



WV Trails Conference

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The Hub

West Virginia Community
— Development Hub —

Leveling Up Your Volunteer Program

Tips, Tricks and Action Steps



Who are we?



**Amanda
Workman Scott**
Director of Community
Engagement



**Olivia
McConnell**
Community Coaching
Programs Associate



THE Hub
West Virginia Community
— Development Hub —



What do we do at West Virginia Community Development Hub?

At The Hub, we work with teams of West Virginians to define the future they want to see and build the skills and connections to get there. We believe that when West Virginians leverage the opportunities and tools they need to make positive change, they create a transformational impact in their communities. We believe that every West Virginia community has assets available today that

enable them to build:

- New economic opportunities*
- Vibrant community environments that reflect their unique identities and histories and*
- Networks of engaged residents who believe in their ability to create the changes they want to see and who are prepared to work together to make them happen*



**What are we
talking about
today?**

Surveying the Landscape:

- **Understanding the ups & downs**
- **The 3Fs of volunteering**
- **Ways to engage**

What You Can Do Today:

- **Take stock of what you are currently doing**
- **Identify what you want to be doing. What are your goals?**
- **Plan your roadmap**

Part 1

Surveying The Landscape

*Understanding the Ups + Downs, The 3Fs of Volunteer Programs,
and Tools and Resources*





Let's survey the landscape...

Before we begin, let's take a temperature check in the room...

- **Who currently has a volunteer program at their org or as part of their project?**
- **Who is looking to start a volunteer program at their org or as part of their project**
- **Who is just here to learn today?**

What is the state of volunteerism in our state?

- 32.1% of residents ages 16 and older reported volunteering in the past 12 months, dipped slightly below national average of 33%
- Average WV volunteer serves approximately 40 hours / year
- Rough value of volunteer time in WV last year: \$2,135,984,882



What else do we know about volunteers in WV?

Who makes up a large pool of these volunteers?

Typical volunteers in WV are over 46 years old, identify as female, and identify as white

What kinds of service opportunities do they engage in?

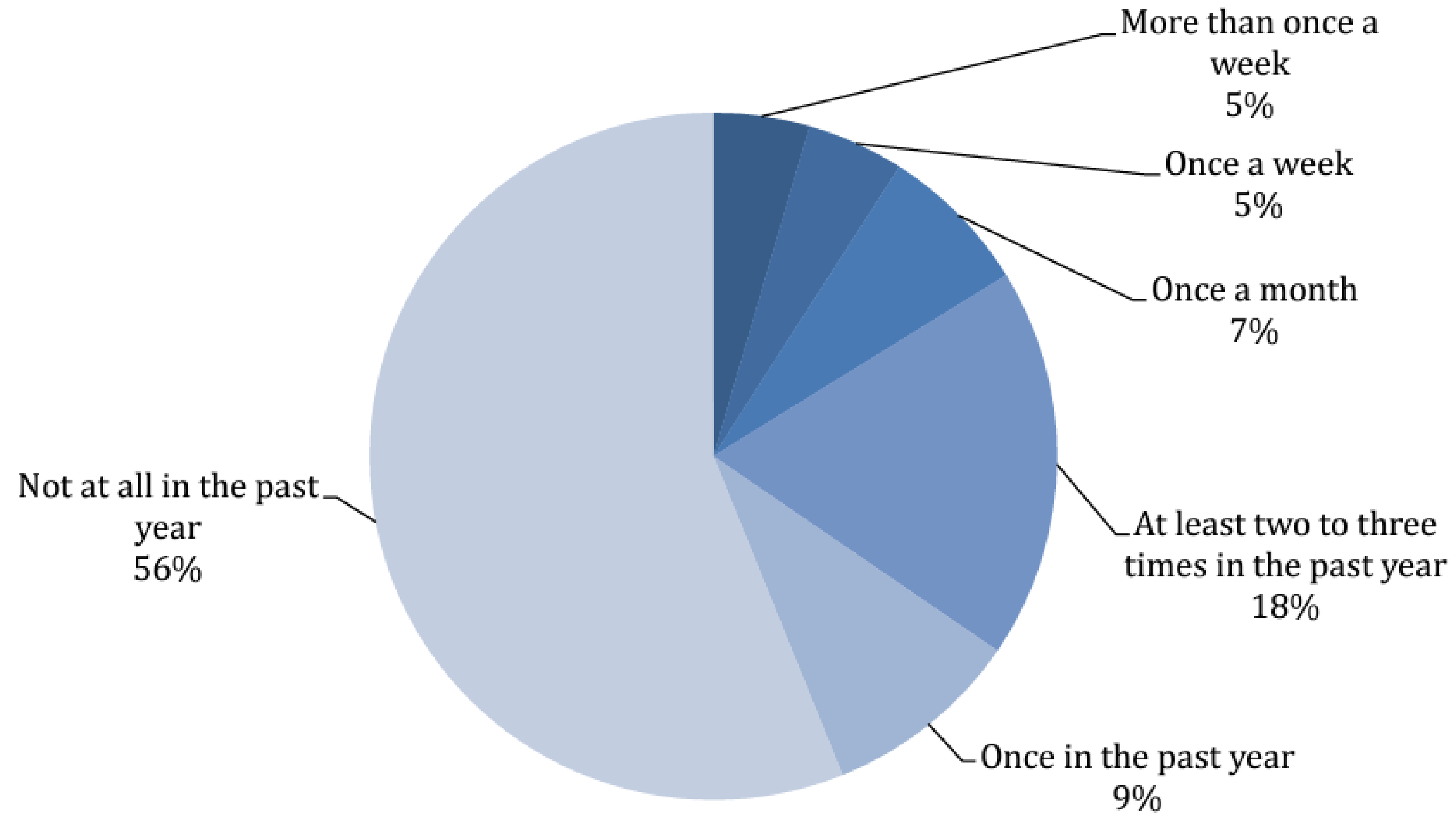
The top four are religious, educational, social service, and health

