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Introduction

PlaceEconomics periodically conducts online surveys on topics of interest to those in historic preservation and related fields. The most recent poll asked about positive and negative impacts of the Coronavirus and the responses to the pandemic taken by preservation professionals. A link to the survey was posted on the firm's Facebook pages as well as being distributed through an e-mail list assembled by PlaceEconomics and its companion firm Heritage Strategies International.

One hundred sixty-four responses were received between February 8th and 13th with respondents from at least 35 US states and a dozen countries representing every continent. There was a balance of those in the private sector (29.4%), public sector (27.0%), and the non-profit (NGO) sector (30.1%).

The survey was composed of nine questions, most of which were multiple choice. But three questions were open ended – one inquired about the negative impacts of the pandemic, another asked about positive impacts, and one asked poll participants how their organizations had responded to the virus. Typically, open-ended questions in surveys receive a relatively low response rate, but in this case poll respondents seemed eager to share their experiences over the last year. Many responses were both highly personal and often heartbreaking: “Floundering, just floundering. Thus, closing up shop,” and “Effect on my mental health to telework 24/7.”

The challenges articulated in the poll related to business operations, personal finances, the inability to provide the professional services that clients expect, experiencing a sense of isolation, and more. For the open-ended questions, the usually terse comments were often so powerful and reflective of challenges caused by the pandemic that they are included as appendices in this report just as they were written by the respondents.

Participants did acknowledge some positive outcomes, most prominently the appreciated a newfound expertise in communicating with colleagues and constituents remotely, but the sentiment was often followed by a feeling that enough is enough. “Zoom – I am so so over it.”

The overriding theme was a strong desire to move back to “normal” while taking into the future a selection of skills acquired over the last year. More than three-quarters of respondents said, “We will continue to utilize electronic interaction technology but also look forward to renewing face to face work.”

Finally, it also emerged that were significantly different experiences for those in the private, public, and non-profit sectors, with the latter being particularly hard hit in terms of loss of projects, reduced budgets, and personnel cutbacks. It is our hope that the results of this survey will reinforce the sense among preservation professionals and organizations that “you are not alone” and also showcase the resilience demonstrated by many during what was the most challenging professional year in their careers.

Key Findings

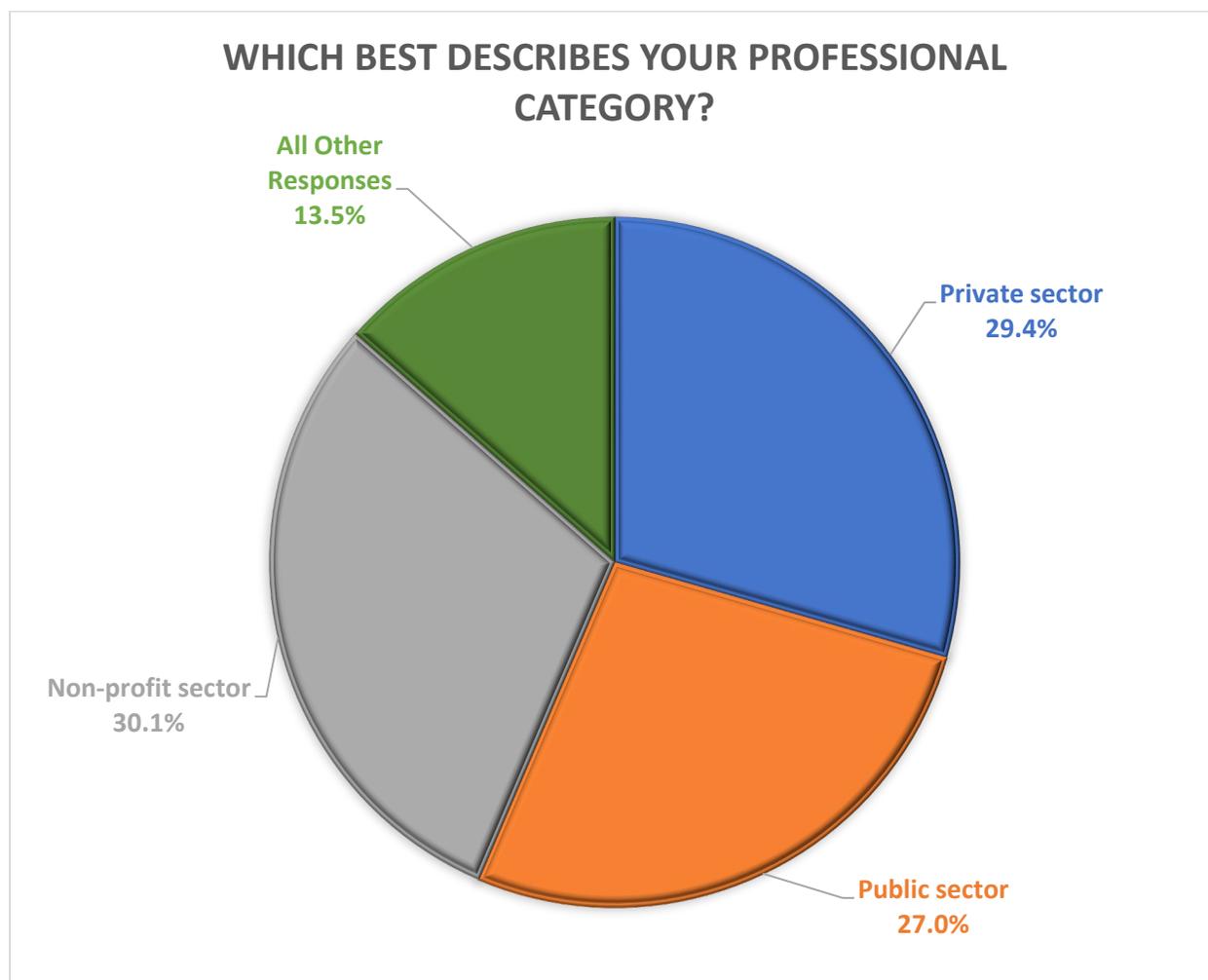
In the pages that follow the responses to each of the survey questions are reported in the aggregate and, when statistically significant, broken out into responses among subgroups of survey takers.

Highlights of the findings include the following:

- Respondents to this survey were overwhelmingly preservation professionals. Nearly 2/3s of the respondents (63.2%) stated that historic preservation is a “significant part of my job” and another 12.3% that preservation is “occasionally part of my job.”
- Over half (51.9%) said that the cancellation of meetings/conferences/workshops negatively affected their business or profession a great deal. Major negative impacts were increased individual workload (37.6%), and revenue/budget/contribution reductions (32.5%). That last category impacted non-profit organizations significantly more than either public or private sector entities.
- In open-ended questions about negative impacts, comments that were categorized as “business operations” were most common (29.3%) followed by “personal” (16.4%) and “business financial” (15.5%).
- Just over half of survey respondents (50.1%) identified “Developing new partnerships” as “a great deal” or “somewhat” a positive outcome.
- “Internal reorganization that will have positive impacts even after the coronavirus” was often noted, particularly in the non-profit and private sectors.
- There were not many instances where the responses of US preservationists differed significantly from their international counterparts. One exception, however, was the “positive impacts” question which included a “Increased revenues/contributions/budgets” alternative. While only 17.5% of all respondents answered, “A great deal” or “Somewhat,” 42.6% of non-US poll takers responded that increased resources was “Somewhat” of a positive outcome.
- The responses to the pandemic were nearly universal, with the vast majority reporting that “Electronic interaction with co-workers” (83.9%), “Electronic interaction with clients/constituents” (83.0%), “Working remotely” (78.9%), and “Reduction in travel” (67.3%) were “Used extensively.”
- A far smaller share of respondents reported that the “Development of new products/services to meet client/constituent needs” was a pandemic response, with the exception of the non-profit organizations who said that they used that strategy “Extensively” (26.5%) or “Somewhat” (42.9%).
- In response to the open-ended question about how organizations adapted, a plurality of the responses was categorized as either “Increased electronic capacity” (46.3%) or “Modified business operations” (42.6%)
- Finally, more than 3 in 4 respondents (77.4%) said, “We will continue to utilize electronic interaction technology but also look forward to renewing face to face work.”

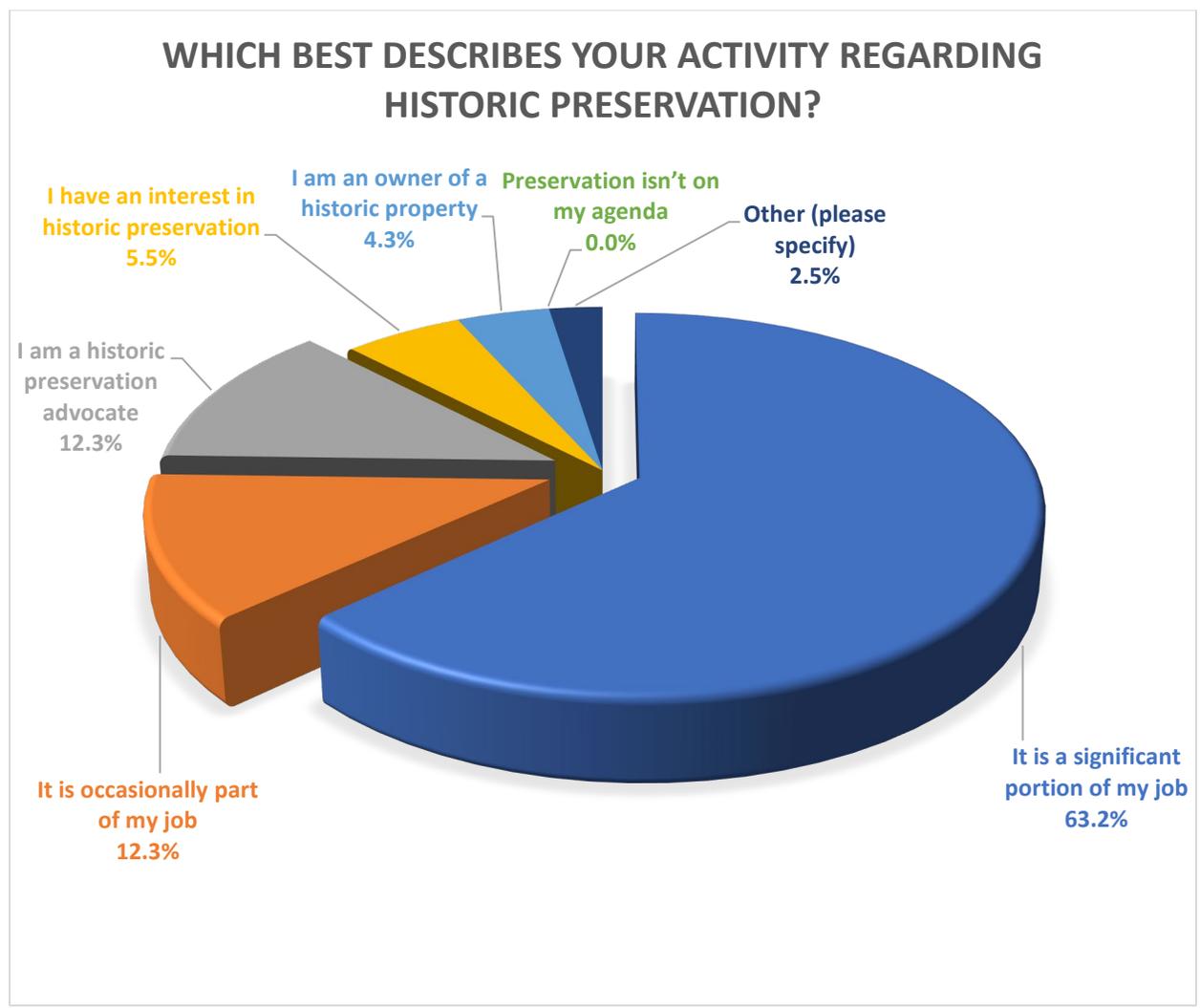
Question 1 -- Which best describes your professional category?

There is important work in the historic preservation field taking place in all three sectors – public, private, and non-profit. Fortunately, the responses to this survey reflected all three. The “Other” responses included: students, retired, educational/institutional, and not in the paid workforce.



