All Aboard! Re-evaluating ABLE2's Onboarding Process
PhD-Community Initiative Final Report

May 2022

ABLE2 PhD-Community Initiative Team
Jacqueline Giesbrecht
Bryan Collins
Line Drapeau

Mentor:
Anne O'Riordan

Table of Contents

Section 1: Executive Summary

1A: Project Overview

In September 2021, ABLE2 partnered with the Queen's University PhD-Community Initiative (PhD-CI) program. This program, run by the School of Graduate Studies (SGS), brings a group of 3 to 5 Queen's PhD students together as an interdisciplinary team to help community organizations address particular issues or challenges that the organization has identified.[1] Our team has had three members: Jacqueline Giesbrecht (the team leader; Cultural Studies), Bryan Collins (Environmental Studies), and Line Drapeau (Finance). We have been supported throughout this project by our wonderful mentor Anne O'Riordan (Rehabilitation Therapy).

The problem identified by ABLE2 was the organization's long waiting list for its Matching Program. While the number of potential Friends (persons with a disability) has always been greater than the number of Matches, ABLE2 informed the team that COVID-19 had worsened this problem. As more people were being added to the waiting list, fewer people were signing up to be volunteers ('Allies'). At the beginning of the project, 184 Friends were on the waiting list for a Match, with many waiting for over two years. The project presented by ABLE2 is as follows:

> ABLE2's proposed project is a review of and recommendations on our volunteer recruitment and retention program, including reviewing our Volunteer Handbook. This review can include a survey, focus groups and a segmentation study on the current volunteer population. This study would provide insight into our Allies' personality or demographic characteristics, leading to targeted recommendations on approaches and strategies for recruiting volunteers. It is critical to reduce the number of Friends on the waiting list and give them a doorway into their communities.[2]

To help them address this challenge, our team was given access to demographic information about the volunteers of the Matching Program. While some insights could be drawn (Section 3), we concluded that there was insufficient demographic information to guide recommendations for future recruitment and retention. Instead, we developed three proposals for potential projects:
- *Proposal A: Retention and Community Building*
- *Proposal B: Improving People's Lives with Data — Better Data, Better Organizational Decisions*
- *Proposal C: All Aboard! Re-evaluating ABLE2's Onboarding and Screening Process*

We presented all three proposals to the staff at ABLE2. Our team and ABLE2 staff chose Proposal C, the project focusing on re-evaluating the ABLE2 onboarding process. In February 2022, the team distributed a survey to ABLE2 volunteers asking about their onboarding experience. The questions were based on findings from a study of Canadian volunteer trends (Section 2) and an onboarding literature review (Section 4). We used the information from these reviews to contextualize the survey data.

1B: Onboarding Survey Overview

ABLE2 already has a strong onboarding process, so our goal with the onboarding survey was to identify both what the organization is doing well and opportunities for growth based on volunteer recommendations. The survey consisted of 52 questions long divided into the following sections:
- Demographics (Section 3)
- The Information Session and the ABLE2 Website (Section 5A)
- The Application Process (Section 5B)
- The Training Process (Section 5C)
- The Matching Process (Section 5D)
- Final Reflections (Section 5E)

The survey included both multiple choice and short answer questions. Most of our multiple-choice questions used standard Likert scale responses:
- Strong disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

As indicated above, each Likert scale response uses descriptive language to measure a respondent's level of agreement or disagreement with various statements. They also can be coded numerically, allowing for the tracking of trends across questions.[3]

The onboarding survey was intended for current volunteers within the Matching Program. For the purposes of this survey, it is important to remember that the format of onboarding has changed over the years, with a few exceptions (see Section 4). This survey was designed so that all questions were optional (apart from one on participant consent), allowing volunteers to skip questions irrelevant to their own onboarding experience. In all, 53 individuals completed the survey, amounting to roughly 20% of the Matching Program volunteers.

1C: Recommendations and Considerations

From the feedback and information gathered in the onboarding survey, as well as the findings of our previous research, we have developed a list of recommendations, divided into six main themes:

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)
- **Reflect on ABLE2's EDI performance** (Section 3)
  - Implement a regular review to reflect on ABLE2's EDI approach and identify growth areas.
- **Expect and plan for diverse identities** (Section 3 and Section 5)
  - Edit language on forms, information packets, and training sessions to further communicate ABLE2's values of diversity and inclusion.
  - Actively challenge the charity model of disability by assuming Friends are not the only ones with disabilities.

- **Practice more consistent data collection of volunteer demographics to better identify the diversity among volunteers** (Section 3)
    - Use this information to better support current volunteers.
    - Identify missing or underrepresented populations and what adjustments can be made to include these populations within the mission of ABLE2.
- **Integrate EDI training into the training process** (Section 5)
    - Plan EDI training for ABLE2 staff and volunteers
    - Implement EDI in volunteer training sessions

Onboarding Structure
- **Consider onboarding differences** (Section 4)
    - Identify the goals of the ABLE2 onboarding process.
    - Reflect on the ABLE2 onboarding process as it compares to that of other similar organizations.
- **Increase the accessibility of onboarding** (Section 4 and Section 5)
    - Make the application available immediately on the website without waiting for a response from an employee.
    - Reduce the specific information provided about the onboarding process.
    - Shorten the application or training steps to prioritize reaching the matching step.
    - Streamline the handbook.

Data and Targeted Recruitment
- **Create better Matches using data and targeted recruitment** (Section 5)
    - Carry out the project *Proposal B: Improving People's Lives with Data.*
    - Have regular volunteer check-ins to gather information about successful Matches.
- **Engage younger volunteers** (Section 3)
    - Further develop ABLE2's social media presence
    - Develop a section of the Matching Program that is compatible with the 8-month university schedule.
    - Consider developing a recreation and leisure program for unmatched Friends.

Networking and Community Building
- **Create a memorable first impression** (Section 5)
    - Produce a warm and engaging video for the information session that introduces the potential new volunteers to the volunteer role, some staff at ABLE2, and the broader community of volunteers in Ottawa.
- **Have a blog to build a relatable online presence** (Section 5)
    - Use storytelling to share more information about the volunteer experience on the website and to connect with a broader audience.
- **Communicate with volunteers frequently during the onboarding process** (Section 5)
    - Reach out to your new volunteers every three weeks when going through the onboarding process to keep them informed and excited and to address any questions and concerns.

Social, Interactive, and Ongoing Training
- **Emphasize relationship building and volunteer networking during onboarding** (Section 5)
  - Pooling groups of new volunteers into onboarding sessions as much as possible so that these new volunteers can learn and interact together while being introduced to new information.
  - Rely less on information slide decks and didactic training sessions and more on social activities that connect volunteers with one another.
  - Develop a volunteer networking program in which new volunteers are connected with other new volunteers or with experienced volunteers who would be great sources of advice and inspiration through mentorship.
- **Create opportunities for volunteers to connect regularly** (Section 5)
  - Provide ongoing support to volunteers through regular training opportunities to keep them up to date with new information and ideas
  - Organize regular volunteer events to connect and integrate volunteers who may otherwise feel as though they are on their own.

1D: Areas for Celebration

Due to the nature of this project, this document focuses on recommendations to help address the challenges related to volunteer recruitment and retention. We want to emphasize, though, that we understand these as areas for growth rather than improvement. ABLE2 already has a strong program with loyal volunteers and is doing impactful work related to its mission. This should be celebrated!

Areas for Celebration:
- ABLE2 is meeting the goals of its volunteers. Many ABLE2 volunteers state that their top motivation to volunteer at ABLE2 is to contribute to the Ottawa community, the ABLE2 mission, and to improve their sense of well-being and health. Survey responses indicate that these goals are being met (Section 3).
- Many of the questions were answered with "disagree" or "strongly disagree" (Section 5). This means that overall, volunteers are content with the onboarding process.
- Many volunteers found training sessions informative, met their educational needs, and were useful in both their Match and in relation to persons with disabilities generally (Section 5).
- Consistent responses of "strongly agree" and "agree" show that volunteers love the matching step! (Section 5)
- The staff at ABLE2 are fantastic at their job. In many of the open-ended survey questions, many volunteers took the time to praise staff for their work, sometimes even mentioning specific staff (Section 5).

We are confident our recommendations will be complementary to the fantastic work already being done by ABLE2 and are honoured to have had the opportunity to use our skills to support ABLE2 in its mission.

Section 2: Volunteering in Canada

This section provides context for how ABLE2 volunteers fit within the Canadian volunteer landscape by outlining volunteer trends in Canada during and before the COVID-19 pandemic. Recommendations for future recruitment and program development are provided based on these trends and the discovered similarities and differences between ABLE2 volunteers and the wider landscape of Canadian volunteering.

2A: Overview

Every five years, Statistics Canada (Stat Can) conducts a General Social Survey on giving, volunteering, and participation. In this survey, volunteering is defined as "the participation in purposeful helping activities without monetary compensation."[1] Volunteering is divided into two categories: 'formal,' which describes any helping activities mediated through a charitable or non-profit organization or group; and 'informal,' which describes direct helping activities done without group or organization involvement.[2]

The most recent Stat Can study of volunteering done in 2018 found that about 79% of Canadians aged 15 and older (24 million) had volunteered either formally (41%) or informally (74%) or both (~34%) in the previous 12 months.[3] Overall, 5 in 10 (53%) Canadians aged 15 and older (16.4 million Canadians) formally volunteered at some point in their lives.[4] Although this information was not gathered for informal volunteering, it can be assumed that this percentage would be substantially higher. Stat Can analyst Tara Hahmann notes that both formal and informal volunteering are important, as they each provide support to causes within various sectors, including healthcare, social services, education, and recreation. While formal volunteering helps already-established organizations continue to provide services, informal volunteering helps "fill the gaps," particularly in areas with fewer established organizations.[5]

2B: Volunteering and the COVID-19 Pandemic

What happens when these gaps grow due to a global pandemic? Since the latest Volunteering survey was in 2018, there is no data quantifying the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the volunteer sector. However, Hahmann notes that, like all sectors of Canadian society, the volunteer sector had to adjust to public health guidelines intended to help reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. All volunteer sectors had to reduce their in-person volunteer activities ─ including hospitals, which typically receive the most volunteer hours on average.[6]

As we know from the increased waiting list at ABLE2, Canadians appeared to be less likely to take up new volunteer opportunities, especially those requiring in-person activities. However, online or phone-based volunteer opportunities such as volunteer mental health services, mentoring, and tutoring have become increasingly popular. Informal volunteering increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, with people offering to deliver groceries, make or donate masks, and provide social media updates on retail locations for prized objects like sanitary wipes or toilet paper.

In addition, hackathons, crowdfunding, and online petitions increased, as did the use of social media to raise awareness for different social issues. As Hahmann summarizes:

> Perhaps now more than ever, Canadians are finding innovative ways of advancing social good, leveraging technology and social media platforms to not only broaden how they give back, but also to better integrate volunteering into their lives.[7]

As a result of the pandemic, the landscape of volunteering in Canada has changed. What, then, is the use of the 2018 Social Survey if its findings are now obsolete? According to Hahmann, analyzing this data is still worthwhile. By examining the characteristics of volunteers and volunteering going into the pandemic, non-profit organizations can familiarize themselves with the nature of volunteering in Canada and better reflect on what volunteering in Canada now is and will be. As an example, Hahmann highlights the expansion of informal volunteering to include the use of social media and hypothesizes that it could "serve as a barometer for volunteering trends."[8] In other words, social media will continue to be a crucial consideration in the future Canadian volunteering landscape, and both researchers and non-profit organizations should take this into account.

2C: Volunteering Before the COVID-19 Pandemic

While formal volunteering opportunities decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic, rates of formal volunteering have been decreasing steadily since at least 2004.

Figure 2.1: Rate of Canadian Formal Volunteering
(Data from Statistics Canada)
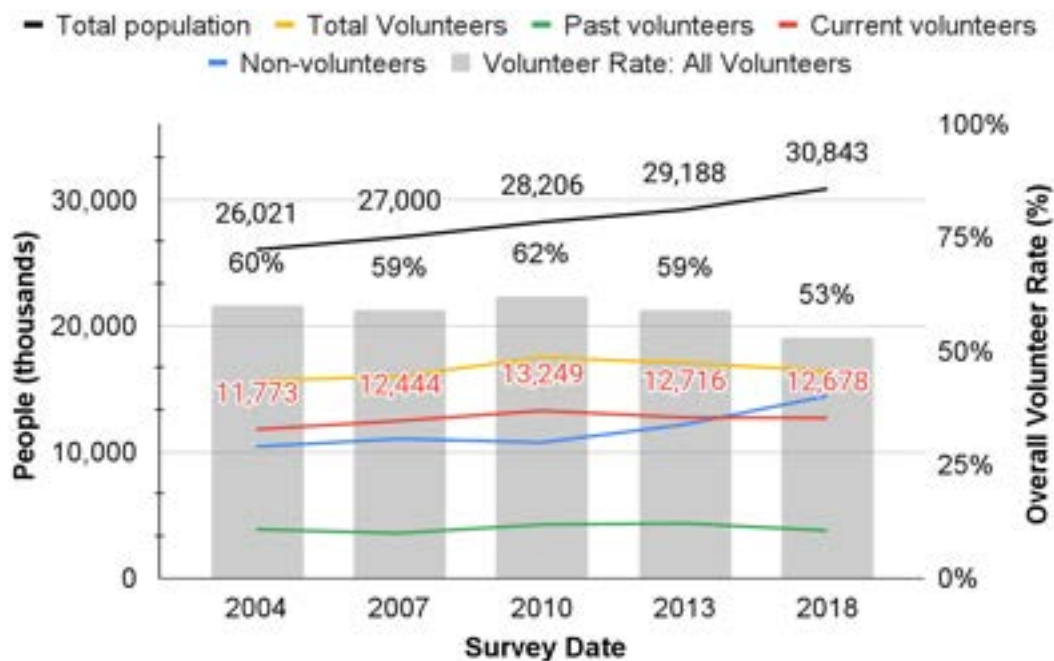
This trend is less noticeable when considering volunteer numbers alone. For example, the total number of individuals formally volunteering did not differ substantially between 2013 and 2018, increasing by only 1505 volunteers. However,

given the population increase since 2013, the overall percentage of Canadians formally volunteering has dropped significantly (Figure 2.1).[9] This shows that, while there is not an absolute decrease in volunteer numbers, volunteering in Canada was declining even before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Age

On average, Canadians volunteered for 206 hours. While younger generations more commonly reported volunteering, older generations contributed more hours. The 'iGens' (ages 15-22) and 'Millennials' (ages 23-37) were more likely to volunteer informally (78% and 77%) than the 'Baby Boomers' (ages 53-72; 73%) and 'Matures' (ages 73-100; 58%). However, Matures and Baby Boomers contributed significantly more informal volunteer hours on average (176 and 197, respectively) than the younger generations (iGens: 99 hours).[10] Data on informal volunteering by 'Gen X' (ages 38-52) were absent from Hahmann's report, but from context, their average contribution can be assumed to be midrange.[11]

The trends in formal volunteering are similar; Matures had the lowest formal volunteer rate (32%) but contributed the highest average of volunteer hours (222 hours), followed by Baby Boomers (39% and 153 hours). iGen had the highest formal volunteer rate (52%) but significantly fewer hours (82 hours). This trend continues in the other categories, with the Baby Boomers rate being at 39% and 153 hours, Gen X at 44% and 120 hours, and the Millennials at 40% and 115 hours.[12]

Sex and Gender

According to Stat Can data collected between 2004 and 2013, volunteer hours tend to be similar across sexes.[13] However, females are more likely to volunteer than males. This trend continues in the 2018 data, in which the volunteer rate among females was 44% and 38% among males. The differences in volunteering participation and hours between sexes are largest among Millennials (45% vs. 36%), iGens (55% and 48%), and Baby Boomers (41% and 36%).[14] It should be noted that while Stat Can does collect information about both sex and gender, only sex is included in their public data and analysis. This is likely because participants are forced to respond within the binary, allowing 'easier' (but inaccurate and, arguably, unnecessarily invasive) statistical analysis when gender is conflated with sex. As well, 'sex' here refers to sex as assigned at birth rather than biological sex, erasing the experience of intersex individuals. Volunteering trends of non-binary individuals are not public and therefore not currently known.

Disability

According to the 2017 *Canadian Survey on Disability* (*CSD*), 22% of Canadians over the age of 15 have one or more disabilities (6.2 million individuals).[15] The 2017 *CSD* uses expanded disability screening questions to provide better coverage of invisible disability, and so it cannot be usefully compared to the previous CSD in 2012. Interestingly, the 2018 General Social Survey used the same types of disability screen and found that 33.1% of respondents indicated that they had one or more disabilities, equal to 10.2 million Canadians.[16] The difference can be credited in part to the *General Social Survey*'s smaller sample size in addition to population growth, though the higher projection in 2018 should not be completely discounted until it can be compared with further census data in the future. While exactly how many Canadians have or identify as having one or more disabilities is unknown, at least 1

in 5 Canadians do. Additionally, the following factors are likely to contribute to increased rates of reported disability:

- Increased age-related disabilities resulting from demographic changes.
- Increased reporting of invisible disabilities due to the improved accuracy of the new *CSD* screening questions.
- Increased acquired disabilities due to COVID-19, either directly from the virus (e.g., Long COVID) or indirectly because of isolation (e.g., mental health disabilities).
- Prevalence of Long COVID may contribute to higher visibility and expanded research into other disabilities resulting from post-viral conditions (e.g., Epstein Barr).
- More people seeking diagnoses as adults thanks to advocacy around disability, internalized ableism, and expanding of diagnoses to consider different presentations of certain disabilities (e.g., how autism presents in women).

The volunteer sector must account for this increasing trend in rates of disability. As demonstrated already in the 2018 survey, 22.7% of Canadians with disabilities volunteered in the previous year, compared to 19.7% of Canadians without disabilities. This means that of the people who volunteered in 2017, 38.5% had a disability, and 61.5% did not. The percentage of individuals with disabilities in the volunteering sector reflects their prevalence in Canadian society, and the scale of their contribution is likely to continue growing. For this reason, the volunteer sector cannot afford to perpetuate the ableist tendencies of the charity model and assume that volunteers are all able-bodied and neurotypical. Organizations will need to make accommodations to engage volunteers with disabilities. We believe that this is the future of Canadian volunteering and that ABLE2 should take it into account.

Motivations for Volunteering

In the Stat Can survey, individuals were asked about their motivations for volunteering. They were able to choose any options that applied to their experience. These motivations are presented in Table 2.1 for easy comparison with the ABLE2 survey data:

**Table 2.1: Motivations to Volunteer Reported by 2018 *GSS***

Category	Survey Response
A	To use your skills and experiences
B	To explore your interests and develop new skills
C	To improve job opportunities
D	To network or meet people
E	Because a friend and/or family member volunteers
F	-To support a political, environmental, or social cause -You or someone you know has been personally affected by the cause supported by this group or organization
G	To make a contribution to the community

H	To improve your sense of personal well-being or health
I	-To fulfill religious obligations -Spiritual or other beliefs

Of the respondents:
- 93% percent identified contributing to the community as being their main motivating factor
- 77% said they wanted to use their skills and experience
- 60% were personally affected by the cause,
- 52% said they did so to improve their sense of wellbeing
- 23% said they volunteered to improve their job opportunities.[17]

Figure 2.2 shows the motivations of Canadians by age.

Figure 2.2: Motivations of Canadians by Age, Percentage
(Data from Statistics Canada)

- A: To use your skills and experiences ■ B: To explore your own strengths
- C: To improve your job opportunities ■ D: To network or meet people
- E: Because your friend and family member volunteers ■ F: To support a political, environmental or social
- G: To make a contribution to the community ■ H: To improve your sense of personal well-being or health
- I: To fulfill religious obligations, or spiritual or other beliefs

The most notable differences in motivation were between younger volunteers (age 15-24) and older volunteers (age 65+). Younger volunteers were much more likely to report "To improve your job opportunities" and "To explore your strengths," while comparatively few 65+ volunteers listed this as a motivation. Meanwhile, the 65+ demographic group was the most likely to report religious or spiritual motivations. Interestingly, as Canadians grow older, they also become more motivated to volunteer to improve their sense of personal well-being. Understanding the different motivations of different age groups could prove insightful for organizations taking on a more targeted recruitment approach.