What kinds of activities do they do?

Most frequent volunteer activities are coaching, refereeing, tutoring, or mentoring



Figure 1 - During the Past Twelve Months, How Often Have You Done Volunteer Work for a Charity?



11%

**of volunteer
organizations have
ceased operating in the
US since March 2020**

2 of 3

**people report that they
help their neighbors
regularly, even if they
don't see it as
volunteering**





**So then, why do
volunteer programs
not succeed?**



**Let's look on the
flipside:
What does make a
volunteer program
succeed?**




**A volunteer program
is only as good as
it's limits...and that's
okay!**

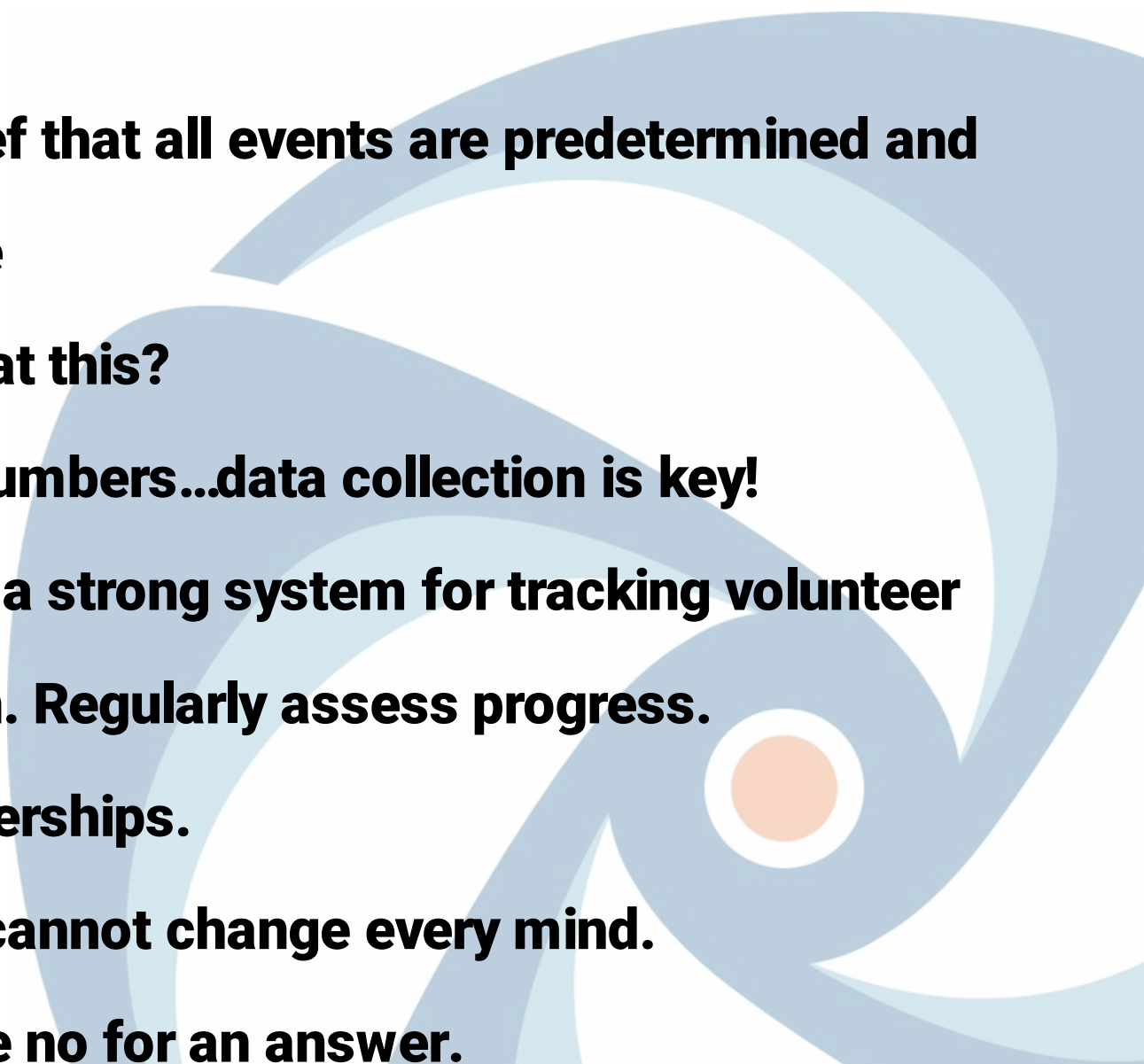
- **Limits exist, but that doesn't mean that you have to be limited in how you expand your program.**
- **But...you do need to keep certain things in mind as you test those limits...how you approach these limits is up to you.**