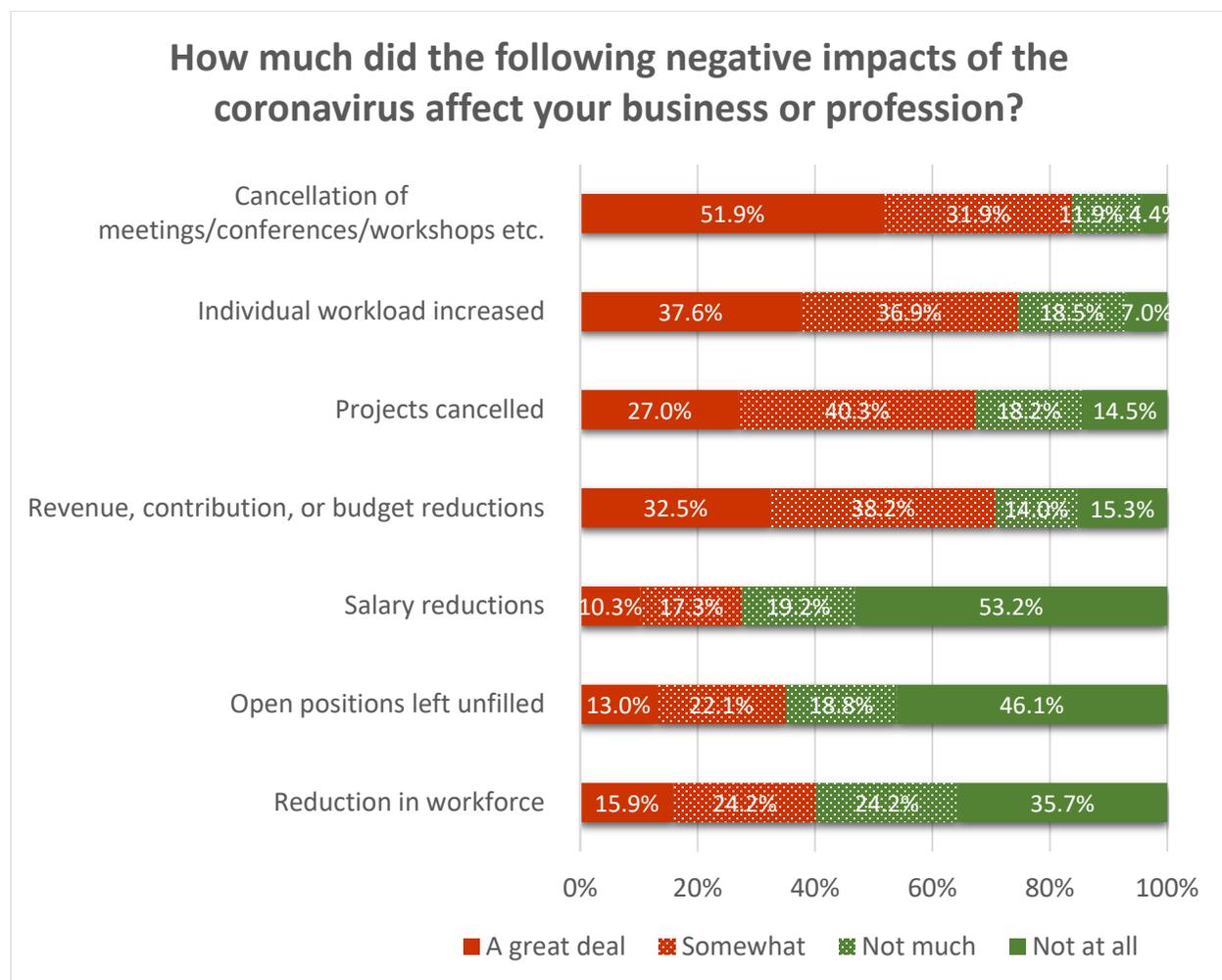
Question 2 – Which best describes your activity regarding historic preservation?

It was primarily historic preservation professionals who responded to this survey, with nearly 2/3s saying preservation was a significant portion of their job and another 12% that it was occasionally part of their job. Other categories of respondents were “Preservation advocate,” “Historic property owner,” and “An interest in preservation,” “Preservation isn’t on my agenda” was one of the alternative answers, but not a single survey respondent identified themselves that way.

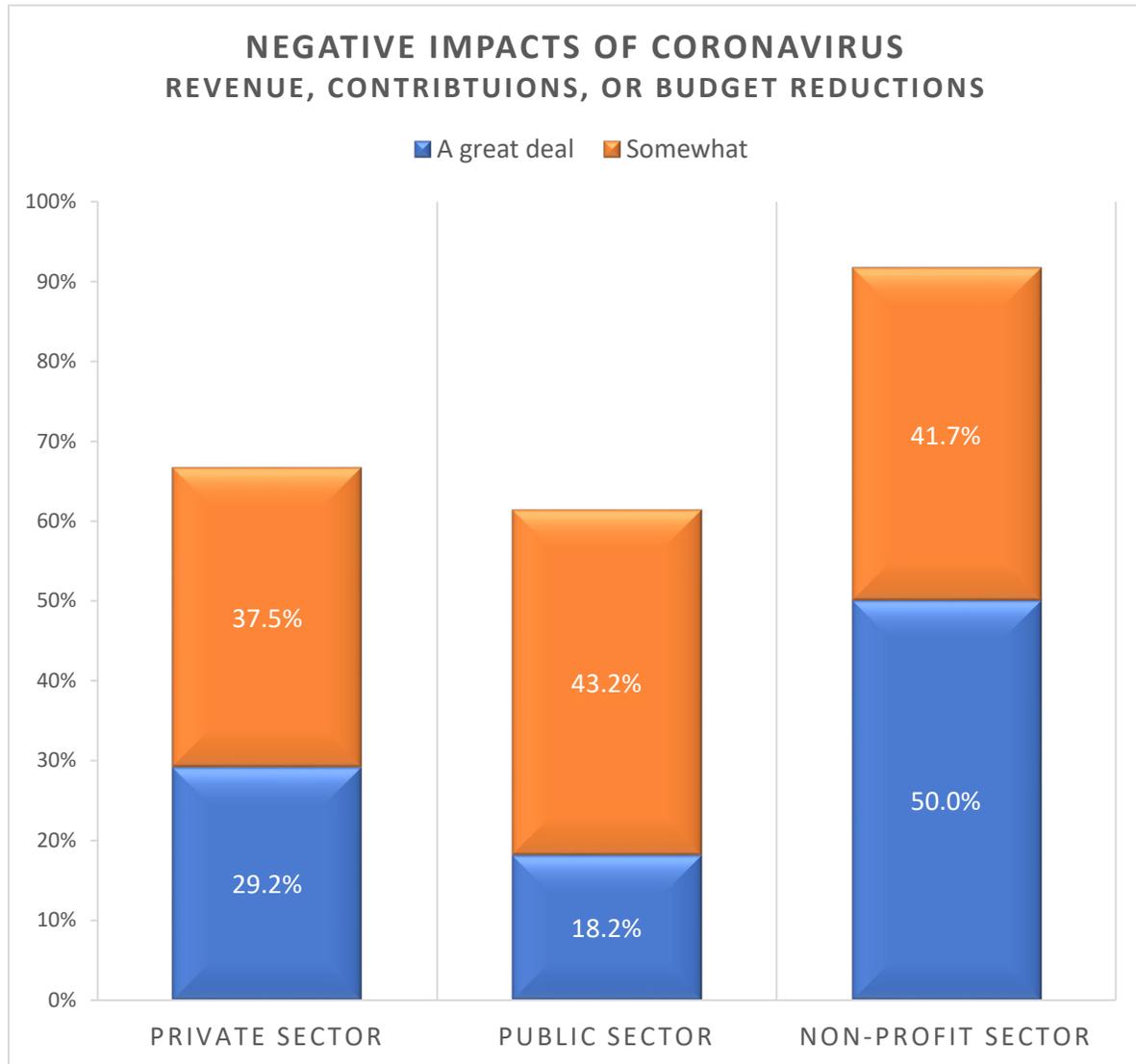


Questions 3 – How much did the following negative impacts of the coronavirus affect your business or profession?

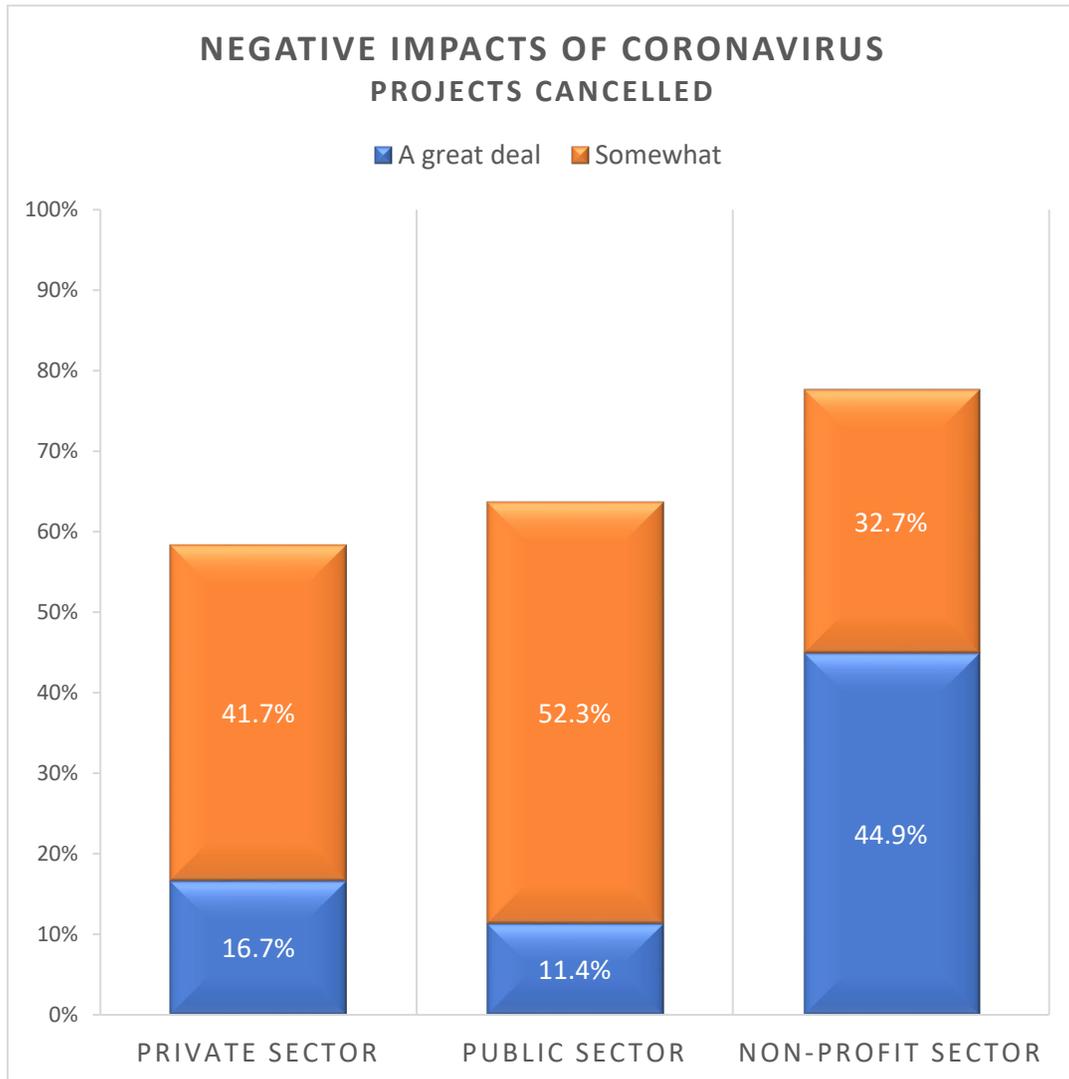
The negative impacts of the pandemic were both deep and widespread. While the cancellation of meetings/conferences/workshops affected nearly everyone, perhaps even more serious was that more than 70% of respondents reported that reductions in financial recourses happened “A great deal” or “Somewhat,” While “reduction of workforce” and “Open positions left unfilled” each affected less than half of the respondents, the absence of co-workers in addition to the very challenging working environment resulted in nearly three-quarters of respondents saying that their individual workload increased either a great deal or somewhat.



