



CRA-WP Grad Cohort for Women Workshop: 2024 Participant Feedback Report

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CERP

Computing Research Association
Evaluation



CRA-WP

Computing Research Association
Widening Participation

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About CERP & Acknowledgement

The Computing Research Association's (CRA) Center for Evaluating the Research Pipeline (CERP) is a research and evaluation center whose mission is to promote diversity in computing. CERP serves as a resource for the computing community by supporting efforts to recruit and retain individuals considered underrepresented in computing or historically marginalized (i.e., women; people who are Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, Indigenous and First Nations, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders; persons with disabilities; persons from low-income backgrounds; first generation college students; LGBTQIA+ individuals; and veterans). More generally, CERP strives to inform the computing community about patterns of entry, subjective experiences, persistence, and success among individuals involved in academic programs and careers related to computing.

CERP was created by the Committee on the Status of Women in Computing Research (CRA-W)/Coalition to Diversify Computing (CDC) Alliance through a National Science Foundation grant to the Computing Research Association (CNS-1246649). The current research was supported by NSF grant CNS-2216270. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

For more information about CERP, visit <http://cra.org/cerp/>.



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Introduction

The CRA-WP Grad Cohort for Women (GCW) is a two-day mentoring workshop for women in computing-related graduate degree programs in their first, second, or third year of their program. Since its inception, GCW has been seen as an important catalyst for women's persistence in computing-related disciplines. CRA's Center for Evaluating the Research Pipeline (CERP) began evaluating the GCW workshop in 2014, and CERP results indicate that the workshop has a strong positive immediate impact on participants. For the 2024 workshop, it was co-located with CRA-WP Grad Cohort for IDEALS in Minneapolis, Minneapolis and brought 133 attendees to build networking with IDEALS attendees.

Using a pretest/posttest methodology, the CRA Center for Evaluating the Research Pipeline (CERP) evaluated the 2024 workshop using an online survey distributed to participants before and immediately after the workshop. The post-workshop survey also included open-ended feedback questions for participants to provide feedback about the workshop. This report discusses CERP's evaluation efforts and results of their analysis assessing open-ended comments on the attendees' perception with the co-location, session engagement, and overall workshop thoughts.

1. Grad Cohort Co-Location Experience

Perception on the Co-Location of the Workshop

Feedback Question: What aspects of the co-location of the Grad Cohort for Women and Grad Cohort for IDEALS workshops contributed to your overall experience?

The co-location of the Grad Cohort for Women and Grad Cohort for IDEALS workshops had a predominantly positive impact on participants' experiences, particularly in terms of networking and session variety. The opportunity to network with a diverse group of attendees, choose from a wider range of sessions, and build a supportive community were major highlights. However, some negative aspects, such as instances of harassment and the perceived dilution of the women's focus, were also reported. Addressing these issues in future events could further enhance the overall experience for participants.

1. Networking Connections (79 mentions)

- Many participants appreciated the opportunity to network with a larger and more diverse group of peers and mentors. The co-location of the two workshops expanded their networking pool beyond their specific cohort, facilitating broader connections and interactions.

2. Sessions Variety and Flexibility (22 mentions)

- The flexibility to attend sessions from both workshops was seen as a significant advantage. Participants liked not being restricted to their assigned workshop and appreciated the freedom to choose sessions that were most relevant to them.


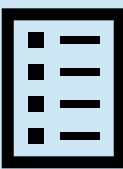


3. Positive Community Impact (25 mentions)

- **Building Community among Peers (15 mentions):** The co-location helped in building a stronger sense of community among participants. This fostered a sense of belonging and mutual support, which was particularly valuable for those from underrepresented backgrounds
- **Encouragement and Support (10 mentions):** Participants felt encouraged and supported by meeting people who shared similar challenges and aspirations. This aspect of the workshops provided them with a positive outlook on their future careers and reinforced their sense of purpose.

4. Negative Aspects (7 mentions):

- **Harassment and Discomfort (3 mentions):** Some participants reported negative experiences, including incidences of harassment. The presence of individuals from the IDEALS workshop led to uncomfortable situations for some attendees, which impacted their overall experience negatively.
- **Dilution of Women's Focus and Empowerment in Computing (4 mentions):** A few participants felt that the co-location diluted the focus on women's specific issues. The broader applicability of sessions and the presence of men in a space meant to address women's challenges in computing made the sessions less effective.

Table 1. Thematic Codes: Aspect of the Co-Location.

What aspects of the co-location of the Grad Cohort for Women and Grad Cohort for IDEALS workshops contributed to your overall experience?	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
 <p>Networking & Connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I met people from all walks of life which allowed me to get more knowledge on the opportunities available and possibilities of being in academia • “It was honestly just nice to meet more people who are minorities within computer science! During the lunches and receptions I was able to meet some IDEALS folks and had some wonderful discussions with them.” • “Sometimes when a workshop running in the Women cohort wasn’t really applicable to me I attended the IDEALS one instead. Also it was nice to meet the people in IDEALS because the challenges they face are similar. It also allowed me to meet some fantastic women in IDEALS who I otherwise wouldn’t meet”
 <p>Sessions Variety & Flexibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I got a chance to attend some of the IDEALS sessions that were strongly related to my research and volunteer work!” • “The co-location helped me interact with a much diverse cohort of people and have a wider variety of sessions available to be able to choose whichever session would be most relevant and valuable for me.”
 <p>Positive Community Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It was honestly just nice to meet more people who are minorities within computer science! During the lunches and receptions I was able to meet some IDEALS folks and had some wonderful discussions with them.” • “I think it expanded the pool of attendees to network with and learn about the experiences of other students committed to diversity and inclusion in computing.”
 <p>Negative Aspects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Because men were present, they dominated lunch discussions and also got into some of the women sessions and also asked more questions than women. This hindered women participation and discussions.” • “I witnessed instances of a man from IDEALS repeatedly trying to get my friends number after she had said no multiple times. While I know this is hard to be accounted for, it really upsetting how deeply ironic this was to happen at a women’s conference and was very deflating for me. I think there needs to be a zero tolerance kind of thing for this in the future or have these workshops in separate spaces.”




Recommendations to Improve Grad Cohort Co-Location

Feedback Question: Based on your experience with the co-location of the Grad Cohort for Women and Grad Cohort for IDEALS workshops, what recommendations would you suggest to make the co-location more effective?

The co-location of the Grad Cohort for Women and Grad Cohort for IDEALS workshops had a predominantly positive impact on participants' experiences, particularly in terms of networking and session variety. The opportunity to network with a diverse group of attendees, choose from a wider range of sessions, and build a supportive community were major highlights. However, some negative aspects, such as instances of harassment and the perceived dilution of the women's focus, were also reported. Addressing these issues in future events could further enhance the overall experience for participants.

1. **Improved Communication and Information Sharing (42 mentions)**
 - **Access to both agendas (26 mentions):** Many participants emphasized the need for better access to the agendas of both workshops. They suggested that providing the schedules of both events in the CVENT app would help them to know which sessions to attend.
 - **Clarify Communication about the Co-location Process (17 mentions):** Participants felt that the co-location of the workshops should be communicated more clearly in advance. This includes explaining the purpose of the co-location, what aspects of the workshops would be shared, and what attendees were allowed to do.
2. **Promote More Networking Activities (16 mentions)**
 - **Facilitation of More Social Activities (12 mentions):** Some participants suggested organizing more social activities to facilitate networking among attendees from both workshops. These activities could include joint meals, outings, and dedicated networking sessions.
 - **Tailor the Peer Networking By interest (4 mentions):** Participants recommended creating opportunities for networking based on specific interests or research areas. This could help attendees connect more effectively with peers who share similar professional interests.
3. **Session Coordination and Logistic Clarification (12 mentions)**
 - **Clear Differentiation of Sessions (8 mentions):** Few attendees suggested for organizers to clearly specify which sessions belong to which GC workshop. This would help reduce confusion and ensure that attendees know which sessions are relevant to their career and academic goals.
 - **Minimize Schedule Overlap (4 mentions):** Some participants recommended minimizing the overlap between sessions of the two workshops. This would allow attendees to attend more sessions of interest without having to choose between overlapping options.

Table 2. Thematic Code: Recommendations of the Co-Location.

