



CINCINNATI PARKS FOUNDATION

2026

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS
CAMPAIGN**

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BRAND PLATFORM

Vision Statement:

To be the nation's leading urban park system— reliable, inclusive, and sustainable— where every Cincinnati neighborhood has access to thriving green spaces that connect people to nature, inspire pride and health, and enhance quality of life for generations to come.

Mission Statement:

The Cincinnati Parks Foundation preserves, restores, and enhances our city's green spaces by improving accessibility, fostering community involvement, and building strong partnerships. Through conservation, education, and inclusive programming, we connect people to nature, celebrate community, and ensure equitable opportunities for all to enjoy Cincinnati's parks.

Values Statements:

Inclusion: We strive to create accessible and welcoming spaces that reflect the diversity of our community, regardless of neighborhood, background, or income.

Collaboration: We foster partnerships with members of the community, businesses, and local organizations to amplify our impact and build lasting support for Cincinnati's parks.

Creation: We foster vibrant, sustainable green spaces and innovative programs that strengthen our environment and inspire long-term growth for Cincinnati.

Integrity: We have immense gratitude for our partners, and in return, we uphold values of trust, honesty, and love for those who give their time and financial support to our vision.

Conservation: We are committed to ensuring our green spaces remain safe, sustainable, and welcoming environments for the people who visit and the wildlife that lives within them.

Advocacy: Developing and maintaining programs where volunteers and donors understand our foundation's mission and see the substantial impact of the organization's work

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cincinnati Parks Foundation (CPF) plays a vital role in the preservation and improvement of Cincinnati's public parks. To understand CPF's visibility and engagement challenges, we began with background research on the foundation's communication methods, audience demographics, and existing volunteer initiatives. This helped us identify key challenges, including limited public awareness, donor diversity concerns, and low volunteer engagement among young adults who visit the parks but are not familiar with CPF's mission or opportunities.

As the next step in our research process, we conducted qualitative research, beginning with a focus group with University of Cincinnati students and an interview with Elizabeth, the cofounder of Skate Downtown Cincinnati. Students expressed a consensus of a lack of awareness of CPF despite regularly visiting Cincinnati Parks. Participants shared that they would be more interested in volunteering if opportunities were more visible, convenient, and social. They emphasized that TikTok and Instagram are their primary sources of local information and events, and believe that CPF can significantly increase awareness and participation by utilizing these outlets. Similarly, the community partner interview confirmed strong support for CPF's mission but noted that the foundation lacks consistent visibility and would benefit from more community collaborations.

Following our qualitative work, we conducted quantitative research through a survey of 126 respondents. The survey reinforced these insights. Although most respondents had little to no awareness of CPF, after hearing its purpose, interest in volunteering increased. Survey data also confirmed the importance of social media, specifically TikTok, emerging as the most influential platform for young adults. Respondents favored opportunities that were hands-on, social, and easy to join, reinforcing the need for accessible, well-promoted programs that demonstrate visible community impact.

Based on all research findings, we developed a campaign designed to increase visibility, strengthen partnerships, and expand CPF's volunteer base over six months. The campaign objectives included increasing engagement with schools and businesses by 40 percent, gaining at least 45 new TikTok followers per month, and recruiting 50 new volunteers monthly. To achieve these objectives, the campaign proposes biweekly community pop-up events, such as coffee carts, yoga sessions, art markets, and pet adoption events in partnership with organizations like Deeper Roots Coffee, Embra Studio, Fenno Fashion, and the SPCA. School partnerships with institutions such as Corryville Catholic, Walnut Hills, and Hughes STEM are designed to integrate service opportunities into educational settings and promote environmental stewardship among younger students.



Digital strategy is anchored in TikTok, where CPF can grow its visibility through volunteer vlogs, behind-the-scenes content, collaboration with University of Cincinnati athletes, and a lighthearted “Parks & Rec” parody series. QR codes placed on flyers, signage, and tabling materials create direct links to CPF’s social platforms. On campus, student organization partnerships, Greek life involvement, and service-focused tabling events provide accessible volunteer entry points while promoting peer-driven recruitment.

A six-month timeline outlines consistent weekly activity across digital content, pop-up events, and promotional outreach. Each month includes repeated touchpoints – such as newsletters, volunteer highlights, and university outreach – to reinforce engagement and maintain community momentum.

Evaluation measures align directly with each objective. Community engagement will be assessed through event attendance, partnership participation, loyalty incentives, and feedback surveys. Digital engagement will be tracked using TikTok analytics, follower growth, QR code scans, and content performance metrics. Volunteer recruitment will be evaluated through sign-up numbers, attendance at Greek life-sponsored events, and monthly participation data from campus partners.

Stewardship plays a key role in sustaining involvement beyond the campaign. CPF can strengthen ongoing relationships through personalized thank-you messages, public recognition on social media, transparent reporting about campaign outcomes and volunteer impact, and consistent communication with partners. Continuing volunteer vlogs, recurring events, and collaborative programming ensures relationships remain active and meaningful.

Overall, this campaign provides a clear, research-driven path for expanding CPF’s visibility, strengthening community relationships, and engaging a broader, younger supporter base. By modernizing communication efforts and creating accessible, social, and collaborative opportunities, the Cincinnati Parks Foundation can cultivate lasting community investment in the city’s parks and build momentum that extends well beyond the campaign period.

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

The research phase for this campaign plan is built on three key methods: background research, focus group interviews, and survey research. Together, these approaches allowed our team to develop a comprehensive understanding of the CPF, its current challenges, and the perceptions held by key audiences such as students, young adults, and local community members. This multi-method design ensured that we first grounded our work in existing knowledge, then explored audience attitudes in depth, and finally tested those insights on a larger scale. Through this process, our team identified persistent gaps in public awareness, limited engagement among young adults, and a need for stronger brand visibility—all of which shaped the research questions that guided subsequent phases of the project.

Our background research served as the foundation for understanding CPF's mission, operations, brand identity, and position within the broader Cincinnati community. By reviewing internal documents, news coverage, corporate websites, and CPF's social media presence, as well as conducting an introductory call with organizational representatives, we assessed both strengths and areas of concern. This research highlighted inconsistent public awareness, limited differentiation from other nonprofits, and an overreliance on the annual Hats Off Luncheon for fundraising. These insights revealed critical issues that informed the direction of our primary research and helped us establish initial assumptions about why younger audiences are not fully engaging with CPF's mission.

Building on this foundation, we implemented two primary qualitative research methods: a focus group with University of Cincinnati students and a one-on-one interview with a community partner closely connected to CPF. These conversations provided valuable insight into audience perceptions, motivations to volunteer, and barriers that hinder participation. Students emphasized that while they value parks and community involvement, they lack awareness of CPF's work and need clearer communication, convenience, and social incentives to get involved. The interview with "Elizabeth," co-founder of Skate Downtown Cincy, added an external, partnership-oriented perspective, highlighting the importance of consistent outreach and collaborative community engagement. Themes emerging from these sessions shaped our understanding of how CPF can strengthen its brand identity, expand youth engagement, and build long-term relationships with new supporters.

To validate and expand on the qualitative findings, we conducted survey research distributed to a broader audience (N = 126). The survey assessed public awareness of CPF, communication channel preferences, and what motivates individuals to volunteer. This method allowed us to confirm that many residents remain unaware of CPF’s mission, revealed strong interest in volunteering when opportunities are clearly communicated, and identified digital platforms—particularly Instagram and TikTok—as essential tools for reaching younger demographics. Survey responses also reinforced the importance of convenience, visibility of CPF’s impact, and the effectiveness of social, hands-on activities in increasing engagement.

Collectively, these three research methods provided a robust understanding of CPF’s current challenges and opportunities. The insights from our background research, focus group interviews, and survey validated one another and informed a strategic campaign plan focused on strengthening brand identity, expanding community awareness, and cultivating volunteer and donor engagement among younger audiences.

BACKGROUND REPORT

Introduction

The purpose of this background research is to provide a clear understanding of Cincinnati Park’s Foundation (CPF) operations, environment, and challenges so that our team can identify the most pressing issues and opportunities to address through a strategic campaign. To build this understanding, we analyzed internal and external materials provided by the client, reviewed news coverage and corporate websites, examined social media channels, and held an introductory call with CPF representatives. This process allowed us to assess how the Foundation is currently perceived, where it excels, and where gaps exist that our campaign can help address.

Organization Background Research

The Cincinnati Parks Foundation (CPF) is the philanthropic partner of Cincinnati Parks, which manages one of the largest municipal park systems in the country. Established in 1995, the Foundation raises private funds to support more than 5,000 acres of green space. Its 2025–2027 Strategic Plan notes that CPF has raised over \$110 million for projects ranging from historic restoration to new amenities (Cincinnati Parks Foundation, 2025). The mission is built around three pillars: create, conserve, and connect. These pillars reflect priorities in infrastructure, environmental stewardship, and community programming (Cincinnati Parks Foundation, n.d.-a).

Transparency and credibility strengthen CPF’s role. The Foundation highlights a four-star Charity Navigator rating, a Platinum Seal of Transparency from Candid, and accreditation from the Better Business Bureau (Cincinnati Parks Foundation, n.d.-a). These recognitions help assure donors of responsible fund management and give CPF an advantage in Cincinnati’s crowded nonprofit sector.

CPF’s communication strategy combines events, campaigns, and partnerships. Its most visible initiative is the Hats Off Luncheon, the Foundation’s largest annual fundraiser and a major gathering for civic leaders and sponsors (Cincinnati Parks Foundation, 2024). Lighter efforts include the #CincyBARKS dog-voting contest and the obLITTERators cleanup program, both of which use playful branding to engage the community (Cincinnati Parks Foundation, n.d.-b).

Partnerships are central, yet CPF also operates in a competitive environment. Its closest collaborator is the Cincinnati Parks Department, which manages the system. Great Parks Forever serves a similar role for Hamilton County, while the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC) manages downtown spaces such as Fountain Square and Washington Park, attracting sponsorships through frequent public events. The Cincinnati Zoo and the Cincinnati Nature Center also compete for conservation-minded donors (Cincinnati Parks Foundation, 2025).

CPF supports Cincinnati Parks Advisory Councils (CPACS), which are volunteer groups that work to maintain public support of Cincinnati parks. CPF is also partnered with the award-winning Cincinnati Children's Hospital with the shared goal of offering family-friendly and accessible programs for all. (Cincinnati Parks Foundation, n.d.-a).

CPF has a social media presence on LinkedIn, X, and Instagram. LinkedIn is used in order to reach out to a more corporate audience, and X is used for press releases. They have had struggles in the past on Instagram. They were only posting two Instagram pictures per week. They do not believe that they are ready to create a CPF TikTok account.

There are multiple donors who financially support the CPF and its mission. Some of the family and individual donors are the Johnstons, Tom Jones, Joyce "Brenda" Hoskins Revocable Trust, and the Oliver Family Foundation. They also have corporate donors, including Macy's, MadTree Brewing, and The P&G Fund of The Greater Cincinnati Foundation. Donors who have donated \$5,000 or more become members of the CPF Oak Society. The Oak Society holds an annual event where members meet at the historic Gibson house in order to celebrate generosity and green spaces (Oak Society, 2025). The public image of the CPF has been negatively impacted because of the fact that they are a donor supported organization. They are thought to be elitist but in reality they are holding events such as litter events, wanting to help the community. They believe projects, programs and people are important now and for generations to come.



Audience Analysis

With our background research and problem statements in mind, we have identified three key audiences for CPF in order of importance and reach: the primary, secondary, and tertiary audiences. Since our focus is on exploring opportunities to further serve Cincinnati and benefit green spaces, the primary audience for CPF would be its partnerships. Our first line and most important set of eyes and ears are those who can both contribute financially and physically to new efforts and campaigns. According to Green (2022), “a report from Broadridge Financial Solutions predicts that ESG assets will tip \$30 trillion by 2030” (para. 3). CPF is a tangible, credible, and reliable nonprofit that can fulfill the business necessity of Environmental, Social, Governance(ESG) expectations. Aiming to collaborate with local high schools, colleges, health institutions, and other businesses with ongoing growing initiatives to improve their ESG can create a forceful current of those wanting to get involved. Bottom line, businesses need nonprofits like CPF to meet ESG standards and demonstrate a measurable community impact. CPF provides proof of impact for these organizations through park projects and community programs.

The secondary audience for CPF we have identified is the Cincinnati community. The secondary audience, or the second line of ears who are also interested, includes residents of Cincinnati, CPF volunteers, and potential donors. The importance of educating the community, which is the heartbeat of the CPF Foundation, is a vital duty that CPF must recognize. Educating this audience on who CPF is, what they do, and how to get involved is where CPF can thrive and improve. Volunteers serve CPF in reducing costs and increasing program reach with their contributions, while local residents can spread CPF’s visibility through word-of-mouth and attendance. Engagement from the community can push along efforts, carry out projects, and increase efficiency from their time (and possibly new financial support)—leading to more time allocated to new campaigns. The client expressed an interest in looking for more volunteers, as well as more residents interested in the arts. In this audience, we capture the attention of CPF believers, advocates, and stewards.

The final tertiary audience would be CPF’s existing legacy donors. This audience is not less important, but a stable, established, and loyal base from their already high engagement in CPF. In our client meeting, it was discussed that there exists a high email-open rate and strengths in legacy donor relationships. This audience is tertiary because, as much as they are important, they will continue to drive interest and engagement in their own time frame; however, in order to grow CPF, more energy from new outlets like partnerships and community members takes priority.



