

Charity Pulse Staff Survey

2020 Guidance notes for charities

Background

At Birdsong we believe that staff surveys are a powerful way for an organisation to keep in touch with what their people are thinking and feeling. We have been running staff surveys across the UK voluntary sector since 2004 and have developed a range of services to enable sector leaders and HR professionals to gather the honest opinions of their people.

At the core of our approach is *Charity Pulse*, a voluntary sector staff satisfaction survey developed by Birdsong. The survey probes the issues that matter most to charity staff through a set of 46 carefully crafted questions.

Charities can run a *Charity Pulse* staff survey at any time of year but, each year in early-spring, we provide the opportunity for charities to run the survey at a specially reduced rate.

Birdsong benchmarks

We have two benchmarks that can provide your charity with meaningful voluntary sector comparisons.

- The Birdsong *Charity Pulse* benchmark: This benchmark provides a general UK voluntary sector comparison. It is based on the most recent three years of responses to over 200 Birdsong staff surveys, involving over 25,000 individuals working in charities.
- The Birdsong *Top Performers* benchmark: This benchmark provides a comparison for charities wanting to challenge themselves a little more. It is based on the survey results of the Top 40 performing Birdsong surveys of the last three years.

The charities included in these benchmarks are participants in Birdsong's *Charity Pulse*, *Hospice* and *Bespoke* staff surveys over the past three years. These organisations are based around the UK and have between 15 and 3,400 staff.

If you choose to use a *Charity Pulse* survey for your staff survey, the main output from the will be a benchmarked Overall Results report that compares your staff responses with the *Charity Pulse* benchmark. If you would also like to compare your charity's results with the Birdsong *Top Performers* benchmark, you can specify this as an optional additional report.

Volunteers

Birdsong can provide a tailored version of the *Charity Pulse* survey for charity volunteers. We are currently developing a benchmark for volunteers, so if this service is of interest to your charity, please get with us in touch to find out more.

Get in touch

If you would like more information about *Charity Pulse* – including examples of our reporting formats – please visit our website birdsong.co.uk and follow the **Off-the-shelf Charity Pulse surveys** link - or contact:

Emma Howard at emma@birdsong.co.uk or call us on **01858 525258**.

Key information

Important dates

The spring 2020 *Charity Pulse* survey is open from **Monday 10th February - Friday 13th March**.

If you would like your charity to take part during this spring survey period, please register by **Friday 24th January**.

After the survey has closed we analyse the results and prepare the reports for each charity. You will receive your reports by **1st April** at the latest.

You can also take the *Charity Pulse* survey at other times of year, if that works better for your organisation.

Registering to take part

To get the process started **you need to register online**. To do this visit our website: birdsong.co.uk and follow the **Off-the-shelf Charity Pulse surveys** link. Please read these Guidance notes before registering.

You can view and try out a test version of the survey and look at example reports.

If you want to run a survey at another time of year, please give us as much notice as you can - a minimum of one month is appreciated.

Deciding who is taking part

The survey is structured so that it can be taken by:

- Paid staff only
- Volunteers only
- Paid staff and volunteers

Survey questions are worded appropriately depending on which of the above groups is chosen. So, for example, here are three example question wordings:

- I would recommend this charity as an employer
- I would recommend this charity as a place to volunteer
- I would recommend this charity as an employer or a place to volunteer

Questions that are not relevant to volunteers, such as those relating to pay, will not be visible to any volunteers who take the survey.

Pricing

There is a fixed price structure for the survey reports, with various options available at additional cost. The details of these are set out in **Appendix 1**.

The core cost of running the survey and receiving the Overall Results report is **£375 + VAT** during the early-spring survey period, or **£475 + VAT** at other times of year.

In addition, we offer consultancy services to support you after you have received your survey results. The pricing for these services is also detailed in this appendix.

The same price structure applies to both staff and volunteer surveys.

Taking the survey

Once everything is arranged, the survey questionnaire is completed via a web-based survey link, which you pass on to your staff and/or volunteers. Hard copy questionnaires can be provided for individuals who do not have access to the internet.

How we use your data

Each charity's results will be confidential to them. Each charity's summary results will be included in Birdsong's *Charity Pulse* benchmark. The top 40 surveys' summary results will be included in Birdsong's *Top Performers* benchmarks.

Confidentiality

Our benchmarks do not identify individual charity results.

We never release information that could allow an individual to be identified.

Additional information about GDPR and the Birdsong data policy can be found in the FAQs appendix at the end of this document.

Overall Results report

The main output of the survey process is a graphical Overall Results report. For staff surveys, this report compares your charity's responses with the Birdsong *Charity Pulse* benchmark.

This report also highlights your charity's top and bottom performance areas, which allows an at a glance view of your best and worst areas of staff satisfaction.

