

Report: SSAR Membership Diversity Survey 2021

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The 2021 SSAR membership survey and report were prepared by the SSAR Diversity Equity, and Inclusion Committee: Jennifer M. Deitloff (co-chair), Robert E. Espinoza (co-chair), Jessica L. Tingle (co-chair), Itzue W. Caviedes-Solis, Kate Jackson, Fausto Mendez de la Cruz, Ann V. Paterson, Evan S. H. Quah, Phillip Skipwith, and Gregory Watkins-Colwell.

Introduction

About the survey

SSAR's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEIC) created and disseminated a membership diversity survey in April-May 2021. The survey has several purposes:

- To establish a benchmark for future assessments of SSAR's efforts towards recruiting and retaining a diverse membership through initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- To recognize and welcome people of many identities who make up the current and future membership of SSAR.
- To help SSAR equitably serve the needs of all members.

In designing this survey, we endeavored to be welcoming and respectful to all subcommunities that make up our membership. We know that some topics are delicate, and we did our best to treat them with sensitivity. In case of participant suggestions for ways to improve our future efforts, we included a comment box at the end of the survey. SSAR members may also contact DEIC to provide feedback on the survey and/or this report by using the form on SSAR's website: <https://ssarherps.org/ssar-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-feedback-form/>

Because the intent and purpose of this survey is to advance DEI efforts within SSAR, it did not require Institutional Review Board (IRB) review for projects involving human subjects.

The survey has six sections, and we have organized this report accordingly:

1. Basic information
2. Nationality, residence, and languages
3. Identities
4. Accommodations
5. Values and relationship with SSAR
6. Additional comments

We aimed for the largest sample possible, representative of SSAR as a whole. To that end, we sent three SSAR listserv emails regarding the survey: the initial email, a reminder halfway through the survey period, and a last call during the final week. Additionally, we incentivized participation by letting participants enter into a raffle to receive one of several prizes offered by the SSAR Publications Office. We asked the Board of Directors to authorize \$25 gift certificates from the Publications Office; by offering gift certificates for existing inventory, we avoided asking for new funds to purchase prizes.

Response rate

590 responses total

537 of 590 responses were from current members

- SSAR currently has 1156 members excluding institutional membership and subscriptions
- 46% of current members responded to survey

97 of 590 responses were from current student members

- SSAR currently has 239 student members
- 41% of current student members responded to survey

46 of 590 responses were from SSAR leadership (members of the Board of Directors, editors of SSAR publications, and SSAR committee chairs)

- 100% of current leaders responded to survey

Report information

The report starts with a general discussion and a list of main take-aways from the survey. It then provides a detailed summary of the data for each survey question.

For “select one” and “check all that apply” questions, the report presents information in a quantitative fashion. Tables show numbers of respondents that selected each option, presenting data for all respondents (including the ~10% of responses from people who are not current members) in one column and data for SSAR leadership in a second column. Figures present a side-by-side comparison of responses from respondents who are not currently SSAR leaders and respondents who are currently SSAR leaders. For “check all that apply” questions, numbers for individual categories can hypothetically add up to greater than the total number of respondents.

For free response questions, the members of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee categorized responses into major themes. The themes and the number of responses that touched on each theme are presented in tables.

General discussion and major take-aways

Many respondents conveyed support and/or appreciation of SSAR's efforts to make our community more equitable and inclusive to a diverse membership.

However, a small (but non-trivial) number of respondents seemed not to understand that not all herpetologists and potential herpetologists currently feel welcome in the community, and some conveyed a strong opposition against efforts to make the society more inclusive to all herpetologists and potential herpetologists. Such respondents often made strongly-worded comments indicating that the SSAR mission should focus exclusively on science and conservation. They expressed the opinion that DEI and social justice issues have no place in SSAR, and that DEI efforts diminish SSAR's scientific endeavor. These mindsets and hateful language towards DEI efforts, even when expressed in the form of an anonymous survey, negatively impact our community.

The Diversity Equity, and Inclusion Committee affirms the necessity of ensuring that anyone can find a welcoming home in SSAR. Our science, conservation, and education missions are only as strong as the community of people we have to carry them out. Thus, we cannot ignore the human element of our endeavor. Continuously working towards greater equity and inclusion in SSAR and in herpetology more generally will ensure the broadest possible pool of talented herpetologists to advance our scientific mission and to protect the animals we love.

Below, we address a few of the survey's findings. We encourage all SSAR leaders and committees to think deeply about the entire report, to consider how its findings might guide their current and future activities, and then to enact positive change on the institutional level. We encourage all SSAR members to learn from these findings and to consider that they as individuals can contribute a more inclusive environment in SSAR and in all their spheres of influence.

Basic information about respondents:

- The majority of SSAR leaders describe their institution as a research-intensive university (52.2%). However, approximately 2/3 of total respondents are not currently at research-intensive universities. Therefore, leadership may need to pay special attention to the needs of members from other types of institutions, especially those underrepresented in SSAR leadership. These include (but are not limited to) community colleges, high schools, government agencies, and industry.
- Nearly 1/3 of respondents were (or expect to be) a first-generation college student. First-generation college students often face particular challenges in navigating academia, so SSAR should consider ways of supporting them.

Nationality, residence, and languages:

- SSAR members reside in numerous countries on nearly every continent, except perhaps Antarctica.
- At least 7% of survey respondents are most comfortable communicating in a language other than English, and many respondents indicated that they would be willing to use a language other than English for a conference presentation (including 19.8% of respondents indicating comfort presenting in Spanish, a substantial portion.)

Respondent identities:

- Most respondents identified as white (83.6%), including the vast majority of SSAR elected officers, editors, and committee chairs (93.5%). Several racial and ethnic groups are severely underrepresented in SSAR, and some are completely unrepresented in SSAR leadership. SSAR leadership must therefore work particularly hard to understand and remove barriers to their participation.
- Of the respondents who responded to the question on gender identity, women are underrepresented relative to men (125 vs. 411 people, or 25.8% vs. 69.7% of total respondents). Women are also underrepresented, though to a somewhat lesser degree, among SSAR leadership (17 vs. 28 people, or 37% vs. 60.9% of total leaders). This result highlights that SSAR has not overcome herpetology's historical gender disparity.
- Several SSAR members identify as transgender, gender non-binary, agender, and/or genderqueer. Because trans, non-binary, agender, and genderqueer people often face challenges or obstacles that are unfamiliar or surprising to cis-gender people, SSAR leadership should pay special attention to understanding the needs of these members.
- A substantial fraction of respondents identified as members of the neurodiversity community (e.g., autistic, ADHD, dyslexia; 9.2%). SSAR leadership should pay special attention to understanding the needs of these members.
- A substantial fraction of respondents indicated that religion is a part of their identity (14.9%). Anecdotally, many religious scientists report facing unfair stigma and even hostility for their beliefs.

Accommodations:

- Many SSAR members have conditions for which accommodations may help them participate more fully in events and meetings (e.g., deaf or hard of hearing, mobility impairment, learning different/disability, visual condition/impairment, etc.) Meeting and event organizers should learn about and implement accommodations whenever possible.
- A substantial portion of respondents are parents who have brought or have considered bringing their children to conferences (92 people, 15.6%), and about half of those have concerns about barriers to their child's participation (45 people, or 7.6%). Making

childcare options more available, accessible, and affordable would facilitate participation of more SSAR members in the annual meetings.

- The cost of annual meetings represents a significant barrier to many, especially people from lower income nations, students, retirees, and people from institutions that don't cover conference expenses. SSAR leadership and the Meeting Management and Planning Committee should continually look for new ways to improve financial accessibility.

Values and relationship to SSAR:

- Of the benefits of SSAR membership, the three most highly valued by respondents were: 1) journals, 2) sharing knowledge, and 3) SSAR's conservation mission. More than 75% of respondents ranked these as either "important" or "very important."
- When exploring whether different groups of people place different values on the potential benefits of SSAR membership, the following groups generally mirrored the patterns seen for all respondents pooled: 1) people who have been SSAR members for 11+ years; 2) students; 3) women; 4) people who identify their race/ethnicity/geographic origin as anything other than exclusively white; and 5) people who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Students placed much higher value on grant opportunities.
- Most respondents would like for SSAR to communicate with them via the monthly email newsletter (87.5%), with a large number also indicating that they like for SSAR to send emails outside the monthly newsletter (41.7%) and fewer people indicating that they like SSAR to communicate via Facebook (12.5%), Twitter (11.7%), or other methods (e.g., TikTok or Herp Review, 0.7%).
- 33.7% of respondents indicated that they feel a sense of belonging in SSAR all or most of the time; 50.6% that they feel a sense of belonging sometimes, or in some ways but not others; and 12.6% that they do not feel a sense of belonging. However, several groups of people indicated lower rates of feeling a sense of belonging (as compared to the whole sample), including women, people who identify their race/ethnicity/geographic origin as anything other than exclusively white, people who identify as LGBTQ+, and people who identify as part of the neurodiversity community.
- Alienation represents a substantial barrier to sense of belonging, with 64 respondents reporting that they have felt alienated or excluded due to some aspect of their identity, their type of employment, etc. SSAR and conference planners should explore and implement a variety of approaches to eliminate alienating behaviors and other barriers, and to proactively facilitate integration into the community.
- A non-trivial proportion of respondents have experienced microaggressions, inequity, or unwelcoming treatment at SSAR-hosted events or professional activities (29 people, or 4.9% of all respondents). Rates were higher for people who indicated that they would benefit from accommodations for full participation in SSAR and/or annual meetings (11.3%); parents (9.9%), and people who identify their race/ethnicity/geographic origin as anything other than exclusively white (8.2%).

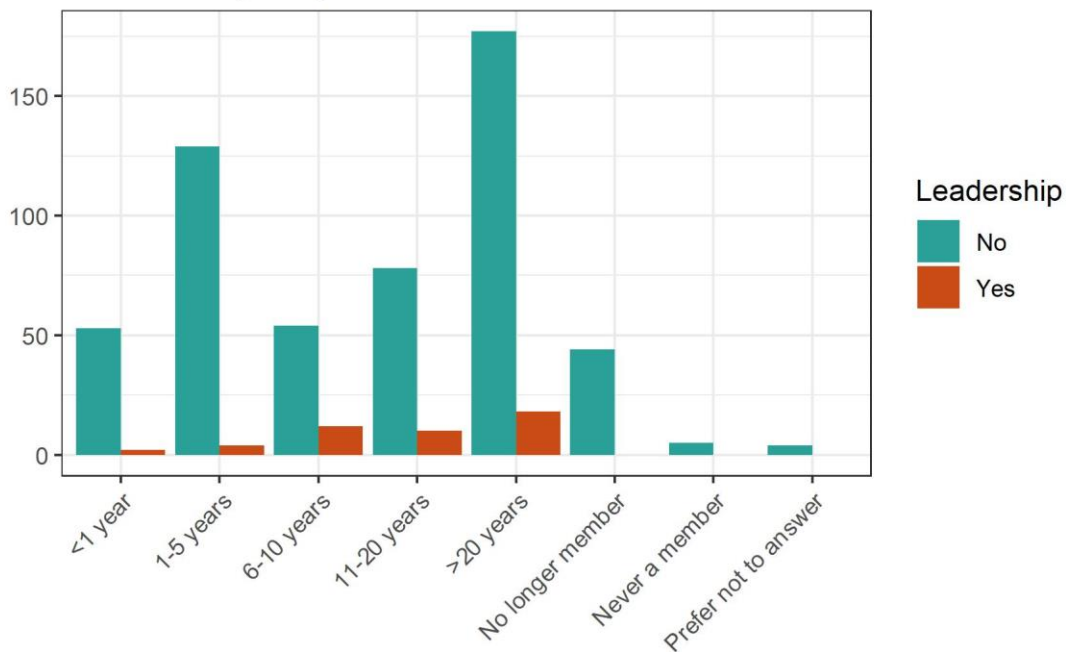
Section 1: Basic information

Membership length

How long have you been a member of SSAR?

