

**A COMPARISON OF MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS
AT PUBLIC GARDENS IN THE UNITED STATES**

by

Stephanie R. Kuniholm

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Public Horticulture

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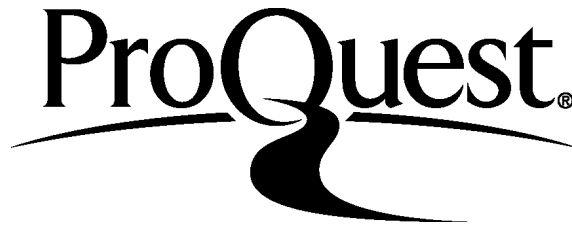
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by

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ABSTRACT

Nonprofit institutions, including cultural attractions such as public gardens, seek revenue from diverse sources, including individual contributions in the form of membership dues. Despite their widespread popularity at cultural institutions, the role and importance of membership programs is not well documented. Based on gaps in previously published research, this study explored similarities and differences in the administration and success of membership programs at public gardens in the United States. The objectives of this research were to distinguish different types of membership programs, signify the role of membership in fundraising initiatives at public gardens, and document the success of membership programs at public gardens.

Quantitative research, including a background study and a survey, recorded information regarding the administration of nearly 300 institutions. Participating gardens were analyzed based on categories of cost (No admission or Yes admission), size based on operating budget (Small, Medium, or Large), and governance (Independent, University, or Municipal). Aspects such as operating budget, visitation, number of memberships, levels, benefits, staffing, member retention rates, revenue generated, and cost of program administration were collected to better analyze administration of membership programs.

The results of this study revealed that while much of membership administration remains the same across garden categories, there were several significant differences based on cost, size, and governance. Three areas of significant difference were observed when comparing No admission gardens with Yes admission

gardens: number of memberships, cost of lowest-level membership, and member retention rates. Similarly garden governance displayed only three areas of significant difference: garden visitation, types of memberships offered, and cost of the lowest level of membership.

The size (operating budget) of the garden most frequently had a significant interaction with the administration of membership programs. Significant interactions based on size were observed in nine different areas: operating budget, total garden FTE (full-time equivalent) staffing, FTE dedicated to membership, garden visitation, cost of admission, number of garden memberships, cost to administer membership program, cost of lowest-level membership, and member retention rate. Most often, the significant differences were observed between Large gardens as compared with Medium or Small gardens; there were almost no significant differences between Medium and Small gardens. Most notably, while visitation, number of memberships, and number of staff increased proportionately along with operating budget, average annual member retention rate was lowest for Large gardens, as compared with Small or Medium gardens.

Through this research, membership programs were found to be valuable in their ability to generate revenue, add prospective donors, and connect people with the mission of the organization. Additionally, this study revealed a great need for defining industry-wide metrics for use in measuring success of membership programs. While there is much room for additional research in terms of defining and tracking the success of membership, this research adds to the body of knowledge that begins to address similarities and differences in membership programs and their role in the fulfillment of mission at public gardens.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

To fund programs, salaries, and support mission, many cultural institutions, including museums and public gardens, seek funding from individuals and granting institutions. In addition to traditional fundraising strategies such as individual giving, corporate sponsorship, planned giving and bequests, and grants, many museums and gardens include membership programs to generate revenue and offset their annual costs (Hughes, 1999).

A fee is generally required to become a member of these cultural institutions and as a result, members gain access to certain privileges, most often free admission to fee-based venues. Higher levels (with higher price) of membership frequently correspond to additional benefits. Many organizations hope to build annual support through memberships, while also cultivating members to become donors of larger gifts (Rich and Hines, 2002).

Despite the widespread presence of membership programs as an important source of revenue, there has been limited published research on the role and purpose of membership programs at museums and cultural institutions (Slater, 2003, 2004), and even less published research on membership programs at public gardens and arboreta. Much of the research on museum membership has focused on member behavior at admission-based institutions, not on the administration of membership programs (Bhattacharya, et al. 1995, 1998; Glynn et al. 1996; Paswan, 2004).

Additionally, much of the published research centers on an individual institution, with very few studies that are national or international in scope.

Based on gaps in previously published research, this study will explore similarities and differences in the administration and success of nearly 300 membership programs at public gardens in the United States. The objectives of this research are to distinguish different types of membership programs, signify the role of membership in fundraising initiatives at public gardens, and document the success of membership programs at public gardens.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction and Overview of Nonprofit Organizations in the United States

Beginnings of the nonprofit sector in the United States go back to the 19th century (Arnsberger, 2008). Early settlers addressed the needs of their communities through “voluntary associations, such as hospitals, fire departments, and orphanages” (Arnsberger, 2008). Since that time, what has become the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has defined and categorized these nonprofit organizations that are distinctly separate from both government and for-profit corporations (Cilella, 2011). By the late 19th century, early stages of the United States Tax Code were forming. In 1954, modern tax code was created, including 501(c)(3) tax exemption for charitable organizations.

According to the IRS, a tax-exempt charitable organization, or 501(c)(3) organization, is defined as an entity that “must be organized and operated exclusively for exempt purposes set forth in section 501(c)(3), and none of its earnings may inure to any private shareholder or individual” (Internal Revenue Service, 2015). Additionally, this exemption restricts “action organizations,” meaning organizations involved in lobbying or other political “campaign activity” (Internal Revenue Service, 2015).

The 501(c)(3) IRS distinction applies to diverse organizations, including charities, religious organizations, and educational institutions, as well as arts and cultural organizations. Investigating further, the umbrella term ‘cultural institution’

includes public gardens, arboreta, and other public horticulture institutions along with museums, theaters, galleries, and zoos.

According to the Urban Institute's Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, in 2013 nearly 1.41 million charitable organizations were registered with the IRS. These nonprofit organizations earned \$258.38 billion in contributions in 2014, up 7.1% from 2013, a rise in giving for the fifth year in a row. The majority of these charitable dollars came from individuals, as opposed to government or corporations. In turn, nonprofits added over \$900 billion to the U.S. economy, or a little over 5 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (McKeever, 2015).

Fundraising in Support of Cultural Institutions

This distinct status defined by the IRS allows cultural organizations, including museums and public gardens, to engage in fundraising activities in support of mission. Museums and gardens primarily exist to fulfill their mission, but for most institutions, mission fulfillment requires financial flexibility attained through skilled fundraising and resource management (McDonald, 2003). Over the last few decades, many museums have increased attention to diversifying and testing new fundraising strategies in light of reduced government funding and inconsistent corporate giving.

It is becoming evident that "policy-makers are moving away from traditional state patronage" leaving museums to look for ways to expand revenue sources (Toepler, 2006). One study went as far as developing a model to assess interactions between fluctuating levels of funding from different sources, with specific attention to fluctuations in state and federal funding of museums (Hughes, 1999).

Many cultural institutions are seeking to develop "diversified income streams" in hopes that "if one revenue source is negatively impacted... than the others can pick

up the slack in a given budget cycle” (Catlin-Legutko, 2012). Similarly, it is widely held that “a diversified portfolio in a museum’s budget is the best protection in any environment” (Cilella, 2011). For museums and gardens, diversified income typically incorporates funding from multiple sources including corporations, government, and individuals. Individual giving often encompasses contributions from personal or family foundations, memberships, bequests, memorials, annual fund, and other gifts (O’Neill, 2002). Again, individual giving accounts for more than three-quarters of private philanthropy (Toepler, 2006).

For philanthropy from individuals, many museums and gardens incorporate a pyramidal approach to donor engagement (Barry, et al., 2010). A large group of donors making small contributions to the organization form the base of the pyramid (Figure 1). Over time, cultural institutions employ various strategies including research, engagement, and donor cultivation to move individuals up the pyramid through major gifts and planned gifts. At the top of the pyramid rests a small number of highly engaged philanthropists. The pyramid is used as a way to understand that “not all donors are equal and not all prospects will pan out” (Ciella, 2011). At most museums and gardens, the large pool of low-level donors at the bottom of the pyramid is engaged with the institution through membership programs, where “membership becomes the donor base for fundraising efforts” (Rich and Hines, 2002).

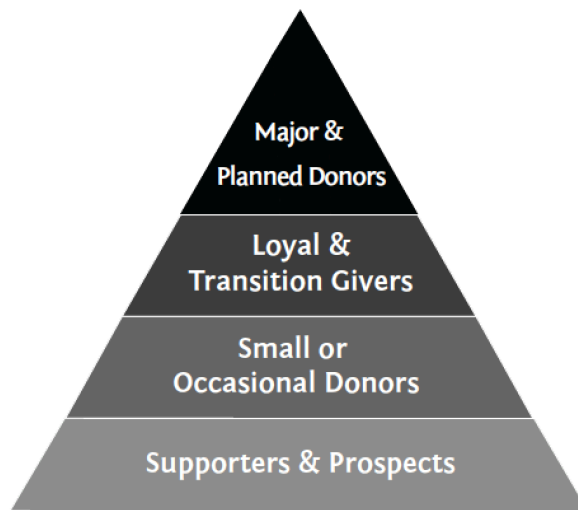


Figure 1 The Fundraising Pyramid (Barry, et al., 2010)

For museums and gardens, membership can often form the bridge between general visitors and philanthropic donors. The goal of many fundraising programs is to move donors from a ‘transactional’ relationship to a ‘transformational’ relationship to the garden or museum (Hodge, 2003). For most fundraising professionals, ‘transactional’ giving relationships refer to an action in return for a good or service: either an ask in exchange for a gift of money, or in terms of membership, a donation in exchange for member benefits. A similar view of transactional members is the ‘value member’, a member “who makes the gift because it is a good value... the member saves money by buying the membership” (Rich and Hines, 2002). While these ‘transactional’ or ‘value’ donor and member relationships are certainly beneficial, fundraisers seek to move donors into a ‘transformational’ relationship with the organization, in which, “donors meaningfully share of themselves and their assets” (Hodge, 2003).

In addition to serving as an entry-point for donors, membership programs at museums and gardens also provide another source of earned revenue along with income derived from admission fees, parking charges, gift shops, and restaurants (Rich and Hines, 2002). In this case, earned revenue refers to “a museum’s capacity to generate revenue from its operations, in contrast with government funding, endowments, sponsorship, or donations” (Lord, 2009).

Membership Programs at Cultural Institutions

Despite the widespread presence of membership programs at cultural institutions, there has been limited published research on the function and administration of membership programs at museums (Slater, 2003, 2004), and even less published research on membership programs at public gardens and arboreta. Much of the research on museum membership has focused on member motivations and behavior at admission-based institutions.

One such study documented the ‘hazard of lapsing’ at an art museum based on member behavior (Bhattacharya, 1998). The author conducted a study of the museum donor records to inform member behavior linked to a lapse in membership (‘lapse’ defined here as nonrenewal within one month of the fourth renewal notice). The results of this study showed that the members that are least likely to lapse are those that have been members for longer periods of time, are involved in the organization, and give more frequently. This study focused on members primarily as customers, not as donors or philanthropists.

Another study focused on the members of one art museum, this time documenting how ‘identification’ with an organization changes member behavior (Bhattacharya, et al., 1995). The author conducted a survey of over one thousand

museum members and found that member identification with the museum is “positively related to perceived organizational prestige, donating activity, tenure of membership, visiting frequency, and confirmation of member expectations with the organization’s services.” Members are more likely to be involved at the museum if they have formed a “bond of identification.” Again, this study viewed members primarily as customers, not as donors or philanthropists.

In yet another study focused on a single art museum, members were studied to document the effects of perceived prestige from being associated with a major art museum (Glynn et al. 1996). The author explored the relationship between the use of two member benefits (free admission and invitation to special events) and a member’s perception of the prestige of being a member of the organization. Findings from a survey of over one thousand members indicated that members who have a higher perception of prestige are more likely to use the two member benefits studied. Again, members are viewed primarily as customers.

A 2004 study explored the interactions between member motivations and membership levels (Paswan, 2004). Motivations for purchasing a membership, including “philanthropy, preservation of art, social recognition, children’s benefits, and hedonic” motivations, were explored for various membership levels. The authors conducted a survey of two thousand members and found that primary motivations for becoming a member change depending on the level of membership. This study begins to look at members as more than just customers, but as philanthropists as well.

Only recently has some attention turned to the role of memberships at free-admission institutions. In 2003, the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester,

England abolished admission fees and has since been watching a decline in membership (Nightingale, 2003).

In the field of public horticulture there is limited published research available documenting membership trends regionally or nationally. In 2011, the American Public Gardens Association dedicated an issue of their quarterly publication, *Public Garden*, to fundraising. Membership programs were included in this issue and the information presented in the article focused on membership research at one garden, the Morton Arboretum (Jaros, 2011). At the Morton Arboretum, surveys, interviews, and focus groups have helped membership staff respond to member needs, while appropriately adjusting member levels and pricing. While research centering on one institution can be informative, research on a wide range of public garden membership programs, revealing national trends and opportunities, is needed.

In 2014 a study was conducted of gardens associated with the Directors of Large Gardens (DLG) network by EMD Consulting (Daley, 2014). This study included 44 large gardens (defined as gardens with an annual operating budget over \$3 million) across the United States. Benchmark data was collected for many aspects of public garden administration, including human resources, attendance, public programming, revenue and expenses, planning, and membership and development. The study produced useful benchmark data, but did not analyze gardens of smaller size, and did not categorize gardens based on admission price (free vs. paid admission) or governance.

The consulting group Marts & Lundy published a similar study in 2015 (White, et al., 2015). Unlike the 2014 DLG study, this effort benchmarked gardens of all sizes. Topics covered in this study focused exclusively on trends in philanthropy as

related to public gardens and arboreta. Benchmarks were reported for topics such as investments, contributed income, individual giving, campaigns, and membership. While this report regarded gardens based on size, it did not account for differences in governance or admission (free vs. paid admission).

As displayed here, much of the research conducted on museum and garden membership returns to the underlying question of motivation, that is, “Why does an individual become a member?” If member motivation influences member satisfaction, then member motivation also influences member retention (Rich and Hines, 2002). Before questions of member motivation can be asked, a baseline study of membership program administration, trends, and successes must be completed and published, which is the goal of this study. Similarly, there is a need for benchmark data on membership programs within various categories including size (operating budget), admission type, and governance. A comprehensive understanding of membership programs will then help facilitate research into trends of member motivations.

Chapter 3

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This research utilizes two approaches to collecting quantitative data. In the first, a database was created to collect published information on membership programs at public gardens, and second, a survey was distributed to supplement information reflected in the database.

Institutional Review Board

All research conducted during this study adhered to the guidelines of the Internal Review Board at the University of Delaware. Questions included in the survey were deemed exempt before sending to participants (Appendix A).

Selection Criteria for Participants

Participants included in this study were identified from a complete list of member institutions of the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) as of September 12, 2015. From that list, the following were removed:

1. APGA test entries.
2. For-profit companies.
3. Cemeteries and memorial parks.
4. Historic plantations. Cornell Plantations was not removed from the list, as it has no history of functioning as an agricultural enterprise.

5. Zoos and museums for which horticulture is not a focus, as determined by the presence of the terms “garden,” “horticulture,” or “conservatory” in the institution name. For example, Como Zoo and Conservatory was included in the study, while the Philadelphia Zoo was not included. Both are APGA member institutions, but the Philadelphia Zoo holds no mention of garden, horticulture, or conservatory in its name.
6. Institutions with cost of membership paid to a “mother” organization (New England Wildflower Society, Delaware Center for Horticulture, Trustees of Reservations).
7. Organizations that do not have a physical site, including garden clubs and societies.
8. Institutions that have no published membership information. Some gardens in this category have not yet opened to the public; others did not have functioning websites.
9. Institutions without membership programs.

Removing the institutions in the categories listed above resulted in a final list of 286 public horticulture institutions for inclusion in this study.

Background Study

From June to October 2015, the information was collected regarding membership programs from institutional websites and data entered in a Microsoft Excel® spreadsheet (hereafter referred to as “background study”). Information collected included qualitative data regarding membership levels and fees, benefits offered, and garden admission costs, as well as contact information for membership administrators at each institution. For each of the 286 gardens included in the study, a total of 60 fields of information were collected including contact information, 13 fields of possible member levels, 38 fields of possible member benefits, price of admission, price of the lowest (least expensive) member level, and price of the highest (most expensive) member level. Fields of information collected in the background study can

be found in Appendix B, and gardens included in the background study can be found in Appendix C.

The author chose fields of information to include in the background study based primarily on the goals of this research. To compare administration of membership programs, it was necessary to collect basic information on membership structures such as member levels, benefits, cost of membership, and cost of admission. Additionally, the author focused on fields of information for the background study that were commonly reported on garden websites. Other information that was not publicly reported was collected through the survey.

Survey

To supplement the background study, a survey was sent to membership or development program administrators at these 286 institutions on November 9, 2015 through Qualtrics[®] survey software made available through University of Delaware (Qualtrics, Provo, UT). This survey included questions regarding the administration of their membership program, as well as general questions about the garden. The survey can be found in Appendix D, and survey results can be found in Appendix E.

This survey was sent to available email addresses for each institution. An original list of 286 email addresses (one per institution) received the survey on November 9, 2015. Shortly after sending this first email campaign, five additional email addresses replaced ones that had ‘bounced.’

A list of additional email addresses was generated in December to supplement emails that were unopened during the first November email campaign. A link to the survey was sent to this additional list of 192 email addresses. No new institutions were contacted. A total of 486 email addresses were used to contact 286 institutions, and

responses (both incomplete and complete) were received from 156 institutions. Emails reminding participants of the survey were sent on December 2 and 17, 2015, and January 4, 2016. The survey was open to participants from November 9, 2015, through January 6, 2016.

Additionally, several recorded survey responses proved to be ‘empty.’ Qualtrics® recorded the entry as a response, but no questions had been answered and no actual information had been collected. After removing these empty entries, a total of 129 usable survey responses remained.

Combined Data

After closing the survey on January 6, 2016, the information from the survey was exported into a Microsoft Excel® spreadsheet and reformatted for compatibility with the background study that had been collected from websites in the first phase of research. The combined spreadsheets were imported into JMP® Pro, SAS data analysis software made available through the University of Delaware. All results were analyzed using JMP® (JMP®, 1989).

Once the spreadsheets were combined and imported into JMP®, gardens included in the study were categorized and analyzed by the following categories:

1. **Cost** of admission to the garden as reported on garden websites and collected in the background study. Gardens were categorized as either No admission, or Yes admission.
 - a. **No admission-** No admission gardens do not charge a fee for entrance to the garden. These gardens may charge a fee for other basic amenities such as parking or guided tours.
 - b. **Yes admission-** Yes admission gardens charge a fee for entrance to the garden.

2. **Size** based on operating budget as self-reported by gardens through the survey. Size distinctions (Small, Medium, Large) were based on definitions outlined in a 2015 study of public garden philanthropy conducted by Marts & Lundy (White, 2015).
 - a. **Small-** Small gardens reported an annual operating budget of less than \$1 million.
 - b. **Medium-** Medium gardens reported an annual operating budget between \$1 million and \$2.499 million.
 - c. **Large-** Large gardens reported an annual operating budget of over \$2.5 million.
3. **Governance**, based on self-reported answers in survey. Gardens identified as a University garden an Independent garden, or a Municipal garden.
 - a. **University-** University gardens operate within the jurisdiction of a university. These gardens have varying degrees of financial dependence on the university.
 - b. **Independent-** Independent gardens are self-governing 501(c)(3) organizations.
 - c. **Municipal-** Municipal gardens operate in conjunction with state or local government. These gardens have varying degrees of financial dependence on their related municipal bodies.

Corporate Membership

Corporate member benefits often involve a distinct set of membership levels and benefits. The author recorded whether or not a corporate membership or set of corporate membership levels was offered by each garden, but did not record specific data on corporate membership levels. Additionally, information regarding corporate member benefits was not recorded. The administration of corporate membership programs would provide excellent opportunity for further exploration and research.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

The results of the combined background study and survey data yield extensive information about membership programs at public gardens in the United States. Results represented in this chapter are intended to 1) add to the general knowledge about the public gardens included in the study, as well as 2) describe administration of membership programs at public gardens. The following results represent data most relevant to the scope of this project, as decided by the author and the thesis committee. Additional information regarding the background study can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C, while full results from the survey, excluding names, garden/institution names, and other identifying information, can be found in Appendix E.

Table 1 indicates the number of gardens included in both the background study and the survey. Gardens involved in this study represented various costs: 124 No admission and 162 Yes admission gardens were included in the background study, while 55 No admission gardens and 70 Yes admission gardens were responded to the survey. Various sizes of gardens (based on operating budget) were also represented: 44 Small gardens with annual operating budgets of less than \$1 million, 26 Medium gardens with annual operating budgets between \$1 million and \$2.499 million, and 33 Large gardens with annual operating budgets over \$2.5 million. Additionally, several types of garden governances were included: 52 Independent gardens, 26 University gardens, and 20 Municipal gardens. Because each garden represents multiple

categories, column totals do not reflect the total number of survey respondents (N=129). For example, one garden could represent Yes admission, Medium size, and Municipal governance, but would still only represent one of 129 survey responses.

Table 1 Gardens included in background study and survey, based on cost, size, and governance.

Garden Type		Number of gardens	
Cost	No admission	124 in background study	55 in survey
	Yes admission	162 in background study	70 in survey
Size	Small	44 in survey	
	Medium	26 in survey	
	Large	33 in survey	
Governance	Independent	52 in survey	
	University	26 in survey	
	Municipal	20 in survey	

As displayed in Table 2, each garden represents three categories: one type of admission cost, one size, and one governance. Even though each garden represents multiple categories, gardens were analyzed based on only one category to ensure adequate sample size.

Table 2 Combinations of size, governance, and cost for gardens

Type	Number
Small, Independent, No admission	8
Small, University, No admission	10
Small, Municipal, No admission	6
Medium, Independent, No admission	2
Medium, University, No admission	1
Medium, Municipal, No admission	2
Large, Independent, No admission	2
Large, University, No admission	5
Small, Independent, Yes admission	10

Table 2 cont.

Small, University, Yes admission	1
Small, Municipal, Yes admission	3
Medium, Independent, Yes admission	13
Medium, University, Yes admission	1
Medium, Municipal, Yes admission	2
Large, Independent, Yes admission	10
Large, University, Yes admission	3
Large, Municipal, Yes admission	5

Results 1: General Garden Information

Much of the data gathered through this study relates to the general operation and administration of public gardens. Information was collected regarding the following aspects of public garden administration and operations:

1. Operating budget
2. Public garden visitation
3. Cost of garden admission
4. Total garden staffing

Operating Budget

Through the survey, gardens were asked to indicate their annual operating budget (Table 3). This information was collected to better compare institutions with similar financial resources. The mean operating budget for all gardens was reported as \$3,055,017. By its very definition, garden size had a significant impact on the operating budget of the garden ($p < .0001$) and, as shown through the Tukey-Kramer test, Large gardens displayed a significant difference in mean operating budgets as compared with both Small and Medium gardens.

Although not significant, Yes admission gardens had an average of around \$1 million higher mean annual operating budget than No admission gardens. Similarly, both Independent and University gardens had an average of about \$1 million higher mean annual operating budget than Municipal gardens.

Table 3 Mean annual operating budget for all gardens, and for gardens based on cost, size, and governance. *Levels not connected by the same letter are significantly different.

Type		Mean operating budget in dollars		Tukey-Kramer HSD*
All Gardens		3,055,017		-
Cost	No Admission	2,202,771	F = 2.077 p = 0.153	-
	Yes Admission	3,665,794		-
Size	Small	420,861	F = 38.297 p < .0001	B
	Medium	1,364,486		B
	Large	7,899,161		A
Governance	Independent	2,567,307	F = .662 p = 0.519	-
	University	2,264,318		-
	Municipal	1,611,662		-

Public Garden Visitation

Gardens indicated their estimated average annual visitation through the survey (Table 4). Mean visitation was recorded for each garden category, with both garden size and governance showing significant interaction with visitation ($p < .0001$; $p = 0.050$). Based on the Tukey-Kramer test, Large gardens display significant higher annual visitation than both Small and Medium gardens. There is no significant difference in visitation at Small and Medium gardens.

Based on governance, the Tukey-Kramer test shows that Municipal gardens have significantly higher visitation than Independent gardens.