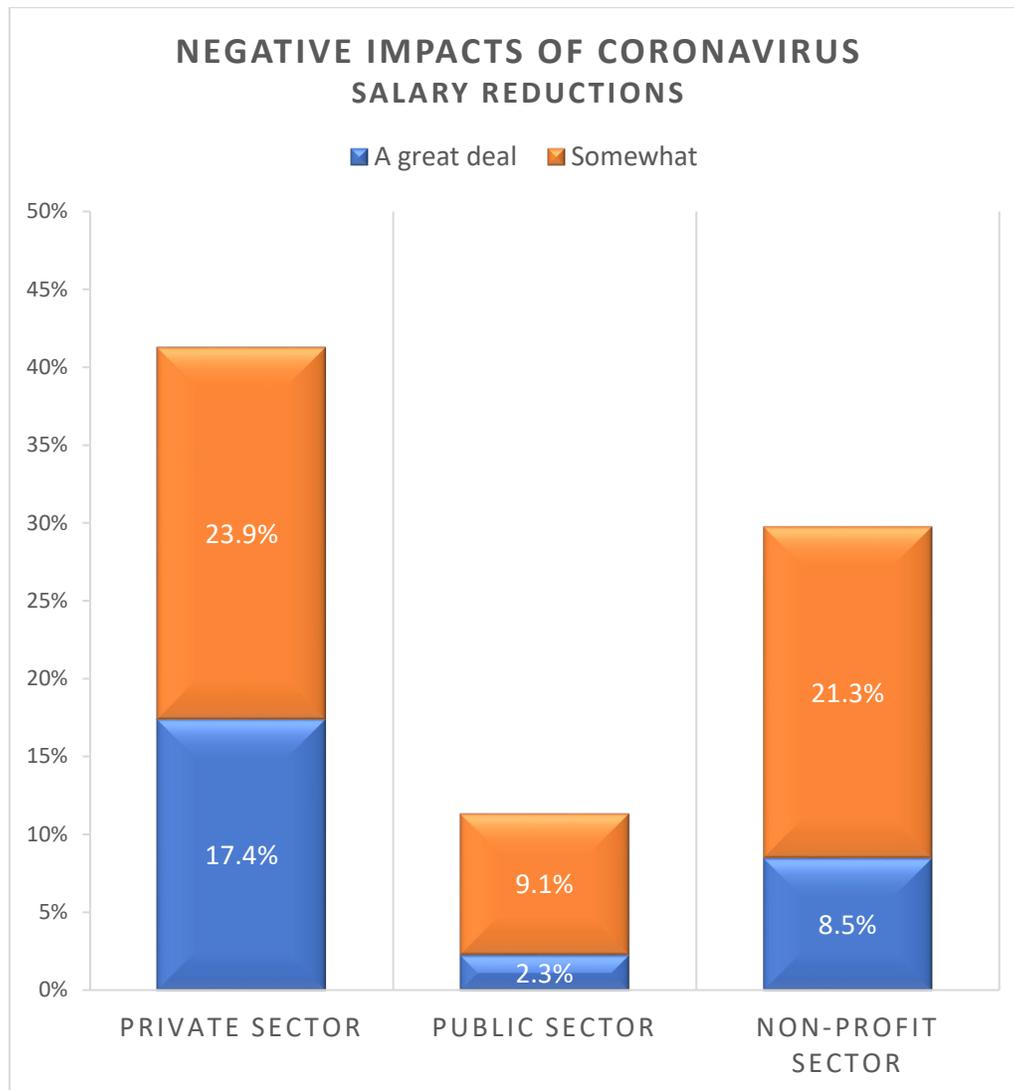
But these negative impacts often differed among sectors. While only 18.2% of those in the public sector reported that budget reductions affected them “A great deal,” fully half of non-profit respondents were impacted this way. In fact, more than 90% of those in the non-profit sector said their revenues were adversely affected “A great deal” or “Somewhat.”



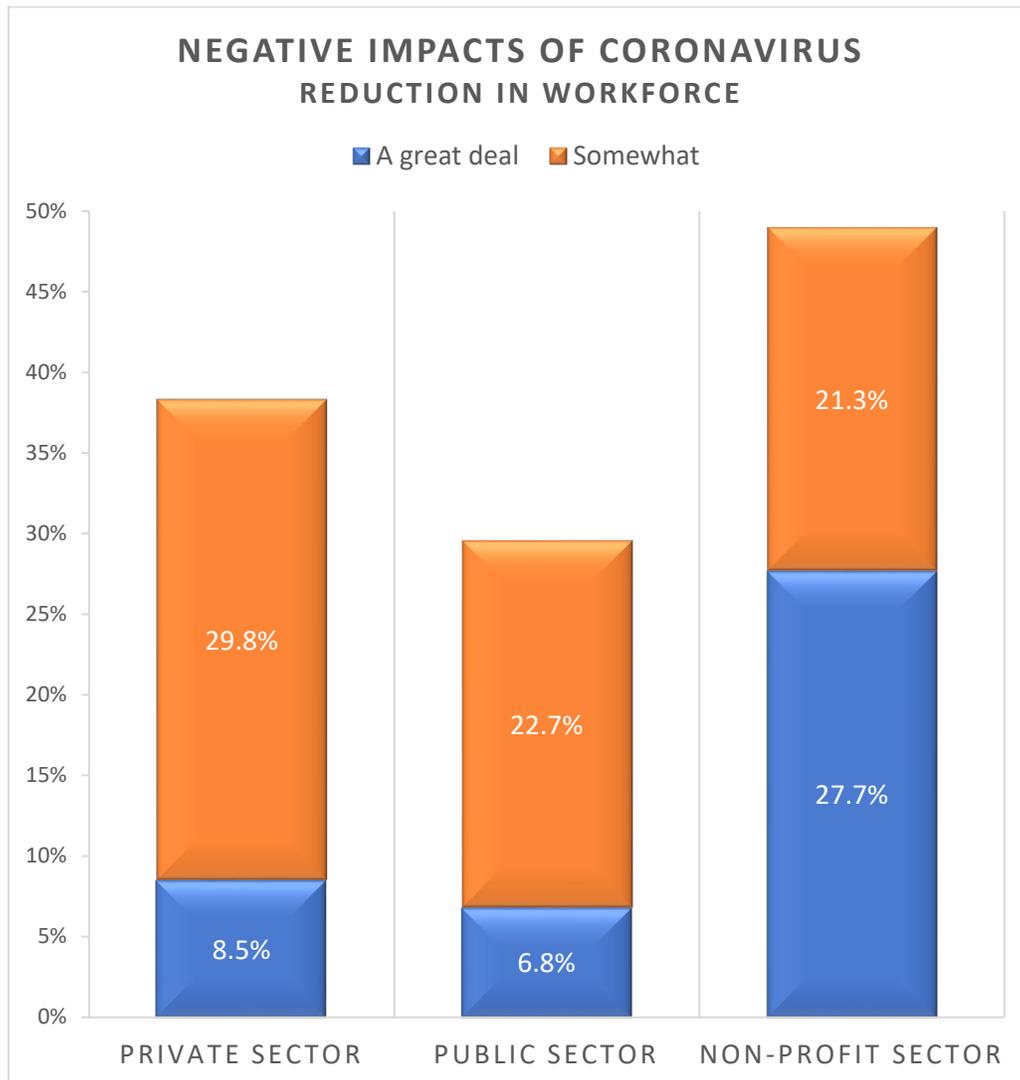
The reduction of financial resources combined with travel restrictions and stay-at-home orders also affected non-profits disproportionately relative to other sectors. Nearly 45% said that the coronavirus caused the cancellation of projects “A great deal” as compared to the private sector (16.7%) and the public sector (11.4%).



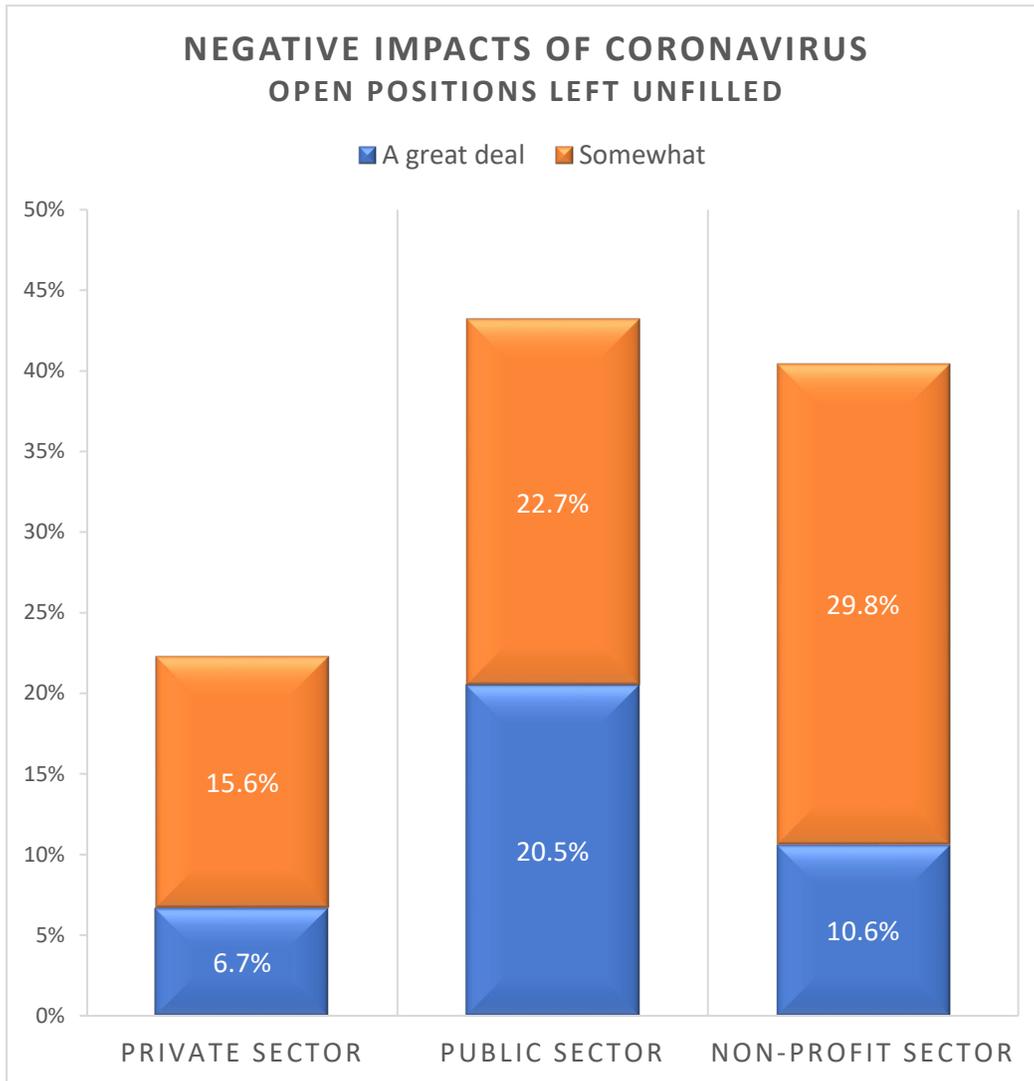
The nature of public sector employment is such that the reduction of salaries of existing employees is not a typical belt-tightening strategy. Leaving open positions vacant is a much more common approach. In the private sector, however, asking employees to take a pay cut rather than simply eliminating a job seems to be more common. 17.4% of private-sector respondents reported salary reductions affecting their business or profession “A great deal” and another 23.9% identify that measure as having a “Somewhat” negative impact.



