

# MAKING THE CASE

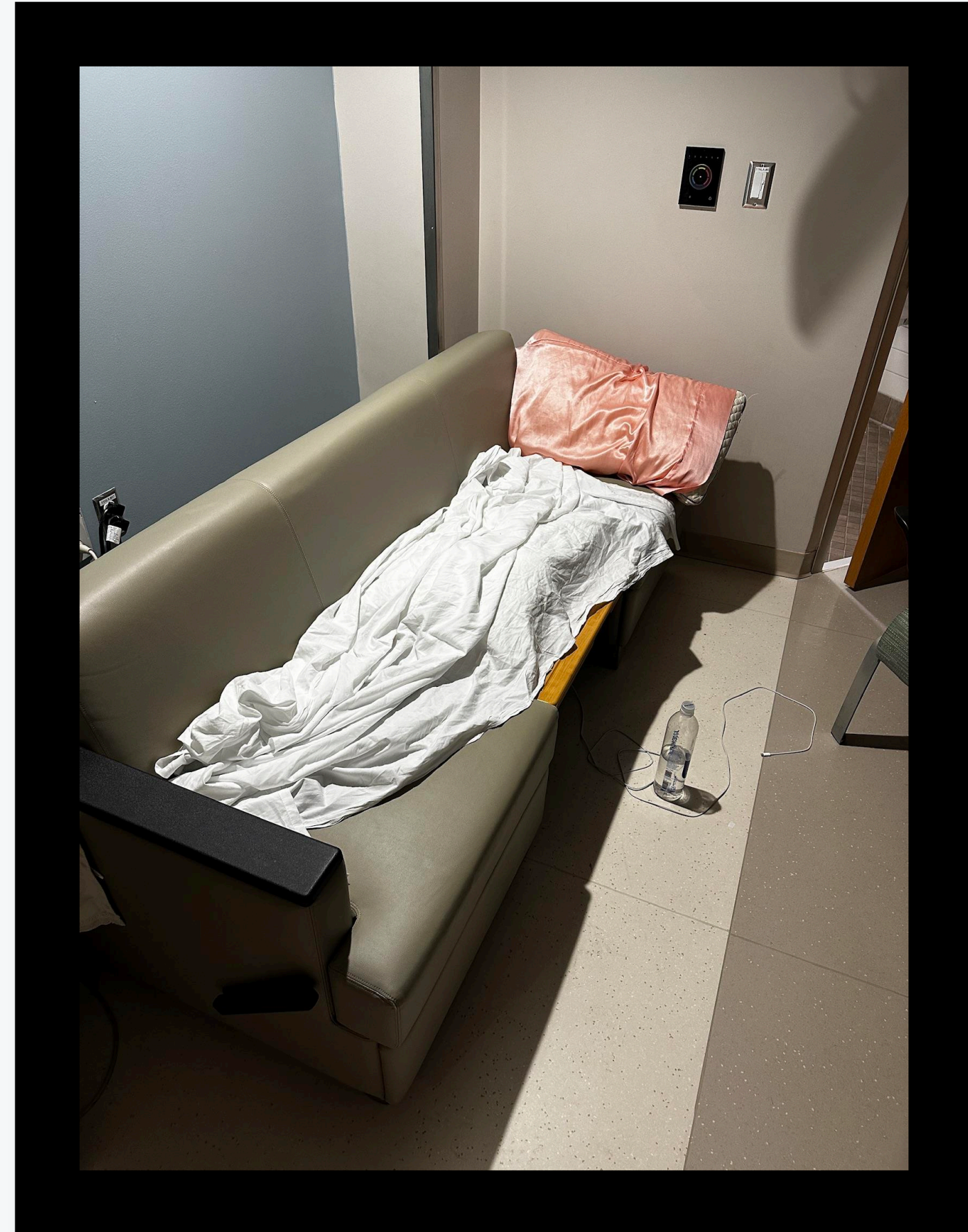
**VOLUNTEER STRATEGY ROADMAP • SESSION 1**

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Incremental Investment in Volunteer Strategy: **Laying the Foundation**

# Delivering The Unexpected:

Connection Is Hard  
To Measure



# THE POWER OF SERVICE

Volunteering isn't just helpful to communities, it's one of the most powerful drivers of human connection we have