Table 4 Mean visitation for all gardens, and for each category of garden. *Levels not connected by the same letter are significantly different.

Type		Mean annual visitation		Tukey-Kramer HSD*
All Gardens		160,657		-
Cost	No Admission	173,687	F = 0.154 p = 0.695	-
	Yes Admission	152,717		-
Size	Small	38,151	F = 23.015 p < .0001	B
	Medium	99,478		B
	Large	311,140		A
Governance	Independent	105,003	F = 3.102 p = 0.050	A
	University	120,125		A B
	Municipal	257,677		B

Cost of Garden Admission

The cost of admission for one adult was collected from institution websites in the background study (Table 5). Analysis of mean cost of admission includes only gardens that charge an admission fee (Yes admission), and excludes No admission gardens. The mean cost of admission for one adult at all gardens is \$10.02. Size of the garden displayed the only significant interaction with mean cost of admission ($p < .0001$). Large gardens have a mean difference of at least \$5 compared with both Medium and Small gardens. The Tukey-Kramer test again displays a significantly higher mean admission cost at Large gardens compared with both Small and Medium gardens. There is no significant difference in the mean cost of admission between Small and Medium gardens.

Table 5 Mean cost of admission for all gardens, and for gardens based on size and governance. *Levels not connected by the same letter are significantly different.

Type		Mean cost of admission in dollars		Tukey-Kramer HSD*
All Gardens		10.02		-
Size	Small	7.44	F = 18.329 p < .0001	B
	Medium	8.48		B
	Large	14.45		A
Governance	Independent	10.85	F = 0.847 p = 0.435	-
	University	9.00		-
	Municipal	8.75		-

Staff

Survey respondents indicated the approximate number of total full-time equivalent (FTE) staff working at their gardens (Table 6). This estimation includes all staff in all departments. The mean estimated FTE for all gardens is 29.08 people. Once again, size of garden displayed a significant interaction with total estimated FTE staffing ($p < .0001$), and again, the Tukey-Kramer test shows that Large gardens have significantly higher mean FTE staff as compared with Small and Medium gardens, with no significant difference in FTE between Small and Medium gardens. Large gardens reported the highest mean estimated FTE staff (79.12 FTE); over five times as many full-time equivalent staff members as Medium gardens and more than ten times as many as Small gardens.

Though not a significant difference, Yes admission gardens reported employing an average of about twelve more FTE staff members than No admission gardens.

Table 6 Mean estimated FTE for all gardens, and for gardens based on cost, size, and governance. *Levels not connected by the same letter are significantly different.

Type		Staff (FTE)		Tukey-Kramer HSD*
All Gardens		29.08		-
Cost	No admission	21.69	F = 1.765 p = 0.187	-
	Yes admission	34.59		-
Size	Small	5.32	F = 32.175 p < .0001	B
	Medium	15.58		B
	Large	79.12		A
Governance	University	20.68	F = 0.383 p = 0.683	-
	Independent	25.75		-
	Municipal	19.37		-

Results 2: Public Garden Membership Programs

The following results describe the administration of membership programs and will be used in an effort to discover similarities and differences in membership programs at public gardens in the United States. Information was collected regarding the following aspects of public garden membership program administration:

1. Number of memberships
2. Expense of administering membership program
3. Membership levels
4. Cost of lowest-level membership
5. Member benefits
6. Member acquisition strategies
7. Member renewal strategies
8. Member retention rates

9. Definition of 'lapsed' member
10. Staff dedicated to membership program administration
11. Location of membership program within organization
12. Software used to manage membership program

Number of Memberships

Through the survey, respondents indicated the estimated number of memberships held at their garden (Table 7). This number most often refers to member households, not individual members. For all gardens, the mean number of memberships is reported at 4,540.40. Size of garden displayed the most significant influence on number of memberships ($p < .0001$). The Tukey-Kramer test indicates that Large gardens had a significantly higher mean number of memberships as compared with Small and Medium gardens. There was no significant difference between Small and Medium gardens. Large gardens averaged about five times as many memberships as Medium gardens, and more than twelve times as many memberships as Small gardens.

The relationship between mean number of memberships and cost (admission) was also significant. Yes admission gardens reported an average of over twice as many estimated memberships as No admission gardens.

Table 7 Mean number of estimated memberships for all gardens, and for gardens based on cost, size, and governance. *Levels not connected by the same letter are significantly different.

Type		Mean number of memberships		Tukey-Kramer HSD*
All Gardens		4,540.40		-
Cost	No Admission	2,271.85	F = 4.777 p = 0.031	-
	Yes Admission	6,190.26		-
Size	Small	901.80	F = 14.089 p < .0001	B
	Medium	2,225.40		B
	Large	11,348.50		A
Governance	Independent	4,794.61	F = 1.009 p = 0.368	-
	University	3,053.28		-
	Municipal	2,393.25		-

Expense of Administering Membership Program

Through the survey, respondents were asked to report the estimated average annual cost of administering the membership program at their garden. Mean costs were recorded for each category of garden, along with cost of administering membership programs as a proportion of mean annual operating budget (Table 8). Looking at all gardens, the cost to administer membership programs was reported at \$91,025, which accounts for 2.98% of the mean estimated annual operating budget for all gardens.

Garden size displayed the only significant interaction with mean cost of administering a membership program. The Tukey-Kramer test shows that Large gardens have significantly larger mean estimated annual costs as compared with Small and Medium gardens. Again, there is no significant difference between Small and Medium gardens.

Although not analyzed for significance, calculating the percentage of mean operating budget dedicated to membership suggests that Municipal gardens direct

almost double the percentage of their annual operating budgets to membership programs as compared with Municipal gardens.

Table 8 Mean estimated annual cost to administer membership program, and cost of membership program as a percentage of mean operating budget.
*Levels not connected by the same letter are significantly different.

Type		Mean cost to administer membership	Mean operating budget	Percent		Tukey-Kramer HSD*
All Gardens		91,025	3,055,017	2.98		-
Cost	No Admission	57,765	2,202,771	2.62	F = 2.223 p = 0.139	-
	Yes Admission	116,755	3,665,794	3.18		-
Size	Small	10,797	420,861	2.57	F = 13.260 p < .0001	B
	Medium	51,950	1,364,486	3.81		B
	Large	234,180	7,899,161	2.96		A
Governance	Independent	86,729	2,567,307	3.38	F = 1.207 p = 0.305	-
	University	43,143	2,264,318	1.91		-
	Municipal	57,895	1,611,662	3.59		-

Membership Levels

The occurrence of member levels for each garden was recorded in the background study. The most commonly offered membership level for all gardens, and for each category of garden was recorded. In total, 12 frequently occurring membership levels were recorded, along with an ‘other’ category for less-frequently occurring member levels. There were 87 records of member levels falling into the ‘other’ category. For example, teacher memberships, ‘far-away friend’ memberships, or children’s memberships were all categorized as ‘other’.

Among all gardens included in the study, the six membership types were the most frequently offered membership types: Individual, Family, Higher-level (high), Student, Dual, and Senior. Frequency of other membership levels was recorded but not analyzed, and can be seen in fields of information included in the background study found in Appendix B. Examples of additional membership levels recorded include grandparent membership, photographer's membership, nonprofit organization membership, corporate memberships, "plus" memberships, and two-year memberships. Additionally, the titles used for membership categories reported here are representative of the type of member category. The author categorized member levels based on number and type of people included in the membership level, not on the name of the level. The most frequently offered membership levels at public gardens are as follows, beginning with most frequent:

1. **Individual Memberships** offer membership status and benefits for one adult member.
2. **Family Memberships** offer membership status and benefits for two adults and accompanying children. Gardens vary in definition of 'children'; some consider a child anyone less than 18 years of age while other gardens do not indicate an age. Any definition of 'children' was accepted for this study. This level is often called 'Household'.
3. **Higher-level Membership (High)** includes membership categories at a higher price than family or individual membership, but do not include benefits for additional named cardholders. Generally, these higher-level memberships cost more \$100. For example, Polly Hill Arboretum offers an 'Individual' membership for \$35 with benefits for one adult, a 'Household' (family) membership for \$60 with benefits for two adults, and a 'Friend' (Higher-level) membership for \$100, again with benefits for just two adults. (Polly Hill Arboretum, 2016). Higher-level memberships generally increase in cost and number of benefits offered, but do not increase in number of cardholders.

4. **Student Memberships** offer membership status and benefits for one full-time student. Generally, these memberships are offered at a lower rate than the regular Individual membership.
5. **Dual Memberships** offer membership status and benefits for two adults. Some gardens require both adults as named cardholders while other gardens require only one named cardholder. Both were included in this category. This category does not include cardholder children; any 'Dual' membership including children was categorized as a Family membership.
6. **Senior Memberships** offer membership status and benefits for one senior adult. Some gardens offered a discount on existing member levels, while other gardens offer a separate level for seniors, often at a lower cost than an individual membership.

Out of all gardens studied, over 80% offered Individual, Family, and High level memberships, while less than about a third of all gardens offered Student, Dual, and Senior memberships (Table 9).

Table 9 Most common membership types for all gardens.

Type	Number	Percent
Individual	275	95.80
Family	241	84.00
High	251	87.50
Student	96	33.40
Dual	72	25.10
Senior	72	25.10

Only the most commonly occurring membership levels for all gardens were assessed for occurrence at gardens based on category. Cost (admission) displayed a significant relationship with the occurrence of both Family memberships ($p < .0001$) and Dual memberships ($p < .0001$) (Table 10). A large majority (93.2%) of Yes admission gardens offered Family memberships, and 72.5% of No admission gardens offered Family memberships. Similarly, 35.8% of Yes admission gardens offered Dual memberships, while only 11.3% of No admission gardens offered Dual memberships.

Table 10 Most common membership types by cost (admission).

	No admission	Yes admission	Chi-Square Test
Type	Percent	Percent	
Individual	95.9	95.7	p = .9039
Family	72.5	93.2	p < .0001
High	83.1	90.7	p = .0524
Student	37.1	30.9	p = .2687
Dual	11.3	35.8	p < .0001
Senior	21.8	27.8	p = .2463

Table 11 displays the most commonly offered member levels for gardens based on size. Garden size displayed a significant relationship with the occurrence of Dual membership offerings (p=0.0031). Large gardens most often offered Dual memberships (45.45%), followed by Medium gardens (34.62%), and Small gardens (11.36%).

Table 11 Most common membership types by garden size.

	Small	Medium	Large	Chi-Square Test
Type	Percent	Percent	Percent	
Individual	93.18	96.15	93.94	p = 0.8746
Family	84.09	76.92	87.88	p = 0.5256
High	79.55	88.46	87.88	p = 0.4913
Student	50.00	30.77	30.30	p = 0.1332
Dual	11.36	34.62	45.45	p = 0.0031
Senior	18.18	23.08	30.30	p = 0.4604

Regarding membership levels most commonly offered at gardens based on governance (Table 12), garden governance displays a significant interaction with the occurrence of Family membership level (p=0.0142). A higher percentage of Independent gardens offered Family memberships (94.23%) than Municipal gardens (75.00%) or University gardens (69.23%).

Table 12 Most common membership types by governance.

	Independent	University	Municipal	
Type	Percent	Percent	Percent	Chi-Square Test
Individual	94.23	100.00	85.00	p = 0.3673
Family	92.31	69.23	75.00	p = 0.0142
High	88.46	80.77	80.00	p = 0.8415
Student	34.62	53.85	40.00	p = 0.5122
Dual	34.62	30.77	25.00	p = 0.9246
Senior	23.08	15.38	30.00	p = 0.6383

Cost of Lowest-Level Membership

The cost of lowest-level membership was collected with other information included in the background study from institutional websites (Table 13). Lowest-level membership refers to the cost of the least expensive membership level at a garden. For most gardens, the lowest-level or ‘entry level’ membership was generally a Student, Senior, or Individual membership. These lowest-level memberships ranged from \$5-\$100 in cost, depending on the garden. The mean cost of a lowest-level membership for all gardens is \$36.69.

As seen in Table 13, all three categories of garden display significant interactions with the mean cost of a lowest-level membership (cost, $p < .0001$; size, $p < .0001$; governance, $p = 0.0032$). Based on cost, Yes admission gardens had a significantly higher cost of lowest-level memberships at \$40.63 compared with No admission gardens at \$31.48. There was a significant interaction between garden size and the cost of lowest level memberships. According to the Tukey-Kramer test, Small gardens displayed a significantly lower cost of lowest-level membership as compared with Medium and Large gardens. The difference in cost of lowest-level membership at Medium and Large gardens was not significant.

Again, the Tukey-Kramer test reveals that independent gardens have a higher mean cost of lowest-level membership compared with Municipal gardens.

Table 13 Cost of lowest-level membership for all gardens, and for gardens based on cost, size, and governance. *Levels not connected by the same letter are significantly different.

Garden Type		Mean cost of lowest-level membership in dollars		Tukey-Kramer HSD*
All Gardens		36.69	-	-
Cost	No admission	31.48	F = 22.169 p < .0001	-
	Yes admission	40.63		-
Size	Small	28.60	F = 13.355 p < .0001	B
	Medium	39.54		A
	Large	46.64		A
Governance	Independent	41.95	F = 6.127 p = 0.0032	A
	University	36.04		A B
	Municipal	29.50		B

Member Benefits

The following tables (Tables 14-17) display the most commonly listed member benefits at public gardens. Additional member benefits might be offered by each garden, but only the benefits that were published on institution websites were collected and included in this study. For example, a garden might regularly send out a newsletter to members, but those newsletters would not be included in this study if they were not listed on the website as a benefit. Benefits were collected from organization websites through the background study. Member benefits were grouped according to the following categories:

1. **Access benefits**, including extended hours of admission to the garden, access to otherwise restricted areas of the garden, and access to otherwise restricted activities in the garden (fishing, picnicking, etc.). Access benefits also include photography access (use of tripod in the garden, early hours for photography, use of garden for commercial photographers). Finally, access benefits include access to facility rentals and/or discounts on facility rentals.
2. **Admission benefits**, including free admission for members, free admission for guests of members, and discounts on additional tickets.
3. **AHS reciprocity**, including reciprocal admission to 300 horticultural institutions throughout North America, made available through the American Horticultural Society (AHS).
4. **Communication benefits**, including physical newsletters and e-communications.
5. **Event benefits**, including invitations, discounts, pre-notice, or pre-purchase ticketing options to annual or members-only special events.
6. **Gift membership**, including an additional membership to be gifted to a friend or family member of the original membership purchaser.
7. **Knowledge benefits**, including library access, plant/pest identification from garden staff, and/or concierge service.
8. **Local business discounts**, including discounts at garden shops, nurseries, hardware stores, restaurants, florists, and other local businesses.
9. **Magazine benefits**, including complimentary subscriptions to national or regional magazines.
10. **Other benefits**, including any member benefit that did not clearly fall into one of the benefit categories.
11. **Parking benefits**, including free and/or discounted parking at the garden.
12. **Plant sale benefits**, including discounts on plants purchased at plant sales, early entrance to plant sales, plant giveaways at plant sales, and/or preview parties and events for plant sales.
13. **Premiums**, including physical items or gifts such as car decals, mugs, t-shirts, calendars, etc.

14. **Programming benefits**, including discounts, early registration, early notice of programs, or members-only workshops, classes, camps, and/or lectures.
15. **Reciprocity**, including museum and nature center reciprocal admission through NARM (North American Reciprocal Museum), ROAM (Reciprocal Organization of Associated Museums), and/or ANCA (Association of Nature Center Administrators), as well as one-off reciprocity with other institutions.
16. **Recognition benefits**, including printed recognition in newsletters, brochures, etc. and/or displayed recognition on bricks, benches, signs, etc.
17. **Retail benefits**, including discounts on gift shop purchases and/or discounts on café and garden restaurant purchases.
18. **Staff access benefits**, including tours, lectures, dining, consulting with horticulture staff, curator, director, and/or other staff.
19. **Tours**, including walking tours and/or audio tours.

Table 14 represents the most commonly listed member benefits at all gardens, with the top five most commonly listed benefits in bold font. Programming benefits are the most commonly listed benefit (82.87%), followed by event benefits (74.83%), communications benefits (73.08%), retail benefits (65.73%), and AHS reciprocal benefits (63.99%).

Table 14 Most commonly listed member benefits at all gardens (N= 286).

Benefit	Number	Percent
Access Benefits	111	38.81
Admission Benefits	167	58.39
AHS	183	63.99
Communications	209	73.08
Event	214	74.83
Gift Membership	32	11.19
Knowledge	61	21.33
Local Businesses	107	37.41

Table 14 cont.

Magazine	56	19.58
Other	52	18.18
Parking	22	7.69
Plant Sale Benefits	122	42.66
Premiums	94	32.87
Programming	237	82.87
Reciprocity	36	12.59
Recognition	89	31.12
Retail	188	65.73
Staff	56	19.58
Tours	114	39.86

Tables 15-17 display member benefits listed by gardens based on garden cost (Table 15), garden size (Table 16), and garden governance (Table 17). Based on cost, No admission gardens and Yes admission gardens generally offer the same top five benefits, with the exception of admissions benefits. Because No admission gardens do not charge an entrance fee, those gardens are unable to offer free admission as a benefit. Additionally, Yes admission gardens offer more benefits overall.

Table 15 Most commonly listed member benefits, based on garden cost (admission).

	No admission (N=124)	Yes admission (N=162)
Benefit	Percent	Percent
Access Benefits	29.03	46.30
Admission Benefits	0	98.15
AHS	53.23	72.22
Communications	68.55	76.54
Event	66.94	80.86
Gift Membership	8.87	12.96
Knowledge	16.94	24.69
Local Businesses	33.87	40.12
Magazine	14.52	23.46

Table 15 cont.

Other	16.13	19.75
Parking	5.65	9.26
Plant Sale Benefits	42.74	42.59
Premiums	37.90	29.01
Programming	80.65	84.57
Reciprocity	10.48	14.20
Recognition	24.19	36.42
Retail	48.39	79.01
Staff	19.35	19.75
Tours	34.68	43.83

Regarding size (Table 16), Small, Medium, and Large gardens generally offer similar benefits with few exceptions. For Small gardens, and not Medium or Large gardens, plant sale benefits fall into the top five most commonly listed benefits. Similarly, only Large gardens, and not Medium or Small, offer retail benefits in the top five benefits. Lastly, Small gardens are the least likely to offer admission benefits out of all garden sizes.

Table 16 Most commonly listed member benefits, based on garden size.

	Small gardens (N=44)	Medium gardens (N=26)	Large gardens (N=33)
Benefit	Percent	Percent	Percent
Access Benefits	36.36	38.46	36.36
Admission Benefits	40.91	76.92	69.70
AHS	61.36	76.92	84.85
Communications	70.45	76.92	75.76
Event	61.36	84.63	90.91
Gift Membership	9.09	3.85	24.24
Knowledge	9.09	26.92	24.24
Local Businesses	34.09	38.46	51.52
Magazine	15.91	26.92	12.12
Other	6.82	19.23	24.24

Table 16 cont.

Parking	2.27	11.54	24.24
Plant Sale Benefits	50.00	57.69	33.33
Premiums	34.09	38.46	36.36
Programming	84.09	84.63	96.97
Reciprocity	4.55	11.54	30.30
Recognition	22.73	30.77	42.42
Retail	43.18	69.23	96.97
Staff	20.45	38.46	24.24
Tours	34.09	42.31	42.42

Again, gardens based on governance offer similar benefits with few exceptions (Table 17). Independent gardens are the more likely to offer admission benefits than either University or Municipal gardens. University gardens are the most likely to offer plant sale benefits, but are less likely to offer retail benefits.

Table 17 Most commonly listed member benefits, based on governance.

	Independent (N=52)	University (N=26)	Municipal (N=20)
Benefit	Percent	Percent	Percent
Access Benefits	44.23	19.23	25.00
Admission Benefits	73.08	23.08	60.00
AHS	71.15	76.92	70.00
Communications	75.00	73.08	70.00
Event	86.54	65.38	75.00
Gift Membership	9.62	19.23	5.00
Knowledge	19.23	19.23	20.00
Local Businesses	46.15	34.62	35.00
Magazine	21.15	34.62	5.00
Other	21.15	11.54	15.00
Parking	7.69	15.38	5.00
Plant Sale Benefits	46.15	61.54	40.00
Premiums	28.85	46.15	40.00
Programming	88.46	84.62	85.00
Reciprocity	13.46	19.23	10.00

Table 17 cont.

Recognition	32.69	23.08	10.00
Retail	73.08	50.00	80.00
Staff	25.00	30.77	20.00
Tours	51.92	23.08	35.00

Member Acquisition Strategies

Respondents reported the use of various member acquisition strategies through the survey. Survey takers were asked to rank their use of acquisition strategies based on frequency of use (Always used, Sometimes used, Never used). Member acquisition strategies evaluated include:

1. **Direct mail**, mailings to physical addresses to promote membership at a garden.
2. **On-site**, where visitors encounter garden staff to purchase a membership on the physical grounds of the garden.
3. **LivingSocial® or Groupon® deals (Web deals)**, two e-commerce marketplaces offering discounts on goods and services. Gardens and other cultural institutions often use LivingSocial® or Groupon® as a platform to sell discounted memberships to new members.
4. **List-sharing**, a scenario in which an institution trades, sells, or shares a names and/or addresses of constituents with another institution.
5. **Social media**, including promotion of memberships on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other popular platforms.
6. **Discounts, deals, or specials**, including general discounts on membership prices, or discounts for special occasions or constituencies. Promoted through the garden's regular platforms (web, mail, etc.).
7. **Other**, including any other member acquisition strategy.

Table 18 displays the frequency of use for various member acquisition strategies at all gardens. The most consistently used member acquisition strategy for

all gardens was on-site acquisition, with 77.87% of all gardens describing that they Always using on-site methods. A majority of respondents report Sometimes using direct mail, social media, and/or discounts, while a majority report Never using either web deals or list-sharing.

Table 18 Member acquisition strategies for all gardens.

	Always	Some	Never
Acquisition method	Percent	Percent	Percent
Direct Mail	23.48	44.35	32.17
On-site	77.87	22.13	0
Web deals	3.64	33.64	62.73
List-share	5.41	18.02	76.58
Social Media	36.13	58.82	5.04
Discounts	20.87	54.78	24.35
Other	51.85	48.15	0

Based on cost (admission), both No and Yes admission gardens had similar responses to use of various member acquisition strategies (Table 19). For No admission gardens, the strongest response can be seen in the 84.78% of respondents answering that they Never use list sharing. Another strong trend is displayed in 83.56% of Yes admission gardens indicating that they Always use on-site member acquisition strategies.

Table 19 Member acquisition strategies, based on cost (admission).

	No admission			Yes admission		
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Always	Sometimes	Never
Method	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Direct Mail	20.00	48.00	32.00	26.15	41.54	32.31
On-site	64.15	35.85	0	83.56	10.96	5.48

Table 19 cont.

Web deals	4.44	26.67	68.89	3.08	38.46	58.46
List-share	2.17	13.04	84.78	7.69	21.54	70.77
Social Media	32.00	60.00	8.00	39.13	57.97	2.89
Discounts	25.00	41.67	33.33	17.91	64.18	17.91
Other	61.54	38.46	0.00	6.67	40.00	53.33

Again, gardens based on size display very similar use of member acquisition strategies with only two exceptions (Table 20). Large gardens indicated that they are slightly more likely to use web deals (LivingSocial[®] or Groupon[®]) for member acquisition as compared with Small and Medium gardens. Additionally, Medium sized gardens are slightly more likely to use list sharing than Large or Small gardens.

Finally, member acquisitions used at gardens of varying governances were similar with only one exception (Table 21). Independent gardens were less likely to use direct mail for member acquisition, as compared with University and Municipal gardens.

Table 20 Member acquisition strategies, based on size.

Method	Small			Medium			Large		
	Always	Some	Never	Always	Some	Never	Always	Some	Never
Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Direct Mail	25.00	45.00	30.00	8.00	48.00	44.00	30.30	48.48	21.21
On-site	70.45	29.55	0	80.77	19.23	0	87.88	12.12	0
Web deals	5.56	22.22	72.22	4.17	25.00	70.83	0	53.12	46.88
Listshare	2.63	15.79	81.58	24.00	76.00	0	15.63	21.88	66.67
Social Media	45.24	47.62	7.14	30.77	65.38	3.85	24.24	69.69	6.06
Discounts	24.39	46.34	29.27	8.00	68.00	24.00	19.35	64.52	16.13
Other	40.00	60.00	0	5.00	5.00	0	50.00	50.00	0

Table 21 Member acquisition strategies, based on governance.

