

Understanding Diversity within the National Museum of Natural History



**A PRELIMINARY REPORT OF NMNH
COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF CURRENT
WORKPLACE DIVERSITY**

**OFFICE OF POLICY AND ANALYSIS
MARCH 2012**

Diversity Survey: Methodology



- Survey sent to 2692 staff, visiting fellows/scholars, interns, volunteers, and contractors in NMNH facilities (Mall, MSC, off-site). 707 respondents total.
 - ✦ 26% overall response rate
- Administered online through Qualtrics and in hard copy
 - ✦ Spanish and English versions available for both approaches
 - ✦ Survey was available for 6 weeks with weekly reminders sent to prospective participants

Diversity Survey: Preliminary Findings



- Respondents indicated diversity is important and that it improves the workplace in multiple ways
- Respondents who felt there was discord within NMNH identified “work position or function” as the top reason
 - Education and seniority were the next most common reasons for discord
 - This echoes open-ended comments which identify the NMNH workforce as diverse but stratified
- Most respondents agree that they are treated with respect by others in their day-to-day work lives

Diversity Survey: Preliminary Findings



- About half of respondents feel they can progress in their careers at NMNH
- Recruitment for job candidates including senior positions and contractors could be done from a more diverse candidate pool
 - There is low agreement (25%) that recruitment for senior positions is from a diverse candidate pool
 - ✦ Open-ended comments recognize pipeline issues and Federal hiring practices as contributing to a less diverse pool of candidates for senior positions

Diversity Survey: Preliminary Findings



- Respondents are very interested in mentoring opportunities as a way to improve the NMNH climate
 - Other interests include events or activities which enable staff to interact across work silos
 - ✦ This is also voiced in open-ended suggestions mentioning “staff days” or “work days” which allow staff to see or experience others’ jobs; opening an exercise facility or having exercise classes or sports teams; having a commons room; support for already established social groups

Diversity Survey: Recommendations



- NMNH leadership could take further steps to demonstrate its commitment to diversity.
 - Agreement ratings on leadership's commitment were between 50% and 60%. This indicates approximately half of individuals in NMNH facilities either disagreed or didn't have an opinion on leadership's commitment.
- Recruitment strategies which target under- or untapped communities
 - Development of pipeline and recruitment programs for minority candidates
 - ✦ Create youth programs to foster an interest in science and a desire to pursue a science career and find participants for these programs from underserved communities
 - ✦ Provide support to SI scientists to identify and network with potential candidates in their field
 - Advertising and recruitment at HBCUs and organizations which focus on underserved communities

Diversity Survey: Recommendations



- **Creation of mentoring programs**
 - Several write-in comments included that programs must also be a safe space where staff can trust their mentors and be able to talk freely
- **Creation of or greater promotion of existing events and activities which allow staff to interact across work silos**
- **Civility training**
 - Many open-ended comments cited the need for civility within NMNH facilities, and not simply diversity

What do individuals within NMNH facilities think about diversity?



Knowledge of the Diversity Council and its goals

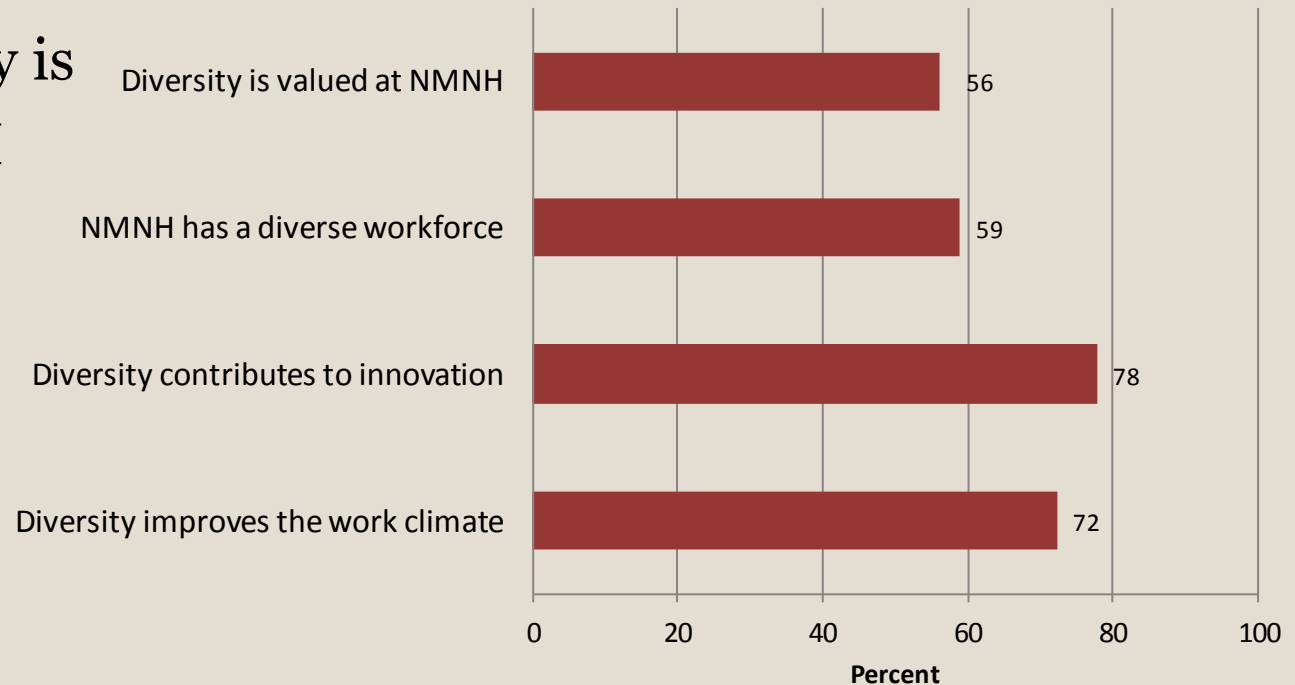


- 92% of survey respondents agree with the definition of diversity used by the Diversity Council
 - Less than half of respondents (45%) were aware of the Diversity Council prior to this survey
 - Most respondents (62%) agreed that the Council's goal to promote a culture of inclusiveness at all level of museum operations is achievable
 - ✦ Approximately 1/3 of respondents indicate that the council had either 'some work' (35%) or 'a lot of work' (34%) to do in order to achieve this goal
 - ✦ A quarter of respondents believe that as a result of the survey, the situation at NMNH will improve while 56% selected "I don't know"

Diversity in the workplace



- Among all respondents, diversity is recognized as an important attribute for the workplace
- Just under 60% of all respondents agree NMNH is diverse and that diversity is valued at NMNH



