

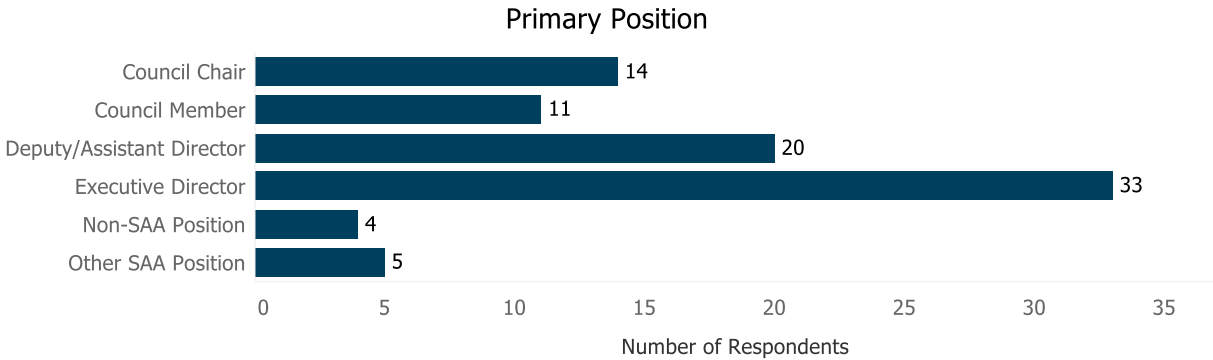


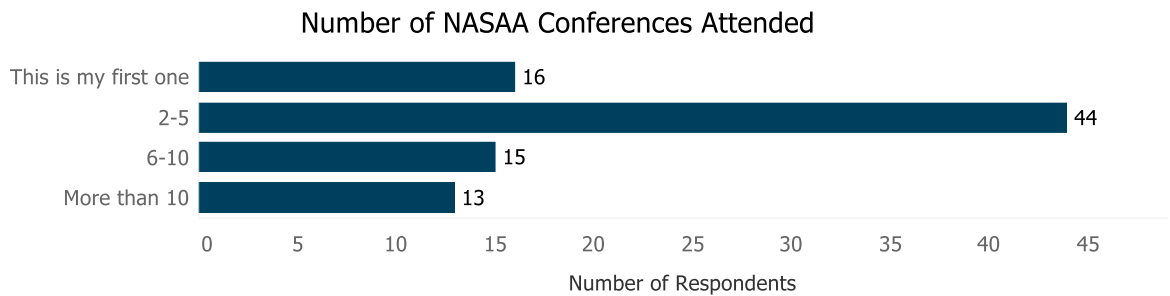
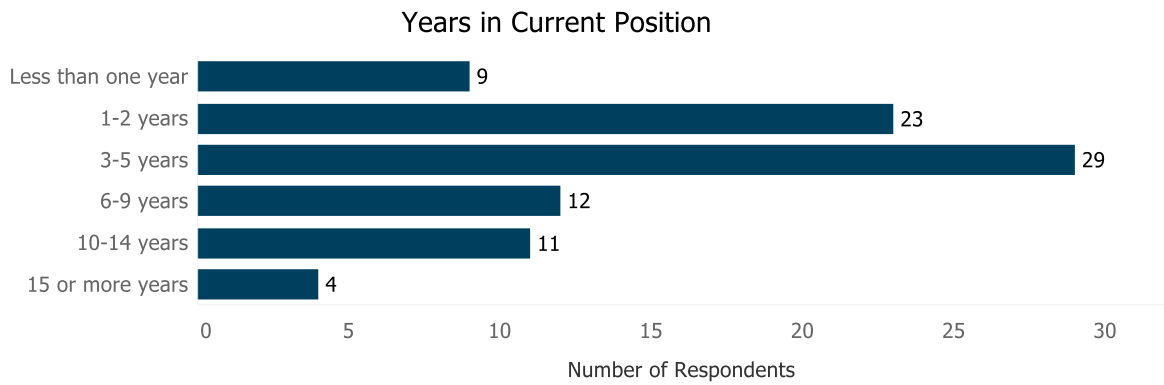
**2019 Leadership Institute Evaluation Summary  
 September 18-20 | Providence, Rhode Island**

The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) convened the 2019 Leadership Institute in Providence, Rhode Island, from September 18-20. 156 participants attended the meeting, 117 of whom were members. Executive directors made up 38% of all peer group registrants, while council chairs/council members and deputy directors constituted 32% and 30% respectively.

As a measure of attendees' experiences and to better plan future meetings, NASAA distributed paper and electronic copies of an evaluation questionnaire to participants during the closing plenary session. From both the on-line and paper methods, a total of 87 questionnaires were completed, with 83 of the respondents identifying themselves as members. This yielded an overall response rate of 58% and a member response rate of 74%.

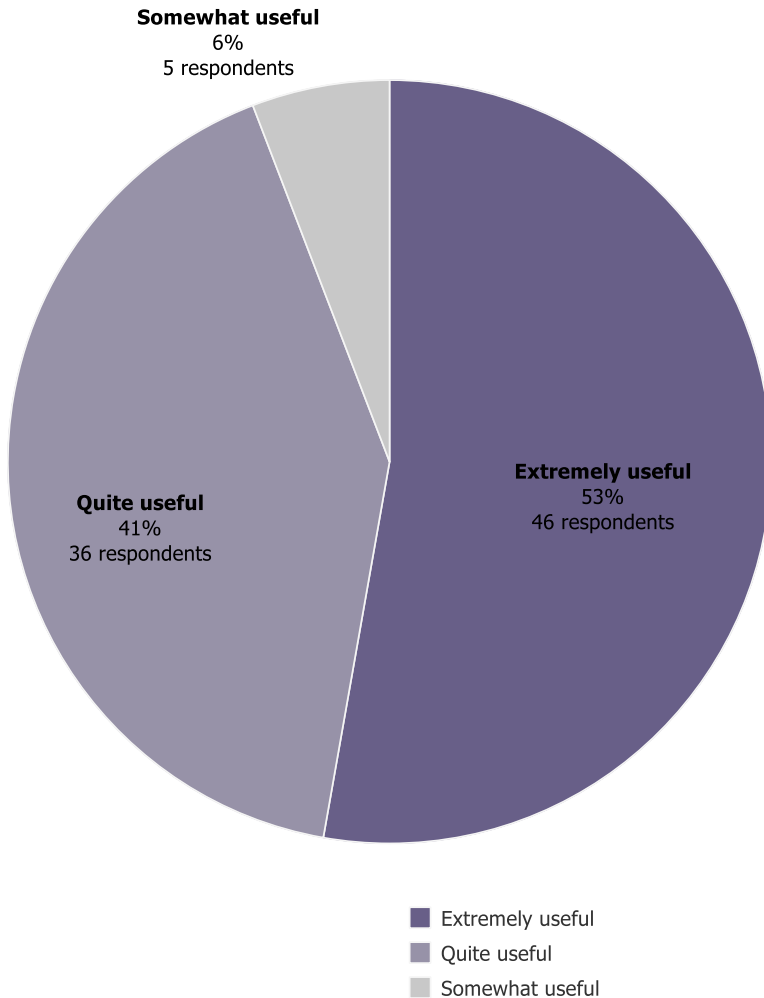
This report contains the key results of the evaluation in cross-tabulations as well as a complete list of all comments.