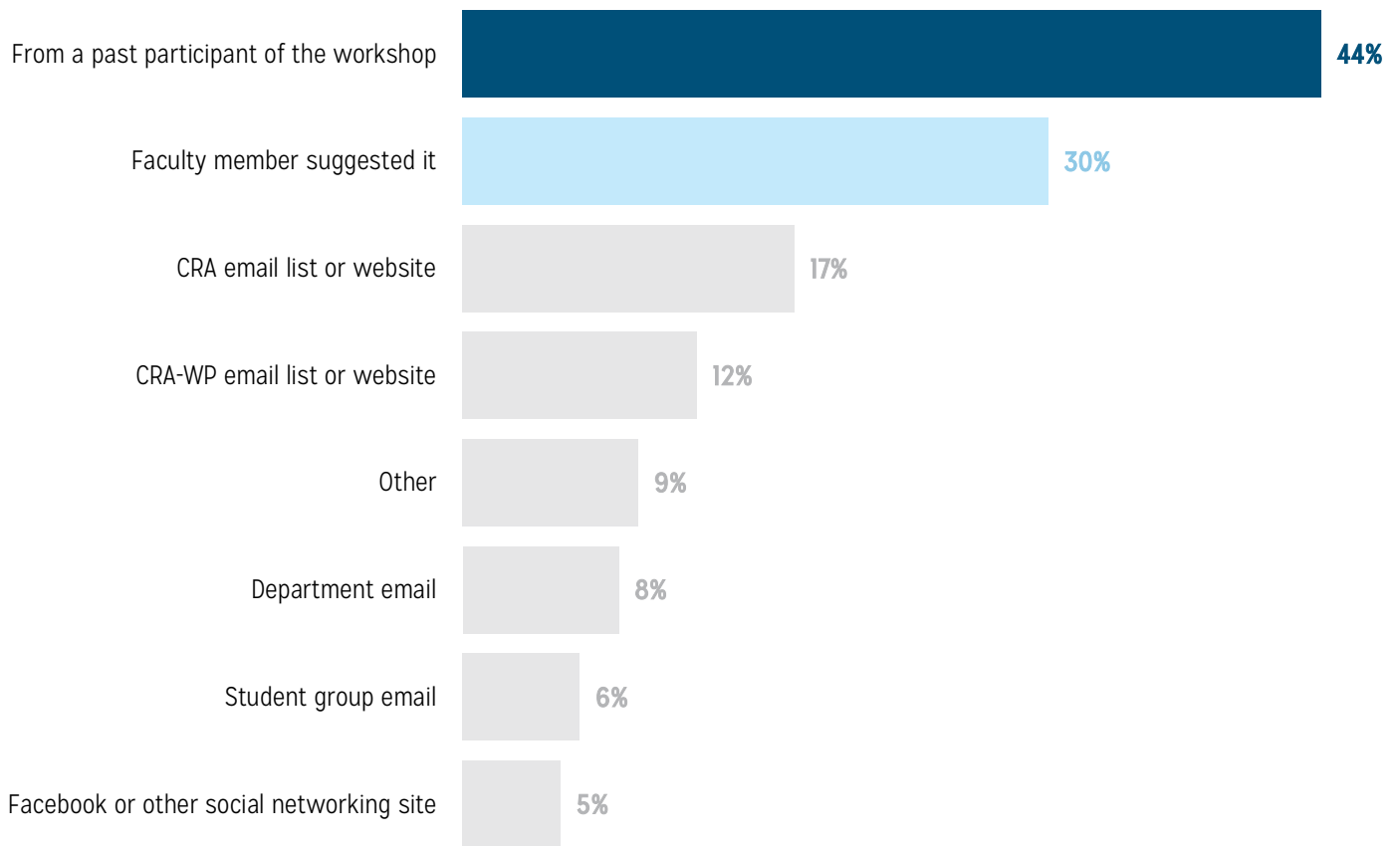
Based on your experience with the co-location of the Grad Cohort for Women and Grad Cohort for IDEALS workshops, what recommendations would you suggest to make the co-location more effective?	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
 <p>Improve Communication & Information Sharing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I was monitoring the IDEALS workshop agenda via their website, it would have been nice if both workshop agendas were easily accessible via the CVENT app. If that functionality was there already, I wasn't able to find it.” • “I think announcing prior and indicating what aspects of co-location were specifically affecting what part of the workshops, what attendees were allowed to do vs. not do – a bit more detailed explanation of this would've been helpful.” • “Provide the agendas of both events in the CVENT app and online. Maybe I would have liked to attend some of the IDEALS events, but I did not know what they were or have a way to find out.”
 <p>Sessions Coordination and Logistical Clarification</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I would suggest sessions to specify explicitly for which workshop it is a part of. I would also suggest communicating in advance the purpose and expected learnings from both the workshops.” • “There was some confusion on which sessions were for which workshop. I would just make all the sessions for each workshop the same.” • “The whole concept was very good, I was thrilled when I realized it was the same location because it widened the network band. I would like the event talk timing to be changed so that we can attend every session we find interesting without forfeiting the other.”
 <p>More Networking Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Perhaps creating sign-ups for doing dinner out or outings in the evening. There were A LOT of people and finding others in a big crowd has its challenges.” • “I think while the co-location is super beneficial, I do think there could be one networking/socializing event that could be focused more on the individual cohorts. It could make the groups smaller and might make networking with more people a bit easier.”

2. Workshop Session Ratings

Workshop Awareness And Motivations To Attend

Survey Question #2a: How did you learn about the Grad Cohort for Women workshop? Select all that apply.

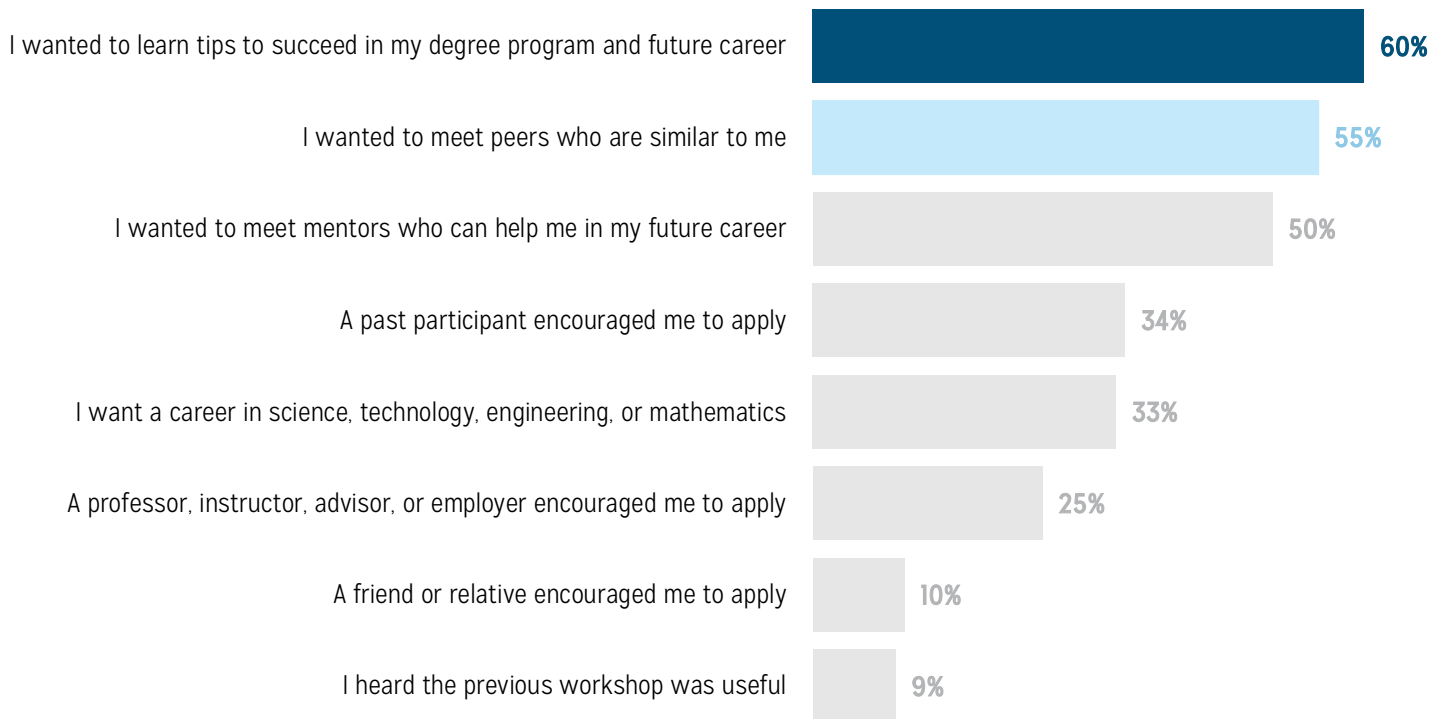
Figure 1. Most attendees learned about the workshop from **a past participant** or **their faculty advisor recommended** it to them.



Notes: Values represent the percentage of all respondents who selected each item above; Respondents could select all that apply.

