

Connect Forum on Social Connections

Common themes and responses from the pre-forum survey

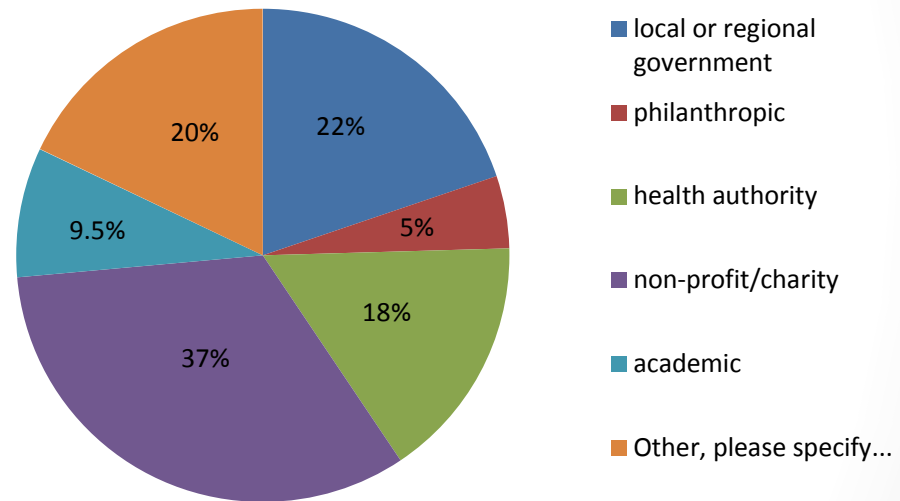
Respondent Information

1. What sector are you involved in?

95 Responses in total

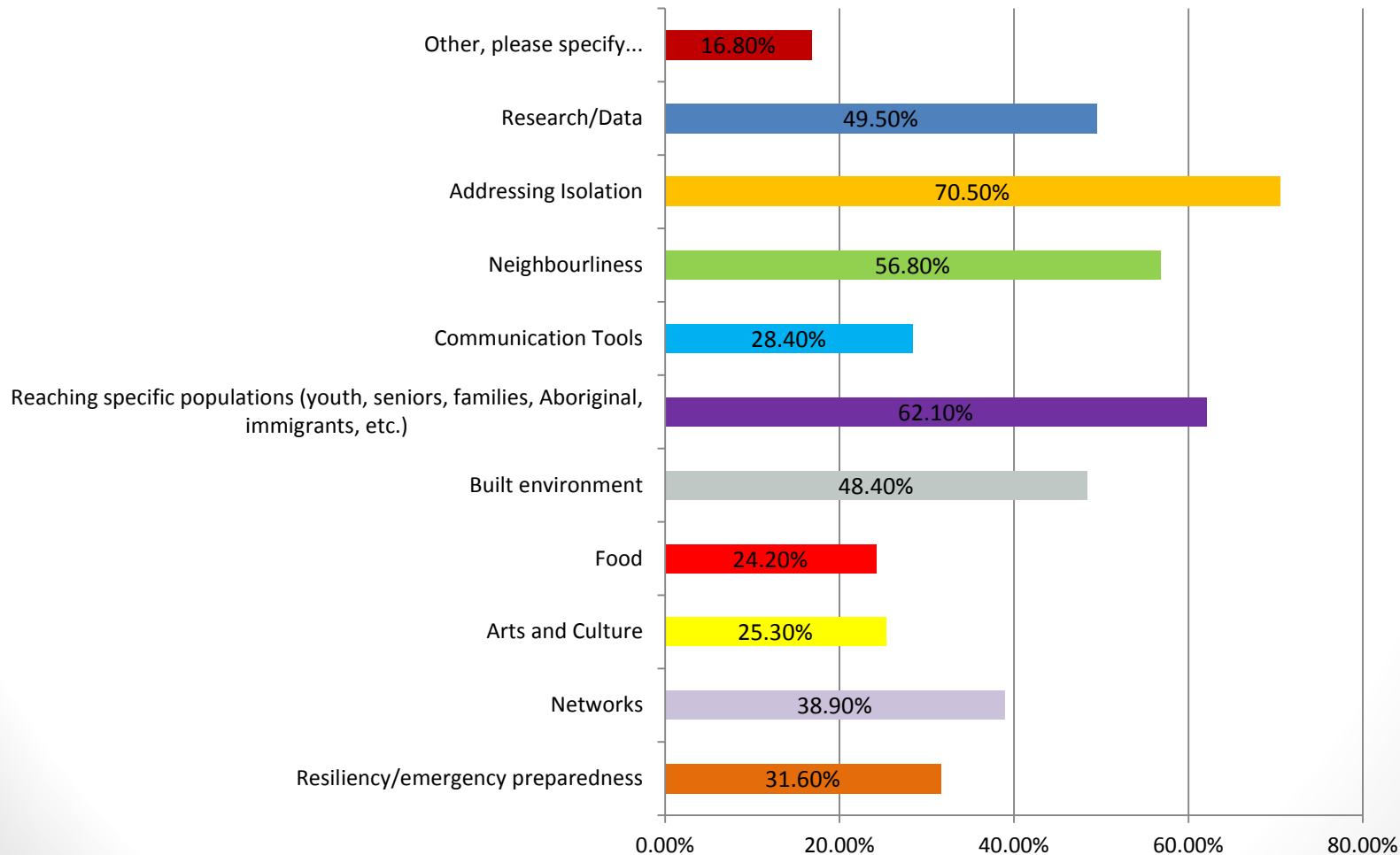
OTHER SECTOR includes:

- Transit authority
- Social Enterprise
- Technology
- Business
- Neighbourhood Houses
- Architecture



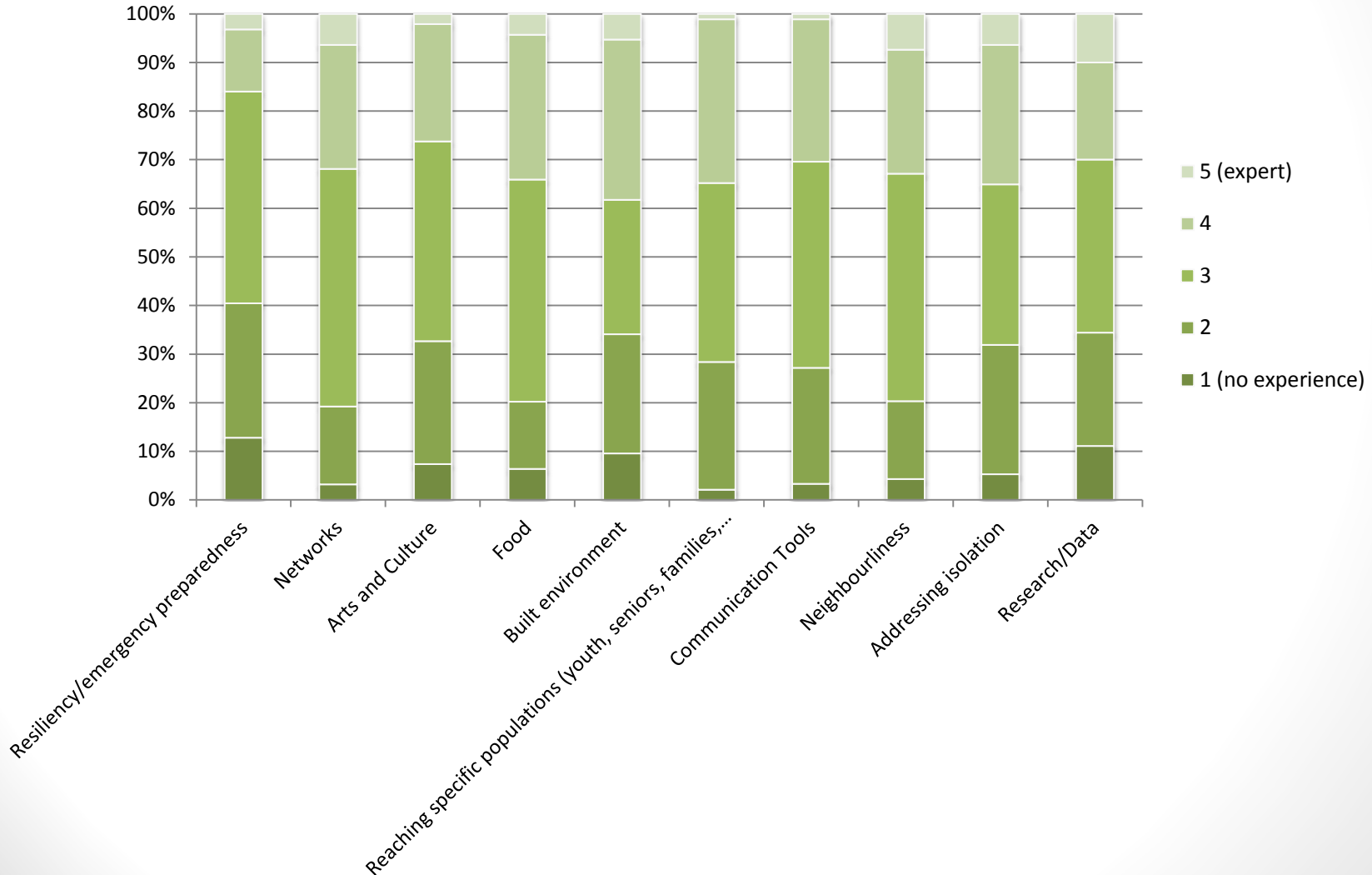
Topics of Interest

2. What topic(s) would you like to learn more about at the Forum, or in a follow-up session?



Familiarity with subjects

3. Rate your familiarity with the following subjects related to social connections, from 1 (not at all) to 5 (expert):



Challenges

4. What do you think are the biggest challenges in the way of your community being a more socially connected one?

- Lack of public/free public spaces
- Lack of transit
- Cultural and language barriers
- Housing/affordability
