

A promotional banner for the Heart & Stroke calendar lottery. It features the text "Heart & Stroke calendar lottery" in a stylized font. To the right, it says "THE PERFECT GIFT! ORDER BY DEC. 1" with images of wrapped gifts. Further right, it says "ONLY \$25 CLICK TO BUY" with a small green heart icon. The bottom right corner has "LL # 4130".

Poll finds compassion drives Canadian charity donations but people skeptical where money goes



By [Steve Mertl](#) | [Daily Brew](#) – 18 hours ago

A new poll has some cautionary news for Canadian charities, finding compassion and trust, not a desire to be recognized for good works, drive Canadians to give but that skepticism over how their money is used can limit donations.

The poll by Innovative Research Group finds Canadians hew largely to the stereotype of trust and compassion "and the more trusting and compassionate you are, the more likely you are to give more," the polling firm said in a [news release](#).



The poll also reveals many donors feel a sense of obligation to give back to society, even though about one third of those surveyed feel charitable donations let government off the hook.

"However, the intensity of scepticism about where charitable dollars go may be limiting both the number of donors and the amount they give," the firm says.

The online survey of 1,759 preselected people conducted from Nov. 17 to 24 also drew a link between levels of trust and the amount donated.

Some 70 per cent of respondents who gave more than \$500 a year agreed with the statement that "most people can be trusted," compared with 35 per cent of those who gave nothing. Almost half of non-donors strongly agreed that money raised by charities is squandered by administrative costs, compared with 23 per cent of big donors.

Pollster Greg Lyle said charities trying to raise money in a climate of economic uncertainty should take note.

"There's been some stagnation and most of that, we've put down to economic factors," Lyle told the [Globe and Mail](#).

"But it may well be that once the economy bounces back and we see incomes grow back the way they did in the past, that the long-term consequences of the loss of confidence in corporate and political leaders may have lasting impact on people's willingness to give.

"That's a really big deal."

Religion was a significant factor in giving, the poll also found, with 46 per cent of donors of more than \$500 agreeing that giving was an important part of their faith, compared with 31 per cent on average.

"We're not that religious a country any more but those who are more religious are a disproportionate share of donors," Lyle told the [Globe](#). "... It's not the dominant factor but it's an important secondary factor. And more important than you might think."

The complete results of the poll can be found [here](#).