	Independent			University			Municipal		
	Always	Some	Never	Always	Some	Never	Always	Some	Never
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Direct Mail	30.00	34.00	36.00	28.00	48.00	24.00	5.26	63.16	31.58
On-site	84.62	15.38	0	61.54	38.46	0	75.00	25.00	0
Web deals	4.17	31.25	64.58	0	20.00	80.00	5.88	29.41	64.71
Listshare	4.17	16.67	79.17	0	23.08	76.92	5.88	23.53	70.59
Social Media	38.46	55.77	5.77	32.00	64.00	4.00	36.84	63.16	0
Discounts	22.00	5.00	28.00	24.00	52.00	24.00	11.11	61.11	27.78
Other	42.86	57.14	0	50.00	50.00	0	60.00	40.00	0

Member Renewal Strategies

Information on use of member renewal strategies was collected through the survey. Respondents were asked to describe their use of various strategies by indicating whether each strategy was Always, Sometimes, or Never used. The survey question included the following member renewal strategies for evaluation:

1. **Mail**, including paper remittance or renewal phones either sent to the member's physical address.
2. **Automatic renewal option (Auto-renew)**, including automatic payment for renewal of membership. Auto-renewal could take place annually, monthly, or on any other time schedule.
3. **Phone call**, including telephone calls to members to initiate renewal.
4. **In-person**, including on-site renewals at the garden.
5. **Email/online**, including email as well as web-based renewal initiated by the member.
6. **Other**, including all other renewal strategies.

For all gardens, the most popular member renewal strategy was reported to be mail renewals followed by online renewals (Table 22). Gardens were split between Sometimes and Never using phone calls for renewals, but a majority of gardens reported Never using both auto-renewal and/or in-person renewals.

Table 22 Member renewal strategies for all gardens.

	Always	Some	Never
Strategy	Percent	Percent	Percent
Mail	90.91	9.09	0.00
Auto-renew	14.29	12.24	73.47
Phone	6.60	48.11	45.28

Table 22 cont.

In-person	0.00	0.93	99.07
Online	53.04	38.26	8.70
Other	0.00	0.00	100.00

Both No and Yes admission gardens reported similar member renewal strategies (Table 23). One exception can be seen in the use of phone renewals; Yes admission gardens are slightly more likely to use phone renewal strategies than No admission gardens.

Table 23 Member renewal strategies, based on cost (admission).

	No admission			Yes admission		
	Always	Some	Never	Always	Some	Never
Strategy	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Mail	90.57	9.43	0.00	91.18	8.82	0.00
Auto-renew	9.52	9.52	80.95	17.86	14.29	67.86
Phone	0.00	46.67	53.33	11.48	49.18	39.34
In-person	0.00	2.17	97.83	0.00	0.00	100.00
Online	52.00	38.00	10.00	53.85	38.46	7.69
Other	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00

Member renewal strategies used by Small, Medium, and Large gardens were similar, again with the only exception being the use of phone renewals (Table 24). Large gardens were very slightly more likely to use phone renewal strategies as compared with Small and Medium gardens.

Once again, gardens based on governance displayed similar use of renewal strategies with the exception of phone renewals; Municipal gardens were slightly less likely to use phone renewals than Independent or University gardens (Table 25).

Table 24 Member renewal strategies, based on size.

Strategy	Small			Medium			Large		
	Always	Some	Never	Always	Some	Never	Always	Some	Never
Mail	93.18	6.82	0.00	88.46	11.54	0.00	87.88	12.12	0.00
Auto-renew	12.50	9.38	78.13	9.09	13.64	77.27	10.34	17.24	72.41
Phone	5.56	47.22	47.22	9.09	40.91	50.00	6.06	51.52	42.42
In-person	0.00	2.70	97.30	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Online	56.10	36.59	7.32	50.00	37.50	12.50	48.48	42.42	9.09
Other	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00

Table 25 Member renewal strategies, based on governance.

Strategy	Independent			University			Municipal		
	Always	Some	Never	Always	Some	Never	Always	Some	Never
Mail	94.23	5.77	0.00	84.62	15.38	0.00	90.00	10.00	0.00
Auto-renew	18.60	18.60	62.79	13.64	0.00	86.36	7.14	7.14	85.71
Phone	11.36	52.27	36.36	0.00	54.17	45.83	0.00	35.29	64.71
In-person	0.00	2.22	97.78	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Online	48.98	34.69	16.33	61.54	38.46	0.00	47.37	42.11	10.53
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00

Member Retention Rates

Retention rates refer to the percentage of members that renew after the term of membership expires. Average estimated annual member retention rates were reported by respondents through the survey (Table 26). The mean annual member retention rate for all gardens was 71.59%. Both cost and size displayed significant interactions with member retention rates (cost, $p=0.012$; size, $p=0.014$). Based on cost, No admission gardens retained about 7% more of their members annually as compared with Yes admission gardens.

Additionally, the Tukey-Kramer test reveals that Large gardens reported significantly lower member retention rates as compared with Small and Medium gardens.

Table 26 Member retention rates for all gardens, and for gardens based on cost, size, and governance. *Levels not connected by the same letter are significantly different.

Type		Retention rate		Tukey-Kramer HSD*
All Gardens		71.59		-
Cost	No admission	75.70	F = 6.588 p = 0.012	-
	Yes admission	68.57		-
Size	Small	74.12	F = 4.506 p = 0.014	A
	Medium	75.85		A
	Large	65.09		B
Governance	University	73.88	F = 0.999 p = 0.373	-
	Independent	70.86		-
	Municipal	67.04		-

Definition of ‘Lapsed’ Member

A ‘lapsed’ member is generally understood to be someone who had purchased a membership yet did not renew membership upon expiry. Each garden defines the exact terms of a ‘lapsed’ member differently. Some memberships are deemed lapsed if renewal does not occur on the date of expiry, while other gardens consider a membership lapsed if renewal does not occur within several months or even a year after expiry. Still other gardens do not designate a lapsed member based on time, but on number of attempts for renewal.

Respondents were asked to describe their program’s definition of a lapsed member through the survey. As displayed in Table 27, 43.36% of all gardens define a lapsed member as someone that does not renew within six months.

Table 27 Definition of lapsed member for all gardens.

Lapse definition	Number	Percent
On Date	12	10.62
Under 6 months	49	43.36
6 month - 1 year	20	17.69
Over 1 year	5	4.42
2 attempts	8	7.08
3 attempts	12	10.62
4 attempts	2	1.77
None	5	4.42

Looking at gardens based on cost (Table 28), size (Table 29), and governance (Table 30) gardens most commonly described a ‘lapsed’ member as someone who does not renew either within six months, or within six months to a year of expiry. This trend holds without exception throughout all garden categories.

Table 28 Definition of lapsed member, based on cost.

	No Admission (N=48)	Yes Admission (N=65)
Lapse definition	Percent	Percent
On Date	10.42	10.77
Under 6 months	31.25	39.58
6 month- 1 year	29.17	32.31
Over 1 year	4.17	4.62
2 attempts	8.33	6.15
3 attempts	10.42	10.77
4 attempts	0.00	3.08
None	6.25	3.08

Table 29 Definition of lapsed member, based on size.

	Small (N=41)	Medium (N=25)	Large (N=32)
Lapse definition	Percent	Percent	Percent
On Date	4.88	12.00	18.75
Under 6 months	24.39	40.00	34.38
6 months -1year	31.71	20.00	25.00
Over 1 year	7.32	4.00	3.13
2 attempts	14.63	8.00	0.00
3 attempts	7.32	12.00	12.50
4 attempts	0.00	0.00	6.25
None	9.76	4.00	0.00

Table 30 Definition of lapsed member, based on governance.

	Independent (N=48)	University (N=25)	Municipal (N=19)
Lapse definition	Percent	Percent	Percent
On Date	6.25	8.00	10.52
Under 6 months	39.58	24.00	15.79
6 months -1 year	25.00	36.00	42.11
Above 1year	2.08	8.00	5.26

Table 30 cont.

2 attempts	10.42	4.00	5.26
3 attempts	10.42	8.00	15.79
4 attempts	2.08	0.00	5.26
None	4.17	12.00	0.00

Staff Dedicated to Membership

Through the survey, respondents described the approximate full time equivalent staffing (FTE) dedicated to membership. Table 31 depicts these results alongside total FTE staffing at the garden as well as percentage of total FTE dedicated to membership. Garden size proves to be the only significant influence on number of FTE dedicated to membership ($p < .0001$). Again, the Tukey-Kramer test shows that Large gardens have significantly more FTE staffing dedicated to membership as compared with both Medium and Small gardens. There is no significant difference between Medium and Small gardens.

Table 31 Proportion of all staff dedicated to membership. *Levels not connected by the same letter are significantly different.

		Mean Membership FTE	Total Mean FTE	Percent of total FTE dedicated to membership		Tukey-Kramer HSD*
All Gardens		1.16	29.08	3.99		-
Cost	No admission	0.79	21.69	3.64	F =1.765 p =0.187	-
	Yes admission	1.41	34.59	4.08		-
Size	Small	0.48	5.32	9.02	F =32.175 p < .0001	B
	Medium	0.80	15.58	5.13		B
	Large	2.37	79.12	2.99		A
Governance	Independent	1.16	25.75	4.50	F =0.383 p =0.683	-
	University	0.83	20.68	4.01		-
	Municipal	0.95	19.37	4.90		-

Location of membership program within organization

Although not analyzed for significance, survey respondents indicated the departmental fit of membership within their organization (Figure 2). Membership programs were most commonly found to be located in either a development department, or their own membership department.

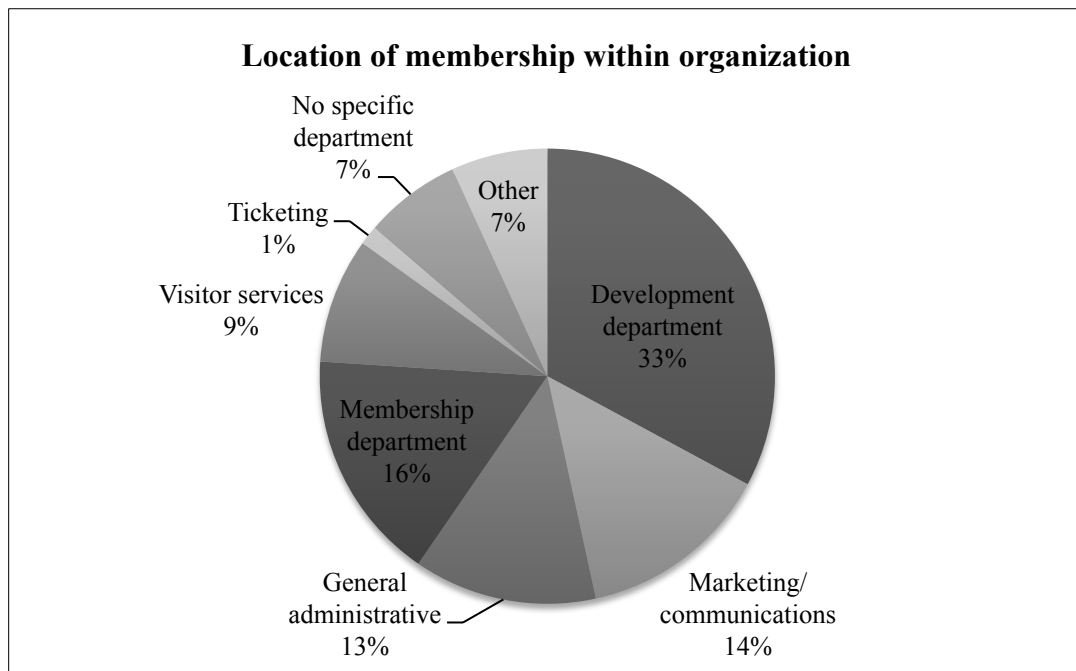


Figure 2 Location of membership program within organization.

Software used to manage membership program

Gardens were asked to name the software system used to maintain member records (Table 32). Respondents listed twenty-four different software types. Proprietary software refers to software developed and used exclusively by the institution responding to the survey. The most commonly used software systems among all gardens were the two Blackbaud® products, Raiser's Edge and Altru,

followed by Microsoft Excel®, Donor Perfect, and twenty other software options. Looking at gardens based on cost, size, and governance, (Tables 33-35) Blackbaud® products continue to lead with the exception of No admission and Small gardens where Microsoft Excel® tends to be the most commonly used software.

Table 32 Most commonly used software at all gardens.

Software	Percent
Access	3.70
ACT Sage	1.85
Advance 9.1	0.93
Albia	1.85
Altru, Blackbaud®	15.74
Banner	1.85
Bloomberg	0.93
CivicRM	0.93
Donor Perfect	8.33
eTapestry	2.78
Exceed	0.93
Microsoft Excel®	12.04
Filemaker Pro	3.70
Giftworks	4.63
PastPerfect	0.93
Proprietary	5.56
Quickbooks	1.85
Raiser's Edge, Blackbaud®	25.00
SalesForce	0.93
SiriusWare	1.85
SunGard Advance	0.93
Telosa Exceed Premiere	0.93
Versai	0.93
Wild Apricot	0.93

Table 33 Most commonly used software, by cost.

	No admission	Yes admission
Software	Percent	Percent
Access	4.35	3.23
ACT Sage	0.00	3.23
Advance 9.1	2.17	0.00
Albia	2.17	1.61
Altru, Blackbaud®	6.52	22.58
Banner	4.35	0.00
Bloomberg	2.17	0.00
CivicRM	2.17	0.00
Donor Perfect	10.87	6.45
eTapestry	4.35	1.61
Exceed	0.00	1.61
Microsoft Excel®	19.57	6.45
Filemaker Pro	6.52	1.61
Giftworks	6.52	3.23
PastPerfect	0.00	1.61
Proprietary	8.70	3.23
Quickbooks	2.17	1.61
Raiser's Edge, Blackbaud®	13.04	33.87
SalesForce	0.00	1.61
SiriusWare	0.00	3.23
SunGard Advance	2.17	0.00
Telosa Exceed Premiere	0.00	1.61
Versai	0.00	1.61
Wild Apricot	2.17	0.00

Table 34 Most commonly used software, by size.

	Small	Medium	Large
Software	Percent	Percent	Percent
Access	0.00	4.35	3.13
ACT Sage	2.44	4.35	0.00

Table 34 cont.

Advance 9.1	2.44	0.00	0.00
Albia	2.44	4.35	0.00
Altru, Blackbaud®	7.32	26.09	25.00
Banner	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bloomberg	2.44	0.00	0.00
CivicRM	2.44	0.00	0.00
Donor Perfect	9.76	8.70	6.25
eTapestry	7.32	0.00	0.00
Exceed	2.44	0.00	0.00
Microsoft Excel®	29.27	4.35	0.00
Filemaker Pro	4.88	4.35	3.13
Giftworks	9.76	0.00	0.00
PastPerfect	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proprietary	4.88	0.00	12.50
Quickbooks	2.44	4.35	0.00
Raiser's Edge, Blackbaud®	7.32	26.09	43.75
SalesForce	0.00	4.35	0.00
SiriusWare	0.00	0.00	3.13
SunGard Advance	0.00	0.00	3.13
Telosa Exceed Premiere	0.00	4.35	0.00
Versai	0.00	4.35	0.00
Wild Apricot	2.44	0.00	0.00

Table 35 Most commonly used software, by governance.

	Independent	University	Municipal
Software	Percent	Percent	Percent
Access	4.08	4.35	5.26
ACT Sage	2.04	0.00	0.00
Advance 9.1	0.00	4.35	0.00
Albia	2.04	0.00	0.00
Altru, Blackbaud®	18.37	4.35	15.79
Banner	0.00	8.70	0.00

Table 35 cont.

Bloomberg	2.04	0.00	0.00
CivicRM	0.00	0.00	5.26
Donor Perfect	12.24	8.70	5.26
eTapestry	4.08	0.00	0.00
Exceed	2.04	0.00	0.00
Microsoft Excel®	6.12	26.09	10.53
Filemaker Pro	2.04	13.04	0.00
Giftworks	8.16	4.35	0.00
PastPerfect	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proprietary	2.04	8.70	15.79
Quickbooks	0.00	0.00	5.26
Raiser's Edge, Blackbaud®	26.53	13.04	36.84
SalesForce	2.04	0.00	0.00
SiriusWare	2.04	0.00	0.00
SunGard Advance	0.00	0.00	0.00
Telosa Exceed Premiere	2.04	0.00	0.00
Versai	2.04	0.00	0.00
Wild Apricot	0.00	4.35	0.00

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

The primary objectives of this research were to distinguish different types of membership programs, signify the role of membership in fundraising initiatives at public gardens, and document the success of membership programs at public gardens.

Distinguishing different types of membership programs

Throughout this study, gardens were organized and analyzed based on three categories: admission cost, size (based on operating budget), and governance. By looking at gardens within these categories, we were able to compare like institutions and offer a more useful evaluation of membership programs to determine similarities and differences between these categories, as well as identify common characteristics of all gardens.

Cost: No Admission and Yes Admission

The results of this study revealed three areas of significant difference when comparing No admission gardens with Yes admission gardens: number of memberships, cost of lowest-level membership, and member retention rates.

Based on analysis of survey results, there was a significant difference in the number of memberships at gardens with varying admission types. Yes admission gardens reported an average of more than double the number of memberships as No admission gardens (Table 7). The cause of this difference is unknown, but is likely

linked to admission cost and member benefits, specifically free admission to a Yes admission garden.

When promoting memberships, No admission gardens face a unique challenge in terms of member benefits. The most commonly offered benefit for yes admission gardens, and presumably one of the most used benefits, is free admission (98% of yes admission gardens offer admission benefits). Gardens that are already free of an admission cost are clearly unable to offer this benefit. Perhaps in an effort to attract and maintain ‘value’ members (people who are looking to save money by becoming a member [Rich and Hines, 2002]), no admission gardens offer other discount benefits to members such as discounts for purchases at their plant sale, gift shop, or café.

Several survey respondents described this difficulty in selling memberships at a No admission garden. One survey respondent described this situation saying, “Our garden does not charge admission, which removes any incentive to join at the gate. Admission fees can really drive membership sales.” A second respondent described this phenomenon:

“Our hardest sell for memberships is the fact that we do not charge admission into our garden, many places can offer that as a perk to keep members engaged. As a result, any garden choosing to add memberships to their organization should consider offering the Reciprocal Admissions Program by the American Horticulture Society to their members, whether they charge admission or not. It was really [the AHS benefit that] helped us ‘sell our memberships’.”

Another significant difference can be seen in the cost of lowest-level membership at No admission and Yes admission gardens. With higher revenue from membership, it is not surprising that the mean entry-level price for a membership at Yes admission gardens is significantly higher than at No admission gardens. On average, Yes admission gardens charge \$9 more than No admission gardens for an

entry-level membership (Table 13). Although more research is needed, it could be that No admission gardens offer lower membership costs because of the lack of admission benefits.

The third area of significance can be seen in the member retention rates at No admission and Yes admission gardens. Based on results, we see that higher budgets and more FTE staff don't necessary translate into higher annual member retention rates; No admission gardens display a significantly higher average retention rate than Yes admission gardens (Table 26), despite smaller operating budgets and fewer staff (Table 3; Table 6). More research would need to be conducted to evaluate the cause of this difference in member retention.

Size: Small, Medium, and Large

Out of all garden categories, size proved to have the most significant impact on the administration of membership programs at public gardens. Significant interactions based on size were observed in nine different areas: operating budget, total garden FTE, FTE dedicated to membership, garden visitation, cost of admission, number of garden memberships, cost to administer membership program, cost of lowest-level membership, and member retention rate. Most often, the significant differences were observed between Large gardens as compared with Medium or Small gardens; there were almost no significant differences between Medium and Small gardens.

By definition, Small, Medium, and Large gardens have significantly different operating budgets. Along with proportional increases in operating budget come proportional increases in total FTE staffing as well as FTE staffing dedicated to membership. The bigger the garden, the larger the operating budget, the more staff are employed. Similarly, and not surprisingly, larger gardens tend to have significantly

higher cost of admission, more visitation, higher number of memberships, and higher cost of lowest-level memberships, all of which could be interrelated.

But again, similar to No admission gardens, results show that a larger operating budget does not consistently reflect a higher member retention rate. There was a significant difference in the member retention rates reported by Large gardens as compared with both Small and Medium gardens; Large gardens had an average retention rate about 10% lower than both Small and Medium gardens. If a healthy membership program “translates into strong support for the institution through renewed membership” (Rich and Hines, 2002), then it would appear that Small and Medium gardens are more successful, at least by one measure, than Large gardens. Again, more research would be needed to draw conclusions on the reason for these significant differences in member retention.

Governance: Independent, University, and Municipal

Garden governance displayed only three areas of significant difference: garden visitation, types of memberships offered, and cost of the lowest level of membership. Municipal gardens reported significantly higher garden visitation than University or Independent gardens; Municipal gardens saw double the average number of visitors annually compared with University and Independent gardens. One could speculate that this significant difference may be related to location of the University or Independent gardens, admission fees, or other factors, but more research would be needed to draw conclusions on the reason for the significantly higher level of visitation at Municipal gardens.

Although significant, differences in types of membership offered at gardens based on governance were not surprising. University gardens were significantly less

likely to offer family memberships. This difference may be linked to the demographics of the visitors; for example, it may be that University gardens have lower demand for family memberships and higher demand for individual or student memberships.

Lastly, a significant difference was observed in the average cost of lowest level memberships at gardens based on governance. This difference could be related to the cost of admission. A lower admission fee (or lack of admission fee) would likely result in a lower cost of entry-level membership due to lower “value perceived” (Cilella, 2011).

Signify the role of membership in fundraising initiatives at public gardens

While the role of membership programs in the overall success of public gardens continues to be under-researched, results and comments from the survey suggest that membership programs are valuable in their ability to generate revenue, add prospective donors, and connect people with the mission of the organization.

As discussed earlier, cultural institutions continue to look for expanded sources of funding and “diversified income streams” (Catlin-Legutko, 2012). As seen through the number and diversity of member levels and benefits offered at gardens, it is clear that museums and gardens are “becoming much more ambitious about their membership programs, both as a source of revenue and as a means of extending their support from the traditional base of high-income individuals to one that reflects the social, economic, and cultural diversity of the community” (Lord, 2009). Dozens of membership levels, from photographer memberships to active military to dog-walker memberships, were recorded in this study and reflect gardens’ efforts to include diverse types of people with diverse interests and socioeconomic constraints.

Not only do membership programs offer a direct source of revenue for the garden, but might also promote the use of other revenue-generating garden amenities. Many gardens offer fee-based programming and events, along with retail and café options, as member benefits. While members usually receive a discount on these opportunities and amenities, this discount might actually inspire more members to engage in these programs and lead to more revenue transactions. Would those members spend any money at all in the café if they weren't receiving a discount? Although more research could be conducted on the amount of dollars spent by members on programs and amenities, we can conclude that members greatly add to the revenue generating options of gardens looking for diversified earned income (Rich and Hines, 2002).

Another benefit of membership programs is their ability to connect people with the organization in ways that could promote future giving. Knowing that “memberships constitute the base of support—a pool of individuals who have the potential to make larger gifts” and that it takes a large number of people giving small gifts to make up the base of the ‘donor pyramid’, membership programs can serve as a point of entry for many potential donors (Catlin-Legutko, 2012). Not only does membership directly create revenue, but “it also provides a base of people who visit frequently, attend special programs, and often engage as donors and volunteers” (Kopco et al., 2004). Similarly, increased use and involvement with an organization decreases the likelihood of lapse, therefore increasing the likelihood of continued giving over time (Bhattacharya, 1998).

By collecting demographic information, program attendance, and the garden visitation of members, fundraising professionals at gardens can create a powerful tool

for assessing the habits and future giving of potential donors. At the very least, membership programs can “build a large contact list, which can then be followed up with development opportunities that may very well be beneficial to the institution over time” (Kopco et al., 2004).