*Survey Question #2b: What were your main reasons for applying for the Grad Cohort for Women Workshop?
(Choose up to 3 responses)*

Figure 2. Most attendees **wanted to learn tips to succeed in their programs** and **meet peers who are similar to them**.



Notes: Values represent the percentage of all respondents who selected each item above; respondents could select three responses.

Friday Poster Sessions

Survey Question #2c: Did you present a poster on Friday at the workshop?

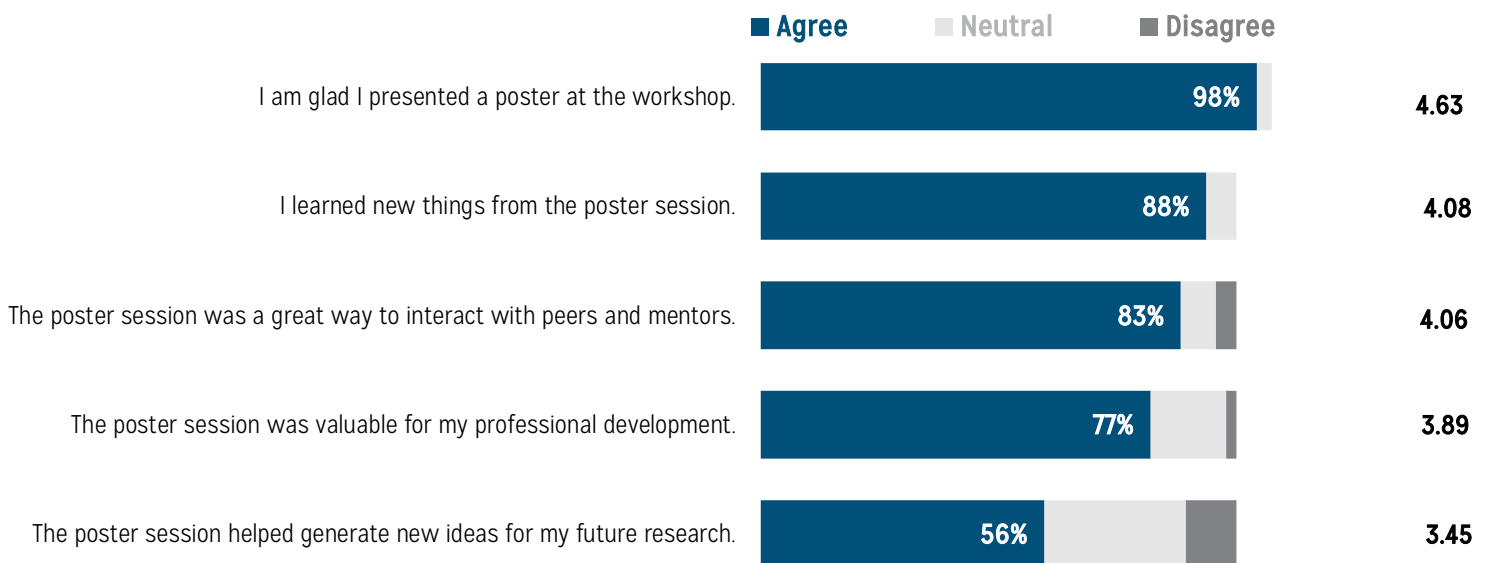


51

GCW 24 attendees presented a poster at the workshop.

Survey Question #2d: Rate the degree to which you disagree or agree with the following statements related to the poster session on Friday?

Figure 3. Most attendees **agreed or strongly agreed** that they presented a poster and learned new things from the session.



Note: Values represent percentages for each item and the average (mean) of all responses within each item are bolded in black. Responses were given on a five-point scale from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding errors.

Friday Sessions

Table 3. Usefulness of Friday sessions.

	n	Not at all (1)	A little (2)	Moderately (3)	Quite a bit (4)	Extremely (5)	Mean
How useful did you find the following sessions on Friday, April 12?							
Joint Keynote 9:00 –9:50 AM							
Joint Keynote	121	0%	3%	17%	33%	47%	4.24
Parallel Sessions 10:00 - 10:50 AM							
Preparing Your Thesis Proposal and Becoming a PhD Candidate	74	0%	8%	23%	27%	42%	4.03
Finding a Research Topic & Interdisciplinary Research	62	0%	2%	26%	31%	42%	4.13
Parallel Sessions 11:20 - 12:10 PM							
Publishing Your Research	61	0%	8%	16%	33%	43%	4.10
Building Your Professional Persona	68	0%	6%	18%	29%	47%	4.18
Plenary I Session 1:45 – 2:45 PM							
Human-Human Interaction	104	1%	3%	20%	40%	36%	4.07
Parallel Sessions 2:55- 3:40 PM							
A Research Mindset	57	0%	7%	16%	35%	42%	4.12
Balancing Graduate School and Personal Life	69	0%	4%	30%	25%	41%	4.01

Notes: Values represent percentages within each session. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding error. (n) = number of individuals who provided responses to each item. "I did not attend the session" responses are not included.

Saturday Sessions

Table 4. Usefulness of Saturday sessions.

	<i>n</i>	Not at all (1)	A little (2)	Moderately (3)	Quite a bit (4)	Extremely (5)	Mean
How useful did you find the following sessions on Saturday, April 13?							
Storytelling 8:30 – 10:00 AM							
Storytelling	110	3%	16%	14%	28%	39%	3.85
Parallel Sessions 10:40- 11:30 AM							
How to Make the Most of Student-Advisor Relationships	79	0%	3%	18%	39%	41%	4.18
Ph.D. Academic Career Paths & Job Search	83	1%	7%	15%	43%	34%	4.01
Parallel Sessions 11:40 AM - 12:30 PM							
Summer Internships	94	5%	10%	31%	29%	26%	3.60
Perspective from DOE & NSF	50	0%	14%	26%	28%	32%	3.78
Closing 12:50 - 1:00 PM							
Closing: Final Questions, Lingering Concerns & Suggestions	119	2%	8%	34%	35%	22%	3.66

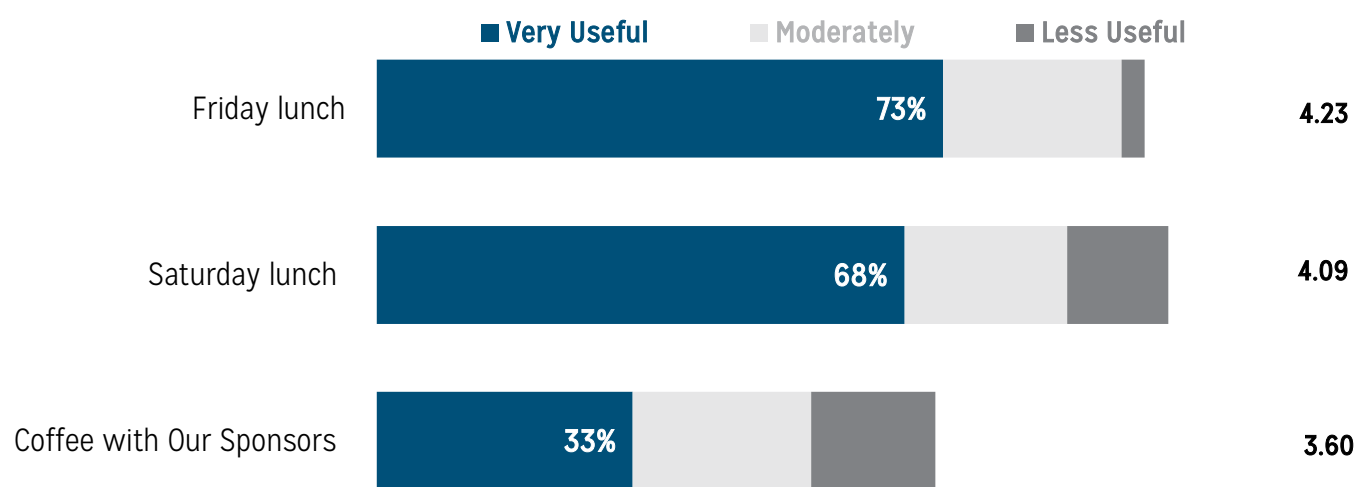
Notes: Values represent percentages within each session. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding. (n) = number of individuals responding to each item. "I did not attend the session" responses are not included.