As displayed in Figure 2.2, a similar percentage of Canadians across all age groups want to volunteer:
- To contribute to the community (17-21%).
- To use their skills and experiences (15-17%).
- To support a political, environmental, or social cause (or are personally affected by the cause) (11-16%).
- To network or meet people (9-11%) or because their friends and family member volunteers (8-11%).

These results show that people of all ages are motivated by the relational aspects of volunteering; many Canadians are motivated to volunteer by their friends and family, network and build new relationships, or partake in community-building.

Canadians evolve as they grow older. As teenagers, Canadians spend most of their time with friends. As adults, they may want to have a family and make it their priority. Once they retire, Canadians generally see fewer people every week. Canadians' changing life circumstances, social needs, personal motivations, and interests influence the kind of volunteering opportunities people want to get involved with.

The importance of the relational aspects of volunteering was also highlighted in *Bridging the Gap*, a pan-Canadian study by Volunteer Canada. This study provided several recommendations to help reconcile the gap between what potential volunteers want and the volunteering opportunities offered by organizations. The study recommends providing more group opportunities and focusing on building meaningful relationships between staff and other volunteers. The study indicates that building relationships is particularly important to youth and families. The youth group is attracted to volunteering opportunities that allow them to be with their friends. Similarly, parents are looking for volunteering opportunities in which their children can be involved to contribute to society while spending time with loved ones. Baby Boomers also have social needs, but they are generally more interested in forms of volunteering that provides them with a sense of purpose. Overall, offering opportunities to volunteer in groups could be the key to finding more volunteers and keeping them for the long run.[18]

2D: Conclusion

This section examined trends in Canadian volunteering to provide context for the ABLE2 onboarding survey results. It has shown that the rate of formal volunteering was decreasing even before the COVID-19 pandemic and that internet- and phone-based informal volunteering has been increasing. Additionally, while older generations volunteer more hours, younger generations volunteer more frequently. Volunteering motivations vary by age, with younger volunteers desiring to explore strengths and improve job opportunities significantly more than older volunteers. Consistently, volunteers desire to use their skills and experiences, contribute to their community, and support a cause that is important to them. Many Canadians are motivated to volunteer by their relationships with friends or family, network and build new relationships, and to contribute to the larger community. The rest of the report will continue to reference these themes to inform our volunteer recruitment and retention recommendations.

Section 3: Volunteering at ABLE2

To improve recruitment practices, it is important to know who the current ABLE2 volunteer is and how to recruit more people like them. This is complicated, as demographics alone cannot identify people with compatible values. However, by comparing the demographics of ABLE2 volunteers versus the Canada-wide volunteer data, ABLE2 can learn who may be missing or underrepresented in their volunteer base. This comparison will help further strengthen what ABLE2 is doing well and indicate where recruitment could be improved.

3A: ABLE2 Demographics

The demographics in this section are drawn from the ABLE2 demographic data given to the team in September, as well as the demographic data gathered in the onboarding survey, which was distributed in February 2022 and had 53 respondents.

Age, Sex, Gender, and Disability

The data provided by ABLE2 in September 2021 revealed information about the age and sex of its 248 volunteers. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 provide visual representations of these demographics.

Figure 3.1: Matched Allies – Age and Sex

Figure 3.2: Matched Allies – Age and Sex
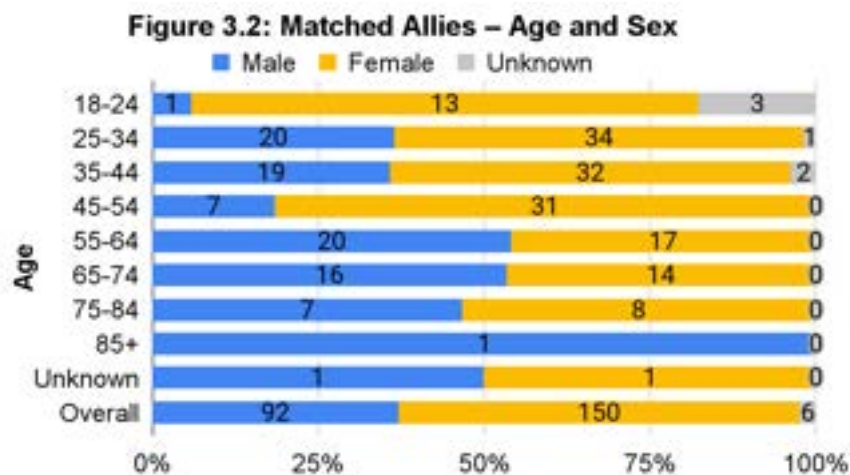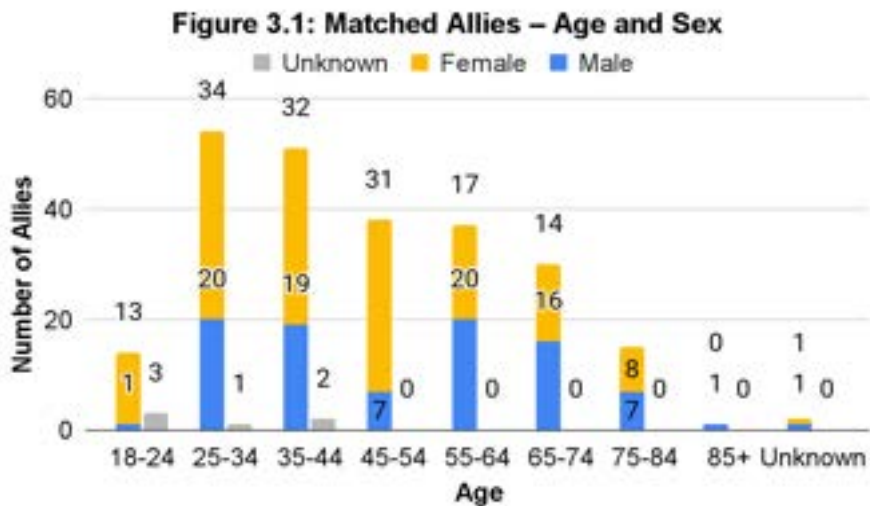
The average age was:
- 47 overall
- 45 among females
- 51 among males
- 29 among individuals without information regarding biological sex

Of the 248 volunteers in the database:
- 150 (60.5%) are listed as being assigned female at birth
- 92 (37.1%) are listed as being assigned male at birth
- 6 (2.4%) have no sex listed

The demographics of ABLE2 Allies reflect the Canadian trend of females being more likely to volunteer. In contrast, volunteer rates by age diverge from the Stat Can data. While volunteer rates are different from raw data of volunteer numbers, the age range from 18-24 (loosely the iGen demographic) is significantly lower than the others, whereas, in both informal and formal volunteering, they had the highest volunteer rates in Canada. The end of this section provides recommendations on how ABLE2 could aim to access this demographic.

Additional volunteer demographics were collected through the onboarding survey (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: Survey Participants – Age, Gender, and Disability
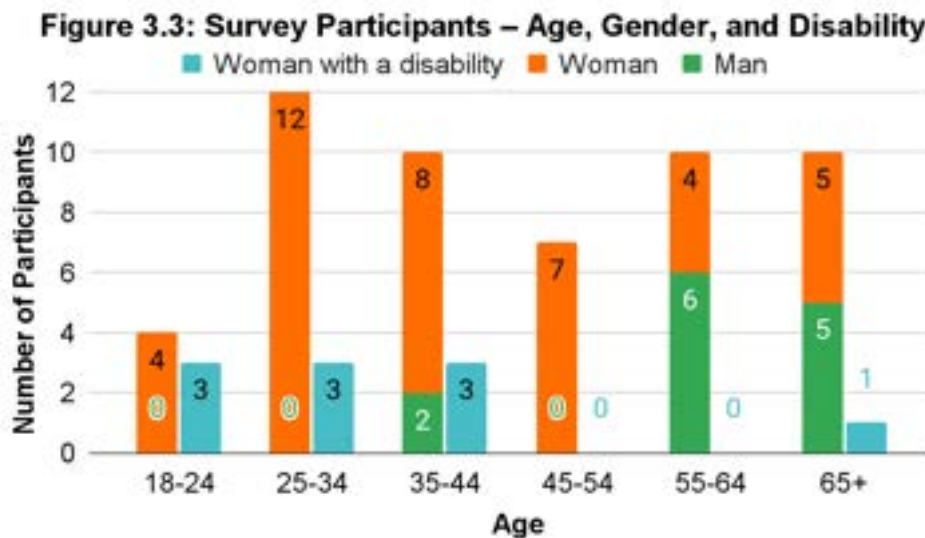
Of the 53 participants:
- 12 (22.6%) were 25-34
- 10 (18.9%) were 35-44, 55-64, and 65+
- 7 (13.2%) were ages 45-54
- 4 (7.6%) were 18-24

In terms of gender:
- 40 (75.5%) identified as women
- 13 (24.5%) identified as men
- 0 (0%) identified as being outside of the gender binary

The survey participants were not asked to identify their biological sex, and it is unknown if any volunteers are trans.

It should be noted that 10 of the 54 respondents identified as having a disability, which reflects the Canadian statistic from 2017. Interestingly, all were women, nine of whom were 44 years or younger. It is not known if this is reflective of the larger Ally population, as this data has not been previously gathered.

Volunteer Hours

We also compared reported volunteer hours worked at ABLE2 per week by age (Figure 3.4) and gender (Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.4: Survey Participants – Age and Average Hours Worked Per Week
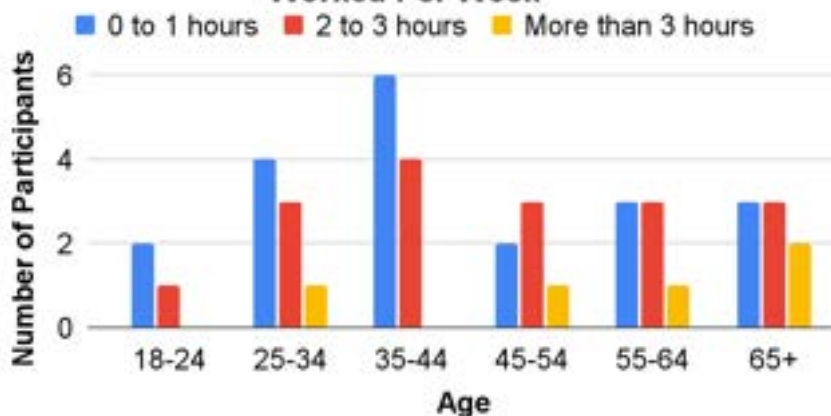
Figure 3.5: Survey Participants – Gender and Average Hours Worked Per Week
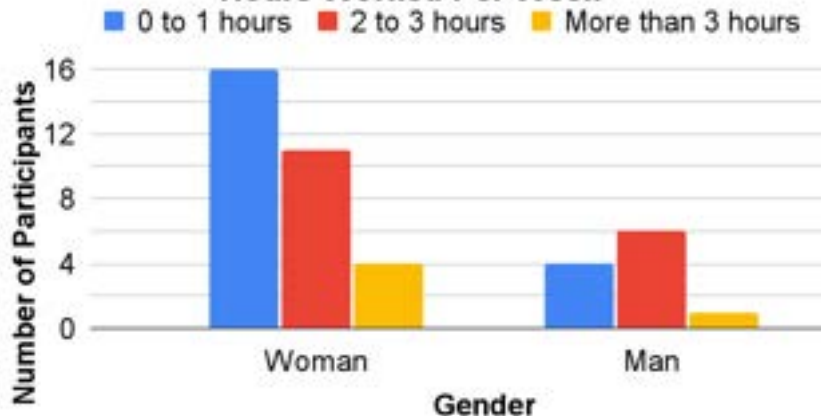
The age demographics of respondents (Figure 3.4) showed that younger and middle-aged adults (ages 25-34 and 35-44) are more likely to dedicate less than one hour to volunteering every week. In contrast, some members of the age group 65+ volunteer over 3 hours per week. These results are congruent with the Stats Can results of hour distribution by age and align with the fact that younger and middle-aged adults may be busier with work and become more available for volunteering opportunities once they retire.

In general, men volunteer 2 to 3 hours per week while women commit to one hour of volunteering work at most (Figure 3.5). While more women choose to volunteer, they dedicate fewer hours to volunteering. This result is in line with studies that show that women are more likely to be busier in their daily lives with various tasks, including paid work and household chores.[1]

3B: ABLE2 Ally Motivations for Volunteering

In our survey for ABLE2, volunteers were asked a question about motivations like the one on the Stat Can survey. The participants were prompted to choose their top three out of ten motivations (Table 3.2)

Table 3.2: Motivations to Volunteer (ABLE2)

Category	Survey Response
A	To use your skills and experiences
B	To explore your interests and develop new skills
C	To improve job opportunities
D	To network or meet people
E	To volunteer with your friends and/or family members who also volunteer with ABLE2
F	To contribute to the mission of ABLE2
G	To contribute to the Ottawa community
H	To improve your sense of personal well-being or health
I	To fulfill religious obligations or beliefs
J	Other

Figure 3.6 shows the survey participants' primary motivations for volunteering across age groups. (See Table 3.5 in Appendix for detailed data).

Figure 3.6: Volunteering Motivations of Allies by Age
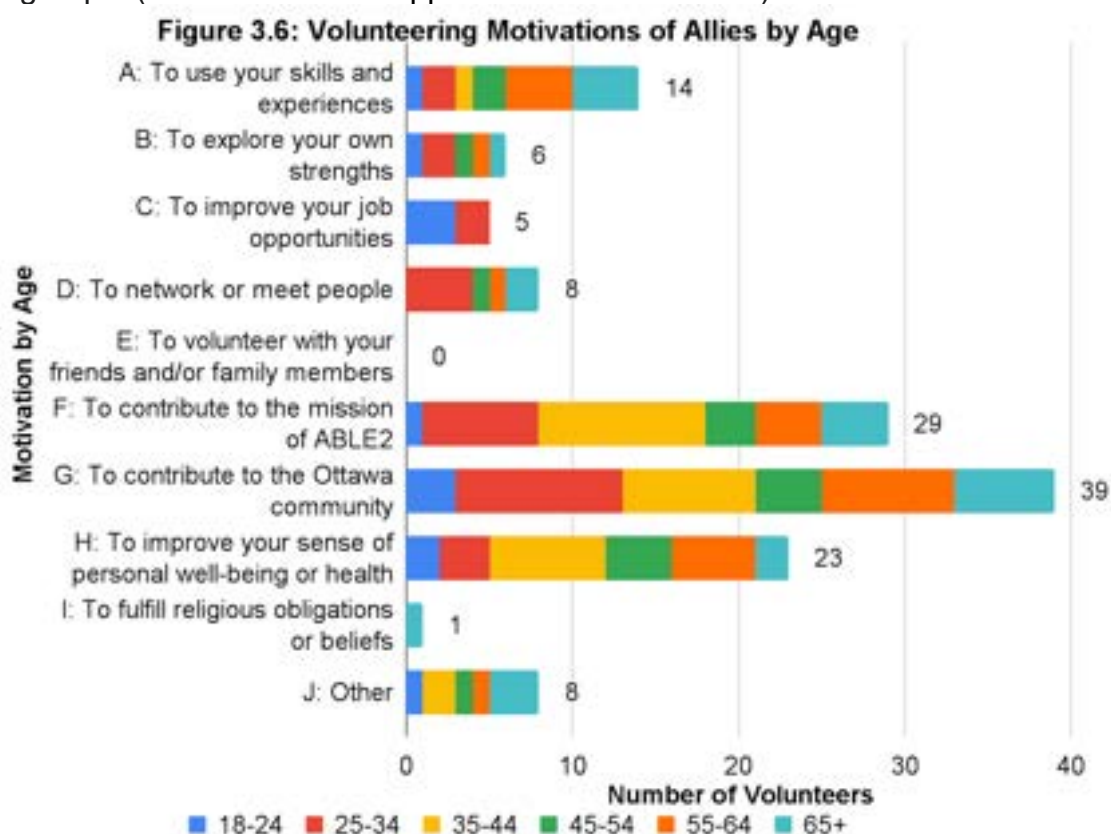
ABLE2 volunteers cited community contribution as their highest motivating factor (Figure 3.6). Furthermore, contributing to the mission of ABLE2 and improving their sense of well-being (or health) are the second and third most frequent motivations to volunteer with ABLE2. Allies do not appear motivated to volunteer to spend time with friends and family and network or meet people. The self-selection phenomenon could explain these observations; for example, ABLE2 does not offer many networking opportunities and opportunities to volunteer in groups, so the organization does not attract volunteers motivated by these opportunities.

Figure 3.7 shows the primary motivation for volunteering within age groups.

Figure 3.7: Volunteering Motivations of Allies by Age, Percentage
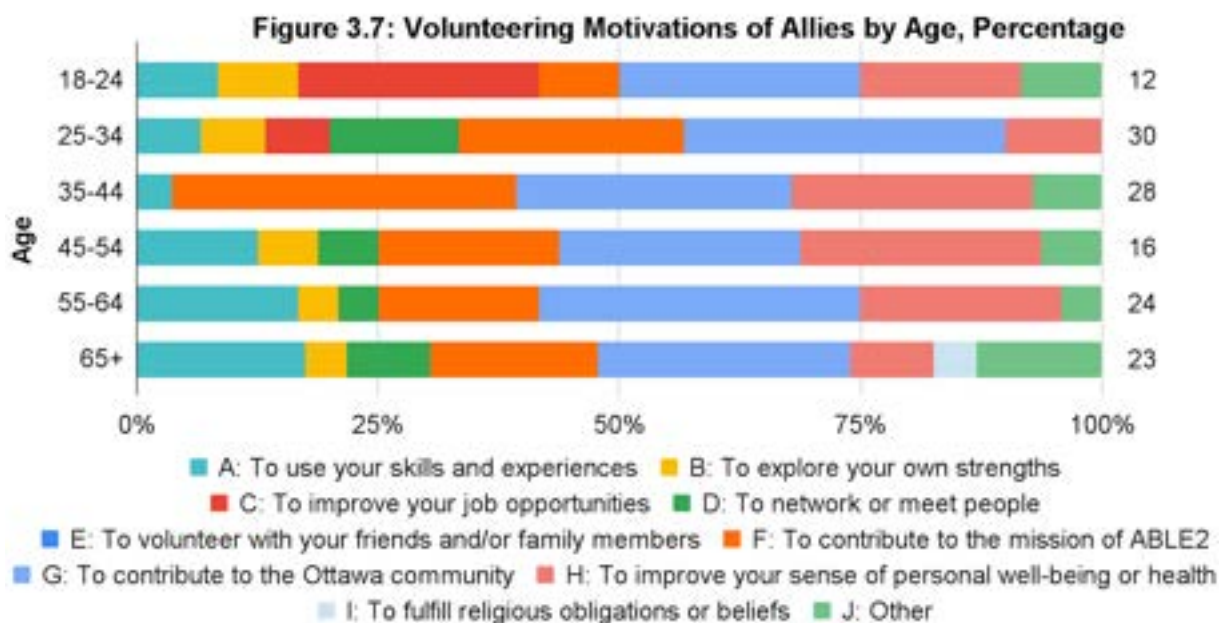
Contributing to the Ottawa community is the motivation most consistent across age groups. Others that were consistent were motivations to:
- Use skills and experiences
- Explore strengths
- Contribute to the mission of ABLE2
- Improve sense of well-being or health

Contributing to the mission is the main motivation for middle-aged adults (35-44) who volunteer(ed) with ABLE2. Unsurprisingly, young adults (18-24) are the group motivated the most by improving their job opportunities. This age group would also be the one that would benefit the most from initial and ongoing training.

Survey respondents who selected "Other" could also describe their motivation for volunteering in their own words. Here are several of those responses:

To help others

To fill a blind spot and broaden my perspective

Improve school applications

Free time to use
Do more than donate
To help someone that needs help give back
To help someone in need

Motivation and Goal Satisfaction

After selecting their top three motivations, participants were asked how well their experience at ABLE2 is meeting these specific goals. Figure 3.8 gauges volunteer satisfaction for each goal by displaying the most-repeated response (mode).