In the comments throughout the survey, there were many mentions of membership serving as a pipeline for future philanthropy. One survey respondent suggested framing membership as philanthropic activity by saying, “Develop a member/donor-philosophy throughout the entire organization that understands the importance of membership to the operating budget.” Another respondent described a similar approach, encouraging others to “foster a ‘philanthropic’ aspect to membership. That would help convert members to donors.” Another survey taker took the theme of loyalty one step further by suggesting to “make membership an effective tool for education, outreach to the community, and building a base of support for the future.”

Several other comments described the need for members to fill the pipeline of other giving:

“[Membership programs] do positively create a long relationship which may translate into a future planned gift or bequest. It can create loyalty.”

“Just that [membership programs] take a lot of time to do it well, but they are a good source of potential major donor”

“Bottom line, [memberships] are of critical importance to every institution; treat your members and volunteers well; they'll reciprocate.”

One final respondent again explained the relationship between membership and other philanthropy:

“The true value of our garden membership program is in building advocacy and community support, involving visitors more deeply through long-term meaningful communication, and in recruiting our base of future donors. (Donors are nearly always members first!) Membership in itself does not net a lot of money right away, but it is an invaluable tool for successful fundraising and development.”

Finally, membership programs can offer gardens an avenue for connecting people to their mission. Through regular visitation as well as participation in events and programs, members are able to build on repeat knowledge of the garden and its mission, vision, and values. Knowing that the threat of member lapse decreases with increased interaction with the institution (Bhattacharya, 1998), and that members are more likely to join at higher levels if they are motivated by mission-related activities (i.e. preservation for an art museum member) (Paswan, 2004), we can conclude that membership is valuable in its ability to connect people with the institution and its mission-related activities.

While not quantified, many survey takers suggested similar themes through their comments. Survey respondents described membership programs as an effective method for “developing passion and commitment from the public.” Similarly, one respondent suggested “membership is an important revenue source for public gardens but it is also the ‘heart’ of your organization. Members support your organization in many different ways and are your ambassadors for your organization.”

Finally, one respondent explained the relationship between mission and members:

“I know that we have a goal this year of trying to ‘tell our story’ better, to engage our members and visitors in the mission of the Garden and to

educate them about all the amazing things that we do in addition to providing a beautiful environment to enjoy. This will help to keep members/donors that are not necessarily only interested in supporting us if and when we have a great exhibition schedule.”

Document the success of membership programs at public gardens

As this study unfolded, the question of ‘success’ continued to appear; what is success for a membership program and how do we define and measure success?

Assuming more members mean more revenue from membership, is success simply an annual increase in number of members along with an annual increase in revenue? If members are satisfied and renew year after year, is success member retention? Or is success when members become donors of larger gifts? Could success be when members heavily use their member benefits, becoming more involved in programs, events, visitation, and the mission of the organization?

Relevant literature poorly defines membership ‘success’ so we are left to look for appropriate metrics elsewhere. In the field, member retention rate is often considered a benchmark for measuring success (Rich and Hines, 2002). Overall, No admission, Medium, and Small gardens have the highest member retention rates (Table 25). Interestingly, these gardens also show some of the lowest operating budgets.

Is it possible that No admission gardens are more effectively delivering on the keys to a healthy membership program which include “quality customer service, successful stewardship, and a ‘member first’ orientation” (Rich and Hines, 2002) than Yes admission gardens? And again, could it be true that membership in “smaller institutions... can be seen as a donation and the ‘charitable’ thing to do” (Cilella, 2011) more so than at larger institutions? Are smaller gardens fostering a more ‘philanthropic’ approach to membership and more deeply engaging with members as

donors instead of customers? As Gail and Barry Lord suggest in their book on museum management, “memberships motivated solely by value for money often end once the perceived benefits cease and are harder to retain” (Lord, 2009). The results of this study would support this notion, suggesting that smaller gardens could be attracting more philanthropic members than larger gardens.

Similarly, visitor conversion to membership can offer a glimpse into the success of membership programs (Rich and Hines, 2002). While information on direct conversion from visitor to member is not available, we can look at memberships as a proportion of visitation to make general comparisons. Looking at estimated memberships (Table 7) as a proportion of total estimated annual visitation (Table 4), it would appear that Large gardens, Independent gardens, and Yes admission have the highest visitor to member conversion, a supposed sign of success for these membership programs. Without more information, particularly with regard to the motivation of people to become members, we are unable to know exactly how much of that visitation was comprised of member visits or how many members were repeat visitors. Again, this comparison is useful, but not a firm measure of success for membership programs.

One additional measure of success might be the percentage of members that grow to give additional gifts to the annual fund or the percentage that upgrade membership levels (Rich and Hines, 2002). Membership is often viewed as the base of the donor pyramid (Barry et al., 2010), but qualitative data has yet to display the exact progression or interaction between members and donors of other gifts. This is yet another area for expanded research on member and donor behavior.

Another measure of success for membership programs could be cost per dollar raised. This study did not directly collect information on cost per dollar raised, and would require industry-wide standards for calculating and reporting this metric. While this study did collect information on revenue and cost to administer membership programs through the survey, which might offer a rough but useful comparison, the responses indicated that there was not a consistent method for reporting these figures. Yet again, this would be another opportunity for extended research.

There were several other themes repeated throughout the survey that might contribute to improved administration of membership programs. This is another area for expanded research, but is worth mentioning anecdotally. Many survey respondents commented about software ushering in membership success:

“If at all possible invest in adequate software from the very beginning vs. creating ‘siloed’ data and then having to eventually consolidate into software anyway.”

“Purchase a good database system.”

“When I took over membership, it was being kept in an Excel spreadsheet, which is not conducive to tracking over time. I would avoid having the membership functions shared by a separate entity (i.e. university Development office) - it hinders timely recognition and can confuse what is intended to be a membership versus what is a donation or sponsorship, etc.”

“Use off-the-shelf software to track members, tie it into your accounting software and include a CRM [customer relationship management module].”

“Invest in an integrated CRM database system.”

These cautions are of particular importance to gardens with small operating budgets. Which database software should a small garden use to maximize success

without overspending? A comprehensive evaluation of software strategies would be a beneficial tool, especially if initial and recurring costs were included.

Regardless of the cost of member and donor database software, there seems to be a notion that data collected consistently over time can serve as a powerful tool. One challenge throughout this study was the lack of available data on membership programs. Likely due to time and resource constraints, many gardens seem to store only the minimal amount of information on their members. By strategically thinking through the best metrics for measuring the health of a membership program (use of member benefits, conversion of visitors to members, conversion of members to donors of other gifts, membership level upgrades), gardens can make data work for them, regardless of the price tag of their software.

Similarly, industry-wide standards for measuring membership programs would greatly increase the knowledge and communication in this field. There is an opportunity to strategically collect data on the habits and behaviors of members and to share that data with the greater field. By clearly defining terms, selecting the most important metrics for the industry, and then committing to reporting and sharing those metrics, membership programs could be refined and improved, allowing opportunity to engage new audiences and retain current ones.

Opportunity for Further Research

This study revealed many areas for additional research on membership programs at public gardens in the United States. The most substantial area for research is in the area of member retention. What causes member retention? What are the habits of organizations with high member retention? What is a common definition for how retention is calculated? Because member retention is often used as a measure of

success, there is much research in this area that would prove useful for the professional advancement of membership programs.

Similarly, there is a need for research on the conversion of visitors to members. How are visitors converted to members? What are their motivations? What tactics do gardens use to successfully foster this transition? How do gardens calculate and report visitor conversion? These are just some of the questions that could be explored in relation to converting visitors to members.

A third area for expanded research is the measurement of cost per dollar raised. How is cost per dollar raised defined? How is it calculated? With industry-wide definitions, we would be better equipped to identify successes in the field.

And finally, there is an opportunity to research corporate membership programs at public gardens. Research on these member levels was outside the scope of this study, but would provide important insight on the fundraising activities of public gardens.

Conclusions

At the conclusion of this study, it is important to reflect on the central declaration for 502(c)(3) organizations: the mission statement. Through the mission statement, a cultural institution is able to proclaim an “inspiring assertion of its *raison d’être*, or relevance” (Lord, 2009). “No museum, or any kind of organization for that matter, can succeed without first creating a mission to follow” (Kopco et al., 2004). Similarly, all programs and activities of a cultural institution need to be supportive of this statement by engaging visitors and the community in fulfillment of mission. As one such program, membership should be anchored in the mission statement as well, and integrated into larger, institution-wide goals. Reflecting on the results of this

study, it becomes clear that the success of a membership program depends on defining goals as set forth by the mission, the methods by which that success is measured, and the ability of that garden to learn from the success of similar and different gardens.

Membership programs hold a unique position in the world of public gardens; not purely fund raising, not purely education, not purely visitation, but somewhere in between all three. As such, membership programs have a unique opportunity to foster introduction to the garden for some and deepen engagement for others, all at the same time. Not only do membership programs offer opportunity for visitors to access the gardens on a regular basis, they also offer an avenue for visitors to learn through regular programming, develop community through events, and begin to invest in the organization through philanthropy. Membership programs are the ideal bridge between general visitation and committed engagement.

While industry-wide definitions and measures of success are vital to the health and growth of membership programs, it is equally important for individual gardens to identify the ways in which membership can help achieve success for the institution. Knowing that “the various aspects of operating a museum necessitate that success be evaluated in various ways,” (Kopco, 2004), success might be different for every garden. For some gardens, success might be introducing a large number of people through the gardens through membership, for others it might be educating members about conservation issues through member programming, for others it might be engaging with a specific demographic, and for others, membership success might be revenue generation. For most gardens, membership will support a number of these goals, and many more. These measures of success should move beyond just number of

members or visitor conversion, and should include a broader scope of the impact of membership (Anderson, 2004).

Throughout the survey, several respondents described the importance of planning and goal setting for membership programs. One respondent said, “Take the time to create a strategic plan around membership, including identifying benefits to the member and the value/cost of those benefits.” Defining goals for membership administration and activities would allow a garden to identify the ways in which membership can support other areas of the garden.

Identifying the specific role of membership through goals in relation to mission is only half the process; goals must also be measured and reported, which implies an attention to record-keeping and collecting information on membership use. One survey respondent suggested that a garden, “have the software to track memberships and members use/visitation. Data is king and is so important for decision-making.” Another respondent reiterated this concept suggesting that gardens “incorporate tracking and more proactive approach for increasing membership.”

If there is one thing we can learn from the results of this study, it is that the strengths of membership programs vary depending on cost, size, and governance of the garden. Only after we industry-wide standards for defining key components of administering membership programs at public gardens can we begin to learn from other gardens’ successes and develop a useful set of best practices for our field. If the goal of a membership program is to increase member retention, and likely engage with more ‘philanthropic’-minded members, look to smaller gardens or gardens that do not charge an admission fee. If the goal is to convert high volumes of visitors to members,

and likely engage with more ‘value’ oriented members, look to Large gardens and gardens that charge admission fees.

By clearly defining the purpose of membership in support of a garden’s mission, mapping out the corresponding benefits and activities that will support that purpose, diligently tracking and reporting measures of success, and then learning from the successes of similar and different gardens, membership programs at public gardens can serve as a powerful tool for both fiscal flexibility as well as mission fulfillment. Through membership programs, visitors are offered a way to become increasingly involved and invested in the work, health, and mission of public gardens.

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Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE IRB, EXEMPT LETTER

DATE: November 2, 2015

TO: Stephanie Kuniholm
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [826920-1] A Comparison of Membership Programs at
Public Gardens in the
United States

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF
EXEMPT STATUS DECISION DATE:
November 2, 2015

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # (2)

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

We will put a copy of this correspondence on file in our office. Please remember to notify us if you make any substantial changes to the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese-McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or nicolefm@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

cc:

Appendix B

INFORMATION COLLECTED IN BACKGROUND STUDY

1. Garden Name
2. Admission (yes/no)
3. Cost of admission
4. University affiliation
5. URL
6. Contact information
 - a. Zip code
 - b. State
7. Membership levels
 - a. Individual
 - b. Dual
 - c. Senior
 - d. Student
 - e. Family
 - f. Grandparent
 - g. Nonprofit organization
 - h. Photographer
 - i. Corporate
 - j. Higher
 - k. Plus

- l. 2-year option
 - m. Other
- 8. Member benefits
 - a. Free admission
 - b. Parking
 - c. Extended use
 - d. Extended hours
 - e. Discount on additional tickets
 - f. Plant sale
 - g. Gift shop
 - h. Café
 - i. Programming
 - j. Advance notice of programs/events
 - k. Special events
 - l. Newsletters
 - m. E-news
 - n. Facility rentals/discounts on facility rentals
 - o. Photography access
 - p. Help from horticulture staff (ID, help line)
 - q. Tours
 - r. Concierge service
 - s. Library access
 - t. Gifts
 - u. Audio tour

- v. Gift membership
 - w. Reciprocal benefits
 - i. AAM
 - ii. AHS
 - iii. NARM
 - iv. ROAM
 - v. Other
 - x. Discounts at local businesses
 - y. Access to director or staff
 - z. Magazine subscriptions
9. Membership cost
- a. Cost of lowest level
 - b. Cost of highest level

Appendix C

GARDENS INCLUDED IN BACKGROUND STUDY

1. Adkins Arboretum
2. Airlie Gardens Foundation
3. Alaska Botanical Garden
4. Atlanta Botanical Garden
5. Berkshire Botanical Garden
6. Blithewold Mansion, Gardens and Arboretum
7. The Bloedel Reserve
8. Bok Tower Gardens
9. Botanica Gardens Wichita
10. Botanical Garden Society of the Ozarks
11. Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve
12. Boyce Thompson Arboretum
13. Brooklyn Botanic Garden
14. Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens
15. Cape Fear Botanical Garden
16. Cedar Valley Arboretum & Botanic Gardens
17. Chase Garden
18. Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art
19. Clark Gardens

20. Cleveland Botanical Garden
21. Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens
22. Crosby Arboretum
23. Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden
24. Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden
25. Denver Botanic Gardens
26. Descanso Gardens
27. Desert Botanical Garden
28. Dixon Gallery and Gardens
29. Dyck Arboretum of the Plains
30. Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
31. Fernwood Botanical Gardens & Nature Preserve
32. Filoli Center
33. Fort Worth Botanical Garden
34. Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens
35. Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park
36. Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens, Inc.
37. Fullerton Arboretum
38. Garvan Woodland Gardens
39. George Landis Arboretum
40. Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden
41. Green Bay Botanical Garden
42. Greenwood Gardens

43. Grounds for Sculpture
44. Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden
45. Heathcote Botanical Gardens
46. Heritage Museums & Gardens
47. Hidden Lake Gardens
48. Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens
49. Huntsville Botanical Garden
50. Idaho Botanical Garden
51. Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden
52. Ladew Topiary Gardens
53. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
54. Lauritzen Gardens
55. Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
56. LongHouse Reserve
57. Longue Vue House and Gardens
58. Longwood Gardens
59. Ganna Walksa Lotusland
60. Harold L. Lyon Arboretum
61. Marie Selby Botanical Gardens
62. Maymont
63. McCrory Gardens
64. McKee Botanical Garden
65. Meerkerk Gardens

66. Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens
67. Minnesota Landscape Arboretum
68. Missouri Botanical Garden
69. Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania
70. Mounts Botanical Garden
71. Myriad Gardens Foundation
72. Naples Botanical Garden
73. New York Botanical Garden
74. Norfolk Botanical Garden
75. Olbrich Botanical Gardens
76. Old Westbury Gardens
77. The Oregon Garden
78. Peckerwood Garden
79. Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens
80. Polly Hill Arboretum
81. Powell Gardens
82. Quad City Botanical Center
83. Quarryhill Botanical Garden
84. Queens Botanical Garden
85. Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden
86. Red Butte Garden
87. Reiman Gardens
88. Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden

89. Rotary Botanical Gardens
90. San Antonia Botanical Garden
91. San Diego Botanic Garden
92. San Francisco Botanical Garden
93. Shangri La Botanical Gardens and Nature Center
94. Sherman Library & Gardens
95. Shofuso Japanese House and Garden
96. Sonnenberg Gardens & Mansion State Historic Park
97. South Coast Botanic Garden
98. South Texas Botanical Gardens and Nature Center
99. Stonecrop Gardens
100. Taltree Arboretum & Gardens
101. The Arboretum at Flagstaff
102. The Fells Historic Estate and Gardens
103. The Holden Arboretum
104. The Huntington Library
105. The Living Desert
106. The Morton Arboretum
107. The Rotch-Jones-Duff House & Garden Museum
108. The Ruth Bancroft Garden
109. Santa Barbara Botanic Garden
110. Tohono Chul Gardens
111. Tower Hill Botanic Garden

112. Tucson Botanical Gardens
113. Tudor Place Historic House & Garden
114. Tyler Arboretum
115. University of CA Botanical Garden at Berkeley
116. University of CA Riverside Botanic Gardens
117. University of CA Santa Cruz Arboretum
118. University of South Florida Botanical Gardens
119. Vizcaya Museum & Gardens
120. Western Kentucky Botanical Garden
121. Wing Haven Gardens
122. Winterthur
123. Yew Dell Botanical Gardens
124. Tulsa Botanic Garden
125. Nehrling Gardens
126. Orland E. White Arboretum
127. Reflection Riding Arboretum & Nature Center
128. University of AZ Campus Arboretum
129. Aldridge Gardens
130. Allen Centennial Garden
131. Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University
132. Asheville Botanical Gardens
133. Awbury Arboretum
134. Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens

135. Bellevue Botanical Garden
136. Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest
137. Betty Ford Alpine Gardens
138. Birmingham Botanical Gardens
139. Boone County Arboretum
140. Boxerwood Nature Center & Woodland Garden
141. Chadwick Arboretum and Learning Gardens at The Ohio State University
142. Cheyenne Botanic Garden
143. Chicago Botanic Garden
144. Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens
145. Como Park Zoo & Marjorie McNeely Conservatory
146. Connecticut College Arboretum
147. Cornell Plantations
148. The Dawes Arboretum
149. Dothan Area Botanical Gardens
150. Dubuque Arboretum and Botanical Gardens
151. Earl Burns Miller Japanese Garden
152. Edith J. Carrier Arboretum
153. Evergreen Arboretum and Gardens
154. Garfield Park Conservatory
155. Elizabeth F. Gamble Garden
156. Hahn Horticulture Center at Virginia Tech
157. Haverford College Arboretum

158. Highline SeaTac Botanical Garden
159. Hilltop Arboretum
160. Inniswood Metro Gardens
161. Iowa Arboretum
162. Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens
163. JC Raulston Arboretum
164. Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens
165. Kansas State Gardens
166. Knoxville Botanical Garden
167. Leach Botanical Garden
168. Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum
169. McLaughlin Garden & Homestead
170. Mizzou Botanic Garden
171. Nebraska Statewide Arboretum
172. North Carolina Botanical Garden
173. Prairie Garden Trust
174. Reeves-Reed Arboretum
175. Reynolda Gardens
176. Rutgers Gardens
177. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden
178. Sarah P. Duke Gardens
179. Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College
180. Secrest Arboretum

181. Slayton Arboretum of Hillsdale College
182. South Carolina Botanical Garden
183. State Botanical Garden of Georgia
184. Temple University Arboretum
185. The Arboretum at Penn State
186. Smith College Botanic Garden
187. John C. Gifford Arboretum
188. University of Tennessee Gardens
189. Toledo Botanical Garden
190. University of California Davis Arboretum and Public Garden
191. UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens
192. University of Delaware Botanic Gardens
193. University of Nebraska-Lincoln Botanical Garden and Arboretum
194. West Virginia Botanic Garden
195. Kingwood Center Gardens
196. Sandhills Horticultural Gardens
197. Alta Vista Botanical Gardens
198. American University
199. Amy B. H. Greenwell Ethnobotanical Garden
200. Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center
201. Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum
202. Bard College Arboretum
203. Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum and Gardens

204. Bellingrath Gardens & Home
205. Bookworm Gardens
206. Botanic Garden At Historic Barns Park
207. Brenton Arboretum
208. Brookgreen Gardens
209. Brooklyn Bridge Park
210. Cantigny Park
211. Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden
212. Clary Gardens
213. Clovis Botanical Garden
214. Columbus Botanical Garden
215. Cummer Museum and Gardens
216. Dunsmuir Botanical Gardens
217. Fellows Riverside Gardens
218. Four Freedoms Park Conservancy
219. Laurelwood Arboretum
220. Friends of the High Line
221. Rogerson Clematis Garden
222. The Gardens at Heather Farms
223. Gardens on Spring Creek
224. Goodell Gardens & Homestead
225. Hermitage Museum & Gardens
226. Heronswood Garden

- 227. Highfield Hall & Gardens
- 228. Highstead
- 229. Historic London Town and Gardens
- 230. Hoyt Arboretum And Herbarium
- 231. The Hudson Gardens & Event Center
- 232. Humboldt Botanical Garden
- 233. Kruckeberg Botanic Garden
- 234. Linnaeus Arboretum Gustavus Adolphus College
- 235. Lockerly Arboretum
- 236. Los Angeles County Arboretum Foundation
- 237. Lurie Garden
- 238. Luther Burbank Home & Gardens
- 239. Luthy Botanical Garden
- 240. Seymour Botanical Conservatory
- 241. Miami Beach Botanical Garden
- 242. Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory
- 243. Mountain Top Arboretum
- 244. The North Carolina Arboretum
- 245. Northern Plains Botanic Garden Society
- 246. Oak Park Conservatory
- 247. Ogden Botanical Garden
- 248. Overland Park Arboretum & Botanical Gardens
- 249. Paul J. Ciener Botanical Garden

- 250. Peace River Botanical & Sculpture Gardens - a Project of the Tetrault Family Fou
- 251. Pine Hollow Arboretum
- 252. Pittsburgh Botanic Garden
- 253. Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park
- 254. Regional Parks Botanic Garden
- 255. Riverbanks Zoo & Botanical Garden
- 256. Robert W. Monk Gardens
- 257. San Francisco Conservatory of Flowers
- 258. Santa Fe Botanical Garden
- 259. Sawtooth Botanical Garden
- 260. Skylands Association
- 261. Smith-Gilbert Gardens
- 262. Stanley M. Rowe Arboretum
- 263. Theodore Payne Foundation
- 264. Tizer Botanic Gardens & Arboretum
- 265. U.S. National Arboretum
- 266. University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden
- 267. Utah State University Botanical Gardens
- 268. Van Vleck House & Gardens
- 269. The Water Conservation Garden
- 270. Wellesley College Botanic Gardens
- 271. Wellfield Botanic Gardens
- 272. Western Colorado Botanical Gardens

- 273. Wilbur D. May Arboretum & Botanical Garden
- 274. Carleen Bright Arboretum
- 275. Harry P. Leu Gardens
- 276. Henry Schmieder Arboretum
- 277. Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Garden
- 278. Lasdon Park And Arboretum
- 279. Mercer Botanic Gardens
- 280. Pinecrest Gardens
- 281. Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center
- 282. Botanical Garden at the Springs Preserve
- 283. Texas Discovery Gardens
- 284. Tower Grove Park
- 285. University of Wisconsin Arboretum
- 286. Ventura Botanical Gardens

Appendix D

PUBLIC GARDEN MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Hello! My name is Stephanie Kuniholm and I am a graduate student at the University of Delaware in the Longwood Graduate Program in Public Horticulture. This program, a collaboration between Longwood Gardens and the University of Delaware, prepares students for leadership positions at public gardens and cultural institutions.

This survey is one part of my research focused exclusively on membership programs at public gardens throughout the United States. By collecting information on 300 gardens, I will be able to provide a comprehensive report on the administration of public garden membership programs. My hope is to collect information that will be useful to membership managers and associates, directors of development, executive directors- you!

You will be asked to answer questions regarding your organization in general, as well as the administration of the membership program at your organization. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes.

Your responses are voluntary. Upon completing my research, I would be more than happy to share my findings with you and your organization.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at kuniholm@udel.edu.

Thank you in advance for your time and participation.

1. Garden Name:
2. At what level do most new members join? Drag and drop in order of popularity, with most popular at the top.

