



# 2021 CDSS Affiliate Survey

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# 1: INTRODUCTION

## Welcome to the 2021 Affiliate survey report!

We are in our third year of surveying CDSS Affiliates to learn about the work that you do and how we can be of best service to you.

There is lots to learn about how the pandemic has impacted traditional dance, music, and song groups throughout North America and how we can collectively move forward so that groups can thrive well into the future.

We've already started to put into action some of the findings from 2021 survey. (In addition to the report, CDSS staff have received a separate document outlining a number of recommendations for consideration.) We hope you find the report interesting and that it helps inform how your group moves forward during these challenging times!

## WHAT IS A CDSS AFFILIATE?

CDSS Affiliates are independent groups and organizations that pay an annual fee to receive connection, services, and information through CDSS. Our Affiliates make up a network of organizations and organizers throughout North America. We are excited to foster connection and facilitate collaboration within the network as it continues to grow and thrive.

## WHY CONDUCT AN AFFILIATE SURVEY?

The inaugural [Affiliate survey in 2019](#) was designed to gain a strong base understanding of our Affiliate community. The goals were to learn about...

- Affiliates and the work they are doing
- What Affiliates like about the services CDSS provides and how we can improve
- The value Affiliates see in traditional participatory arts and what advocacy work can be done to support our shared traditions

A wide range of topics were asked about each of the goals.

The [2020 Affiliate survey](#) built on the first survey, asking many of the same questions to see if there were any trends across years. In addition, we explored topics such as:

- The impacts of COVID-19 on Affiliates
- Sources of revenue that Affiliates use
- Additional questions regarding programming for school-aged participants
- More detailed information about participatory song events, ritual dance traditions, and role terminology in traditional social dance
- Additional questions on tools that CDSS uses to communicate with Affiliates
- Feedback about specific CDSS services

This year, we refocused the survey. We wanted to learn Affiliates responses to a subset of the core questions, but we also wanted to learn...

- More about how Affiliates have been faring through the pandemic and what challenges they anticipate, and questions they have for when in-person events resume
- More about what data Affiliates collect and why
- What cultural equity work is being taken on by Affiliates
- How Affiliates collaborate with other local groups
- Specific feedback regarding three key CDSS services
- Specific feedback regarding the CDSS website
- What topics and forms of delivery Affiliates might appreciate in terms of future online programming offered by CDSS

## REPORT FORMAT

The report has 8 sections.

- (1) An introduction to the survey and report
- (2) A brief summary of the overall findings

Sections 3-8 provide a detailed look at the survey findings.

- (3) Basic information about our Affiliates
- (4) Affiliate response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- (5) CDSS's relationship with Affiliates
- (6) CDSS communication with Affiliates
- (7) CDSS resources and services for Affiliates
- (8) Final comments

## TERMINOLOGY USED IN THE REPORT

The Country Dance and Song Society is referred to as CDSS throughout the report.

In addition, we have used the terms 'survey participants', 'question respondents', 'organizers', and 'Affiliates' to refer to the individuals who completed the survey.

## METHODOLOGY

### Survey Design

The survey was developed through consultation with CDSS staff and was tested by a few Affiliate members.

The 2021 survey was much shorter than the 2019 and 2020 surveys. We removed some of the questions where we had seen similar responses in 2019 and 2020 or where we felt that we didn't need to learn more at the moment. However, we kept a core set of questions and added some new questions. In the end, there were 31 questions with some questions requiring multiple responses.

We knew from previous surveys that organizers want to share information about their activities, concerns, and needs and that there were rarely comments about the length of the survey. In 2021, 92% survey participants continued through to the final few questions – quite a high retention rate.

## Administration of the questionnaire

The survey was administered online through Survey Monkey. It was open for six weeks between June 15 – July 30 with the original closing date of July 15<sup>th</sup> being extended by two weeks to allow for more responses. (The survey was administered a full month later than in 2020.) 56% of participants completed the survey in the last two weeks. This was an increase from 40% in 2020 and 34% in 2019.

We asked for only one response to be submitted by each Affiliate. In addition, we suggested that Affiliates complete the survey as a group or consult among their organizing team prior to having someone complete the survey. However, we also let Affiliates know that that it was ok to have one person complete the survey on their own – what was most important is that we heard from them.

## Data analysis & reporting

Quantitative analysis focused on descriptive statistics. Questions requiring qualitative analysis were coded for emergent themes. The coding was reviewed across all responses to ensure that themes which arose later in the coding process were applied to earlier responses. An attempt was made to capture all ideas including those that did not fit within main themes. After all of the responses were coded for main themes, the data was re-examined to identify and code sub-themes. Illustrative quotes were also flagged. Once coding was complete, the grouped themes were examined in order to draw conclusions and write up findings. Where deemed appropriate, we have included approximate counts of how many Affiliates wrote about certain subjects. All qualitative counts are labeled as approximate as the number is determined through interpretation.

## SURVEY RESPONSE RATE

63% of our total Affiliate membership (156/247) participated in the survey which far exceeded our anticipated response rate, especially in a year where many of our Affiliates self-identified as being 'relatively dormant'. In addition, another 14 lapsed Affiliates from the year before completed the survey making a total of 170 respondents. (62% of Affiliates completed the survey in 2020; 48% of Affiliates completed the survey in 2019.)

We worked extremely hard to engage Affiliates. We sent out a few group emails to the Affiliate list and also sent individualized emails directly to the Affiliate contacts. In addition, we called each Affiliate who hadn't responded by mid-July to ensure that they were receiving email notifications.

## STUDY LIMITATIONS

There are a number of study limitations to consider when reviewing the findings presented in the report. Many of the limitations are repeated from the 2019 and 2020 surveys.

## Lack of participation by some Affiliates

While it was wonderful to receive input from so many Affiliates, 91 of our current Affiliates did not participate in the survey. Of those, 42 didn't participate in either the 2019 or the 2020 surveys which means that we know a fair bit less about those Affiliates. (Some of those Affiliates will have been new Affiliates since 2019 or 2020.)

## Inclusion of lapsed Affiliates

This year, we initially invited lapsed members from last year to participate in the survey. This was an accident. We didn't continue to message them about the survey but we did have 14 lapsed members participate. Given that Affiliate membership turns over May 1<sup>st</sup>, each lapsed group had been an Affiliate until very recently and some are planning to return post pandemic. Thus, it didn't seem to be a big issue. However, it is worth noting.

## Having one individual fill out the survey

We encouraged Affiliates to fill out the survey as a committee or to consult committee members prior to completing the survey. We made this ask so that we would receive responses centered within the range of views of each Affiliate organizing team.

We also provided the option for Affiliates to have one respondent complete the survey without consultation - 61% of respondents did so. Having one respondent per group is a very common approach to surveys and indeed, it is hard to engage groups as a whole. However, it does mean that when looking at questions involving perception, we are hearing from one organizer's perception rather than the group's consensus.

## Very few survey questions were mandatory

We deliberately chose to only have questions be mandatory (i.e., respondent name; respondent email; Affiliate name). We took this approach so as not to burden Affiliates with having to answer questions that were not applicable or that they were not interested in.

Most of the survey questions had a very high response rate (i.e., fewer than 10 Affiliates opted out). However, for those with a lower response rate, we do not know the reason that respondents skipped the question and their reason could have an interesting impact on how to interpret the data. Response rate is listed for each question either in the text or with the figure (e.g., N=170).

## Limited analysis through the lens of Affiliate characteristics

While we looked at some questions through the lens of Affiliate characteristics (e.g., location; tradition), we could have delved into this deeper form of analysis for more questions. However, we did gain an understanding of the needs of different groups for some questions and we will be looking at some of this data in the upcoming months as needed.



## 2: A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE KEY FINDINGS

This section of the report highlights some of the key findings from the 2021 Affiliate survey. We recommend that you read the subsequent sections of the report as the summary doesn't capture all of the interesting findings.

### ABOUT OUR AFFILIATES

#### Where Affiliates are located

The number of CDSS Affiliates is roughly representative of the total population across many regions of North America (e.g., US Midwest; US West Coast). However, the US Northeast has a much higher percentage of Affiliates as compared to total population while the US South is underrepresented. CDSS has Affiliates in 3/13 Canadian provinces and territories and 42/50 US states. Of the six the states with the most Affiliates, three are located along the US West Coast while the other three are in the Northeast.

The distribution of survey respondents is representative of the Affiliate population.

#### Traditions organized by our Affiliates

The most common form of activities organized by CDSS Affiliates are social dance traditions. 86% Affiliates who participated in the survey organize some form of social dance, 28% organize some form of music and/or song event (e.g., concerts; jam sessions), and 16% organize ritual dance. 61% of survey respondents organize contra dances and 40% organize English country dances.

While approximately half of Affiliates organize only one tradition, 26% of Affiliates each organize four or more traditions (e.g., morris; contra dance; a song circle; and family dance).

#### The perceived well-being of CDSS Affiliates

2/3 of Affiliates describe their organization as stable or thriving while the other 1/3 describe their organization as struggling some or a lot. There was a significant decrease in the percentage of Affiliates who identified their group as thriving (8% in 2021; 24% in 2020) with a corresponding increase in the number of Affiliates who identified as stable.

#### Collection of demographic information

Circling back to a similar survey question in 2019, we asked Affiliates about whether they have collected demographic information about the people who attend their events (e.g., age; income; ethnicity; gender identity). 15% noted that they have collected some sort of demographic data at an event using pre-registration and 8% for events without pre-registration (e.g., pay-at-the-door). In written responses, some Affiliates noted the type of data they collected, the reasons why, and how they collect data.

#### Cultural equity work

New in 2021, we asked Affiliates whether their organizing team had done any work on cultural equity. (We provided a definition for cultural equity as defined by Americans for the Arts.)

43% of respondents noted that they had done work on cultural equity. The form of this work varied widely from having discussions and providing learning opportunities to influencing programming decisions and policy changes. Some Affiliates pointed out various challenges associated with doing cultural equity work.

#### Collaboration with other local groups

Circling back to a similar question in the 2019 survey, we asked Affiliates whether their group communicates/collaborates with other traditional dance, music, and song groups in their local region. 81% responded yes.

Some Affiliates provided details about the collaboration such as the various forms that it can take (e.g., discussing topics of common interest; co-planning events; coordinating schedules across groups; supporting each other's events through promotion and attendance; performing at each other's events).

### AFFILIATE RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

#### The impact of COVID-19 on Affiliates

In general, Affiliates perceive their groups as weathering the pandemic fairly well. While a subset of respondents noted that the pandemic had a significant financial impact, the vast majority of respondents noted that they have enough financial cushion to carry them through this time. When asked directly, 6 Affiliates noted that they are considering disbanding.

#### Affiliate activities during the pandemic

While 7/10 of Affiliates noted that they've gone into relative dormancy for the pandemic, over half of Affiliates noted that they've held regular or semi-regular online events and 14% have held regular or semi-regular in-person events.

2/3 of Affiliates have held at least one fundraiser and/or collected donations for their organization at some point during the pandemic. Also, half of the question respondents noted that they've used the pandemic time to brainstorm new ideas.

#### Plans for future events

We asked Affiliates if they were planning to hold in-person events in 2021. Only 11% said no while the other 89% said yes or that they were undecided. However, while some Affiliates had already started holding events at the time of the survey, or were planning to do so later in the summer and into the fall, a number of Affiliates noted concerns about surges in COVID-19 related to the Delta variant. We've since heard that a number of Affiliates have postponed the relaunching of in-person events.

We asked Affiliates whether they were planning to make changes to the type of in-person events they offer as compared to what they offered pre-pandemic. 17% said yes and another 28% said that they were undecided.

14% of respondents noted that they plan to hold online events once in-person events resume and another 23% are undecided.

### **Anticipated challenges upon resuming in-person events**

Affiliates were asked to list challenges they anticipate their group facing once in-person activities resume. Possible lower attendance was by far the most common concern. Other possible challenges included developing and implementing protocols to deal with COVID-19, the shifting nature of the pandemic, and common organizer challenges relating to finances, venues, talent, community culture, and volunteers which have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

### **Affiliate questions about the pandemic and resuming in-person events**

Affiliates were asked to list questions they have about COVID-19/the pandemic that they would like answered. The most common set of questions Affiliates had was about vaccines and how they relate to holding in-person events. Other common questions included, but were not limited to, insurance and liability, how to hold safe events, scientific questions about the virus, and questions about masks.

### **Affiliate perceptions of CDSS's response to the pandemic**

As part of gaining an understanding as to whether CDSS has been able to meet the needs of Affiliates, we asked about the degree to which they felt that CDSS had provided information and resources that had been helpful to their group during the COVID-19 crisis. 70% of Affiliates agreed that CDSS had been helpful and 18% were neutral. 6% felt that CDSS hadn't been helpful and 6% noted that the question wasn't applicable to their group.

## **CDSS'S RELATIONSHIP WITH AFFILIATES**

### **Reasons for being an Affiliate**

The reason most commonly stated for being an CDSS Affiliate was 'to be connected to the wider traditional dance, music, and song community'. However, as in previous years, the vast majority of respondents selected more than one reason that they are an Affiliate suggesting groups perceive multiple benefits to being a member.

### **Committee engagement with CDSS events**

We asked Affiliates whether members of their organizing committee had participated in a variety of different CDSS events within the past five years. 2/3 of respondents have had one or more of their organizers attend a Web Chat while 1/2 of respondents have had one or more of their organizers attend CDSS camp (non-intensive course).

1/5 of Affiliates noted that at least one of their organizers had attended an CDSS in-person organizers training event despite only one such event being held within the last five years.

### **Affiliates' feelings of their relationship with CDSS**

As in 2019 and 2020, we were heartened by Affiliates' positive perception of their relationship with CDSS. On a five-point scale, 87% of survey respondents reported very positive or positive feelings about their Affiliate's relationship with CDSS while the other 11% were neutral. There were two Affiliates who identified as having a negative or very negative perception of their relationship with CDSS – the first time this has occurred in the three years of the survey.

### **Affiliate satisfaction with CDSS's customer service**

As in 2019 and 2020, we asked Affiliates if they had reached out to CDSS staff over the past year, how satisfied they were with the response. Level of satisfaction was relatively consistent across the past three years with vast majority of Affiliates being very satisfied with customer service.

## **CDSS COMMUNICATION WITH AFFILIATES**

### **The relevance of CDSS's communication platforms for Affiliates**

We asked Affiliates to identify whether they read 11 different forms of CDSS communications and if yes, whether that information is relevant. The communication form that was mostly likely to be read and found relevant were personally addressed emails about Affiliate information, followed by the CDSS News. Communications such as the Affiliate email newsletters and Affiliate handbook were much less likely to be read or found useful.

### **The frequency with which Affiliate contacts share information with fellow committee members and their communities**

We asked respondents to let us know the degree to which their Affiliate contact shares CDSS information with fellow committee members and the degree to which Affiliates share information with their wider community.

There has been some increase in percentage of respondents who said that their Affiliate contact shares CDSS information 'as much as they can' with fellow organizers (34% in 2021). However, there was very little change in the degree to which Affiliates share information with their community (i.e., 17% share as much as they can; 2/5 share rarely or never).

### **Forms of CDSS information that Affiliates are likely to share**

As in 2020, we asked Affiliates what CDSS communications they are likely to share with their community, providing a list of various options. The most common form of content Affiliates were willing to share were CDSS flyers about camp while the form of content that Affiliates were least likely to share is Instagram posts.

## CDSS RESOURCES AND SERVICES FOR AFFILIATES

### What CDSS services and resources are of value to Affiliates

We asked a few different questions to gain an understanding as to what CDSS resources and services Affiliates value most.

When asked to rate the importance of 26 separate resources and services, 16 of the resources were seen as very important or somewhat important by over half of the respondents. The most frequently identified resources identified as very or somewhat important included: The CDSS website, group's name in the Affiliate handbook, CDSS leadership on various topics, CDSS event listing, and Web Chats.

When asked what resources were of most value (Affiliates were able to select up to three), insurance was the most common response, followed by 501(c)3 status and then the various ways in which CDSS promotes Affiliates and their events.

### How CDSS can improve specific services

We asked Affiliates for specific feedback on (1) the Resource Portal, (2) Web Chats for organizers, and (3) caller and/or musician training at camp. Respondents wrote about the strengths of each service as well as suggestions for improvement.

### Feedback regarding the CDSS website

As part of planning a redesign of CDSS's website, staff wanted to learn about how the site could be improved for Affiliates.

When asked about the sections/pages of the website that Affiliates were most likely to use, the most common response related to the Resource Portal and resources that appear in that space followed by the calendar of events.

Relatively few Affiliates responded to the question about what information is hard to find on the site. Also, relatively few Affiliates responded to the question about what information is missing on the website. A small number Affiliates provided individual ideas with no common themes emerging.

### Online resources that CDSS could amplify

We asked Affiliates to list any recently created online resources that they have found helpful and which CDSS could help amplify. Approximately 15 Affiliates provided specific suggestions while others made suggestions of what type of resources could be helpful.

### Topics of interest for future online programs

As CDSS is looking to offer more online programming in the future, we asked Affiliates what topics would be of interest to their group. A wide range of topics were deemed of interest to Affiliates with the most common topics of interest being training for organizers and callers. However, other topics such as cultural equity work for community leaders, training for musicians, and lectures/discussions on the history of our shared traditions were also popular, especially when looking at those who identified these topics as very or somewhat interesting.

### Models of online delivery for future online programs

In addition to the question on possible topics for future online programs, we asked Affiliates about modes of program delivery. When comparing across a wide range of program formats (e.g., lectures; activities for families/children), on-demand offerings were almost always seen as more popular than live events. However, it's important to note that many respondents also thought that live content was of interest.

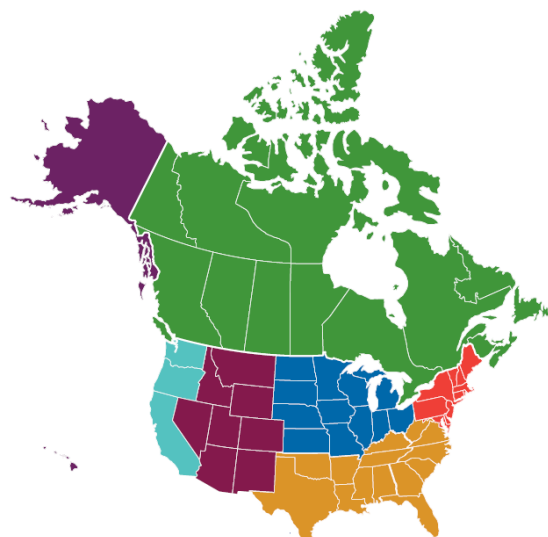
### 3: ABOUT OUR AFFILIATES

Section 3 of the report presents information about CDSS Affiliates such as their location and the type of activities they organize.

#### WHERE CDSS AFFILIATES ARE LOCATED

As in the 2020 Affiliate survey, we divided the continent up into regions (see Figure 1) and compared the percentage of survey respondents by region to the percentage of Affiliates and the total population of those regions (see Figure 2).

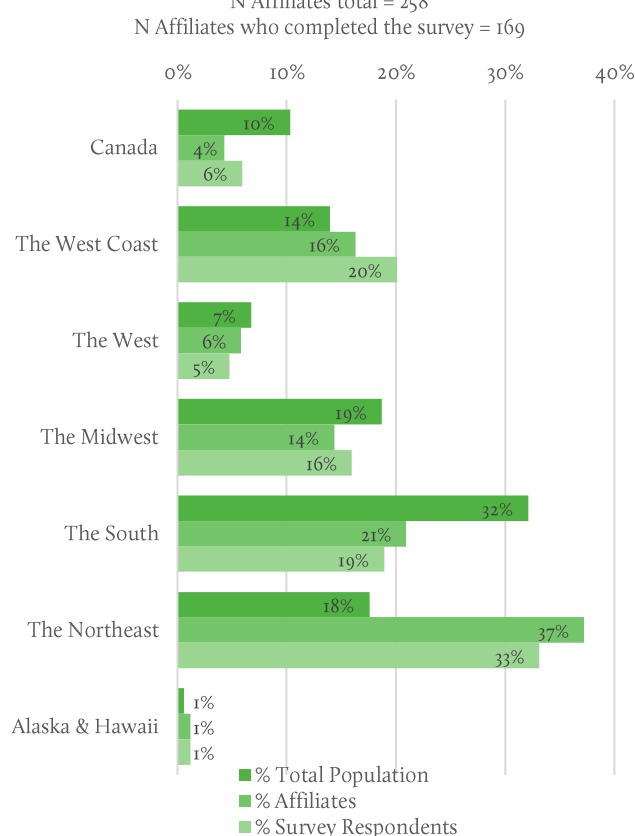
Figure 1: Map of Canada and the US divided by region



Color	Region	State/province/territory
Green	Canada	All of the provinces and territories
Light Blue	West Coast	California, Oregon, Washington
Dark Blue	West	Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming
Blue	Midwest	Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin
Orange	South	Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia
Red	Northeast	Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont
Purple	Alaska & Hawaii	

Note: The regional divisions were created specifically for the purpose of analyzing the survey data through a geographical lens.

Figure 2: Comparison by region of total population, number of Affiliates, and number of survey respondents  
N Affiliates total = 258  
N Affiliates who completed the survey = 169



The percentage of survey respondents by region is representative of the geographical spread of CDSS's Affiliate population.

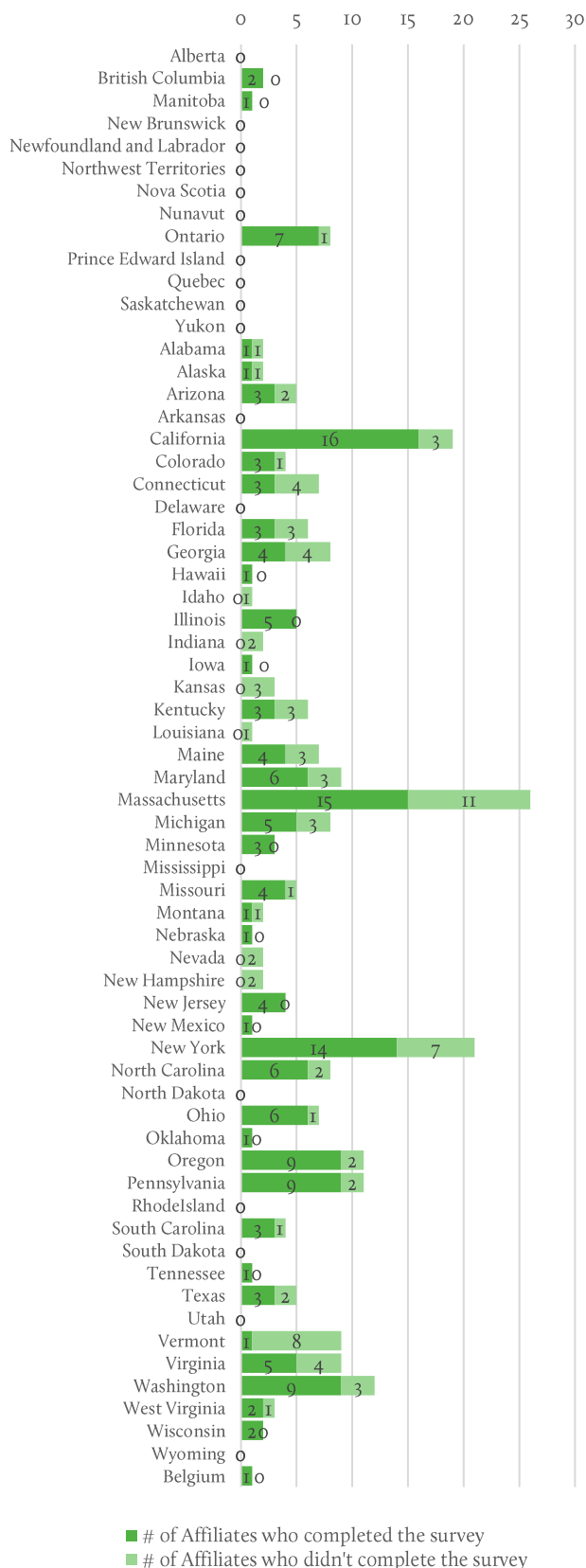
In some regions, the percentage of Affiliates is roughly representative of the total population in that region (i.e., Canada, the West Coast, West, and Midwest are all within a 4% difference). However as in 2020, the Northeast has a much higher percentage of Affiliates compared to the total population while the US South has a much lower percentage of Affiliates as compared to the total population.

