

Report of the Organizing Committee for the 2nd Annual Meeting of NEES Consortium, Inc.

From: Bob Reitherman, Chair
Anke Kamrath, José Restrepo, Solomon Yim
To: NEES Consortium, Inc. Board of Directors and Executive Director
Date: August 30, 2004

This report provides documentation on the 2nd Annual Meeting of NEES Consortium, Inc. that may be useful for planning future annual meetings.

Proceedings

The agenda and other information on the meeting is included in the Proceedings. (CUREE passed all the remaining copies to NEES Consortium, Inc., and I think everyone on this distribution list already has his or her own copy, so it isn't included here. For reference, included here are the Proceedings from the First Annual Meeting.)

Turn-out

The total number of attendees, 147, was less than for the First Annual Meeting, and the number of paid registrants much less. At any one time, the number of people attending was closer to 100. The "less than hoped for" turn out was probably due to three reasons:

1. The "band wagon" effect the first year, when large numbers of people joined NEES (and were not assessed any dues for calendar year 2003). As of the time of the 2nd Annual Meeting, only about half of the over 500 members had paid their dues, indicating a fall-off in initial interest, aside from anything having to do with the Annual Meeting.

2. There was "no free lunch" for the 2nd Annual Meeting, whereas for the first one, the Consortium Development Project absorbed costs and NSF provided an additional grant to CUREE to dispense as travel/registration stipends. No meeting registration fee was charged to NEES Consortium members for the first meeting.

3. Increasing clarity over the NEES Consortium role: Though always made clear in its outreach efforts that NEES Consortium, Inc. did not receive proposals and make research awards, and that NSF had that role, probably some people the first year were under that impression and lost interest when they realized research grants were not coming from the Consortium.

Budget: Appendix A

The initial budget used a low, best estimate, and high figure for paid registrants, with 150 being the low and 200 being the best estimate. When the actual turn-out was lower than the low estimate, this had negative budget implications. The next few pages document the financial aspects (though as of now, there are a couple of minor costs that have yet to be booked, and this is not an official financial statement on behalf of NEES Consortium, Inc.).

Polling Results from the Second Annual Meeting: Appendix B

Hand-held polling devices were used at the meeting to elicit fresh evaluative ratings from the participants. A variety of data are included in this Appendix that profile the attendees' opinions about NEES in general and specifically the Consortium. In general, the meeting had a high approval rating: 33% excellent, 65% OK, and only 2% poor.

Other significant results include:

- First choice for location for the 2005 Annual Meeting was Hawaii (47%) followed by coastal California (27%).
- Desired duration was two days (59%).
- Mid-May was the most popular time for the next meeting (47%)
- Only 17% thought they were not kept well-informed of Committee activities, while 56% said they did not have an ample opportunity to stay abreast of Board of Directors activities, indicating the Board needs to more frequently and openly communicate with the membership. This has implications for ongoing communication (e.g., emailing out announcements that a Board meeting's minutes have been posted) as well as possible agenda items for next year's program that might keep the Board in better contact with the membership.
- For next year's meeting, the most desired program element was updating on funded NEES research projects (44%) followed by strategic planning on how to increase the amount of funding for NEES research (39%). (A general trend with questions where "money" or "funding" was a possible answer was that this choice finished first.)
- The most popular elements of the 2nd Annual Meeting program were (fairly closely bunched): 1st, talks on underway and funded research (30%); 2nd, the wireless polling that provides instant graphs of responses (27%); and 3rd, demonstration of new IT capabilities (24%).

Appendix A: Budget

Budget for Second Annual Meeting, NEES Consortium, Inc.					
May 20 - 21, 2004, San Diego, CA					
		Estimates			
		(made 3 mo's prior to event)			
		150	200	250	ACTUALS
EXPENSES					
(1) Mailing, Printing, Communications					
	Printing Proceedings/program/posters	6,000	6,000	6,000	4,211
	wireless handheld polling, 2 days	4,000	4,000	4,000	3,850
	Printing of 1,000 flyers, stamps	800	800	800	0
	Misc. (e.g., name tags, shipping)	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,667
	Mail, Print, & Communications Subtotal	11,800	11,800	11,800	9,728
(2) Hotel					
Food	4 breaks & 2 Cont. BF: \$48 pp	7,200	9,600	12,000	
	2 lunches @ \$56/person =	8,400	11,200	14,000	
	Banquet @ \$44.50 pp	6,675	8,900	11,125	
	Wine for table@\$16/person	2,400	3,200	4,000	
Reception	No-host bar reception, @\$11 pp	1,650	2,200	2,750	
	Food, Hotel Total:	26,325	35,100	43,875	22,922
<i>(Above hotel costs include tax and service charges, also the following AV & IT hotel charges)</i>					
AV, IT	Audio-visual (mics & screen)	600	600	600	
	A/V Screens/ 5 B.O. rooms	400	400	400	
	Web access, T1 Line (2 days)	700	700	700	
	Hotel Subtotal	28,025	36,800	45,575	22,922
(3) Travel		6,000	6,000	6,000	8,369
(4) Staffing					
	proceedings, web, pre-mtg reg. + on-site labor	7,350	7,350	7,350	7,350
	Andrew Neitlich MC/live polling	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
	Staffing Subtotal	12,350	12,350	12,350	12,350
(5) Contingency		5,818	6,695	7,573	0
TOTAL EXPENSES		63,993	73,645	83,298	53,369
INCOME					
(6) Registration		54700	67700	80700	34,030
(7) Membership dues allocated to event					22,600
(8) MTS sponsorship of reception					2,329
TOTAL INCOME					58,959
9. NET INCOME (with use of dues as "income")					5,590
10. NET INCOME (without use of "income" from membership dues)					-17,010

**Notes to Appendix A Spreadsheet:
Budget for Second Annual Meeting, NEES Consortium, Inc.**

1. Mailing, Printing, and Communications

The budgeted figures for the Proceedings were based on 500 copies--an estimated amount to give one to each of the attendees plus mail one after the event to each Consortium member who did not attend (which was done for the First Annual Meeting). The cost in the Actuals column reflects the fact that a turnout of 150 or less looked probable as the event neared, and to reduce cost no Proceedings were mailed out to members who did not attend. 200 were printed--enough for the attendees and to have a small amount left on hand with the Consortium. The pdf version of the document was posted on the www.nees.org website and members emailed about its availability.

Six color posters (approx. 2 x 3 ft) were printed for use at the event. Eight of the Equipment Site posters (smaller in size, 16 in x 24 in) were also printed (to update them; the other Equipment Site posters were already on hand).

200 hand-held, wireless instant polling devices used at the First Annual Meeting were rented for this meeting as well.

A printed flyer to be mailed out advertising the event was in the initial plans but cancelled to reduce cost.

Miscellaneous charges include shipping and mailing (e.g., shipping to send posters, registration materials, and polling devices). Also included here are small charges of a variety of kinds that don't fit under a larger heading.

2. Hotel

The budget figures broke out the per-person costs and extrapolated for the estimated number of attendees for line items such as the breaks, lunches, etc. As the relatively small turnout seemed likely, these costs were cut as much as possible, resulting in less-than-budgeted expense. (The 150 column for the estimate is the one closest to the actual number who attended).

Todd Shechter of Oregon State University provided wireless Internet connectivity in the meeting room at no charge other than his travel and hotel expense (included under "travel" with the similar charges of guest speakers who had their way paid).

3. Travel

Six speakers were offered travel reimbursement. Other travel expense is for staff and Todd Shechter. As of now, there are two speakers who have not sent in reimbursement requests, so the Actuals figure is an approximation that includes an estimate for these yet-to-be-received charges.

4. Staffing

For planning purposes in the future, this Actuals figure should be regarded as being unrealistically low. Any activities that overlapped with CUREE's Consortium Development award and were allowable costs there were not charged to this Annual Meeting budget. For example, Bob Reitherman's labor and travel costs weren't charged to the Annual Meeting. Web tasks by Darryl Wong that were related to ongoing development of the nees.org website were allocated to the CUREE award also. The staffing cost shown is actually a better guide as to the cost of staffing for a workshop-scale event, not a larger conference such as the annual meeting. Six CUREE staff members worked on the effort from time to time. Five were on hand at the venue.

5. Contingency

10% of the subtotals above this line was assumed in each of the three estimated columns; contingency does not apply to the Actuals column.

