



Evaluation of the 2012 Annual Conference of ICA Phoenix, AZ, 24-28 May 2012

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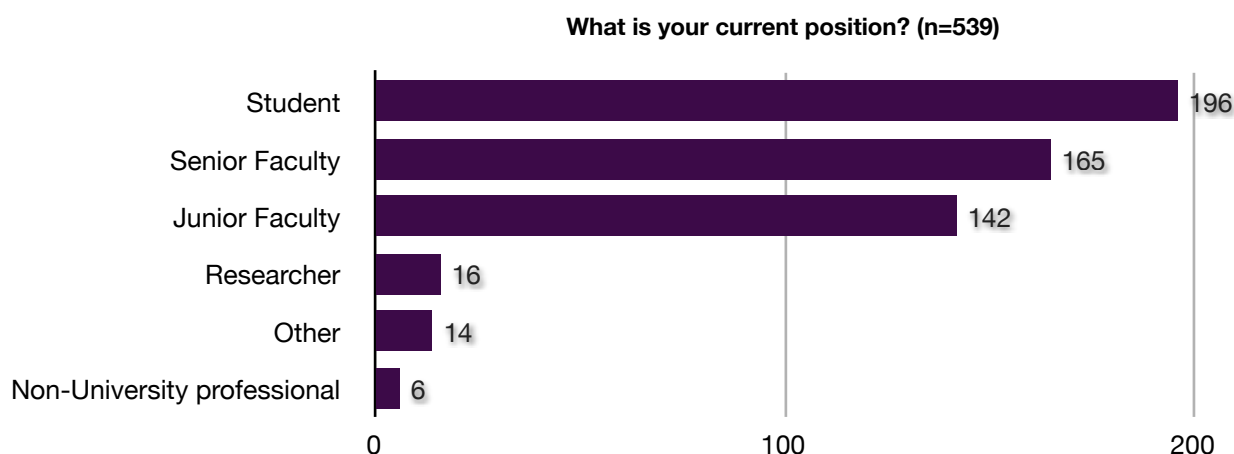
Conference evaluation

Each year, ICA conducts an evaluation survey among delegates who attended the annual conference. To ensure comparability across conferences, each year's survey is largely based on that of previous years. However, this year's survey was considerably reshuffled. The survey was administered online using Tradewinds. The web survey did not collect any personal data, IP address or other identifying information.

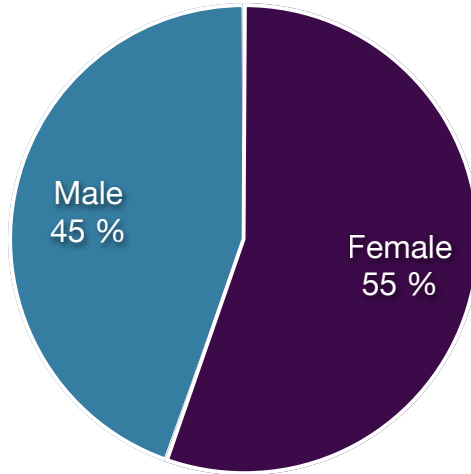
The ICA office emailed all delegates of the Phoenix conference a request to complete the survey on 22 June 2012. Reminders were sent three times during the survey period. The survey was accessible for completion until 20 July 2012. In total, 555 out of the 2,164 participants took part to the survey (26% response rate). The results of the survey were imported into SPSS for analysis.

Year - Location	Attendance	Survey N	Response Rate
2012 - Phoenix	2.162	555	26
2011 - Boston	2.507	700	28
2010 - Singapore	1.691	404	24
2009 - Chicago	2.197	475	22
2008- Montreal	2.108	559	27
2007 - San Francisco	2.134	730	34
2006 - Dresden	1.888	730	39
2005 - New York	2.238	716	32
2004 - New Orleans	1.814	127	6
2003 - San Diego	1.854	754	41
2002 - Seoul	1.159	251	22
2001 - Washington	1.677	318	28
2000 - Acapulco	1.118	284	15
1999 - San Francisco	1.581	58	10
1998 - Jerusalem	857	195	23
1997 - Montreal	1.339	287	22

The response rate (26%) is in line with that of recent years. There are more women than men among respondents (236 vs 190). Over a third of respondents are students, while 30% are senior faculty and 25% junior faculty.

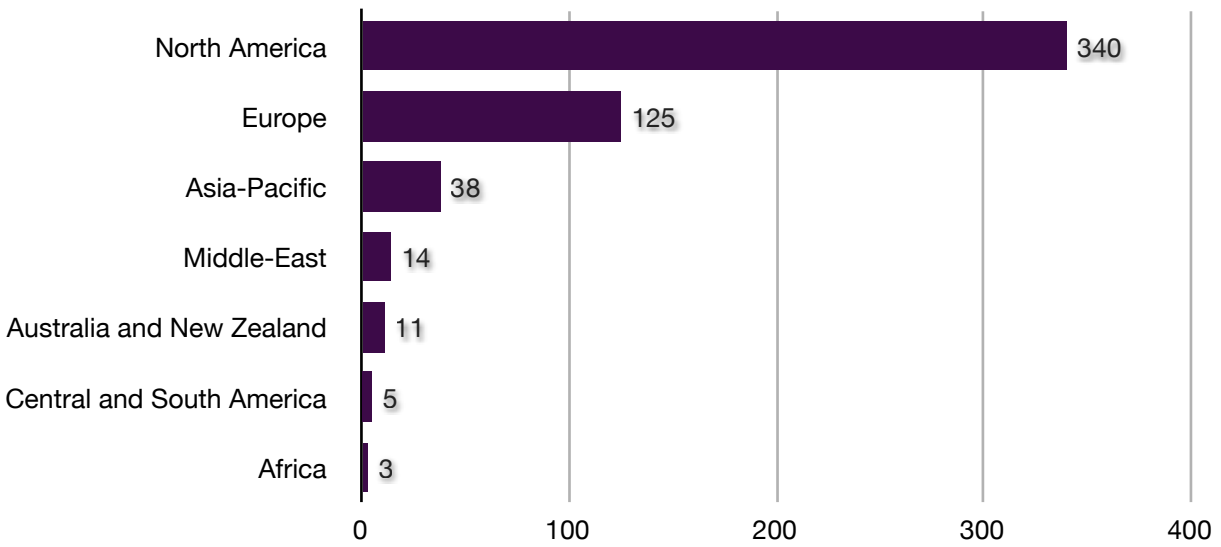


What is your gender (n=426)