Fatigue

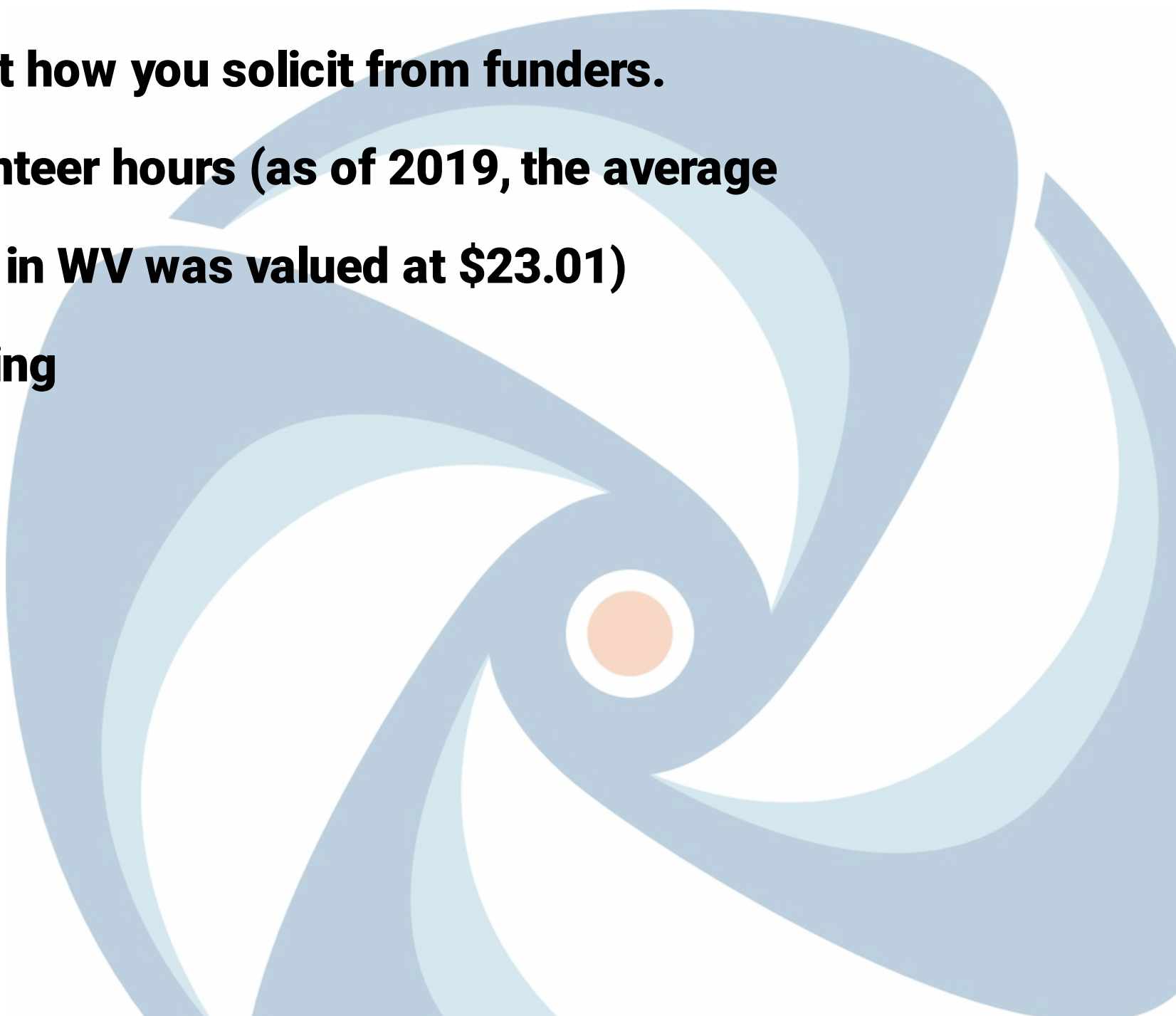
- **Connect to the purpose**
 - **Doing something they care about and want to be doing**
 - **Create an achievable position description**
 - **Be flexible**
 - **Set guidelines at the beginning**
 - **Create an environment that is welcoming**
 - **Be supportive and understanding**
 - **Say thank you!**
- 