6. Registration

There were 118 paid registrants; almost all of these were NEES Consortium, Inc. members and paid the \$250 fee for early registration. The following pages are the registration form from the nees.org website and show the fee schedule. Invited speakers who weren't NEES Consortium members did not pay registration, nor did members of the NEES Consortium Board of Directors. There were 29 attendees who did not pay registration.

7. Membership dues allocated to event

Indirect income from the NEES Consortium (money received from members' dues) was used as "income" to support the event.

8. MTS sponsorship of reception

The Organizing Committee initiated this request to MTS that it sponsor the reception, which it did.

9. Net Income (with use of dues as "income")

With this item included as "income," the event approximately broke even--not a surprise since the bookkeeping attempt was to use dues revenue as necessary to pay the event's costs that were not covered by registration.

10. Net Income (without use of off-setting "income" from membership dues)

This loss or subsidy figure is a more realistic planning guide. It indicates that the NEES Consortium subsidized the 2nd Annual Meeting with about \$17,000 of its own funds.

NEES Consortium, Inc. • 2nd Annual Meeting

May 20-21, 2004 • San Diego, California

Hotel Information

The Catamaran Resort Hotel, San Diego, CA

Room Block Name: **NEES Consortium**

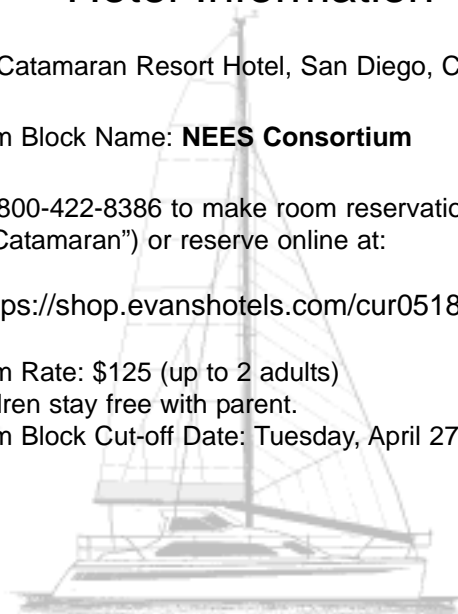
Call 800-422-8386 to make room reservations (ask for "Catamaran") or reserve online at:

<https://shop.evanshotels.com/cur0518.html>

Room Rate: \$125 (up to 2 adults)

Children stay free with parent.

Room Block Cut-off Date: Tuesday, April 27, 2004



Meeting registration includes:

May 19: Outdoor evening reception with hors d'oeuvres

May 20: Continental breakfast, lunch, dinner banquet (including breaks with refreshments)

May 21: Continental breakfast, and lunch (including breaks with refreshments)

May 22: Field trip to UCSD equipment site (*please indicate below if you plan to attend)



Tropical attire suggested (hat not included).

Registration Form

To receive the special member rate, membership dues must be paid at time of registration. If you wish to apply for NEES membership, please visit www.nees.org. Applications must be received no later than April 15, 2004.

Member Registration

Registration (received on or before May 1, 2004) - \$250

Registration (after May 1, 2004) - \$300

Dues for NEES Consortium members may be included with your registration form to receive the special membership rate:

Membership Dues (\$50 for Individual Membership / \$150 for Institutional Membership) please specify

_____ Additional banquet ticket - \$65 each

Non-Member Registration

Registration (received on or before May 1, 2004) - \$350

Registration (after May 1, 2004) - \$400

_____ Additional reception ticket - \$25 each

Note: No registrations will be processed after May 14, 2004. Cancellation requests must be received no later than May 7, 2004. Please allow approximately 2-4 weeks for refunds minus a \$20 processing fee.

Complete form and mail with check or money order payable to: "NEES Consortium, Inc."
1301 S. 46th Street - Richmond, CA 94804-4698

name _____

organization _____

address _____

city _____ state _____ zip _____ country _____

tel. (____) _____ - _____ e-mail _____

* Yes, I will attend the field trip to the UCSD equipment site on Saturday, May 22nd (8:30 AM - 11:30 AM) space is limited.

For further information:

e-mail: info@nees.org

tel.: 510-231-9557

fax: 510-231-5664

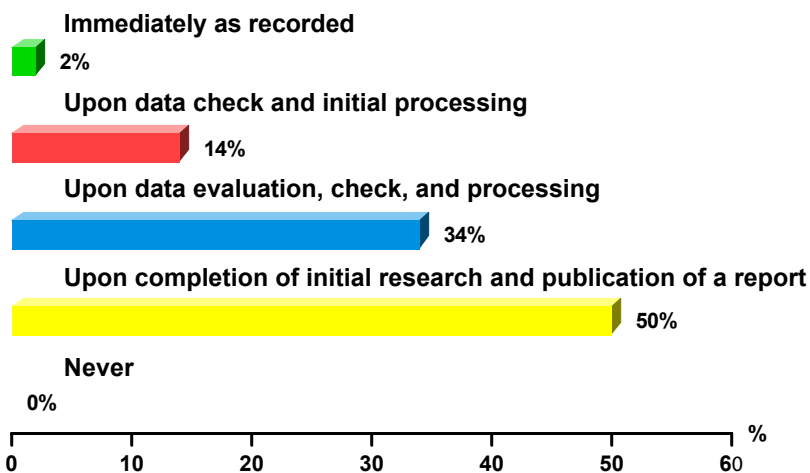
website: www.nees.org

Appendix B: Polling Results from the Second Annual Meeting

Data Archiving and Sharing Committee Polling Questions

1

Which will be the best timing for data release to the public?



2

What will be the preferred data repository?

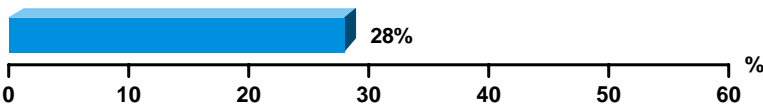
- ❶ Data stored locally as recorded and transferred later to a central repository for archival/release



- ❷ Data stored in a central repository as recorded and archived in the same location



- ❸ Data stored and archived in a local repository with central services for access to archives



3

What is more important: quality assurance or time to release of data?

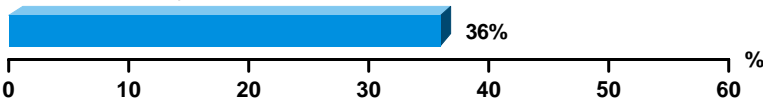
- ❶ Thorough data quality evaluation before archiving at expense of longer time to release



- ❷ Immediate archiving and release followed by a quality evaluation and corrections at later stage at risk of lower data quality/reliability

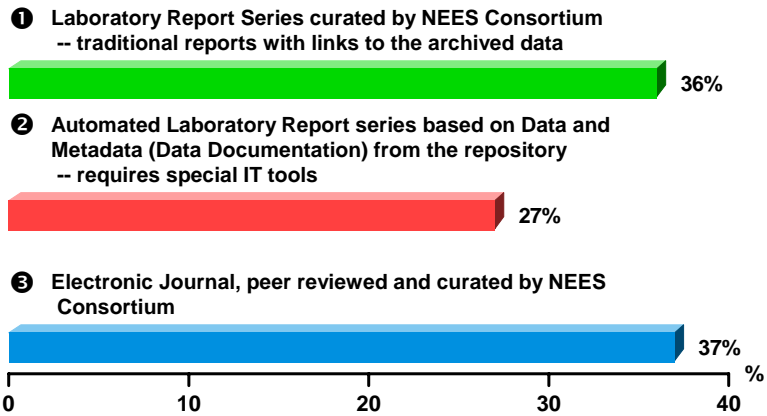


- ❸ Immediate brief data evaluation following by archiving and release followed by further data check and release of corrected versions



