



# **2020 CDSS AFFILIATE SURVEY**

## **FINAL REPORT OCTOBER 2020**

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# INTRODUCTION

## Greetings from CDSS!

This is the final report for our 2020 Affiliate Survey – now officially an annual survey as we are in our second year.

We are thrilled to be able to share the findings of the survey back out to our Affiliate network and the wider traditional dance, music, and song community.

The report is long as there is lots to report on. So dig in!

## 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 2020 survey builds on that work to learn:

- More about our Affiliates and the work they are doing
- What Affiliates like about the services we provide and how we can improve

## REPORT FORMAT

This report has 10 sections:

- An introduction to the survey and report
- A brief summary of the overall findings

Separate sections for detailed findings:

- (1) Basic information about our Affiliates
- (2) Affiliate wellbeing, strengths, and challenges
- (3) The impacts of COVID-19 on Affiliates
- (4) Programming for school-aged participants
- (5) Perceptions regarding the Affiliate relationship
- (6) CDSS communication with Affiliates
- (7) Perceptions regarding CDSS resources & services
- (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.

This year’s survey was long - there were 48 questions with some questions requiring multiple responses. However, we wanted to learn a lot about our Affiliates. Also, we knew from our broader 2016 and 2018 organizer surveys, and from the 2019 Affiliate survey, that organizers want to share information about their activities, concerns, and needs. Indeed, 96% of 2020 survey participants continued through to the final few questions – a very high retention rate.

### Administration of the questionnaire

The survey was administered online through Survey Monkey. (A few Affiliates emailed in their responses.) The survey was open for six weeks between May 15 – June 30 with the original closing date of June 15<sup>th</sup> being extended by two weeks to allow for more responses. 40% of participants completed the survey in the last two weeks. (In 2019, 34% of participants completed the survey in that same window.)

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 if they could not arrange for consultation, 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

62% of our total Affiliate membership (167/269) participated in the survey which far exceeded our anticipated response rate. (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, CDSS staff and Board members called all of the Affiliates who had not responded by June 15th.



## STUDY LIMITATIONS

There are a number of study limitations to consider when reading this report.

### **Lack of participation by some Affiliates**

While we are thrilled to have heard from so many Affiliates, 102 of our current Affiliates did not participate in the survey. 76 of those also did not participate in the 2019 survey as they either were not members in 2019 or they didn't respond to the invitation. The lack of participation means that we know a fair bit less about those 76 Affiliates.

### **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 someone completing the survey. We asked Affiliates to consider this approach so that we would receive responses centered within the range of opinions & views of each Affiliate organizing team.

We also provided the option for Affiliates to have one respondent complete the survey without consultation - 55% 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 (e.g., what is your group's biggest challenge), we are hearing from one organizer's perception rather than the group's consensus. There is not much that we can do about this but it is important to keep in mind when looking through the findings of the report.

### **Very few survey questions were mandatory**

We deliberately chose to make only four questions mandatory (respondent name; respondent email; Affiliate name; Affiliate website). 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=161).

### **Limited analysis through the lens of Affiliate characteristics**

While we looked at some questions the lens of Affiliate characteristics (e.g., location; tradition), we did not have much time to delve into this deeper form of analysis. However, we did gain an understanding of the needs of different groups through some questions and as needed, we can go back to look at specific groups in the future.

## STAFF REPORT

In addition to this report, CDSS staff have received a set of recommendations based upon the findings. That report is being used to inform decisions regarding our support for Affiliates and our wider community resources program.

## A BRIEF SUMMARY OF SOME OF THE KEY FINDINGS

This section of the report highlights some of the key findings from the 2020 Affiliate survey. We recommend that you read the subsequent sections of the report in order to learn about many additional findings that are not included in the summary.

### 1: 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 Canada and the US South are underrepresented. CDSS has Affiliates in 4/13 Canadian provinces and territories and 43/50 US states and districts. Of the five the states with the most Affiliates, three are located along the US West Coast.

#### Number of years Affiliates have been organizing events

Approximately half of CDSS Affiliates were founded 30 or more years ago while approximately 1/10 Affiliates began organizing events within the past ten years.

#### Group status

Similar to the 2019 findings, half of the Affiliates who completed the survey are incorporated through CDSS's 501(c)3 exemption. 1/5 of respondents identified as a volunteer group/individual that is NOT officially incorporated and no Canadian Affiliates have charitable status.

#### Traditions organized by our Affiliates

The most common form of activity organized by CDSS Affiliates are social dance traditions. 87% Affiliates who participated in the survey organize some form of traditional social dance, 30% organize some form of music and/or song event (e.g. concerts; jam sessions), and 14% organize ritual dance. 64% of survey respondents organize contra dances and 41% organize English country dances.

While 1/2 of Affiliates organize only one tradition, 14% of Affiliates each organize four or more traditions (e.g., morris, contra dance, a song circle, and family dance).

Few Affiliates organize participatory song as a stand-alone event. Instead, most Affiliates include song as part of other events such as dance weekends and ales.

#### Role terminology in traditional social dance

There is great variety in the degree to which social dance groups are using non-gendered calling. 1/3 of question respondents noted that they are not interested, have not considered, or have considered but won't be transitioning to gender-neutral calling. 1/3 of respondents are using a mix of gender-specific role terms and gender-neutral/positional calling or are fully using gender-neutral/positional calling. Other Affiliates are leaving the choice up to the caller, are in the process of researching and consulting their communities, or host different events that each their own set of terms. With regards to specific terminology used, 65% of social dance Affiliates leave the choice up to the caller.

#### Sources of funding

4/5 of Affiliates receive funds from door entry fees. However, many other sources of revenue are also being used. For instance, 2/5 of Affiliates have annual membership fees, 1/3 collect donations at regular events on top of the door entry fee, and 1/5 use their special events to generate funds for their organization.

### 2: AFFILIATE WELLBEING, STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

#### 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. A higher percentage of Affiliates identify their special events as thriving (2/5) as compared to their regularly occurring events (1/5). 1/3 of Affiliates identify their regularly occurring events as struggling some or a lot.

#### Our Affiliates' strengths

Affiliates identified a number of community and/or organizational strengths. The most commonly mentioned strengths were topics relating to (1) Positive community culture and building community; (2) Talent (e.g., supporting local talent; hiring quality talent); (3) Programming (e.g., offer variety) (4) Leadership and (5) Volunteers. Many other strengths were mentioned by smaller numbers of Affiliates.

#### Challenges faced by Affiliates

The five pre-COVID-19 challenges/concerns mentioned most frequently by Affiliates were the same as in 2019: (1) Attendance (e.g., declining attendance; recruiting and keeping new participants); (2) Organizers & volunteers (e.g., needing more volunteers; attracting participants into leadership positions); (3) Finances (e.g., not being able to cover expenses); (4) Venues (e.g., difficulty in finding an appropriate venue); and (5) Talent. Concerns about attendance far outweighed any other concern (e.g., 110 Affiliates mentioned attendance; 40 mentioned finances; 10 mentioned talent).

### 3: THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON AFFILIATES

#### Challenges relating to COVID-19

In general, Affiliates are weathering the pandemic fairly well and the majority of Affiliates have enough funds to carry them through the pandemic. However, ¼ of respondents noted that the pandemic had a significant financial impact on their group and a few groups are considering permanently disbanding.

The most common concerns regarding COVID-19 include the uncertainty of when and how to restart in-person events, maintaining community connection during this time, the potential for lower attendance when events restart, and questions on how to make in-person events safe.

#### Affiliate activity during the pandemic

Many Affiliates are remaining busy during this time. Some are finding innovative ways of holding events online, sharing interesting and relevant information with their members, or are building community in other ways. Some Affiliates are focusing on organizational planning and holding fundraisers.

### 4: PROGRAMMING FOR SCHOOL-AGED PARTICIPANTS

#### Organizing events that welcome school-aged participants

Over half of respondents organize all-ages events that are open to elementary, secondary, and college/university students. In addition, 1/5 of respondents noted that their Affiliates organizes events specifically for pre-school or elementary-aged participants while 1/5 of respondents noted that members of their community collaborate with other organizations (e.g., schools; libraries) to provide school-aged programming.

#### Engaging youth

Affiliates use a wide range of strategies to attract and welcome school-aged participants to their events. In addition to encouraging general participation, 44% of respondents agreed that they encourage the development of youth performers and 36% of Affiliates agreed that they engage youth in volunteering and organizing.

### 5: CDSS'S RELATIONSHIP WITH AFFILIATES

#### Affiliates' perception of their relationship with CDSS

As in 2019, we were heartened by Affiliates' positive perception of their relationship with CDSS. On a five-point scale, 89% of survey respondents reported very positive or positive feelings about their Affiliate's relationship with CDSS while the other 11% were neutral. (There were no negative or very negative feelings among respondents.)

#### Why are groups Affiliate members?

While group liability insurance and non-profit tax exemption are common reasons for groups to become Affiliate members, we were pleasantly surprised by how many Affiliates identified other reasons for joining CDSS. For instance, 1/5 of Affiliates cited that they became group members to be connected to the wider traditional dance music and song community - respondents could only select one reason so that is impressive. In a follow-up question (with multiple responses allowed), 4/5 of Affiliates noted that one reason they remain a CDSS Affiliate is for the broader connection while 7/10 noted that they are currently an Affiliate to support CDSS's mission and work. The most frequently selected reasons for remaining an Affiliates were liability insurance and 501(c)3 tax exemption.

### 6: CDSS COMMUNICATION WITH AFFILIATES

As in 2019, survey results indicate that our communication with Affiliates isn't as effective as it could be. While our 1:1 contact seems strong (e.g., positive feedback on phone calls and direct emails), our outreach efforts via email, email blasts and social media are not reaching as many Affiliates as we would like. For instance, 2/5 respondents noted that their either don't receive or don't read the Affiliate-specific eblasts, 2/5 of respondents noted that they don't receive the Affiliate handbook, and 1/2 of respondents noted that they don't receive our Facebook posts. In contrast, the most effective method of communication seems to be personally addressed emails to Affiliate contacts - 65% of respondents noted that they read and find those communications relevant. Affiliates provided a range of suggestions for how to communicate with Affiliates more effectively.

As in 2019, 3/5 of Affiliates share CDSS information with their wider community either sometimes or 'as much as I can', while 2/5 share CDSS information rarely or never. Affiliates seemed willing to share a range of communications to differing degrees, with print flyers being the most popular.

### 7: CDSS RESOURCES AND SERVICES

#### Favorite CDSS services

Affiliates value a very wide range of CDSS services and supports. While liability insurance and 501(c)3 exemption were deemed most valuable by the highest number of respondents, many other resources such as the CDSS website, listing of events, and CDSS taking a leadership role on topics impacting our broader community are also highly valued by many. In addition, organizer supports such regional conferences, web chats, and the resource portal are appreciated by the majority of Affiliates. A handful of resource were deemed not to be important by many Affiliates and some Affiliates are not even aware of certain services.

#### How CDSS can improve the services offered

We asked Affiliates for specific feedback on seven services/resources such as insurance and community grants. Generally, there was positive feedback for each resource in addition to specific suggestions on how we can improve what we offer.

# FINDINGS 1: ABOUT OUR AFFILIATES

This section of the report presents information about CDSS Affiliates such as their location and the type of activities they organize

## WHERE CDSS AFFILIATES ARE LOCATED

In some regions, the number of Affiliates is roughly representative of the total population (i.e., West Coast; West; Midwest). However, the Northeast has a much higher percentage of Affiliates compared to total population while Canada and the US South have a lower number of Affiliates as compared to total population.

The percentage of survey respondents by region is representative of the geographical spread of CDSS's Affiliate population. See Figure 1 for a map of the various regions.

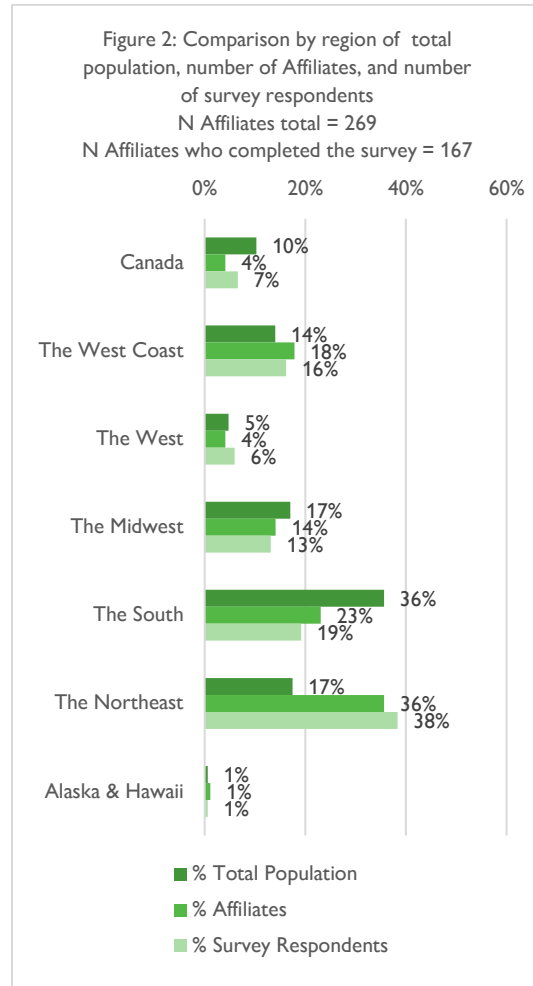
Figure 1: Map of Canada and the US divided by region



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

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

Figure 2 presents a comparison of (1) percentage of total population, (2) number of Affiliates, and (3) number of survey respondents.



The population data was sourced from US federal data from 2018 and Statistics Canada data from 2019.

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

Three of the five states with the most Affiliates are located along the US West Coast:

Table 1: States/provinces with the most Affiliates	#
Massachusetts	23
California	21
New York	19
Oregon	14
Washington	13

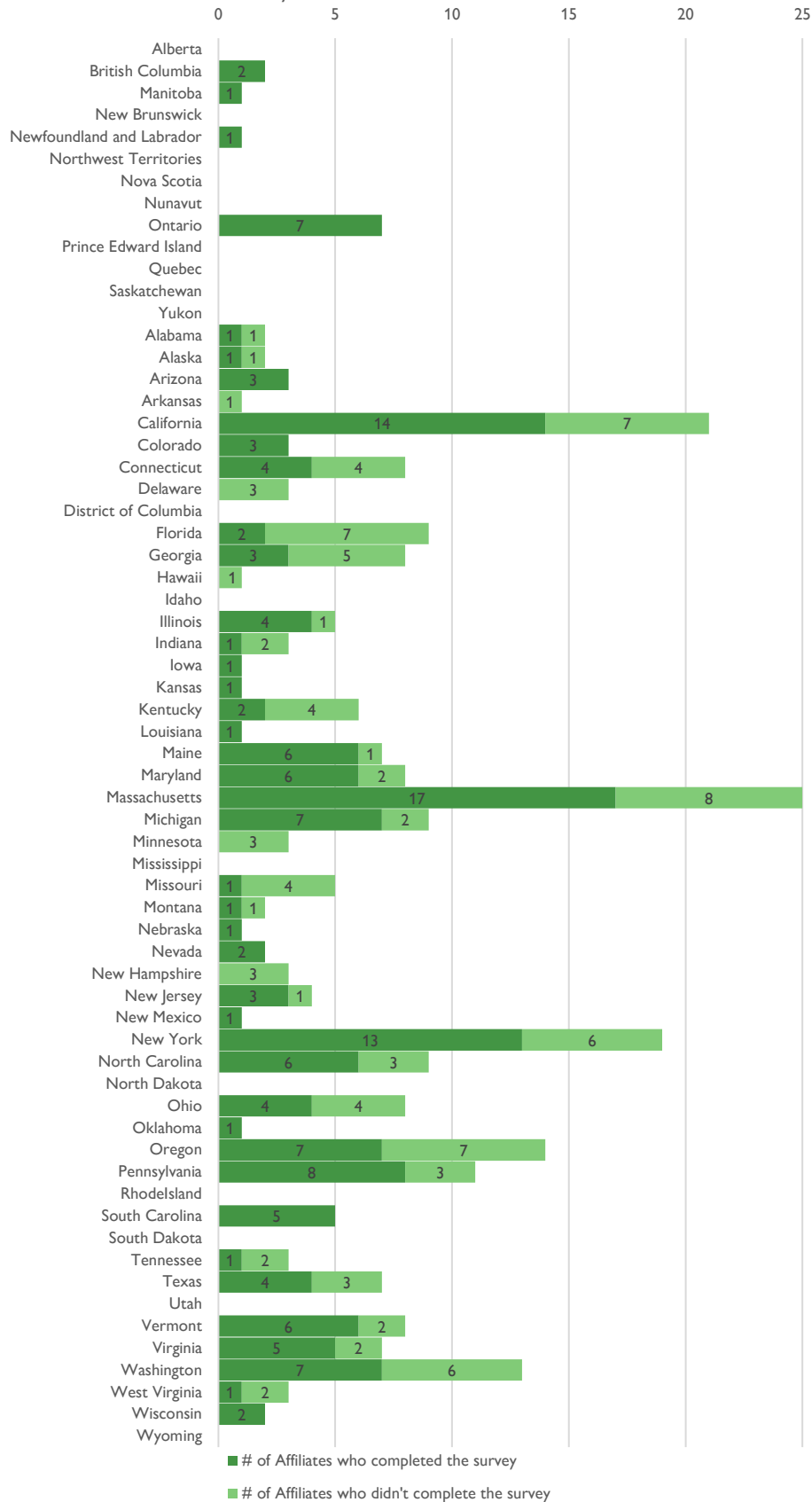
Many states and provinces have no Affiliates. These include:

- 9/13 Canadian provinces and territories (i.e., Alberta, New Brunswick, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Prince Edward Island, Quebec\*, Saskatchewan, and Yukon)
- 7/51 US states or districts (i.e., District of Columbia\*, Idaho\*, Mississippi, North Dakota\*, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Wyoming)

\* = at least one Affiliate in 2019

Figure 3: Number of Affiliates who completed/did not complete the survey  
by State/Province/Territory

Survey N=167; Total Affiliate N=269

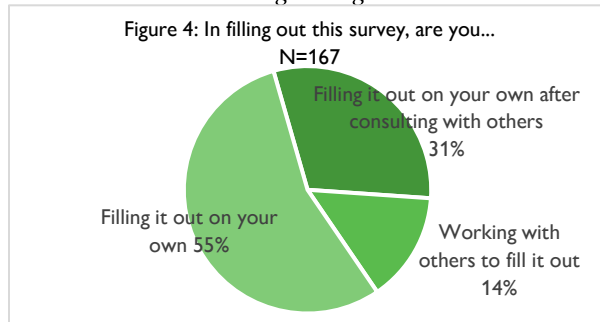




### Q3 WHO COMPLETED THE SURVEY

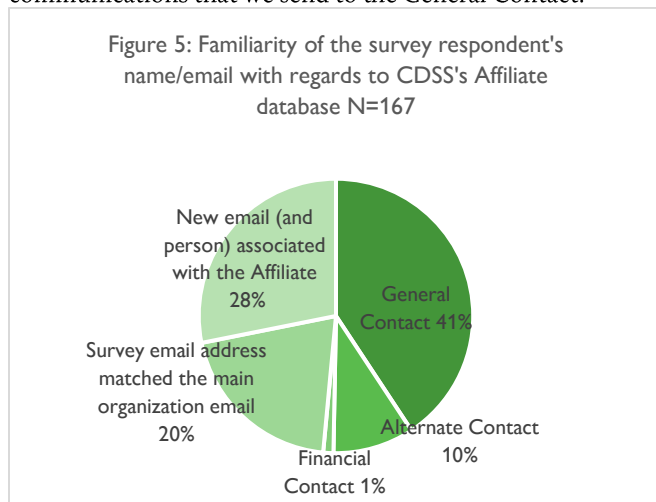
We asked Affiliates to consider filling out the survey in consultation with other members of their organizing team so that we could gain perspectives from the team rather than one member. However, we also noted that it was fine if survey respondents could not consult with others as it was a bigger ask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

Figure 4 illustrates whether survey respondents consulted with members of their organizing team or not.



Over half of the survey respondents completed the survey on their own despite only 2% of survey respondents identifying themselves the sole organizer for their group. This changed little from the 2019 survey (+/-2%). We heard from a few survey participants (via the survey or email) that it was hard to engage other members of their organizing committee in the survey.

We checked the names of the survey respondents against our Affiliate database. Over half of the respondent names either matched the General Contact name that we have on file or the respondent's email matched the main organization email in our records. However, approximately 1/4 of respondents were 'new' to CDSS in that we didn't have previous record of their involvement with their respective Affiliate. The fact that new contacts are filling out the survey is important because those individuals are not necessarily familiar with the communications that we send to the General Contact.

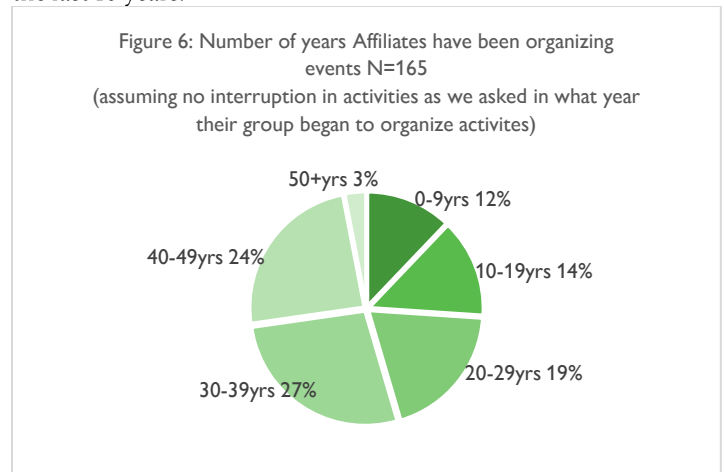


### Q4 NUMBER OF YEARS AFFILIATES HAVE BEEN ORGANIZING EVENTS

New in 2020, we asked Affiliates for a rough estimate of the year their group began to organize events.

Responses were collected through an open-ended question in order to allow for flexibility if respondents did not know the exact year. In general, respondents provided a specific year. 28 respondents provided slightly expanded responses (e.g., approximately 1996; roughly 1995). These responses were easily coded into ten-year groupings.

Figure 6 illustrates the responses. Approximately 55% of Affiliates were founded 30+ years ago, and 45% within the last 30 years. 12% are relatively new groups, having formed within the last 10 years.



### Q5 GROUP STATUS

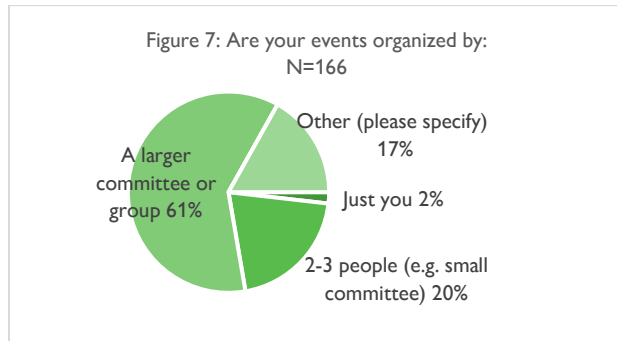
We asked Affiliates about their group status (e.g., incorporated or not). There was very little change as compared to the 2019 findings (i.e., +/- 2% max)

Approximately half of the Affiliate groups who responded to the survey are incorporated through CDSS's 501(c)3 exemption. However, 1/5 are not officially incorporated and another 1/5 are incorporated as a 501(c)3 non-profit through other means. Still other groups fall under other categories including the small number of Canadian Affiliates who tend to be incorporated as non-profit but without charitable status.

Table 2: Which best describes your group? N=167	%
A volunteer group/individual that is NOT officially incorporated	20%
USA - Incorporated state non-profit but NOT 501(c)3 Tax Exempt	5%
USA - 501(c)3 non-profit through the CDSS Group Exemption	48%
USA - 501(c)3 non-profit NOT through CDSS Group Exemption	21%
CANADA - Incorporated non-profit WITHOUT charitable status	3%
CANADA - Incorporated non-profit WITH charitable status	0%
For-profit business whether incorporated or not	1%
Other (please specify)	2%

## Q6 STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANIZING TEAMS

Almost all of the Affiliates have an organizing team rather than one person organizing everything on their own (Figure 7).



There was very little change compared to 2019 results (+/- 4%).

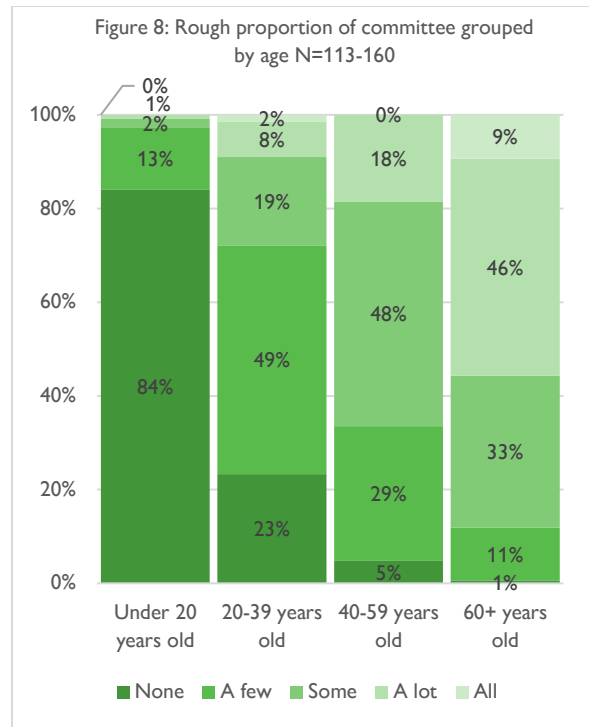
29 Affiliates wrote written responses to 'Other (please specify)':

- ½ of the written responses seemed to be larger committees or groups working together. In many instances, organizers pointed out that they have multiple sub-committees to organize various aspects of their work.
- A handful of respondents noted that everyone in their group is involved in organizing. All but one of those Affiliates were morris teams.
- A few respondents pointed out that they do most of the work but have a bit of help.
- A few respondents noted that their group does not do much organizing (e.g., they are a facility that hosts events; they perform at events planned by others).

## Q7 ORGANIZER AGE

Asking organizers about their age was new in 2020, coming out of a recommendation from the 2019 survey. (The 2016 & 2018 organizer surveys found that the average organizer age tends to be older and written responses in the 2019 Affiliates survey referred to the challenge of organizers aging out.)