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <1 year | 55 | 9.3% | 2 | 4.3% |
| 1-5 years | 133 | 22.5% | 4 | 8.7% |
| 6-10 years | 66 | 11.2% | 12 | 26.1% |
| 11-20 years | 88 | 14.9% | 10 | 21.7% |
| >20 years | 195 | 33.1% | 18 | 39.1% |
| No longer member | 44 | 7.5% | | |
| Never a member | 5 | 0.8% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 4 | 0.7% | | |

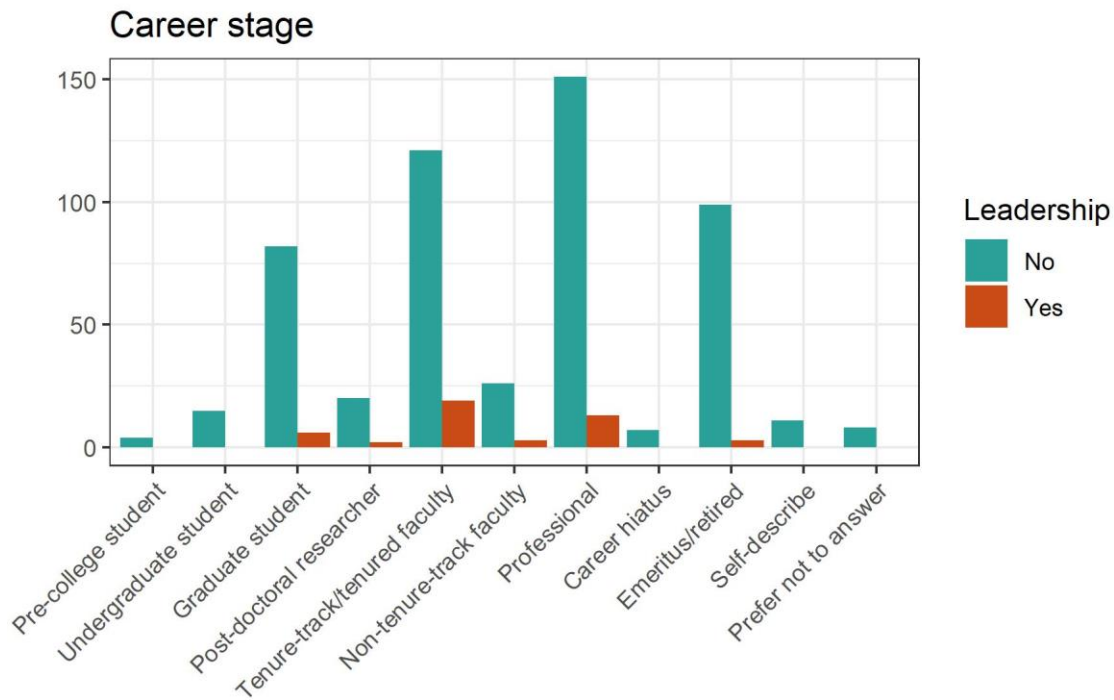
Membership length



Career stage

What is your career stage?

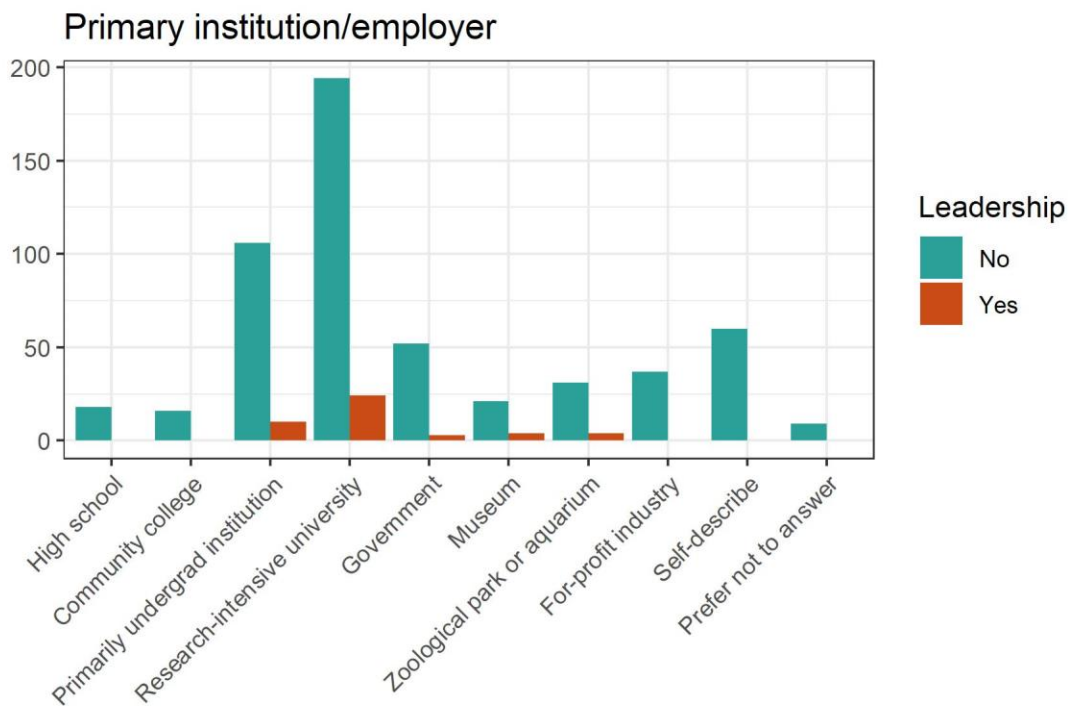
| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Pre-college student | 4 | 0.7% | | |
| Undergraduate student | 15 | 2.5% | | |
| Graduate student | 88 | 14.9% | 6 | 13.0% |
| Post-doctoral researcher | 22 | 3.7% | 2 | 4.3% |
| Tenure-track/tenured faculty | 140 | 23.7% | 19 | 41.3% |
| Non-tenure-track faculty | 29 | 4.9% | 3 | 6.5% |
| Professional | 164 | 27.8% | 13 | 28.3% |
| Career hiatus | 6 | 1.0% | | |
| Emeritus/retired | 101 | 17.1% | 3 | 6.5% |
| Self-describe | 10 | 1.7% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 8 | 1.4% | | |



Primary institution/employer

Which of these best describes your primary institution/employer?

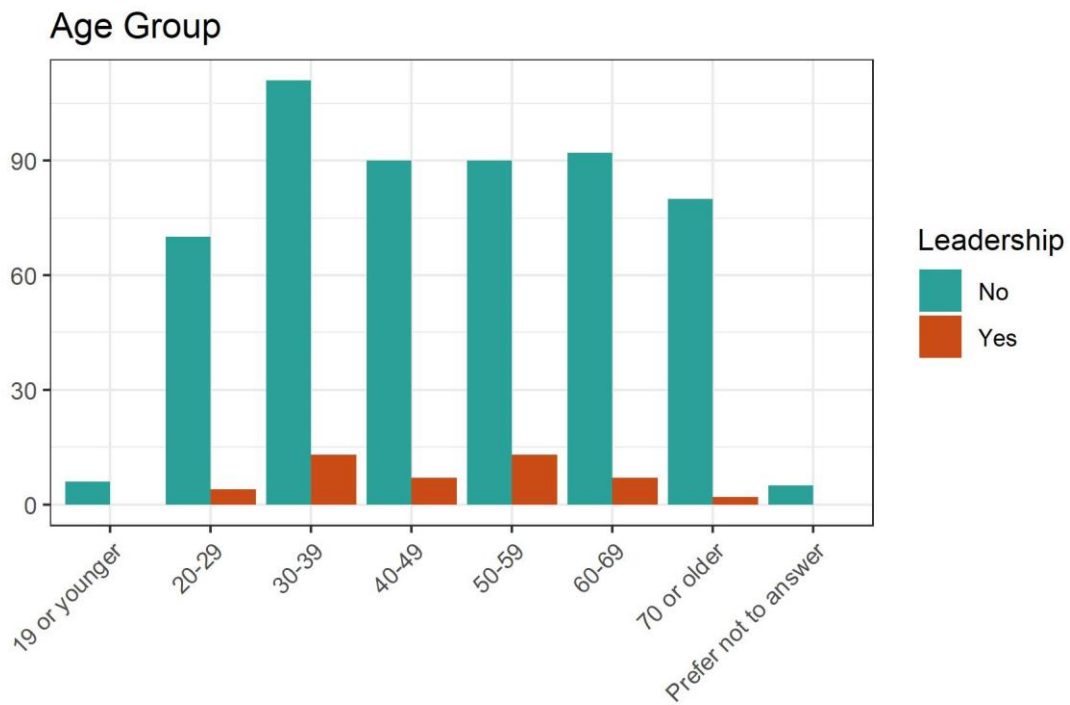
| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| High school | 18 | 3.1% | | |
| Community college | 16 | 2.7% | | |
| Primarily undergrad institution | 116 | 19.7% | 10 | 21.7% |
| Research-intensive university | 218 | 36.9% | 24 | 52.2% |
| Government | 55 | 9.3% | 3 | 6.5% |
| Museum | 25 | 4.2% | 4 | 8.7% |
| Zoological park or aquarium | 35 | 5.9% | 4 | 8.7% |
| For-profit industry | 37 | 6.3% | | |
| Self-describe | 60 | 10.2% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 9 | 1.5% | | |



Age group

To which age group do you belong?