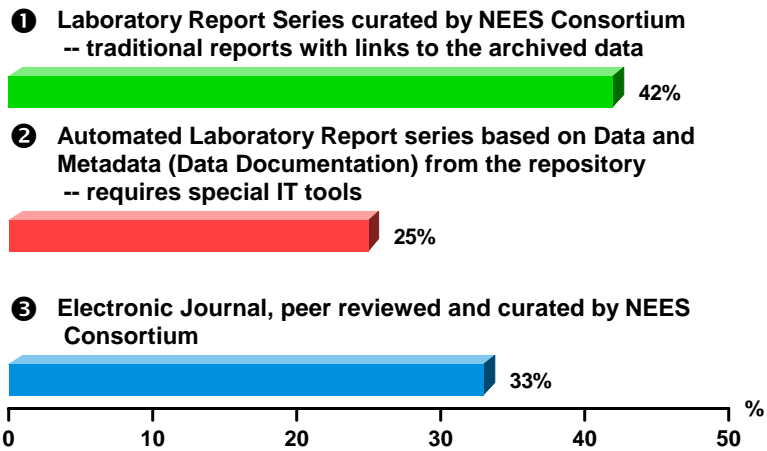
4

**How important is having a NEES publication system?
How would you rank order the following three?
Indicate your first choice:**



5

**How important is having a NEES publication system?
Indicate your second choice:**



6

**How important is having a NEES publication system?
Indicate your third choice:**

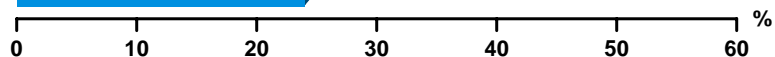
- ❶ **Laboratory Report Series curated by NEES Consortium**
-- traditional reports with links to the archived data



- ❷ **Automated Laboratory Report series based on Data and Metadata (Data Documentation) from the repository**
-- requires special IT tools



- ❸ **Electronic Journal, peer reviewed and curated by NEES Consortium**

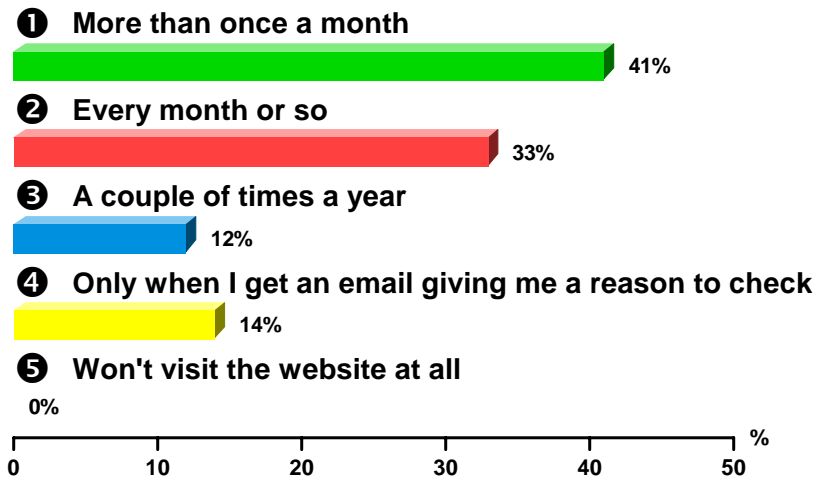


7

**IT Committee Polling
Questions**

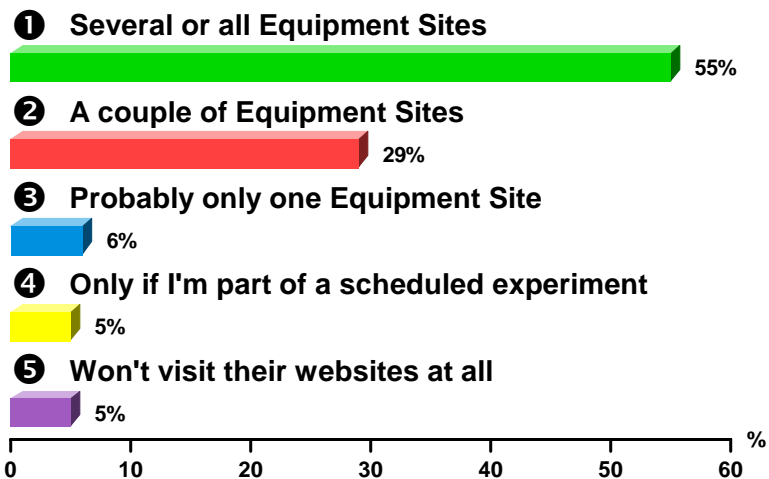
8

Over the next year, how often will you be visiting the nees.org website?



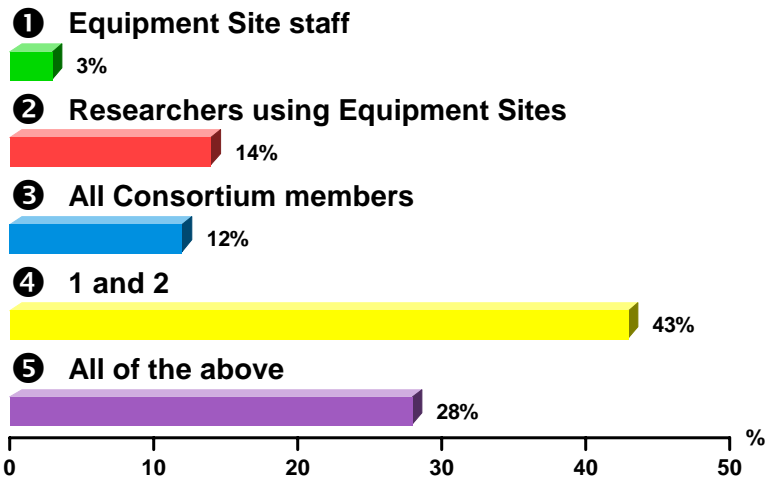
9

Over the next year, what Equipment Site websites will you be visiting?



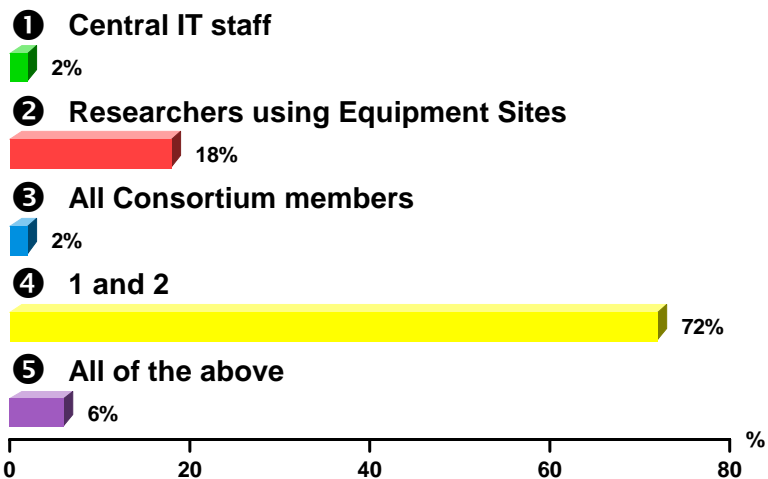
10

Who should be involved in evaluating the performance of CENTRALIZED IT services?



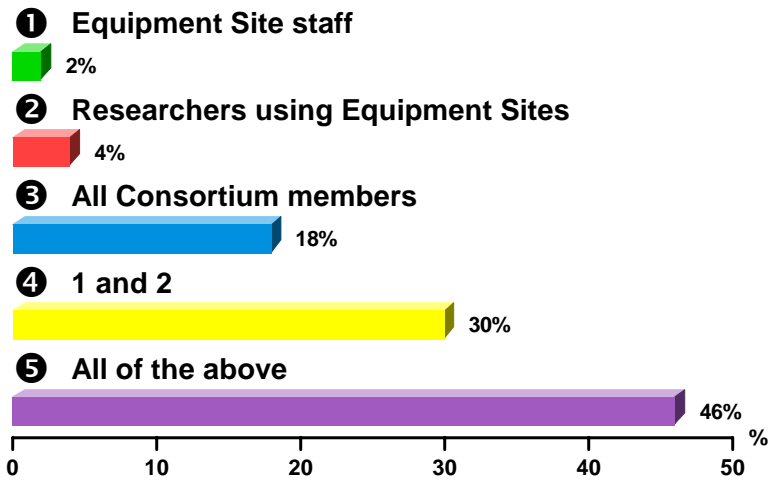
11

Who should be involved in evaluating the performance of ON-SITE IT services?



12

To establish future IT priorities, who should be surveyed/interviewed?



