CRA-WP Grad Cohort Workshop for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Leadership Skills (IDEALS):

2024 Participant Feedback Report

ENIOLA IDOWU & ANDRES PURPURO
CENTER FOR EVALUATING THE RESEARCH PIPELINE (CERP)
COMPUTING RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

CERP
Computing Research Association
Evaluation

CRA-WP
Computing Research Association
Widening Participation

Center for Evaluating the Research Pipeline
Computing Research Association
1828 L St NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036
e. cerp@cra.org

About CERP & Acknowledgement

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Introduction

The CRA-WP Grad Cohort Workshop for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Leadership Skills (IDEALS) is a two-day workshop for students who are underrepresented in computing graduate degree programs, with the goal of increasing students' sense of belonging and persistence in the field. To reach this goal, Grad Cohort IDEALS gives participants the opportunity to connect with a supportive community and create professional networks of peers and senior researchers in the field. Through seminars and discussions, the workshop engages participants in several topics related to career pathways and tips for success in computing graduate degree programs. IDEALS Grad Cohort also provides one-on-one mentoring and professional development opportunities to promote students' successful progression into computing research careers.

The inaugural IDEALS workshop was titled Grad Cohort for URMD. In 2020, following community-wide conversations among CRA-WP leadership, staff, program organizers, and other stakeholders, the workshop was officially renamed to its current name. For the 2024 workshop, it was co-located with CRA-WP Grad Cohort for Women in Minneapolis, Minnesota and brought 106 attendees to build networking with GCW 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 areas of improvements, such as scheduling conflicts and safety/comfort concerns, were also reported. Addressing these issues in future events could further enhance the overall experience for participants.

1. **Networking Opportunities (47 mentions):**
   - o **Peer Connection between Cohorts (37 mentions):** Several participants discussed the opportunity to network with a larger number of peers. Attendees valued meeting female-identifying peers and the ability to interact with members of both cohorts was highly appreciated. This offered a more inclusive networking experience and expanded their professional network.
   - o **Diverse Perspectives (10 mentions):** Several participants found value in hearing different viewpoints and learning from varied experiences, which highlighted the intersectionality of the workshops.
2. **Session Variety and Access (26 mentions):**
   - o **Options to Attend Sessions (18 mentions):** The co-location allowed participants to attend a greater variety of sessions. This emphasized the usefulness of the workshops, as attendees could select sessions that best meet their needs.
   - o **Different Perspectives in Sessions (8 mentions):** The variety in session topics and perspectives, such as industry vs. academic focuses, was valued. This diversity provided a more comprehensive learning experience.
3. **Sense of Community (23 mentions):**
   - o **Creating Welcome and Inclusive Space (10 mentions):** Few participants felt a strong sense of inclusion and community. The welcoming atmosphere was particularly noted by women in computing, who appreciated being among a larger group of peers.
   - o **Intersectionality and Diversity (13 mentions):** The intersectional experiences and the overall diversity of attendees were highly valued. Participants from various backgrounds felt that the co-location enriched their experience.
4. **Challenges and Criticisms (8 mentions)**
   - o **Scheduling Conflicts (4 mentions):** Some attendees reported confusion with the overlapping schedules, which made it hard to choose between sessions. This indicates a need for better scheduling to avoid conflicts and allow participants to attend more sessions of interest.
   - o **Safety and Comfort Concerns (4 mentions):** There were mentions of the environment not being entirely safe or comfortable for all attendees. Specific issues included difficulties in connecting with others and instances of inappropriate behavior. This suggests a need for improved measures to ensure a safe and inclusive environment.

Table 1. Thematic Codes: Valuable Aspects 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**
Networking Opportunities	• "I got to network with more peers. several attendees of Grad Cohort for Women have similar work to mine, and it was nice talking to them." • "It was great meeting more people! Especially as a fellow woman in CS/Engineering."
Session Variety & Access	• "The ability to attend sessions from both events was extremely valuable. Also, the total number of folks in attendance was greater giving more opportunities to network." • "I was able to pick from a wider selection of sessions, which helped with scheduling. There were more people to network with!" • "The sessions from both workshops gave slightly different perspectives on different topics (such as an industry vs academic focus). Additionally, some students from my own university attended the other workshop, so there were more people that I knew before the conference as well as more attendees that I had not met before."
Sense of Community	• "They are all amazing ppl!!! it's good to have a larger community" • "I got to meet other attendees that happened to be women like myself, and it wouldn't happen if it happened separately."
Challenges & Criticisms	• "It made it more difficult to connect and relate with some other attendees. I think it didn't create a safe space for people to share their backgrounds. Also, I think it was unfair to the attendees of the women's conference. I know one woman was repeatedly hit on and this made it uncomfortable." • "The crowds brought on by the two workshops may have negatively contributed to the chaos and perceived lack of organization and accessibility"

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 making the co-location more effective?

The feedback on the co-location of the Grad Cohort for Women and Grad Cohort for IDEALS workshops reveals a mix of appreciation and areas for improvement. The following recommendations can be derived from the quantified mentions and participant suggestions.

1. **Logistical Improvements (26 mentions)**
   o **Venue and Accommodation (10 mentions):** Some attendees noted that the venue did not accommodate everyone in terms of hotel space and sessions, leading to difficulties in navigating the event. Some recommended to choose a larger hotel or event space that can comfortably fit all attendees. Ensure that the venue has sufficient seating, breakout rooms, and common areas for informal interactions.
   o **Scheduling and Session Timing (9 mentions):** Few discussed the issues with overlapping sessions and difficulties in differentiating between sessions for the two workshops. This suggested to Improve scheduling to avoid conflicts between key sessions, such as poster sessions and lightning talks and consider creating a more integrated schedule where similar sessions do not overlap.
   o **Shared Schedule and App (7 mentions):** Participants found it challenging to navigate the schedules of both workshops and wished for a more integrated system. This suggests implementing a shared schedule or app that includes sessions from both workshops. This will help attendees plan their day more effectively and take advantage of sessions from both events.

2. **Integration of Events (25 mentions)**
   o **Combining or Better Integrating the Workshops (14 mentions):** Some participants felt that having two separate workshops was unnecessary and suggested combining them into a single event. Some suggested to merge the two workshops into one comprehensive event. This would streamline the schedule, reduce confusion, and create a more unified community.
   o **Clear Communication about Co-location (11 mentions):** Some participants suggest providing clear communication before and during the event about the co-location. Ensure that participants know they can attend sessions from both workshops and provide guidance on how to navigate the combined schedule.

3. **Accessibility and Inclusivity (10 mentions)**
   o **Mobility and Accessibility Accommodations (4 mentions):** Few attendees suggested to ensure that the venue is fully accessible with accommodations for attendees who have disability.
   o **Creating a Safe and Inclusive Environment (6 mentions):** Few attendees recommended to Implement policies and practices to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all attendees. Provide training for staff and volunteers on diversity and inclusion and establish clear channels for reporting and addressing concerns.

Table 2. Thematic Codes: Recommendations on the Co-Location Experience.

