

# DEVELOPING THE MILLENNIAL LEADERS THAT LAND TRUSTS NEED

APRIL 2019



## A Nationwide Survey - and Ideas for Moving Forward with Millennials

Many land trusts have entered a new age where succession plans are being developed out of necessity, as the original land conservation pioneers prepare for retirement. The retention of talented staff within the land trust community becomes even more imperative in order to continue conservation in perpetuity and develop the next generation of leaders within.

Tired of being “blamed” for destroying everything from the napkin industry to home ownership and being generally misunderstood, a group of millennials working in land trusts decided to tackle the confusion that seems to surround this generation. We developed a brief 12-question survey to advance the discussion of how the land trust sector can best retain and develop millennial employees. The twelve questions were designed to illuminate what millennials were thinking, needing, and hoping.

Thanks to help from Land Trust Alliance (LTA) staff, the survey was distributed nationwide. Word spread through the LTA's eNews and discussion boards on the LTA Learning Center, from July through September 2018. Over 500 millennials responded. We presented the results of the survey at Rally 2018, and are distilling the lessons from the survey and discussions from our Rally workshop here.

Whether you're a board member or staff member - and regardless of your generation - we hope this document can serve as a tool for developing leaders and for understanding the trends in the millennial generation of conservation professionals. Furthermore, we hope it will serve as a useful jumping off point for discussions with and about America's second largest generation.

### PILLARS FOR DEVELOPING MILLENNIAL LEADERS

- **Relevance**
- **Diversity**
- **Salary & Benefits**
- **Career Pathways**
- **Mentorship**
- **Leadership Opportunities**
- **Culture of Gratitude**
- **Health Insurance**

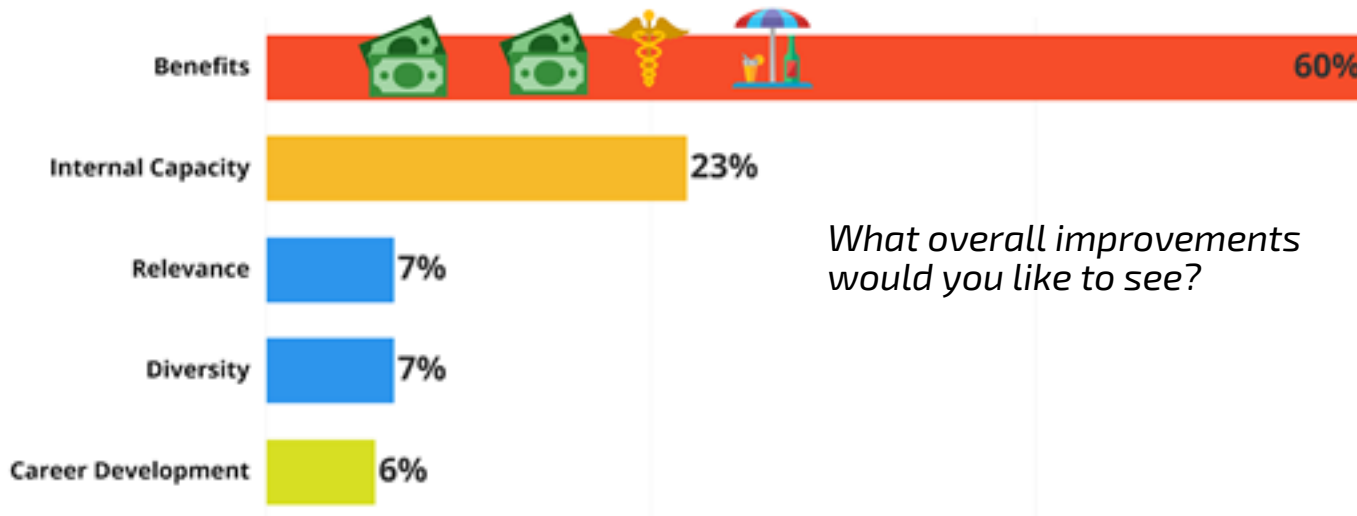
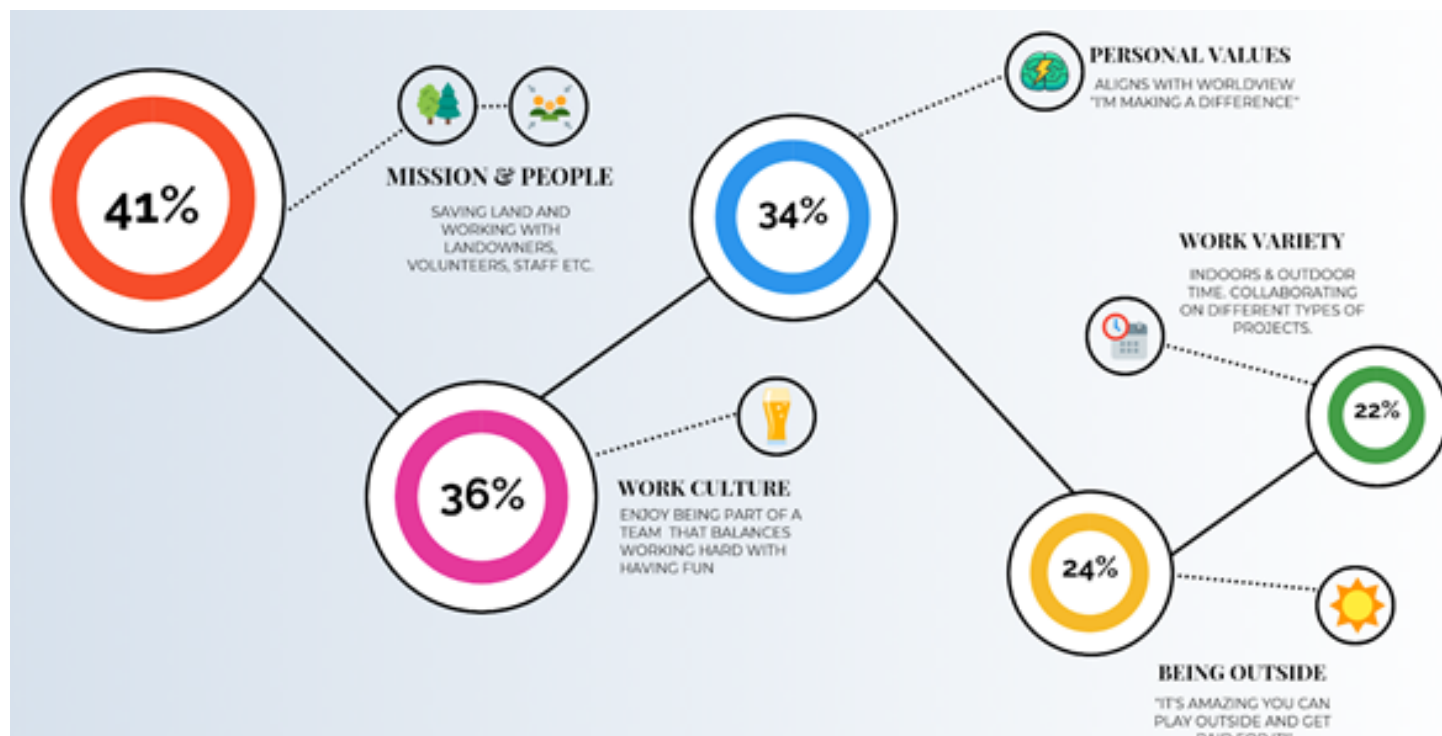
# Survey Methods & Highlights

