



Assembly 2018 Evaluation Summary

The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) convened Assembly 2018 in Baltimore, Maryland, November 1-3. 351 participants attended the meeting, out of which 261 were NASAA members. Executive directors made up 16% of all peer group session registrants; grants/fiscal officers, 15%; chairs/council members, 15%; arts education managers, 13%; folk/traditional arts managers, 8%; deputy directors, 9%; community development managers, 10%; and communications managers/PIOs, 8%.

As a measure of attendees' experiences and to better plan future meetings, NASAA distributed paper and electronic versions of an evaluation questionnaire to participants during the closing plenary session. From both the on-line and paper methods, a total of 205 questionnaires were completed, with 191 of the respondents identifying themselves as members. This yielded an overall response rate of 58%, which increased to 73% when considering only NASAA members.

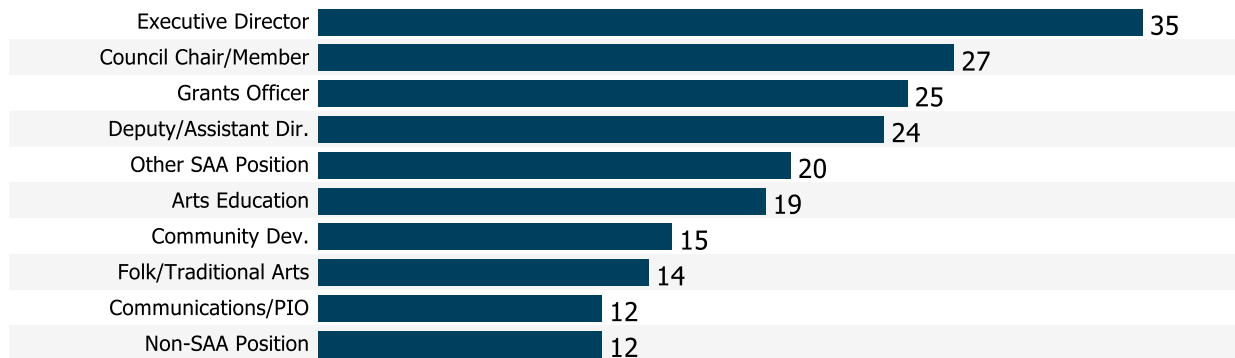
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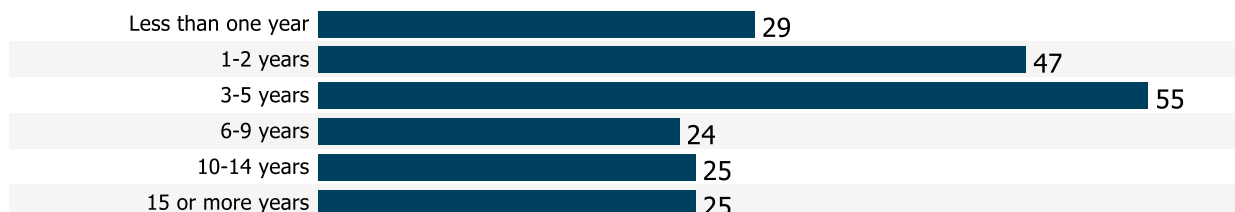
This report contains the key results of the evaluation in cross-tabulations, as well as a complete list of all comments.

About the Respondents

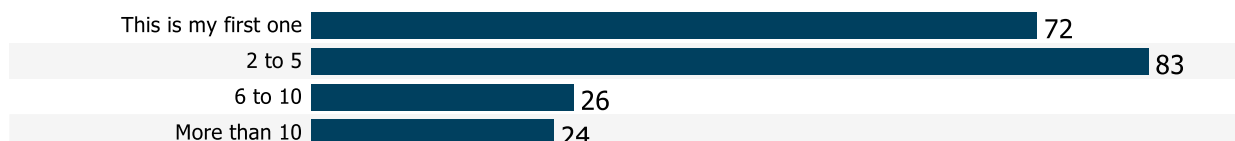
Primary Position



Years in Current Position

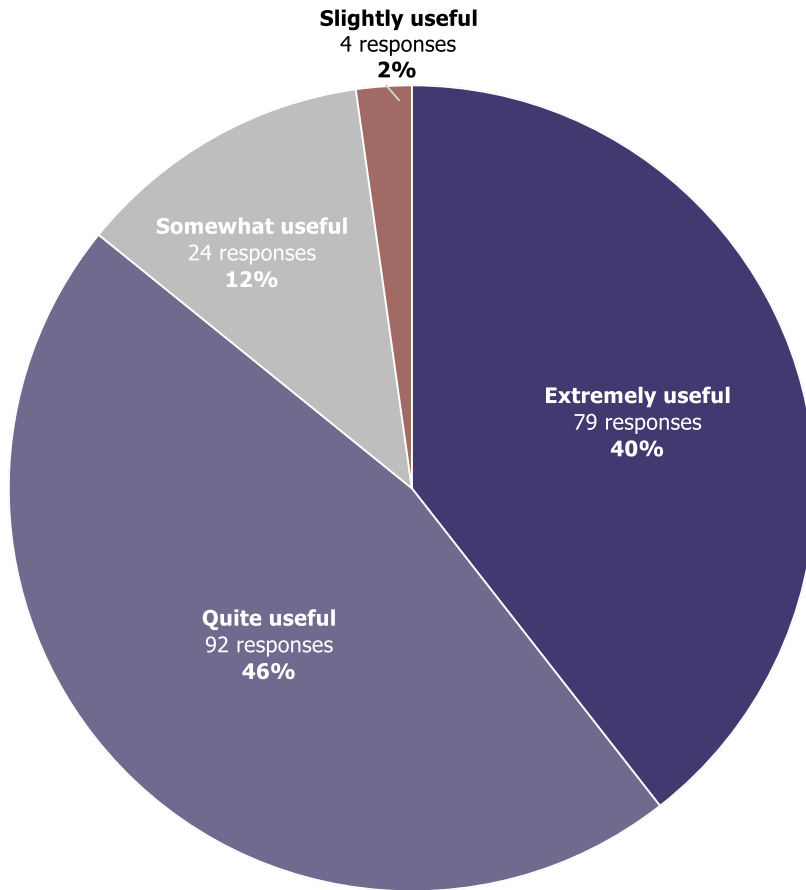


Number of NASAA Meetings Attended

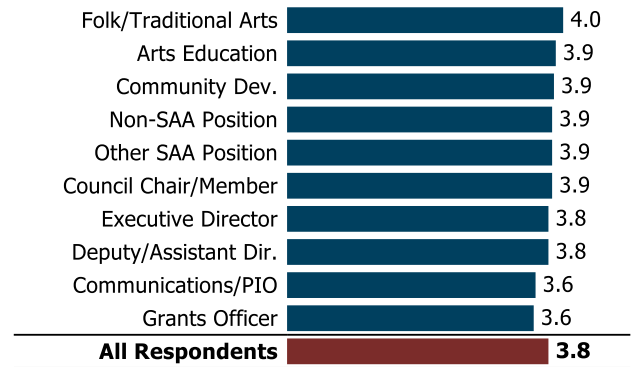


A significant portion of respondents were fairly new to the NASAA community. More than a third of staff had been with their arts councils for two years or fewer and were attending a NASAA meeting for the first time. The Primary Position chart above shows the number of respondents broken down by peer groups.