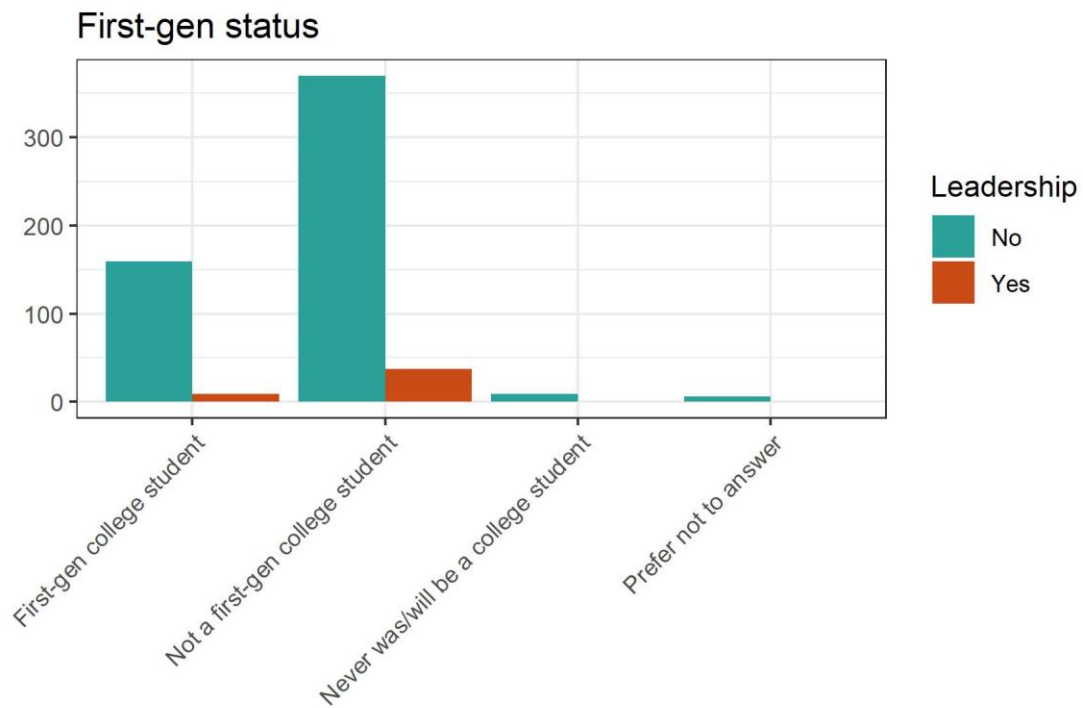
| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 19 or younger | 6 | 1.0% | | |
| 20-29 | 74 | 12.5% | 4 | 8.7% |
| 30-39 | 124 | 21.0% | 13 | 28.3% |
| 40-49 | 97 | 16.4% | 7 | 15.2% |
| 50-59 | 103 | 17.5% | 13 | 28.3% |
| 60-69 | 99 | 16.8% | 7 | 15.2% |
| 70 or older | 82 | 13.9% | 2 | 4.3% |
| Prefer not to answer | 5 | 0.8% | | |



First generation college student status

Were you (or do you expect to be) the first member of your immediate family to graduate from college/university (often called a “first-generation” college graduate)?

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| First-gen college student | 168 | 28.5% | 9 | 19.6% |
| Not a first-gen college student | 407 | 69.0% | 37 | 80.4% |
| Never was/will be a college student | 9 | 1.5% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 6 | 1.0% | | |

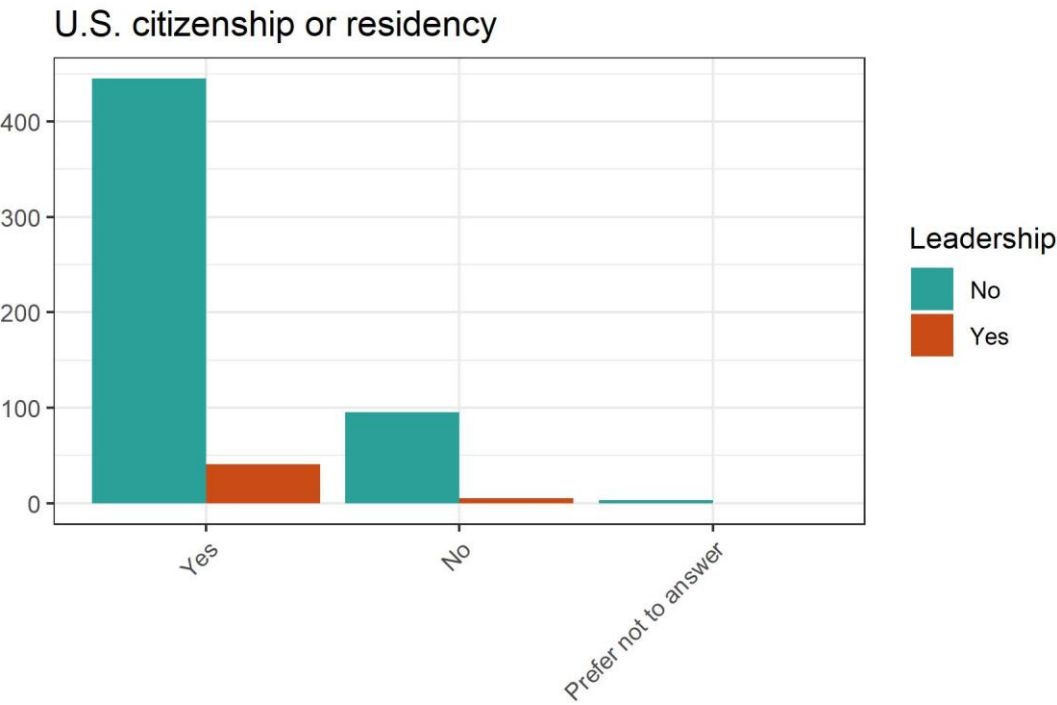


Section 2: Nationality, residence, and languages

US citizenship/residency

Are you a citizen or permanent resident (green card holder) of the USA?

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| Yes | 486 | 82.4% | 41 | 89.1% |
| No | 100 | 16.9% | 5 | 10.9% |
| Prefer not to answer | 3 | 0.5% | | |



Place of origin

What is your place of origin?

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| United States | 450 | 76.3% | 40 | 87.0% |
| Canada | 27 | 4.6% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Mexico | 12 | 2.0% | 2 | 4.3% |
| United Kingdom | 11 | 1.9% | | |
| Germany | 8 | 1.4% | | |
| Australia | 7 | 1.2% | | |
| Brazil | 5 | 0.8% | 1 | 2.2% |
| France | 4 | 0.7% | | |
| Japan | 4 | 0.7% | | |
| Spain | 4 | 0.7% | | |
| India | 3 | 0.5% | | |
| Puerto Rico | 3 | 0.5% | | |
| South Korea | 3 | 0.5% | | |
| Sweden | 3 | 0.5% | | |
| Argentina | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Chile | 2 | 0.3% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Colombia | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Hungary | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Peru | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Portugal | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Cameroon | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Czech Republic | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Denmark | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Ecuador | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Greece | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Guatemala | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Israel | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Italy | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Malaysia | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Nauru | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Nepal | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Netherlands | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| New Zealand | 1 | 0.2% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Nigeria | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Poland | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Russia | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| South Africa | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Switzerland | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Taiwan | 1 | 0.2% | | |

Section 2: Nationality, residence, and languages

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|-------------|--|
| Thailand | 1 | 0.2% | |
| Trinidad and Tobago | 1 | 0.2% | |
| Tunisia | 1 | 0.2% | |
| Prefer not to answer | 5 | 0.8% | |

Place of current residence

In what place do you currently reside?

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| United States | 481 | 81.5% | 41 | 89.1% |
| Canada | 20 | 3.4% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Mexico | 14 | 2.4% | 1 | 2.2% |
| United Kingdom | 8 | 1.4% | | |
| Brazil | 7 | 1.2% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Germany | 7 | 1.2% | | |
| Australia | 5 | 0.8% | | |
| Japan | 3 | 0.5% | | |
| Argentina | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| France | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Peru | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Portugal | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| South Korea | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Thailand | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Bahamas | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Cameroon | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Chile | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Czech Republic | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Denmark | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Ecuador | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Georgia | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Guatemala | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Hong Kong | 1 | 0.2% | 1 | 2.2% |
| India | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Italy | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Kazakhstan | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Malaysia | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Nepal | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Netherlands | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Norway | 1 | 0.2% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Puerto Rico | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Spain | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Sweden | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Switzerland | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Trinidad and Tobago | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Tunisia | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Uzbekistan | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 3 | 0.5% | | |

Most comfortable language for communication

In what language are you the most comfortable communicating?

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| English | 537 | 91.0% | 44 | 95.7% |
| Spanish | 14 | 2.4% | | |
| Spanish + English | 3 | 0.5% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Portuguese | 5 | 0.8% | 1 | 2.2% |
| French | 4 | 0.7% | | |
| German | 4 | 0.7% | | |
| Japanese | 4 | 0.7% | | |
| French + Spanish | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Czech | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Dutch | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Korean | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Korean + English | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Russian | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Spanish + German + Portuguese | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Swedish | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 5 | 0.8% | | |

Languages that could be used for conference presentation/poster (speaker and/or on slides)

What language(s) would you be willing to use for an SSAR presentation/poster (speaking and/or on slides)?

| | All respondents | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| English | 379 | 64.2% |
| Spanish | 117 | 19.8% |
| French | 28 | 4.7% |
| German | 12 | 2.0% |
| Portuguese | 8 | 1.4% |
| Croatian | 2 | 0.3% |
| Indonesian/Bahasa Indonesian | 2 | 0.3% |
| Latin | 2 | 0.3% |
| Arabic | 1 | 0.2% |
| Czech | 1 | 0.2% |
| Hebrew | 1 | 0.2% |
| Italian | 1 | 0.2% |
| Japanese | 1 | 0.2% |
| Mandarin Chinese | 1 | 0.2% |
| Swedish | 1 | 0.2% |
| Thai | 1 | 0.2% |

Note: several respondents noted that they would feel comfortable with some languages only in certain contexts, e.g. on slides but not spoken, for a poster but not an oral presentation, or only if they had help with translation.