Figure 8 illustrates the rough proportion of committee members by age group.

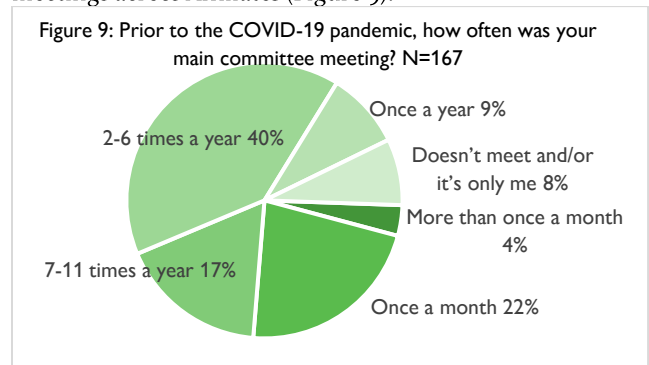


Generally, there seemed to be a mix of ages among organizing teams. Two age groups stood out:

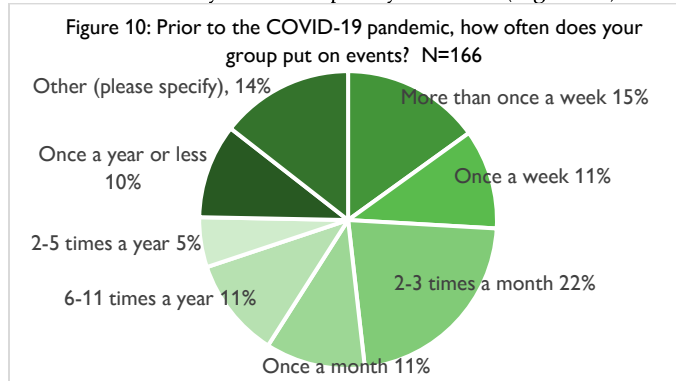
- Youth engagement: Very few groups have youth under 20 on their organizing committee (84% have no organizers under 20). However, 77% of groups have at least a few organizers ages 20-39 with 10% of those groups having 'a lot' or 'all' organizers in that age bracket.
- Senior engagement: 55% of groups noted that 'a lot' or 'all' of their organizers are 60 or older, with 9% of those stating that all of their organizers are 60+.

## Q8-9 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

There is much variety in the frequency of committee meetings across Affiliates (Figure 9).



There is also variety in the frequency of events (Figure 10).



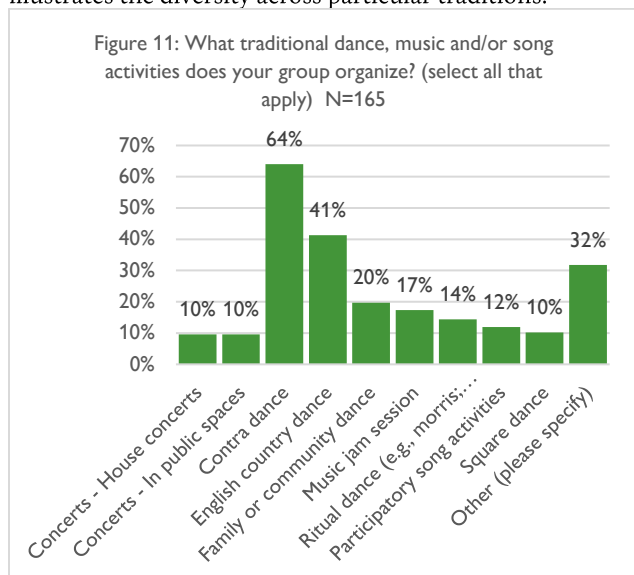
For both questions, there was very little change in comparison to 2019 results (mostly +/- 2%).

As with the 2019 survey, the written responses for 'other – please specify' could be incorporated into the categories provided in the question. Once the comments were grouped into those categories,

- Approximately 30% of Affiliates hold events at least once a week
- Approximately 65% of Affiliates hold events at least once a month
- Approximately 15% of Affiliates hold events once a year

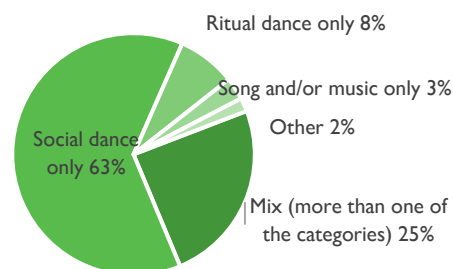
## Q10 THE TYPE OF ACTIVITIES THAT AFFILIATES ORGANIZE

As in 2019, we asked Affiliates what traditional dance, music and/or song activities their group organizes. Figure 11 illustrates the diversity across particular traditions.



Because many Affiliates organize more than one activity, we coded responses as to 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 12 illustrates these findings.

**Figure 12: The traditional dance, music and/or song activities Affiliate organized, grouped by broader theme (select all that apply) N=167**



Figures 11 and 12 illustrate how social dance, and more particularly contra dance & ECD are the most common traditions organized by Affiliates while traditions such as participatory song and ritual dance are less common.

Beyond the findings illustrated in the figures,

- 48% of Affiliates organize one tradition and 29% organize two traditions. 14% organize four or more traditions.
- Looking at aggregated data, 87% of Affiliates organize some form of social dance (e.g., waltz; squares; contra) and 30% organize music and/or song events (e.g., concerts; jams; sings).
- Very little changed between the 2020 and 2019 data (+/- 3%) with the exception of 'Other (please specify)' which increased from 24% to 32% of respondents providing written responses.
- 53 survey participants provided written responses under 'Other (please specify)'. Many of these comments were elaborating on related activities to the traditions above (e.g., camps, workshops, demonstrations, open bands, open mic, weekly instrumental instruction). In addition, some Affiliates noted that they organize other traditions that are not as commonly identified with CDSS's core traditions (see Table 3).

Table 3: Other traditions being organized by CDSS Affiliates	# of respondents
Cajun/Zydeco	4
Swing/Lindy/Blues	4
International/World dance and/or and music	4
Waltz	3
Vintage/Historical dances	2
Folk/music festivals	2
American social dance (late 19 <sup>th</sup> c – 1935)	1
Clogging	1
Mix of couples dancing (country western, swing, waltz, etc.)	1
Ballroom	1
Renaissance dance	1
Scandinavian dance	1
Fusion dance	1



## Q11 SPECIFICS ON PARTICIPATORY SONG EVENTS

In 2019, we asked Affiliates who organize participatory song events to provide a brief description of those events. This year, we broke the question down into two sections, focusing on both where the events are held and the type of repertoire sung.

Few Affiliates seem to be holding participatory song events as a stand-alone event. Among the 16 Affiliates who identified as organizing participatory song, approximately 1/3 are including song as part of their annual camps or weekends (e.g., as part of a contra weekend; as part of an ale). A handful of groups each hold events at pubs, churches (e.g., rented spaces; church hall), or private homes. A handful of respondents provided other responses such as a senior's centre, arts centre, and lutherie.

30 Affiliates also described the type of repertoire sung. Overwhelmingly, Affiliates are singing songs from multiple traditions. For instance, of the 10 groups that listed shape note/sacred harp, eight listed other traditions as well.

Traditions sung by Affiliates include:

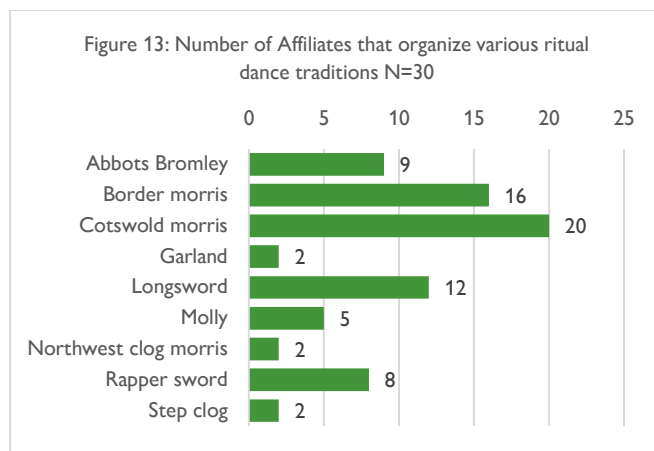
Table 4: Tradition	# of respondents
Shape note/sacred harp	10
'Folk'	7
English/British	6
Sea chanties	3
Pub sings	3
Rise Up Singing	3
American	2
Rounds	2

Individual organizers also mentioned the following styles/traditions: Anything with a chorus and allows for harmony, rap, musicals, Gaelic song, work songs, Canadian, swing & jazz, Scottish, Irish, improve, drinking songs, Renaissance, oldies, bawdy, non-religious spiritual/inspirational, and gospel.

## Q12 SPECIFICS ON RITUAL DANCE TRADITIONS

In 2019, we asked an opened ended question regarding the type of ritual dance traditions that Affiliates organize. We used the 2019 responses to create categories for this year's question.

Figure 13 illustrates the number of teams/groups dancing particular traditions. Of the 30 Affiliates who responded to this question, 21 listed at least two different ritual dance traditions.



Survey participants were provided the opportunity to list other traditions that they organize. Responses included: Bucknell tradition, Appalachian clogging, Cape Breton step dance, English clogging, Ontario step dance, Kerry dancing, and Welsh morris.

## Q13-14 ROLE TERMINOLOGY IN TRADITIONAL SOCIAL DANCE

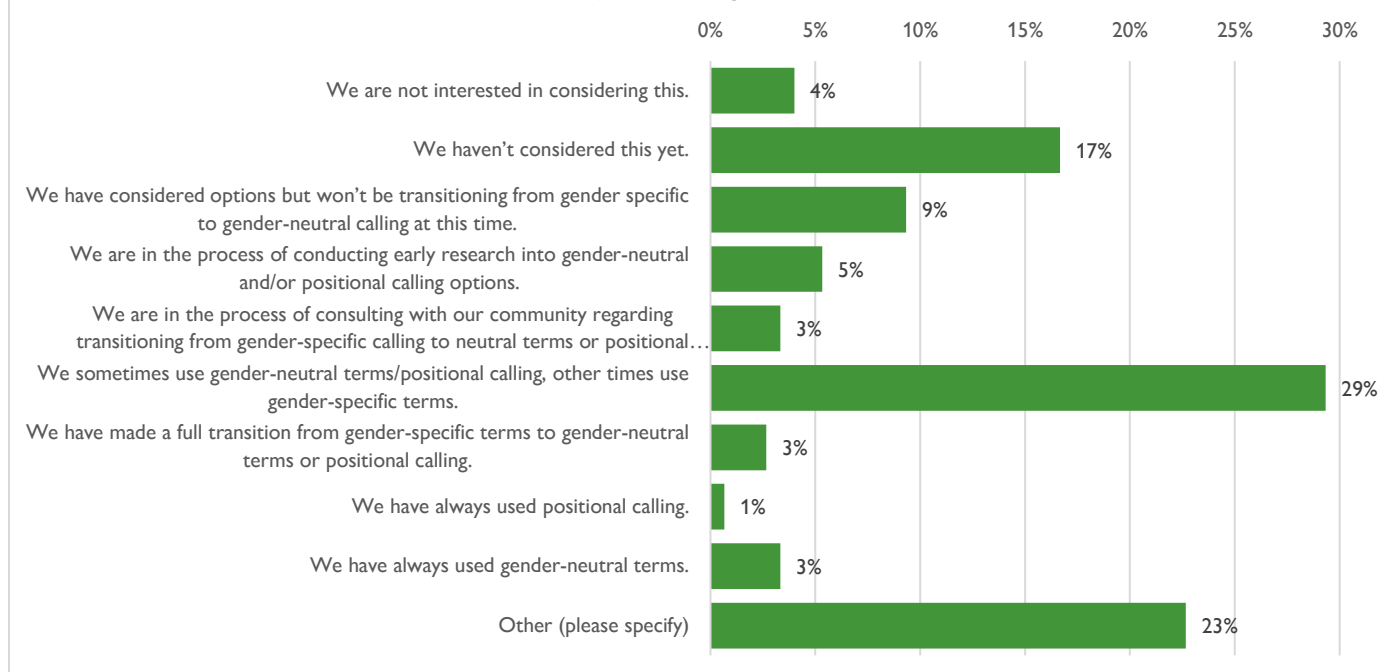
In 2019, we asked social dance organizers an open-ended question on whether their group use gender-neutral terms for dance roles and if so, to identify the terms. This year, we expanded the question to learn more about this shifting practice.

### The degree to which groups are incorporating gender-neutral and/or positional calling

Survey participants were first asked about whether they have considered the use of gender-neutral terms and/or positional calling for social dance (see Figure 14).

There is great variety in the degree to which Affiliates are interested gender-neutral terms or positional calling. 30% of respondents are not interested, have not considered, or have considered but won't be transitioning to gender-neutral calling. 8% of respondents are in the process of researching and consulting their community on gender-neutral terms/positional calling. 29% of respondents use a mix of gender-specific terms and gender-neutral/positional calling and 7% have either switched fully or have always used gender-neutral terms/positional calling. (Note that some Affiliates organize multiple series. Some of those series may be using gender-neutral terms or positional calling but they will appear as 'sometimes using those terms' as the question focuses on the organization as a whole.)

Figure 14: The degree to which groups that organize social dancing have considered the use of gender-neutral terms and/or positional calling N=150



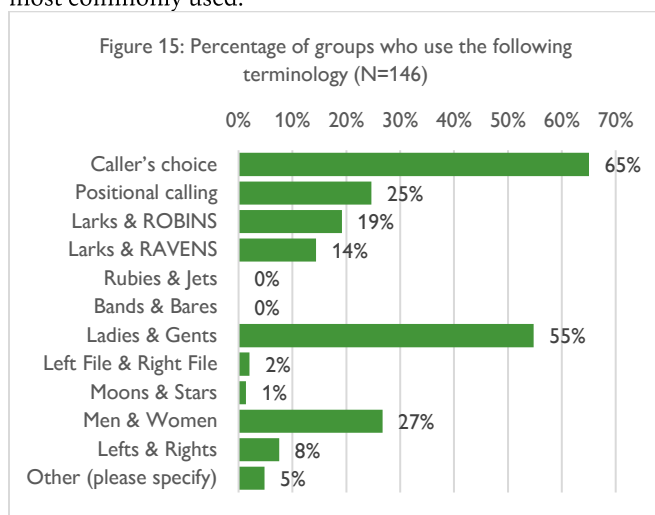
34 Affiliates provided written responses to this question. Of those, 20 wrote about variations to leaving the choice up to the caller. Sometimes groups stated their preference, while other times it was fully up to the caller. Other respondents noted that different dance events within their organization use different terms.

*We have been consulting with our community, and encourage gender-neutral terminology, but leave the decision for any given dance up to the caller. Carl Friedman, Baltimore Folk Music Society*

*We have considered options but do not generally use gender-neutral calling. We will if the caller feels very strongly about it. Pam Ruch, Valley Contra Dance*

### Role terms that are being used:

We asked Affiliates about the terms that their dance community uses for dancer roles. See Figure 15 for the terms most commonly used.



Of the 95 groups that selected caller's choice, 39 did not specify the terms used. This means that the counts of the various terms would be higher if we knew what terms were being used in those communities.

Assuming that callers' choice means that there are more than one set of terms being used, 20% of question respondents listed only one set of terms used in their community (i.e., 29/146 question respondents) while most communities use a range of terms. These findings could be influenced by the fact that many Affiliates organize more than one series which could each be using different terms (e.g., ECD dance uses positional; contra dance uses Larks & Robins).

Ladies and Gents is the most common terminology being used followed by Women and Men. However, other terminology is becoming more common. Last year, no groups reported using Larks & Robins while some groups were using Larks & Ravens. This year, 19% of groups who listed role terminology are using Larks & Robins at least some of the time. This shift likely relates to the broader community discussion around Larks & Ravens vs. Larks & Robins which happened in 2019.

In 2019, we did not ask about positional calling and only one respondent mentioned that they used positional calling. This year, we asked about positional calling and 25% of question respondents noted that they use positional calling at least some of the time. (Anecdotally, we know that many groups have been using positional calling for a while so the lack of responses in 2019 may have been because we asked specifically about 'role terminology' and positions may not be considered roles.)

Other terms mentioned in the 'Other - please specify' included:

- 4: Lead and Follow/Follower
- 1: Sashes and Others
- 1: No terms for a community dance

Other comments from organizers included:

- A few respondents pointed out that they mostly use one set of terms but they have been experimenting with others
- One group pointed out that they currently use Larks and Ravens but are switching to Larks and Robins next year
- One respondent pointed out that they are in the midst consulting with their community

## Q18 SOURCES OF REVENUE

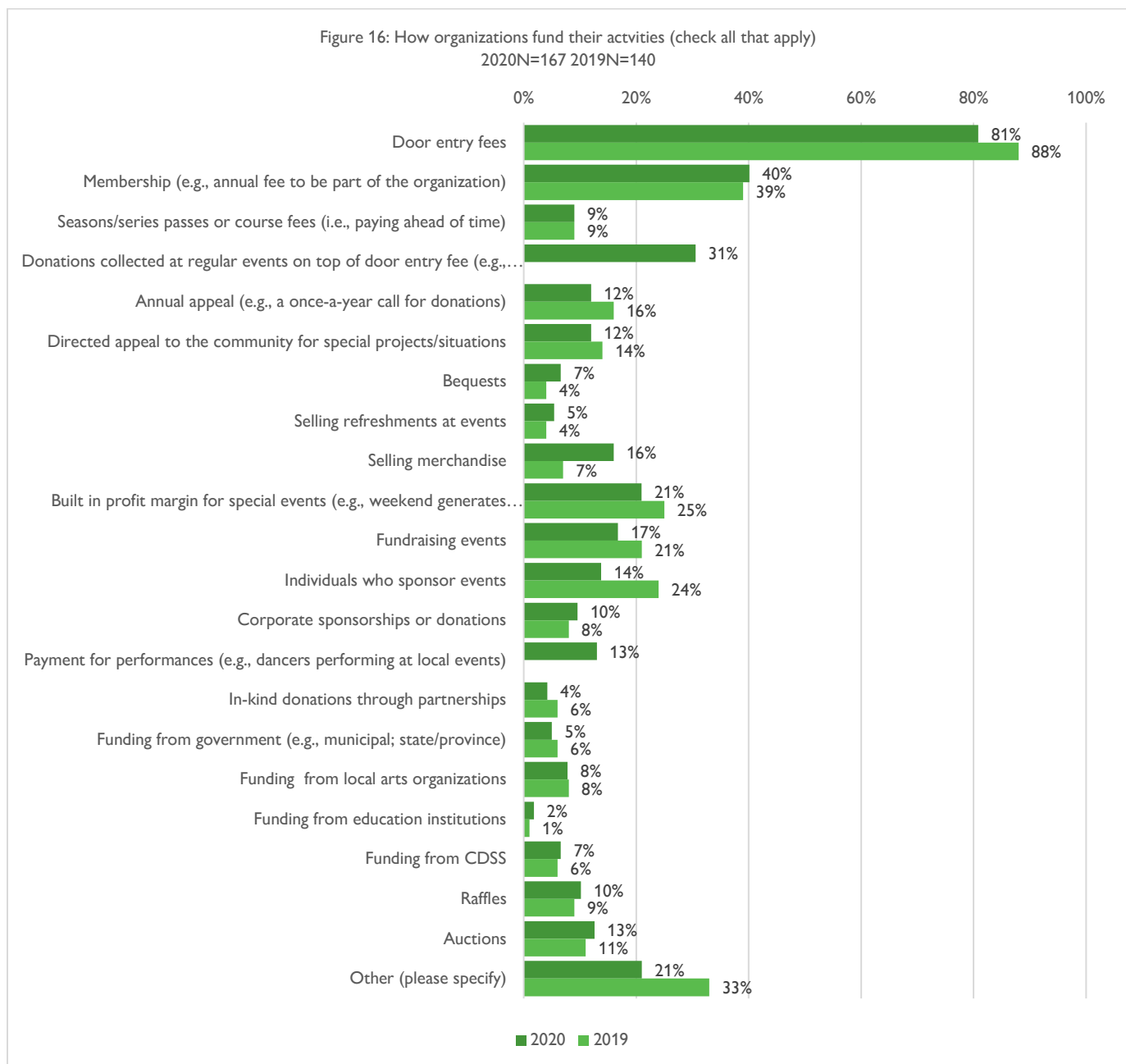
Our Affiliates raise funds through a wide variety of sources. Over 80% of Affiliates collect fees at the door. Of those, 84% use at least one other method of generating revenue. 61% of Affiliate who responded to the survey reported having at least three different sources of revenue.

Fig 16 provides a comparison of revenue sources between 2020 and 2019 data. There is relatively little change (+/- 4% max) for most revenue sources. Changes of 5% or more included

- 7% fewer Affiliates identified as receiving funding through door fees (81% in 2020; 88% in 2019)
- 10% fewer Affiliates identified individuals sponsoring events (14% in 2020; 24% in 2019)
- 8% more Affiliates identified as selling merchandise (15% in 2020; 8% in 2019)

Last year, a number of respondents wrote about additional categories beyond what we had listed. We included these in the 2020 survey.

- 31% of Affiliates collect donations at regular events on top of the door entry fee (e.g., donation jar/tip jar)
- 13% of Affiliates collect payment for performances (e.g., dancers performing at local events)



45 Affiliates wrote written responses to 'Other (please specify)'. When coding these responses, 10 fit into categories above and so were recoded (e.g., "Performance fees" fit under Payment for Performances).

Of the 35 other written responses, there were a few common themes. For instance, a handful of organizers wrote about advanced registration for weekends and camps. Other groups who organize weekends/camps likely selected 'door entry fees' for this revenue source but it's a good point that payment at the door is different than advanced registration payment. In addition, a handful of organizers pointed out that they collect donations at the door (e.g., suggested donation) which is different than door entry fees or donations collected at regular events on top of door entry fees (both options in the close-ended portion of the question.)

Approximately 15 Affiliates wrote about donations in ways that did not fit into the categories provided in the question. Examples of these types of donations include:

- Donations collected at the time of membership or as part of event registration
- An attendee at a special event regularly donating to offset the cost of US/Canadian dollar

- Donations not connected to appeals or events
- One-time donations; small donations; regular donations; some unscheduled donations

Individual respondents each mentioned the following sources of revenue:

- Annuity earnings
- CDSS centennial tour
- Charging for classes
- Endowment
- Foundation support
- Kickstarter
- Selling ads in booklet
- Subsidy
- Rental income (mentioned by two Affiliates)
- Amazon Smile
- Facebook fundraiser

A limited number of Affiliates access funding from governments or art organizations. When grouped together, 16/165 Affiliates receiving funding from government, local arts organizations, or education institutions. When we include CDSS in that grouping the number rises to 21 Affiliates (11 Affiliates identified receiving funding from CDSS).

## FINDINGS 2: AFFILIATE WELLBEING, STRENGTHS, AND CHALLENGES

This section of the report summarizes the findings about Affiliate wellbeing as well as their strengths and the challenges that Affiliates face.

### Q15,16&19 THE PERCEIVED WELLBEING OF OUR AFFILIATES AND THEIR EVENTS

Last year, we were interested in finding out about the self-perceived well-being of our Affiliates. We asked the same series of three questions in 2020 but added a stipulation of *prior to the COVID-19 pandemic* as we know that Affiliates are in a very unusual position right now.

The three questions that we asked were...

*If you organize a regularly-occurring event (e.g., monthly/weekly), overall how would you describe the event? (If you have more than one series, please answer this question in reference to the series with the most participants)*

*If you organize a special event (e.g., ball/festival) overall how would you describe the event? (If you have more than one special event, please answer this question in reference to the series with the most participants)*

And then further along in the survey (separate from the two questions above), we asked... Overall, how would you describe your organization?

Figures 17, 18, and 19 illustrate the perceived well-being of regularly occurring events, special events, and Affiliate organizations as a whole. Some observations relating to these figures include:

- Overall, there is relatively little change between 2019 and 2020 in how Affiliates perceive the wellbeing of their events and organization (max +/-4% with the exception of one 6% change)
- While 2/3 of Affiliates describe their organization as stable or thriving, 1/3 describe their organization as struggling some or a lot
- A higher percentage of Affiliates identify their special events as thriving (2/5) as compared to their regularly occurring events (1/5)
- 1/3 of Affiliates identify their regularly occurring events as struggling some or a lot
- Very few Affiliates are struggling a lot (2%) or have events that are struggling a lot (regular events 6%; special events 2%)

Figure 17: If you organize a regularly-occurring event (e.g., weekly/monthly), overall how would you describe the event? (If you have more than one series, please answer this question in reference to the series with the most participants.) 2020N=139 2019N

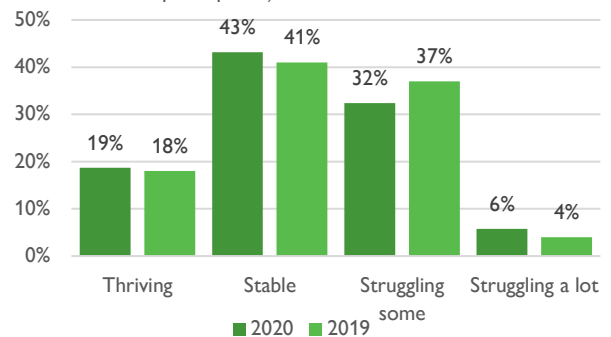


Figure 18: If you organize a special event (e.g., festival; ball), overall how would you describe the event? (If you have more than one special event, answer the question in reference to the event with the most participants.) 2020N=128 2019N=100

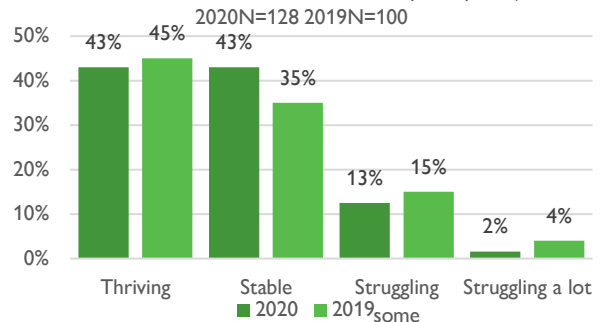
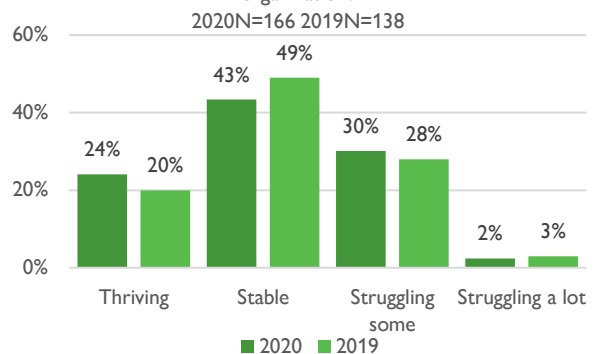


Figure 19: Overall, how would you describe your organization? 2020N=166 2019N=138



## Q15&16 SIZE OF EVENTS

Affiliates were asked open-ended questions regarding the average attendance at their biggest recurring regular event and their biggest special event. Some interpretation was required as written responses varied greatly.