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 making the co-location more effective?	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
Logistical Improvements	• "The sessions for the other workshop were more difficult to find information on in the events app, so having a shared schedule with labels for which workshop each session belongs to would be helpful." • "If this is going to be a continued practice it's important to make sure that attendees have access to both agendas so that we can better plan out which workshops we'd like to attend."
Integration of Events	• "If the events are co-located, I'm confused why they are two separate events. There was quite a bit of overlap. Why not make it one big event with all historically marginalized groups?" • "if there are same session happening across both but are at different times, i would align them to happen at the same time so everyone can have a better cohort experience."
Accessibility & Inclusivity	• "Perhaps more organization considerate to blind and low-vision participants would be helpful. I did appreciate that the overall workshops did not seem to colide, though the halls were booming with activity which is and can be a good thing, though given the venue it served as a bit of a barrier" • "I feel the location for the workshop was great. My only recommendation will be finding a location that offered more mobility accommodations for persons with disabilities. Sometimes, I found it difficult getting through doors."

2. Workshop Session Ratings

Workshop Awareness And Motivations To Attend

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

Figure 1. Attendees learned about the workshop from **past participants** who have attended the workshop.
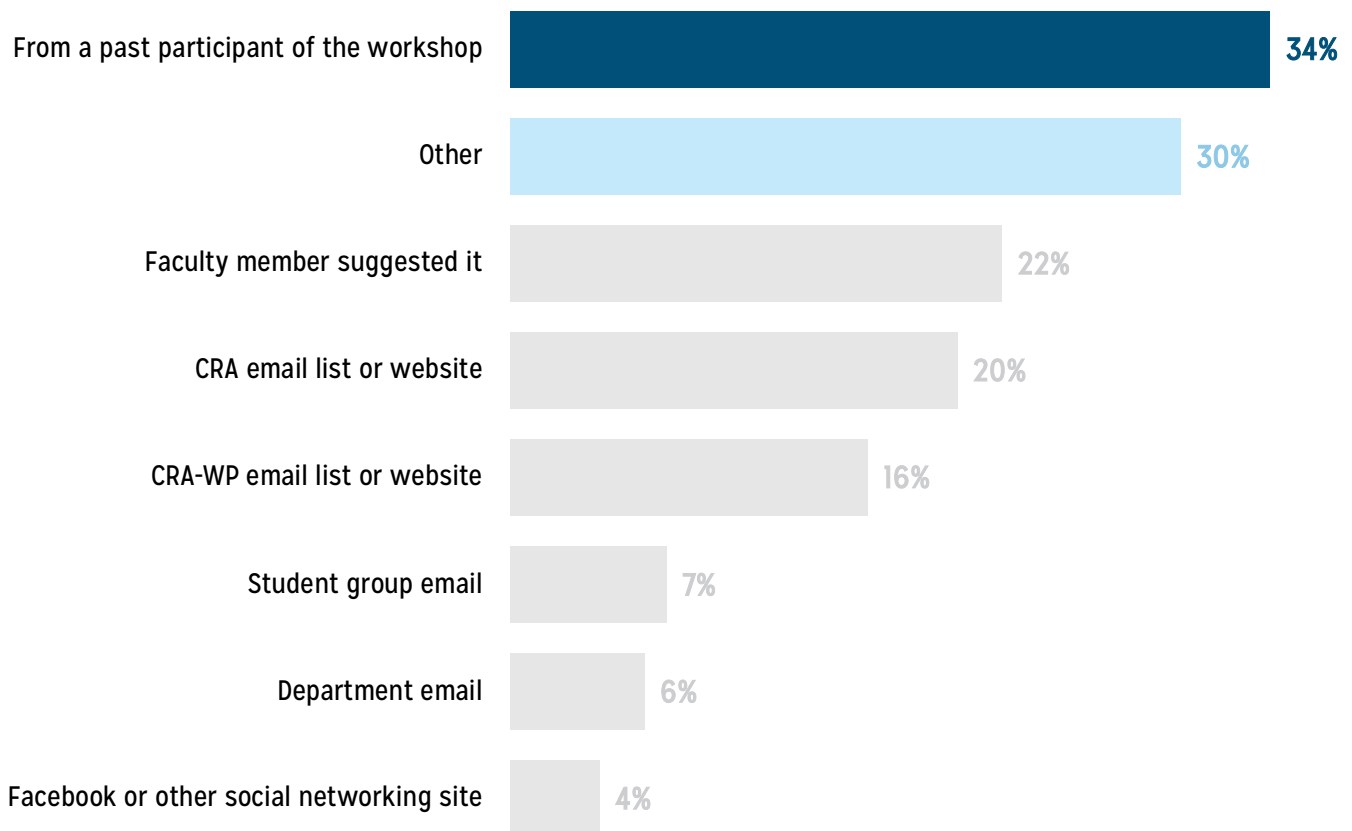
Source	Percentage
From a past participant of the workshop	34%
Other	30%
Faculty member suggested it	22%
CRA email list or website	20%
CRA-WP email list or website	16%
Student group email	7%
Department email	6%
Facebook or other social networking site	4%

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

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

Reason	Percentage
I wanted to meet peers who are similar to me	64%
I wanted to learn tips to succeed in my degree program and future career	61%
I wanted to meet mentors who can help me in my future career	41%
I want a career in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics	32%
A past participant encouraged me to apply	27%
A professor, instructor, advisor, or employer encouraged me to apply	19%
I heard the previous workshop was useful	15%
A friend or relative encouraged me to apply	7%

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

Friday Lightning Talk Sessions

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

38

GC-IDEALS '24 attendees
presented a lightning talk at
the Workshop.

Survey Question #2d: Rate the degree wo which you disagree or agree with the following statements related to the lightning talk session on Friday.