Section 3: Identities

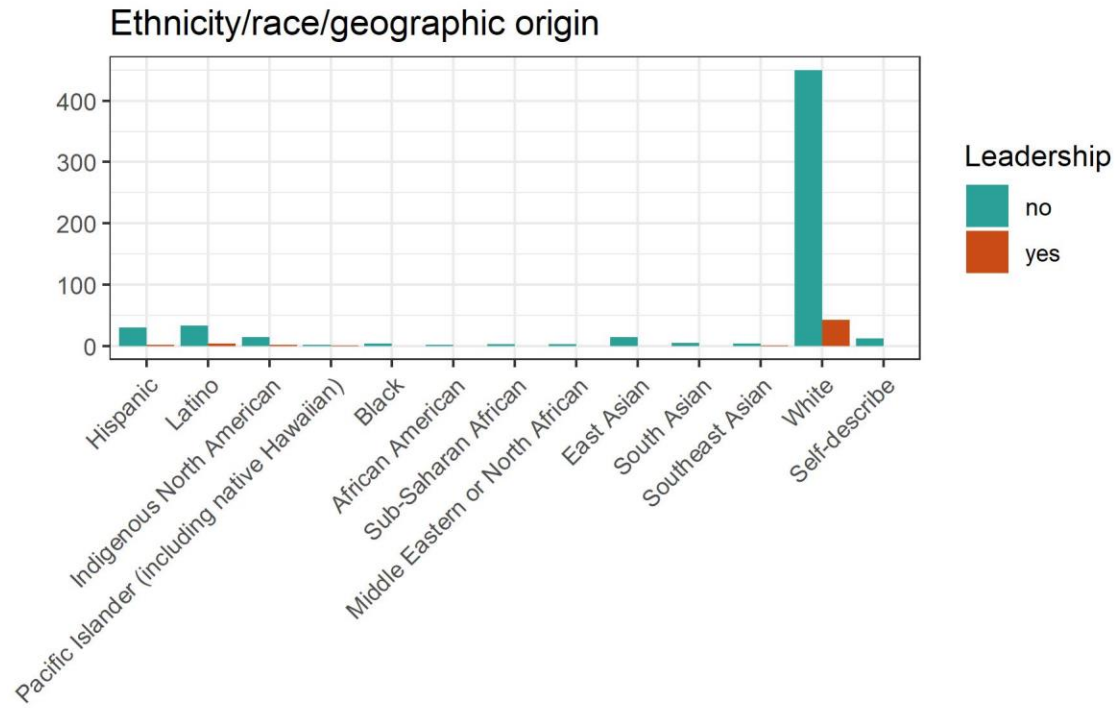
Ethnicity/race/geographic origin

Ethnicity/race/geographic origin (please check all that apply and/or self-describe):

| Identity | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|--|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Hispanic | 32 | 5.4% | 2 | 4.3% |
| Latino | 37 | 6.3% | 4 | 8.7% |
| Indigenous North American | 17 | 2.9% | 2 | 4.3% |
| Pacific Islander (including native Hawaiian) | 3 | 0.5% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Black | 4 | 0.7% | | |
| African American | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Sub-Saharan African | 3 | 0.5% | | |
| Middle Eastern or North African | 3 | 0.5% | | |
| East Asian | 14 | 2.4% | | |
| South Asian | 5 | 0.8% | | |
| Southeast Asian | 5 | 0.8% | 1 | 2.2% |
| White | 493 | 83.6% | 43 | 93.5% |
| Self-describe | 12 | 2.0% | | |

Note: In the future, we will consider adding a “mixed race” option. Because no such option existed this year, we present an additional summary table showing how many people checked 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 identities (but note that checking >1 option is possibly but not necessarily an indication that someone considers themselves mixed race).

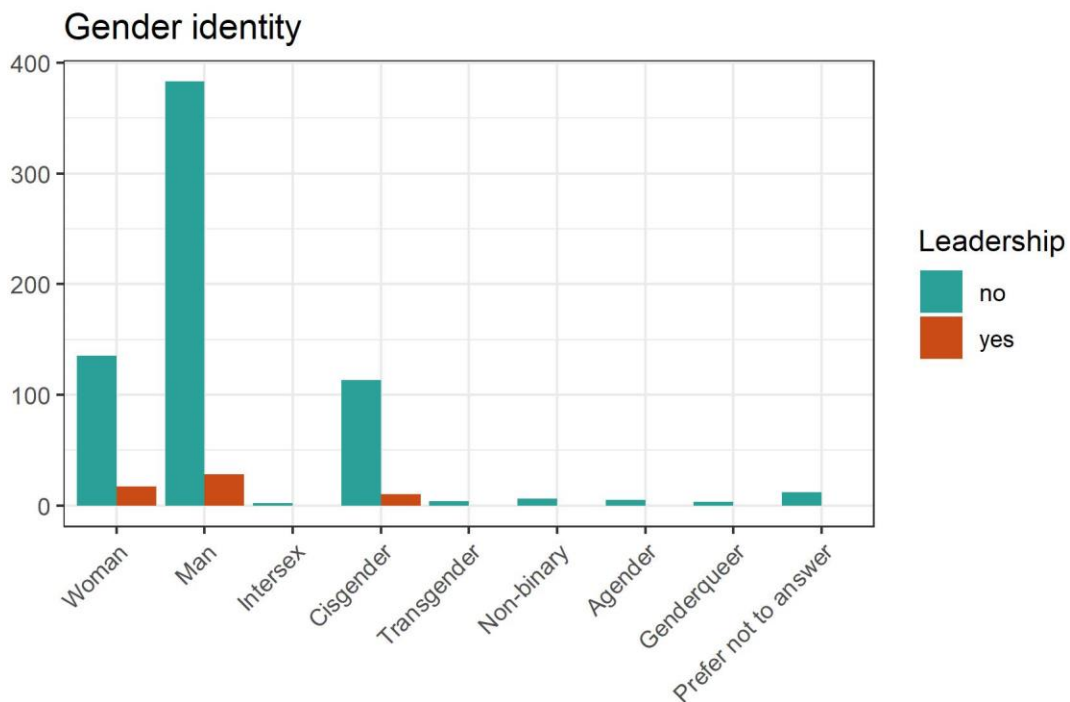
| Number of identities checked | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 0 | 23 | 3.9% | 1 | 2.2% |
| 1 | 514 | 87.1% | 39 | 84.8% |
| 2 | 45 | 7.6% | 4 | 8.7% |
| 3 | 6 | 1.0% | 2 | 4.3% |
| 4 | 2 | 0.3% | 0 | 0.0% |



Gender identity

Gender identity (please check all that apply and/or self-describe):

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Woman | 152 | 25.8% | 17 | 37.0% |
| Man | 411 | 69.7% | 28 | 60.9% |
| Intersex | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Cisgender | 123 | 20.8% | 10 | 21.7% |
| Transgender | 4 | 0.7% | | |
| Non-binary | 6 | 1.0% | | |
| Agender | 5 | 0.8% | | |
| Genderqueer | 3 | 0.5% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 12 | 2.0% | | |

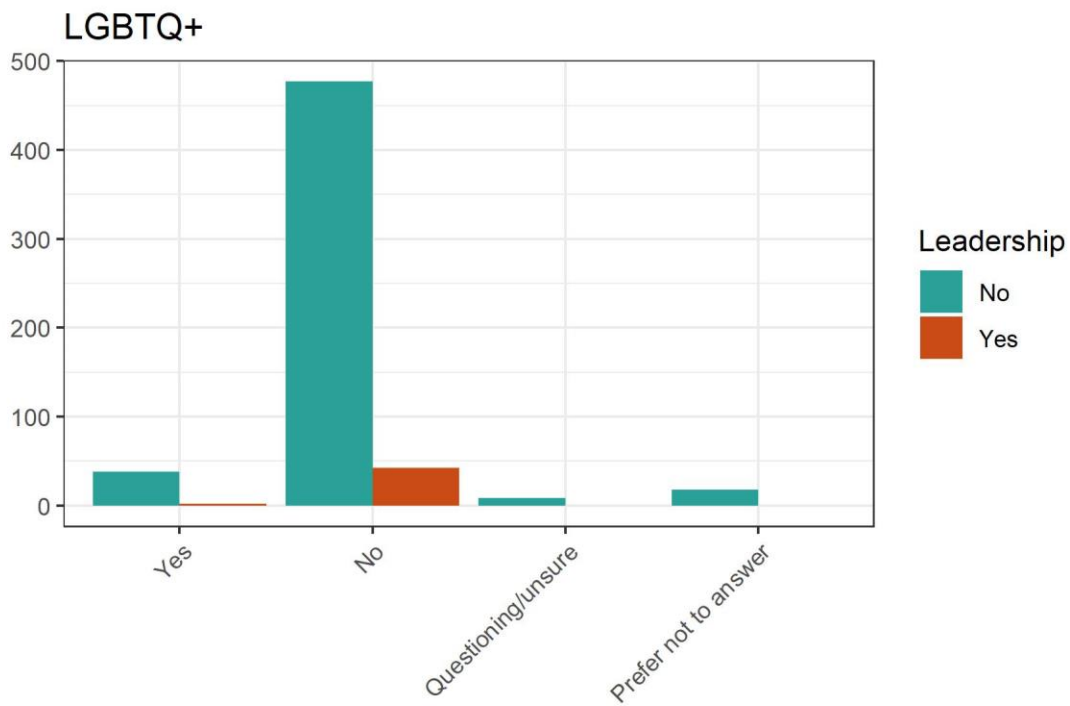


Note: in an attempt to be inclusive by listing numerous potential categories, the survey's authors listed intersex, which is a term referring to reproductive anatomy rather than gender identity. We will correct this error in future surveys.

LGBTQ+

Do you identify as LGBTQ+, including, but not limited to any queer identities, such as asexual and aromantic?

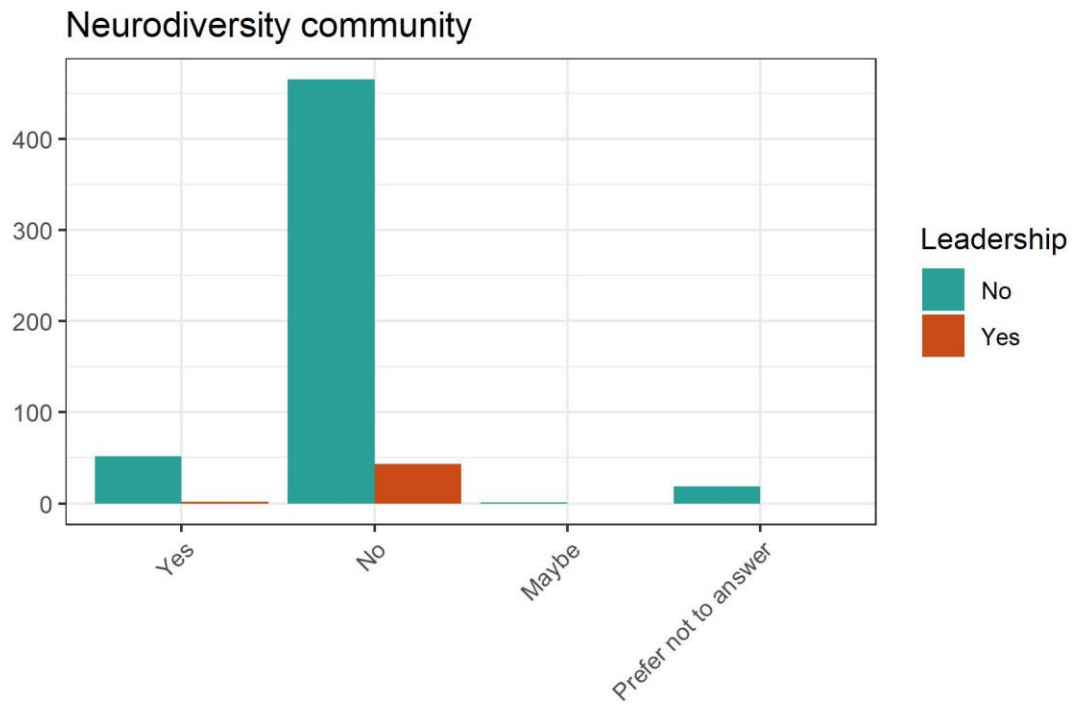
| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Yes | 40 | 6.8% | 2 | 4.3% |
| No | 519 | 88.0% | 42 | 91.3% |
| Questioning/unsure | 8 | 1.4% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 18 | 3.1% | | |



Neurodiversity community

Do you consider yourself a member of the neurodiversity community (e.g., autistic, ADHD, dyslexia)?