13

Site Operations Committee Polling Questions

14

Intro to Next Question:

The current NEES User Guidelines define a “shared use project” as any project that is sponsored through the NSF NEESR program. In addition, it allows the SOC and NEES Board to grant this status on a case-by-case basis to any project that meets some minimum NEES policies (data sharing and archiving mostly) currently under development....

15

Given the situation described on the previous slide, I believe that:

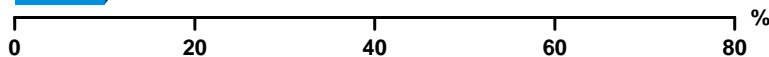
- ① This is the correct approach as it provides good flexibility. Specific policies can be developed as needed, as the target shared used %'s (50% for most Sites) will need a major ramp up period.



- ② The definition of shared use needs to be broadened now to include other projects such that the target %'s of shared use can be achieved immediately.



- ③ The definition needs to be revamped completely.



16

Intro to Next Question:
The current NEES User Guidelines propose the very careful planning be done both at the proposal stage and at the early award stage for the experimental portion of a project....

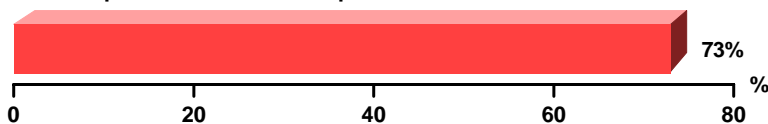
17

Given the situation described on the previous slide, I believe that:

- ① This is over-restrictive and the process needs to be liberalized.



- ② This is the correct approach in order to have fair competition and efficient operations.



18

The current NEES User Guidelines propose a series of conflict resolution procedures to handle disagreements between the sites and PIs. I believe that:

❶ These are too elaborate and more power should be delegated to the NEES Executive Director to make final decisions.



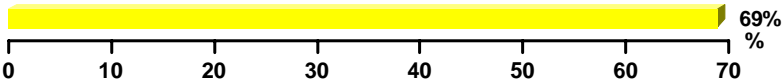
❷ The approach is correct and should be revisited periodically.



❸ The process needs to be revamped completely.



❹ I am not familiar enough with this part of the User Guidelines to say for sure.



19

The level of maintenance and support provided to the sites has raised concerns that this puts the sites at an advantage in competing for other laboratory work (e.g., non-seismic work on bridges). Is this a real concern to you?

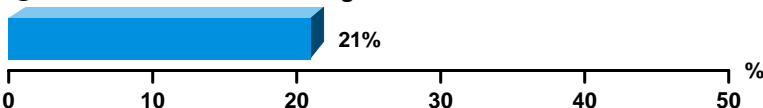
❶ Yes



❷ No



❸ Don't know / Had not thought about it



20

Day Two Polling Questions

1

Demographic Questions for Cross-Tab Analysis

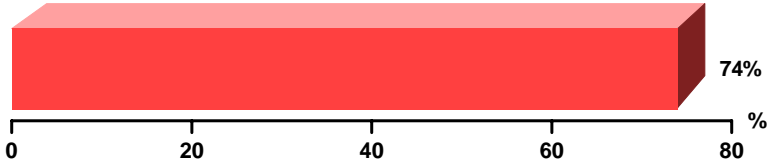
2

Please choose which category describes your age bracket:

① 35 and under



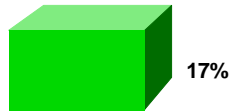
② Over 35



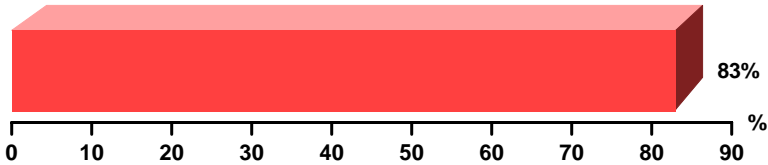
3

Please choose which category describes your sex:

① Female

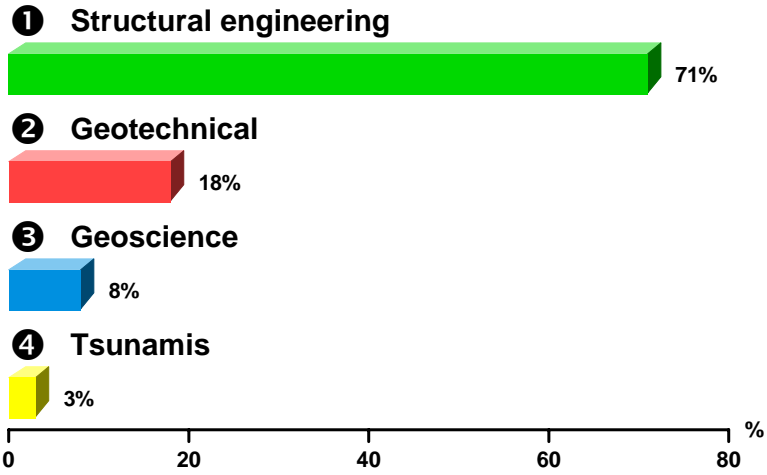


② Male



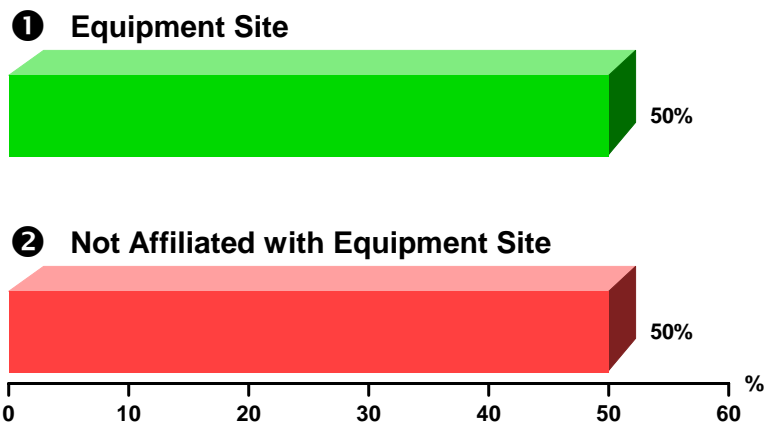
4

Please choose which category BEST describes your engineering specialty:



5

Please choose which category BEST describes you:

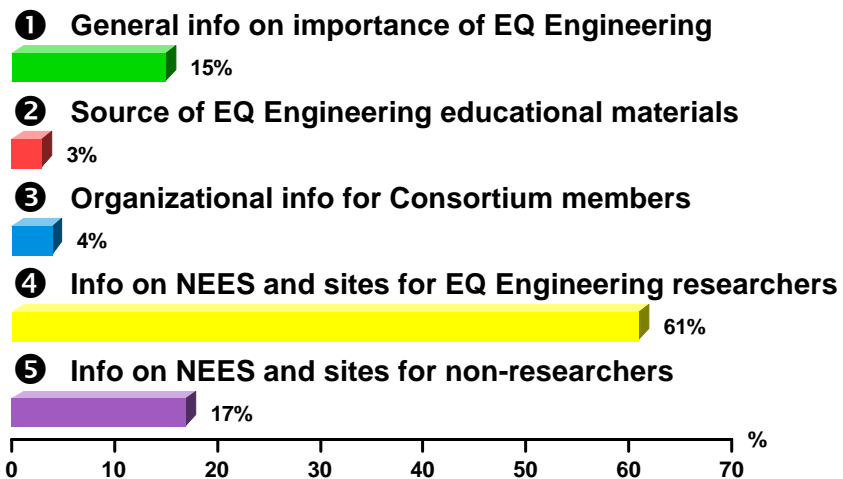


6

Polling Questions

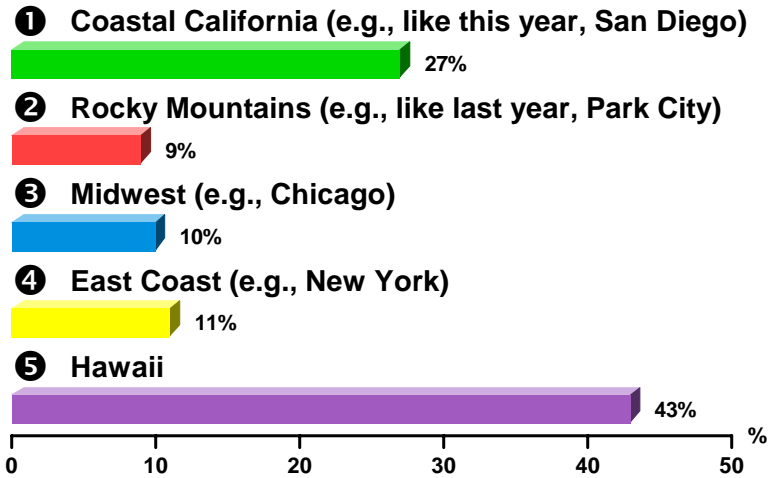
7

The INITIAL impact of the NEES.org homepage should be:



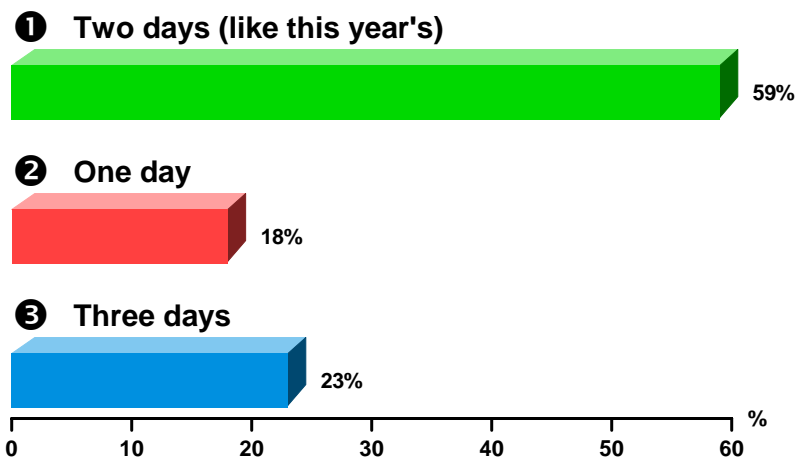
8

Where would you like next year's meeting to be held?



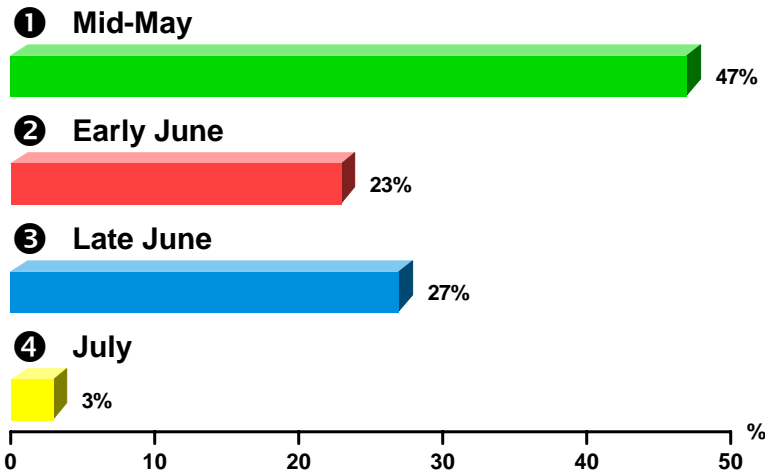
9

How long would you like next year's Annual Meeting to be?



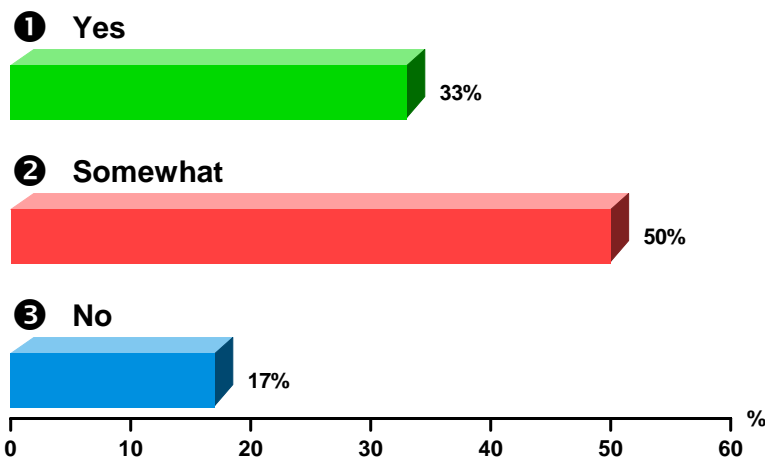
10

When would you like the Annual Meeting to be held?



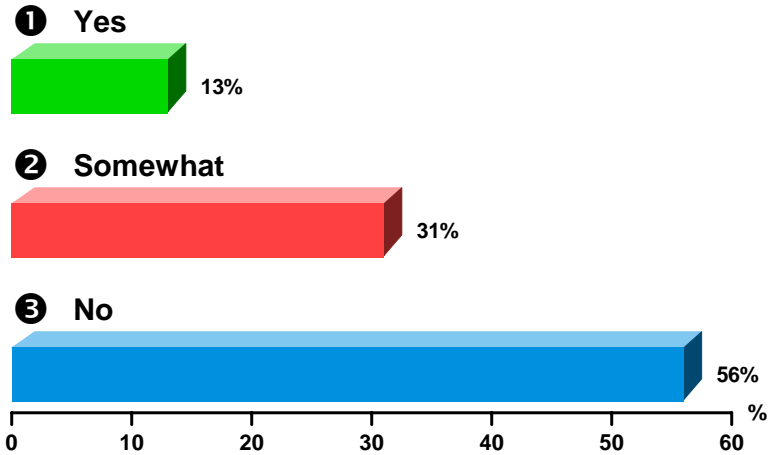
11

Do you feel you have ample opportunity to stay abreast of Committee activities?



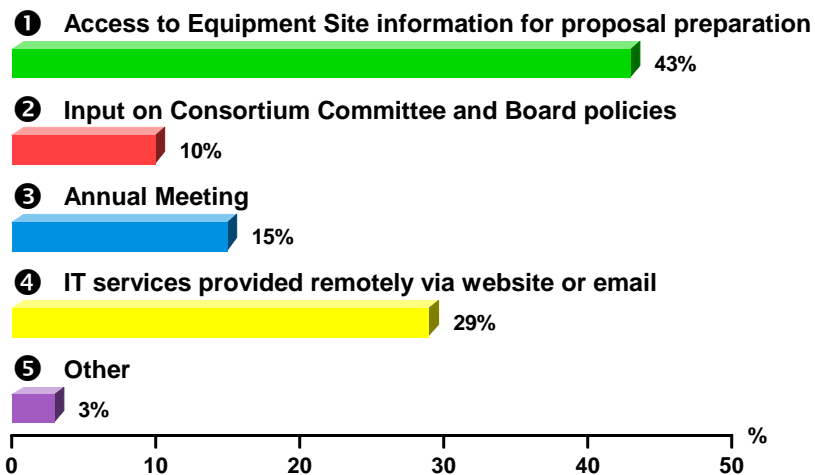
12

Do you feel you have ample opportunity to stay abreast of Board activities?



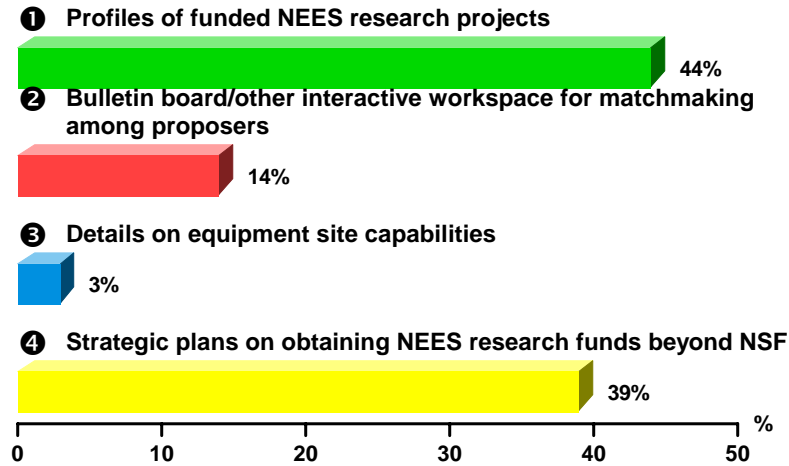
13

What NEES Consortium service do you value most?