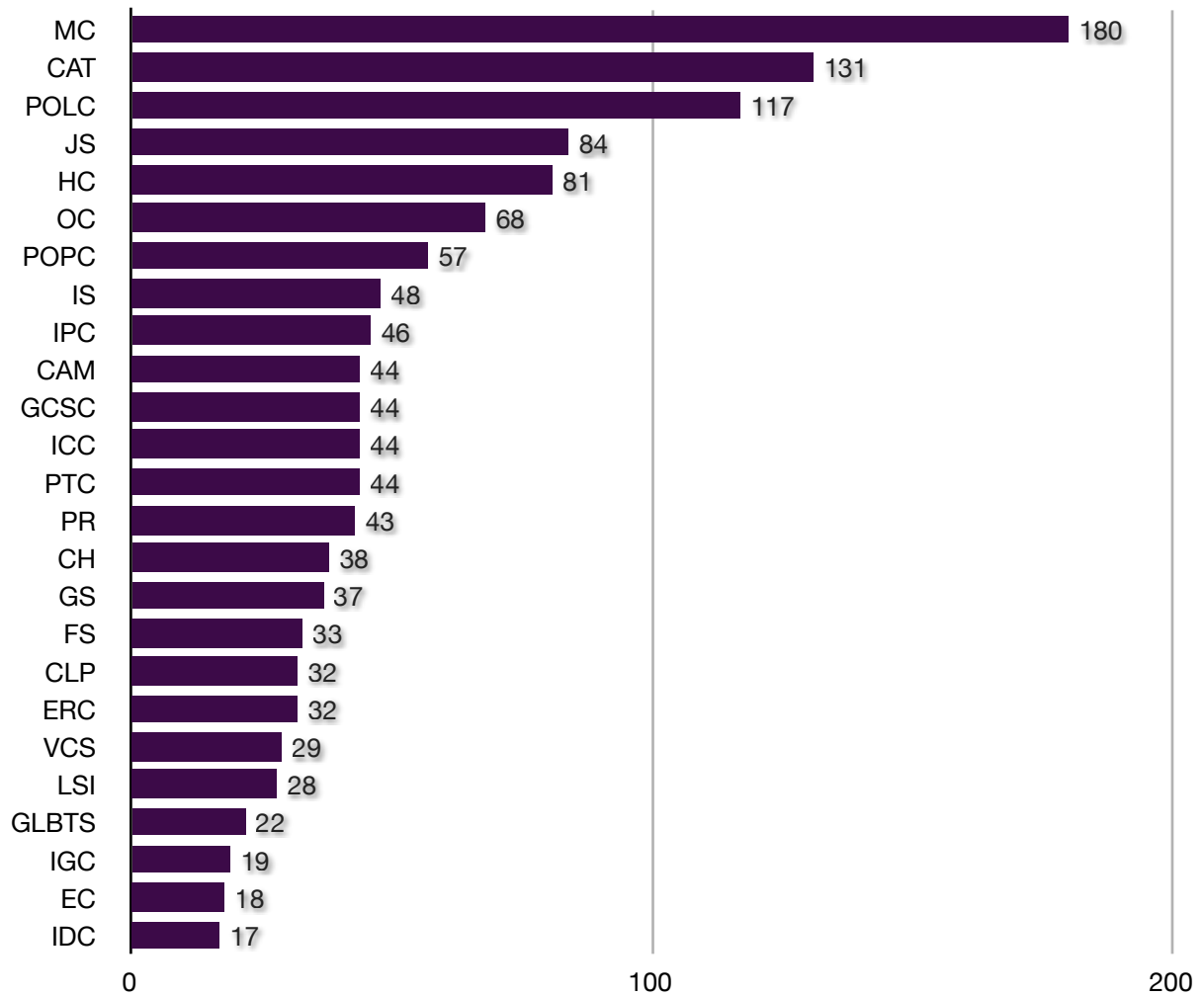
A majority of respondents are from North America (63%), while the next largest region is Europe (23%).

Where do you currently reside? (n=536)



All divisions and interest groups are represented in the sample, with a distribution largely consistent with that of the membership..

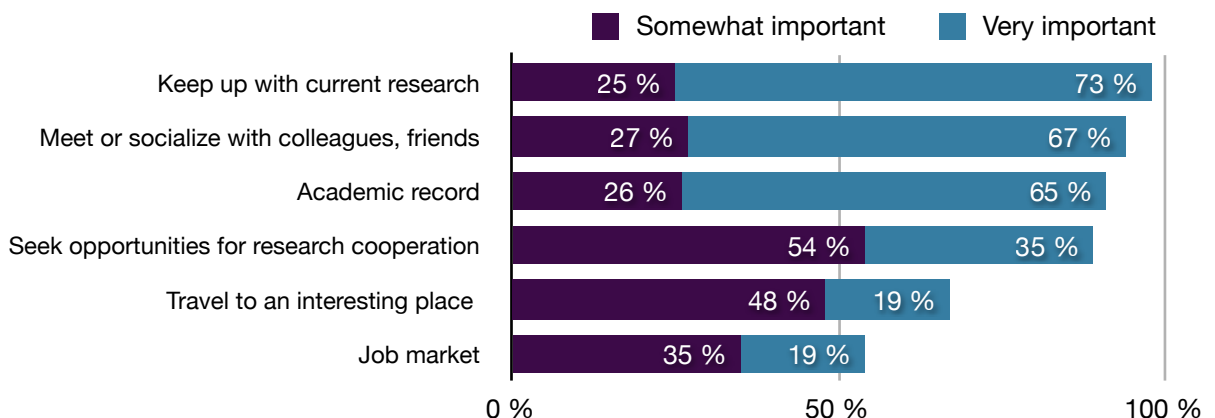
To which division and interest groups are you affiliated?



Motivations

Here again, the usual 7-point scale was replaced by a 3-point scale from 'Not at all important' to 'Very important'. Four factors are overwhelmingly motivating participants: 'Keep up with current research', 'Meet or socialize with colleagues, friends', 'Improve my academic record through paper presentation or other activities'. This is consistent with past conferences.