Only combined strongly agree/agree responses are shown

Diversity and NMNH leadership



- Between 50-60% of survey respondents feel NMNH leadership values diversity and demonstrates its commitment to diversity

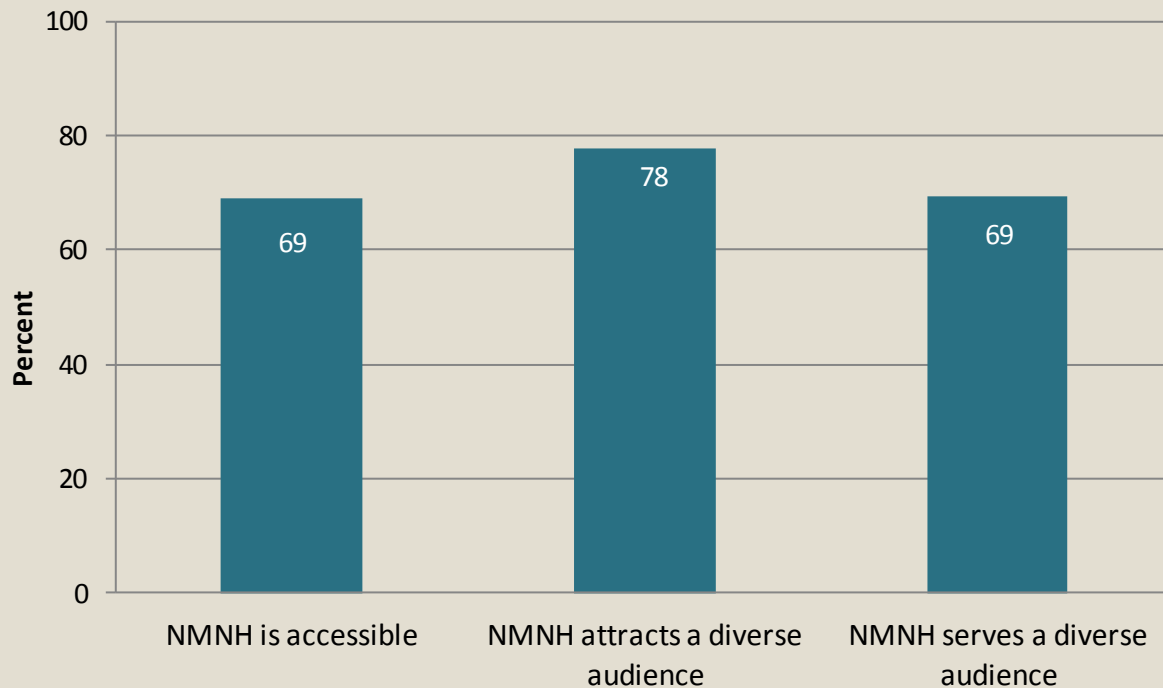


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NMNH and its audience



- Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of respondents feel NMNH attracts a diverse audience while under 70% of respondents feel that audience is diverse and that NMNH is accessible

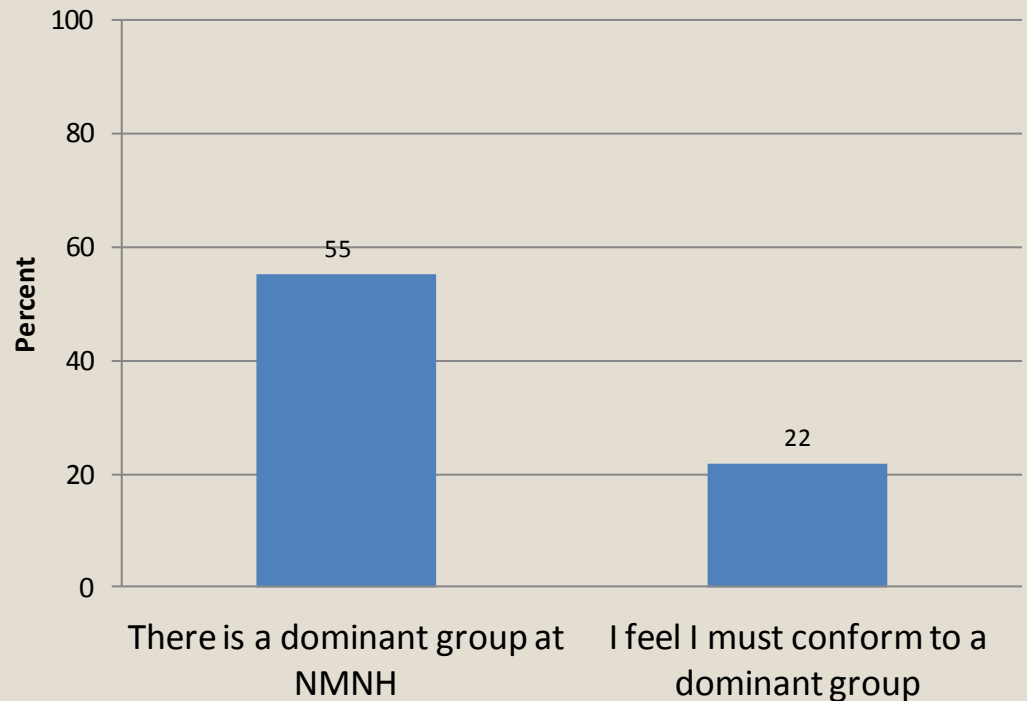


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Presence of a dominant group within NMNH



- Most respondents felt there was a dominant group within NMNH.
- Approximately 1 in 5 respondents felt they must conform to the perceived dominant group.