Figure 3.8: Goal Satisfaction
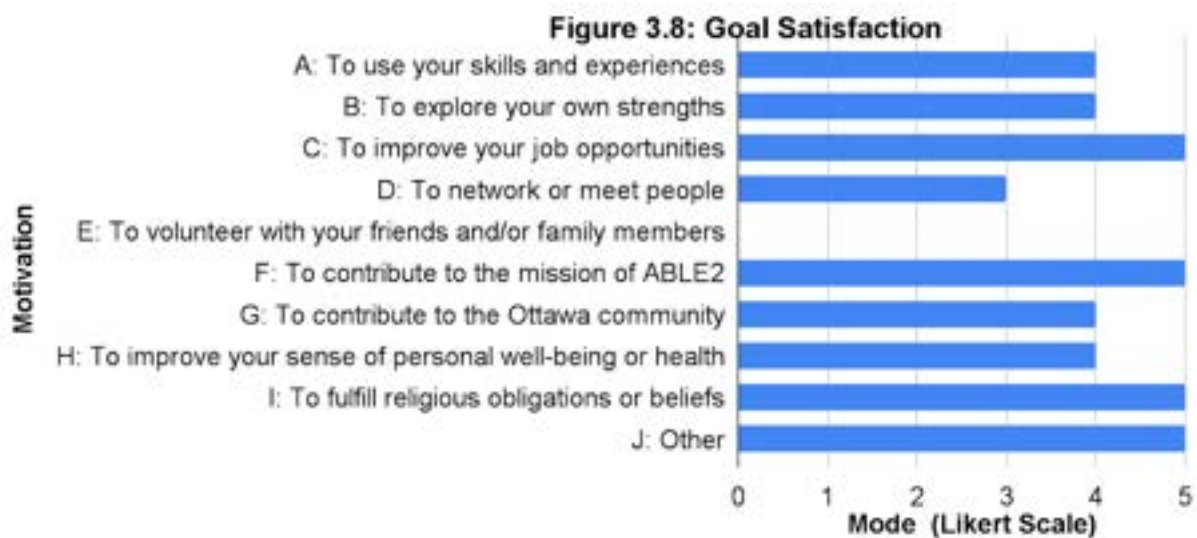
The goals that received "strongly agree" as the most frequent response were to:
- Improve job opportunities
- Contribute to the mission of ABLE2
- Fulfill religious obligations or beliefs

The goals that received "agree" as the most frequent response were to:
- Use skills and experiences
- Explore strengths
- Contribute to the Ottawa community
- Improve sense of personal wellbeing or health

In line with the results of Figures 3.6 and 3.7, the volunteer experience at ABLE2 succeeds in allowing volunteers to achieve the top three goals of the ABLE2 Allies:
- Contributing to the mission of ABLE2
- Contributing to the community of Ottawa
- Improving their sense of well-being (or health).

In contrast, participants were less satisfied with how ABLE2 met their goal of networking or meeting new people (3: "neither agree nor disagree"). As no participants were motivated to volunteer at ABLE2 to volunteer with their friends and family, the response is null. As we will demonstrate in the survey analysis, this lack

of relational focus has resulted in volunteers feeling disconnected from each other and the organization. Volunteers surveyed indicated they would appreciate more opportunities to get to know fellow volunteers to support each other.

Volunteer Satisfaction

Following the questions about motivations and goals, participants were asked to agree or disagree with the following statement: "You would recommend ABLE2 as a great place to volunteer" (Q 2.4, shown in Figure 3.9). Most respondents concurred that they would indeed recommend the organization to their community, with 82.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing. In contrast, 7.8% of participants disagreed.

Figure 3.9: Q.2.4 – "You would recommend ABLE2 as a great place to volunteer."

● Disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree
● Agree ● Strongly agree

35.3%
9.8%
47.1%
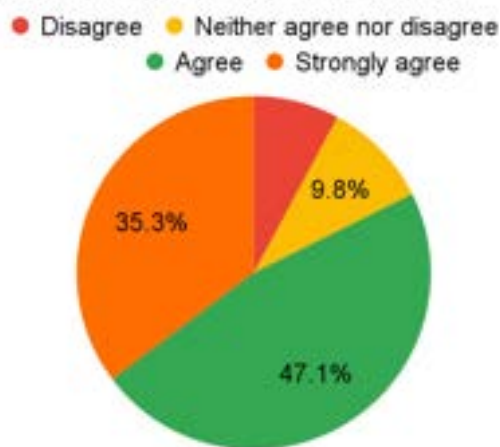
The responses of Q 2.4 were compared against the results of volunteer goal satisfaction (Q 2.2) to identify which motivations corresponded with higher and lower satisfaction (Figures 3.10 and 3.11). Figure 3.10 is filtered for participants that would recommend ABLE2 as a great place to volunteer, and Figure 3.11 is filtered for participants who would not.

Figure 3.10: Motivation Satisfaction and Positive Recommendation
Filter: Q 2.4 – equals "agree" and "strongly agree"

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree

Q 2.2

A: To use your skills and experiences — 5 5 1
B: To explore your own strengths — 0 4 0
C: To improve your job opportunities — 2 1 1
D: To network or meet people — 1 1 3
E: To volunteer with your friends and/or family members — 0 0 0
F: To contribute to the mission of ABLE2 — 16 7 1
G: To contribute to the Ottawa community — 8 19 1
H: To improve your sense of personal well-being or health — 6 11 2
I: To fulfill religious obligations or beliefs — 1 0 0

Number of Participants (x3)

As suspected, those happiest with the volunteer experience of ABLE2 were also most satisfied with their goals. According to Figure 3.10, these people were most satisfied with their goals of contributing to the mission of ABLE2, the Ottawa community, and their personal well-being or health.

Figure 3.11: Motivation Satisfaction and Lack of Recommendation
Filter: Q 2.4 – equals "disagree"

As Figure 3.11 shows, respondents that disagreed about recommending ABLE2 to others also felt neutral or dissatisfied with how one of their goals was being met. However, it is important to note that only 4 of the 52 respondents felt neutrally or disagreed about recommending ABLE2.

Overall, this data supports our recommendations for ABLE2 to focus on improving opportunities for the goals that are being met less: helping volunteers network or meet people and providing opportunities to meet with friends and/or family members. Some opportunities for focusing on these relational aspects include making the onboarding training more interactive and offering regular training or volunteer events at which volunteers can network, which are detailed further in Section 5.

3C: Recommendations Based on Demographic Findings

From the findings of Section 3, we have identified two areas for growth: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and targeted recruitment.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
ABLE2 is encouraged to account for the diversity of the Canadian population and continue developing a posture that welcomes different identities. This can be done through self-reflection, planning, and improved data collection.

Reflect on ABLE2's EDI performance
The first step towards improved practices of EDI is self-reflection. Due to the vastness of all that falls within EDI, this self-reflection is a continuous and ongoing process. If there is not one already in place, we recommend that ABLE2:

Implement a regular review to reflect on ABLE2's EDI approach and identify growth
    areas
Goals can be big and small, but all should be specific and have a projected timeline to ensure accountability and implementation. Below are reflection questions to guide EDI goal setting:

- Is there a known identity in the Ottawa demography that is not associated with the organization? If so, why?
- How can ABLE2 make those with diverse identities feel more valued in their organization?

Expect and Plan for Diverse Identities

Through our data, we know that ABLE2 Allies are varied in age, gender, ability, levels of education, and types of employment. What other identities are represented at ABLE2? We encourage ABLE2 to anticipate that diverse identities are already present in the Ally and Friend populations and adjust accordingly. For example, the survey revealed that there are some Allies who identify as having a disability. Could these individuals be better supported throughout their volunteer experience? How could ABLE2 better support the Allies and Friends that are queer, Indigenous and/or racialized, refugees or immigrants, or practitioners of a minority religion?

If a particular identity appears absent or underrepresented, consider why this might be. Is there any point in the volunteering process that a person with a particular identity may have self-selected out? How can ABLE2 better indicate that people of diverse identities are welcome and valued? By anticipating and preparing for inclusion, ABLE2 will improve the support for current volunteers and work towards a diverse volunteer base that reflects the diversity of the individuals they support. To meet this goal, we recommend that ABLE2:

Edit language on forms, information packets, and training sessions to further
        communicate ABLE2's values of diversity and inclusion

For example, asking questions about gender rather than sex[2] and providing regular opportunities to share pronouns would make the environment more welcoming for transgender and non-binary individuals.

Offer equity, diversity, and inclusion training for staff and volunteers

More detail on EDI training recommendations can be found in Section 5.

Actively challenge the charity model of disability.

In the charity model of disability, a dichotomy of assumed disablement can form in which volunteers are expected to not have a disability. As the survey results show, ABLE2 volunteers do have disabilities. Additionally, individuals that do not currently have a disability will likely develop one if they live long enough.[3]

What adjustments can ABLE2 make to challenge this dichotomy and better support volunteers that have or will acquire their own disabilities? Are there ways ABLE2 can further promote disability solidarity and deconstruct internalized ableism so that volunteers who acquire disabilities in the future will be more likely to self-identify and more quickly access the care that they need?

Improve Data Collection

As described in *Proposal B: Improving People's Lives with Data*, increased and nuanced data collection of volunteers will help ABLE2 develop a targeted recruitment campaign and help create consistently long-lasting Matches. Additionally, as diversity in Canada continues to increase and ABLE2's core volunteer base continues to age, ABLE2 can identify areas for further outreach to engage volunteer

populations of increased diversity. While this proposal was not the chosen project, data gathered in the survey can provide insight into these goals.

<u>Practice more consistent data collection of volunteers to better identify the diversity among volunteers</u>

Use this information to better support current volunteers, identify populations that are missing or underrepresented, and make adjustments to include these populations within the mission of ABLE2.

Targeted Recruitment

Given the higher amount of volunteer hours contributed by older generations, it could be tempting to focus recruitment efforts on these age groups. However, older individuals are more likely to be severely impacted by COVID-19. With the unknowns of 'post-pandemic' life, it is important to plan for the possibility that older generations may continue to reduce their in-person volunteering out of wariness to protect the health of themselves and their loved ones.

Engage Younger Volunteers

As ABLE2 already has a strong volunteer base within these older generations, ABLE2 could transition to focus recruitment efforts on younger generations. To do this, ABLE2 should be younger volunteers where they're at: social media. Additionally, ABLE2 should provide volunteer opportunities more compatible with the interests and availability of younger individuals.

<u>Further develop ABLE2's social media presence</u>

ABLE2 should undertake the social media aspects of *Proposal A: Retention and Community Building* to increase engagement in younger volunteers.

<u>Develop a section of the Matching Program that is compatible with the 8-month university schedule</u>

A separate program could specifically target young adults, functioning similarly to the Best Buddies University/College program,[4] in which university students are matched with community members with disabilities to meet as a pair and for regular group events.

<u>Consider developing a recreation and leisure program for unmatched Friends</u>

This could be a summer-only program, with several summer students hired through the Canada Summer Jobs program. This way, the individuals involved in the 8-month Matching Program would still have opportunities for socializing if their Match left Ottawa for the summer. As well, volunteers who are in Ottawa for the summer could sign up to help organize events or be a temporary Match. Allies and Friends in Matches could also attend some of these events, allowing more networking within the ABLE2 community. A similar program run by Manitoba Possible could be considered as a model.[5]

Section 4: Onboarding Literature Review

This section examines the existing literature on the onboarding process. First, relevant academic literature is reviewed to identify effective onboarding practices both in corporate and not-for-profit agencies. Next, the onboarding practices of ABLE2 are outlined, with reference both to its current and past forms using the internet archives. Finally, there is a comparison of onboarding practices for organizations similar to ABLE2 to identify differences and trends. These findings are then used to develop recommendations for ABLE2 to consider, as well as to inform the later survey analysis.

4A: Importance of Onboarding

Recently, more companies have recognized the importance of strong onboarding processes.[1] Several studies confirm that an organized and relevant set of onboarding procedures proves valuable for both the recruitment and retention of workers and volunteers, demonstrating that onboarding can be carefully crafted to the needs or goals of any organization.[2] An onboarding concept guide from the *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity, and Change* describes the main goal of an effective onboarding experience as to "provide new employees with the knowledge of the organization's vision, mission, operations, products, services and processes, to build strong links between the employees and the organization."[3]

Similarly, in a study by Howard Klein and Aden Heuser, effective onboarding is one in which an organization informs, welcomes, and guides newcomers. In this framework, informing practices include all the activities designed to share information with the newcomers to make them feel ready to become active participants. Welcoming practices are social activities organized to celebrate the newcomers. Guiding practices cover formal training and conscious effort to provide support.[4] All of these combine to form an exemplary onboarding process, which serves a critical role in boosting the attitude, motivation, and confidence of new employees.[5]

Onboarding represents a volunteer's first interaction with an organization, demonstrating how the organization is run and what they are signing up for. A positive first impression will make volunteers motivated to contribute to the organization's mission. However, a negative onboarding experience will produce wariness and hesitation to commit. The Human Capital Institute estimates that 20% of recent hires leave their organization within their first 45 days, highlighting the recruitment and initial orientation phase as a massive contributor to retention.[6] Similarly, a Silkroad Technology study revealed that 10% of all recent hires leave their job due to poor onboarding procedures.[7]

A study by Amy Hirsh Robinson, principal of The Interchange Group's consulting firm in Los Angeles, revealed that 70% of new employees are expected to stay with their hiring organization for at least three years if they consider the onboarding process to be a great experience. This illustrates how the onboarding process is a prime opportunity for employers to win the hearts and minds of new employees. According to Hirsh Robinson: "Onboarding is a magic moment when new employees decide to stay engaged or become disengaged. It offers an imprinting window when you can make an impression that stays with new employees for the duration of their

careers."[8]

A sampling of views both from HR professionals and academic research studies highlights the importance of making onboarding a social and positive experience. As demonstrated in psychologist Lev Vygotsky's seminal work on social learning theory, integrating human interaction into the learning environment is critical for cognitive development when learning new skills.[9] Especially for roles involving social interaction, social onboarding better acclimates the new employee to the organization by supporting knowledge integration and cultivating an atmosphere of belonging that enables the employee to be more outgoing with their team and confident in their position. Similarly, Erik Lachance notes that social interaction between new employees helps link the employees with the organization's overall goals.[10] One suggested way to improve the social experience of onboarding is for an organization to use human interaction and team-building exercises rather than solely using traditional knowledge transfer methods like handbooks and lectures. An organization can support this further by offering a mentor program to connect new volunteers within their new social network.[11]

Another common way to enhance onboarding is by using digital technology to easily communicate and facilitate information sharing. Digital technology can enhance the onboarding process by creating flexible and inclusive training materials and addressing accessibility needs for those with differing abilities.[12] The *Supporting Volunteerism by People With Disabilities Guidebook* by Volunteer Canada emphasizes this idea, highlighting four main principles to create the strongest onboarding training sessions possible. Training must be:
- Accessible to those with differing communication and learning needs, such as by providing audio captions on a visual video.
- Operable, so that information can be retrieved in several ways, such as in hardcopy or online.
- Understandable and use simplified language.
- Robust by making use of technology to enhance the accessibility of the training materials, such as using web-based materials so that volunteers can learn at their own pace.[13]

4B: Corporate vs. Volunteer Onboarding

Most research about onboarding examines the process in a corporate setting. Much of this research is transferable to volunteer settings as well, as effective onboarding principles are universally applicable. However, there are differences between onboarding volunteers at a non-profit versus new employees with a paid position that must be considered in session design. The first is to consider the motivation of the individual being onboarded. Employees and volunteers may both be eager to impress at the start of a new position, though volunteers are more motivated by a desire to feel welcome. Whereas many jobs do not require a high amount of socialization with fellow coworkers, Filipa Silva et al. point out many models of volunteerism are built upon cultivating meaningful connections. They point out that the best method for onboarding is to simply connect volunteers who perform similar roles early on.[14]

In addition to differences in motivation, the transactional nature of an employee's and a volunteer's relationship with their parent organization is fundamentally different. An employee typically requires their job's income to support themselves, which incentivizes staying on past an ineffective onboarding session. In contrast, a volunteer is always free to walk away from an organization without any financial risk. Onboarding, therefore, may be more important for the volunteer organization than the corporate workspace when it comes to retention.[15]

4C: Onboarding at ABLE2

In the previous section, we reviewed how the motivations and incentives for volunteers are different from those of employees. Key considerations are that new volunteers value a friendly onboarding process and that organizations need to remember that volunteers give their time for free. In this section, we summarize the onboarding process at ABLE2 and discuss how the organization makes new volunteers feel welcome and valued.

ABLE2 implemented its current onboarding process in 2017. As seen in Figure 4.1, it includes a pre-onboarding information session followed by three steps: application, training, and matching. Prior to onboarding, new volunteers attend the information session and, if they are interested, they apply by filling out an intake form, providing three references, completing a Vulnerable Sector Check, and reading the volunteer handbook. Next, potential volunteers must attend a four-hour training seminar to learn about their role, different disabilities, and sources of help.

Figure 4.1: The Onboarding Process at ABLE2

The final matching step includes the Learning Conversation, a 120-minute in-person discussion with a social worker to get to know the volunteer; the Match Presentation, a 60-minute meeting with a social worker to present to the volunteer a list of potential Friends that would make a great Match; and the Match Meeting, wherein a social worker facilitates an introduction between the volunteer and potential Friend. After the Match Meeting, the social worker contacts both the volunteer and the Match to confirm that both sides are happy with the relationship.

Participant surveys indicate that the matching step is the highlight of the onboarding process at ABLE2, with many participants voicing appreciation for the support of the social worker:

> I love that the social worker/ABLE2 person comes with you to the first match, it makes everyone feel really comfortable.
>
> ABLE2 did an amazing job with matchmaking. :)
>
> Although I don't remember the application process, I do remember meeting with [ABLE2 staff] and how excited I was after talking with [them]! [They were] also very supportive, but empowering, when I first met my match!

However, one survey participant notes that they had not had a Match Meeting, as their matching happened during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the exceptional reviews of the matching process, we recommend that ABLE2 preserves and protects this rewarding experience for volunteers, offering it as much as possible even during significant disruption.

Survey participants also found that the onboarding process takes too long:

> If I recall there was several months delay between the time I applied and when I was on-boarded.
>
> I had found that the onboarding process was long with many steps.

Responses show that appreciation for the onboarding process improves after the training step is complete. If possible, we advise the organization to shorten, if possible, the application or training step to make it easier for new volunteers to get to the matching step.

It is important to note that while the three-step onboarding process (Figure 4.1) is the current process at the time of writing, it has been modified by ABLE2 several times since the Matching Program began. As a result, survey responses did not all reflect experiences with the current process. For example, while some survey participants did not recall receiving the volunteer handbook or attending a training session, others mentioned additional components of the onboarding process that have since changed (e.g., a one-day training session).

> When I joined in 2015, this was not the process in place. There was a presentation evening, followed by an interview.
>
> I have never seen the volunteer handbook. I am not sure there was one when I applied.

As a result of an evolving onboarding process, volunteers have had different onboarding experiences. Every volunteer should get a similar onboarding experience, if possible. By viewing onboarding as an ongoing process, ongoing training could be provided to ensure that volunteer training is consistent among volunteers, regardless of when they first began their onboarding.

Web Archives Analysis

As the current ABLE2 onboarding process was implemented in 2017 and has not changed much since, we examined trends and changes in how ABLE2 previously approached onboarding. Using the Wayback Machine internet archive,[16] we accessed copies of the ABLE2 website between 2020 and 2022 and the Citizen Advocacy Ottawa website between 2000 and 2019.[17]

The ABLE2 onboarding process has changed over the years. For one, the website used to be online, whereas now it is a Word document. As well, the organization appeared to struggle with its choice of questions on the application form over the years. During the 2011-2016 period, we noticed the following questions:
- What would you say are your strengths as a person?
- What do you like about yourself?
- What do you see yourself needing to improve on?
- Can you tell us how wanting to become a volunteer advocate fits with your own personal long-term goals?

We believe that omitting these questions from the current application form is an improvement, as the social worker obtains that information during the Learning Conversation. We encourage the organization to structure the application form to collect information that addresses the questions such as "What makes a Match successful?" and "What makes a Friend difficult to Match?" It is essential to revise the application form if ABLE2 chooses to undertake the data project (see *Proposal B: Improving People's Lives with Data*).