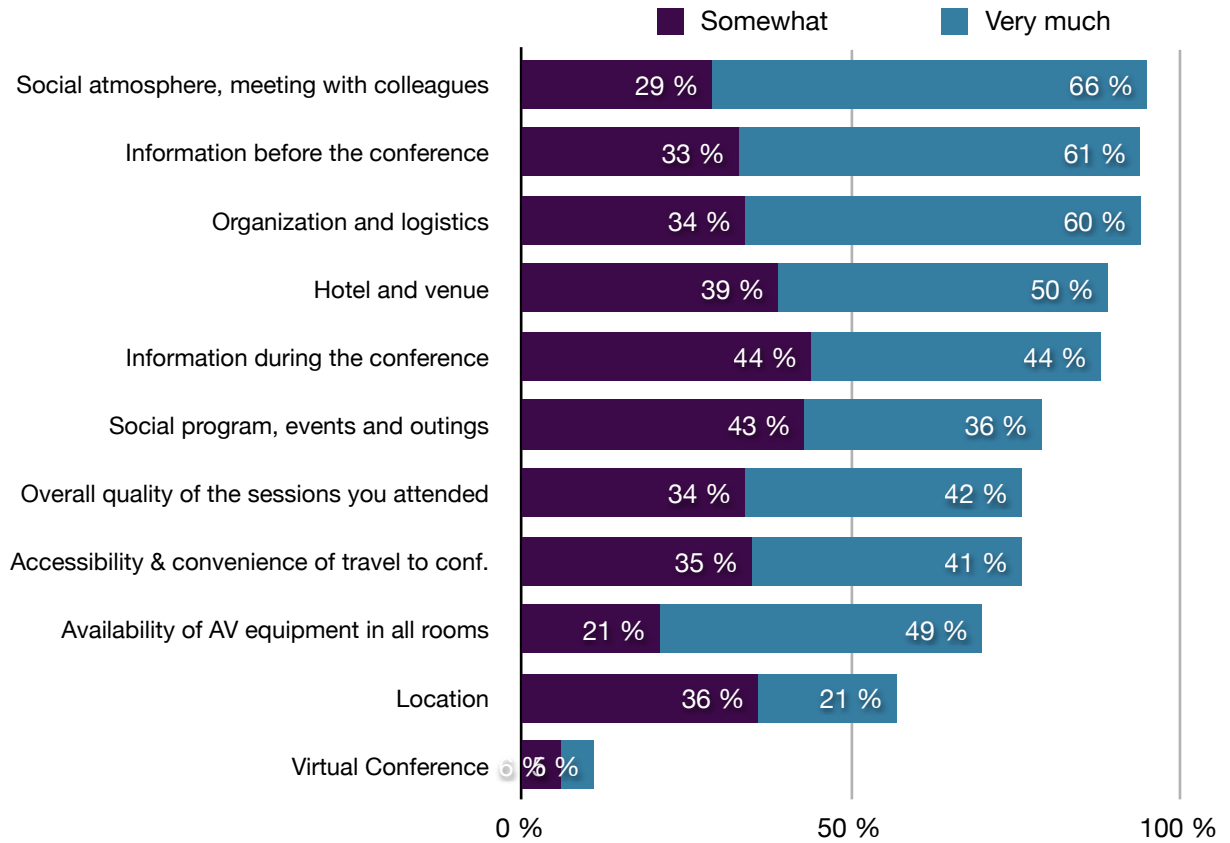
When you decided to attend the Phoenix conference, how important were the following motivations for you personally? (%)



Evaluation

The four-point scale used this year (Not at all / Not much / Somewhat / Very much) is different from the seven-point scale used in previous year. Only the ranking can be compared. Overall respondents were particularly pleased with the social atmosphere and meeting with colleagues (95% somewhat or very much enjoyed), the organization and the logistics (94%), the information before the conference (94%) and the hotel and venue (89%). One in five respondents attended the awards ceremony followed by the presidential address.

How much did you enjoy each of the following aspects of the conference? (%)



If we consider what respondents say they very much enjoyed, the location and the social program show the lowest proportions, although the proportion is more than half of the respondents when taking into account the 'somewhat' answers. Very few respondents answered the question about the Virtual Conference, probably reflecting the proportion of people who actively took part, but the vast majority of those who do answer say they enjoyed it (59 respondents say they enjoyed it somewhat or very much versus 21 who say they enjoyed it not much or not at all).

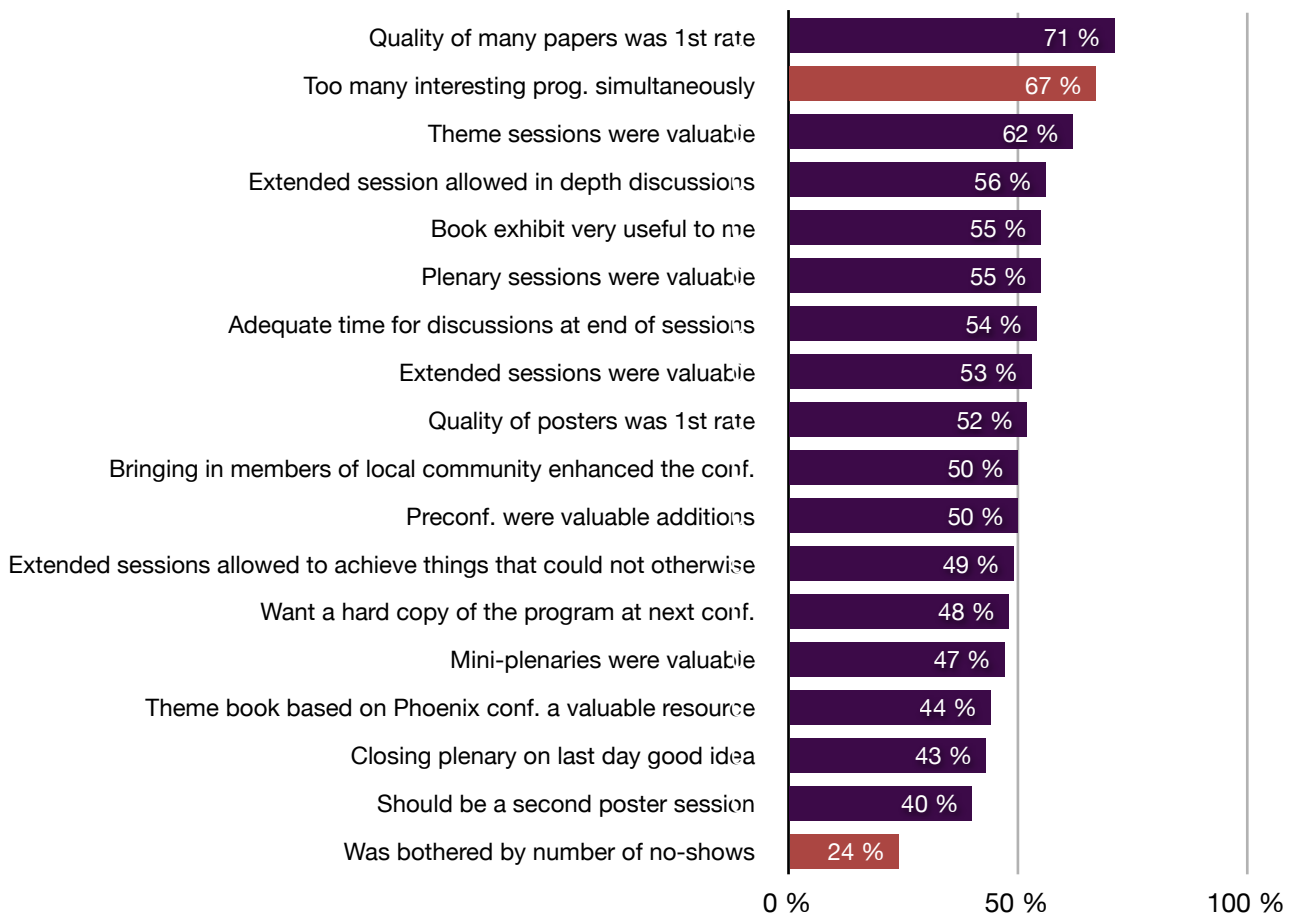
How much did you enjoy each of the following aspects of the conference? (%)

