international association for public participation

IAP2 Australasia

Pulse Survey 1

Summary Report

Background

As part of IAP2 Australasia's (IAP2A) commitment to improving feedback loops and to obtain more regular input and involvement from its engagement community, an IAP2A Pulse Survey initiative was introduced this year.

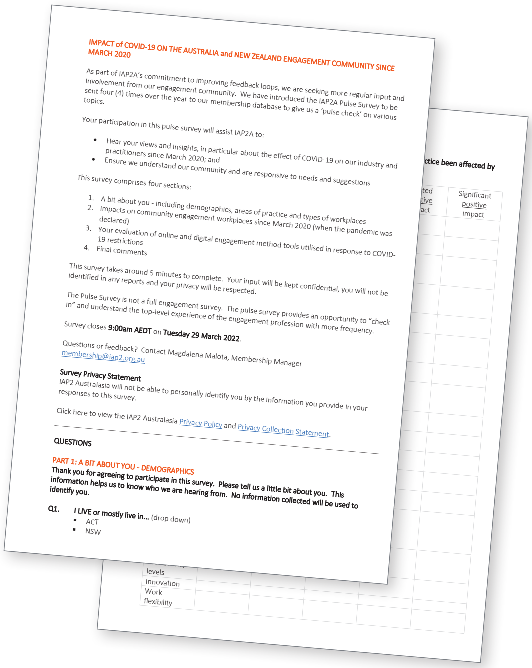
The survey is to be sent out on a quarterly basis, with the aim to provide the association and members with a 'pulse check' on various topics. The results of the pulse surveys will be shared with members in a series of info graphic publications on our website.

Introduction

This first of these was distributed on 22 March 2022 on the topic of the *'Impact of COVID-19 on the Australia and New Zealand engagement community since March 2020.'*

The purpose of the March pulse survey was two-fold:

1. to hear respondents' views and insights, in particular about the effect of COVID-19 on the industry and practitioners since March 2020 (when the pandemic was declared); and
2. to ensure we understand our community and are responsive to needs and suggestions.



IMPACT of COVID-19 ON THE AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND ENGAGEMENT COMMUNITY SINCE MARCH 2020

As part of IAP2A's commitment to improving feedback loops, we are seeking more regular input and involvement from our engagement community. We have introduced the IAP2A Pulse Survey to be sent four (4) times over the year to our membership database to give us a 'pulse check' on various topics.

Your participation in this pulse survey will assist IAP2A to:

- Hear your views and insights, in particular about the effect of COVID-19 on our industry and practitioners since March 2020; and
- Ensure we understand our community and are responsive to needs and suggestions

This survey comprises four sections:

1. A bit about you - including demographics, areas of practice and types of workplaces
2. Impacts on community engagement workplaces since March 2020 (when the pandemic was declared)
3. Your evaluation of online and digital engagement method tools utilised in response to COVID-19 restrictions
4. Final comments

This survey takes around 5 minutes to complete. Your input will be kept confidential, you will not be identified in any reports and your privacy will be respected.

The Pulse Survey is not a full engagement survey. The pulse survey provides an opportunity to "check in" and understand the top-level experience of the engagement profession with more frequency.

Survey closes **9:00am AEDT** on **Tuesday 29 March 2022**.

Questions or feedback? Contact Magdalena Malota, Membership Manager
membership@iap2.org.au

Survey Privacy Statement
IAP2 Australasia will not be able to personally identify you by the information you provide in your responses to this survey.

Click here to view the IAP2 Australasia Privacy Policy and Privacy Collection Statement.

QUESTIONS

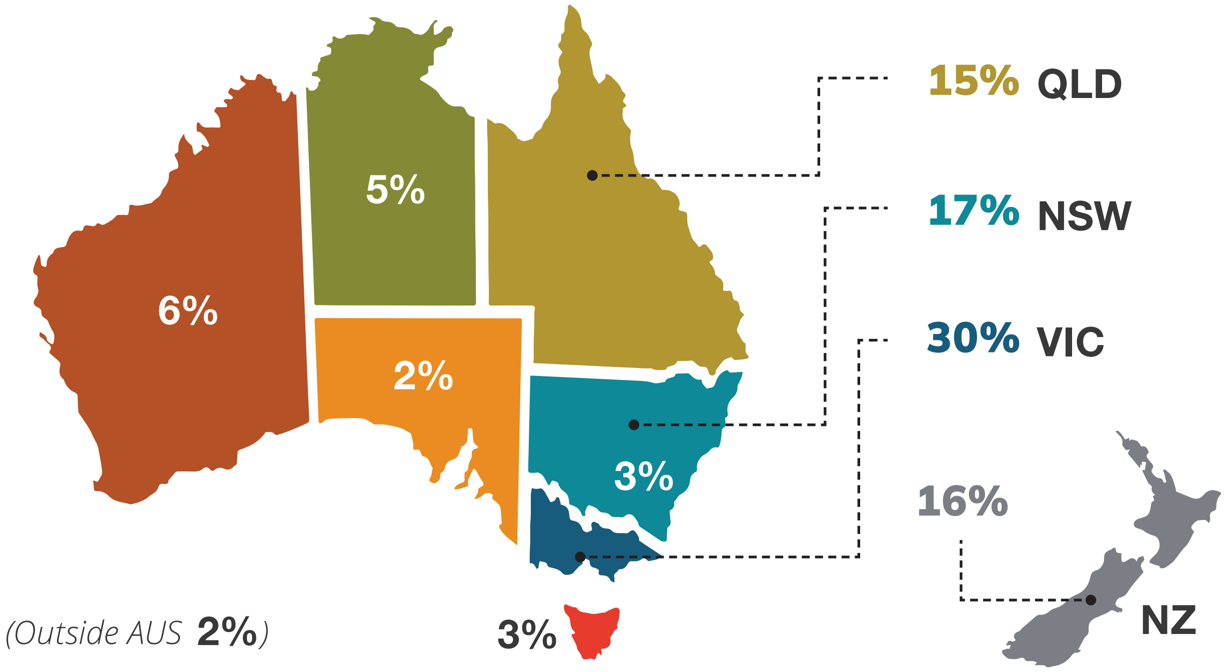
PART 1: A BIT ABOUT YOU - DEMOGRAPHICS
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. Please tell us a little bit about you. This information helps us to know who we are hearing from. No information collected will be used to identify you.