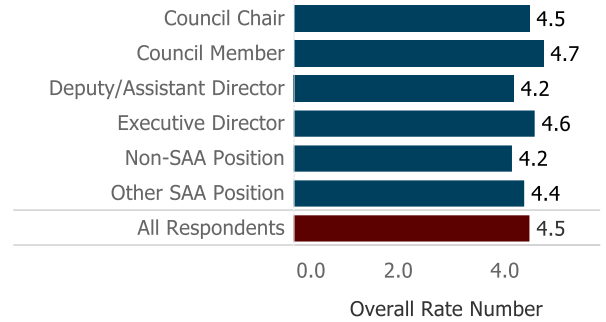


The majority of respondents reported being in their position between 1-5 years. At NASAA's 2017 Leadership Institute, around one-half of respondents reported their tenures as 2 years or fewer. 38% of 2019 respondents were executive directors, 29% were either council chairs or council members, and 23% were deputy directors. The majority of participants have been to 2-5 NASAA conferences.

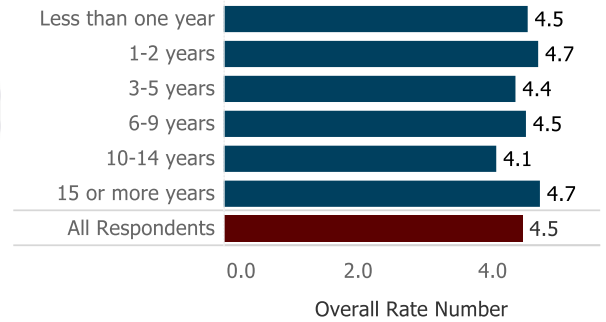
## Overall Conference Ratings



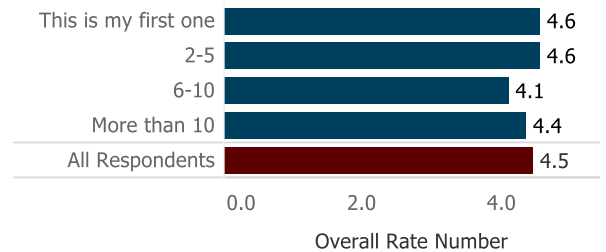
## Rating by Position



## Rating by Tenure

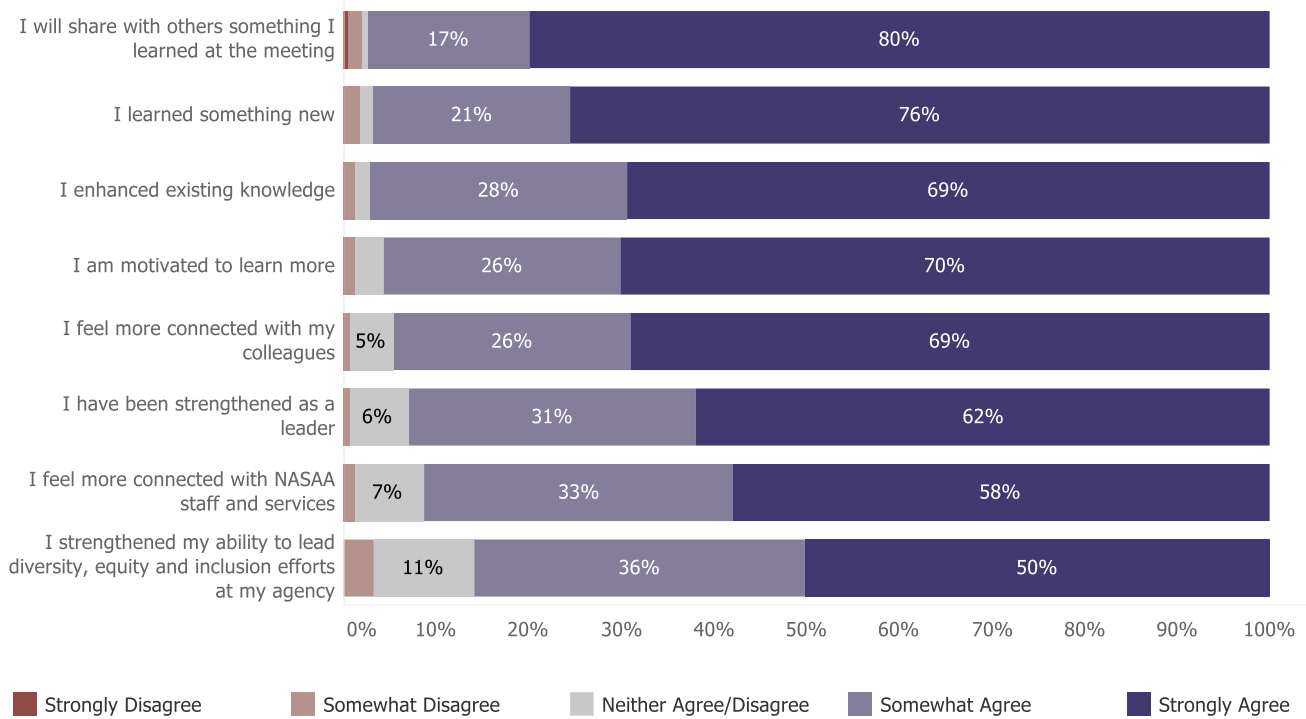


## Rating by Number of Meetings



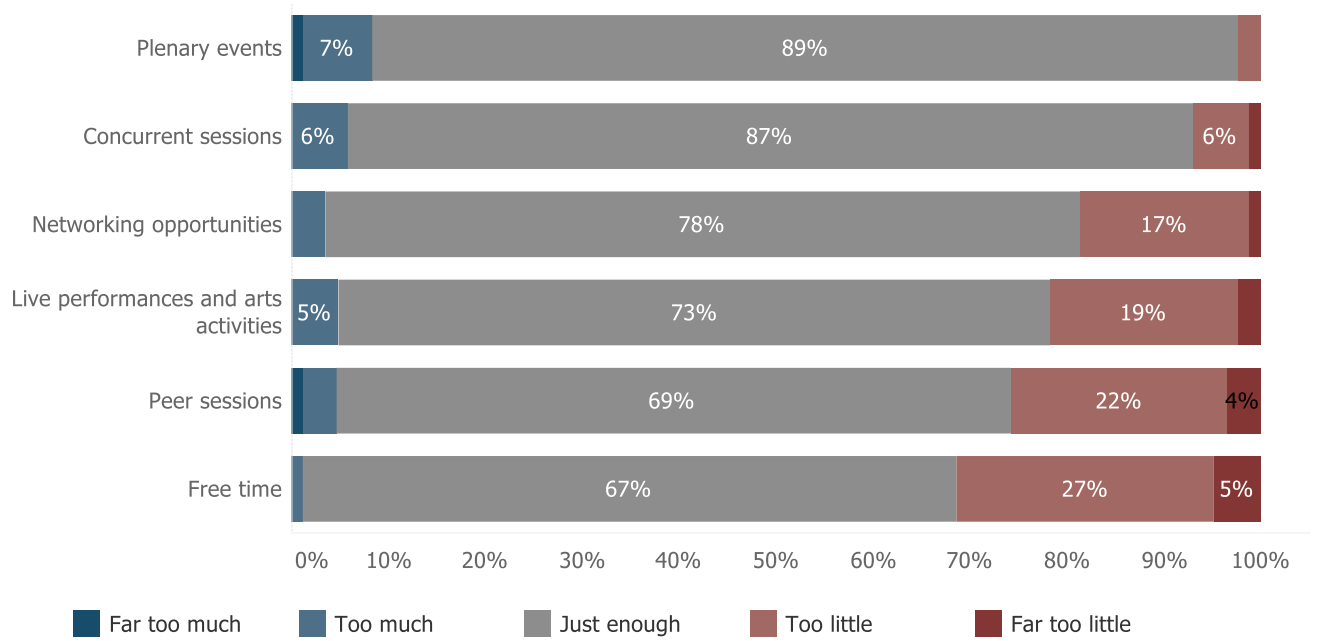
Over half of the respondents rated the conference "extremely useful." The average overall conference rating was 4.5, up from 4.1 in 2017. No respondents rated the meeting as "slightly useful" or "not useful." The minimum average conference rating for any group by tenure, attendance and position was 4.1.