HAVE STRONG SOCIAL SUPPORT

**+24%**

REPORT HIGH LIFE SATISFACTION

**+30%**

TRUST OTHERS

**+27%**

CONNECT ACROSS DIFFERENCES

**+31%**

FEEL POLITICALLY EMPOWERED

**+29%**

*\*Those who regularly volunteer report significantly stronger social support, trust & civic voice.  
Study conducted by the Chamber of Connection*



# NUMBERS

That Tell The Story A Story



**.19%**

Of grants fund volunteer infrastructure

**50%**

Of critical volunteer positions remain unfilled

**64.4%**

Increase in volunteer demand post-pandemic

**78.9%**

Of nonprofits say volunteers enable essential services

# THE PERCEPTION GAP

A 47 Point Disconnect

**72%**

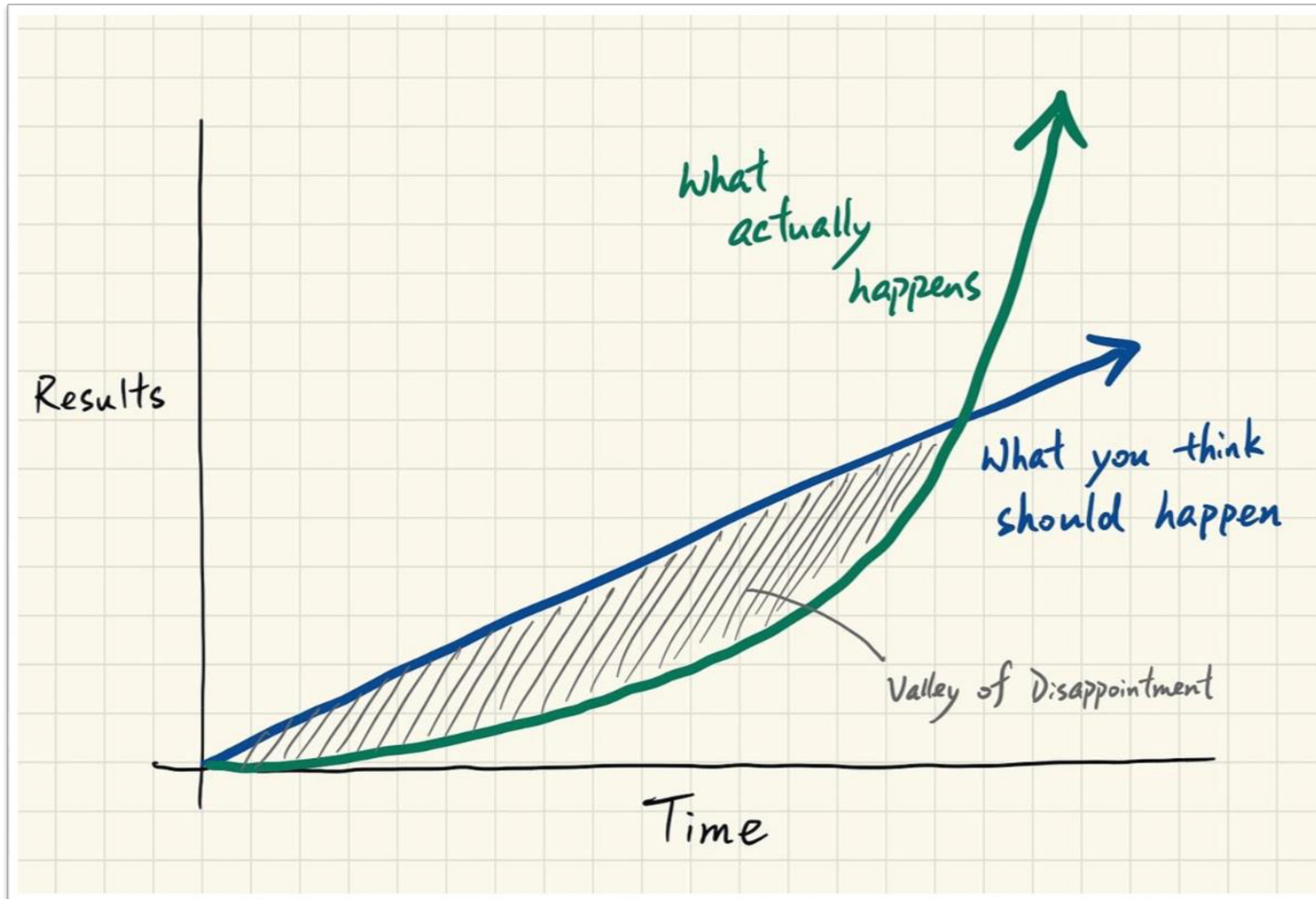
Of nonprofit leaders say  
volunteers are essential to  
their mission

**25%**

Of Funders Agree

# The Valley of Disappointment

WHY PROGRESS FEELS SLOW, UNTIL IT DOESN'T



## Atomic Habits

JAMES CLEAR

Plateau of Latent Potential: results lag effort. Breakthroughs feel sudden, they aren't.

