

STATE OF NONPROFITS 2026

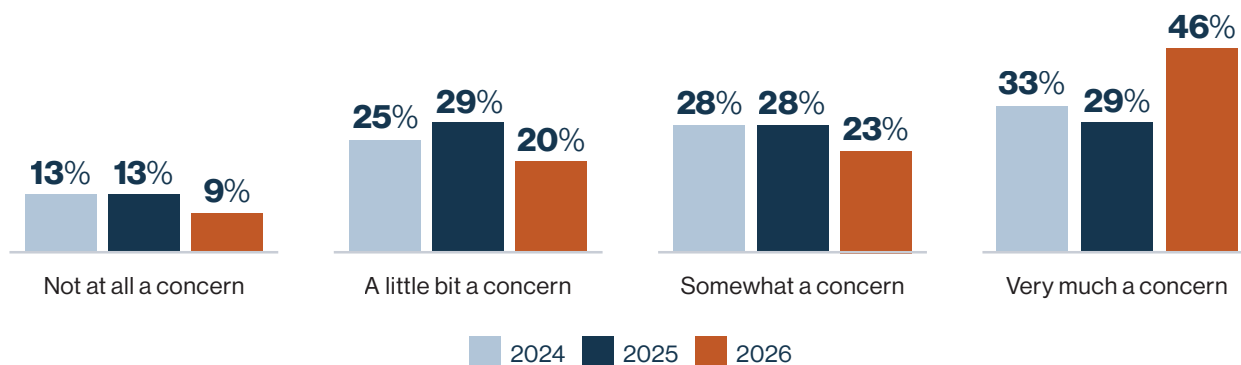
What Funders Need to Know

Key Findings:

1. Burnout has increased dramatically among nonprofit CEOs.
2. Nonprofit CEOs report more difficulty obtaining foundation funding.
3. Many nonprofits are making strategic adaptations to their work in order to survive.

1 Burnout has increased dramatically among nonprofit CEOs, who say the current context has contributed to lower staff morale and heightened levels of stress and fear.

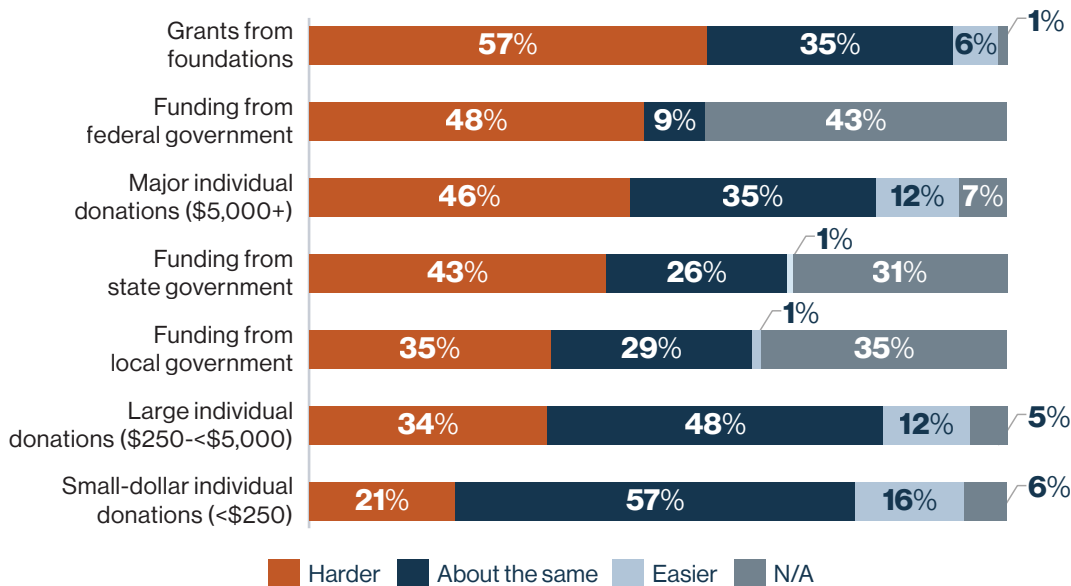
Nonprofit CEOs' Levels of Concern About Their Own Burnout, 2024-2026 (Ns=239-584)



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 because respondents could also select "I am not the executive director, CEO, or equivalent."