A total of 589 people responded to the survey, which exceeded our wildest expectations. The level of response to the survey and subsequent presentations at Rally and regional LTA conferences speaks to the level of interest from land trust staff.

The regional distribution of respondents mirrored the regional distribution of land trusts nationwide. For the purpose of this survey, millennials included anyone born between 1980 and 1996, and participants included those who recently and/or currently work(ed) at land trusts. At the time of the survey, these individuals were approximately 22 through 38 years old. While a portion of this group would likely be in entry-level roles within their organizations, a greater portion was more likely to be in a mid-level role or mid-career.

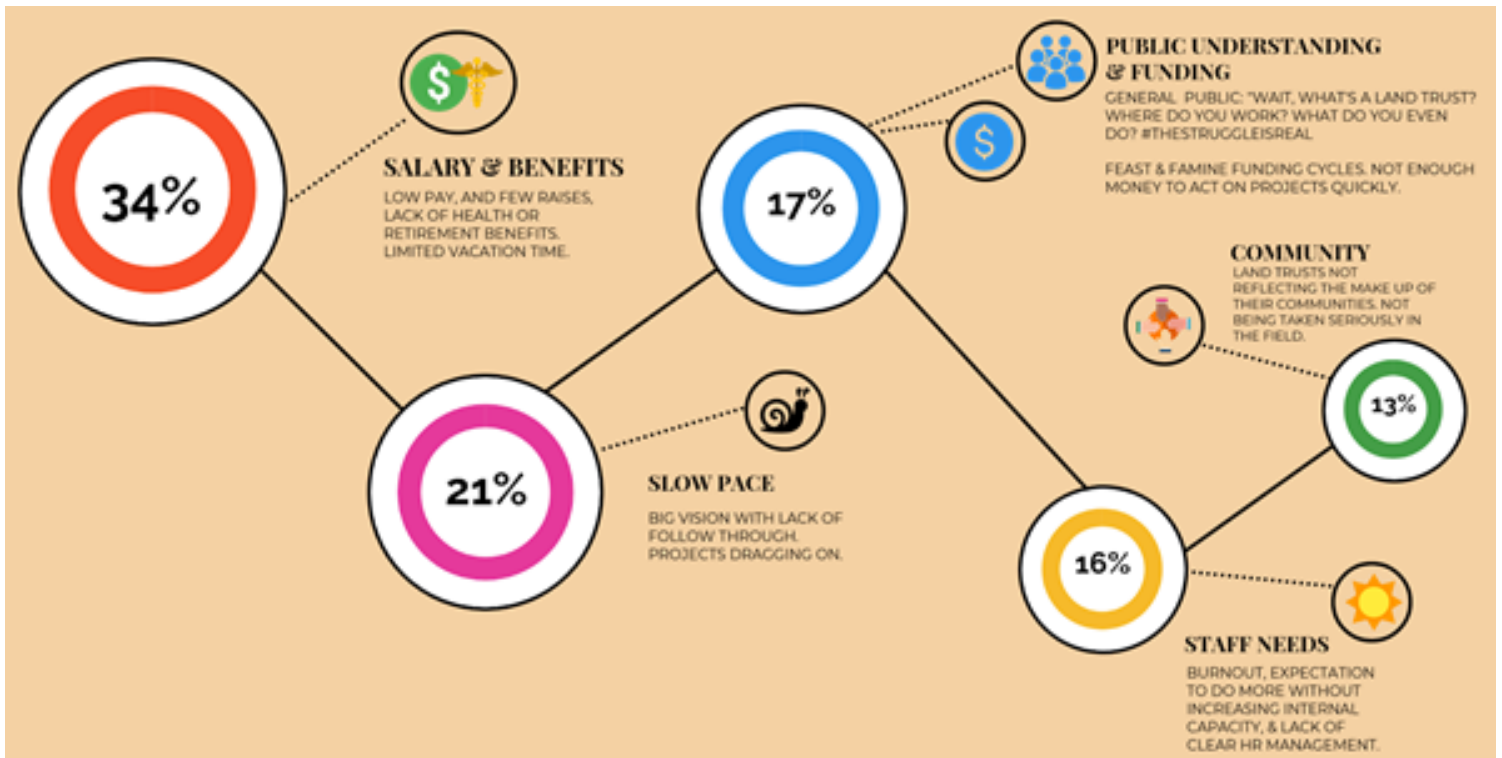
The survey included a mix of multiple choice, ranking, and open-ended questions (see page 12). We initially intended for the survey to guide the development of peer-to-peer networking or mentorship programs; however, the staff who responded had many more ideas. The responses were as varied as the 589 people who responded.