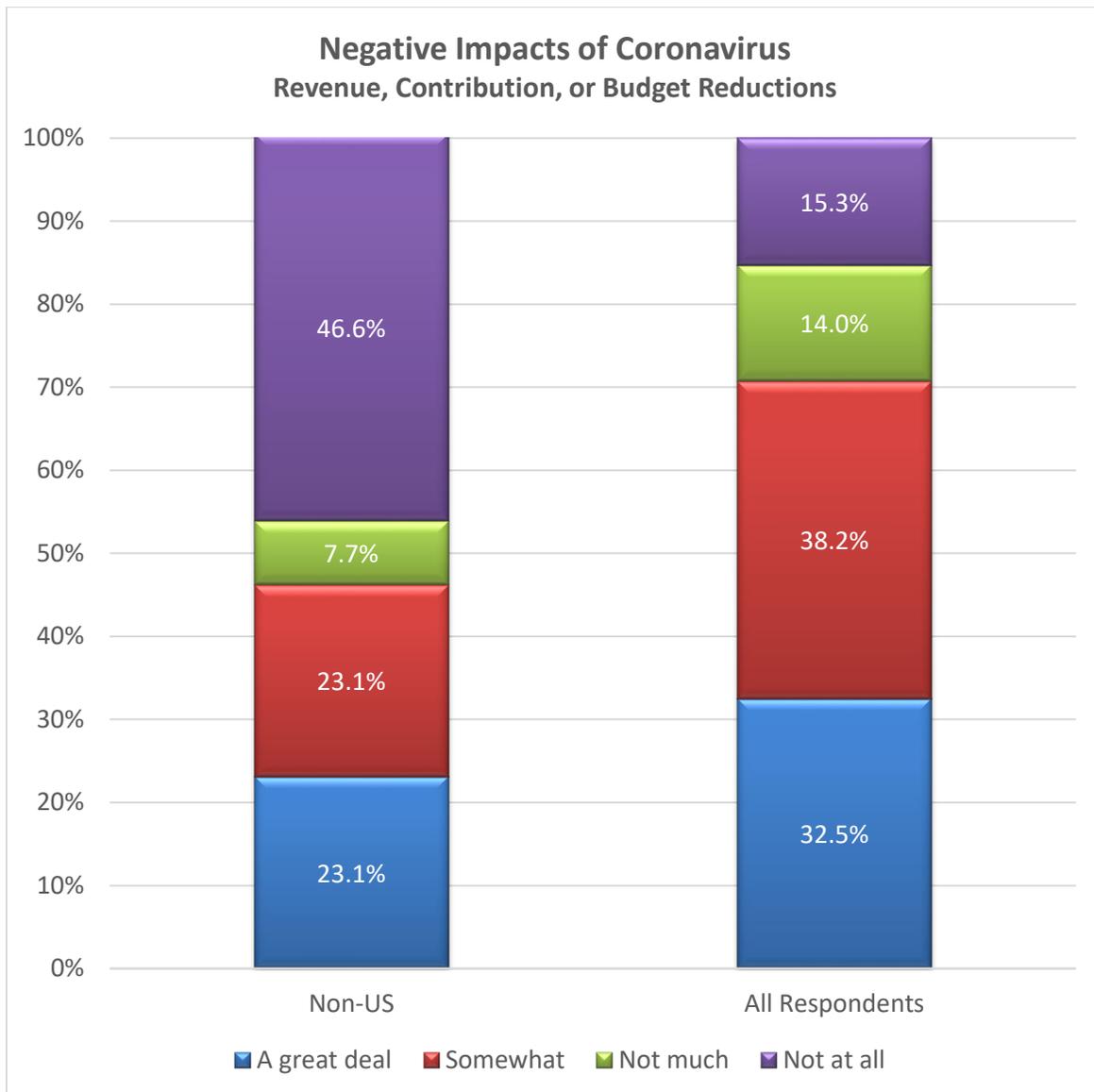
Many non-profit organizations simply don't have the financial reserves (or the borrowing power) to maintain employment levels in times of economic collapse. More than in either of the other sectors, employees working in the non-profit sector faced losing their jobs entirely. Nearly half (49.0%) of respondents from the non-profit sector said that reduction in workforce was either "A great deal" or a "Somewhat" a negative outcome of the coronavirus.



As was mentioned above, in the public sector when budgets are constrained, a common response is to simply not fill positions that are currently vacant. “Open positions left unfilled” was twice as likely to have been identified as a “great deal” negative impact for public-sector respondents than the non-profit sector and three times as likely as the private sector.



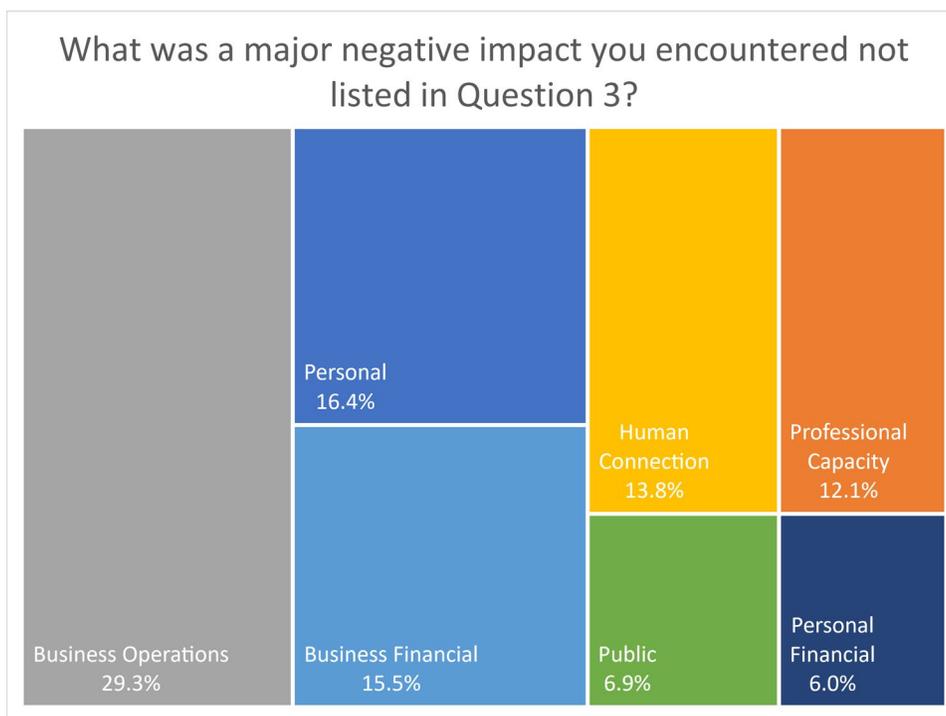
There were not many instances when the responses of non-US survey respondents differed significantly from respondents as a whole. But one area where there was a statistically significant difference was in the identification of revenue/contribution/budget reductions as a negative impact of the coronavirus. Among all survey respondents, only 15.3% responded that they were “Not at all” negatively impacted in terms of revenue, contribution, or budget reductions. But nearly half (46.6%) of non-US survey takers said they were “Not at all” affected by budget constraints.



Question 4 – What was a major negative impact that you encountered not listed in Question 3 above?

Question 4 was open-ended, allowing respondents to write whatever they wanted, unconstrained by multiple choice options. Ordinarily open-ended questions do not receive a high response rate, but for this survey nearly three-quarters of all respondents chose to write an answer. The higher response rate reflects the harsh and often personal nature of the experiences that preservation professionals have faced over the last year. In analyzing the results of the survey, open-ended responses were grouped into categories reflecting common themes. For the question regarding negative impacts, those categories were: Business Operations; Personal; Business Financial; Human Connection; Professional Capacity; Public; and Personal Financial. Because these responses were more qualitative than quantitative, all of the actual responses in the words of the respondents are listed in the appendix with almost no editing.

Many of these responses are both extremely personal, and often heartbreaking. The depth and breadth of the damage to both businesses and individuals is readily apparent. The impacts have been personal, financial, emotional, and professional. Representative responses within each category are included below and the entire list of responses are found in Appendix 1.



The categories are listed below with a representative response:

Business Operations

Delayed review of projects due to uncertainties about legal aspects of holding virtual hearings.

Personal

An emotional and social loss working from home and not seeing coworkers; a personal and emotional loss when coworker died

Business Financial

Uncertainty of clients to have funding to pay for services once rendered.

Human Connection

The loss of social connection with colleagues, constituents, donors, supporters

Professional Capacity

Lack of spontaneity of ideas owing to physical distance/lack of engagement

Public

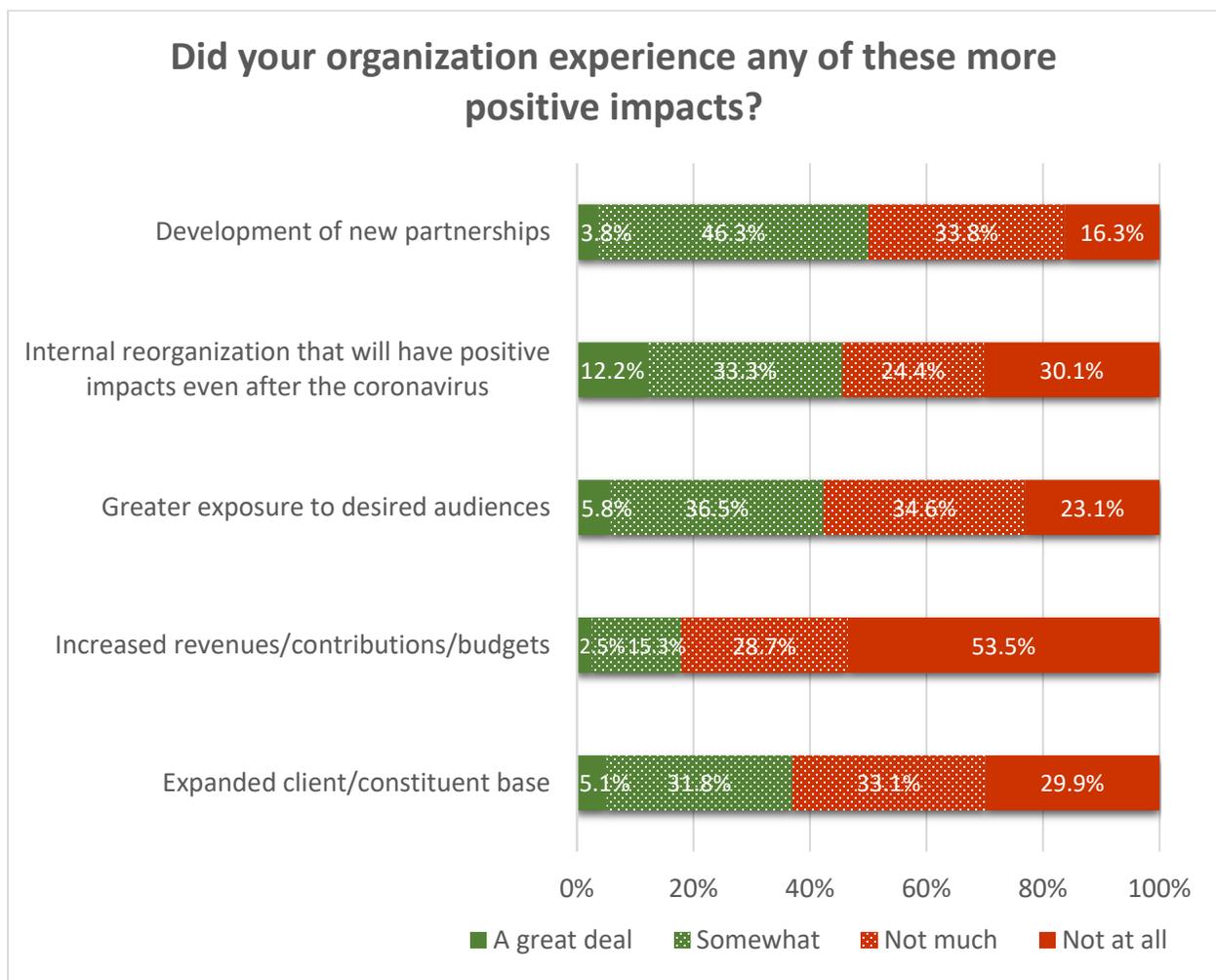
Distracted public less interested in historic preservation