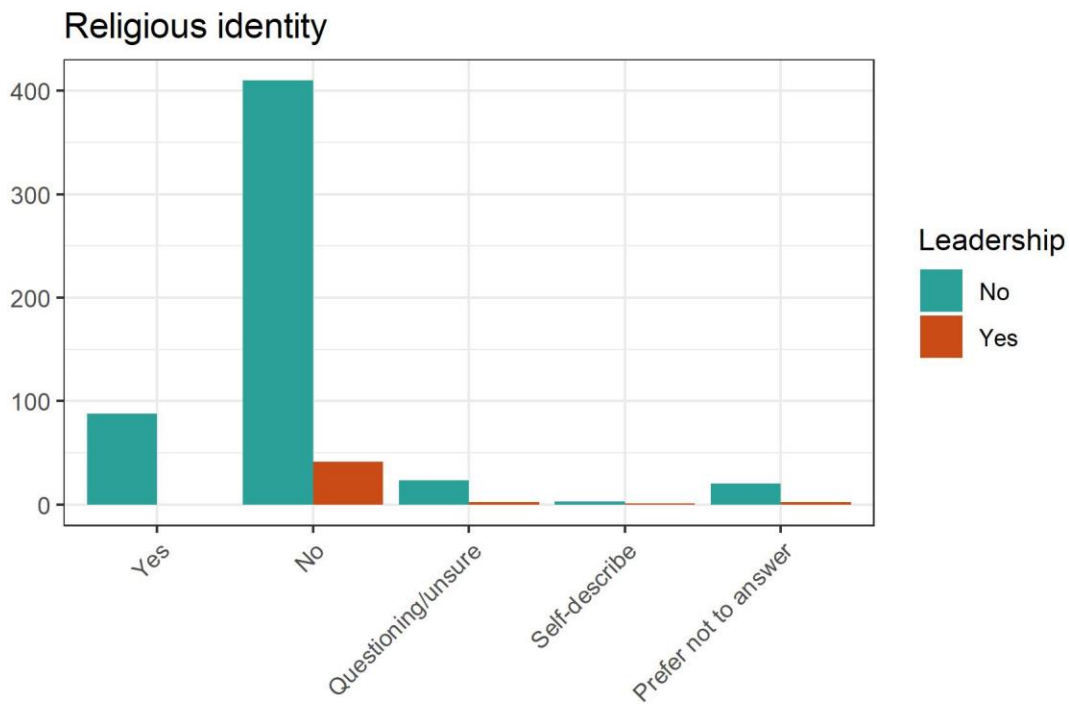
| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Yes | 54 | 9.2% | 2 | 4.3% |
| No | 508 | 86.1% | 43 | 93.5% |
| Maybe | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 19 | 3.2% | | |



Religious identity

Is religion a part of your identity?

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Yes | 88 | 14.9% | | |
| No | 451 | 76.4% | 41 | 89.1% |
| Questioning/unsure | 25 | 4.2% | 2 | 4.3% |
| Self-describe | 4 | 0.7% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Prefer not to answer | 22 | 3.7% | 2 | 4.3% |

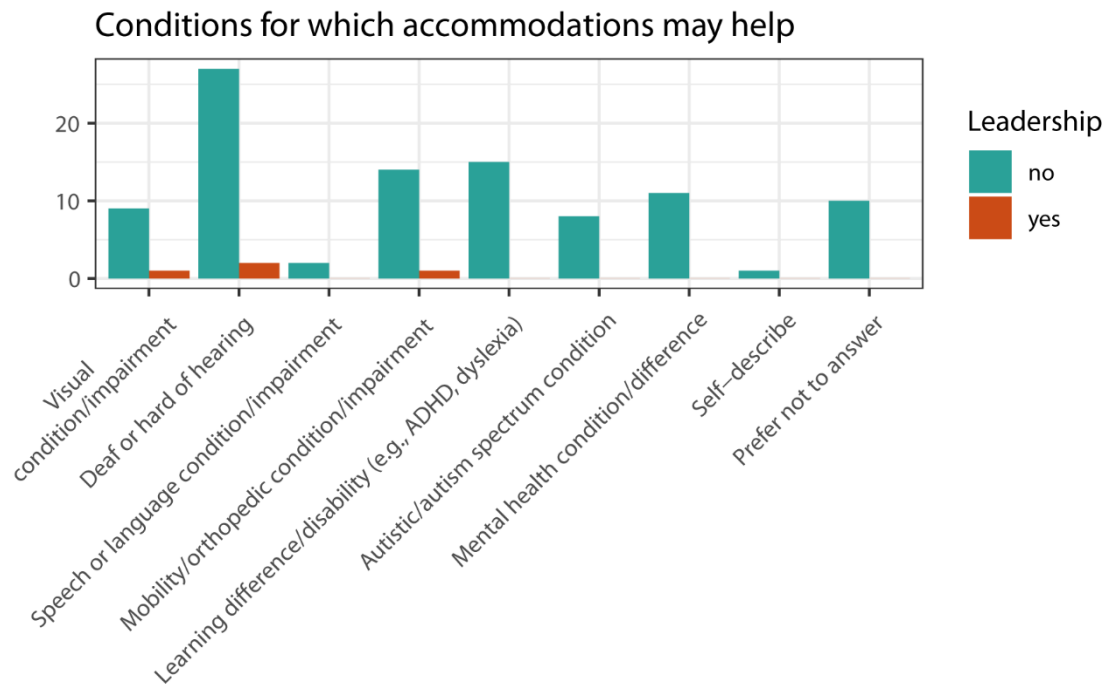


Section 4: Accommodations

Conditions for which accommodations might enhance participation

Do you have any conditions for which accommodations may help you to participate more fully in SSAR events and meetings?

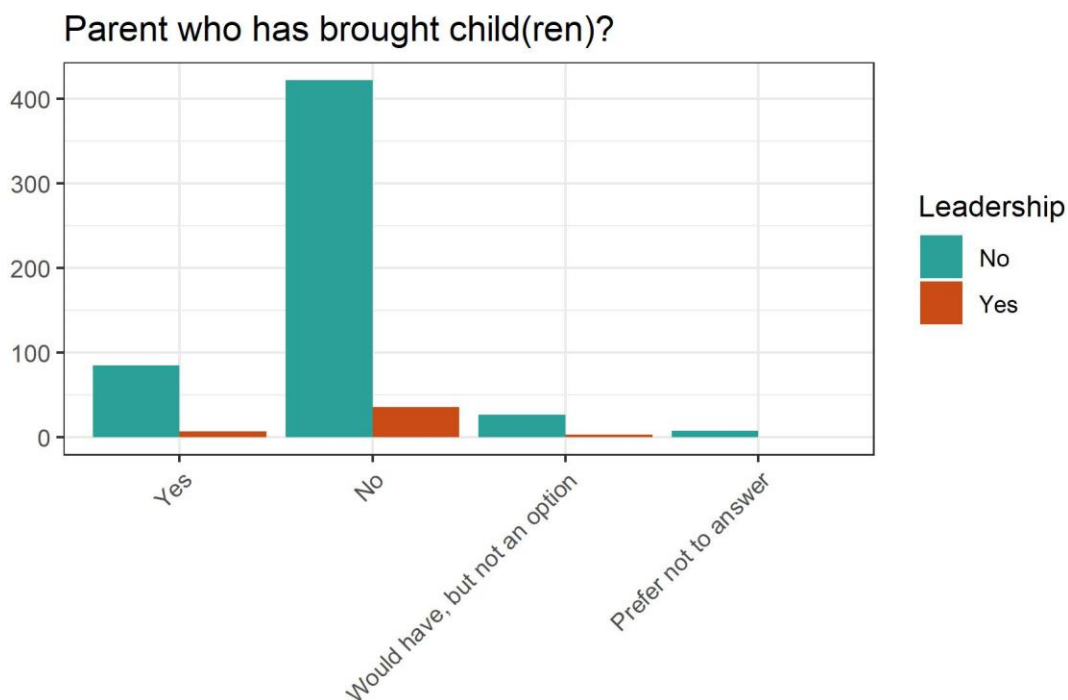
| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|---|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| No | 497 | 84.2% | 44 | 95.7% |
| Visual condition/impairment | 10 | 1.7% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Deaf or hard of hearing | 29 | 4.9% | 2 | 4.3% |
| Speech or language condition/impairment | 2 | 0.3% | | |
| Mobility/orthopedic condition/impairment | 15 | 2.5% | 1 | 2.2% |
| Learning difference/disability (e.g., ADHD, dyslexia) | 15 | 2.5% | | |
| Autistic/autism spectrum condition | 8 | 1.4% | | |
| Mental health condition/difference | 11 | 1.9% | | |
| Self-describe | 1 | 0.2% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 10 | 1.7% | | |



Childcare

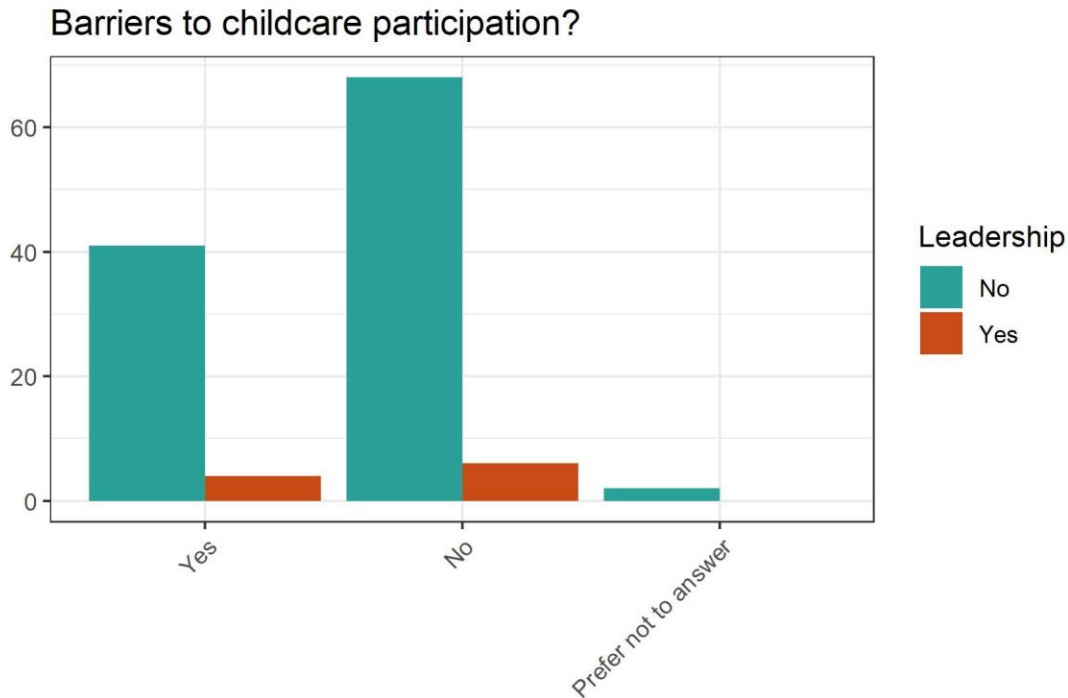
Are you a parent who has brought or considered bringing your child(ren) to an SSAR/JMIH conference?