Three of the six states with the most Affiliates are located along the US West Coast and three are in the Northeast.

Table 1: States/provinces with the most Affiliates	#
Massachusetts	26
California	19
New York	21
Washington	14
Oregon	11
Pennsylvania	11

Figure 3 presents slightly more granular data, listing the number of Affiliates in each state, province, and territory.

Figure 3: Number of Affiliates who completed/do not complete the survey  
by State/Province/Territory  
SurveyN=170 Total CDSS AffiliatesN=259



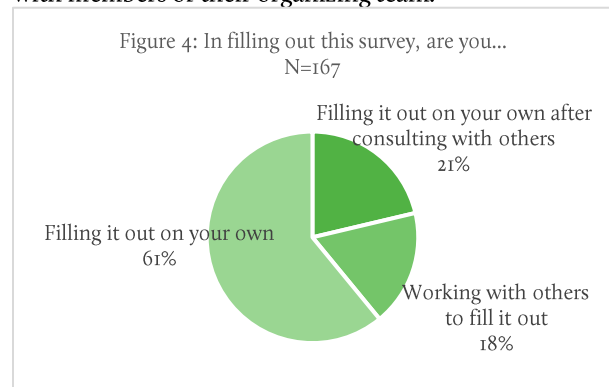
Many states and provinces have no Affiliates. These include:

- 10/13 Canadian provinces and territories (i.e., Alberta, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Saskatchewan, and Yukon)
- 8/50 US states (i.e., Arkansas, Delaware, Mississippi, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming)

### WHO COMPLETED THE SURVEY (Q3)

As in 2019 and 2020, we asked Affiliates to consider filling out the survey in consultation with other members of their organizing team so that we could gain perspectives from the team rather than one member. However, we also noted that it was fine if survey respondents could not consult with others as it was a bigger ask in terms of time and energy.

Figure 4 illustrates whether survey respondents consulted with members of their organizing team.



This year, there was a slight increase in the percentage of respondents filling out the survey on their own (61% in 2021; 55% in 2020 56% 2019).

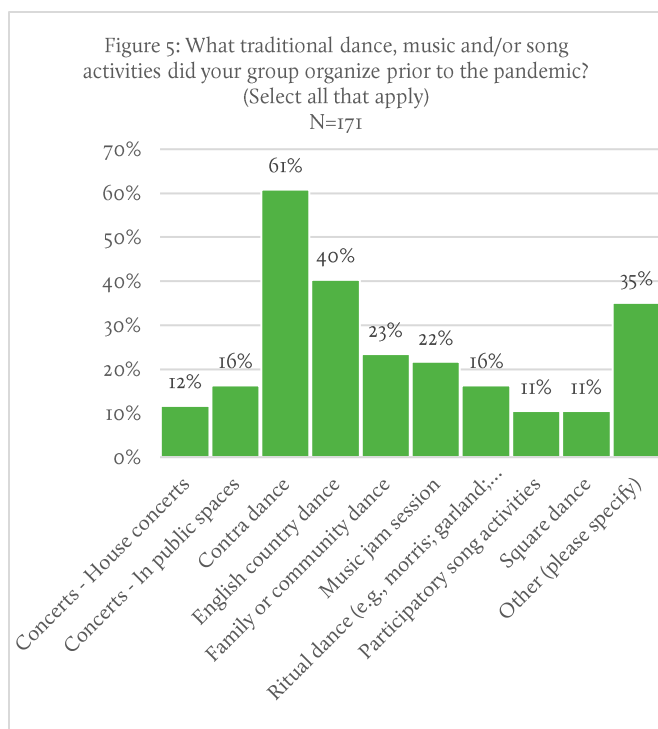
As in 2020, we checked the names of the survey respondents against our Affiliate database. Over half of the respondent names matched the General Contact Person that we have on file while others matched the Additional Contact Person. Approximately 15% of respondents were new to CDSS in that we don't have their name on record in our files as one of the contacts for their respective Affiliate. (This is a decrease from 1/4 of respondents in 2020.) It's helpful to know that so many of the respondents are either the General Contact Person or Additional Contact Person as they are the contacts who receive the ongoing electronic communications from CDSS regarding Affiliate services and so are likely to be the organizers who know the most about the Affiliate program.

### THE TYPE OF ACTIVITIES THAT AFFILIATES ORGANIZE (Q4)

Each year, we ask Affiliates about the type of activities they organize. This year, we reworded the question slightly to ask about what activities they were organizing prior to the pandemic as many groups are not currently organizing activities.

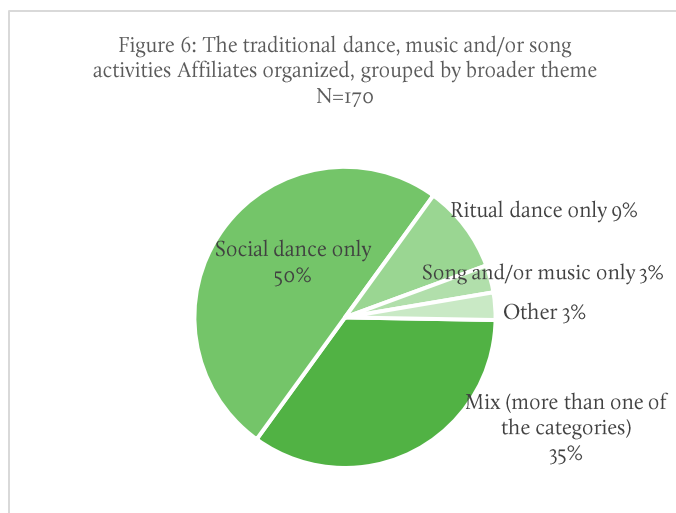


Figure 5 illustrates the diversity of traditions that Affiliates organize. Contra dance is the activity organized by the most respondents (61%) followed by English country dance (40%) and family/community dance (23%).



46% of Affiliates only organize one tradition (e.g., ECD) and another 15% organize two traditions (e.g., contra & family dances). 26% organize four or more traditions. These numbers are very similar to 2020.

Because many Affiliates organize more than one activity, we coded the tradition responses into whether Affiliates organize social dance only, ritual dance only, song and/or music only, a mix of two or more of these categories, or whether they organize something different all together. Figure 6 illustrates these findings. Similar to Figure 5, Figure 6 illustrates how social dance is the most common form of tradition that Affiliates organize.



Looking at aggregated data, 86% of Affiliates organize some form of social dance (e.g., waltz; squares; contra) and 28% organize music and/or song events (e.g., concerts; jams; sings). These numbers are very similar to 2020.

64 survey participants provided written responses under 'Other (please specify)'. Many of these comments were elaborating on related activities to the traditions above (e.g., 6 mentioned camps and 11 mentioned weekends for various dance and music activities, 14 mentioned musician workshops). In addition, some Affiliates noted that they organize other dance traditions that are not as commonly associated with CDSS (see Table 2).

Table 2: Other traditions being organized by CDSS Affiliates	# of respondents
International/World dance	5
Vintage/Historical dances	4
Waltz	3
Scandinavian dance	3
Scottish country dance	3
Swing/Lindy/Blues	2
Cajun/Zydeco	2
Clogging and/or step dancing	2
Ballroom	2
Irish dance/set dance	2
Balfolk	1
Renaissance dance	1
Barn dance	1
Israeli dance	1
Maypole dance	1

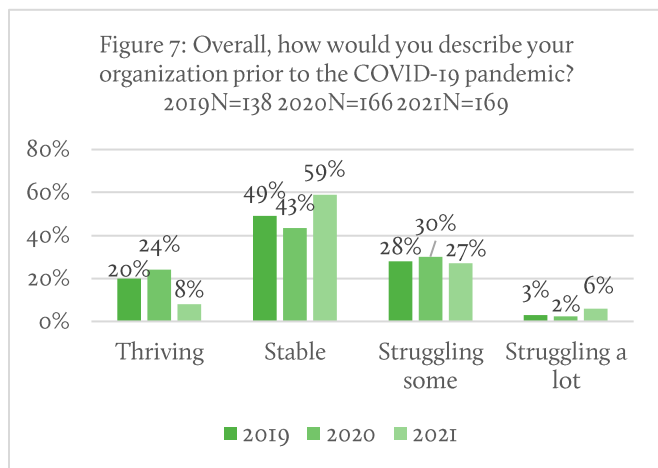
Affiliates noted other types of programming. This included three Affiliates that mentioned leadership training, two Affiliates that mentioned storytelling and individual Affiliates that mentioned:

- Picnics
- Coffee houses
- Film series
- School residences in music, dance, and song
- Programs for older adults
- Music lessons and dancing for incarcerated men
- Apple Day
- Rural education days
- Providing education support in local schools
- English holiday tea
- BBQ/social
- Programming honoring veterans

## AFFILIATE WELLBEING (Q5)

In the first two years of the Affiliate survey, we asked Affiliates about the wellbeing of their regularly occurring events, special events, and their organization as a whole. This year, we only asked about the health of their organization, with the plan to ask about event health again in a year or two.

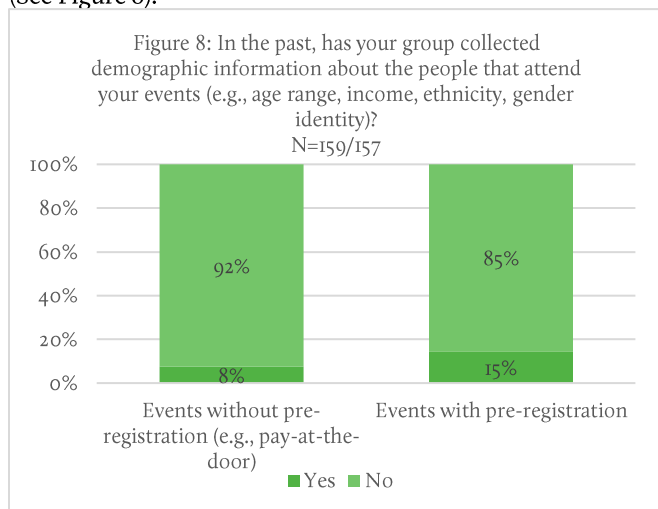
Figure 7 illustrates the perceived health of Affiliates over the past three years. While the percentage of Affiliates who self-identify as thriving has greatly reduced over the past year (8% selected 'thriving' in 2021 while 24% selected 'thriving' in 2020), many more Affiliates are now reporting that they are 'stable'. When grouping the categories of 'struggling some' and 'struggling a lot', there is no significant difference in the number of Affiliates who are struggling. Looking at the data more closely, 10 Affiliates noted that they are 'struggling a lot' in 2021 as compared to 4 in 2020 and 4 in 2019.



## COLLECTING DEMOGRAPHIC DATA (Q14)

Circling back to a similar question in 2019, we asked Affiliates if they have collected demographic information about participants (e.g., age, income, ethnicity, gender identity). Our interest in asking this question is that demographic data can be hard to collect at traditional dance and music events but data can also be helpful for informing decisions.

Relatively few Affiliates collect demographic data – only 15% of respondents noted that they collect some sort of demographic data for events using pre-registration and 8% for events without pre-registration (e.g., pay-at-the-door) (See Figure 8).



As a follow-up, we asked respondents to tell us a bit about what information they collect and why.

## Age data

Approximately 20 respondents wrote that they collect age-related data (e.g., under 25; under 18). A variety of reasons were mentioned. Common responses included:

- Pricing (e.g., youth discount; special youth dances free for under 25; youth scholarships)
- Assigning lodging

Individual Affiliates each mentioned:

- Additional paperwork for minors
- Inform workshop planning
- Include in grant applications
- Inform whether a group was archiving their goal of attracting younger participants

## Gender identity

Approximately 10 respondents noted that they collect data on gender identity. Each of the following reasons were mentioned by a few Affiliates:

- Assigning lodging
- Including pronouns on name buttons

A few Affiliates pointed out that they had previously practiced gender-balancing at some of their events but no longer do so. Another Affiliate said that they don't practice gender-balancing but they tell event registrants what the gender balance is for their weekend event.

One Affiliate pointed out that they collect information on gender as part of a wider data collection process to monitor success at maintaining diversity and to better understand the experiences of people with different identities.

## Race/Ethnicity

Three respondents noted that they collect information on race and/or ethnicity. This includes one Affiliate who noted that they collect the information in an informal way.

One Affiliate pointed out that they collect this type of data because they are required to provide the information to the IRS given the Affiliate's designation as a school.

As mentioned above, another Affiliate pointed out that they collect race/ethnicity information as part of wider data collection process to monitor their success at maintaining diversity and to better understand the experiences of people with different identities.

## Other information that Affiliates collect

- **Location:** Two Affiliates noted that they collect information on the home location of their participants. One noted that it informs how they promote their event.
- **Sexual orientation:** One Affiliate noted that they collect a wide range of data including sexual orientation as part of monitoring the diversity of their event and better understanding the experiences of people with different identities.
- **Socio-economic status:** One Affiliate noted that they collect some financial information to inform their financial assistance program.

## Why Affiliates collect information

Although already mentioned above, it's worth highlighting again the reasons that Affiliates collect information.

Common reasons included:

- Assigning lodging
- Pricing (e.g., youth discount; scholarships)
- In the past, balancing gender
- Required to do so by an outside source (e.g., IRS; venue)

One or two Affiliates each mentioned the following reasons:

- Including in grant applications
- Creating name buttons with pronouns
- Informing plans to move to ungendered calling
- Monitoring success at maintaining diversity and to better understand the experiences of people with different identities
- Informing a group whether they were archiving the goal of attracting younger participants
- Informing publicity decisions
- Informing programming

## How Affiliates collect information

Some respondents mentioned the ways in which they collect information. This included through event registration as well as surveys. A few Affiliates mentioned that they collect information informally (e.g., visually) or they are such a small group that it's easy to track the information.

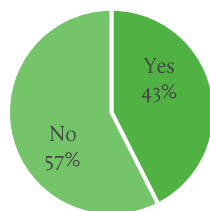
## Affiliates who do not to collect data

Although we didn't ask for follow-up from Affiliates who do not collect data, a few specifically mentioned that they do not. This included one Affiliate who pointed out that they think it would be intrusive given their context.

## CULTURAL EQUITY WORK (Q15)

New in 2021, we asked Affiliates about whether their organizing team has had any discussions or done any work on cultural equity issues related to their organization and/or event. 43% said yes (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Has your organizing team had any discussions or done any work on cultural equity issues related to your organization and/or events?  
N=167



Note: We included the following definition as part of the survey question.

Cultural Equity as defined by Americans for the Arts: *Cultural equity embodies the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people—including but not limited to those who have*

*been historically, and continue to be, underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion—are represented in the development of arts policy; the support of artists; the nurturing of accessible, thriving venues for expression; and the fair distribution of programmatic, financial, and informational resources. While intersectionality is real and crucial to providing entry for people at various stages of readiness, we acknowledge that racial inequity is central to most societal issues, particularly when it comes to the distribution of resources.*

As part of this question, we asked Affiliates who said yes to describe what they are doing. 85 Affiliates provided written responses.

## Addressing cultural equity for a range of underrepresented populations

Affiliates have been discussing and taking action to support a wide range of underrepresented populations. Common aspects of diversity that were mentioned included socioeconomic status, gender, and race/ethnicity.

A few Affiliates each mentioned sexual orientation, cultural differences, age, religion, ability, political/perspectives, and the incarcerated population. One respondent also mentioned different types of personalities as well.

*We're pretty good with newcomers, and a good spectrum of ages, sizes, genders, religions, relationships, races... cultures. Not to mention perpetual beginners. Our community has a reputation for giving a warm welcome. But there are also the awkward, the inept... the less welcome. Some wreck lines, some push and pull and yank, some make women feel uncomfortable. Some take advantage. Some, perhaps after warnings, must be asked to leave. And yet, there are those on the fringe who, if the community is willing and strong enough to accept them, become among the most dedicated, and feel most grateful. Too many challenged dancers, and the community, like a dance line, risks falling apart. Too few, and it risks becoming a clique. Nelson Beavington*

## Learning about cultural equity

Approximately 10 Affiliates wrote about members of their organizing team focusing on learning, whether through online training/webinars, study groups, or online discussions.

*We have formed an anti-racism study group and will be hiring a DE&I consultant. Cindy Culbert & Lisa Brown, Country Dancers of Rochester*

*As previously mentioned, we co-sponsored a cultural equity workshop with the financial aid of the CDSS. Our workshop was titled "Creating Inclusive Dance Communities with Jacob Hoffman and Kafari." Cayley Buckner, Gainesville Oldtime Dance Society*

Many others wrote about having conversations amongst their organizing team, which can be a place for learning, although not explicitly identified as such by Affiliates. (See more about conversations below.)

## Having conversations and discussions

Approximately 40 respondents wrote about having discussions or conversations within their organizing team. While some of these Affiliates also wrote about taking specific actions, a number of the respondents simply wrote about having discussions with some directly pointing out that the conversations haven't led to any conclusions or action.

*Discussed as a need, but have not addressed in any specific effort. Mary Beth Emerton, Dancing Bears Inc.*

*Discussion (not resolved) around gender roles and calling. Syracuse Country Dancers*

*We have started having these discussions, but we are early in the process. Cliff White, Mid-Missouri Traditional Dancers*

A few Affiliates either highlighted or alluded to the importance of having these discussions as part of the process of addressing inequities.

*We are an organization dedicated to creating a contra experience for people who have historically been excluded from the form based on sexual orientation and gender. Our monthly dance was created to embrace younger dancers who traditionally attend fewer dance events in our region and all our events are sliding scale to make them as financially accessible as we can. We continue to discuss the experience of non-white dancers and strategize ways to be more welcoming and inclusive including the way we teach dances, the talent we hire, and how we model and encourage others to interact with new people at our dances. Alan Kline, San Francisco Bay Queer Contra Dance*

*We did work crafting a statement against white supremacy and we've held discussions and team brainstorming sessions about how we can combat and work to dismantle white supremacy and unconscious bias. Nadia Gaya, Ring O'Bells Morris*

## Action on role terminology in social dance

Approximately 20 respondents wrote about caller language, with most of the references focusing on the use of non-gendered role terms. Some Affiliates had made the change to non-gendered terminology while many others noted that they are still discussing options.

*We have discussed the trend to use gender neutral terminology. Vicky Morrison, Tallahassee Community Friends of Old Time Dance*

In a few cases, Affiliates noted that they leave the option open to callers. In one instance, an Affiliate pointed out that they haven't yet changed role terms but that their group is 'on the geographical fringe of country dance' and they anticipate the change will happen soon.

## Action on hiring talent

Four respondents wrote about making conscious decisions about the talent they hire in association with cultural equity considerations.

*Considering who we hire as instructors to improve diversity of campers[...] Celia Ramsay, Lark Traditional Arts*

*[...] We have hired a number of BIPOC and LGBTQ staff for our event. [...] Alex Sturbaum, Raise the Rafters*

One Affiliate encouraged participants in their 2020 virtual event to contribute funds earmarked for hiring BIPOC talent.

## Other actions associated with programming

Approximately 10 respondents wrote about programming-related actions separate from role terminology and talent hiring. This included a handful of Affiliates who wrote about hosting cultural equity discussions at their events or in their community.

*One of the Roadhouse offerings in 2021 was a cultural equity talk by Reese Tanimura and Francisca Garcia of NW Folklife. The Portland Roadhouse*

*See area and regional gatherings we hosted noted above. The regional gatherings were weekend events with non-stop talking. Of course gender neutral and PC calling issues discussed, as well as discussions re crossing cultural/ethnic/gender/age divides and what everyone was doing to bridge them. Heitzso, Atgaga Incorporated*

*We started an online panel discussion series on topics that have included gender in Morris dancing, sexual orientation in Morris dancing and related intersectionalities. Our hope is to continue these events going forward. Meg Dedolph, Midwest Morris Ale Association*

*[...] We will have several workshops at RTR about confronting racism and inequity in the community, as well as discussion spaces designed to open conversation about the same. Alex Sturbaum, Raise the Rafters*

*[...] And our social gathering invited discussion on social issues. Donna Hunt, PATMAD (Philadelphia Traditional Music and Dance)*

Additionally, individual Affiliates wrote about:

- Forming a committee to review tunes that may be controversial and considering how to address these with talent
- Planning a dance series for the LGBTQ community
- Regularly participating in multi-cultural events as a morris team
- Working with older adults in nursing homes/ assisted living centres and with incarcerated men

*We are talking amongst ourselves a lot, including about how we define traditional and who gets access to our events, etc.; we want to host an old time music session and conversation with a Portland-based musician who has done this work with other groups in Maine and beyond; and our work with older adults (nursing homes / assisted living centers) and incarcerated men is closely connected to our cultural equity values. BTW, it's very useful to have this cultural equity quote! Am copying now to send to the board. Chrissy Fowler, Belfast Flying Shoes.*

## Actions associated with promotion

Approximately one dozen Affiliates wrote about taking action on promotion or reaching out to a wider audience. More general statements included:

*We have had some conversations in the group, and are exploring ways to reach out to other cultural groups. [...] John Mayberry, Toronto Morris Men*

*Discussions on increasing diversity and some outreach efforts to local communities. Before pandemic. L. Gordon, Charleston Folk*



In addition, individual respondents wrote about:

- Reaching out to Black and Hispanic participants in the hope of learning how to improve outreach
- Promoting events on LGBTQ bulletin boards
- Looking to add an inclusivity statement within publicity materials

Somewhat related to promotion and outreach, a number of groups have made public statements on cultural equity (more on that below).

## Actions on policy

Approximately one dozen respondents wrote about taking specific action relating to policy. This included a handful of Affiliates who had written and publicized specific statements on cultural equity.

*Last summer we worked on an inclusion message for our website [...] Marian Dalton, DownEast Friends of the Folk Arts (DEFFA)*

*We have written a strong anti-racism statement and code of conduct. Alex Sturbaum, Raise the Rafters*

A few other Affiliates noted that they had done work on safety policy or that they had incorporated aspects of cultural equity into their core organizational documents.

*We have done work regarding LGBTQIA+ issues (role terms, gender neutral bathroom, safety policy, bylaw changes) [...] Downtown Amherst Contra Dance*

*[...] Our core documents and some publicity stress inclusivity and dancer safety. Linda Wahler, Traditional Dancers of Santa Cruz*

*[...] We have had discussion and changed our bylaws to offer more protection for women in our group. Following an attack on one of our dancers and continued reports from other communities, we felt we needed to make some changes to provide a safe space. J. Joseph*

## Action on making events financially accessible

Approximately 10 respondents wrote about making their events financially accessible. This included mentions of sliding scale pricing, scholarships, and providing discounts as needed.