Personal Financial

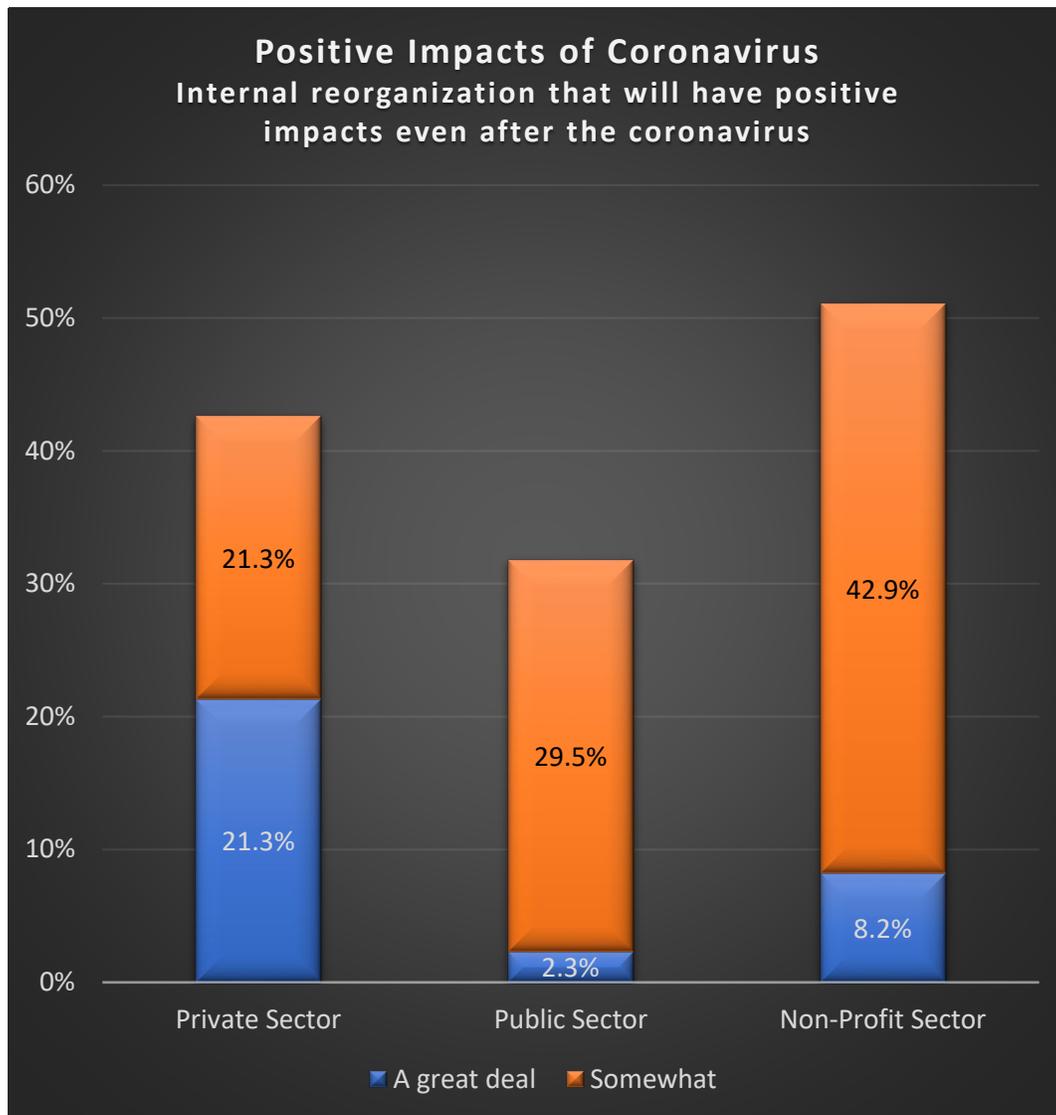
I personally had to go from full-time to part-time employment to care for my child this past year.

Question 5 – Did your organization experience any of these more positive impacts?

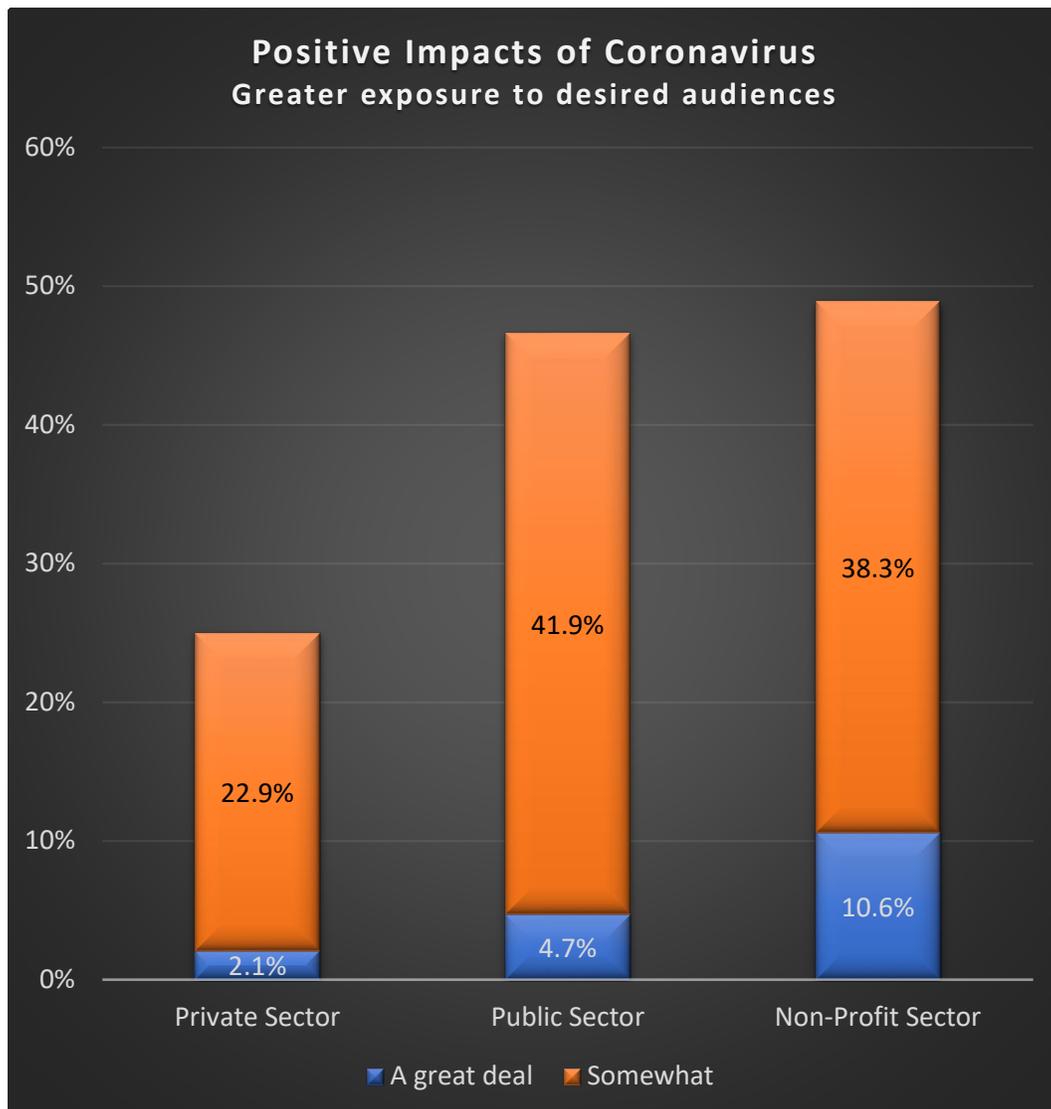
Taking lemons and turning them into lemonade may be a common metaphor, but clichés aside, the extent and breadth of the challenges created by the pandemic made it much harder for professional to see positive opportunity it may present. Nearly every potential positive outcome offered in the questionnaire had more “Not much” and “Not at all” responses than “A great deal” or “Somewhat.” The single exception was “Development of new partnerships” to which 50.1% of respondents selected “A great deal” or “Somewhat.”



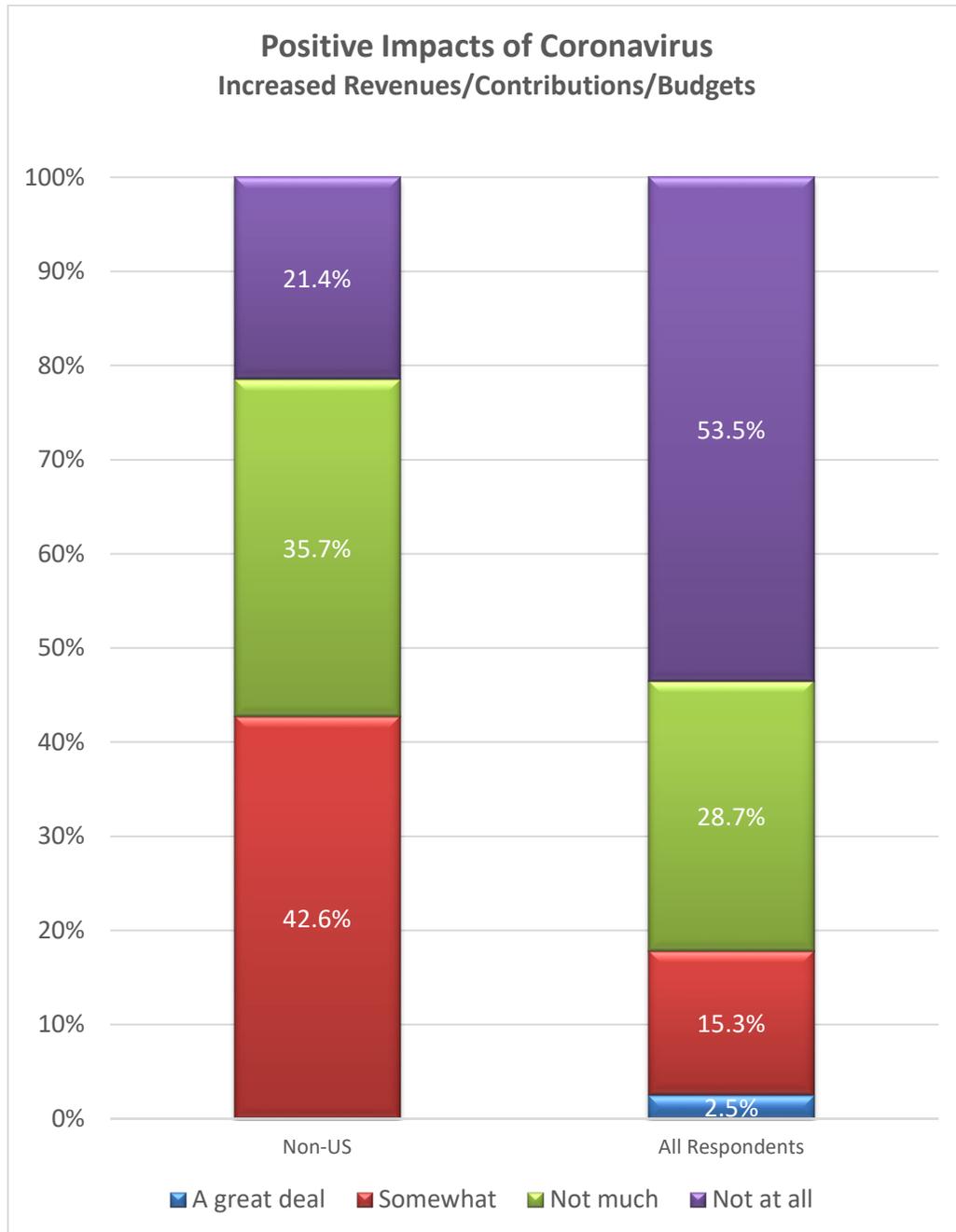
Identifying positive impacts of the coronavirus was another instance where there were significant differences among the sectors. To the statement “Internal reorganization will have positive impacts even after the coronavirus,” 21.3% of private sector respondents said that was “A great deal” with a like amount responding “Somewhat,” The non-profit sector also saw this as a positive outcome with greater overall numbers than the private sector but with less intensity – only 8.2% responded “A great deal” but 42.9% said “Somewhat.”



