



*All by April Evaluation*

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Friday, July 19

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# Project Overview & Methodology



In 2024, Democracy Fund launched the All by April Campaign (AbA) that focused on encouraging national, elections-related funding to be dispersed by the end of April.

In order to best understand the successes and challenges of the campaign, and to inform future efforts, Grassroots Solutions and Democracy Fund administered an online questionnaire to ask and answer critical questions, outline progress to goal among a number of metrics, and gather qualitative input from All by April signatories.

A companion survey was administered to other supporting funder entities.

## Goals and Assumptions

1. Organizations working toward free, fair, and representative elections need to receive funding earlier in the election cycle than they have in past elections.
2. Funders who resource these organizations should and can provide funding earlier in the year than they have in previous election years.
3. Democracy Fund is positioned to implement a communications campaign to encourage funders to increase the amount of funding they give to organizations working toward free, fair, and representative elections by the end of April 2024.
4. A well-coordinated communications campaign will result in funders providing more/most of their grants to organizations working in these areas by the end of April 2024.

## Goals and Assumptions, continued

5. Funders moving all or most of their funding for organizations working toward free, fair, and representative elections by the end of April is earlier than in past election cycles.
6. Funding entities may have to shift their typical behaviors and processes in order to meet the goals of All by April
7. Signers who are not funders can help amplify the campaign to their network members or clients. This is an opportunity for DF to learn more about the type of behavior these groups engage in and set more specific goals for DF's future engagement with these types of entities.
8. Internally, we believed that it would be a bold goal to achieve 100 signers.

## Project Structure

- Grassroots Solutions invited all campaign signatories to participate in a Remesh session of All by April signers during a webinar hosted by the Democracy Fund on May 30, 2024, and left the online focus group session open for 12 days after the webinar to collect additional responses.
- Total Campaign Signatories: 174
  - » Direct Grantmakers = 60%
  - » Non-Direct Grantmakers = 40%
- Total Remesh Participants: 63
  - » Direct Grantmakers = 73%
  - » Non-Direct Grantmakers = 27%
- Grassroots Solutions also sent out a survey via SurveyMonkey to non-signers that was open for 15 days.
  - » Total Participants: 14

## Remesh Segments and Definitions

Based on the Remesh onboarding questions, Grassroots Solutions, in consultation with the Democracy Fund, created the following set of custom segments for analysis (note, individual participants do belong to multiple segments):

- Direct Grantmakers (46) - Foundations, Individual Donors, Intermediary or Pooled fund
- Non-Direct Grantmakers (20) - Donor Advisor, Philanthropic Network, Other
- Larger Budget (23) - Over \$5 million to election-related work in an average year by respondent, their organization, network, or clients
- Smaller Budget (31) - Under \$5 million to election-related work in an average year by respondent, their organization, network, or clients
- Long-Time in Sector (38) - Respondent, their organization, network, or clients continuously funded election-related work for over 5 years
- Newer in Sector (19) - Respondent, their organization, network, or clients continuously funded election-related work for under 5 years, intermittently funded election-related work for over 5 years, or intermittently funded election-related work for under 5 years





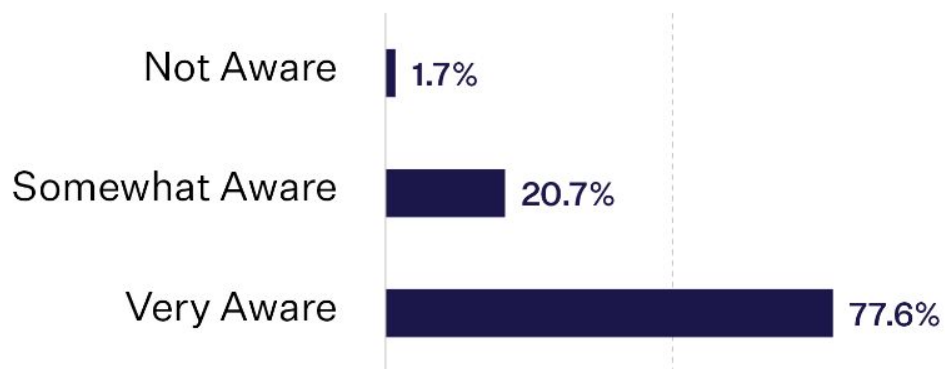
# The Problem

Donors providing funding later in the election cycle than their grantees would prefer.

## There was significant awareness of the benefits of early money and the problem of funders not providing enough of it

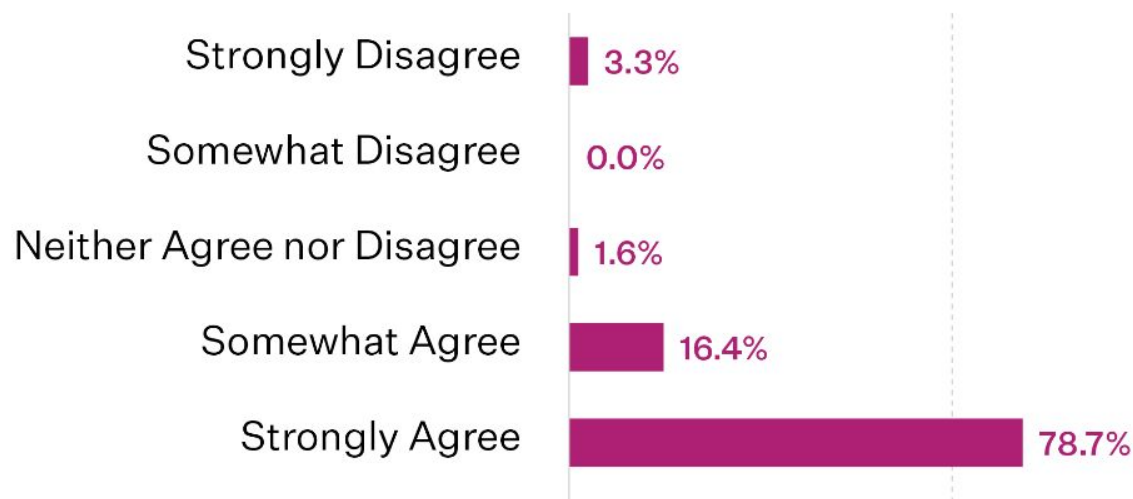
How aware were you of the benefits of early money to 501(c)(3) election activities before the All by April campaign?

(n=58)



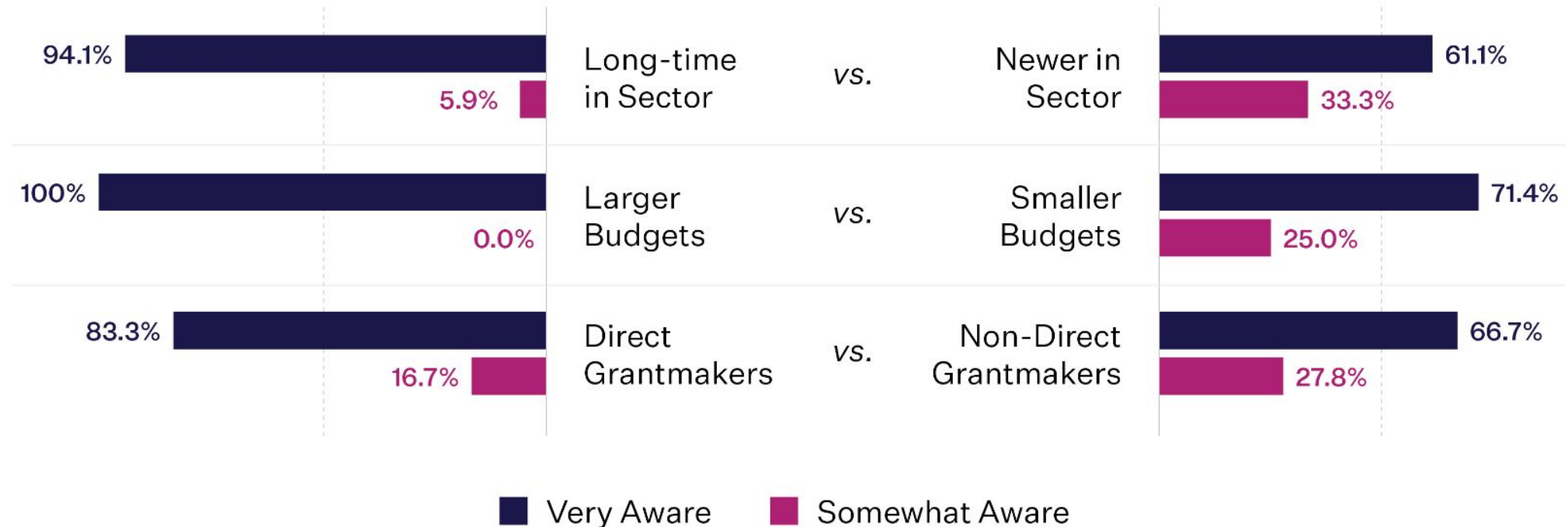
Do you agree or disagree with this statement:  
“In the past, many donors have provided funding later in the election cycle than their grantees would prefer?”

