

LEAN Arts Canada

(Leadership Emergency Arts Network)

Abridged compilation of LEAN initiative's process, statistics and
feedback from participants

January 22, 2021



1/3

1/3



iPad (7)



What is LEAN?

- **LEAN Canada** was an immediate, grassroots, **pro bono** response network to help Canadian professional non-profit arts organizations (big and small) deal with what is coming at them during the COVID-19 crisis. Celia Smith, Jeanne LeSage and Michèle Maheux launched this national initiative on March 30th 2020, and “sunset” the initiative after a six month run in October 2020.
- Advisers included: sector leaders including board members, current and former arts Executive Directors, consultants, etc. from across the country.

*If you need help at this time in strategic decision-making, crisis response, financial analysis, board direction, relationship mediation, HR management, systems change or inspirational leadership, **LEAN ON US!***

Promotion Tactics

- The LEAN Team reached out for potential Advisers and Organizations via:
 - Personal email networks/social networks
 - Emails and Phone calls to Federal / Provincial Funders, Arts Service Organizations, Related Organizations
 - Posting on Social Media Groups, appearance at sector Town Halls and group meetings

How did it Work?

- Community Agreement served as the “agreement” for both sides
- Advisers registered through Google form and indicated their province, language(s), short bio, and picked 3 areas of expertise from a set list. The Google Form included consent for collecting information, and abiding by the Community Rules
- Organizations registered through a similar form, indicating province, language, and the areas/topics that their organization wanted to work on → INTAKE TOPIC LIST (See graph in later slide)
- Organizations then went to a Signup Sheet and they choose an Adviser with an available slot

Other Notes

- The model for LEAN was for the LEAN Team (Jeanne, Celia, Michèle) to support the ADVISERS, who were supporting the ORGANIZATIONS
- The goal was to start something quickly to get Advisers and Organizations matched as soon as possible to get the support started.
- It was a conscious goal for the LEAN Team that this NOT become an institution or a permanent program – pro bono, grass roots, of and for the sector
- SubGroups – specific subgroups to explore specific topics on a deeper level started up: Systems Change, Human Resources, Festivals.

