



Follow the Trends - results of a 2015 national survey of Friends of Library groups

During 2015 Friends of Canadian Libraries, in partnership with Counting Opinions Inc. conducted a national survey collecting information on Friends of Library groups.

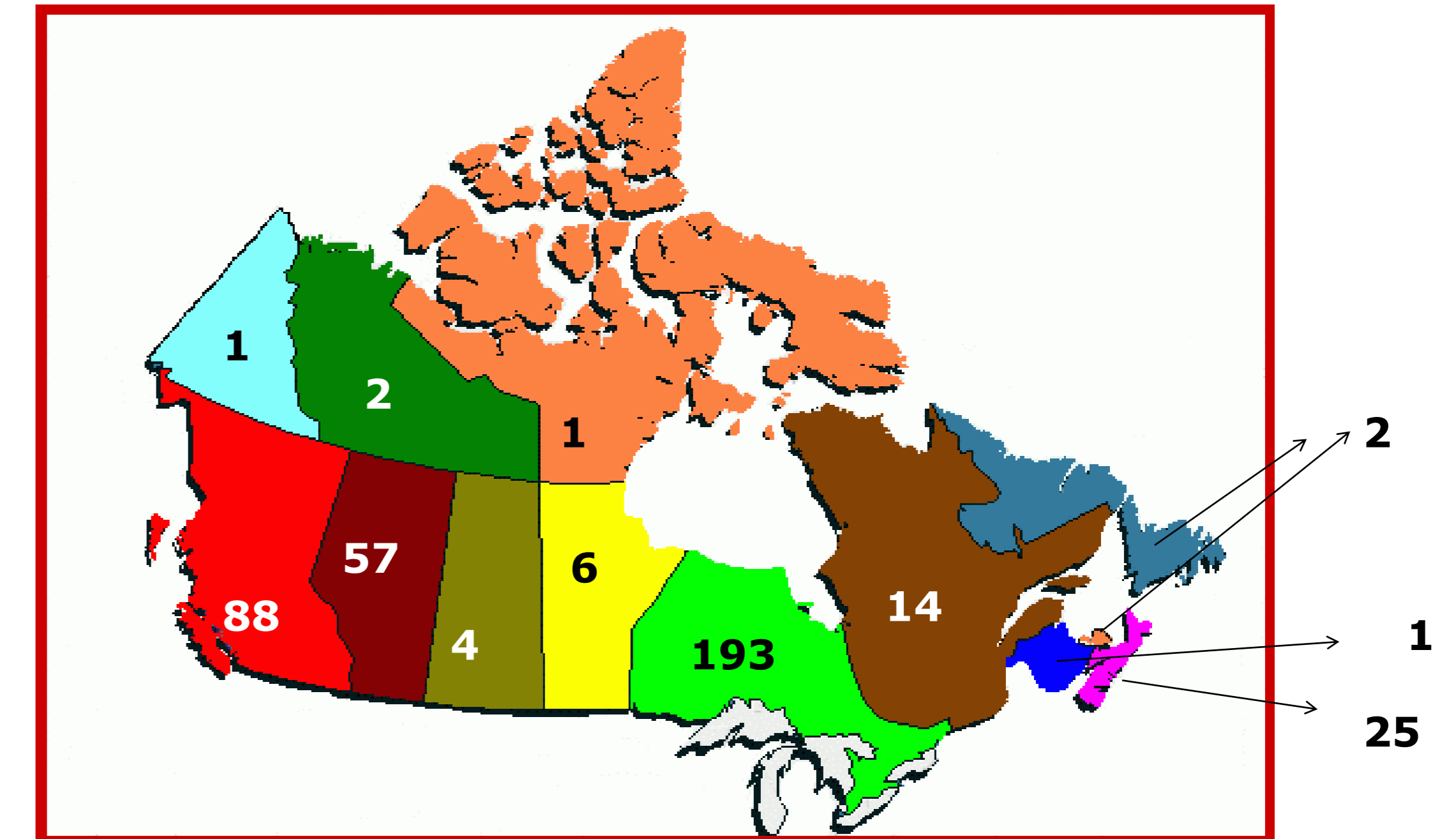
Friends of Libraries are making an impact. Our survey demonstrates that a relatively small number of people focussed on fundraising and advocacy provide tremendous benefits for their library. The funding, volunteer service and goodwill generated by Friends of Libraries results in many libraries being able to enhance and expand their collections, facilities and services, and survive threatened budget cuts.

Friends groups

- The majority of Friends groups (50-60%) have less than 30 members
- In 2015, Friends were more likely to have charitable status than library
- 2015 data report 40% of Friends receive training for basic volunteer procedures; less than 8% receive occupational health & safety training
- Support from the library comes in many forms, ranging from presence on the library website, use of meeting rooms, storage space for books and merchandise, and access to the photocopier
- Member burnout/churn and lack of membership remain the top two barriers to success.