Q1. **I LIVE or mostly live in...** (drop down)
- ACT
- NSW

Survey findings in brief

1. I LIVE or mostly live in.....

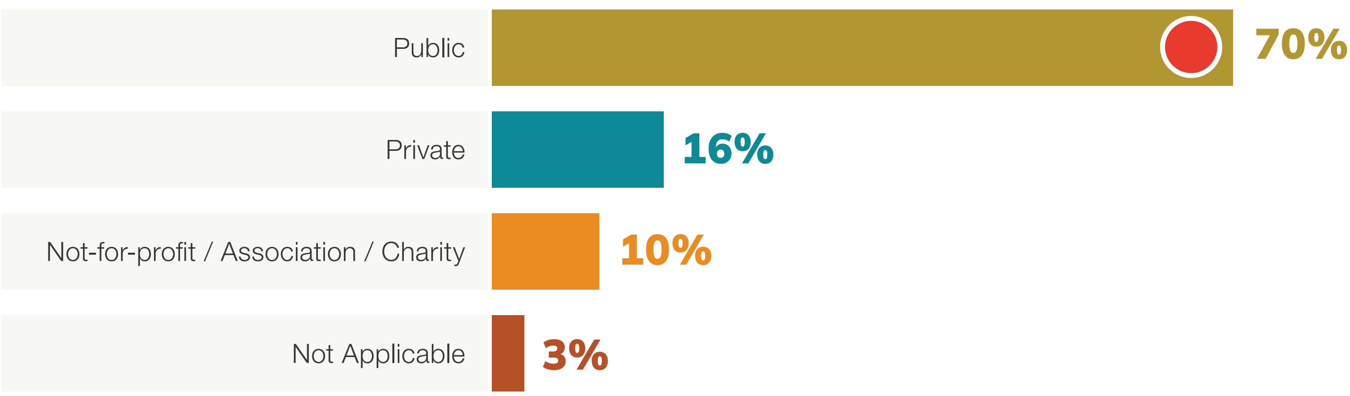
98 RESPONSES



From the ninety-eight (98) received responses, participation was apparent across all Australian states and territories and New Zealand. Participation was highest by community members in **Victoria (30%)**, **New South Wales (17%)**, **New Zealand (16%)** and **Queensland (15%)**.