(n=61)



## Awareness was strong across the board but the intensity was greatest for respondents with Larger Budgets and those identified as Long-Time in Sector

How aware were you of the benefits of early money to 501(c)(3) election activities before the All by April campaign?  
(n=58)





# The Solution

Create a communications campaign to encourage funders to increase the amount of elections-related funding by the end of April 2024.

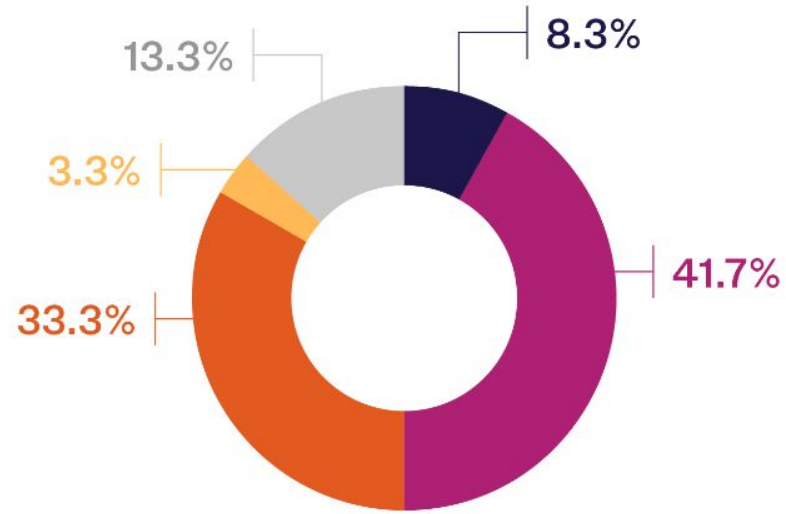


## All by April was effective at its core goals:

Based on the Remesh data:

- All by April was successful at further solidifying the expectations within philanthropy about the importance of making earlier election-related grants;
- The majority of campaign signatories perceived that at least some grantees received earlier grants for their election work in 2024 than they have in the past; and
- Respondents believe All by April was responsible for a portion of that increased early giving.

**Awareness of the campaign was strong across philanthropy, with only 3% of participants stating that their networks were not very aware**



- Very Aware: *Just about everyone was talking about it*
- Aware: *The campaign was known by a significant portion of my donor community*
- Somewhat Aware: *Some donors heard about it, but many didn't*
- Not Very Aware: *Few donors heard about it*
- Don't Know/Not Applicable

Almost three-quarters of respondents believed All by April was successful at changing the expectations within philanthropy about making earlier election-related grants