Fundraising and spending

- Very small groups can have astonishing fundraising success
- Booksales remain most popular fundraising activity
- Over 60% report booksales as major or only fundraising activity
- 25% operate a book store
- Only two groups are selling books online; a third outsources this function
- Library furniture and equipment top spending category



There are over 380 Friends of Library groups across Canada.

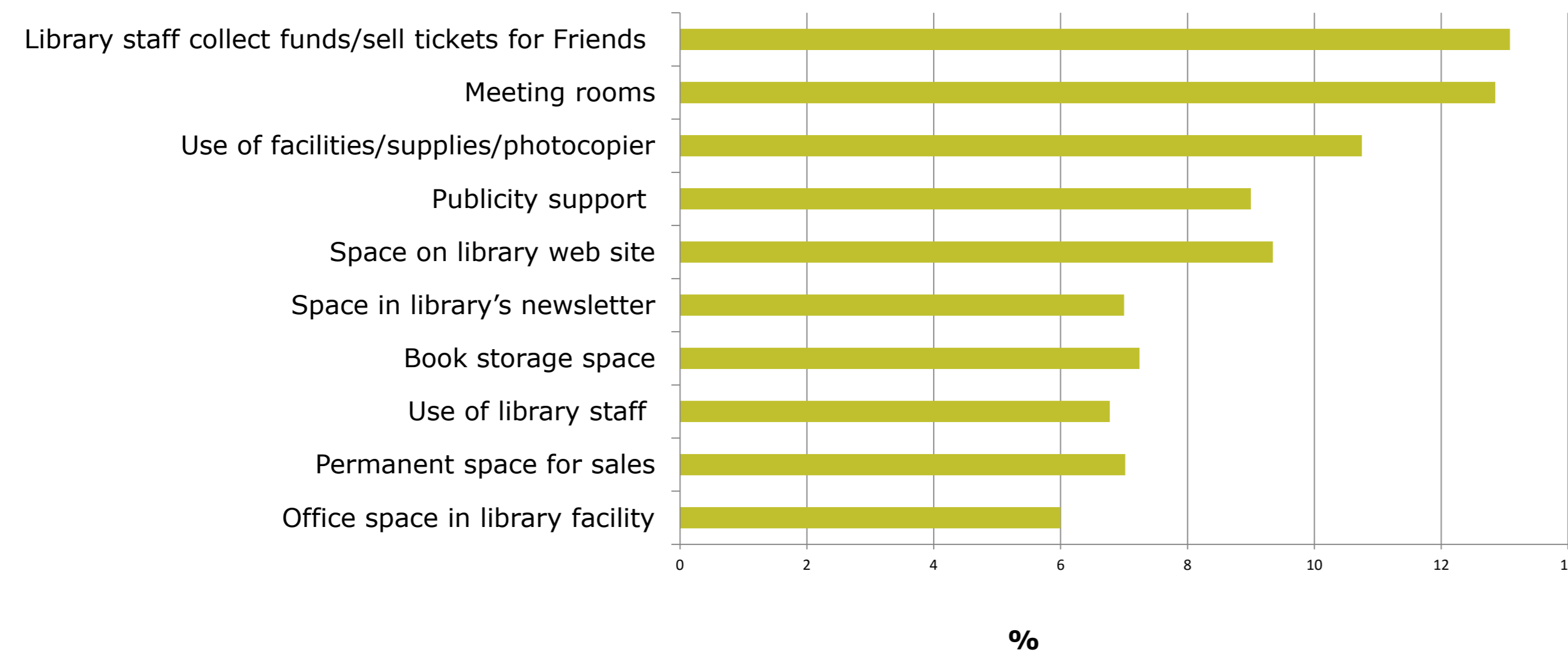
Source: www.friendsoflibraries.ca



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Top ten supports your Friends group receives from the library:



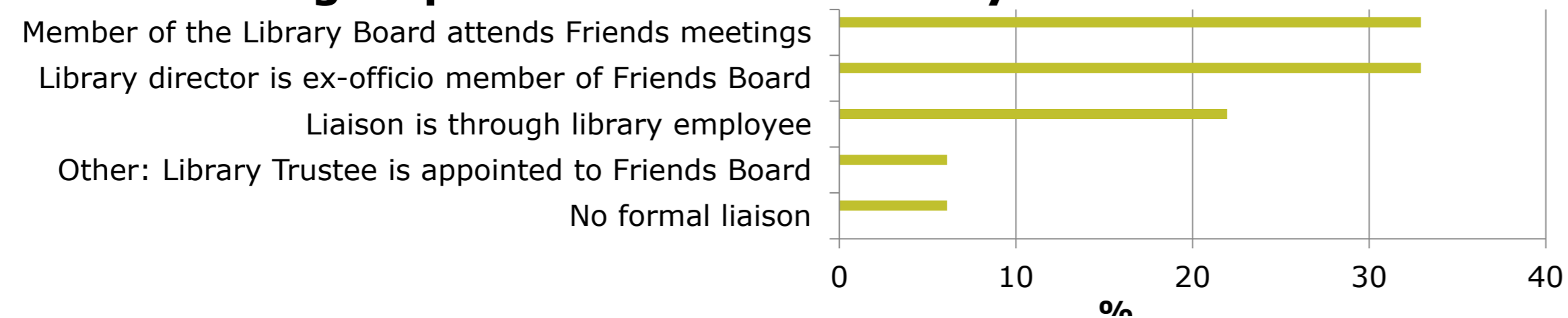
Things that contribute to success of your Friends . . .

- Exceptional leadership
- Central location of library in City
- Committed core of volunteers and excellent support from the library

- Support from Library
- Enthusiasm of volunteers
- Doing worthwhile projects

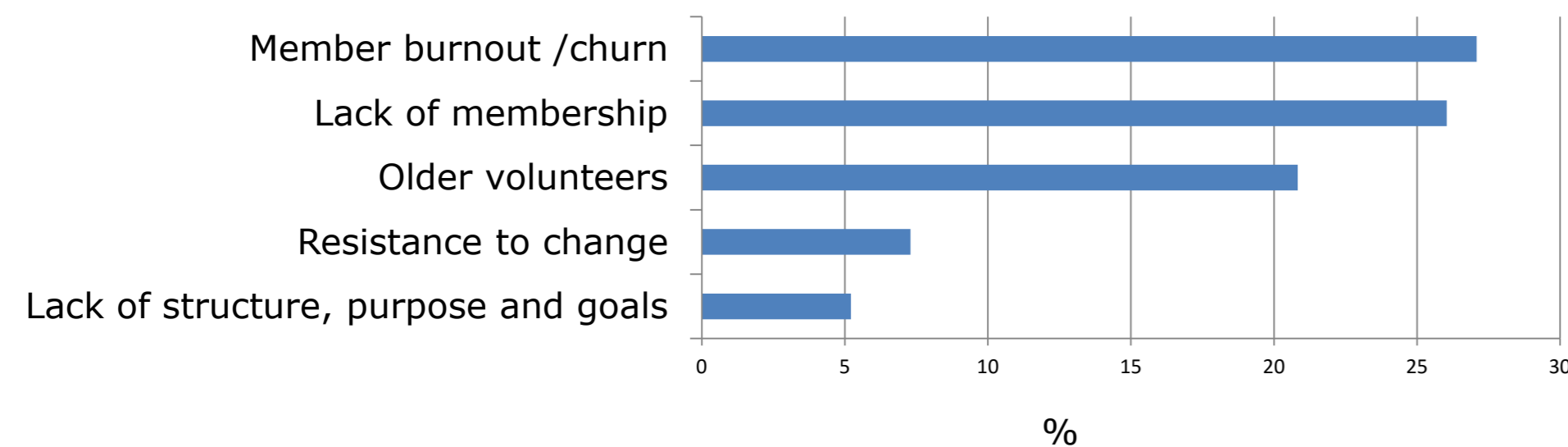
- Widespread belief in the value of a good library
- Commitment of volunteers
- Support from Library Board and Staff

How Friends groups liaise with the library:

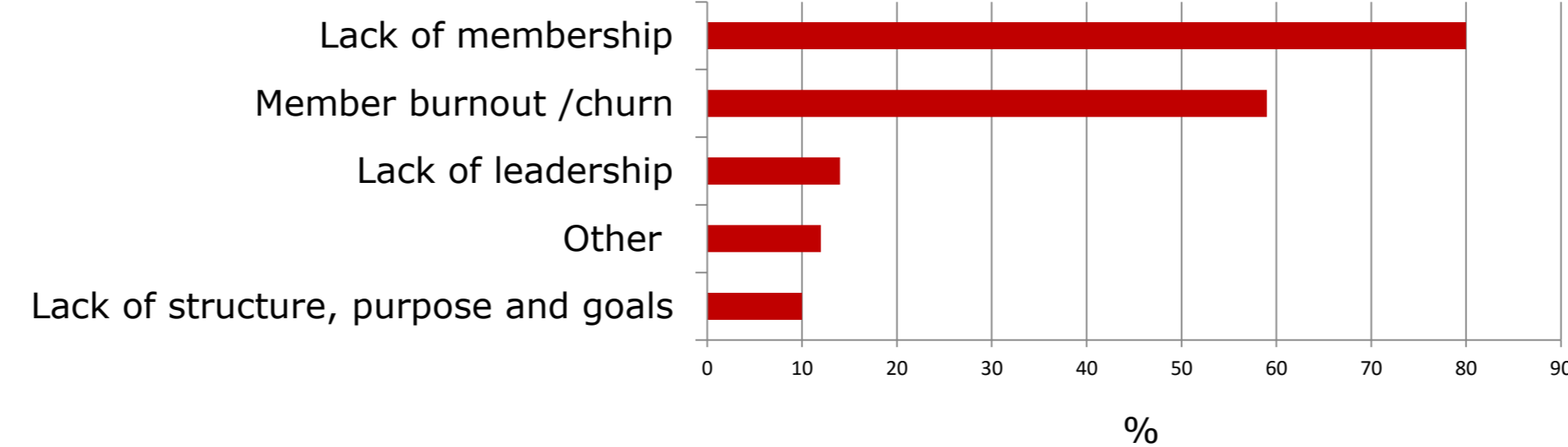


- Enthusiastic Executive
- Reliable volunteers
- Practical and attainable fundraising goals

2015 - Top five barriers that affect the success of your Friends group



2010 - Top five barriers that affect the success of your Friends group

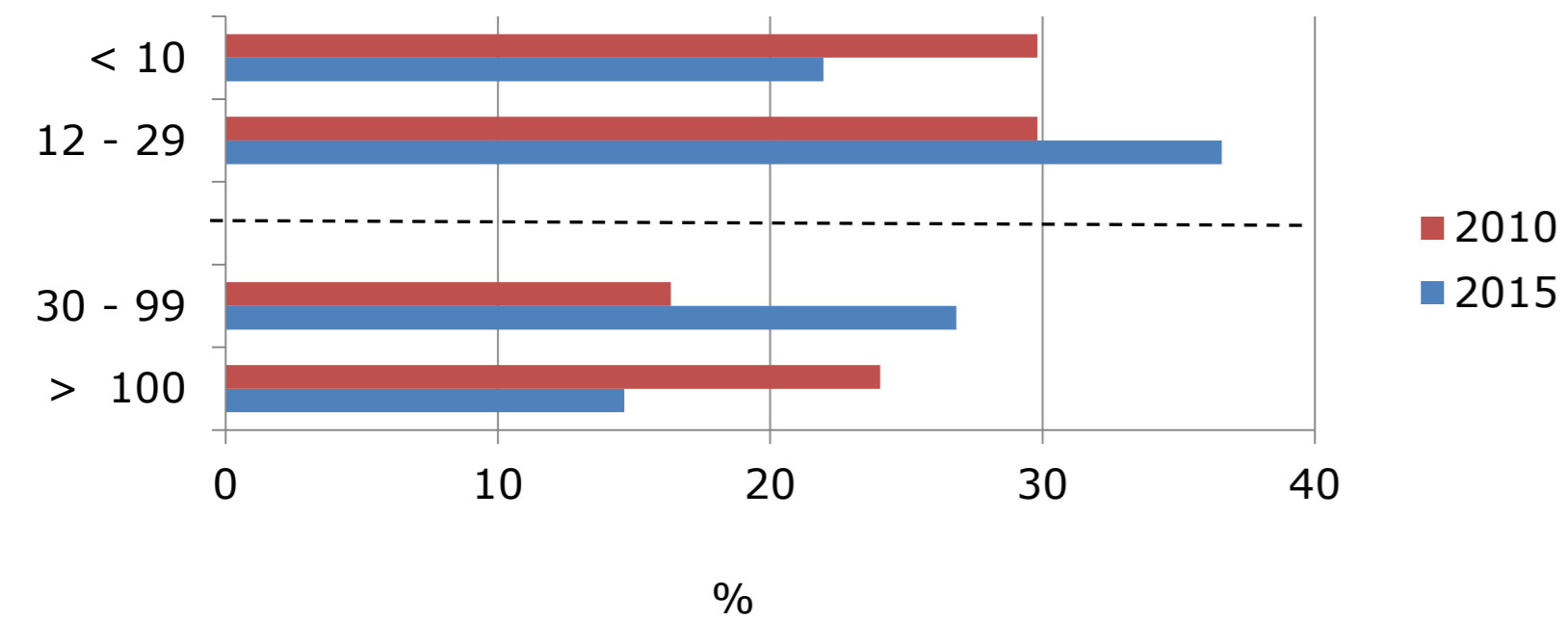


- Only four meetings per year
- Guaranteed cake at every meeting
- Library manager active volunteer in fundraising events