2. The SECTOR where I do most of my work in is...

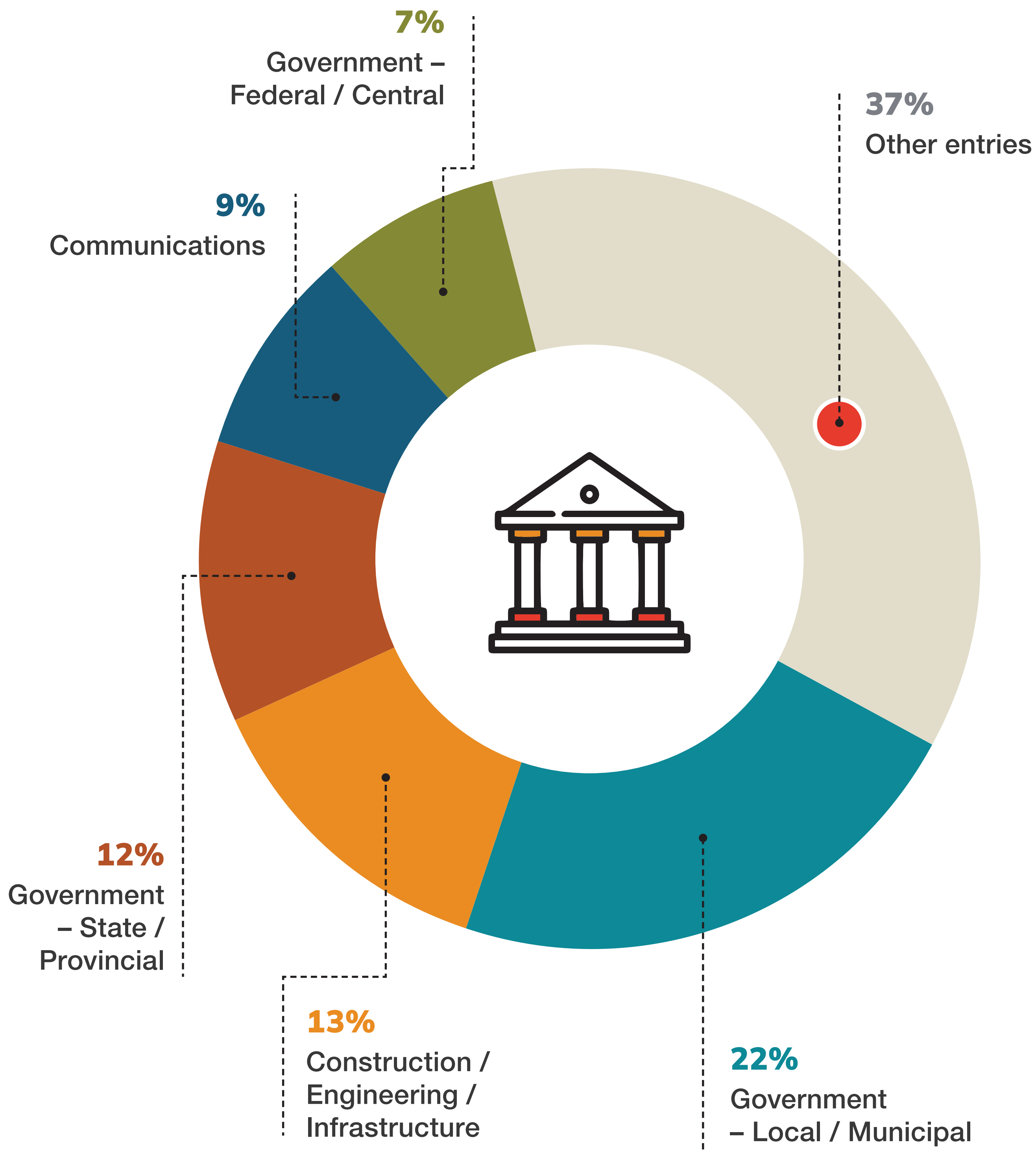
98 RESPONSES

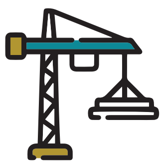


Participants were asked to report the sector and industry where they did most of their work. Most respondents worked in the **public sector (70%)**, the definition of which included: financial corporations controlled by government; government agencies and departments; non-financial corporations controlled by government; notional institutional units controlled by government; public financial corporations; and public non-financial corporations.

3. The INDUSTRY where I do most of my work is...

162 RESPONSES



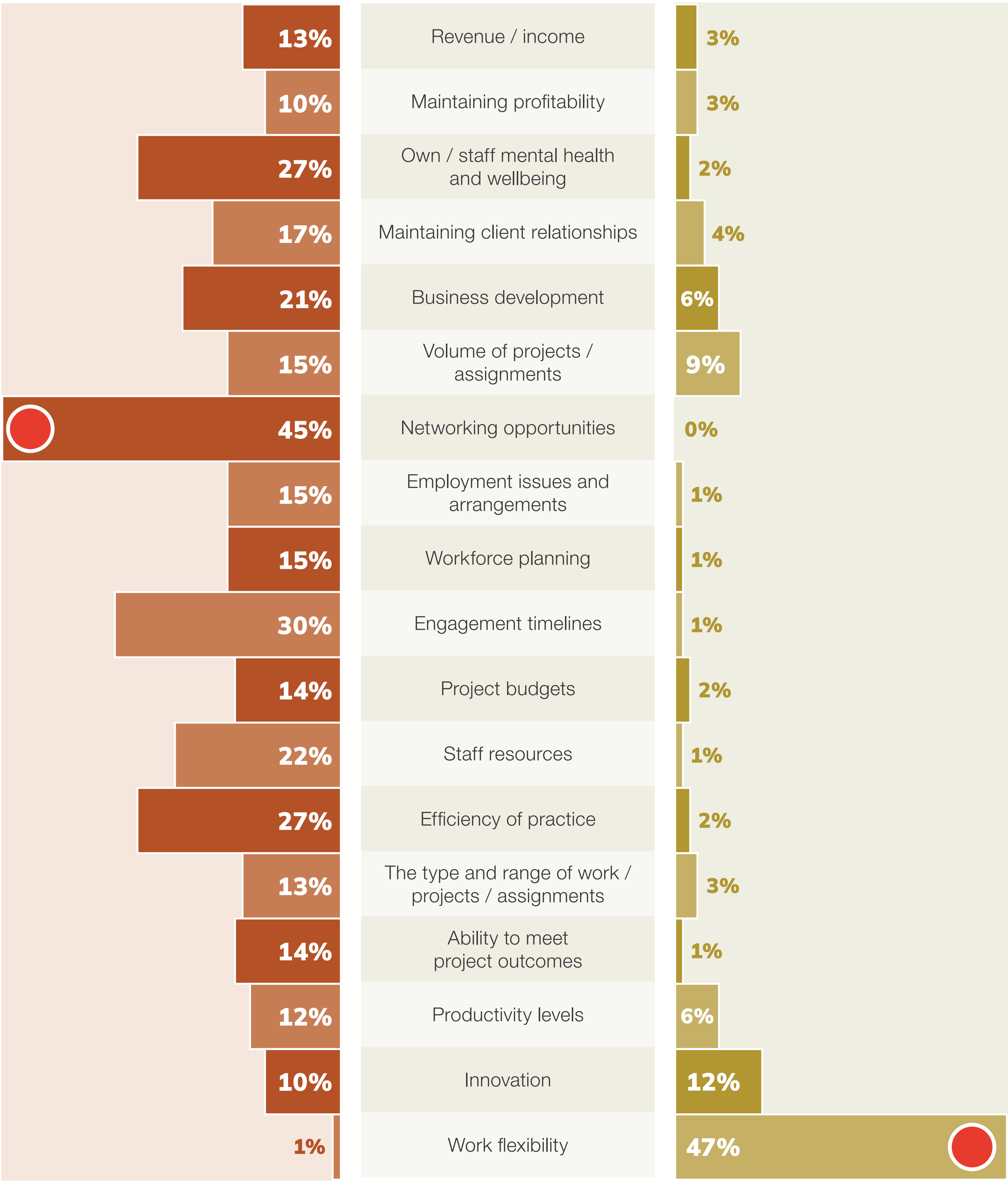


The **top five (5) identified industries** comprised Government – Local / Municipal (36 responses), Construction / Engineering / Infrastructure (21 responses), Government – State / Provincial (19 responses), Communications (14 responses) and Government – Federal / Central (12 responses).