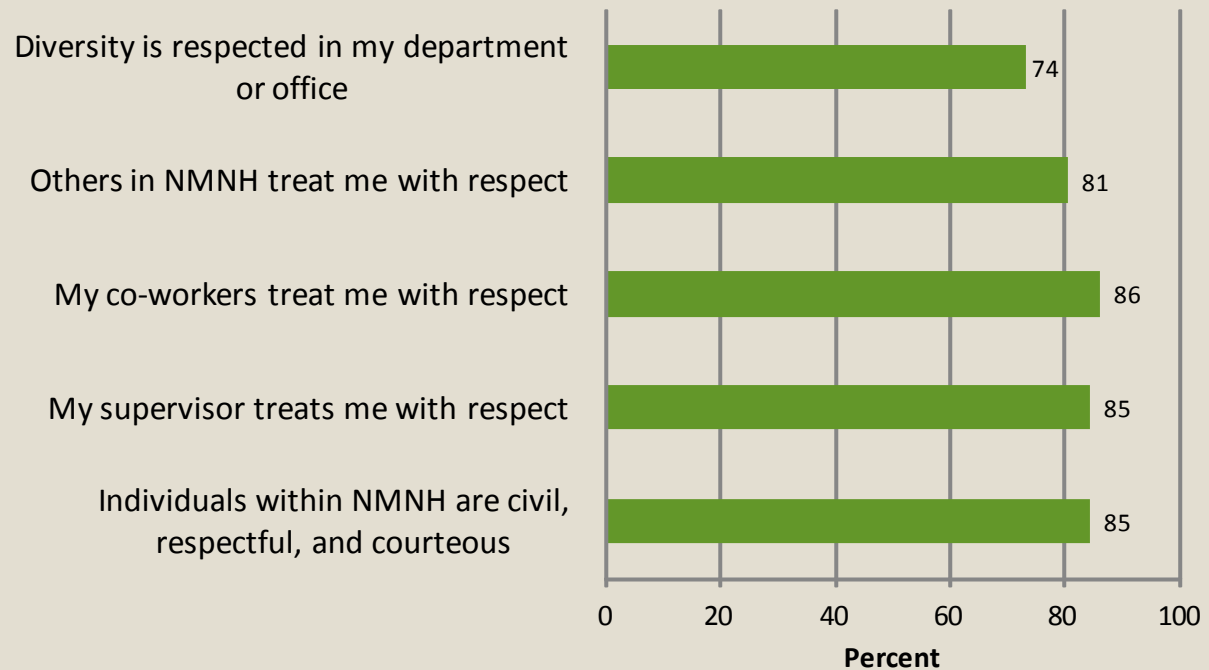


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Respect in the workplace



- Most respondents believe they are treated with respect in their interactions with others in NMNH. Approximately 3/4ths of respondents feel diversity is respected in their primary work area.

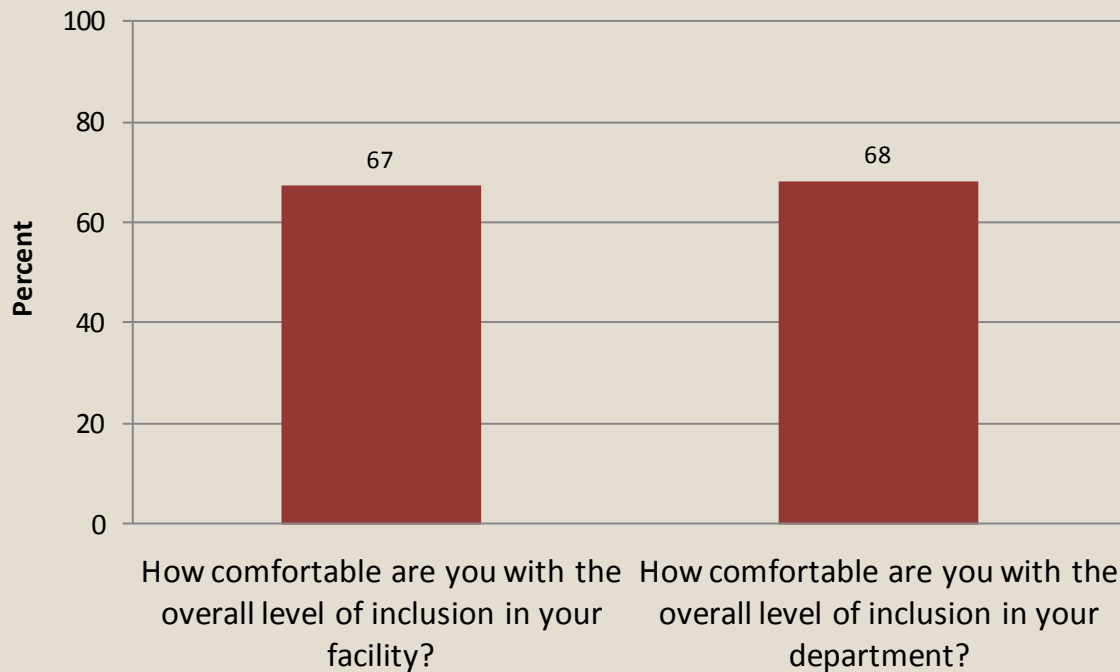


Only combined strongly agree/agree responses are shown

Inclusion in the workplace



- Nearly equal percentages of respondents feel “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the level of inclusion in both their office and facility