Figure 3. Most attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they learned new things from the session and presented a lightning talk.
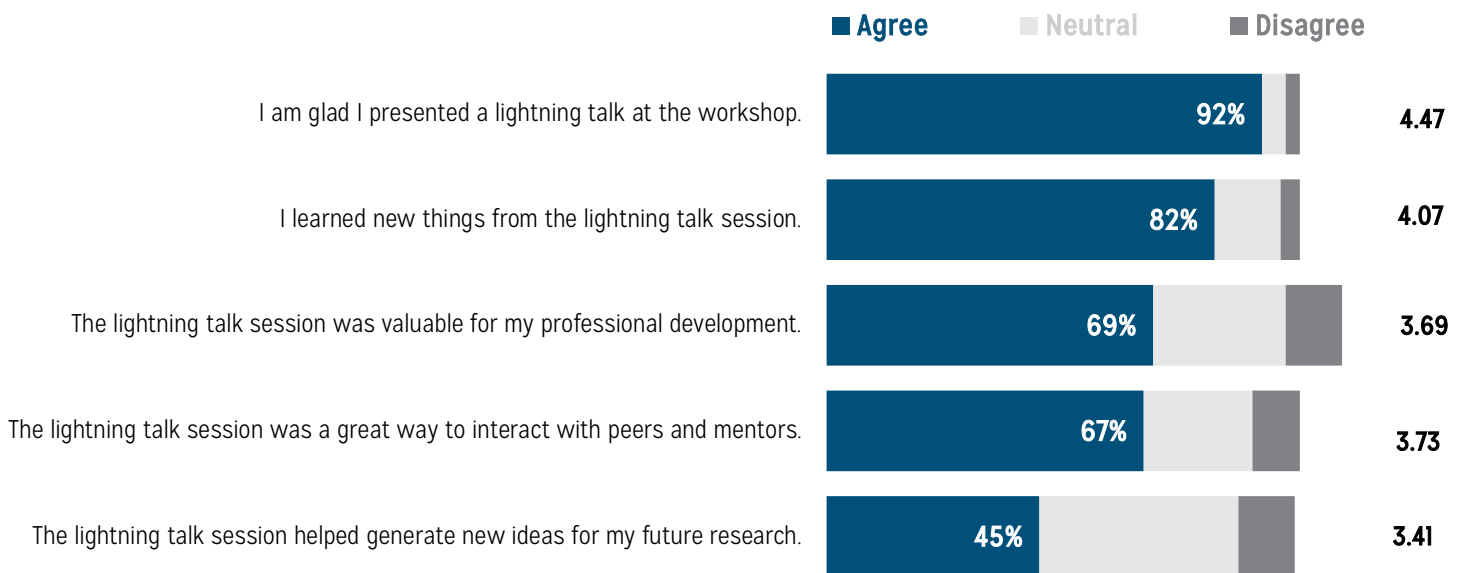
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Mean
I am glad I presented a lightning talk at the workshop.	92%			4.47
I learned new things from the lightning talk session.	82%			4.07
The lightning talk session was valuable for my professional development.	69%			3.69
The lightning talk session was a great way to interact with peers and mentors.	67%			3.73
The lightning talk session helped generate new ideas for my future research.	45%			3.41

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 error

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	96	1%	7%	10%	35%	46%	4.18
Parallel Sessions | 10:00 - 10:50 AM							
Overcoming Insufficient Academic Preparation: Perceived and Real	44	0%	9%	21%	32%	39%	4.00
Building Resiliency & Overcoming Failure	55	0%	7%	26%	26%	42%	4.02
Parallel Sessions | 11:20 AM – 12:10 PM							
Finding an Advisor and Working Effectively with Them	32	0%	6%	22%	34%	38%	4.03
Preparing Your Thesis Proposal and Becoming a PhD Candidate	76	1%	4%	15%	30%	50%	4.24
Parallel Sessions | 11:20 AM - 12:10 PM							
Industry vs. Academic Research Positions	79	1%	5%	15%	28%	51%	4.22
Balancing Graduate School and Personal Life	57	0%	7%	19%	44%	30%	3.96
Plenary 1 Session | 2:55 – 3:40 PM							
Navigating Microaggressions & Finding Your Voice	59	0%	2%	15%	25%	58%	4.39

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.

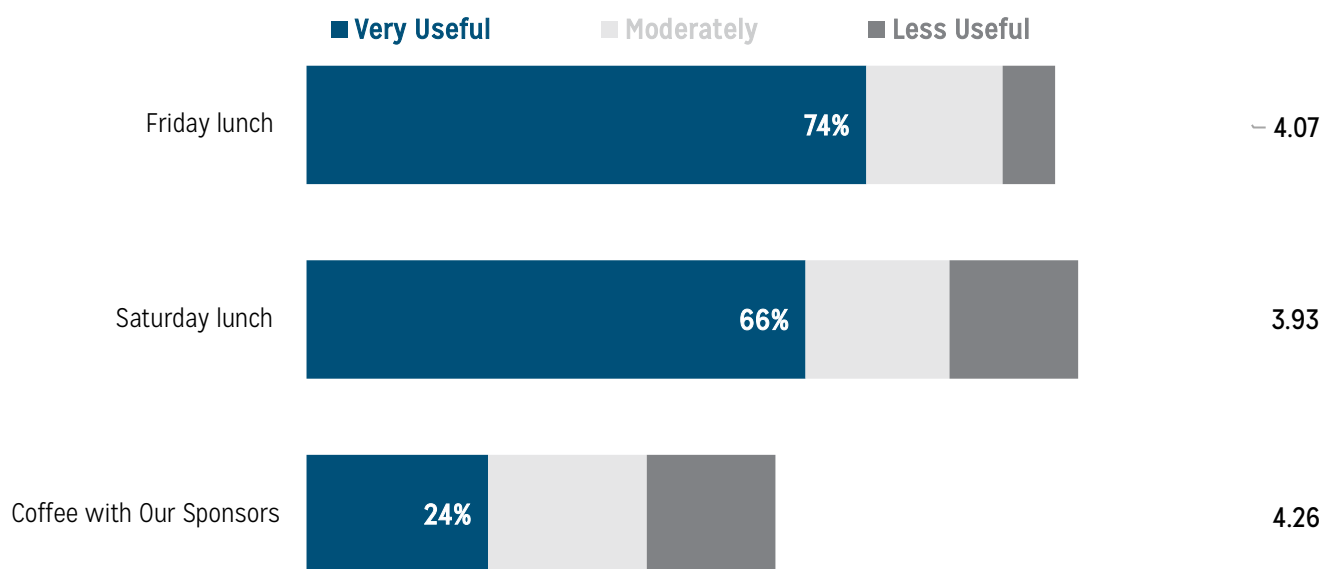|	n	Not at all (1)	A little (2)	Moderately (3)	Quite a bit (4)	Extremely (5)	Mean
How useful did you find the following sessions on Saturday, April 13?							
Plenary I | 8:30 – 10:00 AM							
Plenary I: Storytelling	88	1%	1%	9%	29%	49%	4.11
Plenary II | 10:40 – 11:30 AM							
Plenary II: Empowerment of People with Disabilities	49	0%	4%	8%	35%	53%	4.37
Parallel Sessions | 11:40 AM - 12:30 PM							
Finding a Research Topic & Interdisciplinary Research	45	0%	3%	3%	5%	12%	4.00
Publishing Your Research	69	0%	3%	3%	12%	16%	4.16

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 found the networking sessions "quite a bit" or "extremely" useful with other attendees and sponsors. Friday lunch has the highest rating for networking with other attendees.