## *What do you enjoy about working for a land trust?*

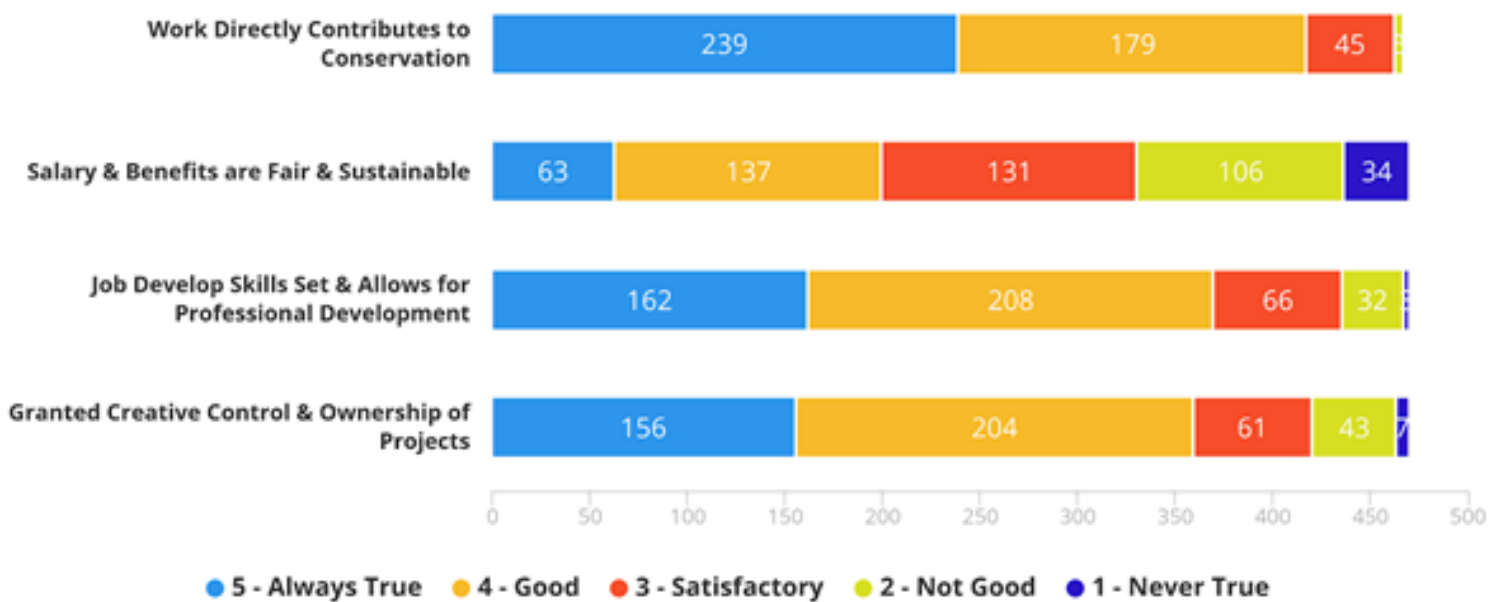


*What overall improvements would you like to see?*

## What frustrates you about working for a land trust?



## What makes your work satisfying?



For more information about the survey, questions, and results, visit [landtrustalliance.org/millennials-land-trusts](http://landtrustalliance.org/millennials-land-trusts). There, you will find slides, graphics, and content from the presentation at Rally 2018. Also look for updates about how this conversation is continuing in the land trust community - including presentations at regional land trust trainings, and a half-day workshop at Rally 2019.



**"Leadership needs to encourage better teamwork and invest in their staff... Set goals for the organization, for us, and for the leadership that include training while also letting us spread our wings."**

*- Millennial Land Trust Staff Person, from 2018 Survey*

**"I would like to see more young adults get involved in conservation. As the only full-time staff person here under 40, I can feel pretty isolated culturally. I don't have a lot in common with my coworkers beyond our shared mission."**

**I want conservation organizations to work really actively to diversify leadership on the board and staff. Some places are trying hard, while others aren't. We all need to get on board."**

*- Millennial Land Trust Staff Person, from 2018 Survey*

## Putting the Data to Work for Land Trusts

Millennials currently make up 40% of the working population and are one of the largest populations in United States history, eclipsing the baby boomer generation in current size (1).