*Mostly our discussions have to do with pricing and policies than remove age and socioeconomic barriers (scholarships to defray all or part of registration fees). Alan Kanaskie, Salem Folklore Community*

*[...] We have endeavored to ensure participation even when individuals could not otherwise afford to do so. James Thayer, Moreton Bay Fig Morris*

*Introduction of sliding scale a few years ago. [...] Becky Liddle, Toronto Contra Dance*

One Affiliate noted that they have a Friendship Fund which provides financial support.

*We have a Friendship Fund specifically for people who are not able to attend dance class(es), balls and/or workshops because of financial constraints. The fund is always available. Individuals can ask for it, might just tell us they can't afford to attend an event, or a friend who knows their situation will notify us. If we find out that somebody can't afford the event, a lot of times what we'll do is will just send them an email surprising them with a 'gift entrance' for being someone we*

*want at our dances - we do a lot to make people know that it's totally fine to tap into the fund and to not feel badly about receiving funds if they need to. I believe it's a very well received program - the community certainly likes it and they feel happy about donating to allow other people to dance because at HTDS we have long been supporting that "everyone needs to dance. It makes life better" so we need to make sure everybody just comes out to dance. The community can donate to the fund (it's even on our website!) and occasionally we run raffles or have little tag sales to raise money for it. The money sits in a special reserve in our accounts. Darlene Hamilton, Historical Tea and Dance Society*

## Being welcoming in a general sense

A handful of Affiliates wrote generally about being welcoming and inclusive of all.

*We continue our long-standing history of being as inviting and open as we can to everyone. Patrick McDonnell on behalf of Lambertville Country Dancers*

*We welcome all attendees equally. Ellie Nowels, Big Scioto Contra Dance*

## Other actions that address cultural equity

One or two Affiliates each wrote about the following actions, or noted that they have discussed taking action on these items.

- Donating money to groups that promote diversity in folk traditions
- Diversifying their board of directors
- Discussing blackface as a 'recurring and historical problem' in the morris community
- Ensuring food at events meet cultural, religious, and health needs
- Providing all gender bathrooms
- Observing the behaviour of participants which might be interpreted as inappropriate or offensive
- Modelling and encouraging others to interact with new people at events
- Tracing involvement of African-Americans and Indigenous peoples in ECD during colonial/revolutionary times
- Only booking venues that are physically accessible to all
- Being welcoming of people with various disabilities (e.g., wheelchairs in dance)

## The challenging nature of cultural equity work

While we didn't ask about challenges associated with cultural equity work, a handful of respondents provided some insight into the challenges that Affiliate face. This included the following ideas, some of which overlap:

- The difficulty of having these discussions generally
- Receiving pushback from the community
- The risk of alienating members of the community
- Needing to follow up discussions with action
- Needing to meet the community where they are at including members of the community that have differing opinions
- Being relatively isolated geographically; in a location with little cultural diversity
- Aspects of the tradition might not be comfortable for various cultures



Only a few conversations (and pushback!!!); we know this is a hard issue that needs work. Midge Olsen, Tapestry Folkdance Center

We've had a discussion and a plan to become more knowledgeable by inviting a guest speaker to our practice to share their perspective and research into the topic of cultural equity, racism in English dance traditions, and more. It was a wide-ranging discussion! Interestingly, we have not moved forward on this. Perhaps because it is a difficult conversation to begin and to stay open to. I appreciate the definition you've provided below. I will take it back to the team! We have yet to decide on whether we will make a BIPOC statement because we want to ensure that we can put our words into action going forward. Laurie Cumming, Toronto Women's Sword

We're careful about these issues. The home school community on Long Island is a source of interest and outreach. This group is mixed politically and culturally. We are open to let people decide what parts they wish to dance but want to avoid taking a corporate stand that might alienate. We are welcoming to diversity of opinion as well as the typical equity stance. Herb Lape, LITMA (Long Island Traditional Music Association)

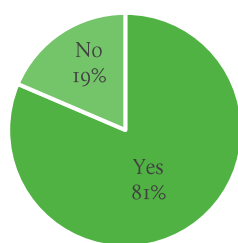
## Not taking specific action

A handful of Affiliates pointed out that they hadn't taken specific action on cultural equity. This included a few comments about being generally welcoming of everyone and/or that cultural equity was 'not an issue'.

## COMMUNICATION AND/OR COLLABORATION WITH OTHER LOCAL GROUPS (Q13)

Circling back to a similar question in 2019, we asked Affiliates whether their group has communicated and/or collaborated with other traditional dance, music, and song groups in their local region. 81% of respondents said yes (See Figure 10).

Figure 10: In the past, has your group communicated/collaborated with other traditional dance, music, and song groups in your local region?  
N=167



As a follow-up, we asked Affiliates to provide a bit of information about those relationships including the names of groups that they work with. 134 Affiliates provided written responses. We haven't listed the names of groups that Affiliates provided but we have summarized how Affiliates have been collaborating locally.

## General comments about collaboration and communication

Many respondents wrote generally about either collaborating or communicating with other groups without providing specifics about those activities.

Collaboration with BACDS particularly with ECD. Contra collaboration with regional events in the Bay Area. North Bay Country Dance Society

## Discussing topics of common interest

Approximately one dozen Affiliates wrote about sharing information of common interest across other groups in their region. This included:

- Communicating about safety topics
- Sharing ideas for engaging dancers
- Sharing ideas about camps
- Discussing role terms
- Sharing thoughts on callers and musicians
- Sharing what groups pay bands, callers, and sound techs
- Observing discussions about diversity and inclusion
- Various 'policies'

[...] Relationship is organizer to organizer communication over high level topics, including safety, role terms, and other policies. Downtown Amherst Contra Dance

[...] Recently we asked them to share what they pay their bands, callers and sound techs. We coordinate our annual camps so that we can dance at them all if we choose to do so (the dates do not overlap). This leads to communication amongst individuals and sharing ideas for camps, dances, callers and musicians. Missoula Folklore Society

Not only were Affiliates sharing information, but some wrote about working collaboratively on policy, having educational/dance organizer working groups, or co-hosting learning opportunities.

Prepandemic, Jennifer Horrocks and myself organized two area and two regional meet-and-greets for contra dance organizers. (e.g. Memphis, Baltimore, Charlottesville, Blacksburg, Charlotte, Gainesville(GA), Santee, ... attending). [...] Heitzso, Atgaga Incorporated

## Co-planning events

Approximately 40 respondents wrote about co-planning events with other local groups. Events ranged widely and included:

- Morris Ales  
We have helped organize the Toronto Ale for many years, together with Toronto Women's Sword, Green Fiddle Morris, Cold Barn Morris, Orange Peel Morris, Belles of York. John Mayberry, Toronto Morris Men
- Special annual dances (e.g., balls; regional dance; double headers)  
We often have one regional dance a year with the Sacramento and Reno groups. [...] Lisa Frankel, Foothill Country Dancers
- Holiday events (e.g., Maypole event)  
Annual Thanksgiving dance coordination with PATMAD, in Philadelphia. Pam Ruch, Valley Contra Dance Society
- Cross-over dance events (e.g., both contra and Irish ceili)  
Combined dance with Scottish country dancing group. Combined with a Baroque dance group. Combined with a classic rock band. Cindy Culbert & Lisa Brown, Country Dancers of Rochester
- Hosting CDSS Board and/or Centennial Tour events
- Residential camps
- Concerts
- Fundraiser events
- Workshops (e.g., for callers)

*DownEast Friends of the Folk Arts - deffa.org - collaborated on some workshops for callers and musicians in the past. Chrissy Fowler, Belfast Flying Shoes*

- **Dance weekends (e.g., at one venue; mini tour for dancers in one area)**  
*We run ContraShock together with Brooklyn Contra. Shoshana Silverman, Country Dance New York (CDNY)  
The Portland Roadhouse coordinates the Cascade Promenade with The Portland Megaband, and dances from Bellingham, WA to Roseburg, OR. The Portland Roadhouse*
- **Supporting festivals**
- **Morris meetings and practices**  
*This past year we also held a joint rehearsal over zoom with Ladies of the Rolling Pin to share skills and learn new dances. Nadia Gaya, Ring O'Bells Morris*
- **Morris team dance outs & tours**  
*We have historically met up and danced with Morris sides from all over the pacific northwest and internationally. Daniel Sabath, Sound and Fury Morris*

One group noted that they had a negative experience collaborating with another group in terms of issues with sharing of income.

### Coordinating schedules across groups

Approximately 20 respondents wrote about coordinating their schedules with other local groups. Often this was done to avoid conflicting dates within a particular region.

*We do schedule our dances not to conflict with others in Connecticut. [...] Anonymous*

*We try and avoid competing events with the Ridgewood, NJ, and New York City English dance groups. Paul Ross, Country Dancers of Westchester*

In other instances, organizers coordinated schedules so as to arrange tours for out-of-town talent or not book the same talent too frequently.

*We coordinate with neighboring dance groups so that we don't book the same callers/bands in the same year. Glenn Manuel, North Texas Traditional Dance Society*

*[...] We worked closely with Monterey to bring Joyride to our area for a weekend of workshops and dances. Linda Wahler, Traditional Dancers of Santa Cruz*

*In the past we have coordinated with Cocoa Beach Contra (now renamed Space Coast Contra) and Tampa Friends of Oldtime Dance to share touring bands which would play at our respective venues on a consecutive Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Cayley Buckner, Gainesville Oldtime Dance Society*

One morris team pointed out that many of their members also participate in other local events/groups such song groups, folk venues, etc. That Affiliate pointed out that it can be challenging for individuals to decide where their priorities lie when groups have events on the same day.

### Supporting each other's events through promotion and attendance

Approximately 35 respondents wrote about either promoting the events of other groups and/or attending their events as a way of providing support.

*We have a friendly cross-event-promoting relationship with the other contra dance organizations in the region; Syracuse, Rochester, and Binghamton. Sarah Schneider, Hands Four Dancers of Ithaca*

*[...] We also promote the Sacramento dance camp, Echo Summit, and help recruit participants etc. Lisa Frankel, Foothill Country Dancers*

In terms of promotion, Affiliates wrote about making announcements, sharing flyers, sending out information via email, and posting on websites.

*We help to promote English Country and Scottish dance in our area, although we are not directly affiliated. We promote other contra dances in Florida on our website and keep their flyers out. Jere Nicholson, Space Coast Contra Dance*

There were also many comments about organizers, and/or members of Affiliate groups attending the events of other groups.

*[...] We encourage our members to attend other area ECD events. Michael Self, Cincinnati English Country Dancers*

*[...] Dances held on different dates and get groups to carpool to other dances. Cilla Jones, Folk Music Society of Midland*

*[...] We hold balls to which members of other groups attend, and we travel to balls held by other groups. Linda Macdonald, Colonial Dance Club of Richmond*

A few groups pointed out that they provide tickets or special discounted rates for their events.

*CDSS and the Flurry plus about 60 smaller dance groups that promote and did tix giveaways for us. Anne Saunders, Falcon Ridge Folk Festival*

### Performing at the events of other groups

Approximately 15 respondents wrote about having groups perform at their events or that they perform at events hosted by other groups.

This included a handful of morris and clogging/step groups that perform at social dance events. One noted that morris teams would use these performances as a way to recruit new members.

*[...] having demonstrations with local cloggers and Morris dancers and MWS dancers. Donna Hunt, PATMAD (Philadelphia Traditional Music and Dance)*

*At times, we [our clogging group] have performed during contra and English country dances Philadelphia. Peggy Leiby, FiddleKicks*

Social dance groups also wrote about doing demonstration dances at events hosted by others.

*We've exchanged dance "demos" with other dance groups (Irish, tango, swing, etc.) L. Gordon, Charleston Folk*

A few respondents wrote about inviting local musicians to perform at their events, or sitting in other events.

*Many in FOWM make up the "back row" band at some Friday night dances at the Grange and the monthly dances at Fiddler's Green. Becky Shannon, Fiddle Orchestra of Western Massachusetts (FOWM)*

*The Belfast Bay Fiddlers - belfastbayfiddlers.org - often play for the culminating dances for school residencies; they and another group are hosting jam sessions for our outdoor events this year. [...] Chrissy Fowler, Belfast Flying Shoes,*

### Other forms of collaboration

Below is a list of other forms of collaboration listed by one, or a few Affiliates:

- Sharing of venue/space
- Sharing of equipment
- Callers and musicians being in regular communication
- Communication between Affiliates regarding topics such as hall rental, cancellation of events, etc.
- Fundraising support/providing grants/sponsoring events
- Providing insurance
- Overlap of organizers/board members

### Little to no collaboration

A few Affiliates commented that they did little to no collaboration. One respondent pointed out that they are fairly isolated geographically. Another pointed out there wasn't much interest in collaboration.

*I have tried to encourage cooperation with the local contra and square dance groups, but it seems members of each group enjoy doing what they are doing and aren't interested in doing other forms of dance. Tom Mack, Shenandoah Valley Civil War Era Dancers*

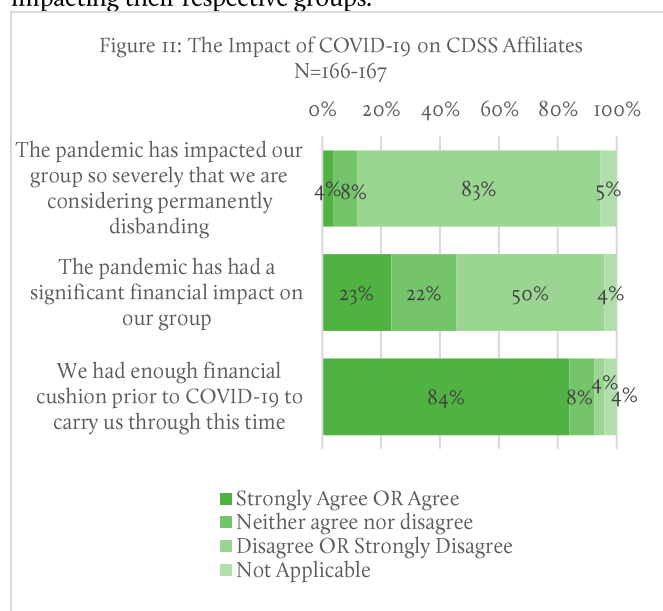
## 4: AFFILIATE RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Section 4 of the report focuses how Affiliates have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. We wanted to learn:

- The impact of the pandemic on Affiliates
- What groups have been doing during the pandemic
- What plans Affiliates have for holding in-person events
- What challenges Affiliates anticipate upon resuming in-person events
- Questions Affiliates currently have relating to the pandemic
- Affiliates' perception of how CDSS has responded to COVID-19

### THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON AFFILIATES (Q7)

Figure 11 illustrates how Affiliates perceive the pandemic impacting their respective groups.



### Overall, Affiliates are coping well

In general, Affiliates perceive their groups as weathering the pandemic relatively well. (Very little has shifted since we asked Affiliates the same questions in 2020.)

While 1/4 of question respondents noted that the pandemic had a significant financial impact on their group (i.e., 39 Affiliates), 84% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had enough financial cushion to carry them through this time. Only 4% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

### A few Affiliates are considering disbanding

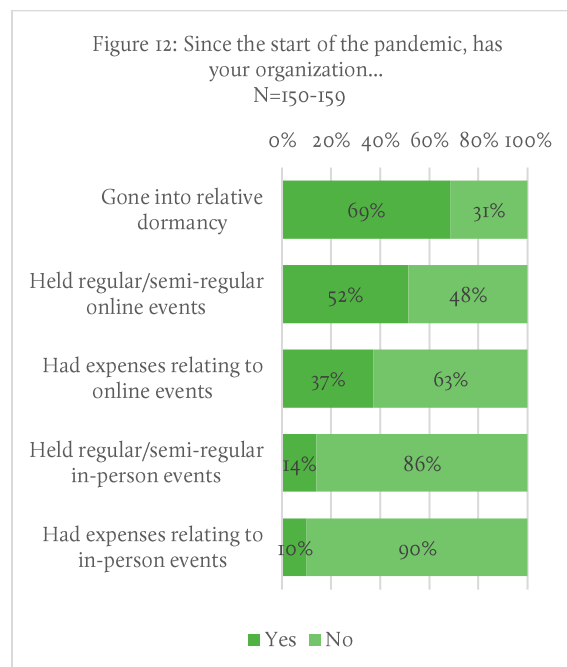
We asked Affiliates if the pandemic had impacted them so severely that they were considering permanently disbanding.

A small number of Affiliates are considering whether they will continue given the large disruption that the pandemic has caused (i.e., 2 Affiliates strongly agreed that they are considering permanently disbanding while another 4 agreed).

### AFFILIATE ACTIVITIES DURING THE PANDEMIC (Q6&7)

Last year, we asked Affiliates whether they had taken various actions since the beginning of the pandemic. This year, we asked those same questions and added a few more to learn about what Affiliates have been doing.

The majority of question respondents (69%) noted that they have gone into relative dormancy for the pandemic (see Figure 12). That being said, over 50% of respondents said that they had held regular or semi-regular online events and 14% noted that they had held regular or semi-regular in-person events.



### In-person events

Some Affiliates provided a brief description of their in-person events. While a handful mentioned holding social dance or song events, others held different types of events focused on maintaining social connections among community members (e.g., outdoor picnics). A few respondents mentioned concerts including one group that held hybrid concerts with both online and in-person attendees. A number of morris teams noted that their vaccinated members have been practicing outside at a distance.

## Online activities

Some Affiliates provided descriptions of their online events. Here are a few examples which illustrate the diversity of what has been happening online since the pandemic began:

- Occasional social gatherings (e.g., game nights, trivia, chat sessions)
- Weekly online dances
- Monthly committee meetings
- Online events that align with previous special events held throughout the year (e.g., un-winter feast)
- Staying in touch with the community through the occasional email/e-newsletter

*Had a few virtual dances during year. Board continued to meet [via Zoom], and Facebook maintained. But no other events possible. L. Gordon, Charleston Folk*

*This is on the line between "relative dormancy" and "semi-regular"; we have held two annual meetings over Zoom, with social time, and put on two live-streamed concerts with contra dance music. Not nothing, but not regular bi-monthly events, either. Sarah Schneider, Hands Four Dancers of Ithaca*

One Affiliate pointed out that they had hosted a few online events but the events hadn't worked well.

## Event-related expenses

Some groups had expenses for online and/or in-person events, although the percentage of groups with event-related expenses was less than the percentage of groups (see Fig 12). Approximately 30 Affiliates provided some insight into these expenses. Costs included:

- Zoom account
- Insurance
- Paying performers for cancelled events
- Paying performers for online events
- Facility rental fees for events - two Affiliates noted they continued paying for their facility even though they have not been holding events since the pandemic began

One ritual dance team noted that they have been saving money because they haven't had to rent practice space.

## Raising funds for Affiliates

2/3 of Affiliates have held at least one fundraiser and/or collected donations for their organization at some point during the pandemic. Approximately 25 Affiliates provided insight into how they raised funds. A few respondents mentioned:

- Collecting donations for online events
- Receiving grants from local foundations or art councils

The following sources of income were each mentioned once:

- Small monthly Patreon donation from one individual
- Having ticket costs donated after a cancelled event
- Collecting annual membership
- Collecting donations through a memorial event for a local community member who died of COVID-19
- Continuing a major fundraising campaign that had begun pre-pandemic but increasing the goal once the pandemic began

## Finding ways to support artists

Close to 1/3 of Affiliates agreed or strongly agreed that their group has found ways to continue supporting artists during the pandemic. We did not collect information on how Affiliates supported artists.

## Refocused work

During the pandemic, many Affiliates have shifted their attention away from regular events onto other business. For instance, approximately 1/2 of Affiliates agreed or strongly agreed that they have used the pandemic time to brainstorm new ideas for their group. In addition, approximately 1/3 of Affiliates agreed or strongly agreed that their organizing team has used the pandemic time to work on other aspects of their organization that have needed attention for a long time.

*[We have been] working with a marketing consultant on mission/vision and later on marketing, to increase dancer attendance. Piper Aune, Friends of Traditional Dance*

Approximately 1/5 Affiliates have offered training or learning opportunities for their organizing team sometime during the pandemic. Approximately 20 Affiliates made reference to learning opportunities. These included:

- Many mentions of CDSS Web Chats, sessions, and trainings
- Four mentions of learning related to anti-racism and equity (e.g., talk about the history of dance and its connections to racism, launching an anti-racism research group)
- A few mentions of learning how to hold successful online dances/events (e.g., tech, how to be a moderator)
- One mention of the Mt. Airy online seminars

In addition, a few Affiliates wrote about holding training for other members of their community including:

- Monthly morris jig workshops with instructors from throughout the US
- Training for callers
- Training for new dance musicians  
*We have focused energy on developing the house band and training new musicians to play dance music. Amy Hartman, San Antonio Contra Dancers*
- Online workshops on percussive dance styles
- Community learning on gender as it relates to ritual dance  
*We have also organized and held online panel discussions on topics including LGBTQ+ people in Morris dance and gender in Morris dance. Meg Dedolph, The Midwest Morris Ale Association*

## Other pandemic activities of note

Two Affiliates formed during the pandemic. One focuses on online activities only and the other is preparing for a future in-person event.

*Symmetry is only an online organization, came into being soon after other in person ECD shut down. Workshops were offered to callers to learn to call via Zoom. Luanne Stiles, Symmetry ECD*

*We actually formed during the pandemic, and will be holding our first event in November. Alex Sturbaum, Raise the Rafter [This Affiliate has since postponed their event due to COVID-19.]*



In addition, one Affiliate noted that their song community has grown substantially during the pandemic and that their group is thriving financially.

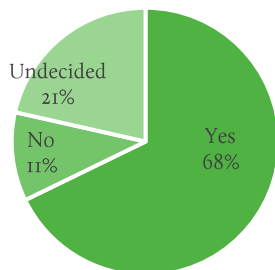
*Our dances stopped and have yet to restart. There is no online alternative being offered. Our concerts committee has held online concerts and has a mixture of remote and in-person events booked for the fall. Our song circle went 100% remote and grew in size considerably. It has been thriving. Square and family dances have gone completely dormant. We accepted donations but we then distributed them as grants to artists in need. Financially we are thriving. Amy Carroll, Seattle Folklore Society*

## PLANS FOR HOLDING IN-PERSON EVENTS IN 2021 (Q10)

As referenced in the previous section, 14% of respondents have already held regular or semi-regular in-person events (e.g., picnics; dance practices; concerts) since the pandemic began.

We asked Affiliates a separate question on whether they had plans for holding in-person events in 2021. Only 11% said no, while 89% said yes or that they were undecided (see Figure 13). Note that the data was collected in June and July prior to much of the increased concern regarding the COVID-19 Delta variant.

Figure 13: Does your group plan on holding any in-person events in 2021?  
N=167



As a follow-up, we asked Affiliates to provide us with a brief description about the events they planned on hosting. 124 Affiliates provided written responses.

### Plans for resuming social dance events

Approximately 70 respondents wrote about plans for resuming social dance gatherings. While some Affiliates had already begun holding dances, the majority wrote about planning to restart their dances in the summer or early fall. Some Affiliates sounded certain about their plans while others noted that it depended on hall availability, local health regulations, feedback from a community survey, and/or the COVID-19 numbers in their area.

*Our old dance location isn't up for hosting group events yet, but we had one dance (vaccination required) in July, are planning a weekend in August, and are planning another dance in September. (Also vaccination required for now.) Our July dance was well attended. Naomi Anderegg, Birmingham*

FOOTMAD [Note that the events in August and September were later cancelled.]