	<i>Missing</i>	Not at all	Not much	Somewhat	Very much
Social atmosphere, meeting with colleagues	2 %	1 %	2 %	29 %	66 %
Information before the conference	2 %		3 %	33 %	61 %
Organization and logistics	2 %	1 %	3 %	34 %	60 %
Hotel and venue	1 %	2 %	9 %	39 %	50 %
Availability of AV equipment in all rooms	21 %	2 %	7 %	21 %	49 %
Information during the conference (on site)	3 %	1 %	8 %	44 %	44 %
Overall quality of the sessions you attended	19 %	1 %	5 %	34 %	42 %
Accessibility and convenience of travel to the conference city and hotel	3 %	6 %	15 %	35 %	41 %
Social program, events and outings	7 %	2 %	12 %	43 %	36 %
Location	2 %	16 %	26 %	36 %	21 %
Virtual Conference	86 %	2 %	2 %	6 %	5 %

A quarter of the respondents have participated to one of the preconferences (but twice as many agree that preconferences are a valuable addition) and two thirds attended at least one theme session.

A comfortable majority of respondents agree that the quality of many papers was first rate and that the theme sessions were valuable. A short majority agree that the extended sessions were valuable and allowed in depth discussions, that the book exhibit was very useful to them, that the plenary sessions were valuable, that there was adequate time for discussions at the end of the sessions and that the quality of some of the posters was first rate. Two thirds of respondents also agree with the statement that there were too many interesting programming simultaneously, which is the expression of a frustration as much as an implicit recognition that there was an overwhelming offer of appealing activities offered. About half of the respondents say they would like a hard copy of the program at the next conference. Panel participants not showing up at sessions is seen as problematic by a quarter of the respondents.

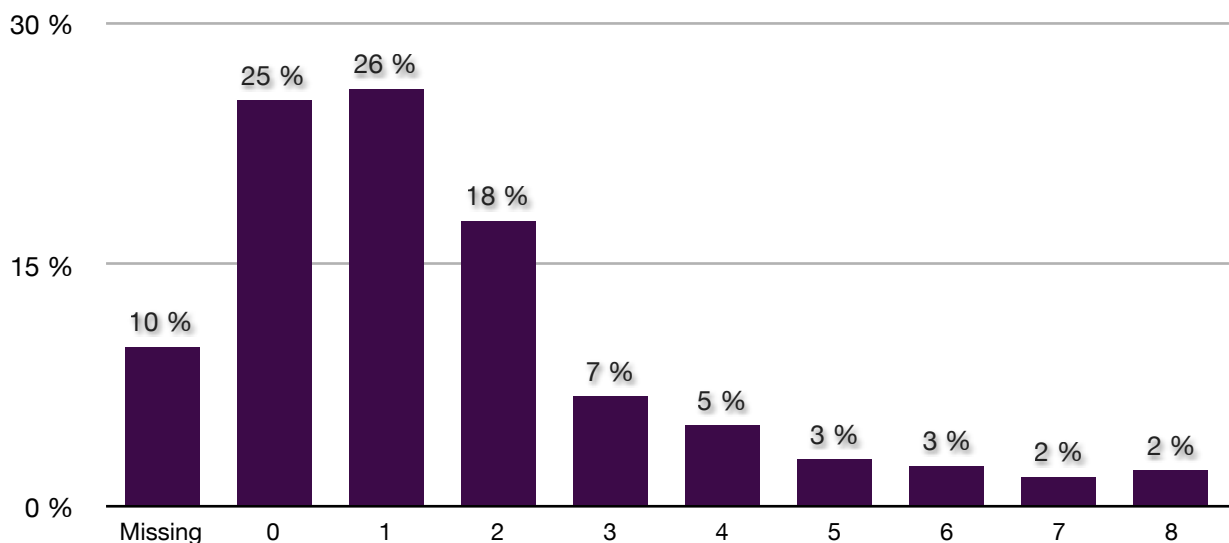
How much do you agree with the following statements about sessions and their content at the Phoenix conference? ('Tend to agree' + 'Fully agree')



Plenaries, mini-plenaries

A quarter of the respondents did not attend any plenary or mini-plenary, while another quarter attended just one, 18% two, and 21% three or more. Nearly half of the respondents agree that the mini-plenaries were valuable