SWOT Analysis

In conducting a SWOT analysis, our team has analyzed Cincinnati Park Foundation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The Foundation's strengths highlight three decades of credibility, robust donor networks, and formal designation as Cincinnati Park's charitable partner. CPF is reputable, holding recognizable awards for its partnership and trust. They also have a strong and impactful portfolio of efforts in conservation, public wellness, and community infrastructure. CPF has a variety of established events, including Fall Releaf, BeWell, CincyBarks, Oblitterators, CPAC grants, Hats off Luncheon, and many more events and outreach programs (Cincinnati Parks Foundation, n.d.-a). Donor confidence is further enforced by its nonprofit accreditations and rankings. Another one of their strengths is the fact that they have a clear mission statement. CPF is transparent about their goals and lets the community know that they really care about the parks and the community. (Cincinnati Parks Foundation, n.d.-a)

A weakness of CPF is the lack of brand differentiation between their work and that of their charitable partner, Cincinnati Parks. The lack of brand differentiation may make it difficult for the public to differentiate the roles of fundraising versus park operations, as well as possible donor confusion in a city with multiple park nonprofits. A second weakness is that the Hats off Luncheon is CPF's largest fundraising event. Although this event draws public attention, engagement, and donations, the Foundation is overreliant on the annual fundraiser. Attendance, success, and ideal weather are not always guaranteed. The Hats Off Luncheon leaves its fundraising portfolio concentrated on one major annual event. CPF is a small-staffed organization, which can limit its capacity for larger account partnerships. While CPF has strong visibility at a local level, it struggles to reach potential national funders and sponsors.

CPF has major opportunities in the potential expansion of partnerships with health organizations and schools. Future events and programming could be catered to these audiences by partnering with these institutions available in the area, which is critical for future success.

CPF is not currently partnered with any high schools in the Cincinnati Area. This is an area of opportunity for the client where effective public relations tactics can be implemented. High school students are ages 14-18, falling within the age category of Gen Z. A crucial generation for CPF to target in order to continue their mission for years to come. If CPF continues to work with other organizations, its own community will continue to grow, which will lead to more people becoming involved in the future. An upcoming opportunity to highlight CPF's thirtieth anniversary.

CPF faces notable threats such as competition from organizations like Great Parks Forever and 3CDC, which draw from similar donor pools and partnerships for civic projects and events. As competitors in the area are also fighting over the same source of funding, CPF faces threats in economic downturns, which can damage their donations or sponsorships. Additionally, public misperceptions about government funding may lessen the public's urgency to give, creating challenges for donor communications and outreach. CPF relies on donors, and the new generation could choose to donate to local township foundations instead of CPF. Other organizations may become more popular if CPF does not continue to appeal to its audience. Also, there are unexpected factors, such as climate change and invasive species, playing a role in the parks. It is important for the organization to keep up to date with what is happening to ensure that the parks are being well taken care of, as well as making sure that the community is not negatively affected during events (Great Parks Forever, n.d).

Concluding Discussion

One of the biggest challenges facing the Cincinnati Parks Foundation is its reliance on the Hats Off Luncheon as the main source of fundraising. The luncheon has been very successful in drawing donors and attention, but putting so much weight on a single event leaves the Foundation exposed. If the weather turns bad, if the economy dips, or if another event competes for the same audience, CPF could suddenly find itself with a major gap in funding. This problem also ties into other issues. Since there are several nonprofits in the area that focus on parks and conservation, for example, Great Parks Forever, 3CDC, and the Cincinnati Zoo, donors sometimes struggle to understand CPF's unique role.

On top of that, with a relatively small staff, CPF has limited capacity to broaden its partnerships or run multiple fundraising efforts at once, which only makes the reliance on the luncheon even stronger.

Looking at the Hats Off Luncheon as the main issue helps put the other challenges into perspective. Suppose CPF can lessen its dependence on this one event. In that case, it creates room to build stronger donor relationships throughout the year, form new partnerships with schools and healthcare providers, and sharpen its own identity as the behind-the-scenes organization making Cincinnati's parks thrive. In this way, tackling the fundraising problem is a crucial starting point for addressing the interconnected issues of brand visibility, partnerships, and capacity.

The growth opportunities are clear. A program like "Prescription for Parks," where doctors encourage patients to spend time outdoors, would connect CPF to a growing public health movement while also expanding its audience. A behind-the-scenes storytelling campaign that shows staff and volunteers planting trees or repairing trails would highlight the hard work people don't usually see, giving the Foundation a distinct voice. Building relationships with high schools would also open up a new pipeline of volunteers and future donors. These ideas would not only help diversify fundraising but also strengthen CPF's presence in the community and clarify its role.

To shape these solutions, our team will rely on both primary and secondary research. On the primary side, interviews with donors, staff, and community partners can help us understand how people currently view CPF and its events. Surveys of volunteers or event attendees would also provide valuable feedback on CPF's outreach and brand identity. For secondary research, we can study how other park foundations balance fundraising and partnerships, and see which approaches might work well in Cincinnati. Combining these methods will give us a clear picture of how to make CPF less dependent on one fundraiser while building its visibility, expanding its partnerships, and ensuring its long-term impact.

FOCUS GROUP

Introduction

Cincinnati Parks Foundation (CPF) faces several challenges that impact its long-term sustainability and growth. Despite its meaningful contributions to maintaining and enhancing Cincinnati's public parks, awareness of the organization remains limited among local residents, specifically students and young adults. Many Cincinnati residents are unfamiliar with CPF's mission, events, or volunteer opportunities. This leads to a lack of engagement and community connection. CPF struggles with brand identity and differentiation from other nonprofits competing for the same limited pool of donors. Currently, CPF relies heavily on its annual Hats Off Luncheon as a primary fundraising source, which presents financial vulnerability and restricts donor diversity. To secure its future, the organization must strengthen its brand presence, expand community awareness, and cultivate relationships with a new generation of volunteers and donors.

To address these challenges, we conducted a focus group with University of Cincinnati students to gain a deeper understanding of their awareness of CPF and what motivates them to participate in community-based organizations. By exploring students' values, perceptions, and volunteer behaviors, the research aims to uncover how CPF can more effectively engage younger demographics and build lasting relationships that support both its mission and long-term sustainability. Our team also interviewed the co-founder of Skate Downtown Cincy, who has worked closely with CPF, to gain an external perspective on how CPF engages with community partners and the broader public. For the purpose of this report, she will be referred to by the pseudonym Elizabeth. These conversations provided valuable insight, helping identify what drives participation, the barriers that exist, and how CPF can better connect with younger audiences to ensure future success.

Our research questions are as follows:

1. How can CPF strengthen its brand identity to expand fundraising opportunities and recruit more volunteers? (Focus Group)
2. How can CPF strengthen its brand identity to recruit new volunteers? (One-on-One Interview)

The focus group allowed our team to gather firsthand insights from University of Cincinnati students about their familiarity with CPF, perceptions of its mission, and overall attitudes towards volunteering. Through open-ended discussion, we identified key factors that influence students' willingness to get involved, such as social connection, personal impact, and event accessibility. This feedback helped reveal gaps in CPF's outreach strategy and highlight opportunities to better align its messaging with the interests and values of younger audiences. The interview with Elizabeth provided an external, partnership-oriented perspective that complemented the student focus group findings. As co-founder of Skate Downtown Cincy and a close collaborator with CPF, Elizabeth offered valuable insight into how the organization currently engages with community partners, communicates its mission, and could strengthen brand identity through more consistent and inclusive outreach. Together, the focus group and interview findings contribute to a deeper understanding of CPF's current challenges and inform actionable strategies to expand awareness, enhance engagement, and attract new donors and volunteers

Methodology

To better understand how CPF can strengthen its brand identity and recruit new volunteers, our team conducted both a focus group and an interview. These qualitative research methods allowed us to collect first-hand insights from individuals who actively engage with Cincinnati parks and community programs, providing valuable feedback for CPF's outreach and branding strategies.

Focus Group

Our focus group was designed to explore the research question: “How can CPF strengthen brand identity to recruit new volunteers?” The session was conducted over Zoom to ensure accessibility and participation from University of Cincinnati students. A moderator facilitated the discussion, while two recorders documented responses and observations, and two additional team members later handled transcription and coding of data. Prior to participation, all individuals were provided a consent form outlining the purpose of the study, confidentiality procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time. Also, we created a moderator guide (See Appendix A1), which included an introduction to the focus group, questions to be used, and fillers as needed during our meeting beforehand to ensure preparedness. The discussion lasted approximately 30 minutes and followed a semi-structured format. Questions centered on awareness of CPF, perceptions of its mission and visibility, and motivations or barriers to volunteering.

We used convenience sampling to identify participants who could provide relevant and insightful perspectives. Because university students regularly use Cincinnati’s parks and community spaces, they were an ideal demographic to assess CPF’s outreach effectiveness among younger audiences. This group also represents a key opportunity for CPF to grow volunteer engagement and long-term community support. We reached out to approximately 15 University of Cincinnati students via email and word of mouth. Four participants confirmed availability and joined the session. All were full-time students residing in the Cincinnati area. Each signed the consent form prior to the focus group and participated under assigned participant numbers to preserve anonymity.

Below is the chart for participants:

Focus Group Participant Profiles					
Participant	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Status	School
1	Male	20-25	White	Full-time student	University of Cincinnati
2	Male	20-25	White	Full-time student	University of Cincinnati
3	Female	20-25	White	Full-time student	University of Cincinnati
4	Male	20-25	White	Full-time student	University of Cincinnati

The focus group was recorded and transcribed verbatim. We observed themes to identify recurring patterns and ideas across participant responses. Themes were coded around participants' familiarity with CPF, perceptions of branding and outreach, volunteer motivations, and suggestions for improving visibility and engagement. This process enabled us to pinpoint both strengths and gaps in CPF's current communication and community engagement strategy.

One-on-One Interview

In addition to the focus group, we conducted a one-on-one semi-structured interview with a community partner who coordinates Skate Downtown Cincinnati, an organization that collaborates with CPF at Sawyer Point Riverfront Rink. We have assigned her the pseudonym Elizabeth to keep her identity anonymous. This partnership provides valuable insight into how CPF's branding and volunteer efforts are perceived by those directly involved in community programming. The interview was conducted via Zoom and recorded for transcription purposes, with consent obtained beforehand. The conversation lasted approximately 20 minutes and covered topics such as partnership communication, CPF's visibility among community volunteers, and recommendations for strengthening CPF's presence.

Elizabeth was selected due to her ongoing collaboration with CPF and experience in community programming, making her uniquely positioned to evaluate CPF's communication practices and volunteer recruitment approach. The interview transcript was analyzed alongside the focus group findings to identify overlapping or contrasting insights and unique perspectives. We compared perspectives between student participants and community partners to highlight differences in awareness, motivation, and engagement with CPF. Integrating these results offered a fuller understanding of how CPF can enhance visibility and reach among both students and community partners.

Interview Participant Profile				
Participant	Gender	Role	Affiliation	Relevance
Elizabeth	Female	Co-founder	Skate Downtown Cincinnati	Provides a firsthand perspective on CPF partnerships, volunteer engagement, and branding effectiveness

Results

After reviewing the individual interview with Elizabeth, co-founder of Skate Downtown Cincinnati and the focus group discussion with four University of Cincinnati students, several themes emerged showing how CPF can strengthen its brand identity to attract new volunteers and broaden community involvement. Participants' insights centered on awareness, motivation, and communication, each revealing opportunities for CPF to better connect with younger audiences and future supporters.

Theme 1: Limited Awareness of CPF and Its Role. Across both conversations, participants emphasized that awareness of CPF is extremely low. The majority of students said they had never heard of the organization, and those who had were unsure of its purpose. Several participants felt that CPF needs to increase outreach so more people understand what it does and how to get involved.

(Participant 1) *“I really don’t know much about them, just kind of rebuilding the parks and keeping the area clean.”*

(Participant 3) *“Not many people really know much about the foundation. I feel like they could definitely do more outreach.”*

Elizabeth also recognized that CPF’s biggest challenge lies in simply being seen and remembered within a crowded local nonprofit scene.

(Elizabeth) *“Awareness is our biggest issue... just simply proving you exist now is so much more labor in all of the online noise.”*

Overall, participants made it clear that CPF’s limited visibility is one of the main barriers to public engagement. Without broader awareness, potential volunteers and donors are unlikely to get involved simply because they don’t know CPF exists or understand its mission.

Theme 2: Clarity and Convenience Drive Volunteer Participation. Students emphasized that convenience and clear communication strongly influence whether they choose to volunteer. They want straightforward instructions and simple sign-up processes. When expectations are vague or details are missing, they are less likely to take part.

(Participant 4) *“Just make it super easy. If there’s a collection service that could come and take it, that makes it a lot more appealing.”*

(Participant 2) *“If I knew exactly what was needed and where to drop it off... very clear and concise about what they are asking me to do.”*

Elizabeth described similar challenges from the organizer’s perspective, sharing that CPF and its partners often lack time and resources to communicate effectively.