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Yes | 92 | 15.6% | 7 | 15.2% |
| No | 458 | 77.6% | 36 | 78.3% |
| Would have, but not an option | 30 | 5.1% | 3 | 6.5% |
| Prefer not to answer | 8 | 1.4% | | |



In considering whether to bring your child to a conference, do you have concerns about barriers to your child's participation (e.g., financial barriers, potential lack of acceptance for any reason, etc.)?

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Yes | 45 | 7.6% | 4 | 8.7% |
| No | 74 | 12.5% | 6 | 13.0% |
| Prefer not to answer | 2 | 0.3% | | |



If you have or had concerns about barriers to your child's participation, please feel free to describe.

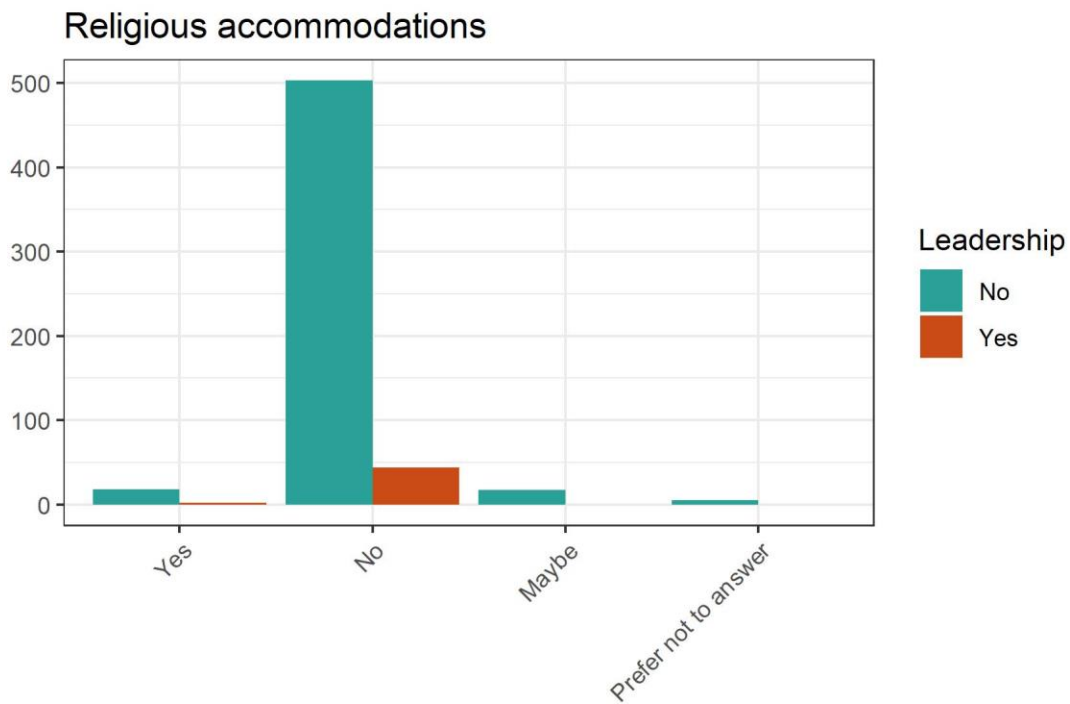
33 respondents provided comments. These comments cited five main barriers to participation in JMIH (note that some comments addressed multiple barriers):

| | |
|---|----|
| Lack of financial aid for travel and accommodations for family members | 17 |
| Lack of child care, or financial aid to pay for childcare | 14 |
| Attendees' negative perception and lack of acceptance of bringing family members to the conference | 4 |
| Networking and social events are not family friendly; they are last minute gatherings mostly in bars | 4 |
| Lack of family-friendly and accessible accommodations, including both conference-specific accommodations and general family-friendliness of cities where conferences are held | 8 |

Religious accommodations

Would you benefit from religious accommodations (e.g., scheduling around days of religious observance, respecting dietary restrictions, providing space and time for prayer) at conferences or other events?

| | All respondents | | Leadership only | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| Yes | 20 | 3.4% | 2 | 4.3% |
| No | 547 | 92.7% | 44 | 95.7% |
| Maybe | 17 | 2.9% | | |
| Prefer not to answer | 5 | 0.8% | | |



Feel free to comment on any specific religious accommodations that you think SSAR should consider.

Thirteen respondents provided comments. One was clearly facetious, which speaks to the issues facing our members who practice a religion and why they are less likely to speak up. The remaining 12 comments pertained to three main topics:

| | |
|---|---|
| Conference scheduling: suggestions to avoid major religious holidays (e.g. Ramadan, Easter, Yom Kippur) and avoid social events or over-scheduling on Saturday or Sunday (varies by religion) | 7 |
| Food at the conference: the need to accommodate vegetarian, Kosher, etc. | 3 |
| Requests for a designated “quiet room” during conferences where people can go to practice religion or for meditation | 2 |

Providing a “quiet room” and improved options for vegetarian/Kosher/Halal diets should be quite feasible. In general, food offerings could avoid pork, or at least have alternatives. Meat and dairy could be served separately (for example, caterers can be asked to provide separate meat and cheese platters)

Scheduling can be more difficult, but not impossible. SSAR and other JMIH societies should pay attention to particularly important holidays that sometimes fall around the same time as the annual conference (e.g, Eid), and avoid having the conference overlap with those holidays. With respect to weekly holy days, many fall on weekends, and most conferences include at least one full weekend. Unfortunately, any attempt to avoid this aspect of conference scheduling could be a problem in other ways (e.g., because conferences on weekends lead to fewer missed work days for many people, or because it can sometimes be easier to plan travel for weekend days). As a compromise, perhaps major social events could alternate between years (i.e., hold a particular major event on Saturday one year, then Sunday the next).

Additional comments about accommodations

If you want to share any comments about accommodations, please feel free to do so here.

50 respondents provided comments. We binned these comments into 9 main categories (some comments fell into multiple categories):

| | |
|--|----|
| Comments that did not provide substantive feedback on accommodations (e.g. "If you can make it great, if you cannot, no big deal. Let's not overcomplicate things"): | 19 |
| Children | 8 |
| Amenities + accommodations for differently abled participants | 7 |
| Religion | 6 |
| Cost of meetings in general | 5 |
| Timing | 3 |
| Food | 3 |
| Desire to see local herps | 1 |
| No present complaints | 4 |

Main takeaways:

- Childcare options are welcomed (e.g. nursing rooms), as it would encourage the participation of more women as well as single parents, dual-career couples, etc.
- Cost has risen over the years, to the point where it has become a deterrent to participation. This barrier especially applies to participants from lower income nations, students, retirees, and people from institutions that don't cover conference expenses. Some form of sponsorship could be considered.

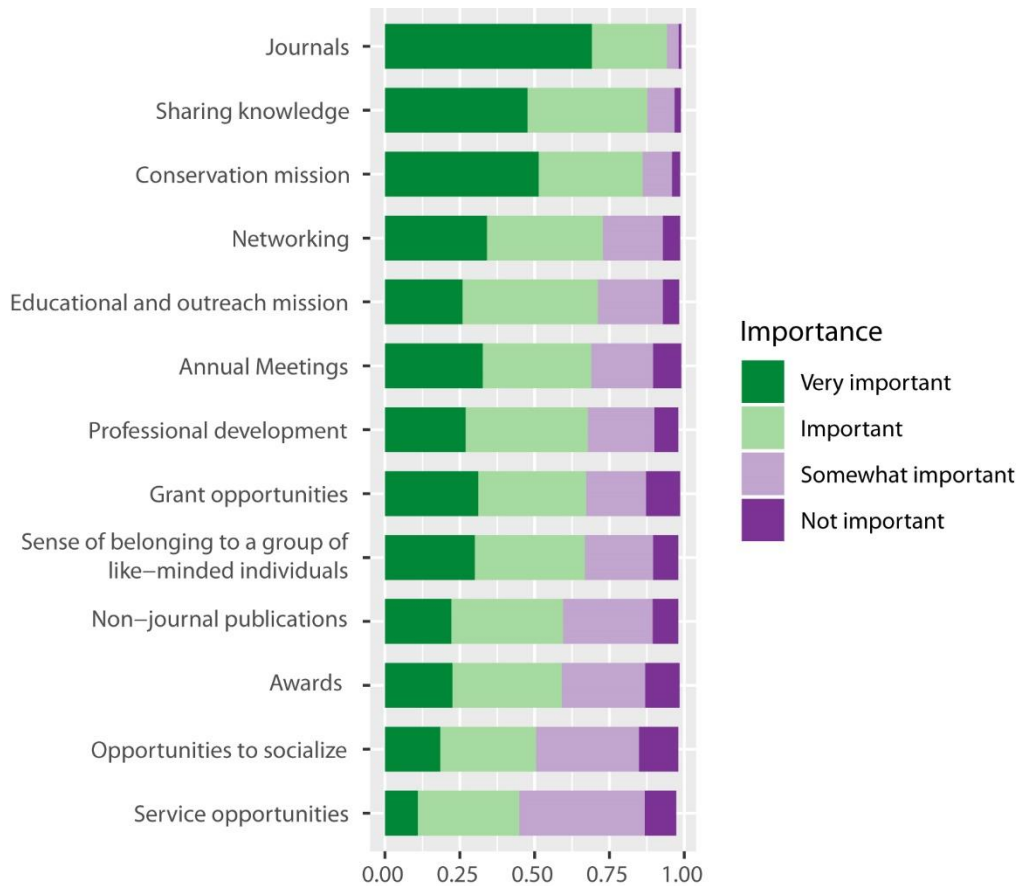
Section 5: Values and relationship with SSAR

Benefits of SSAR membership, ranked

Please rank how you value the various potential benefits of SSAR membership.