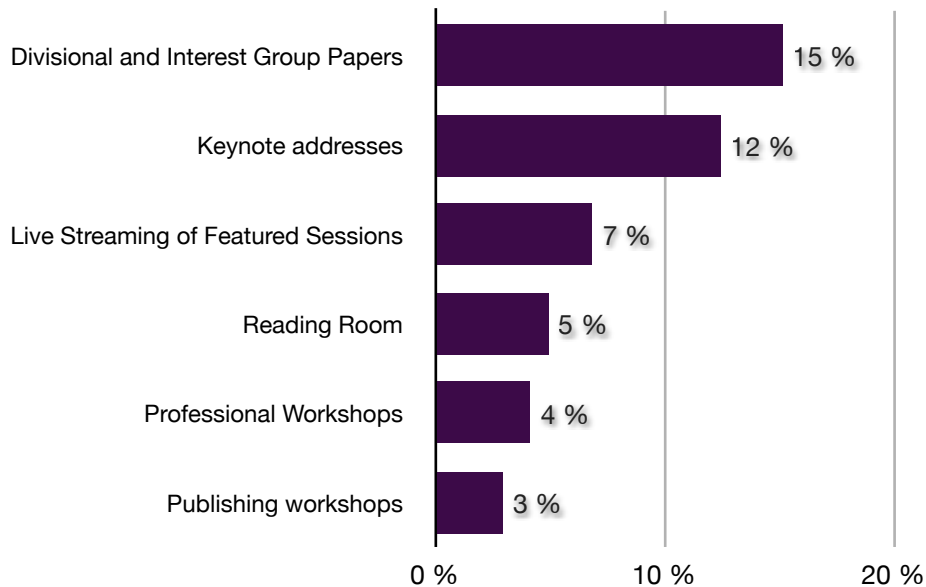
How many plenary / mini-plenary sessions did you attend at this year's conference?



Virtual Conference and technology

Few respondents have answered the questions related to the Virtual Conference, reflecting the large proportion of conference attendees who did not engage significantly with it. Only half of the respondents (51%) say they were even aware of the virtual conference opportunities in Phoenix.

Which of the following components of the virtual/online conference did you check out (other than those for which you had a formal role, such as presenter/chair)?



Those who did are rather positive when assessing their experience, the majority agreeing that navigation was easy, that the available content was clearly identified, that the information was usefully presented, that keynote addresses and workshops were easy to find and could easily be accessed.

How much would you agree with the following statements about the virtual/online conference?

	<i>Missing</i>	Strongly disagree	Tend to disagree	Tend to agree	Fully agree
Navigation was easy	74 %	2 %	7 %	14 %	3 %
Available content was clearly identified	74 %	1 %	8 %	14 %	3 %
Information was usefully presented	75 %	2 %	6 %	15 %	3 %
Keynote addresses were easy to find	76 %	1 %	5 %	13 %	4 %
Workshops were easy to find	78 %	1 %	7 %	11 %	4 %
Keynote addresses and workshop could easily be accessed	78 %	1 %	6 %	11 %	4 %

How much did you enjoy each of the following components of the virtual/online conference?

	<i>Missing</i>	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Not much</i>	<i>Some-what</i>	<i>Very much</i>
Keynote Addresses	81 %	3 %	3 %	9 %	5 %
Professional Workshops	86 %	4 %	2 %	7 %	2 %
Divisional and Interest Group Papers plus commentaries and discussion	79 %	3 %	2 %	9 %	7 %
Live Streaming of Featured Sessions throughout the conference	86 %	3 %	2 %	6 %	3 %
Publishing workshops	87 %	3 %	3 %	6 %	2 %
Reading Room	87 %	3 %	3 %	6 %	2 %
Virtual book exhibit	88 %	3 %	2 %	6 %	1 %

Half of the respondents (52%) agree that the technological opportunities enhanced the *intellectual* value of the conference, while slightly less (46%) agree it enhanced the *social* value of the conference.

To what extent would you agree that the technological opportunities enhance the intellectual value of your Phoenix ICA conference?

<i>Missing</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Tend to disagree</i>	<i>Tend to agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>
26 %	4 %	17 %	40 %	12 %

To what extent would you agree that the technological opportunities enhance the social value of your Phoenix ICA conference?

<i>Missing</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Tend to disagree</i>	<i>Tend to agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>
26 %	6 %	22 %	34 %	12 %

The new conference mobile application offered to participants was very well received. Developed on the Guidebook platform, it offered handy tools to search the program and help with various aspects of the conference. The application was found useful by the vast majority of respondents who downloaded it.

This year, ICA offered participants an application to download on their mobile device (smartphone or tablet) offering a range of information related to the conference. To what extent would you say this application was useful?

<i>Missing</i>	<i>Did not download</i>	<i>Not at all useful</i>	<i>Somewhat useful</i>	<i>Very useful</i>
19 %	24 %	4 %	18 %	36 %

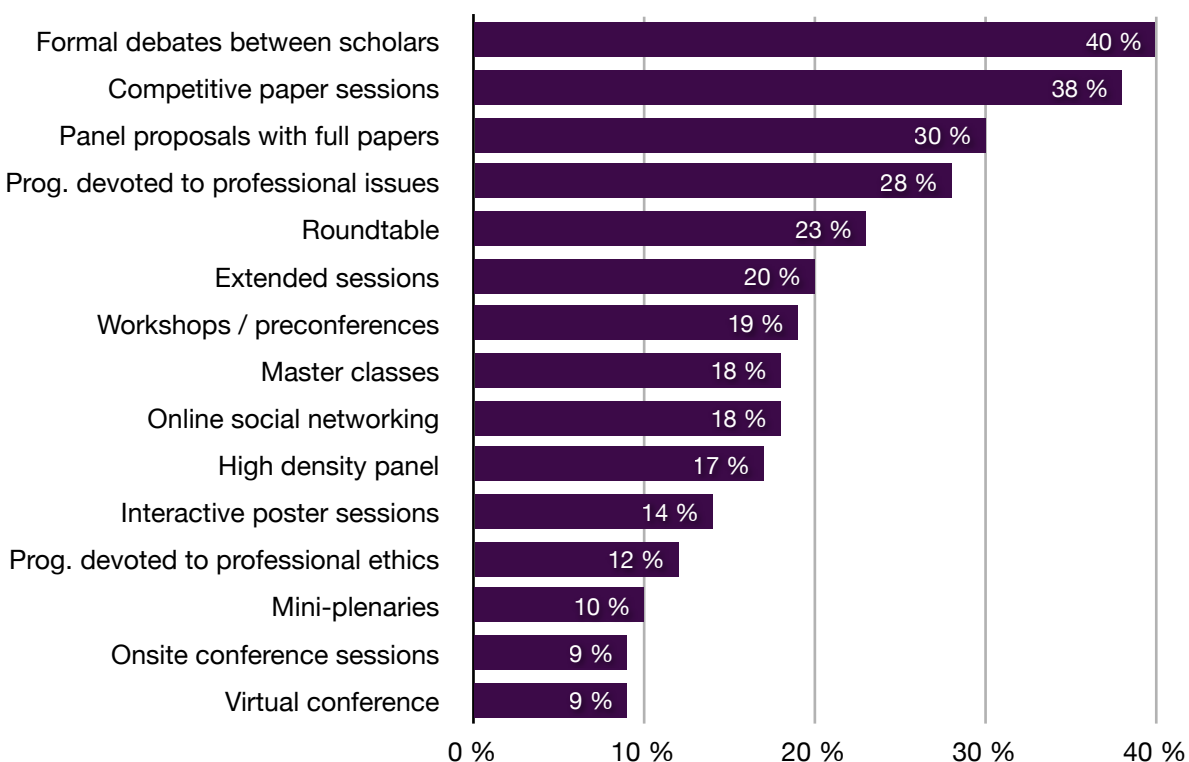
Suggestions for improving the mobile application included:

- Better search capabilities, particularly to by names and keywords [the most requested improvement by far].
- Availability for other OS and mobile devices.
- Clearer instructions for downloading it.
- Ability to integrate selected events to the calendar of your choice or that of the ICA portal and add personal event (like meeting colleagues).
- Make the app stay on the page even when the phone goes into standby mode
- A button 'What's now?'
- Better format for iPad
- Links to papers and people.
- Less connectivity - it's a source of distraction.
- Update the program on the app more regularly to show last minute changes.
- Clearer indications of start time; some users are complaining that the ending time is more visible and this creates confusion.
- Provide a feature that allows to take notes that will remain associated with a particular session.
- Improve the map of the venue and make it more interactive. There is even a suggestion to offer the possibility to activate a GPS function.
- Include information about the city.
- Provide sophisticated filtering options to display only session likely to be of interest.
- Have a check-in feature so that we can get a sense for what panels are especially busy.

Wishes for the next conference

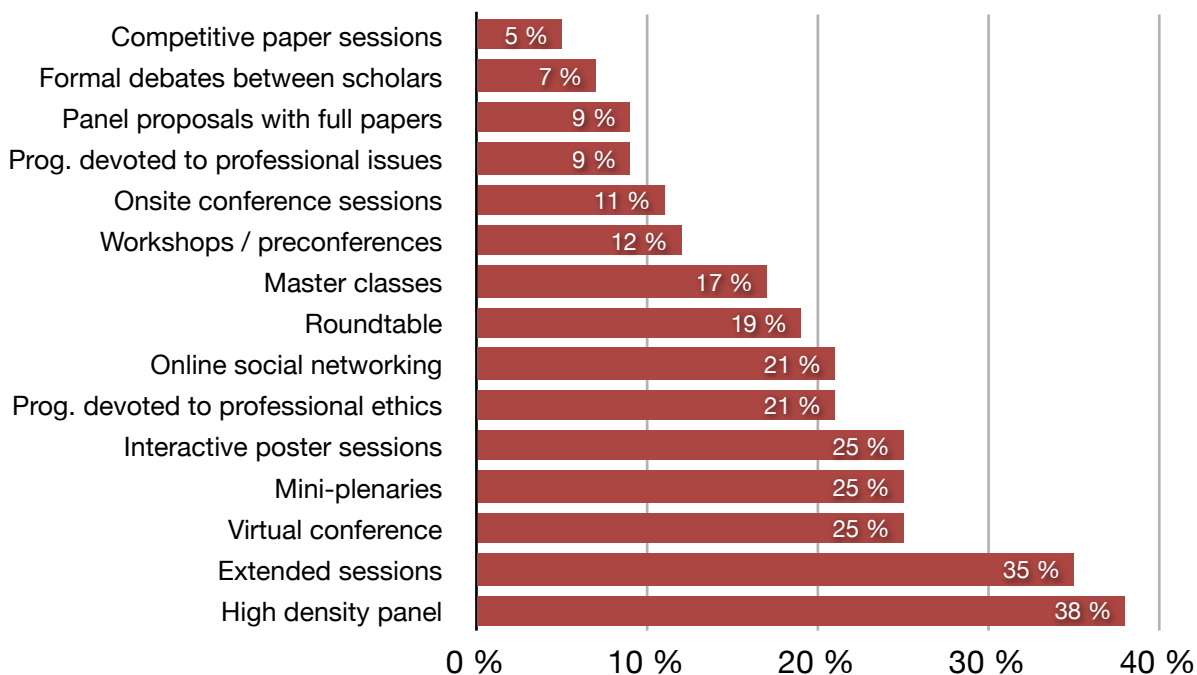
Respondents would particularly like to see more 'Formal debates between scholars' and 'Competitive paper sessions' at the next ICA conference. 30% of respondents wish for more 'Panel proposals with full papers' and 28% more 'Programming devoted to professional issues'.

The conference is made of sessions in different formats. How much would you like to see each of the following types of sessions at the next ICA conference? (proportions of 'More')



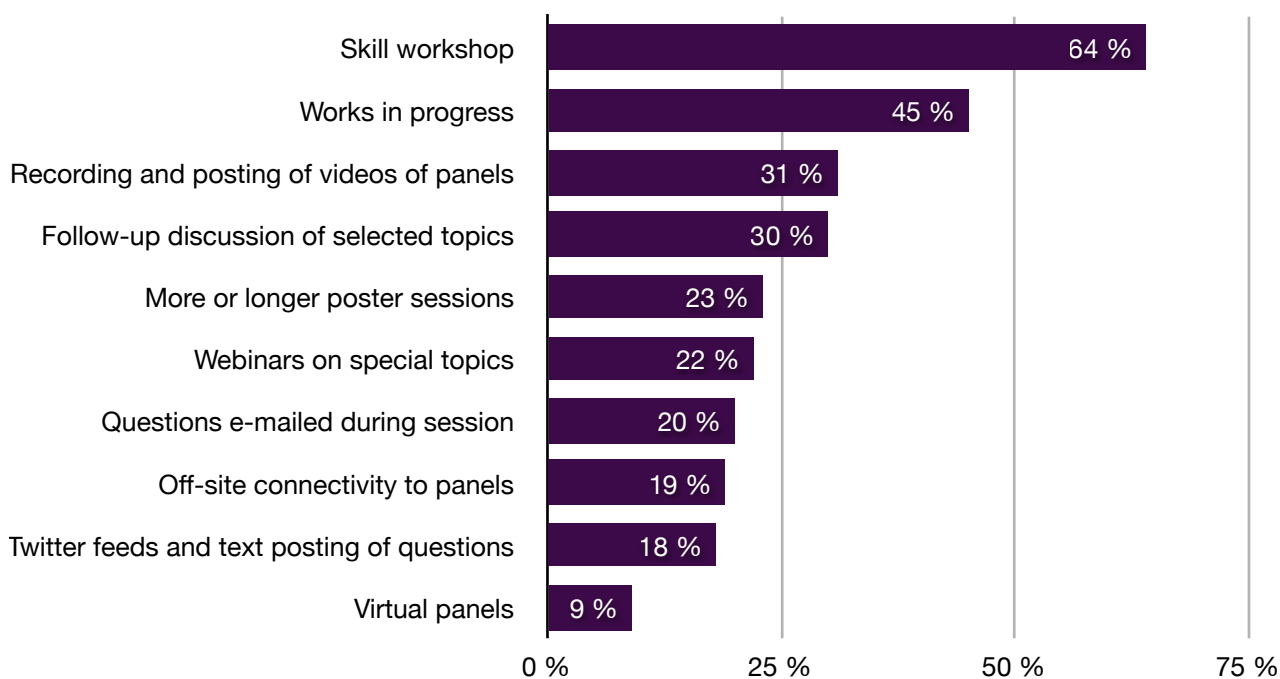
'High density panels' and 'Extended sessions' show the largest proportions (over one third) of respondents asking either for 'less' or 'not at all' at the next conference. A quarter of the respondent wish for less or no 'Interactive poster sessions', 'Mini plenaries' and 'Virtual conferences'.