(Elizabeth) *“Even having the bandwidth to get press releases out for all of the things is hard.”*

The consensus between both groups highlights that better communication and accessibility could make CPF’s volunteer opportunities far more appealing. Clear directions, reminders, and streamlined sign-up options would remove unnecessary barriers and make volunteering feel manageable for busy individuals.

Theme 3: Time, Incentives, and Motivation Matter. Participants agreed that while most people want to help, finding the time is difficult. Students shared that they volunteered more often in high school but now struggle to balance work, classes, and social life. Incentives, like free food, class credit, or resume experience, were mentioned as ways that could make participation feel more worthwhile.

(Participant 1) *“It’s been a while... I just haven’t had as much time.”*

(Participant 3) *“If it counted toward class credit or something on a résumé, I’d definitely do it.”*

Elizabeth reinforced this theme by explaining that volunteering is a privilege not everyone can afford. She pointed out that small gestures can go a long way toward increasing turnout.

(Elizabeth) *“Who has the option to volunteer? You may not be able to afford to volunteer.”*

(Elizabeth) *“Feeding people is really important if you’re not paying them. If you give someone a meal for their time, you can get someone to help for two or three hours.”*

These findings suggest that CPF could attract more consistent volunteers by acknowledging time constraints and offering flexible, low-commitment options. Even small incentives or appreciation efforts could help balance the time cost and make volunteering more accessible to students and young professionals.

Theme 4: Using the Right Channels to Reach Younger Audiences. The focus group repeatedly mentioned that social media is the most effective way to reach college students and young adults. Platforms like TikTok and Instagram were seen as the best places for CPF to promote opportunities, while clear visuals and short videos showing real people in action were considered most engaging.

(Participant 2) *“Probably TikTok, it’s easier to spread the information.”*

(Participant 4) *“Advertising on social media and giving more information on what exactly the event is, and what the volunteers will be doing.”*

Elizabeth agreed that younger audiences are more likely to respond to authentic, peer-based content than traditional advertising.

(Elizabeth) *“You need to meet people where they are... I think some of the younger volunteers are best reached through their peers.”*

Both groups emphasized that CPF needs to modernize its outreach to connect with younger demographics. By leaning into social media storytelling and peer-driven communication, CPF can strengthen its identity as an active, approachable organization that resonates with new audiences.

Theme 5: CPF’s Brand Feels Strongest When It’s “Doing the Work”. Participants agreed that CPF’s reputation and credibility are strongest when people can see its work in action. The students said they are more likely to volunteer for projects that feel hands-on and produce visible results, such as cleanups, plantings, or park restoration.

(Participant 3) *“I’d definitely want to volunteer if I could actually see what’s being done or see the progress in the parks.”*

Elizabeth described CPF's role as that of a connector, an organization that empowers other groups to succeed through guidance, funding, and community connections.

(Elizabeth) *"CPF has helped coach us in invaluable ways, with community connections and resources... really living its mission as community connectors."*

Together, these insights show that CPF's most authentic brand identity lies in visibility and collaboration. When community members can see CPF directly involved in local efforts, it not only builds trust but also creates a stronger emotional connection that motivates people to join in.

The findings from both the interview and focus group reveal that CPF's biggest challenge is awareness; many people don't know who they are or what they do. Both groups emphasized that clear communication, convenience, and visible impact are key to recruiting new volunteers. Time, incentives, and social media outreach also play an important role in making CPF's work more accessible and appealing. Ultimately, CPF's brand identity is strongest when it highlights its visible, hands-on role in the community and connects people to the mission of improving and protecting Cincinnati's parks.

Discussion

After reflecting on the themes of our focus group and one-on-one semi-structured interview, we found that the CPF struggles to gain recognition as an organization. This is different from what we had initially anticipated from our background research. From our background research, we thought that their biggest issue was that they relied so heavily on events such as their Hats Off Luncheon. According to our recent findings, recognition seems to be their biggest challenge. They have trouble bringing in and maintaining relationships with certain audiences. Based on the evidence we have gathered, University of Cincinnati students and residents of the Cincinnati area are either not very knowledgeable about CPF or haven't heard of the foundation at all.

The focus group that was made up of four University of Cincinnati students said that they were not really familiar with CPF, but they do visit the parks for certain activities, such as taking walks with friends. They like the idea of volunteering and think that it is rewarding, but they are not aware of the opportunities that are available to them. The participants think that they would be more interested in volunteering if there were other ways of hearing about it. There were a couple of strategies that they suggested to try to spread more awareness of the foundation.

They expressed how more of a social media presence would be beneficial for their age group. They believe that a lot of people attending the University of Cincinnati use social media frequently. Since this is the case, there needs to be more media outlets in order to make its opportunities known to more audiences. If there are posts on different social media platforms, there will be more people in the community gaining knowledge about CPF and its mission. It would also be beneficial because there would be more people sharing information about the foundation digitally.

The other strategy that the focus group participants suggested was to host events that would encourage doing volunteer work with friends. The participants believe that going to volunteering events with friends could make it sound more appealing to attend, which would lead to more people showing interest in the events and sharing their experiences. These two strategies suggested by the focus group can work together because a post on social media can also encourage volunteers to bring friends, leading to more recognition.

During the one-on-one semi-structured interview, we gained insight into how to get more people to attend events. During the interview, the participant said that it is very important to make sure that the volunteers are fed during the events. They said that since the volunteers are not being paid, they need some sort of incentive to give up their time to make an appearance at the events. This can also connect back to the “friends” incentive that the focus group suggested. The more incentives there are to come and volunteer, the more people are likely to show up and share information about CPF.

Another topic that was mentioned was the inclusion of the arts in certain events. CPF wants to reach larger audiences, so collaboration with arts partners would help to enhance both organizations. A specific suggestion that we were given was to collaborate with the art museum in Cincinnati, since it is surrounded by Eden Park. With Cincinnati's abundance of parks and attractions, CPF can take advantage of this and try to collaborate with more organizations to provide more events for a broader audience with multiple interests.

We also learned that word of mouth is still a very important communication strategy for getting new volunteers. While this may be useful for some audiences, this is not the best form of communication for groups such as University of Cincinnati students. This is why there have been challenges in gaining new volunteers and more recognition in that specific age group. In order to reach more people, there are going to have to be more outreach methods, such as through social media.

The biggest challenge for CPF that we found is recognition. With our previous background research and the findings from the one-on-one semi-structured interview and the focus group, we believe that we have come up with possible strategies we need to look at moving forward. With these insights, we will do our best to spread awareness of the foundation and ensure its success.

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Introduction

CPF plays an essential role in maintaining and improving Cincinnati's public parks, but faces persistent challenges with public awareness, volunteer engagement, and overall visibility. Many residents, especially young adults, are unaware of CPF's mission and opportunities to participate, leaving the organization overly dependent on its annual Hats Off Luncheon fundraiser.

To better understand these challenges, our team conducted a focus group with four University of Cincinnati students and an interview with a community partner, the co-founder of Skate Downtown Cincinnati. Five major themes emerged: low awareness of CPF, the importance of clarity and convenience, the influence of time and incentives, the need for stronger social media presence, and the value of visible, hands-on work.

Participants consistently emphasized that awareness of CPF is low, even among frequent park users. Students said they would be more willing to volunteer if opportunities were clearly communicated, simple to sign up for, and offered incentives, such as food or the opportunity to volunteer with friends. Both groups identified Instagram and TikTok as the best platforms to reach younger audiences and recommended using short and engaging videos that highlight CPF's work in action.

To validate and expand on these insights, our team conducted a survey to better understand public awareness, outreach effectiveness, and volunteer engagement with CPF. The survey aimed to identify which communication channels best reach the community, how CPF can encourage more people to volunteer, and what strategies could enhance overall brand visibility. We reached out to 170 individuals with 126 valid responses.

Our research questions to be answered by the survey are as follows:

1. What are the most effective outreach methods for CPF to communicate with the public?
2. How can the CPF effectively encourage and attract new volunteers to get involved with its initiatives?
3. What strategies can CPF use to strengthen brand awareness and increase community visibility?

Methodology

We conducted data collection for CPF by developing and distributing an online survey using Qualtrics. Each group member participated in survey distribution through snowball and convenience sampling, sharing both the survey link and QR code with friends, family, classmates, and community members connected to Cincinnati. The survey link was sent to approximately 170 individuals, and data collection occurred over a two-week period from October 15, 2025, to October 26, 2025. Participants were required to be 18 years or older.

Before beginning the survey, participants reviewed a consent form summarizing the study's purpose and procedures. This form explained that the research aimed to examine community preferences and behaviors related to brand communication, event participation, and social media engagement with CPF. The consent form emphasized that participation was voluntary, that no identifying information would be collected, and that responses would remain confidential and analyzed only in aggregate. Participants were also provided contact information for the faculty advisor and Miami University's Research Ethics and Integrity Office for questions or concerns.

Once consent was obtained, participants completed a questionnaire consisting of five main sections and standard demographic questions. The survey contained a mix of multiple-choice, Likert-scale, and open-response items designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data.

The first section, Awareness & Perception, was designed to gauge participants' familiarity with CPF and their perceptions of how effectively the organization communicates its mission and contributes to community well-being.

The second section, Communication & Social Media, explored the social media platforms participants use most often and their likelihood of engaging with CPF content across different formats, such as short videos, photos, or stories.

The third section, Volunteering & Engagement, focused on participants' willingness to volunteer, preferred types of volunteer opportunities, and motivating factors such as convenience, social aspects, and communication clarity.

The fourth section, Events & Programming, examined participants' interest in various park events— such as fitness activities, food-related gatherings, and cultural programs— and identified barriers to attendance, including timing, transportation, or weather concerns.

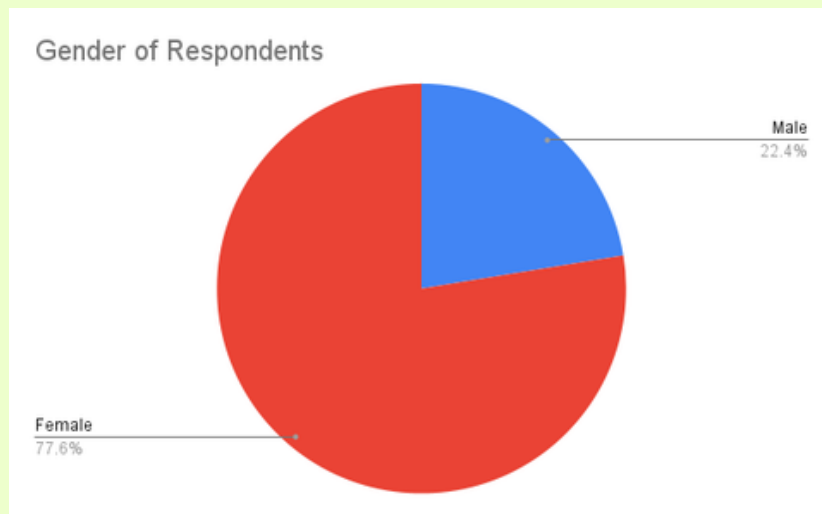
The fifth section, Motivation & Connection, measured participants' emotional connection to CPF and long-term involvement motivators like shared values, recognition, and measurable impact. Demographic questions at the end of the survey captured respondents' gender, age, race, education level, employment status, and household income to help contextualize trends and identify audience segments most engaged with CPF initiatives. For more information regarding the themes, refer to the full list of the survey questionnaire located in the Appendix under section B2.

By combining these question categories, the survey provided insight into how different community groups perceive, connect with, and engage in CPF activities. The findings will help CPF strengthen its communication strategy, expand partnerships, and better understand what drives participation across its audiences.

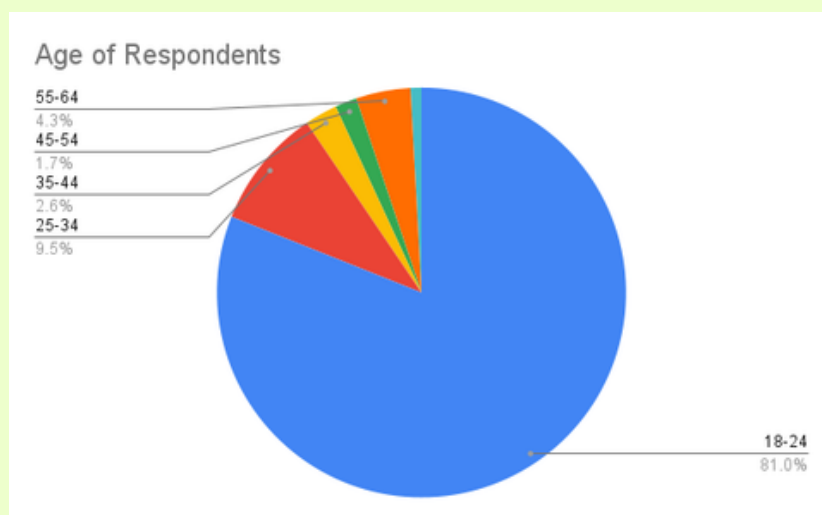
Results: Data Analyses and Report Findings

A total of 170 individuals were invited to complete the CPF survey. Of those, 128 people completed the survey. After removing two participants under the age of 18, the final dataset included 126 valid responses, yielding a 74.1 percent response rate.