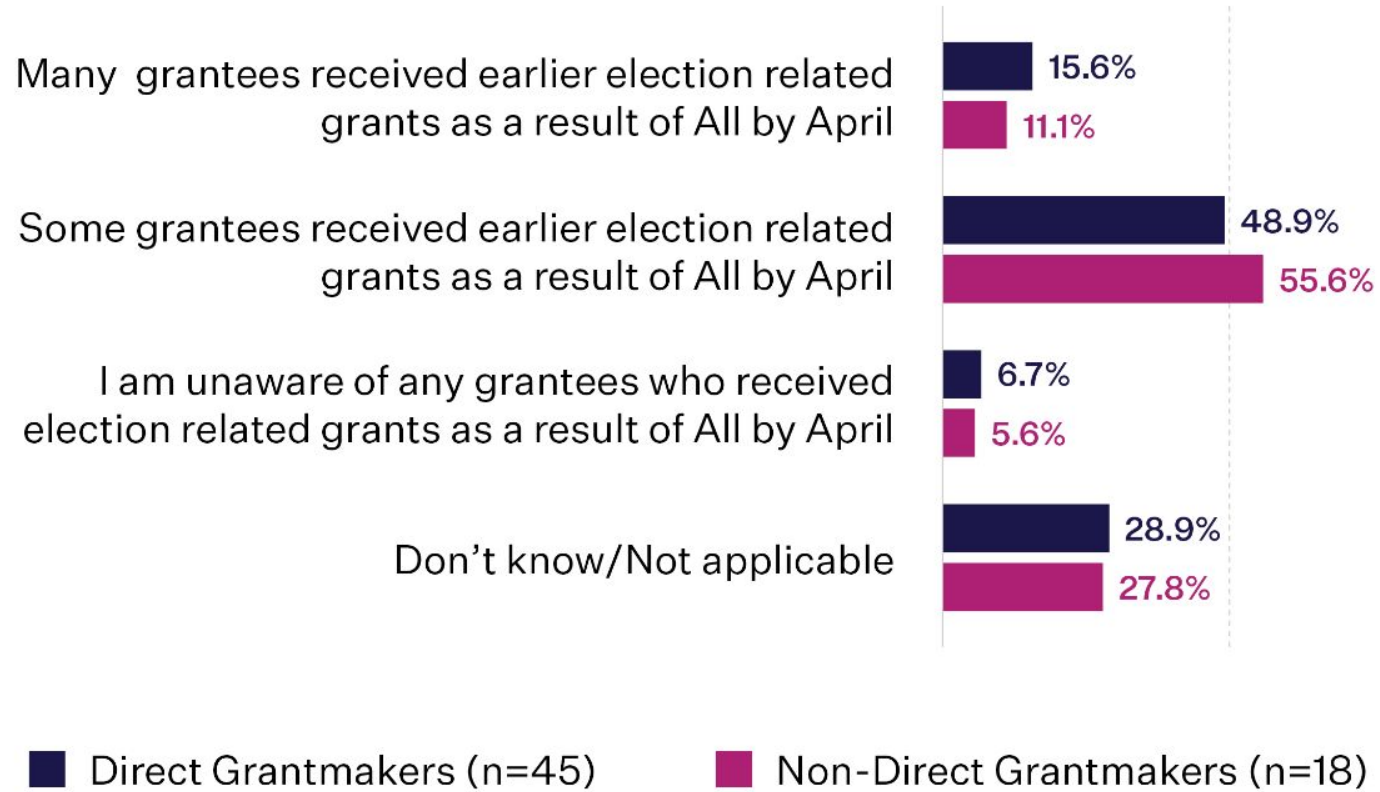


■ Very Successful

■ Somewhat Successful

■ Don't Know/Not Applicable

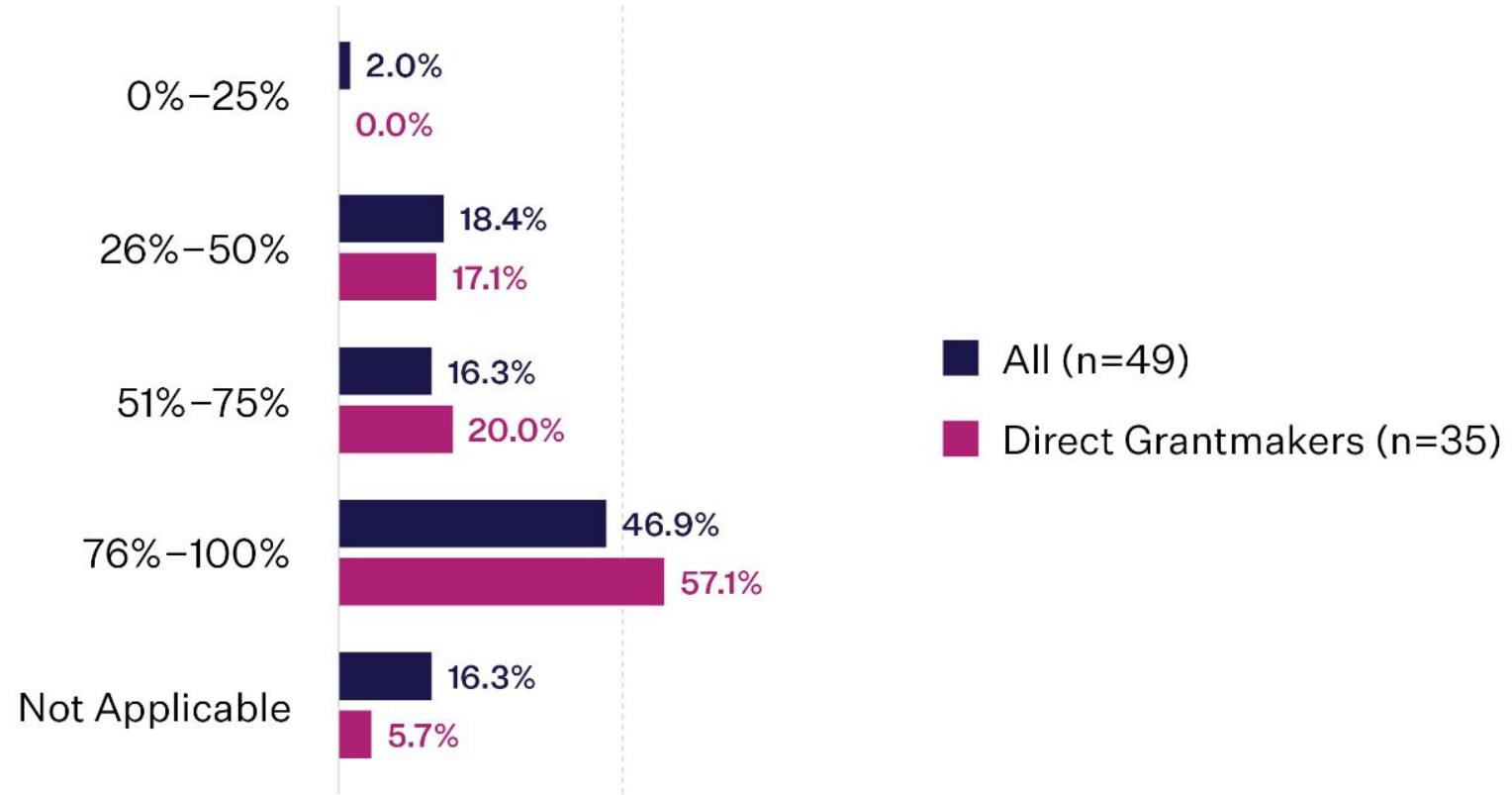
## The perception of respondents was that grantees received more early election-related funds than in the past



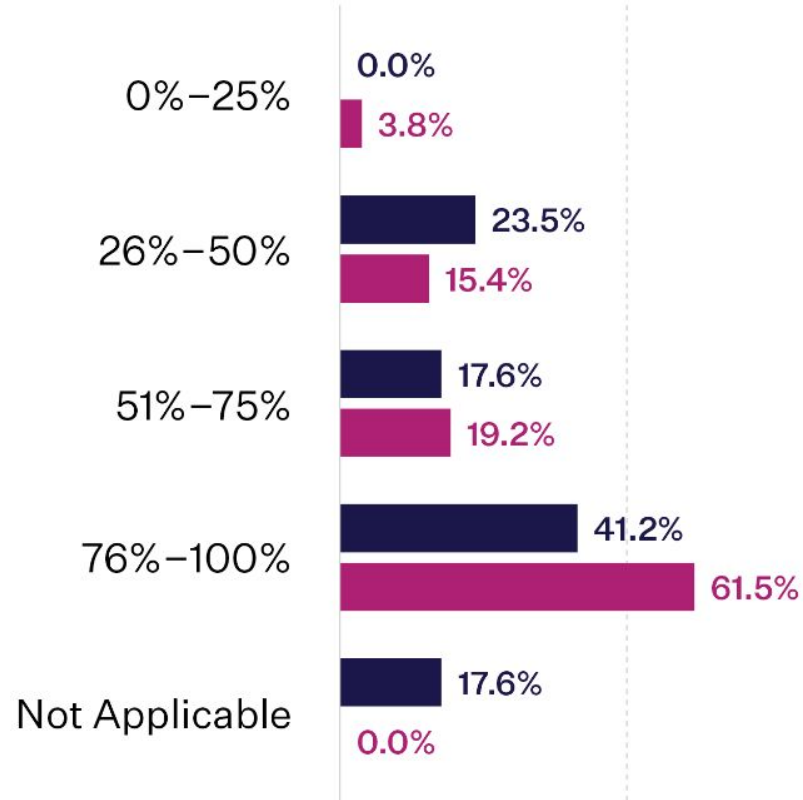


# The Numbers

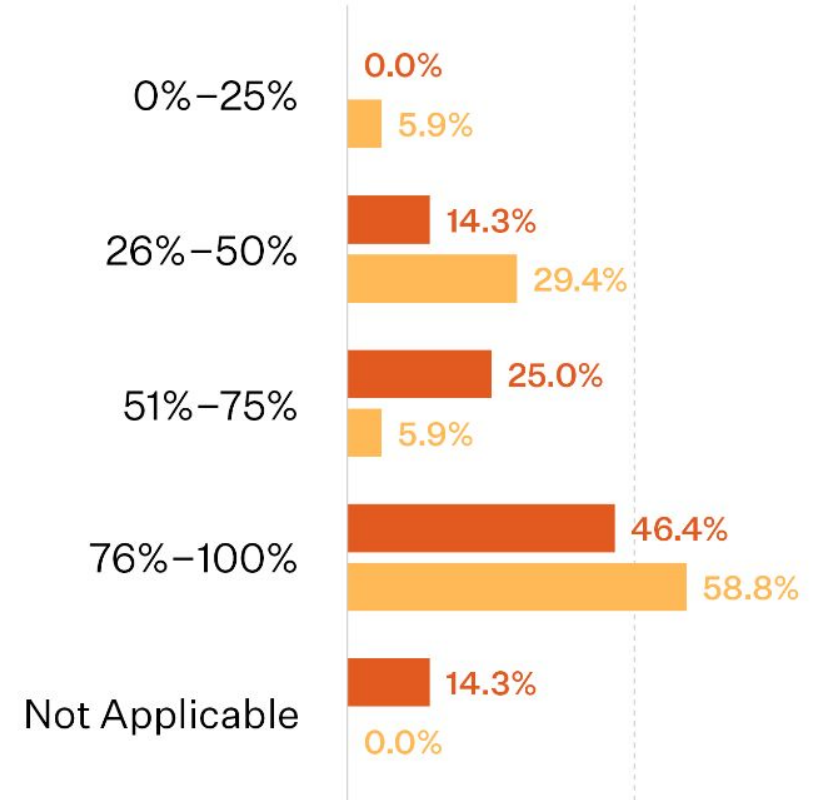
Respondents, their networks, or clients gave a significant portion of their election-related funds before the end of April