Legend: ■ **Very Useful** ■ **Moderately** ■ **Less Useful**

Friday lunch	74% — **4.07**
Saturday lunch	66% **3.93**
Coffee with Our Sponsors	24% **4.26**

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.
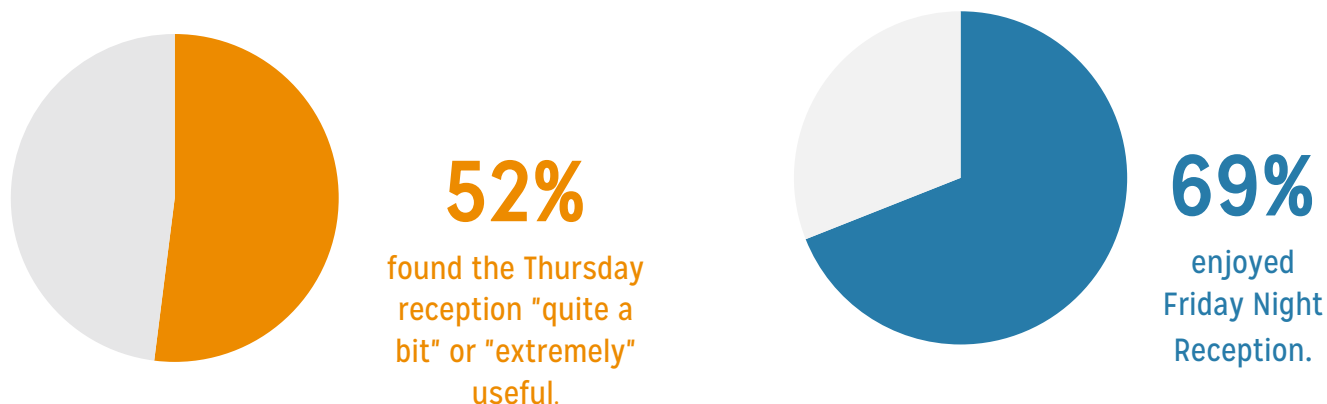
52% found the Thursday reception "quite a bit" or "extremely" useful.

69% enjoyed Friday Night Reception.

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/dietary accommodations and better space organizations.

1. **Food and Beverage Options (23 mentions)**
   o **Limited Food Options (16 mentions):** Participants felt that the food options were limited and not sufficient to cater to everyone's needs. Many were disappointed by the lack of options and the small portions, which caused some to leave the reception early to find better food elsewhere.
   o **Dietary Restrictions (7 mentions):** Many participants noted the lack of accommodations for specific dietary needs, such as vegan, dairy-free, and halal options. This made it difficult for those with specific dietary restrictions to find suitable food.
2. **Seating and Space (17 mentions)**
   o **Need for More Seating (9 mentions):** Several participants mentioned the lack of sufficient seating, which interfered with their ability to interact comfortably. Many had to sit on the floor or stand, which made it difficult to engage in meaningful conversations.
   o **Space Organization (8 mentions):** Concerns about the organization of the space were expressed repeatedly by participants. The layout was described as cramped and disjointed, some felt that the use of multiple rooms negatively impacted the flow of the event.
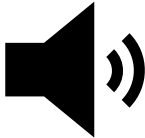3. **Noise Level (10 mentions)**
   o **Music Too Loud (10 mentions**): Many participants mentioned that the music was excessively loud, which negatively impacted their ability to network and conduct meaningful conversations. The loud volume was described as overstimulating and even painful for some.
4. **Positive Feedback (10 feedback)**
   o **Enjoyable Aspects (6 mentions):** Participants enjoyed certain aspects of the reception, such as the photobooth and the opportunity to unwind and have fun. These elements were noted as creating a positive experience that allowed participants to relax and connect with each other.
   o **Networking and Socializing (4 mentions):** Participants also appreciated the opportunity to network and socialize in a relaxed setting.

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
Food and Beverage Options	• "The party is great but the food is very disappointing." • "The get together was great, but again, the food selection was not quite right. I know some individuals, for example, that left early because they didn't like the selection offered and left the hotel to go to outside restaurants." • "I wish there were also more dairy-free/vegan food options."
Seating and Space	• "There were not enough seats for people to talk and get to know each other." • "A bit more tables/chairs would have been nice!" • "There was very little seating/tables for food and it felt a bit hodgepodged together. I think it would have been a bit better if the two rooms had opened up the removable wall for better flow."
Noise Level	• "Inaccessibly loud, even. I couldn't make any use of the networking opportunity because it was too loud to think. It was extremely overstimulating, to the point of painfulness." • "The music was extremely loud, and I wish I had brought my earplugs with me."
Positive Feedback	• "The Friday night reception was a great way to unwind and relate more with connections during the workshop." • "I absolutely loved the photography booth and music." • "It was great to connect with people in a less formal way after we all knew each other more!"

Advising Sessions

Survey Question #3b: How useful did you find the Resume/CV advising session for your professional development?
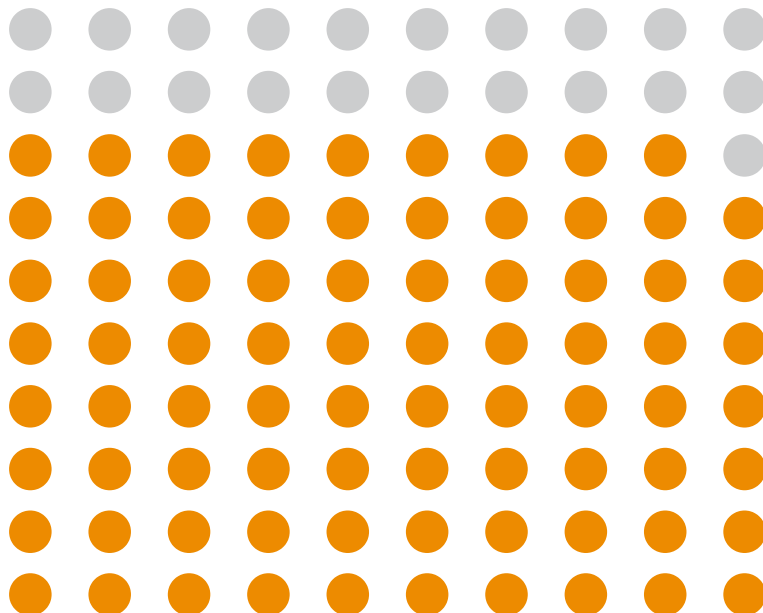
Resume/CV Advising Session
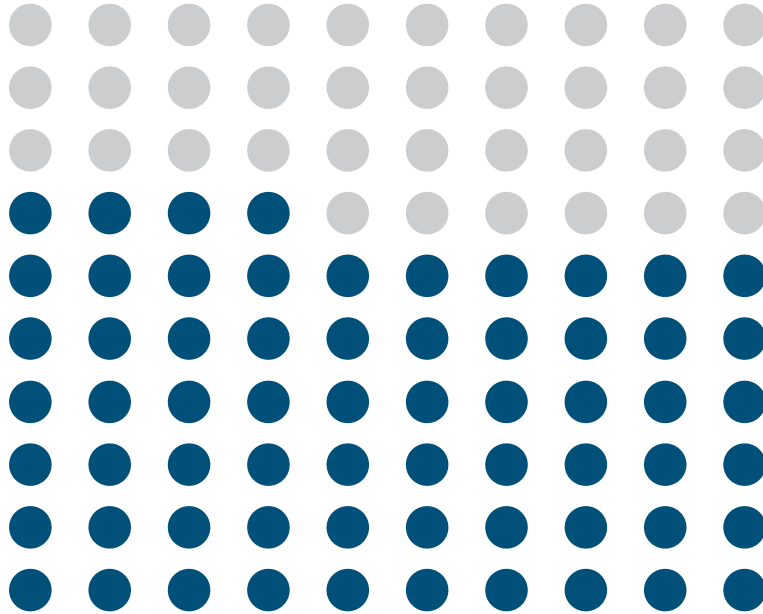
64%

Found the Resume/CV Advising "quite a bit" or "extremely" useful.