- Attitude/social changes – fear of strangers
- Time constraints
- Relationship with technology/social media
- Weather

Opportunities

5. What do you think are the biggest opportunities for your community to become a more socially connected one?

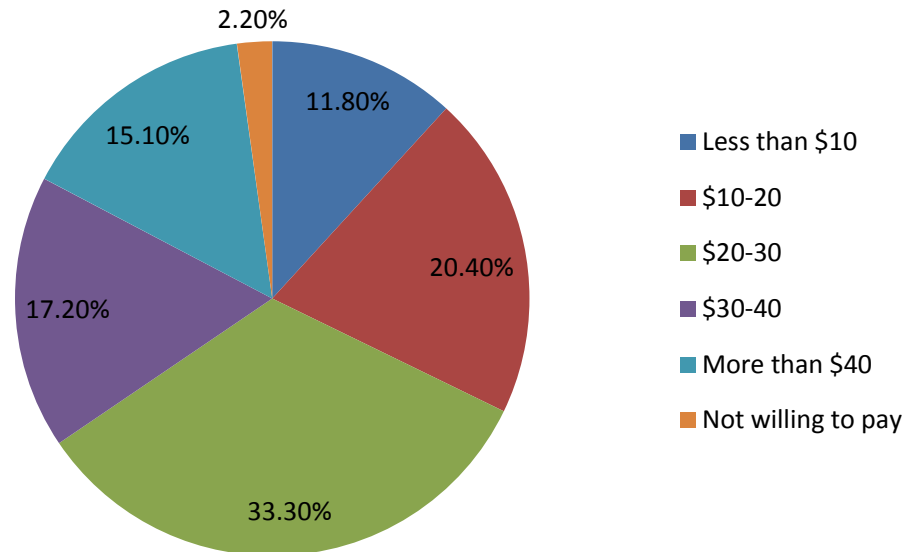
- More public gathering spaces within proximity of neighbourhoods
- Better advertising of events/programs to increase public awareness
- Increased person-to-person connections through connecting different sectors and neighbours
- Sponsored community events that engage people across generations/cultures/socio-economic boundaries
- Neighbourhood small grants
- Affordable housing
- Additional Responses