Optional Reports

You can further analyse your results by choosing from the following optional comparison reports:

- Top Performers
- Previous years
- Staff / volunteers
- Managers / Non-managers
- Length of service
- Location
- Department

In addition you can specify custom sub-analyses unique to your charity. This could be, for example, to analyse the responses from different job types.

Please note that if you specify a sub-analysis that has more than three categories (for example, you specified a department sub-analysis and there are four or more departments), then the report will be produced in a tabular rather than graphical form.

Please do not identify individual categories that are likely to have less than 10 respondents as this may compromise the anonymity of responses.

Verbatim Comments

You can add open questions to the survey so that respondents can enter narrative responses. Open questions can be useful because they allow more detailed feedback from respondents - or for you to raise specific topics that are important to your charity.

Before the survey launches

Give your people advance notice that the survey will be taking place and tell them why you would like them to take part.

Make sure that all of them have access to the internet (or provide the alternative hard copy questionnaire).

Before you launch, we will provide you with your online link to the survey to include in your launch email. Here is an example email to staff:

Our staff survey opens today - please click here to take part:

<http://surveys.birdsong.co.uk/s/survey2020example>

The questionnaire will only take you about 10 minutes to complete.

We want to know what you really think, so the survey is being managed externally. No one at **Your Charity Name** will see any individual responses. *(If you are asking your staff to submit verbatim comments it is helpful to add: Any comments you make in response to open questions will be seen by....)*

The survey closes on so make sure that you have completed the questionnaire by then. We will feedback the summary results to you at/by ...

Thank you in advance for your help with this process. We are committed to making **Your Charity Name** a great place to work and we need your opinions to help us continue to improve.

Clarifying terms used in the survey

If the meaning of any of the terms used in the survey questions need clarification within your charity context, you can also include appropriate guidance in this launch communication. Examples might be further explanation of 'diversity' or 'senior management'.

During the survey

A three-week period is an ideal length of time for the survey, but you may wish to give your people a longer period to complete it.

Encourage responses by publicising the survey through, for example:

- notice boards
- asking managers to remind their teams to take part
- intranet
- staff and volunteer forums

It is helpful to send out reminder emails, to further encourage responses. The final week of the survey is a particularly good time to do this.

We will provide you with a live reporting link, so that you can check on your response levels at any time.

After the survey has closed

We will get your survey reports to you as quickly as possible after your survey has closed - usually within three weeks. To maintain confidence in the process, plan to make the survey results available to your people at the earliest opportunity, highlighting the most significant findings - both positive and negative.

To maximise the motivational impact of the survey, take some prompt action in response to the findings. If appropriate, ask staff or volunteers for their views on which are the most important and/or urgent areas for improvement.

Be honest about what you can and cannot change.

After you have received your results : How we can help you further?

We believe that a staff survey is just the beginning of a journey to improve staff satisfaction, engagement and motivation.

Birdsong has considerable experience of supporting charities following staff surveys and some charities find it useful to have further involvement from us after they receive their results.

We can produce additional reports that further analyse and interpret your data, examples of these include:

- **Findings report**

An executive summary report highlighting key variances, trends, strengths and areas for further investigation.

- **Comments Summary Report**

A written report summarising the comments and suggestions made by staff.

We can also work with you directly to help you in moving forward, examples of this include:

- **Staff presentation/workshops***

A presentation of the survey results and key findings to staff. This can be combined with facilitated group discussions to identify priority areas for improvement.

- **Focus groups***

In depth discussions with groups of staff or volunteers to follow up and explore issues arising from the survey.

- **Telephone support**

We are always happy to discuss your survey results with you and address any questions arising from the reports.

** Please note that these 'in-person' services are not currently available to all locations.*

Any Questions?

If you have any queries or would like to discuss any aspect of the *Charity Pulse* Survey process, please contact: Emma Howard at emma@birdsong.co.uk or call us on **01858 525258**.

Appendix 1 - Survey Costs

All the costs detailed below **exclude VAT**, which is charged at the standard rate of 20%.

Core survey cost

Including Overall Results report	£375	Early-spring survey period
	£475	Other times of year

Optional comparison reports

Top Performers	£250	
Previous years	£200	Two years
	£250	Three years
Staff / Volunteers	£200	
Managers / Non-managers	£200	
Length of service	£250 – £400	See Note 1 below
Location	£250 – £400	See Note 2 below
Department	£250 – £400	See Note 2 below
Custom sub analyses	£250 – £400	See Note 2 below
Verbatim comments report	£150	

Other services

PDF version of the questionnaire - for printing out paper copies	£50	
Inputting hard copy responses	£3	Per questionnaire
Comments Summary Report	From £375	
Findings report	From £750	
Staff presentation/workshops	From £750	
Staff focus groups	From £375	