3. Mentoring & Networking Feedback

Networking Activities

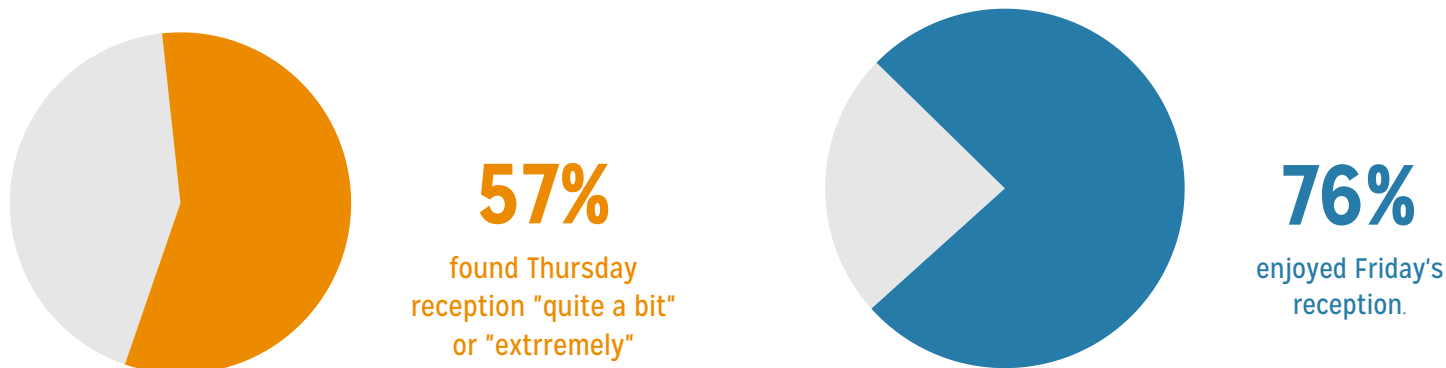
Survey Question #3a: How useful was the Friday lunch/Saturday lunch/Coffee with Our Sponsors for networking with attendees and to connect with sponsors?

Figure 4. Attendees rated Friday's lunch as the **most useful** for their networking opportunities with their peers.



Note: Values represent percentages for each item and the average (mean) of all responses within each item are bolded in black. Responses were given on a five-point scale from (1) not at all useful to (5) extremely useful. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding error.

Figure 5. Usefulness of Thursday and Friday Night Receptions



Feedback Question: If you have any comments about the Friday Night Reception, please tell us below in the text box.

This section examines attendees' perspectives on Friday Night reception. The responses were then manually analyzed and categorized using Excel, capturing the frequency and themes of mentions. The number of mentions for each theme is noted to indicate the relative emphasis placed on different aspects by the participants. Overall, attendees enjoyed the networking opportunities with their peers at their reception but suggested for the organizers to address food and dietary accommodations.

1. Food and Dietary Accommodations (22 mentions)

- Several participants mentioned that the variety and quality of the food could be improved for better accommodation of dietary restrictions, such as gluten-free, vegan, vegetarian, and Halal diets. They were disappointed with the limited options and the poor quality of the food served, suggesting more diverse and inclusive menu options.




2. Atmosphere and Setup (18 mentions)

- a. **Music Volume and Ambiance (10 mentions):** Participants had mixed feelings about the music volume and overall ambiance. While some enjoyed the fun atmosphere, others found the music too loud to have conversations and network effectively.
- b. **Seating Arrangement (8 mentions):** Many participants found there to be a lack of sufficient seating. They suggested having additional tables and chairs to allow everyone to be seated comfortably and create a layout that promotes both socializing and networking.

3. Networking (12 mentions)

- a. **Networking Opportunities (6 mentions):** Several participants appreciated the opportunity to network and interact with peers and mentors during the event. They highlighted the value of these interactions for building professional relationships.
- b. **Improving Networking (6 mentions):** Participants also suggested improvements to better facilitate networking, such as providing more structured activities, creating quieter spaces for conversations, or combining different cohorts.

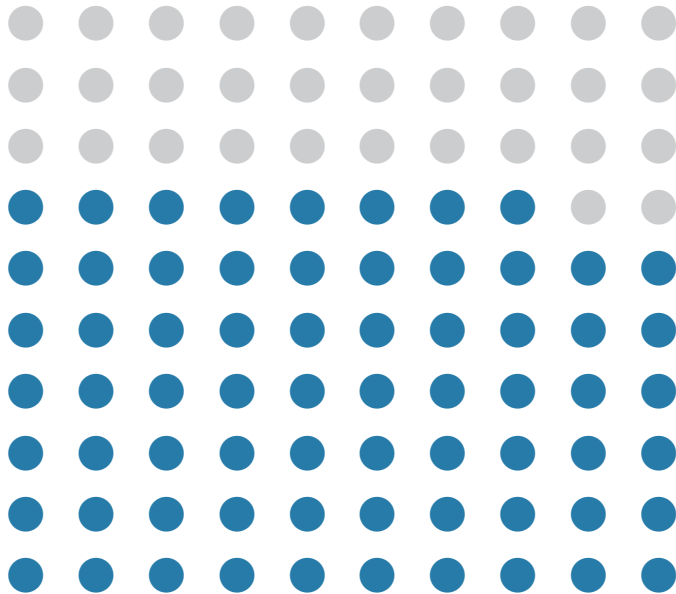
Table 5. Thematic Codes: Friday Night Reception

If you have any comments about the Friday Night Reception, please tell us below in the text box.	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
 <p>Food and Dietary Accommodations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Generally, I feel that the food options with Halal or vegetarian requirements were very limited and particularly on Friday night reception the food was not sufficient for all participants and it ran out before me and my friend could get a chance to have it as we bumped into one of the mentors and started talking to them" • "The dietary preferences were not accounted for properly." • "There were not enough tables in the room, and the tables were too small to accommodate four people. The quality and diversity of the food were far from expectations."
 <p>Atmosphere and Setup</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Friday night reception was loud with the blaring music and I found it hard to locate things." • "The music was a bit too loud, though I know the point was to have fun and dance." • "There were about almost two dozen people who were not able to find a seat and had to sit on the carpet floor in the ballroom."
 <p>Networking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It was a great event with big opportunities for strong network." • "The reception was great to reconnect with the attendees in a more relaxed atmosphere." • "More structured activities would be nice!"

Advising Sessions

Survey Question #3b: How useful did you find the Academic/Career advising session for your professional development?

Academic/Career Advising Session

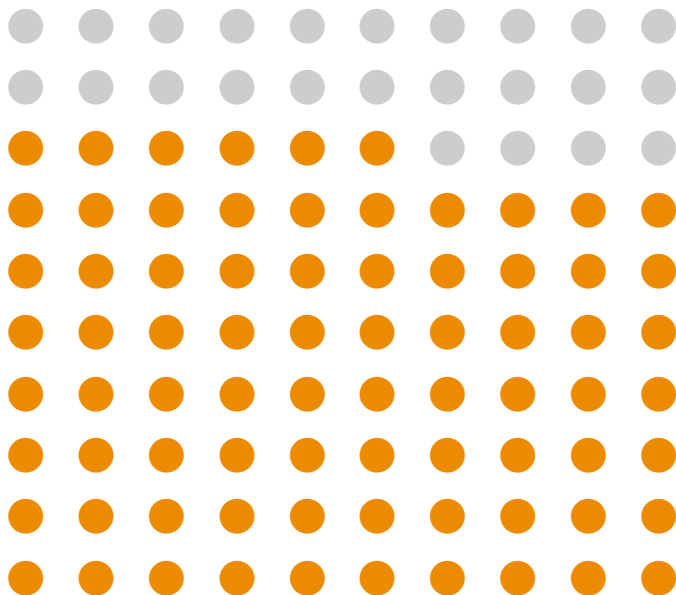


68%

Found the Academic/Career advising session “quite a bit” or “extremely” useful.

Survey Question #3c: How useful did you find the Resume/CV advising session for your professional development?

Resume/CV Advising Session



76%

Found the Resume/CV advising session “quite a bit” or “extremely” useful.

Feedback Question: Please provide any comments you have about the Resume/CV Advising you received below.

CERP collected feedback to assess attendees' experiences with seeking mentorship and advice from resume/CV advising session. The responses were then manually analyzed and categorized using Excel, capturing the frequency and themes of mentions. The number of mentions for each theme is noted to indicate the relative emphasis placed on different aspects by the participants. Overall, attendees shared positive experiences with these sessions and provided recommendations to improve the session for future workshops.

1. Positive Feedback and Practical Advice (12 mentions)

- **Tips for Improvement (8 mentions):** Participants appreciated receiving specific suggestions to improve their resumes/CVs, such as including a summary, inputting metrics, and using stronger language. These actionable tips were seen as valuable for making their documents stand out.
- **General Career Advice (4 mentions):** In addition to resume/CV-specific feedback, participants valued the general career advice they received from mentors. This included insights into the job market, guidance on choosing between academia and industry, and networking tips.