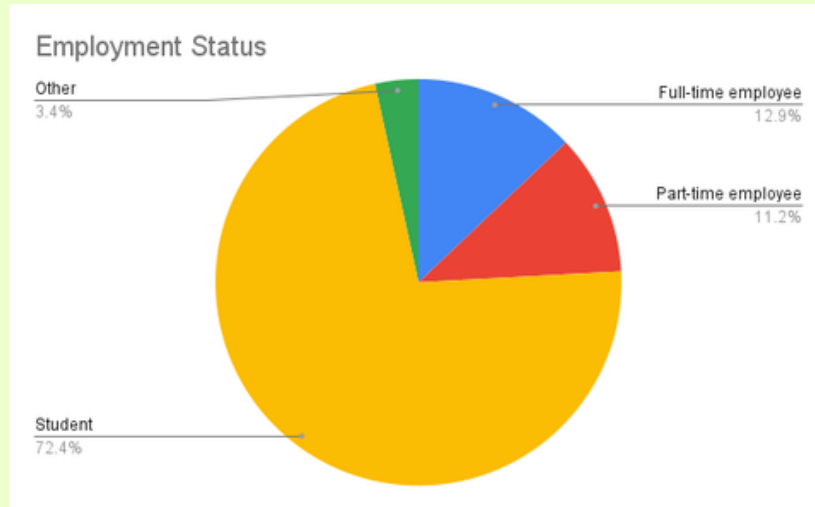
The demographic data shows that most respondents were young adults, primarily students or early-career professionals. A total of 77.6% identified as female (N = 90), while 22.4% identified as male (N = 26).



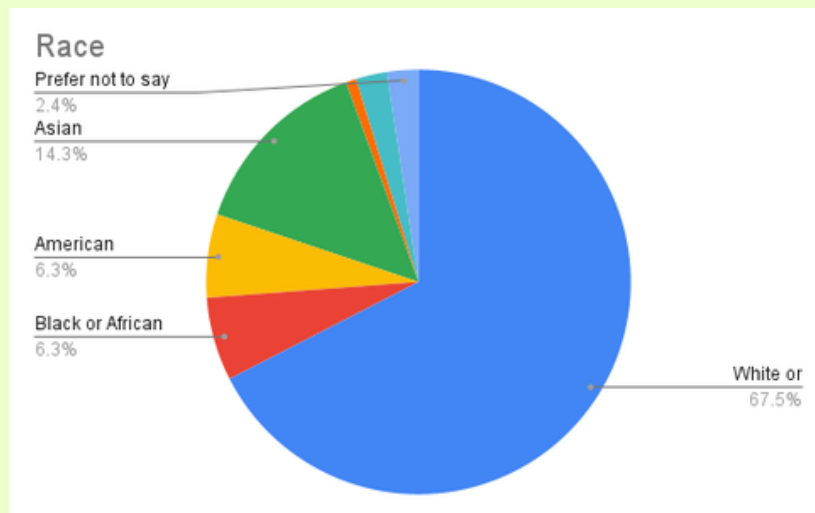
The largest age group was 18–24 years old at 81.0% (N = 102), followed by 25–34 at 9.5% (N = 12), 35–44 at 2.6% (N = 3), 45–54 at 1.7% (N = 2), and 55–64 at 4.3% (N = 5).



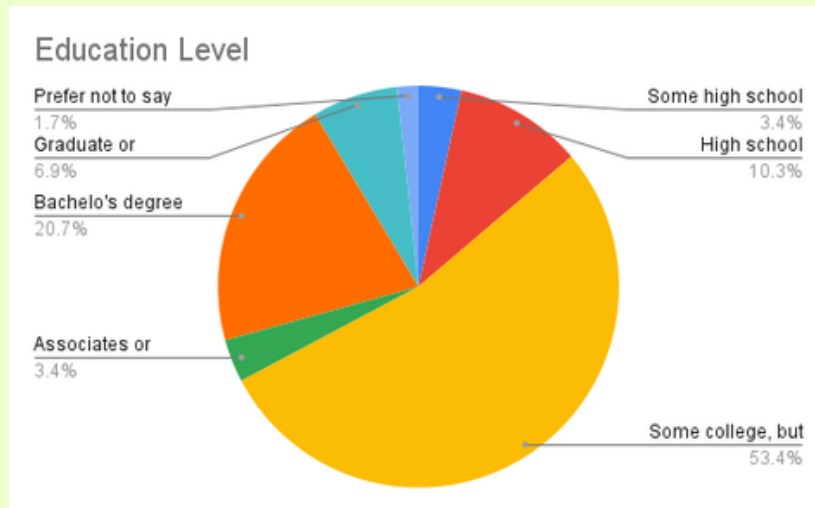
Regarding employment, 72.4% were students (N = 91), 12.9% were full-time employees (N = 16), 11.2% were part-time employees (N = 14), and 3.4% selected other (N = 4).



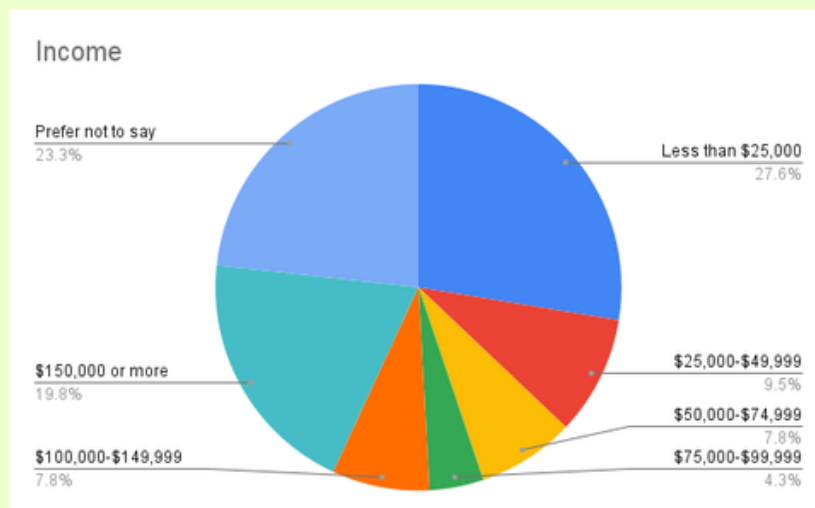
Racially, 67.5% identified as White or Caucasian (N = 85), 14.3% as Asian (N = 18), 6.3% as Black or African American (N = 8), and 6.3% as American Indian or Native American (N = 8), with 2.4% selecting Other (N = 3) and 2.4% Prefer not to say (N = 3).



Education levels were generally high: 53.4% had some college experience (N = 67), 20.7% held a bachelor's degree (N = 26), and 10.3% had a high school diploma or GED (N = 13), with 6.9% reporting a graduate or professional degree (N = 9), 3.4% an associate/technical degree (N = 4), 3.4% some high school (N = 5), and 1.7% preferring not to say (N = 2).

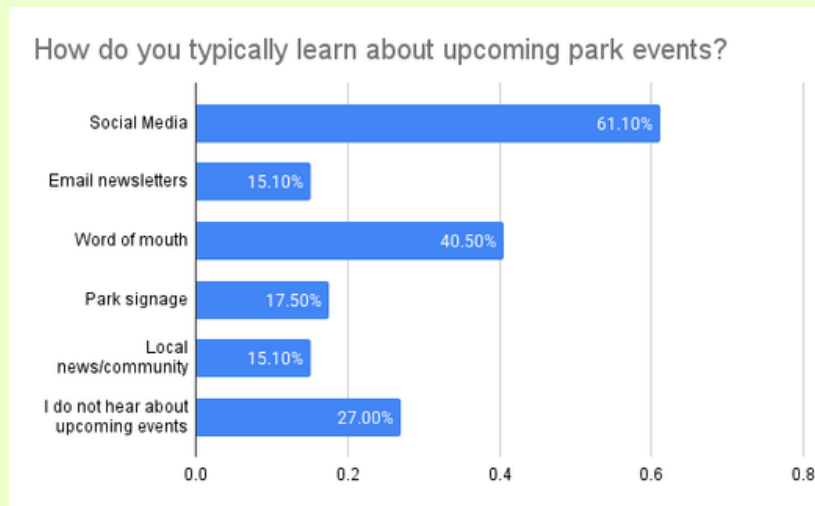


Income varied across the sample: 27.6% earned under \$25,000 (N = 35), 9.5% earned \$25,000-\$49,999 (N = 12), 7.8% earned \$50,000-\$74,999 (N = 10), 4.3% earned \$75,000-\$99,999 (N = 5), 7.8% earned \$100,000-\$149,999 (N = 10), and 19.8% earned \$150,000 or more (N = 25), while 23.3% preferred not to disclose (N = 29).

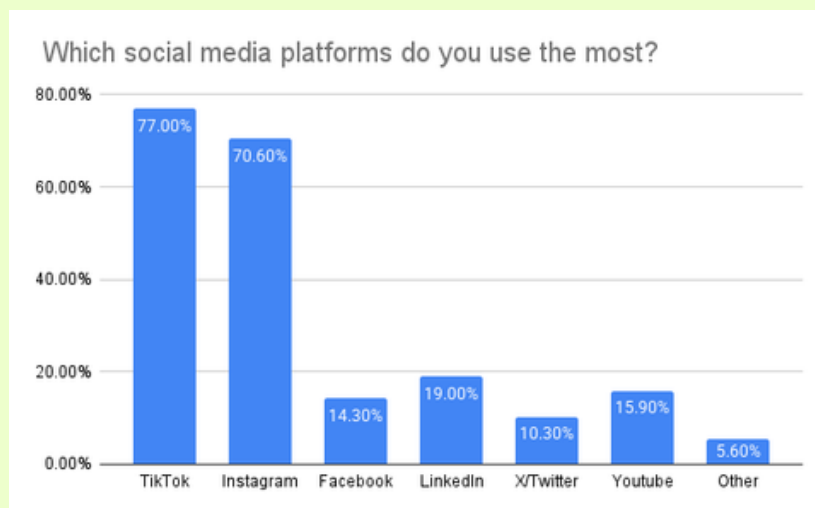


Together, these demographics indicate a primarily young, educated audience aligned with CPF's community engagement goals.

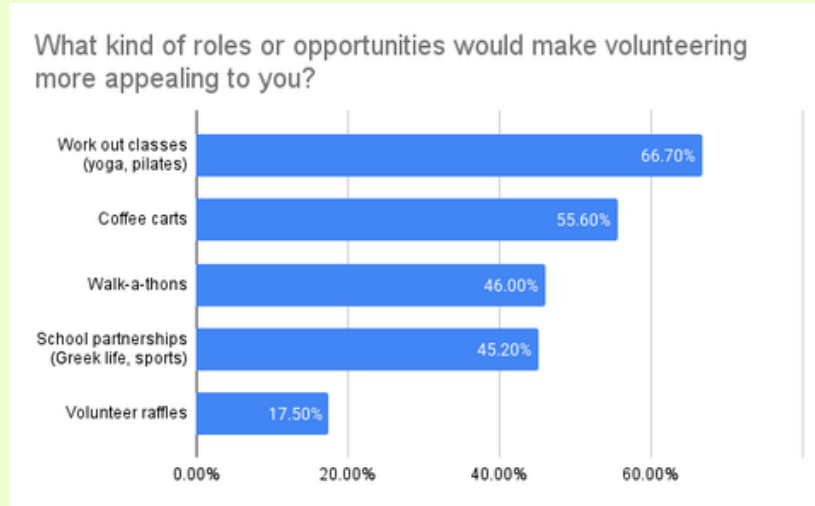
To understand how people receive information about park events, respondents were asked how they learn about upcoming events and which social media platforms they use most. Social media was the top information source at 61.1% (N = 77). Word of mouth followed at 40.5% (N = 51), with park signage at 17.5% (N = 22), email newsletters at 15.1% (N = 19), and local news/community websites at 15.1% (N = 19). Notably, 27.0% said they do not usually hear about events (N = 34).



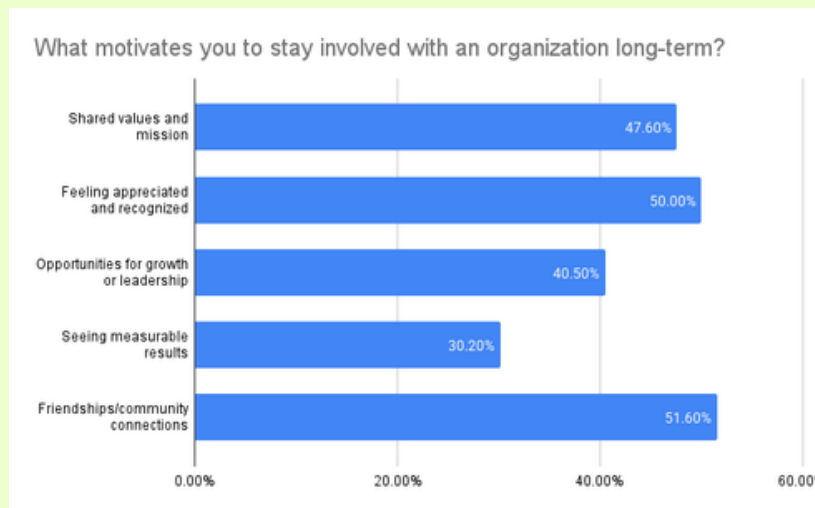
Platform use was led by TikTok at 77.0% (N = 97) and Instagram at 70.6% (N = 89), followed by LinkedIn at 19.0% (N = 24), YouTube at 15.9% (N = 20), Facebook at 14.3% (N = 18), and X/Twitter at 10.3% (N = 13), with 5.6% selecting Other (N = 7). These patterns point to short-form, visual channels as CPF's most effective communication path, with TikTok and Instagram carrying the most reach for this audience.



