NASAA Assembly 2024 Evaluation Summary

The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) convened NASAA Assembly 2024 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, October 23 – 26, hosted by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture (ICP). 503 participants attended the meeting, out of which 348 were NASAA members.

16% of all peer group session registrants were executive directors, 15% were grants or fiscal officers, 14% were arts education managers, 12% were deputy directors, 9% were chairs or council members, 9% were community development managers, 9% were folk and traditional arts managers, and 6% were communications managers/PIOs.

To better plan future meetings, NASAA distributed electronic versions of an evaluation questionnaire to participants. A total of 220 questionnaires were completed (out of 249 submitted, including partially completed), with all 220 of the respondents identifying themselves as members. This yielded an overall response rate of 44%, which increases to 63% when considering only NASAA members.

This report contains the key results of the evaluation in tabulations.

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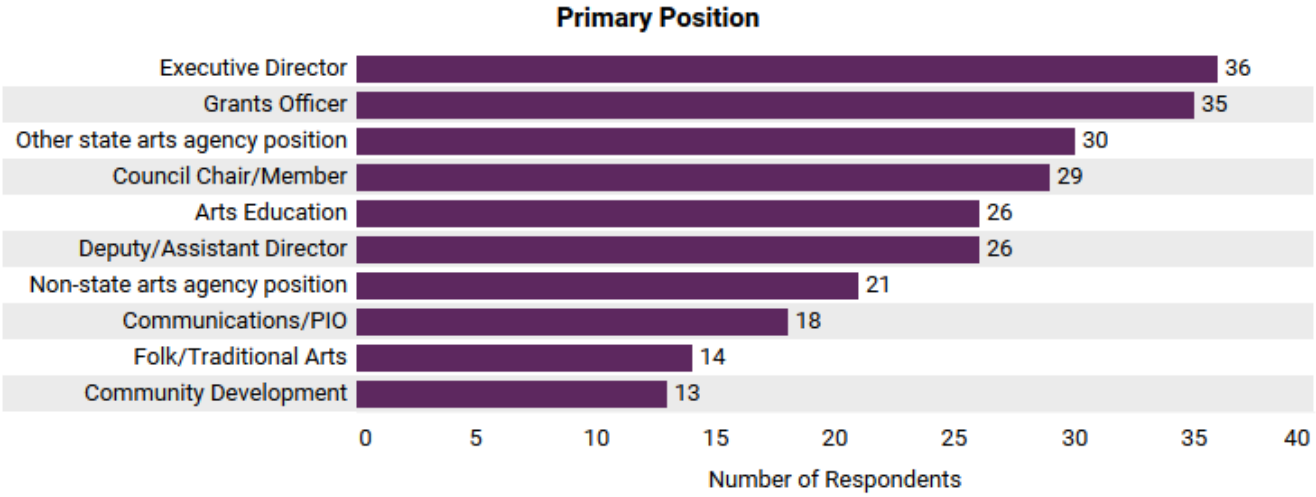
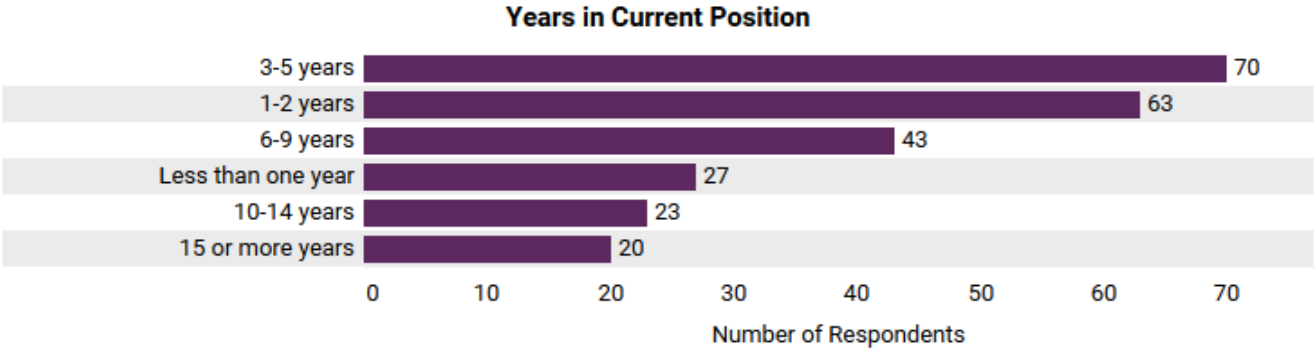
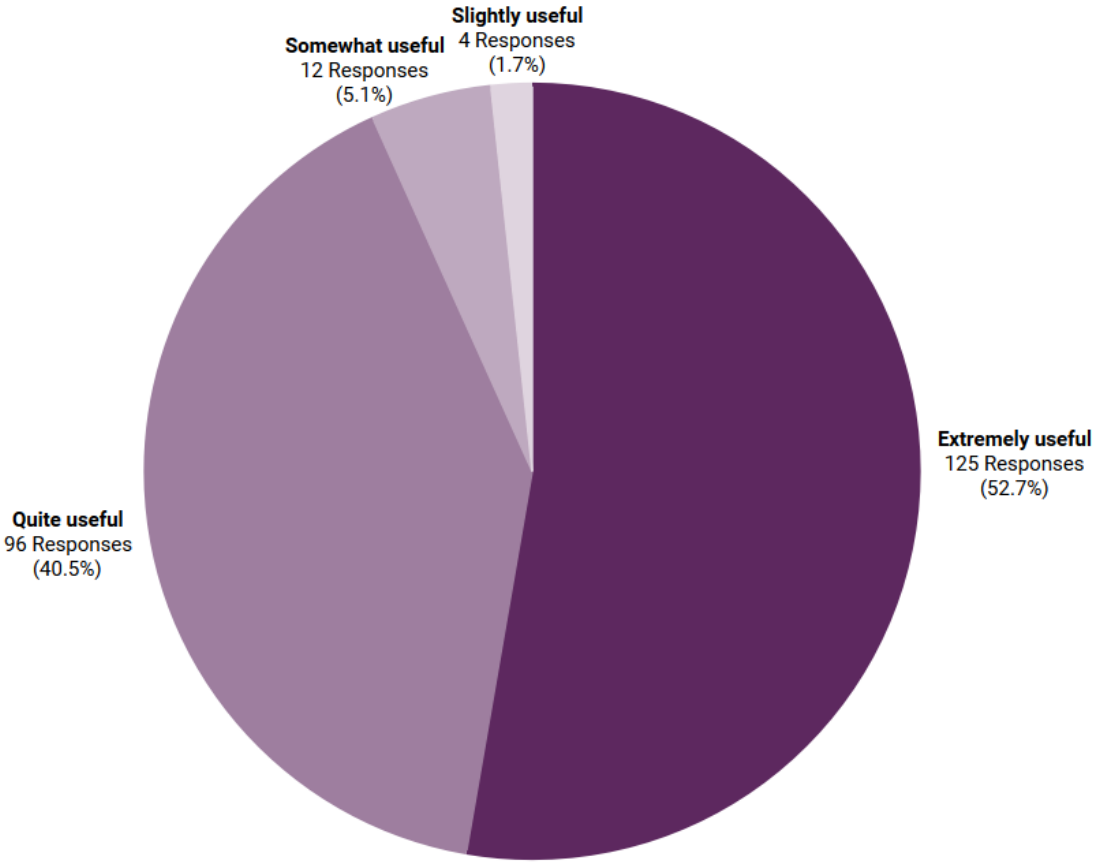
About the Respondents





The largest group of survey respondents was executive director, closely followed by grants officer. The most significant portion of respondents were in their positions for three to five years. A substantial number of respondents (combining 1-2 years and less than one year) had been with their arts agencies for two years or fewer, making up almost half of the total respondents.

Overall Ratings of NASAA Assembly 2024



Ratings by position and tenure

(1 = Not useful 5 = Extremely useful)

Rating by Position

What is your primary position?	Rating	Number of Responses
Executive Director	4.7	35
Folk/Traditional Arts	4.6	14
Community Development	4.6	12
Other state arts agency position	4.5	29
Non-state arts agency position	4.5	17
Council Chair/Member	4.5	28
Communications/PIO	4.4	16
Arts Education	4.3	25
Deputy/Assistant Director	4.3	26
Grants Officer	4.2	34
Total	4.4	236

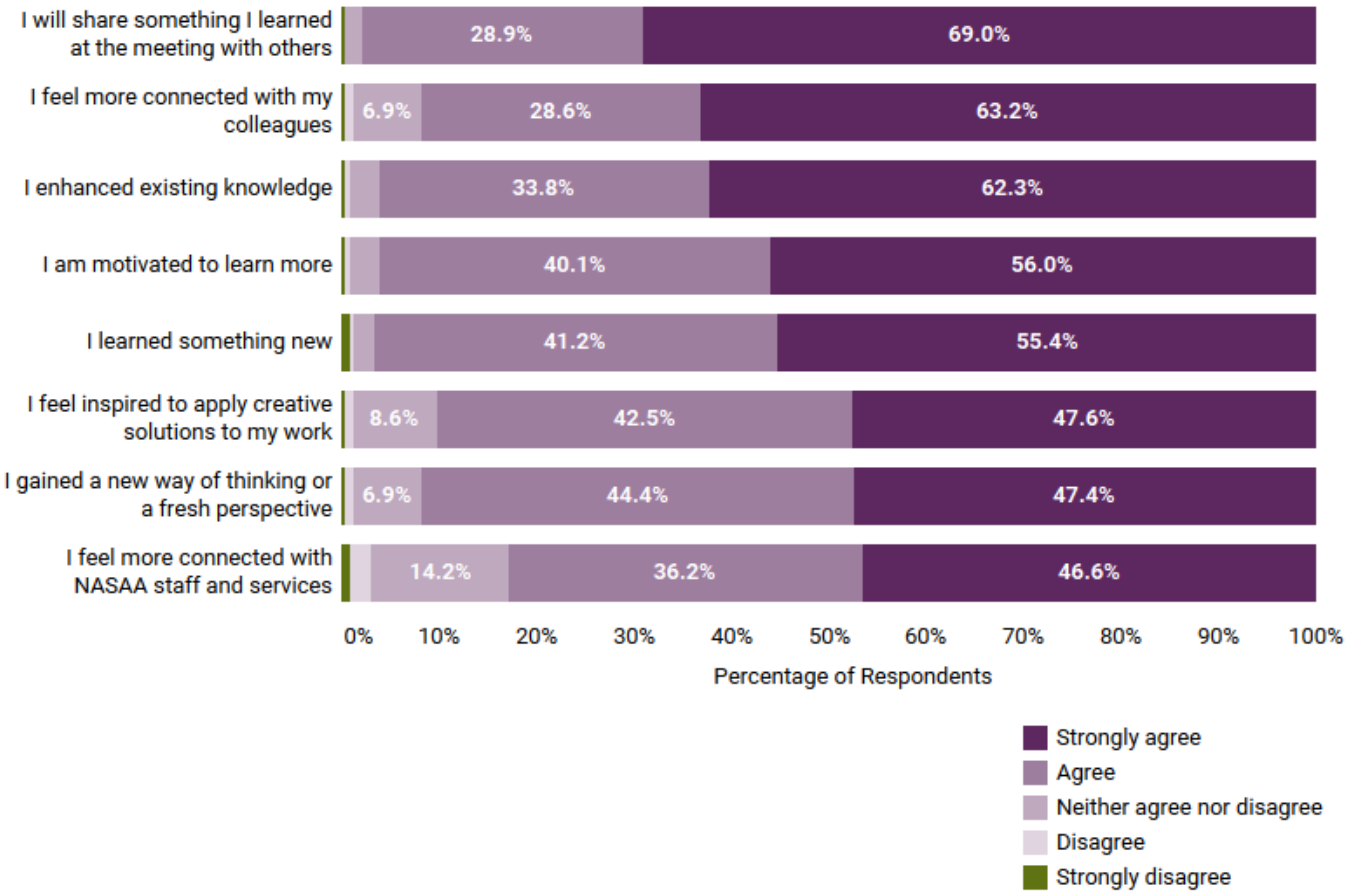
Rating by Tenure

How many years have you served in the above capacity?	Rating	Number of Responses
6-9 years	4.6	38
Less than one year	4.4	27
1-2 years	4.4	61
10-14 years	4.4	22
3-5 years	4.4	66
15 or more years	4.4	20
Total	4.4	234

93% of respondents found NASAA Assembly 2024 quite or extremely useful (40.5% quite useful, 52.7% extremely useful). Compared to Assembly 2022, more respondents (+4%) found the conference extremely useful. When using a numerical scale for the overall rating (from 1 = not at all useful to 5 = extremely useful), the average rating of Assembly 2024 was 4.4, which is higher than the overall average of 4.3 from the Assembly 2022 evaluation. Respondents by position and length of tenure all reported relatively similar levels of satisfaction.

Impact on Participants

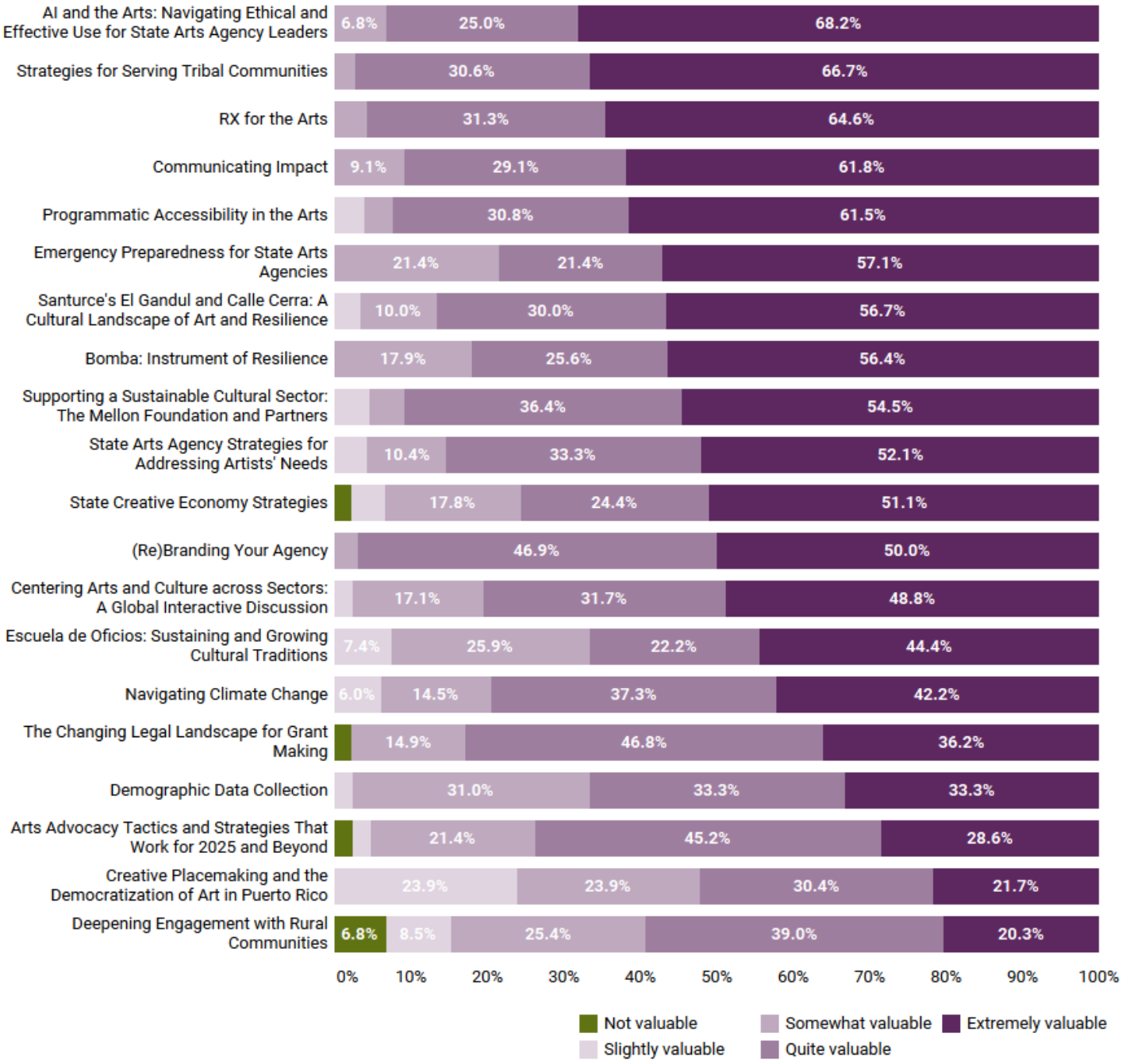
Personal statements included in the questionnaire help gauge participants' self-perceptions, knowledge attainment and changes in motivation.



More than 90% of respondents indicated that they somewhat or strongly agreed with seven of the eight statements. The statement, "I feel more connected with NASAA staff and services" received a lower agreement rating, at 82.8%. Assembly 2024's results are an improvement from the Assembly 2022 and 2018 results.

Session Ratings

(excluding "not applicable")



The bars in the charts above display the ratings as percentages for each session. The lowest average session rating was 4.4, corresponding to "quite valuable," while the highest was 4.7. The overall average rating for all sessions was 4.5. Most respondents rated the sessions as "quite valuable" or "extremely valuable." Members consistently praised the peer sessions and found significant value in the opportunities to form meaningful connections with peers and share real-world take-aways. To that end, members expressed a desire for more and longer peer sessions. AI and Art, Strategies for Serving Tribal

Communities, and Rx for the Arts were viewed as particularly informative, with insightful presentations and discussions. Some sessions, such as Deepening Engagement with Rural Communities, were described as too broad and unfocused, although the presence of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) representatives at that session was appreciated.

Comments and Feedback Summary

Members were asked three questions to share their feedback about Assembly 2024. NASAA received a wealth of feedback reflecting both the strengths of the events and areas where improvements could enhance future gatherings. The following highlights key take-aways from the evaluation.

Question	Response Summary
What was the best thing about this meeting?	Overall, members greatly appreciate the opportunity to network and collaborate with peers, the immersion in Puerto Rican culture, the thoughtfulness and range of topics for the sessions, and learning about other state arts agency (SAA) best practices.
What about this meeting could have been improved?	Areas for improvement include accessibility, more time for breaks and informal networking, more information about sessions and presenters beforehand, loudness, and increased expert and policymaker contributions.
What else would you like to communicate about your experience at the Assembly?	Members overwhelmingly expressed gratitude for NASAA and the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture for organizing and hosting the Assembly. Many members felt the execution was excellent and invaluable. Members also reiterated the areas for improvement mentioned above.

Evaluation Highlights

Strong peer learning opportunities: Participants highly valued the peer group sessions, finding them to be impactful and engaging. However, many attendees expressed a desire for longer and more frequent peer group opportunities, organized peer-to-peer sessions, and additional break times to allow for informal networking and deeper connections.

Diverse session topics: Attendees appreciated the range of topics covered, with the diversity of content allowing participants to find sessions that aligned with their roles and interests. On the other hand, some attendees felt overwhelmed by the length of certain sessions, expressing a preference for shorter, more focused sessions.

Mixed reactions to session formats and content: There were contrasting preferences regarding session topics and formats. Some attendees preferred broad, national discussions, while others favored state-specific content tailored to different budget sizes and agency capacities. Participants also expressed differing needs, with some seeking foundational overviews and others desiring deeper, more advanced discussions. Additionally, while many valued insights from subject-matter experts, others preferred sessions that emphasized active dialogue with fellow SAAs.

Accessibility considerations: Accessibility emerged as an important theme. Participants highlighted physical accessibility challenges at certain venues and noted that high noise levels during events made it difficult for some to engage fully. While many enjoyed the food provided, there were mixed experiences related to dietary options. Attendees with specific dietary needs, such as vegan, gluten-free or dairy-free, found limited choices available.

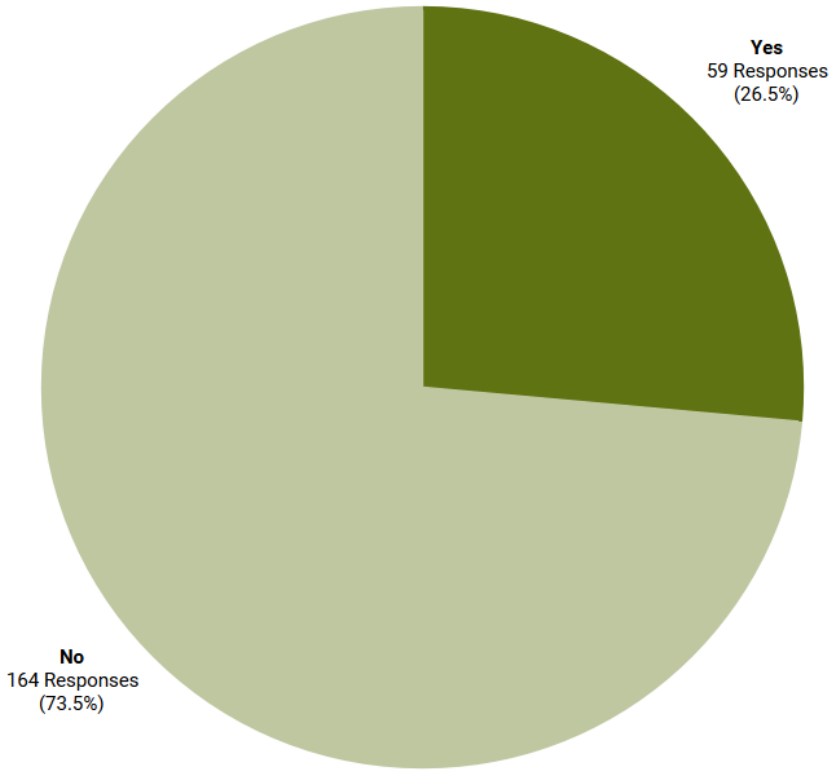
Need for advance information: Attendees expressed a strong interest in receiving more detailed information ahead of the Assembly, including: A list of session presenters included in the program booklet to help inform session choices, a shared list of session attendees to facilitate networking and postconference follow-ups, and clear descriptions of Culture and Community sessions, particularly regarding activities, time allocations, environmental conditions and the presence of alcohol at certain events.

Site Experience

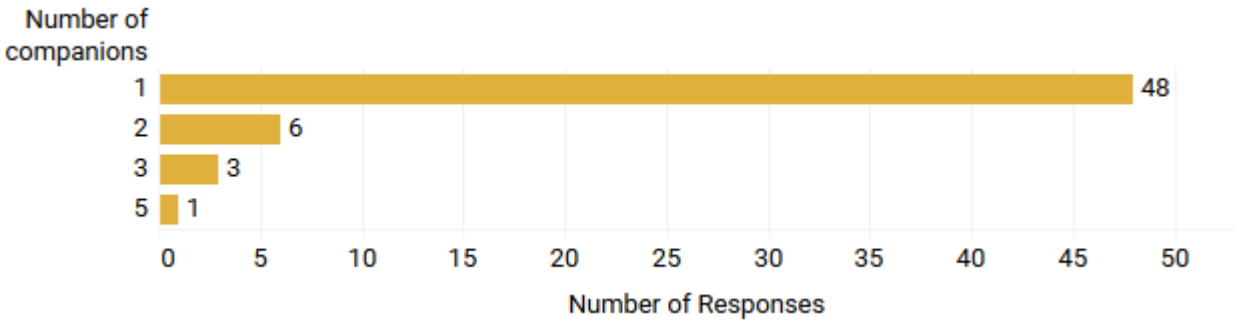
The survey results indicate that 59 attendees brought nonwork companions to the conference (74 individuals). The majority were accompanied by one person. Also, nearly half of the respondents (47.5%) indicated that their travel dates extended beyond the official conference schedule.

The majority of respondents (90.0%) felt they experienced genuine Puerto Rican culture throughout Assembly 2024 events, citing the widespread infusion of Puerto Rican music, dance and food throughout the gathering. Members also appreciated the strong collaboration with ICP, as well as the off-site events as an additional way to engage with Puerto Rican culture. A smaller portion (8.6%) were unsure, while only 1.4% responded that they did not feel they experienced genuine Puerto Rican culture. Some wished they could have had more time experiencing Puerto Rico outside the structure of the Assembly or wished there were more off-site events scheduled.

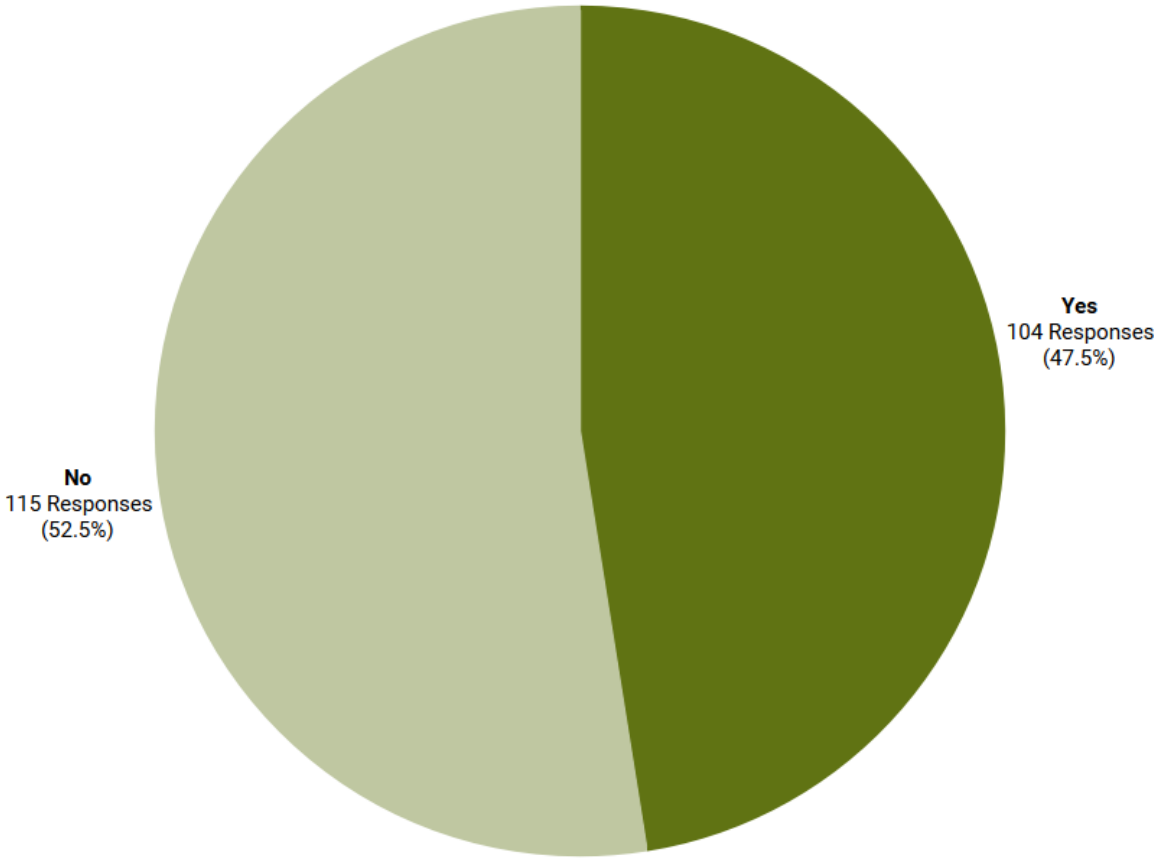
Did you attend the conference with any nonwork companions (e.g., spouse, partner, friend, family members)**?**