_____ Individual (1)

_____ Dual (2)

_____ Family (3)

_____ Other (4)

Comments:

3. At what level do you consider your members to be donors (philanthropically engaged)? Please provide your answer in dollar amount.
4. What other gifts do you solicit from members? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Gifts to annual fund (1)
- ☐ Capital campaign gifts (2)
- ☐ Estate/Planned gifts (3)
- ☐ Memorial/Tribute gift (4)
- ☐ Gifts to special projects (5)
- ☐ Other (6) _____

Comments:

5. Do you track how often members use their benefits at your garden?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

6. Based on your tracking data, which benefits do members use the most? Please drag and drop in order of the most to least used benefit, with the most used at the top.

- _____ Admission benefits (ex: free admission, discounts on additional admission tickets) (1)
- _____ Retail benefits (ex: discounts in gift shop, cafe, plant sales, local businesses) (2)
- _____ Reciprocal admission benefits (ex: AHS, NARM, or other) (3)
- _____ Program benefits (ex: discounts on classes, camps, tours) (4)
- _____ Special events (ex: member only events, annual gala) (5)
- _____ Other (6)
- _____ Other (7)
- _____ Other (8)

Comments:

7. Have you recently added, changed, or removed any of your member benefits?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

8. Which benefits have you recently added, changed, or removed, and why?

9. How do you recruit or acquire new members?

	Always (1)	Sometimes (2)	Never (3)
Direct mail (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
On-site (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social or Groupon deals (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
List sharing (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social media (5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discounts, deals, or specials (6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

10. Do you track the success of member acquisition strategies?

- ☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (2)

11. Please rank your member acquisition strategies in order of their success. Drag and drop in order of success, with the most successful strategy on the top.

- _____ Direct Mail (1)
_____ On-site (2)
_____ Living Social or Groupon (3)
_____ List sharing (4)
_____ Social Media (5)
_____ Discounts, deals, or specials (6)
_____ Other (7)

Comments:

12. What is your average annual member retention rate? Please provide a numeric percentage.

Comments:

13. What methods do you use for member renewal?

	Always (1)	Sometimes (2)	Never (3)
Mail (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email/Online (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Automatic renewal option (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phone call (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In-person (5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

14. How does your organization define 'lapsed member'? (Examples: "A member is lapsed after 3 failed renewal attempts," or "A member is lapsed after failure to renew within 6 months of membership expiration")

15. What methods do you use to bring back lapsed members?

	Always (1)	Sometimes (2)	Never (3)
Direct mail (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phone call (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

16. On average, how much revenue does your membership program generate each year? Please provide your answer in dollar amount.

Comments:

17. On average, how much does it cost to run or administer your membership program each year (including staff costs)? Please provide your answer in dollar amount.

Comments:

18. What is the full-time equivalent staffing of your membership program?

19. Where does membership fit in the organization of your garden?

- ☐ Development department (1)
- ☐ Marketing/communications (2)
- ☐ General administrative (3)
- ☐ Membership department (4)
- ☐ Visitor services (5)
- ☐ Ticketing (6)
- ☐ No specific department (7)
- ☐ Other (8) _____

Comments:

20. Do you survey your members?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

21. Do you ask questions about motivations for becoming a member?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

22. Based on your surveying, what are the top 3 motivations for becoming a member at your garden?

- #1 member motivation (1)
- #2 member motivation (2)
- #3 member motivation (3)

Comments:

23. How would you best describe the governance of your garden?

- ☐ Independent (1)
- ☐ University (2)
- ☐ Partnership with State/Local government (3)
- ☐ Other (4) _____

Comments:

24. What is the average annual operating budget of your institution? Please provide your answer in dollar amount.

Comments:

25. What is the full-time equivalent staffing at your garden?

26. What is the estimated annual visitation at your garden?

Comments:

27. About how many members does your garden currently have?

Comments:

28. What software do you use to manage memberships?
29. If you were creating a membership program for a brand new garden, what would you do differently? What advice would you give?
30. Do you have any final thoughts, questions or concerns about membership programs at public gardens? Please comment below.
31. Would you like to receive a summary of these research findings, expected late spring, 2016? If so, please provide your name and preferred email address:

Name:

Email Address:

32. Thank you again for your time and participation! If you have any additional questions or comments, please contact Stephanie Kuniholm at kuniholm@udel.edu.

Appendix E

PUBLIC GARDEN MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESULTS

Garden names have been removed from survey results. Additionally, any identifying information has been blacked out to protect anonymity.

Initial Report

Last Modified: 11/09/2015

1. Garden Name:

Removed for anonymity.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	141

2. At what level do most new members join? Drag and drop in order of popularity, with most popular at the top.

#	Answer					Total Responses
1	Individual	40	52	17	10	119
2	Dual	17	25	44	33	119
3	Family	50	33	21	15	119
4	Other	12	9	37	61	119
	Total	119	119	119	119	-

Other
Student/Senior
Student/Active Duty Military
Supporter
Senior
Contributing: \$100
Ambassador (\$100) which includes additional free guest
Sponsor
Senior
our \$150 level
preservation \$250
Senior
Household
Bronze Donor Member
Contributing
Garden Plus
Benefactor
Sustaining
Sponsor
Donor (2 guests)
Patron
Regular
Sustaining
Friend
Jewels Level Ruby
complimentary, non-profit, business
senior/military
Contributor
Family & Friends
Senior
Business
Senior
Bougainvillea
Friend
Sustainer
Contributor
Senior/student
Higher levels--all are "family" after base family membership
Contributor (4 cards)
Group (6)
Family with 2 adtl adult guests
\$100 level - Four Person - "████████ Classic"
senior

Senior contributing
Family/Dual senior single
Family plus dog friendly
Individual and Guest
Family Plus
Extended Family
Senori
\$125/year (premium)
Supporting at \$250
Garden Friend
Senior Basic
\$500 - \$20,000
Donor Club Levels
Senior, Volunteer, Teacher K-12
Senior Memberships (Family & Individual)
Friend-\$100
Friend/donor level
Contributor
Friend
Family Plus

Statistic	Individual	Dual	Family	Other
Min Value	1	1	1	1
Max Value	4	4	4	4
Mean	1.97	2.78	2.01	3.24
Variance	0.82	1.02	1.11	0.94
Standard Deviation	0.91	1.01	1.05	0.97
Total Responses	119	119	119	119

3. Comments

Text Response

We don't have a family category, but do have a household level, also, no dual level.

We found that family memberships confused people. Sometimes they would list two different addresses for one family. We do not have any of your other categories of membership, so your ranking make no sense for us.

Garden Plus: General Gardens admission for two named cardholders and their children (or up to four grandchildren) ages 18 and under. PLUS General Gardens admission for one additional guest per day. Perfect for families with a child/adult care provider

We do not have a Dual level, only Individual and then Family.

We don't offer a dual membership

Technically we do not have a dual level membership. Our most popular level includes 2 adults and children under 18 yrs.

We do not have a dual membership option. Our Family Membership allows for any two named adults, not just two named family members.

Our Family and Sr. Family levels are the most popular, followed by the Individual and Sr. Individual.

We don't offer dual or family memberships. This year we restructured our levels and are offering a \$250 level - top of the line - in addition to our \$100 patron and \$35 individual levels.

Jenkins does not differentiate from individual family or organization it is just regular membership

We don't have a dual membership.

Our Dual/Family Levels are the same.

Our Member Plus (family) is the level most new members join.

Family and Individual vascillate though we currently have more at Family

Grandparents would be #4

We do not offer a dual membership yet. We will be adding this level in Spring 2016.

We do not have a Dual level

Our Household membership could be considered a Dual or Family membership
Family & Dual are combined into one collective membership for us. The Sustainer level is also popular for first time member and offers admission for 4 adults and children under 18.

Dual?

We may not be a good fit because the membership is not a garden membership but rather a membership in a non-for-profit organization that supports the garden, The garden is owned and managed by the [REDACTED] and admission is free to the public.

Family and Dual work the same at our garden.

we don't have a dual membership Family is for four people

We do not have just a dual membership. Our "family" membership includes 2 adults/seniors with their children/grandchildren 17 & under

we don't have an individual level

For us, Dual and Family are the same level

We don't have a dual membership level

We have one level for Family/Dual

This doesn't quite apply. Our memberships are considered to be gifts to the Friends of [REDACTED], and the member(s) are whatever names are on the check. Over 90% are individual donors.

The dual is a Senior couple that is our highest membership

We don't have an individual level. We start at dual.

BBG's top three levels are: 1. Family/Dual (2 members) 2. Individual 3. Family/Dual Plus (2 members + one guest with every visit, kids under 16)

Typically it's Family first, but this year has changed to Individual and Guest being the top membership category.

Dual/Family is combined for [REDACTED]

We do not have a dual level.

We do not offer dual. We use the term "Household" rather than family. The \$125 membership gets extra benefits beyond the basics that are offered for Individual and Household Memberships.

Most new members fall into the individual and family levels of giving unless they are giving a specific gift for naming or for a specific purpose.

56% are Household Members (Family). We have added a category of Family and Friends which we hope to become the new favorite, at a higher price point.

We do not have a dual membership.

Basic-- includes individuals and families, we don't have indiv, dual or family options

Dual is \$85

We do not have memberships in the [REDACTED] although donations are encouraged

We only have two basic levels of membership - then moves to donor club levels at \$250

Dual and family are at the same level monetarily.

We don't have a dual membership but do offer a Teacher & Student membership

Our family membership is for 2 adults.

Our duo + 2 level is closest to 'Family' [REDACTED] general admission is \$12 for ages 13 and up, so families with teens ages 13 and over tend to buy the duo + 2 level

We don't have a Dual level. Our categories are Individual \$65; Household \$100 (aka Family); President's Council \$275; Chairman's Council \$1,000; [REDACTED] Society \$2,500; and [REDACTED] Council \$5,000.

We only offer individual and family at this time

We do not have a "Family" category

We really only have family or individual memberships.

We are a state university and do not have memberships.

We don't have a dual membership.

Family Plus is our reciprocal family membership level, through NARM and ROAM. Our number 4 level is not Dual, it is [REDACTED] Family - a family level discounted for [REDACTED] affiliates.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	54

4. At what level do you consider your members to be donors (philanthropically engaged)? Please provide your answer in dollar amount.

\$
50
25
500.00
150
100
250.00
500
500
1.00
75
100
100
1000
1000
25
25
100
100
250
150.00
500.00
185
500
300
200.00
85.00
67
100
50.00
55.00
100.00
500
60
1100.00
10
60.00
100.00
50.00
500.00

300
25
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175
1500
1,000
250
25

250.00
50.00
10,000
200
100
1000.00
100
50
25.00
10.00
40.00
1500
50
100.00
50.00
50
25.00
50
500.00

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	118

5. Comments

Text Response

Our departments are completely separate so we don't consider members as donors and vice versa. Our higher levels of giving, \$250, \$500, \$1,000 and \$1,250 are still considered members.

We do not consider members to be donors as much as we consider donors to be members

We consider all members donors

Our membership is 100% philanthropic.

any amount over our Family membership level of \$60

I don't know what this question means.

Research shows us that the majority of our members--including lower-level donors have an above average median household income. We recognize all of our donor members at \$100 and above.

Currently we do not have a donor program but are working with a consultant to assist in reviewing our options.

The dues at all levels contain a portion of philanthropic donation. The higher the level, the greater the percentage. I have listed the Sustaining level which is the first with a substantial donation.

We recognize member/donors who give \$500 or more by listing in our annual report.

This is our family level.

We do not have a definitive answer on that yet as we are still working on that. Right now, if you are a member you renew your membership annually and any additional gifts that you give are considered separate.

We aren't there yet.

The average spend across all members at all levels is \$67. Most of our members participate at the [REDACTED] (Dual) level, the dues for which are \$75.

[REDACTED] has a very high number of \$100 or more members who are loyal when they join they are donors.

amounts over \$500 are considered a donation

We consider all of our members to be donors - the lowest membership level is \$10 (university student)

I'm not certain we've ever made that distinction. In a quick discussion with my co-workers, we had fairly divergent ideas on the level we would consider to be donors, but the figure above is a good average.

\$35 is an individual membership.

\$125 starts are donor member categories

As a small budget garden we are thankful for any gift though \$500 or more is a generous gift.

We keep membership and donations separate.

We only consider members who forego their benefits or make additional contributions (above and beyond their memberships) to be donors. Usually this is at the \$250 level or higher.

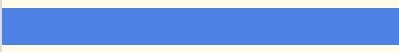





I assume this is a question about membership dues.
This is our Individual membership. Some members give to appeals in addition to membership, some do not.
we also have \$1000 and \$2000 levels
This is our Propagator level membership
This is our "Sustainer" level, its the level that we consider to be philanthropically engaged because of the dollar amount, compared to the membership benefits they receive.
Ambassador: 250 Steward: 500 [REDACTED] Society: 1000+
[REDACTED] considers a gift in any amount to be a donor. But we reserve our discount on programs and membership card for participation the the AHS RAP program for donors with gifts of \$50 or more.
Having a cumulative giving of at least a \$1000
This is our [REDACTED] Annual Fund Giving Society
\$50 is the basic individual membership.
Tough to answer since we have university employees who give year after year at small amounts of \$250/yr. or less to as low as \$25 yr, & board members who may give up to \$2K each yr. I would considered them engaged since they continue to give to us.
However, those donors who make the master plan projects happen here give at levels of \$100K and more.
Anyone who gives beyond a membership is considered a donor.
Our membership ranges from \$40 to an amount that the member chooses to give. We have had donations to [REDACTED] over \$100,000.
We do not advertise our visitors to make donations.
Any amount. We mostly sign up volunteers and don't have a formal donor program.
Anything above the basic level becomes a donor level (basic membership is \$45)
This is our Donor level. As of 2016, the price has now been increased to \$600
N/A
We try to treat every contributor as a donor, especially every contributor of gifts greater than basic membership. In our new magazine, we will recognize donors of \$250 and above in the honor roll.
Any amount above purchasing a membership.
We also consider length of membership. if they have been members for 2 years or more, we consider them to be philanthropically engaged.
The [REDACTED] will be shifting the 'donor' level to \$300; at which point a new Membership level would be established at \$150 without 'donor' level benefits but still include streamlined entry perks
Have not established that
This year's annual appeal as of 12/18/15
See previous comment
We call the memberships from \$200-700 [REDACTED] Fund - which we consider to be philanthropically engaged.
Seniors 65+, volunteers, and students: \$30 Individuals outside the above parameters:

\$50

While the [REDACTED] considers all membership contributions to be donations, the [REDACTED] distinguishes all membership levels from donations. We do not have a particular membership level that elevates members to donor status.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	52

6. What other gifts do you solicit from members? Please select all that apply.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Gifts to annual fund		106	83%
2	Capital campaign gifts		78	61%
3	Estate/Planned gifts		83	65%
4	Memorial/Tribute gift		92	72%
5	Gifts to special projects		107	84%
6	Other		16	13%

Other

Private Garden tour fundraiser

patio pavers

Giving Tuesday

Student programs

endowment, special event

Specific Conservation Programs

Gala sponsorships

Online giving - [REDACTED] Gives Day (through our local foundation) and giving Tuesday fundraising galas

Gala & Special Events, Gift Memberships

Preservation Fund Restricted Campaign

General Donations

general donations

Gala tickets

In-Kind gifts; sponsorships for needed items; gifts to specific areas and programs such as [REDACTED] program, etc.

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	6
Total Responses	127

7. Comments

Text Response

The majority of our Annual Appeal list are members.

As part of [REDACTED], we do not do other solicitations. Our development office does that.

will be adding planned giving

Memorials have become much less of a focus in recent years.

We try not to over-solicit and focus on moving them up the member level ladder. We have cutback on mailings (paper solicitations) and changed our focus to onsite, social and email solicitations.

None at this time.

We will do our first Giving Tuesday in 2015

We don't actively solicit memorial/tribute gifts, but info. about this program is available on the "support" page on our website

Within the last year we have hired a Director of Development to address these types of giving. We are currently soliciting for the types indicated above, and will be next working on Planned Giving.

Our Year End Appeal is our second largest source of donor funding after Membership dues. Almost 90% of respondents to this appeal are members. Members do periodically purchase memorial gifts and give to certain projects, although this giving accounts for less than 1% of our annual revenue.

Need to do better job on Estate/Planned gifts

We are beginning a planned gift program in 2016.

All gifts are put toward a membership, so if someone who is not currently a member gives a planned or tribute gift, we provide them with a 'complimentary' membership at the dollar amount level associated with the tribute gift, for a year. With that said, most planned gifts come from members.

As part of a College, we are not allowed to solicit directly.

We are currently working on developing our planned giving program.

We have a unified giving program which is a combination of membership and annual fund.

None yet. We are in the process of building our Development Department and we will certainly consider members as prospects for many of these types of gifts (capital campaign gifts and gifts to special projects excluded).

Certain members will receive solicitations for gifts to our Annual Appeal, but these solicitations usually only go to members with a history of giving to the annual fund.

we do not do an Annual Fund yearly--every other year



The Friends makes infrequent "soft" solicitations in the categories checked above. But depending on the status of a donor (i.e. an alum or not), [REDACTED] may solicit annual fund, campaign, and estate/planned gifts - not for the gardens, but for the College

Naming gifts/special projects and capital campaign gifts are the largest gifts that we receive.\$5M is the largest single gift that we've received to date. Annual fund and

memorial gifts are the smallest gifts that we receive annually.
 If we are starting an new project, then we ask for donations, but we otherwise don't solicit donations from members.
 Only actively solicit annual fund gifts and at times capital gifts. The others are soft suggestions through brochures, magazine, and e-mail articles. Galas are mostly Boards and President Circle Members (\$1500 and above) but are softly promoted to all members same as above.
 We have only run one capital campaign in 24 years, and we are 2 years into that campaign.
 This goes through our ██████████ Foundation.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	25

8. Do you track how often members use their benefits at your garden?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		37	28%
2	No		95	72%
	Total		132	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.72
Variance	0.20
Standard Deviation	0.45
Total Responses	132

9. Based on your tracking data, which benefits do members use the most? Please drag and drop in order of the most to least used benefit, with the most used at the top.

#	Answer									Total Responses
1	Admission benefits (ex: free admission, discounts on additional admission tickets)	24	4	0	1	1	1	0	3	34
2	Retail benefits (ex: discounts in gift shop, cafe, plant sales, local businesses)	0	12	13	6	3	0	0	0	34
3	Reciprocal admission benefits (ex: AHS, NARM, or other)	1	4	5	6	14	2	0	2	34
4	Program benefits (ex: discounts on classes, camps, tours)	3	8	8	10	5	0	0	0	34
5	Special events (ex: member only events, annual	4	5	8	10	6	1	0	0	34

	gala)									
6	Other	2	1	0	1	5	24	1	0	34
7	Other	0	0	0	0	0	6	28	0	34
8	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	29	34
	Total	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	-

Other	Other	Other
Annual Guest Passes		
Concert ticket discounts and early purchasing privileges		
festivals		
Free Wednesdays for family level and above on trams, railroad garden, and butterfly exhibits		
Opportunity to support conservation mission and other core areas		

Statistic	Admission benefits (ex: free admission, discounts on additional admission tickets)	Retail benefits (ex: discounts in gift shop, cafe, plant sales, local businesses)	Reciprocal admission benefits (ex: AHS, NARM, or other)	Program benefits (ex: discounts on classes, camps, tours)	Special events (ex: member only events, annual gala)	Other	Other	Other
Min Value	1	2	1	1	1	1	6	7
Max Value	8	5	8	5	6	7	7	8
Mean	2.09	3.00	4.29	3.18	3.35	5.41	6.82	7.85
Variance	4.87	0.91	2.46	1.48	1.81	1.95	0.15	0.13
Standard Deviation	2.21	0.95	1.57	1.22	1.35	1.40	0.39	0.36
Total Responses	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34

10. Comments

Text Response

We do not participate in reciprocal admission programs.

Literally beginning with new software from Blackbaud called Altru, which will help us to track.... sorry, no info yet, but intent to track

Currently our reciprocal admission benefit is a \$2 discount at select [REDACTED] valley attractions

We do not offer benefits 4 and 5 as there is no admission bor do we have a retail shop.

This an estimate. We are currently creating a survey to send to our new members, asking which benefit was most encouraging to become a member.

We do not charge admission; it's our single biggest struggle to growing membership, that we cannot offer free admission as a perk.

Our institution does not charge Garden admission so it is not a driver of membership. We have no admission fee.

I don't know how we would track Reciprocal benefits? We don't get information from other institutions.

For the record, our Garden does not charge for parking or admission to the gardens and grounds, though some programs do require a fee. The questionnaire has not directly addressed a key question for public garden membership! Whether or not the garden charges admission and whether membership gives free admission makes a huge difference in numbers. However, selling admission as a benefit of membership may not increase overall revenue or donor numbers.

Currently, we are only tracking member use of admission benefits, and have only been doing so for the past six months, when we installed brand new POS software. I have ordered our most to least used benefits here based on our best guesses, but unfortunately without any tracking data to support this order. We would like to track use of benefits, but with our gift shop, cafe, plant sale staff, and education department all utilizing different POS software and databases, it has not been feasible yet.

Our tracking system is manual and we cannot see which members use which benefits, so the answers above are best guesses based on the data we have recorded.

Our botanical garden is free to the public

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	13

11. Have you recently added, changed, or removed any of your member benefits?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	58	44%
2	No	73	56%
	Total	131	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.56
Variance	0.25
Standard Deviation	0.50
Total Responses	131

12. Which benefits have you recently added, changed, or removed, and why?

Text Response

Discounts with partner businesses, additional events, special privileges
in 2015 we added a Family level (free admission for young adults up to age 20). Also added the reciprocal programs of ROAM and NARM

We added a family membership and removed membership levels over \$5,000

We restructured our membership classifications and added new benefits for members giving over \$150

dropped newsletter. too expensive and time consuming changed from expiration of all memberships on 12/31 to a rolling membership. to get memberships throughout the year. Adding a true annual meeting and report in 2016 to better inform community added complimentary guided tours. added event tickets based on a certain level of joining

added another garden center and Better Homes & Gardens subscription

Created new, named membership tier levels with additional benefits: \$250 -- NARM & ROAM museum reciprocal benefits \$500 -- Free gift membership (basic family level) \$1,000 -- private garden or natural area tour for up to 10 people \$5,000 -- private garden or natural area tour with director, for up to 20 people, including reception with light refreshments; discount on facility rental rate

We have changed our membership levels to allow for more guests as they move up in membership levels. In the past, the most guests allowed per membership, regardless of giving, was only two guests. We now allow up to 5 guests, depending on giving and level of membership.

Added members only workshops 4 x per year. Felt we need more connection with members. Added wine and cheese party for patron level members. Purpose: to socialize Added three newsletters per year instead of 2. More contact Removed weekly email blasts and added bi-weekly instead.

Upon being hired as the new Membership Coordinator in February of 2015, I did away with certain aspects of the Membership program, including the Junior Gardener Membership level, and made changes to other benefits, including making facility rental discounts a flat 5% at all levels. The Corporate Membership program is also being entirely reevaluated.

we moved a benefit of being invited to a preview party to the higher level

Changed Individual (\$60) to word Contributor (\$60) with benefits for adults and children in one household rather than one individual only. All other same.

Removed discount on renting our facility. This was giving too much value to a \$40 membership in conflict of receiving gifts/benefits.

free admission removed as a benefit because we removed the admission fee from the facility Added the Reciprocal Gardens program benefit to replace

We changed a free gift at the gift shop to a discount at the gift shop because we were losing too much money from the gift shop.

We began to charge a discounted fee for members during evening events. We decided to add this additional fee due to additional expenses.

This year we are not having winter cross-country skiing because of ongoing projects on the grounds. We have added reciprocal admission to [REDACTED] with our recent integration.

Number of free passes to Christmas

We added [REDACTED] booklets as a member benefit.

Tweaked benefits at the [REDACTED] Society levels (\$1,500-\$15,000) - took away things they did not use and added tiered ticket packages

We have added a student level membership and have slightly altered the benefits related to upper-level memberships.

Removed 10% discount at annual plant sale as it was difficult to track since we have the sale jointly with our student club.

allow extended hours fishing in our lake (members only)

We added a student level, because we are located in a college town. We also re-structured our membership levels 2 years ago because they needed updated. When we did this, we also added benefits to the higher-level memberships in hopes of increasing moves management.

