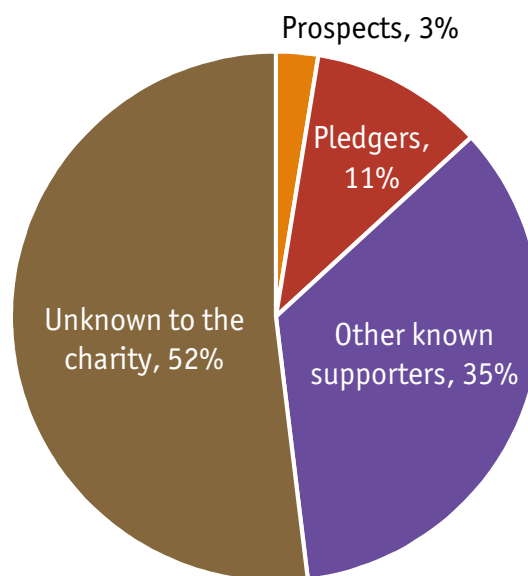


Background

One of the key findings of the 2016 Legacy Marketing Benchmarks Study was that 86% of charitable bequests came from people who were neither legacy pledgers nor prospects. 35% of gifts came from people who were recognised supporters of the charity concerned but revealed no legacy interest while they were alive. Just over half (52%) were apparently completely 'unknown' to their charity and yet they had in fact included them in their will.

Most gifts come from 'unknown' supporters

% of bequests by source (Legacy Marketing Benchmark Project 2016, based on 16 charities' data)



Beneath this overall picture there were big differences by cause area. Health charities were the least likely to know their legators (74% of bequests were from completely 'unknown' sources) and animal charities the most likely (only 31% of legacies from completely 'unknown' sources).

Not only were invisible legators important in terms of their number, but they were also important because of the size of their bequests. The largest average bequests were from people completely 'unknown' to their charity, mainly because they were more likely to leave a residual bequest.

In all, 86% of charitable bequests were not known about until the bequest was notified, whether they were:

Undisclosed bequests – i.e. from known supporters who had not told the charity about their bequest when they were alive

Unrecognised bequests – i.e. from people who identified themselves as supporters and would expect the charity to know about them, but the charity has no information about them on record (i.e. this data has not been captured/been lost/been captured locally but not centrally etc)

Unknown bequests – i.e. from people who apparently had no prior relationship or contact with the charity, but had left them a legacy, seemingly spontaneously

This 86% is the group we are calling 'invisible legators' and the aim of this project is to understand them far better than we currently do.

Uncovering the invisible legator

Through this new research project we want to explore:

- Who are these 'invisible' legators?
- What proportion of them are undisclosed/ unrecognised/truly unknown to the charities they bequeath to?
- What motivated them to leave to you? What connection do they have to your cause?
- What triggered their legacy gift? Specific communications? The brand? The cause?
- Why have they not told you about their gift?
- How do they want you to communicate with them?
- Can – and should – you try to engage them more proactively?
- Is there more you can do at arms length to inform, encourage and reassure these people without engaging them in uninvited dialogue?

We hope that the findings will help charities to be more effective in their brand/legacy communications and stewardship. A better understanding of the motivations and triggers which drove these 'invisible legators' to leave a bequest may help inspire more people to leave a legacy, and perhaps encourage more of them to open up communications with the organisations concerned.

Proposed approach

Phase 1 – Profiling the invisible legator

Because we do not know who these people are, our first challenge is to identify them. To do this, we propose to place questions on a **large scale omnibus survey**, and use this method to build and profile a base of at least 500 people who have left a gift (or gifts) to charity in their will

Once we have this base, we can identify those people who have and have not told their charity and so start to learn more about both the visible and invisible legators. We can also establish the type of charities that people have left bequests to, to better understand the sectoral differences found in the 2016 Legacy Marketing Benchmark study.

We are likely to find that many people have left gifts to more than one charity, so we will ensure that we capture information about every bequest left. It may be that the same person engages with some charities but not others; if so it will be interesting to understand why this is.

Using segmentation and regression analysis techniques, we will also explore whether any of the following impact on legacy giving and visibility:

- The type of legacy (i.e. pecuniary vs residual)
- The type of donor (e.g. childless vs with offspring, more or less affluent, generational differences)
- The perceived brand image, reputation and impact of the charity
- The relationship (if any) that they feel they have (e.g. donor, volunteer, fundraiser, beneficiary)
- Contact points with the charity, and support or information received
- Perceptions of stewardship and supporter care
- Any family or other relationships (e.g. in-memory connections) that have made a difference

Phase 2 – Understanding the invisible legator

Once we have detailed data on the different legator groups, we can go on to explore in much greater detail how they are similar or different in **focus groups and depth interviews**. The profiling data will provide behavioural and attitudinal correlations, and the qualitative research will put flesh on the bones of this information and give us greater insight.