2. Suggestions for Improvement (6 mentions)

- **More Sessions and Opportunities (3 mentions):** There was a demand for more advising sessions to allow participants to ask questions and receive feedback from different advisors. Participants believed that more sessions would enable them to gain varied perspectives and more comprehensive advice.
- **More Perspectives from Advisors (3 mentions):** Some participants felt that the advice they received was outdated or irrelevant to their specific fields. In the future, it would be helpful if advisors are up-to-date with current job market trends and resume standards.

3. Overall Positive Experiences (8 mentions)

- **Positive Experiences with the Advisors (4 mentions):** Many participants shared their positive experiences with specific advisors, emphasizing the impactful guidance they received. They appreciated the personal interactions with knowledgeable and supportive mentors.
- **General Satisfaction (4 mentions):** Participants expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the advising sessions and thanked the organizers and advisors for their support and guidance.

Table 6. Thematic Codes; Resume/CV advising session.

Please provide any comments you have about the Resume/CV Advising you received below.	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
 <p>Positive Feedback and Practical Advice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was advised to provide a short summary about my experience and interests in the beginning of my CV." • "I was told to input metrics in my CV and list my experience first." • "I received the best advice for my career considering I want to start my career in industry after my PhD."
 <p>Suggestions for Improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I wish the advising sessions were held on more than one day for more opportunities to ask questions." • "I wonder if it would be possible to meet at least two people at the advising sessions to get varied opinions." • "Some of the people who were doing resume advising gave advice that is very out of date on the job market of today."
 <p>Overall Positive Experiences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I had the session with Prof. Maria Gini, which was an incredible opportunity." • "It was good and extremely connective." • "I got extremely helpful feedback from this session."

Feedback Question: If you have any comments about the Academic/Career Advising, please tell us below in the text box.

Like the resume/CV advising session, feedback was collected to assess attendees' experiences with seeking mentorship and advice from academic/CV advising session. The responses were then manually analyzed and categorized using Excel, capturing the frequency and themes of mentions. The number of mentions for each theme is noted to indicate the relative emphasis placed on different aspects by the participants. Overall, attendees shared positive experiences with these sessions and provided recommendations to improve the session for future workshops.

1. Positive Feedback and Career Advice (13 mentions)

- **Specific Advice for Professional Development (8 mentions):** Participants benefited from receiving suggestions for their academic and career paths. These actionable tips were helpful for making informed decisions and gaining confidence in their career choices.
- **General Career Advice (5 mentions):** In addition to specific career development tips, participants appreciated the general advice they received from mentors. This included insights into different career paths and encouragement to explore new opportunities.




2. Suggestions for Improvement (9 mentions)

- **Better Mentor Matching (5 mentions):** Participants suggested improving the process for matching mentors and mentees to ensure more relevant and effective advising. They believed that being matched with a mentor in their specific field or with expertise relevant to their career goals would enhance their experience.
- **More Detailed Information About Mentors (4 mentions):** Some participants also wanted more detailed information about the mentors prior to the sessions. This would help them choose which mentors to approach and ensure that the advice they receive is relevant to their goals.

3. Mentorship and Personal Interaction (7 mentions)

- **Positive Experience with Mentors (4 mentions):** Participants highlighted the positive experiences they had with specific mentors. Personal interactions with knowledgeable and supportive mentors were seen as highly beneficial.
- **Benefits of One-on-One Interaction (3 mentions):** Participants also expressed their appreciation for the one-on-one format of the advising sessions allowing for personalized feedback and tailored advice.

Table 7. Thematic Codes; Academic/career advising session.

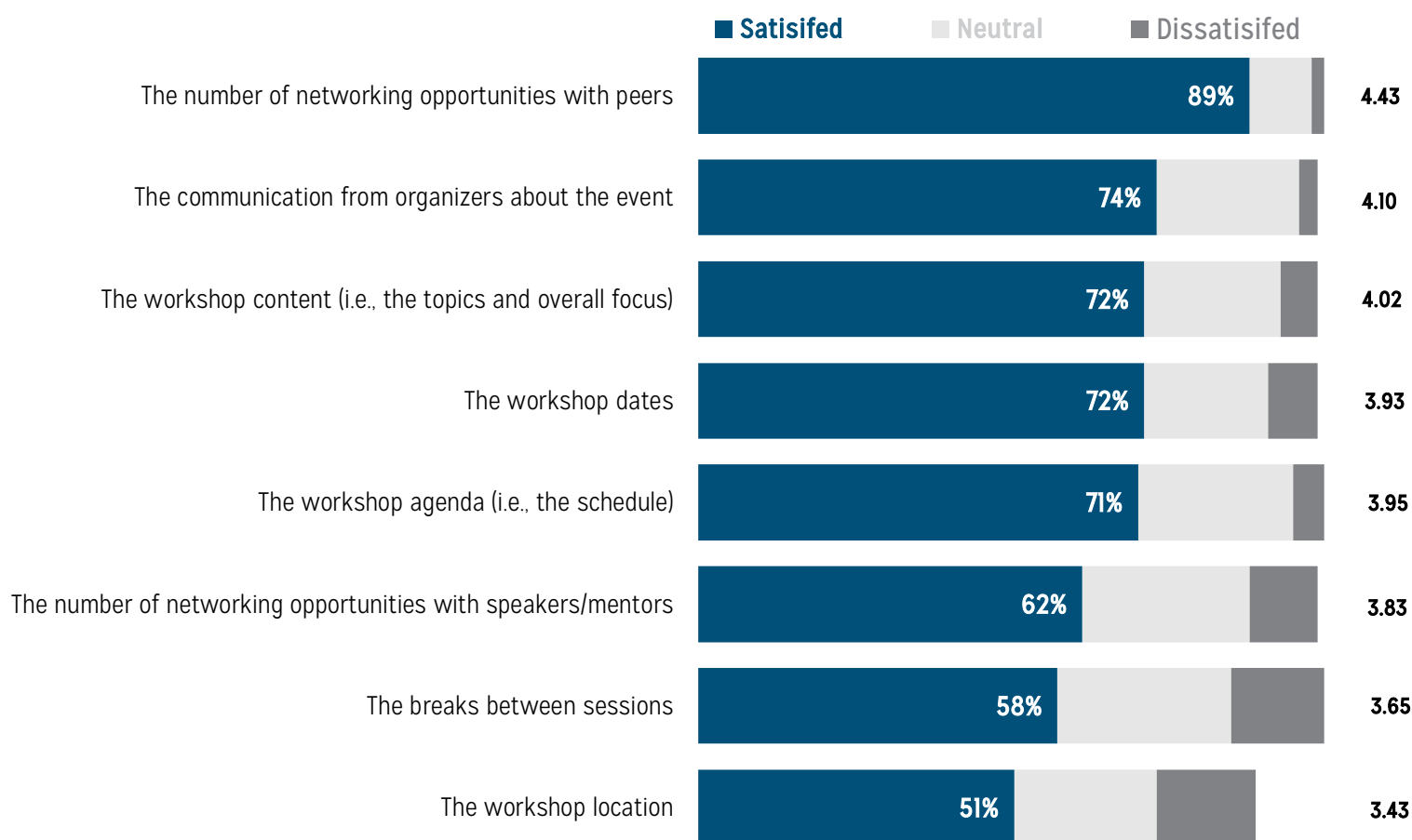
If you have any comments about the Academic/Career Advising, please tell us below in the text box.	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
 <p>Positive Feedback and Career Advice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I was glad to be able to talk to a teaching-focused faculty, since that is the career path that I'm aiming for after graduation." • "I discovered a path I never thought about, so it was really helpful." • "A really valuable opportunity to ask in-depth questions and get robust advice; VERY WORTH IT."
 <p>Suggestions for Improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "We were assigned randomly to mentors. By chance I was assigned to a very relevant mentor in my field." • "Not getting a choice to pick the mentor limited the benefit one could get out of the session." • "It would be helpful to have a catalogue of who was who & their bio prior to the session."
 <p>Mentorship and Personal Interaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The people who are present as mentors in these 1:1 sessions make a big difference." • "I had the session with Prof. Cynthia Phillips, which also I consider as a great chance." • "I really loved how the mentor patiently heard my situation and provided me proper guidance."

4. Logistical Aspects

Workshop Logistics

Survey Question #4a: How satisfied were you with the following aspects of the workshop?

Figure 6. GCW 2024 attendees were "very" or "extremely" satisfied with the number of networking opportunities and the communication from the organizers (n = 126).



Note: Values represent percentages for each item and the average (mean) of all responses within each item are bolded in black. Responses were given on a five-point scale from (1) not at all satisfied to (5) extremely satisfied. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding error.