## Personal Statements

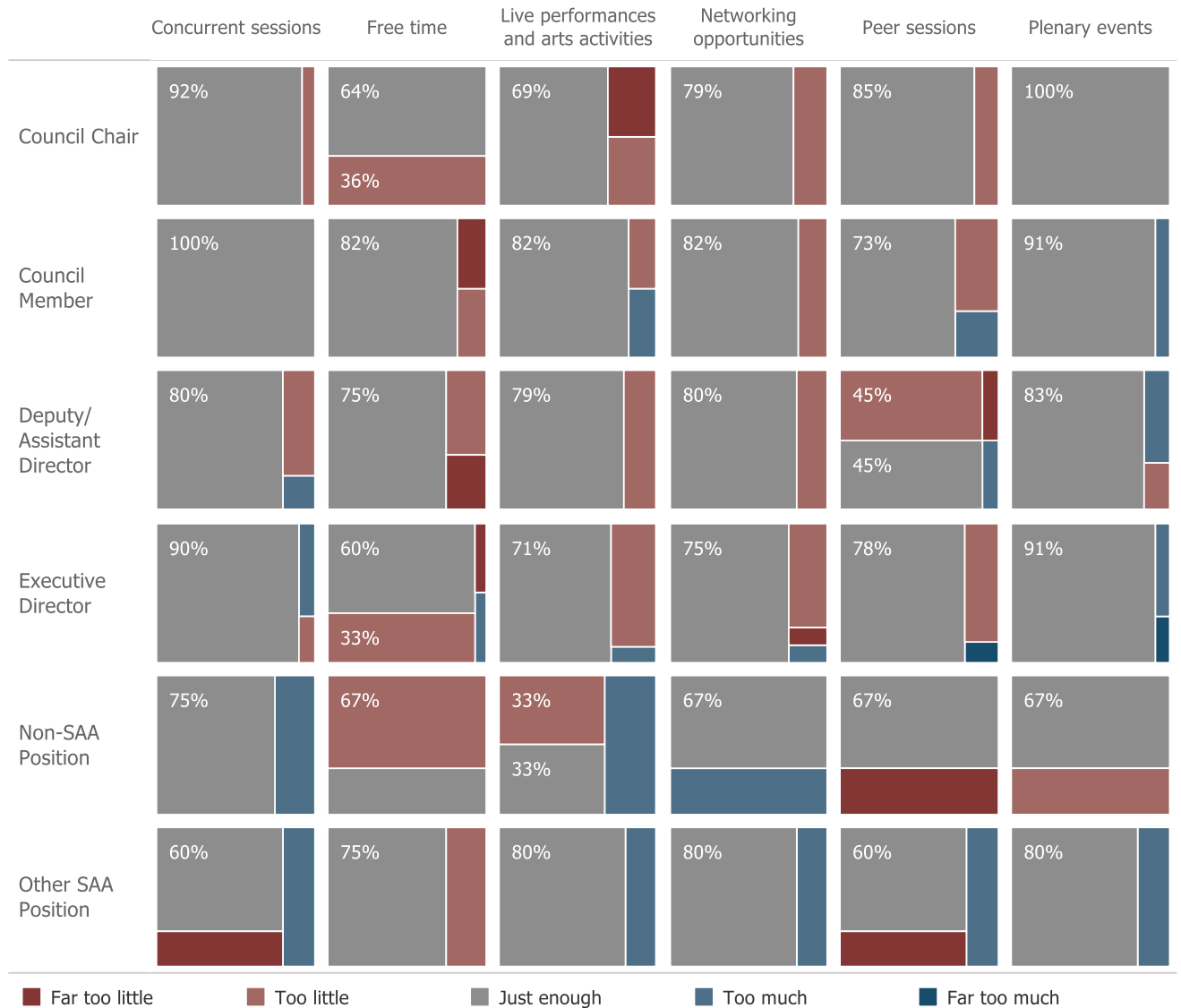


Personal statements assess the degree to which attendees are meaningfully and positively affected by attending the Leadership Institute. 80% of respondents strongly agree, and 17% somewhat agree, that they will share something they learned at the meeting with others. Statements about feeling more connected to NASAA and being strengthened to lead DEI efforts received the lowest ratings, though 91% and 86% of respondents strongly or somewhat agreed with both, respectively. Compared to the last Leadership Institute, around the same number of respondents reported feeling more connected with NASAA staff and services. However the number that selected "strongly agree" decreased slightly.