Greater exposure to desired audiences was clearly a success story among non-profits, with a total of 48.9% responding that they had increased exposure to desired audiences “A great deal” or “Somewhat.” The public sector followed closely behind with a total positive score of 46.6%. In this category the private sector lagged far behind.

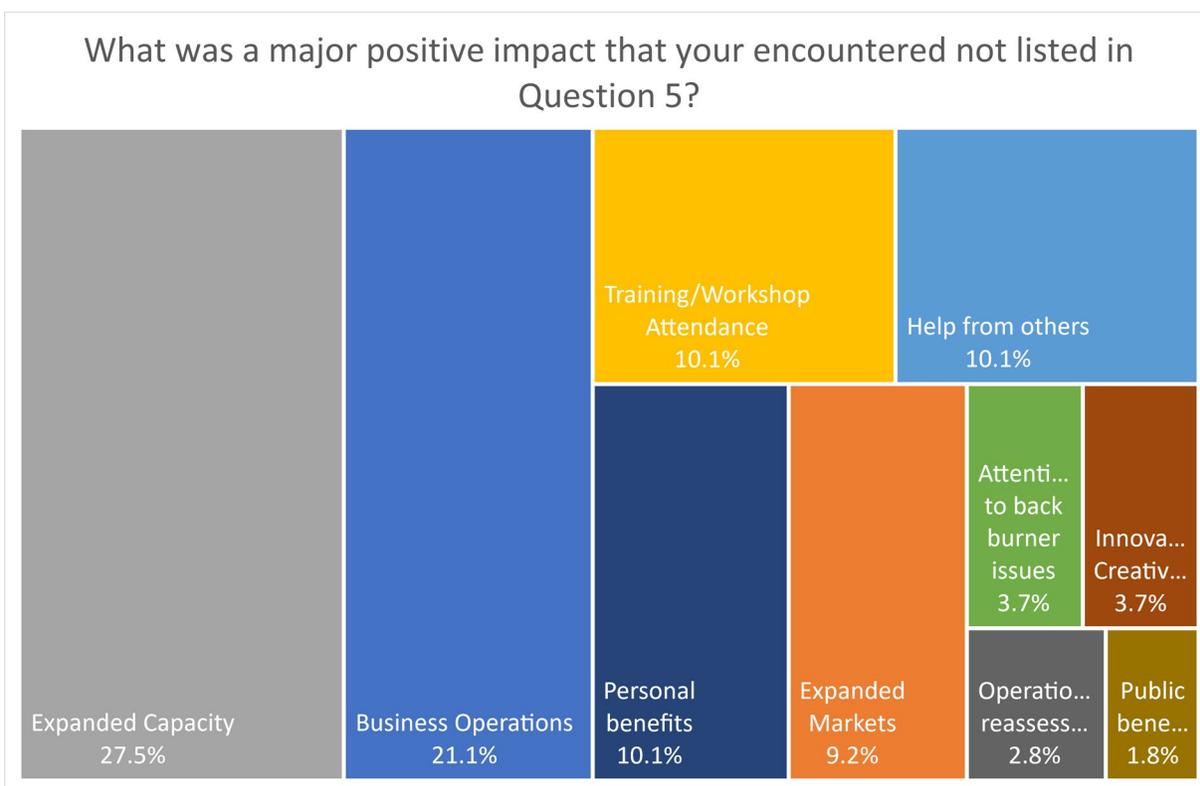


It was on this question where there were noted differences between non-US respondents and the survey as a whole. When asked if a positive outcome of the coronavirus was increased revenues/contributions/budgets, more than half (53.5%) of all respondents answered, “Not at all,” compared to only 21.4% of international survey takers. On the other end of the spectrum, among all survey respondents 17.8% said they had experienced increased financial resources “A great deal” or “Somewhat” while 42.6% of non-US respondents said that increased revenues/contributions/budgets had been a “Somewhat” positive result.



Question 6 – What was a major positive impact that you encountered not listed in Question 5 above?

As with the high response level on the earlier open-ended question, more than two-thirds of survey participants offered descriptive answers regarding positive impacts of the coronavirus. Responses were sorted into 10 categories defining common themes. Representative responses within themes are included below and the complete list of written responses to Question 6 can be found in Appendix 2.



The categories are listed below with a representative response:

Expanded Capacity

Our team has gotten very good at working remotely and streamlined our communications and project tracking.

Business Operations

By keeping as many of our projects running as possible continued to provide jobs for the subcontractors.

Training/Workshop Attendance

Conferences and programs I wouldn't ordinarily be able to attend went online and were low cost/free.

Personal Benefits

Gaining two hours every day by not commuting, which was used to go on daily walks with spouse who was also working from home; gained a better home/work life balance.

Help from Others

Earned revenue is way down but membership and philanthropy are up.

Expanded Markets

Global exposure and ability to keep connected globally via virtual platforms.

Attention to Back Burner Items

Time to overhaul our website which needed improvements.

Innovation/Creativity

Renewed focus on finding innovative solutions.

Operational Reassessment

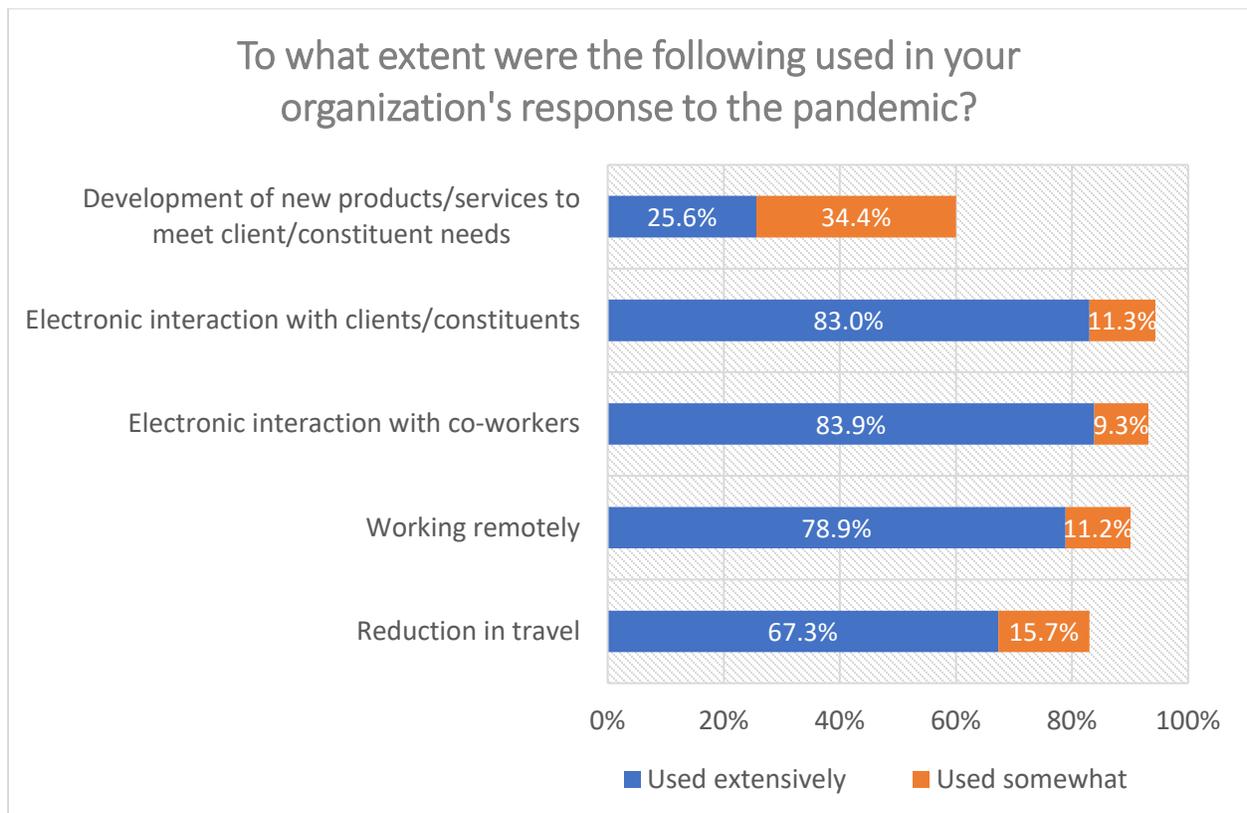
Reassessing what we are doing, our business model, ability to cut unnecessary expenses, forcing us to think long-term.

Public Benefit

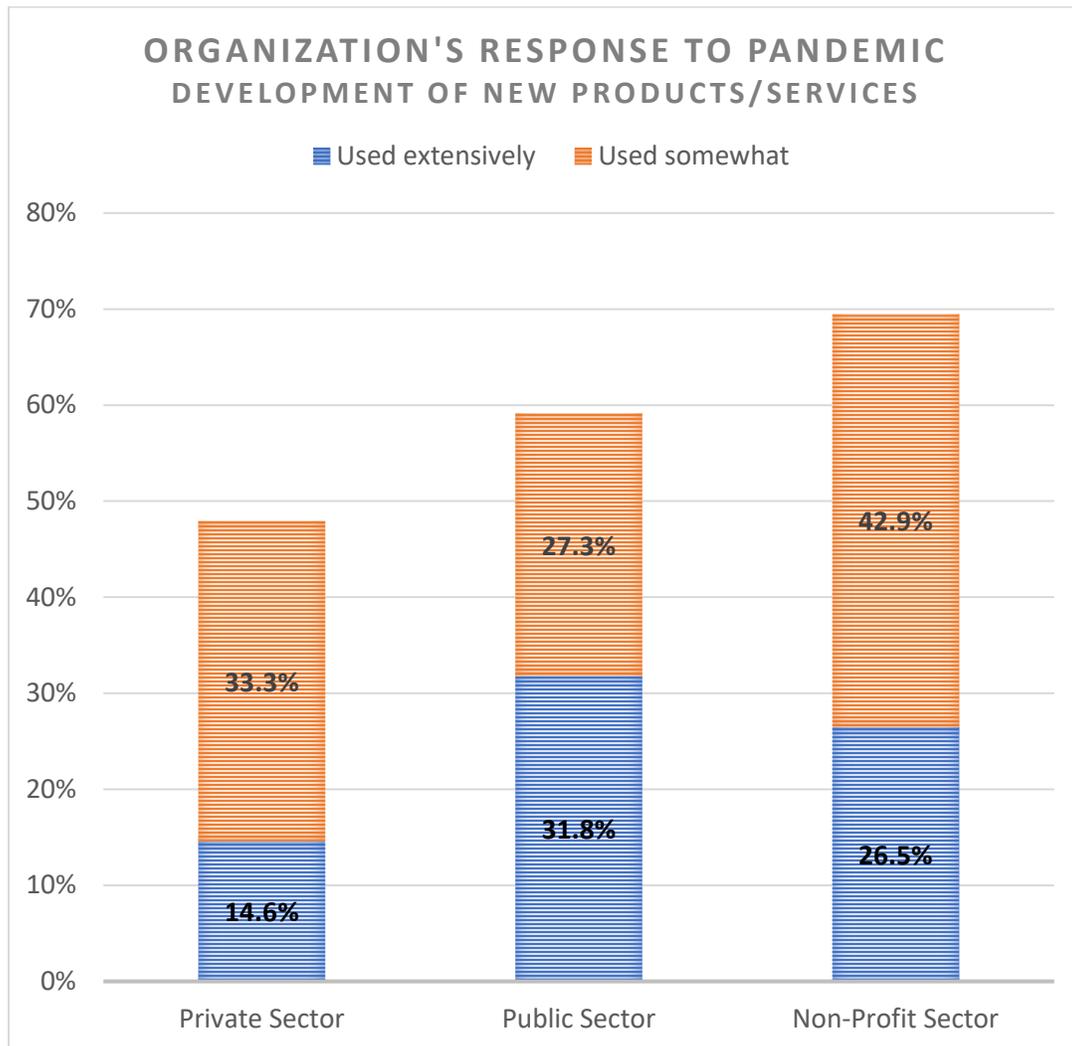
The development of an implementation-oriented regional pandemic stabilization and resiliency strategy.

Question 7 – To what extent were the following used in your organization’s response to the pandemic?