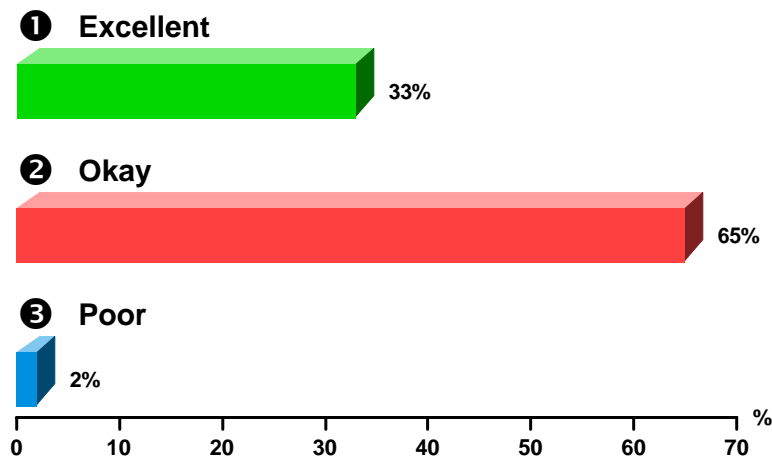
14

**For next year's Annual Meeting (or a web forum),
name your highest priority:**



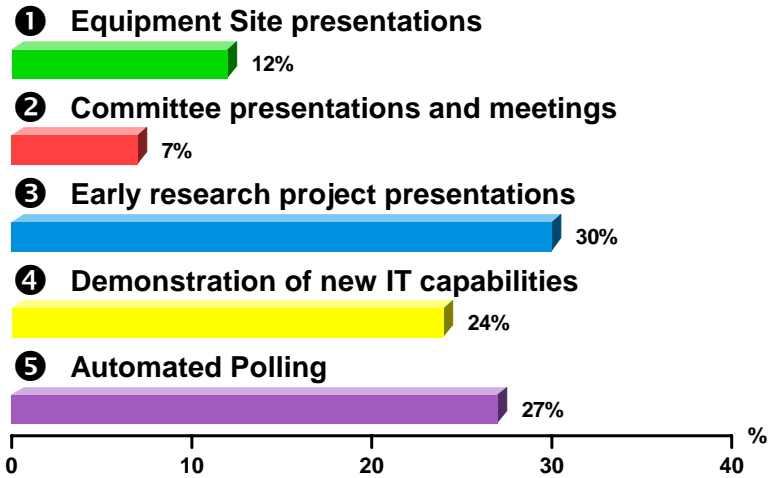
15

**What's your overall rating of this year's
Annual Meeting?**



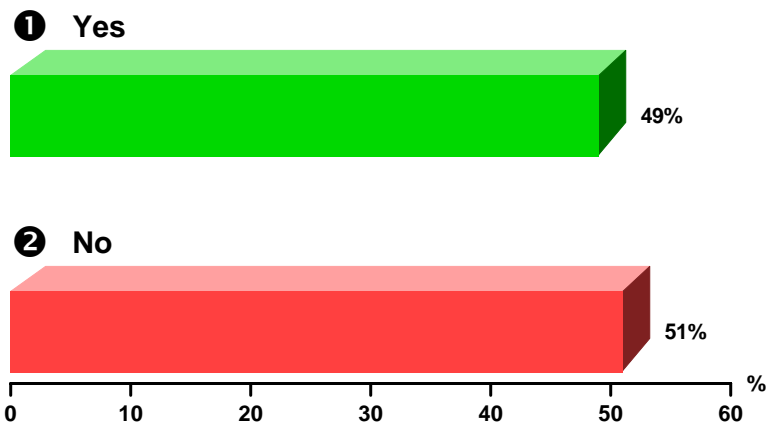
16

What was your favorite part of the Annual Meeting Program?



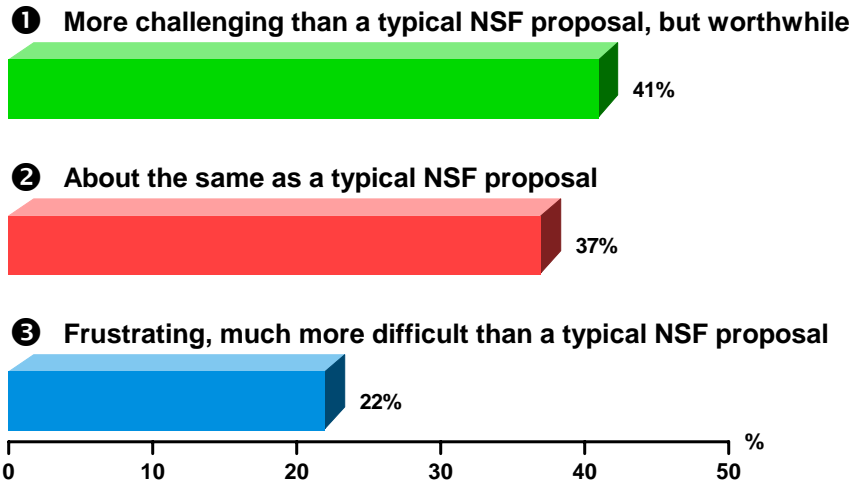
17

Were you part of a NEESR proposal submitted this year?



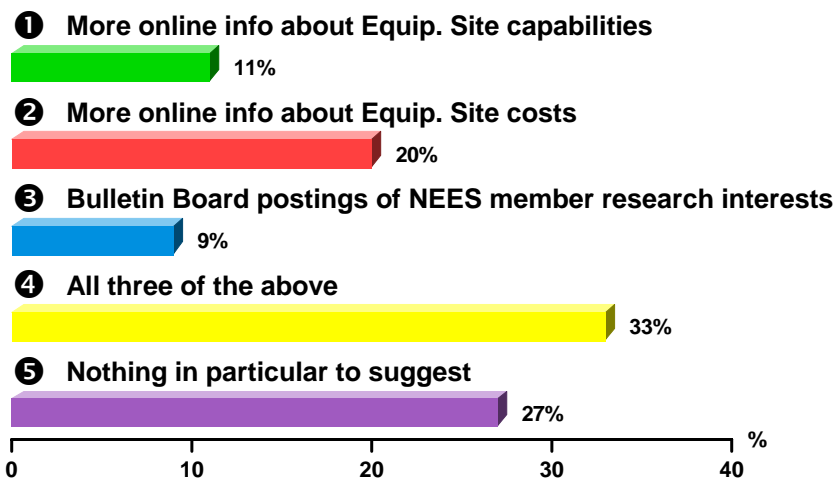
18

If so, how did you find the experience?



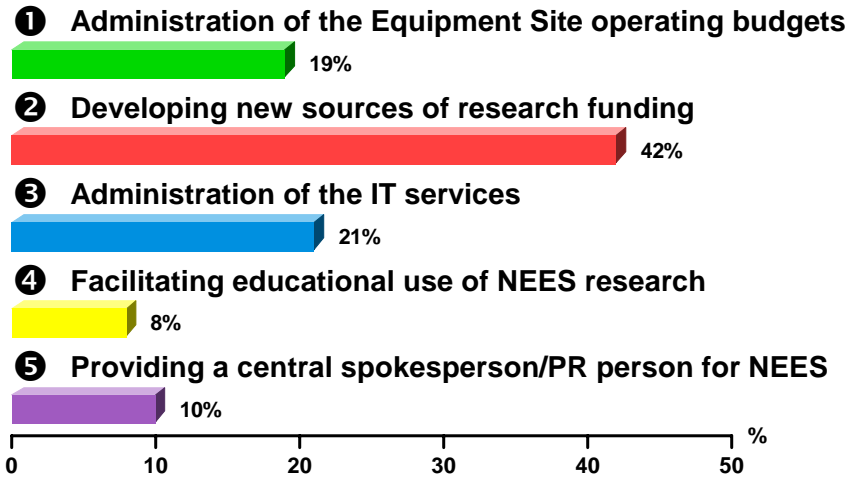
19

Which one of the following would most improve the NEESR process?