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

Advising/Career Advising Session

79%

Found the Advising/Career Advising "quite a bit" or "extremely" useful.

Feedback Question: If you have any comments about the Resume/CV Advising, you may tell us below in the text box.

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 suggested that organizers should list advisors' areas of specialization to tailor their mentoring with similar research interest.
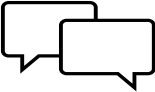
Table 6. Thematic Codes; Resume/CV advising session.

If you have any comments about the Resume/CV Advising, you may tell us below in the text box.	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
Advisor Matching/ Specialization	• "It will be nice to list the advisor's area of specialization so that we can connect with advisors with similar research interest." • "There were very little contribution which I got from the person as he was not that versed with my area."

Feedback Question: If you have any comments about the Academic/Career Advising, you may 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, such as tailored advice to targeted careers

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

If you have any comments about the Academic/Career Advising, you may tell us below in the text box.	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
Relevance and Specificity of Advice	• "I wanted that time to talk to some very specific mentors in my field who I hadn't had the chance to bump into yet, and get specific feedback from that field (accessibility). I was told I wasn't allowed to try to find specific mentors, and sat with someone who was fully unable to answer my questions "you should try AI" was the closest she could give to advice" • "The person I spoke to was very helpful in helping me think through some research ideas to help me reach my impact goals."

4. Logistical Aspects

Workshop Logistics

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

Figure 6. Attendees were **"very" or "extremely" satisfied** with the number of networking opportunities and the communication from the organizers (n =104).
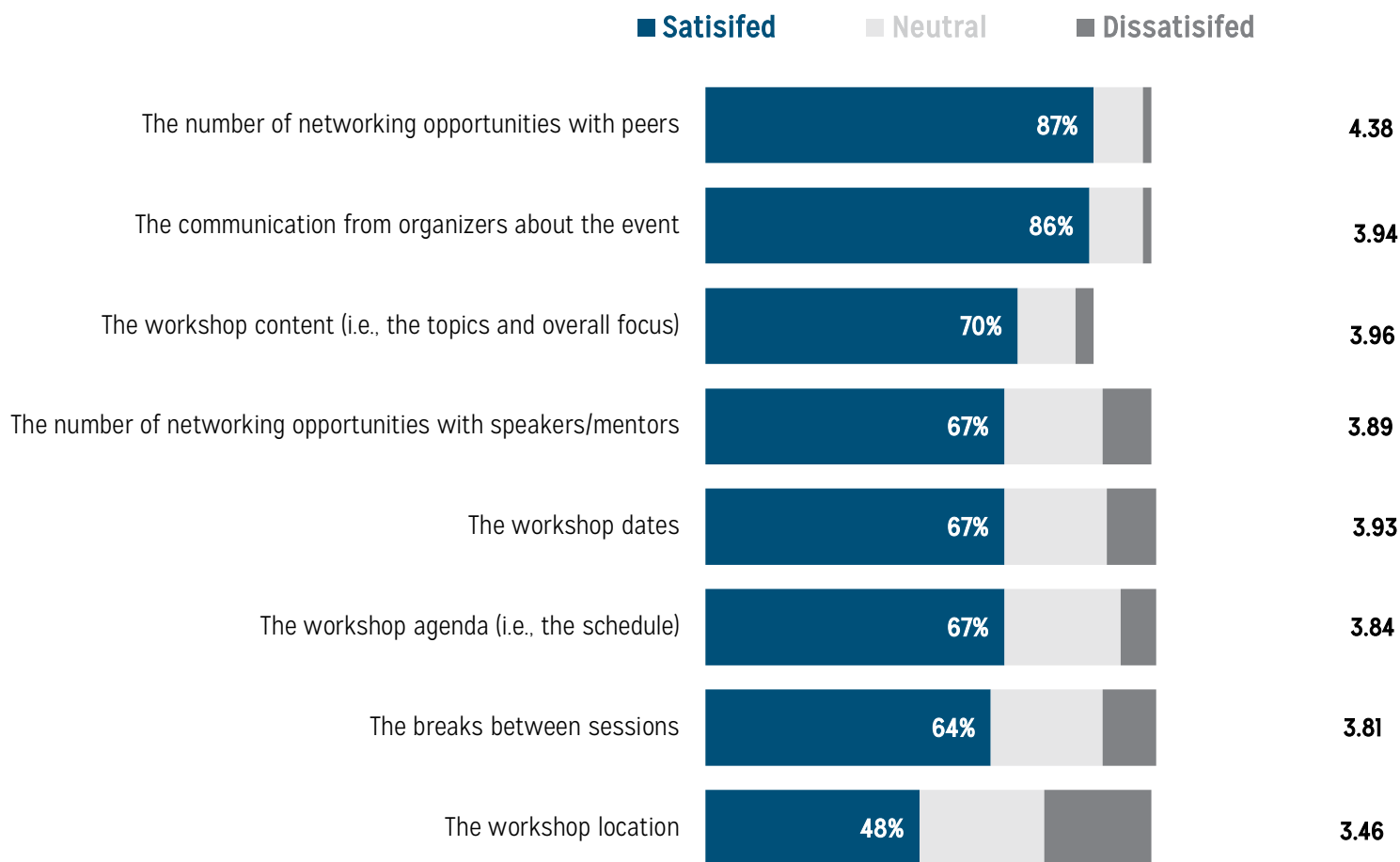
Legend: ■ Satisifed ■ Neutral ■ Dissatisifed

Aspect	Satisfied %	Mean
The number of networking opportunities with peers	87%	4.38
The communication from organizers about the event	86%	3.94
The workshop content (i.e., the topics and overall focus)	70%	3.96
The number of networking opportunities with speakers/mentors	67%	3.89
The workshop dates	67%	3.93
The workshop agenda (i.e., the schedule)	67%	3.84
The breaks between sessions	64%	3.81
The workshop location	48%	3.46

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. Overall, while the workshop had several positive aspects, particularly in terms of content and networking opportunities, there were significant areas for improvement in logistics, scheduling, and accessibility to enhance the experience for future attendees.