## Time Allotment

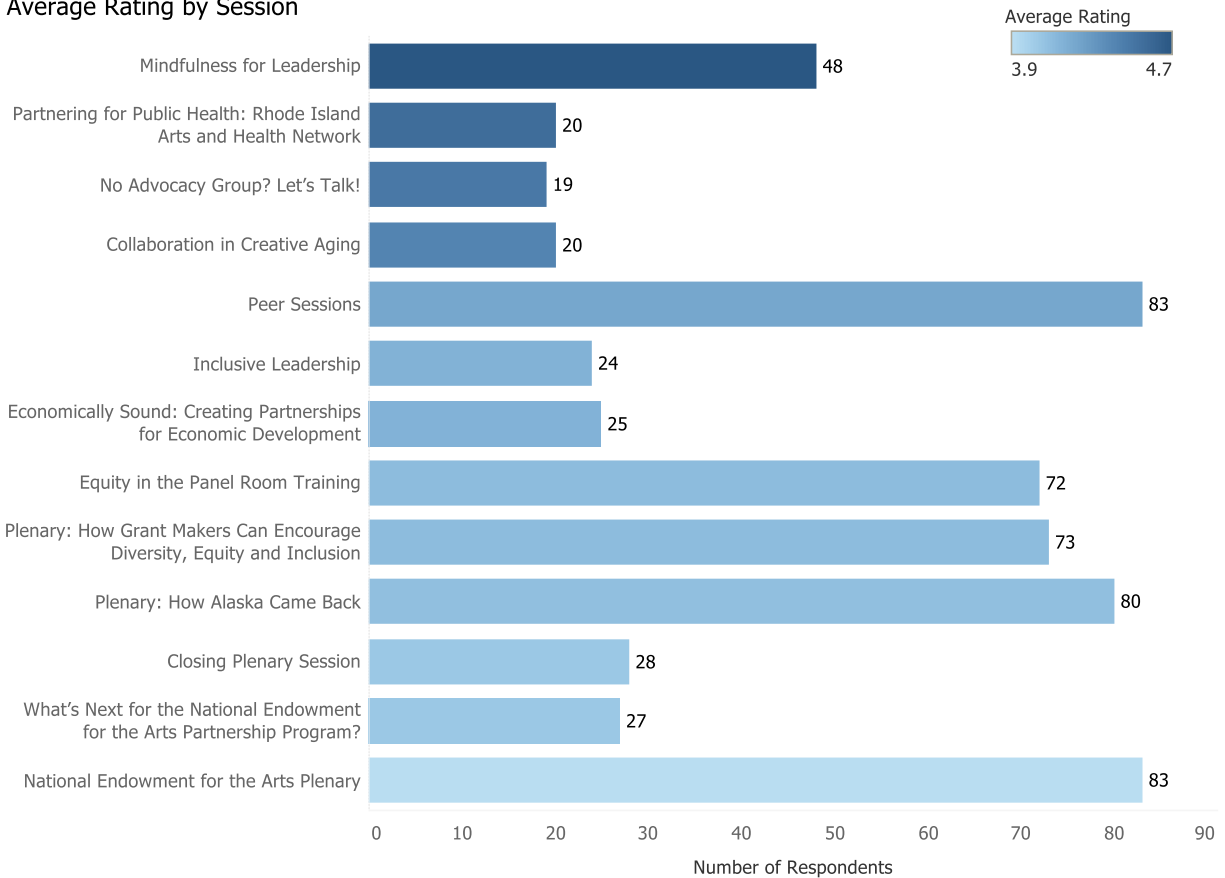


## Time Allotment by Position



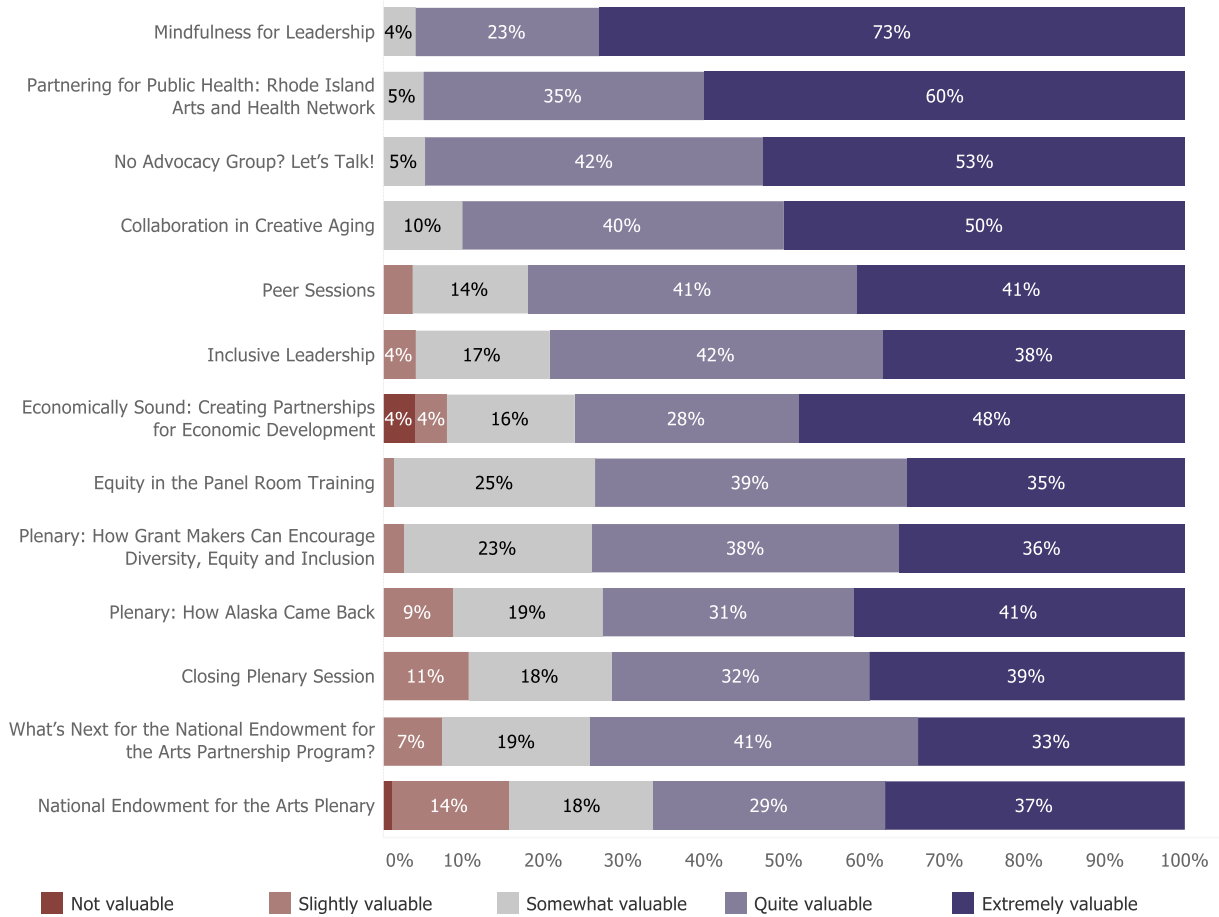
The majority of respondents indicated that there was "just enough" time spent on all activities. Almost one-third of respondents wanted more free time, and about a quarter of respondents wanted more time in peer sessions (consistent with previous years). Half of the deputy directors reported too little or far too little, time devoted to peer sessions.

### Average Rating by Session



The Mindfulness for Leadership session was rated very highly (average rating of 4.7), while respondents rated the What's Next for the National Endowment for the Arts session and Endowment plenary less favorably (average rating of 4.0 and 3.9, respectively). However, all average session ratings were relatively high, with the lowest session average rating at 3.9 on a scale from 1 to 5. Very few respondents rated and attended the closing plenary session, compared to other plenaries. Please see write-in comments for individual feedback on specific sessions.