We removed promotional gifting as a benefit back in May 2015. We saw it as a benefit that most people did not care about and would rather have that money go towards the garden.

In 2015, we moved from a 'one size fits all' membership structure to a level based membership structure. We added reciprocal benefits.

added more members-only previews to art exhibits, festival weekends, special events (summer concert series, etc.). Removed some stand alone programs such as lectures.

We are trying to improve the membership value

We have added a discount in the Gift Shop (we have a new shop), and added invitations to previews of our plant sales and Holiday Lights display

Added NARM reciprocal admission program benefit at \$100+ level. Now invite top level of members to annual donor appreciation event. This spring adding invitation to VIP preview plant sale event for top two levels of members. Made these changes to encourage members to upgrade to higher levels.

Members were always admitted free and we were charging admission; we will be going to a suggested donation model and only charging admission for floral shows
Special events planned for mid and upper level members; \$250-\$2500 level

Changed individual to dual, since most people come with a guest. We are reworking lifetime memberships, too.

Added: Discounts on classes. Reason: Did not offer educational programs with fees in the past. Added: Discounts on rentals. Reason: Rentals were on hold for several years due to facility upgrades.

reduced number of free guest passes per membership, different event access

Following the release of its 2015 title, [REDACTED] will be ending its membership handbook series, a printed gardening guide that was mailed to all [REDACTED] members. Over the past several years, we conducted a thorough assessment of the current [REDACTED] publishing program, looking carefully into every

aspect of the program's internal administration and its external impact. It became clear that the major investment in both time and expense incurred by publishing an annual printed handbook was out of sync with [REDACTED] present resources and that the broader public had moved toward digital content as a primary source of information. The Garden will no longer publish books annually but rather focus on high-quality editorial web content and periodic special edition printed books.

We recently had to remove our "Out on the Town" card which gave members at the \$125 level and above a 20% off dining card at select local restaurants. I'm currently looking for another benefit to add to that membership level.

In 2016 we are changing pricing and benefits. We haven't changed pricing or benefits in over 5 years

More gardening center discounts to increase value added.

We have added reciprocal membership programs with the [REDACTED] Arboretum and [REDACTED] Museum of Art in to increase the perceived value of our membership program. We also run a membership appreciation program during the summer to provide gifts (limited number) and discounts on renewals

Added a 'Contributor' level in which we now list in our newsletter.

Eliminated annual appreciation plant for \$250+ donors since only 25% of eligible donors accepted it. Eliminated Better Homes and Gardens magazine since less than 5% of members wanted it. Revised some other benefits to ensure that all membership donations qualify as tax-deductible.

We added a new member category to bridge between family and steward, that provides another entry point. Also re: your previous tracking question, we do not currently track how members use benefits, but we will starting in March as we have migrated to a new database that will allow us to track ALL those categories you mentioned.

Nursery discount benefits, class discounts, discount on Pacific Hort Magazine.

We have added free monthly tours for members, digital subscription to our publication, and a discounted admission to Tea Ceremony demonstrations in our Japanese Garden

Membership levels have recently been revised to offer more benefits at all levels and we have removed our Supporter (\$50) and Sponsor Level (\$75) and Benefactor (\$150) and added Patron (\$100). The levels are removed to simplify our membership program and to try to increase our number of higher memberships.

Discontinued Senior Citizen Level at \$35, now offer \$10 off all levels to seniors 62 and older. Discontinued Family Advantage Level at \$125 replaced with Como Friends Supporter Level at \$150

We added 2 VIP tickets to our holiday show, Garden Lights, Holiday Nights to our Director's Club level at \$1200. Due to the recent price increase from \$1000, we felt that it would be very helpful to add another benefit to that level.

The quarterly Newsletter and the opportunity to learn about and register for events and classes first was long a benefit of membership. We will no longer produce a print quarterly Newsletter starting this year. Instead we will mail members a more

elaborate magazine/ annual report twice each year, plus e-news to members and other interested parties. Factors include budget and director preference.

Member's Only Early Access to Gift & Wreath Sale, High Level Member/Donor VIP Pre-Plant Sale Appts. Added to provide more member/donor value.

We removed about 2 years ago the benefit of having a tram to drive you around the property. We had to remove that benefit because our tram became inoperable and we have not replaced it.

We stopped offering coupons and are now offering entry into 1 drawing per month and 2 in the month they renew-for \$150 worth of plants or services.

We recently removed our "half price admission for guests on Mondays" benefit, which had not proved to be popular. Because it didn't seem to hold any value for our members and didn't result in increased membership sales, we quietly removed it and did not receive any feedback to the effect that anyone had noticed.

Added nursery partners discount program

Member breakfast - to make them feel special and encourage them to come out and see our new ED center

Changing publication plan from newsletters to magazine and e-news

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	56

13. How do you recruit or acquire new members?

#	Question	Always	Sometimes	Never	Total Responses
1	Direct mail	31	53	38	122
2	On-site	102	27	0	129
3	Living Social or Groupon deals	4	42	70	116
4	List sharing	9	21	88	118
5	Social media	45	74	6	125
6	Discounts, deals, or specials	28	65	29	122
7	Other	15	14	0	29

Other
Tabling at events
Special Events
At Garden Club talks and other presentations
outreach events
Special Events
website
Subscription Services
Email to e-news subscribers; alumni who attend events featuring our director
print and online advertising
Online
Events
Constant Contact E-news
Referrals
Offsite lectures/programs
Promote Gift memberships
Membership Drives through partner agencies
Special Events
Advertising or solicitation
special programming
offer a free plant for signing up
Members request
BBG website
handouts at off-site locations
Tabling at outside events
Class discounts, reciprocal benefits through AHS
Special Events (Plant sales, festivals, concerts)
plant sales and events
Various programs to appeal to varying interests
University wide appeals to alumni; door prizes at events yield good names of potential members;
Member's Only Pre Plant Sale
E-newsletter
stand at the Vail Farmer's Market
Solicitation during community events and festivals
Member plant sales

Statistic	Direct mail	On-site	Living Social or Groupon deals	List sharing	Social media	Discounts, deals, or specials	Other
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	3	2	3	3	3	3	2
Total Responses	122	129	116	118	125	122	36

14. Comments

Text Response

Living Social and Groupon were past events but will never use again.

We are starting a Direct Mail Acquisition Campaign next year. Do NOT do a Living Social or Groupon deal, the benefit of membership is in their renewal and the people who join with a Living Social or Groupon deal are discount seekers and very rarely renew. We have a policy of never discounting our membership.

Ads in the alumnae magazine

If new people attend our fundraising gala, they are then provided a one year free membership. If a couple books a wedding, they are immediately given a one year membership. This one has really built loyalty from the bridal couples and they visit often before their wedding and typically renew.

did groupon as a test. Highly recommend NOT doing it.

Also at Master Gardener meeting and speaking engagements

We focus a lot on general admission to membership conversions.

Looking to do a membership drive in 2016 and looking into Groupon

90% of Membership sales happen on-site through our Visitor's Center.

Developing a major awareness campaign

We are working on finding out how we are getting our new members. Along with the survey asking about benefits, we would like to include a section to ask how they became a member - referral, visit to our properties, tribute gift, etc.

We offer discounts for renewing membership for 2 years.

I would add website (as opposed to social media) to that list as well.

Note - our membership program is somewhat inactive/defunct at the moment. We have not actively recruited new members in several years.

We have not had a new member campaign in some time. This is something we're looking at doing.

special programming has been a combination of Gold Star promos and unique programming or discounts

Our member price for programs (a 20% discount) drives a lot of our membership.

Only did a Groupon once. It was not successful. Much easier to do admission, since it requires no work from staff. There's some overhead with memberships.

We typically rely on on-site sales to acquire new members. We also attend trade shows throughout town and give out membership materials.

As a university garden that does not charge admission, we are limited in what we can do with membership. We count all donors to the gardens annual fund above 50 dollars as members and currently that number is about 1800

Direct mail includes email campaigns and renewal processes.

We also promote memberships at apartment complexes, since we think apartment tenants have a greater interest/need to have some room to roam somewhere.

We don't know when a donor who visits our website and gives a gift if they've come through the website(ours or [REDACTED]). Same for social media. If someone came to our FB page and decided to give a gift we wouldn't know whether our social media

inspired them or not.

We have used Groupon Deals and find them to be difficult to control and monitor, and not terribly effective at converting visitors to members.

On-site is best, Garden sells itself and admission (parking fee) is refunded. We are a free Garden with a \$25 parking fee.

Privacy policy prevents sale or sharing of lists. However, our board suggests potential members, and University research yields names of individuals with similar interests.



We find people join readily when it is required to attend a special plant sale.

We do not have memberships

We have ceased the use of Living Social, Groupon, and Amazon local online promotions.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	30

15. Do you track the success of member acquisition strategies?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		78	60%
2	No		51	40%
	Total		129	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.40
Variance	0.24
Standard Deviation	0.49
Total Responses	129

**16. Please rank your member acquisition strategies in order of their success.
Drag and drop in order of success, with the most successful strategy on the top.**

#	Answer								Total Responses
1	Direct Mail	16	16	14	18	10	2	2	78
2	On-site	47	23	8	0	0	0	0	78
3	Living Social or Groupon	2	6	2	15	25	21	7	78
4	List sharing	1	1	6	13	13	33	11	78
5	Social Media	2	13	21	15	17	8	2	78
6	Discounts, deals, or specials	5	13	20	16	9	8	7	78
7	Other	5	6	7	1	4	6	49	78
	Total	78	78	78	78	78	78	78	-

Other

Community outreach; external events
 Speaking at Garden Clubs and other Presentations
 halloween fundraiser
 Subscription Services
 targeted emails
 print/online advertising
 Online
 Events
 Website
 Email, Web
 In-house events
 special programming
 incentive of free plant at events
 Members ask
 Website
 Tabling, apartment promotions
 plant sales and events
 Public Plant Sale: members receive a 10% discount plus coupon for free plant
 Member's Only Pre-Event

Statistic	Direct Mail	On-site	Living Social or Groupon	List sharing	Social Media	Discounts, deals, or specials	Other
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	7	3	7	7	7	7	7
Mean	3.05	1.50	4.87	5.29	3.82	3.81	5.65
Variance	2.44	0.46	2.04	1.72	2.02	2.83	4.31
Standard Deviation	1.56	0.68	1.43	1.31	1.42	1.68	2.08
Total Responses	78	78	78	78	78	78	78

17. Comments

Text Response

We only use the top two.

I guess "specials" would be giving the membership to those that attend high ticket special events and the bridal couples.

try to combine more open ended fundraiser events to have incentives to joining none of the others psst social media apply, so your rankings make no sense

Do not do direct mail (yet, but may in 2016) Groupon is possible in 2016 List sharing is not part of our organization

I based this on the number of members it brings in not on ROI. For us Direct Mail and List Sharing go together.

This is an estimate.

We don't use 5, 6, or 7 in the list above. Our actual 5 would be offsite lectures/programs

we don't do 4 through 7 so shouldn't be ranked for us

We never use list sharing or programs like Groupon

We don't use Direct Mail, Groupons, list sharing or special discounts.

In person is the most effective way to get new members for us, following by special discount programs.

List sharing and deals are part of our direct mail strategy.

Some of these things overlap - we do list sharing in conjunction with our direct mail and discounts, deals and specials we do onsite and through direct mail.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	14

18. What is your average annual member retention rate? Please provide a numeric percentage.

%
70
65
100
70
86
75
89
80
70
75
65
40
60
75
50
45
25
66
68.93
75
85
75
77
50
68
80
62
92
90
75
80
70
62
90
90
85
78
70
88

80
80
75
56
90
92
81
50
56
50
79
70
80
86
75
70
75
75
64
67
90
80
63
74
65
85
68
75
82
55
49
90
78
87
85
60
78
70
20
65
62
80
66

40
70
97
68.6
90
83
50
80
70
85.2
60
56
80
75
69
50
85
75
52

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	117

19. Comments

Text Response

Despite adding new members through out the year, our membership total hovers around the same figure.

don't know

unknown... yet to begin truly tracking

Not sure - driven by annual giving. Gifts have increased each year over last 6 years estimated

for 12 months

This is an estimate -- We need to do a better job of tracking!

Think would be higher if we were moving forward. We have had a land issue, which has made us stagnant for the last 3 years.

This is % individual not corporate "members" which we call sponsors FY15 (July - June)

We don't have this data.

Based on our fiscal year of 10/1/14 - 9/30/15.

We have not yet calculated our 2015 numbers. It should be noted that our statistics are only a short duration (2 years) because it was not tracked previously. Our 2015 numbers are expected to be a better retention rate due to changes in membership procedures and management and a positive upward swing.

We are fairly high in retention. Ours is a free entry garden, so membership s those who sincerely believe in our mission

this number is based on renewals only - does not include lapsed members who return

We do not know this information due to the nature and limitations of our database.

Cannot give an accurate account of this rate given the dramatic shift in membership structure over the past year.

2014

again, since many members are just giving to the annual fund and not joining for direct benefits, our retention is lower than it might be in a more traditional membership organization

Don't really know this number. Those that give at the membership rate each year that are employees are retained from year to year at a high rate. The rest we just don't track.

estimated

Rough estimate.

Since I am a new ED, we are trying to implement new things to increase retention.

██████ is not a traditional arboretum, we are statewide and our sites are free to visit.

Some years are better than others, depending on our special exhibition schedule

About 60 % of our donors give on an annual or semi-annual basis

For donor levels it's closer to 90%

This is an estimate. There are several ways to calculate annual member retention. We aim for good stewardship of members/donors; work to elevate them to higher giving levels; Recruit lapsed members for many years through direct mail (especially those

who dropped off during the Recession); also, with the way we aim for mission-motivated members rather than what-do-I get-for-my-money motivation, we find that many members join, become donors, and ultimately include the Garden in their wills or other types of planned gifts.

Ranges between 61% and 72%

We have only recently begun to track this in the past few months.

I haven't computed this recently and prefer not to give an incorrect figure.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	29

20. What methods do you use for member renewal?

#	Question	Always	Sometimes	Never	Total Responses
1	Mail	117	11	0	128
2	Email/Online	66	46	10	122
3	Automatic renewal option	16	13	75	104
4	Phone call	7	56	48	111
5	In-person	33	61	21	115
6	Other	4	2	1	7

Other

at events

Volunteer Coordination

newsletter

Onsite at special events

Direct Mailing campaigns

can sign up at an event

Dates on mailing labels; Renewal post cards; include membership envelope in all newsletters and magazines

Member's Only Pre-Event

Statistic	Mail	Email/Online	Automatic renewal option	Phone call	In-person	Other
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	2	3	3	3	3	3
Total Responses	128	122	104	111	114	9

21. Comments

Text Response

We also do not use telemarketing for our renewal strategy. I am assuming in-person is at the Admissions Desk?

Despite our efforts, many of our elderly members still want a renewal mailed to them...

We are considering the automatic renewal option.

will be moving toward more online membership recruitment/renewal

We have volunteers who assist with database integrity and we focus most of our efforts on email communications and when members visit onsite. We typically do not call them unless they are a high level donor (\$250 and above).

Need clarification on the question: How we contact members to renew or is the question about how Members choose to renew their membership? Above answers is how we contact/remind member to renew. If the question is how members choose to renew their membership, then phone and in-person is always.

Will look into automatic renewal option with our new software, Altru.

We would like to start an auto-renewal option, just need to work out details with university gift processing.

Most renewals are mailed in with payment, but a significant portion happen in person, followed by online and over the phone.

We should delegate someone to make calls on our behalf.

We are starting to utilize email renewal solicitation more frequently. Also, we are switching to a new membership module, which may allow our members to choose an automatic renewal.

in person at our plant sales and events

The in-person option would be very informal and organic, not an actual part of our membership program. We have a large number who specifically renew at our plant sales and other events because they are roughly the same time each year, and they use that as their prompt.

We just began a multi-phase renewal process last month. Previous to this we only mailed one renewal notice per member.

We plan to start doing online renewal as well as paper.

In answering this I interpret the question as What options do you have for members to renew

In-person through onsite sales staff during peak season

Our annual appeal letter and member renewal are basically one and the same but we are targeting larger donors for the appeal letter and still get membership gifts.

Moving to ALTRU within the next 3 months, will then have 'self-service' for membership to renew online.

We have a fabulous renewal schedule combining an e-renewal, personal phone calls and mailed renewal statements. I am especially happy with our telefunding efforts for renewal and upgrade.

I am treating membership as same as donors here as there are no members in the

Arboretum

Email/Online by member request

The automatic renewal option is one we will consider. Also, we will be changing from our beautiful renewal postcards to letters (all levels, not just donors) or mailed pieces with a secure giving link and a renewal envelope enclosed to help make it easy for members/donors to renew.

many members renew when they come to visit the Nursery or bring guests for a tour on site.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	24

22. How does your organization define 'lapsed member'? (Examples: "A member is lapsed after 3 failed renewal attempts," or "A member is lapsed after failure to renew within 6 months of membership expiration")

Text Response

A member is lapsed after 2 months

A lapsed member is someone who has not renewed within the past 12 months. At the 13 month mark we mark the member as dropped.

Lapsed once membership has been expired for three months

Members are lapsed when their membership expires, and are sent an email (or postal if necessary) reminder. Quarterly, when our magazine is sent, all lapsed include a label with a reminder.

after a year of expiration

We send out two renewal notices before we consider the membership as lapsed.

After two renewal letters are sent. But, they are sent hard copy mailings for six months after the expiration to see if they just forgot.

3 months after expiration

2 failed renewal attempts and 2 months.

A member is lapsed after failure to renew within 4 months of membership expiration.

Annual gift - lapsed = 1 year from date of last gift.

after a year

Member is lapsed after renewal request is sent and we have received no response in 2 months.

A member is lapsed one month after expiration.

6 months after

3 Failed Attempts or inability to update address

Failure to renew after December 31 of the current year.

A member is lapsed after failure to renew within 1 month of membership expiration

We defined lapsed as failure to renew after 6 months. We solicit 30 days in advance and on the date of expiration via email. A lot of our members allow their memberships to lapse because we enter slow seasons without major events and activities.

lapsed after 3 failed renewal attempts

The date of expiration is "lapsed". However, we do make 3 renewal attempts.

A member is lapsed after two reminders and failure to respond.

After 3 failed renewal attempts

After 3 months

A member is lapsed for 4 months after their expiration date

A member is considered lapsed after failure to renew after 1 month of membership expiration.

Member is considered lapsed 60 days after date payment is due.

A member is lapsed after failing to renew within 6 months of Membership expiration.

3 months of non-reneal after one reminder but many catchup on a following year and rejoin

Not defined
failed to renew after 2 letters are sent.
Two failed renewal attempts
a member is lapsed after 3 attempts and two months, but we do attempt to have them become members even a year later during mailings
Lapsed after failure to renew after 2 renewal letters
A member is lapsed after failure to renew within 6 months of membership anniversary
Lapsed is failure to renew within 3 months. Expired is failure to renew within 6 months.
Failure to renew after one year
after 3 failed renewal attempts
a member is lapsed the day after their membership expires.
A member is lapsed after failure to renew within a year and after 3 failed renewal attempts.
We keep members on the books for three years, then evaluate the level of past giving before dropping.
After one year
?
A member is lapsed after failure to renew within 12 months of membership expiration.
Lapsed after 4 failed renewal attempts
2 years with no renewed membership
N/A
Members are given 365 days of membership. Memberships lapse on day 366 if not renewed.
Three months
We don't have a definition.
If they do not renew within 6 months
A member is lapsed after failure to renew within three months of membership expiration.
We don't really have a hard rule for what defines a lapsed member... system shows as lapsed as soon as they expire. We do lapsed member mailings 2x a year typically.
A member is lapsed after 3 failed renewal attempts - 2 prior to expiration date and one post expiration.
6 months
A membership is lapsed after failure to renew within 1 year of last membership renewal letter
Failure to renew within 6 months. All members receive 2 email renewal notices and 2 mail renewal notices. Upper level members will also receive a phone call and a handwritten note.
A member is lapsed after 3 failed renewal attempts, and then becomes a dropped member after 5 failed renewal attempts.
Nothing definitive, either folks renew or they don't
After one calendar year from end of membership period

A member is lapsed after 3 failed renewal attempts
A member is lapsed after failure to renew within 6 months of the expiration date
A member is lapsed upon expiration of their membership.
A member is lapsed after failure to renew within 1 year of membership expiration.
Failure to renew within 6 months
A member is considered lapsed after 4 failed renewal attempts.
Lapsed after a one month grace period following the expiration date.
Lapsed after membership has been expired for 6 months
1.5 years
Failure to renew within 6 months
A member is lapsed after failure to renew within 6 months of membership expiration.
6 months
3 years failed renewal attempts
A member is lapsed after failure to renew within three months of expiration date.
A member is lapsed after failure to renew within 3 months of membership expiration.
AA member is lapsed after failure to renew within 3 months of expiration
A member is lapsed after 3 failed renewal attempts
3 attempts
Lapsed if does not renew after one month.
Lapsed after 3 months.
failed to renew within 2 months of expiration
Members are marked as "lapsed" after their membership expiration (3 renewal attempts) and then marked as "dropped" after failure to renew within 5 months of membership expiration.
Our members are lapsed after 3 direct mail attempts of renewal.
A member is lapsed after 3 months of membership expiration
6 months
A member is lapsed after 2 failed renewal attempts
12 months
after 3 failed attempts.
A member is lapsed after 3 failed renewal attempts.
Lapsed is after 2 years of non membership
Failure to renew within 3 months of the expiration.
after 2 attempts; sometimes we follow up with another (3rd) letter.
Lapsed = failure to renew annually
Don't designate this.....
Any one who has not renewed within our 2-month mailing effort is considered lapsed.
A failure to renew after 1 year.
We have a grace period of 2-3 months.
A member is lapsed after failure to renew after 6 months of expiration
A lapsed member is someone who did not respond to 2 notifications and is 2 months past their expiration date.
1 full year from a membership expiration

Lapsed Membership = 1 month passed expiration date in our database. We do send out renewal reminders 2 months after expiration.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	124

23. What methods do you use to bring back lapsed members?

#	Question	Always	Sometimes	Never	Total Responses
1	Direct mail	79	31	10	120
2	Phone call	12	51	44	107
3	Email	44	50	24	118
4	Other	7	10	0	17

Other

in person when they show up and realized their membership has expired
 at Garden events
 New Attractions
 personal letter
 postcard re event
 Personal meeting
 Magazine insert
 On site visits at Visitor Center
 event
 on-site
 face to face in community
 special events
 Snail Mail
 On-site staff makes in person ask
 discount offers
 Special update mailings for their areas of interest
 Member's Only Pre Events
 Plant Sale/Gift Shop

Statistic	Direct mail	Phone call	Email	Other
Min Value	1	1	1	1
Max Value	3	3	3	2
Total Responses	120	107	118	19

24. Comments

Text Response

We do plan to implement an email renewal reminder system now that we have a database that can do this for us.

the plant sale is a driving force to become a member. Once people have the plants they need, they often do not reapply. May and June witness our membership loss, once they have enjoyed the plant sale preview reception.

We primarily use email communications. The driving force is visitation and to get them onsite. If we make them use their membership as much as possible onsite then they are more likely to renew.

Currently don't do regular outreach to lapsed members, but we should!

Members receive three renewal notices over the course of three months - prior, during and after their scheduled expiration date - so after they have lapsed, generally no additional contact is made. We did recently run a "recapture drive" targeting all lapsed members since 2010 inviting them to return, with moderate success.

Often times during our annual appeal the lapsed member will send in a donation of \$100 or greater. When this occurs the membership will be automatically renewed.

Members who are about to lapse are given a reminder inserted into our magazine, which goes out twice a year. Once they have lapsed, we no longer send them anything. We feel that if they haven't renewed in the 12 month period prior to lapsing they will not be renewing.

N/A

We send a renewal letter, 2nd notice, and then we do eblast renewal and then a mailing.

We use email marketing primarily.

We will implement direct mail and email communications to lapsed members beginning Spring 2016.

We sometimes offer a special event designed just to get lapsed/dropped members back.

We don't have dedicated staff hours to this process
not applicable

We tried discount offers over Christmas--sending our annual report, appeal and a special note saying they were lapsed and offering them a \$10 discount to come back. Many people took advantage of this AND donated.