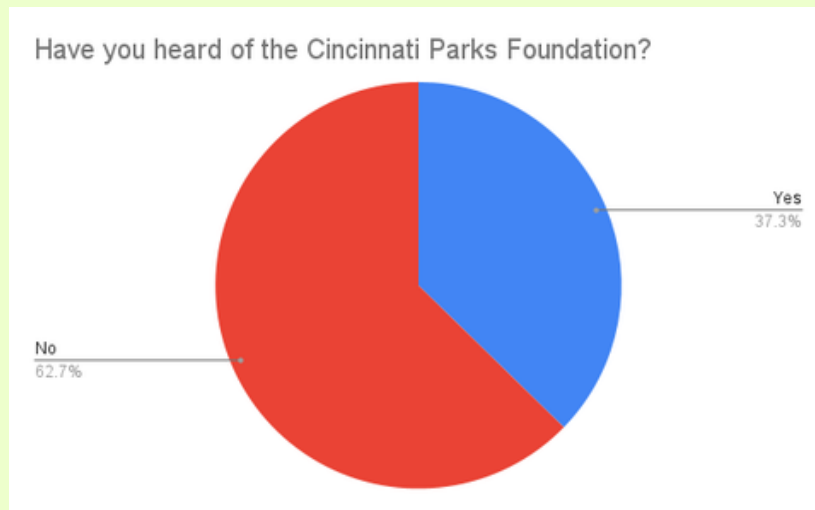
The survey also explored what would make volunteering more appealing and what motivates continued involvement. The most attractive opportunities were workout classes at 66.7% (N = 84), coffee carts at 55.6% (N = 70), walk-a-thons at 46.0% (N = 58), and school partnerships at 45.2% (N = 57), while raffles appealed to 17.5% (N = 22).



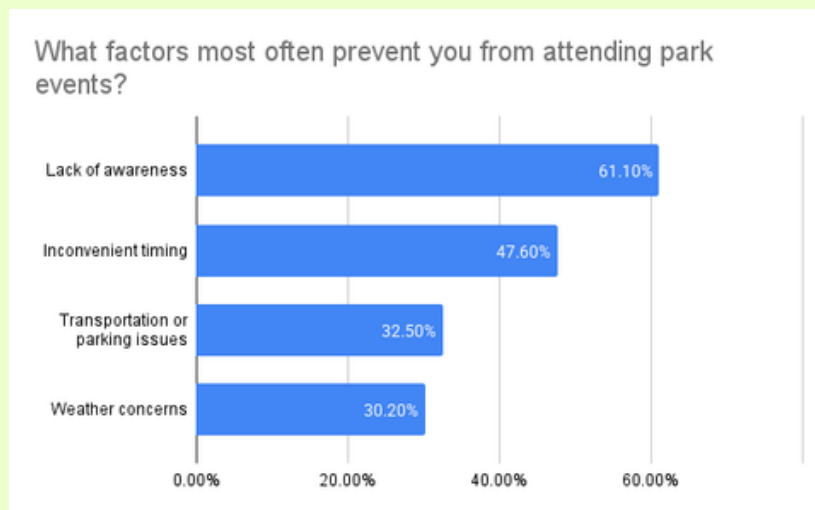
For long-term motivators, respondents emphasized friendships and community connections at 51.6% (N = 65), feeling appreciated or recognized at 50.0% (N = 63), and shared values with the organization at 47.6% (N = 60). Opportunities for growth or leadership were cited by 40.5% (N = 51), and seeing measurable results by 30.2% (N = 38). Overall, people are most likely to volunteer when events are social, clearly organized, and purpose-driven, suggesting group-friendly, recognition-focused activities are the best fit.



Awareness and barriers to participation were also assessed. Only 37.3% reported having heard of CPF before the survey (N = 47), while 62.7% had not (N = 79).



The leading barrier to attending events was lack of awareness at 61.1% (N = 77), followed by inconvenient timing at 47.6% (N = 60), transportation or parking issues at 32.5% (N = 41), and weather concerns at 30.2% (N = 38). The combination of relatively low awareness and “lack of awareness” as the top barrier indicates that CPF’s challenge is visibility rather than interest, and that earlier, clearer promotion paired with consistent branding would likely improve participation.



Overall, the survey findings paint a clear picture of both opportunity and direction. CPF’s audience is young, social, and highly engaged with online platforms, particularly TikTok and Instagram. Many are open to volunteering but value connection, flexibility, and recognition in their experiences.

Awareness, however, remains low, with more than 60% unaware of CPF prior to the survey and identifying “lack of awareness” as the most significant barrier to engagement. Together, these insights show that CPF can build stronger relationships with the community by prioritizing digital communication, creating accessible and interactive volunteer opportunities, and reinforcing its visibility across all park initiatives.

Discussion

After reviewing and analyzing our survey findings and data collected, we and CPF have answers to our research questions. Our survey had 81% of our participants being ages 18-24. Our first research question was to look at what the most effective outreach methods are for CPF to communicate with the public. After receiving the results from our survey, it is clear that social media is the number one most effective way for CPF to reach respondents. We also looked at which social media platforms were used the most by our respondents. TikTok and Instagram were the most used social media platforms, and we believe that they would be the most effective outlets to engage with people regarding CPF. We gained similar insights during the focus group that we conducted, as well as our background research. There is a common theme of CPF not having enough outreach on social media. Making sure that CPF has an active presence on these platforms will help present the upcoming events and initiatives to potential volunteers.

The next research question that we answered was how CPF can effectively encourage and attract new volunteers to get involved with its initiatives. Based on our results, the best way to attract new volunteers is through incentives and events. Workout classes were the most popular way that the participants said they would be attracted to attending a CPF event. The second most appealing factor was whether there was a coffee cart present at the CPF event. It was also indicated by our respondents that it is important that the volunteers and the organization have shared values and a mission. In our focus group, we were also told that social volunteering events would be beneficial to attracting new volunteers. In the focus group, we learned that CPF should prioritize events in which the volunteers are encouraged to go with friends.

This lines up with the results that we received from our survey. We believe that using these incentives would drive more people to become volunteers, but to maintain long-term relationships, CPF needs to make its mission clear to the volunteers.

Lastly, we answered what strategies CPF can use in order to strengthen their brand awareness and increase community visibility. It was evident in our survey responses that CPF is not well known, and this prevents potential volunteers from attending CPF events. With 62.7% of respondents not knowing what the CPF is, this causes there to be less opportunities to attract more volunteers. Also, 61.10% of respondents also claimed that the main reason they do not attend park events is due to the lack of awareness. In order to spread more awareness of the CPF, we believe that the CPF needs to use more social media outlets. This is a similar response to what we received in our focus group. The participants of the focus group and the survey both said that they are not familiar with the CPF but believe that they would have a higher chance to learn about it from social media. Since our respondents' main way of hearing about park events is through social media, it is important to make it a priority in the effort to create community awareness and visibility.

For our future campaign planning, we want to use these insights and promote and spread awareness about the CPF through social media platforms that are frequently used, such as TikTok and Instagram. We believe that this would be effective to attract more volunteers and especially volunteers ages 18-24. We will also implement the use of social media to share our upcoming events and initiatives, where we will also be implementing the desired events, such as workout classes and a coffee truck. Using these strategies, we hope to see an increase in community engagement, awareness, and involvement with CPF.

OBJECTIVES

Goal

Increase community engagement by expanding Cincinnati Parks Foundation's (CPF) volunteer base and social media presence to inspire and involve the target audience in park initiatives over the span of six months.

Target Audience

- **Primary Audience:** Young adults (ages 18–30) living in the Cincinnati area, especially university students and recent graduates seeking meaningful community involvement.
- **Secondary Audience:** Local businesses and their customers who value sustainability, wellness, and neighborhood connection.

Campaign Theme/Messages/Slogans

Theme: Rooted in Community, Growing Together for a Greener Cincinnati.

Slogans:

1. Your city. Your parks. Your CPF impact.
2. Big changes start in small parks.
3. Make your mark – the CPF way.
4. Get out. Give back. Grow together.
5. Create. Play, Flourish. CPF.

Hashtags:

1. #GrowCincyGreen
2. #GoGreenGoCincy
3. #GetOutGiveBack
4. #ParkItForward
5. #CreatePlayFlourishCPF



Objectives

Objective #1: Increase local community engagement by 40% from baseline among local businesses and schools over the next 6 months.

Objective #2: Increase CPF's TikTok following by 45 new followers per month through creative, engaging, audience-driven content and consistent posting.

Objective #3: Recruit 50 new volunteers every month of the campaign by promoting opportunities through social media, community events, and university outreach.

Execution

The execution of the campaign will involve implementing tactics that are in line with our three objectives to enhance visibility for CPF and increase volunteer participation. These actions will align with our three core objectives, ensuring consistent messaging and meaningful community engagement.

Programming

Objective #1: Increase local community engagement by 40% from baseline among local businesses and schools over the next 6 months.

Strategy: Partner with local businesses to promote events and initiatives, encouraging their customers and communities to participate and boost overall awareness.

Tactics

- Organize biweekly pop-up events with local business partners in Cincinnati Parks, such as coffee carts ([Deeper Roots Coffee](#)), yoga ([Embria Studio](#)), jewelry/vintage vendors ([Fenno Fashion](#)), and pet adoption events ([SPCA Cincinnati](#)).
- Collaborate with local schools ([Corryville Catholic School](#), [Hughes STEM High School](#), [Walnut Hills High School](#)) to recruit volunteers.
- Offer shared loyalty incentives with partner businesses such as discount codes, giveaways, and co-branded flyers/posters displayed at partner locations (see Appendix D).

Objective #2: Increase CPF’s TikTok following by 45 new followers per month through creative, engaging, audience-driven content and consistent posting.

Strategy: Leverage both digital and offline marketing efforts to promote CPF’s social media presence on TikTok and foster engagement.

Tactics

- Create a “Parks & Rec” parody TikTok series highlighting CPF events and humor.
- Collaborate with University of Cincinnati sports teams (Football, Baseball, Basketball) and local businesses (using existing partnerships from pop-up events) to co-create trend-based content. (See Appendix D6)
- Incorporate QR codes on flyers, signage, and booths linking directly to TikTok (see Appendix D).
- Produce “Volunteer Vlogs” and day-in-the-life videos showing the behind-the-scenes of CPF events.

Objective #3: Recruit 50 new volunteers each month by promoting opportunities through community events and university outreach.

Strategy: Build a sense of social responsibility among young adults by positioning CPF volunteer opportunities as flexible, fun, and rewarding.

Tactics

- Design and post flyers across UC’s campus and local businesses with a clear call-to-action (see Appendix D3).
- Partner with Greek life organizations to host group volunteer days and offer philanthropy credit (see Appendix D4).
- Collaborate with student organizations and service offices to cross-promote volunteer opportunities.
- Highlight “Volunteers of the Month” on social media to recognize participation and encourage peers to join.

Timeline:

[Gantt Chart](#) (See Appendix C)

Pre-Campaign Events:

Before we launch our campaign plan, we will use the findings from our research and baseline awareness survey to confirm platform priorities and volunteer motivations. We will finalize campaign branding, begin developing partnership outreach materials, and build a detailed content calendar. Additionally, we will begin planning for initial events and preparing scripts for early TikTok content. We will also begin to coordinate with local schools, UC, and local business partners to ensure a smooth and effective campaign kickoff. (See Timeline on pg. 41-43, and Appendix D1-D6)

TIMELINE

January, 2026:

Week 1: (5th-9th)

- Script + plan TikTok “Parks & Rec” parody series
- Build partnership outreach assets (email pitch, benefits sheet, partnership agreement)
- Draft co-promotion templates (flyers, social graphics, posters)
- Begin information distribution planning
- Weekly newsletter

Week 2: (12th-16th)

- Reach out to local businesses/restaurants via email
- Reach out to UC Greek life to schedule volunteer days
- Distribute flyers across UC campus (wave 1)
- Film Parody Episode #1
- Weekly newsletter

Week 3: (19th-23rd)

- Post Parody Episode #1
- TikTok collab with UC Football (shoot content)
- Campus tabling event #1
- Pop-up Event: Coffee Cart (#1)
- Weekly newsletter

Week 4: (26th-30th)

- Post Volunteer Vlog (#1)
- Post “Volunteer of the Month” (Month 1)
- Launch loyalty incentives (discounts, giveaways)
- Information distribution push #1
- Weekly newsletter

February, 2026:

Week 5: (2nd-6th)

- Film Parody Episode #2
- TikTok collab with UC Baseball
- Pop-up Event: Yoga in the Park (#1)
- Weekly newsletter

Week 6: (9th-13th)

- Post Parody Episode #2
- Distribute flyers across UC campus (wave 2)
- Volunteer Day with Greek Life (#1)
- Weekly newsletter

Week 7: (16th-20th)

- Post Volunteer Vlog (#2)
- Pop-up Event: Jewelry Market (#1)
- Information distribution push #2
- Weekly newsletter

Week 8: (23rd-27th)

- Post “Volunteer of the Month” (Month 2)
- TikTok collab with UC Basketball
- Campus tabling event #2
- Weekly newsletter