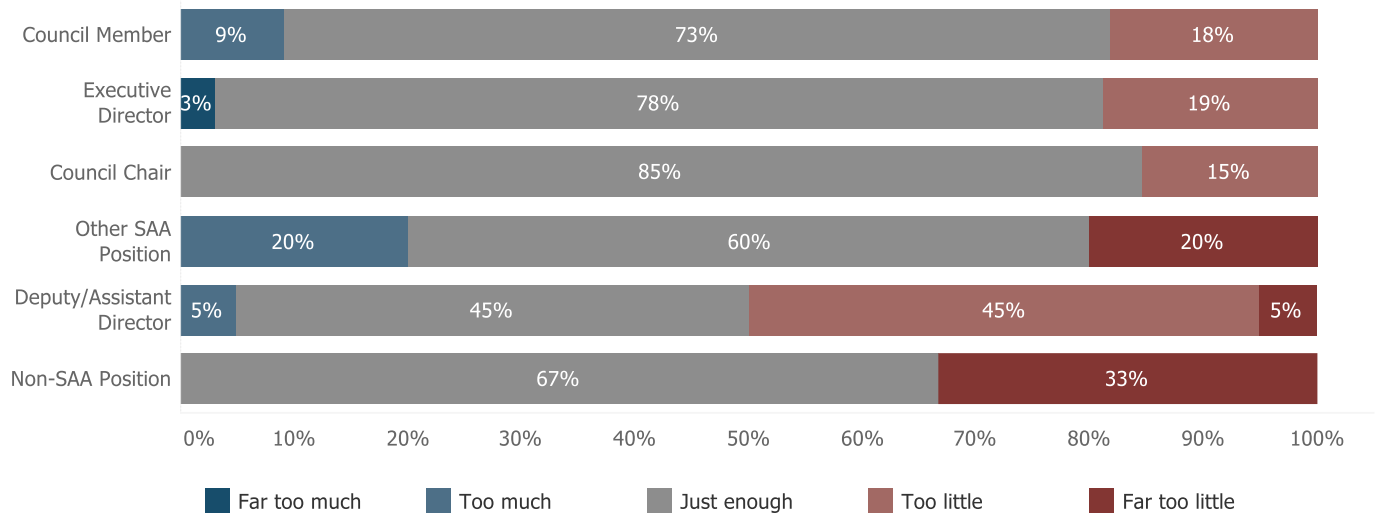
### Full Ratings by Session



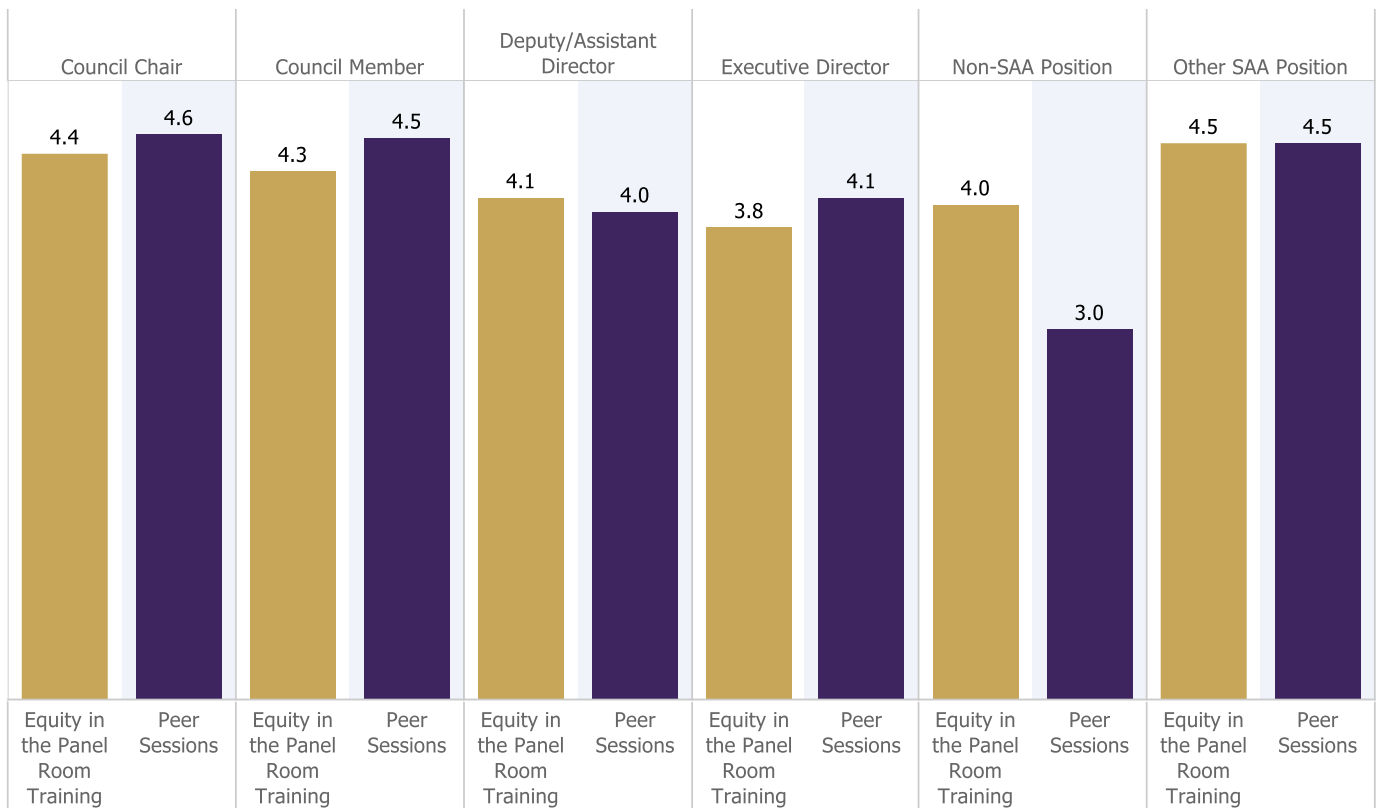
All respondents found the content from the Mindfulness for Leadership, Partnering for Public Health, No Advocacy Group? and Creative Aging sessions at least somewhat valuable; the majority found them extremely valuable. Around two-thirds of respondents rated both National Endowment for the Arts sessions as somewhat valuable or lower.



### Peer Session Time Allotment



### Peer Session Ratings



50% of deputy directors felt that there was too little time spent in peer sessions, up from 34% in 2017. Additionally, deputy directors rated peer sessions the lowest out of every peer group. That being said, all peer groups had ratings between 4.0 and 4.6 (out of 5). Besides deputy directors, the majority of executive directors and council members thought just enough time was dedicated to peer sessions.

## All Comments

### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Aroha session and DEI were great. *(executive director)*
- DEI. [most valuable takeaway] *(executive director)*
- DEI/justice strategies of practice. [most valuable takeaway] *(council member)*
- Equity in the panel room and Thurs. peer session were fantastic! *(council member)*
- Equity in the panel session was great. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Group Agreement utilization regarding diversity and inclusion. *(council chair)*
- I enjoyed the training on equity in the panel room for ED's but I didn't feel as though the content probed enough or pushed us enough to really think about our role in advancing equity from a policy perspective. I would have liked for it to go deeper into the spaces that we don't easily and frequently access (like meeting agreements and disruptive panelists). However, I was grateful for the reminder of the RE-Tool publication and the need to revisit it with staff and to continually review our panel processes. *(executive director)*
- I'm finding group conversations about equity are becoming less and less valuable due to the varying levels of progress across states, but also because of what equity means from state to state. When you're in a large, extremely rural, extremely white state, equity looks different from the way it looks on the coasts—and throughout most of the country. There has to be a better way to include relevant content for all. Maybe some presenters and facilitators from rural states would be a good starting point. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- I'm glad to see agencies across the country focus our efforts on DEI. As a largely straight, cis, white body of people it was good for folks to dive into this work. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- In the realm of DEI, we are not responsible for how "it" all began; simply engage in the work to be done. *(executive director)*
- Less time on race. *(council chair)*
- DEI information. [most valuable takeaway] *(executive director)*
- Race equity is on many agendas. *(council chair)*
- Strengthening DEI practice. [most valuable takeaway] *(executive director)*
- That there are varying levels of commitment to EDI work. The mindfulness workshop was extremely important and could be expanded to the theme for the entire conference in the future. *(executive director)*
- Think the mindfulness and the DEI sessions really complement each other. Mindfulness could really help to encourage DEI discussion. *(executive director)*
- Good DEI information. [most valuable takeaway] *(deputy/assistant director)*

### Peer Sessions

- I prefer that the peer sessions take place on the second day of the institute, allowing time on the first day for powerful learning and breakout sessions to inspire and build excitement. *(deputy/assistant director)*

- DD peer session was overly ambitious. I suggest limiting number of topics or eliminate 'long-form' intros. Good topics but ran out of time. Plenary on DEI was a bit dry but got better as it went on. More straight communication—less "foundation talk."  
*(deputy/assistant director)*
- Economically Sound, Advocacy, and Peers Sessions were outstanding. *(council chair)*
- Thurs. peer session [was] fantastic! *(council member)*
- Peer session needed more time talking to each other. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Great info shared in ED. *(executive director)*

### **Hotel and Food**

- Audio issues at some sessions, could not hear speakers. [could have been improved]
- Better food. [could have been improved] *(council chair)*
- Better hotel/better food!. [could have been improved] *(council chair)*
- Better, stronger coffee. [could have been improved] *(consultant)*
- Egg whites?. [could have been improved] *(executive director)*
- Food wasn't good. [could have been improved] *(executive director)*
- Friday morning's breakfast egg whites :-(  
*(deputy/assistant director)*
- great conference - except for the food if you are vegan or can't eat dairy. I hope this will help others in future years. Greatly appreciate the vegetarian options at all the receptions and meals. Only problem is that they were all dairy-based. For those who are vegan and/or vegetarian and don't eat dairy, we (and there were a few of us) were reduced to eating salad only in several instances. Friday's lunch was lettuce and tomatoes only as the tortellini was cheese and the tiramisu was dairy. The opening reception was vegetables and mac n cheese. You understand. Just pointing this out so that in future years it can be more of a consideration. *(non-SAA position)*
- Hotel a challenge to navigate—helpful to have most of the sessions on floors reachable by one flight of stairs. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Layout of hotel was not great for the purpose of the meeting. Reliant on elevators that were slow. Hotel food was mediocre. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- No hotel bar/restaurant. [could have been improved] *(executive director)*
- Spaces, heat! Little 'eh.' *(executive director)*
- Stronger coffee! Saw lots of sleepy eyes after lunch. *(executive director)*
- Temp in building too cold. *(deputy/assistant director)*

### **Thanks and Praise**

- Best I think I've been to! *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Congratulations on a great Leadership Institute! It was fruitful and provided lots of good opportunities for networking, learning, and policy work.
- Great! Information on building partnerships. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- I love rollcall! *(deputy/assistant director)*
- It was a great conference—thank you to the NASAA staff and to the Rhode Island team!  
*(deputy/assistant director)*
- Its my first one, so not sure. Overall very well organized. *(council member)*
- Kelly Barsdate is amazing! NASAA staff—spectacular! Very relevant discussions this year. Overall, good use of my time! *(executive director)*

- Great hotel! Beautiful, artful, fabulous. Think big! Billion for Arts #NEABillion4Arts *(executive director)*
- Kelly is amazing—makes everything interesting. *(executive director)*
- N/A, thanks NASAA and RISCA!. [could have been improved] *(executive director)*
- NASAA and NEA are here for us. To ensure our success. This is evidenced by the Alaska case. NASAA are true facilitators between SAA/NEA/RAO communication. *(other SAA position)*
- NASAA staff: you hit it out of the park this year. *(executive director)*
- NASAA's staff attentions and care-service. Especially Connie, who goes above her way to make you feel welcome.
- None—very streamlined. [could have been improved] *(executive director)*
- Not much! Great place and NASAA staff were most helpful!. [could have been improved] *(council member)*
- Nothing, keep the format and structure, it works. [could have been improved] *(council chair)*
- Nothing. [could have been improved] *(executive director)*
- Nothing. [could have been improved] *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Overall a great experience. Good job NASAA and RISCA! Thank you! *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Thank you all!!! <3 *(council chair)*
- The conference strengthened my capacity to have the knowledge, resources and energy to do more for my arts council. There [are] a lot of takeaways that will evolve the council I serve. I am looking to strengthening my relationship with NASAA and network community. *(council member)*
- There were a number of tools and resources that I will bring back to my state with me to strive towards greater equity in our work. I also will carry so much of the conversation with Eddie and Crystal with me for the rest of my days. Thank you for bringing them to our gathering. *(executive director)*
- Understanding the value of NASAA *(executive director)*
- Very well organized. Not so much. [could have been improved] *(executive director)*

## Networking

- Camaraderie. Sharing. [most valuable takeaway] *(executive director)*
- Colleagues in similar challenges, new connections. [most valuable takeaway] *(executive director)*
- Heard from other states about their work with their arts advocacy groups. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Hearing from other state agencies on their challenges with their advocacy group. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- More open forum for ED's *(executive director)*
- More time for networking. *(executive director)*
- Networking. [most valuable takeaway] *(council member)*
- Networking. [most valuable takeaway] *(executive director)*
- Networking opportunities and DEI information. [most valuable takeaway] *(executive director)*

- Networking. [most valuable takeaway] *(executive director)*
- Resources (panels) and connections. [most valuable takeaway] *(executive director)*
- Sharing and learning from other agencies. *(council member)*
- The conference strengthened my capacity to have the knowledge, resources and energy to do more for my arts council. There [are] a lot of takeaways that will evolve the council I serve. I am looking to strengthening my relationship with NASAA and network community. *(council member)*
- The networking and NEA Keynote. [most valuable takeaway] *(deputy/assistant director)*
- The networking/connections. [most valuable takeaway] *(council chair)*
- Too many to rank—great ideas on health and aging. Key leadership insights. Good DEI information. *(deputy/assistant director)*

### **Session Remarks and Feedback**

- AD sessions were very good this year. Instructive, productive and interesting. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Advocacy efforts, NEA vision and goals, Alaska and how they dealt with adversity. *(executive director)*
- Aging populations and working with them. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- All of the sessions were great—but I missed several of them so I could have more one on one time with other states around topics that we were both interested in. So too structured, need more time for organic conversations or the face to face conversations with other states. *(executive director)*
- All sessions were valuable and brought new ideas and reinforced others. *(council chair)*
- Aroha session and DEI were great. *(executive director)*
- Econ dev partnership ideas, council diversity and growth ideas. *(council member)*
- Economically Sound [session] presented interesting 'case studies.' To be more interactive it needed more time. *(consultant)*
- Economic development opportunities and creative discussion. *(council chair)*
- Economically Sound shared other avenues to how arts council can function, hiring grant administrators through non-profits. The territories conversation is empowering and I look forward on the next steps to seeing an RAO serve our community. *(council member)*
- Economically Sound, Advocacy, and Peers Sessions were outstanding. *(council chair)*
- Feel like there is a direction, didn't get that sense last year. Great to build relationships/share. *(executive director)*
- Great info shared in ED. No Advocacy. Econ Dev. Liked artist in residence. [most valuable takeaway] *(executive director)*
- Great! Information on building partnerships. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- I enjoyed plenary session from Thursday and how the Alaska theme was presented. *(other SAA position)*
- Learning about NEA audits. Too many great sessions. Friday afternoon—I could have easily attended all of the sessions but had to choose only one of the four! *(executive director)*
- Loved Mindfulness for Leadership. Especially like when we can talk in small groups, most beneficial. Mindful listening is strong leadership. *(council member)*
- Mindful Leadership. [most valuable takeaway] *(deputy/assistant director)*

- Mindful Leadership was excellent as was the conversation on creative industries. *(council chair)*
- Mindful Leadership, RAO breakfast re: territories and time with Arts Endowment. *(executive director)*
- Mindfulness could really help to encourage DEI discussion. *(executive director)*
- Mindfulness for Leadership was excellent! *(executive director)*
- Mindfulness was excellent. More next time! *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Mindfulness, as leaders. Mindfulness. Creative Aging. [most valuable takeaway] *(council member)*
- NEA partnership session was largely ineffective for me; I really regretted not being able to attend 1-2 of the content session running simultaneously. As a newbie, I have very little exp. with the panel review and therefore little to offer or glean. Don't feel many of the thoughts expressed with part. agreements too. So largely not most beneficial use of time with Michael and Andi—though still definitely want time with them. *(executive director)*
- Opportunities available and ease of implementing creative aging programs/partnerships. *(council chair)*
- Re: the artist in residence—he presented on the first day and I was expecting more the following days. *(executive director)*
- Tell us the outcomes for each session and make sure presenters deliver that. I had hoped the Alaska session would offer some concrete takeaways; however, I found the session pretty muddled. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Thank you for including mindfulness. *(council chair)*
- The Aroha and school ! session. [most valuable takeaway] *(council chair)*
- The Mindfulness for Leadership was the best training I attended this year. The speakers were informative and engaging, and I learned a lot about the topic and practice that can be applied personally and with my team. Mindful Listening was a powerful exercise. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- The mindfulness session could not have been more custom picked for me. *(executive director)*
- The mindfulness workshop was extremely important and could be expanded to the theme for the entire conference in the future. *(executive director)*
- Would have loved more time to deep dive in the inclusive leadership session. *(deputy/assistant director)*

### **Suggestions for the Future**

- I also would appreciate more and longer breaks and meals, as there was barely enough time to get from point A to point B with a bathroom break and digestible meal (of course that was also a result of the hotel space being divided between the 2nd and 17th floors). *(deputy/assistant director)*
- A little more Providence time. It was tough to find time to get out of the hotel. *(council chair)*
- Arts/performances/time between sessions. [could have been improved] *(council chair)*
- How about if every state does a Hi-Ku [*sic*] at rollcall? Short, sweet, no competition. *(council chair)*

- I needed refueling. *(executive director)*
- I wish all participants were able to attend the "What's Next for the National Endowment for the Arts Partnership Program?" In addition, I wish the "Mindfulness for Leadership" session was offered on day one. The ability to set an intention for the days of learning would have been invaluable. As a new institute attendee, I wish there was a directory of participants so I could follow up with my colleagues who offered best practices at the sessions. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- I would have liked more opportunities to get to know the art and the community. *(executive director)*
- New chair (arts council, commission, etc.) orientation would be quite beneficial. More free time to explore the arts community in host city! Additional networking time for all to have access to those who have been there, done that, etc. *(council chair)*
- Peer mentor—I am new and was on my own. It would have been great to be assigned 1-2 folks who I could eat with, who could introduce me to people and answer questions. I did fine on my own, people are friendly, but everyone knows each other or at least that seems to be the case. So you've got to gird your loins to meet folks! *(executive director)*
- Planning on the part of those presenting. There were a few things that were good in theory but didn't have the intended outcomes. How Alaska Bounced Back turned into mostly Ben venting about what happened. There was no real takeaway from it. I'm sure it was valuable for him, but I don't think that was the point. I found this to be true for the creative placemaking breakout as well. Great description that had me excited, but under delivered. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Please ensure small groups and/or pair + share is part of every session. Large group discussion does not work for us all and limits participation. *(deputy/assistant director)*
- Repeating some of the concurrent sessions. [could have been improved] *(deputy/assistant director)*
- The format/timeline of the Institute is the most challenging to me (impacting the flow and fluidity of learning and networking). I believe that we need to have the peer sessions after we have heard some content rather than starting there as a place to connect with our peers (we need content to help get us ready for the conversations we need to have). I would love the idea (if feasible) to have the plenary/panel workshops/discussions on Wednesday and Thursday and peer sessions the final morning on Friday so we can unpack and distill what we have wrestled with for the last couple of days, with a closing plenary that ends before 2:00pm so we can get on the road and not miss components due to travel. With the closing plenary so far in the afternoon, it feels that the motivation and excitement wanes heavily on the last day rather than ending on a strong, collective note with high engagement. There could be optional last day content offered for more niche areas but it should feel that it is an extra to the Institute if offered. Also, NASAA staff are so amazing but function more intensely than the rest of us—nice way of saying, we cannot keep up with you all. We need more time for breaks and time to network. There needs to be time to have fun together because we all work hard all year long. This is a space that we should have strong, hard discussions but also get to unwind with each other in a space that is relaxing and rewarding that we can let our hair down. These are not huge changes or suggestions—just trying to give some

good, constructive feedback. Hope it helps. Congrats on another great Institute.  
*(executive director)*

- The housekeeping work of NASAA (financial report, nominating new board members etc.) should come with a simple visual presentation deck while the sharing out is happening. This would make people track better. People sharing out complex information (like finance) without some simple figures/visuals makes it hard to track. Also, might want to offer up all this info at the opening (rather than closing) plenary. Closing events are always problematic because people start peeling away and it feels a bit distracted. *(executive director)*
- We needed more time to share experience outside the hotel. *(other SAA position)*