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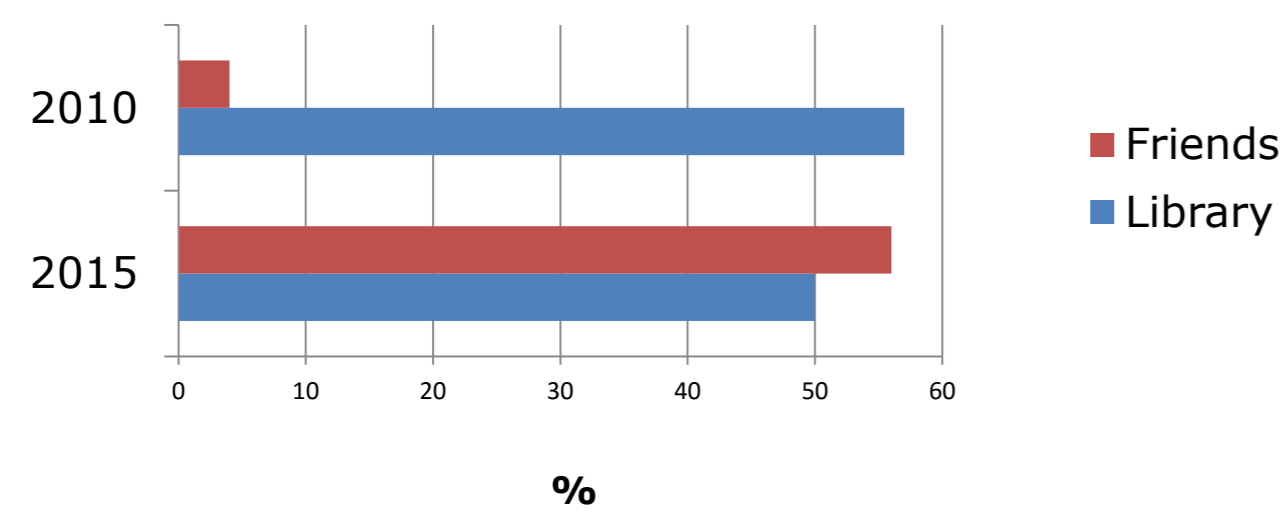
Size of the Friends group



It is true that small groups (less than 10 members) make up 22 – 30% of the Friends groups in Canada.

The majority of Friends groups (50-60%) have less than 30 members.

Charitable Status



In 2010, only 4% of those participating in our survey reported their Friends group had charitable status. In 2015, that number has risen to 56%. In several instances the Friends had charitable status while the library did not.

Revenue

Reported revenue, when compared to size of the Friends group, reflects the reality that very small groups have astonishing success.

Size	Revenue	
	2010	2015
< than 10	\$400 - \$40,000	\$500 - \$75,000
11-25	\$303 - \$16,000	\$1500 - \$42,000
26-90	\$500 - \$55,134	\$1500 - \$30,000
>100	\$500 - \$320,000	\$5000 - \$400,000



Reasons Friends groups ceased operations:

While our survey does not provide a definitive number of those groups which have ended operations, anecdotally we know numbers are increasing.

The survey did indicate some reasons:

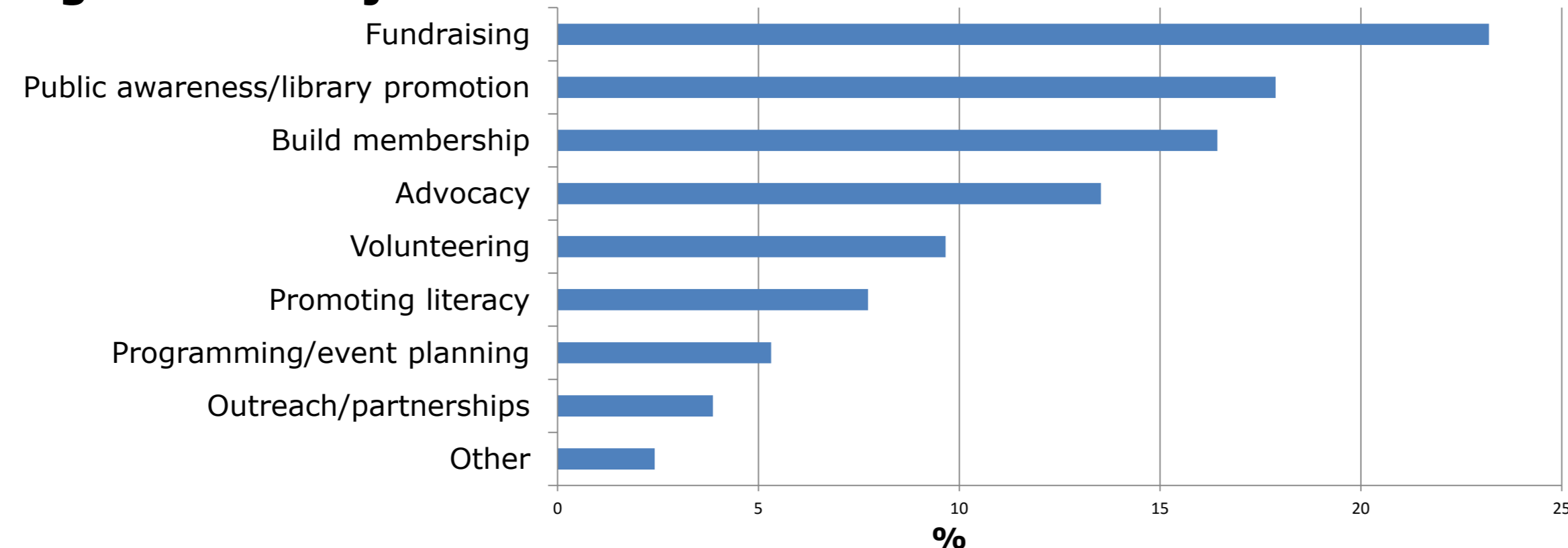
- Lack of volunteers to continue operations
- Lack of volunteers willing to be on the executive
- Cost associated with paying for own insurance
- Friends executive asked library to help by "taking over" the Friends group
- Library incorporated Friends bookstore and volunteers into a volunteer program.