Note 1 – The report cost depends on the number of reporting categories, namely:

- Up to three: **£250**
- Up to six: **£300**

Note 2 – The report cost depends on the number of reporting categories, namely:

- Up to three: **£250**
- Up to six: **£300**
- Up to nine: **£350**
- Up to twelve: **£400**

The Organisation

1. I understand what this charity wants to achieve as an organisation
2. I feel well informed about what is happening within the charity
3. Communication between different teams/departments is effective
4. Communication between staff and senior management is effective
5. I have confidence in the senior management team
6. I have confidence in the trustee board
7. Diversity is valued at this charity
8. Morale at this charity is high

Your Well-being

9. I enjoy the work I do
10. I enjoy working with the people in this charity
11. I like my working environment
12. I feel like I am making a difference
13. I feel appreciated
14. I am treated with fairness and respect
15. I rarely get stressed at work
16. Working for this charity contributes positively to my health and well-being

Resourcing (this section is seen by staff only)

17. The workload in my role is reasonable
18. The results expected of me are realistic
19. I rarely work more than my contracted hours in a week
20. I do not feel under pressure to work long hours
21. I am happy with the flexible working practices here
22. I am not concerned about my job security

Working practices

23. This charity's processes and procedures help me to carry out my role effectively
24. Poor performance is dealt with effectively at this charity
25. This charity makes best possible use of supporters' time and money
26. This charity is doing everything it can to reduce its impact on the environment

People management

- 27. I am clear about what is expected of me in my role
- 28. I feel empowered to take decisions that are relevant to my role
- 29. My views are listened to and valued
- 30. It is safe to challenge the way things are done here
- 31. In the last year I have not been bullied at work
- 32. I receive useful feedback on how I am performing
- 33. I have recently received praise for my work
- 34. I get the support I need to enable me to do my work well
- 35. My line manager is a good person to work for

Training and development

- 36. This charity makes best use of my abilities
- 37. I receive the training/development I need to enable me to do my work well
- 38. I am happy with the personal development opportunities here

Career and reward (this section is seen by staff only)

- 39. I feel supported in developing my career
- 40. My pay is competitive in comparison to people doing similar work in the charity sector
- 41. I feel that pay is handled fairly

Overall

- 42. Overall, I am satisfied with my job
- 43. I am proud to work for this charity
- 44. I believe in the aims of this charity
- 45. I would recommend this charity as an employer
- 46. I plan to be working for this charity in a year's time

Will our survey results be included in Birdsong's benchmarks?

Yes, each charity's results will be included in Birdsong's *Charity Pulse* benchmarks. Any top performing charities will also be included in Birdsong's *Top Performers* benchmark.

Will anyone else see our charity's survey results?

No, each charity's survey results are confidential to them. Each charity taking part in the survey will see a list of this year's participating charities.

Can anyone identify individual responses in any way?

Birdsong never releases survey information that could allow an individual to be identified.

Is it possible for an individual to take the *Charity Pulse* survey more than once?

Yes, we do not limit access to the *Charity Pulse* questionnaire. The reasoning behind our approach is as follows:

- The only way to guarantee one survey response per individual is to send out a personalised invitation to each person with a unique link to the survey. We do not favour this approach because it impairs the perception of survey confidentiality, which reduces response rates and inhibits honest feedback.
- The other option to limit multiple responses is through the use of browser cookies. We do not take this approach because it is very easy for participants to get around this by using multiple devices. Furthermore, many server environments delete cookies or prevent them from being used.

If an individual wants to take the survey more than once (and most, of course, do not), it is rarely a critical problem for a charity. They are not precise exercises and your respondents' responses will vary depending on, for example:

- Their mood on the day
- Any significant activities taking place within your charity when the survey is running. For example, reorganisations typically increase concerns about job security.
- External drivers, such as national events. For example, the result of the Brexit vote negatively impacted the morale of most charity individuals.

Staff and volunteer surveys are designed to provide a guide to future organisational development and the response data should be considered in that context.

Do you include partially completed responses in our survey results?

No, we only include survey responses where the respondent has reached the end of the survey. Individuals do not have to answer every survey question (we do not force responses), but they must click on the *Submit* button to provide a valid response. The benefit of this approach is that if a respondent has to leave the survey part way through, they can return to the survey

link on another occasion and retake the survey from scratch. By discounting partial responses, we remove the risk of double-counting genuine responses.

How long do you retain returned paper copies?

If you ask Birdsong to data capture survey responses returned on paper questionnaires, we will retain them for three months after the survey has closed and then destroy them.

What information do you keep about me?

We retain your contact details. We only use this information to email you about the annual *Charity Pulse* Survey. If you no longer wish us to hold your details, please email Emma at emma@birdsong.co.uk, with *Charity Pulse Unsubscribe* in the subject line.