The organizational responses to the coronavirus were almost universal, with around 80% saying they extensively used “Electronic interaction with co-workers” (83.9%), “Electronic interaction with clients/constituents” (83.0%), and “Working remotely” (78.9%). Two-thirds (67.3%) also saw extensive “Reduction in travel.” The development of new products and services to meet client/constituent needs was far less frequently used with just over a quarter (25.6%) saying that response was used extensively.

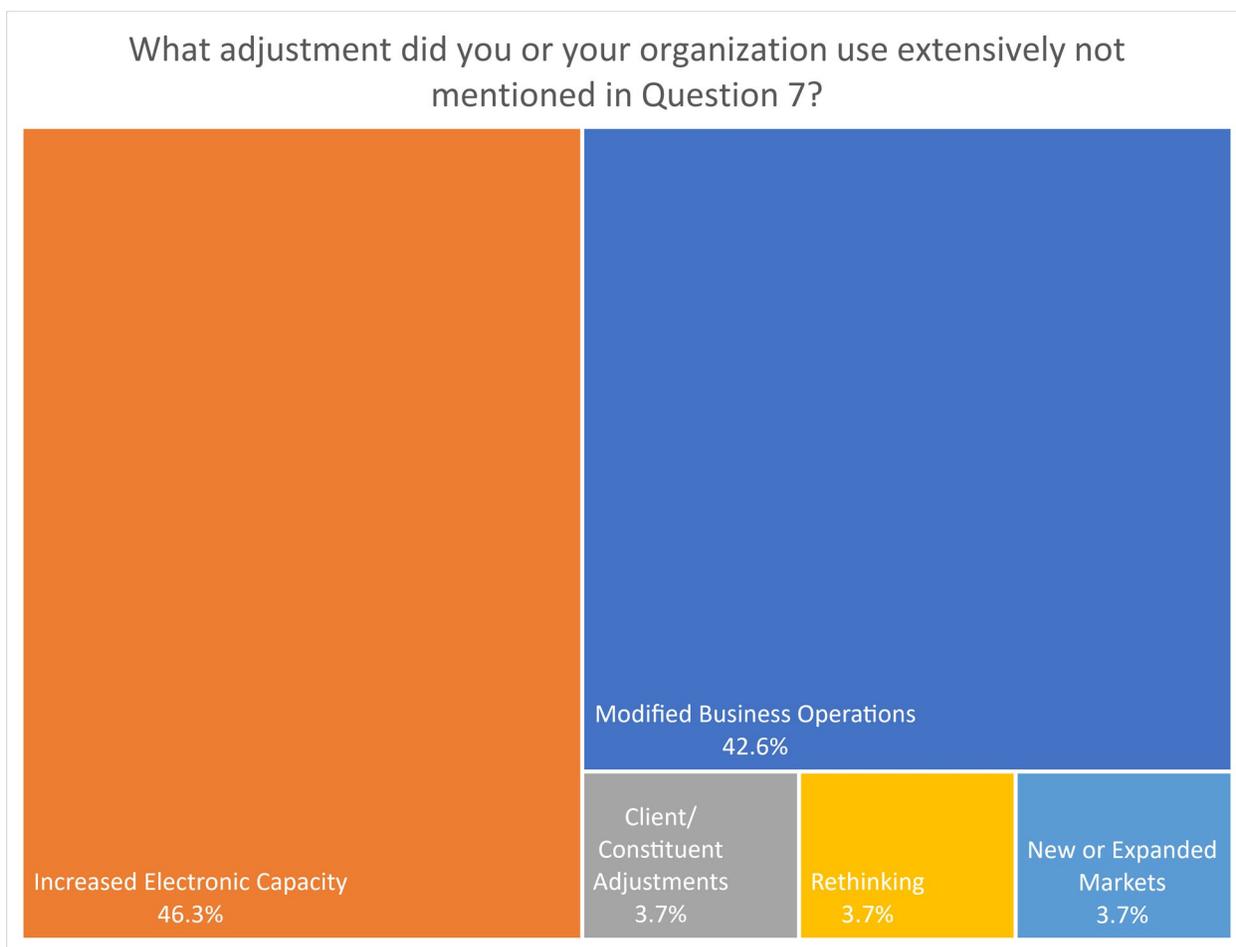


While used less frequently among all respondents, the development of new products/services differed significantly among sectors. Here again the non-profit sector led the way, with more than a quarter (26.5%) using the response of development of new products/services extensively and another 42.9% using it somewhat. Nearly a third (31.8%) of public sector respondents reported using this response extensively. The private sector followed both the other two in this approach.



Question 8 – What adjustment did you or your organization use extensively not mentioned in Question 7 above?

The final open-ended question asked survey takers what additional responses their organization undertook that was not included among the multiple-choice answers. By far the most common categories within which the responses were grouped were “Increased Electronic Capacity” and “Modified Business Operations.” A very small minority of responses were identified as “Client/Constituent Adjustments,” “Rethinking,” or “New or Expanded Markets.” Of the three open-ended questions, this one had the least participation with just a third of respondents identifying a response not listed in the earlier question. As with the other open-ended questions, representative responses are included below. A complete list of comments can be found in Appendix 3.



Increased Electronic Capacity

Used Microsoft Teams for all internal meetings rather than meeting in person; learned several different video conferencing platforms to meet with clients.

Modified Business Operations

Revised and increased safety and health measures

Client/Constituent Adjustments

Adjustments in working with federal agencies and submission protocols

Rethinking

Evaluated project delivery methods, and looked closely at fee structure

New or Expanded Markets

Instead of doing a couple of special restoration projects a year, I have hired more artisan Trades people and apprentices to actively bid more restoration work.

Question 9 – Which best describes your organization?

The final question left little doubt about these organizations' plans for the future. More than three-quarters (77.4%) of all respondents said, "We will continue to utilize electronic interaction technology but also look forward to renewing face to face work."



Conclusions

In December 2019, the first cases of what came to be known as the Coronavirus were identified. In a matter of weeks, the disease reached pandemic levels, affecting virtually every country in the world. When this survey was conducted the virus was still raging in most parts of the world, and the predictions of when things would return to “normal” ranged from six months to never. The cost in human life is immeasurable. As of February 15, 2021, more than 2.4 million lives have been lost globally, including 485,000 in the United States. The negative economic impacts will probably last for a generation and include the permanent disappearance of jobs, increasing poverty, and the acceleration of the wealth gap, both among nations and within nations. In the United States communities of color have been disproportionately adversely impacted.

The historic preservation (heritage conservation) movement has also been negatively impacted in the US and worldwide. This survey was conducted to learn three things: 1) what have been the negative impacts of the pandemic on professionals in the historic preservation field and their respective organizations; 2) have there been any positive impacts of the year of the virus; and 3) what actions did preservationists take in response to the virus.

These findings indicate that success has been measured by simply surviving – an outcome many did not reach. Jobs have been lost, budgets drastically reduced, individual workloads increased. The damage has been economic, professional, but especially personal. Issues of isolation, depression, mental health, and exhaustion have affected a substantial share of the professionals in historic preservation. There were some differences in both impacts and responses among the private, public, and non-profit sectors, but there has been significant hardship on all three.

The non-profit sector merits particular attention. By measures such as job loss, revenue reduction, and cancellation of projects, this sector was harder hit than its private and public sector counterparts. At the same time, many of these non-profits have demonstrated their resilience through greater exposure to desired audiences, internal reorganization, and the development of new products and services.

The Coronavirus pandemic is not over, and the negative impacts are certain to linger. But some heart can be taken as reflected in the comment of one respondent, “[We have] increased partnerships to work with small businesses and to help communities tell their economic development story.” We can hope these new partnerships can continue after the worst of the pandemic is behind us.

Some have said we can now see the light at the end of the tunnel. Let’s just hope that light isn’t another train headed our way.

About PlaceEconomics

PlaceEconomics is a private sector firm with over thirty years' experience in the thorough and robust analysis of the economic impacts of historic preservation. We conduct studies, surveys, and workshops in cities and states across the country that are addressing issues of downtown, neighborhood, and commercial district revitalization and the reuse of historic buildings. We specialize in quality, defensible research, and present findings clearly and effectively in formats that can be understood by academics, economists, mayors, city council members, property owners, and local stakeholders alike. We are also called on by clients to make policy recommendations, particularly in the areas of tools, strategies, and incentives to encourage private sector investment in historic properties. Our companion firm, Heritage Strategies International, performs similar services for clients beyond the United States.

Appendix 1 – Open ended responses to Question 4

Business Operations

- A colleague quit the job because of higher workload
- Cancellation of entire tourism program for year
- Cancelled the training
- Commercial projects put on hold
- Contractors were busier and our towns had a hard time getting work done.
- Delayed review of projects due to uncertainties about legal aspects of holding virtual hearings.
- Difficulty in planning for budgets and events, engagement with our constituents/donors
- Extremely slow response from state SHPO on tax credit & Easement projects
- Governmental shut down...closed offices
- Hands-on, in-person, meetings and projects cancelled or postponed.
- Impact to efficiencies
- Impaired communication and workflow (at work), impaired advocacy due to inability to organize via in-person meetings, 1:1 canvassing & mass site visits (Heritage Board)
- Inability to perform fieldwork
- Inability to provide onsite consultation
- Inability to travel to sites
- Inconsistent application of rules
- Increase of review times
- Lack of consistent policy re pandemic safety and WFH arrangements
- Limited travel and relocation ability
- Limited travel meant difficult to consult on buildings we hadn't seen in person
- Loss of visitation to heritage sites
- Museum unable to open
- Not being around co-workers
- Partners unable to complete work
- Private investor on historical property - loss of momentum on project.
- Project duration extended, lack of fieldwork, hugely increased meeting time using video
- Reduced number of visitors
- Reduction of in office staff to assist the public.
- Significantly reduced ability to travel and inspect modernization and restoration of historic buildings or identify and assess potentially historic buildings in advance of a Federally funded project.

- Slow response at state historic preservation offices
- Tourism
- Visitation of cultural institutions
- Working remotely made training and succession planning difficult
- Poor/inadequate internet for virtual meetings/training.

Personal

- Mental health issues increased
- An emotional and social loss working from home and not seeing coworkers; a personal and emotional loss when coworker died
- Burnout - combination of Zoom fatigue and decreased bandwidth and mental health declines
- Caregiving responsibilities resulting from closure of schools
- Confined to quarters. Had to purchase a desk in order to work from home. Travel was very difficult for out-of-town jobs for site surveys.
- Difficulty in working together
- Effect on my mental health to telework 24/7
- Feeling disconnected from colleagues
- Inability to find contractor. Strict self-isolation. House needs work.
- Mental Fatigue
- Psychological impact of social distancing
- Motivation dropped
- Not having enough personal time to complete work or do marketing because of having to adjust priorities toward family needs.
- Schedule creep
- Shifting to working from home for all staff.
- Social Isolation from colleagues
- Social isolation of team
- Started a new job right before my office was told to work from home.
- UNCERTAINTY
- I am unwilling to interact with anyone not in my household.