Feedback Question: If you have any comments about the logistics of the workshop that you would like to add to provide detail on your responses above, please use the text box below.

CERP collected feedback to assess attendees' perceptions on the logistic and organization of GCW 24 workshop using an open-ended comment box. The responses were then manually analyzed and categorized using Excel, capturing the frequency and themes of mentions. The number of mentions for each theme is noted to indicate the relative emphasis placed on different aspects by the participants. The logistical aspects of the workshop received mixed feedback. While some appreciated the organization, others highlighted concerns about venue safety, accessibility, and the coordination of accommodations and travel. Tight scheduling of sessions left little room for breaks, causing fatigue among participants.

1. Dietary Accommodations (9 mentions)

- Participants expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of dietary accommodations. Despite providing dietary preferences in advance, many attendees found that there was a lack of vegan, vegetarian, or halal options, which resulted in finding food outside the workshop.

2. Logistics and Venue (18 mentions)

- **Location & Safety (6 mentions):** Few participants raised concerns about the safety and accessibility of the workshop venue. Some felt unsafe in the area, especially when traveling between the venue and their hotels.
- **Session Timing and Coordination (8 mentions):** Some attendees felt that the sessions started too early and had too little time for breaks, leading to fatigue and a reduced ability to engage with the content.
- **Accommodation and Travel Coordination (4 mentions):** Few attendees addressed some issues with accommodation as they were placed in different hotels. This


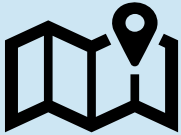
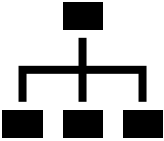

3. Session Content & Structure (15 mentions)

- **Content Relevance (15 mentions):** The co-location helped in building a stronger sense of community among participants. This fostered a sense of belonging and mutual support, which was particularly valuable for those from underrepresented backgrounds
- **Session Overlap (10 mentions):** Participants felt encouraged and supported by meeting people who shared similar challenges and aspirations. This aspect of the workshops provided them with a positive outlook on their future careers and reinforced their sense of purpose.
- **Session Timing:**

4. Cultural Sensitivity (7 mentions):

- **Religious Holiday Conflict (4 mentions):** The scheduling of the workshop during Eid was a major issue for Muslim participants. They felt that the timing was inconsiderate and hoped that future workshops would avoid such conflicts.
- **Inclusion and Safety (3 mentions):** The inclusion of other groups, such as IDEALS attendees, led to feelings of discomfort among some participants. They felt that the presence of men in sessions hindered open discussions and made them feel excluded.

Table 8. Thematic Code: Workshop Logistics.

If you have any comments about the logistics of the workshop that you would like to add to provide detail on your responses above, please use the text box below.	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
 <p>Dietary Accommodations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There were very less vegetarian options during the lunch and breakfast.” • “The food options were inconsiderate of the variety of people attending. From lack of vegetarian/vegan options to zero halal/kosher ones, many attendees such as myself felt like we could not eat properly and had to get additional food afterwards to eat. This was highly disappointing given that there was a large number of attendees who required such food options.”
 <p>Logistics and Venue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't think Minneapolis was a good choice of venue; it's not an easy city to fly into from most places, so many people I talked to had long layovers, especially because the conference was strict about the number of nights hotels would be covered for. Also the city was not very safe, even during the day, which was bad choice for a conference of young women.” • “The response from the organizers were pretty good. However, staying in a different hotel and attending workshop in a different hotel was little bit challenging for me as it was my first time in Minneapolis. I didn't know about the skywalk, and going back and forth from conference venue to hotel was difficult.”
 <p>Session Content & Structure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The information in the sessions felt too generic at times.” • “Sometimes some sessions ran long and ate into the break, so I was very tired going into the next session. There was an incident where I got so faint and had to lie down. The information some of us were getting was very heavy, I needed a bit more time in between to reflect and recharge. Also, with regards to the dates, I feel like I would have enjoyed starting on Wednesday night, so I could spend Saturday traveling and Sunday resting before getting back to work”
 <p>Cultural Sensitivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The event started on Apr 11. As an event with the goal of widening participation it was disappointing that the fact that Eid was on Apr 10 was overlooked; typically Eid is considered 3 days to spend with family but we had to cut it short to attend the workshop. For the organizers who were observing Eid this was likely more of a burden. I myself was visiting family for the end of Ramadan and then began my travels on Eid day after the morning prayer to be able to make it to the workshop. In the same way the workshop wouldn't be held during Christmas or Passover or Diwali I hope that next year it doesn't take place during Eid either” • I think it was lovely. I did not agree with mixing it with IDEALS, this is because I observed that because men were present, they dominated the conversation at lunch tables and at the question part of the sessions. I observed women spoke less because of this. I think women in CS need a safe where they can open up and hold discussions and I felt the presence of men in the conversation (and usually taking the spotlight) heavily hindered this.

Workshop Accommodations

Feedback Question: Do you have any comments related to accommodations provided for persons with disabilities during the workshop? Please consider providing details below in the text box so that we can continue best practices or make improvements to future workshops.

This section examines the feedback from workshop participants concerning accommodations provided for persons with disabilities. The responses were then manually analyzed and categorized using Excel, capturing the frequency and themes of mentions. The number of mentions for each theme is noted to indicate the relative emphasis placed on different aspects by the participants. Participants highlighted both positive aspects and areas needing improvement regarding accessibility, sensory accommodations, and dietary needs.



1. Accessibility and Sensory Accommodations (11 mentions)

- **Room Accommodations for Neurodivergent Attendees (3 mentions):** Attendees who are on the autism spectrum or with social anxiety highlighted the importance of having private rooms for decompression. They emphasized that shared accommodations would have made it impossible for them to attend the workshop.
- **More real-time transcription and captioning in sessions (5 mentions):** Some attendees noted that transcription services were available but not fully effective. They suggested improvements such as integrating transcription into slides and using more reliable real-time diction software.
- **Inclusivity for Attendees with Blindness and Low Vision (3 mentions):** Participants highlighted the need for improved inclusivity measures for blind and low vision attendees. This included better narrative descriptions during presentations and assistance with navigating the venue.

2. Dietary Accommodations (4 mentions):

Few attendees with dietary restrictions such as Celiac disease and diabetes reported challenges with the food options provided. They recommended ensuring the availability of gluten-free and diabetic-friendly options and publishing menus in advance to allow for better planning.

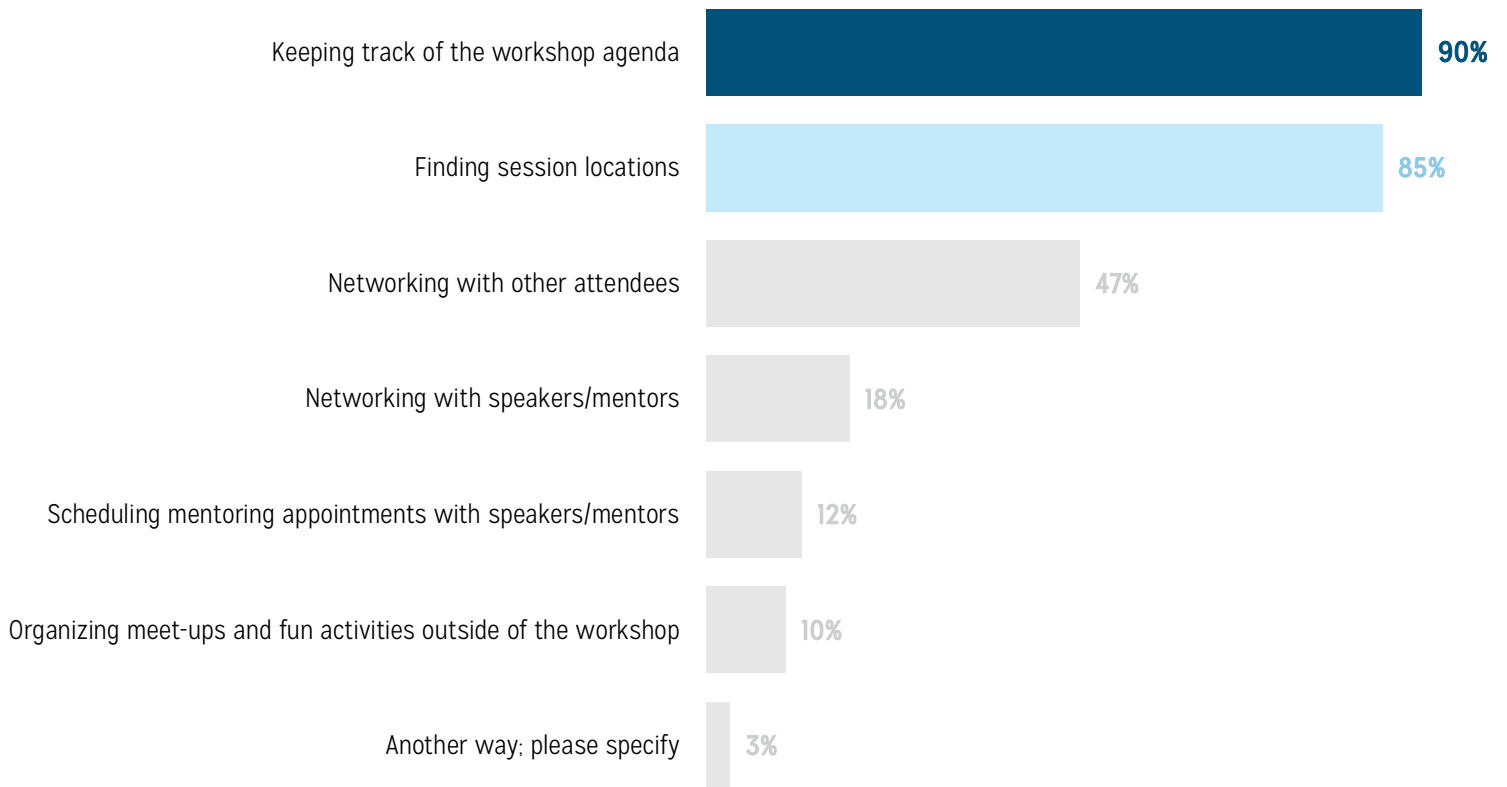
Table 9. Thematic Code: Workshop Accommodations