Though perhaps the media likes to portray them as teenagers and students obsessed with technology, they're more likely to be sitting in your office right now.

Millennials are poised to move into new roles and play a larger role within conservation. Millennials show a clear connection to the work, the people, and the mission of conservation. Yet the demands of the working world are ever changing – and not always obvious to senior leadership – making it difficult to retain the leaders of tomorrow. For land conservation to continue in perpetuity, it is imperative that we adapt to meet those needs.

In the responses to the Millennials in Land Trusts Survey (MLTS), staff members made clear that there are many unique challenges that this generation faces in developing a sustainable career path. Finding a mentor is just the tip of the iceberg. In fact, during our follow-up workshop at Rally, several themes emerged that had previously gone unnoticed. Along with addressing these challenges and their underlying themes, we were able to tease out several tips on how individual land trusts and the entire land trust community can improve.





---

# Pillars for Developing Millennial Leaders

The MLTS results made one thing clear: millennial employees are filled with passion for the work they do and the communities they serve. They also have ideas for how to make land trusts stronger, and help land trusts retain and develop the next generation of leaders. The following sections are based on the survey results and input during our presentation at Rally 2018. The sections cover a breadth of topics from connecting communities to conservation to the practical nature of sustainable employment, all of which are important to millennial employees.

## Relevance

Millennials will work tirelessly if they feel they are making a positive impact on their communities and the world around them. When asked how land trusts could improve, millennials frequently wrote in, "Relevance." As land trusts, we must articulate how our work addresses millennials' major concerns. Here are a few ideas based on survey input:

### Show Local and Global Impact

While the conservation work we do takes place on a local level, it has global impact. This has always been true - but may have special importance to millennials. The work we do empowers millennials to stay connected to their special places, even if they currently live away from home.

### Help Millennials Do Good

Our work is a conduit through which they can do good in the world. Sixty percent of millennial workers indicate that a "sense of purpose" is a key factor in choosing their employers. (2) Show how your land trust is combating climate change, providing public green spaces, educating our communities on environmental issues, and protecting beautiful places. Millennials, both employees and donors alike, want to know that THEY can help make an impact on the WORLD.

### Address Climate Change and Diversity

Many millennials reported frustrations around these issues in the survey, stating that their land trusts were "out of touch," and "not representative of the community," and that their generation was, "not being taken seriously." While not an altogether positive note, it does provide us with an interesting jumping off point for discussion: how do land trusts remain relevant to the millennial generation?



**"We need to make the work of land trusts relevant to EVERYONE....  
Our core supporters are aging and slowly becoming the minority in the US.  
We have to meaningfully engage and interface with diverse audiences  
or our work will no longer connect with the majority of people."**

- Millennial Land Trust Staff Person, from 2018 Survey

# Diversity

---

Diversity is a critical issue, so it should be no surprise to see it as an important theme in our results. In a recent Deloitte Study, when referenced by millennials, diversity is a word that includes, but also goes beyond ethnicity. It is an umbrella term that can include tolerance, inclusivity, openness, respect, different ways of thinking, or simply differences (3). Thinking in terms of the intergenerational workforce, millennials believe that ethnic diversity as well as a diversity of perspective from across the community is the key for a team of employees to be successful. They are not wrong. A 2018 Forbes magazine article highlighted the fact that multigenerational work teams are two times more likely to meet or exceed expectations (4).

Diversity was mentioned 65 times in the MLTS, and that does not include the numerous times that respondents expressed frustration about being relevant and representative of their communities. Diving in deeper, 44% of the millennial generation is made up of people of color, making them the most racially diverse generation in U.S. History. This trend will continue. By 2040, nearly half of the U.S. population will be made up of minorities (5). In tandem with this trend, millennial women are currently outpacing millennial men in terms of earning undergraduate degrees, resulting in an expected influx of more women in the highly educated workforce, including within conservation work (6).

A Green 2.0 study showed that the environmental field has had some success in recruiting people of color for internship and entry-level positions, but as they identified roles “up the career ladder” fewer and fewer minorities were represented in leadership and board roles (7). Another study from the University of Michigan found that while women are more likely to be on staff of environmental nonprofits, men are still more likely to hold leadership positions (8). What policies are in place in the non-profit sector that are causing this to happen?

This is the diversity that millennials want. They want the career ladder to widen, not narrow. They want more seats at the table for different perspectives. And the research shows that this is a good thing for them and for their organizations. The MLTS paints a clear picture – which the research supports – that there is an opportunity out there for land trusts to identify the internal barriers that exist. Breaking down those barriers will help recruit and retain a more diverse group within your staff and board.

Not only will you be more relevant and representative of your community, which will provide avenues for recruiting new supporters, but your younger employees will be more likely to stick around longer, too (9). The same Deloitte study referenced above found that millennials are less likely to leave a diverse working environment.



**“Outdoor landscapes have long been a place for wealthy white people... People of all backgrounds, socioeconomic standing, abilities, races, sexes, and comfort levels should be able to find a common sense of enjoyment in spending time outdoors.”**

**“[We need] an across-the-board reckoning with the ways the conservation movement is unwelcoming to people who are not white and middle class.”**

*- Millennial Land Trust Staff People, from 2018 Survey*



---

# Salary & Benefits

A prevailing theme throughout the MLTS was a desire for an increased salary and a better benefits package, including healthcare (more on healthcare in a few pages). This is a theme, we imagine, that emerges in every sector of the workforce, though it may be magnified in the nonprofit sector. While true that many are willing to accept a lower salary for more meaningful work, balancing passion and practicality, there are still unique demands that the millennial generation faces that may not be obvious at first glance.