March, 2026:

Week 9: (2nd-6th)

- Film Parody Episode #3
- Volunteer Day with Greek Life (#2)
- Pop-up Event: Pet Adoption (#1)
- Weekly newsletter

Week 10: (9th-13th)

- Post Parody Episode #3
- Post Volunteer Vlog (#3)
- Partnerships check-in + cross-promotions
- Distribute flyers across UC Campus (wave 3)
- Weekly newsletter

Week 11: (16th-20th)

- Film Parody Episode #4
- Pop-up Event: Coffee Cart (#2)
- Information distribution push #3
- Weekly newsletter
- Tiktok collab with UC Football

Week 12: (23rd-27th)

- Post “Volunteer of the Month” (Month 3)
- Post Parody Episode #4
- Volunteer Day with Greek Life (#3)
- Weekly newsletter

April, 2026:

Week 13: (30th-3rd)

- Post Volunteer Vlog (#4)
- Pop-up Event: Yoga in the Park (#2)
- Partnership promotion + loyalty incentives reminder
- Weekly newsletter

Week 14: (6th-10th)

- Film Parody Episode #5
- Information distribution push #4
- Weekly newsletter
- Tiktok collab with UC Baseball
- Distribute flyers across UC Campus (wave 4)

Week 15: (13th-17th)

- Post Parody Episode #5
- Pop-up Event: Jewelry Market (#2)
- Weekly newsletter

Week 16: (20th-24th)

- Post “Volunteer of the Month” (Month 4)
- Post Volunteer Vlog (#5)
- Campus tabling event #3
- Weekly newsletter

Week 17: (27th-1st)

- Film TikTok Parody Finale
- Pop-up Event: Pet Adoption (#2)
- Information distribution push #5
- Weekly newsletter
- Tiktok collab with UC Basketball

May, 2026:

Week 18: (4th–8th)

- Post Parody Finale
- Post Volunteer Vlog (#6)
- Greek Life Volunteer Day (#4, optional extra push)
- Weekly newsletter
- Distribute flyers across UC Campus (wave 5)

Week 19: (11th–15th)

- Pop-up Event: Coffee Cart (#3)
- Loyalty incentives final push
- Weekly newsletter

Week 20: (18th–22nd)

- Post “Volunteer of the Month” (Month 5)
- Partnerships recap + highlight co-promotions
- Weekly newsletter

Week 21: (25th–29th)

- Pop-up Event: Yoga in the Park (#3)
- Information distribution final wave
- Weekly newsletter

June, 2026:

Week 22: (1st–5th)

- Post Volunteer Vlog (#7, wrap-up edition)
- Campus tabling event #4 (final recruitment drive)
- Weekly newsletter
- Distribute flyers across UC Campus (wave 6)

Week 23: (8th–12th)

- Pop-up Event: Jewelry Market (#3)
- Post “Volunteer of the Month” (Month 6)
- Weekly newsletter

Week 24: (15th–19th)

- Final campaign recap TikTok
- Compile analytics (volunteers, reach, engagement, partnerships)
- Present campaign evaluation report
- Weekly newsletter

BUDGET

Category	Description	Est. Cost	% of Total
Community Engagement Events	Local business pop-ups, art projects, and small incentives	\$1,200	40%
Social Media & Digital Growth (TikTok)	Digital promotion	\$700	23%
Volunteer Recruitment & Campus Outreach	Flyers, tabling, incentives	\$600	20%
Printing & Co-branded Materials	Flyers, QR codes, signage	\$300	10%
Contingency & Miscellaneous	Unexpected needs	\$200	7%
Total		\$3,000	100%

EVALUATION

For Objective 1, which focuses on increasing local community engagement by 40% from baseline among businesses and schools over the next 6 months, pre- and post-campaign evaluations will monitor progress through attendance tracking, partnership growth, and participation metrics. The success of biweekly pop-up events in Cincinnati parks will be measured through event attendance, vendor participation, and surveyed satisfaction levels from both attendees and partner businesses such as Deeper Roots Coffee, Ebra Studio, Fenno Fashion, and SPCA Cincinnati. Community Art in the Parks initiatives with Corryville Catholic School and local artists will be evaluated by art installation counts, social media engagement on event-related posts, and community feedback surveys measuring perceived awareness of CPF's mission. Marketing materials such as branded flyers, posters, and loyalty incentive promotions will be evaluated by distribution numbers, redemption rates, and customer social media mentions linking back to CPF events.

For Objective 2, which aims to increase CPF's TikTok following by 45 new followers per month, progress will be evaluated by using monthly follower growth analytics, engagement rates (likes, comments, shares), and content reach metrics. The "Parks and Rec" parody TikTok series will be assessed by view counts, completion rates, and comment analysis to measure audience connection. Collaborations with University of Cincinnati sports teams (Football, Baseball, Basketball) and local businesses such as Deeper Roots Coffee and Queen City Radio will be tracked through tagged post performance and cross-platform referral traffic. QR codes featured on flyers, signage, and event booths will be evaluated by scan counts and engagement data linking to CPF's TikTok. Additionally, the effectiveness of "Volunteer Vlogs" and "day in the life" videos will be assessed by viewer retention and increases in volunteer inquiries tied to CPF TikTok content exposure.

For Objective 3, which focuses on recruiting 50 new volunteers each month through community events and university outreach, progress evaluations will measure both quantitative and qualitative outcomes. Flyer distribution across the University of Cincinnati campus and local businesses (Rockwood Pottery, Sleepy Bee Cafe, Joseph-Beth Booksellers) will be tracked through QR code scans, website traffic, and event sign-up data. Partnerships with Greek life organizations (such as Kappa Alpha Theta and Phi Delta Theta) will be evaluated by group volunteer participation rates and philanthropy credit reports. Collaborations with student organizations like UC Serve Beyond Cincinnati, UC Environmental Club, and the Center for Community Engagement will be assessed through volunteer analytics from their networks. Lastly, the "Volunteer of the Month" social media campaign will measure engagement (likes, comments, shares) and peer-driven recruitment following recognition posts.



STEWARDSHIP

The final aspect of the campaign plan is stewardship, which includes four essential components: reciprocity, responsibility, reporting, and relationship nurturing. These recommendations outline how CPF can follow up with and strengthen relationships among the young adults, volunteers, university partners, and local businesses engaged throughout the campaign.

First, reciprocity involves acknowledging and appreciating stakeholders for their participation (Kelly, 2001). We recommend that CPF post a public thank-you message across all social media platforms, recognizing volunteers, partnering businesses, student organizations, and schools that contributed to events and content creation. Additionally, CPF could send personalized appreciation messages or small tokens— such as digital certificates, spotlight posts, or partner shoutouts— to reinforce sincere gratitude and encourage continued involvement.

Next, responsibility is how the organization acts in a socially responsible manner to those who have supported it (Kelly, 2001). This requires CPF to demonstrate ethical use of community support by clearly communicating how volunteer hours, university collaborations, and business partnerships directly benefit Cincinnati's parks. This commitment should be supported through reporting, which reflects the organization's actions in a socially responsible manner to those who have supported it (Kelly, 2001). such as sharing campaign outcomes, event attendance numbers, volunteer milestones, and TikTok engagement growth through monthly recaps or short visual updates.

Finally, relationship nurturing, the organization's duty to recognize the importance of supportive publics and keep them in mind when any decisions are made (Walter, 2009). should be ongoing beyond the campaign, with CPF maintaining consistent communication, inviting partners back for future pop-up events, expanding volunteer opportunities, and continuing a series of volunteer vlogs on TikTok. These actions help ensure long-term connection and meaningful engagement, allowing CPF and its community to grow together for a greener Cincinnati.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A1: FOCUS GROUP MODERATION GUIDE

Introductory Statement:

Hello all, we appreciate you taking the time to participate in this interview. We have already distributed consent forms, but as a reminder during this research project you are able to decline to answer any question you do not wish to answer.

As a brief overview, our group is called Miami Momentum, and we are looking to gather information for our client, Cincinnati Parks Foundation (CPF). They are a nonprofit organization dedicated to organizing volunteer programs, projects, and donations all in hopes of improving the Cincinnati area's greenspaces and parks.

Miami Momentum is interested in hearing perspectives from UC students and how they can be connected with volunteer opportunities.

I will be asking 7 questions, after the fourth question we will take a 5 minute break. Let's begin!

Key Questions:

How do you and your friends currently use Cincinnati's parks/green spaces, if at all?

Probing Question: What kinds of activities or events related to outdoors most excite you to participate in?

Share an example of a time you felt passionate about volunteering your time.

Possible Probing Questions: What was the cause? What was the activity? Who were you with/alone?

How familiar are you with Cincinnati Parks Foundation?

What motivates you personally to volunteer your time?

What could make volunteering for CPF more convenient?

Where do you typically hear about volunteer opportunities?

What makes an opportunity appealing to volunteer for?

Probing Question: How could CPF advertise to UC students and peak their interest? (could be event/activity specific, a certain competition, maybe incentive?)

Transition Statements:

That really intrigues me, could you provide an example of (XYZ).

That is a very unique perspective, if you're comfortable, could you go more into detail on that?

That was very insightful, in relation to (XYZ), I wanted to hear more perspectives on (XYZ).

Closing Script:

That was our last question, and with that being said that concludes our interview gathering insights on possible CPF volunteers. I want to sincerely thank our participants for their time and providing honest feedback. Thank you!

APPENDIX A2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Was there a specific moment or experience that sparked your passion for the rink and community programming?
2. From your perspective, what impact has the rink programming had on the downtown community – and in what way would you say these impacts/values are similar to CPF?
3. Are there aspects of our mission or values you wish were communicated more clearly?
4. What do you think motivates people to volunteer at the Riverfront Rink, and how could CPF highlight those same motivators to attract new volunteers citywide?
5. From your perspective, what might discourage someone from volunteering?
6. If CPF wanted to recruit more young or first-time volunteers, what kinds of messaging, events, or incentives do you think would resonate based on what you've seen at Sawyer Point?
7. Based on your experience partnering with the Cincinnati Parks Foundation, what do you see as the key strengths of this collaboration that could be applied to future partnerships?
8. Which partnership strategies or practices do you feel have been most successful and could be replicated in other collaborations?
9. What challenges did you encounter during your partnership with the Cincinnati Parks Foundation?
10. As a long-time partner of the Cincinnati Parks Foundation, what community groups or organizations do you believe CPF could extend its collaborations with to further increase the visibility of its efforts and strengthen engagement with the greater Cincinnati community?

APPENDIX A3: FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT

09/29/2025

FOCUS GROUP #1 TRANSCRIPT

Moderator

All right. We're going to go ahead and begin. If everyone participating in the focus group could turn on their cameras, that would be great. So hello, everyone. We appreciate you taking the time to participate in this focus group. We've already distributed the consent forms, but just a reminder, during this research project, you're able to decline to answer any of the questions that you wish not to answer. So, a brief overview, our group is called Miami Momentum, and we're looking to gather information for our client, Cincinnati Parks Foundation, or CPF. They're a nonprofit organization dedicated to organizing volunteer programs, projects, and donations in the hopes of improving the Cincinnati area's green spaces and parks. So Miami Momentum is interested in hearing perspectives from UC students and other people living in the Cincinnati area, and how they can be connected with volunteer opportunities. So I'm going to be asking seven questions, and then after the fourth question, we'll take a little break. So to start us off, how do you and your friends currently use Cincinnati's parks, green spaces, or any of that, if at all? And we'll start with number one.

Participant #1

Can you hear me?

Moderator

Yes.

Participant #1

I love going on a good walk. Ault Park's pretty awesome. I'm a big picnic guy. So yeah, I kind of love that, and then every once in a while, I think Ault Park does a fireworks show. So yeah, I love doing that, but yeah.

Moderator

All right. Could we hear from number two?

Participant #2

Yeah. So a lot of the time me and my friends like to go on walks. We just like to explore Cincinnati and just kind of enjoy our time outside, so we really love going to the parks and everything.

Moderator

Would you say there's any specific activities or events that you attend, or is it more general? Participant #2
More general. I mean, we just like being outside, kind of playing spike ball, being around the area.

Moderator

All right. Number three.

Participant #3

Mostly just walks as well, just in general.

Moderator

In general? No particular events that come to mind?

Participant #3

Yeah.

Moderator

All right. Number four?

Participant #4

Yeah, me and the fellas, we love going on good strolls. And, you know, Oktoberfest is always a good time. Opening day, Bengals games, they always have good activities down there along the river.

Moderator

Thank you for that. So could you guys share an example of a time where you felt passionate about volunteering in your life? We'll go in reverse order this time. Number four?

Participant #4

Yeah. So I volunteer, uh, about once a week at my, uh, fire department, just use that to get experience. And, as a kid, I used to volunteer at the Ronald McDonald House.

Moderator

Is there a certain cause or reason that you volunteer weekly?

Participant #4

Well, as a kid, it was because my dad made me, and now it's because it looks good for a job. Moderator

All right. Number three.

Participant #3

It's honestly been a while, but I used to volunteer at a soup kitchen in high school. It was for school, though, so...

Moderator

Would you say there's a specific reason why it's been a long time since you volunteered?

Participant #3

Not really. I mean, I just haven't had as much time, I feel like.

Moderator

Okay. Number two?