N/A

Many Garden contributors are particularly interested in one or more of our outlying areas, collections, or programs. We find that a targeted update letter from the curator or other individual they may know will often result in a gift for that area. If the gift is at dues level or above, they are reinstated as members.

We have not run a concerted lapsed member campaign.

Renewals are done on the spot in our gift shop and during annual plant sales.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	19

25. On average, how much revenue does your membership program generate each year? Please provide your answer in dollar amount.

\$
200,000.00
1,200,000
45000
85,000.00
250,000
35,010
85000
88000
52,000
30,000
15,000.00
50,000
10,000
97000
200000
10,835
7500
75000
450,000
23000
6,000,000
20,000
27,000
125,000
2000000
360,000
4500
101856
110,000
7500
135000
12,000.
40000
165,441
28000
150,000
150000
16,000
8000

312,000
20,000
8500
9000
80,000.00
2,000,000
25,000
35,000
302,000
80000
19,321
100,000
80,000
1,400,000
53,000
125,000
75,000
260000
1,000,000
10000
65,000.00
3,000,000
80,000
60,000
13,000
64528
170,000
250000
1,000,000
10,000
30,000.00
95000
4000.00
1,600,000
650,000
615,000
45,000
255,000.00
90,000
60000
15000
220,000
1400000

465000
280000
430,280
60,000
500,000
100,000
200000
365000
15,000
5,000
500000
12,000
222,000
80,000
42000
40,000
79750
1,700
70000

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	122

26. Comments	
Text Response	
This is pure revenue	
Membership is mixed in with other gifts, so it is hard to say. Probably around \$100,000	
We are a \$1.4 million dollar a year operation.	
This is income from donors who fill out a membership form. However, alumni who make gifts to [REDACTED] through the [REDACTED] Annual Fund also receive membership benefits, and average annual income from those gifts is \$425,000!	
Throwing out a terrible year in 2012, our average is closer to \$112k a year.	
FY15	
FY 2014 income was \$20,500. We are not sure why the income has dropped.	
This figure includes gifts made in honor/memory of others, but that is a fairly small percentage.	
This is what we generate from our annual appeal.	
General membership includes gift (\$1-\$99)	
Membership dues only. Does not include revenue collected in lectures, receptions, year-end appeals, shopping or dinning.	
This is the total of our annual fund	
This is what we bring in from our annual appeal most years.	
How are you defining revenue? Is this just memberships?	
Includes individual, corporate, organizational and affiliate arboretum memberships	
This is the amount for our general membership \$50.00, \$85, \$150, \$250, and \$500.	
And Fellows \$1,500,\$3,000, \$5,000, \$10,000, \$20,000. Includes dues and donations	
I have only been Director for three years and, because donations are increasing and we received a couple of large gifts last year, it is difficult for me to know what is average	
Membership is part of our fundraising and development effort and brings in about 10% of our revenue. Overall fundraising varies depending on whether we are in a capital campaign, but in a typical non-campaign year we bring in \$1M - \$1.5M. Most members make their gifts unrestricted, so the \$150,000 from membership is very important.	
step increases year to year place pressures and demands on relatively small sized dept.	
I don't have access to this information, and our director is unfortunately unable to pull these numbers for me at this time.	
This is the membership income got 2015; it has been increasing steadily in the last five years and totaled more than \$1 million both last year and this year.	
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	21

27. On average, how much does it cost to run or administer your membership program each year (including staff costs)? Please provide your answer in dollar amount.

\$

177,786

3500

40,000.00

7,254

15,000

20000

6,000

3,000

2000

1200

35000

85000

500.00

500

60,000

5000

1,021,547

10,000

25,000

40,000

350,000

80,000

1000.00

57000

40,000

1500

10000

2,000

15,000

5800

50,000

40000

20,000

306,000

400

1000

15,000.00

3500

5,000
5000
15000
45,000
3500
40,000
65000
300,000
5000
30,000.00
325000
24725
4,500
1853.33
69,000
30000
500,000
10000
20,000.00
500.00
214,000
75300
128,000
20,000
182,000.00
30,000
20000
1500
50000
650000
42000
200000
5000
50,000
150,000
90000
164000
10,000
500.
220000
2000.00
125,000
100,000

40000
20,000
500
65,000
200,000.00
545,000
1,200,000
93,000
35,000
2,000
15,000
400,000
55000
250,000
3,000
60,000
65000
300,000

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	99

28. Comments

Text Response

We don't have dedicated membership staff, so it is hard to judge
Our membership person is also the class registration person so he works about 20 hours a week doing both registrar and membership things as well as social media updates.
estimate; we don't have a membership 'dept' but do membership as a team effort we have a dedicated volunteer that works with a staff person who is in charge of the mailings and updating spreadsheets.
Annual Giving is run by Central Development - The Arboretum pays for mailing costs
too time consuming to answer this one. sorry.
This is only a rough estimate as we do not have dedicated staff specifically to membership. We have only 1.75 FTE in our Development Office and these employees deal with all aspects of development, so we are roughly guessing the percentage of time spent on membership specifically.
unknown
50% salary for development assistant who manages membership program and all annual fund gift acknowledgments, plus estim. printing & postage costs
Our curator does not deal with membership. Membership is handled by a volunteer membership chair . person. Dollar amount is for supplies.
Approx \$25k in expenses and \$32k in staffing.
This is an estimate but it takes a lot of resources in staff time of administrator as well as executive director to maintain a membership program
have not determined
We do not separately track this, so this is estimate.
This is an estimate.
We reduced staff and did not rehire a membership coordinator. I added this function to my duties. I estimate I spend a third of my time managing the membership program, including data entry and renewal letters.
we don't have this tracked very well.
Never calculated this
This figure includes our online membership database subscription, our mailing costs, and staff salary.
N/A - our membership program is not very active. There is no specific department or staff member handling membership.
Our giving program is a once a year ask for a combined membership and annual fund gift. Our Advancement team works with general, donor and leadership donors. Including foundation, and corporate giving, and a yearly fundraiser event.
Sorry, I do not have an accurate amount at this time.
Don't know, membership coordinator has multiple jobs
I'm actually not sure of this amount. I'm sorry.
We haven't calculated this in a while. It's pieces of several staff jobs.

Our program revenue is vital to our organization
This is a very complicated answer and could be half or 3x the number given depending on the calculus used
Includes direct and indirect staffing costs
I'm not exactly sure. That's my salary.
N/A
Mostly staff time - benefits require minimal cost on the part of our organization.
It is hard to say since we never did any figuring on this subject. If I had to estimate printing and mailing costs as well as our free seedling benefit and those costs, I'd have to offer the conservative amount above.
Don't really have these numbers fine-tuned here.
Hoping to increase the ROI for membership, but priority has been to keep existing while enrolling new members - High cost!
This number is based on salaries and student intern pay. Both the staff and student intern only spend a portion of their time on membership, so without much further processing, this number may not be accurate.
I do not have an accurate figure due to the fact that our Membership and Development budgets are combined.
Includes staff salaries, postal fees, and office supplies necessary to membership applications and renewal
Rough estimate
This is something we don't have a good handle on and are trying to tack differently this year.
Uncertain, but I believe the figure would be about \$500
Costs included are personnel, printing, mailing, benefits -- including discounts and free plants; and some members-only events such as the Members Plant Sale Preview and the Members' Holiday Party.
we don't track
The above number is just a guess. We have a couple of different positions that help to administer the membership program so that amount does not include them.
\$250K in operational costs membership staffing varies by season, with seasonal and temporary employees utilized
I don't have access to this information, and our director is unfortunately unable to pull these numbers for me at this time.
This is our expense budget and does not include salaries.
Our staff is diverse so it's impossible to pin down the exact amount of dollars are specific to membership renewal/acquisition.









Statistic	Value
Total Responses	47

29. What is the full-time equivalent staffing of your membership program?
Text Response
2
2 Full time staff members, Membership Manager and Membership Clerical
Membership Coordinator, with volunteer Membership Committee support
One full-time staff
1 part time person
Different people do different things. So, maybe 60%
We have a part-time person that dedicates about 9 hours a week on membership
.25
.5
with the volunteer hours counted, it is currently a two day a week job.
.25
0 - We have a development director and interface with centralized Annual Giving staff
.5 FTE
0.10%
We have only 1.75 FTE in our Development office and we are guessing about 0.75
FTE is spent on membership.
1 membership manager 1 major gifts officer
Program is run by volunteers
none
1 person
About three full-time staff members.
0 FTE
3 Ft staff and 25 frontline staff members who sell memberships
Development Associate - 1 Volunteer acquisitions on site - 1 (part time)
About 0.2 FTE
0.5 FTE
0.75
4
1 Full-time Membership and Special Events Director
We don't have full-time equivalent staffing.
2015 is our first year with a full time Membership Coordinator. We have a single
person in this position at 40 hours a week.
0.9
N/A
1 FTE estimated
None
half time person
1 person
1 office staff member
1
.5

.33
we have 1 staff person that spends 5-10% of their time on membership.
2
approx. 0.1
.10
I am the only administrative paid staff at the garden. I try to do everything
0.3 FTE
Four dedicated staff
.25
N/A
Two full time employees focus on membership and development tasks.
.1%
4
.25
.75 FTE
1.5 FTE
.25 FTE
0.75 FTE
one
1 full time employee
3
No full time, we all pitch in
none membership coordinator is part time (20 +hours/week)
3.5
.5 FTE
1 part-time staff member working 28 hours per week.
One of our part-time, seasonal employees (works 10.5 months a year at 35 hours per week) handles membership as 1/4 of her responsibility.
.20%
I am our full-time membership coordinator
.75FTE
7
0.10 FTE
0
0.5 FTE maybe
.1 fte
3 FT employee equivalent
2.5
2
1 FTE
1.25
0.5
3/4 of one employee

5
1 and half of the Development Assistant position
1 full-time staff
1
3/4
5
2
2
1.5
part time; duties split with a volunteer from our board.
3.0
No membership program per se but our marketing person does the annual appeal with help from the print shop and other development staff here at [REDACTED].
1.75
There are no full time positions, dedicated only to memberships. Our membership program administration, marketing, outreach and communicaitons and all tasks are carried out by a team of staff, students interns and volutneers.
approx. .5
1 full time staff member
20 hours a week
1
1
0.1

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	123

30. Where does membership fit in the organization of your garden?				
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Development department		61	48%
2	Marketing/communications		25	20%
3	General administrative		24	19%
4	Membership department		30	24%
5	Visitor services		16	13%
6	Ticketing		2	2%
7	No specific department		12	10%
8	Other		13	10%

Other
Finance Department
one part time employee
Education and Outreach
It is its own committee
volunteer dept
We do not have departments
Direct Public Support
Public awareness
Member & Donor Services Department
Outreach
Friends
New position
We do not have a membership program

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	8
Total Responses	126

31. Comments

Text Response

I report directly to the CFO. We are extremely unique.

SMALL shop. we have an office manager who does visitor services, all office admn except finance, all on-line presence, board support, event plaanning, etc. Current development position is vacant. will be a 30 hr a week development admn when hired. We have a combined Development & Marketing Department. Total there is about 3.5 FTE in the combined department (4 people with some part-time hours), with about 1.75 FTE dedicated to development.

We are too small to have a membership department. We have 1.75 FTE's on staff. Our membership coordinator works in concert with (but separately from) our university Development Office. All donations (including memberships, sponsorships, etc) go through our Development Office and are then communicated to us in a monthly report. This report is then used to update our membership database and send out cards. We handle all membership communications after receiving the monthly report.

Separate from Development. They work together with Marketing.

Development Department is now the Advancement Department

My title is Education, Membership & Outreach Coordinator, so membership fits into what ever you want to call that!!

Membership and Visitor Services are combined under one manager. Membership, Visitor Services and Development all report to COO

We don't have a large enough staff to have departments. Membership activities fall under development, marketing and administrative.

I'm not exacctly sure what this question is asking but, the membership is run by the Membership and Development department. There is one full time staff member in this department. The Marketing and Promotions, and Visitor Services departments provide additional support to the Membership and Development department as appropriate, with the Executive Director minimally involved directly with membership.

Membership and communications and events coordinate closely.

Development and membership are one department at the [REDACTED]

Como Friends is the fundraising partner to [REDACTED].

Our Advancement department is comprised of Membership and Development

We are part of external affairs which is Development, Membership, Marketing/Communications.

The job is under our Marketing and Events Director, who is assisted by office volunteers.

Membership formerly part of Marketing/Communications for past four years. In restructuring, membership now remaining in Development for past 2 years

The Membership Engagement Manager reports to the Director of Marketing and Guest Services, but works close with the Director of Philanthropy


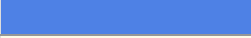
Membership was moved for 2 years to the Guest Services department, but it was

determined that Membership is an outward-looking program and better suited to an outward-looking department, so this month the program is moving back to Development.

Marketing/Membership/PR



Statistic	Value
Total Responses	21

32. Do you survey your members?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		60	48%
2	No		66	52%
	Total		126	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.52
Variance	0.25
Standard Deviation	0.50
Total Responses	126

33. Do you ask questions about motivations for becoming a member?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		43	72%
2	No		17	28%
	Total		60	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.28
Variance	0.21
Standard Deviation	0.45
Total Responses	60

34. Based on your surveying, what are the top 3 motivations for becoming a member at your garden?		
#1 member motivation	#2 member motivation	#3 member motivation
Supporting the organization	Discounts on organization events, sales, classes	Discounts with partner businesses
Free admission to Garden	Membership prices for classes	Membership pricing for events
attend the plant sale preview reception	general help and support of the Gardens	
Receive satisfaction from supporting the organization's mission	Receive the members-only newsletter	Receive program discounts
philanthropy	personal connection with estate	attend events
Cost of membership	Benefits	Word of mouth
support the gardens in general	spring plant sale	class discounts
Access to the gardens	Member benefits	Communication future events and programs
support our mission & programs	reciprocal benefits at other public gardens	discounts at our shop & local garden centers
Education	Plant sales	annual Garden Tour
Involved in a worthwhile conservation effort	community outreach programs	support of non profit gardens
Conservation / Protection	Education	Activities
Concert ticket discounts	Early purchasing privileges for concert tickets	Satisfaction from supporting our mission
Discounts on plants and education programs	supporting our work	discounts at local garden centers
unlimited access to garden & museum	exhibitions and programming	Philanthropic
free unlimited admission	free lights visits	to support our facility
support the garden	reciprocal benefits at other gardens	discounts on classes/events
Admission in to the garden	additional guests allowed each visit or bringing children/grandchildren	Special rates to our events and educational programming
Belief and support in the mission	Ability to bring guests	Reduced cost of admission
programming exclusives	discounts on enrollment in public programs	horticulture walks and talks
Membership perks	Support the Arboretum	

Exploring Nature	Beautiful Gardens	Exhibits
To Utilize membership benefits associated with concerts	Visit the Garden	Support the Garden
admission	support of organization mission	source of information
Philanthropic support	Free classes/educational offerings	
Entertainment value (attractive leisure-time option)	Civic value—desire to support a community asset	Economic value (vs. buying admission and festival tickets per visit)
See an exhibition	Bring a friend	View plant collections and displays
Supporting the Gardens	Reciprocity of admission with other Gardens	Discounts
Trails	Gardens	Free parking
Beauty of Tyler Arboretum and its diverse landscapes	Children's and Family Programs/Camp	Events
Gardens	Museums	Attend Events
Keeping the conservatory (and zoo) free	Care for the plants and animals	Special Access Events
Free Admission to the Garden during regular hours	Supporting Garden as a community asset	Guest passes to give to friends and family
Free parking	Discounts on ticketed events	Free admission at other Gardens
Desire to support the conservation mission and core areas such as collections, conservation lands, education, horticulture, botanical research	Discounts on programs, lectures, and summer nature camp	Discounts on plants, books, and gifts
Seeing the Garden and accessing the Nursery	Attending events	
free admission year-round	reciprocal admissions	special discounts and previews
unlimited free admission	subscription to the award winning quarterly member magazine	subscription to Better Homes and Gardens magazine

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	38

35. Comments

Text Response

Note, our Arboretum does NOT charge admission, parking or any sort of entrance fee. This likely alters our member motivations from ticketed organizations. These motivations were gleaned from a member survey completed in November 2015. I think these responses are skewed due to the fact that there are other members who did not respond to the survey and do not take advantage of these benefits. In other words, these are a vocal few.

We have not conducted a full scale member survey in a number of years - we intend to survey our members again in 2016



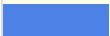

This was done in 2015 and was a sampling of the membership not the entire membership.

As with most other museums and gardens that receive some tax support, the [REDACTED] Botanical Garden is open to the public and there is no charge for general admission. Members do receive a 10% discount on programs, lectures, classes, plants, books, and gifts. A few value our free seed program and free plant for new members and take advantage of these benefits. A somewhat larger group comes out for special member events. [REDACTED] alumni often make a separate gift to support their favorite Garden areas on the main campus such as [REDACTED]. The typical long-term member will say that they join and give to support the [REDACTED] Botanical Garden and its mission.

We have not surveyed our members since 2011.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	7

36. How would you best describe the governance of your garden?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Independent		63	50%
2	University Partnership with State/Local government		34	27%
3	Other		28	22%
4	Other		13	10%

Other
501c(3)
Private
private non profit 5013C
Non-profit that is part of a University System
nonporfit 501 (c)(3)
park district
nonprofit musuem
Parks and Recreation District
special purpose district
nonprofit
Non-Profit
501c3

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Total Responses	125

37. Comments

Text Response

20 years ago the city privatized the garden because it could not keep up.

We have a 7 member Board of Directors

Board of Directors

The [REDACTED] Garden has a very tangled history that I won't go into here, but the governance has changed over the last 15 years. The Garden started as a partnership between the county, city of [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] Association of Nurseries. The [REDACTED] dropped out after near-bankruptcy in 2004 and a for-profit entity ([REDACTED]) came on to manage the Garden. Current interested parties include the county, city, [REDACTED] Foundation and [REDACTED].

We have a 5 member board of directors.

Nonprofit board and volunteer association working with city government

Our physical property is owned by a local parks and recreation district and managed by a 501(c)(3) private operating foundation. All staff members are employees of the foundation.

Not for profit has management agreement with City

We are owned by [REDACTED] University, and do receive some funding from the University. However we earn most of our funds ourselves.

Nonprofit organization with a Board of Trustees

property is owned by the county but operations are the responsibility of the 501(c)3

[REDACTED] is a member of [REDACTED] Cultural Institutions Group.

We operate as part of the state-owned university and are held to all state protocols but our donors fall into the Foundation operations which stands alone from state monies.

We are a part of [REDACTED] University, but raise all of our operating costs from an annual Spring Plant Sale and donations.

Private Non-profit

[REDACTED]

We are a 501c3, embedded within a University--University in-kind of office space, (no University funding) and operate our programs and outreach in partnership with the [REDACTED] Forest Service (a [REDACTED] department/state agency)

[REDACTED]

We sit on [REDACTED] Forest Preserve land and receive 1/3 of our operating support from [REDACTED] County. Although some of our decisions don't require their involvement, others do such as our parking fee, reduced parking for seniors on day per week, and the supplier diversity initiative. They are not involved in setting membership fees or structures which have to be approved by our own Board of Directors.

The [REDACTED] is technically the Garden's membership organization and a source advocacy and financial support, though [REDACTED] Development processes gifts and issues tax receipts. The [REDACTED] also acts as a land trust and owns and protects nature preserves that are not owned by the University. The [REDACTED] Garden Director is answerable to the Office fo the Provost of the University. All staff members, including those involved in the development and membership program are employees of the University [REDACTED] and participate in the coordinated development activities of [REDACTED] is definitely a public-private partnership.

The grounds are owned by the City but they are managed by a foundation that was created in the 70's.

We are a public garden, with a nonprofit 501 c 3 designation. We are run by a volunteer board, and we hold an easement with the [REDACTED] who makes sure we stay true to our mission of preservation and education.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	22

38. What is the average annual operating budget of your institution? Please provide your answer in dollar amount.

\$
3,700,000
990000
1,000,000.00
1,500,000
350,000
1400000
400000
880,000
550,000
500,000
650,000
600,000
3700000
3000000
125,000
2000000
7,000,000
608917
29,000,000
1,000,000.00
180,000
3,800,000
890,000
10000000
1,600,000
30,000
1,000,000
60000
750000
480,000.
231,000
610,078
275000
3,000,000
800000
185,000
400,000
3,118,235,000
490,000

100000
150000
250,000
9733000.00
320,000
400,000
7,524,828
1,000,000
163,872
1,200,000
4,418,240
5,000,000
800,000
1,200,000
1,000,000
200000
800,000.00
13,000,000
1,200,00
1,433,000
495000
2,500,000.00
2600000
4,650,000
350000
1,500,000.00
375000
10,000,000
8600000
2,400,000
2,004,629.00
1,200,000
1,130,000
210000
2000000
20,000,000
7,000,000
4500000
11,000,000
1,500,000
3,800,000
22,000,000
12,500,000

1200000
600,000
150,000
4,000,000
170,000
1,500,000
329,000
1209000
1,200,000
200,000
10,000,000
1,000,000
1,200,000.00
10,000,000.00
500000
13,918,000.00
30,000,000
2,500,000
1,100,000

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	110

39. Comments

Text Response

I don't know actually.

Also hard to judge, since salaries, cost of heating greenhouses, & other overhead is covered by the College

Additional capital or restricted funding expenses planned of \$2,900,000 in the current year that we track separately from "operating" funds. (The numbers provided in the survey are for the current fiscal year, rounded, and not necessary an "average" - wasn't sure of how many years to calculate into an average.)

Unavailable

Approximately
approximately

This is the entire operating budget for a zoological park and botanical garden.

Don't know

This figure includes both state funds and non-profit funds, but not volunteer time (worth over \$400,000 per year).

is approximate

Hoping to dramatically increase operating budget over next several years.

This is all operations, materials, plantings

City and non-profit combined

This gu

This includes pass through dollars that go directly to communities for community greening projects. About \$400,000/yr

Unknown, but my guess is approximately \$50,000

Varies depending on grants. State funding provides about 40%. Membership and private fundraising provides about 40% in a typical year. Other revenue sources include program fees, weddings and meeting rentals, sales revenue and public grants.

I don't have access to this information, and our director is unfortunately unable to pull these numbers for me at this time.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	18

40. What is the full-time equivalent staffing at your garden?
Text Response
I don't know actually.
10
10
10
15, plus about 50 volunteers
5
9 FTE, 15 PT
6 FTE
11 employees plus up to 14 student interns
6
6
7.5
4 FTE's
45 FTE, approx
50 people
There is no full-time staffing. Volunteers only.
I dont know what this question means. We have a seasonal Executive Director, Office manager, Horticultural manager and 2 gardeners.
12
10 FTE
250
7 full time (others are part time)
1.7 FTE
45 FTE
8
121
10
Executive Director Part-time
4 FTE, altho it is about 230 hours/week
2 full-time staff, 4 part-time
3.5
7 person
2, Executive Director, Education Director
23
12
1.75
2
40
8
1.5 full-time positions among 3 people
2

8 FTE
120 staff
8
5.5
52 full time employees, 11 part time, 36 seasonal, along with 3 crossover employees from the Botanical Garden
20
1
13
20 FTE
About 60FTE
7
15.25 FTE
8
35 full time
10
?
5 full time/5 part time or hourly
12
16
18
1 full-time, 5 part-time, seasonal
4.5
We have 15 full-time staff with 2 part-time staff members
35FTE
50
5
7
3 fte
85 FT staff
Not sure.
29
6
8.5
9
20
40
216.5
70
20 full time
50 full-time employees
10
29

25
70
46
7.5
one person
50.0
4 full-time staff, 5 part-time, and 4-5 student interns/work study positions. Volunteers are crucial for us.
+/- 30
We have 3 f/t staff and an Executive Director
10.57 - includes City and non-profit partnership, excludes IT
8 full time staff
3
125
15
Eight full-time equivalent and 8 part-time equivalent
Accountant 1.0 FTE, admin assistant .75FTE, Program staff 3.75 FTE, ED 1 FTE, interns 3 @ .50
136 includes all locations
4
104

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	115

41. What is the estimated annual visitation at your garden?
Text Response
145,000
370,000
35000
11,000
40000
12,000
35000
19000
30,000
30,000
30,000
15,000
260000
200000
9,856
10,000
15000
250,000
70,000
1,200,000
6,000
7000
60,000
50,000
650000
200-300
30,000
25000
25,000
18,000
13,000
20000
150000
110000
30,000
50,000
100,000
50000
1300
100,000
350,000

60,000
28,000
95,132 children and adults
100,000
12,000+
102000
150,000
220,000
35,000
we don't track visitation
12,000
65,000
100,000
Just starting to track
80,000.00
100,000
175,000
over 400,000
18,000
27000
60,738
50,000
350,000
4000
50,000
?
70000
400,000
170000
232,000
4,000
170,000
40,000
90,000
65000
850,000
180,000
110000
75,000
40,000
300,000
980,000
250000

350000
30,000
5200
500,000
18,000-20,000
70,000
300000
75000
200,000
300000
35,000
1.8 million
85,000
5000
500,000
500
1 million

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	112

42. Comments

Text Response

145000+ visitors to the museum

Also hard to judge as the entire campus is the Botanic Garden. We generically say 60,000, but we really have no idea. It is also hard to say who is a visitor.