As in 2019, Affiliates continue to hold relatively small events (i.e. approximately 80% of question respondents host a series that has as a regular attendance of under 75 participants; 55% under 50 participants).

Table 5: Series/regular events N=104/117	Rough % 2019	Rough % 2000
Under 25 participants	17%	20%
25-49 participants	41%	35%
50-74 participants	21%	23%
75-99 participants	9%	8%
100-124 participants	10%	9%
125-149 participants	1%	0%
150+ participants	1%	0%

It's important to remember that some of these regularly occurring events are gatherings such as morris dance practices or jam sessions which would have small numbers of attendees.

We asked participants to identify what percentage of their crowd is attending for the first time. While there was great variety, the most common response was 10%.

Affiliates were also asked about the average attendance at their largest special event. Approximately 70% of respondents hold at least one special event with over 100 participants.

Table 6: Size of regular events N=104/111	Rough % 2019	Rough % 2020
Under 50 participants	9%	10%
50-99 participants	22%	22%
100-149 participants	26%	25%
150-199 participants	15%	14%
200-249 participants	13%	11%
250+ participants	15%	18%

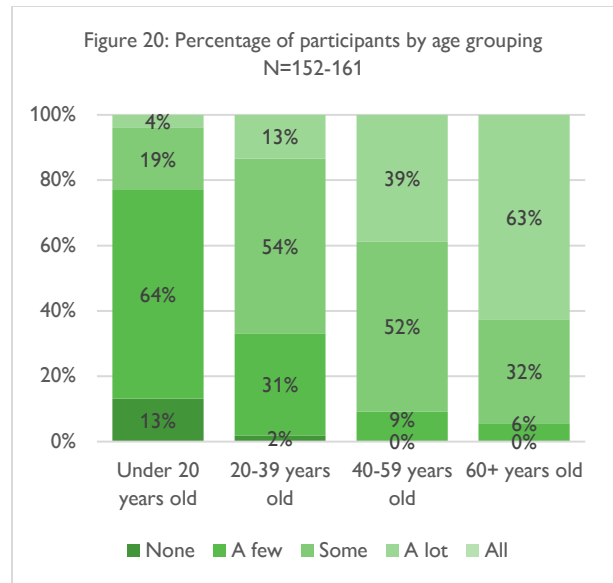
## Q17 PARTICIPANT AGE

In addition to asking Affiliates about the age of their organizing committee (Question 7), we asked Affiliates about the age of their participants.

*Looking across your various events, roughly what proportion of your participants are....*

Figure 20 illustrates the findings. Some observations include:

- 1/4 of Affiliates have a lot or all of their participants under the age of 20
- 2/3 of Affiliates have some or a lot of participants ages 20-39yr
- 2/3 of Affiliates have a lot of participants who are 60+



## Q20 ORGANIZATION & COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

In 2019, we asked Affiliates about the strengths of their organization and/or community (i.e., what their group does well). This year, we made a slight change to the question, prompting respondents to list up to three strengths.

161 of the 167 survey respondents provided a written response. Of those, 18 listed two strengths and 132 provided three strengths.

Table 7 lists the approximate number of respondents that mentioned various strengths.

Table 7: Affiliate strengths	Approximate # of respondents
Positive community culture and building community	120
Talent	75
Programming	65
Leadership	35
Volunteers	30
Finances	25
Publicity and communication more broadly	20
Stability, dedication, and longevity	20
Participant experience levels	20
Venues	15
Engaging diverse communities	15
Commitment to community safety	5
Refreshments	5

### Positive community culture and building community

Approximately 120 of the 161 question respondents wrote about community culture and/or building community – that is 3/4 of question respondents!

50 Affiliates use the terms ‘welcoming’ or ‘welcome’. Many Affiliates wrote about being welcoming in a general sense. In addition, approximately 25 wrote about being welcoming to newcomers.

*We actively welcome, dance with, and help new contra and English country dancers. Chuck Cross, Traditional Austin Area Dance Association*



*Committing to truly welcoming new people to our dance.* Carol Deacon, Charlotte Country Dancers

*Welcoming new dancers. We are friendly, quickly involve them in dances, encourage them to sign up for notifications.* Chris Carroll, English Country Dance Atlanta

A few other Affiliates pointed out other aspects of being welcoming including:

- Having a welcoming vibe or atmosphere
- Welcoming all ages and abilities
- Having a welcoming and safe community for all
- Being more welcoming than other local dances

20 Affiliates used the term 'friendly'.

*Open - welcoming atmosphere - warm atmosphere - friendly.* Village Green English country Dancers

*Regional reputation is "friendly". Dancers are hospitable to others while dancing and off the floor, including break and post dance.* Jamey Hutchinson, Conestoga Dance Association

Other Affiliates described their community in the following ways:

- Having a strong community feel
- Enthusiastic and appreciative
- Warm
- Inclusive
- Joyful
- Having a strong social connection among participants; built in socializing time
- Having a community that cares about and supports each other

*Strong social connections on and off the dance floor.* Cis Hinkle, Chattahoochee Contra Dancers

*We support each other through difficult times e.g., illness, injury.* Jenny Fraser, Victoria English Country Dance Society

Approximately 25 Affiliates wrote about building community. This included a few Affiliates who pointed out that they use refreshments as part of that effort.

*Creating community.* Michael Bean, Ann Arbor Community for Traditional Music and Dance

*Organize events that build community and transmit knowledge (pickup Morris dancing).* Meg Dedolph, Midwest Morris Ale Assn.

## Talent

Approximately 75 Affiliates commented on topics relating to talent. Of those, 30 Affiliates noted that they have strong local and/or touring talent.

*Selects excellent artistic talent, both local and imported.* Sharon Green, Bay Area Country Dance Society

*Combination of wonderful teaching, music, and dancing in a beautiful setting.* Deb Karl, Lenox Assembly

Another 35 Affiliates provided other comments relating to talent. These included:

- Offering a variety of musical styles, bands, and callers
- Talent willing to perform for little remuneration or as volunteers
- Fostering the growth of local talent (e.g., having regular open bands/caller events)
- Providing refreshments for talent
- Having a dedicated core of callers and/or musicians
- Talent feeling appreciated by the local community

## Programming

Approximately 65 Affiliates commented about programming as a strength. Many simply mentioned their tradition (e.g., singing; dance). However, others provided more detail.

Approximately 15 Affiliates wrote about offering a variety of activities and traditions.

*Besides dancing, we share other likes and talents including pub singing and music jamming.* Ruth Olmstead, Pokingbrook Morris Dancers

*The diversity of events and locations.* Herb Lape, Long Island Traditional Music Association

*Our wide repertoire of choreographed traditional percussive dance styles.* Peggy Leiby, Fiddle Kicks

Approximately 10 Affiliates wrote about how their events were popular, well-attended or particularly fun while another five wrote about offering a quality/great experience.

Approximately five organizers wrote about offering a consistent, regular, or dependable schedule.

One or a few Affiliates each wrote about other aspects of their programming such as:

- Have unique themes at monthly events
- Include lessons as part of their events
- Teach recently written ECD; teach ECD repertoire from before 1815
- Use non-gendered calling
- Choreograph new dances
- Introduce new material to dancers
- Include historical information about the dances
- Children's specific programming
- Introduce square dancers to contra dancing
- Take advantage of visiting talent

Some wrote about specific events that they offer. For example:

*Running Sugar Hill dance weekend with all the history of that event and the strong power of the volunteers.* Marie Deer, Bloomington Old-Time Music and Dance Group

*Our Waltz Weekends fill to capacity and attract people from 6-8 states and sometimes Canada.* Jan Pearce, Lexington Vintage Dance

## Leadership

Approximately 35 Affiliates wrote about effective leadership. Many wrote about having strong, enthusiastic, and committed leadership while others wrote about being well organized, good at planning, or good at execution. One, or a few Affiliates, each mentioned the following:

- Duties being distributed among Board members
- Well-crafted infrastructure
- Efficient meetings
- Group decision making
- Committee members with strong skills
- Engage younger leaders
- Stable leadership
- Commitment to record keeping and financial transparency
- Leadership being connected to, and representative of the community

*Our leadership is both connected to and representative of our dance communities.* Shoshana Silverman, Country Dance New York (CDNY)

*Some of our newer, younger members have extraordinary dedication and skills (like web-mastering) which have improved our image. Nell Wright, Friends of Greenfield Dance*

## Volunteers

Approximately 30 Affiliates wrote about volunteers as one of their strengths, this beyond the mention of leadership (see above). Affiliates mentioned that they have strong volunteer management, they are good at recruiting and encouraging volunteers, and/or that they have a group of committed volunteers. The following quote was particularly inspiring:

## Finances

Approximately 25 Affiliates wrote about strengths relating to finances. Comments included:

- Maintaining a balanced budget, being able to cover costs, or being self-funded
- Having a healthy bank balance as support in difficult times
- Being frugal, thrifty, or doing a lot with little
- Managing finances well

*We're financial stable and fund our costs entirely through door collection. Marcus Graly, Boston Intergenerational Dance Advocates*

*Financially secure due to long-term planning. John Nash, Ottawa English Dance*

One or two Affiliates each mentioned the following:

- Grant writing
- Fundraising
- Maintain a low admission cost
- Support those who cannot afford to pay
- Provide financial support to grange halls or other causes

## Publicity and communication more broadly

Approximately 20 Affiliates listed publicity and/or communication as one of their strengths. In general, little detail was provided (i.e., Affiliates simply noted that they were good at communication, publicity, marketing, or attracting new dancers). Individual Affiliates provided comments such as:

- Good website, posters, press releases, Facebook presence, use of traditional media, branding
- Contact past attendees regarding special events
- Encourage new dancers to sign up for notifications
- Send a weekly newsletter/calendar
- Out of town dancers regularly report that they hear about events through the internet

*Monthly publicity - press release, posters, website, facebook, etc. Doone MacKay North Berkshire Community Dance*

## Stability, dedication, and longevity

Approximately 20 Affiliates wrote about the stability, dedication, and/or longevity of their group. This included comments relating to having a loyal following and dedicated members.

*Core group of long-time members are like family. Bruce Pomeroy, Pick'n & Sing'n Gather'n, Inc.*

*Community stability over long time with a good core group of regular, supportive dancers. Patrick Harrigan, Gainesville Oldtime Dance Society*

## Participant experience levels

In addition to being welcoming of newcomers (see earlier comments), approximately 20 Affiliates wrote about the experience level of their participants. Comments ranged from being open to a wide range of abilities, to being a space learn and transmit knowledge, to being proud of strong skills and being able to do something well.

*Emphasis is more on having fun than on technical expertise. Cathy Dueck, Peterborough English Country Dancers*

*Inspire confidence in people who think they can't sing or play instruments. Lori Fassman, Folk Song Society of Greater Boston*

*Encourage members to improve their dancing and singing. John Mayberry, The Toronto Morris Men*

*Longstanding members with good dance skills. Carl Friedman, Charm City Rapper*

*Focus on dancing well. Deb Karl, Lennox Assembly*

## Venues

Approximately 15 Affiliates wrote about their venue as being one of their strengths. Repeated comments included:

- General positive comments about the location
- Beautiful hall; great ambiance
- Low rental cost

Individual respondents pointed out that they have great decorations for their hall and that they are effective at raising money for their grange hall.

## Engaging diversity communities

Approximately 15 Affiliates wrote about engaging participants of various ages. This included comments about attracting and catering all ages, families, youth, and/or older participants.

*Dance intergenerationally. Donna Hunt, Philadelphia Area Traditional Music and Dance (PATMAD)*

Approximately five Affiliates focused specific on inclusivity as it relates to gender. This included a few organizers who listed that they use gender free or gender-neutral calling. In addition, a few Affiliates noted that they

- Welcome a diversity of genders
- Have a diverse community attend their dances
- Are an LGBTQ+ friendly space

In addition to the comments about experience levels (see earlier comments in this section), one Affiliate wrote specifically about engaging participants with differing physical and/or mental abilities.

*Merging variety of ages, experience, and physical/mental abilities. ContraDance Omaha Organizers*

## Commitment to community safety

Approximately five Affiliates wrote about their commitment to community safety. This included specific mentions of developing a consent-based culture and addressing issues promptly.



## Refreshments

Approximately five Affiliates mentioned refreshments as one of their strengths. This included having potluck snacks, providing food to the band, and providing food to the community. A few Affiliates linked refreshments to encouraging socializing and building community.

*Refreshment break (volunteers supply snacks) promotes socialization.*  
Chris Carroll, English Country Dance Atlanta

*We have great potluck snacks. And dancers volunteer to help clean up.*  
Jamey Hutchinson, Conestoga Dance Association

## Strengths identified by morris teams

A wide range of strengths were identified by morris teams. The most common strength was performing and/or entertaining the public. One or two teams each mentioned the following:

- Hosting or attending Ales
- Building leadership and cooperation skills among a youth team
- Contributing to the global morris community
- Singing
- Stability (e.g., members remain many years; musician commitment)
- Appealing to youth
- Knowledge transmission
- Representing an aspect of English culture
- Group culture (e.g., energetic and rowdy)

## Other strengths mentioned by Affiliates

Each of the following strengths was mentioned by one to four Affiliates:

- Collaboration/partnerships with other organizations
- Sound quality at events
- Accommodating change
- Interesting costumes
- Focusing on the local geographic region
- Knowledgeable
- Pay attention to detail
- Participants will travel a distance to attend
- Spontaneous
- Organization sends dancers to camps around the county and world
- Maintain a collection of dance videos
- Well-connected in the dance community
- Commitment to tradition and its current relevance

*[...] allowing participants to experience the contemporary relevance and power of traditional forms of music and dance, stewarding those forms for the generations to come, and having fun.* Belfast Flying Shoes

*People dedicated to the mission of "giving you that old song and dance."*  
Herb Lape, Long Island Traditional Music Assoc

## Q21 THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING AFFILIATES

As in 2019, we asked Affiliates what their organizations biggest challenge/concern was and why. (This year, we prefaced the question with *Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic...*)

164 of the 167 survey respondents provided a written response. While we specifically asked for the *biggest challenge/concern*, some Affiliates listed more than one concern, sometimes linking them together. Relatively few Affiliates provided details to the why portion of the question.

The five most common challenges in 2020 were the same as those in 2019. Of the 164 question respondents in 2020, the approximate number of responses per topic is provided below. (The exception being that in 2020 we also coded for aging communities, which appeared in the 2019 data but which was presented within other subject categories.)

Table 8: The biggest challenges facing Affiliates	Approximate # of respondents
Attendance	110
Organizers & volunteers	40
Finances	40
Venues	25
Aging communities	25
Talent	10

These top concerns also align closely, although not completely, with the concerns expressed most frequently in the 2016 Canadian organizer survey and the 2018 US organizer survey. (Challenges associated with promotion/publicity were also very common in both the 2016 and 2018 survey).

## Attendance

3/5 of Affiliates identified their biggest concern or challenge as being associated with attendance. Concerns varied widely but all linked back to the fact that it is hard to attract new participants, keep them, and retain regular participants over time.

*Getting feet on the floor.* Wayne Richard, Harvest Moon Folk Society

## Declining attendance

Many Affiliates wrote about their attendance dropping over time. This included some Affiliates who wrote about their participants either aging or aging out of their activities.

*Attendance has been decreasing over several years. We typically lose about \$100 at each weekly dance (3 dances per month). Donations usually compensate for a lot of the losses. We have enough money in the bank that we are not in danger of going bankrupt. We would like to increase attendance to help spread the joy of dancing, and also to help our finances.* Anonymous.

*Attendance! The young/eager dancers from 1975 have mostly aged out, and we're struggling to recruit more generations.* Oliver Gaffney, Round Hill Country Dances

*Dwindling attendance. More experienced dancers were aging out without full replacement numbers.* Matt Hawkins, North Alabama Country Dance Society

Other reasons cited for the decline include:

- Competition (e.g., increasing number of dance weekends; concerts in next town)
- People's lives becoming too busy
- Injury
- Participants moving away
- Economic factors (e.g., less money; less vacation time)
- Parents being busy

*Declining membership due to people moving away, injuries and/or being overcommitted.* Jeff Bigler, Red Herring Morris

*Membership is like a half-filled bathtub with the tap on and the drain open. People move, die, life changes. It can be difficult retaining the youth who grew up in an organization, who have loved their experiences*

and who have life changes. Organizations like ours always have the older and retired, but it is challenging retaining the younger members while they move, have families, limited budgets, etc. Even more difficult is attracting new young people who are willing to take a chance - time and cost. Our events are entire weekends or a full 5 days. People have less vacation time than in the past. They also have more family oriented recreational opportunities close to home. Plus, the Disney Worlds did not exist when we started in 1940. Jack Marquess, Eastern Cooperative Recreation School, Inc.

Attracting more younger dancers to attend consistently. We were attracting more a few years ago but many have either moved away or on to dance styles such as West Coast Swing. Peggy Leiby, The Waltz Project / Mostly Waltz

[...] Our dancers are enthusiastic, but some people are aging out of dancing, and they aren't necessarily being replaced. We don't see as many of our regulars; life has gotten busy, and in our little town, there is inevitably a competing concert, a competing play, a competing gathering... We've worked to strengthen our ties to the contra dance community at the local university, but they've been having the same problem, with declining attendance and competing demands/temptations on any given evening. This seems like a problem in a lot of communities, regardless of the specific dynamics in any given town. [...] Sarah Schneider, Hands Four Dancers of Ithaca

One organizer wrote about their perception that there is a national decline in participation in contra dancing.

### Recruiting and keeping new participants

Over 40 Affiliates wrote about needing to recruit new participants with some stating that it is difficult to do so.

Membership is always a concern. Morris dance is not seen as a "thing" in this part of the world so recruitment requires awareness/education/developing interest. James Thayer, Moreton Bay Fig Morris

Many of these participants also wrote about the challenge of keeping new participants returning once they have attended for the first time.

Having new dancers return on a regular basis. We do not know the reason. Dancer say they like it but do not come back on a regular basis. Adele Beard, Pikes Peak Traditional Dance

Other organizers wrote about the challenges of retaining dancers more generally.

Keeping consistent dancers. Dancer attendance is sporadic. They seem to have a good time, say they will come next month, and then skip several dances. Contra Dance Omaha

With so many entertainment opportunities in the Charlotte area, getting people to regularly attend was becoming an increasingly larger problem. Charlotte Deacon, Charlotte Country Dancers

### Engaging younger participants

Approximately 40 Affiliates wrote about wanting to engage younger participants. Many made general comments on how it is hard to get younger participants to come once and then come back regularly. Specific comments made by individual Affiliates included:

- It is hard to get youth off their phones
- Youth are attracted to other forms of dance (e.g., swing)
- Youth come in groups for one time only
- Younger participants move away after they are done high school or college/university
- Families age out of family dances
- Location impacts whether younger people will attend (i.e., challenging transportation)
- It is hard to keep younger members engaged

Attracting new/young dancers. Many come (usually in groups, checking it out). Few come back regularly. Becky Liddle, Toronto Contra Dance

Aging of the community. At times over the years we have had sizable groups of HS and college age students as regular dancers, and families with dancing children. But the students graduate and scatter, the children

grow up, and they aren't necessarily replaced by others. In this last winter we had some occasional school-age dancers, but their attendance was not regular. An Affiliate located in the Midwest

Graying of the dance group is our biggest concern because it has been difficult to compete for and retain young dancers and recruit new dancers generally. We have lost a noticeable number of young contra dancers to other social dance categories, especially swing. Chuck Cross, Traditional Austin Area Dance Association

We should not assume that when Affiliates talk about wanting to attract younger participants that they mean youth who are college-age or younger. Below are examples of Affiliates looking for younger participants:

- A morris team looking for members under 60 because their current team members are in their 70s
- An ECD group looking for dancers under 40
- A contra community and a barn dance community each wanting to attract dancers ages 20-39

### Other challenges

Other challenges relating to attendance include: (Approximate counts)

- 7: There is a lot of competition for people's attention and engagement (e.g., other trad music/dance events; other dance forms; other local events; screen time)
- 1: Want to welcome a more diverse community
- 1: Have too many participants

We are a music organization that includes dance. Our participation rate is up almost every year (or stable, at the least), so our concern has become capping the number of enrollees. Jody Miller, Mountain Collegium Early Music & Folk Music Workshop

### Finances

Approximately 40 Affiliates wrote about challenges associated with finances.

Almost half the Affiliates linked financial issues with not having enough participants and/or declining attendance.

In the earlier years, dance attendance routinely hit 110 for a regular evening dance. Over the last years, we've been down to 60-80, on average. [...] We've gotten creative about money and fundraising, but we don't turn profits on many of our dances these days, and we take more big losses than we used to. We're financially stable, but it is a concern in the long run; at some point, we need to have a year where all our dances break even! Sarah Schneider, Hands Four Dancers of Ithaca

Declining attendance at the dances. This has been a long-term trend, probably due to a variety of things, and it makes running this type of event financially tricky. Cedar Stanistreet, The Brattleboro Dawn Dance

Other common responses include:

- 9: Costs associated with venues (e.g., rental costs being too high; building maintenance and repair)
- 6: General comments about not being able to balance revenue & expenses

One or two Affiliates each spoke about:

- Needing to find a door price fee that collects enough money but not too much
- The new AB5 legislation in California which will have organizations treating talent as employees
- Leadership challenges threatening financial stability
- Relying on dance weekend funds to cover regular dances but then dance weekend barely breaking even

## Organizers and volunteers

Approximately 40 Affiliates wrote about challenges relating to organizers and volunteers.

The vast majority of the concerns focused on the need for new volunteers at the organizer/leadership level. This included a handful of respondents who pointed out that their organizing team is getting older and cannot continue indefinitely.

Related, a few Affiliates wrote about wanting younger volunteers to join their organizing team.

*We are aging, and need to transition the work of running PSG into younger hands. Bruce Pomeroy, Pick'n & Sing'n Gather'n, Inc.*

Other comments included: (Approximate counts)

- 3: Managing leadership transitions (e.g., between founder & new director; between founder and organization; between sole proprietor and non-profit)
- 3: Too much work for the number of volunteers
- 1: Difficulty in identifying parents to run the family dance because parents are busy
- 1: Not having enough funding to pay for an ED/AD

Individual respondents also mentioned personality and skill-based challenges relating to organizers:

- Need to recognize success and respond to concerns
- Need to use evidenced-based feedback
- Need to operate in a business-like manner
- Work with technology
- Organizers created an event that requires not only a lot of work but also a lot of knowledge to organize
- Lack of clarity of goals
- Personality issues creating division

## Aging communities

Approximately 25 Affiliates wrote about their community members aging. As highlighted above, this was a concern to many because participants are aging out of their communities and attendance was declining for some. A handful also mentioned that their organizers were aging (e.g., getting tired; wanting to hand over the leadership to younger organizers). Other concerns relating to aging included:

- Certain venues not being accessible to older members (e.g., too long a drive; stairs; icy parking lots)
- The local region having an older population making it even harder to recruit younger participants

## Venues

Approximately 25 Affiliates mentioned concerns relating to their venues. Concerns included: (Approximate counts)

- 10: Venues costing too much
- 6: The difficulty of finding a new venue and/or concerns about losing the current venue
- 7: Various issues around the suitability of the venue (e.g., accessibility issues; lack of air condition; poor floor)
- 4: Problematic hall location (e.g., younger dancers not being able to attend because no public transportation)
- 2: The cost of operating, maintaining, and renovating venues

*Finding affordable halls in the Los Angeles area. Dan Vilter, The California Dance Cooperative*

*Attracting and maintaining new, younger dancers partly because our venue is not easily located (not on public transportation). Mary Jones, Amherst Area English Country Dancers*

*Our big city of 290 thousand lacks a dance hall of any description, so all the various dance clubs fail to thrive. The venue we use is a middle school with large windows visible from the parking lot; some people think youth drive by, look in and just keep driving. Mary Beth Emerton, The Dancing Bears*

*Issues related to age of members: night driving, climbing stairs, walking through icy parking lots. This may force us to change the time and building location of our monthly gatherings for the first time in almost 40 years. Theresa Erickson, Paint Creek Folklore Society*

## Talent

Approximately 10 Affiliates mentioned various topics associated with talent. Concerns included:

(Approximate counts)

- 7: Cost (e.g., not being able to pay enough; cannot afford live music)
- 2: Quality of performers
- 2: Wanting new people to be interested in calling
- 1: Lead teacher aging

## Using non-gendered terminology and supporting diverse communities

Approximately 10 Affiliates wrote about topics relating to non-gendered calling and/or supporting diverse communities. Most organizers wrote about the terms used when teaching/calling:

- Whether and how to incorporate non-gendered calling (e.g., positional calling)
- How to address differing opinions in one's community
- Noting that youth are attracted to other events that include non-gendered calling
- Being in the middle of a transition to non-gendered calling when the pandemic hit and not being able to complete community consultation

One community who has used non-gendered terms since its inception pointed out that they are finding it difficult to attract a more diverse gender community.

*Attracting, supporting, making space for, and retaining new and younger participants, particularly trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming, women, and femme participants. Lavender Country Folk Dancers*

## Other programming concerns

Approximately 10 Affiliates raised programming concerns beyond those associated with non-gendered terminology. Concerns included: (Approximate counts)

- 3: Challenges associated with establishing new series (e.g., Cajun dance series; second queer contra series; family dance; music class)
- 3: How to sustain a high level of programming when it falls on volunteers / lack of staff
- 2: Balancing different levels of abilities and interests
- 2: Putting on a successful event
- 1: Dancers leaving one series for a more challenging dance series
- 1: Lack of local community interest in most events

## Publicity & Promotion

In addition to dozens of Affiliates noting that it is hard to recruit new participants, a handful of Affiliates wrote specifically about challenges associated with publicity and promotion. These concerns included:

- Challenges maintaining a website
- Using technology and social media in an effective way
- Not knowing how to recruit new participants
- Wanting to conduct outreach to engage a more diverse population
- Planning to hire a marketing coordinator to run social media and provide new ways to market/brand their organization.