Do you have any comments related to accommodations provided for persons with disabilities during the workshop? Please consider providing details below in the text box so that we can continue best practices or make improvements to future workshops.	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
 <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Accessibility and Sensory Accommodations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I am on the autism spectrum with social anxiety and would not have been able to attend the workshop if I needed to share a hotel room, because I simply cannot be surrounded by people 24 hours a day for multiple days. The only accommodation I need for my disability is alone time to decompress (or meltdown or hide as needed, which is very embarrassing for me).” “Narrative description and other aspects of inclusion were not consistent despite the presence of blind and low vision attendees. Please model narrative description and accessibility for speakers and other speakers (Lightning talks, vendors, etc).” “More accommodations could have been given to those with low vision (e.g., presentation slides ahead of time, help navigating crowded areas, etc.)”
 <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Dietary Accommodations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “More reliable food options would be helpful. I have type 1 diabetes and Celiac's disease so it is stressful for me if the scheduled meals are insufficient. For example, at the Friday lunch I was able to eat the cabbage salad and the curry, but none of the starches. Having plain white rice would've improved the accessibility of the food options at Friday lunch. The macaroni and cheese bar at the evening mixer on Friday was not great because I had to miss the first hour of the event due to needing to find food elsewhere.” “At the very least, knowing what the menu is ahead of time would be helpful (if I knew that there wouldn't be a real dinner Friday night I could've gotten dinner at 6pm independently). Solutions: Ensure the caterer provides enough gluten free dishes so that someone with Celiac's can access a starch and a protein at each meal Publish menus ahead of time so that diabetic attendees and those with food allergies or intolerances can prepare ahead of time”

Usage Of Cvent App

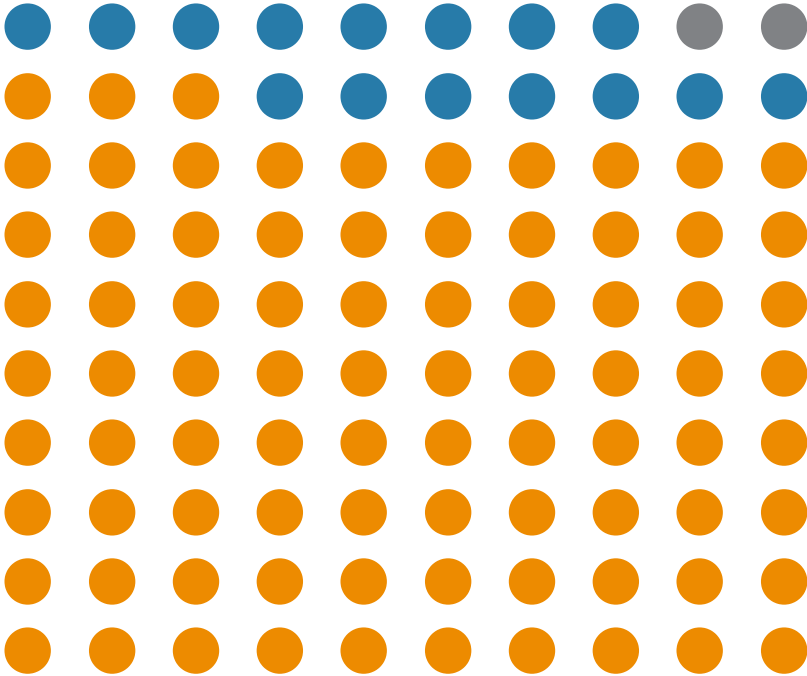
Survey Question #4b: In what ways did you use CVENT Attendee Hub during the workshop? Select all that apply.

Figure 7. Most GCW 2024 attendees used the CVENT app to **keep track of the workshop agenda** and **finding session locations** (n = 126).



Notes: Values represent the percentage of all respondents who selected each item above; respondents could select all that apply.

Survey Question #4c: Overall, how satisfied are you with your use of CVENT Attendee Hub for this workshop?



2%

were dissatisfied or “very”
dissatisfied”.

15%

were neither satisfied nor
dissatisfied”

83%

were satisfied or “very” satisfied”

5. Overall Workshop Feedback

Valuable Aspects of the Workshop.

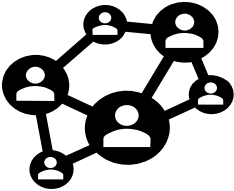

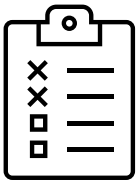

Feedback Question: What aspects of the workshop did you find most valuable? Please tell us in the text box below.

Participants provided their favorite aspects of GCW 2024. The responses were then manually analyzed using Excel, capturing the frequency and themes of mentions. The number of mentions for each theme is noted to indicate the relative emphasis placed on different aspects by the participants

1. **Networking and Peer Connections (50 mentions)**
 - **Meeting Peers and Sharing Experience (21 mentions):** Many participants valued the opportunity to meet other graduate students and share their experiences. This peer interaction helped them realize that they shared many of the same struggles.
 - **Building Professional Relationships (17 mentions):** Participants appreciated the chance to build professional relationships with peers and mentors. This included developing connections for potential collaborations and gaining insights from others in the field.
 - **Structured Networking Opportunities (12 mentions):** Participants emphasized the importance of the structured networking opportunities provided during the workshop, which included lunches, receptions, and specific networking sessions. These events facilitated meaningful interactions and relationship-building.
2. **Mentorship and Guidance (35 mentions)**
 - **One-on-One Mentoring Sessions (15 mentions):** Individual mentoring sessions were particularly valued for the personalized feedback and tailored advice participants received. These mentorship sessions were viewed as important for professional development.
 - **Advice from Experienced Professionals (11 mentions):** Several participants greatly appreciated the advice and guidance provided by experienced professionals, including faculty members, industry experts, and senior researchers. This advice helped participants navigate their academic and career paths.
 - **Overall Support and Encouragement (9 mentions):** The overall support and encouragement from mentors were seen as invaluable. This encouragement left participants feeling motivated and reassured, which helped them gain confidence to accomplish their goals.
3. **Workshop Content and Practical Sessions (23 mentions)**
 - **Value of Specific Sessions (14 mentions):** Participants found certain sessions particularly relevant to their interests, such as those revolving around finding a research topic, preparing for thesis proposals, and publishing research. These sessions provided valuable and actionable information.
 - **Appreciation for Practical Activities (9 mentions):** Practical activities, such as group discussions, interactive exercises, and hands-on sessions, were highly valued. These activities allowed participants to apply what they learned and receive feedback.
4. **Inclusivity and Representation (11 mentions)**

- **Importance of Diverse Perspectives (11 mentions):** Many participants enjoyed hearing from a diverse set of speakers and mentors. They valued the different perspectives and experiences shared, which benefited the workshop discussions.