This also includes special events and wedding guests.

We're working to determine annual visitation - no fee, gateless entry adjacent to campus.

estimate. no good way to track. gate is open 24/7

This is an estimated number obtained from a car counter at the front gate and assuming an average of 2.4 passengers per vehicle (ie a school bus of children will count as 2.4 visitors, the same as a motorcycle with only 1 passenger)

2015 year count 2014 count - 9,038

We don't charge admission or have a gate, so this is always difficult to calculate!

estimate only due to free admssion and large open visitaiton window daily 365 unitl susnet

Not sure, we do not have gate receipts

we are open to the public for free...so there is no way to measure.

best guest - we are free to the public and have no way to count visitors

We have no way to track this

Open seasonally, May 1-Oct. 31

Very hard to judge since we do not have a "front gate". Our visitor center is open from Memorial Day to Columbus Day and we get a estimate of visitors when that is opened. We are looking into installing a pedestrian counter near our main entrance to get a better idea of visitation

This is an estimate based on the number of entries in the Garden and does not include the number of people who visit the Garden by tram from the Zoo.

members, paid, free

We are a gateless garden open 24/7. We have hundreds of thousands of users but no way to get a firm number.

unable to determine at this time

We do not know the number of visistors to our gardens. We have business hours only Monday-Friday, then the rest of the time the gardens are open to the public to use whenever they choose.

Includes all 5 gardens

Last year, we didn't quite make that, but with a [REDACTED] exhibition in 2016, we anticipate hitting this mark

This is an estimate. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has many different sites, and only the main garden area is enclosed with a fence. Other campus garden, woodlands, nature preserves and trails have multiple entrances and are open dawn to dusk daily, so there is no reliable way to count visitation.

That is visitation for the entire estate.

FY15 July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015

I don't have access to this information, and our director is unfortunately unable to pull these numbers for me at this time.

Free public garden

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	27

43. About how many members does your garden currently have?
Text Response
2700
13,200
670
1,000
2600
600
700
1500
600 households
522
815
350
1200
150
1500
820
Approximately 500
340
2500
9,000
425
61,182
315
200
1,500
1350
31000
150
940
350
1100
345
370
753
450
2370
2000
561
179
3,300
250

85
400
800
45,000
300
223
7000
1,199
400
3000
1,514
9,300
500
3,473
700
2900
12,000
145
2100
34,000
1,000
975
~300
453
2,000
3,000
11,885
100
307
1900
250
24,635
10000
approximately 6,000
450
5744
1500
850
150
2400
17000
7877
3800

3500
3000
1800
2000
10200
223
125
17,000
100-200
3100
1900
1593
680
1240
92
1400
100

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	119

44. Comments

Text Response

member units. We have about 1,200 members

It's actually been going up a few hundred over the last few years.

Additional 100 members on inactive roll

This 61,182 Households

We consider anyone who gives a total amount of over \$35 within a year to be a member.

FY15 (10/1/2014-9/30/15) 7000 members

This number has remained stable for the past 12 years. We lose and gain about the same amount every year.

34,000 member households, representing 160,000 individuals are members of the [REDACTED]

Since we are in the process of switching membership databases, this is an approximation.

we just passed a renewal point (Dec. 15) it will bump up to 12,000 after renewals.

Our base, paid membership is 17,000. However, [REDACTED] is currently participating in [REDACTED] municipal ID program ([REDACTED]) and awarding complimentary individual memberships to [REDACTED] cardholders. This has drive our total membership count to over 30,000. The program has been extended through 2016.

Approximately 17,000 members in 9,100 households

Again we aren't tracking them so approximate #

memberships - family = 1 unit, individual = 1 unit

The end of 2015 we had 165 members (so we expect this number to go up significantly).

Membership includes zoo benefits

Includes membership levels \$50, \$85, \$150, \$250, \$500, \$1,500, \$3,000, \$5,000, \$10,000, and \$20,000

N/A

We use the "unique donor number" calculated by [REDACTED] development. An individual donor who gives once is counted as a single "member" even if they give multiple times. A dual or household member is counted as two regardless of the number of times they contribute. If you count membership by household addresses on the mailing list, regardless of numbers contributing, then the number is probably closer to 2,500.

800 is households (since people can purchase family memberships).

New program within the last four years

That number is households. In the 6,800 households, there are about 12,000 adults and 8,000 children represented.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	22

45. What software do you use to manage memberships?

Text Response

Altru

Raiser's Edge

GiftWorks

SalesForce

Banner (which is what the College uses)

filemaker pro

Telosa Exceed Premiere. We moved from Raisers Edge because it was expensive, cumbersome and a pain. We are very happy with Telosa.

currently excel; just purchased Altru by Blackbaud; will launch in December
excell

Albia

Advance 9.1

eTapestry. Hate it. need affordable replacement that includes tracking volunteers, the services of constant contact and eentbrite. know of anything better? Please call Robin 907-770-3692

Giftworks and excel spreadsheet

DonorPerfect (we would love to know of other gardens using DonorPerfect, if that is information that could eventually be shared)

sltru

Giftworks

CiviCRM

Altru

OMNI Ticketing/Blackbaud Raiser's Edge but converting to Altru (Blackbaud)

Altru

SiriusWare

Blackbaud - Altru

Excel

Filemaker and university gift records database

FileMaker Pro

Raiser's Edge

Microsoft Excel

Abila

Contracted

RaisersEdge

Excel

Microsoft excel

Donor Perfect Online (DPO)

ACT Sage

Microsoft Access currently. Switch to University wide system called [REDACTED].

Raiser's Edge but we hate it and are looking into a new product

eTapestry

raiser's edge
Raiser's Edge
Giftworks
Donorperfect
Excel spreadsheet
Wild Apricot (used eTapestry in the past)
Raiser's Edge
eTapestry
DonorPerfect
Raiser's Edge
Altru
not sure but assuming excell, microsoft office tools
Raiser's Edge
DonorSnap
Raiser's Edge and Galaxy
Quickbooks
Access
Sage Fundraising 50, now part of Abilia
Raisers Edge
SiriusWare and Raiser's Edge
Excel and Publisher for our cards
Bloomerang
Centaman and Rasiers Edge
PastPerfect
Raisers Edge
Microsoft Access
excell!
A constituent database that was company developed and run by our University's foundation. They have developed it and have made it usable/compatible for [REDACTED].
Altru by Blackbaud
proprietary program called [REDACTED]
Excel
Excel
DonorPerfect online
Raisers' Edge
Altru
Raiser's Edge
Banner
Raisers Edge
donor perfect
Versai (museum software)
Donor Perfect

raiser's edge
Raisers Edge
Raiser's Edge
altru
DonorPerfect, but as of January 2016 we will be using Tessitura
Altru
university proprietary software and an in-house system we seek to change at some point
SunGard Advance membership module
Raiser's Edge
Altru by Blackbaud
Microsoft excel
Currently Raiser's Edge, but migrating to Altru by March 2016 (both Blackbaud products)
Excel spreadsheets
ALTRU by BlackBaud - just completing our conversion from 4 separate database systems to ALTRU. Manages all aspects of our needs, including donor management, membership, retail sales and online transactions, including registration and giving. We have an internal database called [REDACTED].
currently customized access database, moving to ALTRU
donor perfect
Microsoft Access, Constant Contact,
Excel, Access
Altru
none
Raiser's Edge
Quickbooks

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	118

46. If you were creating a membership program for a brand new garden, what would you do differently? What advice would you give?

Text Response

Involvement/connection to an institution.

Pay attention to cost/benefit and know what your members are giving and what you are able to provide. Its a balancing act between meeting their needs but also making sure you are creating a profit for your institution and not letting them run the show.

Establish strong Membership Committee; ensure dedicated, competent staff support
I'm not sure...would love to learn from others on this.

We are a very particular, unusual situation, so not much is applicable to other gardens
Dedicate someone to spend the time not only bringing in new members but also retaining and nurturing the members that are brought in. Dedicate the resources (time, money and membership tools) to do a good job.

I'd like to learn from others becuase I am sure we should have a corporate program. I also don't know if discounts, specials, and direct mail are worth the effort/expense.
If at all possible invest in adequate software from the very beginning vs. creating silo'd data and then having to eventually consolidate into software anyway.

it would be nice to have one of the more advance programs that automatically sends renewal letters. Until membership grows to near \$75-80,000 per year, that is out of our reach.

We're happy with our membership program being run through annual giving. Our garden is 7 years old and there is no entry fee, visitors center, or gate, and parking is free.

Frame it as a form of donation. Include easy catagories, rolling basis and simple benefits that are easyu to track. have a good software system.

Only offer a few select levels of membership with very clearly defined benefits per level.

Under promise and over deliver on member benefits. Once you have provided a benefit and found it is hard to manage or costly, it is very difficult to change it or take it away. First, find the core of people that want to join the garden because they love it, not because they want something in return. Then offer one-time special benefits or limited time offer deals to entice new people to try the program and fall in love with the organization as well.

Have specific person in charge of membership and train individuals taking over. Plan for change in staff when relying on volunteers who come and go.

Our program is working well.

Don't create too many membership levels; it confuses your members and adds additional costs to your program when you try to accommodate everyone. Don't overprice your membership, but make sure it is at least three times the cost of general admission. Limit the number of members on a family membership and focus on general access into your facility--the remaining benefits should follow. Price your memberships so you can offer renewal discounts and encourage members to renew

when they wouldn't.

Develop benefits that are a value-add to the member, provide easy ways to sign up and renew, and provide special perks for them to build some identity at the garden. Also, it is clearly beneficial to have a staff person dedicated to stewarding members so they have a greater integration into the organization.

Use the regional and local demographics to understand needs of your potential members: family size, travel time, program interests...

Add caregiver level / option. Offer more benefits, specials, promotions Give option for lower price for multi-year levels

This is very much based on available budget, which is very limited. Typically, it is more cost effective and revenue generating to solicit donations. I believe membership is valuable in the relationships rather than the income.

Train your admissions staff to give every guest the opportunity to become a member, Record as much detail as possible in your member records, Process memberships and send membership cards as quickly as possible, Be flexible (if someone is upset, give them guest passes or extend their membership, surprise them and make them happy) make membership affordable ask members what they want give something back - a party, annual meeting at no cost

List all the reasons why would want to create this. It is costly and administratively complicated but may be a necessity for small gardens.

Informative and Educational Campaign specific, letters, phone calls

ours seems to run well. perhaps offer multi year memberships. better fulfillment of member benefits.

Take the time to create a strategic plan around membership, including identifying benefits to the member and the value/cost of those benefits.

Form and have an active Membership Committee, stay as personally involved with all members as possibly can.

I have only been in this role for two months, so I am not sure. Microsoft Access is not a quality tool to track membership, so I am glad we are switching to a different/better system. We have a lot of exceptions to our membership formula, which can make it difficult, but I have yet to find a way to better streamline the process while also reaching our maximum membership numbers.

give less benefits- once you give them a lot any reduction is very difficult

Hire a development director and a membership coordinator. The two positions would work together to develop a strategic plan to increase membership support.

Make sure to gather all demographic information that you can. Also, keep up to date information on the members, regarding deceased partners and people that move away.

It needs someone with a sales mentality, energy and drive.

Purchase a good database system

I would advise getting a solid membership program in place from the very beginning. Our membership functions have been passed from a 501 c3 Friends organization, to our Development Office, to a Gardens membership coordinator - and consistency of communication with our members has suffered at each transition. When I took over

membership, it was being kept in an Excel spreadsheet, which is not conducive to tracking over time. I would avoid having the membership functions shared by a separate entity (i.e. university Development office) - it hinders timely recognition and can confuse what is intended to be a membership versus what is a donation or sponsorship, etc.

Develop a member/donor-philosophy throughout the entire organization that understands the importance of membership to the operating budget. Involve the entire staff for member recruitment and importance. Focus on training (customer relations, etc). Do not neglect the importance of member retention.

We're looking for advice ourselves.

Survey members for benefits important to them, and push forward ideas to create a "best" program. Survey "like" organizations for benefit offerings. Survey organizations in the area of the new garden for offerings.

A more appropriate question for us is what do you plan to do as you further develop your membership program? We plan to make a more assiduous effort to court and retain members. We also plan to add value to our memberships. We plan to develop a program of engagement with our members, especially first time members. We plan to identify a staff member who is tasked specifically with enhancing our membership program. We plan to invest more time and money in the program not only to generate income but to develop more engagement with our constituents.

Have a full time staff to support the program. Offer great benefits, give them access to special events, give them special pricing on all programs etc..., communicate with them and make them feel loved. :)

Communicate with members regularly and in a personalized fashion whenever possible. Don't offer lifetime memberships.

research membership software carefully

Find out what benefits people most want and work to those ends

use off-the-shelf software to track members, tie it into your accounting software and include a CRM

For a brand new garden I would have an open house with discounted memberships for those joining as founding members. Member benefits are also important, local garden center discounts and the Reciprocal Admissions Program through AHS. I would also try to create some sort of program or incentive for members to bring in new members. To get members you need to get them to the garden and give them a reason to want to support you. I would not recommend Direct Mail for that reason

Charge and entrance fee. Membership is based on value of garden. Free gardens are no more than parks

Our garden does not charge admission, which removes any incentive to join at the gate. Admission fees can really drive membership sales.

I would suggest more staff hours devoted to membership.

Find a way to encourage your membership to buy in, and try to attract young families from the beginning. A lot of our members were elderly when we first opened (~12 years ago), and we see a lot of attrition due to death.

Solicit community and surrounding community for suggestions and ideas on what they would like to see given as benefits - whats important to them. Really analyze and figure out how much you want to charge per level of membership - this is difficult to change down the road once established (most members do not like to see change in rates, even though it is supposed to be a donation to the garden). Member only events are wonderful to have, but be aware of how you create the overall expectation - if you decide to offer a buffet, and realize that it costs a ton to sustain that, and you want to back down to offering just beverages, their might be some ruffled feathers. Make sure keep in touch with the community, advertise. Gift memberships are also important. And lastly - retain, retain, retain! New members are wonderful, but in the long run is much less work to retain then to have to find new.

I would have a more robust orientation/introduction system inclusive of clear and exciting printed materials and opportunities to tour the Reserve as a new member. Additionally, I would increase programming at the garden to ensure members feel as though they are truly receiving a benefit.

I think there should be more flexibility in membership levels. With the tiers of usual levels, I would include an add-on, e.g. "Flex Pass", that would allow blended families greater access to the Gardens, i.e. nannies, grandmothers, etc. Messaging about membership being crucial support for the Gardens is important to cultivate upward movement through the levels of membership. I would do more of that in membership materials.

Really make sure what you offer as member benefits you can deliver on.

Have a part time staffer for membership, have software just for membership, have a plan before you start soliciting membership and definitely have benefits besides entry to the Gardens.

incorporate tracking and more proactive approach for increasing membership; just don't have staff to devote to membership management

New software system. Referral Program. Better onsite signage

I am pretty new to this position. I'm not sure I would have any advice just yet!

I would like to have an improved online membership form linked to the database.

Advice: Be very clear on benefits and keep it simple. It is very hard to take something away later. I would also recommend having a 2-year renewal option.

Have good software program and limit your membership levels

not much different

My advice for a new garden would be to invest in an integrated CRM database system.

I would invest in great membership cards and a desk at the Visitor Center. I'd make the job more visible and public-facing. I would provide training to each staff member regarding membership levels and the value to have conversations with the public.

have better reporting

Structure benefits appropriately and not give away too many free guest passes. Foster a "philanthropic" aspect to membership. That would help convert members to donors. Immediate on-site membership cards.

Not use plants as a membership benefit.

Look at reports and membership information across the field to determine what benefits and levels to start with based on comparable organizations. From there, do surveys and find out what your specific constituents want out of a membership program.

I would suggest looking at a larger garden than ours.

We're very happy with and proud of our current membership program. 83% renewal rates speak well of it (compared to national averages of only 45% or so in renewed annual support). Advice: keep the categories simple but inclusive (e.g., Household, rather than Family); encourage members to step up to premium categories; use surveys to make sure you understand what motivates your members (we learned that the trails matter more than the gardens...); make changes based on membership feedback

We have a/some dedicated staff to working on such programs

Do a Pricing and Benefits study Develop good member programs to keep existing members engaged (travel program) Create a new member event, and support outreach that first year of membership

We would have additional staff and funding.

plan ahead. define benefits. define when to contact and how to integrate development - at what level are memberships complimentary?

1) Ideally create a system to issue membership cards as soon as they are purchased either online or onsite. 3) Have an automatically updated list of memberships accessible at each site where benefits are available. 2) Create a system to track redemption of membership benefits, membership admittance, and guest pass redemption. 4) Clearly define what constitutes a "family" or "household" when publishing materials on membership. 5) Keep track of how people are applying for membership so that it is possible to optimize renewal notifications. 6) Talk with companies in the area and set-up a corporate membership wherein employees of a company can apply for membership at a discount (or something similar).

Do not create too many membership levels and be sure to tell all visitors the support it gives the gardens. Our hardest sell for memberships is the fact that we do not charge admission into our garden, many places can offer that as a perk to keep members engaged. As a result, any garden choosing to add memberships to their organization should consider offering the Reciprocal Admissions Program by the American Horticulture Society to their members, whether they charge admission or not. It really helped us "sell our memberships".

Evaluate the whole pricing structure to get the best results and make membership worth while for visitors. Research competitors and make sure there is enough options for visitors to choose from.

Track and track early to see what is working to retain members and how they are engaging. Do not duplicate entry between your financial software and database --it only creates errors.

Because our location it's difficult for our members to utilize their benefits, we are currently moving to a cause based model.

These are things that we are striving for, but they are things that one should constantly

keep in mind: 1) Review and test all database systems that are employed and aim for systems that work the most effectively with each other 2) Always keep in mind that training throughout the institution is the key to providing the best experience for the member/donor and for the employees 3) Excellent customer service throughout your organization is key to success

N/A Publicly recognize donors

We have a well established membership program. Having been a membership professional for over 23 years I have also been involved in young membership programs. My advice is to be careful with benefits because once you offer something it is hard to take it away so think carefully. Do direct mail, it works. Don't be afraid to discount your membership but not too much offer a discount on your direct mail but a reasonable one. If you expect a good renewal rate don't do Groupon or Living Social that is too deep of a discount and they won't renew (works good for ticketed events). If you are going to make a big change in benefits communicate to your members and tell them why. On the other hand, if you increase membership prices but not by too much (\$5) no need to tell your members in advance, most people won't notice \$5 and if they do they are likely to pay it. Refund admission with on-site memberships. Provide excellent customer service, in-person, on the phone, in e-mail, and in all written communications.

To the authors of this survey, I would say that you should not make direct comparisons between public gardens that charge admission with those that do not or that are prohibited from doing so. The incentive of "free admission" wraps admission in with membership in a way that will skew results. To those starting a brand new garden, I would say to be careful that you do not set up competition between the membership program and the rest of the development program! I have seen this happen where sub-departments do not share information and major donors are not considered "members" and do not receive communications and benefits! Strive to integrate the membership program into the overall fundraising effort with the aim of high retention, great donor stewardship, elevation to higher giving levels, and ultimate legacy gifts. I would also tell them and their boards that events rarely make much money and they nearly always create a huge load for staff. Chose events for membership / fundraising judiciously and have a small number very successful events. I would say that our members' favorite events have very little overhead and do a lot to involve different sub-groups of our membership in aspects of the Garden such as the plant sale and winter displays and programs.. The true value of our Garden membership program is in building advocacy and community support, involving visitors more deeply through long-term meaningful communication, and in recruiting our base of future donors. (Donors are nearly always members first!) Membership in itself does not net a lot of money right away, but it is an invaluable tool for successful fundraising and development. Membership goals should be for sustainable growth rather than low retention and erratic growth and loss, as often happens with benefit-driven recruiting or occasional membership gala events that spike the numbers. Membership is a long-term investment !

No life members.
I have only been in this position for about a year and before that I had no membership experience so I am still learning. I don't have any advice quite yet.
We would stress the value and ease of online yearly renewal.
prorate benefits for membership levels offer auto renewal consistently build membership levels to \$150 and move donor level to \$300 or more
Hire a consultant, hire more staff and interview members to see what they need/want
Keep membership levels simple from the start - it's hard to pare them down later, as we found out when we streamlined our categories in 2014. Also, know the limitations of your membership software before designing your program - we implemented several new discounts before realizing our software had no ability to track these discounts. Our search for a work-around to this limitation resulted in lots of extra membership categories and subcategories, combined with a lot of extra manual entry, and a ton of unnecessary frustration.
Improve and make 'customer-friendly' online access and utilities a central feature of the program's management
I would love the answer to this one
Have the software to track memberships and members use/visitation. Data is king and is so important for decision making. Also, set-up standards for tracking the data so reports are accurate.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	90

47. Do you have any final thoughts, questions or concerns about membership programs at public gardens? Please comment below.

Text Response

Public gardens by definition are free, so incentive is not as great to join. We are a private-non-profit organization, so do not have a benefactor or major donor to support us. I would love to have our admission be a reduced amount, but it's a major source of revenue. We do participate in reciprocal programs and many visitors use free library passes. We also implemented a "2 for Tuesday" to help make it more affordable for locals, although many tourists take advantage of this as well.

I led a session at this past APGA annual conference on membership programs at "gateless" gardens, so you might want to look at that.

Membership is an important revenue source for public gardens but it is also the "heart" of your organization. Members support your organization in many different ways and are your ambassadors for your organization.

I look forward to the results. Good luck, [REDACTED]

Bottom line, they're of critical importance to every institution; treat your members and volunteers well; they're reciprocate. thanks for doing this research; very interested in the results across many gardens!

A great program for developing passion and commitment from the public. reciprocity is an important benefit. we have issues with other gardens that only give free parking when we give free admission. Would love to see a passport for gardens for the 'serial' garden goer. tat would pull more people to ours.

Membership at a garden that does not charge admission is very hard to compare to a garden that does charge admission. Really, we treat most of our members like donors immediately.

I can't stress how important renewal retention is to the overall growth of your membership program. Make the renewal process as easy and seamless as possible for your members.

What are the National trends: are they growing, sustaining, or declining on the following areas: visitation, donor support, program development, staffing, volunteers, community partnerships...

If the garden receives a large donation, do they automatically give a membership with it?

Have fun! It shows.

They do positivley create a long relationship which may translate into a future planned gift or bequest. It can create loyalty.

We would be interested in seeing the final analysis of your study!

Would like to see best practices membership guide for gardens based on size.

Within my organization, membership is a vital and required program financially but the least contributed to by the leaders of the group.

Please keep our responses confidential. They can be part of the results. Please do not list our organization's name. Thanks.

Thank you for inviting us to participate and please accept my apologies for being unable to answer your operations and budget questions. We look forward to the results!

It is tricky to have a limited budget and a desire to market a membership program at a free public garden. I would love to see the information that you collect from your study.

We have found using promotional partners like Living Social to provide a short-term reward but a long-term challenge. I caution colleagues to use these as tool judiciously.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	36

48. Would you would like to receive a summary of these research findings, expected late spring, 2016? If so, please provide your name and preferred email address:

Removed for anonymity.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	114