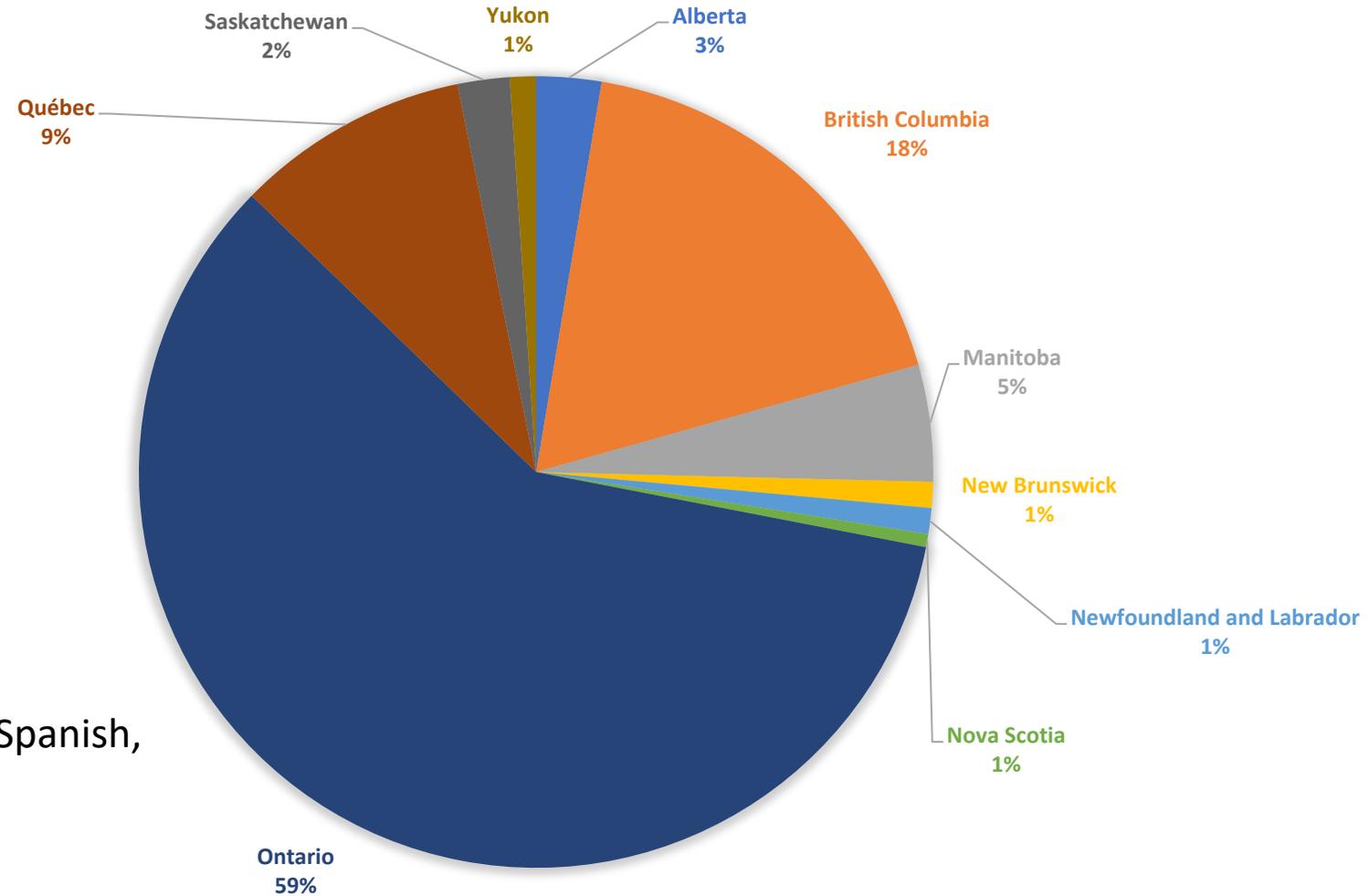
Stats – High Level

- 189 Registered Advisers
- 300 registered organizations
- 199 “matches”. (some orgs matched with more than one adviser)

*duplicates and errors removed, if additional staff from same org registered separately – these were merged

Adviser Info

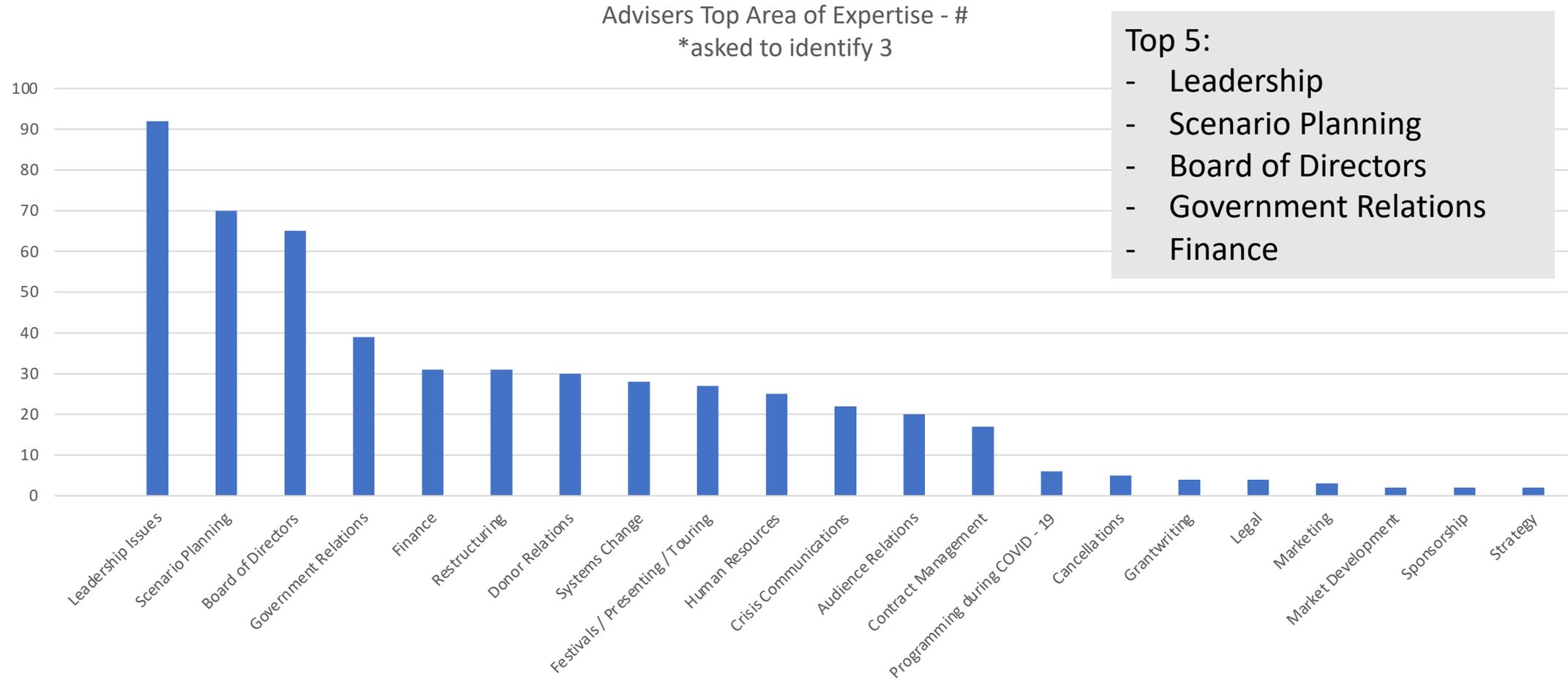
LEAN ADVISERS - PROVINCE/TERRITORY (N = 189)