Fatalism

- How many times have you heard:
 - “We have always done things this way, why should we change?”
 - “Things have always been this way, how can we make a change?”
 - Fatalism: the belief that all events are predetermined and therefore inevitable
 - How do we combat this?
 - Have the numbers...data collection is key!
 - Implement a strong system for tracking volunteer participation. Regularly assess progress.
 - Build partnerships.
 - Know you cannot change every mind.
 - Take no for an answer.
- 



Finances

- **Be cautious of how you solicit from volunteers.**
 - **Be smart about how you solicit from funders.**
 - **Track the volunteer hours (as of 2019, the average volunteer hour in WV was valued at \$23.01)**
 - **Leverage funding**
- 



So, what can I do about it?

01

Engage with partners

02

Engage outside helpers

03

Engage in ongoing learning



Engage with partners

Engaging with partners allows you to maximize your efforts across organizations and can prevent duplicated efforts or pulling too much from a limited pool.

It's important to check assumptions and ask questions!

Questions to ask in building partnerships for volunteer programs:

01

What are our shared values?

02

How long will we partner? (Is there an end date? Are we on the same page about it?)

03

What are our shared long-term outcomes?





Engage with outside helpers

There may be organizations or programs out there that can support your work, meeting large project needs or building capacity over time.

Consider cost of these opportunities vs. what you will leverage.

Some helpers you could engage...

01

Colleges/higher education institutions

02

Service groups, i.e. Praying Pelicans, Appalachian Service Project

03

AmeriCorps projects in West Virginia





Engage in ongoing learning

Continual learning is a great tool to make sure your program doesn't go stagnant

Learning is more than just attending trainings and webinars (like this one!)



Where are places you can learn?

01

Continue to attend trainings and webinars

02

Meeting with and building relationships with regional experts

03

Your current volunteers!

Part 2

What You Can Do Today





It's time to take stock of your program

Even if your program is new or fledgling, it's a good idea to check in with where you are, and where you want to go.

How do we do this?

Data, data, data!



How do I do that?

Regular, unbiased assessment and good tracking mechanisms.
Here are some tips:

Just ask!

It's okay to ask people for feedback – they may not say yes right away, and they might say no all together.

Be transparent!

Think through how and when your data will be shared, and with whom.

Don't reinvent the wheel!

Use existing tools to help you create your assessments. Some examples include public image/needs assessments, and pre/post assessment tools.



A general word on tracking...