1. **Timing and Scheduling (11 mentions):**
   o **Conference Timing (3 mentions):** Few attendees mentioned that the timing of the conference was inconvenient due to its proximity to their finals. This added stress for students who had to balance conference participation with final exams and assignments.
   o **Session Scheduling (3 mentions):** Attendees experienced issues with the scheduling of sessions, including frequent delays and inaccurate timing in the provided schedule. This affected their ability to attend all their sessions of preference.
   o **Inadequate Break Times (5 mentions):** Several participants felt that break times between sessions were insufficient. This limited their opportunities for networking, relaxation, and attending to their personal needs.
2. **Logistics and Workshop Organization (25 mentions):**
   o **Overall Organization (7 mentions):** Feedback on the overall organization of the workshop was mixed. Some attendees praised the planning and execution, while others found the event disorganized, particularly in terms of coordination between different sessions and logistical details.
   o **Room and Conference Venue issues (7 mentions):** Attendees noted various issues with the conference rooms and venue, including cramped social event spaces, limited seating, and accessibility challenges. These issues impacted their ability to fully participate and enjoy the event.
   o **Hotel & Accommodation (5 mentions):** Issues related to hotel accommodations were highlighted, including challenges with changing hotels, lack of clarity about accommodations, and problems specific to accessibility needs. These issues affected the comfort and convenience of attendees.
   o **Accessibility & Inclusivity (6 mentions):** There were significant concerns about accessibility, particularly for attendees with disabilities. Issues included difficulties for those with mobility-related disabilities and inadequate accommodations for blind or visually impaired participants.
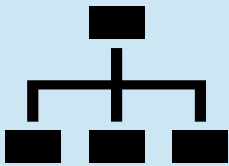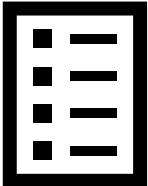3. **Workshop Content & Sessions (13 mentions):**
   o **Content Quality (5 mentions):** The content of the sessions received mixed feedback. While some attendees appreciated the content and found it professionally planned, others found the sessions repetitive, especially for returning attendees.
   o **Networking Opportunities (5 mentions):** There were mixed opinions about networking opportunities. Some attendees appreciated the chance to meet mentors and peers, while others felt there were limited networking opportunities due to short breaks and scheduling overlaps.
   o **Diversity of Content (3 mentions:** The diversity of session content was appreciated by some attendees, who found value in attending sessions from both IDEALs and Women workshops.
4. **Food and Refreshments at Lunches/Receptions (5 mentions):** Attendees had mixed opinions about the quality of food provided during the conference. Some found it lacking, while others mentioned specific issues like limited options for those with dietary needs.

Table 8. Thematic Codes; Workshop Logistics.

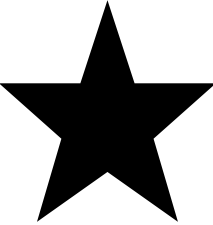| If you have any comments about the logistics of the workshop that you would like to add to provide detail on your responses above, please use the text box below.	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
Timing and Scheduling	• "Mid-April is far too late of a date for a workshop for graduate students. My semester will end April 19th. There was a lot of stress involved with attending the workshop and trying to complete my final assignments." • "The conference dates was too close to finals." • There was not enough time to actively network with peers, as the breaks between sessions were short. Overall, the event's planning was spectacular.
Logistics & Overall Organization	• "If the workshops are held jointly in the future, just make one big schedule or app. It was hard to determine which workshops I wanted to attend because there were two separate schedules, and I ended up attending both workshops. Also locations were either not there or poorly labeled." • "The workshop location should've been announced beforehand. The workshop logistics about roommates was also poorly handled. I asked for accomodations for gender and disability for a single room and was refused. I also received conflicting information about flights." • "I was extremely dissatisfied with the workshop overall. It did not feel accessible or inclusive for blind/low-vision people in organization, venue, or presentations. I appreciated the presence of text live stream for those who are deaf or hard of hearing, but there were little to no considerations for blind or low-vision people at this workshop."
Workshop Content & Sessions	• "As a returning attendee of CRA-WP I found most of the talks and their content to be repeated. There were some talks I could attend that I missed last year, but other than that the most valuable part of the conference for me was the peer and mentor networking. If CRA-WP wants to build a long-term community around widening participation, adding other talks or tracks for returning attendees could help to encourage the development of a long-term community." • "I really enjoyed that we were able to go to both the IDEALs and Women workshop. It also let me meet more people. There were some sessions that were very useful for me that was not in my workshop. Also, I appreciate getting to spend time with mentors who were doing similar work to me."
Food & Refreshments	• The food definitely can be better." • "For the Saturday lunch, there was only one table talking about disabilities, which definitely wasn't enough for us all."

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 and more quiet spaces.

1. **Positive Feedback (5 mentions):**
   o **Availability of ASL Interpreters (3 mentions):** Few attendees appreciated the availability of sign language interpreters, who provided support during major events and socializing, enhancing the inclusivity of the workshop.
   o **Live Stream Captions (2 mentions):** The provision of live stream captions was noted as a positive aspect, ensuring that attendees who are deaf or hard of hearing could follow along with the sessions.
2. **Areas of Improvements (15 mentions):**
   o **Accommodations for Attendees Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired (3 mentions):** Few attendees mentioned a lack of accommodations for blind or visually impaired attendees. Some attendees had to assist their peers due to inadequate support or personnel.
   o **More Quiet Space and Reduce Music Volume (5 mentions):** Some suggested the need for more quiet spaces and lower volume music during receptions to accommodate those with sensory sensitivities.
   o **General Accessibility (5 mentions):** General accessibility improvements were suggested, including better seating arrangements, more inclusive event design, and clearer communication about available accommodations.
   o **Food Labeling & Dietary Restrictions (2 mentions):** Better labeling of food items and clearer communication about dietary restrictions were highlighted as areas needing attention to accommodate various medical conditions.

Table 9. Thematic Codes; 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**
★ **Positive Feedback**	• "I saw the efforts and felt it was laudable. There was a lady who was audibly impaired and there was always someone by her side to sign language translation during major events and also when she was socializing. Someone from UoW also had someone support him all times. The live stream captions and other disability support were great in my opinion." • "From what I experienced personally and what I saw offered to others, accommodations were spot on." • "There were interpreters for sign language for people with disabilities. This was great, however, in some sessions, they were standing in the center, and it was kind of distracting. There were other sessions were the interpreters stood on the side, right in front of participants who needed them, and this was much better."
💡 **Areas of Improvement**	• "If there isn't food I can eat available to me that adheres to my medical condition, I can't eat the food. I can't pick around it or assume the labeling applies to a certain ingredient. If I need to ask staff for a meal that fits dietary restrictions, it would be helpful to be provided that info at the registration "If you require a peanut free, DF, GF meal, please speak to a staff member at mealtime" or something like that. Most of the meals were labeled fine, but were very unbalanced. For example, I could only eat the cold vegetables at the Friday reception, and a few meals didn't have a protein and starch available for me to eat (thinking specifically of curry sauce and cabbage)." • "Didn't seem to have accommodations for non seeing blind. I ended up guiding my roommate through the entire session which I enjoyed because we became super cool friends but I didn't know of any resources for helping." • "The hotel needs more sensitisation. I wonder if there can be an access evaluation from the perspective of different disabilities before venue is finalised. While I received the basic accommodations I asked for, I found it hard to network. The overall design of the event can be made more inclusive."