LANGUAGES OFFERED

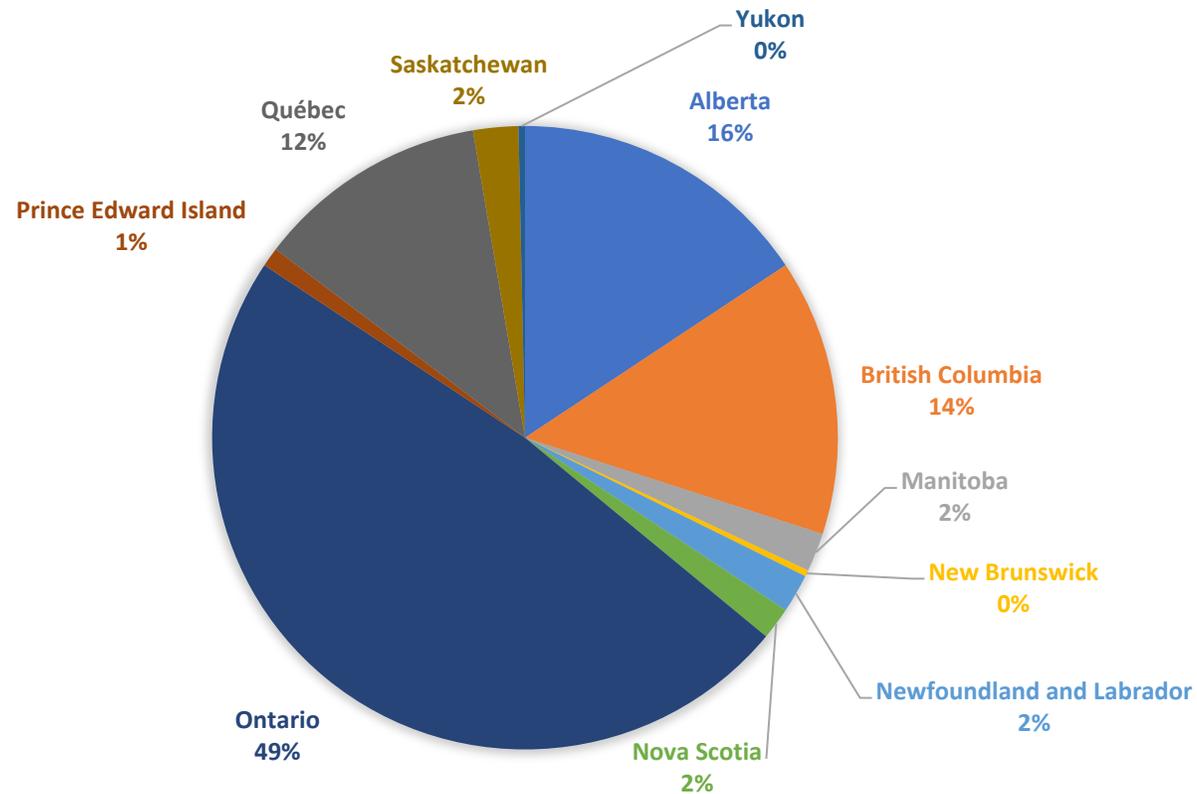
- 180 in English
- 30 en français
- Others: Yiddish, Ukrainian, Spanish, Chinese, Italian