- **Record keeping is something that is incredibly important, incredibly difficult, and incredibly worthwhile.**
- **What should be tracked? That depends!**
- **There are a variety of premade systems, and some you can build or customize to what you need to help keep track.**

Identifying your goals

Action Step 1

Use the data to identify where your gaps are, and where you can improve upon existing systems

Action Step 2

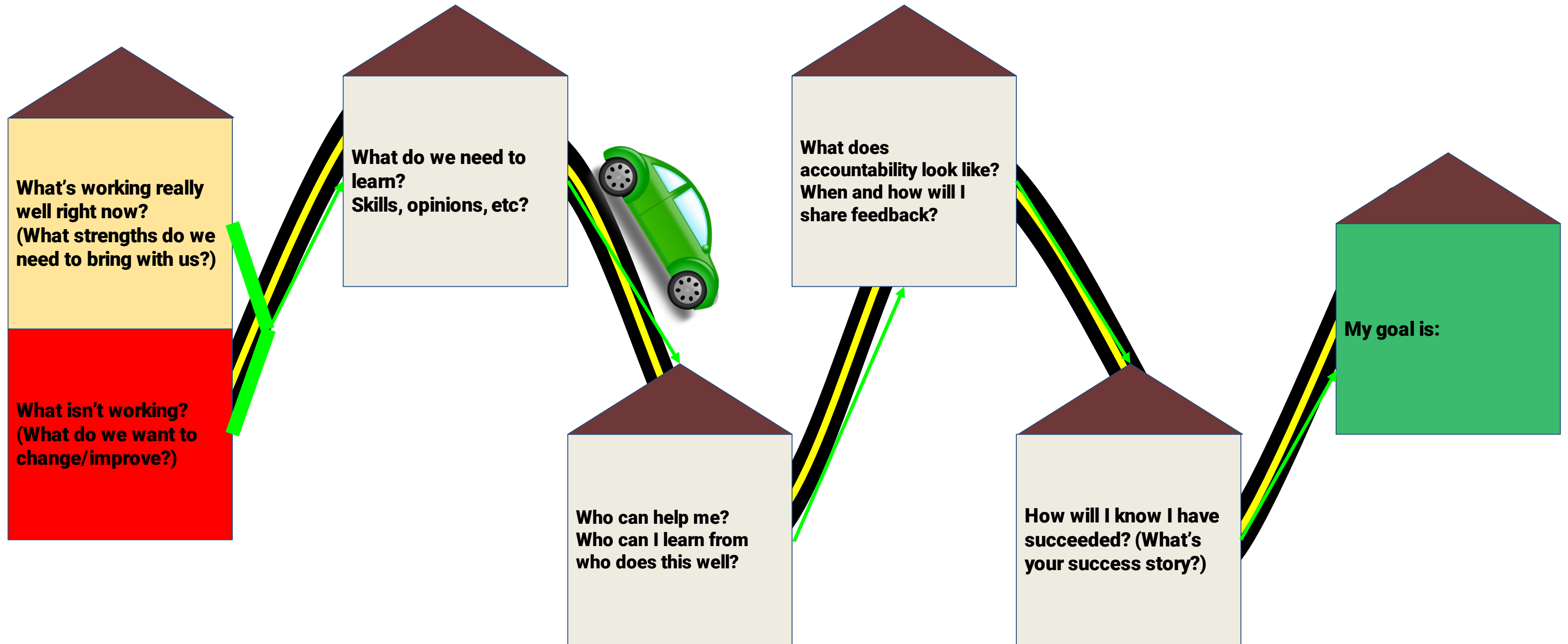
Start coming up with what you need to do along the way towards your identified goal.

Action Step 3

Determine how you will know you have succeeded - what are the metrics/performance indicators of your goals?



What's the road map?



Part 3

Action Step Planning & Discussion

Leveling Up Your Volunteer Program



What we're going to do:

01

You will be broken into groups in just a moment.

02

Start on your roadmap activity, independently. Then work with your group.