Participant #2

Yeah. I used to volunteer a lot when I was young, more specifically, my family was a part of this thing called the Community Emergency Response Team in Mason. So what they would kind of do is, like, clean up older people's houses and everything. So we haven't just done it in a while, but specifically, I kind of did that just because my family was into it, and it looked really good on a resume.

Moderator

All right. Thank you. Number one?

Participant #1

I used to volunteer for younger kids, like helping them learn how to play baseball. That's really the only volunteer work I did, but, you know, I mean, I played baseball basically my whole life. So, it's pretty important to me to be able to kind of coach up younger kids. Moderator

Yeah, that was very nice. So now I want to get into our client, and we're going to start with you again, number one. How familiar are you with the Cincinnati Parks Foundation, if familiar at all?

Participant #1

I'm not super familiar with them, but as far as I'm aware, they kind of, um...It's the foundation that helps rebuild the parks and put events there and stuff like that.

Moderator

Number two?

Participant #2

I really don't know much about them. Same as kind of what number one said, just kind of rebuilding the parks and just kind of keeping the area clean.

Moderator

Number three?

Participant #3

I'm honestly not really familiar at all. Gonna be honest.

Moderator

Thanks. Okay, and number four?

Participant #4

Yeah, I don't really know a whole lot. I probably wouldn't know what a Parks Foundation is if it weren't for Parks and Rec on TV.

Moderator

Okay. Fair enough. And number four we're going to stay with you. You talked about some of your volunteering, what you're currently doing, and in the past. So, what's a motivator for you personally to volunteer your time? Like, does it have to mean something to you in order for you to volunteer somewhere?

Participant #4

Um, I'd say a big motivator, um... I wouldn't say there's a lot that has to motivate me right now for what I do. Just getting there is it, pretty much.

Moderator

All right. Number three, do you have any motivators if you were going to give up some of your time to volunteer?

Participant #3

Mostly just being able to help people and feel like it's fulfilling in a way.

Moderator

All right. Number two?

Participant #2

Yeah. I mean, it is very fulfilling. I just feel like you always feel good after helping somebody and after doing something good, so...

Moderator

Totally. Number one?

Participant #1

Yeah, I'm kind of with number three and number two on that. I mean, you definitely feel good after helping people, and I mean, there's honestly nothing better than that kind of feeling.

Moderator

All right. Thank you for those answers. So, in what ways do you think volunteering for Cincinnati Parks Foundation could be more convenient? Whether that's like how you learn about the information or just how you get involved as a volunteer. Number one, how do you think it could be more convenient?

Participant #1

I mean, so basically, from what I've heard from this, not many people really know much about the foundation. So, I mean, maybe just a little bit more advertisement might help them kind of get more people involved.

Moderator

All right. Number two, what are your thoughts?

Participant #2

Yeah, I kind of think that it's the same thing as number one, but there needs to be more outreach to the actual population because not a lot of people just know about the organization. So, I feel like if there was more outreach of the program, then they would have a lot more involvement.

Moderator

All right. Thank you. Number three?

Participant #3

I would agree, like more ads or just more information to the community.

Moderator

All right. Number four?

Participant #4

Yeah. Pretty much what everyone else has said. Just getting the word out there more of what they are and how they operate.

Moderator

All right. Number four, where do you typically hear about these volunteering opportunities? Not Cincinnati Parks Foundation specifically, but in general if you're going to hear about a volunteer opportunity, where do you normally hear that from?

Participant #4

So, probably get the information from, like, the event information. So, they'll probably add something there, like volunteers needed, something like that. That would probably be where I'd hear about it the most.

Moderator

All right. Number three, where do you hear about volunteering opportunities?

Participant #3

I feel like mostly social media or the news.

Moderator

All right. Number two?

Participant #2

Yeah, I would say social media, maybe the newspaper. There is a lot of good volunteer stuff in the newspaper. Also, the news, they report on it a lot, just locally.

Moderator

Mm-hmm. Number one?

Participant #1

In the past, when I've done any sort of volunteering, I feel like I've heard about it through school. That's really the only way I've really heard about any volunteering opportunities I've done in the past.

Moderator

Okay. I do want to go back to two and three for a little bit. Number two, you mentioned newspaper. Are there certain publishers that you noticed it more in?

Participant #2

Not really. I feel like locally there are a lot more like volunteer just opportunities than in like the national like type of newspaper. But it just kind of depends on the area you're in.

Moderator
All right. Thank you. And number three, is there a certain social media platform that you said?

Participant #3

Probably like Facebook or Instagram, I feel like, for the most part.

Moderator

All right. So, for our next question, what makes an opportunity appealing for you? So, we'll start with number one. If you see something online for, or anywhere for a volunteering opportunity, what makes it appealing for your age, specifically, your age group?

Participant #1

I mean, I feel like the opportunity to be, to be able to volunteer, I guess, with people that are your age definitely helps. And I mean, like we kind of said previously like, just knowing that you're helping people, that definitely makes a big difference. But I mean, if it's something that I feel like other people my age might be doing, that would definitely make me more inclined to do it.

Moderator

Okay. Number two?

Participant #2

I mean, yeah, I feel like it would just kind of depend on, like, if people your age were actually doing it, you would feel more connected to it. It would kind of give you more of a fun opportunity to connect with people. And it just kind of would feel rewarding, really any volunteering that a person does.

Moderator

Number three?

Participant #3

I would say just making it more fun as well, like not just volunteering, but like, more engaging for the volunteers, if that makes sense.

Moderator

Could you go into a little bit more detail? Like, what do you mean? Like, what could be an example of it being more fun?

Participant #3

I don't know. I can't think of anything specific. Like, just if you're doing it with your friends or something, I guess, like making it a group activity.

Moderator

Yeah. What about number four?

Participant #4

I would say, pretty much just tag along with what everyone else has said. Try and get a couple friends to do it with you. I don't know, you could definitely make some memories with some friends by volunteering together.

Moderator

All right. We're on our last question. So, what are some types of advertisements that you would say work especially well with college students and people around your guys' age, and what might they find appealing, and what can Cincinnati Parks Foundation utilize to try to reach your guys' age group? And we'll start with number four.

Participant #4

Advertising on social media would definitely be, go a big way. Maybe changing their target audience with like a flyer, getting more information on the advertisement of what exactly the event is, and what the volunteers will be doing.

Moderator

All right. Thank you. Number three?

Participant #3

I feel like, yeah, flyers or video ads are probably more engaging for us, like our age group. Moderator

Do you think short form or on like a TikTok would be a good way of advertising, or do you think something like an Instagram post would be more effective?

Participant #3

I feel like probably TikTok, because I feel like a lot of people use that. So, it'd be easier to spread the information.

Moderator

All right. Thank you. Number two?

Participant #2

I definitely feel like social media would have a big change. But also, I feel like local commercials could have a big change and involve more people in volunteering. Like, during like a Bengals game or a Reds game, or something on TV, they could just put in a commercial and really get a lot of outreach to the actual population.

Moderator

Thank you. Number one?

.

Participant #1

I feel like specifically on social media, like TikTok and Instagram, is a big one. But I also think, like we said in the last question, if you can kind of lean on the fact that maybe you can get put with, like, friends, if you want to do it as a group activity. And I think that could also lean on the fact that it might look good on a resume or something like that, that would definitely make people more inclined to volunteer for it.

Moderator

All right. Thank you all for your answers. So, that was our last question. And with that being said, that concludes our interview gathering sites on possible Cincinnati Parks Foundation volunteers. I want to sincerely thank all of our participants for their time and for providing honest feedback. Thank you all.

APPENDIX A4: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

10/08/2025

ZOOM INTERVIEW #2 TRANSCRIPT: ELIZABETH (PSEUDONYM FOR PRIVACY)

Moderator

So for our Capstone class, we basically, throughout the semester, we're putting together a campaign plan for Cincinnati Parks Foundation, basically researching ways and, um, methods for them to improve their outreach and, um, increase brand visibility to attract new volunteers.

Elizabeth

Oh, super, super. Well, that's definitely a noble goal.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

And, um, yeah, happy to just provide insight where and when I can, um, on our project as it relates to the Parks Foundation and...

Moderator

I think... I think your audio might have cut out.

Elizabeth

Is everyone here who needed to be here for the interview? Is that okay to proceed?

Moderator

Yeah, we're all here. Whenever you're ready, you can go ahead.

Elizabeth

Did you want to ask the questions in order or... I would let you lead that.

Moderator

Yeah, we probably should. Um, okay, so... Starting off, um, was there a specific moment or experience that sparked your passion for the rink and community programming?

Elizabeth

Uh, no specific moment, but just a culmination of people that I was meeting in the park doing the same thing I was doing.

Moderator

Yeah. Um, so from your perspective, what, um, impact has the rink programming had on the downtown, downtown community, and in what way would you say these impacts and values are similar to CPF from what you know?

Elizabeth

Well, you know, our project has connected residents with parks, and particularly, uh, different demographic of folks to participate in our civic spaces, so with other city initiatives and programs and, um, just civic participation.

Moderator

Mm-hmm. Um, are there any, like, aspects of the mission, like, or values behind your organization and similar with CPF that you wish, like, were communicated more clearly?

Elizabeth

Um, I don't... I think, you know, we started as a fiscally sponsored initiative of the Parks Foundation, so we're pretty aligned with CPF on the values front.

Moderator

Yeah. Um, from your perspective, just when thinking about, like, new volunteers and recruiting more volunteers for these programs, what do you think are the top factors that discourage people from volunteering, if you had to say?

Elizabeth

What's discouraging people from volunteering is simply people with the disposable time aren't leaving the house as much. I mean, you know, you have to get people off their phones first.

Moderator

Yeah. Definitely.

Elizabeth

It's like, you know, the way people engage with people in real life has changed.

Moderator

Yeah. Good answer. Um, so then one, one thing we were, um, looking to include in our campaign plan was recruiting more young, first, or first-time volunteers. So what kind of messaging events or incentives do you think would resonate with these volunteers?

Elizabeth

Well, you know, feeding people is really important if you're not paying them. Um, so I think, you know, you, you have to be able to incentivize, at least with a meal. If you can give someone a meal for their time, then they'll spend-

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

... a couple of hours with you. You know, you can get someone to help for two or three hours, um, if, uh, if it, you know, they weren't doing anything else and you can feed them.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

The other, the other bit about, um, you know, incentivizing volunteers is we have to look at who can afford to volunteer. Who has the option to volunteer? Um, I, every organization wants young 20-somethings, and if you're in school and you're not working full-time, you have the time to volunteer. If you're retired and you're not working full-time, you have the time to volunteer. Um, when you're out of school and you're focused on making a living, then, and depending on what kind of job you have is, you may not be able to afford to volunteer. You might have to use your hours, um, uh, towards monetized activities that are yielding you income for that time. Um, you're not gonna necessarily trade it away. Uh, so I think, you know, the economics of volunteerism also have to change for different demographics of folks, um, who may or may not have that privilege.

Moderator

Yeah. Um, so based on your experience with partnering with CPF so far, what, um, do you see as the key strengths of this collaboration that could be applied to future partnerships?

Elizabeth

Well, CPF has a ton of wonderful experience, and they've helped coach us in invaluable ways. Um, as far as the best routes or how to go about doing this, um, you know, we wouldn't exist without CPF as an independent nonprofit, um, as, um, they, they really helped us build that model, and I think that is where they can provide other community organizat- organizations or other grassroots organizers like myself, um, a high impact, um, value in that, um, you know, in that advising role.

Moderator

Mm-hmm.

Elizabeth

The community connections have also been wonderful. The Parks Foundation has been, uh, really living its mission as community connectors.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

And I think that is, uh, that is so important in the work that, that we're doing. That community connection is fantastic. Um, I, I also think that, you know, the Parks Foundation cares deeply about the mix of people involved, mix of race, gender, religious preferences, income, um, all types of people, um, and making a way for everyone to participate regardless of whether you can or can't offer a bunch of your time or resources. Um, so I, I think that that, that is also very valuable attitude to take.

Moderator

Yeah. Um, so if you can think of any specifically, like any partnership strategies or practices that you've seen within your partnership with CPF, like have been the most successful and could be replicated with other collaborators?

Elizabeth

Yes. Um, uh, early on in this initiative, uh, we focused on the model created through Reimagining the Civic Commons, and I think Reimagining the Civic Commons, uh, it was a project back pre-pandemic, multiple national foundations all contributed to this knowledge base, this, um, social model for, uh, change-making in physical spaces and in public spaces like parks and libraries and, um, you know, recreation places, museums. And so, you know, change-making in public spaces, uh, now has this really amazing framework, Reimagining the, the Civic Commons, and it was Parks Foundation that really put me onto that, and I used it as a model for what we do. And, um, that model proved to be really, uh, really critical for us. And, and so, you know, if Parks Foundation hadn't connected us to that framework and the spirit of that, and then, you know, as well, you know, aligned both of our missions through that, uh, it's, it, uh, would have been a different story, I think.

Moderator

Yeah. Um, and then what challenges, if any, have you and your organization encountered during your partnership with CPF? And like-

Elizabeth

Uh, like, I mean, you know, there's not enough money to go around for amazing projects. That's the long and the short are, you know, it's, uh, it was you know, we have together the same challenge, which is, um, finite resources. There are a lot of phenomenal parks projects. Skating rink is just one of them, and, um, you know, we're all raising money, uh, to try to get these great community spaces-... uh, you know, either in order or repaired or lively again. Um, yeah, just finding resources.