*If our venue allows, we will resume dancing, with multiple new rules in place (e.g. vaccines; masks). Cara King, Monrovia English Country Dancers*

*If our venue approves use of their parking lot for dancing we will host dances there in August and September with hopes of indoor dances Oct, Nov, Dec. Our venue is an elementary school. They have approved renewal of our rental agreement but are still not allowing non-school rentals. ContraDance Omaha Organizers*

*We are returning to our regular schedule of four dances per month in Sept as long as the pandemic doesn't worsen and guidance [doesn't] prohibit dancing. Jan Symons, Country Dancing in Kalamazoo [Upon touching base with Jan in October, she pointed out that their group has delayed the relaunching of their events until January.]*

Other Affiliates pointed out that they had planned on holding dance events but were now rethinking their plans or had decided not to restart given the Delta variant.

*When this survey first came out we would have answered "yes" but recent surges in Covid-19 variants have moved us to the undecided category. Michael Self, Cincinnati English Country Dancers*

*At this time, at the end of July it is looking unlikely that we will hold in person events anytime soon. We don't see how it can be done safely in this time of delta. Carl Morgan, Phoenix Traditional Music and Dance*

*We thought so but are now concerned. Janice Pearce, Lexington Vintage Dance [In early October, Janice provided more context: During this past summer, Lexington Vintage Dance returned to leading open (unmasked) community dances while requiring both COVID vaccinations and liability waivers. However, when the COVID numbers began looking bad in our state and in the county where we dance, we began requiring masks... when the numbers got even worse and ICUs began filling up, we returned to Zoom to lead our dances. So far, we are relieved that our strategy has worked to keep our dance community safe. (We are still dancing on Zoom, but we hope to return to in-person dancing in the near future when our county COVID numbers come down somewhat more.)]*

Given the comments shared by participants and the fact that that concerns about variants has increased significantly since the survey closed, it seems likely that many groups have rethought their plans for restarting events.

Two Affiliates mentioned that their organizing team has split opinions about whether to hold in-person events. One noted that roughly half of their board are 'COVID-19 deniers' and feel that dancing is perfectly safe. Another respondent pointed out that their board is having differing opinions on the matter and that one board member has been holding large private dances.

### Plans for resuming song & music events

Approximately one dozen Affiliates wrote about resuming concerts and/or participatory song events. This included mentions of holding both outdoor as well as distanced indoor concerts. Only a few groups mentioned holding participatory sings.

*Resuming in-person concerts and coffee houses in Sept, 2021. [...] In-person singalongs resumed in June 2021 with attendance consistent with pre-covid events. Gene Carbaugh, Three Rivers Folklife Society*

A few of groups who also organize dances pointed out that they were restarting concerts while holding off on dances.

*As of today, 7/6/21, we are only planning in-person outdoor concerts. Liz Nelson & Hannah Johlas, The Friends of Greenfield Dance*

Similar to dance, it's likely that some planned song events have since been cancelled. For instance, at the time of the survey, Raise the Rafter was planning their first song weekend, but it has since been postponed.

Only a few Affiliates mentioned holding in-person music sessions (e.g., jam sessions, music workshops.)

### Plans for resuming morris dance

Approximately 15 morris teams wrote that they had already started holding in-person events or that they were going to start shortly. There were many references to holding practices as well as some references to dance-outs, gigs, and performances.

*We have already started in-person practices and hope to have some in-person dance-outs in the fall. John Mayberry, Toronto Morris Men*

*In person dance practice. Gigs if we can get them. James Thayer, Moreton Bay Fig Morris*

There were also references to morris teams being engaged in:

- Morris community 'day of dance' in September
- Potluck picnic
- Planning an ale with some limitations

### Plans for holding larger events

Approximately 20 Affiliates wrote about planning larger events such as balls, weekends, festivals, and camps. There were no overarching themes coming out of the comments other than organizers were considering various precautions.

*We're planning on holding our dance weekend in November but limiting it to fully vaccinated participants. Tucson Friends of Traditional Music [The group since confirmed that their group has since cancelled the event given the latest surge in COVID-19]*

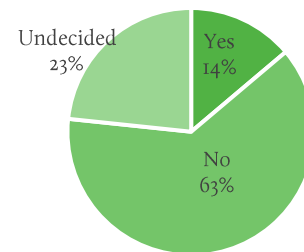
*A Day of Falcon Ridge - Sat July 31 at Goshen Fair Grounds - A one day socially distanced hybrid event with pod-seating. All state, local and CDC COVID guidelines will be followed. Anne Saunders, Falcon Ridge Folk Festival*

## HOLDING ONLINE EVENTS ONCE IN-PERSON EVENTS RESUME (Q9)

We asked Affiliates whether they had plans to continue holding online events once in-person events resume. 63% of respondents said no. 14% said that they would continue to hold online events and another 23% said that they were undecided (see Figure 14).

(It's important to keep in mind that 48% of Affiliates noted that they aren't holding online events right now so it's not surprising that there aren't many groups planning to continue online events once in-person events resume.)

Figure 14: Does your group plan on holding online events once in-person events are possible in your area?  
N=167



41 Affiliates provided written comments regarding the continuation of online events. Approximately 20 groups were planning on potentially continuing some fully online programming while 10 were considering a hybrid model.

### Fully online events

Examples of possible future fully online events include:

- Regularly scheduled or occasional social dances
- Weekly ritual dance practices
- Weekly tai chi
- Social chats
- Board/committee meetings

A few Affiliates mentioned that while their group wasn't going to continue organizing online events, one of their community members would be.

### Hybrid events

Examples of future hybrid events include livestreaming concerts or dances that will be held in-person. One group mentioned the idea of a hybrid song circle and a few others mentioned running hybrid camps or festivals.

*I believe our song circle will retain some remote participation options. Concert committee is considering how to keep some remote options open. Amy Carroll, Seattle Folklore Society*

### Reasons for continuing with online events:

Some Affiliates provided reasons for continuing online events. The reasons included that the events...

- Are popular/successful  
*We'll offer members the option of a monthly Zoom-based social in lieu of a regular Thursday dance and see what the responses are. Our socials during the pandemic were rather successful, so this is a distinct possibility. Paul Ross, Country Dancers of Westchester*
- Allow for talent who live far away/face high visa costs to participate
- Maintain connections with dancers from other places
- Can include participants who aren't comfortable attending in person
- Could possibly help with weather-related cancellations

## Reasons for not continuing with online events

In addition to some respondents stating that their group would continue hosting online events, a handful of Affiliates noted that they have never held online events or they aren't planning to continue once in-person events resume. Reasons include:

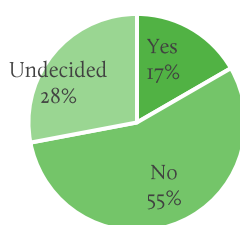
- Poor internet access
- Lack of community interest  
*We did some online 'social breaks' this spring, which were enlivening for us, but they were sparsely attended. We are not especially interested in hosting online events, mostly because the local community we serve is not clamoring for online activities. That said, one of our programs was virtual for a while (music lessons via video conference) and we're recording some outdoor concerts for local broadcast and online platforms, in part so they'll be available on demand.* Chrissy Fowler, Belfast Flying Shoes
- Online events taking a lot of effort to organize  
*The events we held (May Day 2020, a "Morris Beer Tasting" and our "Winter Solstice Program" - a mix of pre-recorded pieces and a live Mummings Play) were successful but a huge effort compared to in-person. We hope not to have to recreate that again.* Alan Peel, Foggy Bottom Morris Men
- Generally not successful

## MAKING CHANGES TO IN-PERSON EVENTS (Q8)

As part of learning about the impacts of the pandemic, we asked Affiliates whether they were planning changes to the type of in-person events they had been offering pre-pandemic (e.g., offer fewer programs, different types of dance).

Over half of respondents weren't planning any changes while 17% said that they were planning changes and 28% were undecided (see Figure 15).

Figure 15: Going forward, does your group plan to change the type of in-person events you offer as compared to what you offered pre-pandemic (e.g., offer less program; different types of dance)?  
N=168



We asked Affiliates who said yes to tell us about the changes. 57 Affiliates provided a written response.

## Covid-specific changes

While we didn't consider this question applying to COVID-19 safety protocols, a large number of respondents wrote how COVID-19 would impact the way in which they run their regular events. For instance, approximately 10 Affiliates wrote about requiring proof of vaccination and another 10 wrote about holding their events outdoors. One or a few Affiliates each mentioned the following changes:

- Modifying the dances so that there will be less contact

- Creating pod seating to limit contact
- Limiting the number of attendees
- Requiring masks
- Requiring a liability waiver
- Following local health guidelines

## Changes to dance programming

Approximately 10 respondents noted that they were considering changes their dancing programming. Specific changes included:

- Incorporating different dance forms into contra evenings (e.g., squares, triplets, mixers, etc.)  
*[...] We are very interested in offering more varieties of traditional folk dance/music, but at this time are still working on a plan to execute that goal.* Liz Nelson & Hannah Johlas, The Friends of Greenfield Dance  
*Not immediately, but in order to be a thriving organization, we need to be willing to try new types of dances.* Midge Olsen, Tapestry Folkdance Center
- Incorporating different types of dance moves
- Transitioning to gender-free calling
- Resuming in-person events by starting with percussive (solo dance) gatherings held outside
- Resuming with ECD as it seems to have less close physical contact

## Lowering the number of events

Approximately 15 Affiliates wrote about either cancelling one of their series or lowering the number of events they hold. In some instances, it sounded as though this would be a temporary measure while for others it sounded more permanent.

*We are reducing the number of dances until we get a sense of interest and [we] cancelled a struggling down on the East End of Long Island.* Herb Lape, LITMA (Long Island Traditional Music Association)

A few Affiliates noted that they would not be holding family dances, with one Affiliate pointing out that they will wait until children can be vaccinated.

One Affiliate noted that they wouldn't be holding their Saturday dances as they wanted to 'stay local' and limit expenses. Another pointed out that they were considering changing one of their two regular dance events into a virtual social since the gatherings had been popular during the pandemic.

## Other changes to in-person events

Approximately five Affiliates mentioned that they were considering holding hybrid in-person/virtual events.

A few Affiliates mentioned that they would shift how they run some of their regular events in order to meet dancers where they are (e.g., shorter evenings, shorter individual dances, longer breaks, slower tempos, and participants bringing their own refreshments).

*The CFOOTMAD Board and a caller's group have discussed changes to the contra dance evenings - much of it informed by CDSS's "Stepping up to the Mic" Common Time and all of the re-entry web chats: possibly shorter evenings; slower dance tempos; more frequent breaks and more time between each*

*dance, to allow folks to catch their breath and socialize; incorporating different dance forms into our contra evenings (squares, triplets, mixers, etc.)* Christa Torrens, Colorado Friends of Old Time Music and Dance

## ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES UPON RESUMING IN-PERSON EVENTS (Q11)

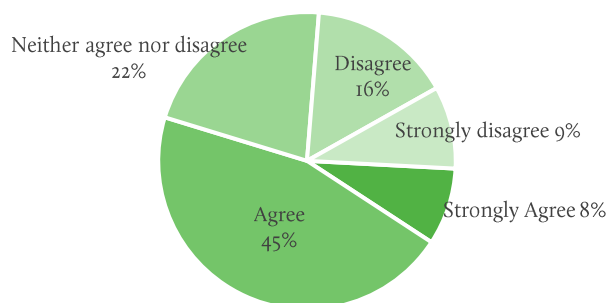
Affiliates were asked to list up to three challenges that they anticipate their group facing once in-person activities resume. 159 of the 170 survey respondents provided at least one response to this question. Of those, 51 listed two and another 77 listed three.

Many of the common challenges listed in 2021 were also mentioned by Affiliates in 2020 and are similar to some of the challenges that Affiliates were facing prior to the pandemic.

### Lower attendance

As in 2020, the most common concern shared by Affiliates was the possible drop in attendance once in-person events resume. Approximately 3/4 of the question respondents anticipate that this will be a challenge. Earlier in the survey, Affiliates were asked about this same concern as part of a rating question regarding the pandemic. 53% agreed or strongly agreed that they were concerned that participants would not return post-pandemic while another 22% took a neutral position. 25% were not concerned (i.e., disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement) (see Figure 16).

Figure 16: We are concerned that participants will not return to our activities post-pandemic  
N=167



Of the 159 Affiliates who wrote about anticipated challenges relating to resuming in-person events, approximately 125 Affiliates wrote about concerns relating to lower attendance. A wide range of related challenges were identified.

### Past participants not returning:

Many Affiliates listed reasons that participants might not return. These include:

- General hesitancy to resume in-person events, especially those involving close contact  
*Overcoming everyone's hesitancy about in-person events (including our own).* Alex Sturbaum, Raise the Rafters  
*Possible low attendance due to pandemic-related fears, real or perceived.* Alan Kanaskie, Salem Folklore Community

*People not being comfortable returning to a traditional contra dance (no hand-holding or close breathing).* Kay Bidwell Loberg, Door County Folk Alliance

- Individual risk-profiles relating to COVID-19  
*The concern that many current dancers will not be returning, even if permitted by the authorities, due to individual risk profiles.* Julie Bishop, President, Old Sod Folk Music Society of Ottawa
- Proof of vaccination being required, concerns about the vaccine status of others  
*Attendance – we can't know if we'll lose some folks or for what reasons (age, vaccination status, or mistrust of others vaccination status).* Celia Ramsay, Lark Traditional Arts
- Participants having found other activities to do instead  
*Loss of dancers who have drifted away from the hobby.* Downtown Amherst Contra Dance
- Travel barriers associated with the pandemic  
*People attending the Ale come from all over the U.S. and Canada, and sometimes the U.K. as well.* Rachel Diamondstone, Marlboro Morris Ale Association
- Lower physical ability caused by inactivity during the pandemic  
*Several older members may not return due to losing over a year of practicing.* Jinny Mason, Wake Robin Morris [Jinny provided an update at the time of report publication: *Their team had since discussed that while they aren't as athletic as before, everyone wanted to find or create a tradition that was easier on bodies so they could all keep dancing.*]
- Participants having moved, aged out, or passed away  
*Possible reduction in members (age and stamina-related).* Teachers Committee, Village Green English Dancers  
*Attrition among dancers and callers – we know of dancers who have passed away or moved, as well as folks who have simply found other things to do with their evenings.* Christa Torrens, Colorado Friends of Old Time Music and Dance

### Attracting new participants:

Some Affiliates wrote about the challenge of attracting and incorporating new participants.

*Providing extra training for beginners in a context where it may be even harder to schedule additional time or to find a location to hold such training.* Ruth Olmsted, Pokingbrook Morris

A few Affiliates wrote about needing to promote their events effectively.

*Drawing new folks without drawing negative attention. We want to draw folks who are relatively risk averse, to an activity that at first glance would appear to be risky, without them having a negative perception of us for putting on a risky event. Which is tricky....* Naomi Anderegg, Birmingham FOOTMAD

### Other possible challenges regarding attendance:

Many Affiliates made a connection between low attendance and financial implications for their groups (see separate section on finances). In addition, one Affiliate pointed out the possible impact of lower attendance on the feel of their events.

*Will enough dancers come back to make for a fun and profitable dance?* Jere Nicholson, Space Coast Contra Dance



One Affiliate pointed out that COVID-19 would exacerbate the issue they already had with low attendance—an issue that we know has been the most common concern since we began surveying organizers in 2017.

*Insufficient attendance, (which was already somewhat of an issue before covid, but likely exacerbated).* L. Gordon, Charleston Folk

## COVID-19 protocols

Approximately 3/4 of Affiliates wrote about the challenges associated with COVID-19 protocols.

### Specific protocols that were mentioned included:

- Verifying vaccination status
- Signing waivers
- Wearing masks
- Controlling attendance (e.g., pre-registration)
- Sorting out how to travel safely
- Allowing for extra space (e.g., seating)
- Handwashing
- Cleaning the venue before and after events

Some Affiliates mentioned the need to adhere to government guidelines.

*Adhering to COVID standards including local standards stricter than national ones.* Bob Crone, Contra Dancers of Hawaii

One Affiliate raised the question of whether it is worth resuming events given the required safety protocols.

*Deciding if whatever safety protocols must be implemented at the time preclude us from offering our events the way we want them to be offered.* Patty McCollom, The Living Tradition

### Concerns with creating protocols:

Affiliates are concerned with how to create the protocols. Respondents pointed out that...

- It can be challenging to find agreement among committee members regarding what protocols to use
- Organizers are unsure about how to set protocols up in a legal and fair way  
*Ongoing negotiation of health and safety issues. Legally and fairly.* L. Gordon, Charleston Folk
- It's challenging when safety protocols are constantly changing
- It's challenging when government laws do not support the protocols that groups want to create  
*We are unable due to a new state law to require attendees to be vaccinated.* Vicky Morrison, Tallahassee Community Friends of Old Time Dance

### Concerns with implementing protocols:

Affiliates pointed out that in addition to creating protocols, the protocols must also be able to be implemented which can be challenging. For instance,

- It can be challenging to clearly communicate protocols to the wider community
- New protocols create additional work for volunteers and it can be challenging to find enough volunteers
- Groups need to figure out how to maintain accurate records (e.g., who has been vaccinated, waivers)

- For dances requiring vaccination, there is concern about how to best communicate with the non-vaccinated community members (e.g., how to manage conflict, what to do about children who can't be vaccinated)

*Dealing with dancers who are not vaccinated but want to dance. How to be friendly but firm regarding the vaccination requirement.* Piper Aune, Friends of Traditional Dance  
*Mediating conflicting COVID safety beliefs, as played out at the door, and on the dance floor.* Nelson Beavington, Vancouver Country Dance

*Dealing with musicians who want everyone at the dance to be vaccinated vs. bands who are not vaccinated themselves.* Anonymous

*Agreeing on COVID precautions, especially in the Contra group [organizers are in agreement but not all of the dancers agree.]* Pamela Weems, Traditional Austin Area Dance Association

### Other concerns relating to COVID-19 protocols include:

- The fact that some past participants won't attend events because of certain COVID-19 protocols (e.g., don't want to wear masks while dancing)
- How to deal with different levels of comfort among participants (e.g., how close dancers are during a ritual dance practice)

## The shifting nature of the pandemic

A handful of Affiliates wrote about challenges associated with the shifting nature of the pandemic. For instance, a few Affiliates mentioned the resurgence in COVID-19 cases at the start of the summer and how it can be challenging when regions re-impose restrictions or groups need to change the protocols they had previously created. Also, one Affiliate mentioned that breakthrough infections create uncertainty.

*The probability of re-imposed health restrictions in the event of a fourth wave.* Teachers Committee, Village Green English Dancers

*Making appropriate decisions concerning COVID response as variants arise.* Ellie Nowels, Big Scioto Contra Dance

## Finances

Approximately 30 Affiliates expressed concern about their group's finances as they resume in-person events. The vast majority of comments pointed out the challenge of making dances financially viable, especially if attendance is down.

*Lack of returning dancers will make some dances unviable.* North Bay Country Dance Society

*Financial strain if many dancers don't feel safe to come back but hall/talent costs are same as pre-pandemic.* Becky Liddle, Toronto Contra Dance

*Attracting a sufficient number of people to be financially viable.* John Pagliarulo, Hudson Valley Community Dances

*Possible economic impact if there are a substantial number of people who stay away when we begin dancing again.* Lisa Frankel, Foothill Country Dancers

A handful of Affiliates pointed out that the cost of renting venues (see next section). In addition, individual Affiliates mentioned the following:



- Needing to pay talent less if there aren't enough participants
- How to pay talent in California given the new AB5 law

## Venues

Approximately 40 Affiliates expressed concerns regarding venues. Half of those wrote about the challenge of finding an appropriate venue. Some lost their venue during the pandemic while others are looking for alternative spaces because their current space won't be available for a while or it doesn't feel like a safe space because of COVID-19.

*Finding a new hall. Our former one is no longer available and also is indoors.* Bob Crone, Contra Dancers of Hawaii

*We lost our venue during the pandemic. Struggling to find a new one.* Cliff White, Mid-Missouri Traditional Dancers

*Finding indoor space large enough for our orchestra. We are not sure if our past location will be available or when.* Becky Shannon, Fiddle Orchestra of Western Massachusetts (FOWM)

A few Affiliates wrote about the uncertainty of when their venue would become available.

*We don't yet know what our theater venue is going to allow this year.* Alan McArdle, Welcome Yule

A handful of Affiliates mentioned venue rental cost being a challenge including a few groups who noted that the rental cost has recently increased.

A handful of Affiliates wrote about their venue's COVID-19 rules and regulations (e.g., limiting number of participants, requiring masks)

*Current Hall health regulations require masks. Some dancers won't come because of mask requirement.* Rosemary Lach, Victoria English Country Dance Society

*We must follow the guidelines of the county that sponsors us and provides our dance venues.* Linda Macdonald, Colonial Dance Club of Richmond

A few Affiliates pointed out the need for better ventilation in their venue.

## Volunteers

Approximately 30 Affiliates expressed concerns regarding volunteers. Many comments focused on not having enough organizers and/or volunteers. This included a few who pointed out that they had lost members of their leadership team.

*Changes in our group's leadership (turnover, etc).* Michael Self, Cincinnati English Country Dancers

*Fewer volunteers to share organizing tasks.* Linda Wahler, Traditional Dancers of Santa Cruz

*Refresh our leadership, since current leaders have stepped down since the pandemic.* Paul Ross, Country Dancers of Westchester

Other Affiliates wrote about the increased tasks that volunteers will need to take on because of COVID-19 protocols as well as concerns about how volunteers can best implement the protocols (e.g., contract tracing; verifying vaccination status).

*[...] We have a very small group of volunteers, so adding an additional person on door to manage vaccination check, temperature check and contact sheet will be an issue.* Joanie Blanton, Shepherdstown Music and Dance

*Finding enough volunteers to do venue cleaning before and after dances.* John Hopson, Fiddle and Bow Country Dancers

One or a few Affiliates mentioned the following:

- Organizing and electing a board
- Building volunteer systems
- Ongoing challenges with not having a fully functioning committee
- Organizers being unable to meet the future with new and energized creativity

## Issues relating to talent

A handful of organizers wrote that they are worried about whether talent will return to perform once in-person events resume. Some Affiliates wondered whether this would lead to not having enough talent, or a lack choice of talent.

*Whether our regular musicians, callers, and sound technicians are still going to be interested.* Sarah Schneider, Hands Four Dancers of Ithaca

*Talent uncomfortable with performing.* J Joseph

*Reforming our in-house band which has disbanded although that's largely their responsibility.* Bob Crone, Contra Dancers of Hawaii

*A smaller group of possible performers to choose from at least in the near future until more people feel comfortable being with others in an indoor space.* Larry Koplik, Princeton Country Dancers

A handful of organizers expressed concern about talent pay. Comments reflected how communities may either need to pay less or may lose money for a period of time while they maintain their rate of pay but experience lower attendance.

One or a few Affiliates each mentioned the following:

- Dealing with talent who want everyone to be vaccinated as well as talent who aren't vaccinated
- Specific to California, how to pay talent given AB5
- Challenges relating to performer travel including having to cross national borders
- Needing to start with local talent
- Talent boycotting communities that are starting in-person events earlier than talent may deem safe
- Training new/younger talent
- Talent that cancel after an event has been advertised

## Liability

Approximately 10 Affiliates mentioned liability issues associated with resuming in-person events. Most concerns related to organizations/organizers potentially being exposed to COVID-19 related lawsuits and the lack of information on the risk that groups are assuming by hosting events.

One Affiliate mentioned the high cost of CDSS insurance and how that created financial hardships for their group.

## Community culture

A few of respondents wrote about challenges regarding community culture.

*Social interactions - being kind and patient as we all "relearn" how to dance, be among people again! Midge Olsen, Tapestry Folkdance Center*

They referred to the challenge of rebuilding community bonds after the pandemic and concerns about how to remain a welcoming community despite concerns about vaccination. One Affiliate pointed out that it was challenging to create a welcoming culture for everyone prior to the pandemic and that challenge would continue. Another pointed the challenge of combining online and in-person communities. Two Affiliates made specific mention to safety and community culture policies. This included how to implement codes of conduct and incident resolution procedures.