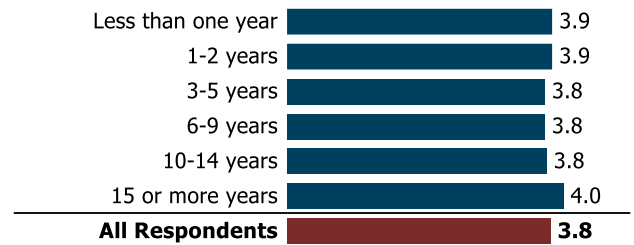
Overall Ratings of NASAA Assembly 2018



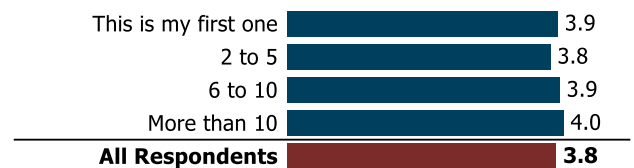
Rating by Position



Rating by Tenure



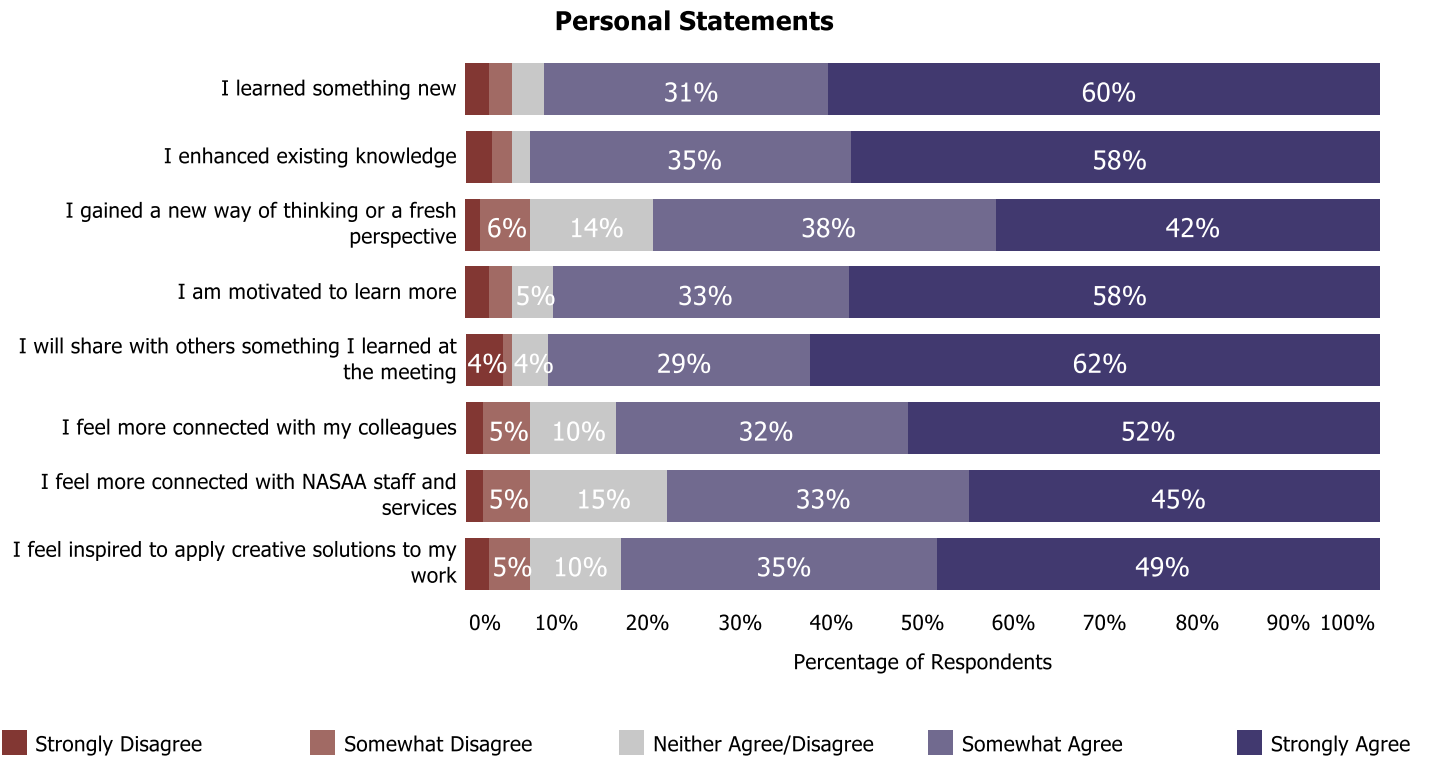
Rating by Number of Meetings



86% of respondents found Assembly 2018 quite or extremely useful. Compared to Assembly 2016, 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 is 3.8, which is slightly lower than the overall average of 4.2 from the Assembly 2016 evaluation. Respondents by position, length of tenure and number of meetings attended all reported relatively similar levels of satisfaction.

Impact on Participants

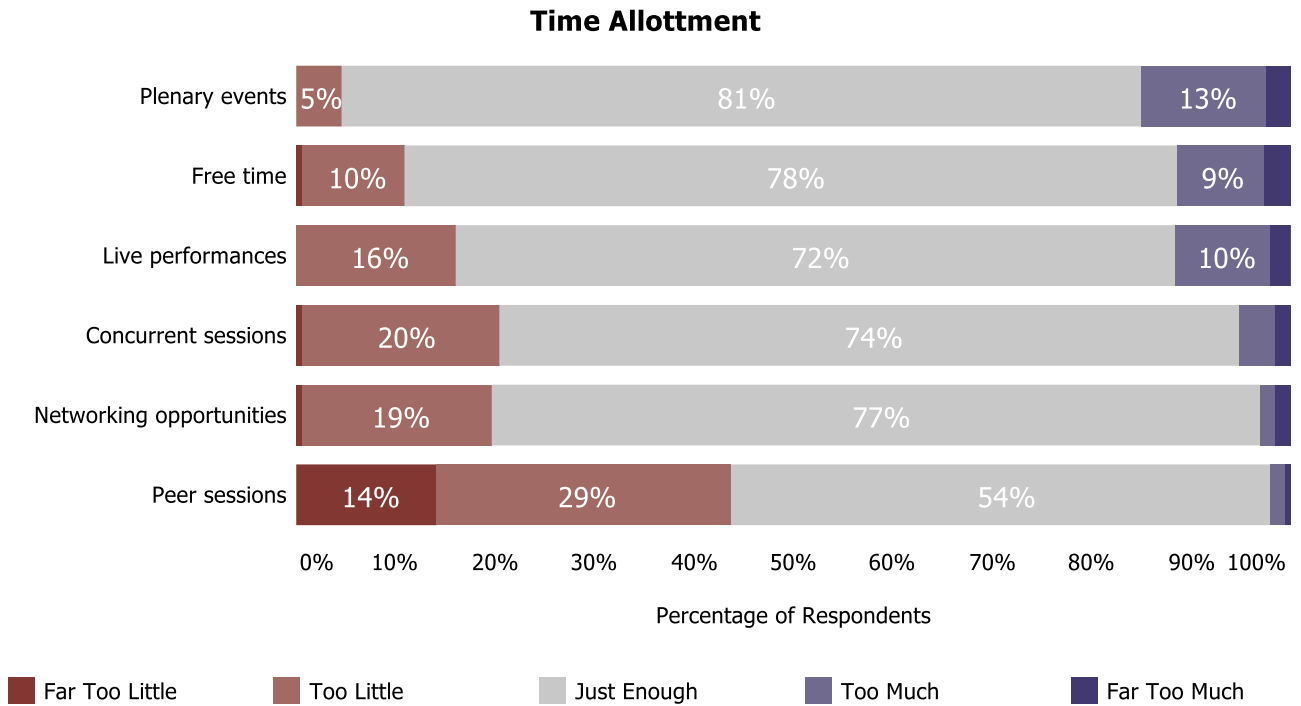
Personal statements included in the questionnaire help gauge participants' self-perceptions, knowledge attainment and changes in motivation.



More than 80% of respondents indicated that they somewhat or strongly agreed with seven of the eight statements. "I feel more connected with NASAA staff and services" received a slightly lower agreement rating, at 78%. This year's results are consistent with 2014 and 2016 results.

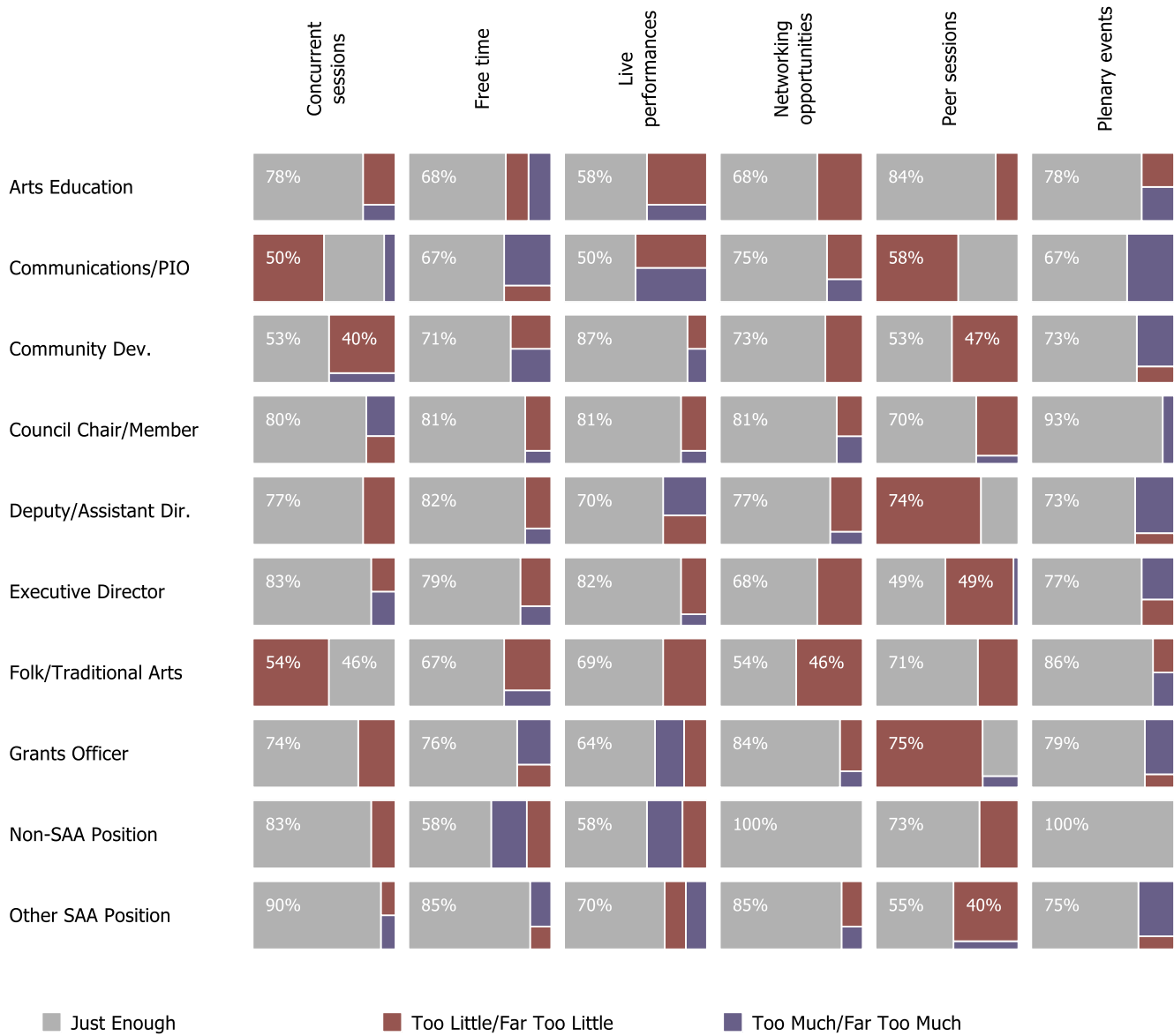
Regardless of tenure, most respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed with the personal statements. Respondents who had been with their arts council for 15 years or more responded with the highest level of agreement to these statements. Those who had been in their position less than one year also displayed relatively high levels of agreement.