In addition, we noted two changes unrelated to the onboarding process but otherwise relevant to recruitment. First, in recent years the website's language puts more emphasis on the friendships (e.g., Friends/Allies vs advocates/protégés) and less on the practical tasks a volunteer may help with (e.g., excerpt from the Citizen Advocacy website in 2010: "assistance with a variety of issues, including housing, budgeting, relationships and more"[18]). This increased focus on friendship is an excellent change, as it is congruent with our previous findings regarding the importance of relationship-building in volunteer satisfaction. Increasing focus on these relational aspects, where possible, could lead to better volunteer retention, client satisfaction, and community engagement.

Second, we observed that the organization advertised difficulties with securing funding in the past and thus encouraged prospective new volunteers to apply only when serious. As an excerpt from the Citizen Advocacy website in 2011 says:

> Due to funding constraints, we have had to alter our procedures for new prospective advocates. Before completing the application form below, please ensure that you have read the relevant sections about [the various programs] and that you have thought carefully about whether you believe this opportunity is a good fit for you.[19]

This phrasing does not appear in the most recent versions of the website.

Overall, ABLE2 has improved on the information disclosed on its website, the framing of its programs, and the development onboarding steps relevant to its

programming needs. While past and current volunteers found that the onboarding process was long and tedious, the same volunteers did not appear to feel the same about the matching stage. On the contrary, the matching step is crucial as volunteers really enjoy it — the matching process should be celebrated and remain as is.

4D: Onboarding Comparisons

A strong onboarding system adheres to a generally agreed-upon set of standards, but organizations still need to tailor their system to their unique needs and values. The *Supporting Volunteerism by People with Disabilities Guidebook* from Volunteer Canada identifies four critical aspects of onboarding for organizations that work with persons with disabilities:

    1) They are committed to accepting all potential volunteers and the diversity that entails.
    2) They provide training and support that enable volunteers with disabilities to participate effectively.
    3) They are conscious of what accessibility and inclusion entail.
    4) They actively identify and seek to remove barriers to participation.[20]

By paying attention to these four aspects, onboarding can work in tandem with the organization's unique core mission and values.

In this section, we will review a sampling of organizations in Ontario and Quebec (Table 4.1) that engage volunteers to enhance the daily lives of people with disabilities and compare their onboarding processes.

Table 4.1: Sampling of Organizations Similar to ABLE2 in ON and QC

Organization	Location	Disability Type	Programming
Montreal Center for Learning Disabilities	Montreal, QC	Learning disabilities/ADHD	Educational
Friendship Circle	Montreal, QC	Children of all disability types	Recreational, social, and educational
Best Buddies Canada	Ottawa, ON	People with intellectual or developmental disabilities	Social
Variety Ontario	Scarbor-ough, ON	Children with physical disabilities	Recreational
Sick Kids Foundation	Toronto, ON	Children of all disability types	Generating investments in health and science

Hutton House	London, ON	People of all disabilities	Social and recreational
KW Habilitation	Kitchener, ON	People with developmental disabilities	Educational
Easter Seals	Toronto, ON	Children with physical disabilities	Social and recreational
Ottawa-Carleton Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities	Ottawa, ON	People with developmental disabilities	Educational and social
Independent Living Center of Kingston Disability Resources	Kingston, ON	People of all disabilities	Providing independent living

For all the listed organizations, the onboarding process starts when a potential volunteer shows interest in joining an organization. A variety of factors will then influence whether a volunteer decides to follow through and apply. In comparing the pre-application stage of onboarding, we found that ABLE2 was the only organization surveyed that describes its onboarding process in detail on its website. Aside from Variety Ontario, which mentions that new volunteers must attend volunteer orientation sessions and in-service training sessions before being placed as a volunteer, the other organizations omit any such details. In these cases, the applicant would not know exactly what to expect upon submitting their application. Both approaches can be beneficial; one is direct in its expectations so that there are no surprises, and the other allows the volunteer to be eased into the process without overwhelming them with details.

Most of the organizations reviewed allow an interested party to apply immediately through an electronic form on their website, while three had a pre-application step. ABLE2 requires the volunteer to provide their email address before viewing a 20-slide information slideshow, followed by contact from an employee to discuss the official application. The Hutton House requires an initial contact via email or phone with the volunteer coordinator before filling out an actual application. The Montreal Center for Learning Disabilities requires filling out a short preliminary form before directing volunteers to the main application. The direct application approach has the advantage of streamlining the process and attracting more applications. However, ABLE2's additional steps may attract applicants who are more serious and engaged with their core values.

4E: Recommendations Based on the Literature Review

Onboarding Structure

Based on the onboarding literature review, we recommend ABLE2 consider its onboarding process in relation to those of other organizations, with a particular interest in increasing accessibility.

Consider Onboarding Differences

ABLE2's onboarding process differs from those of the other organizations surveyed, in that it provides a publicly available description of the process online and requires extra steps for submitting an official application. Evidently, ABLE2 has taken a unique approach compared to organizations of similar scope. Because of this difference, we recommend that ABLE2:

Identify the goals of the ABLE2 onboarding process

Has the reasoning that guided the current onboarding process changed? Are the goals of onboarding different than what they used to be? Are there better ways to meet those goals?

Reflect on the ABLE2 onboarding process in comparison to similar organizations

What does ABLE2 think these other organizations are doing well, and is there anything it can glean when considering its own onboarding adjustments?

Increase the Accessibility of Onboarding

Mitigating aspects of the onboarding process that applicants find intimidating may help increase volunteer recruitment. To meet this goal, we recommend that ABLE2 adopt approaches used by other organizations to:
- Make the application available immediately on the website without waiting for a response from an employee.
- Reduce the specific information provided about the onboarding process.
- Shorten the application or training steps to prioritize reaching the matching step. As our data shows (Section 5), the matching step is the most appreciated step.

While considering the reasonings for these differences, we also encourage ABLE2 to reflect on the following questions:
- What are the characteristics of the people who do best in this volunteer role?
- How is the onboarding process — and method of data presentation — effective in selecting these types of people?
- How might the current onboarding process pose a barrier to the kinds of people who would do well in this role?

Survey results indicate that while ABLE2 is doing well in meeting the desires and its volunteers, there are opportunities for growth within the organization. However, we still encourage ABLE2 to reflect on how their approach differs from that of other organizations and whether they are satisfied with the reasoning behind them.

Section 5: ABLE2 Onboarding Survey

This section examines the data from the 52-question onboarding survey distributed to volunteers in February 2022. The survey was divided into five main parts, which will each be addressed in a separate subsection:

- Part A: The Information Session and the ABLE2 Website
- Part B: The Application Process
- Part C: The Training Process
- Part D: The Matching Process
- Part E: Final Reflections

Each section will include a list of the survey questions and an analysis of the survey data. In each part, the results of the Likert scale questions are compared to gather insight into trends of volunteer agreement vs. disagreement and overall satisfaction. Trends related to satisfaction rates within and across each of the onboarding steps are noted. A sixth part, Part F, will outline all the recommendations for Section 5.

Our analysis showed that volunteers generally thought well of the onboarding process: very few volunteers selected "disagree" and even fewer selected "strongly disagree" for all areas. In comparing survey results across sections, it was noticeable that some parts of onboarding had a more consistently positive response. The questions related to the matching process received responses of high satisfaction most consistently. This demonstrates that the matching step is a favourite of many volunteers and is one that ABLE2 is doing especially well. Compared to the matching process, other steps like the application and training processes received a greater frequency of neutral responses. These results show that ABLE2 is doing well in these areas overall but that there is room for growth.

It can be challenging to interpret responses of "neither agree nor disagree," as they can demonstrate either ambiguity ("I don't know") or ambivalence ("I don't care").[1] The number of ambiguous-ambivalent responses is the highest for questions in the application section and the lowest in the matching section. For example, 46% of the responses indicate "Neither agree nor disagree" for the survey statement "The ABLE2 website was easy to navigate" in the Information Session section (3.1). In contrast, 9.5% of the responses indicate "Neither agree nor disagree" for the survey statement "The social worker adequately answered your questions" in the matching section (6.5). We believe that the highest proportion of responses, "Neither agree nor disagree," in the application section is better explained by ambiguity than ambivalence, as evidenced by the answers to the open-ended questions. Participants remembered the application process poorly:

> The forms were filled out 3-4 years ago and I don't recall many of the details.
>
> I was onboarded before ABLE2 was ABLE2 and I don't remember much of this or if it even existed so I chose 'neither agree nor disagree'

In contrast, participants consistently remembered the matching process. In conclusion, we believe that ABLE2 can improve the application and training parts of the onboarding process so that they become more engaging and memorable for

volunteers. These parts should be exciting as they prepare new volunteers for the final matching step of the onboarding process.

5A: The Information Session and the ABLE2 Website

The first part of the survey asked four questions about the pre-onboarding process (Table 5.1), when potential new volunteers attend the online information session and gather information via the ABLE2 website.

Table 5.1: Questions about the Information Session and ABLE2 Website

#	Text
3.1	The ABLE2 website was easy to navigate.
3.2	The ABLE2 website provided adequate information about a) the mission of ABLE2, b) the Matching Program, c) the volunteer experience, and d) how to apply to be a volunteer.
3.3	The online information session (20-minute video) provided you with all the information you needed to feel comfortable applying to the Matching Program.
3.4	Please provide any specific feedback about the website so that ABLE2 can continue to improve this part of the onboarding process (i.e., areas for improvement; what worked best).

Figure 5.1 presents the percentage of respondents who either agreed or disagreed with the survey statements mentioned above.

52% of respondents concurred that the ABLE2 website was easy to navigate (3.1). The percentage gets higher when participants express themselves about the adequacy of the information provided on the website (3.2).

Figure 5.1: Overall Satisfaction – Website

Other responses showed that the agreement rate is:
- 75.5% regarding the mission of ABLE2 (3.2a)
- 72.3% regarding the Matching Program (3.2b)
- 59.6% regarding the volunteer experience (3.2c)
- 70.2% regarding how to apply to be a volunteer (3.2d)
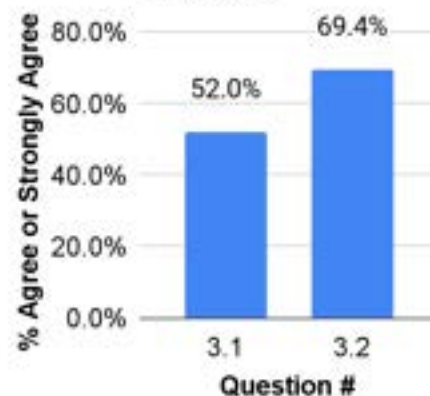
This results in question 3.2 having a global average satisfaction rate of 69.4%, as shown in Figure 5.1. Participants are somewhat satisfied with the information provided about the mission of ABLE2. In contrast, they are less satisfied with the volunteer experience information.

After closing the survey, we realized that the information session was not a video but a PowerPoint slide deck. For this reason, the results of question 3.3 have not been included in the analysis.

Lastly, the responses to the survey statement 3.4 gave us more insight into what the participants thought. Here are a few quotes:

> I consulted the website probably over 3 years ago (when I applied), so not sure how relevant the answers above are in the event the website has changed.
>
> I have not looked at the website in years. I really don't remember how useful it was/is. I expect it has changed.
>
> I have been a volunteer for >10 years and don't really recall using the website in the onboarding process.
>
> Have not reviewed the website much. Also, joined ABLE2 more than 20 years ago when there was no onboarding so I've tried to avoid giving my opinion on my experience since it's not applicable to today's onboarding training sessions.

As per the quotes above, ABLE2 has a functioning website, but it is underutilized. Given the widespread use of the internet as a first point of information today, we would expect recent volunteers to know about the ABLE2 website better than long-term volunteers. If both long-term and recent volunteers do not use the ABLE2 website, it could pose a problem. They should be the target audience, in addition to the people with disabilities seeking to access ABLE2's resources. If volunteers are not using the website, they may not have access to vital information related to ABLE2 and their current volunteer positions.

Figure 5.2: Satisfaction Versus Years Volunteered – Website

Satisfaction Versus Years Volunteered

Satisfaction with the info session and website was higher among volunteers who were onboarded in the last five years (Figure 5.2). In line with those results, the percentage of the response "Neither Agree nor Disagree" was higher among volunteers who were onboarded more than five years ago. Overall, recent volunteers are more satisfied with the website's ease of navigation and information adequacy (3.1 and 3.2) than volunteers who onboarded before 2017.

5B: The Application Process

The second part of the survey asked ten questions about the application process (Table 5.2), which is the first step of the onboarding process at ABLE2. Applicants are required to fill out a form, provide three references, obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check, and read the volunteer handbook.

Table 5.2: Questions about the Application Process

#	Text
4.1	All of the application materials were easy to retrieve.
4.2	The application form was easy to use.
4.3	The application could be completed in a reasonable amount of time.
4.4	The questions asked in the application were appropriate and relevant.
4.5	It was easy to provide the number of references required for your application.
4.6	The volunteer handbook provided you with adequate information about your role.
4.7	Reading the volunteer handbook helped prepare you to succeed in your role.
4.8	The Vulnerable Sector Check was easy to complete.
4.9	Communication from ABLE2 was timely after the application was submitted.
4.10	If you wish, provide any specific feedback about the application process with ABLE2 (i.e., barriers you faced, or things you liked).

Figure 5.3 presents the percentage of survey respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with each question above.

Figure 5.3: Overall Satisfaction – Application Process
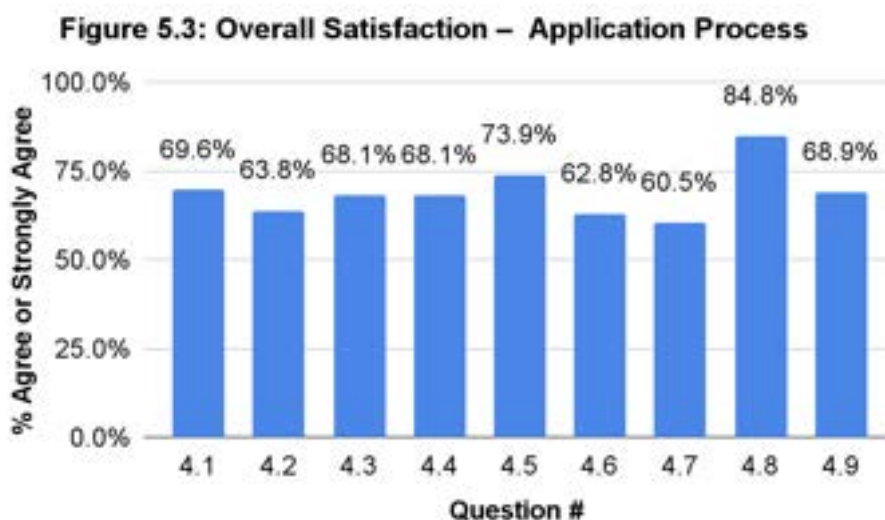
Satisfaction rates with the application process were high, ranging between 60.5% and 84.8%:

- 69.6% of respondents found that the application materials were easy to retrieve (6.1).
- 63.8% concurred that the application form was easy to use (6.2).
- 68.1% of participants said that the application took a reasonable amount of time (6.3) and asked appropriate questions (6.4).
- 73.9% of respondents agreed that it was easy to provide the number of references required.

Regarding the volunteer handbook:
- 62.8% of participants said it provided adequate information about their role (4.6).
- 60.5% of participants said that it prepared volunteers well to succeed in their role (4.7).

These results suggest that the handbook may not be as valuable as intended, as the two questions about the handbook have the lowest satisfaction rates in this subsection.

Further:
- 84.8% of participants found that the Vulnerable Sector Check was easy to complete (4.8). While this percentage is the peak in this subsection, some respondents mentioned that they encountered difficulties in this process (e.g., having to take a day off).
- 68.9% of respondents agreed that communication was timely after applying (4.9). This result suggests that communication is a potential area for improvement.

Finally, the responses to the survey statement 4.10 allow us to gather the various thoughts that participants shared with us:

> Great but was just a very long process
>
> I have never seen the volunteer handbook
>
> If I recall there was several months delay between the time I applied and when I was onboarded [...] I had to take time off of work to do the vulnerable sector check
>
> Apologies I was unable to answer some of these questions. I was trained/onboarded prior to ABLE2, when it was still Citizen Advocacy. [...] I don't recall many details.

Some participants found the application process long. Fortunately, few people faced barriers regarding the Vulnerable Sector Check. Several survey respondents also do not recall receiving/having seen the volunteer handbook.

Satisfaction Versus Years Volunteered

Satisfaction with the application process was higher among volunteers who were onboarded after 2017 (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4: Satisfaction Versus Years Volunteered – Application Process
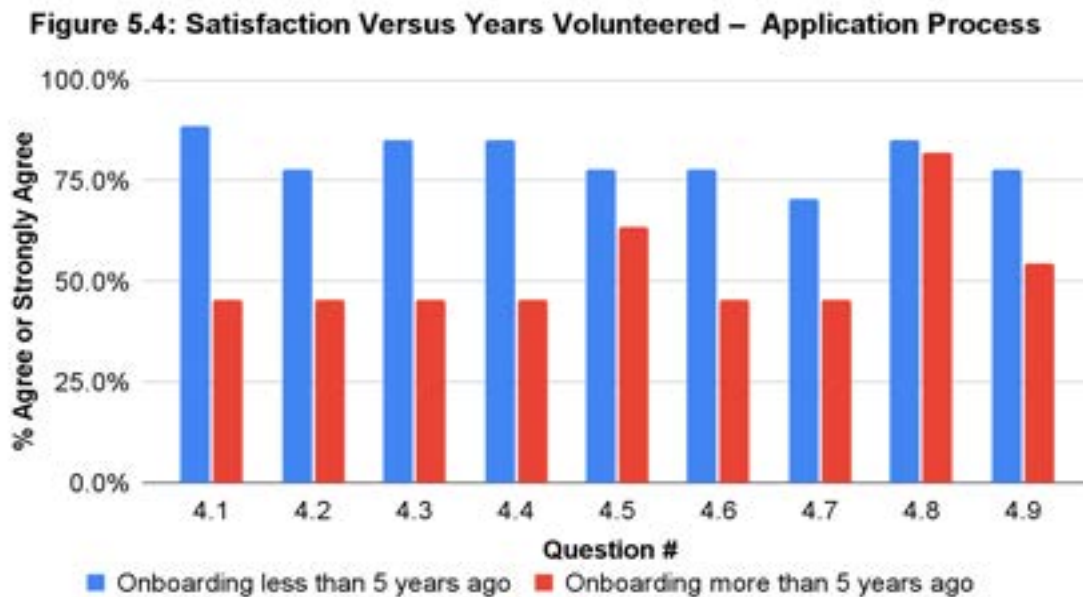
Volunteers onboarded in the last five years reported more satisfaction with all the steps involved in the application process than the group of volunteers who onboarded before 2017. We also observe that the percentage of participants who selected "Neither Agree nor Disagree" is higher for all questions among volunteers who onboarded more than five years ago (not shown in Figure 5.4). This aligns with the responses to the questions about the online information session and the ABLE2 website. These results suggest that either the application process improved in the last five years or that volunteers who had their onboarding more than five years ago may not remember the application part of the onboarding process well enough to form a strong opinion.

5C: The Training Process

The third part of the survey asked ten questions about the training process (Table 5.3), which is the second step of the ABLE2 onboarding process. Training includes the mandatory four-hour training session and any other training (e.g., AODA training). Table 5.3 presents the ten questions for this portion of the survey.

Table 5.3: Questions about the Training Process

#	Text
5.1	The Onboarding Seminar was offered at a convenient time for you.
5.2	The Seminar provided you with helpful information about the volunteer experience in the Matching Program.
5.3	The Seminar provided a space to build meaningful relationships with other volunteers and the ABLE2 staff.

5.4	The training sessions were relevant to your educational needs.
5.5	The training sessions provided you with information that has been useful in your Match.
5.6	Your training has given you the tools to better support people with disabilities outside of ABLE2.
5.7	Prior to volunteering at ABLE2, how much experience did you have with: physical, neurodevelopmental, learning, or mental health disabilities?
5.8	What did you find most helpful about the training sessions?
5.9	What did you find least helpful about the training sessions?
5.10	Did you feel there was anything missing from the training? If yes, please explain.