Advisers – Top Areas of Expertise



Registered Organizations

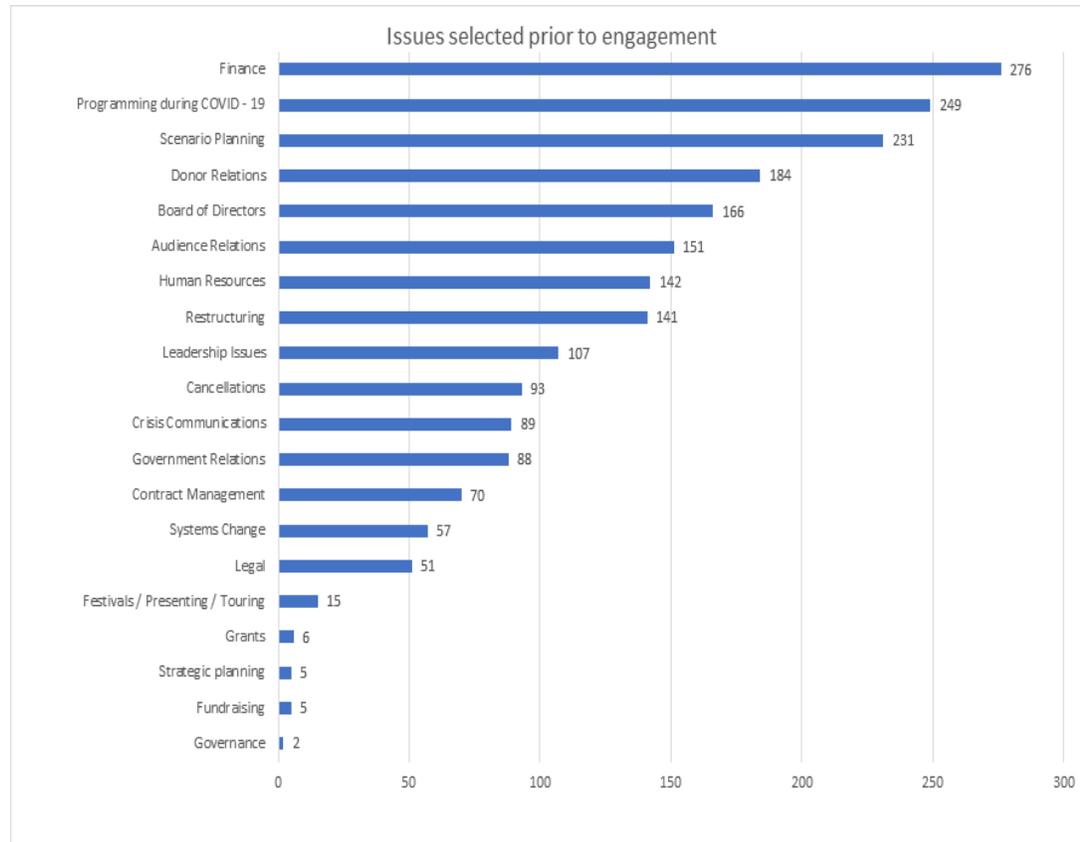
LEAN ORGANIZATIONS - PROVINCE/TERRITORY (300)