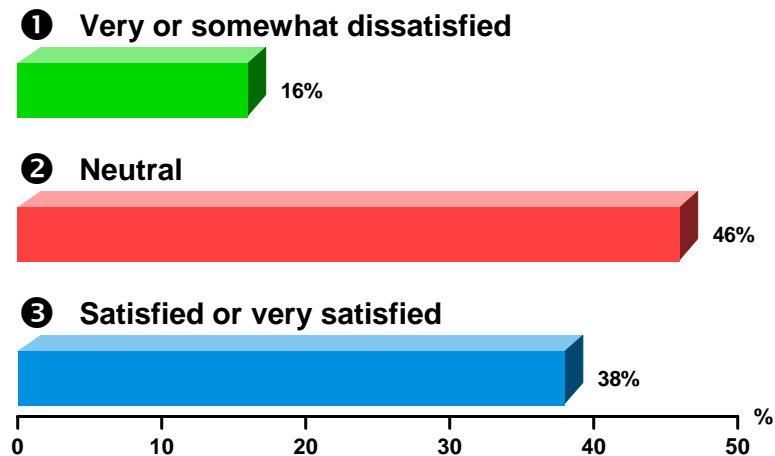
20

What is the single most important priority for the NEES Consortium?



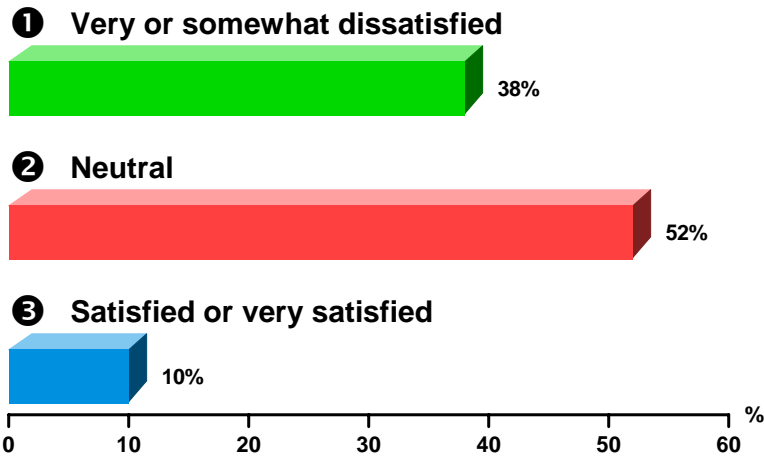
21

How satisfied are you with the progress the NEES Consortium is making in achieving its mission?



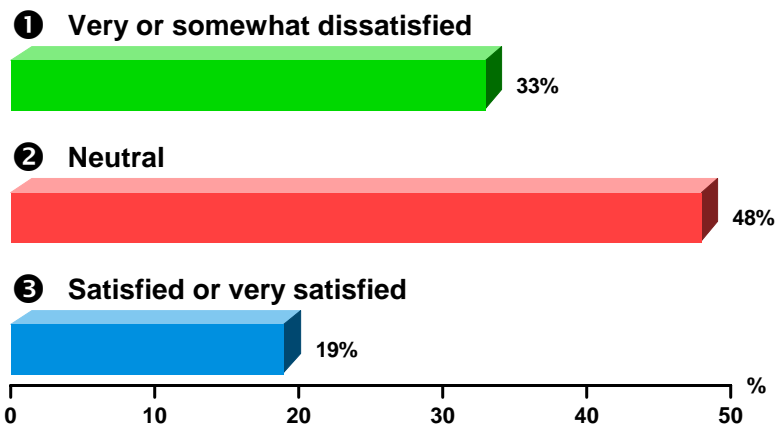
22

How satisfied are you with the efforts of the NEES Consortium to reach out to more junior researchers?



23

How satisfied are you with the efforts of the NEES Consortium to reach out to women and ethnic minorities in the engineering community?

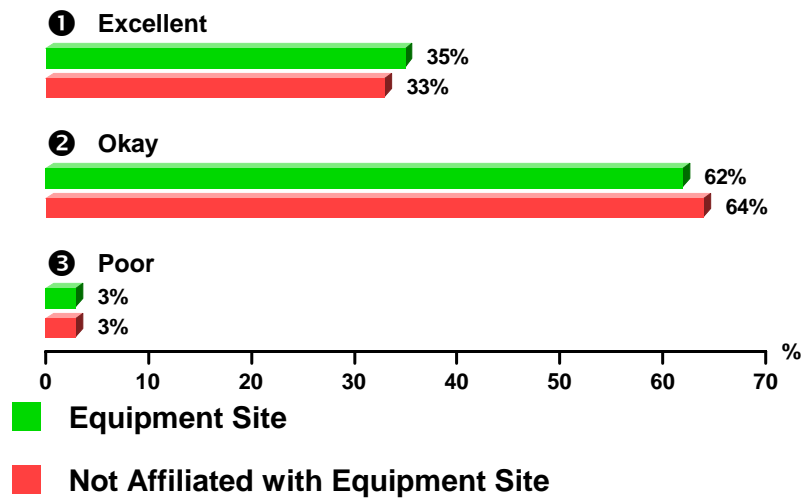


24

Instant Cross-Tab Analysis

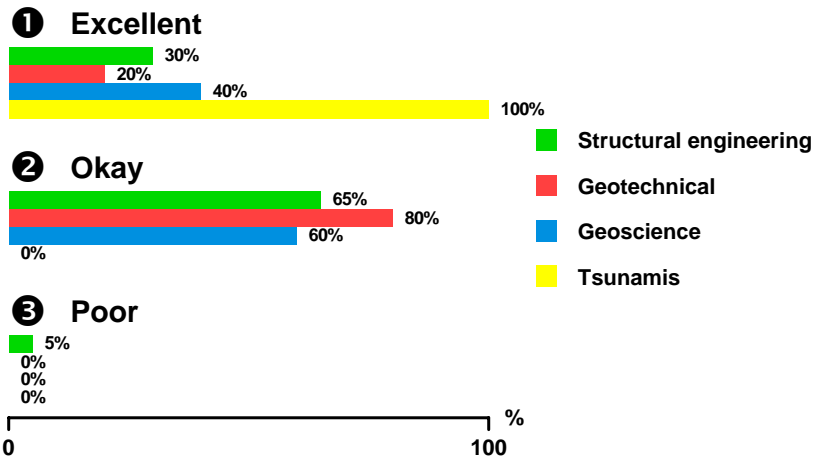
25

What's your overall rating of this year's Annual Meeting?



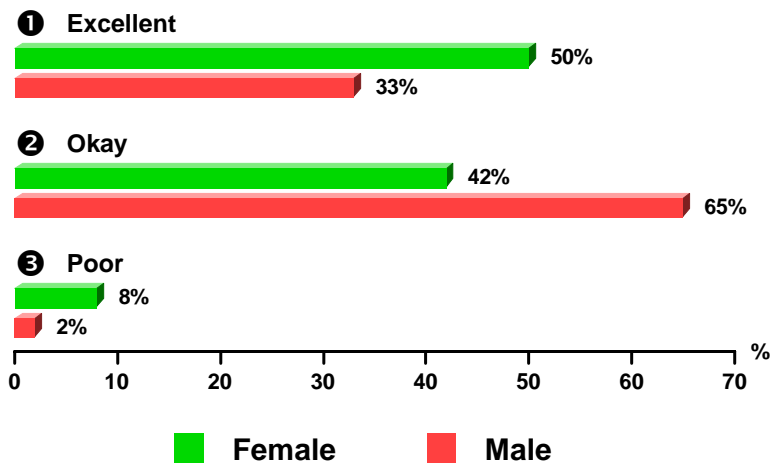
26

What's your overall rating of this year's Annual Meeting?



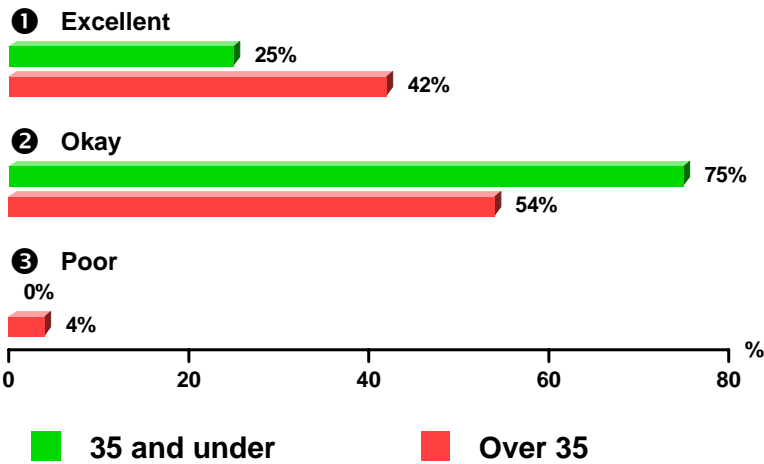
27

What's your overall rating of this year's Annual Meeting?