Moderator

Did you find that it was difficult to attract greater involvement from local business partners?

Elizabeth

Um, I think what, you know, uh, d- no, I think, y- you know, from our perspective with our particular project, awareness is our biggest challenge. So it's like people... That rink that we reactivated was closed for so long that people forgot Cincinnati was home to North America's largest waterfront skating surface.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

Like, people just forgot it existed, and so we've been on this We Exist Campaign to let everybody know this is, this still exists. We re-opened it. It's back in operations, and you can come skate for free every weekend through park season.

Moderator

Yeah. That's a big part of our campaign too is just kind of trying to get the message out there more.

Elizabeth

The awareness, awareness is still our biggest issue, um, because once folks are aware, I think they're really keen on figuring out how to help and, and, um, you know, how to contribute time and treasure. Um, but just the awareness, just simply, you know, proving you exist now is so much more labor in all of the noise and all of the online noise and all of the things happening here. You know, our community calendars are very full in Cincinnati.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

Like, there's not a night of nothing to do here. Like, if you are a social person, you can go out and do everything.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

Or one option.

Moderator

Definitely. Um, with, I know you just mentioned you, kind of like a We Exist Campaign, are there any specific, um, methods or outreach that has noticeably been making an impact and gaining more traction?

Elizabeth

Well, uh, let's see. Methods of outreach, um, I mean, word of mouth is still, like, the number one way we get people down.

Moderator

Mm-hmm.

Elizabeth

Um, social media advertising works, um, you know, to a degree for sure. And that's effective. Um, and we've had a lot of success with our ads. Uh, but also press releases. Just earned, earned media via press release.

Moderator

Mm-hmm.

Elizabeth

And sending, you know, even having the bandwidth to get press releases out for all of the things.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

Um, you know, with, again, a limited team and Skate Downtown is all volunteer led, so we don't have any staff. And just getting volunteers, even just, like, volunteer-led organizations, period. You know, all of us have other jobs.

Moderator

Yeah. Um, okay, last question. Um, as a long-time partner of the Cincinnati Parks Foundation, what community groups or organizations do you believe that CPF could extend its collaborations with to further increase the visibility of its efforts and strengthen engagements within the community?

Elizabeth

Well, I've long felt like the arts organizations and the parks should do more together, because our parks enhance so many of our arts organizations and vice versa. Uh, when you think about music hall, well, without Washington Park there in front of it, it would be far less attractive and alluring. Uh, the same with the art museum in Cincinnati. It's surrounded by Eden Park, which is the most gorgeous urban park in the system. It's incredible. So, uh, you know, we have... A lot of our major regional attractions are framed by public parks, and, uh, you know, this, this past year, uh, you know, I worked with CPF to, um, you know, increase their level of connection and communication with the Taft Museum of Art, which has the resources and the programming wherewithal to program some things in Lytle Park. And, and so I think there's just a lot more that, that can happen there. Same with the art museum and the Artwork- and ArtWorks, you know, they have a van. Both of them have outreach programs where they have vans to bring activities into parks and outdoor public spaces. So I think there's a lot that our, um, libraries and museums, our arts orgs can do to enliven the parks. You think about all of the underutilized amphitheaters and stages in our parks.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

Um, you know, all- I think the, um, another, uh, wonderful partnership to explore would be with higher learning institutions like Miami of Ohio.

Moderator

Mm-hmm.

Elizabeth

You guys are doing a great thing. This is wonderful fodder for student groups. There's plenty to study and do in this space. So I, I would be keen to see other universities engaging this way. You know, at Skate Downtown, we've got the Art Academy of Cincinnati working on graphic design, uh, solutions for our wayfinding and signage at the rink just to-... help that awareness piece like, "Okay. Did you know this was here? These are the hours. Here's what we're offering. Here's what's on the menu." You know? Our graphics can tell so much of that story w- for us. And the Art Academy is our design partner in that, and those students are in their version of a capstone class, uh, working on some design solutions for us. So I would love to see more universities, libraries, and museums extend their programming into parks and, and extend their think tanks into park challenges like, like this one.

Moderator

Yeah. I completely agree. I think that was a great answer. Um, do you have any follow-up questions for us or any just kind of abstract thoughts that you wanted to share?

Elizabeth

Do any of you roller skate?

Moderator

I have before-

Elizabeth

Ah.

Moderator

... I can't say I'm very good. I definitely do not.

Moderator

I think last time for me was probably at, like, a birthday party.

Elizabeth

You know, you guys should, um... It would be fun for you to bring at least your group to our Halloween Skate. It's our last program of the year, and we're partnered with Parks Foundation and Cincy Parks for that, as well as the local roller derby team, Cincinnati Roller Girls. Um, it's fun. I mean, it's really hard to top skating in costumes, guys. Really tough to beat. So-

Moderator

Sounds fun.

Elizabeth

But yeah, you should bring a group and come down, and-

Moderator

When is that?

Elizabeth

... and experience it. It's gonna be October the 18th, and, uh, it'll run from 6:00 to 10:00. Usually folks start showing up around 7:00, when it kind of gets dark.

Moderator

Hm. That sounds so fun. That would be great research for us.

Elizabeth

Great research.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

So yeah, come down. You could interview, uh, interview quite a few people, and, uh, get a feel for the culture at the rink, and, uh, just kind of see how people are interacting with the space. I think you'd find it fascinating.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

You could get some photos too.

Moderator

Yeah. Definitely. Anyone else have anything to add? I guess not. I just wanted to say thank you for meeting with us. This was super helpful and really great information. We really appreciate it. Yeah, definitely gained a lot of insight from this.

Elizabeth

Well, hey, um, you know, you have my an- my email now, so don't be a stranger. Email if you need anything else, if you want any other materials or anything. And, um-

Moderator

Yeah, definitely will follow up.

Elizabeth

Yeah, absolutely. And then hopefully I can meet you all on October 18th for the Halloween Skate.

Moderator

Yeah.

Elizabeth

Um, but yeah. In the meantime, let me know if you have any other thoughts or questions. And I, I can't wait to hear what your ideas are. You guys, you guys are, uh... You guys have your finger on the pulse of things, so I, I'm gonna learn a lot from this too, I know.

Moderator

Yeah. Thank you so much for taking the time. We appreciate you doing this on such short notice too. Yeah, thank you.

APPENDIX B1: RESEARCH CONSENT INFORMATION: CINCINNATI PARKS FOUNDATION PROJECT

Research Consent Information: Cincinnati Parks Foundation Project

The purpose of this research is to examine community preferences and behaviors related to brand communication, event participation, and social media engagement with the Cincinnati Parks Foundation.

This study is being conducted by researchers from STC 459C Capstone class in the Department of Media, Journalism, and Film at Miami University. Invitations to complete this online survey have been sent by email to about 400-500 people. In addition, open invitations have been posted on social networking sites such as Instagram and Twitter/X. Participation in this research is restricted to persons 18 years of age or older.

Completing the survey should take about 8 minutes. Your participation is voluntary, you may skip questions you do not want to answer, and you may stop at any time. The survey does not request information that would explicitly identify you. If you inadvertently include identifying information, such information will be removed from stored data. Only the researchers will have access to individual responses. Results of the survey will only be presented publicly as aggregate summaries.

If you have any questions about this research or you feel you need more information to complete this survey, you can contact a faculty advisor.

If you have questions or concerns about the rights of research subjects, you may contact our reviewing body: the Research Ethics and Integrity Office at Miami University at (513) 529-3600 or humansubjects@miamioh.edu.

---- Thank you for your participation.

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

- Yes, I agree to participate in the study. (1)
- No, I do not agree to participate in this study. (2)



APPENDIX B2: FINAL SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Awareness & Perception

1. Have you heard of the Cincinnati Parks Foundation?

- Yes
- No

2. On a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:

CPF does a good job communicating what it does for the community.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. In your opinion, how well do Cincinnati parks contribute to building a sense of community?

- 1 = strongly disagree
- 7 = strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. Communication & Social Media

4. Which social media platforms do you use the most? (Select all that apply)

- TikTok
- Instagram
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- X/Twitter
- YouTube
- Other: _____

5. On a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely), indicate how likely you are to engage with Cincinnati Parks Foundation content in the following formats:

- Short videos or reels
- Photo posts
- Stories or polls
- Long detailed videos

6. How do you typically learn about upcoming park events? (Check all that apply)

- Social media
- Email newsletters
- Word of mouth
- Park signage
- Local news/community websites
- I do not hear about upcoming events
- Other: _____

3. Volunteering & Engagement

7. On a scale of 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely), how likely are you to volunteer with the Cincinnati Parks Foundation if you learned of a potential opportunity?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. What kind of roles or opportunities would make volunteering more appealing to you? (Select all that apply)

- Work out classes (yoga, pilates)
- Coffee carts
- Walk-a-thons
- School partnerships (Greek Life, HS sports)
- Volunteer raffles

9. When deciding whether to volunteer for an organization, which factor matters most to you? (Select all that apply)

- Clear communication of event details
- Easy online sign-up
- Friendly/welcoming staff
- Opportunities to volunteer with friends
- Flexible time commitments

10. Does the impact of volunteering motivate you?

- Yes, highly
- Yes, somewhat
- No

4. Events & Programming

11. How likely would you be to attend these specific programming events in your local parks? (1 = least likely, 7 = most likely)

- Fitness activities (yoga, run clubs)
- Food-related events (food trucks, farmers markets)
- Music, art, or cultural events
- Volunteer opportunities or park clean-ups
- Family and youth events

12. What factors most often prevent you from attending park events? (Select all that apply)

- Lack of awareness
- Inconvenient timing
- Transportation or parking issues
- Weather concerns
- Not interested in offered events
- Other: _____

13. On a scale of 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely), to what extent do you feel that incentives (free food, giveaways, etc.) would increase your likelihood of attending a CPF event?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Motivation & Connection

14. On a scale of 1 (not connected at all) to 7 (very connected), how connected do you currently feel to the Cincinnati Parks Foundation?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. What motivates you to stay involved with an organization long-term? (Select all that apply)

- Shared values and mission
- Feeling appreciated and recognized
- Opportunities for growth or leadership
- Seeing measurable results
- Friendships/community connections

16. What is your profession?

1. Full-time employee
2. Part-time Employee
3. Student
4. Other

Demographic Questions

17. Gender: What is your gender?

Male

Female

Non-binary/third gender

Prefer not to say

18. Age How old are you?

- under 18
- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 - 74
- 75 - 84
- 85 or older

19. Race: Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be

- White or Caucasian
- Black or African American
- American Indian/Native American or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Other
- Prefer not to say

20. Education: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Some high school or less
- High school diploma or GED
- Some college, but no degree
- Associates or technical degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate or professional degree (MA, MS, MBA, PhD, JD, MD, DDS, etc.)
- Prefer not to say

21. Income: What was your total household income before taxes during the past 12 months?

- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$74,999
- \$75,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000-\$149,999
- \$150,000 or more
- Prefer not to say

APPENDIX D-
MOCKUPS

APPENDIX D1: COFFEE CART POP-UP FLYER



The flyer features a light green background with a subtle floral pattern. At the top, the text "COFFEE AND CPF" is prominently displayed in a dark green, bold, serif font. The word "AND" is contained within a dark green speech bubble. Below this, the logos for "DEEPER ROOTS COFFEE" (CINCINNATI OHIO) and the "CINCINNATI PARKS FOUNDATION" are shown. The event details "EVERY FRIDAY @ 7-11 AM" are written in a large, bold, dark green font. Contact information, including the location "Fradel Park", the website "cincinnatiiparksfoundation.org", and the phone number "(513) 861-0023", is provided at the bottom. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner.

**COFFEE
AND CPF**

DEEPER
ROOTS
COFFEE
CINCINNATI OHIO

CINCINNATI PARKS
FOUNDATION

**EVERY FRIDAY
@ 7-11 AM**

Fradel Park
cincinnatiiparksfoundation.org
(513) 861-0023



APPENDIX D2: YOGA EVENT FLYER

YOGA

IN THE PARK WITH CPF



02 APRIL 2026

LOCATION:
OWL'S NEST PARK -
1984 MADISON RD,
CINCINNATI, OH 45208

TIME:
11 AM - 6 PM

WE'RE EXCITED TO SHARE OUR
UPCOMING YOGA IN THE PARK EVENT—
BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER TO
SUPPORT WELLNESS, COMMUNITY
CONNECTION, AND THE PRESERVATION
OF CINCINNATI'S PARKS.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

[HTTPS://CINCINNATIPARKSFOUNDATION.ORG](https://cincinnati-parks-foundation.org)

APPENDIX D3: UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI SIGN-UP FLYER





Join the Movement

**Connect. Serve. Grow!
Unite with Your Greek
Life for Volunteer Days!**

Unite your fraternity or sorority or students to give
back to our city's green spaces!

 Cincinnati + Cincinnati
Parks Foundation

 University of Cincinnati
Foundation



APPENDIX D5: GENERAL VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP FLYER

cincinnati.parksfoundation.org'."/>

**Give Back to Cincinnati's
Green Heart**

Volunteer Today
to Preserve Our Parks

Join CPF | Visit Our Site to Learn More:
cincinnati.parksfoundation.org



APPENDIX D6: UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI TIKTOK COLLABORATION