The two purposes of the above questions below were to assess whether the information covered in the training sessions is relevant and insightful, and to examine how volunteers create relationships with staff and other volunteers at the initial stages of being a volunteer.

Figure 5.5 presents the percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed with the six Likert-scale questions above.

Figure 5.5: Overall Satisfaction – Training Process

As Figure 5.5 illustrates:
- 75.0% of respondents agreed that the onboarding seminar was offered at a convenient time (5.1).
- 77.8% of respondents agreed that the training sessions provided helpful information about the volunteer experience in the Matching Program (5.2).

In contrast:
- Only 37.8% of respondents agreed that the training provided a space to build meaningful relationships with other volunteers and the ABLE2 staff (5.3).
- In line with this result, 17.8% of respondents (not shown in Figure 5.5) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

This disagreement rate figures among the highest ones for all the questions in the survey, suggesting that socialization is not a main focus of ABLE2's current onboarding strategy.

Questions about training relevance received a moderately high agreement rate:
- 59.1% of participants said that the training information was a good learning opportunity for their educational needs (5.4).
- An even higher rate of respondents (65.9%) agree that the training sessions provided information that has been useful in their Match (5.5).
- 56.8% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training has given them the tools to better support people with disabilities outside of ABLE2 (5.6).

While volunteers felt the training gave them sufficient and relevant information about the experience in the program and their Match (5.2 and 5.4), it was not as effective in providing them with enough information about supporting people with disabilities outside of the organization.

Lastly, some volunteers shared positive comments about their experience with the training. Volunteers found that the content was interesting and direct.

> The training session helped to raise my awareness of the needs of many of the Friends in the ABLE2 program.
>
> It was very thorough. I liked how it talked about the realities/challenges we might encounter with our match. ABLE2 did not shy away from discussing difficult or awkward topics, like your match going to the bathroom!

Satisfaction Versus Years Volunteered

Satisfaction with the training process was higher among volunteers who were onboarded after 2017 (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6: Satisfaction Versus Years Volunteered – Training Process
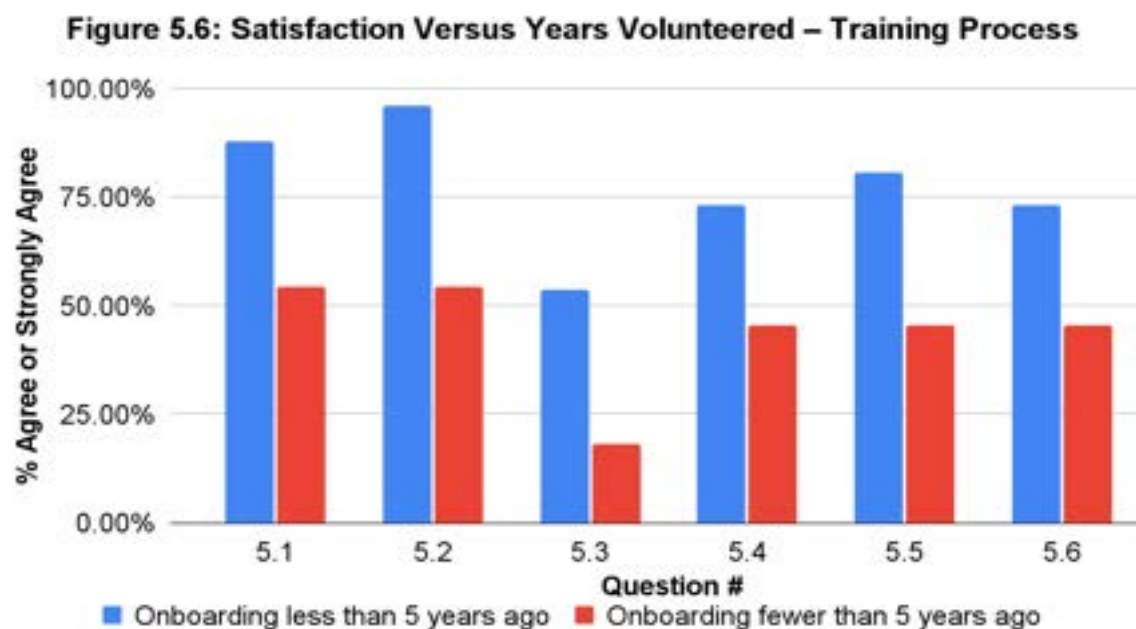
Satisfaction with all aspects of the training was higher among the recent volunteers than those who became volunteers with ABLE2 prior to 2017. Unsurprisingly, the latter group selected the "Neither Agree nor Disagree" responses more frequently (not shown in Figure 5.6). We interpret those results carefully as showing that either the training process at ABLE2 has improved in the last five years or that people who became volunteers in a more distant past do not remember the training process well enough to form a strong opinion.

5D: The Matching Process

The third part of the survey asked twelve questions about the matching process (Table 5.4), which is the third and final step of the ABLE2 onboarding process. Matching consists of a Learning Conversation, Match Presentation, and Match Meeting.

Table 5.4: Questions about the Matching Process

#	Text
6.1	The Learning Conversation and Match Presentation were offered at times convenient for you.
6.2	You felt adequately prepared for the Learning Conversation and Match Presentation.
6.3	The questions asked of you during the Learning Conversation were appropriate.
6.4	The next steps in the onboarding process were made clear to you in these meetings.
6.5	The social worker adequately answered your questions.
6.6	The potential Matches presented in the Match Presentation were good fits for you.
6.7	The social worker helped make the Match that was best for you.
6.8	The social worker helped make the Match that was best for your Friend.
6.9	You felt adequately prepared for your first Match Meeting.
6.10	You felt supported by ABLE2 staff during your first Match Meeting.
6.11	Overall, the matching process was a positive experience.
6.12	Please provide any specific feedback about the matching process so that ABLE2 can continue to improve this part of the onboarding process.

Figure 5.8 presents the percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed with the above questions

Figure 5.8: Overall Satisfaction – Matching Process

The high satisfaction rate is striking.
- 86.0% of respondents agreed that the Learning Conversation and Match Presentation were offered at convenient times (6.1) and that they were adequately prepared for those meetings (6.2).
- 79.1% agreed that the questions during the Learning Conversation were appropriate (6.3).
- 83.7% agreed that the next onboarding steps had been made clear to them by the social workers (6.4).

As previously mentioned, survey respondents have great memories of their meetings with the social workers. It is unsurprising then that 90.5% of participants — the highest satisfaction rate in the survey — said that the social worker adequately answered their questions (6.5). Their connection is vital for the new volunteers — it may make or break the onboarding process.

The statement with the lowest volunteer satisfaction rate in this section was that the potential Matches presented in the Match Presentation were good fits for them (6.6), with 72.1% agreement. Although this is still a high level of satisfaction, it raises the question as to whether ABLE2 can do better for the 27.9% of participants who did not agree or strongly agree. Match fit is vital to creating long-lasting friendships. 81.4% of respondents agreed that the social worker helped make the Match that was best for the volunteer (6.7), and 76.7% agreed that the Match was the best for the Friend (6.8). Lastly, participants overwhelmingly felt adequately prepared for their first Match Meeting (81.4%, 6.9) and supported by ABLE2 staff during this meeting (88.4%, 6.10). Overall, 83.7% of respondents said that the matching process was a positive experience (6.11).

Satisfaction Versus Years Volunteered

Figure 5.9 compares satisfaction with the matching process of survey participants who onboarded before and after 2017.

Interestingly, volunteers who onboarded less than five years ago, on average, reported higher satisfaction for the first half of the questions (mainly about the Learning Conversation). The largest differences in agreement were:

- 18.6% for 6.1 ("The Learning Conversation and Match Presentation were offered at times convenient for you").
- 13.9% for 6.2 ("You felt adequately prepared for the Learning Conversation and Match Presentation").
- 13.9% for 6.5 ("The social worker adequately answered your questions").

Figure 5.9: Satisfaction Versus Years Volunteered – Matching Process
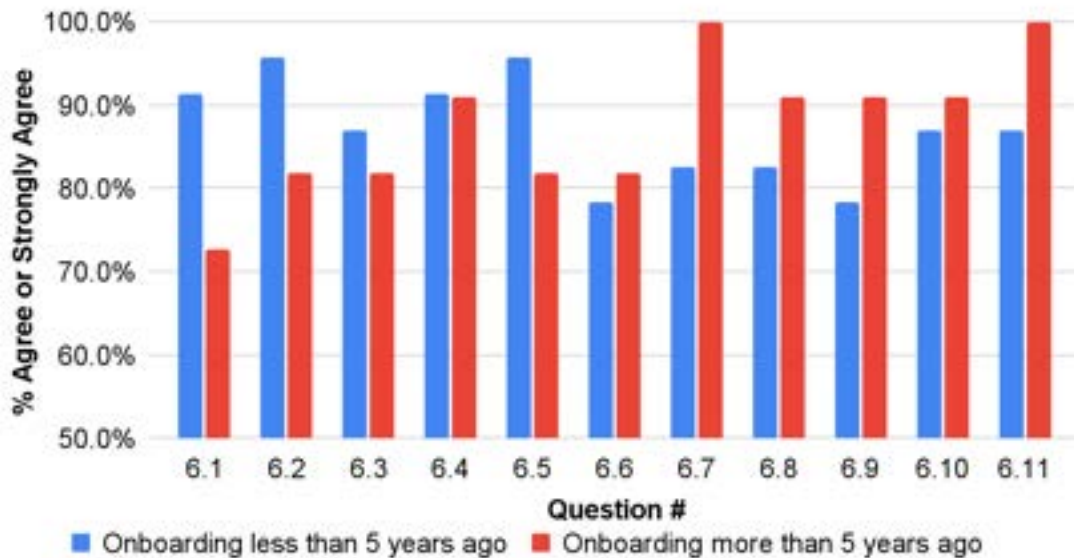
In comparison, volunteers who onboarded more than five years ago, on average, reported higher satisfaction for the second half of the questions (mainly about the Match Presentation and Match). Here, the largest differences in agreement were:

- 17.4% for 6.7 ("The social worker helped make the Match that was best for you").
- 12.6% for 6.9 ("You felt adequately prepared for your first Match Meeting").
- 13% for 6.11 ("Overall, the matching process was a positive experience").

Restrictions to in-person matching activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic may explain why volunteers who onboarded more than five years ago appear to be more satisfied. We recommend that ABLE2 carefully protect and cherish the matching experience, as volunteers appreciate the onboarding process once they reach this stage.

5E: Overall Onboarding Reflection Questions

The concluding section presented four Likert scale questions (7.1-7.4) and two open-ended questions (7.5-7.6) about their reflections on the onboarding process (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Questions about the Final Reflections

#	Text
7.1	Overall, how effective did you find the different steps of the onboarding process?
7.2	Overall, the onboarding process was easy to navigate.

7.3	You felt well-supported by ABLE2 staff throughout your onboarding experience.
7.4	In your opinion and from your experience, the ABLE2 onboarding process reflects your understanding of the organization's values.
7.5	Please explain.
7.6	Is there anything else about the onboarding process that you would like to share?

In question 7.1, we asked participants how effective they found the application, training, and matching part of the onboarding process at ABLE2 (Figure 5.10).

Figure 5.10: "How effective did you find the different steps of the Onboarding process?"
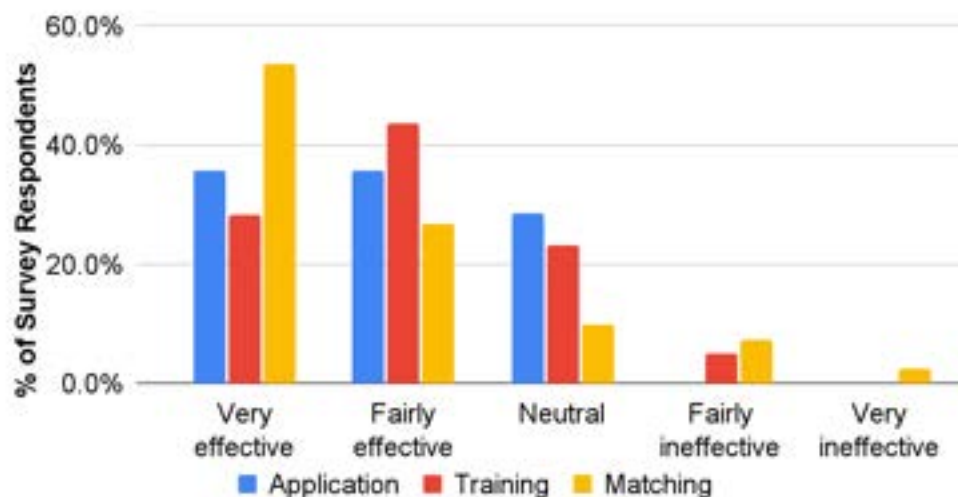
Figure 5.10 shows that the effectiveness rate (the percentage of "Very effective" and "Fairly effective" responses) is similar for both the application and training part of the onboarding process, while participants are more ambivalent about the application process. Unsurprisingly, the matching step has the highest effectiveness rate (percentage of "Very effective" and "Fairly effective" responses), meaning that most survey respondents found it favourable.

However, it is also the one with the lowest percentage of "Neither agree nor disagree" responses. In other words, the matching step was found to be unfavourable in specific instances. From our survey data, we know that these responses were from the few individuals who were unhappy with their Matches. This data shows that, apart from a few specific instances, volunteers find the onboarding process to be effective overall.

Figure 5.11 presents the percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed with the three Likert-scale questions in this section (7.2, 7.3, and 7.4).

Figure 5.11: Overall Satisfaction – Final Reflections
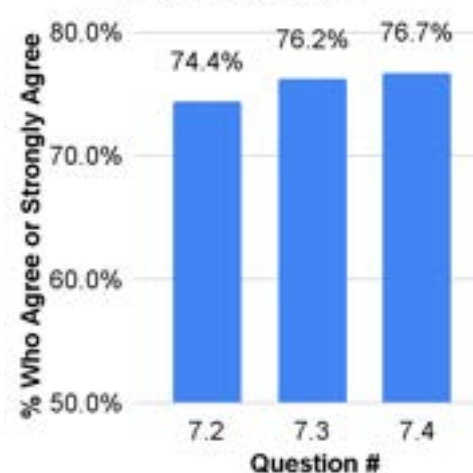
About 75% of the respondents concurred that the onboarding process was easy to navigate, that they felt supported by ABLE2 staff throughout their onboarding experience, and that the onboarding process reflected their understanding of the organization's values. Question 7.5 allowed participants to explain their previous responses on whether the onboarding process reflected their understanding of the organization's values. Representative quotes include:

> I came to ABLE2 hoping to be able to make a difference in the life of a member of my community. ABLE2's onboarding process and matching system have helped me to do that and helped me to form a very close bond with the Friend I matched with.
>
> From the beginning, they make you feel part of a community, and that's what it is all about.
>
> They want to ensure the best match and information is provided before being matched up. To ensure benefit and success for all those involved, it is critical to have many steps leading up to being matched with ideal candidates. To ensure respect and growth and aid to all those involved. Very well done.

Overall, most responses to this question were overwhelmingly positive.

From these responses, we found that some participants believe that ABLE2 can better build relationships within ABLE2 and in the broader community. This is congruent with the findings of Section 2, which highlight the importance of relationship-building in volunteering. Two survey participants mentioned that the onboarding program offers few networking opportunities, especially during the training sessions (see the quotes below). Another indicated that networking was one of the top 3 reasons this person volunteers and that ABLE2 has not delivered during COVID. Overall, volunteers appreciate their in-person interactions with the staff and their community and want more.

> Too long, not interactive, no opportunities to network.
>
> It would have been nice to have more time to socialize with other volunteers.
>
> During COVID, there has been very little 'networking' within the ABLE2 community from my perspective.
>
> I liked that I got to meet and engage with ABLE2 staff in person during the application/matching process.
>
> Lots of online training and unfortunately no opportunity to meet in person.

Other participants were disappointed by the ongoing support once the onboarding process was complete, acknowledging that the initial training was helpful but insufficient (see the quotes below). As a friendship develops and evolves, ABLE2 should provide support as new challenges come up.

> The onboarding process was adequate. I cannot say the same thing about ongoing support offered to matches and think this should also be considered.
>
> Lack of connection with ABLE2 [was missing from the training].
>
> A refresher training course may be useful.
>
> It was very intense in a short amount of time. I did mine back when it was in person. It would have been good to have more ongoing training and support once established in a match.

Survey participants generally feel that their friendship makes them happy, and they have developed a strong sense of community by participating in the Matching Program (see the quotes below). Other responses highlighted the critical role that the staff and social worker played, especially in the beginning of the relationship between an Ally and a Friend.

Lastly, we asked survey participants if they would like to share anything else about the onboarding process (7.6).

> I do feel like I am contributing to the community but after becoming a Friend/advocate in this volunteer program after a while it no longer feels like intentional friendship but pure friendship.
>
> From the beginning they make you feel part of a community, and that's what it is all about.
>
> I have developed a true friendship with my match and friends improve wellbeing!
>
> When I first joined, the process was very simple and had a strong human component. [The ABLE2 staff] made it happen.
> I love that the social worker/ABLE2 person comes with you to the first match, it makes everyone feel really comfortable.

Overall, ABLE2 succeeds in creating friendships and initial positive interactions within the organization. However, ABLE2 could consider how to connect volunteers together and provide them with ongoing support over the longer run.

One participant wrote:

> The most useful advice I was given during the on-boarding process, which I hope is shared among all volunteers, is to choose your match not necessarily based on who may be the most vulnerable person (i.e. who 'needs a friend most'... I was feeling guilty about this) but based on who you think you will enjoy spending time with, as this brings a far greater chance of a long term match. My social worker was right - it has been 6 years and it is really a pleasure for us to spend time together.

Some respondents used 7.6 to say "thank you" or share a personal story:

> I want to thank all the social workers for their work, it is extremely valuable. I find the pandemic has truly affected relationships … moreover the ones with people with disabilities. So, what you do is crucial for the community's mental health! Thank you.

The survey has demonstrated that the majority of ABLE2 volunteers are satisfied with the onboarding process and that there is much to celebrate in the work already being done to support Allies by ABLE2. However, the few areas where survey responses were slightly less positive suggest areas for ABLE2 to consider for growth in relation to its application process while still protecting its highly valued matching process.

5F: Recommendations Based on Survey Results

This section includes all the recommendations for Section 5, developed from the analysis of the onboarding survey data.

The Information Session and Website

The following recommendations are based on the findings of Section 5A.

Networking and Building Community

Create a memorable first impression

Surprisingly, the "online information session" appears to be a static slide deck. It is the organization's first direct contact with potential new volunteers. Make it fun and exciting! We recommend that ABLE2 make this step into an interactive session to better engage volunteers. For example, ABLE2 could create a video of someone presenting the slides warmly and enthusiastically. The video could mention how the potential new volunteer would contribute to the broader community of volunteers in Ottawa.

Have a blog to build a relatable online presence

We recommend ABLE2 have a blog covering stories of thriving Matches, along with a comment section to provide an opportunity for social interaction among the ABLE2 community. The blog could provide more information about the volunteer experience via volunteers' testimonies. The senior management could also contribute to articles to create proximity with the audience. Storytelling connects people and ideas. People are more likely to remember the organization through a story.[2]

The Application Process

These recommendations are based on the findings of Section 5B.

Application Accessibility

Streamline the handbook

The volume of the content in the handbook may be overwhelming for many volunteers. It is suggested that the handbook (and its appendices) be presented in a streamlined and user-friendly format. For example, Appendix H of the handbook is about bed bugs. We suggest deleting it, as this situation may not be as frequent or as ABLE2-specific as this handbook section seems to indicate. It gives the impression that people with disabilities are not clean and thus perpetuates negative stigma. We encourage the organization to use inclusive language in the volunteer handbook.

Networking and Building Community

Communicate frequently during onboarding

We encourage ABLE2 to connect with potential new volunteers at least once every three weeks as they move through the onboarding process. Staying in touch with the volunteers and informing them that the next steps are coming soon will keep them informed and engaged when there are delays in the onboarding process.

The Training Process

The following recommendations are based on the findings of Section 5C.