The tables and figure in this section are organized according to how many respondents ranked the item as “Very Important” or “Important,” with the highest scores on top.

| | Very Important | | Important | | Somewhat Important | | Not Important | |
|---|----------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Journals | 408 | 69.2% | 148 | 25.1% | 23 | 3.9% | 5 | 0.8% |
| Sharing knowledge | 281 | 47.6% | 236 | 40.0% | 54 | 9.2% | 12 | 2.0% |
| Conservation mission | 303 | 51.4% | 205 | 34.7% | 58 | 9.8% | 16 | 2.7% |
| Networking | 201 | 34.1% | 229 | 38.8% | 118 | 20.0% | 34 | 5.8% |
| Educational and outreach mission | 153 | 25.9% | 267 | 45.3% | 128 | 21.7% | 32 | 5.4% |
| Annual Meetings | 193 | 32.7% | 214 | 36.3% | 122 | 20.7% | 55 | 9.3% |
| Professional development | 159 | 26.9% | 241 | 40.8% | 131 | 22.2% | 47 | 8.0% |
| Grant opportunities | 184 | 31.2% | 213 | 36.1% | 118 | 20.0% | 67 | 11.4% |
| Sense of belonging to a group of like-minded individuals | 177 | 30.0% | 217 | 36.8% | 135 | 22.9% | 49 | 8.3% |
| Non-journal publications (e.g., Facsimile Reprints, Herpetological Circulars) | 131 | 22.2% | 220 | 37.3% | 177 | 30.0% | 50 | 8.5% |
| Awards (e.g., student presentation awards, Meritorious Teaching Award) | 133 | 22.5% | 216 | 36.6% | 164 | 27.8% | 68 | 11.5% |
| Opportunities to socialize | 109 | 18.5% | 189 | 32.0% | 203 | 34.4% | 77 | 13.1% |
| Service opportunities | 65 | 11.0% | 200 | 33.9% | 247 | 41.9% | 62 | 10.5% |



To explore whether members belonging to different groups place different values on the potential benefits of SSAR membership, we present the five most highly ranked benefits for the following groups: 1) people who have been SSAR members for 11+ years; 2) students; 3) women; 4) people who identify their race/ethnicity/geographic origin as anything other than exclusively white; and 5) people who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

People who have been SSAR members for 11+ years (n = 283):

| | Very Important | | Important | | Somewhat Important | | Not Important | |
|---|----------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| Journals | 210 | 74.2% | 62 | 21.9% | 5 | 1.8% | 1 | 0.4% |
| Sharing knowledge | 131 | 46.3% | 112 | 39.6% | 30 | 10.6% | 5 | 1.8% |
| Conservation mission | 134 | 47.3% | 107 | 37.8% | 31 | 11.0% | 7 | 2.5% |
| Non-journal publications (e.g., Facsimile Reprints, Herpetological Circulars) | 79 | 27.9% | 115 | 40.6% | 68 | 24.0% | 17 | 6.0% |
| Educational and outreach mission | 60 | 21.2% | 133 | 47.0% | 70 | 24.7% | 16 | 5.7% |

Students (n = 107):

| | Very Important | | Important | | Somewhat Important | | Not Important | |
|--------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| Journals | 72 | 67.3% | 29 | 27.1% | 4 | 3.7% | 1 | 0.9% |
| Grant opportunities | 67 | 62.6% | 31 | 29.0% | 5 | 4.7% | 3 | 2.8% |
| Sharing knowledge | 58 | 54.2% | 39 | 36.4% | 7 | 6.5% | 2 | 1.9% |
| Conservation mission | 66 | 61.7% | 29 | 27.1% | 9 | 8.4% | 2 | 1.9% |
| Professional development | 46 | 43.0% | 44 | 41.1% | 13 | 12.1% | 2 | 1.9% |

Women (n = 105):

| | Very Important | | Important | | Somewhat Important | | Not Important | |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| Journals | 65 | 61.9% | 34 | 32.4% | 5 | 4.8% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Sharing knowledge | 61 | 58.1% | 36 | 34.3% | 6 | 5.7% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Conservation mission | 57 | 54.3% | 35 | 33.3% | 12 | 11.4% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Grant opportunities | 52 | 49.5% | 35 | 33.3% | 12 | 11.4% | 5 | 4.8% |
| Networking | 52 | 49.5% | 35 | 33.3% | 15 | 14.3% | 2 | 1.9% |

People who identify their race/ethnicity/geographic origin as anything other than exclusively white (n = 134):

| | Very Important | | Important | | Somewhat Important | | Not Important | |
|--------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| Journals | 87 | 64.9% | 36 | 26.9% | 8 | 6.0% | 2 | 1.5% |
| Sharing knowledge | 69 | 51.5% | 50 | 37.3% | 10 | 7.5% | 2 | 1.5% |
| Conservation mission | 75 | 56.0% | 35 | 26.1% | 16 | 11.9% | 5 | 3.7% |
| Networking | 52 | 38.8% | 49 | 36.6% | 22 | 16.4% | 7 | 5.2% |
| Professional development | 49 | 36.6% | 46 | 34.3% | 27 | 20.1% | 6 | 4.5% |

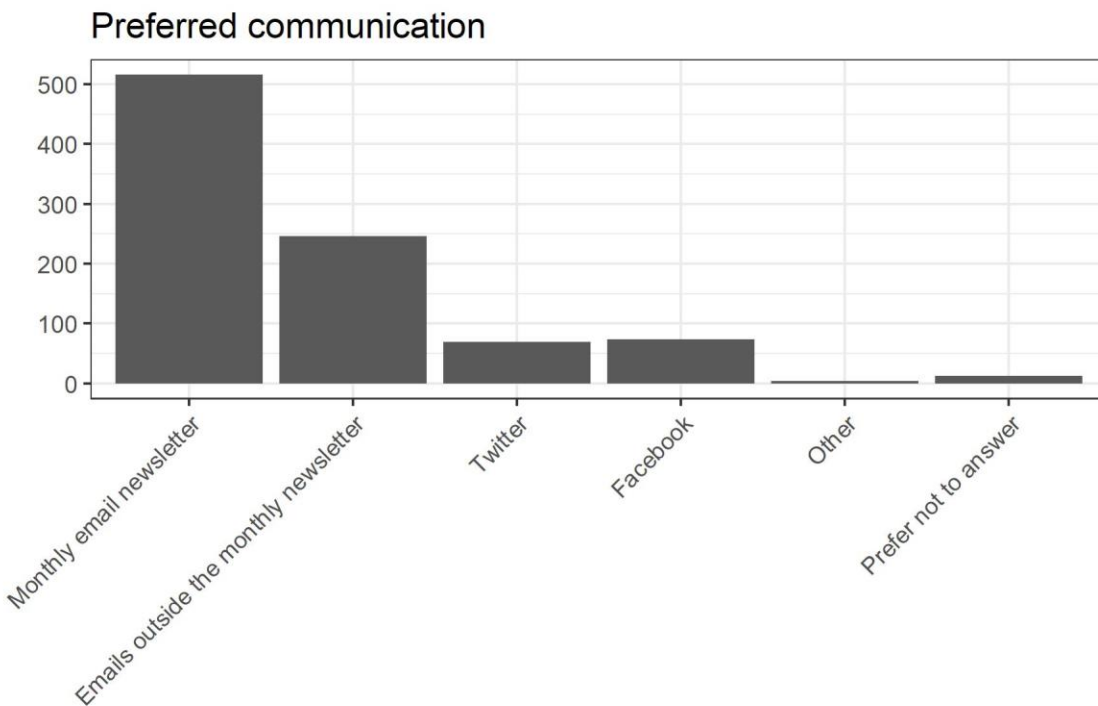
People who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents (n = 100):

| | Very Important | | Important | | Somewhat Important | | Not Important | |
|---|----------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Journals | 65 | 65.0% | 27 | 27.0% | 6 | 6.0% | 2 | 2.0% |
| Conservation mission | 45 | 45.0% | 40 | 40.0% | 9 | 9.0% | 5 | 5.0% |
| Sharing knowledge | 40 | 40.0% | 45 | 45.0% | 9 | 9.0% | 5 | 5.0% |
| Networking | 31 | 31.0% | 41 | 41.0% | 20 | 20.0% | 8 | 8.0% |
| Non-journal publications (e.g., Facsimile Reprints, Herpetological Circulars) | 22 | 22.0% | 48 | 48.0% | 15 | 15.0% | 13 | 13.0% |

Preferred communication from SSAR

How would you like for SSAR to communicate with you? Please check all that apply:

| | All respondents | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Monthly email newsletter | 516 | 87.5% |
| Emails outside the monthly newsletter | 246 | 41.7% |
| Twitter | 69 | 11.7% |
| Facebook | 74 | 12.5% |
| Other | 4 | 0.7% |
| Prefer not to answer | 12 | 2.0% |

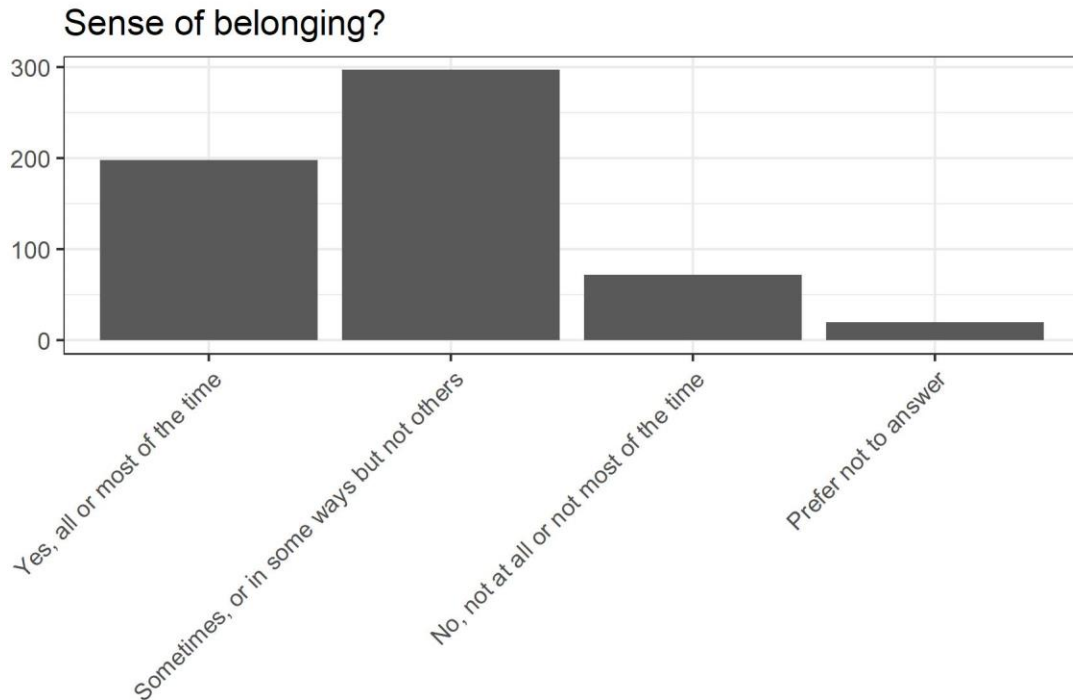


Suggestions for other forms of communication included:

- Herpetological Review
- TikTok (with a comment that Gen Z predominantly uses TikTok)
- Quarterly newsletter (rather than monthly)
- Ditching the monthly newsletter

Sense of belonging in SSAR

Do you feel a sense of belonging to the SSAR community?