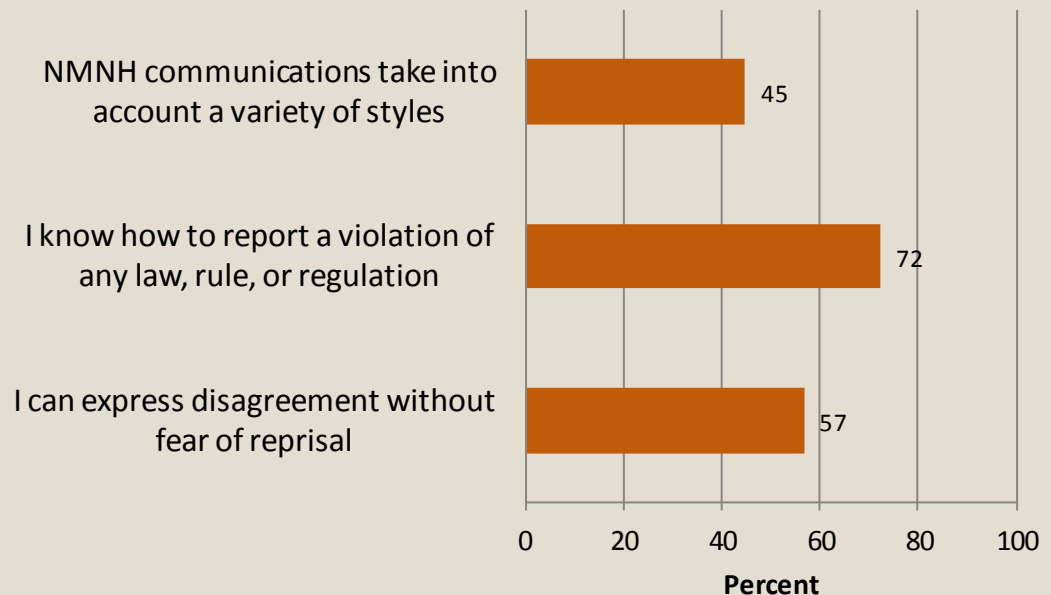


Only combined very comfortable/
comfortable responses are shown

Communication within NMNH

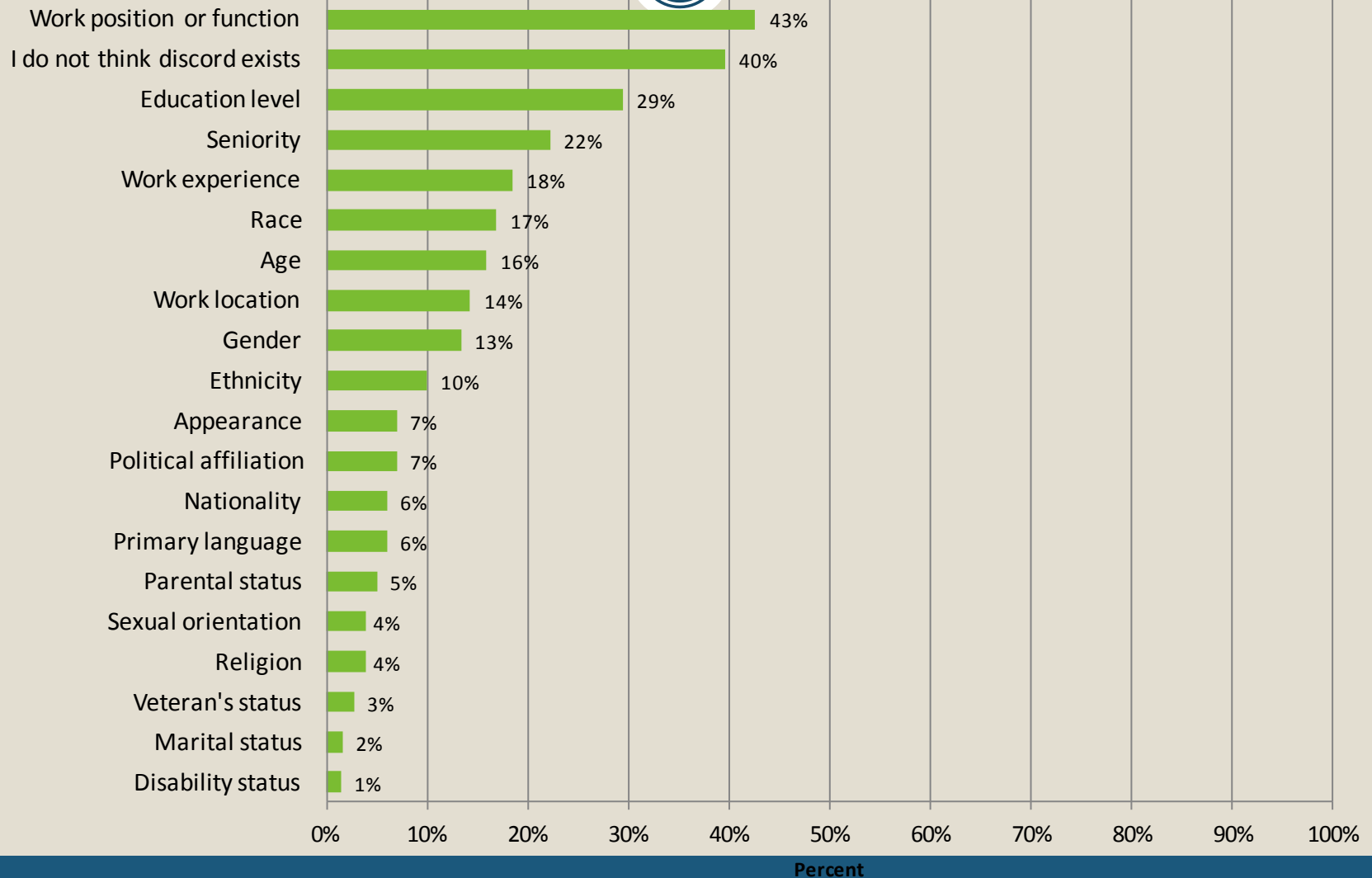


- More than half of respondents feel they are able to express disagreement without fear of reprisal
- Less than 50% of respondents agree NMNH communications account for different communication styles
- A little less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of respondents know how to report EEO or other violations



Only combined strongly agree/agree responses are shown

Discord in NMNH Facilities



I think discord exists between individuals at NMNH based on...

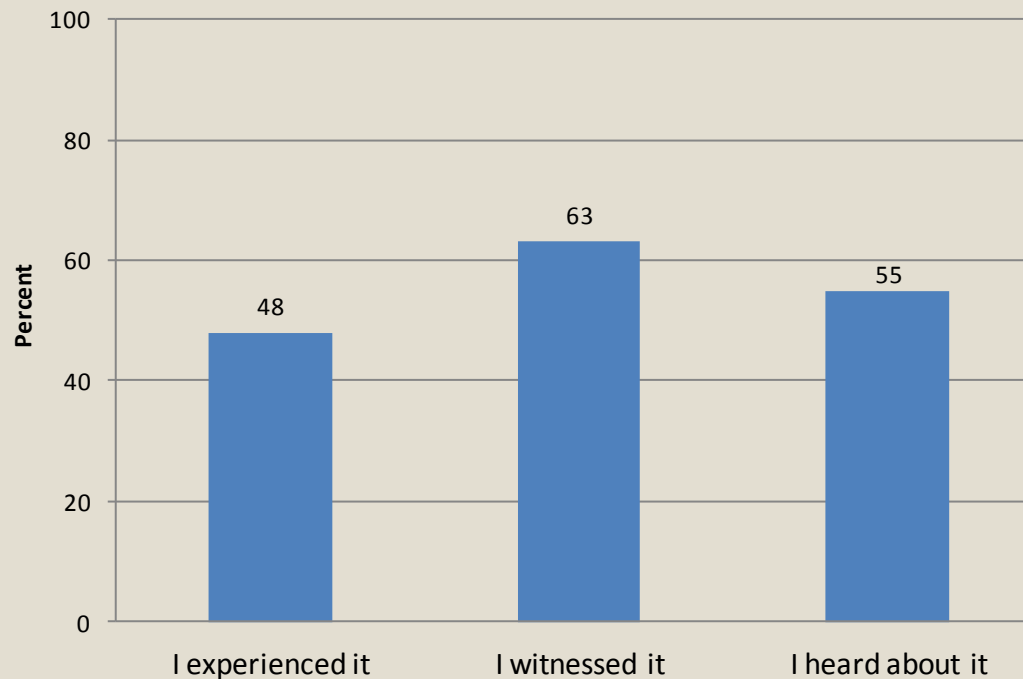


- “Work position or function” was the most of common source of discord chosen (43%) while “I do not think discord exists...” was the next most common option chosen (40%)
- After “work position”, the most common sources of discord chosen include “education level” (29%) and “seniority” (22%)
- The least common sources of discord chosen were “disability status” (1%) and “marital status” (2%)

Why do you think discord exists?



- Respondents were able to select more than one reason for why they thought discord exists within NMNH. Witnessing an interaction was the most common reason chosen.