Time Allocation



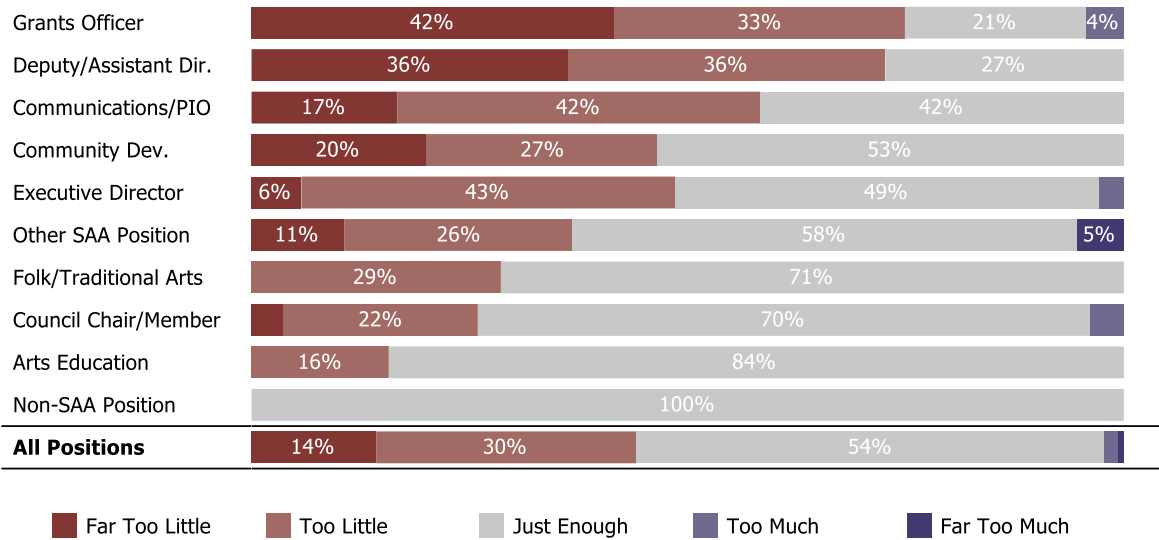
43% of respondents indicated there was too little or far too little time dedicated to peer sessions. The vast majority of respondents believed there was just enough time allocated to the rest of the Assembly activities.

Time Allotment by Position



This table conveys attendee attitudes toward the duration of activities by position type. Most respondents wanted more time allocated to peer sessions—this was especially true for grants officers, deputy directors and communications managers/PIOs. Folk/traditional arts and communications/PIO peer groups also indicated there was too little time for concurrent sessions.

Peer Session Time Allotment by Position

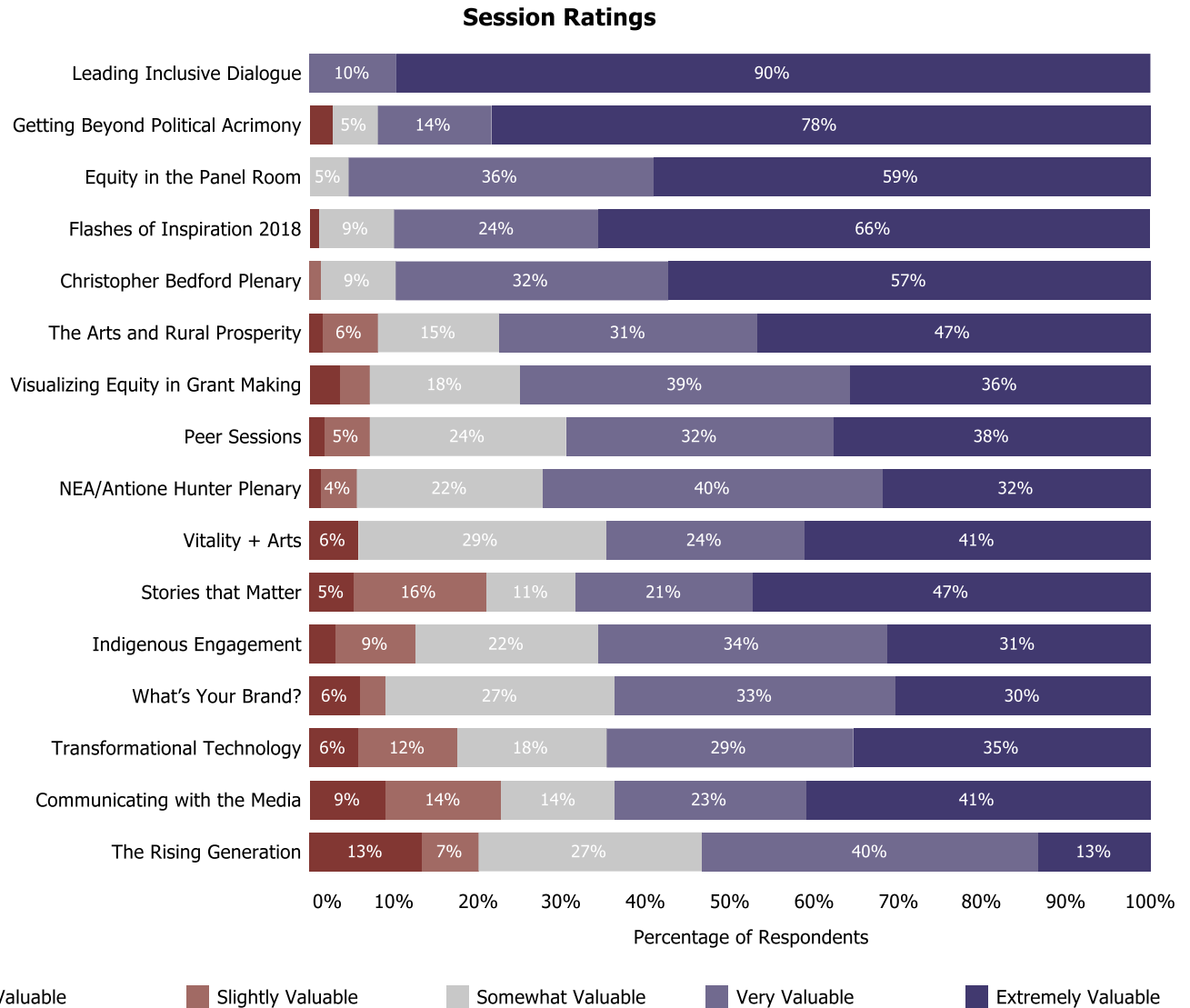


Average Peer Session Rating by Position



Many respondents wanted considerably more time with peers—75% of grants officers (with 42% indicating there was "far too little" time, consistent with Assembly 2016) and 72% of deputy directors. A significant portion of responding communications managers/PIOs, community development managers and executive staff members also wanted more peer time. Folk/traditional arts managers and arts education managers, who have preconference programs, felt the right amount of time was allocated to peer sessions. In terms of satisfaction with the peer sessions themselves, the average rating by peer group was 4.0 on a 5.0 scale. Communications managers/PIOs had a lower average rating (3.4) than the rest of the groups, down from a 4.7 average rating in 2016.

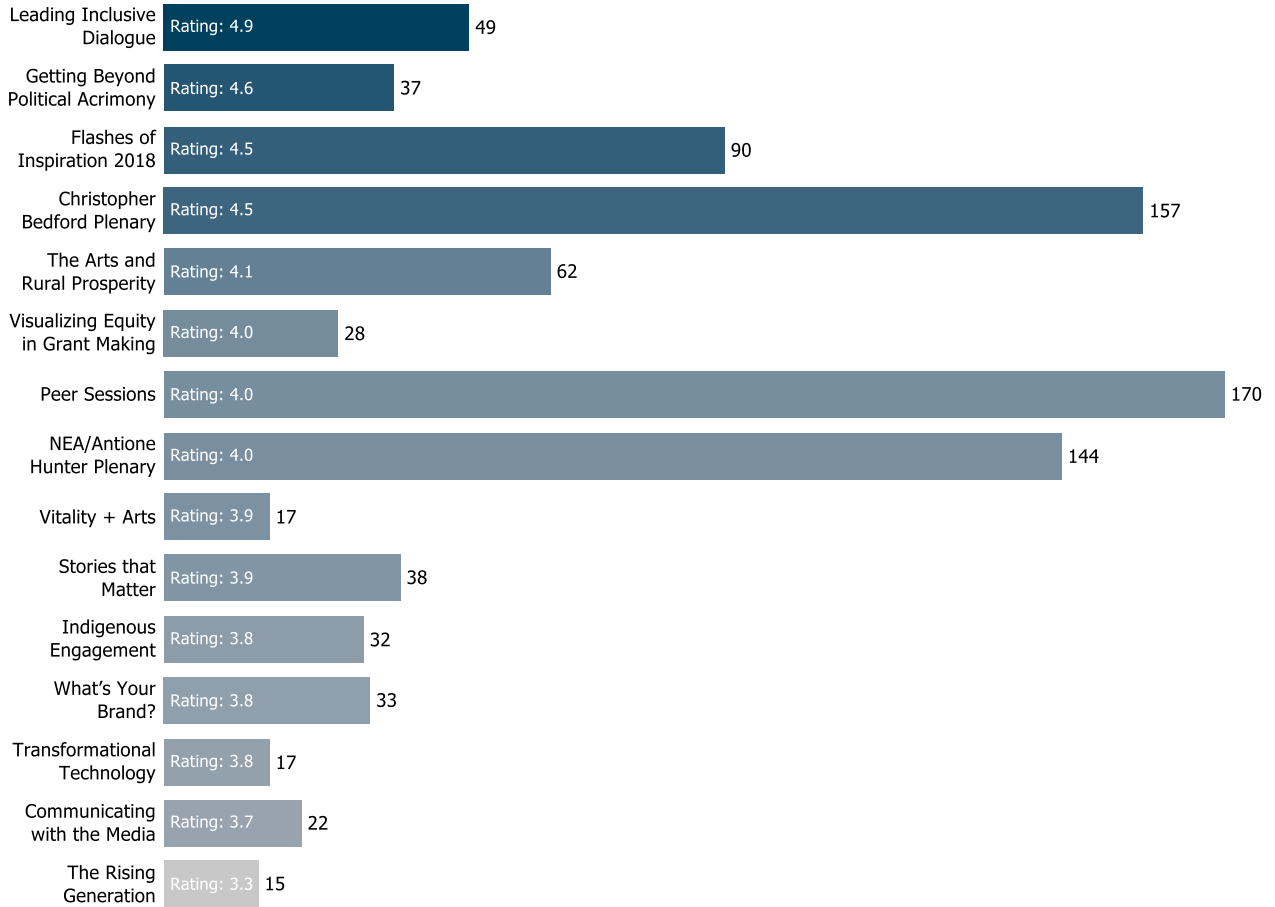
Session Ratings



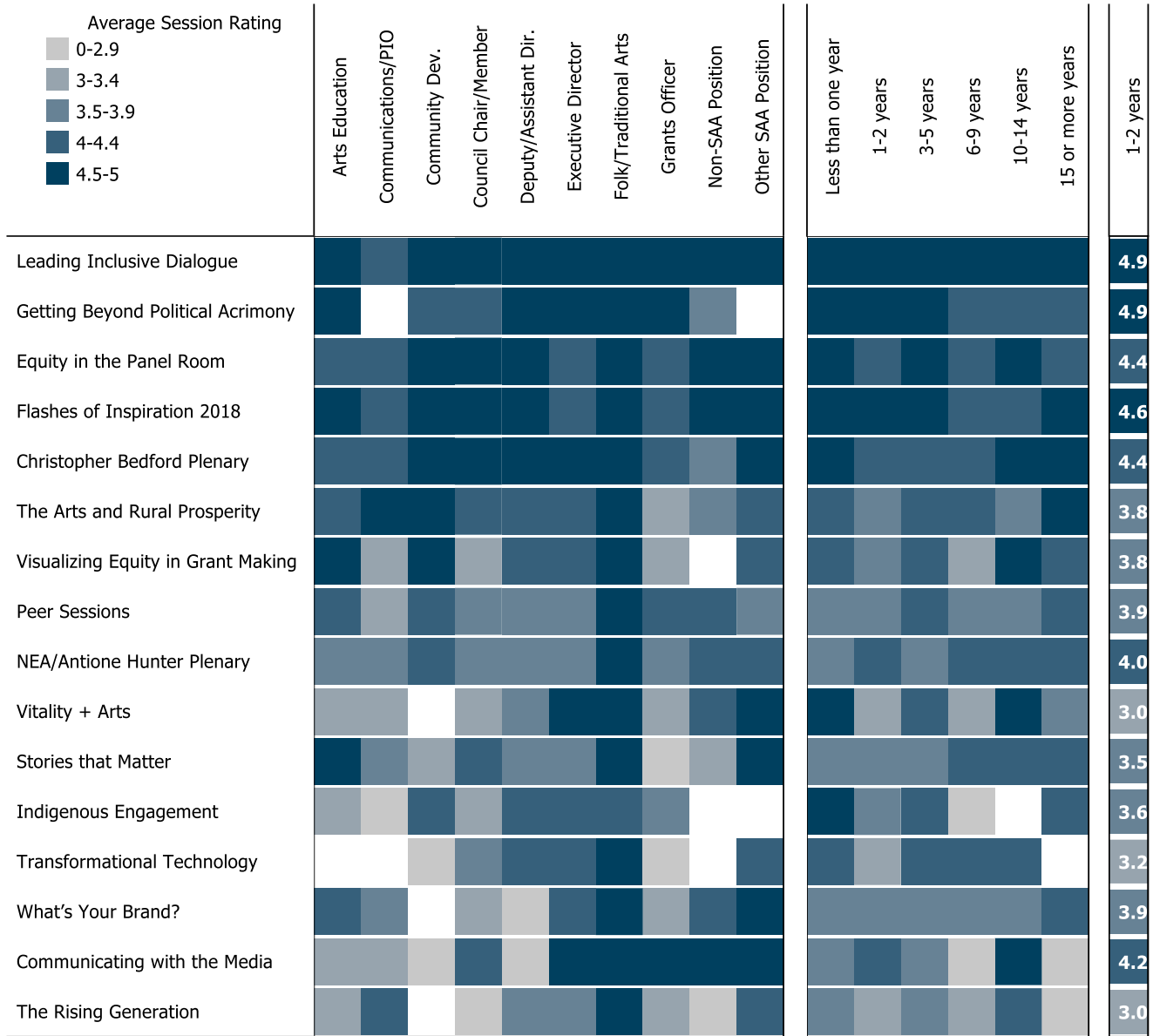
The bars in the chart above display the ratings as percentages for each session. The lowest average response rating for a session was above 3.3, which corresponds to "somewhat valuable." Most respondents felt sessions were "very valuable" or "extremely valuable." The Verbatim Comments section below provides more detailed session feedback and is consistent with this chart's findings.

The following chart shows the number of attendees along with the average rating, providing popularity measures by rating and number of respondents. The last chart provides average session ratings by position and tenure.

Respondents by Session Attendance and Average Rating



Average Session Rating by Position and Tenure



Verbatim Comments

The following are verbatim comments from submitted surveys. Respondents were prompted to answer three write-in questions related to sessions and overall experience at the meeting.

Please share any comments you have about specific sessions.

- A great approach to challenging topics!
- A group of us attempted to visit Bromo Tower, but had the wrong directions. We did, however, visit another charming area of Baltimore where we found a splendid plein air artist.
- After hearing Christopher Bedford, we visited BMA in the afternoon. Overall, really great assembly.
- After visiting, I would have preferred a guided tour of the art district. It was along a very busy street and it was difficult to navigate and decide where to go despite the staffed HQ. Having said that I saw some really great stuff!
- All rooms, all speakers need to use mics!!! Speakers should not ask if ok not to use mics.
- Amazing Assembly. Great job!! Looking forward to more collaboration with NASAA and NEA.
- Antoine Hunter brought so much love and connection to the whole group! Happy to have Mary Anne [Carter, acting chairman] at the NEA.
- Appreciated plenary with Antoine Hunter.
- Arts and Entertainment District: great way to see how one community is expanding the arts. Stories that Matter was awesome!!
- Arts and Entertainment Districts: disappointed no tour of Baltimore Museum. Poorly organized/art less than quality/timing long and poorly designed. Super dirty areas in town. Excellent presentation by Kelly (Getting Beyond Political Acrimony). SO VERY. Any session led by Kelly is excellent.
- Arts and Entertainment Districts: very disheartening variety of reasons, only got to see one institution because it started so late. Didn't find the arts and rural prosperity helpful or insightful. Was a very dry recap of what we as state arts agencies already know, didn't provide a clear outline of how this research would be applied and used to incite change moving forward.
- As a new ED who covered both the "30 minute" OIG session for the Grants Officers/Deputy Directors, followed by transition to ED session, I found it hard to get into the conversation of either because of 1) my newness and still unfamiliarity of the FFR/FDR and allowable/unallowable; so ultimately not able to bring home new knowledge to my Deputy. We purposely chose that my Deputy would not attend the conference because current oversight is just financial/accounting and not programmatic. That said, I still feel at a significant loss for knowing with certainty how/what we are reporting. This first time I anticipate to be a huge learning curve. On a completely separate topic, while I was rather inspired by the visionary leadership of Christopher Bedford and the BMA, I was a little disappointed to not hear many concrete strategies for how they are reaching out to and truly engaging diverse audiences. Felt like we were neglecting half of the point of the conversation.
- Baltimore Arts & Entertainment Districts: would have preferred guided session, rather than on own transportation to attend. Field exploration should have been more guided,

not left to self-exploration. Some of the topics and descriptions didn't match presentation.

- Bedford and Urban Dance - outstanding
- Both indigenous and rural session would have benefited from greater length.
- Can't wait for report on rural infinitives. C. Bedford was inspirational, especially the statement about knowing that when he leaves, it will be the right time for change. Leading inclusive dialogue very effective and reaffirming.
- Christopher Bedford and Antoine were amazing.
- Congrats to Eric! It was a great annual meeting.
- Council Member Peer Session: All of these council members come to this session with probably more diverse backgrounds than the professional staff at the Assembly. It would be more ideal spending more time getting to understand who they are and what they feel like they can do or need to learn in their state. I was surprised no one had a single question for Mary Anne Carter...the head of the NEA! A facilitated dialogue with her might have been better or a clearer sense of what you wanted attendees to do with what they learned from Mary Anne. Also, the small group sessions were mostly: "in my state we do this" statements. Not quite useful enough? Technology Session: I enjoyed this, though I think Jax's presentation could have been refined just a bit. I know much of what she said was jibberish to a lot of people in the room...I don't know that people were ready for how technical it would be. (It was good enough for me though, that I'm hoping to connect with her in Michigan.) Work conference calls kept me from participating in some of the assembly's sessions.
- DD peer session - facilitators did not really have a structure/content. Equity in panel room - some activities (boal) were entertaining, but no takeaways.
- Equity in Panel was great, gave very actionable, tangible takeaways. Flashes was great! Would encourage case study panels to make sure presentations focus on what can be applied to other states.
- Equity in the Panel Room was brilliant, engaging, and one of the only sessions where I felt I left with action steps to take back to my team.
- Equity in the panel room was great, except...there was little to no buy in from Executive Directors, Deputy Directors, and board members. There were tons of people at the session, but almost all were grants program staff. While these staff run the panel meetings, they don't always have control over agency-wide decisions like allocating funds for additional panel training, adding equity criteria to scoring, etc. If this work is to advance, ED's and board members need to be in the room.
- Excellent "flashes" authentic successes that could be replicated. Short presentations extremely valuable.
- Grants coordinators really need their own pre-conference. There is need for a much deeper and longer conversation. About a dozen of us went to dinner as well as the session and again, still much more to discuss. I have a suggestion on how we could structure it too....!
- Great Arts Ed PDI
- Highlandtown was a great place to learn about Baltimore Art Scene
- I appreciated deep dives. They could go longer, even deeper. Professional development opportunities and skill development would be great.
- I appreciated Pam's immediate and clear apology about the postcards. It was clearly unintentional and the staff owned it and dealt with it quickly and well.
- I enjoyed my first time with NASAA

- I feel like the sessions were parceled out in a way that seemed like the conference had minimal programming. I was disappointed there were not more session times blocked off for learning. Since I was only available on Thurs/Fri to attend, I only was able to make just a couple sessions. As always, I feel more peer sessions (or even a pre-conference like the arts ed folks) would be helpful. I always love site visits but I was uninspired by the lack of organization around this year's (as they were a "choose your own adventure on your own" type of tour).
- I had to depart on Friday afternoon, so did not attend as much as I would have liked.
- I love the flashes of inspiration model and learning from the states in a range of fields (arts in health, arts in corrections, emergency preparedness, etc.). NASAA does a tremendous job in allowing the NEA opportunities to participate and connect with our colleagues across the SAAs/RAOs and other participating orgs. Thank you for being so generous to the office of accessibility - allowing Beth and I time to host the peer session and speak at others. Wonderful job including people with disabilities in the themes and messaging throughout the conference. Antoine Hunter and Co. were fantastic!
- I loved the "free" Friday night, because I used it for a dinner with other grants folks, where we essentially continued the peer session.
- I think peer sessions could have had more "free form" Q and A time than it did, maybe just one presentation.
- I thought Christopher's session was interesting, but it was a little too specific. I had a difficult time connecting the work he is doing at a local level to the work we are doing at the state agency level.
- I was very much anticipating the Bromo tour - but found all but one of the studios closed. Interesting building but insufficient access and context.
- I wish the first plenary had not cut into the peer session, I would like less time on the state intros.
- I wonder if there is value considering peer sessions as half day pre-conference activities (time for more networking as peers/time for dialogue).
- I would have liked more structure and more sessions scheduled on Friday rather than loosely structured excursions. There were far too few sessions on specific topics of interest and the plenary sessions are too broad for actual take-away lessons.
- If there is any way to allow for more time for the Grants Officer Peer Group to meet, it would be invaluable. Thanks for considering this!!
- Inclusive dialogue was the best, appreciated having longer session too.
- Inspector General information was very helpful.
- Kelly Barsdate (Beyond Political Acrimony) - OMG she is engaging, interesting presenter who addressed a timely yet timeless and vital topic.
- Kelly Barsdate far exceeded expectations in leading her sessions. She is an outstanding presenter, policy expert and data engineer.
- Kelly Barsdate is a phenomenal facilitator and presenter. Her session has the perfect blend of data, application and empathy.
- Kelly Barsdate Political Acrimony session was incredible - moving, challenging and inspiring. I want my whole staff to go through it for team building! Antoine Hunter presentation was amazing.
- Leading Inc. dialogue was brilliant! The peer session "chew" session devolved into negativity.
- Love focus on equity - more sessions on implementation, models, best practices.
- Love knowing all the sessions will be summarized and shared.

- Love the flashes of inspiration
- Loved the interactive components of the equity in the panel room session - well designed, provided useful tools for managing panels. Look forward to exploring cited resources and research.
- Loved the peer session where our table talked about rural involvement of the arts as a tool for economic development.
- Loved the performances!!!! All of them! Especially Antoine Hunter - so uplifting!
- Mics were needed in almost all situations! need to control time! Need to have moderators repeat questions!
- More time for peer sessions.
- More time for Saturday sessions.
- Most studios were closed. For those of us who walked, the directions were a bit confusing.
- Ms. Quivers was phenomenal!
- Much too little time with peer group.
- NEA audit session: IG folks seemed a little unprepared to present. Slight disconnection between accountant language and questions. Appreciate Andi making this available.
- Need more peer time
- Opening session: post cards used for roll call were inappropriate with racist imagery on some.
- Panels need to scale back presenting time to leave questions and discussion time. Too often first presenters run long and last panelist is forced to rush. Use flashes of inspiration template with timed slides to keep presenters focused and on task. To have time after the intense pre-con was a gift.
- Peer sessions could use more time and diverse topics to discuss according to the type of work DD's are doing.
- Please see electronic feedback. Thank you.
- Plenary sessions should provide caption and provide communication access.
- Really enjoy connecting in the peer session and appreciate that NASAA prioritizes this.
- Rural prosperity - would have liked less repeating of current situation, and more about how to engage/support.
- Saturday session too short. Both would have benefited with more time, for deeper dives - more depth?
- "Stories that Matter" was wonderful but would be helpful if at the end, it could be tailored to telling short story about value of the arts to folks that have limited time. More practical solutions.
- Storytelling
- Storytelling session was really inspiring and I wish more people could experience that.
- Storytelling was inspirational.
- Strongly feel more time could be allotted to Peer sessions
- Thank you for putting together such relevant and interesting session. Loved hearing from BMA director and Antoine Hunter.
- Thank you!
- The 2 hour sessions seemed a little long and Saturday's morning sessions too short. Would like to have had Friday's sessions repeated. The grants managers/deputy session regarding audits was not long enough and felt rushed for such an important and pressing issue. Peer sessions are not long enough, PLEASE CONSIDER a pre-conference session for grants managers.

- The concurrent sessions were too long. The great thing about Flashes of Inspiration is that presenters need to be succinct. A shorter time frame for other presentations would make them stronger. There is too much filler, and not enough interaction.
- The facilitation of the Equity in the Panel Room session was great!
- The grants officer peer session was cut short and it would have been very valuable to have more time to connect with our peers. The Equity in the Panel Room was incredible and very helpful!
- The grants people really need a pre-conference and a conference in the year between assemblies. REALLY NEED THIS.
- The joint DD/GO session was valuable but left me with more questions. I can't wait to hear how the BAM works out. The Research Affinity Group was also valuable. Will be stealing many things from Flashes of Inspiration.
- The Leading Inclusive Dialogue session was exceptional and relevant to anyone who facilitates and anyone who wishes to open meetings for diverse audiences.
- The Leading Inclusive Dialogue session was outstanding. Well designed, great content, excellent support. Great speaker. Will definitely be following up with her and watching her work.
- The most valuable of the sessions that I attended was Communicating with the Media. I appreciated the role-playing and specific exercises Leah devised and led us through. We could have used another hour to make it really worthwhile. The peer sessions are way too short and it feels impossible to cover anything worthwhile in the time, despite best efforts to do so.
- The NEA presentation at the ED session was too little info to engage, and too much to be a brief presentation. I think that would have been better suited in the AE Manager session. It significantly reduced our time to have meaningful conversation. Following that presentation, the format of the "what questions do you have?" segment allowed for an all-consuming conversation about something we have discussed a million times. I would have liked a more rapid fire approach to this part of the session, allowing more questions to be addressed and we need to set ground rules... often it becomes a pitch sessions for a project or program that an ED is proud of that may or may not connect to the topic, and generally go on for about 5 minutes longer than it should. We have a room full of smart, passionate folks all with great ideas. We just need to come up with a format that allows more voices, more ideas, more diversity of thought. For example, what if we had a "panel" of 3-4 EDs (our experts) that rotated with each question asked. So that 3 EDs are the panel, question gets asked, they respond if they can, then they go back to their seats, another 3-4 go up to serve as a panel, and a new person asks a new question.... rapid fire. If the first half of the session ran this way, you could bring up a lot of topics. The second half of the session could be a deep dive into one or two topics that came up as questions in the first half that people wanted to revisit. I'm not wed to this idea, just trying to brainstorm format ideas to get us out of the trap we fall into year after year.
- The opening plenary was VERY long. I wish we had more time for the peer discussion sessions we had only really just gotten started with it was time to wrap up.
- The peer session time was very disappointing as it was cut short by the opening plenary running long, and then the combined Grants/Fiscal Officer and Deputy Director group conversation about NEA audits also ran long. By the time we were in our separate peer group and had finished introductions, it was already 5pm. Giving so much time, not only in the peer group meetings but in the assembly in general, to compliance issues doesn't

seem like a very effective use of in-person time. The NEA audit information is useful and needed but could have easily been conducted as a webinar. Gathering in person is an infrequent occurrence and I would like to see NASAA consider how it makes the most out of deeper, interpersonal learning for all peer groups. I liked the Saturday format with short sessions that repeated, but both sessions that I attended utilized a panel format with too many speakers. They ran long and there was no, or little, time for discussion. Again, I really like the format of 45-minute sessions but would encourage NASAA to program these with only one speaker or other presentation formats more conducive to the time. The presentation + performance format of Antoine Hunter's session was great. Would love to see more like this in the future, hearing more directly from the artists performing. The Leading Inclusive Dialogue session was really useful and the facilitator was excellent. I would be interested in this as a continued area of learning. I loved the inclusion of time to get out into the city and neighborhoods.

- The plenary sessions are a bit too long. The arts portions were fabulous, but couple that with multiple speakers it was too long. Don't lose the arts - just be more succinct or find additional ways to inform us about the things we need to know.
- The tour guide was great, and I loved hearing about the folk art of painted screens. I wish there had been more opportunities to connect with people in Baltimore or opportunities to connect about particular focus groups. For me, a tour of Baltimore's public art would have been massively valuable.
- The two hour format for deep dive presentations made for a rich experience on the topic of equity in the panel room. The format and presenters were fabulous.
- Tiffany (inclusive dialogue) was FANTASTIC!!
- Tiffany Quivers prepared and led a good session.
- Tiffany Quivers was terrific - am going to follow up with her.
- Transformation technology was so disappointing. It should have been clear it was only going to focus on virtual reality.
- Very helpful to hear the branding examples from Tennessee and Ohio.
- Visited BMA based on lecture by Bedford. Visit made the connection.
- Visualizing equity in grant making
- While he introduced 3 interesting questions as part of storytelling, Kiran Sirah talked way too much for the "Stories That Matter" session to have the impact it might. And the "What's Your Brand" session was too narrowly defined on logo and other graphic design components.
- Wonderful and thoughtful presenters and peers. Thank you for convening this unique group of people.
- Wonderful artist performances.
- Would have liked at least one rotation of the sessions (Equity in Panels, etc.) to be able to attend another session. Two hours was too long. Sessions could have been 50 minutes with transition time and another rotation offered. Or offer them in the afternoon for those who don't wish to do an excursion. The plenary with Antoine Hunter was SPECTACULAR. We need to focus more on arts and disability. Great conference!
- Would love if people has buses to attend districts and would like to know how many visited each district - and if transportation was a factor in that decision.

What was the best thing about this meeting?

- AIE pre session PDI was phenomenal, inspiring and totally supports my work. Full NASAA conf - Plenary sessions; opportunities for networking.
- All great! Collegiality, inspiring speakers, performers, topics. Appreciated the pre-conference peer session tremendously.
- All the usual good stuff - sessions, networking, etc.! Antoine Hunter and his dancers are beautiful artists and such a heart touching reminder. Also, nice hotel, easy to navigate and good location.
- Amazing organization and materials. Great client service through the hotel.
- Antoine Hunter
- Being with colleagues
- By far, Antoine Hunter's presentation and performances. It was so powerful and moving. Akua Allrich was incredible! I wish they could've performed longer.
- Catching up with colleagues, sharing experiences, best practices and food for thought. Congrats on always making the Assembly reflect and embody something unique about the place (city/state) we are meeting. And, there were some great sessions and discussions. Thanks for keeping the topics relevant and engaging.
- Chris Bedford was a revelation! Well spoken, raised interesting questions
- Chris Bedford's presentation
- Christopher Bedford.
- Christopher Bedford. 50 anniversary fundraiser.
- Christopher Bedford's talk
- Collaboration with colleagues.
- Colleagues at NASAA and all the states.
- Communicating with the Media, Christopher Bedford plenary session
- Community building. Meeting all the ED's beyond bootcamp cohort. Recognition that the models exist and are replicable.
- Community gathering?
- Community support, sharing best practices, learning from others.
- Connecting with my colleagues and peers.
- Connecting with NASAA staff and board, and other SAAs! Thursday open NASAA board meeting.
- Connecting with others who do similar work and have similar (and different) constraints.
- connecting with peers
- Connecting with peers.
- Connecting with peers.
- Connections with peers.
- Convening and interacting with peers doing similar work in other states.
- CONVENING WITH COLLEAGUES FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY
- Equity in the Panel Room
- Experiencing a diversity of ideas, expressions, arts forms, and information.
- Finding relevance in the content for almost all aspects of our agency.
- First conference. Great to discover and meet peers from other states - so valuable. Good balance between sessions and plenary.
- Folk & Traditional Arts Preconference Reception at the Visionary Art Museum
- Folk arts pre conference and Christopher Bedford
- For me, networking with colleagues.
- Friday sessions and PDI
- Gathering of ideas. The time to celebrate

- Getting a chance to connect with colleagues. Also, the concurrent sessions. I found these more useful than the plenary sessions.
- Getting to know colleagues and their work.
- Getting to know colleagues from other states and the inspirational keynote sessions!
- Getting to see colleagues and friends, in particular the catch-ups over dinner and at the bar are very helpful. Roll call is great!! I really enjoyed having NEA and AFTA reps with us for most of the meeting. The fundraising activities I thought created good buzz and energy at the event and what an accomplishment to be able to announce that the goal was met...and exceeded. The whole thing generally ran very smoothly...cheers to Eric!! Everyone seemed happy. The donor reception was fun. And there was fantastic music throughout this convening. Congrats all!
- Great balance of activities.
- Great job!
- Great speakers.
- Hard to isolate one "best" thing. I noticed and appreciated when you scheduled extra time between sessions. Providing concrete support for the informal learning that takes place is a very valuable thing to provide!
- Having two-first timers attend with us. :)
- Hearing creative solutions to common issues
- I am responsible for three very different funding streams and the Folk & Traditional Arts preconference provided me with the opportunity to totally engage myself in the sessions and meet professionals in the field from all over the country. I couldn't have asked for more in a preconference. Great planning!
- Inclusive dialogue!
- Individual roll calls, performers, networking. Scooters!! - Baltimore.
- It was well organized.
- Kelly's presentations. Jazz dance deaf group! Sign language!
- Knowing that diversity is weaved throughout the conference and hearing about advocacy in a number of ways. Also, there are so many newbies and I think everyone felt acclimated and included.
- Learning from peers
- Learning what everyone else is doing!
- Live performances were great.
- Location. People. Good topic. Food was great. Antoine - learned a lot and was fun too! Such great talent! Thank you!
- Lots of fun with colleagues and all the learning opportunities!
- Lots! Too hard to decide.
- Loved number of informal networking, social gatherings.
- LOVED presentation by Antoine Hunter - inspiring perspective and context for arts opened a window into the world of those with extraordinary and distinct "superpowers."
- Meeting and engaging expertise and enthusiasm.
- Meeting arts council staff and leadership
- Meeting many great leaders.
- Meeting my counterparts and learning what others are doing.
- Meeting new folks and reconnecting with previously met folks. Also the dance party! Also great change to feel part of a large tribe!! And the artists! The music! OMG!! :-)
- Meeting new people who are engaged in the same/similar work.
- Meeting other State Art Agencies

- Meeting peers, sharing experiences.
- Meeting people we communicate with via email all the time, hearing what other state are doing and asking questions in real time. Getting to think and talk without staff about what we're learning and how it applies to our work at home.
- Meeting so many colleagues (EDs) from SAAs, as well as staffs of NASAA, NEA, etc.
- Meeting with and learning from Arts Ed colleagues and connecting with new colleagues in other areas.
- Meeting with other state agencies. Shared knowledge, shared problems.
- Meeting with our peer groups. I also thought the performing artists were wonderful and the Keynote was also very insightful. NASAA staff is incredibly helpful. Thank you for all you do!
- NEA Peer Session; DEI focused peer sessions/discussions.
- Networking
- Networking
- Networking
- Networking - meeting new people, sharing ideas. Deepening relationships.
- Networking (meeting old friends!!).
- Networking and exploring other arts districts
- Networking and learning about resources that can be utilized back home.
- Networking and learning more about what others are doing in the arts.
- Networking time, support NASAA, visit with colleagues, communications/media training, see new NEA leadership team
- Networking with colleagues, meeting new people, learning with and from NASAA staff (what a resource!), and learning more about the resilient city of Baltimore.
- Networking with peers and colleagues, such a great blend of information shared and self-care through laughter, ideas, and friendship.
- Networking with peers.
- Networking!
- Networking! Flashes of Inspiration is so good it should be a plenary.
- Networking, connections, data.
- networking, learning what's going on
- Networking. Peer session was weak for EDs this year (we need to break up into new/mid-level/advanced for EDs?)
- Offering rural and indigenous focuses, networking, seeing arts in Baltimore.
- One of the best things is always seeing amazing performing artists
- Pam Breau and NASAA staff. Inclusion of AFTA and regionals.
- Peer networking
- Peer session
- peer session
- Peer session discussion about arts as an economic development tool and learning how other states have progressed.
- Peer Sessions; Networking.
- People, networking. I love connecting with my peers who are doing great work and are happy to share it.
- Putting my position in context with other agencies across the country, meeting key people in similar fields and understanding comparisons and context between positions and agencies, feeling the energy generated by our field, and listening to wonderfully insightful speakers and performers.

- Reaffirming. Informative. Rejuvenating. Networking.
- Really well organized! Excellent job!
- Relevant content and opportunities to connect with colleagues.
- See previous comments.
- Seeing old friends!
- Sharing ideas with people from across the country
- spending time with peer colleagues
- Tell your own story through storytelling.
- Thank you for the DEI work NASAA is doing in general and for its inclusion in the assembly. I found it to be both the best thing about the meeting and something that could have been improved. In the context of the assembly, I look forward to seeing how DEI can be centered even more across all sessions, conversations and learning.
- THANK YOU NASAA!
- The artists and networking
- The arts ed PDI!
- The block of free time (PML: means visiting arts and entertainment districts)
- The camaraderie and openness of the staff and all the participants, plus amazing presenters. Loved Antoine Hunter! Also the social gatherings! Thank you!
- the connection with the national endowment for the arts
- The connections made. Also, excellent content this year!
- The dance band at the reception and the great food!
- The formal and informal exchange of ideas.
- The Friday morning plenary and Friday keynote were wonderful.
- The guest speakers were great. A lot of the data and research presented in sessions was interesting.
- The networking, exposure to NEA staff. NASAA staff was extremely helpful in directing me to requested resources!!! The performance by the Bay Area Deaf IDF and its director was a starred highlight of the entire conference! Thank you for this opportunity.
- The opportunity to learn from peers in other states
- The peer sessions are always wonderful, but more time was needed. The inclusive dialogue was my favorite session by far this year.
- The peer sessions, the Bedford's keynote, and the two performances.
- The people are always the best thing - the engagement, the friendly and professional staff, the openness of the Board, the fun times, and the serious work.
- The people! Also the provided lunch and breakfast was great.
- The people! The artists! Watching Ben dance. Dance party. Chris Bedford. Antoine Hunter.
- The plenary sessions.
- The research presented at the closing session of SAA EDs and state arts advocacy organization EDs.
- The schedule did not feel over programmed at all. There was a variety of great choices for content. The plenary speakers were all awesome! It was great to connect with our network in person.
- The thematic sessions and inspiring speakers.
- The time spent with my SAAN colleagues
- The time to talk about what we're all doing and thinking about, and help each other.
- There was lots of variety, it felt well balanced between learning sessions and downtime, time inside the venue and out in the community.

- Variety
- Well organization, focused.

What about this meeting could have been improved?

- A list of "local" favorites - galleries, restaurants, shopping. How to take this back and incorporate it.
- A lot more time for grant coordinators to meet and talk.
- Air, at times, was unbearable during breakout sessions.
- As lovely and valuable as it is to hear from artists, I felt like these segments were long. I'm aware that doing less time is not ideal, but I became distracted. This is not the primary reason I attend. Perhaps one artist session would suffice.
- Better communication during conference or extended registration desk/info desk hours.
- Business should be done at one sitting (not last day). Shorten plenary sessions. Great to have 30 min breaks!
- Closed captioning
- Coffee availability, but not much else.
- Coffee service!
- Conference was spot on!
- Deep gratitude for giving ASCA a chance to share about our work and to learn more about others!
- Enjoyed all aspects.
- Even more peer to peer interaction around specific topics.
- Extend time of breakout sessions.
- Fewer speakers at the opening plenary. It was just a really long time to sit. I found more value in the briefing sessions, and wish they had been a bit longer.
- Guidelines for PPTs, designed to captivate the attention of attendants. Too much text - color palette and font can make a positive difference. It would be useful to have a list of the state arts agencies/councils, etc. to be able to compare organizational structures and identify who can be key peers to network and exchange study cases with.
- Having the board meeting be the very first thing and the business meeting be the very last thing is tough. I lost a lot of steam toward the end of the week. Being away for five days is a giant time commitment. I wonder if things could be compressed a bit? I had also hoped to be with friends and their families for Halloween in Michigan...I know scheduling is a bear, but the board meeting being on a holiday was rough. Also, having the business meeting be the last thing made the final audience very thin...I felt a little bad for the artist how small the crowd was and that people kept leaving.
- Holding the Folk & Traditional Arts preconference every year rather than every two years.
- I appreciated idea of walking tour, but might have been more inclined to participate with transportation. THANK YOU FOR THE AWESOME MEETING!!!!
- I can't really think of anything
- I didn't see value in a whole afternoon of "exploring" and would have rather had sessions on Friday afternoon.
- I found my concurrent sessions lacked focus and clear goals. More time and planning would've been required to truly provide value through the concurrent sessions I attended. I would've preferred more opportunities for dialog (guided and open dialog) with peers around specific topics. Less programmed presentations and more dialog.

- I know a lot of factors play into scheduling the assembly, but it would be helpful if it wasn't over a holiday. I would have attended the Arts Education PDI, but didn't want to miss celebrating Halloween with my family. I would have like to have had the Saturday sessions on Friday afternoon rather than the having the time to visit the districts.
- I really want more peer grant time! Great conference! I do understand the constraints of time under which you operate.
- I recommend late night talent shows.
- I strongly feel NASAA should be investing in ASL interpretation or other accommodation for people with disabilities.
- I think it was great - just some little things. I think there should just be more time allotted to roll call and shorter plenary presentations overall.
- I think organized trips (for an additional fee and including transportation) to the arts/cultural districts would have been an improvement.
- I thought it went really well.
- I wish I was able to connect with other technology specialists in our own peer group. Many of us were in the grants and fiscal officers peer group.
- I wish there had been a peer group or talk that had something to do with public art or artists programs, but I had no problem correlating the information of sessions to my own position since the speakers were very engaging and knowledgeable.
- I wish there would have been more time to learn about OIG requirements for agency audits and more time for peer groups to meet.
- In my first peer session (Folk and Traditional Arts) I would have loved for someone to be able to moderate or comment about the presentations.
- It is well organized with rich content. I cannot think of specific improvements, but overall more repetition of content, time with colleagues and transportation to cultural sites with guided content.
- It was great! Use available power point to highlight NASAA business point in all plenaries (more visuals needed).
- It was very confusing on Thursday when the plenary session went over time, what we should do - leave to peer session? Stay? I wish there had been a little announcement.
- It would be great to see some international perspective: NEA, state department, Regional other states, Mexico, Canada. Food on Saturday.
- Less "speeches," we don't need to "pat" ourselves or hear more about why the arts are amazing.
- longer peer session
- Longer Saturday sessions, 1 hr.
- Longer...need for everyone to meet once a year.
- Look at the structure starting late and in the pm should be reviewed.
- Love time for lunch - twice meeting precluded any opportunity to eat.
- Mics
- More appropriate peer sessions/could we offer "self-identified" peer group options?
- More artists throughout (perhaps an artist market place for local artists). Bigger peer session (CDC).
- More coffee
- More food i.e. lunch last day, breakfast on Friday.
- More food, and consistent tea and coffee.
- More food, no lunch options on Saturday.
- More food.

- More for PIOs
- More hands-on arts participation.
- More opportunities to connect with regional colleagues.
- More peer session time.
- More peer sessions
- More peer time for PIOs.
- More time for Deputies to share best practices. I would like a topic on grants and how states determine who they are giving money to, grant categories, other community events they coordinate, other partners they coordinate with.
- More time for focus sessions, plenary is great but maybe less time?
- More time for grants/fiscal peer time. A way for small SAAs to share ideas.
- More time for peer session or to have a grants officer pre conference to talk more about relevant issues dealt with on a day to day basis. Entire conference ran late every day, very frustrated cut into valuable time needed in other sessions.
- More time for peer sessions - perhaps one with a focused topic, and are unstructured.
- More time for peer sessions.
- More time for peer sessions.
- More time in peer meetings. I feel like there was just enough time for people to introduce themselves and then the meeting was almost over.
- More time with just EDs.
- More time with peers, restaurant recommendations (did you offer and I missed?)
- More visuals of arts projects in each state displayed in common areas. Highlights of each state - make a billboard for each state/region.
- n/a
- Need more peer session time and shorter plenaries.
- Not enough sessions to learn from. Minimal programming.
- Not enough time in peer session. Would have been nice to have a pre-conference for grants officers.
- Nothing comes to mind
- Nothing!
- Opening session too long.
- Opportunity to meet outside hotel.
- Peer session time for grants and fiscal officers really need to be increased via pre-session or other means!
- Perhaps giving the peer group session more time like the Deep Dives were allotted; potentially doing the two content driven sessions first and then ending with the peer group session so that we have the opportunity to process what we've learned together.
- Really did not respond well to the hotel ballroom for all the plenary sessions. It just seemed to crush the creative spirit of those assembled.
- Sensitivity to time zone differences. 8am = 5am PST
- Sessions to be a bit more interactive or qual oriented. Consistent labeling of foods for allergies. Consistent options for people with food allergies. In the future recognize the Indigenous Peoples whose homeland you are on at the opening and/or invitation to do so.
- Shorten length of plenary artist presentations. Provide more peer session learning opportunities.
- Temperature too cold.
- Thanks for all you do!

- The arts district tour could have been a bit more organized, but I still enjoyed the experience. Would have liked to have more time with my peer group.
- The arts district tours were poorly organized with timing, neighborhoods and guides had no idea who we were. Art was less than expected.
- The arts experiences/performances are great, but do not help me professionally.
- The briefing sessions could have been longer - so much information to cover.
- The first morning of plenary session combined with the performance went on for too long. Too much sitting in one room. I would also like to ask that you give some consideration to changing up the format, specifically reconsidering the Saturday biz meeting and performance. People either skip it or are not engaged and watching the clock. (Maybe start a day earlier?) Also, what if we separated out the performances from the plenary session. Performances could be woven throughout but not always following a talking head. Let them stand on their own. I fear sometimes that the audience energy is low by the time the performers take the stage. Some can lift it back up, but not all.
- The opening plenary should have been shorter. Not sure the state roll call is necessary. Took an hour.
- The opening plenary went way too long. Bad time management. Pam's welcome and Jonathan's poem should have come at the beginning. A mistake to schedule something AFTER the music. Sucked all the energy from the room and cut into peer session time.
- The performances during the sessions were too long.
- The roll call of the states has gotten stale and much too long when the secretary is relying on the tech staff to project state names (which seems unnecessary). And it was unfortunate that several images projected were antithetical to NASAA's deeply embedded mission of inclusion, diversity, and equity.
- The visit to the entertainment district was a bit confusing. More details on those would have been very helpful.
- The whole conference seemed so rushed, however, I only arrived on Thursday. Since there were 31 NEA staff members, it would have been nice to have had an opportunity to meet them. A session or one on one meetings with NEA grants staff would have been great.
- There is never enough time or chocolate.
- There needs to be a pre-conference for Grant Officers/Admins. There's never enough time to address all the issues/questions.
- There was too much unstructured time on Friday afternoon; more valuable use of my time please! Maybe an option of additional sessions if not visiting districts?
- There were some issues with images at roll call that were quickly addressed, so good on staff for that. Additionally, the allotted time for roll call seeped into late afternoon session. I was torn as to whether to stay or join my cohort (I managed a bit of both).
- There's so much to see and do in Baltimore - sessions could have been held elsewhere (as the AIE PDI sessions were). Logistics of hotel conference rooms with minimal to poor signage, not enough seating, too many people in a session to allow for deeper conversations, no mics for breakouts with 70+ people in a room (often some standing), nothing to write on or with provided by the conference with hit-or-miss internet, and in general, conference center setting with the ability to float from one session to another or back to your room - all combine to create barriers for full participation and deep engagement in subject matter. If folks need to board a bus, walk, or otherwise be transported to a location where they will participate in 2 or 3 sessions - they may be more likely to commit and engage rather than flit about. I realize this requires significant

fiscal and human resources, but I believe these improvements would strengthen the overall experience. While I've been participating in NASAA and stand-alone PDIs for years, my attending colleagues (first-timers) have not. They've questioned whether this was worth the travel, time and expense - compared to other national conferences. Overall, NASAA does great work year round. The resources, data, strategy, and leadership NASAA provides is helpful and commendable - but the annual 'meeting' - could be stronger and more effective - my opinion.

- Think of new ways to make the plenary session timing work - if you need more time - plan for more time or add a plenary session so that everything can be covered without rushing or apologies.
- This is a small thing, but we were asked about our dietary needs and then there was hardly any gluten free or vegetarian food....
- This was a good conference
- Time and opportunities to visit museums and art galleries without cutting a session.
- Too cold. Chris Jacobs band should have been earlier or a different time when more people could enjoy.
- Too much time spent on roll call and whole group sessions, not enough in smaller groups in hands-on workshops.
- Transportation to the arts districts. More free time for personal exploration of Baltimore.
- Vendors at the opening reception. Highlight local artists. Add to that state's economy! You always remember where you bought a treasure.
- Weather was perfect, food was fabulous and NASAA staff was extremely generous, helpful and kind, and pleasant - always! :-)
- Whole meeting integrated DEI lens, rather than its explicit instruction.
- Would have liked to have an opening session hearing the themes of the conference and priorities of the upcoming year with leaders from NASAA, AFTA and NEA. Panel with Pam, Mary Anne, Bob with priorities of each. More with 50 states here, this was the opportunity to focus the agenda for the conference and the next year!!
- Would love a special session for new or emerging arts admin. professionals. With a new wave of professionals coming into the field, it would be great to focus on challenges or issues we face.
- Would love more peer engagement and support for community dev. coords. For a first time participant, I found insufficient opportunity to network with my peers. The peer session did not provide this opportunity.
- Would love pre-con for grants officers.