The conference is made of sessions in different formats. How much would you like to see each of the following types of sessions at the next ICA conference? (proportions of 'Less' + 'Not at all')



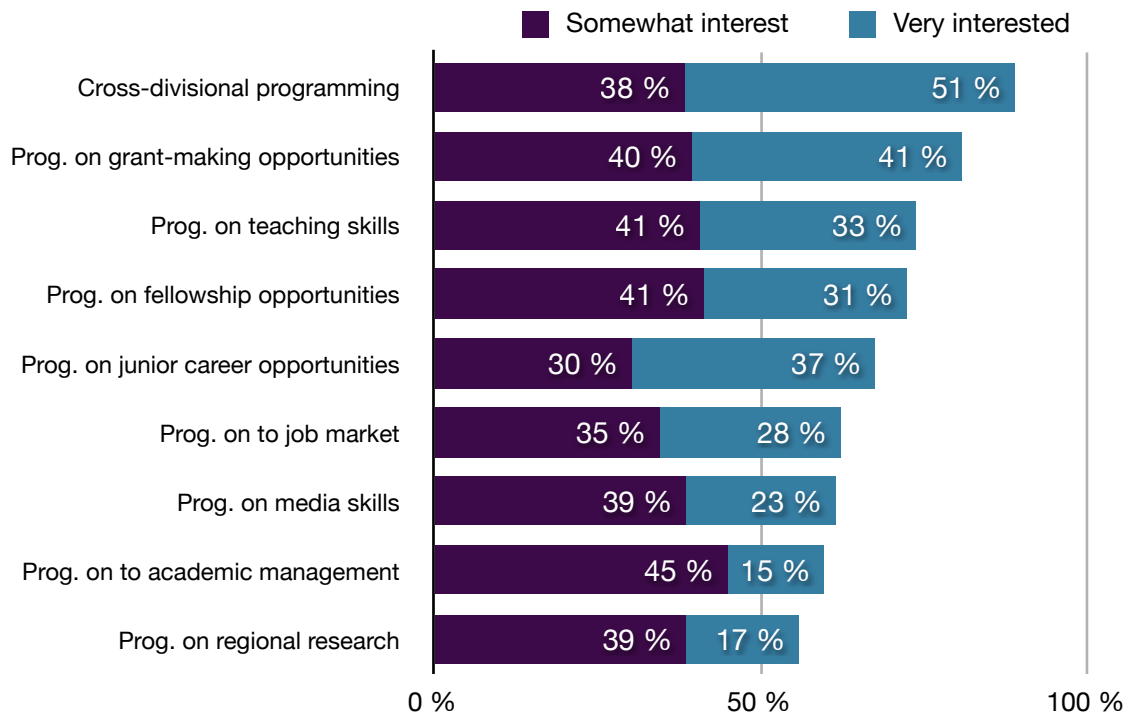
Nearly two thirds of respondents say they'd like to see skill workshops in future conferences and 45% would like to see works in progress. All other formats tested for future consideration gathered the vote of less than a third of the respondents.

What other types of formats would you like to see in future conferences



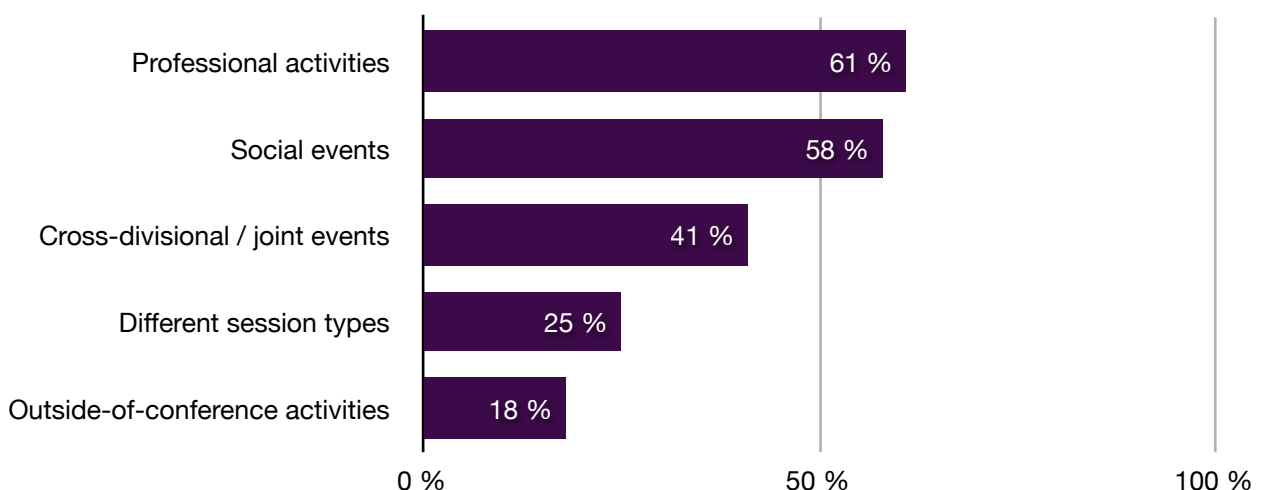
The demand among respondents is overwhelming for cross-divisional programming, programming on grant-making opportunities. All other proposals made in that particular question raised interest for the majority of the respondents, particularly on teaching skills, fellowship opportunities and junior career opportunities.