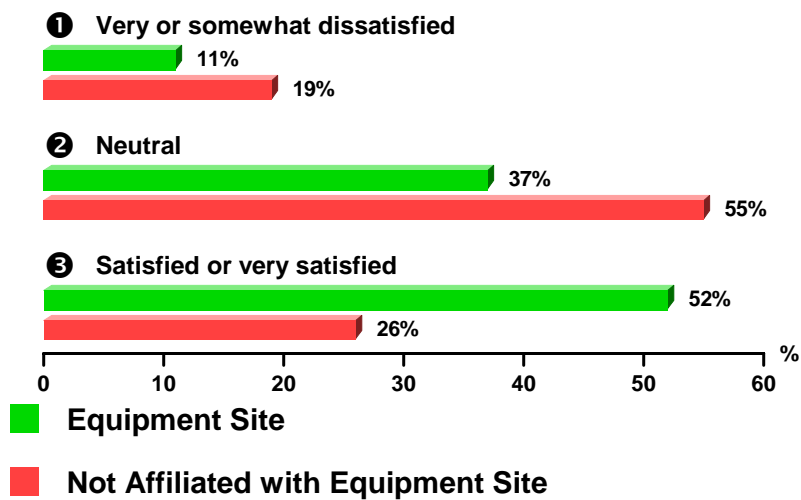
28

What's your overall rating of this year's Annual Meeting?



29

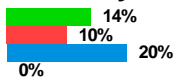
How satisfied are you with the progress the NEES Consortium is making in achieving its mission?



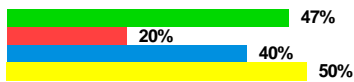
30

How satisfied are you with the progress the NEES Consortium is making in achieving its mission?

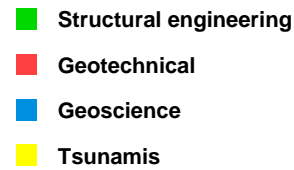
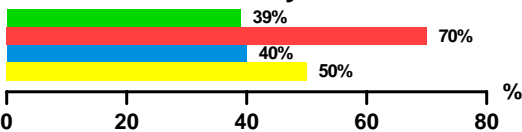
① Very or somewhat dissatisfied



② Neutral



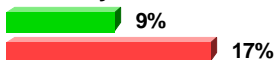
③ Satisfied or very satisfied



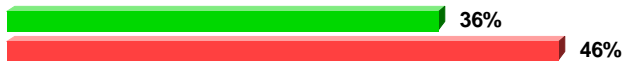
31

How satisfied are you with the progress the NEES Consortium is making in achieving its mission?

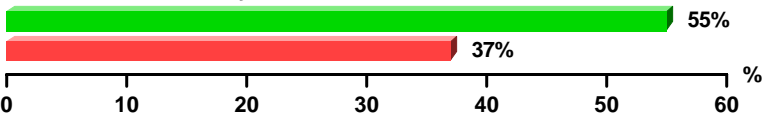
① Very or somewhat dissatisfied



② Neutral

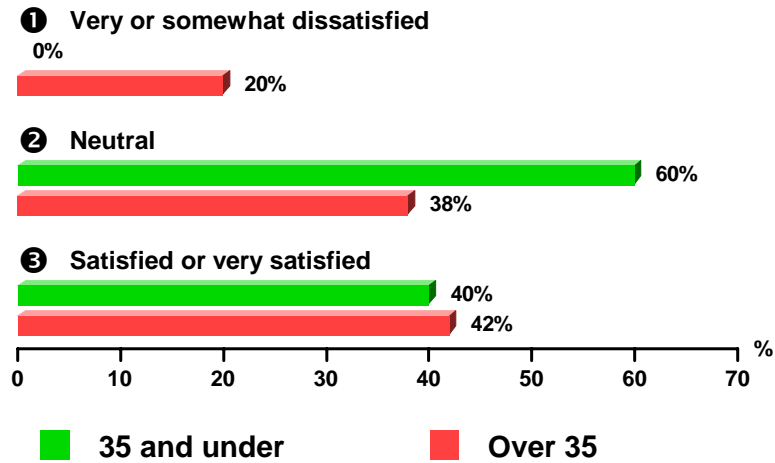


③ Satisfied or very satisfied



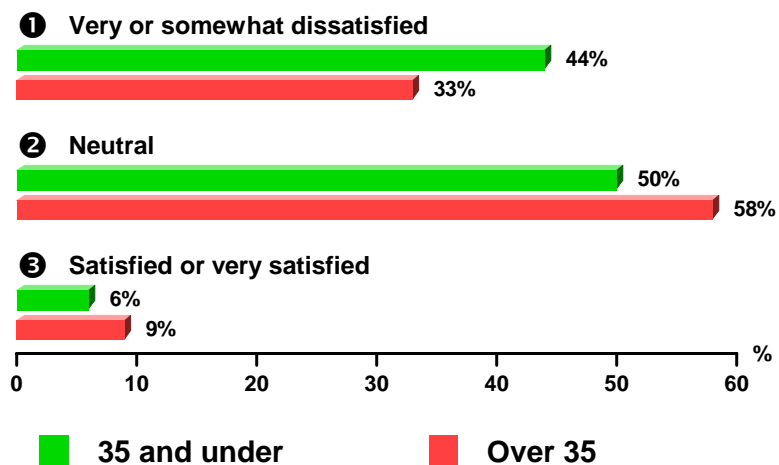
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How satisfied are you with the progress the NEES Consortium is making in achieving its mission?



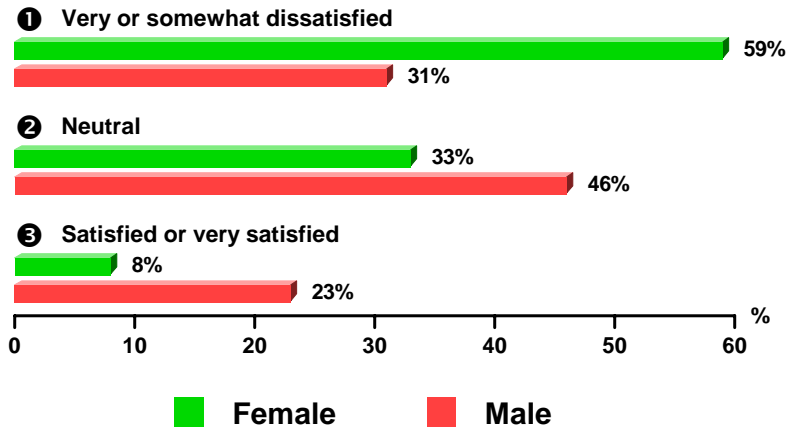
33

How satisfied are you with the efforts of the NEES Consortium to reach out to more junior researchers?



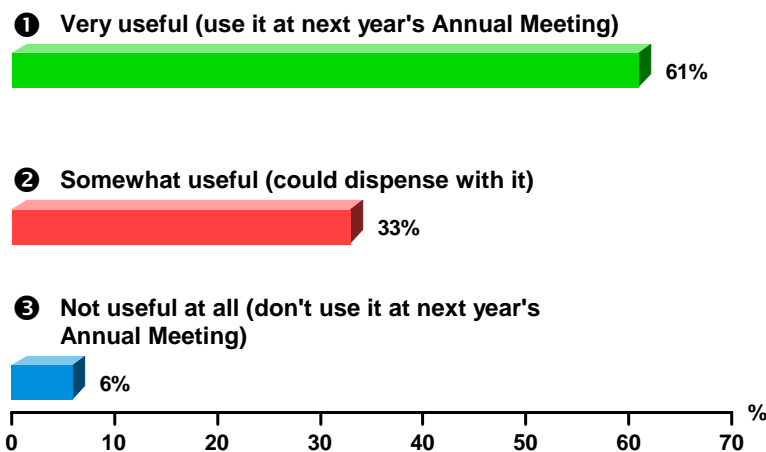
34

How satisfied are you with the efforts of the NEES Consortium to reach out to women and ethnic minorities in the engineering community?



35

How useful have you found instant polling?



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