## Other challenges

Individual or a few Affiliates each mentioned the following:

- Deciding when to return to events; having to make decisions about larger weekend events far in advance
- Shifting role terminology (e.g., was in the process of shifting terminology prior to the pandemic and the break has complicated things)
- Challenges regarding travel
- Participants needing to refamiliarize themselves with routines/dances
- Declining fitness and skill
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Having to cut out the refreshment component of events, how to make serving food at events safe
- The psychological impact of distancing for a long time
- Dealing with many of the same challenges that existed prior to pandemic

## No anticipated challenges

Two Affiliates wrote that they do not anticipate challenges. In addition, 11 Affiliates didn't respond to this question – we don't know whether they anticipate challenges or not.

## AFFILIATE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PANDEMIC AND RESUMING IN-PERSON EVENTS (Q12)

As part of the survey, we asked Affiliates whether they have COVID-19/pandemic questions they would like help getting answered. We provided space for Affiliates to list up to three questions. 69 of the 170 survey respondents asked at least one question, 10 asked two and 12 asked three.

Similar themes emerged in 2021 when compared to the same question in the 2020 survey. Affiliates wanted to know about resuming in-person events, insurance and legal issues, and more. However, some of the specific questions changed. For instance, there were many more questions relating to vaccination (e.g., showing proof to enter events) as well as the use of participant waiver forms. The specific questions that Affiliates asked are listed below.

## Questions about vaccines as they relate to in-person events

Over 1/3 of respondents had questions about vaccines as they relate to in-person events, making it the most common topic that Affiliates wanted to learn about.

Affiliates repeatedly asked about guidelines for requiring proof of vaccination for event entry. For instance,

- Can we mandate vaccinated people only? Is this legal?
- Are we allowed to require seeing vaccination cards?
- What is CDSS's opinion on requiring vaccination?
- What is a realistic framework for keeping track of proof of vaccination?
- Do we have to follow venue requirements for vaccinations?

*What are we legally allowed to ask for in regard to proof of vaccination, and what is a realistic framework for keeping track of vaccination proof? Liz Nelson & Hannah Johlas, The Friends of Greenfield Dance*

Many of Affiliates wanted to hear what other groups were doing about proof of vaccination.

A number of Affiliates also asked about how they should communicate with their unvaccinated community members.

- How do we enforce vaccination requirements without confrontation?
- How do we deal with public relation issues such as criticism for only allowing vaccinated participants?

*How to respond to criticism for only allowing participants with proof of vaccination. John Gintell, Lavender Country & Folk Dancers*

The following questions were asked by one or a few respondents:

- Are organizers allowed to ask hired talent if they are vaccinated?
- How do we balance inclusivity of different kinds (e.g., safety for at-risk individuals vs. people who can't/won't get vaccinated)?
- What options do groups have if they don't want to check vaccine status?
- What are the pro and cons of allowing non-vaccinated participants to attend if they have a negative PCR test?
- What can our community do to encourage people to get vaccinated?

*What can we as a community do to further encourage vaccination, so that we can all reach herd immunity? Downtown Amherst Contra Dance*

## Questions about insurance and liability

Insurance and liability were the second-most common topic of interest for Affiliates.

The most common questions relating to insurance and liability focused on waiver forms. Specific questions included:

- How important are waivers? What is their value? What is their validity?
- Can CDSS to prepare a legally examined waiver form?
- What should be included in a waiver?

- How do we create forms that (1) hold our group harmless if participants contract COVID-19 at a dance and (2) requires participants to notify us if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 within two weeks of an event?
- How long will waivers be needed?

One Affiliate wrote that the CDSS website provided helpful information about waivers.

Other questions about insurance/liability were each asked by one or a few respondents:

- How do we best to avoid exposing our organization to COVID-19 related liability?
- What level of exposure risk is acceptable?
- How can we keep up with the changing landscape around liability?
- What happens if someone sues an organization/board because of COVID-19?
- Is there a history of any organizations being held responsible for someone getting sick following exposure at an event?
- How will CDSS's insurance coverage change due to the pandemic and does CDSS's plan cover exposure at events?
- Does CDSS have insurance options to protect board members and volunteers from COVID-19 related liability?

### General questions about holding safe events

Just under 1/3 of respondents asked more general questions about how to hold in-person events in a safe way. For instance:

- When will it be safe to hold events again, especially with new variants?
- How do we make events safe without sacrificing joy?
- What are general guidelines to hold a safe event? What are other groups doing about this?  
*What are other dance organizations doing in terms of health safety measures? Alan Kline, San Francisco Bay Queer Contra Dance*
- How do we use public health expertise to guide us towards a full return to 'normal'?
- What does research show as necessary protocol for safe contra dancing? Safe singing? Safe playing of instruments?  
*What does current research show as to wind instruments being played and people singing indoors? Patricia McCollom, The Living Tradition*
- If a regularly occurring event restarts, how do organizers know when and why to stop the event again?

### Scientific questions about the virus

A handful of scientific questions about the virus were asked by individual respondents. The questions included:

- Is it possible to trace a COVID-19 spread back to a small group/class?
- What percentage of unvaccinated people in a room, if any, is safe?
- Can a vaccinated individual transmit the disease?
- How has the Delta variant changed the advice that has been shared thus far?

- How high does local vaccine uptake need to be before it's safe to open events to the public?

### Questions about masks

Masks were mentioned by five Affiliates. They asked:

- How do we manage masking guidelines?
- How do we enforce masking without confrontation?
- What masks are most wearable and effective for dancing?
- As COVID-19 rates rise, when should we require masks for vaccinated participants?
- How do we decide that indoor events are no longer safe with or without masks?

### Questions about venues

A few Affiliates asked questions about venues.

- How do we increase air circulation in an indoor venue?
- How do we negotiate rentals?

### Other questions

The following questions were each asked by one or a few participants:

- How do we decide what to do as a group given all the information and advice?
- How do we plan events that need a lot of advanced planning?
- How do we safely make and serve food at events?
- What legally defines a 'public' versus 'private' event in specific jurisdictions?
- Is there a list of callers and bands that are currently active?
- How do we attract people who are eager to participate but are concerned about safety?
- How do participants feel about attending larger events (e.g., morris teams attending ales)?

One Affiliate pointed out that they don't have any questions right now but would like to know how to submit questions if anything comes up.

### Preferred sources of information

In addition to asking questions, some Affiliates referenced their preferred sources of information.

Approximately 10 Affiliates mentioned CDSS. This included positive comments about the information CDSS has been providing throughout the pandemic (e.g., Web Chats on re-entry). A few Affiliates asked for CDSS's opinion or direct guidance on certain topics (e.g., waiver template; whether participants should be required to be vaccinated).

Approximately 10 Affiliates wanted to hear what other groups are doing on a wide range of COVID-related topics.

A handful of Affiliates each mentioned the following:

- Wanting or using research on specific topics
- Using government directives (e.g., CDC, public health, provincial regulations)

Two Affiliates mentioned having access to expertise within their community.

## Affiliates with no questions

21 Affiliates wrote that they didn't have any questions. Another 101 of the survey respondents didn't answer this specific question.

## AFFILIATE PERCEPTIONS OF CDSS'S RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC (Q7)

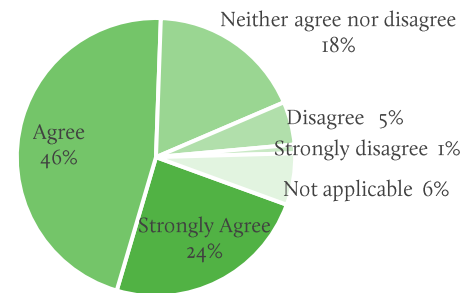
As part of gaining an understanding as to whether CDSS has been able to meet the needs of Affiliates, we asked Affiliates about the degree to which they feel CDSS had provided information and resources that had been helpful to their group during the COVID-19 crisis. This question was also asked on the 2020 survey when we were only 3-4 months into the pandemic.

Responses shifted between the 2020 and 2021 (see Figure 17) with a clear trend towards Affiliates finding CDSS's response helpful.

- **Positive:** In 2021 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that CDSS had provided helpful information and resources relating to the pandemic crisis. In 2020, 49% agreed or strongly agreed.
- **Neutral:** In 2021, 18% held a neutral opinion while in 2020 32% neither agreed nor disagreed.

- **Negative:** In both years, few respondents felt that CDSS hadn't been helpful during the crisis (i.e., 6% in 2021 and 7% in 2020 disagreed or strongly disagreed with the question statement).
- **Not applicable:** In 2021, 6% selected that the statement was not applicable to them; in 2020, 11% did the same.

Figure 17: The percentage of Affiliates that agree with the following statement: CDSS has provided information and resources that have been helpful to our group during this crisis  
N=166



## 5: CDSS'S RELATIONSHIP WITH AFFILIATES

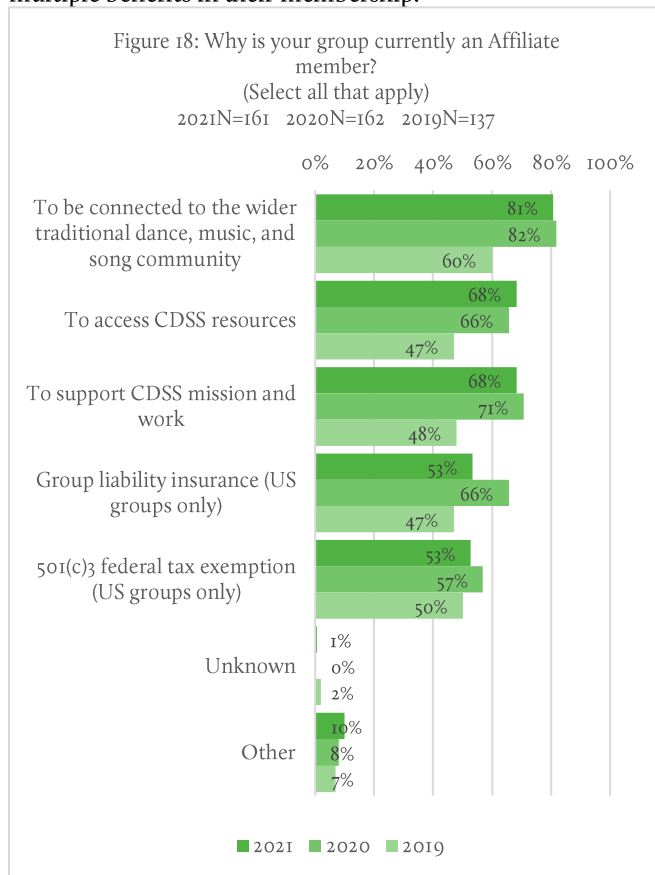
Section 5 provides insight into Affiliates' perceptions of their relationship with CDSS.

### REASONS FOR BEING AN AFFILIATE (Q16)

Since the annual Affiliate survey began in 2019, we have asked groups why they are currently an Affiliate member of CDSS.

While there some big differences between 2019 and 2020 responses, there were relatively few changes between 2020 and 2021 (see Figure 18). The biggest change was a drop of 7% of Affiliates selecting that they are currently an Affiliate because of the group liability insurance (available to US groups only).

The reason most commonly stated for being an CDSS Affiliate was 'to be connected to the wider traditional dance, music, and song community'. However, as in previous years, the vast majority of respondents selected more than one reason that they are an Affiliate suggesting groups see multiple benefits in their membership.



16 respondents provided written responses to the 'other – please specify'. Some of the comments echoed options provided in the question. For instance:

*Because morris dancing is part of the culture of CDSS and we wish to be part of the community.* Jinny Mason, Wake Robin Morris

*To be involved in assisting CDSS in fulfilling their mandate.* Teachers Committee, Village Green English Dancers

*What amazing opportunities CDSS has provided throughout the Pandemic to see/hear and learn from other dancers/organizers/and talent throughout the country.* Mary Beth Emerton, Dancing Bears Inc.

In addition, one or a few respondents mentioned the following reasons for being an Affiliate:

- Camp scholarships
- Grants
- Name recognition
- Inclusion in CDSS directory
- Discounts in the store
- CDSS Newsads
- Caller's insurance

A few Affiliates pointed out that they have community members who are individual members of CDSS.

### COMMITTEE ENGAGEMENT WITH CDSS EVENTS (Q28)

As in 2020, we asked respondents about the degree to which Affiliate organizers engage with CDSS's in-person events. This was to gain a sense of whether Affiliates have had face-to-face contact with CDSS in the recent past (i.e., five years).

In 2020, the response rate for this particular question was a bit low. It had been phrased as an 'opt in if yes' question so we couldn't tell if the lack of responses were because Affiliates hadn't attended CDSS events or whether they had simply skipped the question. This year, we framed the question as a 'yes/no/don't know' and had a much higher response rate. Figure 19 illustrates the Affiliates who said that members of their committee had engaged with in-person CDSS events.

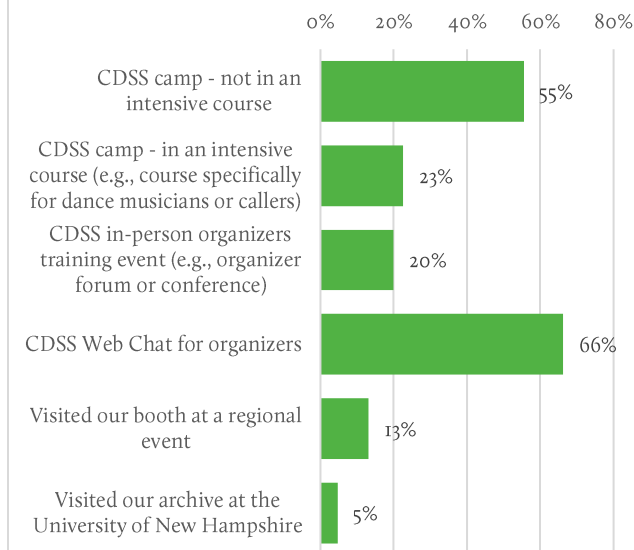
In looking at this data, it's important to remember that we haven't been able to easily gather for 1.5 of the last 5yrs and so there has been somewhat of a limited opportunity for Affiliates to have interacted with CDSS in-person.

66% of Affiliates have had at least one of their organizers attend a Web Chat, the most common form of face-to-face interaction with CDSS over the past five years. Camps is the second most common with 55% of Affiliates having had an organizer attend CDSS camp (non-intensive course).

20% of Affiliates have had at least one organizer attend in-person training events for organizers even though there has only been one in-person organization gathering in the past five years (i.e., Lady of the Lake Forum in 2019). Likely some of these respondents are thinking back to Puttin' On The Dance in 2015 as well as the SW conference in 2014.



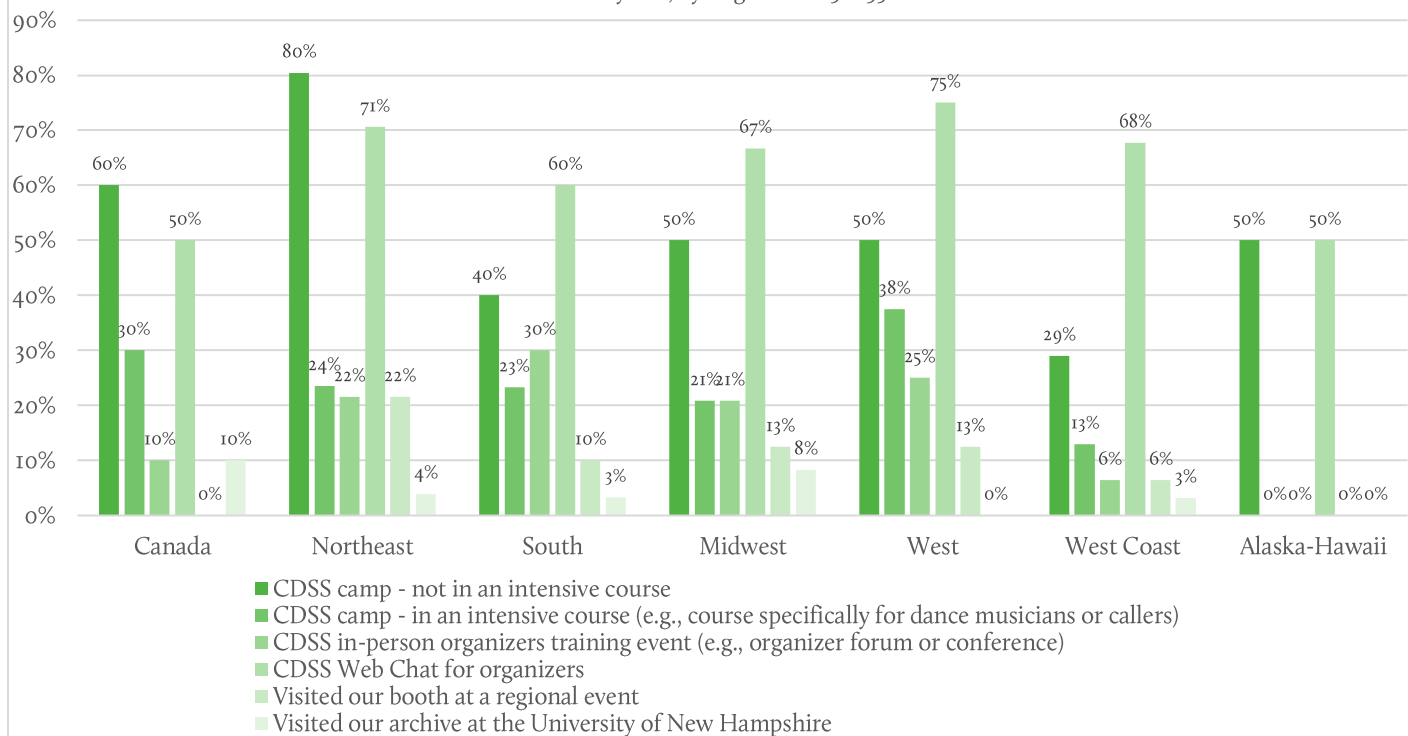
Figure 19: Percentage of Affiliate who have had a member of their organizing committee attend CDSS events within the last five years N=151-155



A few respondents wrote comments in the 'other – please specify'. Individual comments included:

- It's difficult for Affiliates in the West to attend CDSS events when most are held in the East
- Hosted a CDSS Board meeting with associated events
- Have a CDSS Board member as part of their local organization

Percentage of Affiliates who have had a member of their organizing committee attend CDSS events within the last five years, by Region N=151-155



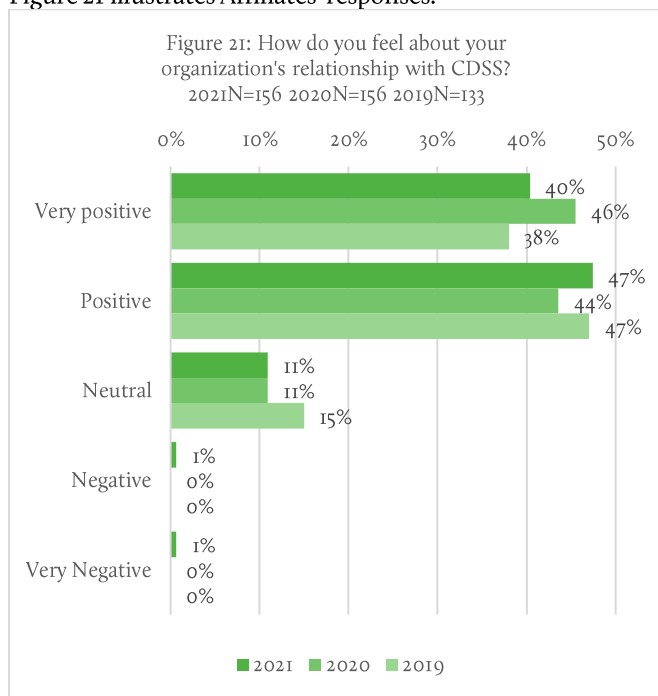
Some highlights include:

- The Northeast had, by far, the highest percentage of Affiliate organizers attending camp. However, other regions such as the West and Canada were more likely to have organizers attend camp intensive courses than Affiliates in the Northeast
- For many regions (i.e., South, Midwest, West, West Coast), the Web Chats seem to be the easiest way for Affiliate organizers to engage face-to-face with CDSS
- Very few Affiliates from any region have visited the CDSS archive or a CDSS booth at a regional event
- Despite only having held one in-person organizer training event in the last five years, CDSS in-person organizer training events were mentioned by 1/5 or more of Affiliates in the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West

### AFFILIATE FEELINGS ABOUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH CDSS (Q30)

As in 2019 and 2020, we asked Affiliates how they feel about their organization's relationship with CDSS. (This question was positioned as one of the last three questions of the survey so that Affiliates' previous reflections could provide context for their response.)

Figure 21 illustrates Affiliates' responses.



Level of satisfaction was relatively consistent across the past three years. The vast majority of Affiliates feel very positive or positive about their organization's relationship with CDSS (87% in 2021). This year was the first year where there were negative sentiments expressed through this question. One respondent had a negative response regarding their Affiliate's relationship with CDSS and another had a very negative response.

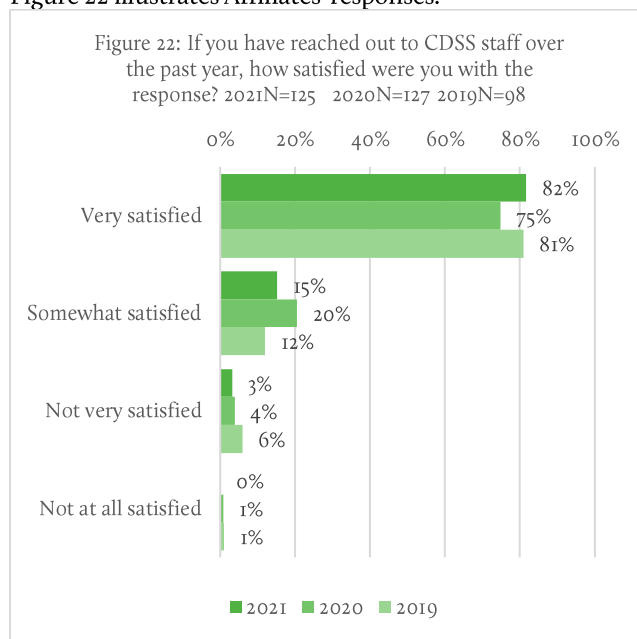
A handful of Affiliates wrote written responses along with their rating. Individual comments included:

- Members of the Affiliate are individual CDSS members
- Glad to be an Affiliate
- General support for CDSS camps as a place to foster broader appreciation of morris dance
- Could be using CDSS resources more
- Affiliate has opportunities to offer but they aren't always accepted by CDSS
- Sometimes it's hard to know how Affiliate fits in given the size and variety of the 'CDSS machine'

### AFFILIATE SATISFACTION WITH CDSS'S CUSTOMER SERVICE (Q29)

As in 2019 and 2020, we asked Affiliates if they had reached out to CDSS staff over the past year, how satisfied they were with the response. (This question was positioned as one of the last three questions of the survey so that Affiliates' previous reflections could provide context for their response.)

Figure 22 illustrates Affiliates' responses.



Level of satisfaction was relatively consistent across the past three years. The vast majority of Affiliates are very satisfied with staff response. This year, four Affiliates were not very satisfied and zero Affiliates were not at all satisfied.

26 Affiliates provided a written response in the 'comments' box. Approximately half were positive comments and half included concerns or suggestions for improvement.