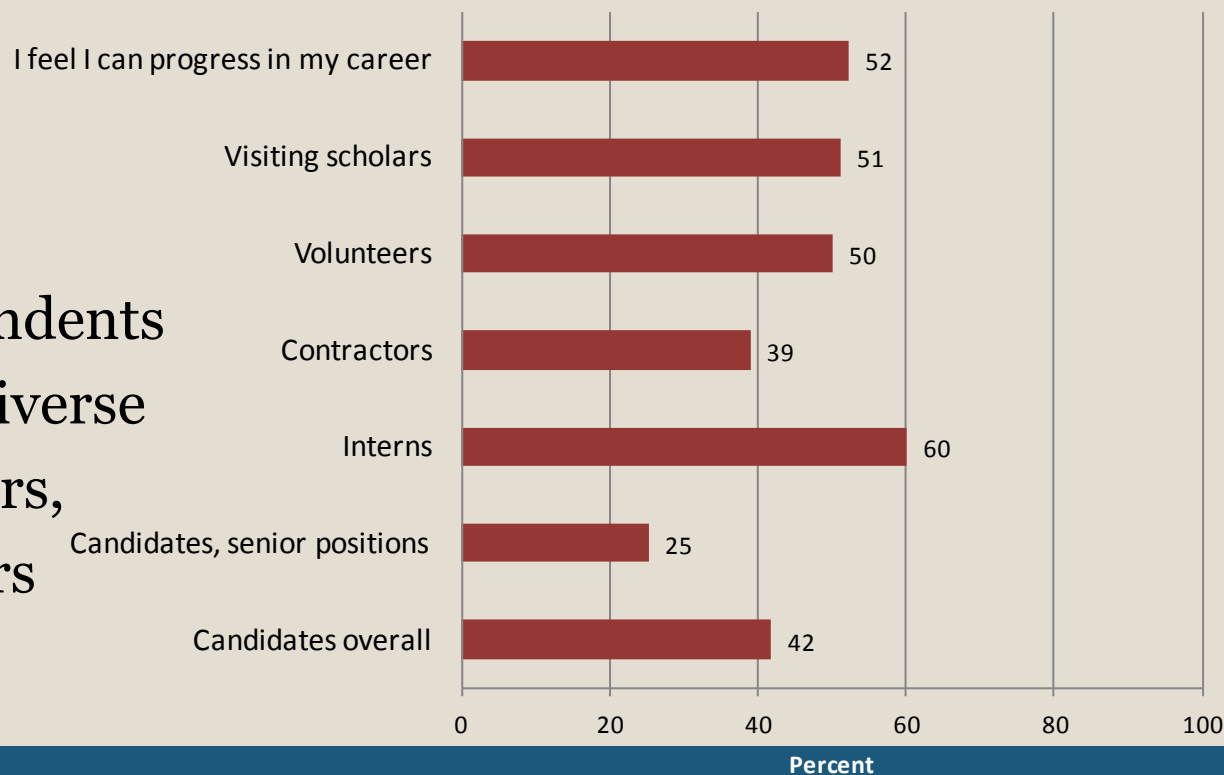


Recruitment and career progression

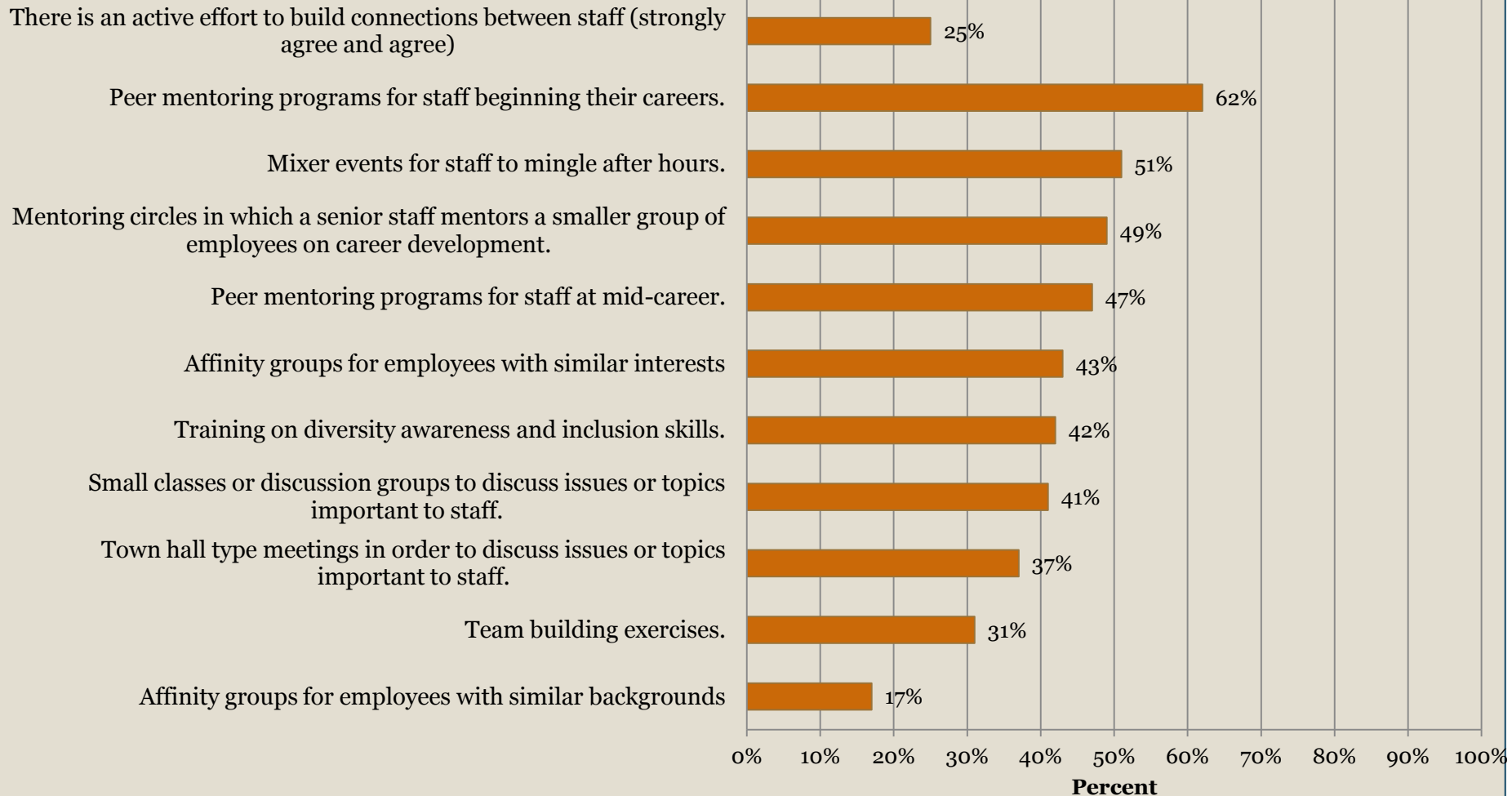


- A little more than half of respondents feel they can progress in their careers at NMNH
- A quarter of respondents agree that NMNH recruits a diverse pool of senior level job candidates