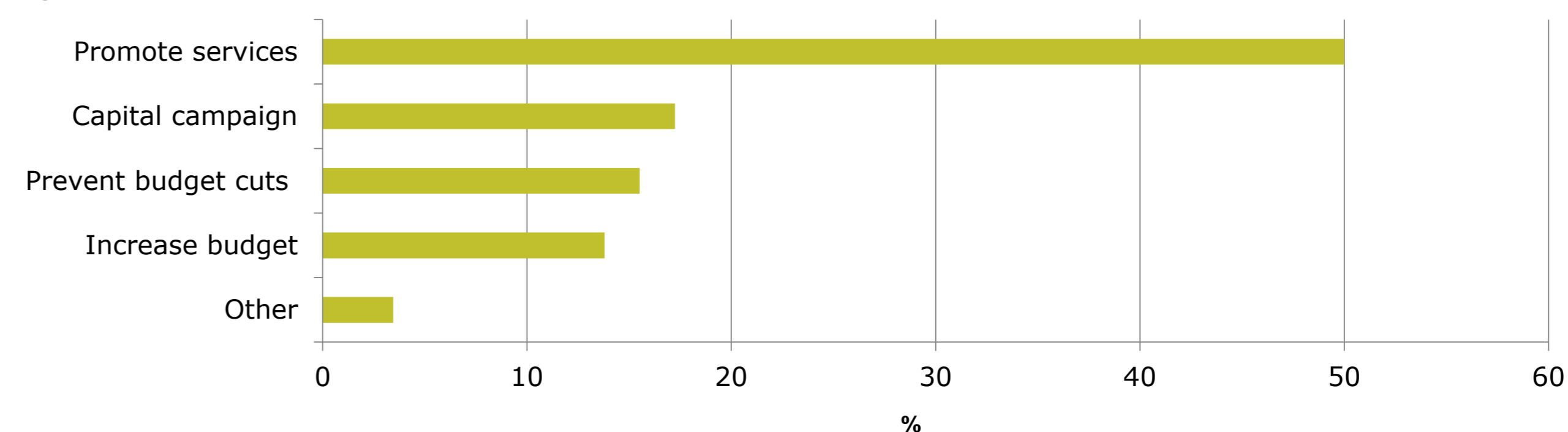
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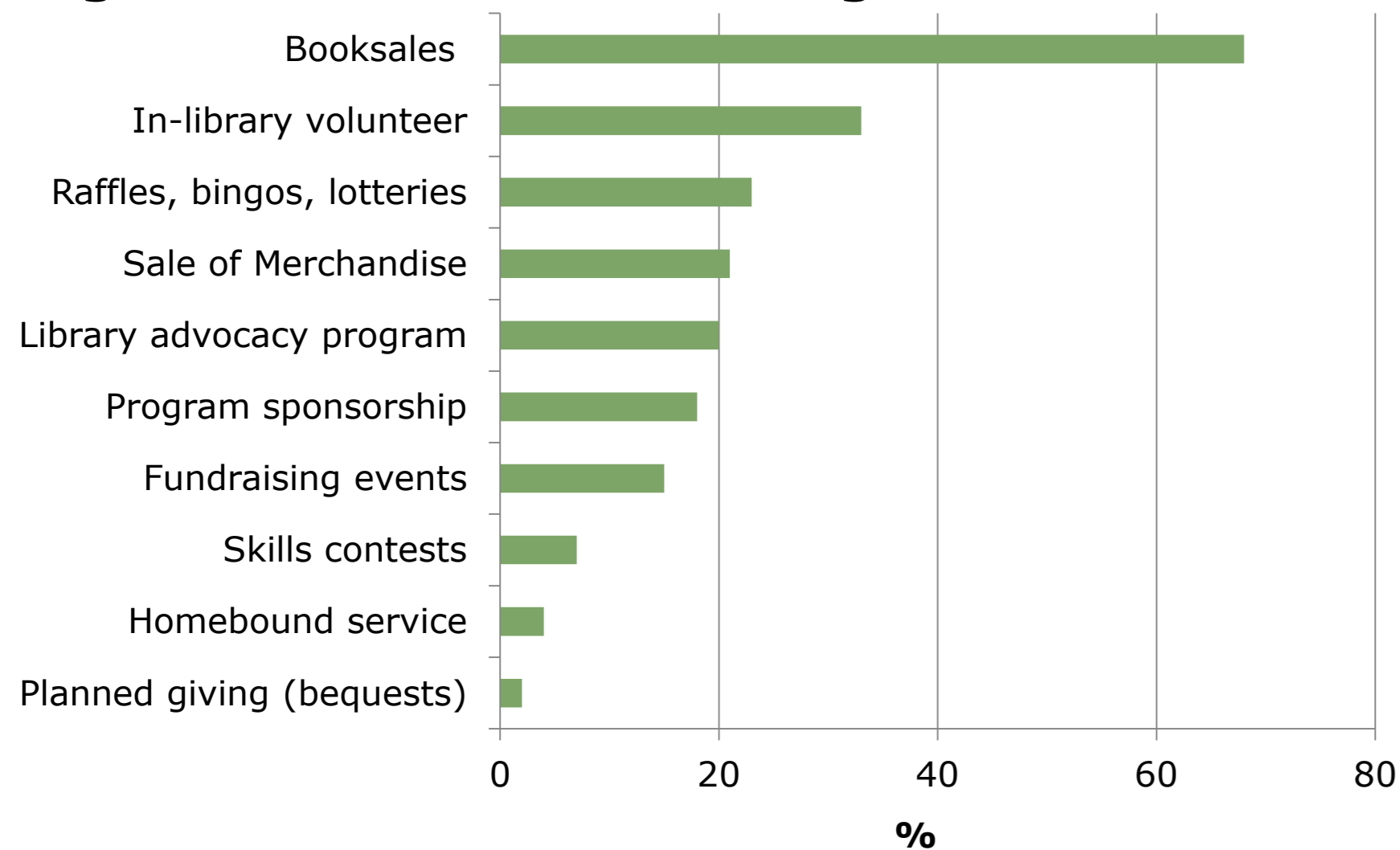
Current goals and objectives:



Objectives of your advocacy efforts in the past 2 years:



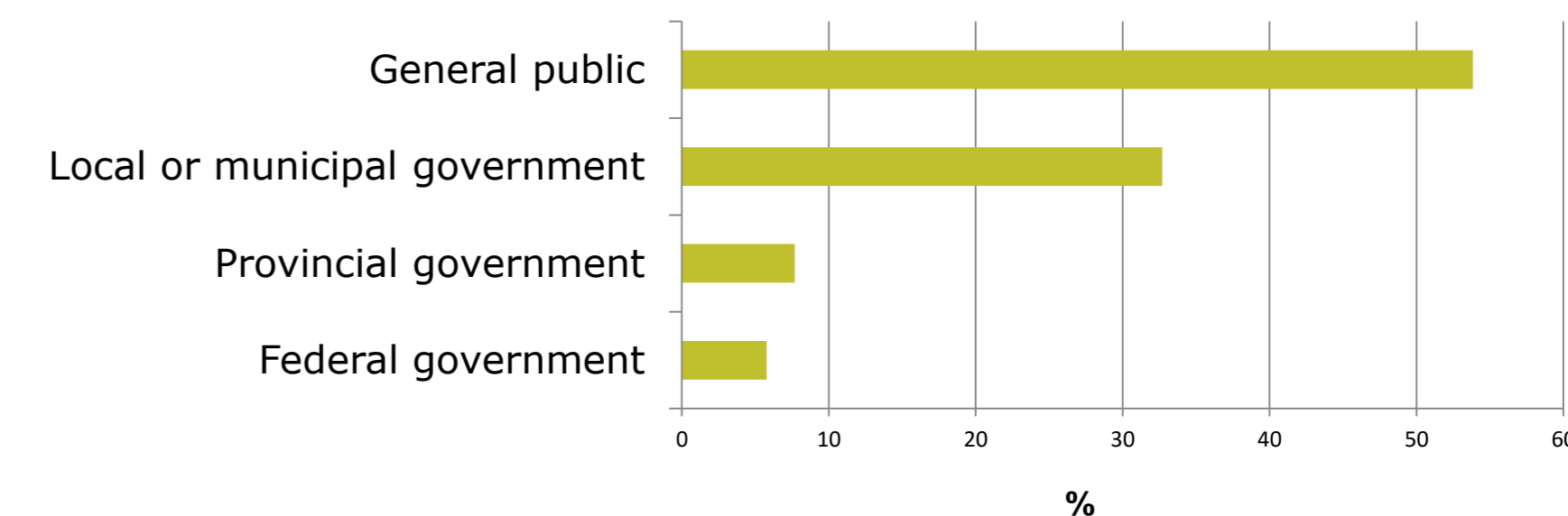
Regular activities/fundraising methods:



Top five revenue streams -

- Book sales
- Grants/awards
- Membership
- In kinds
- Cash donations – individual or corporate

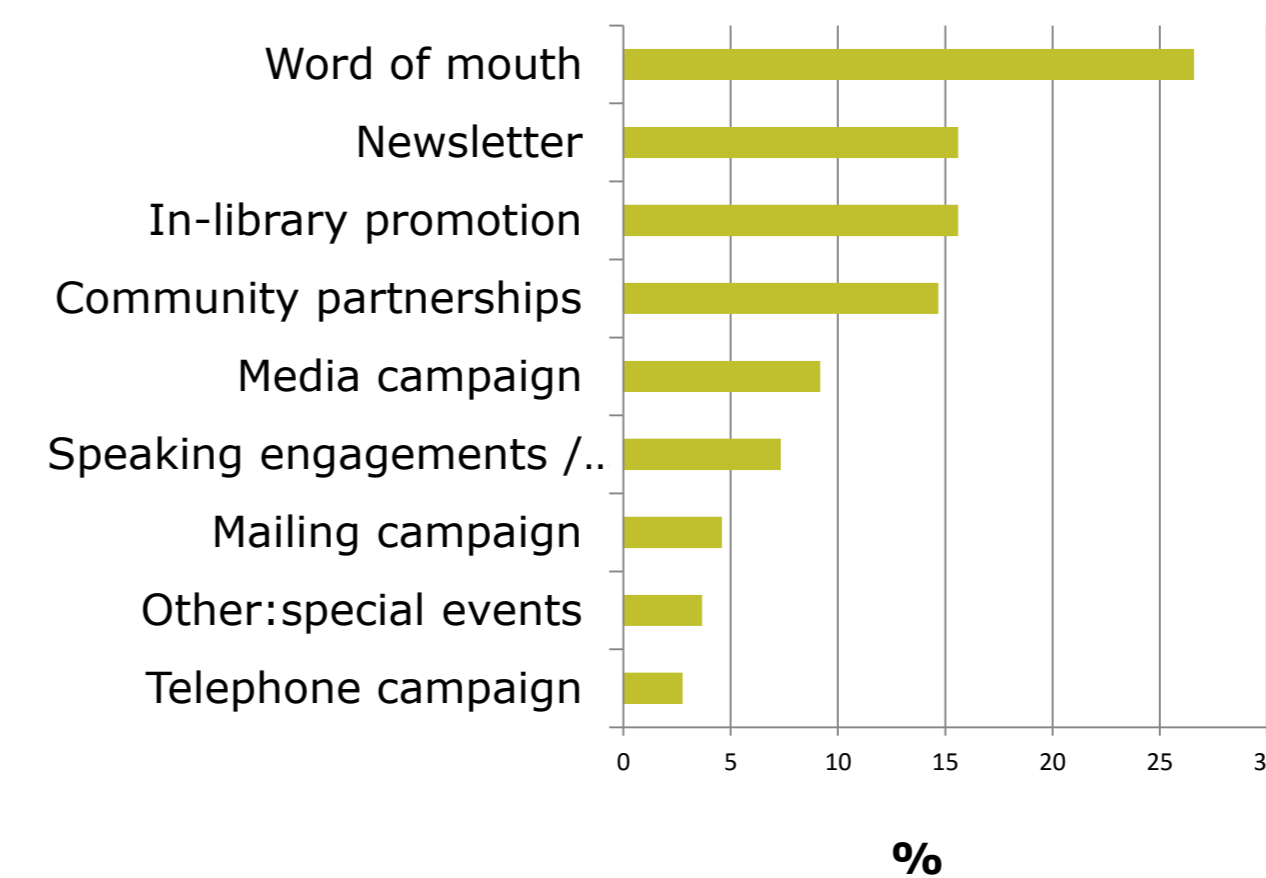
Focus of advocacy efforts:



Top five spending categories -

- Library furniture and equipment
- Library programs
- Library materials e.g., books, videos
- Computer equipment and software
- Cash donation

Methods used for advocacy:



Booksales