Financial insecurity was an important topic in the responses. Many of the respondents do not feel financially secure in the land trust sector. They share a concern that an unexpected accident or increase in their cost of living would mean that they would need to drop out of non profit work in search of a field that can pay a living wage. These may sound like universal needs, but they are grounded in the fact that millennials are the first generation in the modern era to have higher levels of student loan debt, poverty and unemployment, and lower levels of wealth and personal income than their two immediate predecessor generations had at the same stage of their life cycles (10). Millennials, as a block, work the same, owe more, and make less.

Student loans, mentioned 30 times in the MLTS, are a critical issue for millennials. College costs have doubled over the last 20 years (11) and two thirds of recent college graduates leave school with an average of \$27,000 of student debt (12). These debts have a trickle-down effect, making it harder for those with student debt to successfully reach a better standard of living. While not limited to home and car ownership, you can see why millennials can be frustrated when they are blamed for drops in home and car buying. Most jobs in the land trust sector require a bachelor's degree, yet many overlook the cost of living in their immediate service area, and the student's costs undertaken to acquire the necessary credentials. In addition to understanding the average millennial's financial limitations, further considerations should be made to address how these pay scales may impact the socioeconomic diversity of the talent pool. It is important to attract a wide range of millennial applicants, beyond just those who can afford to work in a nonprofit (13).

There is an opportunity for land trusts to conduct a self-audit on their employees' wages to ensure that they are fair and equitable. Are passion and practicality balanced as well as they could be? Could we do more? Are we considering the unique financial challenges of new or recent college graduates?

When discussing salary and benefits, healthcare is the obvious elephant in the room. The MLTS reflected this, and so we address this on page 11. Beyond healthcare, other benefits mentioned for consideration included parental leave, vacation time, flexible schedules or compensation time, incentives that encourage employees to spend more time in nature, and more family friendly policies. Many of these benefits can make a large difference for a small piece of your annual budget. These types of improvements also enhance the image of the land trust's workplace culture, which may be the deciding factor in hiring or retaining a diverse workforce.



**"I think millennials face a very different set of economic challenges than previous generations - stagnant wages, high student loan debt, and decreasing benefits...This has put our generation behind in trying to get ahead. This makes it challenging for young people to "make it" in the non-profit land trust field. "**

*- Millennial Land Trust Staff Person, from 2018 Survey*

**"..There appears to be a gap in offerings at the level between internship and director-level land trust positions for early career professionals looking to continue learning on the job and receive mentorship. Many passionate and talented young people have left the land trust field because of low pay, lack of professional development opportunities, and limited potential for growth and advancement within their organizations."**

*- Millennial Land Trust Staff Person, from 2018 Survey*



**"[I want] opportunities to have mentors and learn from folks who paved the way. I always learn so much when I can hear the back story about why things are the way they are today."**

*- Millennial Land Trust Staff Person, from 2018 Survey*

## Career Pathways

According to our survey data, the top two reasons millennials left prior jobs at land trusts were a lack of professional development, and a mismatch between position and career goals. Yes, you read that correctly, while salary and benefits are important, professional development and career trajectory take the cake. We were surprised too.

Respondents were strongly motivated by the desire to continue learning, to see a tangible impact on their organizations and communities, and to become leaders (14). Land trusts can make their millennial employees happier and more valuable as thinkers, doers, and leaders by investing time (and where possible, money) in their career development. After all, the institutional cost of losing an employee can be up to twice that person's annual salary in loss of experience, loss of productivity, loss of relationships, and loss of institutional knowledge (15). It is cost-effective to invest in your employees.

Career development will vary based upon your organization, staff, and budget, but a few ideas include:

- Send your staff to professional conferences and partnership meetings.
- Provide for continuing education at virtual or physical universities.
- Offer flexible spending for professional development to allow millennials to take part in charting their path.
- Create an internal mentorship program where millennials are paired with more experienced senior staff for coaching or project work.
- Suggest stretch assignments for millennials, allowing them to take things off the plates of their managers, which will develop their skills as well as provide relief for senior staff.
- Provide in-house leadership opportunities and encourage building cross-functional skills that may not fit the traditional job description.
- Invite and involve transparent conversations about promotions and succession planning.

## Mentorship

Career pathways and professional development can be widely shaped by the role of a mentor or a professional peer network. While many millennials noted in their responses to the MLTS that it was important to them that they had a colleague, manager, or board member as a mentor. we found in the workshop discussion at Rally that many people have difficulty finding a mentor. And for those that do successfully find a mentor, many shared that it was difficult to keep in steady communication with them.

While it's not the best idea for a supervisor to be a mentor, this is an ideal opportunity for board members to further share their experience and knowledge with staff. There is also an untapped opportunity to use regional and national conferences to develop a way to coordinate mentor-mentee match-ups. As noted earlier, there is a strong benefit to intergenerational relationships. Encouraging employees to maintain these relationships for the benefit of their professional development is another inexpensive, workplace culture improvement.



# Leadership

---

Millennial leadership in your organization can take many forms. You might encourage leadership on the staff, board, or volunteer level. You might encourage millennials to be leaders through targeted campaigns (for instance, engaging them on your development team).

What do you get when you encourage leadership from the millennial generation? A driving force of new ideas and organizational energy. When you provide leadership opportunities, you become more relevant to this generation, empowering them to achieve big things through and for your work. By creating millennial leaders on all levels, you are helping to secure the future of your organization by creating the leaders of tomorrow through succession planning.