- About half of respondents agree that there is a diverse pool of visiting scholars, interns, and volunteers



Improving the climate at NMNH



Improving the climate at NMNH



- A quarter of respondents agreed that there was an active effort to build connections between NMNH staff*
- Respondents were most interested in mentoring opportunities of some kind (peer mentoring beginning of career 62%, mentoring circles 49%, mid-career mentoring 47%) or mixer events after work
- Respondents were least interested in affinity groups based on similarity of background (17%)

*53% of respondents selected 'Neither agree nor disagree'

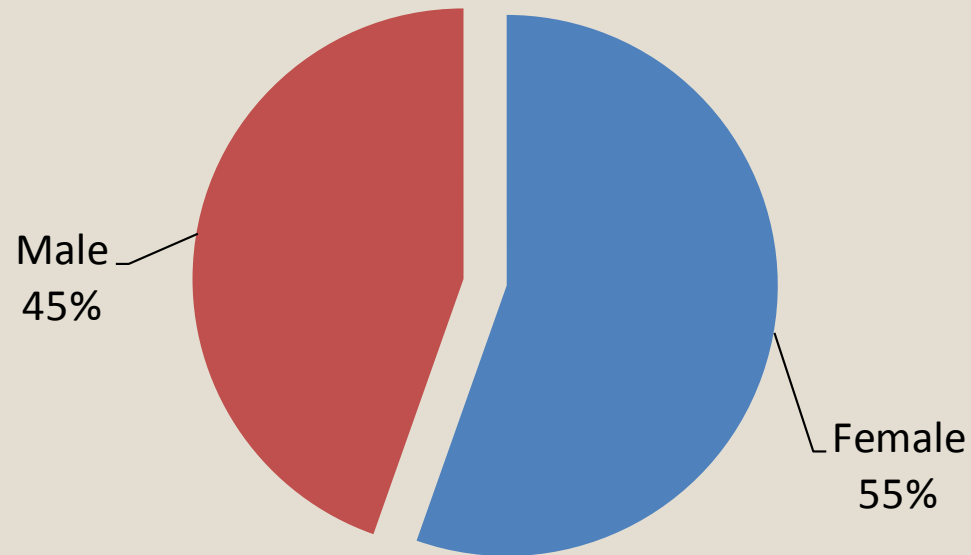
Demographic Characteristics of Respondents



