

# ERNOP Research Note

Academic articles on philanthropy through a practitioner lens



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## Did you donate? Talking about donations predicts compliance with solicitations for donations

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The research found that blood donors who talk about their donation experiences are more likely to comply with future requests. This effect is especially pronounced in new donors, suggesting that early engagement through communication can cultivate a long-term habit of giving.

Nonprofits can apply this finding by actively encouraging donors to share their donation stories offline and online which is currently only done incidentally. This could be facilitated through social media campaigns, online communities or features on the nonprofit's website where donors can post testimonials or share their experiences in blog entries. Such strategies not only foster an atmosphere of giving but also leverage peer influence to attract new donors.

[#blooddonations](#) [#acquisition](#) [#engagement](#) [#conversion](#) [#community](#)

## Background & Context



- **How Organizations Influence Helping Behaviors:** The study looks into how groups that need donations, like blood banks, encourage people to help others. It points out that the way people interact with each other and the role of the organization both play a big part in getting someone to respond to requests for donations.
- **Focus on Blood Donations:** The research specifically investigates blood donations in the Netherlands, using data from around 157,000 donation requests and responses from about 24,045 blood donors. It explores how recommendations from friends (word-of-mouth) and conversations about donating influence whether people decide to donate blood.
- **Using a Broad Framework to Understand Donor Behavior:** The study uses a broad approach, called the social-ecological systems model, to understand how personal factors and social interactions combine to influence a person's decision to donate blood. This helps to provide a detailed view of what motivates people to donate.

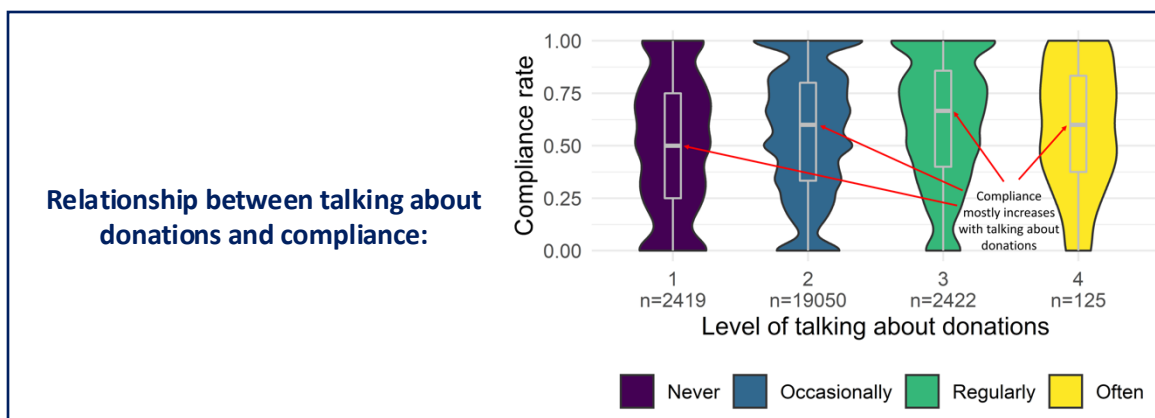
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## Take aways & Learnings



- Nonprofits can leverage this insight by **encouraging donors to share their donation experiences online**. For instance, implementing features that prompt donors to share their stories using generative AI. This strategy could be particularly effective for engaging new donors, who are 2.9% more likely to respond to future solicitations for each increase in their engagement score.
- From previous research with NextAfter, we know the **impact of talking about donations is severely underestimated by the sector**. This research shows why **it is important for nonprofits to invest in storytelling around donating**, whether it is blood donations or financial contributions.
- The study emphasizes the **importance of donor communication in increasing conversion (compliance) rates**. While the article itself does not provide specific digital tool statistics, it highlights the effectiveness of communication. For example, adding 'share' buttons that are visible upon donation confirmation can capitalize on the moment of donation to encourage sharing, potentially increasing donor engagement and future willingness to give.
- Nonprofits can use this insight to tailor their communication strategies. **For new donors, who show a 2.9% increase in compliance per unit increase in discussion about donations, more frequent and engaging content could be beneficial**. In contrast, for seasoned donors, who are less influenced by such discussions, content could focus more on deepening engagement through detailed impact reports and insider updates. **Nonprofits can use data analytics to segment their donor base and tailor communications accordingly**.
- In line with Salesforce research on optimizing online engagement, **nonprofits should design their digital platforms to easily allow sharing and discussions about donations**. Generative AI can take away the friction of producing that content. Features like 'share' buttons on donation confirmation pages and prompts to share donation experiences on social media can effectively turn single-time donors into active promoters of the cause.



ERNOP Research Notes provide easy-to-read, practice-oriented summaries of academic articles on philanthropy and are written by practitioner experts. This ERNOP Research Note 2024/25 is published in September 2024 and has been written by Andrea Goezinne from Salesforce. More information can be found at [www.ernop.eu](http://www.ernop.eu).