## Community safety & culture

A handful of Affiliates wrote about community safety issues. Concerns included:

- Needing to address individuals with inappropriate/disruptive behaviour
- Retaining younger members when they experience difficult or unpleasant encounters

A few Affiliates made a link between safety issues and the impact on community culture.

*We take culture seriously. We monitor and address inappropriate dancer behavior at events because it affects our community culture and drives people away from events. Dugan Murphy, Portland Intown Contra Dance*

One other Affiliate mentioned the issue of inclusiveness without providing any detail.

## Other concerns mentioned by Affiliates

Each of the following topics were mentioned by one or two Affiliates:

- Cost of insurance
- Many members of a women's display dance team having children in a short period of time which has prevented regular attendance

- Stagnation
- Performance teams/organizers finding it hard to find places to perform

## Ritual dance-specific concerns

Because so many of our Affiliates organize social dance only or a mix of traditions, it is hard to hear the concerns of the ritual dance community through looking at the responses as a whole. Therefore, we took a look at the challenges specifically facing Affiliates that only organize ritual dance (N=13). (They are also represented in the findings above.)

The vast majority of concerns focus on attendance. These included: (Approximate counts)

- 7: Attracting and keeping new participants including five teams specifically wanting to attract younger participants
- 2: Members moving away or becoming injured

Other concerns included: (Approximate counts)

- 3: Aging members
- 1: Lack of affordable practice venue
- 1: Many members having babies making it hard to practice regularly
- 1: Finding time for events
- 1: Finding places to perform

## Song/music-specific concerns

Similarly to ritual dance, it was hard to hear from Affiliates who organize events focused solely on song and/or music (N=4).

When looking at this group, we again found that organizers are finding it difficult to attract and maintain participants, including younger participants. A few of the groups also wrote about participants and volunteers aging out and about challenges associated with venues.



## FINDINGS 3: THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON AFFILIATES

This section of the report focuses solely on the impact of COVID-19.

Here is the text that opened this section of the survey:

*Questions 22-28 focus on the impacts of COVID-19. We are interested in learning from you so that we can:*

- (1) Support our Affiliates during this time, and*
- (2) Tell the story on how COVID-19 has impacted our specific sector of participatory arts to governments and large funding bodies.*

The questions that were asked fall into three categories and are organized as such in the report, even though the survey questions were not asked in that order.

- The impact of COVID-19 on Affiliates (e.g., the challenges faced)
- How Affiliates are responding to COVID-19
- Affiliates' impressions of CDSS's initial response to COVID-19

### Q22 THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON AFFILIATES

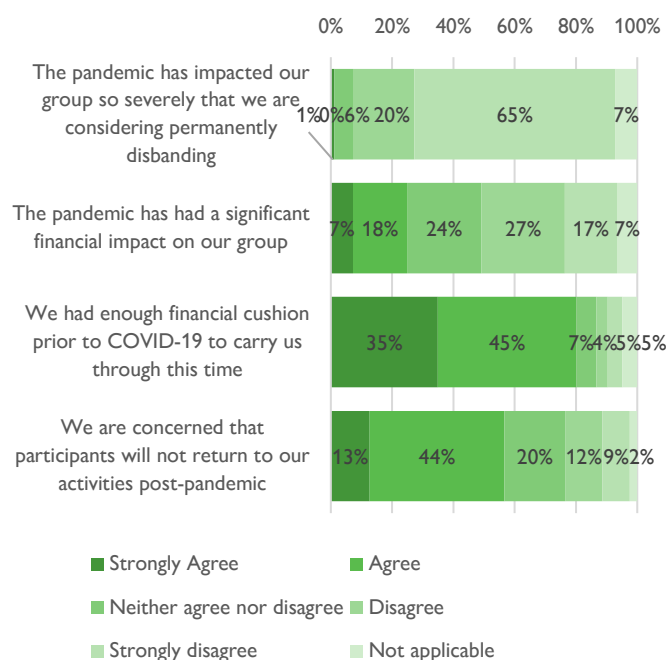
Figure 21 illustrates the Affiliate responses regarding the impact of COVID-19 on their respective groups.

In general, Affiliates are weathering the pandemic fairly well. For instance, only 2/167 the responding groups have been impacted so severely that they were considering permanently disbanding.

The pandemic has had some financial ramifications for our Affiliates. At the time of the survey, most Affiliates identified as having enough funds to carry through the pandemic time. However, 1/4 of survey respondents noted that the pandemic has had a significant financial impact on their group (25% agree/strongly agree) and a handful of groups noted that don't have enough funds during this time (i.e., six Affiliates said that they disagree that they have enough cushion and eight strongly disagreed).

Looking forward, a large proportion of Affiliates are concerned about the longer-term impacts. For instance, over half (53% agree/strongly agree) are concerned that participants will not return to their group's activities post-pandemic.

Figure 21: The Impact of COVID-19 on CDSS Affiliates  
N=165-166



### Q23 CHALLENGES CURRENTLY FACING AFFILIATES AS A RESULT OF COVID-19

We asked two open-ended questions about the challenges facing Affiliates:

*What specific challenges (if any) are you currently facing given the COVID-19 pandemic. (List up to three.)*

*What specific challenges (if any) do you anticipate your group will face once you are able to resume in-person activities? (List up to three.)*

Affiliates were asked to list up to three challenges that their group is currently facing given the pandemic. 147 of the 167 survey participants provided at least one response to this question. Of the 147, 46 listed two and another 47 listed three.

#### Cancelled events

Some organizers wrote about having to cancel or not hold events. This included a few that had to cancel their only or main event of the year. There were very few remarks about the challenges of actually cancelling, but rather organizers were focused on their events not happening.

#### The uncertainty of when and how restart in-person events

1/3 of question respondents (approximately 60 Affiliates) shared concerns about the uncertainty of when and how to restart their in-person events. This included concerns about not having the knowledge or needing to know what metrics to consider when making these decisions.

*How and when to start holding in-person events?* Charlie Pilzer, Folklore Society of Greater Washington

*What conditions should be in place before we re-start contra dancing (one of the best ways to spread COVID that I can think of)?* Phoenix Traditional Music and Dance

Related, some organizers pointed out that there is a lot of uncertainty in the current situation and that it is difficult to plan for the future when organizers do not know what is going to happen.

*The future is unknown: we don't know if we will ever be able to dance again. We cannot host dances as long as social distancing is recommended.* Hal Southern, Urbana Country Dancers

*How to plan for future dances without knowing when it will be possible to hold them again.* Jonathan Sivier, Central Illinois English Country Dancers

Organizers also pointed out the concern about restarting too soon for the comfort of some, and that there is a lot of fear surrounding the virus.

Individual participants pointed out:

- Feeling pressure from singers to gather indoors again
- Needing to make down-payments on venues without knowing whether they can hold their events

## Maintaining community connection

1/4 of question respondents (Approximately 50 Affiliates) wrote about the importance of social connection and the challenges of maintaining community connection during this time of physical distancing

*WE MISS SEEING OUR FRIENDS IN PERSON!!!!* Cis Hinkle, Chattahoochee Contra Dancers

*Losing regular contact with each other so the social aspect of the team is weakened.* Laurie Cumming, Toronto Women's Sword

*It is hard to hold the community together when we can't be together in person.* Sue Songer, Portland Country Dance Community

Related, a few organizers pointed out that it is hard to remain relevant or maintain momentum without that connection.

A few organizers wrote that online events could meet some social needs.

*We are trying to start a Zoom dance which won't appeal to everyone but might help the social aspect.* Linda Lewis Lieberman, Central Iowa Traditional Dance

One organizer pointed out that it is challenging to maintain a sense of connection with those who are less tech-savvy.

*Reaching out to less tech-savvy community members to help maintain connection and involvement.* Meg Dedolph, Midwest Morris Ale Assn.

## Attendance

Approximately 35 respondents expressed concern regarding attendance at future in-person events. Organizers are worried that participants may lose interest, find other activities to fill their time, or feel that it isn't safe to resume. Organizers also pointed out that it may also be hard to recruit new participants when events start up again.

*We are afraid that some dancers will be unwilling to dance until a vaccine has been developed, and a vaccine may not be available for three years.* Hal Southern, Urbana Country Dancers

*Fear of losing new dancers. Without consistent practice and feedback, many may not come back.* Janet Nardolillo, Capital English Country Dancers

*Keeping newer dancers interested and involved. Tom and I had hosted at-home classes/skill building sessions to bolster our newbies' confidence.* Val Medve, Burlington Country Dancers

*Since we cater to high schoolers they are leaving and it's hard to recruit without dancing.* Tom Kruskal, Great Meadows Morris and Sword

*Worry that yes, dancing will start slow and take years to get up to previous level of participation.* Nell Wright, Friends of Greenfield Dance

## Not being able to participate regular activities

Approximately 25 organizers wrote about missing the specific activities that they help to organize whether it be dancing, playing music, or singing.

*We all miss dancing! Physically, socially. I notice the lack of mental stimulation. We miss the joy.* Chris Carroll, English Country Dance Atlanta

*Group singing is our favorite thing, but it is a potent transmitter of disease.* Bruce Pomeroy, Pick'n & Sing'n Gather'n, Inc.

## Online events

Approximately 35 organizers identified challenges with online events. These included:

- How to make online events meaningful and effective
- How to connect community members to online events
- Technical challenges during livestreaming
- The lack of equipment or knowledge of how to participate in online events
- Lag time for activities such as singing
- Fatigue for online events

*Training instructors, tech people and participants/students in the use of Zoom. To have the feel of community.* Jack Marquess, Eastern Cooperative Recreation School, Inc.

*Expertise on managing, keeping up to date with, being aware of emerging online options.* Mark Sustic, Young Tradition Vermont

## Financial considerations

Approximately 25 Affiliates mentioned challenges relating to finances. Issues included:

- Loss of income
- Facilities losing income
- Affiliates needing to pay certain operating costs regardless of whether or not they are holding events
- How to support local artists during this time

*We are concerned about the well being of our callers, musicians and others who make part of their income from our events.* Chris Carroll, English Country Dance Atlanta

*Our dance venue - the Capital City Grange Hall has low ongoing expenses; but with rental income dropping to near zero due to COVID-19 there is not enough income to cover expenses. Related to this, the CDU (and Friends) are doing our annual Challenge Grant Fundraiser virtually this year with proceeds going to the Grange for operating expenses (to offset low rental income). The event is Sept 12 - - an online concert with Pete's Posse (we are paying the Posse) Patty Giavara, Friends of the Capital City Grange Hall*

## Venues

Approximately 25 Affiliates expressed concerns related to facilities/venues. These included:

- Concerns about venues no longer being available when events restart
- Venues being closed indefinitely
- Venues not being available for certain activities (e.g., singing)
- Not being able to physically search for new venues
- No rental income for facilities

*Will we be able to use our current location after re-opening* Eileen Hug, Southern Nevada Old-time Contra Dancers

*Keeping our hall. It's a great place to dance, we do not want to lose access to it.* Mike Self, Cincinnati English Country Dancers

## Talent

Approximately 20 Affiliates wrote about issues relating to talent. Most of the comments related to the financial challenges to callers, musicians, and sound personnel. However, other concerns were also mentioned:

- Being unable to practice
- Having to postpone training opportunities
- Losing sound tech who has decided that they enjoy their time off

## Organizers & organizing teams

Approximately 10 respondents wrote about challenges specifically relating to their organizer team. Concerns included:

- Maintaining enthusiasm and energy for organizing without events as 'rewards'
- Delaying or having to figure out alternative plans for annual meetings
- Maintaining communication
- Having a new board who has never met in person and has had to learn to work together
- Not having events makes it hard to find new committee members to fill spots that are being vacated
- Board members who may not be interested in restarting events

## Other concerns

The following concerns were mentioned by a small number of organizers:

- Loss of momentum and/or continuity
- Loss of practice time for dancers and/or musicians and how for some, skills are being lost
- Loss of physical exercise and mental stimulation

In addition, individual respondents wrote about:

- Providing quality events to paid members
- How to increase membership during this time
- Insurance costs given the lack of events
- Disinformation
- Equipment storage
- Managing expectations

A few respondents wrote that their group is not experiencing any challenges.

## Q24 ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES FOR AFFILIATES UPON RETURNING TO IN-PERSON EVENTS

Affiliates were asked to list up to three challenges that they anticipate their group facing once they are able to resume in person activities. 153 of the 167 survey respondents provided at least one response to this question. Of those 153, 51 listed two and another 44 listed three.

## Lower attendance

The most common concern shared by organizers (two-thirds of question respondents; approximately 100 Affiliates) related to a possible drop in attendance.

Many organizers attributed the potential drop in attendance to fear of COVID-19.

*Will dancers feel comfortable dancing? Have we lost dancers forever?*  
Luanne Stiles, Red Hills English Country Dancers

*If there is still some question of contagion people may be afraid to return to group events. We hope for a reliable vaccine or other solution.* Ellie Kuhn, Old Farmer's Ball

*A significant percentage of our audience/dancers might stay home for their own health.* Rebecca Park, Kanawha Valley FOOTMAD

Others wrote about how participants might be 'out of the habit', forget the value of the experience, or have found other ways to spend their time (e.g., comfortable staying at home; competition with virtual events).

*Members having found other activities and no longer having time for morris.* Jeff Bigler, Red Herring Morris

*People are forgetting how important contact through dance is, to all of us.* Laura Frank, Monterey Country Dance Community

Others wrote about the loss of connection to their community and how groups may need to get 'back on the radar'.

*Drop in attendance due to lost connections and also fear of dance safety.*  
Sue Songer, Portland Country Dance Community

A few organizers pointed out that specific communities may be difficult to attract. These included:

- Older established participants
- Newer members or less-committed members of groups
- Brand new participants who might be less likely to try an activity that involves so much close contact

*People will not feel safe participating in social dancing; many of our group are in vulnerable age range.* Laura Leonelli, Sacramento Country Dance Society

*Reduced social acceptance (or even stigmatization) - making it difficult to attract new dancers.* Lavender Country Folk Dancers

## How to make in-person events safe

Close to half of question respondents (approximately 70 Affiliates) are concerned about safety at their future events relating to COVID-19. Many of the organizers specifically asked how they can make their events safe for participants.

*Developing appropriate safety protocols for a limited-interest activity with little research into it.* Meg Dedolph, Midwest Morris Ale Association

A number of questions were raised on how to implement safety measures. Repeated comments included:

- How to understand the true risks and develop safety guidelines that apply to shared activities based on information from knowledgeable sources
- How to communicate and have participants adhere to new safety regulations (e.g., wearing masks; temperature scanning)
- How to manage refreshments (i.e., drinks & snacks)
- How to ensure safety for older, immunocompromised, or otherwise vulnerable participants
- Having to restructure or rewrite dances to limit contact
- How to play music safely (e.g., cannot play certain instruments with masks on; hard to jam with a large group at the best of times)
- How to host events if there are limits relating to physical distancing and the size of space (e.g., house concerts when space is already tight; lower limits on attendance for halls)

Individual respondents also raised the following concerns:

- How to obtain health supplies (e.g., hand sanitizer; disinfectant)
- How to collect data for contact tracing
- The variety of expectations/tolerance/comfort with various practices such as wearing masks
- Potential conflict with anti-vaxxers in a community

As alluded to earlier under 'lower attendance', many organizers raised the concern about perception of safety (i.e., the event could be safe but participants may not attend because they perceive it not to be safe). Organizers wrote about needing to reassure participants, help them feel comfortable, and that many participants simply may not feel safe to return.

*Residual fear of physical contact.* Nelson Beavington, Vancouver Country Dance

*Although we may be able to resume our events, many of our 60+ attendees may still not feel safe attending an indoor social dance event.* Karen Kalinsky, Varsity Dance Club

*Creating an environment where dancers are confident our events are safe to participate in.* Phoenix Traditional Music and Dance

## The uncertainty of when in-person events will restart

Approximately 25 Affiliates expressed concern about the uncertainty of when to restart events.

*Uncertainty of knowing when we can resume in-person dance when it's safe for all.* Beverly Young, Missoula Folklore Society

Some comments about this issue included:

- Not knowing about dancer attendance and how that might affect when events restart
- How to responsibly decide when it's safe
- Having to wait on government rules about gatherings
- Having to start planning events without knowing when they will happen
- Concerns about whether COVID-19 restrictions will re-occur

## Finances

Approximately 35 organizers wrote about finances. The most common concern was that lower attendance would result in less revenue - either people choosing not to attend or having to limit the number of participants. One group who only holds a few events a year pointed out that if they lose too much money because of lower attendance, their event won't be able to continue.

Individual organizers also mentioned:

- Additional costs associated with health supplies (e.g., masks)
- Not having income during this extended time
- Depleted funds given COVID-19
- The cost of new sound equipment with a changing venue
- Future grant funding may be limited
- Needing to fundraise for their facility
- Concerns about rental costs increasing
- Facilities assuming higher costs to meet required procedures that ensure safe, clean environments

## Venues

Approximately 20 organizers mentioned concerns regarding venues/facilities. These included:

- Organizers being informed that their venue will no longer be available
- How to keep facilities financially viable; that some may not reopen or may need support through fundraising
- Finding spaces willing to rent for certain activities (e.g., two organizers pointed out that seniors centers may not be willing to host events)
- Venues may become more expensive
- Groups have no control on whether venues will hold their long-held time slot
- As referenced above, facilities having higher costs to meet required procedures that ensure safe, clean environments

## Loss of skill or fitness

Approximately 10 organizers, most of whom are morris teams, wrote about the loss of fitness and/or needing to relearn repertoire.

*We are going to need to find our fitness again.* Daniel Sabath, Sound and Fury Morris

*Improving the quality of our dancing. We'll be too busy remembering the new dances we created just prior to Covid quarantining.* Laurie Cumming, Toronto Women's Sword

In addition, one contra dance organizer pointed out that dancers who are out of shape or older could injure themselves when they return.

## Promotion

Approximately 10 organizers wrote about the need to promote their events as they restart.

*Getting the word out about our activities (It will be sort of like starting all over, after 15 years.)* Belfast Flying Shoes

## Talent

Approximately 10 organizers wrote about talent. Comments varied widely:

- Rebuilding enough attendance to sustain talent
- Restarting the long-term booking process
- The difficulty of booking talent given travel concerns
- Whether bands will still exist to play for dances
- Local callers becoming rusty

## Other challenges

One or two organizers each raised the following concerns:

- Lack of volunteers
- Accommodating both people who are ready to resume in-person activities and those not yet ready; maintaining both online and in-person events
- Competition with virtual events that may continue post-pandemic
- Legal liability relating to COVID-19 exposure at an event
- Lost momentum
- Finding ways to remember those who have lost during this time, either because of COVID-19 or for other reasons

And....

*Regaining that carefree and joyous pre-pandemic attitude.* Belfast Flying Shoes



A few organizers noted that they do not have concerns.

*Everyone is longing and waiting to dance. I don't think that we will have trouble getting enough dancers to make it worth holding a dance in our small dance community. Our average number of dancers is about 45.*  
Maureen Rawlings, Olympia Contra Dance Community

*Can't think of any -- I think we'll pick up where we left off.* Lori Fassman,  
Folk Song Society of Greater Boston

## Q25 QUESTIONS REGARDING COVID-19

After asking Affiliates about the challenges they are facing during the pandemic, we asked if they have questions that they would like help answering. Space was provided for up to three questions. 68/167 survey participants provided at least one question, with 9 asking two questions, and 10 asking three.

Note: Survey Questions 23-24 collected many questions in the form of concerns. Therefore, the analysis of those questions should also be considered when thinking about the questions that Affiliates have about COVID-19.

### Questions about restarting in-person events

The vast majority of questions raised by Affiliates had to do with restarting in-person events. The following questions provide a summary as to types of questions asked:

#### About sourcing information...

- What expert advice is the CDSS looking into?
- What does CDSS advise (on a whole range of topics)?
- Could CDSS act as a clearinghouse for good ideas/specific recommendations on when and how to re-open?
- What are other groups doing?

#### What information is of interest...

- Will singing and dancing be safe (even with safety protocol) before immunization is widely available (e.g., indoors with recirculating air)?
- What is the timeframe for restarting in-person events? How far in the future in CDSS recommending that groups not hold in-person events?
- How do we know when it's safe to restart events? When we are officially cleared to hold events? What are the criteria for responsibility restarting events?
- Is there research on COVID-19 as it relates to dancing & singing?
- What does safe dancing/singing look like? How do we maintain a safe space? What precautions/guidelines/protocols/conditions should be used (e.g., signage; masks; gloves; limiting group size)?
- How can we ensure that participants follow protocol/obey recommended restrictions?
- What can we do to help the participants feel safe? How do we convey to participants that we are taking appropriate precautions?
- What government financial assistance programs are available for groups?

### Questions about insurance and legal issues

A handful of Affiliates asked questions about insurance and legal issues. These included:

- Does CDSS insurance cover liability for people who become infected at our events?
- What legal risk are organizers assuming if someone gets sick from contact at their events?
- What liability exposure occurs when meetings and events are held over Zoom?
- Can Affiliates receive a refund or credit given that the number of events has dropped?
- Will insurance costs be impacted by COVID-19?

### What to do while there are no in-person events

A handful of Affiliates had questions about what to do during this time of physical distancing. Questions included:

- What is the best way to keep in touch and connected with participants?
- How to hold events online (e.g., dances/socials)? What are other groups doing?
- Technical support with online events (e.g., what equipment/software/platforms to use; ways to structure events on zoom such as breakout rooms)

### Other questions asked by Affiliates

One or two Affiliates each asked the following questions.

- How can we help support freelancers? ... We need guidance on how to sponsor a livestream
- How can we reduce costs given probable reduced attendance until fears are past?
- How to advertise/recruit participants
- Interest in the survey results to see how other groups feel

Approximately 1/4 of question respondents wrote that they didn't have any questions at this time, or at least any that CDSS could answer.

*No questions at this time. We check Orange County, CA COVID website, but since our cases are still increasing, we have no plans to return to any of our activities.* Patty McCollom, The Living Tradition

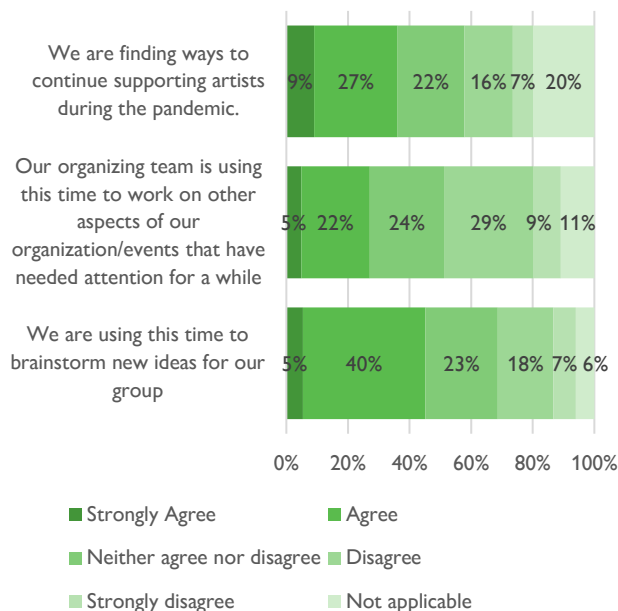
## Q22B HOW AFFILIATES ARE USING THIS TIME

As part of Question 22, we asked about ways in which Affiliates are currently using their time during the pandemic.

Some Affiliates are using this time for new or different types of work (See Figure 22). For instance:

- 1/3 of respondents (36% agree/strongly agree) are finding ways to support artists during the pandemic (20% of Affiliates noted that this question was not applicable to their group)
- 1/4 of respondents (27% agree/strongly agree) are using this time to work on other aspects of their organization/events that have needed attention for a while
- Over 2/5 of respondents (45% agree/strongly agree) are using this time to brainstorm new ideas for their group

Figure 22: Current Affiliate activities in light of COVID-19  
N=166

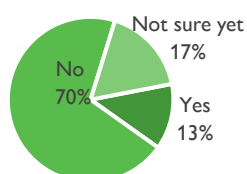


## Q26 FUNDRAISING PLANS TO SUPPORT AFFILIATES DURING THIS TIME

Question 26 asked Affiliates whether they had held or were planning on holding a fundraising drive to help their group during the pandemic period.

At the time of the survey, the majority of Affiliates were not planning a fundraising drive to help them through the pandemic period (see Figure 23).

Figure 23: Have you held, or are you planning a fundraising drive to help your group through this time?  
N=163



## Q27 INNOVATIVE WAYS OF REMAINING CONNECTED TO COMMUNITY

We asked Affiliates if their group had found innovative ways of staying connected with their community (e.g., singers, dancers, musicians, organizers, etc.) to describe them in detail. Affiliates were prompted to list up to three ideas. 102/167 survey participants responded to the question. Of those, 28 provided two responses, and 20 provided three responses.

### Communication platforms used

Approximately 100 Affiliates made direct mention of the communication platforms they are using.

Rough counts of the various platforms include:

Table 9: Communication platform	Approximate #
Zoom	70
Email (e.g., occasional emails; regular email newsletters)	20
Facebook	15
In-person physically distanced gatherings	10
Social media	5
YouTube	2
Group website	2

Individual respondents mentioned: Phone calls; Discord; Google Meet; JamKazam; and Webex.

### Holding dances, sings, workshops, and more

Approximately 50 Affiliates wrote about holding virtual dances, sings, and other shared traditions. The most common platform mentioned was Zoom. However, a few other platforms such as Facebook Live were also mentioned. In addition, a handful of organizers mentioned they were holding in-person events, often mentioning that these events were at a safe distance.