## Respondents with Smaller Budgets and those Newer in the Sector reported higher percentages of early giving

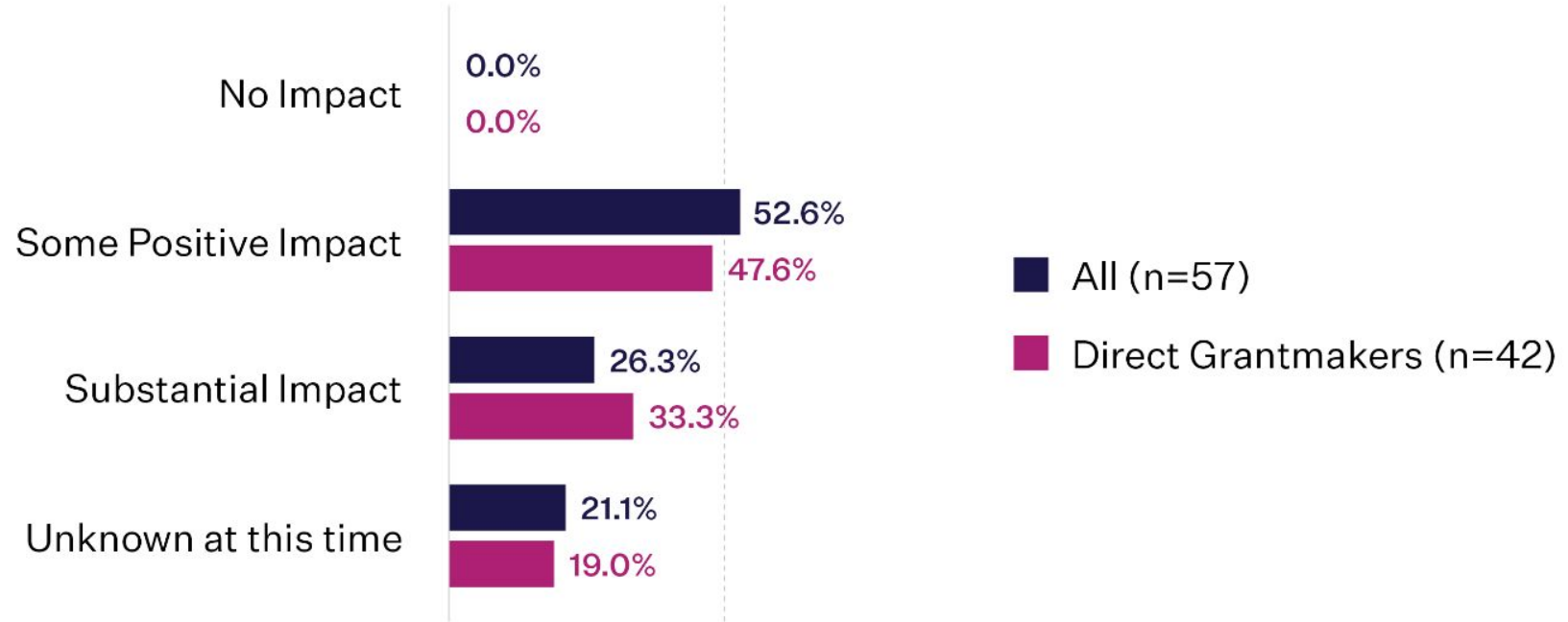


■ Larger Budget (n=17)  
■ Smaller Budget (n=26)



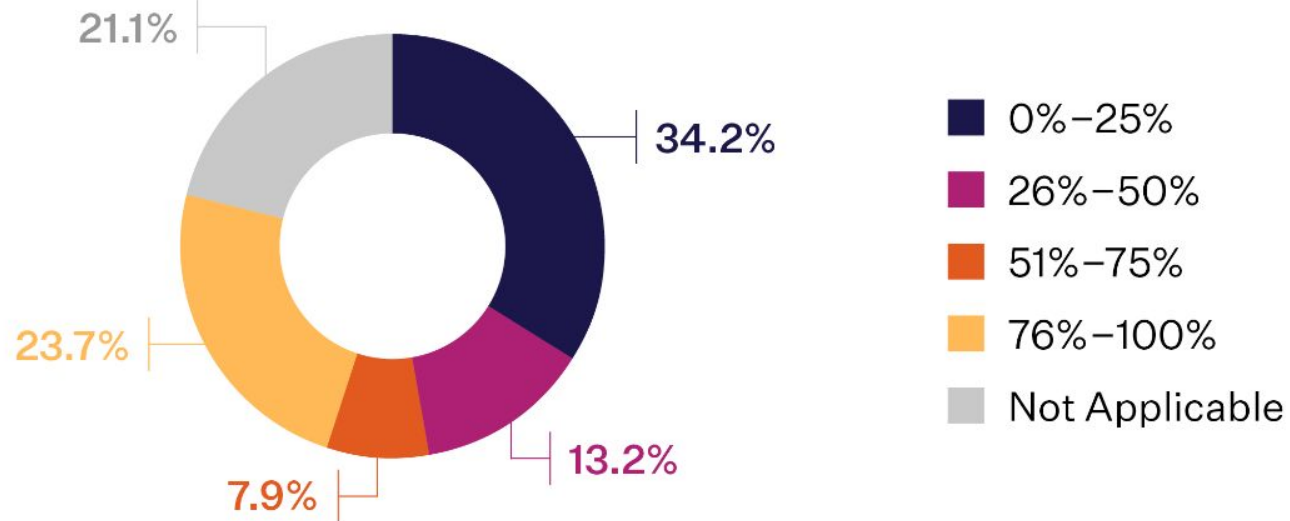
■ Long-time in Sector (n=28)  
■ Newer in Sector (n=17)

**81% of Direct Grantmakers believe All by April had a positive impact on the rate of overall early giving to 501(c)(3) election-related work in 2024, including one-third who rated the impact as substantial**