People in the following groups seem somewhat less likely to feel a sense of belonging to the SSAR community, compared to pooled values for all respondents:

- Women
- People who identify their race/ethnicity/geographic origin as anything other than exclusively white
- People who identify as LGBTQ+
- People who identify as part of the neurodiversity community

| | All respondents (n = 587) | | Women (n=105) | | Non-white (n=133) | | LGBT+ (n=40) | | Neurodiversity (n=53) | |
|---|------------------------------|-------|------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| Yes, all or most of the time | 198 | 33.7% | 24 | 22.9% | 36 | 27.1% | 10 | 25.0% | 13 | 24.5% |
| Sometimes, or in some ways but not others | 297 | 50.6% | 60 | 57.1% | 66 | 49.6% | 23 | 57.5% | 26 | 49.1% |
| No, not at all or not most of the time | 72 | 12.3% | 16 | 15.2% | 23 | 17.3% | 6 | 15.0% | 9 | 17.0% |
| Prefer not to answer | 20 | 3.4% | 5 | 4.8% | 8 | 6.0% | 1 | 2.5% | 5 | 9.4% |

If you wish to describe why you do or do not feel a sense of belonging to the SSAR community, please feel free to do so here.

A total of 119 respondents provided comments related to sense of belonging, including:

- 22 who indicated that they feel a sense of belonging in SSAR all or most of the time
- 62 who indicated they sometimes feel a sense of belonging or are unsure
- 31 who indicated that they do not feel a sense of belonging
- 4 who preferred not to indicate whether they felt a sense of belonging

The tables below list some of the major themes that emerged in the responses about sense of belonging.

Themes from responses by people who feel a sense of belonging in SSAR all or most of the time (note that even people who usually feel a sense of belonging sometimes indicated reasons they occasionally do not feel a sense of belonging):

| | |
|--|---|
| Enjoyment of being connected with others who like herps | 9 |
| Paying for journals and using resources is enough to feel belonging | 4 |
| SSAR provides opportunity to express interests and hear from others | 2 |
| Generally included, but feels need to hide religious identity; their religion was maligned in a large talk at JMIH | 1 |
| Not very outgoing (no further explanation) | 1 |
| Has published in SSAR journals | 1 |
| Conferences allow reconnection with friends, mentors, former students, collaborators | 1 |
| Appreciation for society support of research | 1 |
| Society feels welcoming to students | 1 |
| Feels that some members attack those who disagree with current SSAR policies on social media (specified that officers don't do this) | 1 |

Themes from responses by people who sometimes feel a sense of belonging or are unsure:

| | |
|---|----|
| Alienation | 37 |
| Reduced participation with increasing age | 4 |
| Inability to attend meetings (e.g., for financial or geographic reasons, because earlier notice is desired) | 4 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Appreciation of the value of sharing knowledge/ information about herps | 3 |
| Discomfort at first, but later comfortable; glad to finally be able to join | 2 |
| Excessive commitments (to other societies or in general) | 2 |
| Expense | 2 |
| Meetings interfere with research | 2 |
| Not attuned to all modes of communication SSAR might use | 2 |
| Discrimination due to neurodivergence | 1 |
| Preference for interacting with the broader wildlife community, rather than focus on herpetology | 1 |
| Desire for ice breakers, etc., for those other than students | 1 |
| Politically left-biased community | 1 |
| Moving into new study areas that aren't focused on herps | 1 |
| Overworked | 1 |
| Exclusionary social events and meetings | 1 |
| Desire to connect outside of annual meetings | 1 |
| Not involved in research | 1 |

Themes from responses by people who do not feel a sense of belonging:

| | |
|---|----|
| Alienation | 27 |
| Perception that SSAR is U.S.-focused | 2 |
| Desire for Herp Review, not interested in sense of belonging | 1 |
| Desire for print Journal of Herpetology, unhappy with move to digital | 1 |

Themes from responses by people who preferred not to indicate whether they felt a sense of belonging:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Amateur | 1 |
| Just joined | 1 |
| Lack of sense of purpose | 1 |
| Too political | 1 |

The vast majority of responses indicating a sense of belonging referred to annual meetings as the major pathway towards belonging. Few responses mentioned other ways of feeling

connected with SSAR, suggesting that increasing ways to feel involved outside of the annual meetings could have significant benefits.

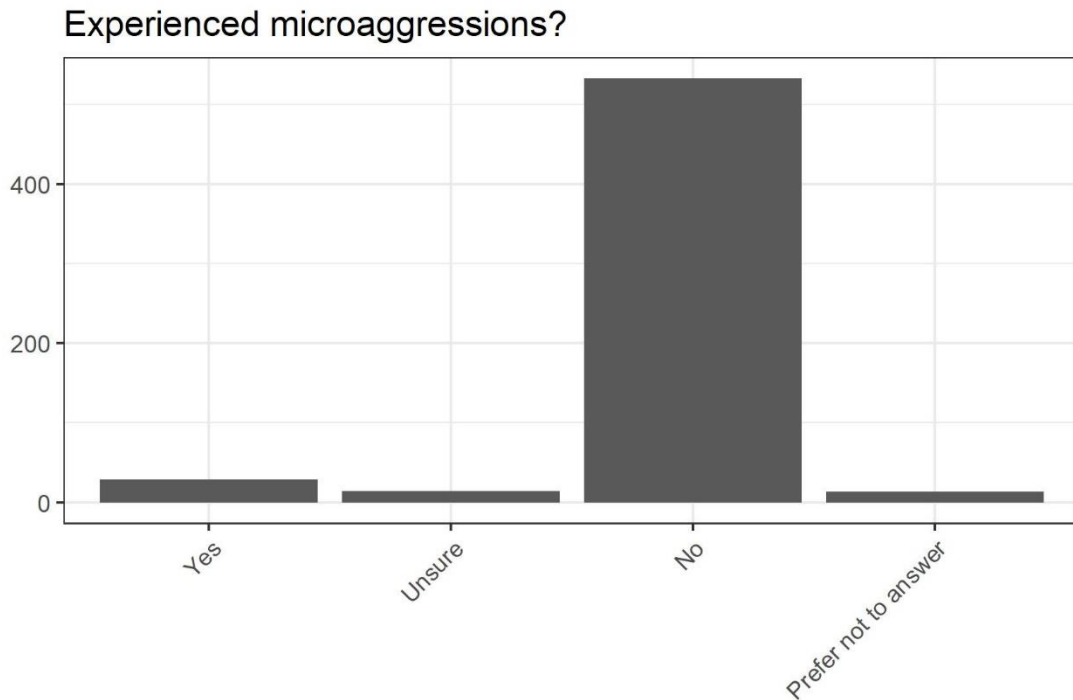
“Alienation” represented by far the most common reason reported for feeling a sense of belonging only sometimes, or in some ways but not others, or not at all. Respondents reported feeling alienated due to their age, having a teaching-focused position, lacking any academic position (despite desiring one), feeling that SSAR and/or the annual meeting is only for those from “cool” labs, lacking effort and/or ability to feel a sense of belonging, and poor attendance at recent students’ conference presentations. Many respondents feel that meetings are highly exclusive, geared towards those in prestigious labs or popular individuals. Some had the impression that those in primarily teaching positions, looking for jobs, and interested as a hobby are looked down upon.

Other reasons for only sometimes feeling belonging included age, being from outside of the United States, a desire to attend other meetings to meet broader connections, expense, and being overworked. Note that age was sometimes referenced in connection to alienation (i.e., being excluded due to age), and sometimes not in connection to alienation (e.g., some members may simply find it harder to participate with increasing age).

Some respondents reported negative feelings based on misperceptions, such as thinking that SSAR pays for the board members to attend meetings (which it does not). A few respondents criticized SSAR’s “recent push” towards DEI initiatives, indicating that they find it ostracizing (two comments) or that they see these initiatives as too “political” (three comments).

Microaggressions, inequitable treatment

Over the past 36 months, have you experienced microaggressions or microinvalidations, felt unwelcome, or been treated inequitably at SSAR-hosted events or professional activities?



People in the following groups seem somewhat more likely to have experienced microaggressions, or unwelcoming or inequitable treatment, compared to pooled values for all respondents:

- People who identify their race/ethnicity/geographic origin as anything other than exclusively white
- People who would benefit from accommodations for full participation in SSAR and/or annual meetings
- Parents

| | All respondents (n=589) | | Non-white (n=134) | | Accommodations (n=80) | | Parent (n=121) | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| Yes | 29 | 4.9% | 11 | 8.2% | 9 | 11.3% | 12 | 9.9% |
| Unsure | 14 | 2.4% | 5 | 3.7% | 5 | 6.3% | 3 | 2.5% |
| No | 533 | 90.5% | 108 | 80.6% | 63 | 78.8% | 104 | 86.0% |
| Prefer not to answer | 13 | 2.2% | 10 | 7.5% | 3 | 3.8% | 2 | 1.7% |

Several other groups had responses that reflected the overall sample. These include:

- Students
- People who identify as women
- People who identify as LGBTQ+
- People who identify as part of the neurodiversity community
- People who identify as religious

If you wish to share your experience(s) with microaggressions or microinvalidations, feeling unwelcome, or being treated inequitably, please feel free to do so here.

16 respondents provided comments. We binned these comments into 6 main categories:

| | |
|---|---|
| Academic bullying | 5 |
| Sexism/LGBTQ discrimination | 3 |
| Statements referring to microaggressions as not generally being a problem | 3 |
| Racial discrimination | 2 |
| Statements referring to microaggressions generally being a problem, without giving specific details | 2 |
| Discrimination against disabilities | 1 |

Five responses focused on academic bullying, ranging from perceived exclusion from events based on station (e.g., career type) to actual harassment. Most responses citing racial discrimination claimed that they felt discriminated against as white people or white men. A sizable portion of responses stated that microaggressions do not exist and white men are the victims. Lastly, one response pointed out that the annual meetings are not conducive to hearing-impaired attendees.

Section 6: Additional comments

102 respondents provided additional comments.

Comments not related to DEI:

| | |
|---|----|
| Compliments to SSAR society, meetings, and journals | 10 |
| Comments about publications (e.g., journal content, format, deliver time, cost and submission process) | 6 |
| Suggestions for meetings/SSAR events (e.g., ideas related to the organization and logistics) | 5 |
| Membership personal status (e.g., comments about individual membership status and plans to renew in the future) | 5 |

Comments related to DEI:

| | |
|--|----|
| Compliments to SSAR for DEI efforts and/or general support for DEI | 25 |
| Thoughts about DEI efforts being unnecessary and/or negatively affecting the SSAR mission | 10 |
| Positive suggestions for ways that SSAR can work to be more inclusive | 7 |
| Comments about society culture not being welcoming (e.g., lack of inclusiveness with respect to age or gender) | 5 |
| Comments or suggestions about how to improve the survey | 4 |
| Positive comments about DEI in general | 3 |

Specific comments will be used by the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee in conjunction with SSAR leadership to guide future Society activities