While ABLE2 volunteers reported satisfaction with the training process, the survey responses indicated two areas for growth:
- A more social and interactive training program to better connect volunteers and engage them in their learning.
- Ongoing training and networking opportunities to keep volunteers connected, supported, and up to date with new information and ideas (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7: Schematic of How to Think about Ongoing Onboarding

Social networking

Scheduled opportunities to socialize with everyone involved with ABLE2 to better connect volunteers and staff

Onboarding as a continuous process

Interactive trainings

Exposure to new methods and stories on how to become a better ally

EDI trainings

Equity, diversity, and inclusion trainings for all volunteers and staff

Survey responses highlighted the possibility of reconceptualizing ABLE2 onboarding as a process that is continuous and ongoing. Due to the mission of ABLE2, we also recommend a focus on EDI training as a part of the initial and ongoing onboarding process.

Social and Interactive Training

As touched on in the literature review section, onboarding ought to make use of social and interactive features. Interactive methods of knowledge transfer are proven to be more engaging, memorable, and effective for learning new material. While the survey results point toward volunteers feeling prepared after going through the onboarding process, some responses quoted in the previous section suggest room for improvement.

Emphasize relationship building and volunteer networking during onboarding
While making use of computers and online training modules is appealing and often useful, onboarding should be a social time for new volunteers to engage with other volunteers and organization staff.

To emphasize volunteer networking, we recommend:
- Pooling groups of new volunteers into onboarding sessions as much as possible so that these new volunteers can learn and interact together when being introduced to new information.
- Relying less on information slide decks and didactic training sessions and more on social activities that connect volunteers with one another.
- Developing a volunteer networking program in which new volunteers connect with each other or experienced volunteers to share advice and inspiration through mentorship.

While COVID-19 certainly puts limits on creating a social onboarding process, approaches do exist for fulfilling the social aspect of learning rather than solely relying on independently performed online training sessions. Several studies have provided examples of a successful transition to interactive onboarding in the COVID era.[3] For example, the Systems Director at the Rochester Regional Hospital implemented an eight new step process, parts of which could be adapted by ABLE2: at the onset of the pandemic, which was later deemed to be an excellent example for other workplaces to follow. Steps from the hospital that would be relevant to ABLE2 and other like-minded volunteer organizations include:
- Planning for the learning to be in small segments to ensure the new worker is not overwhelmed.
- Creating spreadsheets that keep track of the new worker's progress
- Connecting new employees with other members of the organization through short one-on-one meet and greet virtual chats
- Using screen sharing functions on software such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams to make sessions feel more interactive.

A key component of this process is frequently reassuring the new employee that they are gaining knowledge and that the onboarding process is critical to their success.

Integrate Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion into the Training Process

In a diverse city like Ottawa, local organizations should be comfortable interacting with varying identities both within their own workforce or volunteer base and when interacting with the larger community. Renowned economist Amartya Sen has championed EDI by encouraging organizations to embrace it in all aspects of their work. Organizations can benefit from including rather than excluding the valuable multidimensional insights brought about by diversity.[4] Attention to EDI also helps reduce structural inequality and reveal unproductive power dynamics. Organizations are always at risk of power imbalances, even those that lack a formal hierarchy. Thus, the EDI framework provides an initial first step for everyone associated with the organization to be treated fairly.

As noted in Section 3, continuous reflection is necessary for improving EDI practices. As a part of this reflection, ABLE2 should consider how to further integrate EDI into the training program.

Plan EDI training for ABLE2 staff and volunteers

Once growth areas have been identified, ABLE2 could organize EDI training specifically for its staff. Cultivating an environment where staff are actively learning and growing will, by extension, encourage these values in Allies and Friends, and will help to make the ABLE2 community even more welcoming and inclusive. Given that ABLE2 already has developed equity training related to disability, ABLE2 could 'barter' training with another local organization doing work in another area.

Implement EDI in volunteer training sessions

Whenever ABLE2 is planning future training sessions, the following questions should be considered:
- Are all necessary documents written in an accessible, globalized language so that all individuals can comprehend the information?
- Could alternative formats be offered for those with differing needs?
  - For example, could conversations between potential volunteers and staff be used to gather the needed information instead of collecting it through formal paperwork?
- Would anyone feel excluded by the structure of the training sessions?
- Are all volunteers informed of the importance of EDI in their volunteer work?

The value of ongoing training creates a setting for ABLE2 to continually reflect upon these questions and transfer this knowledge to new and seasoned volunteers alike, as the field of EDI is constantly changing. How we conceptualize EDI changes as new power dynamics emerge in our society and new innovative ways to address them emerge in response. Including training around these issues would benefit ABLE2's mission by attracting new and diverse volunteers and keeping healthy relationships within the organization.

Ongoing Training and Social Networking

Many individuals indicated that ongoing support for volunteers through regular training opportunities would be extremely useful. Onboarding extends beyond the volunteer's first few weeks with the organization; it is imperative to consider it a continuous process for the volunteer.

<u>Create opportunities for volunteers to connect regularly</u>

Ongoing training that provides new learning opportunities is a proven method to improve volunteers' performance and engagement across their duration with the organization. In addition, it is a way to stay in touch with management and fellow volunteers. We recommend:

- Providing regular training opportunities throughout the year to keep volunteers up to date with new information and ideas.
- Organizing regular volunteer events to connect and integrate volunteers who may otherwise feel on their own.

The Matching Process

The following recommendations are based on the findings of <u>Section 5D</u>.

Data Management and Targeted Recruitment

The survey results showed that some participants do not agree that the potential Matches presented fit them well. ABLE2 should investigate the factors that drive long-lasting friendships in the Matching Program.

<u>Create better Matches using data and targeted recruitment</u>

Having an up-to-date database of past and current Matches would allow ABLE2 to use this information for targeted recruitment. To implement this recommendation, the organization could:

- Carry out the project *Proposal B: Improving People's Lives with Data*
- Have regular volunteer check-ins to gather information on successful Matches

We pinpointed several areas to improve the data (e.g., collecting missing individual information on education, disabilities, hobbies and so on, and connecting data about Friends and Allies to have a database of Matches). Only once ABLE2 has an up-to-date database will it be better positioned to examine questions such as "What makes a Match successful?" and "What makes a Friend difficult to match?" ABLE2 could then proceed with targeted recruitment for Friends on the waitlist.

ABLE2 could increase check-ins with volunteers to help collect this data, asking questions about which aspects or characteristics of the Match are working well and which are not. This data should be gathered in one-on-one interviews and entered anonymously into the database. The interviewers should anticipate a positivity bias and re-ask questions as needed so that volunteers are more inclined to be honest in their responses. Collecting this data will help ABLE2 support individual Matches and make adjustments if needed while also gathering data to help shape future training topics.

Section 6: Conclusion

The overall goal of this project was to address ABLE2's concerns around volunteer recruitment and retention. The pandemic introduced unforeseen challenges, but it also offered an opportunity to assess current operations and search for ways to improve. Through the PhD-Community Initiative, we partnered with ABLE2 to identify recommendations that the organization might implement in their efforts to continually attract the highest number of volunteers. Motivated volunteers drive ABLE2's mission of working with partners to provide the tools, choices and connections that empower people with disabilities to build lives of meaning and joy.

We developed three project proposals (see Appendix 1) that covered a wide range of ideas related to volunteer recruitment issues. After reviewing them, ABLE2 selected the proposal to examine their onboarding process. This proposal consisted of a literature review of contemporary research about onboarding and volunteering in Canada, and a survey of volunteers who have partnered with ABLE2 in the past. The literature review revealed several key ideas about the optimal onboarding process that ensures knowledgeable and motivated volunteers and offered comparisons with the onboarding process of similar organizations. The survey was designed to uncover how volunteers truly felt about the onboarding system and provide recommendations for growth in the process.

The literature review revealed the importance of a strong onboarding system, suggesting that a weak onboarding system will do the organization no favours in recruiting and retaining new volunteers. A solid onboarding system results in happy, long-term volunteers. The literature review also revealed many traits about what makes the most effective and efficient onboarding system. Common themes portray an onboarding system that is social and interactive, makes use of relevant technology, and boosts and motivates the confidence of new volunteers. The findings of the literature review and survey results were used to develop the following key recommendations:

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
Ensuring that diverse identities are welcome at ABLE2 should be paramount throughout all operations. ABLE2 should continuously perform self-assessments on its EDI performance so that it can further integrate the EDI framework. Developing training materials and forms that are easily interpretable for diverse populations would attract new volunteers and make them feel welcome and respected. Practicing more consistent data collection of volunteer demographics can help identify existing diversity among volunteers. This information can be used to better support volunteers and to make adjustments so that missing or underrepresented populations can be included in ABLE2's mission. Offering EDI training to all staff and volunteers would aid in this mission as well.

Onboarding Structure
ABLE2 should reflect on its onboarding process to ensure it aligns with the organization's overarching goals. Likewise, they may want to consider how their onboarding compares to that of other like-minded organizations. This reflection could help increase the application accessibility, such as by making the application available directly from the website, reducing the amount of information distributed

directly to prospective volunteers, shortening the application or training steps, and streamlining the volunteer handbook.

Data and Targeted Recruitment

ABLE2 can improve upon their methods of data collection for recruitment purposes. A better understanding of the diversity and attributes of volunteers can be used both to better support current volunteers as well as create a more targeted approach for volunteer recruitment. We suggest gathering this data more consistently and using regular volunteer check-ins to gather data about successful Matches. In its targeted recruitment efforts, ABLE2 should focus on an underrepresented demographic in its volunteer population: younger volunteers. To attract more young adults, ABLE2 can further develop its social media presence, and develop a section of the Matching Program that is compatible with the 8-month university schedule or regular but less-frequent volunteer involvement, such as a recreation and leisure program for unmatched Friends.

Networking and Community Building

One specific opportunity for growth is to focus more on networking and community building. ABLE2 could do this by creating a memorable first impression through a warm and engaging information session video, having a blog to build an online presence, and communicating with volunteers frequently during the onboarding process.

Social, Interactive, and Ongoing Training

Onboarding is an ongoing process that extends past a volunteer's first few weeks with the organization; it is an ongoing process by which volunteers should continually be updated and connected with management. However, these first few weeks lay the foundation for a volunteer's experience with the organization. To make the most out of this time, ABLE2 should emphasize relationship building and volunteer networking by offering more social and interactive training that connects volunteers with one another. New volunteers could be connected with other new volunteers, or with experienced volunteers who would be great sources of advice and inspiration through a mentoring relationship.

ABLE2 should also provide ongoing training and events throughout a volunteer's time at ABLE2. Some respondents indicated that ongoing support would be beneficial, especially as rules and policies change or when uncertainty rises, such as during the pandemic. This would keep them up to date with new information and ideas and connect them with other volunteers so that they feel integrated with ABLE2.

Final Thoughts

Throughout our project, we learned a great deal about volunteering, surveys, team building, communication, and more. Most important, though, are the relationships we have built with ABLE2 staff. We want to thank the ABLE2 staff who have supported and encouraged us throughout the PhD-CI project. We are confident that our findings will be helpful to the staff at ABLE2 as they continue their fantastic work in serving the Ottawa community and are honoured to have been a part of its mission. We encourage the staff at ABLE2 to reach out if they have further questions about the report — we would be delighted to continue the dialogue.

Section 7: Endnotes

Section 1: Executive Summary

1. "PhD-Community Initiative," Expanding Horizons Professional Development, Queen's University, accessed March 9, 2022, https://www.queensu.ca/ /phd-community-initiative.

2. "Projects 2021/22," Expanding Horizons Professional Development, Queen's University, accessed March 9, 2022, https://www.queensu.ca/exph/phd - community-initiative/projects-2021-22.

3. The Likert scale is used in the social sciences to collect 'ordinal' data using categorical variables. Due to the directionality of the Likert scale (strongly disagree → agree), the results can be analyzed using both 'descriptive' (word-based) and 'inferential' (numerically coded) statistics. Often, the median or mode is used to measure the 'central tendency' of opinion, and the range is used to measure the variability of opinion. However, since the intervals between the different categories are not of the same numerical value, not all mathematical operatives can be performed. Susan Jamieson, "Likert scale," Encyclopedia Britannica, last modified September 27, 2017, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Likert-Scale; Pritha Bhandari, "Ordinal Data: What Is It and What Can You Do with It?" Scribr, last modified August 27, 2021, https://www.scribbr.com/statistics/ordinal-data/.

Section 2: Volunteering in Canada

1. Tara Hahmann, "Volunteering Counts: Formal and Informal Contributions of Canadians in 2018," April 23, 2021, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2021001/article/00002-eng.htm.

2. Hahmann, "Volunteering Counts."

3. See also Table 2.3 and Table 2.4 in Appendix; Tara Hahmann, "Volunteering by Canadians in 2018," Statistics Canada, April 23, 2021, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2021035-eng.htm.

4. Statistics Canada, *General Social Survey, Cycle 33, 2018 [Canada]: Giving, Volunteering and Participating*, identification number gss-4430-E-2018-c33 in <odesi> [database online] (Ottawa, ON: 2018 [deposited 2021]).

5. Hahmann, "Volunteering Counts."

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. See Table 2.4 and 2.5 in Appendix. Statistics Canada, *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 2004 [Canada]: Main File*, identification number csgvp-89M0017-E
-2004-main in <odesi> [database online] (Ottawa, ON, 2004 [deposited 2006]); Statistics Canada, *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 2007 [Canada]: Main File*, identification number csgvp-E-2007-main in <odesi> [database online] (Ottawa, ON, 2007 [deposited 2009]); Statistics Canada, *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 2010 [Canada]: Main File*, identification number csgvp-E-2010-main in <odesi> [database online] (Ottawa, ON: 2010); Statistics Canada, *General Social Survey, 2013 [Canada]: Cycle 27, Giving, Volunteering and Participating*, identification number gss-89M0033X-E-2013-c27 in <odesi> [database online] (Ottawa, ON, 2013 [deposited 2015]); Stat Can, *GSS Cycle 33, 2018.*

10. Hour trends of Millennials were absent from Hahmann's report. Tara Hahmann, "Volunteering Counts."

11. A similar age range, 35-54, was calculated to have a 75% informal volunteer rate. Tara Hahmann, "Volunteering Counts"; Statistics Canada, *GSS Cycle 33, 2018.*

12. Tara Hahmann, "Volunteering Counts."

13. Maire Sinha, "Volunteering in Canada, 2004 to 2013," Statistics Canada, last modified November 30, 2015, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-652-x/89-652-x2015003-eng.htm.

14. Hahmann, "Volunteering Counts."

15. Stuart Morris, Gail Fawcett, Laurent Brisebois, and Jeffrey Hughe, "A Demographic, Employment and Income Profile of Canadians with Disabilities Aged 15 Years and Over, 2017," *Canadian Survey on Disability Reports*, Statistics Canada, November 28, 2018, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2018002-eng.htm.

16. Stat Can, *GSS Cycle 33, 2018.*

17. Sinha, "Volunteering in Canada, 2004 to 2013."

18. *Bridging the Gap: Enriching the Volunteer Experience to Build a Better Future for Our Communities*, Volunteer Canada, accessed March 30, 2022, https://volunteer.ca/vdemo/researchandresources_docs/Bridging%20the%20Gap%20Summary.pdf.

Section 3: Volunteering at ABLE2

1. "Why Women are More Burned Out than Men," BBC, accessed May 11, 2022, https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210928-why-women-are-more-burned-out-than-men.

2. An explanation of this can be found in *Policy on Collecting Information about Sex and Gender at Queen's University*, Queen's University, September 2016, https://www.queensu.ca/vpr/sites/vprwww/files/uploaded_files/Ethics/HSREB-guidelines/CollectingInformationAboutSexandGenderPolicy.pdf.

3. This is in reference to "temporarily able bodied" (TAB) as popularized by disability activists in the 1980s to indicate that everybody *will* acquire a disability if they live long enough. In *Disability: Controversial Debates and Psychosocial Perspectives*, Deborah Marks indicates a preference for a similar term, "contingently able bodied" (CAB), which similarly "[eschews] the fantasy of 'ability.'" However, Marks finds that CAB more effectively gestures to the precariousness of bodily and mental health and the intermittent experience of disablement. As Marks says, disability is not a universal experience; it "is a state that emerges out of a specific constellation of factors," which can include fluctuating levels of impairment as well as social and political factors. Deborah Marks, *Disability: Controversial Debates and Psychosocial Perspectives* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1999), 18.

4. "University/College Program," Best Buddies Canada, accessed May 3, 2022, https://bestbuddies.ca/about-our-programs/universities-colleges/.

5. "Programs at a Glance," Manitoba Possible, accessed May 3, 2022, https://www.manitobapossible.ca/programs/#adult; "Adult Recreation and Leisure," Manitoba Possible, accessed May 3, 2022, https://www.manitobapossible.ca/adult-recreation-and-leisure.

Section 4: Onboarding Literature Review

1. 'Onboarding' refers to the process of integrating new employees or volunteers into an organization by introducing them to new knowledge and skills to become best accustomed to its culture.

2. Bruce Keisling and Melissa Laning, "We are Happy to be Here: The Onboarding Experience in Academic Libraries," *Journal of Library Administration* 56, no. 4 (2016): 381-394; Howard Klein, Beth Polin, and Kyra Leigh Sutton, "Specific Onboarding Practices for the Socialization of New Employees," *International Journal of Selection and Assessment* 23, no. 3 (2015): 263-283; Michael Karsman, "Three Must-Have Onboarding Elements for New and Relocated Employees," *Employment Relations Today* 42, no. 2 (2015): 9-14; Talya Bauer, "Maximizing Success," *SHRM Foundation's Effective Practice Guidelines Series*, accessed February 11, 2022, https://www.shrm.org/foundation/ourwork/initiatives/resources-from-past-initiatives/Documents/Onboarding%20New%20Employees.pdf.

3. Azidah Abu Ziden and Ong Chin Joo, "Exploring Digital Onboarding for Organizations: A Concept Paper," *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 13, no. 9 (2020): 734-750.

4. Howard Klein and Aden Heuser, "The Learning of Socialization Content: A Framework for Researching Orientating Practices," in *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management* (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2008).

5. Tawanda Lashone Carpenter, "Improving Volunteer Retention with Nonprofit Organizations Through Implementing Onboarding Training," 2021, https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/education_projects/25.

6. "Why New Employees Quit," Human Capital Institute, December 3, 2019, https://www.hci.org/blog/why-new-employees-quit.

7. "Why Onboarding Is Important and a Key to Success," Apollo Technical LLC, January 2, 2022, https://www.apollotechnical.com/why-onboarding-is-important/.

8. Arlene Hirsch, "Don't Underestimate the Importance of Good Onboarding," Society for Human Resource Management, August 10, 2017, https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/dont-underestimate-the-importance-of-effective-onboarding.aspx.

9. Lev Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 57.

10. Erik Lachance, "COVID-19 and its Impact on Volunteering: Moving Towards Virtual Volunteering," *Leisure Sciences* 43, no. 1-2 (2020): 104-110, https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2020.1773990.

11. Sarah Yardley, Pim Teunissen, and Tim Dornan, "Experiential Learning: Transforming Theory into Practice," *Medical Teacher* 34, no. 2 (2012): 161-164.

12. Yardley, Teunissen, and Dornan, "Experiential Learning"; Lachance, "COVID-19 and its Impact on Volunteering."

13. *Supporting Volunteerism by People with Disabilities Guidebook*, Inclusive Design Research Centre, OCAD University, accessed February 2, 2022, https://volunteer.ca/vdemo/EngagingVolunteers_DOCS/Supporting_Volunteerism_by_People_with_Disabilities_Guidebook.pdf.

14. Filipa Silva, Teresa Proença, and Marisa Ferreira, "Volunteers' Perspective on Online Volunteering — A Qualitative Approach," *International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing* 15, no. 4 (2018): 531-552.