The millennial generation know it will eventually be their job to succeed the leaders of today. In fact, millennials are looking forward to the opportunity: a study conducted by Virtuali and WorkPlaceTrends found that 91% of millennials aspire to become a leader (16). Providing them with opportunities to prepare for that transition can only strengthen your organization.



## Case Study - Blue Hill Heritage Trust

Blue Hill Heritage Trust, in Maine, has recently taken steps to make their organization more attractive to the next generation of staff, volunteers and donors.

BHHT has created the structures that millennial staff members need - and they are seeing tangible benefits. For instance, BHHT created room for more autonomy and professional development, and staff report feeling empowered to utilize their unique talents and skills. The land trust has created guaranteed annual salary increases, which removes anxieties over negotiating for raises. Each year, BHHT has two-way conversations during annual reviews, which make staff feel that they have a voice. The land trust offers a competitive benefits package with generous time off and flex time, which decreases burn out. And contributions to a 401k after just one-year help staff feel more valued and professional. Today, BHHT's staff is 60% millennials - and they not only feel valued, but have a sense of loyalty to the organization.

BHHT is also working to engage millennials as volunteers and at the board level. The board is intentionally recruiting younger members, providing mentors for new board members, and changing meeting times to better suit those with jobs and families. They also have a strategy to move younger board members into leadership positions. Volunteers feel empowered to help the trust because BHHT encourages them to bringing their own ideas to the table for outreach programming, development strategy, trail building, and campaign work.

Last but not least, BHHT is connecting with millennials as donors. Younger donors are encouraged to step up through strategic online millennial donor campaigns, to band together and take action to make an impact and protect the places they love.

While these actions take strategic thought and planning, none have caused financial stress for BHHT. Instead, engaging millennials has turned BBHT into one of the leading organizations in their region.

---

# Culture of Gratitude

Thank you. Most of us say this to our donors all the time, but how often do we say it to our co-workers, staff or volunteers?

Millennials in the MLTS and in our Rally workshop highlighted the value of being acknowledged when praise was deserved. Staff and board members can take a moment to write an email, stick your head in someone's office, or make a quick call to show gratitude. These small, free steps can be the difference between losing or keeping a highly qualified person in your organization. These gestures encourage millennials (or anyone) to continue to grow and become a real leader for your cause. Creating a culture of feedback through regular meetings and checkpoints can go a long way for millennials (17). As a whole, the millennial generation wants to be learning and growing, and so they are looking for constant feedback. This should not be confused with a need for constant praise - but rather millennials want to know how they're doing.

Millennials in our survey clearly stated that they are in this work because they believe in conservation. Often, a simple thank you goes a long way in making millennial staff feel that their hard work is proving useful.



## Case Study - Thousand Islands Land Trust

For anyone working in a non-profit and especially for those of us working in land conservation, we know that the hours can be long and the progress on new projects can be slow. Whether it's the acquisition of a new property, getting a new program off the ground, or the beginning of a new partnership, it's all work that takes time and consequently deserves to be celebrated!

The staff at the Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT) (above, right) is shown toasting with glasses of wine in hand alongside the beautiful St. Lawrence River. They had a lot to celebrate:

At TILT's Zenda Farms Preserve, they have begun partnering with local agricultural producers for an educational experience that dovetails land conservation and sustainable agriculture, and creates new revenue sources to continue programming. The partnership developed with local Vintner, Coyote Moon Vineyards. Together, TILT and the Vintner are ushering in a new era for the Farm - and some very good wine. This partnership this was a significant accomplishment. After two and a half years of research, discussion, and drafting legal paperwork, they are toasting to that very wine.

The culture of gratitude at TILT tied the entire project together. The staff took time (after 5 o'clock of course) to recognize the hard work and dedication that went into developing the partnership. Celebrating in a fun way brought the whole TILT staff in on this new endeavor and let everyone take pride in a job well done.



---

# Health Insurance

The prevailing opinion among respondents to the MLTS was that while none of them went into land trust work to get rich, and have no expectation of becoming so, they also cannot sacrifice their basic needs, including healthcare. The unpredictability of medical expenses represents massive uncertainty in their lives, and it is difficult to stick with a career that leaves you vulnerable to such risk. Healthcare is an essential linchpin in millennial hiring and retention.

It's important to note, however, that a one-size-fits-all approach is impractical for all land trusts. Size of staff and the state in which any trust is organized are significant factors that will seriously impact what a trust can offer. Regardless of these nuances, it bears repeating that many millennials cannot afford to live without comprehensive health insurance. Because of factors like student loan debt, wage stagnation, and lower personal wealth, respondents aren't able to accumulate discretionary savings, which is necessary when covering the largest deductibles of budget health insurance. With these worries at hand, in addition to the eventual role reversal millennials are expecting as they will become caregivers for their parents, it's no surprise that many believe that healthcare is a right, not a privilege. (18)

So, what is a land trust to do? First, learn from your peers. Ask around and see what similarly sized non-profit organizations in your area are offering. Compare program structures and costs. Do the same through the Land Trust Alliance. Find other trusts in your state or region who are offering healthcare plans that meet the needs of their employees. Ask about millennials. Ask for guidance and a discussion of the various components, remembering that the discussion doesn't have to stop at only the healthcare plan.