Event Format & Budget

6. What type of format appeals to you for this type of event?

Response	Chart	Percentage
Plenary key note speaker(s)		54.3%
Panel conversations		50.0%
“Deep-dive” breakout workshops		68.1%
Experiential learning		61.7%
Informal/“unconference”		30.9%
Other, please specify...		12.8%

7. What do you think an appropriate fee would be?



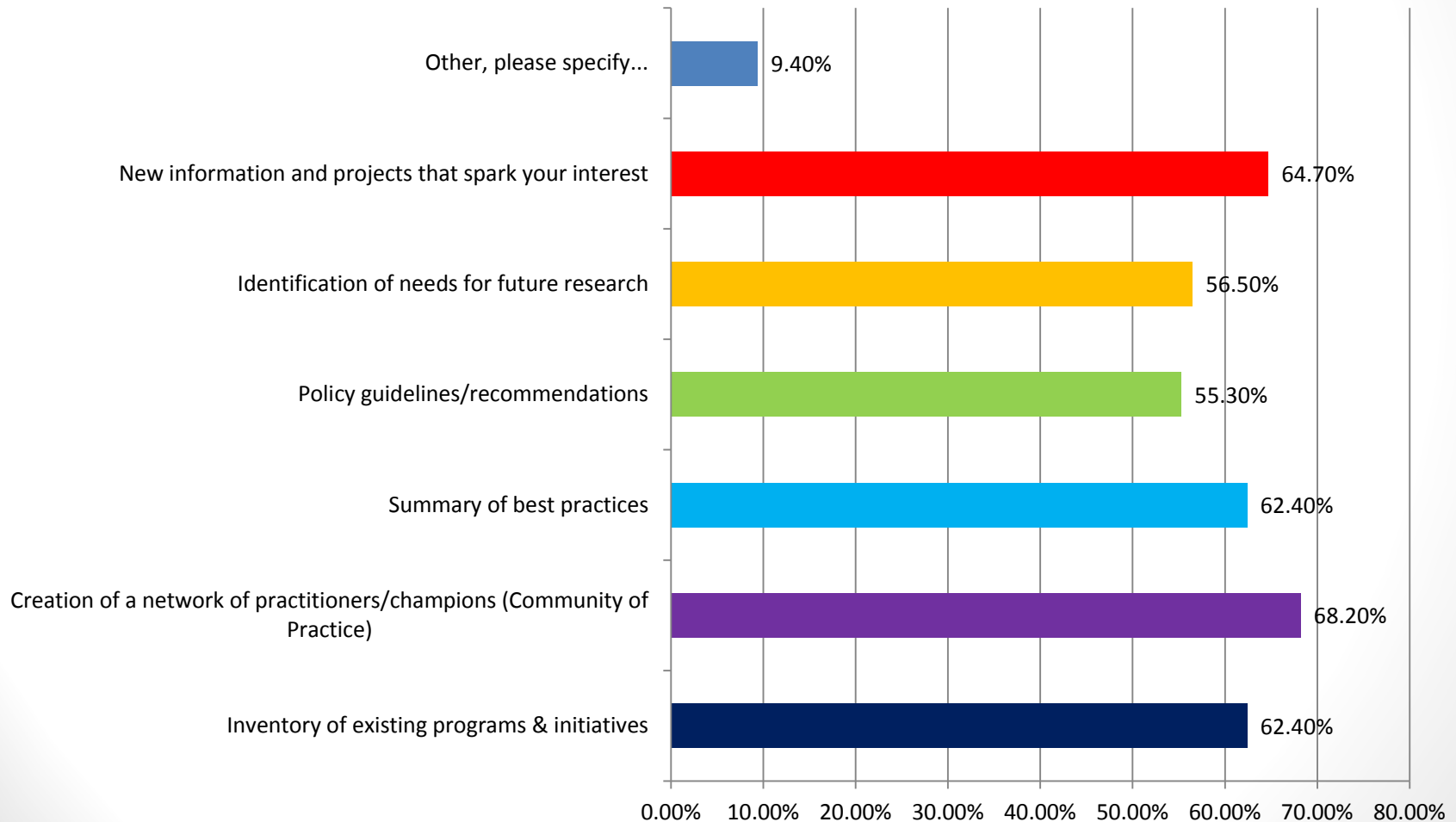
A “Practice” of helping people to connect