LANGUAGES:

- 264 in English
- 26 en français
- 9 – both

INTAKE TOPIC LIST - Organizations



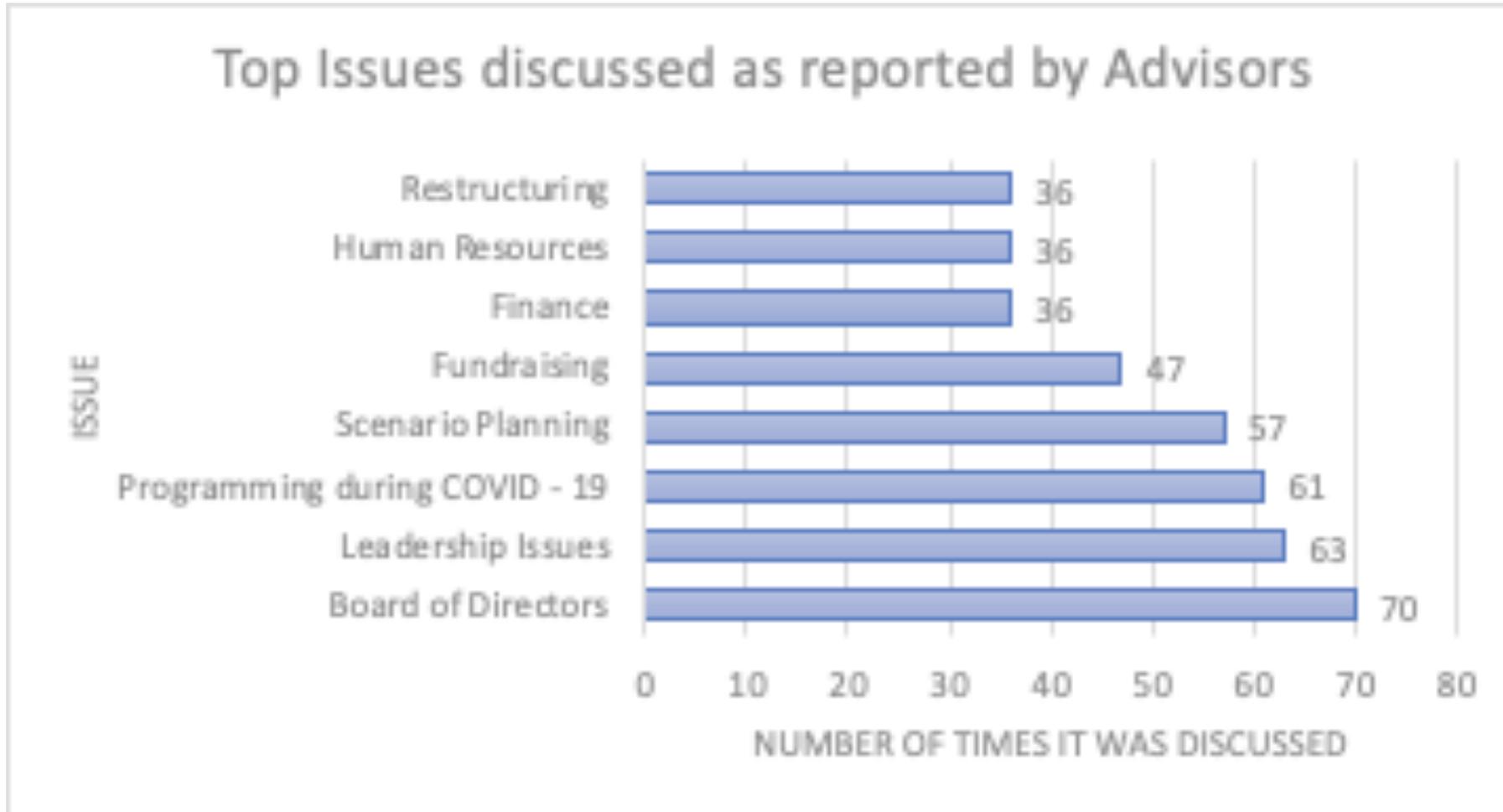
- Organizations were asked to choose the topics they wanted to work on (and could choose as many as they wanted)
- At Intake – top issues were:
 - Finance
 - Programming during COVID
 - Scenario Planning
 - Donor Relations
 - Board of Directors