Positive comments mostly focused on staff's prompt response in answering questions and dealing with issues

*Staff always come to my aid when I can't get through on the submissions, whether it be listing our event, or getting the ad done right. Maxine Louie, Toronto English Country Dance Assembly*

*Very satisfied with all phone interactions with Staff. Thank you All! Mary Beth Emerton, Dancing Bears Inc.*

Negative comments tended to focus on lack of prompt response.

*Would appreciate having emails acknowledged promptly.*  
Anonymous

*Most times very satisfied; but a couple of times the response has not been timely and required multiple contacts.*  
Anonymous

*Follow-up has sometimes been lacking. Getting connected to someone has been difficult.* Ric Goldman, Portland Country Dance Community

Additional concerns mentioned by individual Affiliates included:

- Asked for special insurance rates for smaller groups with few events as well as reduced membership for struggling clubs
- Lack of support regarding an Affiliate's concern about falling ECD standards
- Lack of response regarding a suggested terminology change
- Dissatisfaction about high postal rates to Canada
- Directors and Officers insurance not offered through CDSS

## 6: CDSS COMMUNICATION WITH AFFILIATES

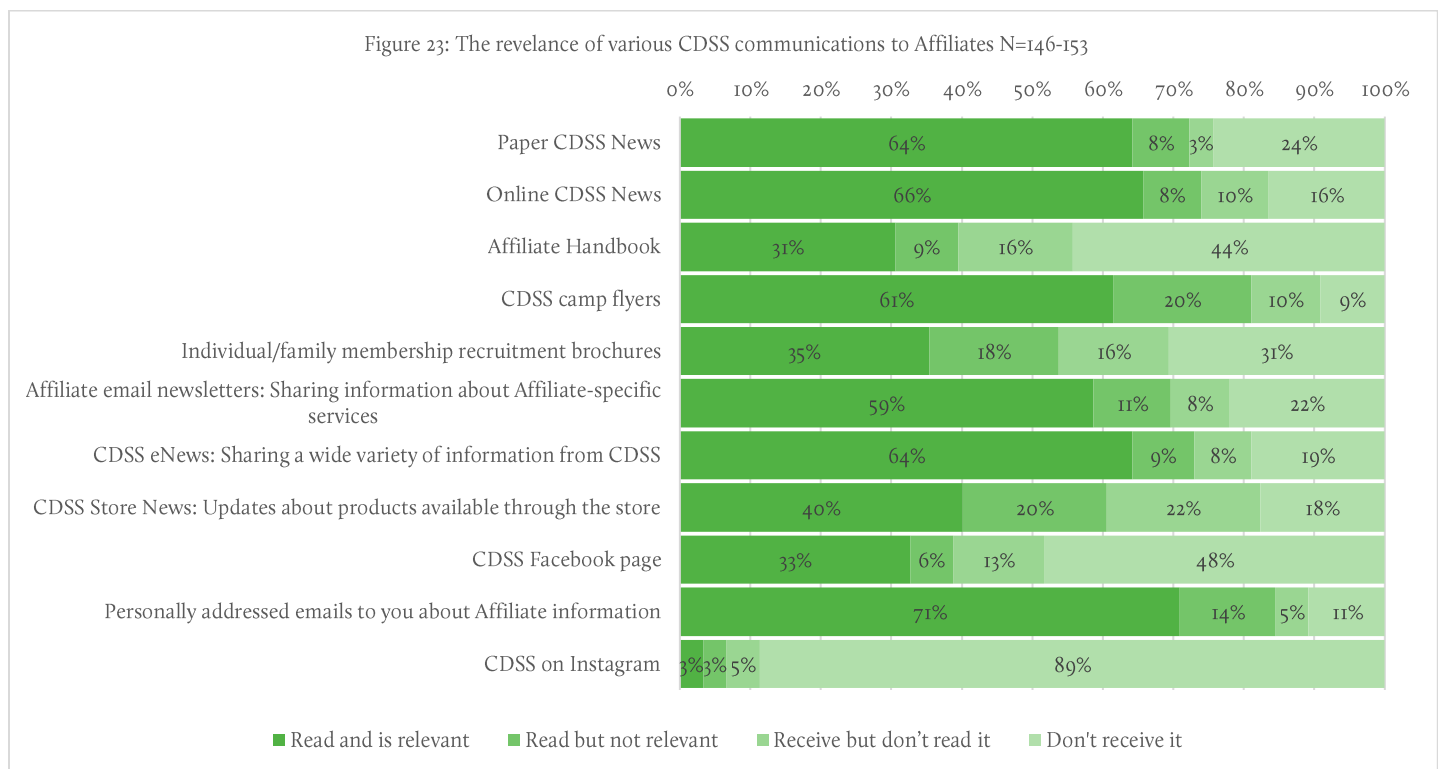
Section 6 provides insight into Affiliates' perception of CDSS's communication

### THE RELEVANCE OF CDSS'S COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS FOR AFFILIATES (Q17)

In 2021, we asked Affiliates about the relevance of CDSS's various communication platforms. The same question was asked in 2020 with the exception of a few minor changes. The changes included:

- Changed "CDSS E-Newsletter: Sharing a wide variety of information from CDSS" to "CDSS eNews: Sharing a wide variety of information from CDSS"
- Removed *Shop Talk* email newsletters: *Sharing information specifically about organizer resources* as *Shop Talk* was discontinued

Figure 23 illustrates whether various channels are read and relevant, read but not relevant, not read, or whether Affiliates don't receive the material.



There were some changes between the 2020 and 2021 results but most were minor in nature. Also, there is also a much higher percentage of survey respondents in 2021 that are either the CDSS general contact or additional contact meaning that they are designated to receive CDSS communications for Affiliates.

The following five communication channels were identified as *read and relevant* by the highest proportion of question respondents (Table 3):

Table 3: Communication platforms deemed 'read and relevant'	% of respondents
Personally addressed emails to you about Affiliate information	71%
Online CDSS News	66%
Paper CDSS News	64%
CDSS eNews: Sharing a wide variety of information from CDSS	64%
CDSS Camp flyers	61%

These are the same top items as in 2020, although in a slightly different order. Still, personally addressed emails was the form of communication most likely to be read and found relevant.



The following five communication platforms were identified as not being received by the greatest number of question respondents:

Table 4: Communication platforms deemed 'not being received'	% of respondents
CDSS on Instagram	89%
CDSS Facebook page	48%
Affiliate Handbook	44%
Individual/family membership recruitment brochures	31%
Paper CDSS News	24%

The top three items on this list were also the top three items in 2020.

#### Other highlights include:

- The most effective way to reach Affiliates is through writing personally addressed emails
- A substantial number of Affiliates aren't receiving core Affiliate communications
- A substantial number of Affiliates don't find the CDSS Camp flyers (20%) or Individual/family membership brochures (18%) relevant even though they read them
- The CDSS News and general CDSS eNews are each read by over 70% of respondents

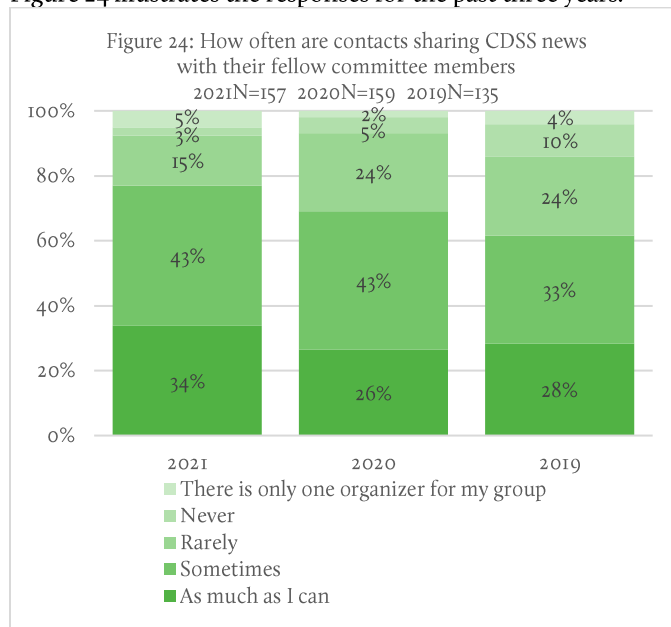
### THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH AFFILIATE CONTACTS SHARE INFORMATION WITH THEIR FELLOW COMMITTEE MEMBERS (Q18)

CDSS has up to three email contacts for each Affiliate - General Contact Person (GCP), Additional Contact Person (ACP), and Financial Contact Person (FCP). Sometime Affiliates have three different names listed while others only have one name/email on file. Print materials are sent to the GCP and most of the electronic correspondence goes to the GCP and ACP. The FCP receives renewal and 501c3 reporting information.

We have been curious about the degree to which the GCP and/or ACP share information with their fellow committee members and so we have asked about this over the past three years. In 2020, we changed the question in order to reflect that the person filling out the survey may not be the 'general contact' for the Affiliate. We also added a preamble to emphasize our hope that Affiliates would share information. (We realize that this builds in bias to the question.)

*We believe that CDSS can bring greater value to Affiliates if we have strong channels of communication with Affiliate organizing teams. How often do you, or the Affiliate representative, share information from CDSS with your organizing committee? (e.g., forwarding CDSS Affiliate e-blasts, sharing news about matching scholarships)*

Figure 24 illustrates the responses for the past three years.

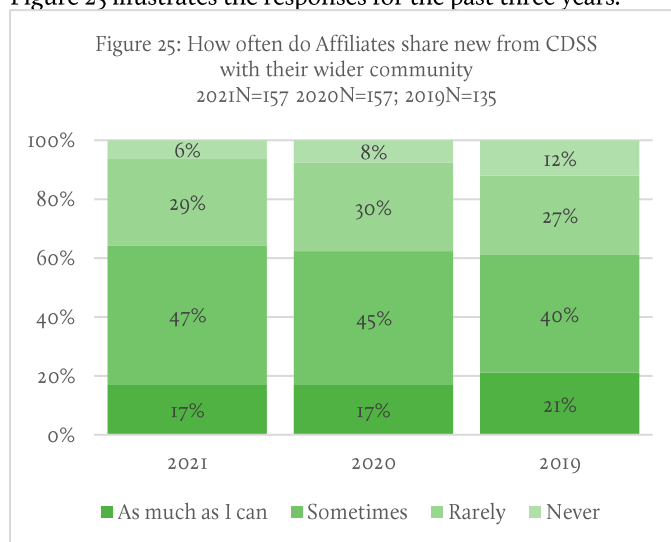


There has been some increase in the percentage of Affiliate representatives who say that they share CDSS information as much as they can (i.e., 26% in 2020 34% in 2021). There has been a corresponding decrease in the percentage of Affiliate representatives who rarely or never share information with their fellow organizers (i.e., 29 in 2020; 18% in 2021).

### THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH AFFILIATES SHARE INFORMATION WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES (Q19)

In addition to communicating with organizers, CDSS wants to reach out and share resources and information with the wider Affiliate communities. As with Q18, we added a preamble to Q19 to emphasize our hope that Affiliates would share information.

Figure 25 illustrates the responses for the past three years.



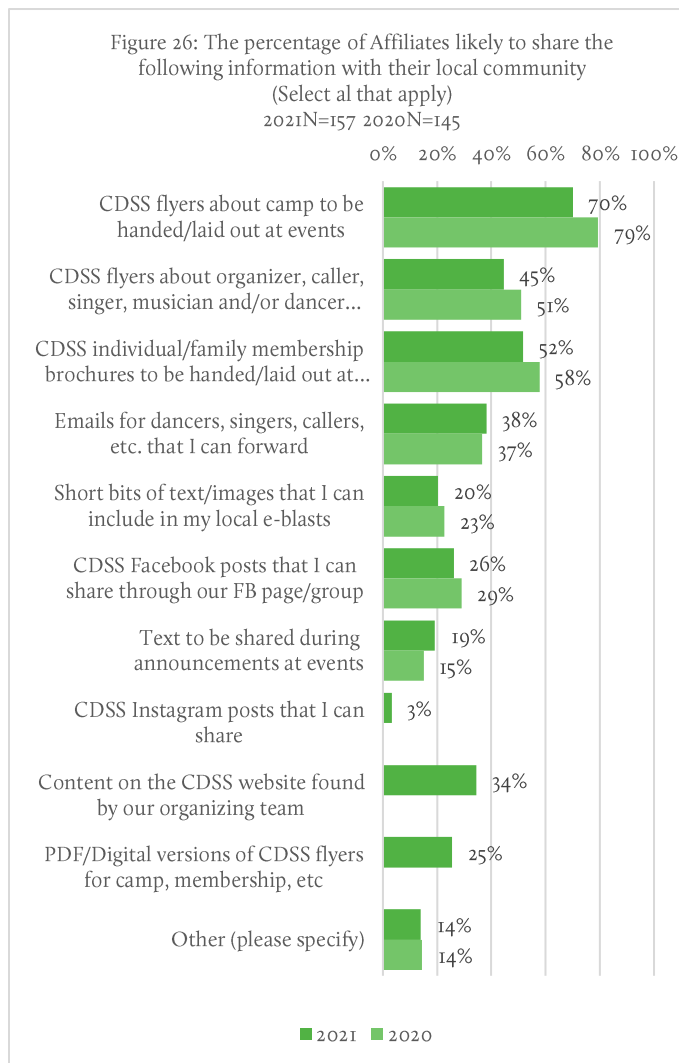
There was very little change in the degree to which Affiliate sharing information between 2019, 2020, and 2021. Roughly 2/5 of Affiliates rarely or never sharing CDSS communications with their wider community while 3/5 share sometimes or as much as they can.

## FORMS OF CDSS INFORMATION THAT AFFILIATES ARE LIKELY TO SHARE (Q20)

Starting in 2020, we asked Affiliates what forms of CDSS communication they are likely to share with their community. Respondents were able to select as many options as they wished. This same question was asked in 2021 having added a few additional forms of communication.

The percentage of Affiliates willing to share CDSS content varied greatly depending on the communication format (see Figure 26). For instance, the most common format Affiliates were willing to share were CDSS flyers about camp while the format Affiliates were least likely to share is Instagram posts.

The results seen in Figure 26 may be influenced by the fact that CDSS hasn't yet produced/provided a number of the formats so Affiliates aren't familiar with what the content might look like, the ease of sharing it, or whether they would find it useful for their community.



In addition to the close-ended options, 22 respondents provided written answers to 'Other (please specify)'.

## Reasons for not sharing information

Approximately 10 respondents provided reasons for not sharing information. A handful of Affiliates pointed out that they are located too far from CDSS events for it to make sense to promote CDSS events. Other reasons for not sharing information included:

- Only hold an event once a year so not relevant
- Timing of events doesn't align with camp registration
- Little information relevant to morris teams
- Only promote events that are gender neutral so will not share information that isn't clear on role terminology

One respondent noted that their group receives CDSS promotional information through multiple channels which "wastes your resources."

## Other comments about sharing resources

A number of respondents provided other comments about sharing CDSS information. These included:

- One Affiliate shares specific content from the CDSS website through digital formats and at in-person events
- One Affiliate hosts an interactive calendar on which CDSS can add events
- One Affiliate puts some CDSS information on their website but aren't sure how much it is viewed
- CDSS often visits an Affiliate to dance during the annual CDSS Board meeting
- Suggestion that when CDSS shares information about virtual camps that it specifies the cost
- One group doesn't maintain an email list so it can't promote CDSS information via email
- One Affiliate doesn't maintain a Facebook page
- One Affiliate shares CDSS information through regularly scheduled e-blasts

# 7: CDSS RESOURCES AND SERVICES FOR AFFILIATES

Section 7 of the report examines Affiliates' perceptions of CDSS's resources and services.

## WHAT CDSS SERVICES AND RESOURCES ARE IMPORTANT TO AFFILIATES (Q21)

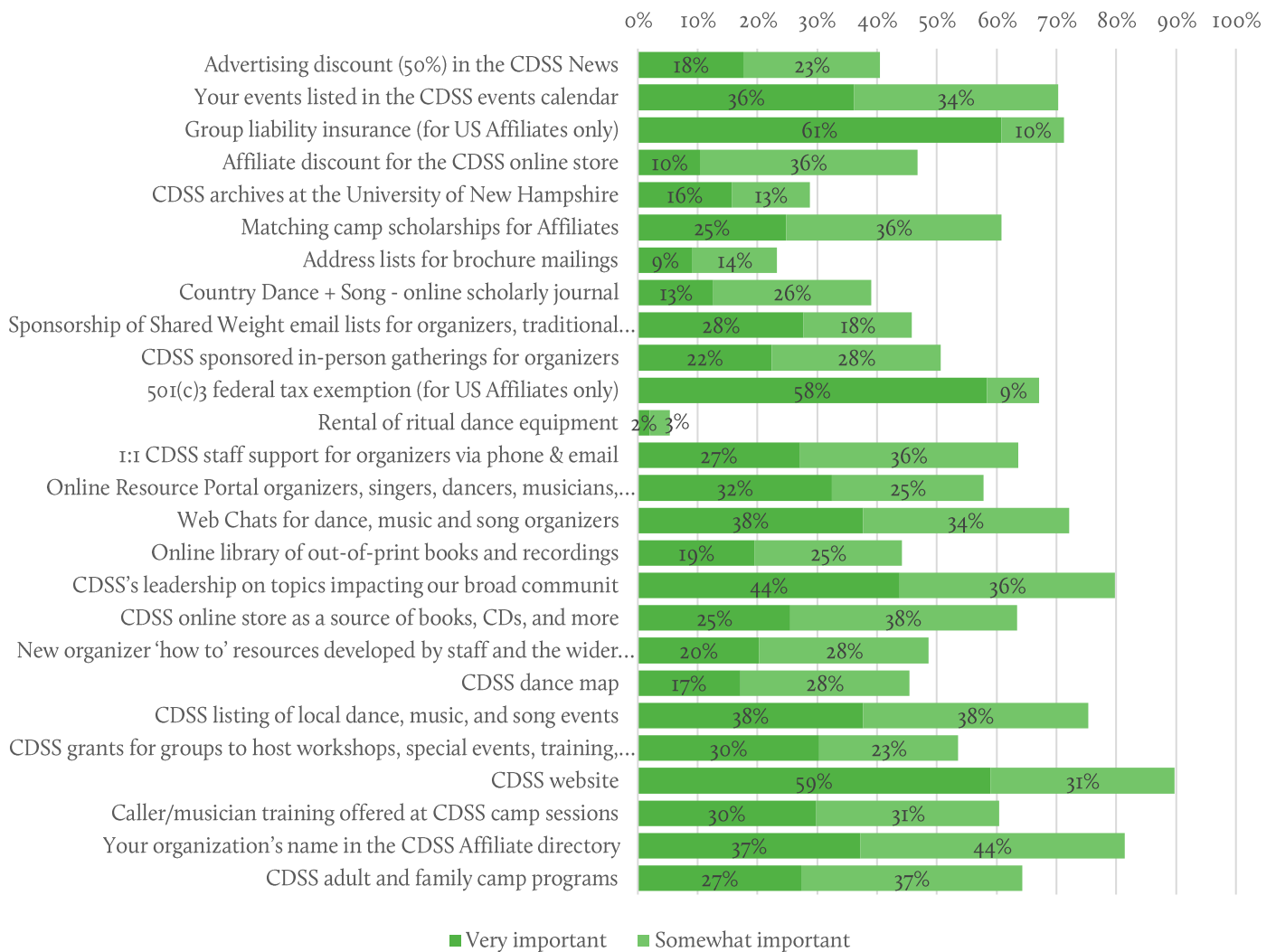
Since we first launched the annual Affiliate survey in 2019, we have asked Affiliates about the importance of various CDSS resources/services. The question has been asked as follows:

*How important is it to your group that CDSS offer these services/resources?*

A list of resources follows and Affiliates are given the option of selecting: Very important; somewhat important; not very important; not at all important; was not aware of.

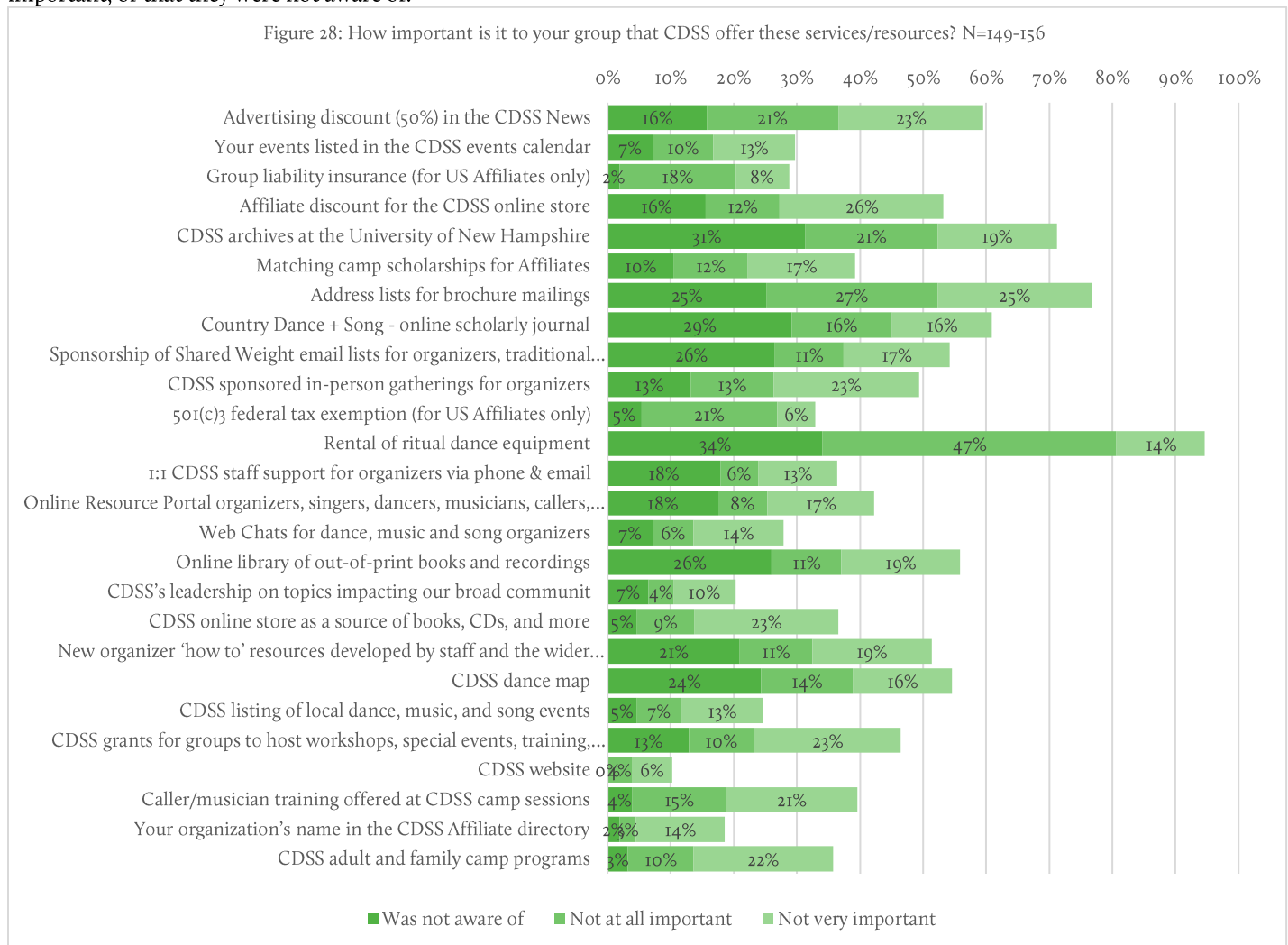
Figure 27 illustrates the percentage of respondents that found various CDSS services/resources either very important or somewhat important.