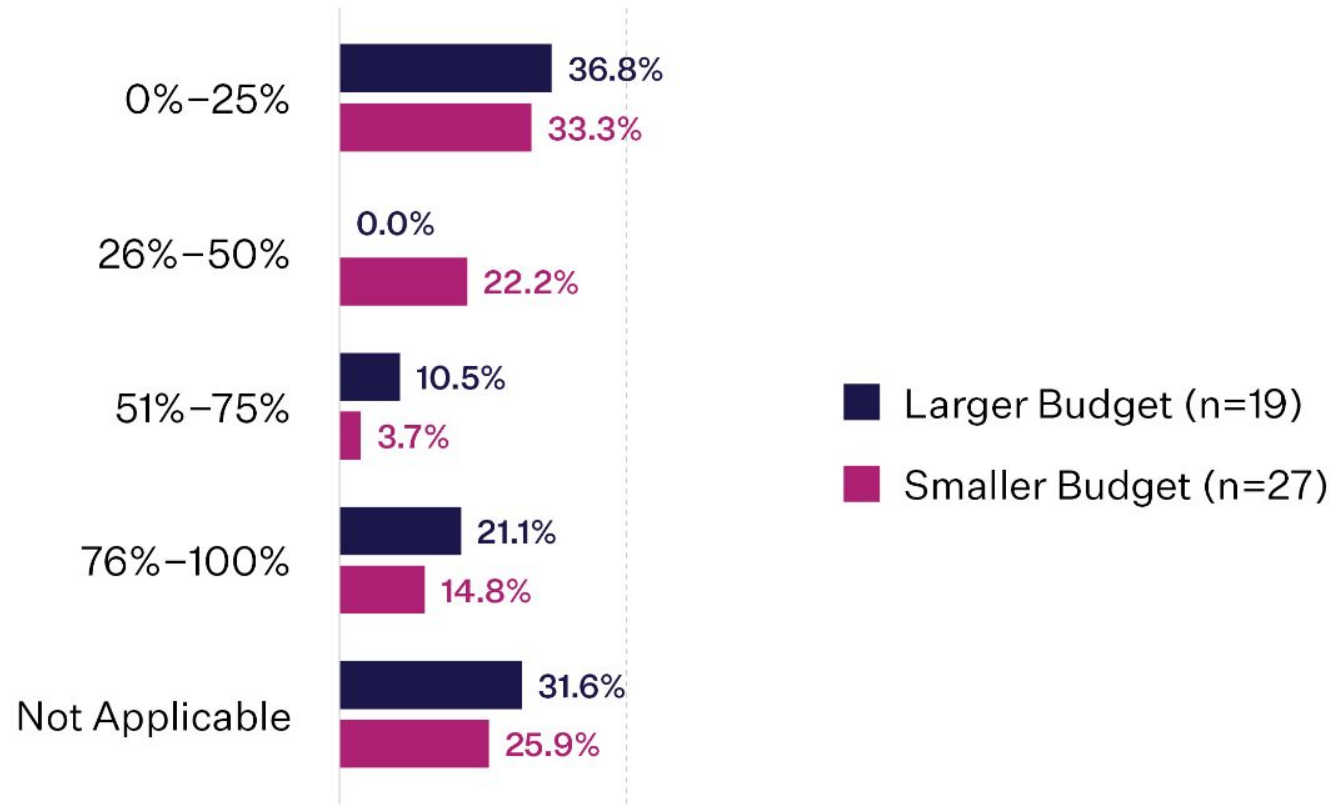


## 45% of Direct Grantmakers attributed at least a quarter of their pre-April giving to their All by April commitment, including one-third who attributed at least half

Thinking about the total dollar amounts for both new funding and moving up payments—how much of the funds you named in the above two questions would you attribute to your commitment to the All by April campaign?



## Respondents with Larger Budgets attributed more of their early funding to their All by April commitment than those with Smaller Budgets





## New Grants and Moved Up Grant Payments

- \$79 million – Total in new 501(c)(3) election-related grants between January-April of 2024 reported by Foundations and Individual Donors who signed onto AbA.
- \$61 million – Amount of scheduled grant payments that Foundations moved up to the period between January and April of 2024 so that grantees would have access to 501(c)(3) election-related work funds earlier in the year.



## Total reported amount of 501(c)(3) election-related funding given by the end of April

- 47 – Number of campaign signers who provided data on their donations (including Non-Direct Grantmakers like philanthropic networks and donor advisors, who estimated the amount donated by their members or clients).
- \$395,213,500 – Reported total dollars going to 501(c)(3) election-related work before April of 2024 by these respondents.

*Note: The total number involves estimation and some potential duplication of dollars (for instance, if a foundation invested in an intermediary who re-granted to an organization on the ground), so we are more confident in the amounts reported by Foundations and Individuals Donors.*

**A majority of campaign signers—including those who make direct grants and those who do not—reported that All by April motivated them to change their behavior**







## Themes on actions taken by participants after signing on to All by April they otherwise would not have taken:

- Both Direct Grantmaker and Non-Direct Grantmaker respondents appreciated the deadline and structure this provided their work.
- Behavior change was greatest among respondents with Smaller Budgets and those Newer to the Sector.
- The All by April Program encouraged grantmakers to move up payments and encouraged more communication with partners and the field.
- Those who did not move funds up were already planning to move their money early.



## Examples of Actions Taken by Direct Grantmakers:

- “This framework **gave me a set time frame to do a lot of research about where to give** and to be methodical about my giving.” (*Smaller Budget, Newer in Sector*)
- “YES! **We gave out our multi-year community organizing grants in April instead of waiting until the one-year point** in September.” (*Smaller Budget, Newer in Sector*)
- “Once we had our list of grantees, we might have spent more time obsessing over allocation amounts. **Having taken the pledge helped inspire us to stop worrying and get the money moving.**” (*Smaller Budget, Long-Time in Sector*)
- “**AbA inspired us to make additional gifts** -- in addition to the 2024 and multi-year funding we had already provided -- and to do so before the end of April.” (*Larger Budget, Newer in Sector*)
- “**We moved up previously committed grant payments** that had been scheduled for later in the year.” (*Larger budget, Long-Time in Sector*)

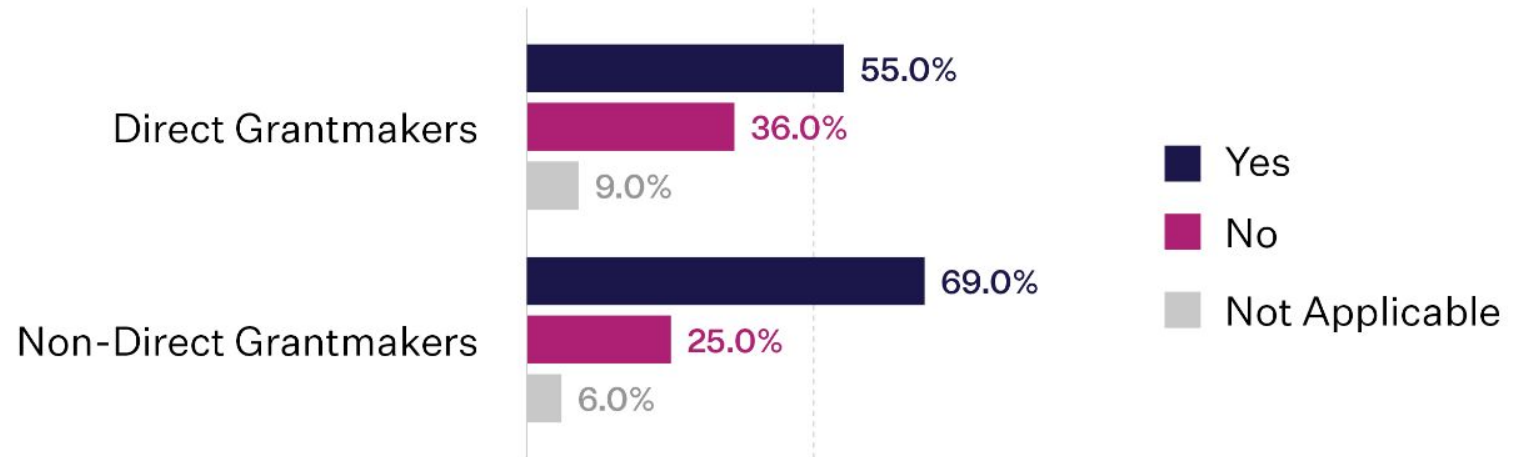


## Examples of Actions Taken by Non-Direct Grantmakers:

- **“It allowed me to have conversations with peer funders** about the importance of moving early. It created a very helpful (even if somewhat artificial) deadline.” *(Donor Advisor)*
- **“It allowed me to send payments by April** to all multi-year Democracy grantees. **It accelerated decision making by the Board** on their undecided democracy funding for 2024. **It gave a boost of hope to what feels like a long and hard election cycle.**” *(Donor Advisor)*
- **“We used the All by April frame to push our entire donor community** for larger, earlier giving, **and to make the case for c4 money** also. it was **helpful to have "movement wide" framing**, coordination and momentum to support the work we would have done.” *(Philanthropic Network)*
- **“Yes, we reached out to families with specific, fundable ideas in ways we wouldn't have otherwise.”** *(Donor Advisor)*

## A clear majority of both Direct Grantmakers and Non-Direct Grantmakers reported implementing changes to their grantmaking policies or ways of working to support All by April

What changes, if any, did you implement in your grantmaking policies to support All by April? If your primary role is not grantmaking, did you change other ways of working to support All by April?





**What changes, if any, did you implement in your grantmaking policies to support All by April? If your primary role is not grantmaking, did you change other ways of working to support All by April?**

- Of the direct grantmakers and non-direct grantmakers who altered their ways of working, a majority of the changes cited centered around moving payments up earlier and each had unique approaches to accomplishing this goal while keeping their grantees and networks in mind.
- For example, one grantmaker moved up their timeline for considering new grants while another shifted some internal processes like relaxing amendment language to move up payments.