## The Dip

SETH GODIN

Every worthwhile pursuit has a Dip. The people who push through become the best in the world.

## Good to Great

JIM COLLINS

The Flywheel: enormous early effort, barely moves, then unstoppable momentum.

# A Starting Point

YOUR NUMBER, CALCULATED

$$(\# \text{ Volunteers} \times \text{Avg Hours/Month} \times 12 \times \$33.49) \div \text{Annual Budget} = \text{ROI}$$

*\$33.49 = current value of one volunteer hour (Independent Sector, 2024)*

## EXAMPLE

50 volunteers  
× 8 hrs/month  
× 12 months  
× \$33.49  
÷ \$65,000 budget

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**247% ROI**

# What Incremental Investment Actually Unlocks

S M A L L S T E P S . C O M P O U N D I N G R E T U R N S .

01

## Better Retention

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### Longer Tenure

- Providing support and training to volunteers keeps them in your organizations longer.
- Every departure costs you training time, bandwidth and relational value with the communities you serve

02

## Stronger Recruitment

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### Organic Pipeline

- Your best volunteers come from your current volunteers. Referrals recruit faster, onboard easier
- A structured program gives volunteers an experience they want to talk about

03

## Volunteer-to-Donor

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### The Warm Pipeline

- A donor who has volunteered gives to a cause they have personally walked alongside
- Your volunteer program is an entry point for the community to get involved with your cause

04

## Community Engagement

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### Advocates

- Every volunteer could represent your organization in their neighborhood, workplace, and network.
- A well supported volunteer tells others
- Community trust built with volunteers is powerful

05

## Better Experience

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### Show Up Differently

- One volunteer, in the right role, at the right moment, can turn a routine interaction into the reason someone recommends your organization for the rest of their life.
- Experience quality is the output of infrastructure investment

# The Data Audit

YOU MAY BE SITTING ON MORE PROOF THAN YOU THINK

## WHAT YOU TRACK NOW

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- Volunteer hours logged
- Number of active volunteers
- Roles and assignments
- Shift attendance
- Training completion
- Volunteer tenure
- Application data (skills, interests)

## WHAT YOU WISH YOU TRACKED

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- Why volunteers leave
- Volunteer satisfaction / NPS
- Which volunteers became donors
- Economic value generated
- Retention by role type
- ROI by recruitment channel
- Volunteer referrals

## WHAT BECOMES POSSIBLE

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- Precise ROI for board meetings
- Predict volunteer churn
- Identify donor-ready volunteers
- Prove best recruitment channels
- Build 3-year investment case
- Show community impact
- Earn the ask with evidence

# Making the Case: A 5-Part Framework

THE BOARD CONVERSATION

**01**    **PROBLEM**    Our volunteer program generates \$X in value but receives only \$Y in investment.

**02**    **OPPORTUNITY**    With better infrastructure, we can improve retention, expand capacity, and build our donor pipeline.

**03**    **INVESTMENT**    We're requesting \$X for technology, training, or staffing. Incremental, not a full overhaul.

**04**    **RETURN**    This investment yields a 5-10x return based on industry benchmarks and our own data.

**05**    **EVIDENCE**    Research from Independent Sector and Do Good Institute confirms these returns across the sector.

# Three Essential Actions

At every level; organizational, sector-wide, and societal:



## Better Data

Track and understand volunteer value with real metrics, not assumptions.

Volunteer management software reduces coordinator workload by up to **50%**.



## Stronger Infrastructure

Invest in technology, training, and professional standards for volunteer management. **77% of companies** have increased corporate volunteerism.



## More Dialogue

Create common language between nonprofits and funders about volunteer program investment. The momentum is here we want the conversation to match it.

**Thank you for the work you're doing. It Matters. Let's build *momentum*.**



**THANK YOU**  
**SO MUCH!**