4. To what extent have the following aspects of your employment / practice been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020?

98 RESPONSES

SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE AND SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE IMPACT



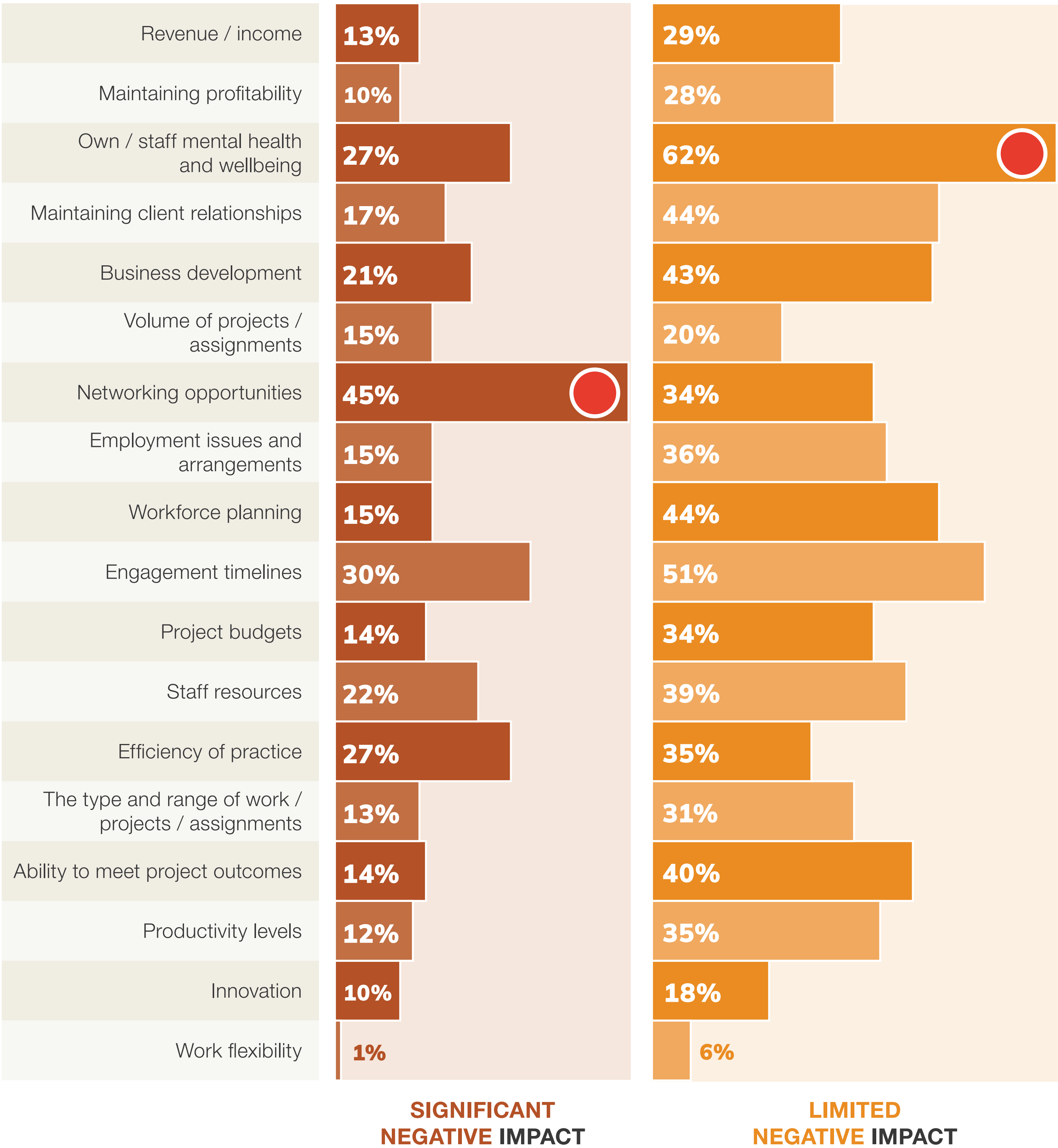
SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE IMPACT

SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE IMPACT

4. To what extent have the following aspects of your employment / practice been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020?