In your conversations, don't forget about options like Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA), Healthcare Reimbursement Accounts (HRA), dental insurance, and vision insurance. These tools can be powerful additions to your overall benefits plan, and they may be easier to implement in some cases. These "add-ons" can be attractive to any employee, especially millennials, and even more so if the healthcare plans your organization offers are not as robust as you'd like them to be.



**"The idea that young employees are in the work for the mission and therefore don't need pay raises, insurance, professional development is ridiculous. [Land trusts] are willing to blow through employees rather than invest and it is hurting the organization the most."**

*- Millennial Land Trust Staff Person, from 2018 Survey*

---

# Putting the Survey, Results, and "Pillars" to Work at Your Land Trust

The MLTS data is meant to be utilized by land trusts leaders across the nation. Here are three ways that staff and board members at your land trust can consider using the survey and its findings. Each action item is grounded in the survey and its results - and the recommendations in previous pages (the "Pillars for Developing Millennial Leaders"). Thank you for putting energy into this work, and for helping to develop the next generation of leaders in land trusts.

## 1. Repeat the Survey Within Your Land Trust and Share the Results.

*Looking to dig in deeper, and get a sense of how your land trust matches up with national trends? Consider repeating this survey at your land trust, and use the results to start a conversation about workplace satisfaction, culture, and new initiatives and improvements that can benefit your millennial staff, and by extension, your entire staff.*

**1. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being "never true" and 5 being "always true" please rate the follow:**

- a) My work contributes to conservation
- b) My salary, vacation time and benefits feel fair and sustainable to me
- c) My work develops my skill sets and allows for professional development
- d) My work allows for creative control and ownership of projects

**2. What do you find enjoyable about working for a land trust?**

**3. What do you find frustrating about working for a land trust?**

**4. Please share any improvements you wish to see on the organizational, regional or national level, that you feel will enhance your professional career and/or personal life**

**5. Rank the following statements, with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least important:**

- It is important to me to have a professional peer network
- It is important to me that I have a solid mentorship from a co-worker, manager or board member at work
- It is important to me to have a professional mentor
- It is important to me that I have the time and ability to build relationships with millennial peers in the Land Trust community

**6. What sector or industry do you think does a good job of attracting and keeping millennials as employees?**

**7. Please feel free to share any other thoughts, opinions or experiences you have had as a millennial, that you feel will be helpful or relevant for us to know.**

## 2. Reach Out and Learn with the Land Trust Community

Energy is building for this work nationwide. Contact these land trust professionals if you are ready to learn more and help your land trust develop the Millennial leaders that you need:

- Engaging Millennials as Donors, Volunteers, and Staff: Chrissy Allen at [chrissy@bluehillheritagetrust.org](mailto:chrissy@bluehillheritagetrust.org)
- Building a Culture of Gratitude: Rebecca Dahl at [rdahl@tilandtrust.org](mailto:rdahl@tilandtrust.org)
- Navigating Multiple Generations in the Workplace: Marcia Nicholson at 202-800-2237

Eager to learn in person? Sign on for Rally 2019, and participate in "Think Millennial: Cultivating Leaders Across Staff, Volunteers and Donors" on Thursday, October 17. This interactive half-day presentation will utilize case studies from around the country to illustrate how organizations have been successful in diversifying their leadership to include millennials. Participants will generate a millennial leadership roadmap and leave with a clear vision of next steps to implement at their land trust.



---

## 3. Ask Yourself: How Can Your Land Trust Develop Millennial Leaders?

If you're ready to develop the millennial leaders that your land trust needs, this basic self-assessment can help you identify your strengths, as well as specific ideas for growth. Each question is based on survey results.

### Relevance

- Do you specifically address climate change? How?
- How is your land trust learning from the LTA's Relevance Campaign? Does this address millennials' concerns?
- How does the makeup of your land trust constituency compare with the communities you serve?
- Are millennials represented in the various aspects of your land trust (board, staff, volunteer, committees, etc.)?

### Diversity

- Does your land trust include a representative cross-section of people within your community, at every level of service (board, staff, intern, volunteer, committees, etc.)?
- Does your land trust welcome people of color, people in the LGBTQ community, and others in traditionally underserved communities?
- Is your land trust posting on job boards readily accessible to all?
- Is there any potentially exclusive language in your job descriptions (ex: needing to lift 50 lbs in an administrative role, gender specific language, etc.)
- Are office holidays inclusive? Do you provide options for all religious and cultural celebrations?

### Culture of Gratitude

- Do you provide positive feedback or acknowledge staff in a structured way? In an informal way? How often?
- Do you give staff the opportunity and tools for thoughtful self-evaluation and improvement? Do you allow staff to give feedback to leadership?
- Do you give staff the opportunity and tools for thoughtful self-evaluation and improvement?
- Is there a third person present for year-end reviews, to ensure transparent conversation, and build trust and relationships?

### Career Pathways

- Do you budget for staff at all levels to participate in professional development (trainings, conferences, etc.)?
- Do you have mid-level positions at your land trust, or only entry-level jobs and an Executive Director?

### Leadership

- Are millennials serving at every level in your land trust (board, staff, intern, volunteer, committees, etc.)?
- Do millennial (and all) staff have the opportunity to present at board meetings and community events?