2 Nonprofit CEOs report more difficulty obtaining foundation funding than in previous years.

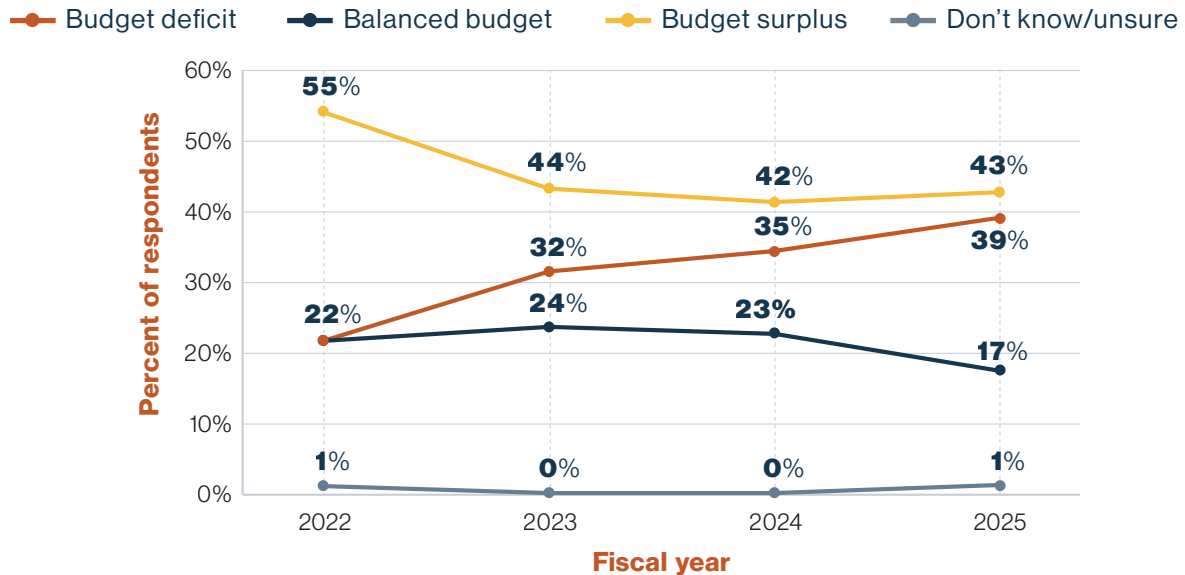
Change in Level of Difficulty Nonprofits Report in Getting Funding Since January 2025 (N=377-378)



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

3 Despite ongoing financial challenges, many nonprofits are making strategic adaptations to their work in order to survive.

Trends in Fiscal Year Budget Status, 2022-2025 (Ns=239-583)



Actions to Improve Sustainability: Nonprofit CEOs report considering taking such actions as pursuing funding from new/existing donors, refraining from planned cost increases related to staff, using reserve funds, and reducing programming/services to improve their organization's finances.

Questions this raises for boards

1. What, if anything, is your foundation doing to support the well-being of nonprofit CEOs and staff in the current context?
2. How is your foundation approaching conversations with nonprofits about their budget constraints and how this affects their ability to work toward their mission?

Resources to learn more

- The Center for Effective Philanthropy: "[Foundation Governance Today: How Boards and CEOs Are Navigating Risk, Accountability, and a Shifting Landscape](#)"
- The Center for Effective Philanthropy: "[A Sector in Crisis: How U.S. Nonprofits and Foundations Are Responding to Threats](#)"
- Grantmakers for Effective Organizations: "[Toward Meaningful, Valuable, Equitable Governance](#)"
- BoardSource and Fund for Shared Insight: "[Authorized Voice & Power in the Boardroom: Reimagining Governance to Fulfill Philanthropy's Purpose](#)"

If your staff or board is interested in learning more, or if you would like someone from CEP to facilitate a conversation with your board based on these findings, please reach out to CEP Vice President of Research, Elisha Smith Arrillaga, elishas@cep.org.

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