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 attendees used the CVENT app to **keep track of the workshop agenda** and **finding the session locations** (n =104).
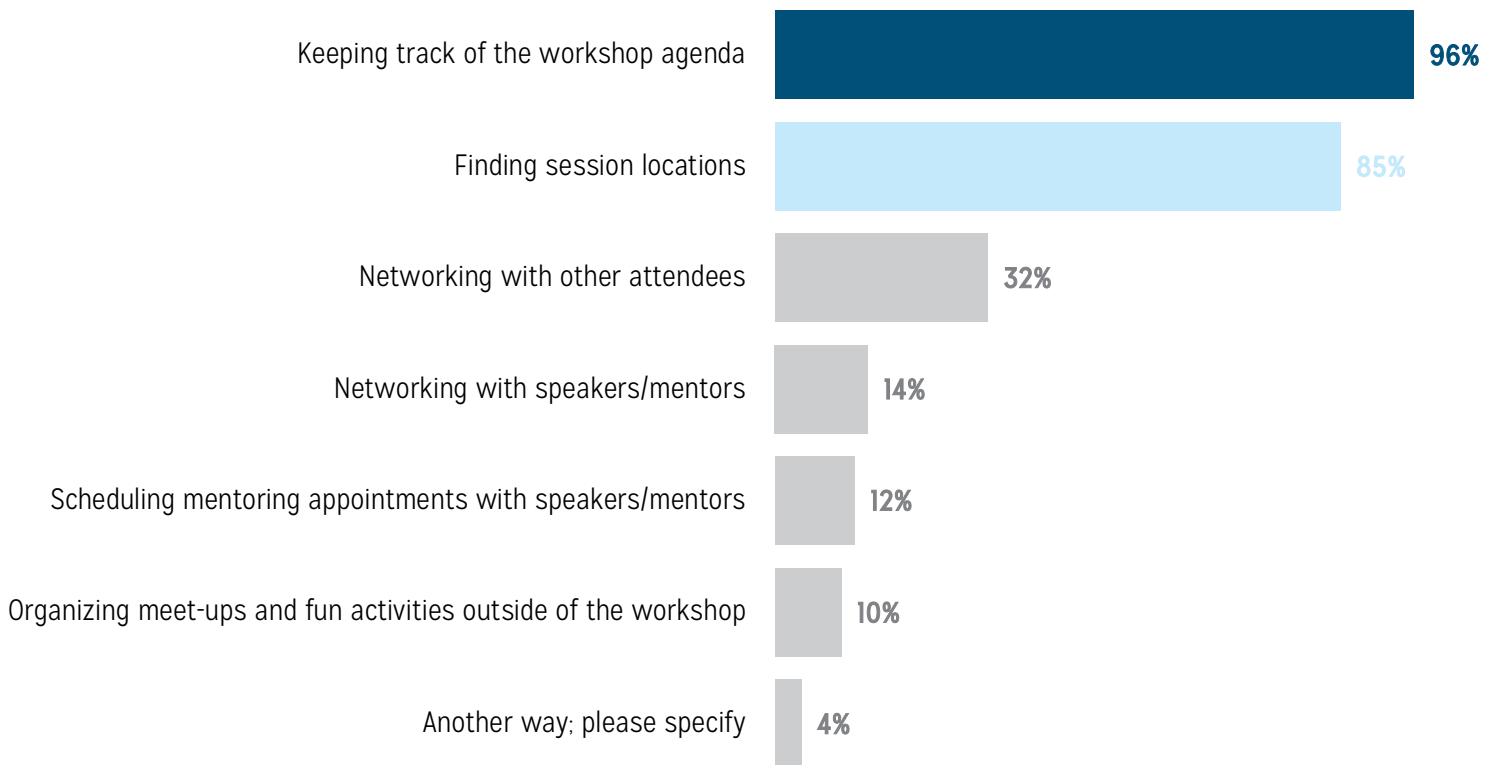
Notes: Values represent the percentage of all responses received. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Survey Question #4c: Overall, how satisfied are you with your use of CVENT Attendee Hub for this workshop?
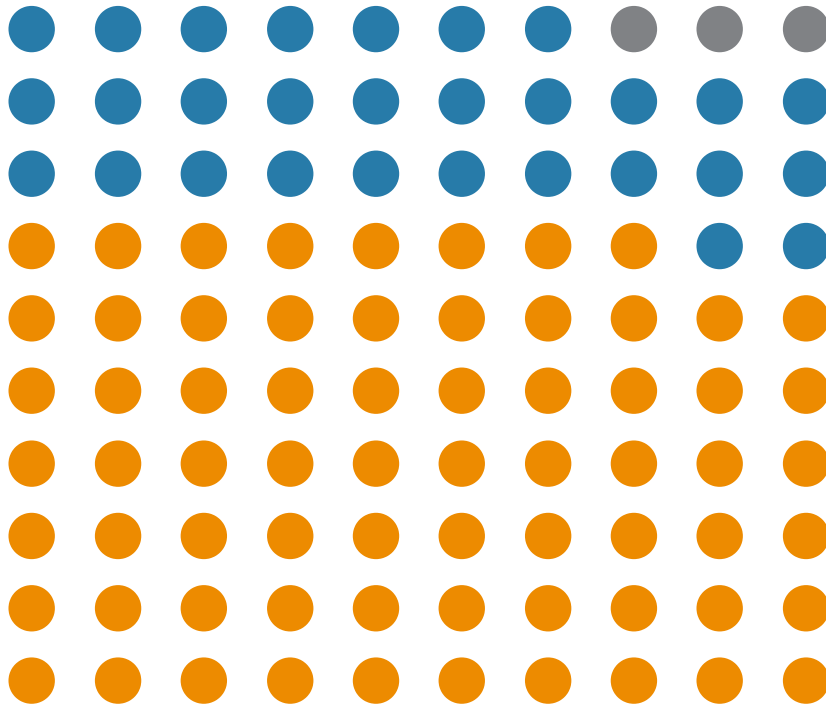
3%

were "dissatisfied or "very dissatisfied".

25%

were "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied".

68%

were satisfied or "very" satisfied".

5. Overall Workshop Feedback

Valuable Aspects of the Workshop.

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.

Participants provided their favorite aspects of GC-IDEALS 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 Opportunities (51 mentions)**
   o **Connecting with Peers (24 mentions):** Participants emphasized the value of networking with fellow students in similar stages of their academic journey. They enjoyed the opportunity to share experiences and build friendships.
   o **Connecting with Mentors and Senior Researchers** (17 mentions): Many participants enjoyed interacting with mentors and senior researchers, which provided guidance and valuable insights into their career paths.
   o **Networking Events and Sessions** (10 mentions): Several participants valued the structured networking events and sessions, such as networking lunches, receptions, and lightning talks.
2. **Valuable Sessions and Workshops (33 mentions)**
   o **Specific Sessions** (14 mentions): Participants found certain sessions as particularly impactful, such as those on navigating micro-aggressions, finding research topics, and preparing thesis proposal
   o **Workshops (11 mentions**): Many participants appreciated the diversity of workshops offered, covering topics such as industry vs. academic research positions and building a research mindset.
   o **Interactive Elements (8 mentions):** The interactive aspects of some sessions, which included activities like elevator pitch practice and group discussions, was very well received by participants
3. **Mentorship and Advice (18 mentions)**
   o **Individual Mentoring (10 mentions):** Participants found one-on-one mentoring sessions particularly helpful as it offered tailored advice and specific feedback on their academic and career paths.
   o **General Mentoring (8 mentions):** Participants also appreciated general mentoring sessions, where they could receive broader advice and support. These interactions with experienced researchers and mentors provided valuable insights and encouragement.