COMPLETION REPORTS - QUANTITATIVE

- We asked both organizations and advisers to fill in a simple "Completion Report" with info on the # of hours, their feedback on LEAN, the process, and the issues facing the organization
- Matches Made – 199
- Reports Received
 - From Advisers – 152 (76% return rate)
 - From Organizations – 139 (70% return rate)
- Hours Reported
 - From Advisers – 629.22 TOTAL hours, Average 4.2 hours per match
 - From Organizations – 506.5 hours, Average 3.6 hour per match

*Average of these two numbers = 568 TOTAL hours

ADVISERS – Topics Covered in Calls



Top 5 from Advisors:

- Boards
- Leadership Issues
- Programming
- Scenario Planning
- Fundraising

ORGANIZATIONS – Topics Covered in Calls



Top 5 from Organizations:

- Programming during COVID
- Scenario Planning
- Boards
- Leadership Issues
- Fundraising

COMPLETION REPORTS - Qualitative

- In addition to the Quantitative Information Gathered Above, we asked both Organizations and Advisers to answer three open-ended questions about the LEAN program, the process of working together and final comments about the trends that the organization was facing in light of the COVID-19 crisis.
- The results provided a snapshot of the specific functional areas of challenge (i.e. fundraising, marketing, programming) - but also a compelling view of the organization's leadership/governance capacity and the need for ongoing expertise from peers and external resources.
- While LEAN was designed as a one-time grass roots effort, and the LEAN Team is not proposing an institutionalization of the initiative, it is valuable to review this feedback to understand the needs and gaps in the sector.

COMPLETION REPORTS - Qualitative

- The analysis of the open-ended questions reviews data from the LEAN project Organization & Adviser feedback documents. It draws primarily from written feedback comments, coded for commonalities and outliers, and then analysed for project reporting purposes.

COMPLETION REPORTS - Qualitative

- With the exception of a few outlying comments, most of the feedback classified into six inter-related categories including:
 1. Perceived outcomes of LEAN program
 2. Need for networking and sector cohesiveness
 3. Challenge of the unknown
 4. Pre-existing issues
 5. Need for Bureaucratic Support
 6. Functional Challenges of COVID-19

1. Perceived outcomes of LEAN program

- Accessibility
- Relevant expertise
- Concrete impacts
- Specific tools
- Professionalism

“The process was relaxed and accessible. We felt there was great flexibility and generosity on the part of the advisor in accommodating the questions and concerns we had around the issues discussed. [ADVISER] helped bridge the communication and knowledge gaps we were experiencing...”

2. Need for networking and sector cohesiveness

- Sounding board
- Desire for connection
- Morale
- Knowledge-transfer

3. Challenge of the unknown

- Need, fear, and potential of ongoing adaptation
- Creative solutions

4. Pre-existing issues

- Leadership struggles
- Lack of funding

5. Need for Bureaucratic Support

- Administrative mentorship or professional development
- Formal funding for contract workers or Flying Squad-type grants
- Shared resource listings and information sharing

6. Functional Challenges of COVID-19

- Finances
- Audience Engagement
- Programming
- Human Resources

Lessons Learned/Final Thoughts from LEAN

- LEAN was created and designed to be grass roots and not tied to any institution, and as such was completely volunteer based. While offers of financial and In-Kind support were offered on a few fronts, it was important that the initiative remain grass roots.
- A few areas that weren't served by the volunteer effort:
 - Fully translated materials - through the amazing efforts of our volunteers - we translated as many of the materials as we could into French. But these often lagged from the originals, and we didn't translate everything. This was an Anglo effort.
 - Diversity of Advisers - (from many perspectives: age, BIPOC, varying institutions) - through the feedback and notes from our colleagues, the adviser pool was not representative of these diverse voices. As the discussion began, the decision was made to sunset the program
- non-COVID issues?
 - It's all related. And the problems and the issues are just beginning.



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