Figure 27: How important is it to your group that CDSS offer these services/resources? N=149-156



\* There have been some wording changes to certain resources/services over the 2019, 2020, and 2021 surveys. See Table 5 for a list of changes

Figure 28 illustrates the percentage of respondents that found various CDSS services/resources either not very important, not at all important, or that they were not aware of.



There have been some wording changes to certain resources/services over the 2019, 2020, and 2021 surveys. See Table 5 for a list of changes.

Table 5: Wording changes to resources/services	
Current wording of the Resource/Service	Change(s) that have been made
Group liability insurance (for US Affiliates only)	Accidentally left off the 2019 survey. Added in 2020.
Address lists for brochure mailings	Longstanding service, added to the survey in 2020.
Sponsorship of Shared Weight email lists for song organizers, dance organizers, callers, musicians, and sound techs	Added to the 2020 survey as Sponsorship of Shared Weight email lists for song organizers, dance organizers, callers, musicians, and sound techs. Changed the wording slightly in 2021.
CDSS's leadership on topics impacting our broad community	Added in 2020 as CDSS's leadership role on topics impacting our broad community. Changed the wording slightly in 2021.
1:1 CDSS staff support for organizers via phone & email	Wording changed slightly in 2020. Was originally 1:1 Staff advice on organizing.
Online Resource Portal organizers, singers, dancers, musicians, callers, and educators	The 2019 wording was Online organizers resource portal. The wording changed in 2020 to Online Resource Portal for singers and song organizers, ritual dancers and organizers, dance organizers, callers, dance musicians, educators/teachers, and families. The wording then shifted again in 2021.
CDSS grants for groups to host workshops, special events, training, start-up funding, etc.	The 2019 wording was CDSS grants. The wording changed in 2020 to CDSS grants for groups to host workshops, encourage youth involvement, etc. The wording then shifted again in 2021.
CDSS sponsored in-person gatherings for organizers	Changed the wording in 2021 from CDSS supported regional conferences & in-person gatherings for organizers
Caller/musician training offered at CDSS camp sessions	Changed the wording in 2021 from Training offered at CDSS camp sessions
CDSS adult and family camp programs	New item added in 2021.
CDSS listing of local dance, music, and song events	New item added in 2020. Is similar to Your events listed in the CDSS events calendar which has appeared in all three years.
	Priority spaces for camp registration was added to the 2020 survey and removed in 2021.



## Resources that are deemed important by many CDSS Affiliates

A wide range of CDSS's resources and services are valued by the majority of Affiliate members. Of the 26 services/resources listed in the question, 16 were identified as very important or somewhat important by at least half of the question respondents (see Table 6).

Table 6: Services/resources that were identified as very important or important by at least half of the respondents	% of respondents
CDSS website	90%
Your organization's name in the CDSS Affiliate directory	81%
CDSS's leadership on topics impacting our broad community	80%
CDSS listing of local dance, music, and song events	75%
Web Chats for dance, music and song organizers	72%
Group liability insurance (for US Affiliates only)	71%
Your events listed in the CDSS events calendar	70%
501(c)3 federal tax exemption (for US Affiliates only)	67%
CDSS staff support for organizers via phone & email	64%
CDSS adult and family camp programs	64%
CDSS online store as a source of books, CDs, and more	63%
Matching camp scholarships for Affiliates	61%
Caller/musician training offered at CDSS camp sessions	60%
Online Resource Portal organizers, singers, dancers, musicians, callers, and educators	58%
CDSS grants for groups to host workshops, special events, training, start-up funding, etc.	54%
CDSS sponsored in-person gatherings for organizers	51%

The resources and services that the most Affiliates found as important related to sharing of information and creating connections (see top five items in Table 6).

There was little change between 2020 and 2021 in the list of services/resource that the majority of Affiliates found important. However, a few changes of note include:

- In 2021, Web Chats for organizers were seen as important by 72% of respondents. This increased from 56% in 2020 and 48% in 2019.
- The three items that were deemed important by the most respondents in 2021 (i.e., CDSS website; organizations name in the Affiliate directory; CDSS listing of local events) increased 5-6% over 2020; this despite many of the other resources staying much closer to their 2020 percentage.
- Group liability insurance dropped in importance (77% of respondents found CDSS's insurance program as very or somewhat important in 2020; 71% did the same in 2021). This small decrease is likely due to the fact that many Affiliates aren't currently running events.

Focusing on what resources were seen at 'very important', the resources/services with highest percentage of respondents were:

Table 7: Services/resources that were identified as very important by at least half of the respondents	% of respondents
Group liability insurance (for US Affiliates only)	61%
CDSS website	59%
501(c)3 federal tax exemption (for US Affiliates only)	58%

CDSS's leadership on topics impacting our broad community	44%
CDSS listing of local dance, music, and song events	38%

These are the same top five items as in 2020, with the exception of the last item which was 'Your organization's name in the CDSS Affiliate directory' in 2020.

## Resources that are deemed not important to many CDSS Affiliates

The resources that the fewest respondents found very important or somewhat important were:

Table 8: Services/resources that were identified least often as very important or important by respondents	% of respondents
Rental of ritual dance equipment	5%
Address lists for brochure mailings	23%
CDSS archives at the University of New Hampshire	29%
Country Dance + Song - online scholarly journal	39%
Advertising discount (50%) in the CDSS News	41%

Similar items came up when looking at the resources that were most frequently identified as 'not that important' or 'not at all important' (see Table 9).

Table 9: Services/resources that were most frequently identified as 'not that important' or 'not at all important'	% of respondents
Rental of ritual dance equipment	61%
Address lists for brochure mailings	52%
Country Dance + Song - online scholarly journal	44%
CDSS archives at the University of New Hampshire	40%
Affiliate discount for the CDSS online store	38%

It's important to consider why these resources may not be considered important (e.g., more useful for individual/family members than Affiliate members; resource only useful to a certain tradition; Affiliates have little access to the resource).

## Resources that Affiliates do not know about

The following table lists the resources for which 1/5 or more of respondents said that they were unaware of:

Table 10: Services/resources for which 1/5 or more of respondents noted they were previously unaware of	% of respondents
Rental of ritual dance equipment	34%
CDSS archives at the University of New Hampshire	31%
Country Dance + Song - online scholarly journal	29%
Sponsorship of Shared Weight email lists for organizers, traditional singers, callers, musicians and sound techs	26%
Online library of out-of-print books and recordings	26%
Address lists for brochure mailings	25%
CDSS dance map	24%
New organizer 'how to' resources developed by staff and the wider community	21%

Looking across 2019 and 2020 data, these same resources have continued to be ones that at least 1/5 of Affiliates don't know about. For instance, all but one of these items were listed in the same table for the 2020 survey Q21 (i.e., the new organizer 'how to' resources is new to the list this year). Looking back to 2019, all the same items were listed except for two which weren't included in the 2019 survey (i.e., Shared Weight sponsorship, address lists). The conclusion therefore is that a somewhat significant proportion of Affiliates (20%+) have continued to be unaware of a set of CDSS's resources over the past three years.

## Other CDSS resources identified by Affiliates

In addition to the 26 resources/services listed in the survey question, Affiliates could select 'Other (please specify)' and write an additional response. 21 respondents did so. Only two of the comments noted other resources or services. These were:

- Priority camp spaces
- CDSS publications to put on display

However, Affiliates used the text box to provide other related comments. For instance, a handful Affiliates took the opportunity to point out that it's hard for some Affiliates to access to certain CDSS resources given their geographical distance.

*I'm just going to note that the [geographical] distance between us and you is an impediment to fully utilizing in person services that you provide and that that may have made things rank lower than they otherwise would have. Naomi Anderegg, Birmingham FOOTMAD Birmingham FOOTMAD*

*It's unfortunate that most CDSS events are focused on the east coast which reduces their value to those of us on the west coast. Anonymous*

*Our geographic remoteness is the main reason most CDSS offerings are not useful for us. Gordon Enns, Southern Oregon Contra Dance*

*Looking at your list I can see I could use some of these resources in planning a trip to the Eastern US. Linda Wahler, Traditional Dancers of Santa Cruz*

*We wish that more of these resources could exist on the west coast in addition to the east coast. As individuals we're excited that many of these resources exist for the community as a whole, but we are not able to take advantage of them. Alan Kline, San Francisco Bay Queer Contra Dance*

One Affiliate pointed out that not all resources are well-maintained.

*Many of these do not work well (or at all), e.g. the dance map. Patrick Dunlavey, Northern Berkshire Community Dance*

Another respondent pointed out that they are a relatively new Affiliate and are generally focused on their event so aren't aware of many of the resources.

*The Ale Committee has not been an affiliate that long and to be honest, we don't know about most of these resources. But we are fairly focused on just putting on our event and don't usually look too far afield. Rachel Diamondstone, Marlboro Morris Ale Association*

One Affiliate pointed out that it can be hard to determine what resources are important and not, and that they could be of value even if not for their local group. Another pointed out that there is a difference on whether their Affiliate considers the resource useful as compared to their personal opinion.

*Hard to say what's important for our group or not. I think some of these services and programs are crucial, but maybe not especially for us... (For example, I think the matching scholarship for camp is great, and we might someday do that to develop new/young leaders, but we haven't to date...) Chrissy Fowler, Belfast Flying Shoes*

*So I have answered these in terms of DEFFA, but some of them (archives, online library, online store) I would personally say "very important". Marian Dalton, DownEast Friends of the Folk Arts (DEFFA)*

## THE CDSS SERVICES & RESOURCES THAT ARE OF MOST VALUE TO OUR AFFILIATES (Q22)

Following Question 21 which asked Affiliates to rate the importance of all resources, respondents were asked to identify what three resources are of most value and why. 118 listed three resources, 18 listed two, and 4 listed one.

When considering the relative number of comments for various resources and services, it's important to consider that some items may be easier for Affiliates to consider as a resource/service (e.g., insurance) than others (e.g., camp which could be considered more of a program). There may be other reasons that certain items arise more or less often (e.g., in-person organizer events may not be mentioned much as CDSS has only offered one in-person organizer event in the last 5 years and organizers aren't currently thinking about travelling to in-person events).

### Insurance

The most commonly mentioned CDSS resource that Affiliates feel is of most value is insurance with over half of question respondents listed insurance as one of the top three most valuable resources. Common comments included:

- Venues require groups to have insurance coverage
- The cost is reasonable; it would be more expensive to source as an individual group
- It is much easier to purchase from CDSS than source one's own plan

*Group Liability Insurance - could be difficult and much more expensive to obtain if not for you. Jean Gibson-Gorrindo, Central Coast Country Dance Society*

*Group liability insurance. We are just now switching from a local private insurance company to CDSS insurance. Cost effective and convenient. Gene Carbaugh, Three Rivers Folklife Society*

*Liability Insurance - best rates and coverage we can find anywhere. Carl Morgan, Phoenix Traditional Music and Dance*

Two Affiliates pointed out that it's helpful to have insurance that understands their event and that is tailored to their needs. One Affiliate noted that they appreciate CDSS insurance as local insurers won't cover events that have children present.

### 501(c)3 federal tax exemption

The second most commonly mentioned CDSS resource that Affiliates feel is of most value is the 501(c)3 tax exemption program. Almost half of the question respondents listed 501(c)3 as one of their top three CDSS resources.

Affiliates repeated suggested that they wouldn't be able to maintain tax exemption on their own because the process is complicated and expensive.

*501(c)3 tax exemption. Makes renewing this each year easiest, least time consuming with little expense. John Hopson, Fiddle and Bow Country Dancers*

*501(c)3 - This service was very helpful because no board members had the skills or background to effectively complete the needed paperwork. Luanne Stiles, Symmetry ECD*

501(c)3; we'd never be able to figure out the paperwork on our own. Sarah Schneider, Hands Four Dancers of Ithaca

501(c)3 - b/c establishing/maintaining this individually takes a lot of energy. Amy Hartman San Antonio Contra Dancers

Affiliates noted that having 501(c)3 status provided multiple benefits. These included:

- Encouraging donations/charitable contributions
- Providing access to public grants
- Providing sales tax exemption / local and federal tax benefits
- Allowing Affiliates to build up financial reserves
- Providing access to various Google non-profit supports
- Making it easier to deal with 'other entities'
- Helps separate the organization from individuals
- Helpful in renting venues (e.g., lower rates at hall)

### Promotion of Affiliates and their events

CDSS has a number of tools that it uses to promote Affiliates and their events. These include:

- Online events listing/calendar
- Affiliate directory
- Dance map
- Ads (with discount) in the CDSS News
- Mailing address labels

Taken together, almost half of the question respondents listed at least one of these tools as being one of their top three most valued CDSS resources, with some Affiliates mentioning more than one of these tools.

*We clearly need to take advantage of CDSS' marketing strength so that we're not so damn small. Alan Peel, Foggy Bottom Morris Men*

### Online events listing/calendar

The most frequently mentioned promotional tool is the calendar/online events listing. Affiliates noted that it's a way for new participants to find their group and to learn about their events.

*Event listings; this is part of how people new to town find us. Sarah Schneider, Hands Four Dancers of Ithaca*

*Events listed in CDSS events calendar, publicity is important to recruit participants. George Marshall, Dance-A-Rama*

*Listing the Ale in the CDSS calendar is very useful in helping to draw bigger audiences to our public stands. Rachel Diamonds, Marlboro Morris Ale Association*

### Affiliate directory

After the calendar, the next most frequently mentioned CDSS tool for promoting Affiliates is the Affiliate directory. Affiliates saw the directory as a way to make them 'visible' and gain 'exposure'. A few mentioned that it might help them market events, or have visitors join their events.

*Name in Directory -- hear from dancers who have moved to area or are passing through and want to find a dance. ContraDance Omaha Organizers*

*Our name in the directory - so visiting folks can find us to attend practice or events. John Mayberry, Toronto Morris Men*

In addition a few noted that it's helpful so that groups can get in contact with each other.

*Affiliate Directory, so we can be in touch as needed. John Millar, Williamsburg Heritage Dancers*

*Affiliate directory for sword event planning (i.e. DART). Kappy Laning, Charm City Rapper*

### CDSS News advertising

Approximately 15 Affiliates identified CDSS News advertising as one of the top three resources/services they felt were most valuable. This included some specific references to the discount.

*Advertising discount for newsletter: Our only advertising spent on our Foggy Moon dance weekend in November. Laura Frank, Monterey Country Dance Community*

*Advertising discount. It allows an affordable way to reach dancers across the country to let them know of our special dance weekends. John Hopson, Fiddle and Bow Country Dancers*

One Affiliate pointed out that they aren't always able to get their ad in early enough to make the print deadline.

### Dance map

A handful of respondents mentioned the dance map as one of the three CDSS resources/services that they find most helpful. No details were provided in the written responses.

### Mailing lists

One Affiliate mentioned that the CDSS contact list for mailing labels was one of the three most useful resources that CDSS provides.

### Resources posted on the CDSS website

Approximately 30 Affiliates mentioned the Resource Portal or resources located in the Portal/on the website more generally.

Approximately 10 Affiliates specifically mentioned the Resource Portal including subsections (e.g., for ECD musicians; aspiring callers; community culture and safety toolkit).

*Online Resource Portal is Amazing! I have gotten a lot of good kernels of info from combing through. Mary Beth Emerton, Dancing Bears Inc.*

A handful of respondents who wrote about the COVID-19 specific information provided online by CDSS.

*CDSS website -- Especially during COVID, we found some good advice. Connie Wright, Arkansas Valley Music and Dance*

Other Affiliates wrote more generally about the resources available on the CDSS website and how they have been helpful.

*Website resources - such a wealth of information! Midge Olsen, Tapestry Folkdance Center*

*Website. Provides a wealth of info on numerous topics. Vicky Morrison, Tallahassee Community Friends of Old Time Dance*

A few Affiliates wrote about the value of new organizer 'how to' resources.

*New organizer 'how to' resources developed by staff and the wider community. Tom Mack, Shenandoah Valley Civil War Era Dancers*

Two Affiliates wrote about the value of the online library.

*Online library for out of print resources, because access to archives is important!* Mady Newfield, Chicagoland English Country Dancers

## Web Chats

Approximately 30 Affiliates noted that Web Chats (or related online sessions) were one of three most valuable resources/services that CDSS offers. Affiliates valued...

- The leadership CDSS has provided through the online sessions
- The relevant topics chosen and the type of information presented (e.g., latest research and information about COVID-19 related issues, keeping groups up-to-date during the pandemic)
- The wide pool of expertise, hearing what works and what doesn't
- The fact that Web Chats help organizers stay connected to the wider community and not feel so isolated
- That Web Chats are posted online after the event so that Affiliates can watch them later

*Webchats for dance, music and song organizers - CDSS brings in experts in the field, and it's a way for us to be together during this time that we can't be together in person.* Downtown Amherst Contra Dance

Two Affiliates felt that the Web Chats have been helpful during the pandemic but either weren't before or won't be needed after the pandemic.

## Camp and related services

Camp and its related services (e.g., scholarships) was mentioned by approximately 30 respondents.

### Camp scholarships

Approximately 15 Affiliates wrote that camp scholarships were one of the top three most valuable CDSS resources. A few Affiliates pointed out that they had taken advantage of the scholarships while a few others said that they hadn't yet taken advantage of them, but they thought scholarships were a good idea.

*Camp Scholarships-though no one here has taken advantage of it to my knowledge-seems like very good support.* Mary Beth Emerton, Dancing Bears Inc.

Some Affiliates listed why scholarships are important. The reasons include:

- Teaches new techniques to local talent
- Revitalizes organizers
- Allows individuals to attend camp
- Helps address the cost of camp for Canadians given the US/CAD exchange

### Training at camp

A handful of Affiliates noted that training offered at camp is one of the three most valuable resources/services offered by CDSS. This included training for callers, musicians, and also new dance knowledge and inspiration for morris dancers.

## Other comments about camp

Approximately 10 Affiliates noted that camps were one of three most valuable CDSS resources/services without any specific mention to why.

One Affiliate noted in a general sense that camps 'support their community' and people enjoy camp.

A handful of Affiliates mentioned that they appreciate having information about camps to share with their communities.

One Affiliate wrote that they value dance and music camps being offered across the country and in other countries.

## CDSS Website

Approximately 25 Affiliates mentioned the CDSS website as one of the three most valuable resources/services that CDSS offers. As alluded to above, many of the comments focused on how the website housed useful resources and information. An additional 10 comments simply listed the website without any detail and a few others posted out that the website hosts the event listing and store.

## CDSS Leadership

Approximately 25 Affiliates wrote about CDSS's leadership as one of their top three most valued resources/services. (While we listed CDSS leadership as a resource/service in Question 21, it may not be something that certain Affiliates would consider as a resource/service for this particular survey question.)

Many of the comments were general in nature, stating that they valued CDSS's leadership in the community. Others wrote specifically about CDSS's leadership with regards to COVID-19 and a few mentioned equity.

*CDSS's leadership and guidance. Provides a foundation upon which we can make decisions.* Vicki Morrison, Tallahassee Community Friends of Old Time Dance

*Leadership on topics impacting broader community- it is very helpful to have a parent organization show some guidance in dealing with covid and social equity issues.* Ellie Kuhn, Old Farmers Ball

*CDSS Leadership on topics impacting our broad community - because no one else is doing this; CDSS is the only organization with the standing to do so and we need it.* Downtown Amherst Contra Dance

A few Affiliates pointed it out the benefit of having an organization as the hub for connection.

*Leadership on common issues/hub/nurturing community, b/c community needs a space/center to connect.* Amy Hartman, San Antonio Contra Dancers

*Because we are so small, it is critical, especially this past year that there is a wider community that we could tap into to be sure we are keeping our dancers as safe as possible. The larger community has provided guidance that has been immeasurably valuable.* Betsy Noyce, Countryside Contra Dance

Another pointed out how CDSS has been helpful in sharing information across communities.



CDSS's leadership on topics that impact the broader community, because that is a way to share relevant, valuable information across many organizations. We can all benefit from being on an even playing field in regards to knowledge. Liz Nelson & Hannah Johlas, The Friends of Greenfield Dance

## CDSS Store

Approximately 20 respondents mentioned the store as one of the three most valuable resources/services that CDSS offers to Affiliates. While some comments were general in nature, other Affiliates provided more detail.

A handful of respondents mentioned the store discount.

*Affiliate discount for the CDSS online store - we need resources.* Mary Shleifman, Ottawa English Country Dance Club

A handful of respondents wrote that the store houses items that they can't easily source elsewhere (e.g., morris bells; rapper swords; materials for vintage dance)

*CDSS store: morris bells and new publications related to ritual dance and associated activities like mumming.* Ruth Olmsted, Pokingbrook Morris

One Canadian respondent wrote that the postal costs are too high and that they should be based on weight and not cost.

## Grants

Approximately 10 respondents noted grants as one of the top three resources. Affiliates used grants for...

- Helping callers and musicians improve their craft
- Funding an archival project
- Hiring additional musicians
- Hiring a guest speaker on cultural equity
- Putting on a sword dance workshop

## Other resources & services of most value

- A few Affiliates mentioned other resources or services.
- Staff support  
*Staff support via phone - talking to a person is far superior to any other means of communication.* Alan Kanaskie, Salem Folklore Community  
*Staff support has been of great assistance in the past for insurance-related questions.* Meg Dedolph, Midwest Morris Ale Association
- CDSS News
- In-person organizer gatherings  
*"Putting on the dance" workshop was very useful to organizers here (before I joined the org).* Becky Liddle, Toronto Contra Dance  
*Attending CDSS organizers conferences has been a great way to learn new things and make connections with other groups.* Jonathan Sivier, Central Illinois English Country Dancers
- Equipment rental for ritual dance
- Sponsorship of email lists  
*Sponsoring email lists for dissemination of information and ability to get questions answered (hobnobbing with one's fellow wizards!)* Mady Newfield, Chicagoland English Country Dancers  
*Sponsorship of shared weight lists enhances communications between callers, musicians, and organizers.* John Gintell, Lavender Country & Folk Dancers

## FEEDBACK REGARDING THE CDSS RESOURCE PORTAL (Q23)

In 2021, we asked Affiliates for feedback on three specific resources/services, one of which was the CDSS Resource Portal. 59 Affiliates commented on the Portal.

### Some Affiliates value the Portal

Approximately 25 Affiliates wrote that the Resource Portal was valuable or helpful to their group.

*Committee members use and refer the portal regularly and find it useful.* Downtown Amherst Contra Dance

*Excellent and extremely time-saving to save local organizer time and effort.* Steve Pike, Madison Contra Dance Cooperative

*Excellent! Used a lot during COVID pandemic.* Missoula Folklore Society

### Some Affiliates haven't used the Portal

Approximately a dozen Affiliates wrote that the Resource Portal was either not applicable to their group or that they hadn't used it much.

*I personally haven't used this much, but the callers have.* Maxine Louie, Toronto English Country Dance Assembly

*We haven't used this yet.* Rachel Diamondstone, Marlboro Morris Ale Association

### Some Affiliates were unaware of the Portal

Approximately 10 Affiliates wrote that they were previously unaware of the Portal.

*Did not know this existed. Make information about this more available.* Bob Crone, Contra Dancers of Hawaii

*Not aware of this.* Judy Williams, Savannah Folk Music Society

## Feedback on the design

Approximately 10 Affiliates commented on the design of the Portal and the wider CDSS website. These included a handful of comments that noted that the Resource Portal/website wasn't particularly easy to use.