## Examples of Changes Reported by Direct Grantmakers:

- “We moved up the grants that were due to go out in September. We gave grantees the option of waiting until later in the year if preferred, due to fiscal year accounting. Mostly **we provided the option for grantees and the vast majority said yes, pay us in April.**” (*Smaller Budget, Newer in Sector*)
- “**We dug deeper in order to release even more dollars into the field than we had previously thought we could.** We sped up our internal processes to ensure that new grants to both past and new grantees could be made by the end of April.” (*Larger Budget, Newer in Sector*)
- “Because of AbA we moved our grantmaking earlier. We planned to make the grants in 2024, and **knew earlier was better, but AbA helped by giving us a deadline/goal.**” (*Smaller Budget, Long-Time in Sector*)
- “We **didn't change policies but ensured that our team was on board with the commitment** (as Joe said, grantmaking impacts not just the program team, but finance and operations teams).” (*Newer in Sector*)

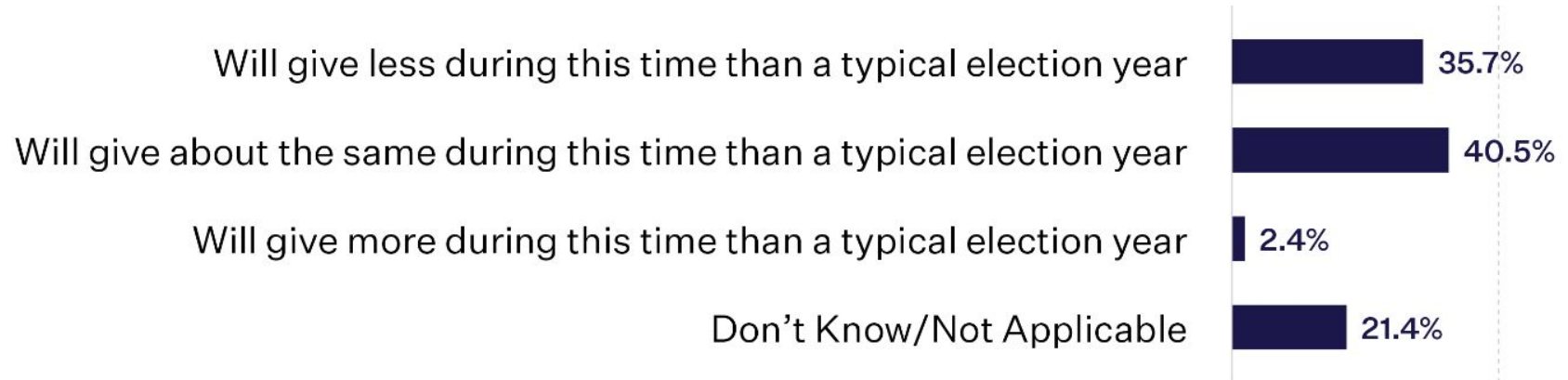


## Examples of Changes Reported by Non-Direct Grantmakers:

- **“More than anything, All by April created organization urgency.** I don't think it radically changed our practices, but there were definitely a couple grants that moved in April instead of what might have otherwise been May or early June.” *(Donor Advisor)*
- **“We shared with members and encouraged them to participate.** In a future vision, with more lead time, we'd organize around All by April - info session with DF for members, workgroup sessions so members can plan granting, etc.” *(Philanthropic Network)*
- **“This prompted us to begin to think about other creative ways we can support and create tangible, actionable campaigns that pushes our members** to transform their grantmaking to be more equitable and efficient.” *(Did not specify)*
- **“Secured Board approval to accelerate multi-year grants,** and provide a boost to a selection of grantees.” *(Donor Advisor)*
- **We expedited grants for free (normally \$100 fee) so the All by April grants moved to the top of the queue** and moved out first. Otherwise just more outreach.” *(Donor Advisor, Intermediary/Pooled Fund)*

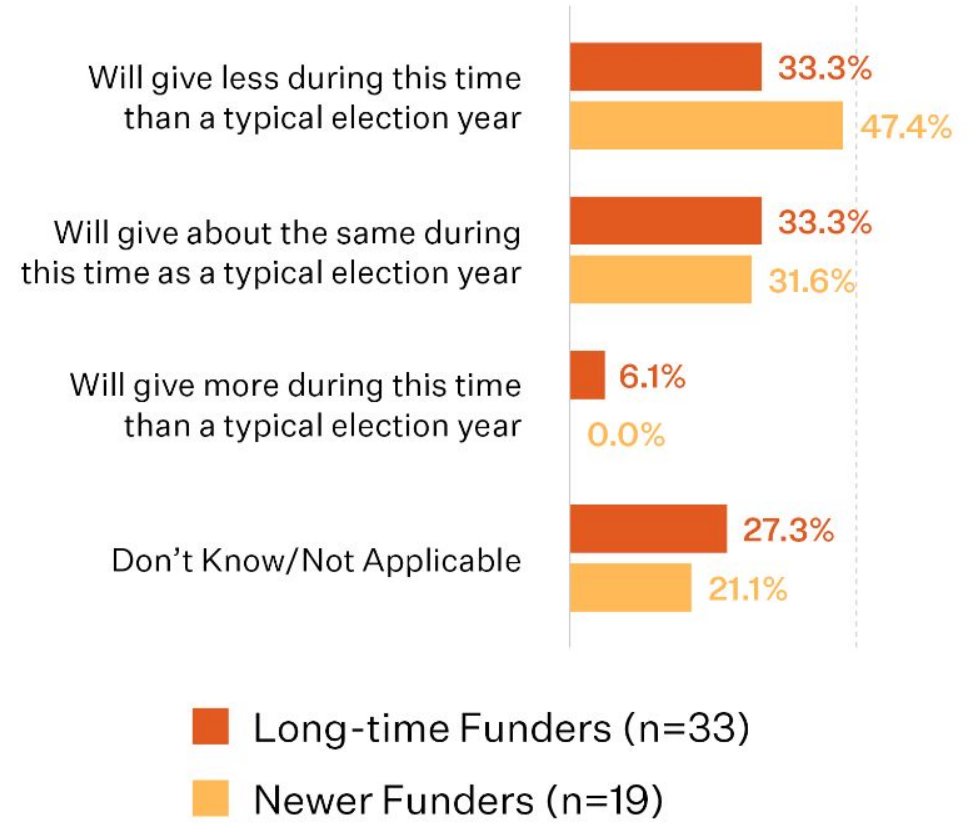
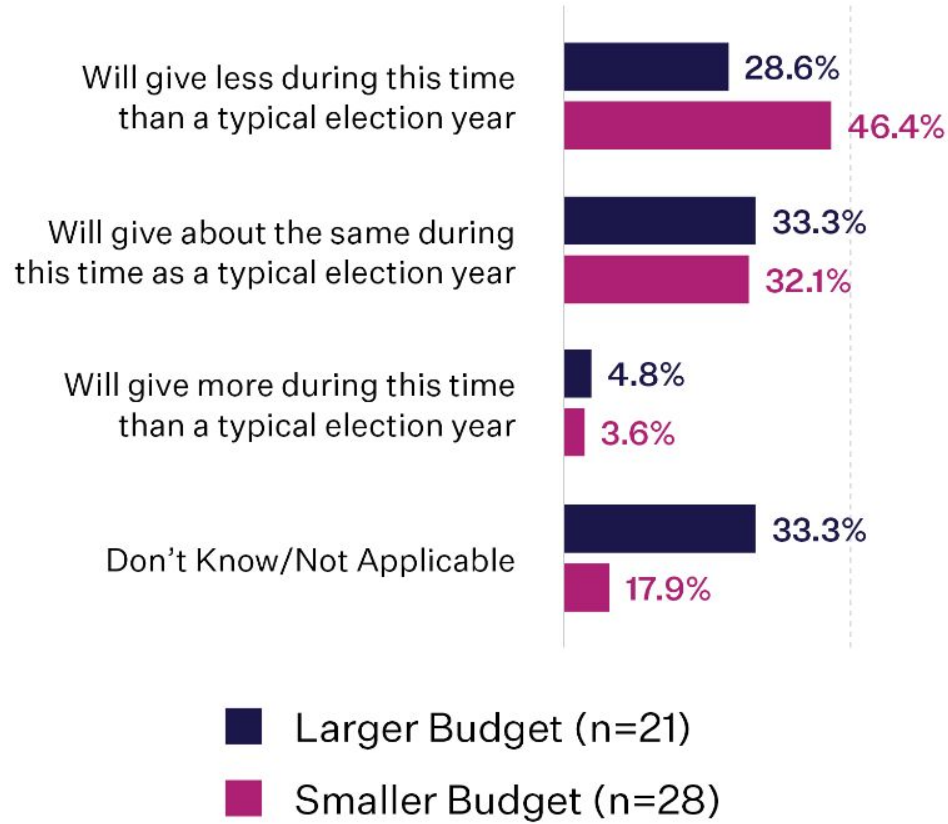
**A plurality of Direct Grantmakers (41%) will give the same for the remainder of the year compared to a typical election year while 36% will give less**