98 RESPONSES

SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE AND LIMITED NEGATIVE IMPACT

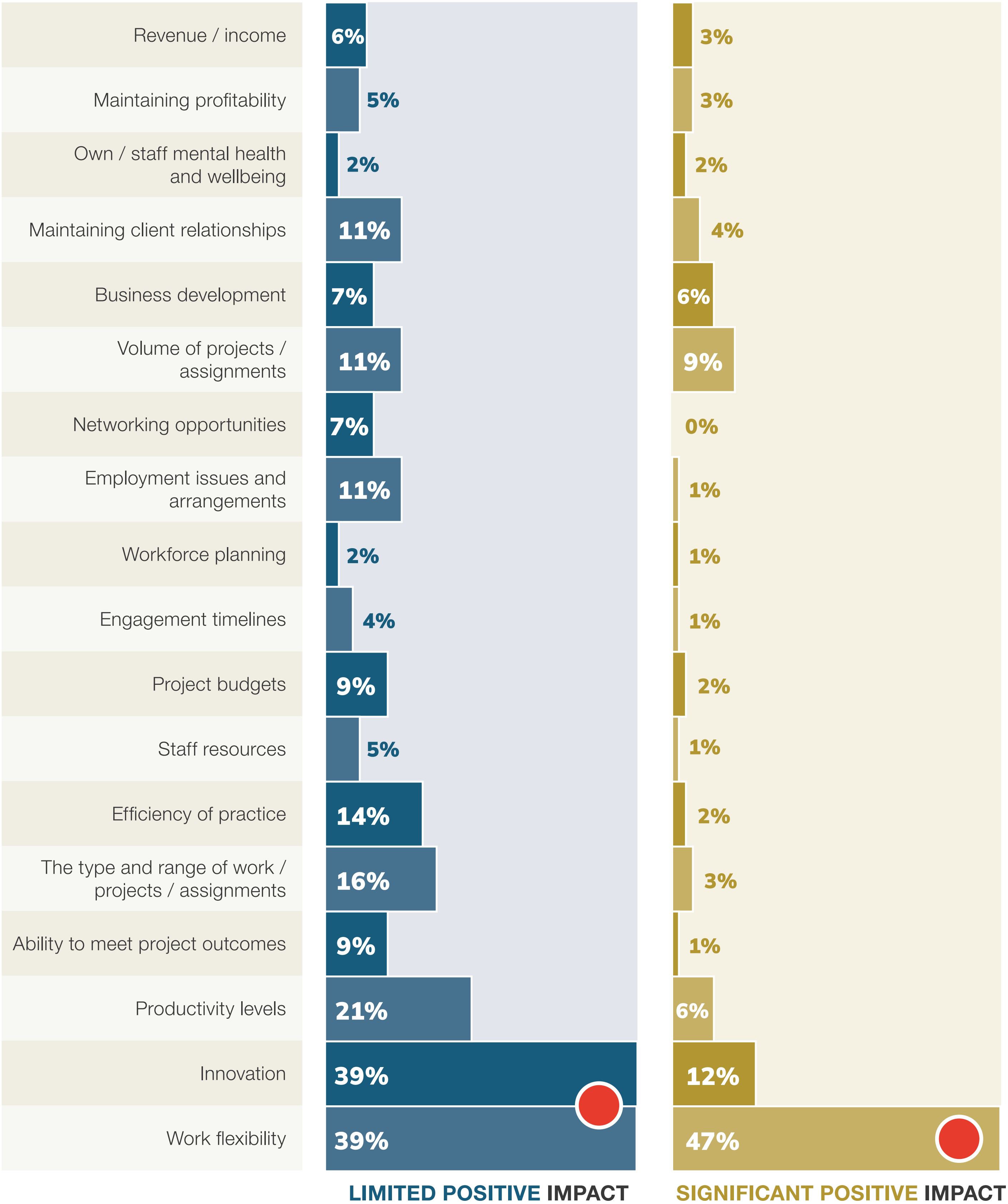


Six aspects were most often viewed as having been **negatively impacted by pandemic-related changes**, including: professional networking, impact on engagement timelines, efficiency of practice, own and staff mental health & wellbeing, staff resources and business development.

● 4. To what extent have the following aspects of your employment / practice been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020?

98 RESPONSES

LIMITED POSITIVE AND SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE IMPACT



Perceived positive impact of the COVID-related changes was mainly identified by respondents in **work flexibility (47%)**, likely associated with the potential for better work / life balance, created by greater acceptance of flexible working conditions.

4. To what extent have the following aspects of your employment / practice been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020?