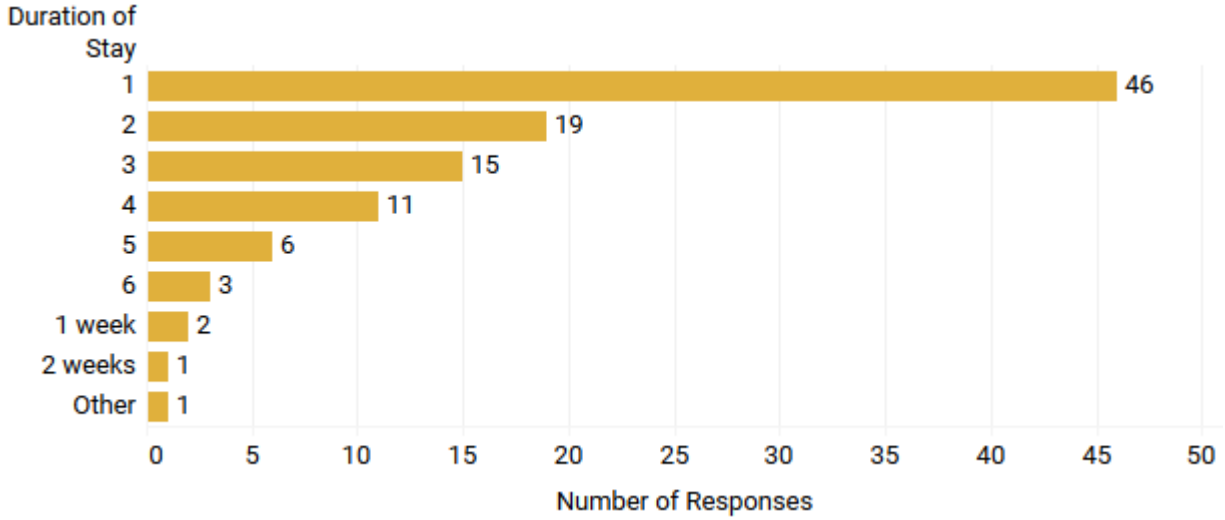
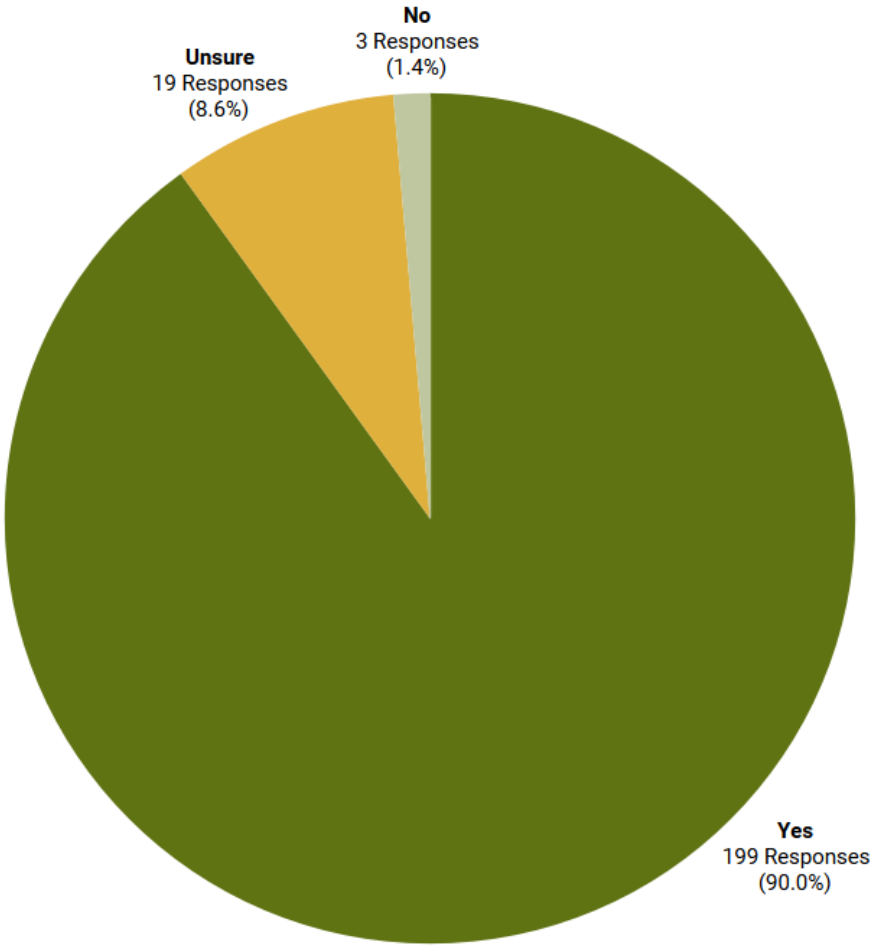
If yes, how many nonwork people accompanied you?



Did your travel dates extend beyond the official conference schedule (e.g., did you arrive before or after the conference dates to enjoy additional tourism days)**?**



If yes, how many additional days did you stay?



Do you feel that you experienced genuine Puerto Rican culture through the Assembly events?