We will use focus groups to explore the (larger) invisible legator categories – i.e. **undisclosed, unrecognised** and **unknown** donors – and depth interviews to compare and contrast **pledgers** and **prospects**. We will use professional market research recruiters for our focus groups, but will need help from our charity clients to identify pledgers and prospects.

Given the relative sizes of the 'known' (35%) and 'unknown' (52%) groups, at this stage we propose two groups of known supporters and four groups of unknowns – the exact make-up of these groups would depend on the results of the quantitative research in Phase 1. We know that people who leave residual bequests are more likely to be childless, and that some leave a significant percentage of their estate to charity. On the other hand, people leaving pecuniary bequests span a broader spectrum. Therefore we propose to look separately at these two types of legacy giver. In each group, we would ensure that a range of cause areas was represented.

We also plan to conduct 5 depth interviews by phone with pledgers and 5 with prospects.

We will use the qualitative research to explore in more detail similarities and differences between the different legator groups in terms of:

- The relationships they have with 'their' charities (e.g. donor, volunteer, fundraiser, beneficiary)
- The history of their relationship & contact with the charities
- Any other relevant relationships with their charities (e.g. other family members, friends)
- The importance of cause area
- Sources of information used to find out about their charities
- How they feel about their charities' impact and public image
- Key events or campaigns that have swayed opinion
- Contact levels and how they feel they are treated or regarded
- Their will-writing history – at what point were charities added? Retained? Removed?
- The influence of family members on the decision-making process
- The influence of third parties such as solicitors
- Managing 'portfolios' of bequests across a range of causes
- Why they chose to include specific charities in their will
- The types of gift left
- Why they have or haven't told the charities about their bequest
- Whether anything could persuade them to tell the charities if they haven't done so already
- How they want the charities to treat them going forwards

Project outputs

- A PowerPoint presentation to the group at a central London location (slides to be circulated afterwards)
- An executive summary report (PDF)

Consortium size and fee structure

This is a Consortium project, which will be offered exclusively to existing Legacy Monitor members at a cost of £2,000-£2,500+VAT each. The minimum number of members required is 25 charities. The final cost per charity will be confirmed in late March 2017, along with a list of Consortium members.

Invoices will be issued on 1st April 2017 and payment terms are 30 days. Alternative invoice dates may be agreed with Legacy Foresight.

Project management

We hope to recruit a sounding board of 4-5 people to provide feedback and suggestions on the work as it develops, assure the quality of outputs on behalf of the consortium, and agree on the final dissemination of findings. The sounding board will meet 'virtually' (via teleconference) three times: to agree the research specification (late April 2017), to discuss the results of the quantitative research (mid June) and to discuss the initial conclusions (early September 2017).

If you would like to be considered for the sounding board, please let us know when you confirm your participation in the project.

Timings and next steps

The project will operate over a 7 month period:

- Deadline for sign-up: **Friday 17th March 2017**
- Confirmation of final cost per charity: Tuesday 21st March 2017
- Project kick off/invoice: Monday 3rd April 2017
- Sounding board meeting to agree research specification: late April 2017
- Quantitative research: May 2017
- Sounding board meeting to discuss quantitative research findings: mid June 2017
- Qualitative research: July/August 2017
- Sounding board meeting to discuss initial conclusions: early September 2017
- Consortium presentation: October 2017
- Publication of executive summary report: end October 2017

To express your interest or for more information, contact Meg Abdy at: m.abdy@legacyforesight.co.uk

The Project Team

Legacy Foresight are Britain's foremost analysts in the legacy and in-memoriam sectors. We study the state of the markets, produce income forecasts and research into donor motivations. Our work is used both for ongoing performance management and for long-term strategic development. Since our first project in 1994, we have worked with over one hundred clients, including all of the top twenty British fundraising brands.

Legacy Monitor is our flagship benchmarking service, in operation since 1998. We work with an ever-growing Consortium of charities (84 at present) to collect and analyse key legacy performance data. By drawing directly on our clients' databases, we can present the latest intelligence on legacy incomes, notifications and values.

We also manage **consortium research projects** on emerging market issues, to explore future opportunities and challenges. This collaborative approach cuts costs, saves time and creates opportunities for joint initiatives. Recent research topics include in-memory giving (the In-Memory Insight programme, now in its sixth year), baby boomers and legacies and the Scottish legacy market.