



New Idahoan Philanthropy Survey – Executive Summary

Key takeaways

- Newcomers and long-time residents share more values than many people expect, especially around community, family, self-reliance, and a preference for local solutions.
- The gap isn't willingness to give or volunteer; it's familiarity and connection. Many newcomers are still learning the nonprofit landscape and how to plug in.
- The opportunity is to build trust and belonging through clear, local outcomes and transparent impact—reducing friction with simple, welcoming on-ramps through trusted community networks.

Summary

Idaho is growing quickly, and with that growth comes a practical question communities and nonprofits are asking across the state: *Who are our new neighbors, and how do we engage them?* The 2025 Idaho Community Foundation (ICF) New Idahoan Philanthropy Survey was commissioned to move beyond assumptions and anecdotes and replace them with data, so communities can better understand what Idaho donors value, how they decide where to give and volunteer, and where connection gaps exist for newer residents.

This research was conducted in partnership with Boise State University's Idaho Policy Institute and fielded September 17–25, 2025. It included a geographically and demographically representative sample of 800 Idaho adults (margin of error $\pm 3.5\%$), collected via a mix of phone interviews (36%), online surveys (38%), and text-to-web (26%). To better understand newer residents, the study also included a targeted oversample of 200 adults who have lived in Idaho less than five years—allowing results to be analyzed for both long-time residents (N=704, MOE $\pm 4\%$) and newcomers (N=296, MOE $\pm 5.8\%$).

New Idahoans in this research tend to be younger, working professionals and families who chose Idaho intentionally for quality of life, opportunity, and a strong sense of community. About one-quarter (26%) of newcomers moved from California, followed by Utah (12%) and Arizona (6%), with a broad distribution across other states. Compared to long-time residents, newcomers are somewhat more likely to be in the 18–29 age bracket (24% vs. 18%). Long-time residents are more likely to be white (85%) than newcomers (78%), while both groups include similar proportions of Hispanic or Latino respondents.



Across the survey, *newcomers and long-time residents share more values than many people expect* – with common emphasis on personal responsibility, faith and family, community safety and stability, independence and self-reliance, and a preference for local solutions. Newcomers trend slightly more conservative overall, but the most actionable takeaway is less about ideology and more about *how people respond to messaging*: communications that feel overly institutional, abstract, or politicized can create distance, while clear, local, practical outcomes tend to resonate across the spectrum.

Faith plays a strong role in how many Idahoans build trust and community—particularly for newer residents. Newcomers are more likely to say faith-based organizations are the cause that matters most to them (22%) and to prefer supporting religious or faith-based organizations (37%). They are also more likely to say that attending a community or church event (22%) most prompts them to give or volunteer time. This does not mean every nonprofit needs to be faith-based; it *does* suggest that faith and community networks often function as trusted entry points, especially early in a newcomer’s journey of local involvement.

For the most part, *newcomers and long-time residents engage with philanthropy in similar ways*. Nearly all Idahoans say giving and volunteering are important, and comparable shares report donating money, giving goods, and volunteering time. Among those who donated, newcomers are more likely to report giving more than \$1,000 annually (37%), while long-time residents are more likely to give between \$250 and \$1,000 (36%). The bigger difference is not willingness to give—it’s *familiarity and connection* to local opportunities and organizations.

Newcomers are often less connected to Idaho’s nonprofit sector – not because they don’t care, but because they’re still learning the landscape. Newcomers are less likely to say it is very important that the organization they support has a local Idaho connection (44%), and they are also less likely to report being familiar with nonprofits in their communities (46%). About 15% cite not knowing what opportunities are available as their biggest challenge to getting involved. Taken together, these findings point to a clear opportunity: build awareness, reduce friction, and create simple on-ramps through trusted community networks. Emphasizing visible local outcomes, transparency, and a welcoming invitation helps convert interest into long-term community connection.