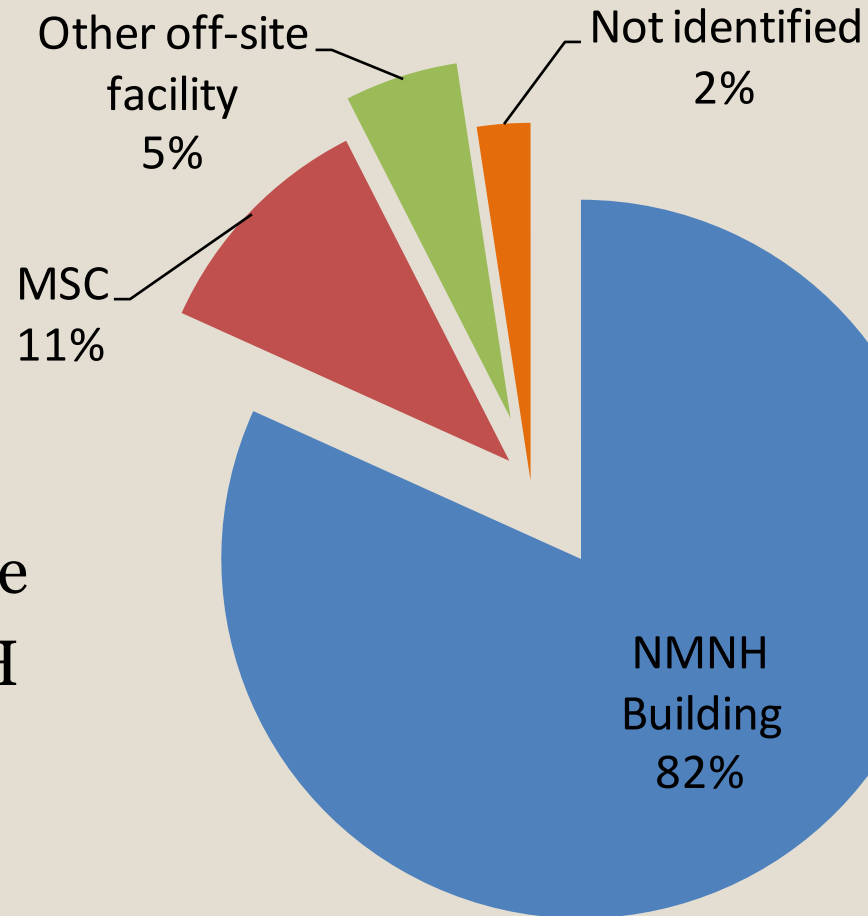
Demographics: Sex



- There were more female than male respondents to the survey



Demographics: Primary Work Location

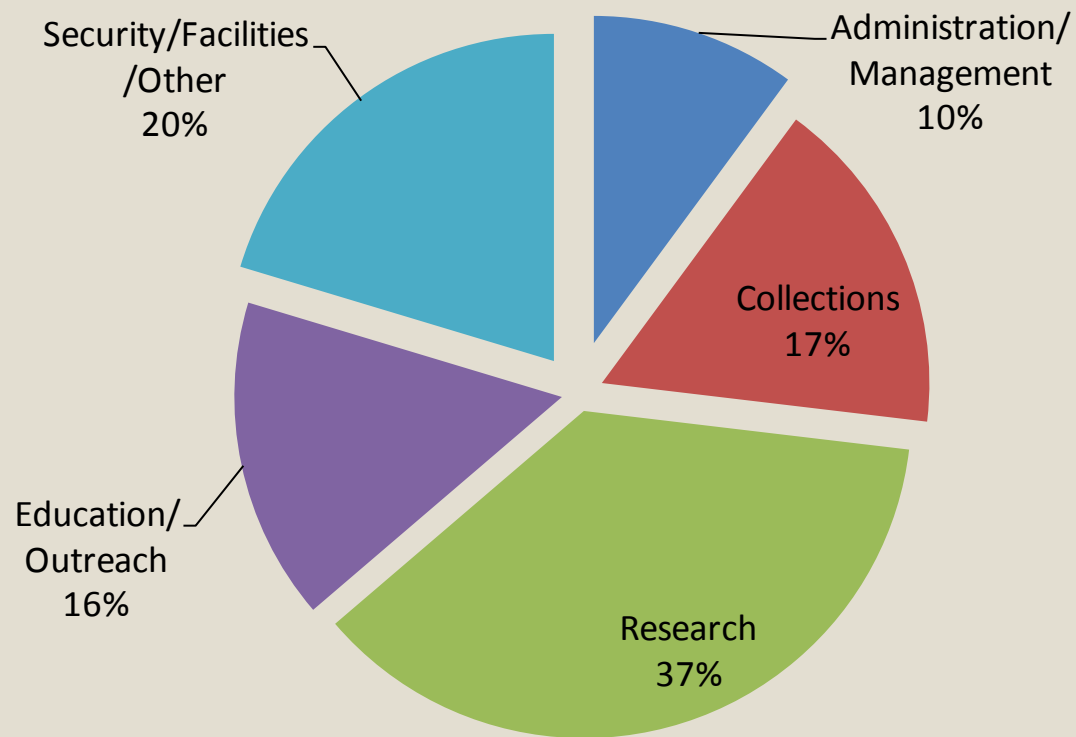


- Most respondents are located at the NMNH building on the Mall

Demographics: Primary Role



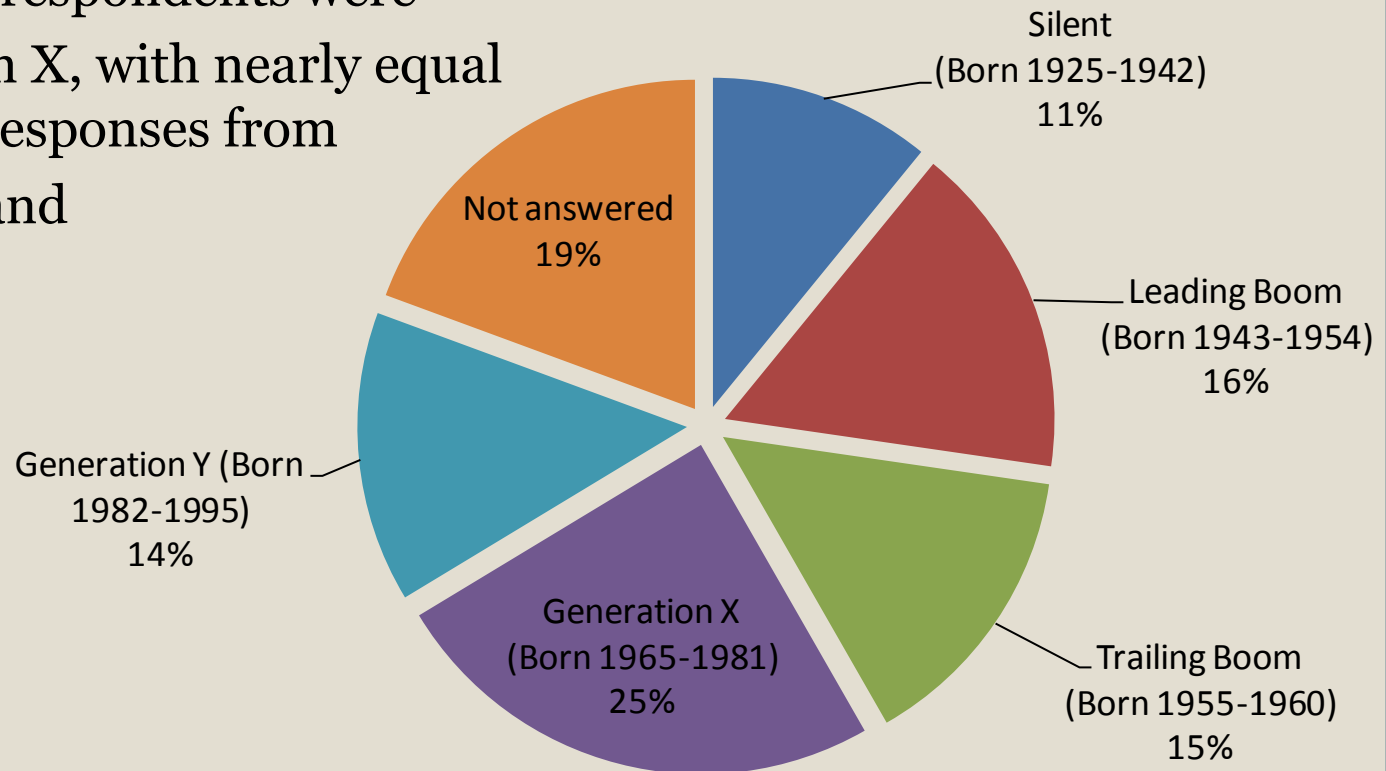
- The majority of respondents identified their primary roles at NMNH as research.



Demographics: Age by generation



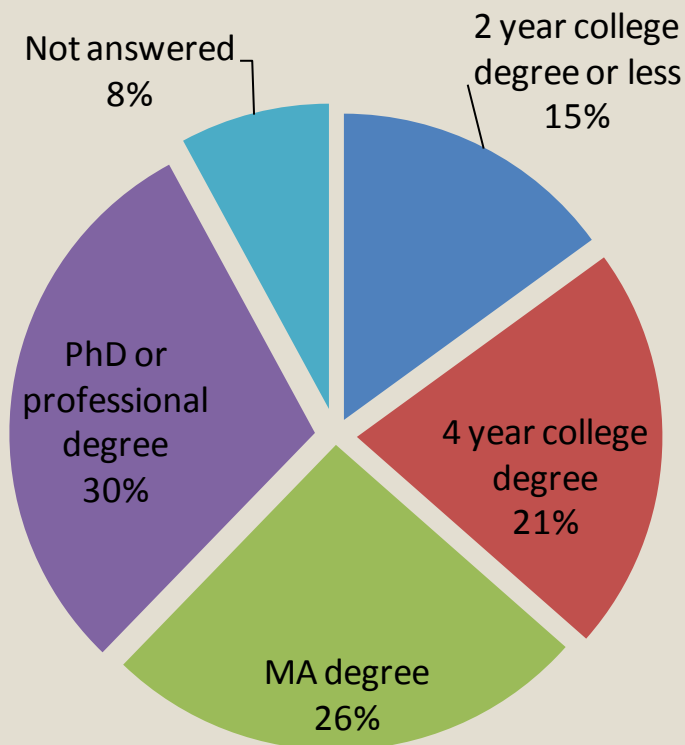
- Nearly 1/5 of respondents (19%) did not indicate what year they were born
- The majority of respondents were from Generation X, with nearly equal percentages of responses from Baby Boomers and Generation Y