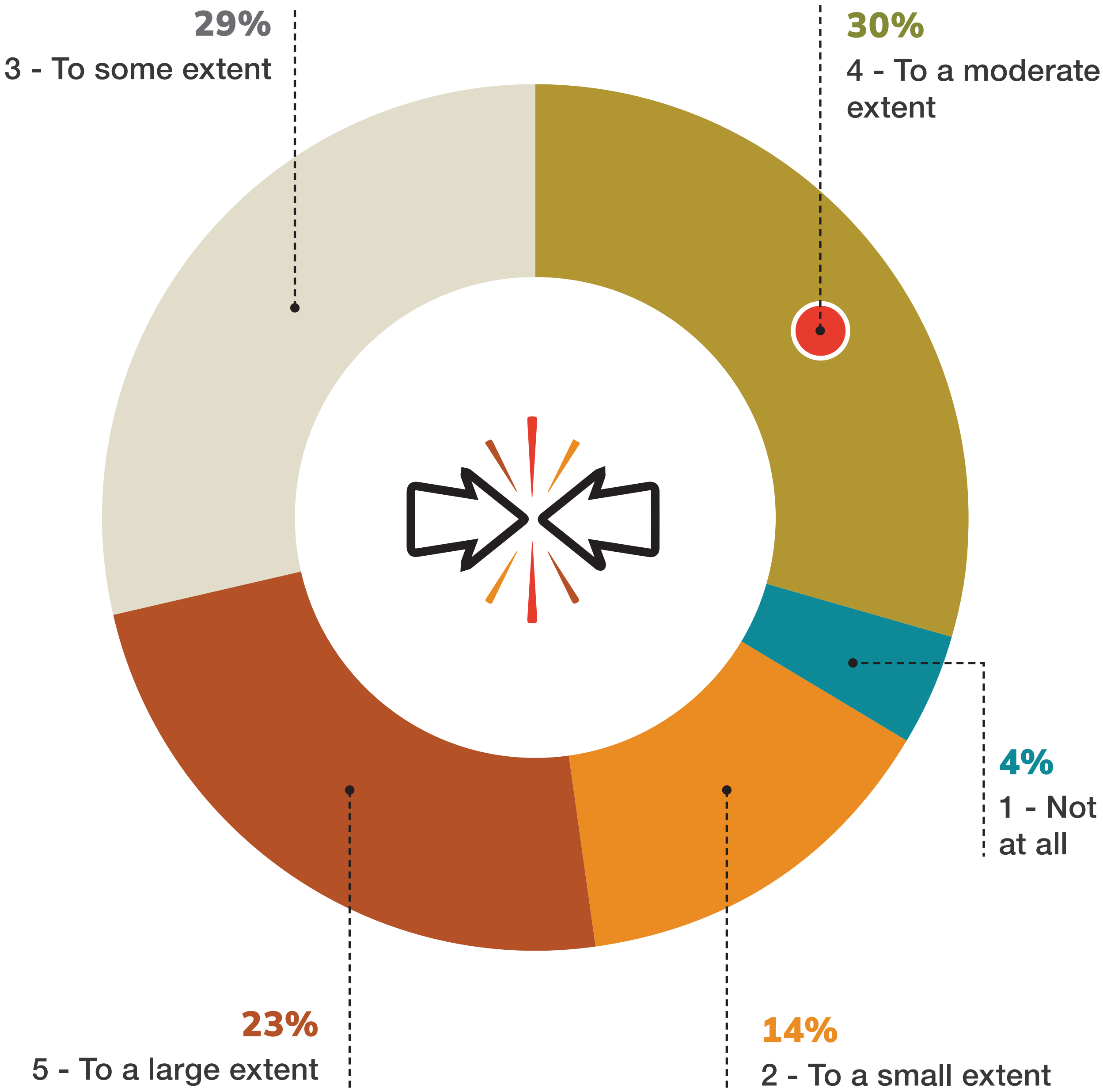
98 RESPONSES

OVERALL IMPACT

	SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE IMPACT	LITTLE OR NO IMPACT	SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE IMPACT
Revenue / income	13%	49%	3%
Maintaining profitability	10%	54%	3%
Own / staff mental health and wellbeing	27%	7%	2%
Maintaining client relationships	17%	23%	4%
Business development	21%	22%	6%
Volume of projects / assignments	15%	44%	9%
Networking opportunities	45%	14%	0%
Employment issues and arrangements	15%	37%	1%
Workforce planning	15%	38%	1%
Engagement timelines	30%	14%	1%
Project budgets	14%	41%	2%
Staff resources	22%	33%	1%
Efficiency of practice	27%	22%	2%
The type and range of work / projects / assignments	13%	37%	3%
Ability to meet project outcomes	14%	36%	1%
Productivity levels	12%	26%	6%
Innovation	10%	20%	12%
Work flexibility	1%	7%	47%