8. What can we do to make the Forum itself a “practice” of helping people connect? (e.g. ideas around formatting/programming, follow-up, etc.)

- Promote networking – encourage mingling
- Provide opportunities for people to engage informally
- Create a social/casual atmosphere
- Use interactive activities (mini dance party breaks, board games that relate to themes, ice breaker games)
- Share best practices
- Have inspiring guest speakers
- Encourage follow-up

Deliverables

9. What sort of “deliverables” would be most useful to you, arising from the Forum?



Metrics for Success - Impact

10. In your view, what might make this type of event successful? e.g. what would be a metric we could use to measure its success?

Solutions/Tools/Research that helps participants create better connections:

- Measure of concrete outcomes (new projects/alliances)
 - Identification of next steps for participants to take
 - Lasting involvement by participants
- Ongoing electronic forum where conversations can be continued
- Follow-up (3-6 months post forum)
 - Webinar of what ideas have begun to move forward
 - Survey of skills acquired and how they have been adapted
- Implementation of ideas learned
- Increase in awareness around issues/solutions
 - Self reflection activity to see the impact the forum had over a sustained period

Metrics for Success - Network

10. In your view, what might make this type of event successful? e.g. what would be a metric we could use to measure its success?

A network of practitioners

- Attendance
- Diversity of participants/representation of a wide range of groups
- New connections made both professionally and socially
 - Number of participants who share contact information and follow up
- Measure that every participant has at least 4 friends/family connections
- Number of participants who identify concrete intentions of connecting socially again after the event

Gaps in Research

11. Where do you see gaps in research/practice you would like to see filled?

Common Responses:

- How to put the research to use
- The relationship between urban planning/affordability/housing/ etc. and social connections
- Clarification on the definition of social connection
- local data on belonging/inclusion/engagement/connectedness
- How to shape social connections to include marginalized people; increased understanding of marginalized vs. social isolation
- Ways of sharing volunteer opportunities/community events
- The relationship between social connection and technology

Best Practices

12. What example(s) of best practice do you know of related to building social connections and/or reducing social isolation?

- Neighbourhood Houses
- Neighbourhood small grants and programs led by community members
- Work of non-profits with vulnerable/marginalized populations
- Creating spaces for people to gather
- Affordable housing
- Adequate public transportation systems/walkable neighbourhoods
- Free public events
- Local organizations (Churches, community kitchens, community centers, seniors centres)

Initiatives/Speakers/Projects/Policies

13. What example(s) of initiatives (speakers/presenters or programs/projects/policies) are you aware of that we could highlight or share at the Forum, or in a follow-up session?

- Charles Montgomery
- Neighbourhood House staff
- City of Victoria Resiliency Cities
- Representatives from a wide range of Vancouver groups (youth groups, Aboriginal community leaders, LGBTQI, cultural group representatives, mental health associations)
- Neighbourhood Small Grant participants

14. What group(s), organization(s), or individual(s) do we absolutely HAVE to invite to attend the Forum?

- Municipal staff – recreation, social planners
- Neighbourhood House staff
- Public Health workers
- Social Workers
- Researchers/academics
- NGOs
- Small Businesses
- Housing industry
- Community groups (Faith groups, youth groups, seniors centres, parent advisory committees, community hobby/interest groups)
- Charles Montgomery