Demographics: Education



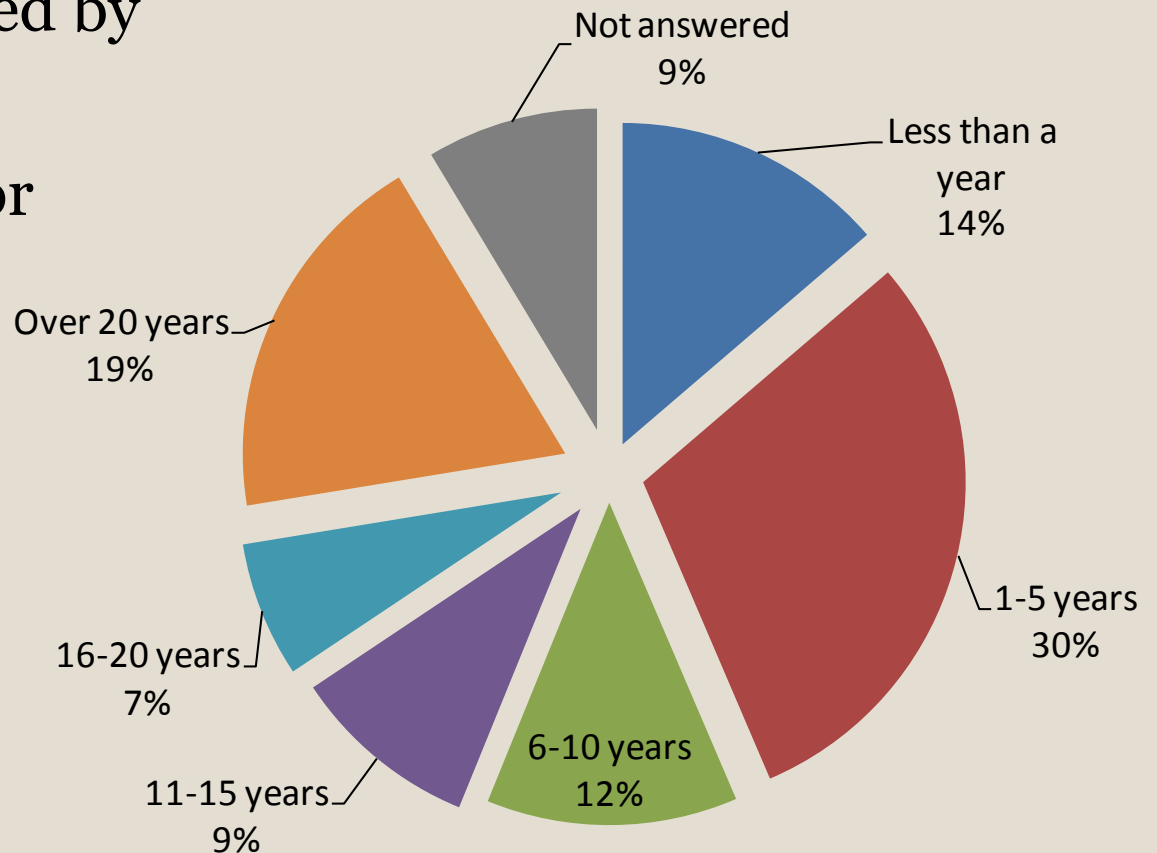
- NMNH has a highly educated staff with most respondents holding a 4 year college degree or more



Demographics: Tenure at NMNH



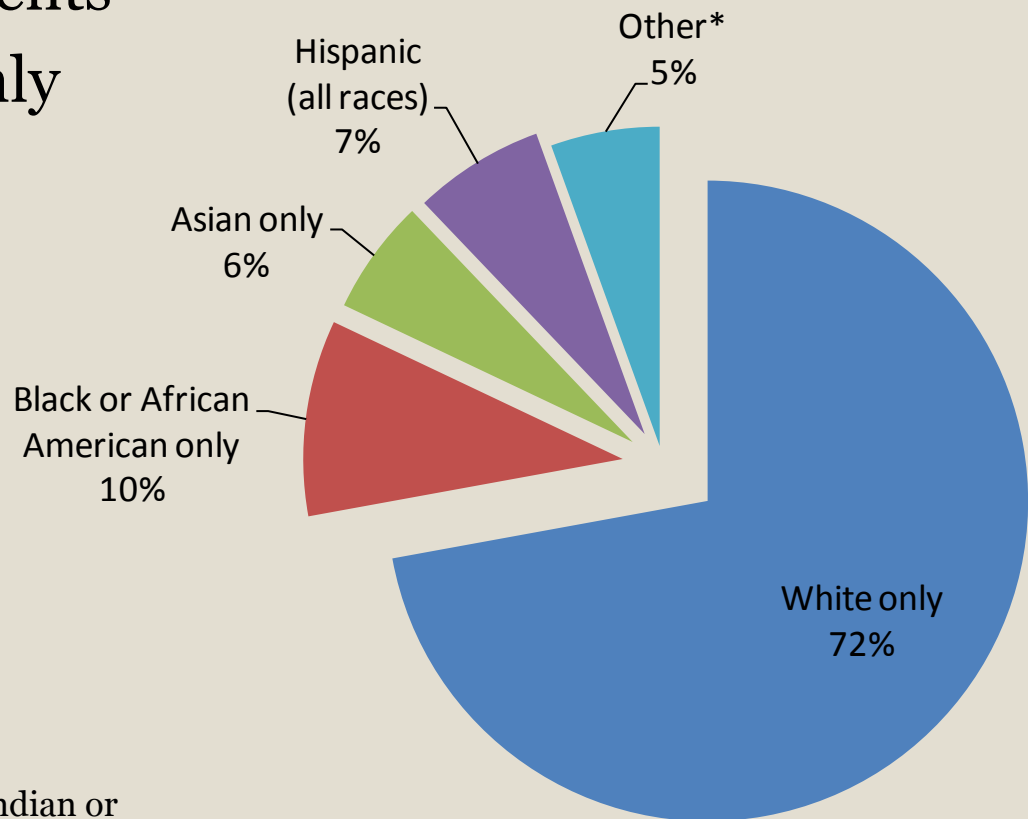
- Most respondents have been with NMNH for 1-5 years, followed by those who have been with NMNH for over 20 years



Demographics: Race and Ethnicity



- Most survey respondents identified as white only



*Other also includes multiracial, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian