 40 years old. With 73 million members in 2019, the millennials are the largest living generation. They are more highly educated than previous generations, with 39% having a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared with the Silent (15%), Baby Boomers (25%), and Gen Xers (33%) at the same age. There

is a significant gap in earnings between Millennials who have a college education and those who do not, greater than in previous generations, and a significant increase in the amount of student debt held by Millennials and the percentage of the generational cohort with student debt. With much of the cohort coming of age around the Great Recession, Millennials have accumulated less average household wealth than previous generations had at the same age.

Three words frame the roadmap for Millennial giving & volunteering:

CONNECT: Technology is the key to reaching prospective Millennial donors.

Website (65%), social media (55%), and e-newsletter (47%) are Millennials’ preferred way to learn about a nonprofit.

In visiting a website, 9 out of 10 Millennials go to the page describing the nonprofit’s mission.

Your website should reveal a mission that is unique, purposeful and concise with a clear call to action.

Millennials seek something exact to respond to. Emails should have only one main story with compelling visuals.

INVOLVE: Millennials give time; they volunteer for what inspires them.

Treat this audience as peers and in ways more typically reserved for major donors. Make a place for their voice at your leadership table, for Millennial participation is driven by personal relationships and connections.

81% prefer to learn about volunteering opportunities from their peers and family members.

Provide one-time as well as long-term volunteer options. Be clear as to time commitment and duties and explain how the volunteer task fits into the mission of the organization.

By a margin of two-to-one, Millennials who volunteer are more likely to donate.

GIVE: 75% of Millennials give; 15% give \$500 or more.

In supporting a nonprofit, 47% said they would give their time, 16% said they would give money, 37% said they would give time and money.

Millennials overwhelmingly prefer to donate through the web (70%). Smart phones and social media are not proving to be successful in fundraising.

Peer fundraising is the best way to raise money from this generation.

Millennial giving is impulse driven. Forty-two percent said they give to “whatever inspires me at the moment.”⁵⁵

55 (2012). *The Millennial Impact Report*. Achieve, JGA Associates. www.themillennialimpact.com.

GENERATION Z

Born 1997-2012

Ages 23-8 in 2020

While much of the Gen Z cohort remains in primary and secondary education, the oldest members are adults entering the workforce or continuing in higher education. The generation is predicted to have the most diverse racial/ethnic composition—52% white, 25% Hispanic, 14% Black, 6% Asian, and 4% other racial/ethnic identities in 2018—and highest levels of education in US history.⁵⁶

Gen Z members are genuine digital natives, born into world that was online, but in repeated surveys, large majorities of Gen Z students and workers report a marked preference for in-person communication.⁵⁷ (But they aren't turning their backs on technology—45% of them receive their own smartphone by the age of 12.⁵⁸)

How to Rally Gen Z to Your Cause

Tap their creative energy: utilize their design skills

Don't sugarcoat: give them facts

Communicate in microbursts: frequently & concisely

Use good design: their eyes know⁵⁹

56 Fry, R. and Parker, K. (2018) "Early Benchmarks Show 'Post-Millennials' on Track to Be Most Diverse, Best-Educated Generation Yet," Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/11/15/early-benchmarks-show-post-millennials-on-track-to-be-most-diverse-best-educated-generation-yet/>

57 Jenkins, R. (2017) "This is How Generation Z Will Communicate at Work" Inc. <https://www.inc.com/ryan-jenkins/72-percent-of-generation-z-want-this-communication-at-work.html>

58 The Nielsen Company (2017) "Mobile Kids: The Parent, the Child and the Smartphone" Insights. <https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2017/mobile-kids--the-parent-the-child-and-the-smartphone/>

59 Jensen, B. (2015). "Are You Ready for Generation Z?" *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*. April Issue.