ICA is contemplating new types of programming for future conferences. To what extent would you be interested in attending the following types of programming?



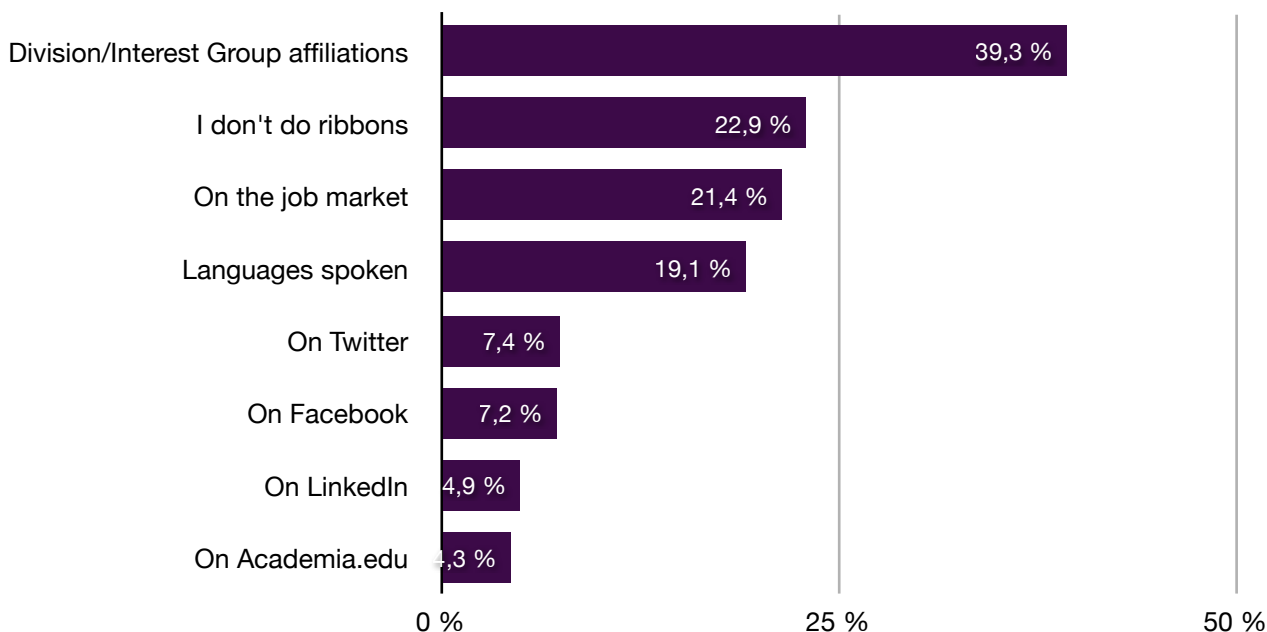
Regarding activities and services more specifically provided by divisions and interest groups, respondents show particular interest for more professional activities and for social events.

Divisions and interest groups provide a variety of activities and services for their members at the ICA conference. Of the following types of activities and services, which would you like to see more of?



Colorful and playful ribbons are appropriated by participants according to their inspiration and expectations. If new ribbons were to be introduced at the next conference, it would appear that marking one's affiliations to divisions and interest groups would be seen as most popular among respondents. A ribbon indicating 'on the job market' would be as popular as the languages spoken ribbons introduced in Phoenix or the ironic 'I don't do ribbons'.

ICA traditionally makes use of ribbons to be fixed to the conference nametags for various purposes. Please indicate which of the following types of ribbons you would find useful for future conferences.



Open comments provide other leads as to what respondents wish for future conferences:

- The quality, availability and stability of the wi-fi is also noted as important by some, all the more when ICA develops and encourages various online activities.
- More information by every possible means to reduce the cost (cheap hotels, travel grants, room sharing).
- More information (including maps) about nearby restaurants and shops.
- Sessions about failures or problematic research, so that participants can share the lessons learned.
- Better information about participants who cancelled their participation.
- Ribbons to identify divisions' officials.
- "The ribbons were great, please continue them."
- "Please don't make inflationary use of ribbons - or drop ribbons altogether."
- "Never let anyone wear a ribbon that states 'On the job market'"
- Workshops for papers in progress where participants, having read the papers in advance, provide concrete suggestions for improvement.
- If new formats are tried, some ask that it not be imposed on divisions who work under enough constraints as it is.
- Papers should be available for download for a longer time.
- "Lunch & Learn opportunity might be a great benefit for Master Students or Ph.D. in learning how to become an academic. Something to give up and coming insight, perspective on a hot topic, or just the opportunity to mingle with tenured professors."
- On-site daycare and baby-sitting for participants traveling with children.
- "Less ICA stuff and more divisional stuff. Honestly the plenaries, mini plenaries, and theme stuff are all worthless. ICA is not a big family, its a lot of big families (the divisions) occupying the same hotel."
- "Phoenix was boring, but it probably kept more people in the hotel and at the sessions."
- "Streaming and posting authors' presentations online is a form of publication and should not be allowed by ICA without explicit changes to bylaws and recognition of these media as official ICA publications."
- "More open discussions about specific topics!"
- More time in regular sessions.
- More *skill workshops*
- "Please do not twitter-fy this conference. Keep it centered on solid research, which it already is. Those constant twitterers are very distracting and counterproductive. "

- "Be more helpful and welcoming of first-time attenders who are not students. There were no special welcoming opportunities or orientations apart from students."
- "Please stop sending member passwords in unencrypted emails, like the email that informed me of this survey."
- "Having more respondents could be helpful as a presenter (to get feedback before publication) and as an audience member (to learn more about the quality of the papers)."
- "Wondering why every single social event in every division MUST revolve around alcohol and be held at a bar? This places those of us who don't drink, for religious or other reasons, at a distinct disadvantage and serves to distance us from our colleagues."
- "Most of food provided in different receptions are way too salty, which is not good for health."
- "ICA has grown too large and this has resulted in a balkanization of the conference."
- "Extended sessions: The success of these seemed to vary a great deal. Some were great and others were a waste of time. I think these should be optional for planners but not mandatory."
- "The OCD did an absolutely fantastic job with their extended session Research Escalator. As a junior scholar, this was a well-organized, productive time where I got feedback from 'famous' scholars in my field whom I otherwise would not have met."
- "Thank you for all your hard work -- it makes such a difference to so many of us."