### Salary & Benefits

- Do you provide "flex" or "balance" time for your staff? This may be a no-cost way for your land trust to give value to your staff.
- Are your internships unpaid? Have you considered funding internships, so that a wider cross-section of your community can afford to develop their skills with your land trust?
- Is your vacation time consistent with the benefits provided at surrounding organizations?
- Have you updated "sick day" to "personal day" or "mental health day"?
- Do you provide a 401(k) and health insurance? These can be difficult to tackle, but are necessary for retaining and developing high quality staff.
- Have you updated your Personnel Policy in the last three years? Are staff across all levels and from various backgrounds and ages (including millennials) given an opportunity to help shape the Personnel Policy?
- Do you provide staff with an HR contact for dealing with sexual harassment, as well as a backup contact should the HR contact be involved in the complaint?

### Mentorship

- Do you connect your millennial staff or board members with mentors in a formal or informal way?
- Do you allow time in millennial staff members' work plans to learn from their mentors?

---

## About the Authors

Chrissy Allen, Blue Hill Heritage Trust  
Rebecca Dahl, Thousand Islands Land Trust  
Lianna Lee, Northern Forest Center

Liz Brownlee, Oak Heritage Conservancy  
Alison Delaney, Peconic Land Trust  
Photos courtesy of authors

## Learn More

Visit [landtrustalliance.org/millennials-land-trusts](http://landtrustalliance.org/millennials-land-trusts) for slides, graphics, and content from the presentation at Rally 2018. Also look for updates about how this conversation is continuing in the land trust community - including presentations at regional land trust trainings, and a half-day workshop at Rally 2019.

# References

---

1. William H. Frey. (January 2018). The Millennial Generation: A Demographic Bridge to America's Future. Retrieved from Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings website: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2018-jan\\_brookings-metro\\_millennials-a-demographic-bridge-to-americas-diverse-future.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2018-jan_brookings-metro_millennials-a-demographic-bridge-to-americas-diverse-future.pdf)
2. ProInspire. (October 2015). A Force for Impact: Millennials in the Nonprofit Sector. Retrieved from: <https://www.proinspire.org/millennials-2015/>
3. Deloitte.(2018). The Deloitte Millennial Survey 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www2.deloitte.com/nz/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/millennialsurvey.html>
- 4.Erik Larson. (April 11, 2018). Future of Work: Research Shows Millennials, Gen Xers And Baby Boomers Make Better Decisions Together. Retrieved from Forbes' website: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/eriklarson/2018/04/11/future-of-work-research-shows-millennials-gen-xers-and-baby-boomers-make-better-decisions-together/#7f7bf4535b44>
5. William H. Frey. (January 2018). The Millennial Generation: A Demographic Bridge to America's Future. Retrieved from Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings website: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2018-jan\\_brookings-metro\\_millennials-a-demographic-bridge-to-americas-diverse-future.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2018-jan_brookings-metro_millennials-a-demographic-bridge-to-americas-diverse-future.pdf)
6. William H. Frey. (January 2018). The Millennial Generation: A Demographic Bridge to America's Future. Retrieved from Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings website: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2018-jan\\_brookings-metro\\_millennials-a-demographic-bridge-to-americas-diverse-future.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2018-jan_brookings-metro_millennials-a-demographic-bridge-to-americas-diverse-future.pdf)
- 7.Dorceta E. Taylor. (July 2014). The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations. Retrieved from Green 2.0's website: <https://www.diversegreen.org/the-challenge/>
8. Dorceta E. Taylor. (January 2018). Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Reporting and Transparency. Retrieved from the University of Michigan School for Environment and Sustainability's website: [https://seas.umich.edu/news/01\\_26\\_2018/diversity\\_environmental\\_organizations\\_reporting\\_and\\_transparency](https://seas.umich.edu/news/01_26_2018/diversity_environmental_organizations_reporting_and_transparency)
9. Deloitte.(2018). The Deloitte Millennial Survey 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www2.deloitte.com/nz/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/millennialsurvey.html>
10. Richard Fry.(May 14, 2014).Young Adults Student Debt and Economic Well-Being. Retrieved from Pew Research Center: Social & Demographic Trends' website: <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/05/14/young-adults-student-debt-and-economic-well-being/>
11. Briana Boyington. (September 13, 2018). See 20 Years of Tuition Growth at National Universities. Retrieved from US News' website: <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/paying-for-college/articles/2017-09-20/see-20-years-of-tuition-growth-at-national-universities>
12. Pew Research Center. (March 7, 2014) Millennials in Adulthood: Detached from Institutions, Networked with Friends. Retrieved from <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/03/07/millennials-in-adulthood/>
- 13.ProInspire. (October 2015). A Force for Impact: Millennials in the Nonprofit Sector. Retrieved from: <https://www.proinspire.org/millennials-2015/>
- 14.Workplace Trends and Virtuali. (July 20, 2015). The Millennial Leadership Survey. Retrieved from <https://workplacetrends.com/the-millennial-leadership-survey/>
15. Josh Bersin. (August 16, 2013). Employee Retention Now a Big Issue: Why the Tide has turned. Retrieved from: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20130816200159-131079-employee-retention-now-a-big-issue-why-the-tide-has-turned>
16. Workplace Trends and Virtuali. (July 20, 2015). The Millennial Leadership Survey. Retrieved from <https://workplacetrends.com/the-millennial-leadership-survey/>
17. ProInspire. (October 2015). A Force for Impact: Millennials in the Nonprofit Sector. Retrieved from: <https://www.proinspire.org/millennials-2015/>
18. Paul Keckley. (March 18, 2014). What Do Millennials Want from the Healthcare System?. Retrieved from the Healthcare Blog:<https://thehealthcareblog.com/blog/2014/03/18/what-do-millennials-want-from-the-healthcare-system/>