15. Carpenter, "Improving Volunteer Retention."

16. Wayback Machine, accessed May 9, 2022, https://web.archive.org/.

17. "Volunteer," ABLE2, accessed January 8, 2022, https://www.able2.org/volunteer/; "Volunteer," ABLE2, archived November 26, 2020, https://web.archive.org/web/20200922053241/https://www.able2.org/volunteer/; "Volunteer," Citizen Advocacy, archived April 15, 2018, https://web.archive.org/web/20180415162423/https://www.citizenadvocacy.org/volunteer/; "Steps to Becoming an Everyday Champion," Citizen Advocacy, archived February 21, 2016, https://web.archive.org/web/20160221154518/http://www.citizenadvocacy.org/steps-to-becoming-an-

everyday-champion/; "Volunteer Application," Citizen Advocacy, archived June 24, 2014, https://web.archive.org/web/ 20140624075923/http://www.citizenadvocacy.org/ get-involved/become-a-volunteer-advocate/volunteer-application/; "Volunteer Application," Citizen Advocacy, archived November 27, 2011, https://web.archive. org/web/20111127161233/http://www.citizenadvocacy.org/get-involved/become-a-volunteer-advocate/volunteer-application/; "Getting Involved with CA," Citizen Advocacy, archived December 11, 2010, https://web.archive.org/web/20101211 075620/ http://www2.citizenadvocacy.org/beingvolunteer.html; "As an Advocate," Citizen Advocacy, archived March 11, 2005, https://web.archive.org/web/200503 11144552/http://www2.citizenadvocacy.org/citizenadvocacy/advocate.html; "As an Advocate," Citizen Advocacy, archived September 30, 2000, https://web.archive.org/ web/20000930115538/http://www.citizenadvocacy.org/advocate.html.

18. "Getting Involved with CA," Citizen Advocacy, archived December 11, 2010.

19. "Volunteer Application," Citizen Advocacy, archived November 27, 2011.

20. *Supporting Volunteerism by People with Disabilities Guidebook*.

Section 5: ABLE2 Onboarding Survey

1. Aphrodite Baka, Figgou Lia, and Triga Vasiliki, "'Neither Agree, Nor Disagree': A Critical Analysis of the Middle Answer Category in Voting Advice Applications," *International Journal of Electronic Governance* 5, no. 3-4 (2012): 244-263.

2. Vanessa Boris, "What Makes Storytelling So Effective for Learning?" Harvard Business Publishing, December 20, 2017, https://www.harvardbusiness. org/what-makes-storytelling-so-effective-for-learning/#:~:text=Telling%20stories%20is%20one%20of,and%20values%20that%20 unite%20people.

3. Christina Goodermote, "Remote Onboarding and Training of New Program Coordinators into the Medical Education Office During Covid-19 Social Distance Quarantine: Process and Recommendations." *Journal of Community Hospital Internal Medicine Perspectives* 10, no. 5 (2020): 399-401; Andrew Carlos and Daisy Muralles, "Onboarding in the age of COVID-19," *IFLA Journal* (2021): 03400352211035413; Gunjan Yadav, Anil Kumar, Sunil Luthra, Jose Arturo Garza-Reyes, Vikas Kumar, and Luciano Batista, "A Framework to Achieve Sustainability in Manufacturing Organisations of Developing Economies Using Industry 4.0 Technologies' Enablers," *Computers in Industry* 122 (2020): 103280.

4. *Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion at Work: A Research Companion*, edited by Mustafa Èzbilgin (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2009).

Section 8: Appendix

Appendix A: Tables

Table 2.3 Canadian Volunteers (Data from Stat Can)

Volunteer Category	2018	2013	2010	2007	2004
Total Formal Volunteers	16,420	17,037	17,472	15,984	15,613
Current Formal Volunteers	12,678	12,716	13,249	12,444	11,773
Past Formal Volunteers (Prior to Last 12 Months)	3,742	4,321	4,223	3,540	3,840
Non-volunteers (Formal)	14,423	12,151	10,734	11,016	10,408
Current Informal Volunteers	22,692	23,216	—	—	—
Current Informal Volunteers, Overlapping	10,874	10,982	—	—	—
Total Current Volunteers	24,496	24,950	—	—	—
Total population	30,843	29,188	28,206	27,000	26,021

Table 2.4: Canadian Formal Volunteer Rates (Data from Stat Can)

Volunteer Category	2018	2013	2010	2007	2004
All Formal Volunteers	53%	59%	62%	59%	60%
Current Volunteers (Last 12 months)	41%	44%	47%	46%	45%
Past Volunteers (Prior to Last 12 months)	12%	15%	15%	13%	15%
Current Informal Volunteers	74%	80%	—	—	—
Current Volunteers (Overlapping)	35%	38%	—	—	—
Total Current Volunteers	79%	86%	—	—	—

Table 3.5: Volunteer Motivation by Age (ABLE2)

		Motivations to Volunteer										
		A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**	**J**	**Total**
Age	Under 18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
	18-24 years old	1	1	3	0	0	1	3	2	0	1	**12**
	25-34 years old	2	2	2	4	0	7	10	3	0	0	**30**
	35-44 years old	1	0	0	0	0	10	8	7	0	2	**28**
	45-54 years old	2	1	0	1	0	3	4	4	0	1	**16**
	55-64 years old	4	1	0	1	0	4	8	5	0	1	**24**
	65+ years old	4	1	0	2	0	4	6	2	1	3	**23**
	Total Count	**14**	**6**	**5**	**8**	**0**	**29**	**39**	**23**	**1**	**8**	**133**

Table 3.6: Motivations Legend

Category	Survey Response	Category	Survey Response
A	To use your skills and experiences	**F**	To contribute to the mission of ABLE2
B	To explore your interests and develop new skills	**G**	To contribute to the Ottawa community
C	To improve job opportunities	**H**	To improve your sense of personal well-being or health
D	To network or meet people	**I**	To fulfill religious obligations or beliefs
E	To volunteer with your friends and/or family members who also volunteer with ABLE2	**J**	Other (please specify)

Appendix B: Supplementary Charts

This section includes charts made from the data provided in September 2021.

Figure 8.1: Matched Friends – Age and Sex

Figure 8.2: Matched Friends – Age and Sex
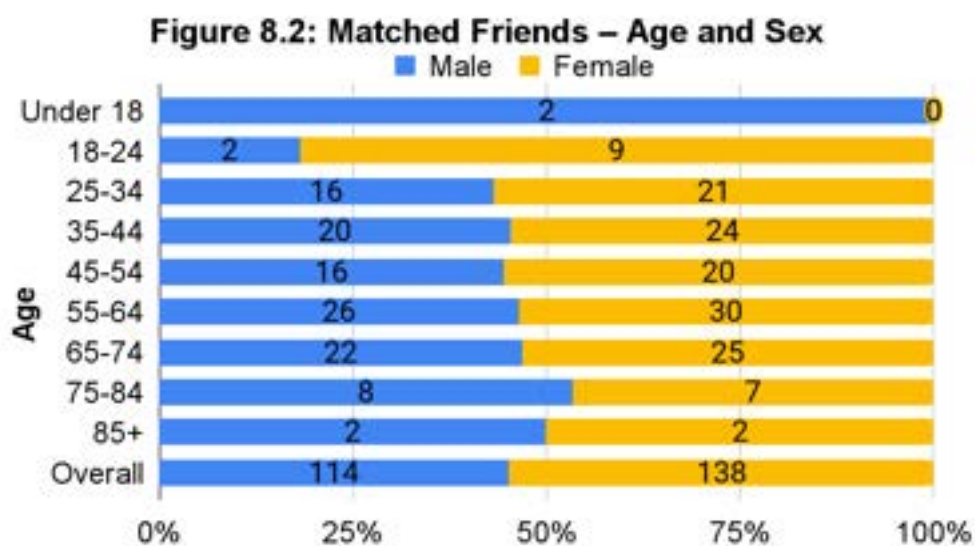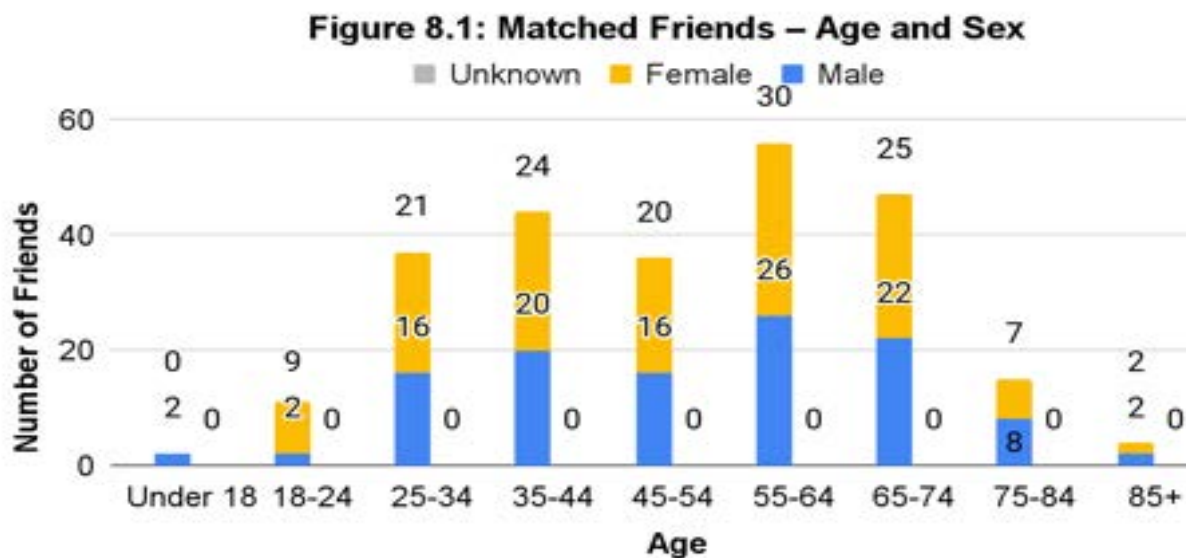
Figure 8.3: Waiting List – Age and Sex

Legend: Unknown, Female, Male

Age	Male	Female	Unknown
Under 18	7	2	0
18-24	12	3	0
25-34	30	10	0
35-44	11	12	0
45-54	19	13	1
55-64	19	20	0
65-74	13	16	0
75-84	3	4	0
85+	2	2	1
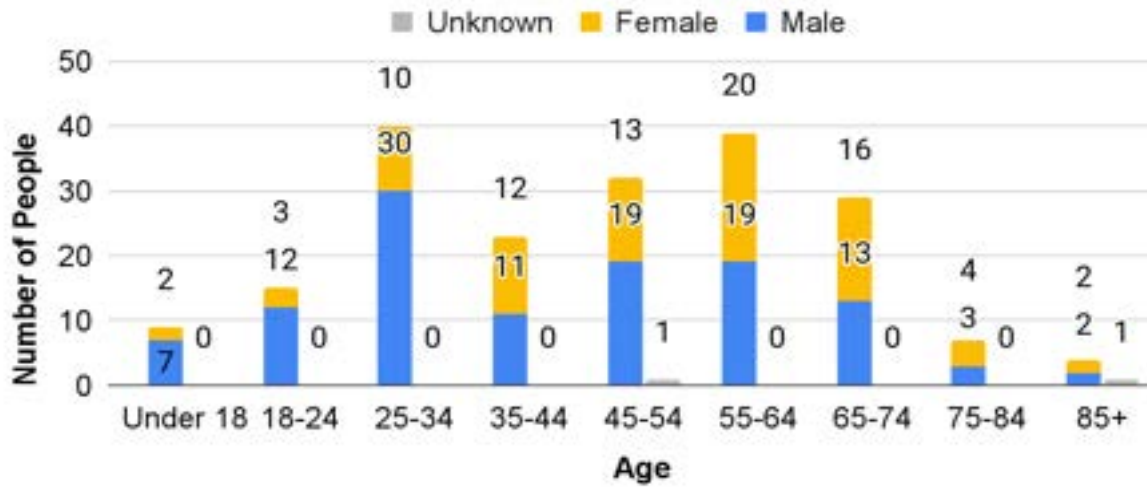
Figure 8.4: Waiting List – Age and Sex

Legend: Male, Female, Unknown

Age	Male	Female	Unknown
Under 18	7	2	0
18-24	12	3	0
25-34	30	10	0
35-44	11	12	0
45-54	19	13	1
55-64	19	20	0
65-74	13	16	0
75-84	3	4	0
85+	2	2	1
Overall	109	80	2
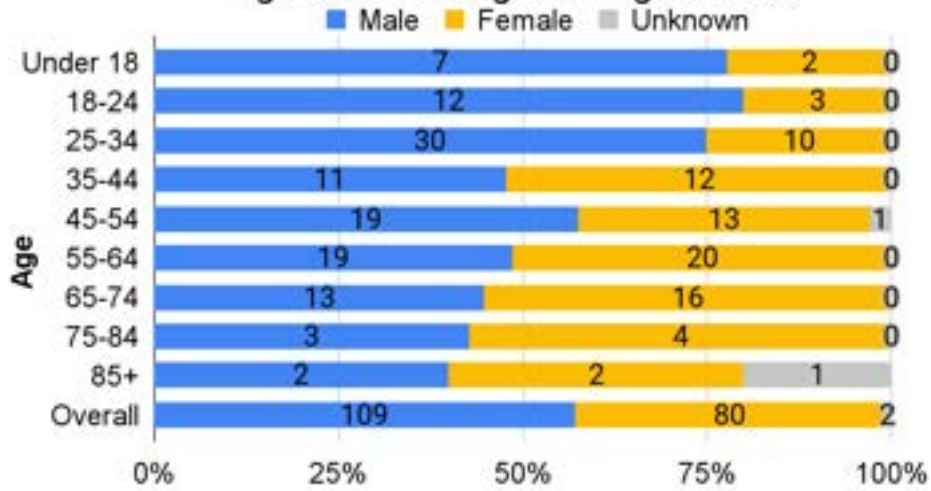
Figure 8.5: Average Age at ABLE2

Legend: Male, Female, Overall

ABLE2 Demographic	Male	Female	Overall
Matched Allies	50.8	44.9	46.7
Matched Friends	52.6	50.7	51.6
Waiting List	43.7	52.3	47.5
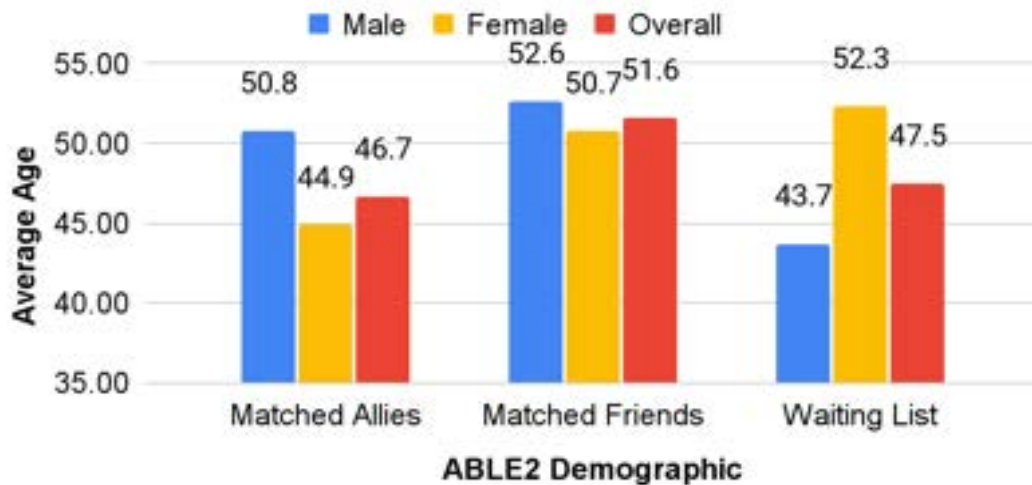
Figure 8.6: Longest Matches – Age Difference

Over twenty
5.0%
Fifteen to twenty
15.0%
Ten to fifteen
25.0%
Five or less
45.0%
Five to ten
10.0%
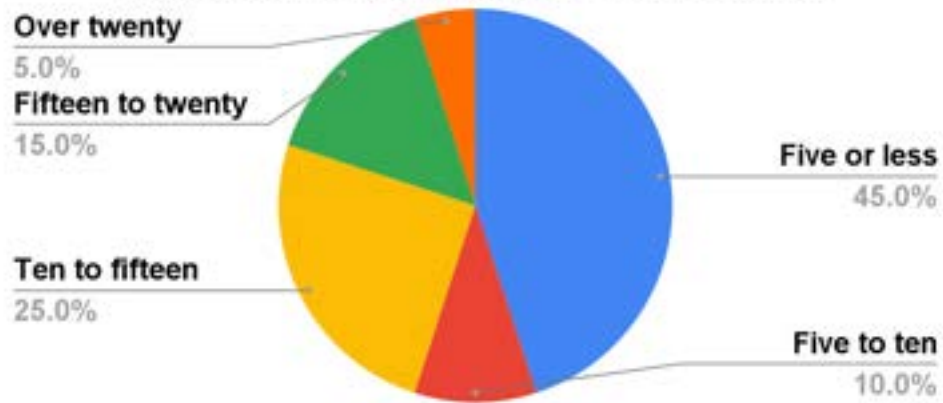
Figure 8.7: Longest Matches – Age Difference

Older Ally   Older Friend

Five or less — 4, 5
Five to ten — 2 0
Ten to fifteen — 2, 3
Fifteen to twenty — 2, 1
Over twenty — 0, 1

Age Difference

Number of Matches
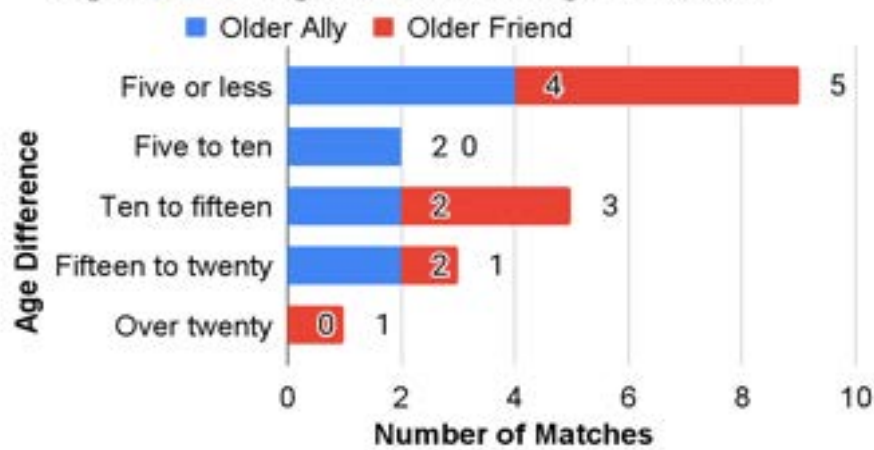
Figure 8.8: Longest Matches – Sex

Male and Male — 10
Female and Female — 8
Male and Female — 2
Female and Male — 0

Sexes of Friend and Ally

Number of Matches
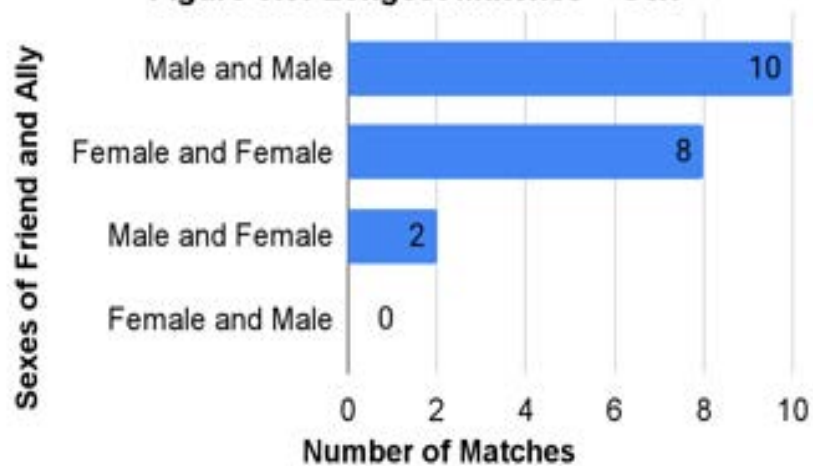
Appendix C: Raw Data Tables

This section includes supplementary data tables made from the onboarding survey results. Open text-based questions are not included to preserve the anonymity of the survey participants. All other data is included in this appendix.

Q1.1 - How old are you?