How will your Q1 2024 investment alter the amount of funding you anticipate that you, your organization, network members, or clients will allocate for election-related activities during May–November of 2024?  
(n=57)






# The Numbers



- A greater proportion of those Newer to the Sector will give less later this year than those tagged as Long-Time in the Sector.
- Respondents tagged as Long-Time in the Sector are evenly divided between giving less and giving about the same as in a typical election year.



**While the sample size was small, the SurveyMonkey data indicates that All by April had a positive spillover impact on early 501(c)(3) election-related giving beyond the population that signed the campaign.**

- 83% of respondents whose organizations did not sign on to the campaign believe AbA had a positive impact on the rate of overall early giving to 501(c)(3) election-related work in 2024;
- All respondents believe that grantees received election-related grants earlier than other years; and
- 62% of respondents reported that they, their networks', or clients' gave away over half of their election-related giving by the end of April.



## All by April's spillover impact on early 501(c)(3) election-related giving.

- Five of the 14 entities that did not sign onto the campaign, and were included in the evaluation, reported that they made donations that were motivated in part by the campaign messaging even though their organization could not publicly sign.
- The five entities reported donations that totaled \$13.7 million in new grants and \$3.25 million in payments moved up to the period between January-April 2024.



## All by April Feedback

Soliciting feedback from signers on program significance to utilize in future projects.



## How participants first heard of All by April:

- The majority of participants heard about the All by April campaign through direct outreach from Joe Goldman followed by outreach and emails from the Democracy Fund.
- Additional channels included via partners like the Solidaire Donor Network, SIF, the Latino Community Foundation, and “various colleagues/networks”.



Generally participants reported having enough time to take the desired actions of All by April. However, it was also clear that most participants would have appreciated a longer runway to prepare during 2024 budgeting and planning in late 2023.

*Did you learn about the campaign in enough time to take your desired actions aligned with the campaign's purpose? If not, when would you have liked to learn about the campaign?*

- **“Yes.** I think the movement was early enough **but late in 2023 during planning period for 2024 might have been better.”** *(Direct Grantmaker, Smaller Budget, Long-Time in Sector)*
- **“Fall of 2023** would have been great for a general introduction, **to have given an earlier introduction to our members, preparing them at the end of last year.”** *(Non-Direct Grantmaker, Philanthropic Network)*
- “Honestly it's easy to say earlier would have been better but **not sure we would have actually taken action earlier. But if it's a campaign that keeps going, we can build on the momentum ahead of time.**” *(Non-Direct Grantmaker, Donor Advisor, Intermediary/Pooled Fund)*



**In terms of materials offered, Direct Grantmakers and Non-Direct Grantmakers agreed that All by April offered just the right amount, but if additions could have been made their suggestions included:**

- A space for signers to connect and learn together
- Progress reports that include the tracking of early funding, existing gaps, etc.
- Board-focused and grantee-focused materials
- Some signers suggested a parallel effort for c4 and politically-oriented work

## Direct Grantmaker Feedback on All by April Materials:

- “**Board-focused support materials for Foundation staff to utilize**...to help them articulate to Boards about the significance of the campaign, and share who/why/how other funders were aligning.” (*Long-Time in Sector*)
- “**Optional meetings for All by April co-signers to come together** to talk about and potentially coordinate the grantmaking they are doing.” (*Larger Budget, Long-Time in Sector*)
- “I also **appreciated the different messengers engaged to spread the word**. It helped me educate our new leadership team on the import.” (*Did not specify*)
- “It would have been helpful if we were able to **track where the money was moving early and where it was not (yet)**, so we could push to fill those gaps.” (*Smaller Budget, Long-Time in Sector*)
- “I do think momentum on one time campaigns are hard, so maybe **having something like this every year that people come to expect like they do Giving Tuesday?**” (*Smaller Budget, Newer in Sector*)