*We can't easily access the resource portal. The website and portal are clunky.* Cindy Culbert & Lisa Brown, Country Dancers of Rochester

*In general the website has so much content that it can be a bit daunting to navigate to what you are looking for, but there are a lot of really good resources (assuming you can find them).* Cayley Buckner, Gainesville Oldtime Dance Society

Two Affiliates were concerned about password access to the Resource Portal, suggesting that there may be some confusion as the Portal isn't behind the Commons password wall.

One respondent pointed out that there is no tab in the Resource Portal for Affiliates and that Affiliate information is hard to find on the website.

## Suggestions for resources to add to the Portal

Individual Affiliates provided specific suggestions regarding resources they would like to see on the Portal. The suggestions included:

- How to keep clogging groups thriving
- Cultural equity statements from ritual dance teams
- Ideas for attracting new members to ritual dance teams, even if incremental
- Publicly accessible list of Affiliate groups as only members can access the Affiliate directory
- 'Bring back' the dance map

### Feedback about the morris resources

One Affiliate pointed out that the morris links seem to be outdated and that it's unclear whether the information is active or whether it's there for archival purposes.

### Feedback on the process of submitting resources

One Affiliate pointed out that it wasn't particularly easy to submit a resource and that they expected feedback on their resource once it had been submitted.

## FEEDBACK REGARDING ONLINE WEB CHATS FOR ORGANIZERS (Q23)

In 2021, we asked Affiliates for feedback on three specific resources/services, one of which was Web Chats for organizers. 75 Affiliates commented on Web Chats.

### Some Affiliates value the Web Chats

The vast majority of comments about Web Chats were positive. While some Affiliates wrote about the Web Chats being valuable in a general sense, many referred specifically to the value of pandemic-focused sessions.

*[Web chats] have been particularly helpful this year in navigating situations we've never dealt with before. Shoshana Silverman, Country Dance New York (CDNY)*

*Didn't tune into before but has been very helpful during the pandemic. Cliff White, Mid-Missouri Traditional Dancers*

*Several members of our board found the Return to Dance webinars useful. Jan Symons, Country Dancing in Kalamazoo*

*Good work— keep it up even when things are 'normal'. Good to know what is happening elsewhere. Patrick McDonnell on behalf of Lambertville Country Dancers*

A handful of Affiliates pointed out that the Web Chats are well organized and presented.

Affiliates noted that the Web Chats have been helpful in...

- Gaining access to helpful information (e.g., professional health and legal resources)
- Feeling less isolated and alone
- Connecting with other organizers
- Learning about what other groups are doing and how they are coping
- Being able to solve problems collaboratively
- Supporting local decision making

### Lack of engagement in Web Chats

Two respondents wrote that they didn't know about Web Chats. Five respondents wrote that they hadn't attended a Web Chat. Five respondents wrote that the Web Chats weren't applicable to their group.

### Feedback about the Web Chat archive

Five Affiliates noted that it's very helpful to have the Web Chats archived for later use.

*Nice to have them available after the fact since timing is a factor. Kay Bidwell Loberg, Door County Folk Alliance*

One Affiliate asked for the Web Chats to be made more widely available after the session so they could share with their local group.

In addition, a few Affiliates asked for CDSS to provide highlights/important conclusions along with the Web Chat video. Two others pointed out that it's helpful to be able to download the zoom transcript.

### Other comments and suggestions

Other comments provided by one or a few Affiliates include:

- Not being able to join a Web Chat as it was 'full'
- Wanting sessions offered at different times; not during workdays for those on the West coast
- Looking for more Canadian content
- It would be helpful to have facilitators in the breakout rooms
- Suggestion that CDSS support monthly organization discussion groups as a community builder and for organizers to share information
- Lack of content for ritual dance teams or other groups like cloggers
- Continue to solicit and follow feedback/requests from the community
- Organize breakout rooms by region
- Provide an agenda
- Include less information that is already widely available

One Affiliate noted that the Web Chats had been a 'mixed bag' and another noted that more effort was needed in the planning and presentation.

## FEEDBACK REGARDING CALLER AND/OR MUSICIAN TRAINING AT CAMP (Q23)

In 2021, we asked Affiliates for feedback on three specific resources/services, one of which was caller and/or musician training at camp. 62 Affiliates commented on these training opportunities.

### Some Affiliates value the training

Approximately 30 Affiliates wrote a general statement about the training being valuable or they noted that the training had been helpful to their group/members of their community.

*Have had musicians attend training camps and both found them stimulating and informative. Looking forward to returning. Teachers Committee, Village Green English Dancers*

*Has helped to increase the number of available callers in our area. Carol Waddell-Sheets, Queen City Contra Dancers*

A few respondents wrote that other programs had been valuable such as...

- Ritual dance workshops
- ECD leadership course
- Organizer training at camp

*This was crucial for me, personally, and could be useful for developing leaders in future. I liked the organizer training concept that CDSS pursued a few years back, but it seems like that did not really fly... Chrissy Fowler, Belfast Flying Shoes*

### Lack of engagement in camp training

Three Affiliates were unaware that CDSS offered training for callers and musicians.

Five Affiliates pointed out that their communities hadn't yet taken advantage of the training opportunities. A few noted that they would like to do so in the future.

Approximately 10 Affiliates noted that the training opportunities were not applicable to their group.

### Suggestions regarding camp training programs

Approximately 15 Affiliates provided suggestions on how to improve the camp training programs. Eight of the comments focused specifically on location. These Affiliates asked for camp programs further west (e.g., West Coast; west of the Rockies). As part of this, some noted that the distance makes it cost-prohibitive for members of their community to attend.

*This seems valuable for callers and musicians on the east coast and we wish we could have this resource for callers and musicians in other regions who may not be able to attend a full camp. Alan Kline, San Francisco Bay Queer Contra Dance*

*Not very helpful from Hawaii. Perhaps begin west coast camps. Although there are large dance communities up and down the west coast, I believe the furthest west CDSS camps are held in Michigan. Bob Crone, Contra Dancers of Hawaii*

One Affiliate suggested that CDSS take the training 'on the road' to various regional locations.

### Other comments

Individual Affiliates each suggested the following:

- Provide organizer training
- Provide training for ritual dance musicians
- Offer more slots for caller training as they fill up quickly
- Provide opportunities for experienced callers to gather to discuss trends, challenges, etc.

While not directly a suggestion, one organizer wrote that gender neutral/positional calling is creating tension in some communities.

One Affiliate wrote that they should be promoting camp training more within their local community so that musicians are aware of the opportunity.

## FEEDBACK REGARDING THE CDSS WEBSITE (Q24)

As part of planning a renewal of CDSS's website, we wanted to learn about how to improve the Affiliate experience of CDSS's website. Therefore, we asked:

*If your organizing team uses the CDSS website (www.cdss.org) for information/activities relating to your group...*

- What sections/pages of the site do you find most useful for your group?
- What Affiliate information is hard to find on the site?
- What Affiliate information is missing/would you like to have on the website?

### The sections of the CDSS website Affiliates find most useful:

60 Affiliates answered the question about which sections of the website they find most useful. Approximately 1/4 of the respondents noted that they don't use the CDSS website or that the question wasn't applicable to them.

Table 11 provides the approximate number of times each section of the website was mentioned by Affiliates.

Table 11: The sections/pages of the CDSS website found most useful to Affiliates	Approximate # of responses
Resource Portal and related resources (e.g., Covid-19 section; community safety toolkit)	18
Event listing	14
Insurance	6
Web Chats (e.g., listing; archive)	6
Store	5
Affiliate resources/pages generally	4
501(c)3	3
Affiliate directory	3
Membership renewal/payment	3
CDSS News (including past articles)	2
Scholarships	1
Dance map	1

Some feedback was provided on particular aspects of the website/tools on the site. This feedback included:

- Cannot find the staff directory
- The Affiliate directory cannot be accessed by all Affiliate members and the contact person that is listed doesn't have automatic access. Additionally, it would be helpful to know who the members are of each Affiliate groups
- Can't use the website because of password issues

### Information that is hard to find on the website

When asked directly, 40 Affiliates wrote a comment about what information that is hard to find on the CDSS website. Half the comments were either 'not applicable' or that they didn't know.

Table 12 lists the approximate number of Affiliates who noted having trouble accessing specific information on the CDSS website.

Table 12: Information that was difficult to access on the CDSS website	Approximate # of responses
The Commons – all about gaining access	3
Event listing – all about posting events	3
Resource Portal – finding specific information (e.g., Affiliate information is not listed there)	3
501(c)3	1
Dance map – hard to submit information	1
Ads – hard to submit information	1

*Anything requiring log in to the Commons. (perhaps this is a unique problem but I was on a 'forgot password' loop so many times I gave up.) Anonymous*

*I have often had trouble submitting online, such as ads and events, and had to call in. Maxine Louie, Toronto English Country Dance Assembly*

Two respondents wrote that the CDSS website is clearly laid out and that it isn't hard to find information.

### Affiliate information missing from the website:

29 Affiliates wrote a comment regarding what information is missing on the website. Two thirds either noted that the question wasn't applicable or that they didn't know if anything was missing.

Individual Affiliates each commented on the following:

- Template for a demographics/role term preference survey
- Template for a post-pandemic re-entry survey
- Template for a waiver form around pandemic re-entry
- More information in the Affiliate handbook
- More information about how the insurance policy works
- List of callers and bands
- List of Morris Ales in North America
- Listing of a lower rate of insurance for groups holding 10-20 events a year

Additional suggestions included:

- Holding a workshop about Affiliate insurance
- Changing the title of the Affiliate section of the website from "Materials for Affiliates" to "Affiliate Materials"
- No more information, just better organized

### ONLINE RESOURCES THAT CDSS COULD AMPLIFY (Q25)

Given that so many fantastic online resources have been created since the start of the pandemic, we wanted to learn if there were any resources that Affiliates thought we should know about and amplify through CDSS's communication channels. 29 Affiliates responded to the question about new resources with approximately half providing specific suggestions. The specific suggestions aren't listed in this report but they have been forwarded to CDSS staff for posting in the Resource Portal and promoting through our various channels.

Affiliates also provided other suggestions through this question. The suggestions included:

- Wanting more dance and music history webinars
- Needing more support for small performance groups

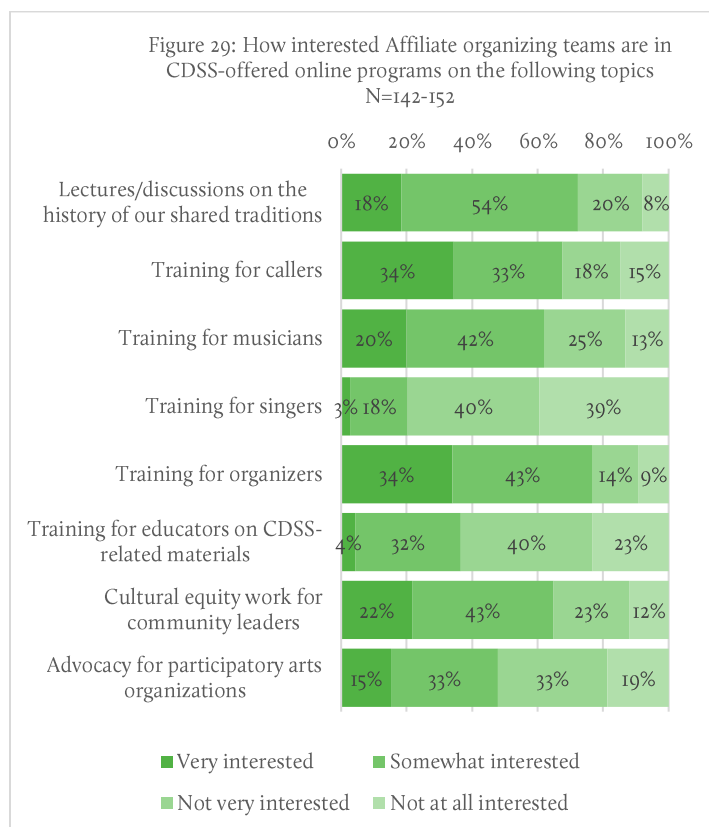
- Wanting a website to watch recorded zoom workshops for musicians, callers, and organizers
- Wanting workshops for beginner contra musicians

### TOPICS OF INTEREST FOR FUTURE ONLINE PROGRAMS (Q26)

As CDSS is looking to offer more online programming in the future, we asked Affiliates what topics would be of interest to their group. Figure 29 illustrates the results.

Training for organizers and training for callers were the topics most frequently identified as be 'very interesting' to Affiliates (1/3 of question respondents). Approximately 1/4 of Affiliates were very interested in cultural equity work for community leaders, training for musicians, and lectures/discussion on the history of our shared traditions. When looking at both ratings of both 'very interested' and 'somewhat interested', these same topics were each of interest to over 60% of question respondents.

However, Figure 29 is worth looking at more closely. For instance, while training for educators on CDSS materials was seen as 'very interesting' for only 4% of question respondents, another 32% were 'somewhat interested' in this option. In addition, 48% of Affiliates are 'very' or 'somewhat' interested in advocacy for participatory arts.



As part of the question, we provided an 'other – please specify' comment box. 26 Affiliates provided a wide range of comments on various topics.



#### Topics for organizers:

- Interest in organizer training depends entirely on the subjects (e.g., conflict de-escalation training could very helpful)
- Concerns about the aging out of traditional dancers across communities and a request for CDSS to help on this 'major issue'

#### Topics for musicians:

- Music theory for dancers
- How musicians and dancers work together
- Online technology helpful to musicians

#### Topics for educators:

- Online training may help educators who can't travel to events like Pourparler or CDSS camps
- Local group has own 'teacher' training for dance leaders

#### Topics for callers:

- How to adapt dance forms to non-traditional music (e.g., technocontra; mariachi; etc.)
- Online technology helpful to callers

#### Topics for singers:

- Online technology helpful to singers

#### The challenge of engaging with CDSS programming:

- Individuals might be able to take advantage of these opportunities but the organization is too busy
- Local group is hard to engage period – nothing that CDSS can do
- Don't have enough time to take advantage of CDSS's resources

#### Other general comments:

- CDSS needs to make use of more talent from beyond the East Coast

### MODES OF ONLINE DELIVERY FOR FUTURE ONLINE PROGRAMS (Q27)

In addition to asking about topics of interest for online programming, we asked Affiliates what formats of online program delivery their Affiliate group would be interested in. Figure 30 illustrates the findings.

When comparing across a wide range of program formats (e.g., lectures, activities for families/children), on-demand offerings were almost always seen as more popular than live events. However, it's important to note that many respondents also thought that live content was of interest.

Some formats were more popular than others. The forms of program delivery of interest to over half of the respondents included:

Table 13: Form of program delivery of interest to more than half of Affiliates	% of respondents
Lectures - On-demand (watch previously recorded content at the viewer's convenience)	66%
Film/video/multi-media presentations - On-demand (watch previously recorded content at the viewer's convenience)	66%
Moderated panel discussions - On-demand (watch previously recorded content at the viewer's convenience)	58%
Interactive workshops with break-out rooms, polls, class participation - Live (log in and participate in the moment)	56%
Interviews - On-demand (watch previously recorded content at the viewer's convenience)	56%
Multi-session training courses - On-demand (watch previously recorded content at the viewer's convenience)	55%
Moderated panel discussions - Live (log in and participate in the moment)	55%
Concerts - On-demand (watch previously recorded content at the viewer's convenience)	51%

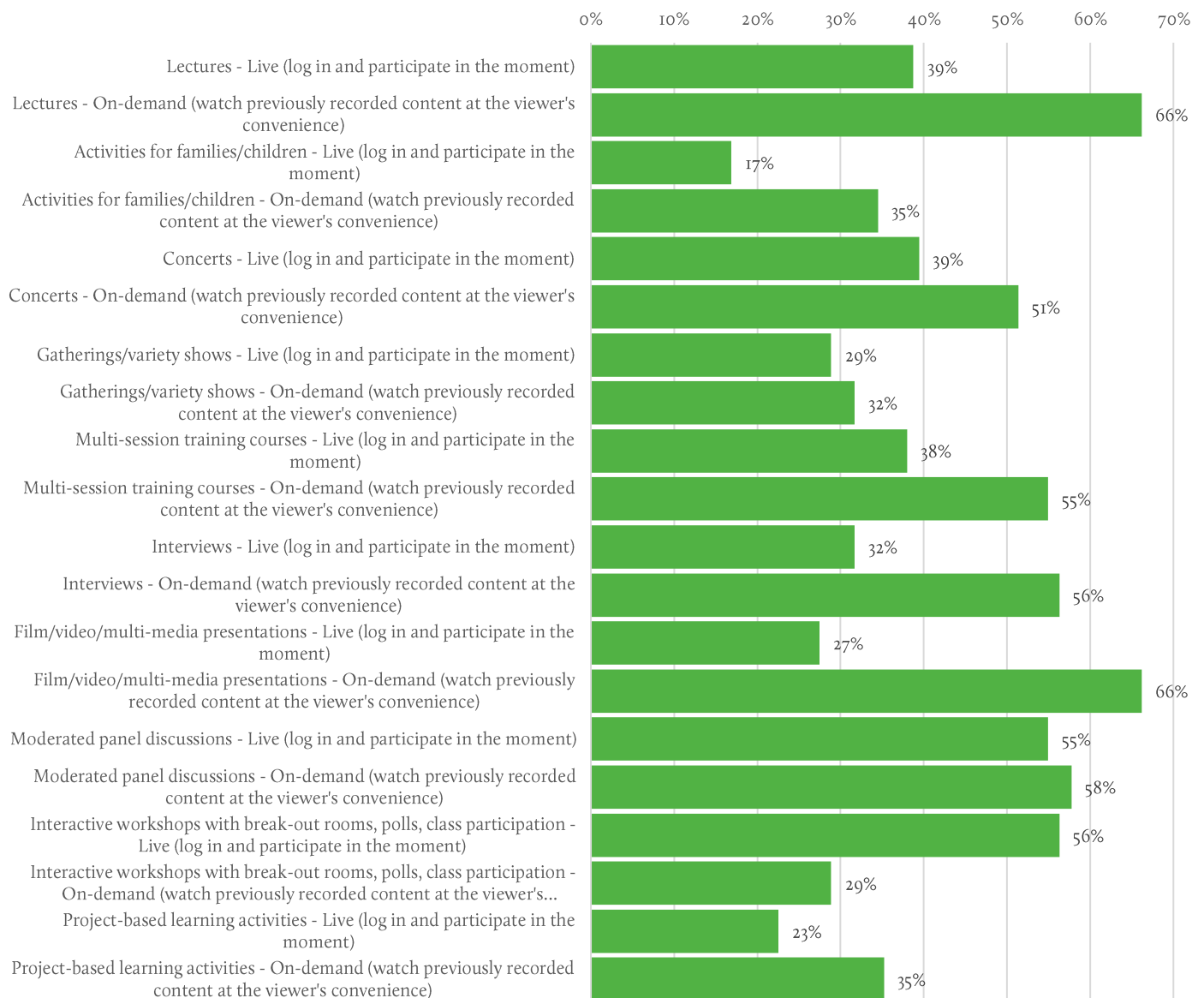
Content that was deemed of interest by the fewest Affiliate respondents included:

Table 14: Form of program delivery of interest to the fewest Affiliates	% of respondents
Activities for families/children - Live (log in and participate in the moment)	17%
Project-based learning activities - Live (log in and participate in the moment)	23%
Film/video/multi-media presentations - Live (log in and participate in the moment)	27%
Interactive workshops with break-out rooms, polls, class participation - On-demand (watch previously recorded content at the viewer's convenience)	29%
Gatherings/variety shows - Live (log in and participate in the moment)	29%

Many of the items in Table 14 are not surprising as the formats listed are likely more for individual enjoyment rather than of benefit to an Affiliate organization.



Figure 30: The percentage of question respondents who felt that their Affiliate group would be interested in the various modes of online program delivery  
(Select all that apply)  
N=142



## 8: FINAL COMMENTS

### FINAL COMMENTS (Q31)

The 2021 survey finished by asking Affiliates whether there was anything else that they would like to tell us. 61 Affiliate provided written responses.

#### General appreciation for CDSS

Approximately 24 Affiliates wrote appreciative comments. A few highlights include:

*Thank you for asking for feedback and for making lemonade out of lemons this past year. :) Amy Hartman, San Antonio Contra Dancers*

*Thank you for everything you've been doing, especially during the pandemic. Peggy Leiby, FiddleKicks*

*I'm just so glad that I, as President of The Living Tradition, have access to CDSS, which has many years of experience navigating dance and music issues on a national level. Patricia McCollom, The Living Tradition*

A few Affiliates pointed out CDSS's leadership role and its ability to pivot at the start of the pandemic.

#### Positive feedback on CDSS services

Approximately 10 Affiliates provided positive feedback about specific CDSS services. These included: (Approximate counts)

- 1: Communication has improved
- 1: Value of having CDSS networking – keep it up
- 1: Work on diversity has been long overdue
- 5: Pandemic supports have been helpful

*Thank you to everyone involved with producing the COVID reopening web chats! They have been very helpful. Our group sends a rep and then we get together by zoom to hear their report. The information has given us a lot of things to consider when dealing with how/when to resume our dances. ContraDance Omaha Organizers*

*You folks have done an outstanding job gathering and distributing information about how to handle the coronavirus pandemic. Glenn Manuel, North Texas Traditional Dance Society*

#### Suggestions for CDSS to consider

Some Affiliates provided additional suggestions for CDSS. These included: (Approximate counts)

- 4: Need to address issues relating to geographical location (e.g., need representation from outside the East coast at CDSS sponsored events; Common Time is offered during work hours for the West coast, hard to feel connected to CDSS as live on the West coast)
- 1: Looking for CDSS to provide leadership regarding role terminology  
*Gender neutral / positional calling, dancing, & other related issues are very important to some people in the community. The way that CDSS approaches these concerns impacts the entire community. At this moment our community is concerned that CDSS's work & communication in these areas may create division & discourage participation in our activities. Michael Self, Cincinnati English Country Dancers*
- 1: Suggestion for CDSS to provide a licence for playing recorded music

- 1: Some Affiliates are in locations with poor internet access which makes it hard to access certain resources
- 1: Provide workshops for ritual dancers with a focus on teams learning from one another
- 1: Stick to dance and song when talking about COVID-19
- 1: Create bridges between established and new groups so that established groups can support newer organizers
- 1: Offer financial services to groups that organize events as this can be extremely challenging (e.g., hard to work with banks when the event registrant and treasurer live in different states)
- 1: Offer event registration services at an affordable and scalable rate
- 1: Provide more training and support to encourage under 30yr olds become organizers/leaders
- 1: Host a round table discussion on the pros and cons of collaborative organizations (e.g., PATMAD; NJ Folk Society) and how to initiate discussions with other groups in one's local area

#### Comments about CDSS membership

A handful of Affiliates commented on CDSS Affiliate and/or individual membership. Comments included:

- Most members of a morris team are individual members of CDSS so while their team doesn't communicate regularly with CDSS as an Affiliate, they are connected in other ways
- Majority of ECD dancers are not CDSS members and don't travel
- Only two members of a contra-focused Affiliate are CDSS members and CDSS is irrelevant to most members

#### Feedback on the Affiliate survey

Approximately 15 respondents provided feedback on the survey. These included: (Approximate counts)

- 4: Some questions were hard to answer as a group vs as an individual
- 3: The randomized questions (e.g., Q17/21) were tricky as a few Affiliates consulted their fellow organizers using the PDF version of the survey and the items wouldn't be in the same order when they were filling out the form
- 2: Survey was too long
- 2: Some questions are not applicable
- 1: Some questions were ambiguous
- 1: Wanted access to the questions to share with their fellow organizers

Two Affiliates noted that the survey had help them become more aware of the resources and services that CDSS provides.