Answer	%	Count
Under 18	0.00%	0
18-24 years old	7.55%	4
25-34 years old	22.64%	12
35-44 years old	18.87%	10
45-54 years old	13.21%	7
55-64 years old	18.87%	10
65+ years old	18.87%	10
Total	100%	53

Q1.2 - How do you self identify in terms of gender?

Answer	%	Count
Woman	75.47%	40
Man	24.53%	13
I do not identify within the gender binary	0.00%	0
I prefer not to disclose information concerning my gender	0.00%	0

Total	100%	53

Q1.3 - Do you identify as being a person with a disability?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	18.87%	10
No	81.13%	43
Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
Total	100%	53

Q1.4 - How long have you been volunteering with ABLE2?

Answer	%	Count
Less than a year	15.09%	8
One to two years	13.21%	7
Three to five years	32.08%	17
More than five years	18.87%	10
More than ten years	20.75%	11
Total	100%	53

Q1.5 - How many hours do you volunteer at ABLE2 every week?

Answer	%	Count
0 to 1 hours	50.94%	27
2 to 3 hours	37.74%	20
More than 3 hours	11.32%	6
Total	100%	53

Q1.6 - How did you first learn about ABLE2?

Answer	%	Count
Newspaper	9.43%	5
Kijiji	0.00%	0
Family Member or Friend	16.98%	9
Social Media	3.77%	2
Other (please specify)	22.64%	12
Volunteer Ottawa	47.17%	25
Total	100%	53

Q2.1 What are the top 3 (three) reasons you volunteer?

Answer	%	Count
To contribute to the Ottawa community	29.32%	39
To volunteer with your friends and/or family members who also volunteer with ABLE2	0.00%	0
To network or meet people	6.02%	8
To improve job opportunities	3.76%	5
To fulfill religious obligations or beliefs	0.75%	1
To improve your sense of personal well-being or health	17.29%	23
To explore your interests and develop new skills	4.51%	6
Other (please specify)	6.02%	8
To use your skills and experiences	10.53%	14
To contribute to the mission of ABLE2	21.80%	29
Total	100%	133

Q2.4 - Please indicate your agreement with the following statement: You would recommend ABLE2 as a great place to volunteer.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	7.84%	4
Neither agree nor disagree	9.80%	5
Agree	47.06%	24
Strongly agree	35.29%	18
Total	100%	51

Q3.1 - The ABLE2 website was easy to navigate.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	2.00%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	46.00%	23
Agree	40.00%	20
Strongly agree	12.00%	6
Total	100%	50

Q3.2 - The ABLE2 website provided adequate information about:

Question	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Total
The volunteer experience	0.00%	0	4.26%	2	36.17%	17	38.30%	18	21.28%	10	47
The mission of ABLE2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	24.49%	12	48.98%	24	26.53%	13	49
The Matching Program	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	27.66%	13	51.06%	24	21.28%	10	47
How to apply to be a volunteer	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	29.79%	14	51.06%	24	19.15%	9	47

Q3.3 - The online information session (20-minute video) provided you with all the information you needed to feel comfortable applying to the Matching Program.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	2.00%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	34.00%	17
Agree	48.00%	24
Strongly agree	16.00%	8
Total	100%	50

Q4.1 - All of the application materials were easy to retrieve.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	30.43%	14
Agree	50.00%	23
Strongly agree	19.57%	9
Total	100%	46

Q 4.2 - The application form was easy to use.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	2.13%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	34.04%	16
Agree	46.81%	22
Strongly agree	17.02%	8
Total	100%	47

Q 4.3 - The application could be completed in a reasonable amount of time.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	31.91%	15
Agree	53.19%	25
Strongly agree	14.89%	7
Total	100%	47

Q 4.4 - The questions asked in the application were appropriate and relevant.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	31.91%	15
Agree	51.06%	24
Strongly agree	17.02%	8
Total	100%	47

Q 4.5 - It was easy to provide the number of references required for your application.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	26.09%	12
Agree	52.17%	24
Strongly agree	21.74%	10
Total	100%	46

Q 4.6 - The volunteer handbook provided you with adequate information about your role.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	37.21%	16
Agree	46.51%	20
Strongly agree	16.28%	7
Total	100%	43

Q 4.7 - Reading the volunteer handbook helped prepare you to succeed in your role.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	39.53%	17
Agree	46.51%	20
Strongly agree	13.95%	6
Total	100%	43

Q 4.8 - The Vulnerable Sector Check was easy to complete.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	6.52%	3
Neither agree nor disagree	8.70%	4
Agree	54.35%	25
Strongly agree	30.43%	14
Total	100%	46

Q 4.9 - Communication from ABLE2 was timely after the application was submitted.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	6.67%	3
Neither agree nor disagree	24.44%	11
Agree	42.22%	19
Strongly agree	26.67%	12
Total	100%	45

Q 5.1 - The Onboarding Seminar was offered at a convenient time for you.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	2.27%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	22.73%	10
Agree	52.27%	23
Strongly agree	22.73%	10
Total	100%	44

Q 5.2 - The Seminar provided you with helpful information about the volunteer experience in the Matching Program.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	2.22%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	20.00%	9
Agree	48.89%	22
Strongly agree	28.89%	13
Total	100%	45

Q 5.3 - The Seminar provided a space to build meaningful relationships with other volunteers and the ABLE2 staff.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	6.67%	3
Disagree	11.11%	5
Neither agree nor disagree	44.44%	20
Agree	22.22%	10
Strongly agree	15.56%	7
Total	100%	45

Q 5.4 - The training sessions were relevant to your educational needs.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	4.55%	2
Neither agree nor disagree	36.36%	16
Agree	47.73%	21
Strongly agree	11.36%	5
Total	100%	44

Q 5.5 - The training sessions provided you with information that has been useful in your Match.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	6.82%	3
Neither agree nor disagree	27.27%	12
Agree	47.73%	21
Strongly agree	18.18%	8
Total	100%	44

Q 5.6 - Your training has given you the tools to better support people with disabilities outside of ABLE2.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	9.09%	4
Neither agree nor disagree	34.09%	15
Agree	45.45%	20
Strongly agree	11.36%	5
Total	100%	44

Q 5.7 - Prior to volunteering at ABLE2, how much experience did you have with:

Question	No experience		Little experience		Some experience		Lots of experience		Total
Physical disabilities	23.91%	11	26.09%	12	30.43%	14	19.57%	9	46
(Neuro)developmental disabilities	45.45%	20	13.64%	6	25.00%	11	15.91%	7	44
Learning disabilities	26.67%	12	28.89%	13	28.89%	13	15.56%	7	45
Mental health disabilities	25.00%	11	25.00%	11	31.82%	14	18.18%	8	44

Q 6.1 - The Learning Conversation and Match Presentation were offered at times convenient for you.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	13.95%	6
Agree	51.16%	22
Strongly agree	34.88%	15
Total	100%	43

Q 6.2 - You felt adequately prepared for the Learning Conversation and Match Presentation.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	13.95%	6
Agree	60.47%	26
Strongly agree	25.58%	11
Total	100%	43

Q 6.3 - The questions asked of you during the Learning Conversation were appropriate.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	4.65%	2
Neither agree nor disagree	16.28%	7
Agree	44.19%	19
Strongly agree	34.88%	15
Total	100%	43

Q 6.4 - The next steps in the Onboarding process were made clear to you in these meetings.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	2.33%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	13.95%	6
Agree	41.86%	18
Strongly agree	41.86%	18
Total	100%	43

Q 6.5 - The social worker adequately answered your questions.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	9.52%	4
Agree	50.00%	21
Strongly agree	40.48%	17
Total	100%	42

Q 6.6 - The potential Matches presented in the Match Presentation were good fits for you.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	9.30%	4
Neither agree nor disagree	18.60%	8
Agree	53.49%	23
Strongly agree	18.60%	8
Total	100%	43

Q 6.7 - The social worker helped make the Match that was best for you.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	2.33%	1
Disagree	2.33%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	13.95%	6
Agree	41.86%	18
Strongly agree	39.53%	17
Total	100%	43

Q 6.8 - The social worker helped make the Match that was best for your Friend.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	2.33%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	20.93%	9
Agree	39.53%	17
Strongly agree	37.21%	16
Total	100%	43

Q 6.10 - You felt supported by ABLE2 staff during your first Match Meeting.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	2.33%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	9.30%	4
Agree	48.84%	21
Strongly agree	39.53%	17
Total	100%	43

Q 6.9 - You felt adequately prepared for your first Match Meeting.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	2.33%	1
Disagree	2.33%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	13.95%	6
Agree	46.51%	20
Strongly agree	34.88%	15
Total	100%	43

Q 6.11 - Overall, the Matching process was a positive experience.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	2.33%	1
Disagree	2.33%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	11.63%	5
Agree	46.51%	20
Strongly agree	37.21%	16
Total	100%	43

Q 7.1 - Overall, how effective did you find the different steps of the Onboarding process?

Question	Very effective		Fairly effective		Neutral		Fairly ineffective		Very ineffective		Total
Application process	35.71%	15	35.71%	15	28.57%	12	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	42
Training process	28.21%	11	43.59%	17	23.08%	9	5.13%	2	0.00%	0	39
Matching process	53.66%	22	26.83%	11	9.76%	4	7.32%	3	2.44%	1	41

Q 7.2 - Overall, the Onboarding process was easy to navigate.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	25.58%	11
Agree	44.19%	19
Strongly agree	30.23%	13
Total	100%	43

Q 7.3 - You felt well-supported by ABLE2 staff throughout your Onboarding experience.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	2.38%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	21.43%	9
Agree	47.62%	20

Strongly agree	28.57%	12
Total	100%	42

Q 7.4 - In your opinion and from your experience, the ABLE2 Onboarding process reflects your understanding of the organization's values.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Neither agree nor disagree	23.26%	10
Agree	48.84%	21
Strongly agree	27.91%	12
Total	100%	43

Bibliography

ABLE2. "Volunteer." Accessed January 8, 2022. https://www.able2.org/volunteer/.

ABLE2. "Volunteer." Archived November 26, 2020. https://web.archive.org/web/20200922053241/https://www.able2.org/volunteer/.

Baka, Aphrodite, Lia Figgou, and Vasiliki Triga. "'Neither Agree, Nor Disagree': A Critical Analysis of the Middle Answer Category in Voting Advice Applications." *International Journal of Electronic Governance* 5, no. 3-4 (2012): 244-263.

Bauer, Talya. "Maximizing Success." *SHRM Foundation's Effective Practice Guidelines Series*. Accessed February 11, 2022. https://www.shrm.org/foundation/ourwork/initiatives/resources-from-past-initiatives/Documents/Onboarding%20New%20Employees.pdf.

Best Buddies Canada. "University/College Program." Accessed May 3, 2022. https://bestbuddies.ca/about-our-programs/universities-colleges/.

Bhandari, Pritha. "Ordinal Data: What Is It and What Can You Do with It?" Scribr. Last modified August 27, 2021. https://www.scribbr.com/statistics/ordinal-data/.

Boris, Vanessa. "What Makes Storytelling So Effective for Learning?" Harvard Business Publishing. December 20, 2017. https://www.harvardbusiness.org/what-makes-storytelling-so-effective-for-learning/#:~:text=Telling%20stories%20is%20one%20of,and%20values%20that%20unite%20people.

British Broadcasting Corporation. "Why Women are More Burned Out than Men." Accessed May 11, 2022. https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210928-why-women-are-more-burned-out-than-men.

Carlos, Andrew, and Daisy Muralles. "Onboarding in the Age of COVID-19." *IFLA Journal* (2021): https://doi.org/10.1177/03400352211035413.

Carpenter, Tawanda Lashone. "Improving Volunteer Retention with Nonprofit Organizations Through Implementing Onboarding Training." 2021. https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/education_projects/25/.

Citizen Advocacy. "As an Advocate." Archived March 11, 2005. https://web.archive.org/web/20050311144552/http://www2.citizenadvocacy.org/citizenadvocacy/advocate.html.

Citizen Advocacy. "As an Advocate." Archived September 30, 2000. https://web.archive.org/web/20000930115538/http://www.citizenadvocacy.org/advocate.html.

Citizen Advocacy. "Getting Involved with CA." Archived December 11, 2010. https://web.archive.org/web/20101211075620/http://www2.citizenadvocacy .org/beingvolunteer.html.

Citizen Advocacy. "Steps to Becoming an Everyday Champion." Archived February 21, 2016. https://web.archive.org/web/20160221154518/http://www. citizenadvocacy.org/steps-to-becoming-an-everyday-champion/.

Citizen Advocacy. "Volunteer." Archived April 15, 2018, https://web.archive.org/ web/20180415162423/https://www.citizenadvocacy.org/volunteer/.

Citizen Advocacy. "Volunteer Application." Archived June 24, 2014. https://web.archive.org/web/20140624075923/http://www.citizenadvocacy. org/get-involved/become-a-volunteer-advocate/volunteer-application/.

Citizen Advocacy. "Volunteer Application." Archived November 27, 2011. https://web.archive.org/web/20111127161233/http://www.ctizenadvocacy.o rg/get-involved/become-a-volunteer-advocate/volunteer-application/.

EveryAction and Nonprofit Hub. *The State of Data in the Nonprofit Sector*. Accessed December 1, 2021. https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/433841/The_State_of_ Data_in_The_Nonprofit_Sector.pdf

Expanding Horizons Professional Development. "PhD-Community Initiative." Queen's University. Accessed March 9, 2022. https://www.queensu.ca/exph/ phd-community-initiative.

Expanding Horizons Professional Development. "Projects 2021/22." Queen's University. Accessed March 9, 2022. https://www.queensu.ca/exph/phd -community-initiative/projects-2021-22.

Èzbilgin, Mustafa, ed. *Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion at Work: A Research Companion*. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2009.

Feldman, Jack, and John Lynch. "Self-generated Validity and Other Effects of Measurement on Belief, Attitude, Intention, and Behaviour." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 73, no. 3 (1998), 421-435. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010. 73.3.421.

Fica, Tori. "What People Really Want from Onboarding." BambooHR. October 3, 2018. https://www.bamboohr.com/blog/onboarding-infographic/#point-two.

Goodermote, Christina. "Remote Onboarding and Training of New Program Coordinators into the Medical Education Office During Covid-19 Social Distance Quarantine: Process and Recommendations." *Journal of Community Hospital Internal Medicine Perspectives* 10, no. 5 (2020): 399-401.

Hahmann, Tara. "Volunteering by Canadians in 2018." Statistics Canada. April 23, 2021. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2021035- eng.htm.

Hahmann, Tara. "Volunteering Counts: Formal and Informal Contributions of Canadians in 2018." April 23, 2021. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2021001/article/00002-eng.htm.

Hirsch, Arlene. "Don't Underestimate the Importance of Good Onboarding." Society for Human Resource Management. August 10, 2017. https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/dont-underestimate-the-importance-of-effective-onboarding.aspx.

Human Capital Institute. "Why New Employees Quit." December 3, 2019. https://www.hci.org/blog/why-new-employees-quit.

Inclusive Design Research Center. *Supporting Volunteerism by People with Disabilities Guidebook.* OCAD University. Accessed February 2, 2022. https://volunteer.ca/vdemo/EngagingVolunteers_DOCS/Supporting_Volunteerism_by_People_with_Disabilities_Guidebook.pdf.

Jamieson, Susan. "Likert scale." Encyclopedia Britannica. Last modified September 27, 2017. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Likert-Scale.

Keisling, Bruce, and Melissa Laning. "We Are Happy to Be Here: The Onboarding Experience in Academic Libraries." *Journal of Library Administration* 56, no. 4 (2016): 381-394.

Klein, Howard, Beth Polin, and Kyra Leigh Sutton. "Specific Onboarding Practices for the Socialization of New Employees." *International Journal of Selection and Assessment* 23, no. 3 (2015): 263-283.

Klein, Howard, and Aden E. Heuser. "The Learning of Socialization Content: A Framework for Researching Orientating Practices." In *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2008.

Lachance, Erik. "COVID-19 and its Impact on Volunteering: Moving towards Virtual Volunteering." *Leisure Sciences* 43, no. 1-2 (2020): 104-110. https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2020.1773990

Manitoba Possible. "Adult Recreation and Leisure." Accessed May 3, 2022. https://www.manitobapossible.ca/adult-recreation-and-leisure.

Manitoba Possible. "Programs at a Glance." Accessed May 3, 2022. https://www.manitobapossible.ca/programs/#adult.

Marks, Deborah. *Disability: Controversial Debates and Psychosocial Perspectives* New York, NY: Routledge, 1999.

McAfee, Andrew, and Erik Brynjolfsson. "Big Data: The Management Revolution." *Harvard Business Review 90,* no.10 (2012): 60-68. https://hbr.org/2012/10/big-data-the-management-revolution.

Morris, Stuart, Gail Fawcett, Laurent Brisebois, and Jeffrey Hughe. "A Demographic, Employment and Income Profile of Canadians with Disabilities Aged 15 Years and Over, 2017." *Canadian Survey on Disability Reports*. Statistics Canada, November 28, 2018. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2018002-eng.htm.

Pew Research Center. "Social Media Fact Sheet." April 7, 2021. https://www.pew research.org/internet/fact-sheet/social-media/.

Queen's University. *Policy on Collecting Information about Sex and Gender at Queen's University*. September 2016. https://www.queensu.ca/vpr/sites/vprwww/files/uploaded_files/Ethics/HSREB-guidelines/CollectingInformationAboutSexandGenderPolicy.pdf.

Silva, Filipa, Teresa Proença, and Marisa Ferreira. "Volunteers' Perspective on Online Volunteering - A Qualitative Approach." *International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing* 15, no. 4 (2018): 531-552.

Sinha, Maire. "Volunteering in Canada, 2004 to 2013." Statistics Canada. Last modified November 30, 2015. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-652-x/89-652-x2015003-eng.htm.

Statistics Canada. *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 2004 [Canada]: Main File*. Identification code csgvp-89M0017-E-2004-main in <odesi> [database online]. Ottawa, ON: 2004 [deposited 2006].

Statistics Canada. *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 2007 [Canada]: Main File*. Identification code csgvp-E-2007-main in <odesi> [database online]. Ottawa, ON: 2007 [deposited 2009].

Statistics Canada. *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 2010 [Canada]: Main File*. Identification code csgvp-E-2010-main in <odesi> [database online]. Ottawa, ON: 2010.

Statistics Canada. *General Social Survey, Cycle 33, 2018 [Canada]: Giving, Volunteering and Participating*. Identification code gss-4430-E-2018-c33 in <odesi> [database online]. Ottawa, ON: 2018 [deposited 2021].

Statistics Canada. *General Social Survey, 2013 [Canada]: Cycle 27, Giving, Volunteering and Participating*. Identification code gss-89M0033X-E-2013-c27 in <odesi> [database online]. Ottawa, ON: 2013 [deposited 2015].

Stobierski, Tim. "The Advantages of Data-Driven Decision-Making." Harvard Business School Online. August 26, 2019. https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/Data-driven-decision-making.

Uen, Jin Feng, Sz-Ping Peng, Shu-Yuan Chen, and Shu Hwa Chien. "The Impact of Word of Mouth on Organizational Attractiveness." *Asia Pacific Management Review* 16, no 3 (2011): 239-253. https://doi.org/10.6126/APMR.2011.16.3.0.

Volunteer Canada. *Bridging the Gap: Enriching the Volunteer Experience to Build a Better Future for Our Communities*. Accessed March 30, 2022. https://volunteer.ca/vdemo/researchandresources_docs/Bridging%20the%20Gap%20Summary.pdf.

Vygotsky, Lev. *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978.

Wayback Machine. Accessed May 9, 2022. https://web.archive.org/.

Yardley, Sarah, Pim Teunissen, and Tim Dornan. "Experiential Learning: Transforming Theory into Practice." *Medical Teacher* 34, no. 2 (2012): 161-164.

Yadav, Gunjan, Anil Kumar, Sunil Luthra, Jose Arturo Garza-Reyes, Vikas Kumar, and Luciano Batista. "A Framework to Achieve Sustainability in Manufacturing Organisations of Developing Economies using Industry 4.0 Technologies' Enablers." *Computers in industry* 122 (2020): 103280.

Ziden, Azidah Abu, and Ong Chin Joo. "Exploring Digital Onboarding for Organisations: A Concept Paper." *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 13, no. 9 (2020): 734-750.