Business Financial

- All of my face-to-face keynotes, hands on workshops, classes at my school and seminars were cancelled. Some converted to Zooms.
- Budget cuts
- Cancellation of major fundraising event
- Revenue loss
- Business closed
- Clients don't want to pay their bills.
- Exponentially greater difficulties with fundraising
- Fundraising problems
- Interest, fundraising, events
- Loss of commercial revenue due to business closures. We rely on earned revenue as significant source of overhead.
- Main sources of funding (events, tenants) lost for the year
- No one sending out RFPs; research locations closed and still closed
- Our members lost 2/3rds of their workforce, we lost tourism, etc.
- Projects delayed

- Floundering, just floundering. Thus, closing up shop.
- Provincial cost-sharing grants for my non-profit clients (heritage site Boards) cancelled in 2020 therefore, less projects with non-profits, no RFP's came out with municipalities or projects put on hold, not able to engage with residents, no ability to network outside of all digital or phone calls
- Uncertainty of clients to have funding to pay for services once rendered.
- Unpredictability of planned projects moving forward

Human Connection

- Disconnect with Commissioners. All of my job relies on good communication and rapport with the commissioners. Not seeing them in person has resulted in some miscommunications.
- In person events switching to virtual
- Access to in-person conversations
- Adjusting to all-virtual contact and teaching.
- Inability to interact face to face for certain tasks
- Lack of human connection
- Less interaction with coworkers
- Loss of being able to offer education in person
- Loss of connection with membership.
- Meetings in person
- Nearly impossible to do community outreach
- Networking with other professionals
- No travel thus no outreach
- Not being able to meet with property owners due to Pandemic
- Not being able to network in person
- The loss of social connection with colleagues, constituents, donors, supporters

Professional Capacity

- Ability to obtain historical documents required for reports
- Be on field.
- Communication seemed to be far less effective than in the past as everyone suddenly went into panic and focus mode
- Difficulty in travel to project locations
- Increase in workload. Site visits not possible or have to be sub-contracted.
- Individual workload increase
- Lack of access to research facilities has been the biggest factor in slowing down projects. Libraries and archives have strict limitations here and the resources often can't be checked out...so we wait!
- Lack of spontaneity of ideas owing to physical distance/lack of engagement
- My position went from 100% office work to 50/50 field and virtual
- Not being able to travel for my research; taking time to take care of ethnic communities whose historic resources were being compromised.
- Not being able to work in person.
- Not having equipment to join meetings virtually
- What project continued obtaining materials became a greater challenge
- When doing research, many of the libraries and archives are closed to the public so I'm limited to things that have been digitized

Public

- Distracted public less interested in historic preservation

- Lack of understanding that historic preservation could be a solution to the triple crises of health, wealth and social equity/pandemic/economy
- Many Many Many poor leadership decisions by our governor
- Participation in important County public hearings, while always difficult, was all but eliminated
- Preservation becoming less of a priority to some
- Reduced City services in fear of reduced sales taxes! Which was not the case! Both our City and State have enjoyed record sales tax collections.
- Reduced community engagement.
- Repercussions within field itself, i.e. illegal demo's picked up

Personal Financial

- [Not] being able to find other job opportunities in preservation.
- Fewer entry-level jobs available in the field
- I personally had to go from full-time to part-time employment to care for my child this past year.
- Loss of work altogether as a freelancer.
- Loss of work opportunities slowed revenue, which slowed hiring.
- Salary reductions
- Staff Reduction

Appendix 2 – Open ended responses to Question 6

Expanded Capacity

- Better digital use
- More efficient use of technology
- Our team has gotten very good at working remotely and streamlined our communications and project tracking
- Accommodations for disabled people more prevalent due to mandatory accommodations for able-bodied people; more flexibility in remote work and virtual public meetings; greater flexibility in general
- Creating better remote computing
- Development of online programs and increased staff knowledge on how to set up and manage them.
- Development/implementation of virtual or hybrid meetings.
- Flexibility/expansion of virtual platforms for meetings, programs and events.
- Forced to learn new digital tools
- Greater access to public meetings now hosted virtually and greater engagement in the preservation process.
- Improved communication between partner organizations (common use of online and other digital tools) forced by circumstances
- Increased partnerships to work with small businesses and to help communities tell their economic development story.
- Learned to use new technologies to communicate and collaborate
- Learned zoom, worried about shit I could do nothing about, husband retired so I never have to cook a meal again or do the laundry, he has taken on chores I have no time for
- Learning that we can function nearly to full capacity while working from home.
- New ways of working

- Our whole team was forced to become proficient in the use of Microsoft Teams and other collaboration tools
- Practice with technology
- Remote work becoming viable
- The ability to organize internally
- The online engagement opened up enormously and enabling an online platform across the country supports the interconnection within the field, i.e. learning from others, engaging in preservation conferences that are in other states, but semi- relevant, understanding we are often dealing w similar situations for possibly similar solutions; etc.
- Upgrading to technology and communications
- Use of new technology increased communication
- Use of technology to make meetings more accessible
- We were forced to do something we should have been doing: produce online programming and resources.
- With limited opportunities to gather, I believe we had a further reach in the virtual world.
- Work-from-home allowed for better focus on some initiatives
- Working by video conference.
- Greater comradery across regional offices fostered via comfort with and expectations for virtual meetings, chat, etc.
- Increased use of virtual meetings

Business Operations

- A new leadership team that will help direct growth.
- Ability to really review work processes and consider change
- Able to serve multiple clients and localities on a single day due to virtual rather than in-person meetings.
- Able to work remotely, which opened up more opportunities to research software that allowed us to connect with remote clients. Kept projects on schedule.
- Although tiring, some virtual meeting platforms have increased participation in projects or processes.
- Expanded work schedule due to lack of visitation
- Growth in social media outreach
- Increased efficiency with virtual work.
- Knowing we can work from home & can eliminate our office if necessary.
- Learned that 60-80% of work can be accomplished remotely.
- Membership numbers rose
- Reassurance that remote operations are achievable
- Reorganization of tourism seasons and activities community-wide
- Reset of our operations, relocation of our office, government funding to keep our team together at 2019 compensation despite dramatic fall off in income producing work.
- Site observation work slowed to a reasonable pace
- Sourcing subconsultants within 100 km of the office
- Stable income from budget funds
- Virtual meetings replaced in-person, which resulted in less time travelling and more time for focused work, particularly a very large project that could not have easily happened if we would have been working as usual.
- We found out we can work remotely, and well, together.
- We were able to test flex schedules and teleworking options which showed the cost savings associated with both.
- Working with local historical society on exhibition, research using various online sources.

- By keeping as many of our projects running as possible continued to provide jobs for the subcontractors
- My book sales increased as people stayed at home to work on their own properties.

Training/Workshop Attendance

- Able to continue to host the APT/NTC conference last year once we changed it to a virtual one after all the work that had been done on it prior to Covid impacts, got to sit on a virtual Awards panel regardless of not being able to meet in person for the jury of it
- Attendance of far more training opportunities through virtual presentations of organizations like APT (regional and national).
- Conferences and programs I wouldn't ordinarily be able to attend went online and were low cost/free.
- Conferences were cheaper because they went online.
- I attended many more web-based conferences and established potential relationships for the future.
- Lots of conferences went online along with presentations of all sorts - thus, I and my colleagues had a lot of opportunities for affordable continuing education!
- Organizing meetings, lectures, conferences and teaching remotely worked better than I had expected and will likely continue after the crisis has passed.
- Permanent improvement in education with new virtual classes that will be the norm moving forward
- Possibility to attend courses online for which time and funding would have not been enough to attend in person
- Saved money required for in person attendance at conferences and meetings that could be reallocated, but the loss of the personal interactions was negative.
- We offered an online learning option- free for now.

Personal Benefits

- Closer working relationships with few remaining staff members
- Gaining two hours every day by not commuting, which was used to go on daily walks with spouse who was also working from home; gained a better home/work life balance.
- More time at home with my children?
- No commute!! Saved some money on beauty/care, clothing, travel.
- No in-person meetings.
- Not commuting has been a huge positive impact. I'm not sure if there will be flexibility in terms of work from home once things return to "normal"
- Not travelling allows more time for other activities.
- Working from home has been great for me. I am a caregiver for an elder and we are saving ~\$30k this year by not paying for caregivers to come into the home while I am at work.
- Workload.
- interest in staying home...home office
- Meet new people

Help from Others

- Secured new source of state grant funding
- Significant amounts of grant funds made available to businesses. To date, DC Government has invested \$133 million in grants to businesses, primarily those forced to close as a public health measure.
- State grant and PPP loan to get us through
- Continued support for our program from our larger agency.
- Donors not impacted financially stepped up and donated
- Earned revenue is way down but membership and philanthropy are up
- How the private and public sectors came together to raise money for the virus

- Kindness from strangers
- More folks wishing to become involved in the mission of our organization.
- We have seen an increase in giving. We haven't increased our membership substantially, yet, the members we have contributed more.
- While we lost revenue from not being able to host in-person fundraising events, we have received increased donations and secured two rounds of PPP, which offset any losses. We were able to successfully host walking tours and expanded the number of tours into the fall, a first. All tours sold out.

Expanded Markets

- Ability to join national and international conversations via virtual platforms
- Global exposure and ability to keep connected globally via virtual platforms
- Great exposure
- Greater exposure.
- Increased availability of audience for our blogs and podcasts.
- I've done historic property development all my life and did all the work in house. We are now, for the first time, doing contract trades work to supplement the loss of consulting work
- Many people in our area who were stuck at home seemed to take on new home projects and reached out to us for advice.
- New partnerships
- New possibilities in related fields

Attention to Back Burner Issues

- As commercial project workload slowed down, some back burner projects were completed.
- Focus on things that don't often get focus
- Slowdown forced us to re-think a major project which it looks like we will sell to a partner to complete.
- Time to overhaul our website which needed improvements

Innovation/Creativity

- Developing different ways to engage audiences
- Great innovation from preservation partners, especially at the Main Street level.
- New ways of looking at old problems
- Renewed focus on finding innovative solutions

Operational Reassessment

- Reassessed priorities
- Reassessing what we are doing, our business model, ability to cut unnecessary expenses, forcing us to think long-term
- Time to rethink organization structure and mission
- Have more time to think and organize the new form of relationship

Public Benefits

- The decrease in new development meant lessen the threat to many heritage assets
- The development of an implementation-oriented regional pandemic stabilization and resiliency strategy

Appendix 3 – Open ended responses to Question 8

Increased Electronic Capacity

- Community engagement activities went entirely online for us.
- Developed online portal for presentation education <https://www.cascadianow.org/learning-places>
- Electronic interaction
- It has forced us into the digital world, which was a priority that long was on the back burner. It is exciting to innovate despite difficulties.
- Most business processes went online.
- Online delivery of visitor experiences
- Physical files now reside in Cloud storage that can be accessed by anyone in our organization from anywhere.
- Remote work and electronic meetings. Better attendance by community and for our own board meetings.
- Taking conferences from in-person to virtual
- Took programming online
- Updating technology for employees
- Use of Zoom or FaceTime to conduct virtual site visits to historic properties
- Used Microsoft Teams for all internal meetings rather than meeting in person; learned several different video conferencing platforms to meet with clients.
- Videoconferencing; preparing bids without site visits.
- Virtual awards presentation
- Virtual coordination and electronic submissions with SHPO.
- Virtual meetings / facilitation.
- Virtual public hearings
- We learned how to use zoom and shifted our major fundraising efforts to zoom and other online platforms.
- We started offering substantially more online and streaming educational content to the public and through the schools
- Working in different time zones
- YouTube engagement
- Zoom
- Zoom but I am so so over it

Modified Business Operations

- Close physical office permanently
- Expand reach and relationships
- Flexible work hours
- Get used to losing battles with developers
- Hiring additional skilled staff
- In our trades-based firm, we need on site, in private home's/resources, which has proven difficult.
- Job flexibility, tasks, and time
- Meet on the site.
- Modified working schedule

- Not much of an adjustment but working from home stretched the working hours to be unlimited
- One was to have a limited number of people in meetings. At first there was strict limit of 5 - 10 people in a meeting. that has been relaxed somewhat in recent times.
- Outdoor meetings in good weather
- Reassessment of project costs
- Reduced hours worked
- Reduction in networking activities
- Reporting of work hours each month which led to more work as not all types of activities were listed from the begin and also not coffee breaks which take place physically
- Revised and increased safety and health measures
- Social media outreach and was able to attend trainings that would not have been in the budget if travel was needed.
- Staggered work schedules
- Took on new, safer office.
- We closed our shop to the public
- We were able to get to work project with the museum closed
- We're decorations a covid protocol, and modified designs to accommodate greater separation and touch free environment.
- When we try to find new way to discuss and do work in group remotely in the same time but not have the same opportunity and tools.

Client/Constituent Adjustments

- Adjustments in working with federal agencies and submission protocols
- Eliminate in-person, over-the-counter customer interaction

Rethinking

- Created ideas and reports about where the design of our spaces are going
- Evaluated project delivery methods, and looked closely at fee structure

New or Expanded Markets

- I am working with the local historical society on an exhibition that requires extensive research.
- Instead of doing a couple of special restoration projects a year, I have hired more artisan Trades people and apprentices to actively bid more restoration work.