5. OVERALL, to what extent has your employment / practice been affected by the COVID – 19 pandemic?

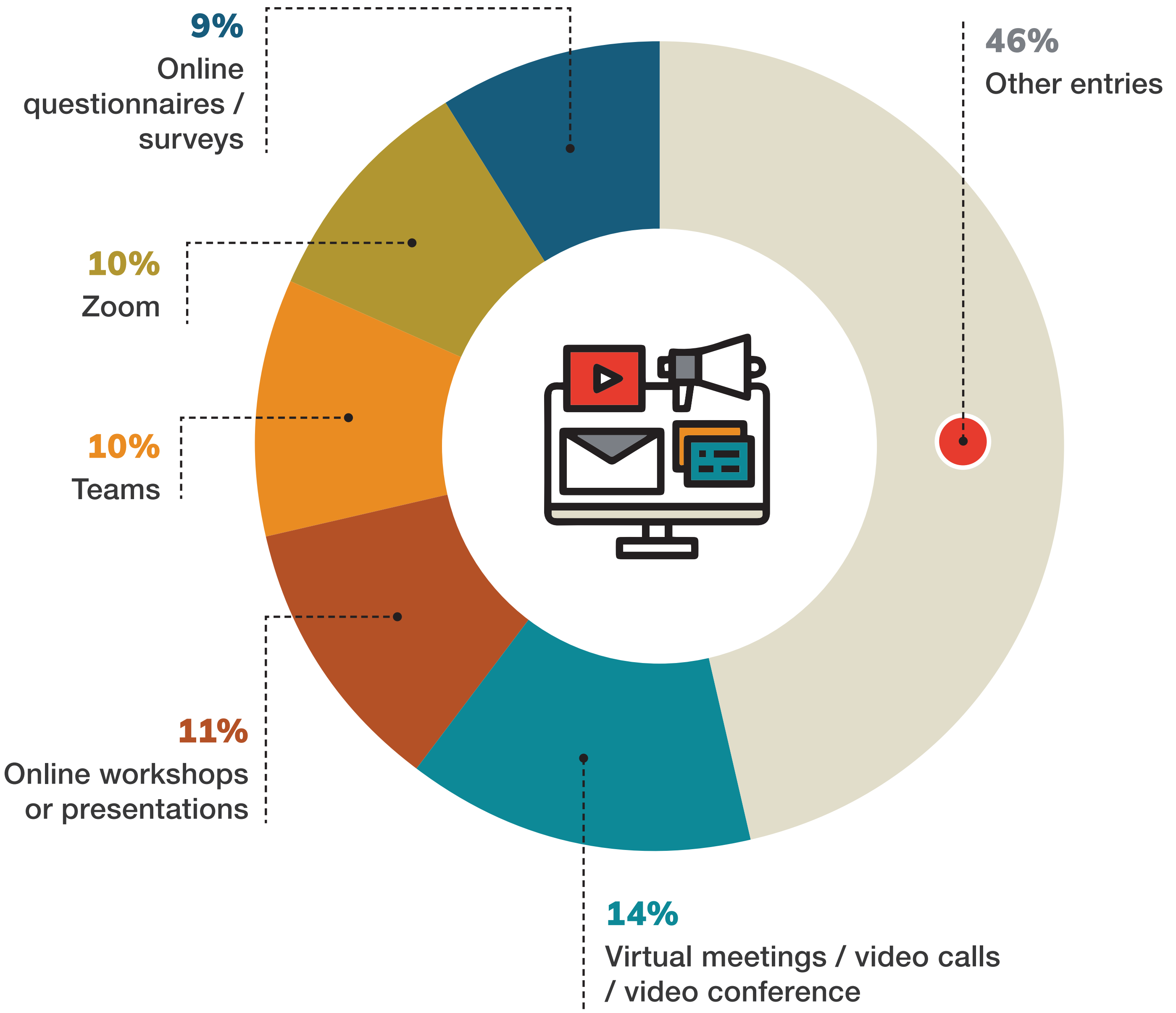
98 RESPONSES



Respondents were asked the overall level of impact that COVID-19 had on their employment / practice since March 2020. A sizable majority of respondents **(53%) reported either a moderate or large impact of COVID-19 on their employment / practice**. A modest 4% reported no impact, and 14% reported a small impact.

6. What digital engagement tools and / or platforms have you found to be most effective in building relationships with the community and stakeholders?