*The Mystic Contra Dance (called the "Pie Dance" because we sell slices of pie at our dances to pay band and caller) are planning to have ZOOM pie parties, where people bring their own pie, hear some music from the band and have small group chats with dancers. Nancy Worthen, Mystic Contra Dance*

*Morris musicians are practicing with physical distancing outdoors. Larry Hill, Eugene Folklore Society*

*We're practicing step dancing, at a safe distance, in a member's backyard on an almost-weekly basis. Laurie Cumming, Toronto Women's Sword*

Groups are holding the following events:

- English Country Dances
- Contra dances
- Clog/step dance/Jig workshops or practices
- Line dances (in place of contra)
- International dances
- Music jam sessions/practices/tune-swaps
- Play along options for musicians during an online dance
- Concerts
- Sings
- Music lessons
- Other activities such as crafts, laughter classes, charades, etc.

*We've adapted one of our outreach programs (music lessons at a local corrections facility) to offer lessons via videoconferencing. This has been very positive for the teacher as well as the participants. Belfast Flying Shoes*

One of the most elaborate-sounding events mentioned was the virtual Midwest Morris Ale:

*We hosted a virtual Morris Ale with 315 registered participants from 27 states and 5 countries, with four concurrent Zoom rooms, over Memorial Day weekend. We had 19 Trusty Virtual Guides who volunteered to run the Zoom rooms and help keep the event going smoothly. A total of 14 workshops were offered by 18 workshop leaders or co-leaders. Another 8 people volunteered to host pickup dancing, singing, and other evening sessions. These folks put a lot of time into preparing material, presentations, and handouts to share their love and lore. Meg Dedolph, Midwest Morris Ale Assn.*

A few organizers also mentioned creating video montages of performances (e.g., concerts) that would be posted online.

*We are working on having our orchestra record a concert -- either each from their own home, or outdoors with social distancing, and posting the concert to YouTube, and perhaps ask for donations thru GoFundMe. Karen Kalinsky, Varsity Dance Club*

A handful of organizers mentioned that their community is attending the events organized by other groups.

### Social gatherings

Approximately 30 Affiliates wrote about holding social gatherings for their communities. Most of the groups referenced Zoom. Some hold events regularly (e.g., weekly) while other groups have only held one or two.

Organizers wrote about these gatherings as virtual social meetings, teas, happy hours, potlucks/picnics, social pub meetings, and cocktail parties.

A few organizers mentioned activities that occur during the socials. These included:

- Conversation to check-in and catch-up
- Ice breaker questions
- Small group chats (as part of a larger call)
- Share a drink
- Organized activities
- Play games
- Moderator asking people how they are doing so all feel seen and heard
- Watch dance videos
- Discuss aspects of team and morris history
- Solo dancing
- People playing along at home to a few tunes

*We have every other week structured social hours. In the social hour, we have an activity, we split into "hands 4" sized breakout rooms to do the activity, return to the main room, then repeat the activity with a different "hands 4" group. After that we have unstructured socializing with the full group. Shoshana Silverman, Country Dance New York (CDNY)*

*We maintain a Zoom "practice" every week, where we mostly socialize, but also explore different aspects of team and Morris history, usually in a fun way. John Mayberry, The Toronto Morris Men*

*Thursday Tea Time... a regular time to get together each week to check in, chat, have a break from everything, see friends, feel like you have friends and you're not alone. Darlene Hamilton, The Historical Tea & Dance Society*

### Other ways of building connection

In addition to social events and dances/music/song events, some Affiliates are holding other online events as ways of building connection.

- Training workshops (callers; musicians; jig)
- Organizers making check-in phone calls to their community members. Also, leaders suggesting that community members reach out to each other
- Contest
- Hosting talks by leaders in the field (e.g., history of waltz)
- Memorial for a community member who passed away
- Local listserv discussion
- Discussion group and collaboration on how to influence the political process
- Musicians playing on a zoom program for the wider community
- Talent show / virtual cabaret

*I have been phoning every member to make sure they are staying well and doing okay. It's time consuming but worth the effort to stay in touch. Linda Lewis Lieberman, Central Iowa Traditional Dance*

*Leaders have suggested that dance members contact each other each month in various ways (stay connected by being separated). Country Dancers of Rochester (CDR)*

### Sharing information with one's local community

Approximately 25 Affiliates wrote about sharing information with their local community. This was often done through email and/or social media.

Information that was commonly mentioned included:

- Online events organized by other groups
- Links to dance, music, and song information (e.g., interesting articles; clips from musicians; caller topics; CDSS resources; collaborative dance videos from the morris community)
- Updates from the local organization/board
- Good wishes

*We focused on livening up our Facebook page with links to online activities people might enjoy. Rebecca Park, Kanawha Valley FOOTMAD*

### Administrative meetings

A handful of Affiliates wrote about administrative meetings. These included:

- Annual meeting (e.g., included some song/music presentations)
- Organizer meetings
- Facilities meeting

Organizers used mostly Zoom although Google Meet, Discord, and Webex were mentioned by individual respondents.

### Initiatives relating to talent

A handful of Affiliates wrote about initiatives relating to talent. These mostly related to collecting funds from online initiatives (e.g., live concerts). In addition,

- One Affiliate created a fundraiser to support local musicians
- One Affiliate wrote that they are providing a list of independent instructors for private lessons

### Other initiatives

One Affiliate noted that they have set up a COVID-19 assistance fund to support local community members who require financial assistance.

### Little/no new initiatives

Approximately 10 Affiliates wrote that they aren't or are just starting to consider options for maintaining connection with their community.

## Q28 OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED BY AFFILIATES DURING THE PANDEMIC

Related to Question 27, we asked Affiliates the following question:

*If you have identified opportunities that the current situation has provided to your group, please describe them in detail here. (List up to three.)*

62/167 survey participants provided one response. Of those, 17 provided two responses, and 9 three responses.

## Organizational planning and administrative activities

Approximately 20 Affiliates wrote about this time of physical distancing as being an opportunity to focus on activities related to organizational planning and administration. A few groups mentioned that it was a good time to reflect generally, consider processes, and plan for the future. Others mentioned:

- Cleaning up files
- Working on their local archives
- Dealing with administrative backlog
- Focusing on safety/consent policies and how to manage complaints
- Identifying community members who might volunteer for future projects
- Updating mission statement to incorporate inclusiveness.
- Website updates (e.g., complete rebuild; posting content from past events)
- Looking into registering as a state non-profit
- Updating bylaws
- Looking for a more suitable venue

## Connecting with others at a distance

Approximately 20 Affiliates wrote about the benefits of connecting with others who are at a distance. This included being able to hire callers and musicians who live at a distance, meeting dancers from other places, and connecting with community members who live far away.

*Contacts with other dance and contra dance groups. Contra Dance Omaha*

*Connecting with other teams that we would not normally get a chance to meet online. Jinny Mason, Wake Robin Morris*

*Bringing people together. Over the years members have moved and rarely attend because they now live on the west coast or countries other continents. Zoom has allowed them to participate and be able to converse with old friends. Jack Marquess, Eastern Cooperative Recreation School, Inc.*

*We can bring in musicians from far away more easily. Marie Deer, Bloomington Old-Time Music and Dance Group*

*Some of our dancers have been able to join in with Zoom events around the world. Linda Lewis Lieberman, Central Iowa Traditional Dance*

*The opportunity to engage callers from a wider area for online dance events. Janet Nardolillo, Capital English Country Dancers*

*We've attended the midwest morris ale over zoom and built community with the middle americas. Daniel Sabath, Sound and Fury Morris*

More locally, one Affiliate wrote about how the online environment lets them get to know their community members better:

*Getting to know other dancers better thru virtual gatherings. Patrick Harrigan, Gainesville Oldtime Dance Society*

## New ways of reaching audiences

Approximately 10 Affiliates wrote about new ways that they are reaching audiences. This not only included online concerts and dances but also more unique approaches such as online hospital visits and street concerts.

For some Affiliates, these new initiatives are resulting in new participants/a broader audience. The following quotes speak to a wide range of ways that outreach is occurring:

*National and international outreach. We have intentionally invited dancers from all over the world to our events, many of whom have made donations to BACDS and to our sister affiliate NBCDS. Sharon Green, Bay Area Country Dance Society*

*Attendance is 3 to 10 times larger with online events compared to just in-person events. Mark Sustic, Young Tradition Vermont*

*Socially-distanced porch music to teach traditional contra dance music to new musicians. Amy Hartman, San Antonio Contra Dancers*

*I have some new people joining online, and hope they'll show up once we start dancing in person again. Laura Beraha, Valley Area English Regency Society*

*Opportunity to dance with family members in online settings, when family may not have been interested in attending regular dances. Janet Nardolillo, Capital English Country Dancers*

## The benefits of holding online events

In addition to reaching new audiences, approximately 20 Affiliates wrote about other benefits of holding online events. One of the benefits is that online platforms can facilitate teaching and learning.

- Learning clog/stepdance/jig through zoom (mentioned by multiple morris teams)
- Learning about community dance leaders through the Historical Tea and Dance Society videos
- Musician workshops/classes including allowing musicians to focus on technique at their own speed

In addition, some Affiliate were experimenting, or considering trying new types of events. These included:

- Sit down contras to accommodate social distancing
- Mummers play via zoom
- Online solstice event using both new and previously recorded information

## Fundraising

A handful of Affiliates wrote about this time being an opportunity to focus on fundraising:

- Annual fundraising to cover CDSS dues and liability
- Online events resulting in donations for musicians and Affiliates from a much wider base (national/international)
- Pause in activities allows to focus on an anniversary celebration and fundraising drive for a legacy fund

*We were planning a celebration of our 40th year for spring 2021, launching a drive for our legacy fund. The pause in activities gives the chance to focus on that (for fall 2021) whereas we had been faced with trying to fit the planning in around our usual concert and dance seasons. Rebecca Park, Kanawha Valley FOOTMAD*

## Online capabilities

A handful of Affiliates wrote that the pandemic has provided them the opportunity to build skills in holding virtual events, something that they now plan to continue the future (e.g., monthly board meetings; events when the facility is closed for maintenance).

*Once the pandemic is over, Zoom events will be part of our programming as well as the traditional physical location events. Jack Marquess, Eastern Cooperative Recreation School, Inc.*

*We may use our COVID induced on-line abilities as an alternative the next time our facility has to close due to maintenance. In the past, we either had to cancel our scheduled event or scramble to find a reasonably priced venue, available on a Saturday night, which is nearly impossible. Now, we know how to offer on-line substitutions, which, while not being perfect, are better than cancellation. Patty McCollom, The Living Tradition*

*This will make us appreciate live dance events once we are able to return to them. Ben Allbrandt, Tidewater Community Dance Council Inc.*

## Other opportunities

Each of the following activities were mentioned by one Affiliate:

- Community members sharing musical performances and poetry through the group page
- Sharing of CDSS resources
- Taking a stance on Black Lives Matter
- Looking into improvements to the grange hall

## Q22C PERCEPTIONS OF CDSS'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 THUS FAR

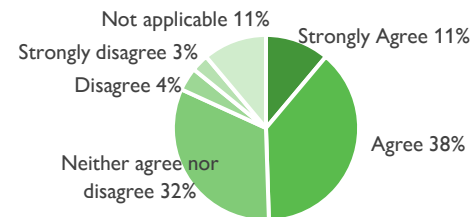
As part of Question 22, we asked Affiliates the degree to which they felt that CDSS had provided information and resources that had been helpful to their group during the COVID-19 crisis.

Responses were wide ranging (see Figure 24).

- Half of the respondents agreed that CDSS had provided helpful information (49% agreed or strongly agreed)
- A third had a neutral opinion (32% neither agreed nor disagreed)

- A very small percentage didn't think CDSS had provided helpful information (7% disagreed or strongly disagreed); these groups were from a wide range of traditions
- 11% noted that this question was not applicable to them which is in itself very interesting given that these groups ranged from morris teams to social dance, and music-focused groups

Figure 24: 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





## FINDINGS 4: PROGRAMMING FOR SCHOOL-AGED PARTICIPANTS

This section of the report summarizes the findings on Affiliates' perceptions of, and engagement with school-aged participants.

The inaugural CDSS Affiliate survey in 2019 asked a number of questions about Affiliate engagement of school-aged participants. We found that those questions weren't as effective as we would have liked so we updated the survey questions for 2020.

Within the 2020 survey, Affiliates were provided the following prompt regarding the section that focused specifically on school-aged participants:

*Do you have any elementary, secondary, or college/university-aged participants? Questions 29-33 are for groups who have at least a few school-aged participants.*

### Q29-30 AFFILIATE-ORGANIZED EVENTS FOR SCHOOL-AGED PARTICIPANTS

Questions 29 and 30 asked Affiliates about their engagement of school-aged participants.

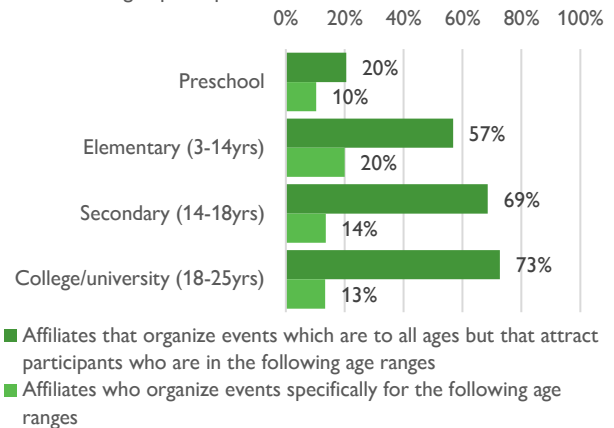
*Q29: Do you hold events that are open to all ages but that attract participants who are in the following age groups:*

*Q30: Does your group organize events specifically for...*

Figure 25 illustrates the percentage of Affiliates that include school-aged participants in their all-ages events and also the percentage of Affiliates that organize events specifically for school-aged participants. Some of the findings include:

- Affiliates are much more likely to organize events for all-ages rather than organizing events specifically for school-aged participants
- Over half of the question respondents organize events that are open to elementary, secondary, and college/university students
- 68 of the 139 question respondents include pre-school and/or elementary participants in their all-ages events
- Of the 101 Affiliates who include university/college students in their all-ages events, 76 also included high school students, and 58 also included elementary and/or pre-school participants
- 28/140 question respondents organize events specifically for pre-school and/or elementary-aged participants; 18 specifically for high school; 17 specifically for university/college.

Figure 25: The percentage of Affiliates that include school-aged participants in their events N=118-140



Affiliates were also asked to provide information about their events that attract and/or are organized specifically for school-aged participants.

### Camps/Festivals/Ales/Weekends

Some festivals, ales, and dance weekends wrote about including school-aged participants in their all-ages events.

This included:

- Incorporating children's programming (e.g., family dance as part of a weekend event; specific program stream for kids)
- Preferred pricing for youth (e.g., free for those under five; reduced rates for teen and college/age participants; youth scholarships including free access for a parent to attend with their child; financial aid program; fee discount for work volunteers)

*Youth activities during adult dance sessions including singing, music, arts and crafts, & nature activities; community dance. AnneMarie Walter & Diane Silver, SplashDance*

*Kids' theatrical play, craft workshops, instrument building workshops. Celia Ramsay, Lark Traditional Arts (Lark Camp)*

A few groups noted that they specifically cater to youth.

*Summer Trad Camp for kids is an annual immersive week full of traditional music and dance classes, jamming, and games. Yasi Zeichner, The Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture*

### All-ages social dances

Many Affiliates wrote about how they include school-aged participants in their dance events. This included a few Affiliates who said they wanted to engage more school-aged participants. Gainesville Oldtime Dance Society is an example of one group that is attracting younger participants.

*Our regular contra dances attract families with school-age children, who may constitute 10% or more of event dancers. We also attract regular and occasional college-age dancers from nearby University of Florida. Patrick Harrigan, Gainesville Oldtime Dance Society*

One Affiliate pointed out that children can be disruptive but that their group "tolerates them".

## Attracting school-aged participants to all-ages dances

Many organizers wrote about how school-aged participants end up attending their events. These included:

- Special price arrangements (e.g., free/lower admission for under 12, teens, youth, occasional dances free for ages 29 and under/under 35; free admission for college students as the dance is held on the college campus)
- Advertising events as 'all ages are welcome'
- Parents/grandparents bringing their children, including parents who are already part of the dance community
- Youth bringing their friends
- Holding events on, or near, university/college campuses on a regular basis or as a special event
- Holding an event at a local elementary/high school (e.g., dance as a fundraiser for the school)
- Home schooling families/kids (including as a phys-ed requirement)
- Offering childcare
- Being located in a region where youth attend dances
- Word-of-mouth
- Engaging the local youth outing club
- Performing at local events
- Musicians inviting the young students to play at a dance
- Engaging the local dance school
- Social media, including paying for posts (noted as unsuccessful)
- Including other forms of dance such as swing/fusion/blues

## How to make all-ages dance events welcoming to school-aged participants

Organizers made all-ages dances welcoming to school-aged participants in a wide variety of ways:

- Creating an atmosphere where all are welcome
- Offering childcare
- Offering a beginner lesson before every dance
- Offering snacks/treats/refreshments
- Incorporating younger participants in all events (e.g., encourage children who can't dance by themselves to dance as a unit with their parent; include easier dances)
- Dancers providing carpooling for youth dancers
- Experienced dancers inviting younger dancers to dance and also chat with them; one group pointed out that they have found that young female dancers prefer to dance with women rather than men
- Offering patience and respect for all new dancers
- Allowing grade school participants to watch a few dances before jumping in
- Having quality talent
- Offering techno or gender-free dances

*Red Hills ECD had mostly homeschool children. ECD counted as a phys-ed requirement. Some continued on after graduating high school but were not in college. We focused on upbeat and energetic dances when they attended. We were performing at the President Polk homestead 2x/year. The event drew mostly families and often we could draw children into the audience participation dances. Luanne Stiles, Red Hills English Country Dancers*

*Monthly dances, school residencies, extra events. Our contra dance participants feature a high percentage of preteen, teen, and college age people. Not sure exactly what we do, other than put out the vibe that all are welcome and celebrate/incorporate the younger participants at all of our events. We do have a lower admission rate for contras for kids under*

*12 and for teens 13-20, which maybe sends a positive message. Belfast Flying Shoes*

*Swing, fusion, and blues are especially popular amongst the 18-25 year old demographic. Our 2nd Saturday contra has also made an effort to specifically target this demographic and has seen a significant increase in not only younger dancer participation, but younger organizers, musicians and callers as well. Michael Bean, Ann Arbor Community for Traditional Music and Dance*

## Dances specifically for families

Approximately 15 Affiliates wrote that they hold family dances. A few mentioned that they hold the dances just before their contra dances while one mentioned holding their family dance in the afternoon. Below are a few descriptions of family/community dances:

*Family dance, use red ribbon around wrist to show which hand is right. do free flowing called movements at start of evening to teach basics and get mixing, have a break with food and interesting entertainment, talk with kids, keep it simple and fun. Susan Stanton, Village Green English Country Dancers*

*For the two younger groups, we have family dances three to four times a year that are geared specifically to them; this year they were particularly successful, because we met in a city recreational facility and so the event was co-sponsored by the city, and families who came the first time got to experience our talented and creative musicians and callers and were thrilled to come back again. Marie Deer, Bloomington Old-Time Music and Dance Group*

## Teen dances

A handful of organizers wrote about organizing dances for secondary school-aged participants. These included:

- Teen dances / teen contra dances
- ECD ball for home-school children

In addition, a few Affiliates wrote about holding occasional or one-off events such as a one-off Jane Austen ball for youth.

## Morris dance

A handful of morris teams wrote about how they engage school-aged participants.

- Two teams include dancers as young as 10 and one of those teams mentioned having three teen dancers. A third team mentioned that they welcome participants as young as 11
- Host a family-oriented ale where all ages can attend the performances
- Perform for school-aged children
- Invite young audience members to come up at the end to dance/learn a few figures

## Holding events at schools

Approximately 10 Affiliates wrote about holding events at schools. These varied widely, including:

- Offering a dance at a local high school
- Organizing a one-off/once a year dance at a university
- Offering an after-school club for kids
- Offering world music concerts at schools
- Morris teams dancing out at pre-schools
- Leading a contra dance for an intern orientation (ages 18-29)
- Performances at local schools (e.g., vintage dance)

## School-aged participants involvement in other types of events

A handful of Affiliates wrote about organizing other types of events specifically for school-aged participants. These included:

- Teen music jams
- Youth dance band
- Rug concerts/performances
- Picnics especially geared towards families which include music, singing, and dance

A few Affiliates wrote about organizing other types of all-ages events that are open to school-aged participants:

- Evening music classes for adults but all ages welcome if their skills are appropriate for the class
- Encourage youth at all-ages clogging classes and follow-up by sending videos and communicating with them to learn what they prefer
- Engaging youth in solstice events

*This is a Midwinter, solstice-oriented event. It's open to all. We try to have at least a few pieces that focus on the younger members of our cast, especially the children's chorus and teen performers if we have them.*  
Alan McArdle, Welcome Yule, Inc.

## Q31 COLLABORATION IN SCHOOL-AGED PROGRAMMING

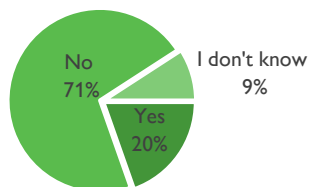
Beyond Affiliates working with children, we were interested in learning about whether members of local communities were partnering with other organizations to provide programming for school-aged participants. We asked:

*Is someone from your community collaborating with other organizations (e.g., schools; libraries; festivals) to provide school-aged programming?*

And a follow up question: *Please provide details about the type of collaboration:*

Few Affiliates (1/5) noted that they know of members of their community collaborating with organizations to provide school-aged programming (see Figure 26).

Figure 26: Is someone from your community collaborating with other organizations (e.g., schools; libraries; festivals) to provide school-aged programming?  
N=153



Affiliates provided some specific information about the activities involving partnerships.

## Programming at schools

A handful of Affiliates wrote that members of their community hold occasional dances at elementary and/or secondary schools. In addition, a handful Affiliates mentioned other forms of programming at schools such as:

- Morris team performance including a participatory dance
- Residences or a series of residences
- Assemblies/performances
- Dance demonstration
- Classes for college students
- Workshops
- Connecting schools to callers
- Assisting a physical education teacher in dance materials
- Offering grants to schools to offer traditional music & dance events

A few Affiliates specifically mentioned private or Waldorf schools.

## Programming at libraries

A handful of Affiliates wrote about members of their community offering programming at libraries. This included:

- General collaboration
- Performing at libraries (vintage dance)
- Offering grants to libraries to offer traditional music & dance events

## Interested but haven't taken action

A handful of Affiliates wrote that they had considered partnerships with other organizations but no one had pursued them. A few pointed out that it's hard to find someone to put in the effort. A few others pointed out that they would like more information on offering this type of programming.

## Q32 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN PERFORMANCE

In order to learn about whether Affiliates encourage youth performers we asked:

*Does your group do anything in particular to encourage the development of younger performers (e.g., song leaders; dance musicians; callers) who are elementary/secondary/college-aged? If yes, what do you do?*

151/167 Affiliates responded to this question. If those who did, 44% agreed that they encourage the development of youth performers; 56% do not.

71 Affiliates took the opportunity to provide a written response to this question.

## Hiring talent for dances

A handful of participants wrote that they hire young/emerging talent for their regular dances.

*Our booker actively looks for emerging performers.* Pam Ruch, Valley Contra Dance

Additional ideas shared by individual organizers included:

- Inviting youth to play at the family dance
- Hiring youth discovered at a youth jam for the teen contra dances



## Apprentice-type performance opportunities

Approximately 25 Affiliates wrote about opportunities to perform in more of a guest/apprentice-type situation. For instance:

- Open bands that are accessible to all ages, with some Affiliates specifically inviting youth to participate
- Have 'sit in opportunities', a 'back row band', or 'off mic' opportunities to play with the hired talent
- Sound techs taking on youth as apprentices
- Have up-and-coming callers call a few guest slots in an evening
- Have a multi-caller evening(s) where younger callers can participate
- Invite music students to play with bands that include music teachers

*One of our dance organizers has begun mentoring younger musicians using the "back row band" method. Michael Bean, Ann Arbor Community for Traditional Music and Dance*

*Twice in the last year the fiddle and guitar teachers in our regular band had their students play for us the whole dance. They were great. We let parents and siblings in for free. At first, they said they would only listen but soon joined in and had a great time. Band members friends also came and had a great time. Parents put more money into band tip jar than would have been their entrance fee. Contra Dance Omaha*

## Training opportunities for callers and dance musicians

In addition to learning through apprentice opportunities, 25 Affiliates wrote about other opportunities for young callers and musicians. (Most of the training opportunities focused on callers in particular.) These experiences included:

- Offering scholarships to dance and folk music camps; promoting camps to youth
- Reaching out directly to youth to encourage calling/playing
- Forming a callers collective that holds gatherings to discuss and practice calling
- Offering options for mentoring
- Offering workshops

*I ran caller's workshops for years with nationally known callers that included local university student leaders. The cost of their participation was provided by our affiliate. Linda Lewis Lieberman, Central Iowa Traditional Dance*

*Another organizer has taken to mentoring younger callers, one of which has formed the Ann Arbor Caller's Collective, which holds meetings and workshops to discuss and practice calling. Michael Bean, Ann Arbor Community for Traditional Music and Dance*

*Young callers are invited to mentor with experienced callers if the young person expresses a desire to learn. We do not specifically hold caller workshops. Joyce Eyler, Nashville Country Dancers*

## Opportunities for young morris dancers

A handful of morris teams wrote about how they encourage the development of young morris dancers and musicians. The comments included:

- Word-of-mouth invitation, usually through a family member
- Hold a workshop at a contra dance for recruitment
- Anyone being able to join a mixed-age team at the age of 14 with the same skills being taught to everyone
- Youth being the focus of the team

*That's what we do! We have the kids run their own teams and learn leadership - cooperation - and tolerance. Tom Kruskal Great Meadows Morris and Sword*

## Other music & song opportunities for youth

Approximately 15 Affiliates involved with non-dance events (e.g., folk club; folk festival; fiddle group) shared ways in which they encourage youth in performance:

- Invite teens to music jams; offer a teen-specific jam
- Sponsor a ballad singing contest for students
- Create specific performance roles for youth such as an emerging artist showcase or have young performers in a specific time slot
- Folk Society/fiddle groups offering scholarships for folk music camp
- Have teens take on youth leadership positions at camp including leading jams and helping out with younger kids
- Make instruments with kids and then parade
- Hold a song writing workshop
- Hold weekly music classes for the public that are open to all ages
- Create a teen volunteer crew
- Have youth perform with their mentors, teachers and parents

*We sponsor a cash prize for the South Shore Folk Music Club's ballad singing contest for students. We also offer scholarships for young Boston-area musicians to attend folk music camps. Lori Fassman, Folk Song Society of Greater Boston*

*We ask younger folks to join our music sessions - & have had high school players from time to time. Kay Bidwell Loberg, Door County Folk Alliance*

## Q33 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN LEADERSHIP

In order to learn about whether Affiliates are engaging youth in volunteering and/or organizing we asked:

*Does your group do anything to engage elementary/secondary/college-aged participants in volunteering or taking on a role in organizing? If yes, what do you do?*

153/167 Affiliates responded to this question. If those who did, 36% agreed that they engage youth in volunteering and organizing; 64% do not. 63 Affiliates took the opportunity to provide a written answer to this question.