Table 10. Thematic Codes; Overall 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**
Networking Opportunities	• "The networking lunches were the most valuable, since I could talk to peers that I hadn't met more easily and professors as well." • "Connecting with mentors and peers. I had deep conversations with several professors that are later in their careers; this is very helpful as I am preparing my job search materials." • "I loved meeting up with people from last year's events and more effectively networking with people."
Valuable Sessions and Workshops	• "Plenary I: Navigating Micro-aggressions & Finding Your Voice was the most impactful talk for me." • "I liked the networking between peers, poster sessions, and lightning talks. This was a great way to talk about your research interests with others who may provide new angles and insight" • "Workshops geared towards students who may be later in their PhD, like Industry vs Research, and learning more about how to publish research."
Mentorship and Advice	• "I found the one-on-one mentoring sessions the most helpful. I was able to get advice on preparing for interviews and tailoring my resume." • "I appreciated networking with peers and mentors, and how inviting and accommodating the atmosphere of the workshop was." • "Meeting other students and mentors."

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. **Career Preparation and Job Market Guidance (17 mentions)**
   o **Job Application and Interview Advice (7 mentions):** Many participants requested sessions that focus on applying to internships and jobs, preparing for interviews, and conducting live interviews to provide real-world insights.
   o **Industry Insights and Networking Tips (6 mentions):** There was a demand for more engagement with industry professionals to learn about breaking into specific fields, networking for employment, and understanding industry expectations.
   o **Career Path Discussions (4 mentions):** Participants wanted discussions revolving around various career paths, including transitioning between academia and industry, and requirements to become a professor.
2. **Mental Health (10 mentions)**
   o **Work-Life Balance and Stress Management (7 mentions):** Many participants wanted sessions that focus on maintaining a healthy work-life balance, managing stress, and maintaining mental well-being throughout the PhD journey.
   o **Coping with Academic Challenges (3 mentions):** There was a call for discussions revolving around dealing with slow progress, managing procrastination, and overcoming imposter syndrome.
3. **Diversity (8 mentions)**
   o **Minority Experiences (4 mentions):** There was a call for discussions on how different aspects of identity, such as race, gender, socioeconomic background, and disability, impact experiences in computing academia.
   o **Support Systems (4 mentions):** Some participants suggested panels on finding and setting up support systems in hostile environments, including how to access and share resources for support.

Table 11. Thematic Codes; Future Workshop Topics.

What topics should future workshops address that have not been previously covered?	
Themes	Exemplar Participant Quotes
Career Preparation and Job Market Guidance	• "Requirements for becoming a professor. I feel like there is a session about choosing between industry and academia which is very good, however, there is no session about how to actually become a professor e.g what are the requirements, how to prepare for the job search, etc." • "More industry folks can talk about breaking into the industry (Google, Apple, Meta, Consulting firms, etc) as someone who is from a minority group." • "Specific talks for applying to internships/jobs and preparing for interviews. Showing a live interview would be good."
Mental Health	• "Given the sheer number of attendees with ADHD, I would love to see a panel discuss methods of handling ADHD within academia. The issues of severe procrastination, difficulty with task transition/switching, etc. would be very helpful." • "Mental Health and Wellness. Providing resources and strategies for maintaining mental well-being throughout the PhD journey."
Diversity	• "Given the co-location of IDEALS and Women, you could add a session on Intersectionality and Diversity. Addressing how factors such as race, gender, socioeconomic background, and other forms of diversity intersect and influence experiences in computing academia." • "A panel/topic about finding and sharing resources for support. For example, how to find support if there are limited support systems. Or how to set up a support system in an unwelcoming environment."

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. **Overall Positive Experience (20 mentions)**
   o **Enjoyment and Gratitude (12 mentions):** Many participants expressed their gratitude for the workshop, highlighting its value and the positive impact it had on their professional development. They appreciated the educational value of the workshop, mentioning the sessions that were relevant to their research and career paths.
   o **Networking Opportunities (5 mentions):** Participants found the networking opportunities to be one of the most valuable aspects of the workshop, allowing them to conduct meaningful conversations with peers and mentors from various fields.
   o **Gratitude for Organizers and Sponsors (3 mentions):** Participants also expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the organizers and sponsors in making the workshop possible. They recognized the hard work that went into making the event possible.
2. **Suggestions for Improvements (7 mentions)**
   o **Event Organization (5 mentions):** Several participants suggested better organization and logistics, including the need for more streamlined event planning and more efficient scheduling.

Dining Arrangements (2 mentions): A few participants mentioned the need for improved food options and better management of dining arrangements, such as reducing wait times and offering various dietary options.

Table 12. Thematic Codes: Final Thoughts or Recommendations

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
Overall Positive Experience	• "I've really enjoyed and it gave me an opportunity to network and to open up as I was approached more often. I am an introvert so it was catered to my introvert ways." • "It was a great opportunity to meet other researchers, especially first year Ph.D students. I also enjoyed the lunch time conversations." • "I really enjoyed the workshop and look forward to applying again in my later years!"
Suggestions for Improvements	• "The only piece of critique would be that there was a lack of food options." • "I think staff meant well, and the event meant well, but there were some serious disconnects with planning and execution with the conference."

Recommendations

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

1 **Choose an Accessible Venue and Accommodation**
- Attendees suggested to choose a single hotel that can accommodate all attendees to foster a sense of community and ease logistical challenges. This will also ensure participants do not have to deal with the inconvenience of moving between hotels.
- Ensure the venue has adequate mobility accommodations for participants with disabilities to enhance accessibility for all attendees.
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2 **Modify Workshop Content, Communication, and Scheduling to Align with Co-Location**
- Clearly label and differentiate the sessions for Grad Cohort for Women and Grad Cohort for IDEALS to avoid confusion among participants. This can be achieved through color-coded schedules or distinct session titles.
- Consider extending the workshop duration to allow more time for interactions and networking. This can help participants connect more with their peers and mentors.
- Inform participants in advance that the two workshops are co-located and provide access to both schedules.
- Attendees suggested to publish a combined schedule for both workshops to allow participants to plan effectively and attend sessions across both events.

3 **Add More Sessions to Focus on Intersectionality, Inclusion, and Mental Health in CS Departments**
- Few attendees recommended to include more sessions and panel discussions on finding and sharing support for BIPOC students who are in unwelcoming departments.
- Create more sessions for international students on how they can find resources and job opportunities as they navigate their graduate school experience and post-graduate as well.
- Participants suggested to discuss strategies for maintaining mental well-being throughout the PhD journey, including stress management techniques, coping mechanisms, and addressing imposter syndrome.

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.
- Consider exploring diverse and cultural food options for future workshops and address attendees' dietary needs beforehand.

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Manage Session Timing and Add More Interactive Activities

- Attendees requested for program organizers to include more interactive sessions to engage their peers actively and make workshops more dynamic.
- Program organizers should make it clear that attendees can cross-attend session from both workshops.
- Consider including sessions focusing on alternate career options for PhD students, such as working with national labs, non-profits, or start-ups.