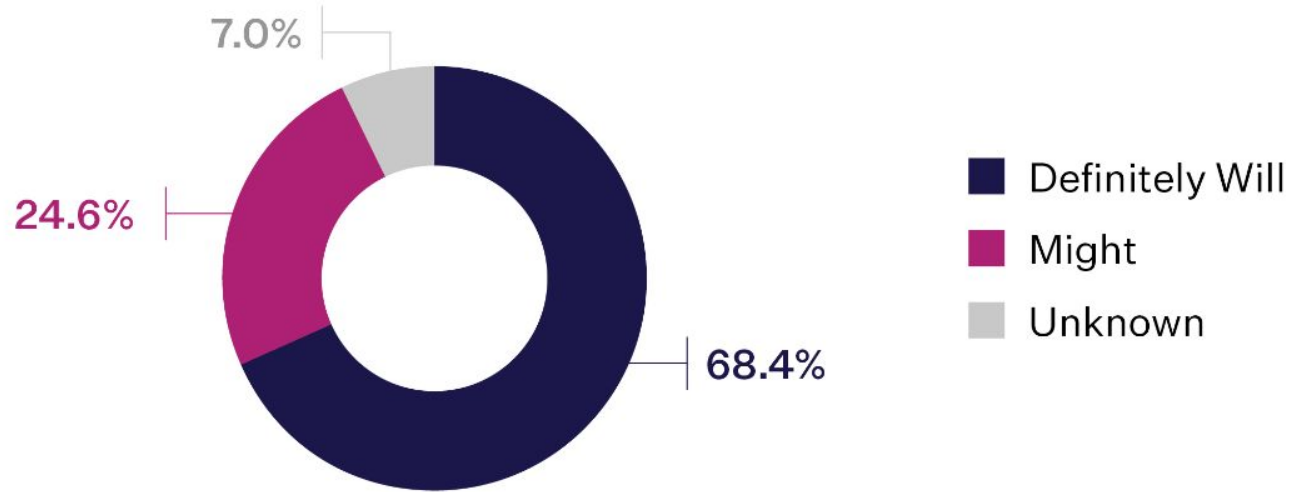


## Non-Direct Grantmakers Feedback on All by April Materials:

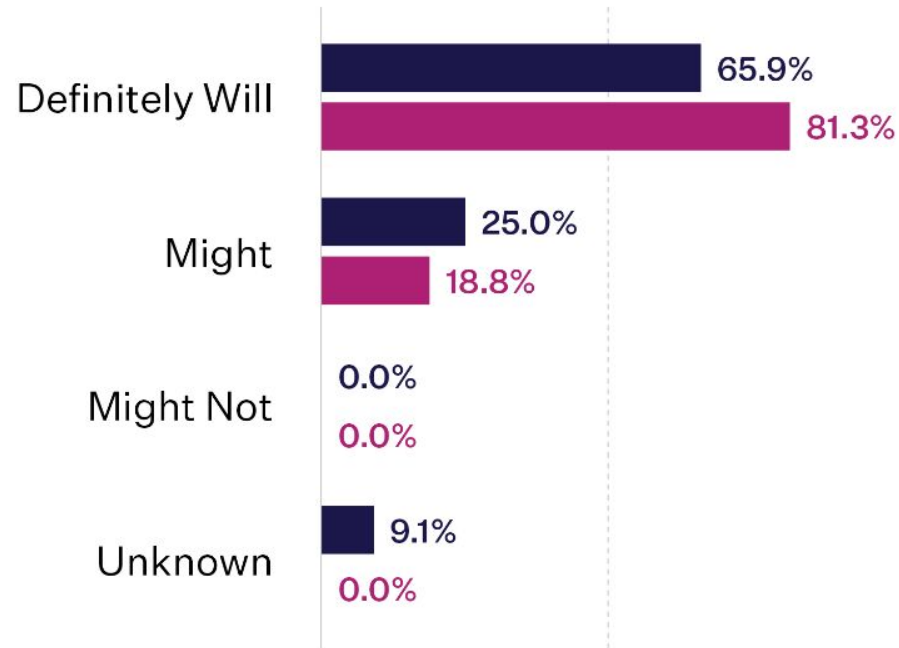
- “The campaign provided the right amount of information for its first year. In future election years, **it would be helpful to have some case studies to illustrate the impact--particularly ones featuring individual or family donors.**” *(Did not specify)*
- “**...testimonials from grantees around how early money has/could benefit the work of their organizations.** Potentially an **internal timeline guide** to help organizations realistically meet the April deadline for moving money.” *(Did not specify)*
- “**I thought this was a "right sized" campaign - clear call to action,** some additional information, but more would have over complicated the call to act.” *(Donor Advisor)*

# The Numbers

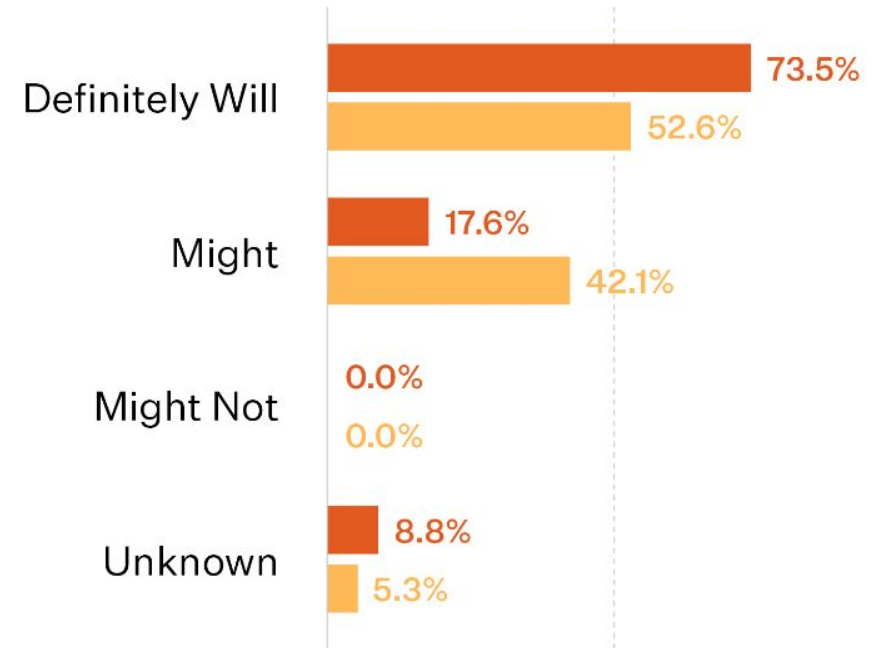
Interest in signing on to a future effort is strong among all participants as 93% say they **Definitely Will** or **Might** sign on



## Interest was higher among Non-Direct Grantmakers and Long-Time in Sector



■ Direct Grantmakers (n=16)  
■ Non-Direct Grantmakers (n=44)



■ Long-time in Sector (n=34)  
■ Newer in Sector (n=19)



Feedback that Signers report receiving about the campaign from grantees, clients, or network members was nearly exclusively positive.



## All by April Feedback Direct Grantmakers received from grantees, clients, or network members:

- “Gratitude for the commitment to early funding. **Wish more groups signed on / followed through.**” (*Larger Funder, Long-Time in Sector*)
- “I think one challenge is **there are already a lot of demands on the grantee side to collaborate and share gaps etc, but funders still overall do their own things - this kind of effort helps provide framing in narrative and broader field education** but it still feels a little top down when a big funder is driving it - just complex when overall there is more need than donors or funders currently.” (*Larger Funder, Long-Time in Sector*)
- “**A number of grantees have told me that All by April made a positive difference in the conversations they had with funders.** Many felt that the conversations were easier and the necessary funding flowed earlier.” (*Larger Funder, Newer in Sector*)



## All by April Feedback Non-Direct Grantmakers received from grantees, clients, or network members:

- “Donors I shared it with in our network -- said -- **We would never have given this early -- thanks for the prompt.** Now we can rest assured that our funding it being put to the best and highest use early in a high-stakes situation.” (*Smaller Funder, Long-Time in Sector*)
- **“It's brilliance is in its simplicity.** Very simple, easy-to-understand idea that we were able to quickly implement.” (*Smaller Funder, Newer in Sector*)
- “Had a bunch of positive reactions - **a giving circle I advise moved all their money early, one couple it moved them to both give more and earlier, a family foundation I advise found it helpful to push their board to move faster.**” (*Larger Funder, Long-Time in Sector*)



## Participants shared the following feedback when asked generally, what else would they like All by April to know:

- “I just appreciate having this offered out as something we could sign onto as a nudge for us to do more outreach. **It benefitted us greatly in our relationships with partners and impact for grantees.**” (*Direct Grantmaker, Smaller Funder, Newer Funder*)
- “**It was a great accountability tool** for those of us who already try to fund early in the year.” (*Direct Grantmaker, Larger Budget, Long-Time in Sector*)
- “**Really appreciated the clarity, anyone could sign on** as it was a clear targeted ask about timing vs give to “our groups” or “or our strategy” which is also valuable but a more complicated ask.” (*Non-Direct Grantmaker, Larger Budget, Long-Time in Sector*)
- “**Make sure donor networks are also aligned...**If we are doing this again (and we should), **get the field on board too!**” (*Non-Direct Grantmaker, Smaller Budget, Newer in Sector*)



## Participants shared the following feedback when asked generally, what else would they like All by April to know:

- **“It would have been cool to input my giving into a platform that tracked everyone's giving to feel like I was part of something bigger and to have a better sense of what we were collectively accomplishing. And to get a better sense of where other folks were giving, explore best practices, etc. This felt geared more towards orgs and high profile donors but I think could be a cool campaign and toolbox for more normal people and new donors, too!”** *(Direct Grantmaker, Smaller Budget, Newer in Sector)*
- **“Brilliant idea!!! Would not have thought of it ourselves. Our board was proud to sign on and our grantees loved that we didn't stick to ‘the rules’ and became more flexible.”** *(Direct Grantmaker, Smaller Budget, Newer in Sector)*





Conclusion



## All by April was effective at its core goals and should continue

The quantitative and qualitative data that informed this evaluation was conclusive that All by April:

- Succeeded at further solidifying the expectations within philanthropy about the importance of making earlier election-related grants;
- Was responsible for a portion of the increase in earlier 501(c)(3) election-related giving;
- Had a positive spillover impact on early 501(c)(3) election-related giving beyond the population that signed the campaign; and
- Inspired some Direct Grantmakers to alter grantmaking policies to move grants earlier than in past election years.

Additionally:

- There was a lot of energy and excitement around the campaign and there was near universal interest in signing onto similar efforts in the future; and
- Direct feedback from campaign participants provides constructive ways to improve the campaign in more strategic and impactful ways moving forward.



This evaluation was conducted by Grassroots Solutions - Eric Marshall, Julie Thompson and Kurston Cook - and commissioned by the Democracy Fund. We want to thank all of the leaders in philanthropy who took the time to participate in the Remesh sessions or fill out the SurveyMonkey to inform this presentation.



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