## Helping as a 'day of' volunteer

Approximately 30 Affiliates wrote about day-of volunteer opportunities for youth, and or youth engaging in day-of volunteering. These roles included:

- Teen volunteer crew
- Registration/door table
- Role shadow volunteers, mentor with sound techs, and support tear down
- Make and serve pies; help with cooking; refreshments

A few Affiliates pointed out that volunteers get a discount or in free and that it can be an incentive for youth.

## Taking on a leadership role

Approximately 25 Affiliates wrote about youth taking on more of a leadership role or providing youth with those opportunities. This included:

- Inviting youth to meetings
- Any age being welcome in organizing and the group welcoming youthful enthusiasm
- Everyone on a morris team being involved in organizing

- Having youth focused dances (e.g., teen contra) with youth organizers (e.g., coordinator)
- Youth board member roles (e.g., strive for two so not alone)
- Taking on a role planning special events (e.g., Ales; dance weekends)
- College liaison role (e.g., work on funding from college to cover the cost of students attending the events)
- Ask younger members to provide feedback – explore barriers and address them
- Shadow particular roles (e.g., squire of a morris team)

*...One current board member was recruited during her college years (after having been an intern/assistant at Summit School through her teens). She now is involved with the coordination of several programs. Yasi Zeichner, The Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture*

*The 2nd Saturday contra dance committee, otherwise known as NexGen, has the primary function of attracting younger dancers, organizers, callers, and musicians. Currently, 5 of the 6 committee members are aged 30 years or younger. The committee has pushed for a pay what you can format which the board has adopted and recently organized the area's first real techno contra which was a huge success in bringing in new, younger dancers. Michael Bean, Ann Arbor Community for Traditional Music and Dance*

*We have [...] invited younger members to serve on the board, asked younger members to provide feedback on various initiatives. We have tried to explore what the barriers are and address them. Susan Stanton, Village Green English country Dancers*

A handful of Affiliates pointed out that it is hard to attract youth to organizer positions. For instance,

*We invite anyone 18 and over to be on planning committees and our board of directors. It is hard for under-grad college students to do this. We have had more success if they are graduate or have graduated and in 20s. Jack Marquess, Eastern Cooperative Recreation School, Inc.*

*We involve them in the planning and on-site tasks for the weekend event. They seem willing to help out with specific tasks, but show little interest in administrative responsibilities. Alan Kanaskie, Salem Folklore Community*

## Providing encouragement for youth to engage

Approximately half of the question respondents wrote about various ways in which they encourage youth to volunteer with their group.

- Expectation that everyone will be involved (e.g., morris team; teen contra)
- Personal invitation to take on day-of or board/committee roles
- Creating specific roles for youth leaders (e.g., youth position on committee)
- Engaging youth/school groups
- Offering community service credit for helping
- Offer work exchange for events to youth
- Summer internship
- Encourage role shadowing

*We have occasionally tried to bring in outside groups like school music ensembles or individuals who can apply some specific stage, lighting or other background skills. Conversations with other directors and producers and with high school performing arts groups have provided some of these. Alan McArdle, Welcome Yule, Inc.*

*We have tried to get younger to shadow the squire, and foreperson and have asked them to be on committees. Jinny Mason, Wake Robin Morris*

*College-aged participants make up a core of our volunteer group (because we structure volunteering to be financially worth it). When someone in that age group starts attending regularly, we ask if they'd have any interest in volunteering and explain the roles and structures. Shoshana Silverman, Country Dance New York (CDNY)*

*At teen contra, all participants are asked to volunteer to help and are encouraged to try out helping with sound or learning to call a dance. Sharon Green, Bay Area Country Dance Society*

## FINDINGS 5: CDSS'S RELATIONSHIP WITH AFFILIATES

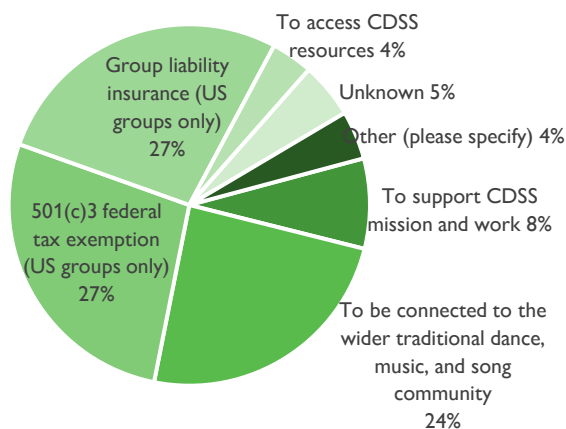
This section of the report summarizes Affiliates' perceptions of their relationship with CDSS.

### Q34-35 REASONS FOR BEING A CDSS AFFILIATE

We are interested in learning why Affiliates become and remain members of CDSS; and whether there are shifts in their reasons over time. Therefore, the following two questions were asked last year as part of our first Affiliate survey and we plan on asking them every year.

The primary motivation for becoming an Affiliate didn't shift much between 2019 and 2020 (mostly +/- max 4%). Just over half of our Affiliates join primarily to access either insurance or 501(c)3 tax exemption. However, approximately a third of Affiliates' primary motivation to join is to be part of a larger community or support CDSS's mission and work – impressive considering that Affiliates could only select one option for this question. The one substantial change between 2019 and 2020 is that there was an 11% decrease in the number of Affiliate who selected that they joined to access CDSS resources.

Figure 27: What was your group's primary motivation for initially becoming a CDSS Affiliate? (select one) N=161

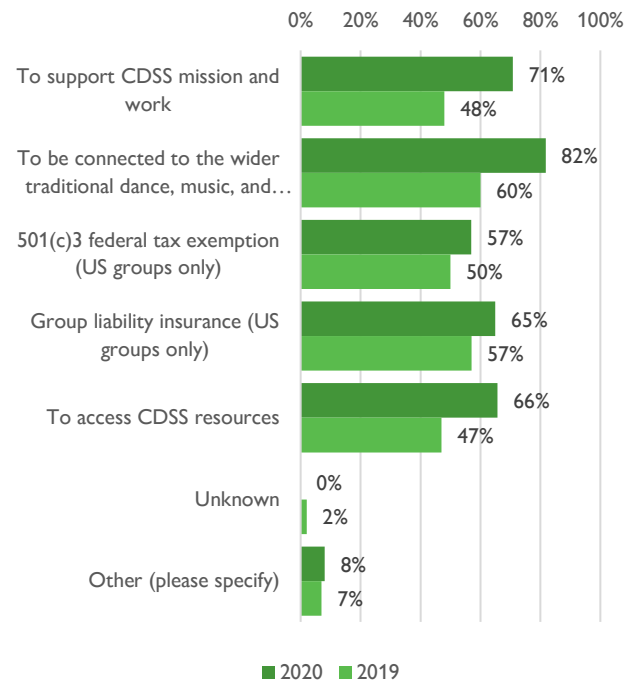


A handful of survey participants provided written responses to 'Other (please specify)'. Respondents pointed out that their reasons were varied, that they didn't know the initial reason (e.g., previous organizer set up the membership), or that they wanted other support (e.g., increase visibility/advertising; priority at camp).

We also asked Affiliates why they are currently a member. As in 2019, respondents could select as many answers as they wished. Figure 27 illustrates that in 2020, a greater percentage of survey participants selected each of the reasons for remaining an Affiliate, suggesting that more Affiliates view their membership as offering a wide range of benefits to their local group. For instance:

- In 2019, 60% of survey respondents noted that one of the reasons they were currently an Affiliate member was to be connected to the wider traditional dance, music, and song community; this increased to 82% in 2020 and is the most common response in terms of why Affiliates are currently members
- In 2019, 48% of survey respondents noted that one of the reasons they were currently an Affiliate member was to support CDSS's mission and work; this increased to 71% in 2020
- In 2019, 47% of survey respondents noted that one of the reasons they were currently an Affiliate member was to access CDSS resources; this increased to 66% in 2020

Figure 27: Why is your group is currently an Affiliate member? (select as many as apply) 2020N=162 2019N=137



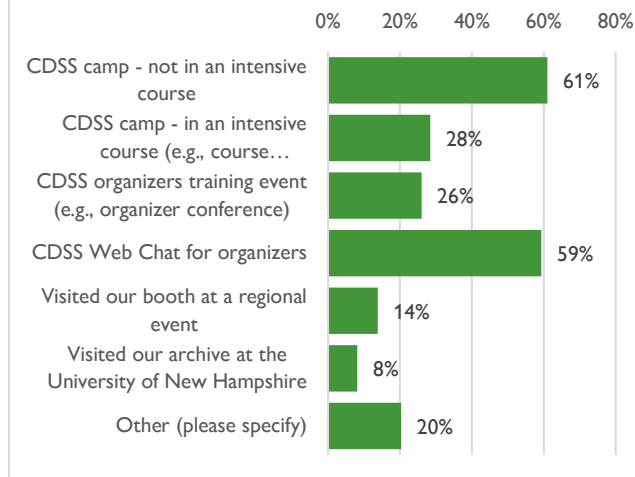
Approximately 10 survey participants provided written responses to 'Other (please specify)'. Individual respondents pointed out reasons such as accessing the CDSS store discount and advertising their annual event in the CDSS News.

### Q45 COMMITTEE ENGAGEMENT WITH CDSS EVENTS

We added a new question in 2020 that looked at the degree to which Affiliate organizers engage with CDSS's in-person events. This was in order to gain a sense of whether Affiliates have face-to-face contact with CDSS.

123 Affiliates answered the question. Figure 28 illustrates the findings.

Figure 28: Percentage of Affiliate who have had a member of their organizing committee attend CDSS events within the last five years N=123



74% of survey participants answered this question. Given the way the question was answered, we can't tell if the other respondents simply skipped this question or whether some of the 26% who didn't take the time to respond haven't engaged in any of the face-to-face opportunities.

The most common way in which committee members have engaged face-to-face with CDSS is through camp and then our web chat series. However, 1/4 of Affiliates have attended an organizer training event (e.g., organizer conference) within the last five years even though we have only offered two in that time period.

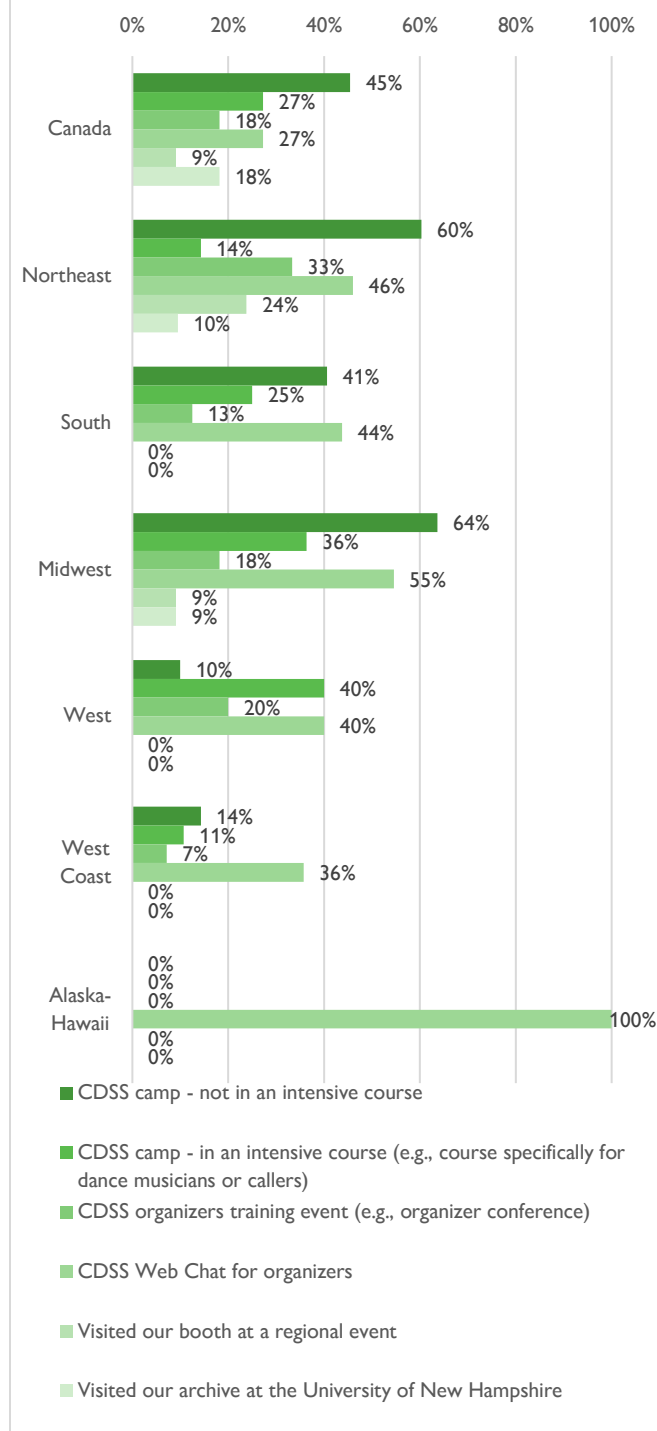
25 Affiliates selected 'other' and provided written responses. However, most of these did not list new events but rather provided more detail such as:

*Attended 1st Putting on the Dance in White River Junction; planned to attend the Portland, ME event last fall, but it was canceled. Stephen Moore, Lenox Contra Dance*

We looked at Affiliate engagement by region. Below are some findings that stand out:

- Relatively few Affiliates from the West and West coast are attending camp while Affiliates in the Northeast and Midwest are mostly likely to have committee members attend camp
- Intensive courses at camp attract the highest percentage Affiliates from the West and Midwest, followed by the South. The West Coast and Northeast Affiliates are less likely to have committee members attend intensive courses
- Affiliates in the Northeast have been most likely to engage in CDSS organizer training events over the past five years (One of the two gatherings was held in the Northeast)
- No Affiliates from the West Coast, West, or South stated that they've visited a CDSS information booth at a regional event
- West Coast Affiliates are most likely to participate in web chats
- The Affiliate from Alaska has only participated in web chats

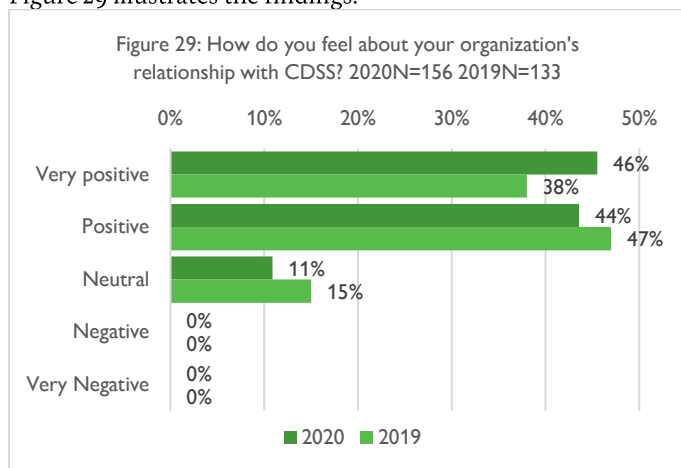
Figure 28: Percentage of Affiliates who have had a member of their organizing committee attend CDSS events within the last five years, by Region N=123



## Q47 AFFILIATE FEELINGS ABOUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO CDSS

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

Figure 29 illustrates the findings.



Level of satisfaction was relatively consistent across the past two years. The vast majority of Affiliates feel very positive or positive about their organization's relationship with CDSS and no Affiliates who participated in the survey felt that they had a negative or very negative relationship.

27 Affiliates provided written responses. Comments varied widely. (Approximate counts)

- 7: Appreciative of CDSS resources including two Affiliates who pointed out that would like to take better advantage of the resources  
*Great range of resources and expertise. Lorraine Weiss, DanceFlurry Organization*  
*I want to delve into the resources more. Haven't yet. Rebecca Park, Kanawha Valley FOOTMAD*
- 5: Individual members of Affiliate communities have personal ties to CDSS  
*Most of our performers are definitely connected with CDSS in their other dance/music activities such as Morris, contra and English country and there's much appreciation for CDSS. Peggy Leiby, FiddleKicks*
- 5: CDSS doesn't feel relevant to some members of the community given location, type of tradition, community focusing inward, or lack of connection  
*But for a performing dance group without participatory events, its not very relevant. Most communications/publicizing happens within Morris community, especially on the west coast. David Summers, Renegade Rose Morris*
- 2: Appreciate staff support

Individual Affiliates wrote the following comments:

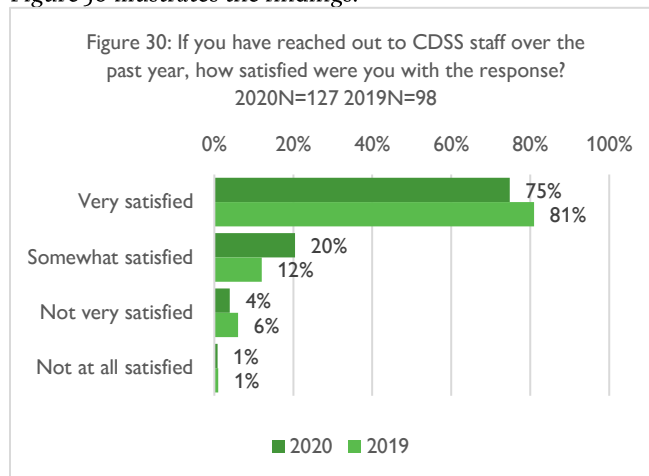
- Appreciate leadership
- Camps are valuable
- Appreciate reduction in Canadian fees
- Would like group insurance to be offered in Canada
- Helpful as a partners
- If had a vibrant community with more volunteers, would be able to contribute more to the CDSS mission
- Supportive of the CDSS mission
- Like the connection

One of the respondents pointed out that their relationship with CDSS is neutral because its not a strong one.

## Q46 AFFILIATE SATISFACTION WITH CDSS'S CUSTOMER SERVICE

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

Figure 30 illustrates the findings.



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

35 Affiliates provided written response to the 'comments' box. This included a few Affiliates wrote that they hadn't reached out to CDSS.

Approximately 20 Affiliates wrote positive comments including that staff were prompt, polite, had a can-do attitude, were friendly, helpful, responsible, and 'noticeably better'.

Approximately 10 Affiliates had somewhat negative comments including that response quality depended on the person, that it was hard to find the correct person or that responses were sometimes slow or incomplete. In addition, a few Affiliates pointed out particular issues that they had (e.g., a few Affiliates pointed out that it is hard to update Affiliate contact information).



## FINDINGS 6: CDSS COMMUNICATION WITH AFFILIATES

This section of the report examines Affiliates' perceptions regarding CDSS's communications.

### Q36-37 THE RELEVANCE OF CDSS'S COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORMS FOR AFFILIATES

The 2019 Affiliate survey asked a series of questions regarding the degree to which Affiliates read or refer to our various communication channels. The questions were separated by type of communication platform (e.g., print; online; email blasts). While the 2019 questions were fairly effective, we decided to tweak the questions further in 2020 to refocus what we were learning. Therefore, the 2019 and 2020 results are not comparable.

Question 36 asked respondents about the relevance of various CDSS communication channels. Figure 31 illustrates whether various channels are read and relevant, read but not relevant, not read, or whether Affiliates don't receive the material.

We also asked Affiliates which of the communications listed in Q36, they are most likely to read. (Affiliates could list up to three.) 57 survey respondents listed three methods of communication, 37 listed two, and 45 listed one for a total of 139 respondents.

With this particular question, it's important to remember that not all of the survey respondents receive CDSS communications directly (see Question 3).

Figure 31: The relevance of various CDSS communications to Affiliates N=140-153

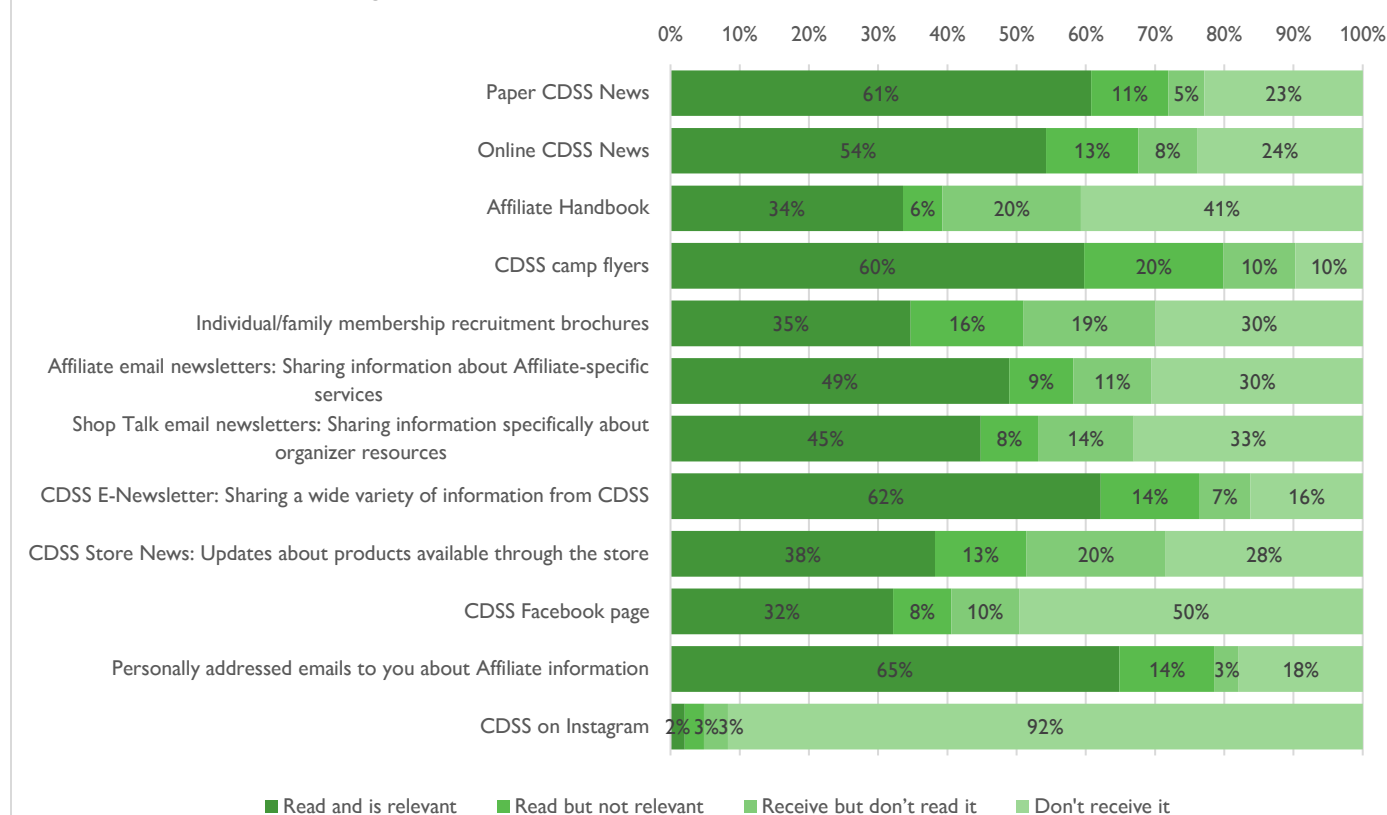
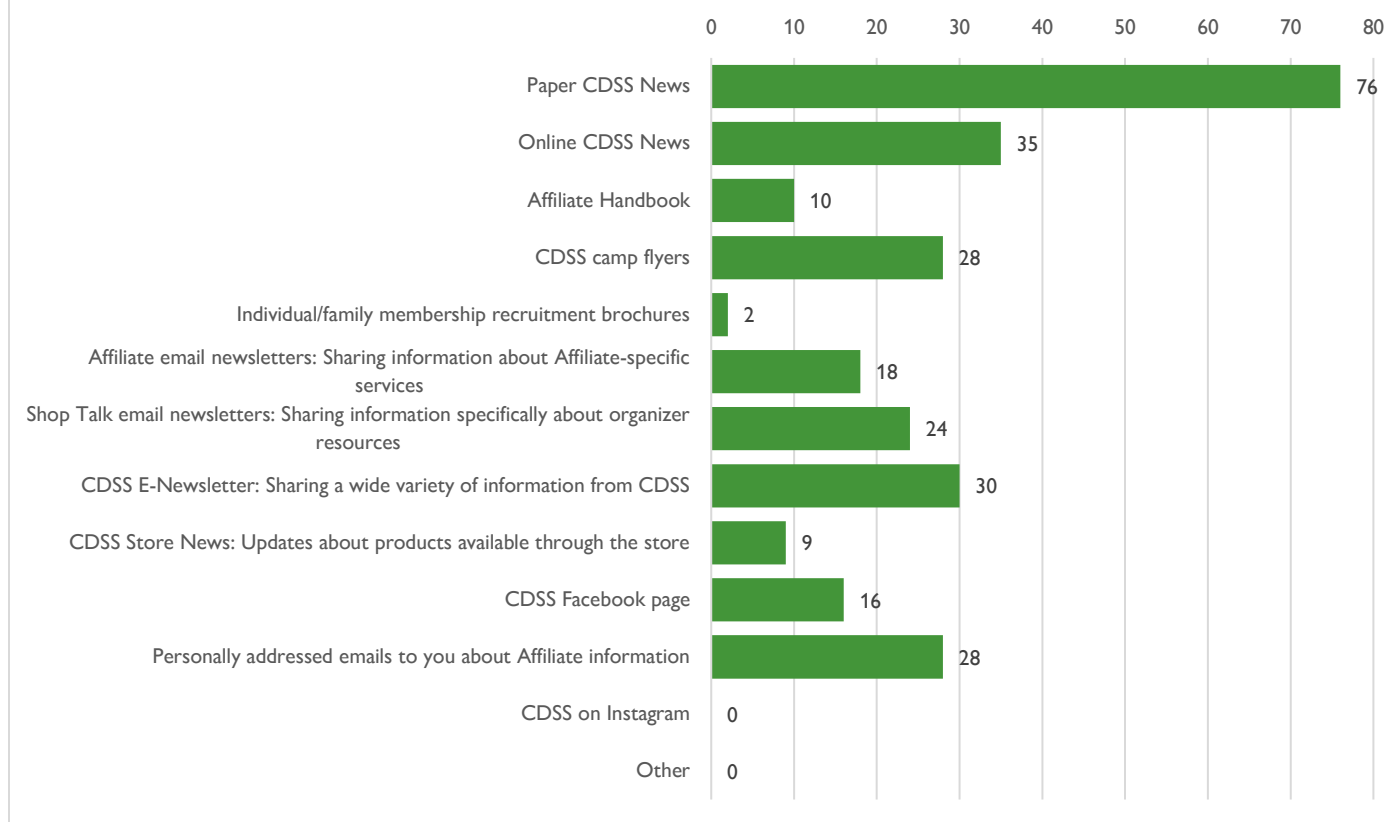


Figure 32: The number of Affiliates who identified the following as one of the three CDSS communications they are most likely to read N=139 (57 Affiliates identified three types of communication; 37 identified two, and 45 listed one)



In addition to the channels of communication listed above in Figure 32, a few Affiliates mentioned other forms of communication or had more general comments:

- Most likely to read the CDSS website
- Most likely to read anything via email
- Most likely to contact CDSS staff
- Communications are sent to one volunteer and cannot always be widely shared
- Committee members vary in what they engage with
- Respondent didn't know about most of the communications
- Most of the communications are not relevant to morris teams

The following five communication channels were identified as *read and relevant* by the highest proportion of question respondents (Table 10):

Table 10: Communication platform	%
Personally addressed emails to you about Affiliate information	65%
CDSS E-Newsletter: Sharing a wide various of information from CDSS	62%
Paper CDSS News	61%
CDSS camp flyers	60%
Online CDSS News	54%

When looking at the communication platforms Affiliates are *most likely to read* (Table 11), the same five items were identified by the greatest number of question respondents:

Table 11: Communication platform	Approximate #
Paper CDSS News	76
Personally addressed emails to you about Affiliate information	35
CDSS E-Newsletter: Sharing a wide various of information from CDSS	32
Online CDSS News	28
CDSS camp flyers	28

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

Table 12: Communication platform	%
CDSS on Instagram	92%
CDSS on Facebook	50%
Affiliate handbook	41%
Shop Talk email newsletters: Sharing information specifically about organizer resources	33%
Both the Affiliate email newsletter (i.e., sharing information about Affiliate-specific services) AND Individual/family membership recruitment brochures	30%

#### Other highlights include:

- Some communications channels that are specifically designed for Affiliates weren't as commonly read or deemed relevant (e.g., 2/5 of respondents noted that their either do not receive or don't read Affiliate specific e-blasts)
- 41% of question respondents noted that they do not receive the Affiliate Handbook
- While the CDSS Facebook page is read and deemed relevant by 1/3 of question respondents, 50% of question respondents identified as 'don't receive it'

- There is a difference in the percentage of Affiliates who read the paper CDSS News as compared to the online CDSS News but the difference is relatively minor and the online News is still one of the five most read communication channels

### Q38 THE DEGREE TO WHICH AFFILIATE CONTACTS SHARE INFORMATION WITH THEIR FELLOW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Over the past few years, we've heard from some Affiliates that it is challenging to have only one member of their board/committee receive notices from CDSS. We too want to make sure that key communications are reaching as many committee/board members as possible.

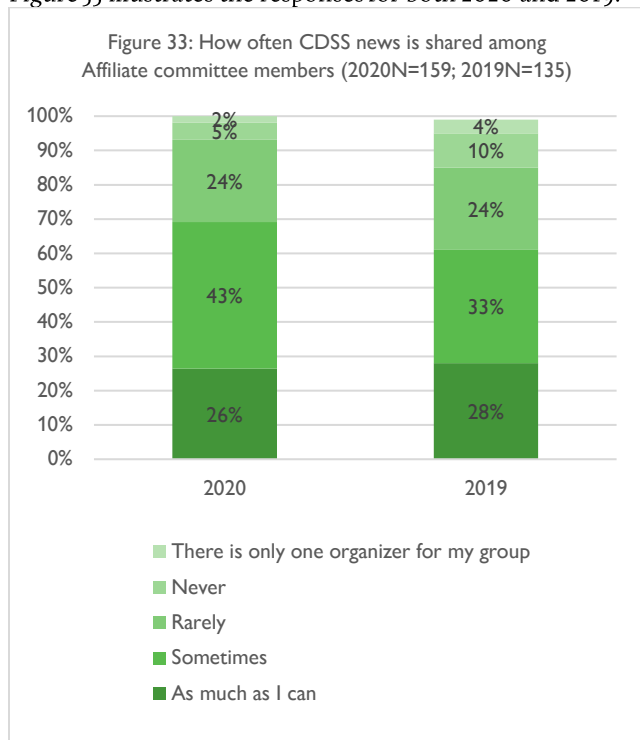
In 2019, we asked the following question:

*How often do you share CDSS news with your organizing committee? (e.g., forwarding CDSS Affiliate e-blasts; sharing news about matching scholarships)*

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 33 illustrates the responses for both 2020 and 2019.



There was some minor change in the degree to which Affiliate contacts sharing information between 2019 and 2020 (10% increase in those who share sometimes; 5% decrease in those who never share). Still, 3/10 of respondents note that CDSS information is rarely or never shared among committee members.

### Q39 SUGGESTIONS FOR MORE EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATING WITH ORGANIZING COMMITTEES

New to the 2020 survey, we asked survey participants how CDSS could more effectively communicate with their organizing committee. 94 survey participants responded to this question.

#### Positive feedback

Approximately 20 respondents wrote positive comments (e.g., current communication is effective; needs are met; doing great; better than ever).

#### No feedback

Approximately 10 respondents wrote that they didn't have any suggestions or weren't sure what could be done to improve communication.

#### Communicate directly with more organizers from each Affiliate

¼ of question respondents suggested that CDSS communicate directly with more or all of the organizers in their group.

*If all on the committee could get the emails instead of just the contact person that would be great, otherwise one person has to either forward everything or decide what might be of interest to others. Ellie Nowels, Big Society Contra Dance*

*Perhaps a mechanism for communicating to CDSS the names & contact information our organizing committee members would help. Our Board members for the most part do not feel that much connected or in communication with CDSS. A little more information flow could prove invigorating. Patrick Harrigan, Gainesville Oldtime Dance Society*

More specific comments included:

- Have a way for committee members to sign up to receive information
- Have Affiliates provide contacts for all board members
- One respondent was surprised that they were the only person in their group to receive the notice about the survey

#### Encourage Affiliate contacts to share information with their committees

Approximately 10 survey respondents commented on the current system of having one contact per Affiliate share information with their organizing team.

A few respondents pointed out that it works well to have one contact as people are generally overwhelmed with email and the contact can select relevant information.

*We all are overwhelmed with emails. I forward what seems to me to be pertinent. Contra Dance Omaha*

A handful pointed out that the contact acts as a filter and doesn't always share information from CDSS. This included a few individuals who suggested that we prompt contacts to share the information with their committees.

*Perhaps being explicit about sharing. We may not be aware about whether we are receiving information to be shared. Janet Nardolillo, Capital English Country Dancers*  
*Encourage representatives to share materials with a wider community. I think sometimes emails stop at our board president and are not forwarded along to the rest of the board. Anonymous*

One respondent pointed out that the survey is making Affiliates more aware of the need to share information.

*By filling out this survey, organizers have realized that we could do a better of disseminating CDSS information to other community members. Meg Dedolph, Midwest Morris Ale Assn.*

## Use CDSS individual membership as a way for committee members to stay informed

A handful of organizers pointed out that members of their committee are also individual members of CDSS and that is how they remain informed.

*Most of our committee are individual CDSS members, so they are already pretty familiar with what CDSS offers. Gerald Blum, FootFall, LLC*

## Ensure that content is relevant

Approximately 10 organizers pointed out that information needs to be current, relevant, and focused.

*In today's world of massive and easy electronic communication we can easily get overwhelmed. As non-profit volunteer organizers we spend the majority of this volunteer time doing all the chores that keep our dances going so we have to be very narrowly focused when it comes to the information we take in. It must be very relevant to our specific task. Our time is at a premium so anything that saves time and allows us to quickly access specific information we may need is beneficial. Unless we have more volunteers who have the time in their busy lives to devote to this, it is difficult to seek out new information and try new things. John Hopson, Fiddle & Bow Country Dancers*

A few groups noted that the information isn't necessarily relevant to their particular context (i.e., morris team, small ECD group; world music instruction). One morris team pointed out that recent communications have been more relevant.

## Regarding email communications specifically

Approximately one third of question respondents specifically referenced email communication. A number of these respondents suggested that CDSS add more or all committee members from each Affiliate to the Affiliate email list.

There were difference views as to the effectiveness of email. A number of organizers said that email was an effective way to reach them. However, a few also pointed out that they are overwhelmed with email. One respondent suggested the use of paper mailings as email 'gets lost.'

## Lack of local interest

A handful of organizers pointed out that members of their committee aren't interested or are too busy to read more content. As one Affiliate said, 'I think the onus is on us.'

## Other suggestions and comments

Two survey respondents suggested that we set up regional Affiliate liaisons. Individual respondents suggested the following:

- Be a guest speaker at annual meetings of Affiliates
- Make the online CDSS News a paper addition again
- Make phone calls
- Make the Portal easier to find on the website
- Straighten Affiliate records
- Send texts if something requires specific attention

## Q40 THE DEGREE TO WHICH AFFILIATES SHARE INFORMATION WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES

In addition to communicating with organizers, CDSS wants to reach out and share resources and information with the wider Affiliate communities.

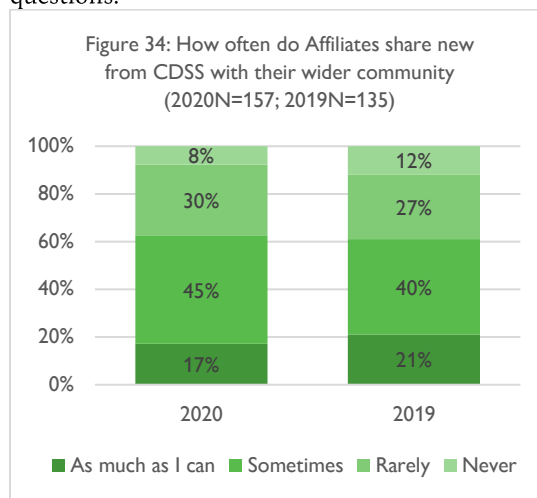
To learn whether Affiliates share information with their communities, we asked the following question in 2019:

*How often do you share CDSS news with your wider community? (e.g., sharing interesting CDSS News articles; forwarding camp information)*

In 2020, we added a preamble to emphasize our hope that Affiliates would share information. (We realize that this builds bias into to the question.)

*We believe that there is great value in local participants being aware of the larger dance, music, and song movement throughout North America – and that CDSS has much to offer in supporting that awareness. How often do you share CDSS news with your wider community? (e.g., sharing interesting CDSS News articles; Facebook posts; forwarding camp information)*

Figure 34 illustrates the responses for both the 2020 and 2019 questions.

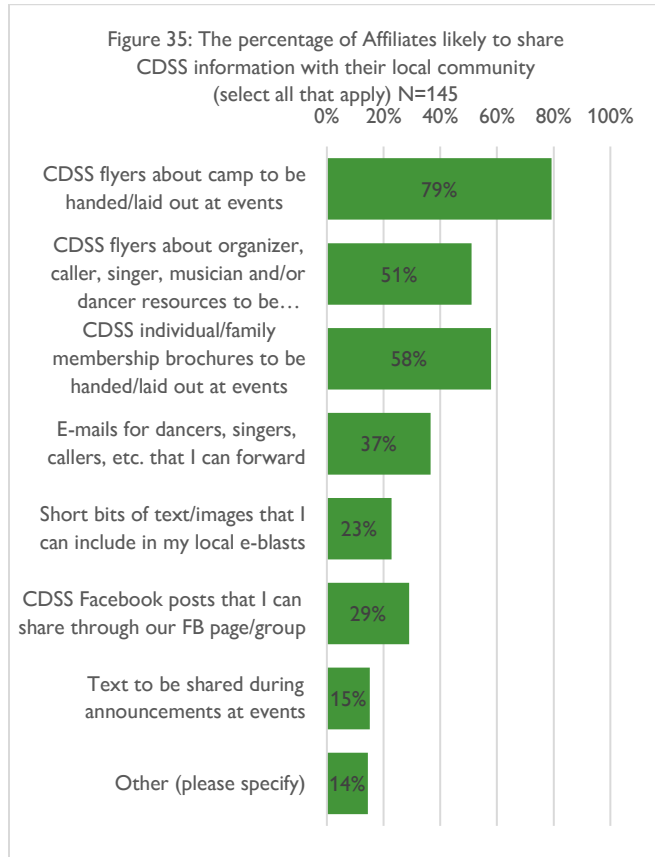


There was very little change in the degree to which Affiliate contacts sharing information between 2019 and 2020. 2/5 of Affiliates rarely or never sharing CDSS communications with their wider community while 3/5 share sometimes or as much as they can.

## Q41 FORMS OF CDSS INFORMATION THAT AFFILIATES ARE LIKELY TO SHARE

New in 2020, we asked Affiliates what CDSS communications they are likely to share with their community. Respondents were able to select as many options as they wished.

Figure 35 illustrates percentage of Affiliates likely to share various CDSS communications.



Some of the communication channels listed in Figure 35 are ideas which CDSS may consider in the future. For instance, 1/2 of Affiliates noted that they would share CDSS flyers about organizer, caller, singer, musician and or dancer resources – this is something we haven't yet done.

In addition to the close-ended options, 21 respondents provided written answers to 'Other (please specify)'. These included:

- **CDSS News:** One organizer noted that they put out the paper CDSS News on a table at their dances. Another said that they share the electric News, and a third wrote that they share specific articles from the News.
- **Online events:** Two organizers wrote that they share the CDSS online events page with their community. Another group asked that we send this information in a format that they can share.

*Email material with links to other events that we can share via our newsletter and Facebook. Celia Ramsay, Lark Traditional Arts (Lark Camp)*

- **Camp flyers:** A handful of organizers pointed out that camp flyers aren't useful given that their event is after camp season or they are located far away and have other local camps. One organizer pointed out that they dance in another community that frowns on putting out too many flyers.
- **Lack of interest:** Two organizers pointed out that members of their local community don't seem to want to engage in the broader scene.  
*Most of our dancers don't appear to want to get involved and simply want to dance and go home. Donna Hunt, Philadelphia Area Traditional Music and Dance (PATMAD)*
- **Website:** Two Affiliates noted that they list CDSS information on their website.
- **Consideration:** One Affiliate pointed out that they haven't considered sharing information from the wider dance community.

*This is an excellent question that I can't really answer. We've never talked about deliberately sharing information from the wider world. We do regularly list other dances in the area, including listing other dance websites, and other dances list our events as well. But we don't really extend beyond that. Stephen Moore, Lenox Contra Dance*



## FINDINGS 7: CDSS RESOURCES AND SERVICES

This section of the report examines Affiliates' perceptions regarding CDSS resources and services.

### Q42 WHAT CDSS SERVICES AND RESOURCES ARE IMPORTANT TO AFFILIATES

In both 2019 and 2020, we asked Affiliates about the importance of various CDSS resources/services. The question was asked as follows:

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

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

In addition to the resources/services listed in 2019, the following items were added to the 2020 survey:

- *Group liability insurance (for US Affiliates only)* - This service was accidentally left off the 2019 survey
- *Priority spaces for camp registration* - CDSS has offered this service for many years but didn't ask about it in 2019
- *Address lists for brochure mailings* - CDSS has offered this service for many years but didn't ask about it in 2019

- *Sponsorship of Shared Weight email lists for song organizers, dance organizers, callers, musicians, and sound techs* - This resource is new to CDSS this past year
- *CDSS's leadership role on topics impacting our broad community*
- *CDSS listing of local dance, music, and song events* - As it turns out, this item was very similar to *Your events listed in the CDSS events calendar*

The following items changed wording:

- *1:1 Staff advice on organizing* shifted to *1:1 CDSS staff support for organizers via phone & email*
- *Online organizers resource portal* shifted to *Online Resource Portal for singers and song organizers, ritual dancers and organizers, dance organizers, callers, dance musicians, educators/teachers, and families*
- *Web Chats for organizers* shifted to *Web Chats for dance, music and song organizers*
- *CDSS grants* shifted to *CDSS grants for groups to host workshops, encourage youth involvement, etc.*

Figures 36 and 37 illustrate the resources that Affiliates found important and those that were not important or that they were unaware of.

Figure 36: How important is it to your group that CDSS offer these services/resources?  
N=145-153

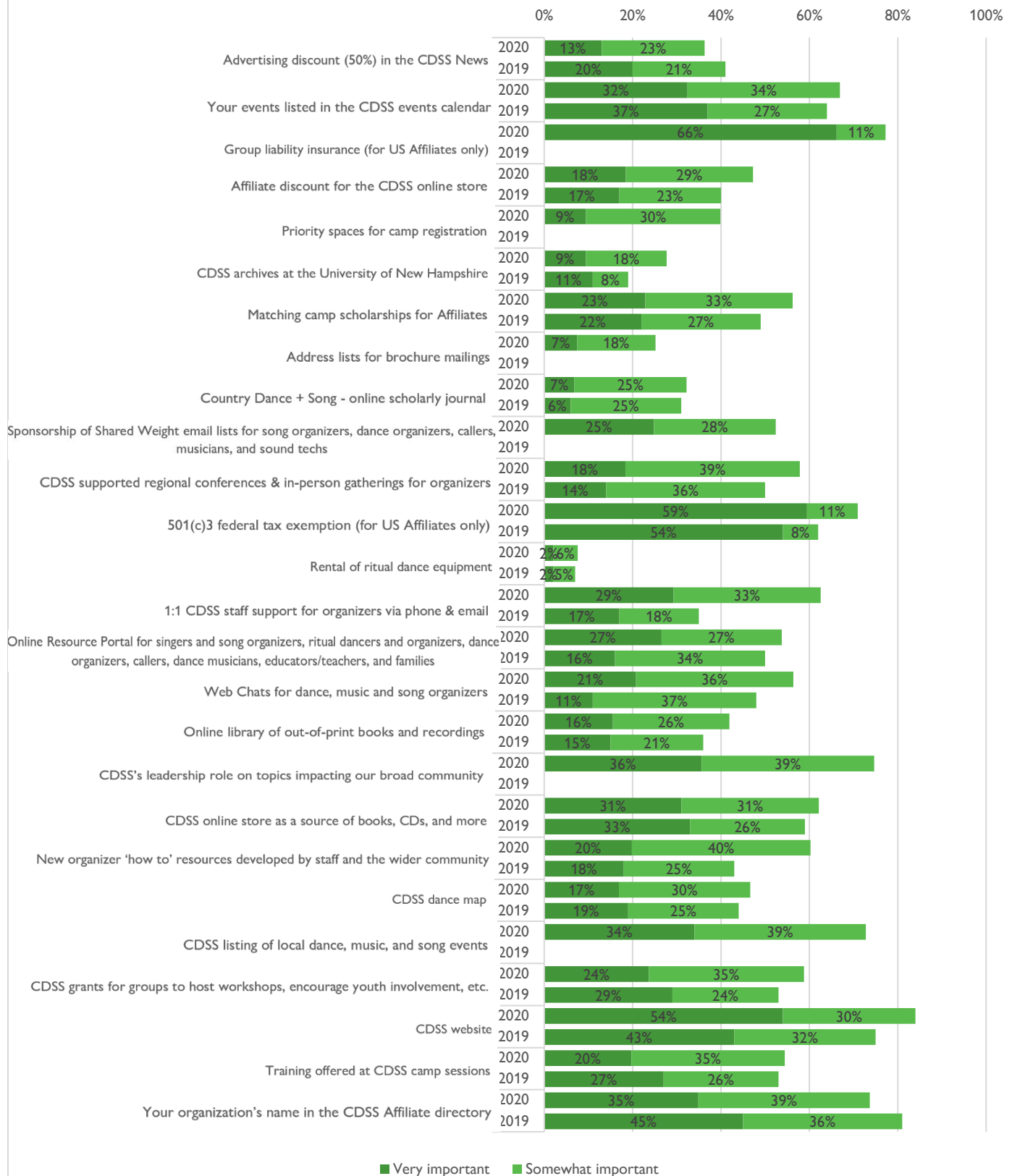
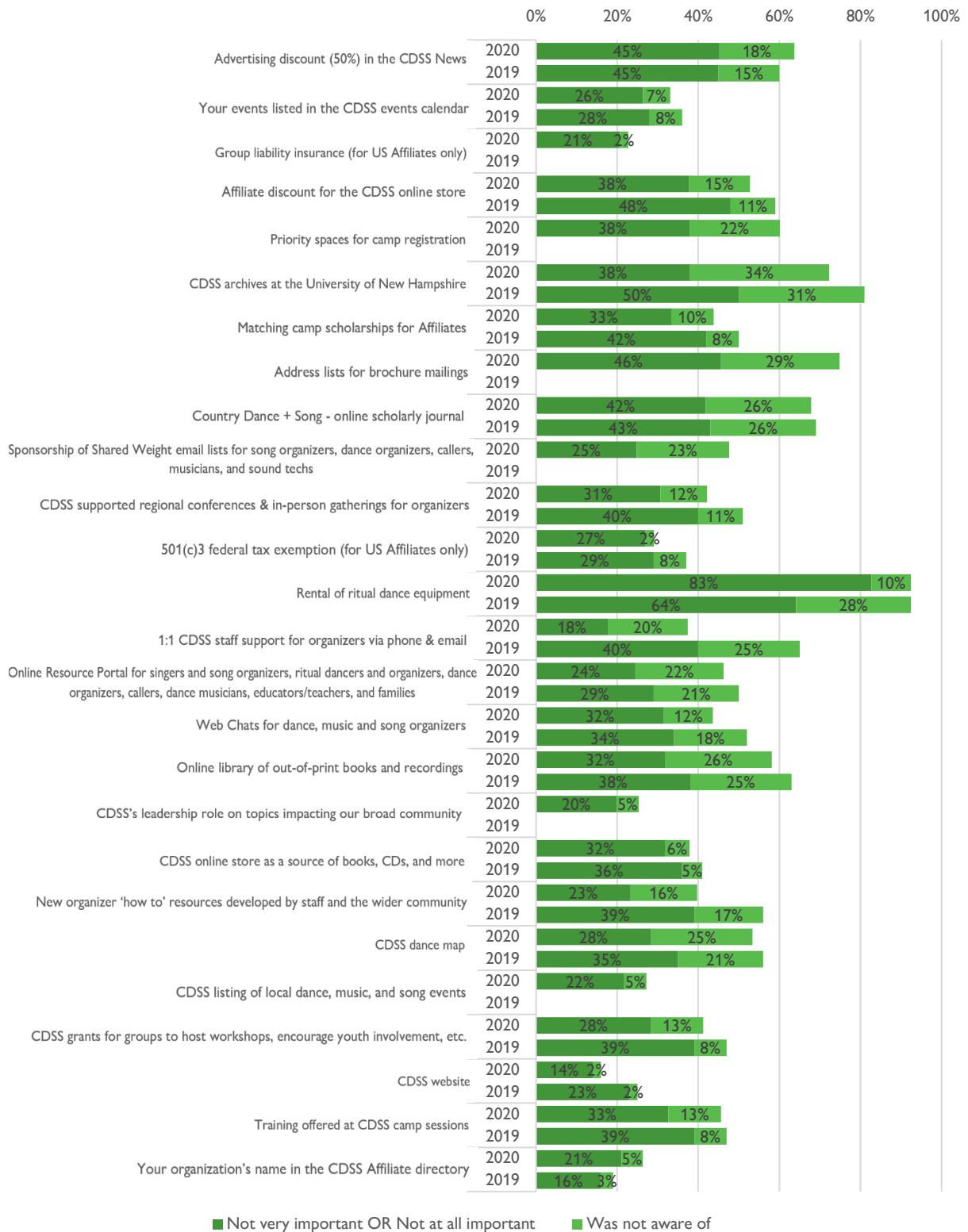


Figure 37: How important is it to your group that CDSS offer these services/resources?

N=145-153



## Resources that are important to many CDSS Affiliates

Of the 26 services/resources listed as options, 16 were identified as very important or somewhat important by more than half of the Affiliates:

Table 13: Service/resource	%
CDSS website	84%
Group liability insurance (for US Affiliates only)	77%
CDSS's leadership role on topics impacting our broad community	75%
Your organization's name in the CDSS Affiliate directory	74%
CDSS listing of local dance, music, and song events	73%
501(c)3 federal tax exemption (for US Affiliates only)	71%
Your events listed in the CDSS events calendar	67%
1:1 CDSS staff support for organizers via phone & email	63%
CDSS online store as a source of books, CDs, and more	62%
New organizer 'how to' resources developed by staff and the wider community	60%
CDSS supported regional conferences & in-person gatherings for organizers	58%
Web Chats for dance, music and song organizers	56%
Matching camp scholarships for Affiliates	56%
Online Resource Portal for singers and song organizers, ritual dancers and organizers, dance organizers, callers, dance musicians, educators/teachers, and families	54%
Training offered at CDSS camp sessions	54%
Sponsorship of Shared Weight email lists for song organizers, dance organizers, callers, musicians, and sound techs	52%

There was some shift in the percentage of Affiliates who felt certain resources were very or somewhat important (9/22 changed by 5-9%; 2 increased 10+%). By far, the two services/resources that showed the largest increase in percentage of Affiliates saying very or somewhat important were:

- 1:1 Staff support increased from 35% to 62% (Note: The description of this item shifted. It was defined as '1:1 staff advice on organizing' in 2019; In 2020 it was defined as '1:1 CDSS staff support for organizers via phone & email'.)
- 'New organizer how to resources developed by staff and the wider community' increased from 42% to 60%

The five services/resources that were deemed 'very important' by the highest percentage of respondents were:

Table 14: Service/resource	%
Group liability insurance (for US Affiliates only)	66%
501(c)3 federal tax exemption (for US Affiliates only)	59%
CDSS website	54%
CDSS's leadership role on topics impacting our broad community	36%
Your organization's name in the CDSS Affiliate directory	35%

Of the 26 services/resources listed in Question 42,

- 18 increased in the percentage of Affiliates identifying the resource as very or somewhat important
- 2 decreased in the percentage of Affiliates identifying the resource as very or somewhat important (i.e., Name in CDSS Affiliate directory dropped from 81% to 74%; Advertising discount in CDSS News decreased from 41% to 36%)
- We added 'CDSS's leadership role on topics impacting our broad community' in 2020 - Interesting that it was the third most selected response as being very or somewhat important (75%)

## Resources that are not important to many CDSS Affiliates

The five resources that were deemed as not at all important or not very important by the highest percentage of respondents were:

Table 15: Service/resource	%
Rental of ritual dance equipment	64%
Address lists for brochure mailings	46%
Advertising discount (50%) in the CDSS News	45%
Country Dance + Song - online scholarly journal	42%
-Affiliate discount for the CDSS online store	Tied at
-Priority spaces for camp registration	
-CDSS archives at the University of New Hampshire	38%

## Resources that Affiliates do not know about

The following table lists the resources for which 1/5 or more of our Affiliates are unaware of:

Table 16: Service/resource	%
CDSS archives at the University of New Hampshire	34%
Address lists for brochure mailings	29%
Rental of ritual dance equipment	28%
Online library of out-of-print books and recordings	26%
Country Dance + Song - online scholarly journal	26%
CDSS dance map	25%
Sponsorship of Shared Weight email lists for song organizers, dance organizers, callers, musicians, and sound techs	23%
Priority spaces for camp registration	22%
Online Resource Portal for singers and song organizers, ritual dancers and organizers, dance organizers, callers, dance musicians, educators/teachers, and families	22%
1:1 CDSS staff support for organizers via phone & email	20%

Looking across the 22 services/resources that were listed in 2019 and 2020, there was very little change in terms of awareness (i.e., within +/- 4%). Those that experienced bigger changes were:

- 501(c)3 tax exemption: 18% were unaware in 2019; 2% were unaware in 2020
- Rental of ritual dance equipment: 28% were unaware in 2019; 10% were unaware in 2020
- 1:1 CDSS Staff support: 25% were unaware of in 2019; 20% were unaware in 2020
- Web Chats: 18% were unaware in 2019; 12% were unaware in 2020

## Other CDSS resources identified by Affiliates

In addition to the 26 resources/services listed in the question 42, Affiliates could select 'Other (please specify)' and write an additional response. Only 10 of the 153 question respondents did so. Comments included: (Approximate count)

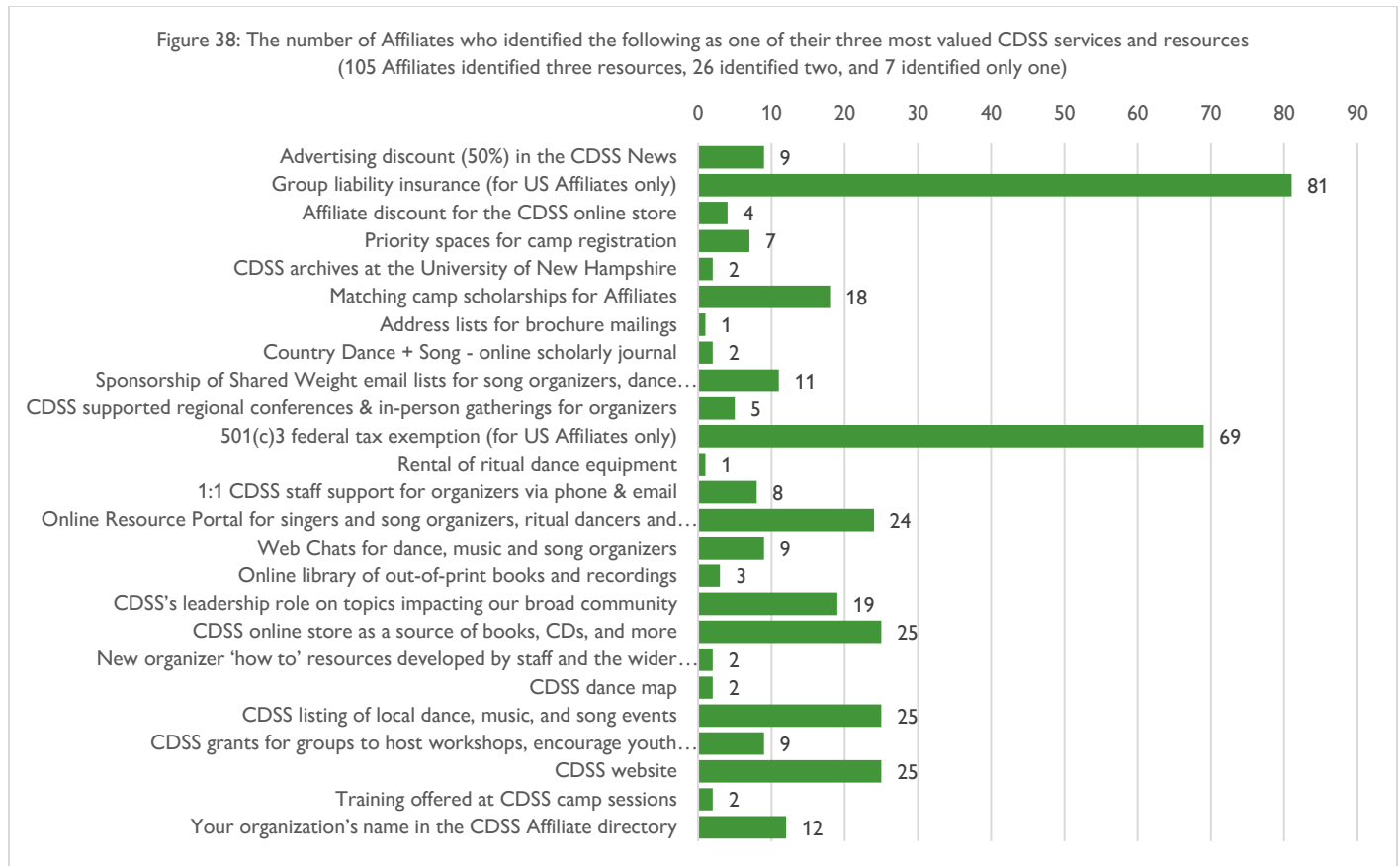
- 3: Organizing team has limited time so don't use as many resources as they might otherwise; one respondent pointed out that they may have limited interest given that they are happy with how they are doing
- 2: Some resources are helpful to individuals and groups
- 2: Noted that they answered the question based upon their own experience rather than their full committee
- 1: The resources are more useful now that CDSS is 'broadening out'
- 1: Organizers refer their ECD callers and musicians to CDSS's online resources

## Q43 THE CDSS SERVICES & RESOURCES THAT ARE OF MOST VALUE TO OUR AFFILIATES

Following Question 42 which asked Affiliates to rate the importance of all resources, respondents were asked to identify what three resources are of most value and why. 105 listed three resources, 26 listed two, and 7 listed one.

Figure 38 provides a count of approximately how many Affiliates mentioned various services/resources as one of their top three currently of most value. (Counts are approximate as respondents provided written responses and some interpretation was required.)

Note: 'Your events listed in the CDSS events calendar' was removed as that item was effectively the same as 'CDSS listing of local dance, music and song events'. (An error on our part to include both.)



### Liability and 501(c)3 exemption

Group liability insurance is the resource most valued by the highest number CDSS Affiliates – 3/5 question respondents listed insurance as one of the three services/resources their group currently value most. This increased from 1/3 in 2019, likely because there was a mistake in the 2019 survey where insurance was left off the list of services/resources.

### 501(c)3 tax exemption

1/2 of Affiliates identified 501(c)3 status as one of the three services/resources of most value to their group. This was the same as in 2019.

### Static resources

2/5 of Affiliates noted identified one or more of CDSS's static resources as one of the most valuable resources/services. Static resources include: Online resource portal; online library; online store; and new resource how-tos.

### Promotion of local Affiliates and their events

CDSS promotion of local groups was valued as a top service/resource by 1/3 of question respondents. This includes the CDSS News advertising discount, Affiliate directory, dance map, mailing addresses, events calendar, and listing of events (essentially the events calendar). This decreased as compared to 2019 when 1/2 of respondents noted promotion of Affiliates and their events as one of their most valued CDSS services.

### Resources focused on connectivity

1/4 of respondents identified one or more of CDSS's connectivity resources as one of the most valuable resources/services. Connectivity resources include regional conferences, sponsorship of Shared Weight, web chats, grants to host workshops, and training offered at CDSS camps.

### CDSS camps

Under 10 Affiliates identified topics relating to camp (i.e., training; matching scholarships) as one of the most valuable resources to their group. This is a marked decrease from 1/3 of participants mentioning these topics in 2019.



## Other resources of value to small numbers of Affiliates

Certain resources are valued by a small set of Affiliates (e.g., rental of ritual equipment is only useful for ritual dance teams and therefore it makes sense that few Affiliates would identify this resource as being very important).

## The reasons why various resources & services are valuable

Question respondents provided reasons that various resources are valuable to their local groups. These are summarized below along with approximate counts.

### Advertising discount (50%) in the CDSS News

- 1: Main outlet for advertising weekend
- 1: Makes the ad affordable; saves money

### Group liability insurance (for US Affiliates only)

- 9: Ease of access (e.g., convenient; otherwise hard to find)
- 15: Affordable (e.g., good value; best rates can find; could not afford on own)
- 4: Certain venues require insurance
- 3: CDSS understands events like morris ales, etc.
- 3: Don't use it/source insurance elsewhere but think it's important that CDSS provides

*Insurance! That's our biggie!! That alone lets us have our event in peace!!*  
Amy O'Brien, Almost Heaven Dance Weekend

### Matching camp scholarships for Affiliates

- 5: Training for (new, young, experienced) callers, musicians, and dancers
- 3: Develop volunteers (e.g., sound volunteers)
- 1: Haven't used but think it's important
- 1: Helped group get started

*Matching camp scholarships for group affiliates - normally, a member of our community attends a camp through this program although we haven't had a participant since around 2018. This has fostered and empowered more experienced callers, musicians, and dancers in our community.* Kelly Wice, Triangle Country Dancers

### Sponsorship of Shared Weight email lists for song organizers, dance organizers, callers, musicians, and sound techs

- 4: Learn from other organizers
- 2: Helpful for callers
- 1: Use it all the time

*The organizers email list, like Shared Weight, help with bringing broader perspectives to our discussions. Sometimes leads me to introducing discussion topics, or else to bring specific information. We had a period a while back when our attendance really dropped, and at the same time I'd read that this was mysteriously happening all over. Broader context can help understand our specific situation.* Stephen Moore, Lenox Contra Dance

### CDSS supported regional conferences & in-person gatherings for organizers

- 1: In person
- 1: Building community and learning

### 501(c)3 federal tax exemption (for US Affiliates only)

Other than exemption from tax,

- 7: Value CDSS's help (e.g., could not do this on own; saves paperwork/time/energy)
- 3: Financially advantageous
- 3: Encourages donations; allows for fundraising

### 1:1 CDSS staff support for organizers via phone & email

- 1: It's easier to solve a problem by talking to someone on the phone
- 1: Helpful to resolving a situation quickly

### Online Resource Portal for singers and song organizers, ritual dancers and organizers, dance organizers, callers, dance musicians, educators/teachers, and families

In addition to organizers using the portal,

- 7: Local callers/musicians use the online resources

*The Resource Portal is AMAZING. We use it as reference material for organizers and to educate musicians about what dancers like.* Mary Beth Emerton, The Dancing Bears

*The resource portal has been very useful, especially amongst our younger organizers and musicians.* Michael Bean, Ann Arbor Community for Traditional Music and Dance

### Web Chats for dance, music, and song organizers

- 3: To learn about and discuss current/relevant issues
- 2: Helpful in learning what others are doing (e.g., addressing challenges)
- 2: Inspiring, help frame initiatives and provoke discussions

*Web Chats have been consistently inspiring and provoke discussion/help frame initiatives* Mary Beth Emerton, The Dancing Bears

### CDSS's leadership role on topics impacting our broad community

- 4: Helpful to have direction/guidance
- 1: Helpful to have a core organization providing historical background
- 1: Leadership role important as 'our state tends to be behind in everything (cultural changes, music that uplifts dancers)'
- 1: Helpful in sharing best practices
- Helpful leadership in terms of broad topics such as:
  - 2: COVID-19
  - 1: Anti-racism work
  - 2: Safety at dances
  - 1: Non-gendered terminology

### CDSS online store as a source of books, CDs, and more

Respondents pointed out that it is hard to find resources elsewhere. More specifically, Affiliates wrote that the store was useful for:

- 5: Morris dancers
- 3: Callers
- 1: Musicians
- 1: Dancers who 'want to know more'

*CDSS Store - Morris Bells are very hard to come by in the US. I was unaware of an affiliate discount, but that would be quite important.* Dan Sabath, Sound and Fury Morris

*CDSS Store -- Where else in this country can you get bells at a reasonable price!!!!* James Thayer, Moreton Bay Fig Morris

## CDSS listing of local dance, music, and song events

- 10: Helps with promotion (e.g., travelling dancers can find)
- 2: A few Affiliates were confused as to the tools we currently have available (e.g., we don't currently have 'map of Affiliates')
- 2: Online events listing during COVID-19

*Our group name on your list or map of events so that travellers can find us. Eileen Hug, Southern Nevada Old-time Contra Dancers*

*Our events listed in the CDSS calendar - the further we can spread the news of our offerings in the trad music and dance community, the better. For Spice on Snow music festival and Old Time on the Onion gathering in particular, those events draw from out of state and CDSS's events calendar has a greater reach than our email blasts etc. for our local community. Yasi Zeichner, The Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture*

*On-line events during COVID quarantine- Geographical boundaries no longer apply. Without CDSS, we wouldn't know these events existed on-line. Patty McCollom, The Living Tradition*

## CDSS grants for groups to host workshops, encourage youth involvement, etc.

- Supports the pilot of new events and to enrich activities
- Support training of new callers and musicians

## CDSS website

- Provides helpful information
- To stay connected
- To be informed of updates and current events
- Useful for contact information
- Useful for paperwork renewal; insurance

*CDSS website- a great resource for all kinds of things! Ellie Kuhn, Old Farmer's Ball*

## Q44 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING CDSS SERVICES AND RESOURCES

In 2019, we asked Affiliates one open question on how we could improve our services and resources. There were relatively few responses (N=40).

With our interest in improving what we offer to Affiliates, we refocused the question in 2020 to specifically ask for feedback on seven resources. The resources were:

- Group insurance
- 501(c)3 tax exemption
- Discount on advertising in the CDSS News
- Matching scholarships for camp
- CDSS community grants
- Affiliate directory
- Our map and/or event listing

## Q44A FEEDBACK REGARDING GROUP INSURANCE

79 Affiliates provided written feedback regarding CDSS's group insurance.

**Positive feedback:** Approximately 1/3 of question responses were positive (e.g., keep offering; nice as is; great service; thank you!).

*The tax exemption and group insurance are a tremendous if not essential convenience and benefit for us. Kate Casano, Northeast Squeeze-in (NESI)*

*This is an essential service, and we could not hold events without it! Cedar Stanistreet, The Brattleboro Dawn Dance*

**Regarding cost:** Approximately 10 respondents wrote that CDSS insurance costs too much (e.g., more than take in at events; can get cheaper elsewhere).

**Sourcing elsewhere:** Approximately 10 respondents wrote that they source their insurance elsewhere (e.g., a morris dance team sources insurance from the US square dance association). This was often (but not always) being linked to alternative sources involving lower cost.

**The renewal process:** A handful of Affiliates commented on the renewal process. This included a few pointing out that the process was easier this year; one pointed out that it was challenging.

**Canadian insurance:** A few Affiliates asked that CDSS offer insurance in Canada. One Canadian Affiliate mentioned that they get their insurance through the Canadian Morris Alliance. (11 Canadian Affiliates completed the survey.)

**Single-day insurance option:** A few Affiliates asked that CDSS maintain single day insurance options for groups that only organize one- or two-day events.

**Insurance costs in light of COVID-19:** A few Affiliates expressed concern that they were paying for insurance even though they aren't currently holding events.

**Staff support:** A few respondents wrote about staff support. One was positive while the other wished that they had more help and that staff didn't seem to understand what help was required.

**Board member liability insurance:** A few Affiliates requested that CDSS offer board liability insurance.

## Q44B FEEDBACK REGARDING 501(C)3 TAX EXEMPTION:

70 Affiliates provided written feedback regarding CDSS's offering of 501(c)3 tax exemption.

**Positive feedback:** 2/5 of question respondents provided positive feedback regarding the 501(c)3 tax exemption (e.g., keep it; very helpful; essential). Two groups pointed out that while they don't use it, they think it's important.

**Not applicable/used:** 1/4 of question respondents noted 'Not applicable' or that they don't use it. A few groups pointed out that they have 501(c)3 status through other means.

**Need more information:** Approximately 10 Affiliates wrote that they need more information. For instance:

- Need more information generally on 501(c)3
- What is CDSS's role?
- Does this mean we can use CDSS's tax number to apply for grants?
- Explain how this saves time and trouble
- Want updates about anticipated changes/challenges
- Want IRS 990 reporting guidance

- While information on the website (including samples for incorporation) are helpful, it still feels overwhelming
- Please provide examples of how easy it is for donors to claim tax deductions on gifts
- Want to explore whether this is applicable to our group and whether reporting/fiscal requirements there may be

**Canadian option:** One Canadian Affiliate asked for a Canadian option to be provided. (It is likely most Canadian groups do not know what 501(c)3 means and so don't relate to what the equivalent might be in Canada.)

**Other comments each mentioned by one Affiliate:**

- It would be helpful to get the exemption in the Affiliate's name rather than CDSS's
- Thank you to CDSS for combining the tax exemption with annual membership renewal

#### Q44C DISCOUNT ON ADVERTISING IN THE CDSS NEWS

50 Affiliates provided written feedback regarding the advertising discount in the CDSS News.

**Do not use/Not applicable:** 1/2 of question respondents noted that the discount is either not applicable or they do not use it. This included a handful of Affiliates who pointed out that their events are focused on a local audience. A few others pointed out that advertising in the CDSS News is not important to them.

**Positive feedback:** 3/10 question respondents provided positive feedback regarding the advertising discount (e.g., please continue; very helpful; provides savings).

**Other comments**

- 3: Not sure of the impact of the advertising (e.g., would it bring in new participants?)
- 2: Would like to learn more about this option
- 1: It is a way to advertise for free
- 1: Would like a shorter lead time as it is hard to prepare the ad so far in advance

#### Q44D MATCHING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CAMP

60 Affiliates provided written feedback regarding matching scholarships for camp.

**Positive comments:** 1/3 of question respondents provided positive comments regarding matching scholarships. A handful seemed lukewarm (e.g., useful but little used; might be useful). However, many others were very appreciative (e.g., very important; terrific; helpful to get people from certain regions to camp).

**Not used:** 1/3 of question respondents noted that they have not used this service, rarely use it, or that it's not applicable. This included a few groups who noted that they have not used it yet but think that it's valuable and/or would like to use it in the future.

**Location as a barrier:** A handful of Affiliates pointed out that their group is located too far away from CDSS camps for their members to take advantage of matching scholarships. One Affiliate suggested that CDSS organize a camp west of the Mississippi and another suggested that CDSS provide travel money. In contrast, one Affiliate from Arizona wrote that scholarships are helpful in supporting members of their group to attend CDSS camps.

**Affiliates need more information:** A handful of Affiliates asked for more information about matching scholarships. For instance, they pointed out that they didn't know about it, they aren't sure who is eligible, they want more information to distribute in their community, and/or they want more information in order to determine who they put forward for scholarships.

**Other comments:** Individual Affiliates shared the following:

- Hope that members of their morris team with limited funds will attend camp in the future
- Started their own camp scholarship fund

#### Q44E CDSS COMMUNITY GRANTS

49 Affiliates provided written feedback regarding CDSS's community grants.

**Positive feedback:** 2/5 of question respondents wrote positive comments about the grants (e.g., great program; keep it; very important; useful). A handful of these groups noted that they have not used the grants. One Affiliate pointed out that their general membership does not appreciate the impact of CDSS grants.

**Not used:** 1/3 of question respondents wrote that they had not used the grant program. This included some who thought the program was positive while others noted that it was not relevant. A few groups pointed out that they may apply for a grant in the future.

**Other comments**

One or two Affiliates each made the following comments:

- Any grants for this year that could not be used because of COVID-19 should be rolled over to 2021
- Unsure about how often Affiliates can apply for grants
- Grants should be for larger amount / too small to make a difference
- Need more information on how to make a submission (e.g., what are the steps to applying)
- The application is cumbersome (i.e., takes a lot of work to apply for and complete the follow-up; the application process is too much of a bother)
- Request to list other grant sources that have supported similar activities
- Not aware of the grant program

#### Q44F AFFILIATE DIRECTORY

54 Affiliates provided written feedback regarding CDSS's Affiliate directory.

**Positive comments:** 3/5 of the responses were positive (e.g., lets people know we exist; necessary; please continue; important to communicate with other Affiliates).

**Not used:** 1/5 of question respondents noted that they do not use the directory or it isn't important to them.

**Other comments:**

One or two Affiliates each made the following comments:

- Could be offered as an online resource only
- Make sure the directory is accurate and up to date
- Have not seen the directory
- Would like to have both the name of the organization and the event name(s) included
- What is the purpose?

#### Q44G OUR MAP AND/OR EVENT LISTING

55 Affiliates provided written feedback regarding CDSS's map and/or event listing.

**Positive comments:** 2/5 question respondents wrote positive comments about the map and/or event listing (e.g., excellent promotion for groups; helpful for people travelling; keep doing; valuable).

**Not using:** 3/10 question respondents noted that they are not using these resources. Only one respondent said that these resources were not relevant; instead, a handful pointed out that they didn't know these resources existed.

**Other comments:**

One or two Affiliates each made the following comments:

- Make sure the resource is accurate and up to date
- Experience challenges posting events
- Some events have short lead times or are part of a larger event so do not fit into an events calendar
- Cannot find the map on the CDSS website
- Needs to be improved
- There are so many events that it is not that valuable
- Hope that the events calendar can continue to be as robust and easy to use post COVID-19

## FINDINGS 8: FINAL COMMENTS

### Q48 FINAL COMMENTS

The 2020 survey finished by asking Affiliates whether there was anything else that they would like to tell us. 82 Affiliate provided written responses.

#### Appreciation for CDSS and the work it does

Approximately 40 Affiliates wrote appreciative thank you comments. A few highlights include:

*On a personal level, as a long-time dancer, I appreciate an umbrella organization that is looking at the larger cultural issues and supporting music and dance. Support for any dance event supports all of our dances. We have young people who go on to their adult lives and dance elsewhere and this might not be possible without a larger group like CDSS. Stephen Moore, Lenox Contra Dance*

*Thank you for all the work that the Board and the staff do. I applaud your Anti-Racism statement and efforts for DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion). Karen Kalinsky, Varsity Dance Club*

*Thank you for all the hard work you do to support the many dance and song organizations in this country. I doubt that many, if any, of us could do it without your support! Jean Gibson-Gorrindo, Central Coast Country Dance Society*

*Thank you for listening and continuing to improve! Oliver Gaffney, Round Hill Country Dances*

*Your investment in staff has paid off in nimble, thoughtful responses to challenges, and in greater visibility. Thank you. Janet Nardolillo, Capital English Country Dancers*

#### Feedback on the Affiliate survey

Approximately 20 respondents provided feedback on the survey. These included: (Approximate counts)

- 5: Survey was too long
- 3: Some questions are not applicable to grange halls, morris teams, or clogging groups
- 2: Filled out on own as committee isn't currently meeting; did best as could as was filling out on own
- 1: Survey stimulated new ideas to consider
- 1: Some questions were tricky to answer as resources may be useful to individuals but not to the group
- 1: Please provide a copy of the responses to Affiliates
- 1: Hopeful that the survey prompts connection between their particular group and CDSS

#### Comments about CDSS's anti-racism work

There were two responses in this question relating to anti-racism work generally and/or CDSS's work. (This topic was raised by a few other participants with regards to other survey questions. Each comment is mentioned as part of the write up to that question.)

One Affiliate thanked CDSS and asked the organization to continue working on this subject. Another Affiliate pointed out that now is a good time to look at our shared traditions.

*We have a break from dancing and gathering in large groups, so we will face challenges when we return to dance. Now is an opportunity to look hard and introspect into our traditions. Dance and song traditions are constantly evolving and changing. Some unhealthy ones need to be left behind and learned from. Now is a time for us to examine the BIPOC erasure from country dance, and why as much as we claim to love history, we've been so blind to it for over a century. Now is the time to look at why BIPOC, LGBTQ, and other marginalized groups may not feel comfortable in many dance spaces in America. Ron Blechner, Downtown Amherst Contra Dance*

#### Community awareness of CDSS

One Affiliate pointed out that most people in their local community do not know about CDSS and aren't interested. This idea came up a handful of times across other questions.

*Unfortunately, if I polled our dancers, I would estimate that 95% of them would not know CDSS exists. Our callers all know about CDSS, but the rank and file are fairly oblivious. For the most part, they come and dance on Fri/Sat nights, then forget about contra for a week or two, until the next dance. The fact that there is an organization that is the closest thing to a governing body for what we do, pretty much escapes them. I think the truth is that for the average dancer, involvement beyond their local dance is just not on their radar screen. Paul Somlo, Friends of Traditional Dance*

#### Other suggestions for CDSS

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

- 7: Thankful for COVID-19 supports. A few asked for more information on when/how to open up events and one Affiliate asked for CDSS to offer more online programming during COVID-19 (e.g., what makes a good callers; how to do zoom dances)
- 2: Would like CDSS to provide guidance about ASCAP fees; one of the two respondents pointed out that the National Fastdance Association provides music licensing (BMI, ASCAP, SESEC)
- 1: It is difficult for Affiliates on the West Coast to send campers to CDSS camps given the distance
- 1: The website and online shop is not intuitive
- 1: Request for CDSS to continue working on anti-racism
- 1: Want more information on Affiliate services