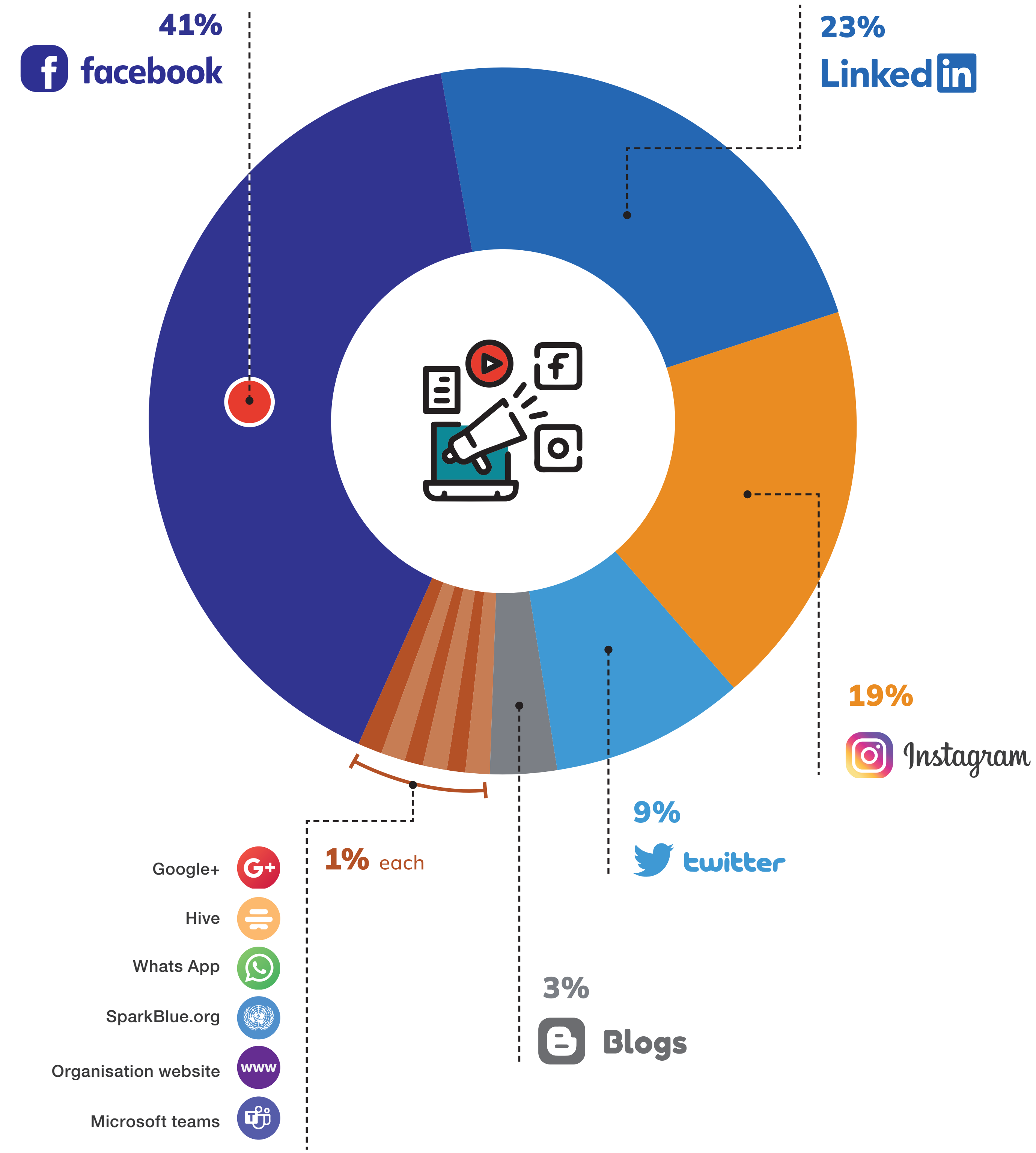
450 RESPONSES



To investigate the most useful digital engagement tools and / or platforms relied upon and considered as most effective in building relationships with the community and stakeholders during the pandemic, the top four responses included **virtual meetings / video calls and conference (14%)**, online workshops or presentations (11%), followed by Teams and Zoom (10% each respectively).

7. Preferred social media platforms

112 RESPONSES



For those who selected the option of a social media platform, the majority of respondents indicated that **Facebook (46)** and **LinkedIn (26)** were their preferred mediums.

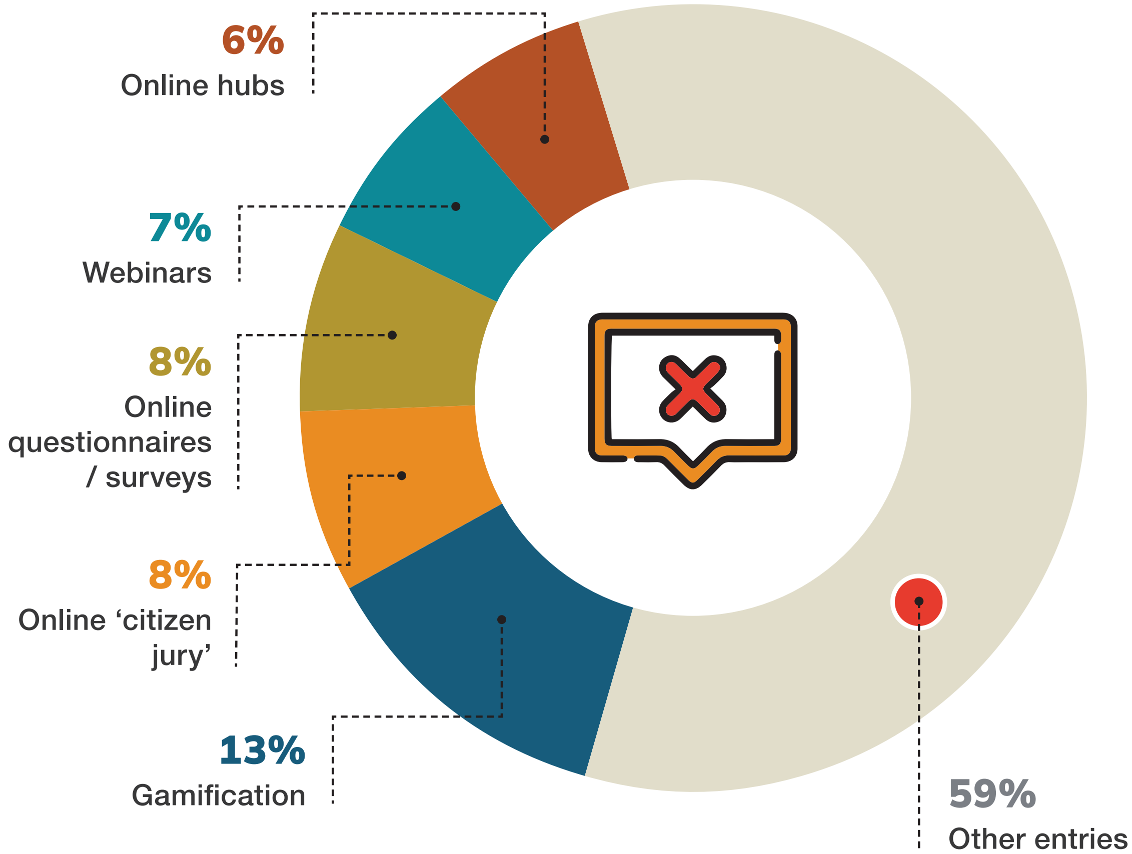
What was your absolute go to digital engagement tool or platform?

58 respondents indicated that their absolute go to digital engagement tool or platform was either **Teams (34 responses)** or **Zoom (27 responses)**.

108 responses from 98 respondents as multiple responses were provided in some instances

8. What digital engagement tools and / or platforms have you found to be least effective?

223 RESPONSES



The **least effective digital engagement tools** and / or platforms in building relationships with the community and stakeholders during the pandemic were found to be gamification (13%), online questionnaires / surveys and 'citizen jury' (8% each respectively).

Whilst there was no standout least favourite digital engagement tool or platform, **social media** as an umbrella term, was the overarching noted answer, with 22 responses.

9. Final comments

The most noted factors relating to changing one aspect around digital engagement focussed on the issue of **'accessibility'** namely across access to technology resources (including useability challenges) and input by vulnerable and minority groups.

Relationships, connections, interactions, dynamics and energy that face-to-face engagement can generate, and which can be lost in a digital environment, were identified as the **most missed aspects** about not undertaking face-to-face engagement.

iap2

international association
for public participation