



Skills for Cities

April 2022

Impact Report

Bringing the
Power of
Pro Bono to
North Carolina



Bringing the Power of Pro Bono to North Carolina

Common Impact's Spring 2022 Skills for Cities event - held during National Volunteer Week - was dedicated to strengthening nonprofit organizations across North Carolina. As the demand for their vital services increased during the pandemic, so did their needs for greater capacity and stronger, more resilient infrastructure.

An incredible group of volunteers and social impact leaders collaborated to address those critical nonprofit challenges. The result? Increased capacity, new connections, and fresh perspectives on the ways we can all work together to build up communities.

Read on for more about our collective impact.

Volunteer Reflections

"Being able to use my skills to help someone in need is amazing. **I have volunteered before, but I never felt as helpful as I did at this event.**"

"I went into this hoping that I could have some kind of impact, but **I came away feeling like not only was I a help, I want to do more.**"

"It was the **most fulfilling and rewarding experience** I've had using my skills in a work setting."



Impact Snapshot



Volunteers provided skills-based support for:

- Marketing & Branding
- Human Resources
- Technology
- Operations
- Client Relations & Sales

Community Leadership in the Wake of COVID

As part of Skills for Cities, Common Impact gathered a group of nonprofit and corporate leaders for a Community Conversation on the changing face of community leadership and why collaboration, cross-sector partnerships, and capacity building are vital to responding to the pressing challenges such as COVID-19, racial inequity, and climate change.

Moderated by Elizabeth Schwan-Rosenwald, Chief Program Officer at Common Impact, the conversation featured Jarian Kerekes of Equitable, Laura Yates Clark of United Way of Central Carolinas, Sherri Chisholm of Leading on Opportunity, and Leslie Walden of Fidelity Investments.

[Watch the full conversation](#)



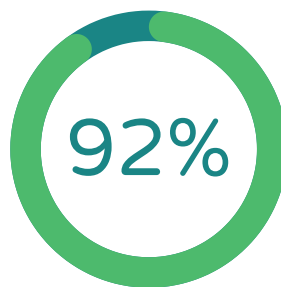
"Skills for Cities was a great experience for our nonprofit. [Our volunteers] saved us a lot of time researching a pain point we were experiencing in our processes, opened our eyes to a new way of looking at the problem, and gave us a deliverable that we can expand upon and share with our Board of Directors."

- *Melissa Mericle,*
Dan River Basin Association

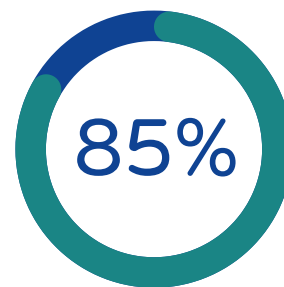
"Our volunteers leveraged their expertise to provide us with very tangible and practical actions we could take to improve our processes and achieve better, faster, and cheaper results."

- *Kerr Collins,*
Habitat for Humanity Charlotte

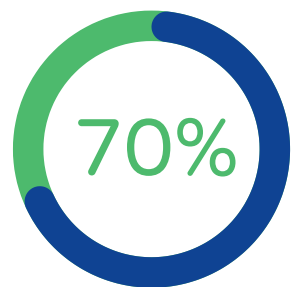
Nonprofit Impact



agreed they will be able to **use the project deliverable** within the next **12 months**



said it has made them **think about approaching** their work in a **new way**

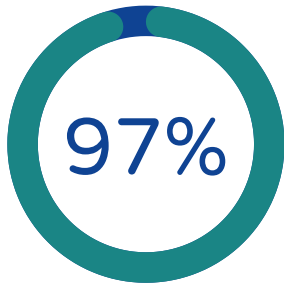


said they **made a new connection to an employee or company**

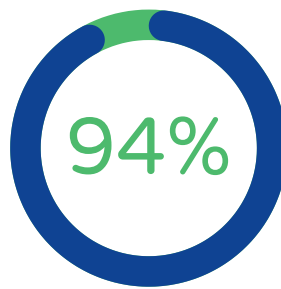
Volunteer Perspectives



said the event was a **valuable professional development opportunity**



strongly agreed or agreed that their work at **Skills for Cities** made a real difference for the nonprofit



said **working on a multi-company team was useful**

"Collaborating with peers, critical thinking, and problem-solving are all things most of us use daily and can always improve upon. This was an opportunity to sharpen those skills and exercise those muscles in a new and energizing way."

- **Sarah LeBlanc, TIAA**

"I really enjoyed the collaborative effort of working with people from different organizations and giving back by using my skillset to help them grow."

- **Tarisha Rush, Equitable**

73% of volunteers were new to skills-based volunteering. In just one day, volunteers reported sharpening these skills:

Collaboration & Teamwork

Client Focus & Empathetic Approach

Creative Thinking & Innovation

Problem-Solving & Navigating Ambiguity

Leadership & Strategic Thinking



Project Spotlight



As the pandemic wanes and Raleigh Little Theatre (RLT) prepares to reboot its programming, the arts organization is ensuring its staffing practices align with its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) values. RLT came to Skills for Cities ready to focus on enhancing its recruitment and hiring guidelines to be more equitable.

A cross-company team of volunteer experts in human resources, business analysis, and process optimization assessed RLT's guidelines and performed a gap analysis, asking staff questions that challenged them to think critically about their barriers to recruiting diverse candidate pools. Through these conversations, the volunteers compiled DEI best practices and a checklist breaking down RLT's three overarching needs – attracting, evaluating, and onboarding talent – into key categories with recommendations sorted from most urgent to longer-term or back burner ideas.

This thoughtful deliverable is empowering RLT's small team to take on individual action items on its way toward achieving its DEI objectives.



"It was so wonderful to talk through challenges that I am so passionate about with an experienced team that was ready to offer help, resources, and new eyes. It's hard to know where to start with some challenges, and this was incredibly helpful. I am so grateful!"

- Alicia Grey, Finance & Operations Manager, Raleigh Little Theatre



"My understanding of social injustice issues was strengthened through helping Raleigh Little Theatre in their recruiting efforts, specifically their talent acquisition process to ensure the recruitment of diverse talent. It was such a pleasure participating in valuable work to help this wonderful community theatre group meet their needs and really rewarding to be able to utilize my skills and collaborate with other talented professionals!"

- Vivian Unks, Employee Relation Leadership Partner, Equitable

To our Skills for Cities
partners and participants,

thank you.

We hope you will continue
using your skills to support
nonprofit organizations in
your community and beyond.



EQUITABLE



Want to join us in October for the next Skills for Cities?
We'll be partnering with nonprofit organizations with missions
focused on sustainability & climate justice and racial justice &
equity. [Read more](#) and [reach out today](#) to get involved.

www.commonimpact.org