

Not for publication

Office for Learning and Teaching

Networks

Progress Report – July 2014

State-based Promoting Excellence Networks –
Victoria/Tasmania

Monash University (Lead Institution)

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Please refer to the document *Project Management Information*, available on the OLT website <http://www.olt.gov.au/grants-and-projects/project-management> for information on completing and submitting reports.

1 Progress against specified outcomes and deliverables

1. Maintaining and sustaining an active VTAS network.

The VTAS network consists of a core project team of four Victorian/Tasmanian higher education institutions – Monash University, La Trobe University, Swinburne University and the University of Tasmania. In 2013, RMIT came on board as an adjunct member and both Deakin University and Victoria University have agreed to host network workshops in 2014. We have also expanded the network and engaged with the teams at Federation University and Melbourne University, to ensure the full complement of Victorian and Tasmanian universities are included in the network. This has strengthened the project team network to seven institutions which provides a much richer engagement with the network and provides a far wider reach for dissemination of information.

The project team meet on a regular basis (13.2.14, 26.2.14, 12.3.14, 9.4.14, 7.5.14, 6.6.14 25.7.14), and planning meetings have been much more frequent than that outlined in the proposed activity timeline, which demonstrates a strong commitment to seeing success within the network.

Three showcase events have been scheduled:

- June 2014 Themed “Failure as a pathway to success” hosted by Deakin University),
- November 2014, Themed “Creative forms of teaching evidence” hosted by Victoria University)
- June 2015 Themed (tbc) hosted by Monash University).

2. Continued PE staff support and training.

On the 11-12th December 2014, the University of Tasmania are hosting a professional learning event for promoting excellence staff within the network. Whilst details are still being finalised, it is expected that the two day event will be organised around the following theme areas:

- To review the aims and progress of the network and develop strategy looking forward, specifically in terms of:
 - sharing the best practice (including resources) and most challenging key areas of practice across all network institutions (in the awards, grants and fellowships space);
 - measuring the impact of the network and its activities;
 - enabling post-project dissemination and engagement, including measuring the impact of project outcomes and resources;
 - ensuring sustainability of the network with limited (or no) funds;
 - considering the changing nature of higher education and identifying opportunities to strengthen the impact and methods of our practice; and
 - better marketing the network via our website and twitter presence.
- To develop a continuing and current understanding of how the network can promote the work and mission of the OLT;

- To consider how our practices can be enhanced to help realise the promoting excellence goals of our own institutions, our network, the OLT and for learning and teaching more broadly;
- To enhance the administrative processes and professional learning opportunities for staff working with network members who serve those functions; and
- To develop a better understanding (and adopt approaches and resources where relevant) of other promoting excellence network activities across the national landscape.

In addition to network members across Victoria and Tasmania, at least one member from each state-based promoting excellence network will receive an invitation to attend this event, or to share their practice via our website (or other appropriate means). Key members of the OLT will obviously be invited as presenters and to attend with the view to developing a better sense of the work that the network is engaged with.

3. Professional development related to sharing of systems, knowledge and processes that contribute to optimising learning and teaching.

On 24 June, the first VTAS showcase event was held at the Deakin City Conference Centre. It was entitled “Failure as a pathway to success”. The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to hear from highly qualified professionals in their field about the experiences of taking failure and transforming it into something positive. Keynote speakers were Monica Curro from the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Academic from James Cook University, Professor Sally Kift. Two roundtable sessions were held which enabled the attendees to critically analyse failed grant applications to identify areas of improvement and/or transforming or reappropriating these projects into something else.

Registrations were capped at capacity (80) with 60 participants attending on the day. Feedback so far from 12 respondents provided post showcase has been very positive (See Appendix 1). Key positive themes that emerged are:-

- The ability to network.
- Developing a shared interpretation of the OLT requirements.
- The selection of presenters and activities.

4. Fostering collaborations between VTAS and interstate PE networks.

As outlined above, we were fortunate to have the DVC-A, Professor Sally Kift from James Cook University present as a keynote for the June showcase. We would like to continue to encourage this engagement with our events.

Monash are involved in the OLT funded project entitled: *“Mapping resources, activities and processes supporting the development of tertiary learning and teaching grant applications”*. This project aims to map the diversity of internal processes in Australian and New Zealand tertiary institutions that support applicants for institutional and national teaching awards and grants. The active dissemination of the resultant typology that will be produced from the mapping exercise will allow institutions to benchmark their approaches against the

broad range of activities across the two countries that endeavour to produce competitive, relevant and robust applications.

The project is led by the University of South Australia, in collaboration with University of New South Wales, Curtin University, University of Auckland, Central Queensland University and Tabor College.

5. Enabling post-project dissemination, engagement and therefore impact of research project outcomes and resources.

The website provides a platform for post-project dissemination and the workshops/showcase events provide an opportunity to share project outcomes.

6. Developing a sustainable social media presence for the network.

The Wordpress platform for the VTAS Network website (<http://vtasnetwork.com/>) is still proving to be the most successful form of communication between members of the network. Since January 2014 the site has had 1,821 views and we have uploaded 12 posts. All posts to the website are automatically linked to Twitter and Facebook and we have 94 and 7 followers respectively. It provides a good dissemination platform for OLT final reports, as outlined above. There has been a drop in followers since its inception and we will need to properly market the benefits of the website at future network events, as well as engaging in further cross-promotion of the website and social media profiles. This will be achieved by:

- Promoting the VTAS Network twitter profile on the VTAS network website by inviting users to follow @VTASNetwork.
- Automatically re-directing VTAS network event participants to the VTAS network website or twitter page as the last step in the event registration process.
- Further enhancing the social media presence at VTAS network events by utilising a live twitter feed where possible.
- Automatically re-directing VTAS event participants to the VTAS network website as the last step in online post-event evaluations.

Review of progress

1.1 Major achievements against schedule/network brief

We have moved from an infrequent and loosely-coherent network, into one that adds value for grants and awards professionals, and others in the sector. We have a shared website which provides a platform for sharing of ideas and resources, together with the dissemination of projects. There is good participation in network events and we have achieved positive participant evaluation results.

1.2 Lessons learnt

- From survey results, it is evident that the membership still see great value in the network and the information provided by the workshops and the website which is encouraging. We need to ensure that feedback is taken on board and addressed where able to continually improve the direction and quality of our events. A strategy is being developed to ensure an increase in response rates from workshop surveys.
- Registrations at events always meet capacity targets, but there is the issue of non-attendance on the day which incurs unnecessary costs for catering costs. In order to mitigate this expenses in the future, it will be necessary to overbook registrations to factor in this variation.
- Each event needs to schedule time for a networking activity.
- Further clarification of the purpose and aims of the network to participants is needed.
- Modify website to include:
 - an “About” page to focus on what has been achieved, as well as future growth:
 - The Network events have allowed opportunities for collaboration and networking between attendees (evidence)
 - PE staff support and training/PD related to sharing of systems, knowledge and processes that contribute to optimising student learning
 - Intention is that PE events are rotated between universities across Victoria and Tasmania and foster shared understanding of OLT processes and plans and opportunities to network and collaborate in L&T projects and programs
 - brief abstract about what the website contains and who may be interested in accessing it. [Suggested wording: The website contains provides a valuable summary of activities undertaken, as well as links to resources and relevant events and contacts. Academic and professional staff from all VTAS institutions interested in enhancing their learning and teaching practice, PE staff, those intending to apply for OLT learning and teaching grants, academic developers.]

1.3 Challenges met

Need to ensure that we market the website at future planned events in order to improve the level of subscribers to this important dissemination platform.

Future challenge: Need to explore innovative ways to generate additional income for the network, for its future sustainability in case funds are not made available by the OLT.

1.4 Indicate if and how these challenges will impact on the outcomes, the timeline or the budget?

Challenges will not impact timeline or budget.

1.5 In terms of the planned deliverables, what is your estimation of how far the network has progressed?

Please indicate percentage below:



2 Formative evaluation

2.1 What formative evaluation processes are being used?

The project team collects data at the end of each network workshop in the form of survey responses from attendees. Also the core VTAS PEN team has regular reflective meetings that aim to address the challenges and lessons learnt.

2.2 What have you learnt from these processes thus far?

Survey data indicates that it is not unusual for a high proportion of participants to be attending for the first time, so we need to ensure that networking opportunities are provided for those not familiar with the network.

We need to make it clear to participants what the network is trying to achieve.

We need to consider ways in which the network can be sustained in the longer term.

3 Networking

Provide details of network events held during the period. Events include workshops, forums or colloquiums involving participants outside the network team. Please provide the following information for each event:

Event Date	Event Title and Location	Brief description	Number of participants	Number of HE institutions	Number of other institutions	Brief description of outcomes
13.2.14	Project Team Meeting, Melbourne - teleconference	Planning Meeting	11	5	0	To plan for the June 2014 workshop
26.2.14	Project Team Meeting, Melbourne - teleconference	Planning Meeting	7	3	0	To plan for June 2014 workshop
12.3.14	Project Team Meeting, Melbourne - teleconference	Planning Meeting	9	4	0	To plan for June 2014 workshop and Dec 14 Prof Dev Event.
9.4.14	Project Team Meeting, Melbourne - teleconference	Planning Meeting	8	5	0	Planning: June 2014 workshop, Prof Dev event and confirm VU to host next workshop Nov 14.
7.5.14	Project Team Meeting, Melbourne - teleconference	Planning Meeting	11	5	0	Planning – June 2014 workshop, Prof Dev Event and forward planning for Nov 14 workshop.
6.6.14	Project Team Meeting, Melbourne - teleconference	Planning Meeting	8	5	0	Final preparation for June 14 workshop. Planning for Prof Dev event and Nov 14 workshop.
24.6.14	State-based PEI Network Workshop – Deakin City Conference Centre	“Failure as a pathway to success”	80 Registrations 60 participants	10	1	Vic/Tas wider network workshop. Half day event with two guest speakers and two roundtable sessions.
25.7.14	Project Team Meeting, Melbourne - teleconference	Planning Meeting				Workshop de-brief and planning for Prof Dev Event and Nov 14 workshop.

Provide details of events planned over the next six months. If you would like to publicise forthcoming events on the Office for Learning and Teaching website please contact the OLT learningandteaching@education.gov.au

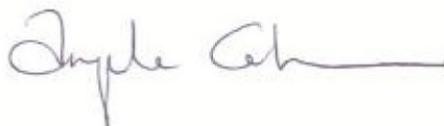
Event Date	Event Title and Location	Brief description	Number of participants	Number of HE institutions	Number of other institutions	Brief description of outcomes
13.11.14	VTAS Showcase Event – VU City Conference Centre	“Creative forms of teaching evidence”	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
11/12.12.14	Professional Development Event, University of Tasmania, Hobart	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

4 Certification

Certification by Network Coordinator

I certify that this is an accurate representation of the progress of the project.

Network coordinator: Associate Professor Angela Carbone



Signature:

Date: 1 August 2014

Certification by DVC/PVC (Academic), or equivalent, or their official delegate

I acknowledge submission of the Progress Report.

Full name: Professor Darrell Evans

Position: Vice-Provost (Learning and Teaching)



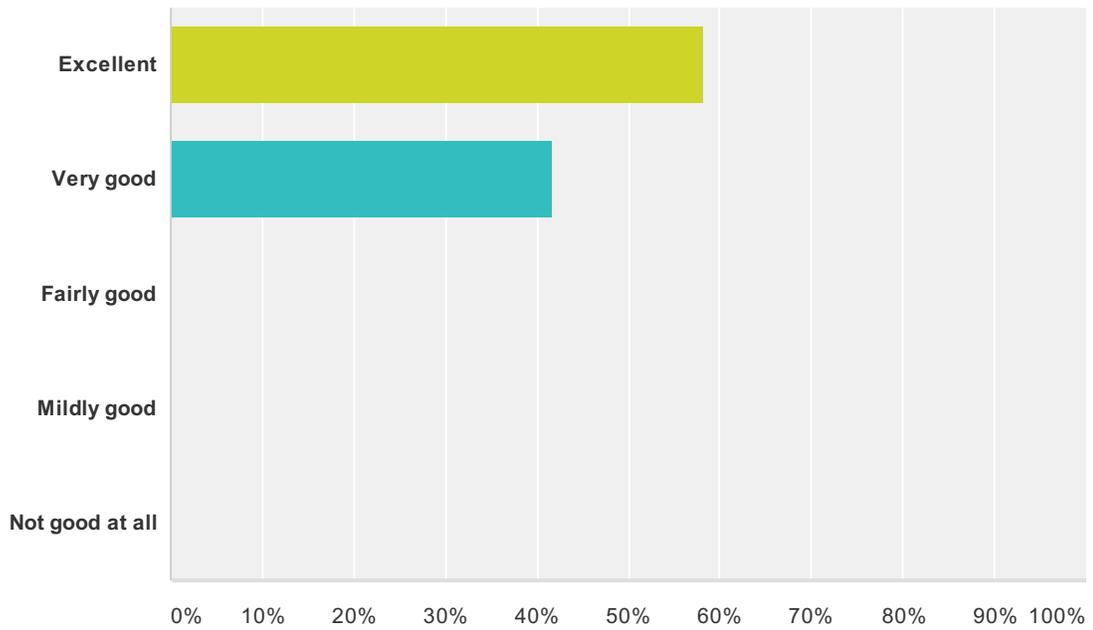
Signature:

Date: 4 August 2014

Please upload to the OLT Portal: [Portal Log-in](#)

Q1 Overall, how would you rate the event?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Excellent	58.33%	7
Very good	41.67%	5
Fairly good	0.00%	0
Mildly good	0.00%	0
Not good at all	0.00%	0
Total		12

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	I have rated it highly because it was well pitched for me, as I am relatively new to the OLT process.	6/27/2014 5:04 PM

Q2 What did you like about the event?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0

#	Responses	Date
1	really informative - both factual and opportunity to discuss. Keynote was excellent	7/4/2014 2:25 PM
2	Networking; the motivational keynote Monica; practical guidance and hands-on opportunities; wonderful catering and hospitality	6/30/2014 6:00 PM
3	Good keynote. Good exercise to summarise top 5 things wrong with the dummy bid on the overhead. Real application review exercise a good idea for implementation in my own uni. Good summary of recommendations by Sally Kift	6/30/2014 11:31 AM
4	Networking and variety in presentations and workshop activities.	6/27/2014 6:11 PM
5	I really liked that it was open to all comers. I'll be encouraging my university to do this too. It is slightly more work, but the rewards are far greater - chance to meet people from other unis, attract better quality speakers... Sally Kift was excellent because she spoke with authority about the scheme.	6/27/2014 5:38 PM
6	the opportunity to see both successful and unsuccessful applications and hear about priorities	6/27/2014 5:27 PM
7	Sharing interpretation of OLT requirements against real cases.	6/27/2014 5:04 PM
8	Interesting and engaging presenters	6/27/2014 4:24 PM
9	The quality of the speakers and the well prepared tasks.	6/27/2014 4:16 PM
10	The quality of guest speakers was excellent.	6/27/2014 4:09 PM
11	I loved Monica's address, it was really inspiring and transferable to any industry/ workplace.	6/27/2014 3:09 PM
12	The speakers, venue, catering and activities	6/27/2014 12:45 PM

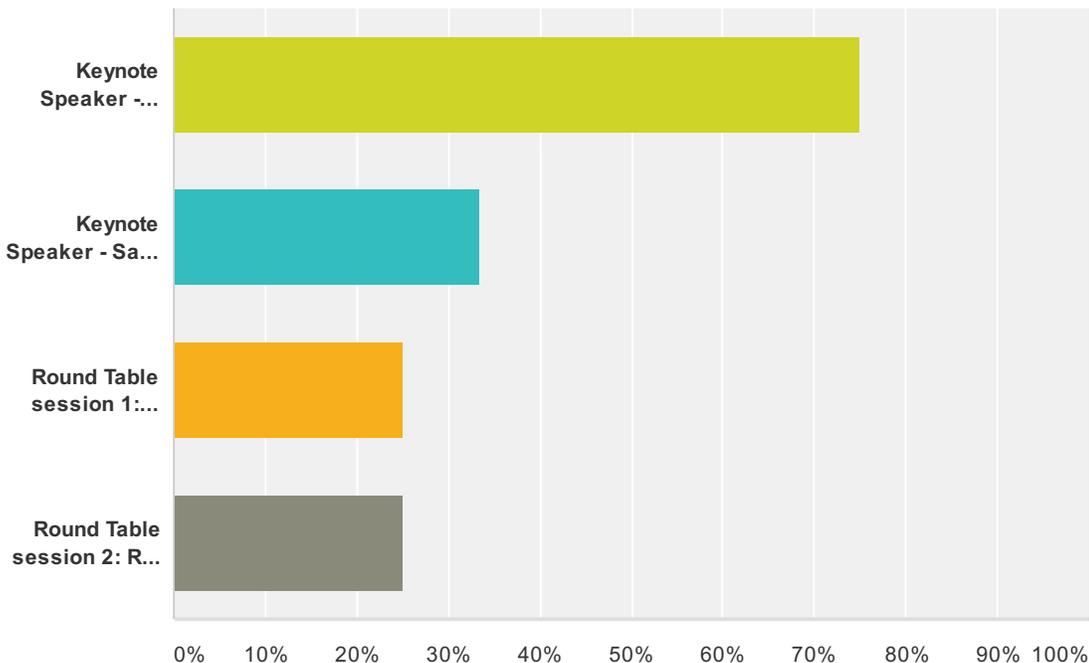
Q3 What did you dislike about the event?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 7

#	Responses	Date
1	Found the real application review exercise only beneficial to the actual authors.	6/30/2014 11:31 AM
2	I thought that the dummy application didn't work. It was so bad that there was nothing really constructive to say, and it ate into time, which is always precious. Still, I can see why you tried it. I don't think you need to be afraid that people will get really personal and nasty. People are attending in their professional capacity, which generally acts as a buffer. The person reporting back was reporting for the table, which is another barrier to nasty comments. Of course, if someone does get nasty, the moderator need to be ready to step in and close them done. I don't think it was a great idea to have two real applications from the same group (or ones that appeared to be from the same group). Still, you can only work with what you got. I would have liked the opportunity to talk to the people behind the failed application that our table looked at, either in a structured way as part of the process, or over a cup of tea at the end. I assumed that they were in the room somewhere, and it felt a bit odd talking to the air, so to speak.	6/27/2014 5:38 PM
3	Long way to come for someone from Tassie for half day event.	6/27/2014 5:04 PM
4	Would prefer a Full day event rather than just a few hours	6/27/2014 4:24 PM
5	Nothing. It was the perfect length of time and the venue was excellent.	6/27/2014 4:09 PM

Q4 Which element of the day did you find most useful/ interesting?

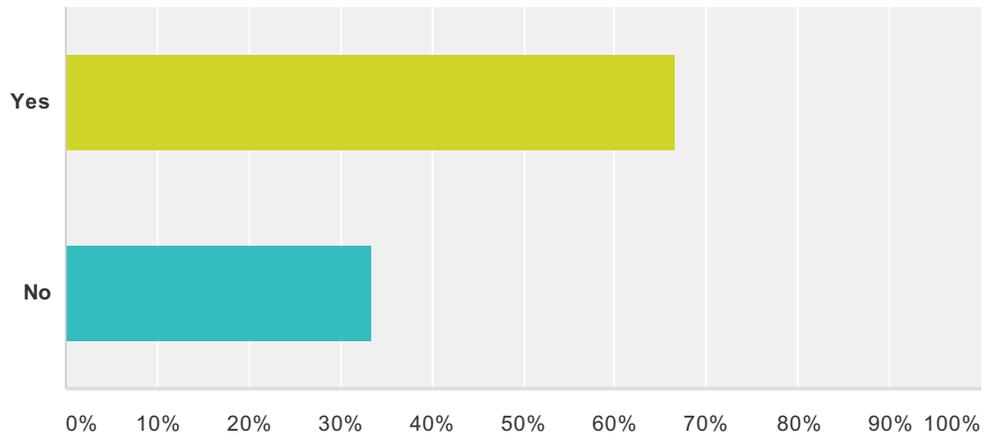
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Keynote Speaker - Monica Curro	75.00% 9
Keynote Speaker - Sally Kift	33.33% 4
Round Table session 1: Dummy failed grant application	25.00% 3
Round Table session 2: Real failed grant application	25.00% 3
Total Respondents: 12	

Q5 Did this workshop enable you to extend your connections with members of the VTAS Promoting Excellence Network?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0

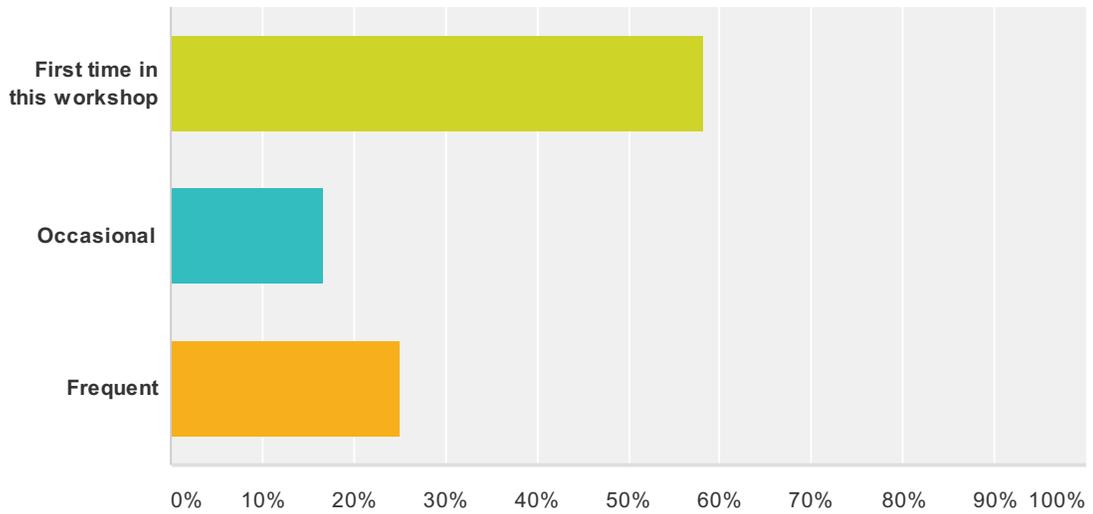


Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	66.67% 8
No	33.33% 4
Total	12

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	not really	7/4/2014 2:25 PM
2	Would have valued allocated networking time, even if 5 minutes, to introduce each other sitting round the table.	6/30/2014 11:31 AM
3	I don't know much about the network. I don't know if the people I met were members of the network.	6/27/2014 5:38 PM
4	First time I've met most people - so was making first connections rather than extending. Would have been nice to have had opportunity to have general discussion about people's roles and nature of institutional support processes.	6/27/2014 5:04 PM

Q6 Can you rate your level of engagement with the VTAS Promoting Excellence Network?

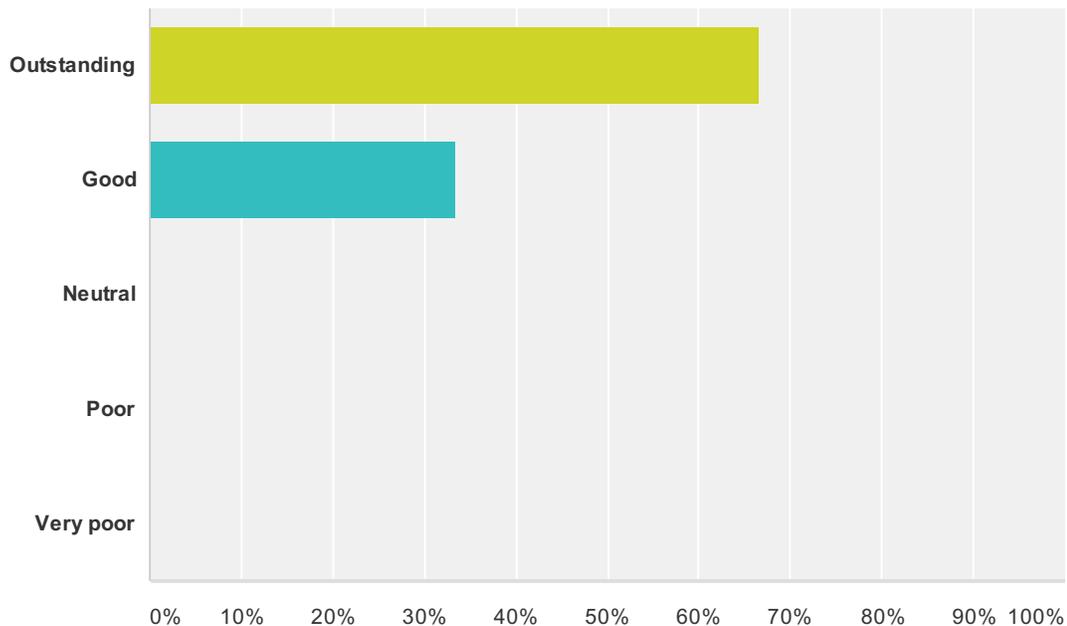
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
First time in this workshop	58.33% 7
Occasional	16.67% 2
Frequent	25.00% 3
Total	12

Q7 How would you rate the venue, catering and organisation of the event?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0

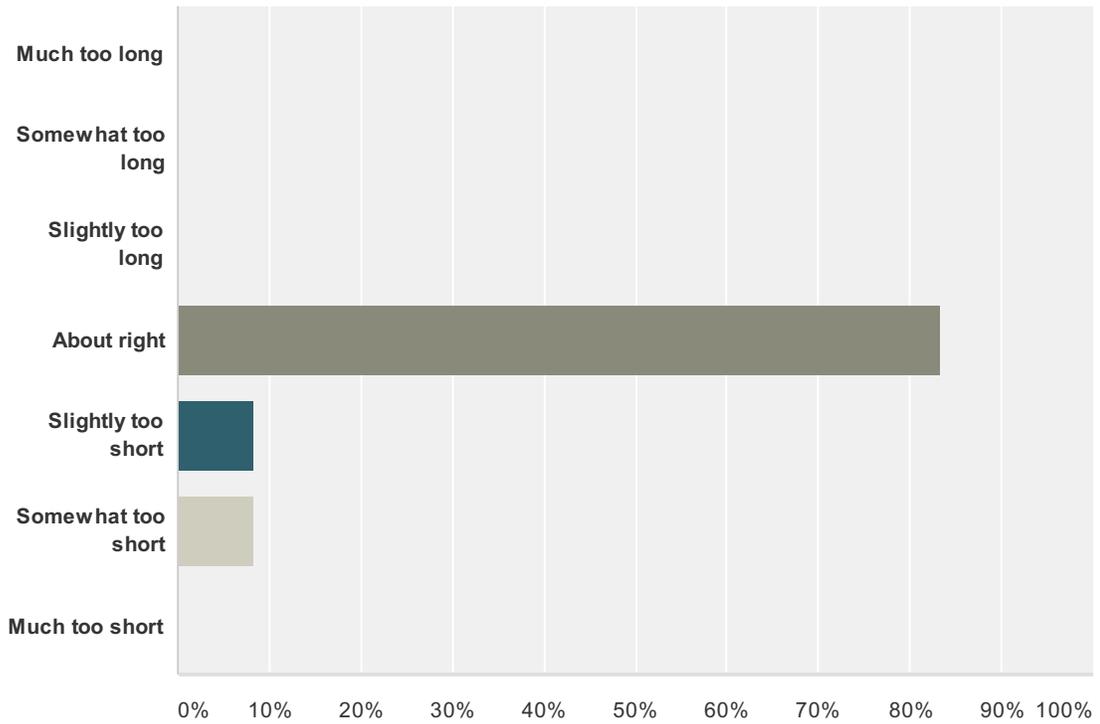


Answer Choices	Responses
Outstanding	66.67% 8
Good	33.33% 4
Neutral	0.00% 0
Poor	0.00% 0
Very poor	0.00% 0
Total	12

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	good location, catering limited	7/4/2014 2:25 PM
2	Great location for those of us travelling in from regional Victoria	6/30/2014 6:00 PM
3	The 'Qantas lounge' is an apt nickname.	6/27/2014 5:38 PM

Q8 Was the event length too long, too short, or about right?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Much too long	0.00% 0
Somewhat too long	0.00% 0
Slightly too long	0.00% 0
About right	83.33% 10
Slightly too short	8.33% 1
Somewhat too short	8.33% 1
Much too short	0.00% 0
Total	12

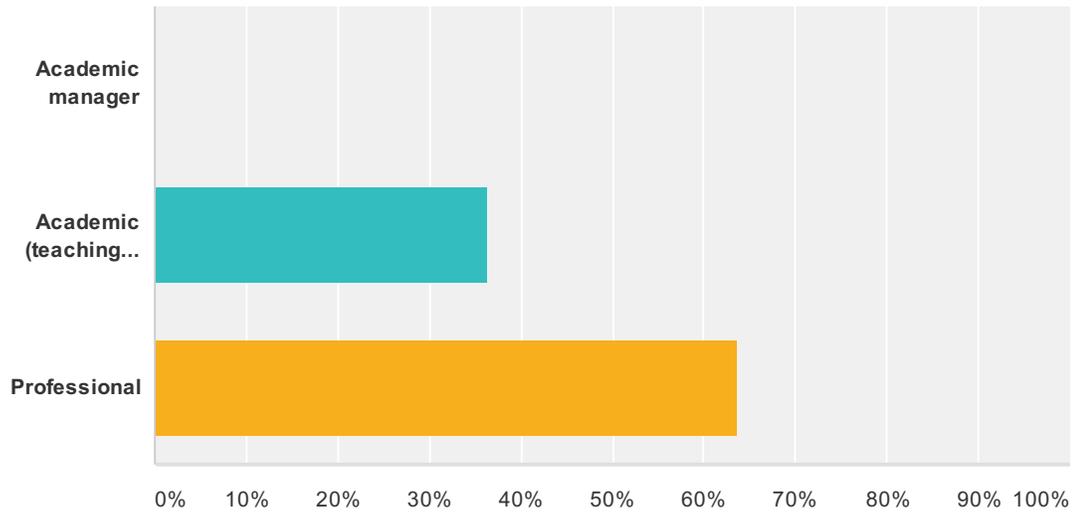
Q9 What is your organisation?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

#	Responses	Date
1	university	7/4/2014 2:25 PM
2	Monash University (located rurally)	6/30/2014 6:00 PM
3	Swinburne	6/30/2014 11:31 AM
4	RMIT	6/27/2014 5:38 PM
5	Deakin University	6/27/2014 5:27 PM
6	UTAS	6/27/2014 5:04 PM
7	Monash	6/27/2014 4:24 PM
8	RMIT University	6/27/2014 4:16 PM
9	Monash University	6/27/2014 4:09 PM
10	PEN	6/27/2014 3:09 PM
11	Monash	6/27/2014 12:45 PM

Q10 Which category best describes your position in your organisation?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
Academic manager	0.00% 0
Academic (teaching and/or research)	36.36% 4
Professional	63.64% 7
Total	11

#	Other (please specify)	Date
	There are no responses.	

Q11 At our future events what topics would you like to explore?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 7

#	Responses	Date
1	The process of developing a bid - how long to allow, process of peer-review and feedback	6/30/2014 11:31 AM
2	Not sure - don't really know what the network is trying to do.	6/27/2014 5:38 PM
3	More specific detail from OLT on why some grant applications make it and some do not. (Their feedback on proposals isn't helpful to those of us who have to advise others.)	6/27/2014 5:04 PM
4	Constructive ways of advising prospective applicants of problems they may encounter when preparing applications and how to try to avoid the pitfalls associated with the grant application process.	6/27/2014 4:24 PM
5	Current government funding priorities.	6/27/2014 4:16 PM

Q12 Is there anything else you'd like to share about the event?

Answered: 4 Skipped: 8

#	Responses	Date
1	Thanks to the team. Fabulous. Still thinking about ideas	6/30/2014 6:00 PM
2	Monica was a surprise package - entertaining and inspiring.	6/27/2014 5:04 PM
3	Best to try to avoid using real applications in groups where one or more of the applicants is present, as it can make it difficult to provide constructive criticism that does not potentially create embarrassment for the applicant.	6/27/2014 4:24 PM
4	I really enjoyed my first workshop and gained alot from the session. Am looking forward to the next one and the chance to network some more.	6/27/2014 3:09 PM