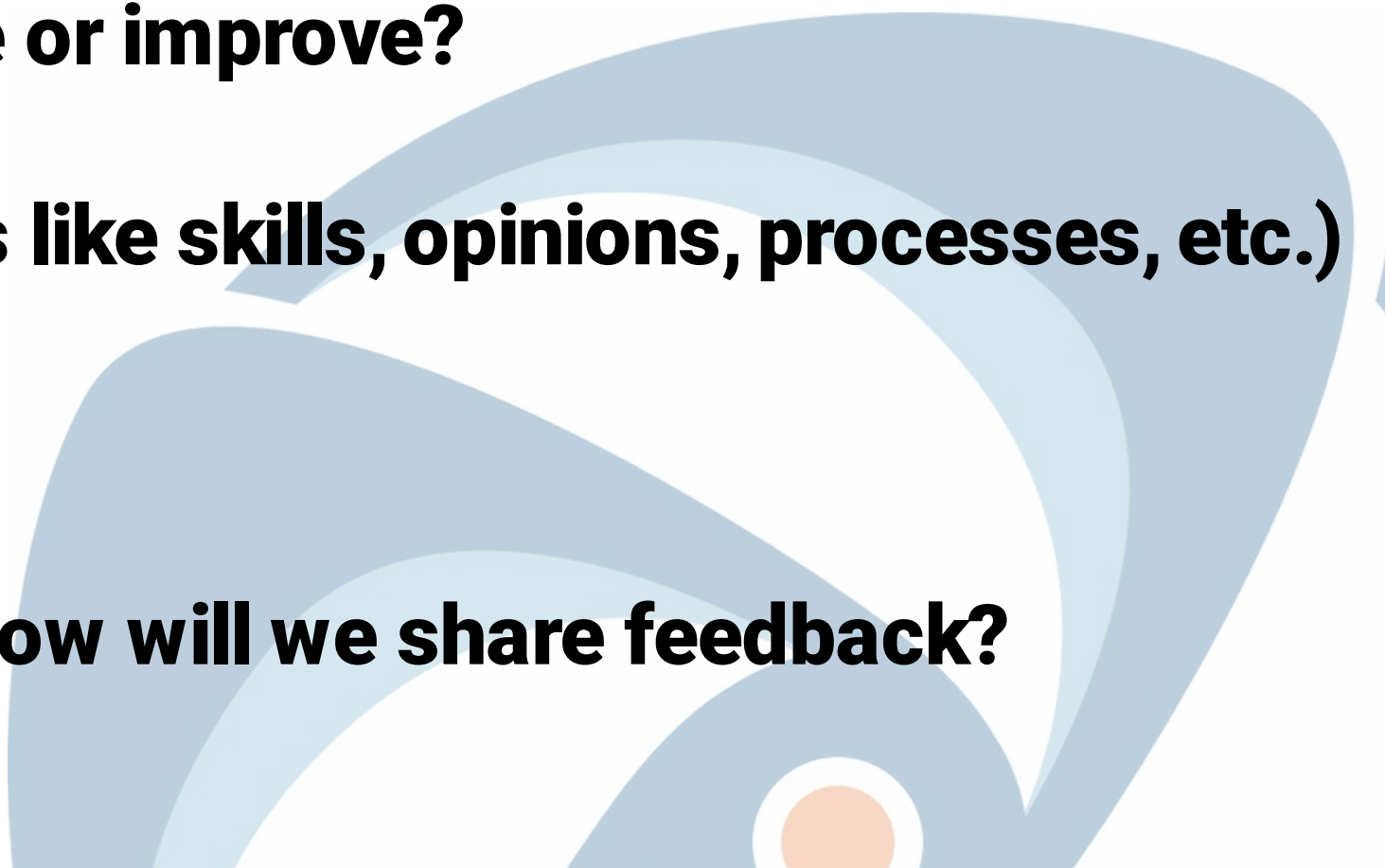
03

Select a spokesperson to share with the room!!





My Road Map

- **What's working well right now? (What strengths do we need to bring with us?)**
 - **What isn't working? What do we want to change or improve?**
 - **What do we need to learn? (These can be things like skills, opinions, processes, etc.)**
 - **Who can help us? Who can we learn from?**
 - **What does accountability look like? When and how will we share feedback?**
 - **How will we know we have succeeded?**
- 
- An abstract graphic on the right side of the slide, consisting of several overlapping, flowing blue shapes that resemble a stylized swirl or a path. A small orange circle is positioned within the lower part of the swirl.



**Contact us if there are
any questions.**

**Thank you for
your time!**

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Helpful Links

Introduction to AmeriCorps

<https://americorps.gov/>

Apply for AmeriCorps Resources

<https://americorps.gov/partner/how-it-works>

VolunteerWV Rural Volunteer Management Training:

<https://volunteer.wv.gov/OtherPrograms/Pages/Rural-Volunteer-Management-Training.aspx>

Tips on Volunteer Surveys

<https://www.initlive.com/blog/volunteer-surveys-tips-and-best-questions-to-ask>

Volunteer Survey Template from Survey Monkey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/volunteer-feedback-survey-template/>

Kickstart Online Learning

<https://wvhub.org/onlinelearning/>