Table 10. Thematic Code: Valuable Aspects of the Workshop

What aspects of the workshop did you find most valuable? Please tell us in the text box below.	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
 <p>Networking and Peer Connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Networking with other PhD students and learning about their graduate school experience." • "Networking with peers and mentors including faculty members and industry researchers and engineers." • "Networking, especially the lunches and receptions."
 <p>Mentorship and Guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The one-on-one face times I got with mentors and speakers." • "The advice that I got in individual chats with mentors was extremely helpful." • "I found it most valuable to meet peers and connect with mentors."
 <p>Workshop Content and Practical Sessions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The most valuable part of the workshop that I found was the session "Preparing your thesis proposal and becoming a PhD candidate", by Jodi Tims and Maria Gini. I think the reason for being the most important for me is because I could relate most of the things the speakers said." • "The exercises during the workshops where I talked with other participants about problems we had faced in our PhD careers so far."
 <p>Inclusivity and Representation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Connecting with other women and having a safe and welcoming environment." • "Having mentors and speakers from a diverse set of backgrounds." • "Hearing from the women speakers. Their stories were very inspiring."

Future Workshop Topics

Feedback Question: What topics should future workshops address that have not been previously covered?

This section summarizes the suggestions to include new workshop topics for future GCW events. The responses were then manually analyzed using Excel, capturing the frequency and themes of mentions. The number of mentions for each theme is noted to indicate the relative emphasis placed on different aspects by the participants.

1. Navigating the PhD Journey (17 mentions)

- **Managing Stress and Mental Health (7 mentions):** There was a demand for discussions that revolve around mental health and stress management. Participants were hoping to learn strategies for dealing with the burdens of graduate school, including handling failure and frustration.
- **Setting Milestones (6 mentions):** Participants wanted sessions on how to set and accomplish milestones throughout their PhD program. This includes advice on pacing oneself, tracking progress, and managing the uncertainty of research.
- **Dealing with Imposter Syndrome (4 mentions):** Many participants expressed their concern for experiencing imposter syndrome. To address this, they wanted sessions focused on overcoming these feelings to build confidence in their abilities.

2. Career Development and Networking (15 mentions)

- **Focused Career Discussions (6 mentions):** Several participants wanted more tailored career conversations that address specific career paths, including both academic and industry options. They suggested having more individualized and detailed sessions on career development.
- **Networking Skills (5 mentions):** Developing effective networking skills was seen as critical. Participants wanted sessions on how to successfully network, including initiating conversations, building relationships, and leveraging networks for career growth.
- **Job Application Preparation (4 mentions):** Participants also sought guidance on job applications and interview preparation. Participants wanted practical advice on formulating resumes, preparing for interviews, and negotiating job offers.

3. Diversity and Inclusion (11 mentions)




- **Promoting Inclusive Practices (8 mentions):** Uplifting women and other underrepresented groups in computing was a key concern. Participants suggested sessions focused on the unique challenges these groups face and strategies for overcoming them.
- **Dealing with Microaggressions (3 mentions):** Some participants wanted sessions centered around recognizing and addressing microaggressions in the workplace and academic settings. They sought strategies for handling these issues.

4. Technical and Research Skills (11 mentions)

- **Specific Research Topics (4 mentions):** Participants expressed interest in having more sessions on specific research areas, such as computer architecture, hardware, and AI-related privacy and security.
- **Practical Research Skills (4 mentions):** Developing practical research skills was also emphasized by participants. They wanted sessions on how to frame research questions, write grant proposals, and navigate the research process.

- **Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Research (3 mentions):** Participants highlighted the importance of collaborative and interdisciplinary research. They suggested sessions on how to collaborate with researchers from different fields and how to approach interdisciplinary research projects.

Table 11. Thematic Code: Future Workshop Topics

What topics should future workshops address that have not been previously covered?	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
 <p>Navigating the PhD Journey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Possible strategies to undertake when the imposter syndrome is hitting you really hard." • "Topics related to how to set milestones for your own PhD journey and how to pace yourself in the program would be helpful." • "PhD Mental Health: How PhD students deal with failure and frustration during the research process."
 <p>Career Development and Networking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "What to look for in an industry job; how to figure out if a particular company is the right fit for you; more discussion about what factors we should consider prioritizing when looking for future jobs" • "Networking: What is the right way to network with others? How can one start a conversation without seeming too aggressive?" • "Learning more detailed job suggestions like ways to ask for a raise or more salary."
 <p>Diversity and Inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Provide more panel discussions that get to the nitty gritty of dealing with micro-aggressions." • "Discrimination at workplace and how to overcome it." • "Issues and opportunities around women's rights, maternity leave, resources provided for women in academia."

Final Thoughts & Comments

Feedback Question: Do you have any final thoughts or comments about the workshop that you would like to add? Please tell us in the text box below.

Participants provided their overall thoughts and suggestions to improve the workshop. The responses were then manually analyzed using Excel, capturing the frequency and themes of mentions. The number of mentions for each theme is noted to indicate the relative emphasis placed on different aspects by the participants



1. Positive Feedback and Gratitude (28 mentions)

- **General Positive Feedback (13 mentions):** Many participants expressed their overall satisfaction and gratitude for the workshop, highlighting how much they enjoyed the experience and found it valuable for their professional development.
- **Appreciation for Organization and Opportunity (9 mentions):** Participants appreciated the effort put into organizing the workshop and the opportunity to attend. They acknowledged the organizers and expressed their thankfulness.
- **Specific Appreciation (6 mentions):** Some participants also noted specific aspects of the workshop they enjoyed, such as sessions, networking opportunities, and the overall structure.

2. Suggestions for Improvement (19 mentions)

- **Better Accommodations (8 mentions):** Several participants suggested improving the accommodations, such as providing more inclusive food options and better hotel arrangements.
- **More Tailored Content (6 mentions):** Participants wanted more tailored and detailed content, particularly for specific groups like advanced PhD students, and sessions that address unique challenges in different research areas.
- **Logistical Improvement (5 mentions):** Participants also suggested improving the event's logistics, such as better poster session organization, providing information about mentors beforehand, and improving the overall conference experiences.

Table 12. Thematic Code: Final Thoughts or Comments.

Do you have any final thoughts or comments about the workshop that you would like to add? Please tell us in the text box below.	
Themes	Themes
 Positive Feedback and Gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Overall, it was an amazing experience, and I am beyond grateful and happy to attend this cohort." • "A great experience! It would be one of the best memory I had in my life so far!" • "I really appreciate having the chance to join the event this time, and I also love that the organizer designed different sessions for PhD students at various levels."
 Suggestions for Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The food on the conference was a bit disappointing because there was not enough accommodation for vegetarian or halal options." • "I think sessions on soft skills would be interesting, like team building or managing teams." • "For the poster session, some posters were assigned to unrelated topics. It would be more helpful if you can organize the posters better."

Recommendations

This section highlights CERP's recommendations for future co-located GC workshops based on feedback findings discussed in this report.

1

Improve Workshop Structure and Organization with Scheduling of the Sessions

- Attendees voiced that the sessions were too generic and repetitive, as some attended past GC workshops, which may not align with their current academic goals.
- Offer more in-depth sessions that go beyond introductory material, focusing on practical strategies and takeaways that attendees can apply in their academic and professional career.
- Incorporate more advanced topics and soft skills sessions, such as team building, managing teams, and addressing specific challenges in research.
- Avoid dual schedules by aligning the timing of sessions and breaks to minimize confusion and overlapping, while still allowing distinct workshop tracks.

2

Find a more Accessible and Inclusive Accommodation to Support Attendees with Disabilities

- Ensure all participants are accommodated in the same hotel or within easy access to the conference venue to avoid confusion and isolation from their peers.
- Several attendees noted that the conference space was not accessible from their peers who have a disability
- Explore resources or strategies to provide essential support for attendees with disabilities and focus on accessibility in session materials and venues.

3

Improve Communication and Coordination with the Co-location of the Workshops

- Some attendees expressed that they were unaware about the co-location of the GC workshops, which may reflect why some attendees were uncomfortable about the presence of men in the spaces.
- Inform participants well in advance about the co-location and how it will be managed, including access to schedules and session choices.
- Ensure that participants have access to both schedules to choose sessions that best meet their interests and needs.
- Integrate both events into a single app to facilitate easy access to all sessions, networking opportunities, and communication features.

4

Expand Diverse Lunch Options and Address Dietary Restrictions

- Participants addressed the concerns about the quality and availability of the food options, limited their dietary restrictions.
- Ensure a wider variety of food options, including halal, vegetarian, and vegan choices, to accommodate the diverse dietary needs of all attendees.

5

Refine the Mentoring Session Structure and Advising for the Attendees' Needs

- Attendees requested to know about the mentors beforehand to help the participants to find a good match and align to their academic/professional needs.
- Encourage mentors to come with an open mind and offer tangible opportunities, such as part-time positions or referrals, to help students build relationships and gain practical experience.



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