

CERIS – THE ONTARIO METROPOLIS CENTRE



The Future of *CERIS*

Findings From Online Survey

Prepared by: Rehanna Siew., PhD Candidate
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The Future of CERIS: Findings from Online Survey **Summary Report**

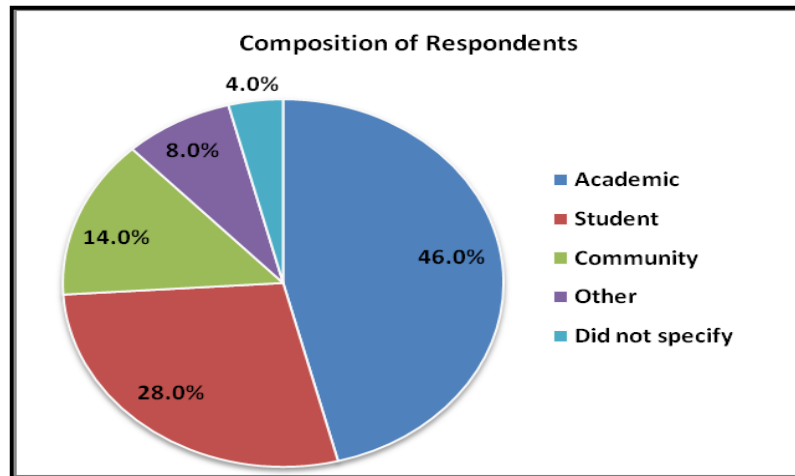
To prepare for the March 2012 closing of *CERIS* in its current form, the Future Planning Subcommittee (FPS) administered an online survey from July 28 to August 23, 2011. The objective was to gain insight from affiliates and non-affiliates on their past experiences, current needs, and future goals. A web-link was emailed to affiliates, graduate programs and faculty from the three Toronto-area universities. Member agencies of *Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants*, the *Community Social Planning Council of Toronto*, and the *United Way of Greater Toronto* also received the survey.

In total, 306 surveys were completed (46% Academics, 28% Students, 14% Community, 8% 'Other' and 4% did not specify). Of the total, 75% were affiliated with *CERIS* in the past 10 years. In combining academic and student respondents, the response rate for universities was York University (31%), Ryerson University (20%), University of Toronto (17%), 'other' universities (24%), and did not specify (8%). There was some correlation among the activities respondents attended/used/participated in, activities they wanted to see continue, and what should be included in a new Centre—with particular reference to seminars, conferences, and the use of working papers. Although research grants were low on the list of activities used/participated in, 76% of all respondents indicated that they were important and should continue in a new Centre. Respondents were asked what roles a new Centre should have where, policy relevant research, academic or basic research, and knowledge dissemination to community were respectively the top three answers. Policy making, research, and advocacy were stated as areas of improvement for *CERIS*, and which should be addressed in a new Centre. In an open-ended 'dream question,' respondents most frequently said the ideal *CERIS* would: (1) bridge academic research with policy development; (2) be the main site for innovative knowledge formation and exchange; and (3) have more collaboration between researchers, policy makers, and the community. This survey indicates a need for more of a community voice to understand the landscape of community-based research, and what it may look like. As an extension of the survey, the FPS hopes this may be accomplished through a town hall meeting in Fall 2011, which 57% of respondents indicated an interest in attending. A full report of the survey findings is provided below, which includes a breakdown of responses based on participants' positions as academics, students, community members, and 'other'.

The Future of CERIS: Findings from Online Survey
Full Report

In March 2012, *CERIS – The Ontario Metropolis Centre* in its current form, will come to an end. In preparation, the Centre’s Future Planning Subcommittee (FPS) administered an online survey (see Appendix A) from July 28 to August 23, 2011 using SurveyMonkey. The objective was to gain insight on affiliates’ past experiences, current needs, and future goals. The survey was also encouraged non-affiliate participation, allowing for new insight into the shaping of a future Centre. The survey was targeted towards academics, graduate students, community partners, and policy leaders that are interested in immigration research. A web-link to the survey was emailed to past and present *CERIS* affiliates as well as graduate programs and faculty from Ryerson University, University of Toronto, and York University. *CERIS*’ community partners, *Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants*, *the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto*, and the *United Way of Greater Toronto* also forwarded the survey to their member agencies. In total, 306 individuals completed the survey. The respondents’ work settings were distributed as follows: 46% Academics, 28% Students, 14% Community, and 8% ‘Other’¹ (see Graph 1). 12 individuals did not specify their ‘work setting’ and were recorded as having skipped this question. Appendix B provides the responses to all the questions based on a respondent’s ‘work setting.’ Respondents generally shared similar views for all questions regardless of their work setting with the exception of question 6, which concerned areas of improvements for *CERIS*. Here, academics stated research was the area that needed the most improvement, while students and the community stated policy making.

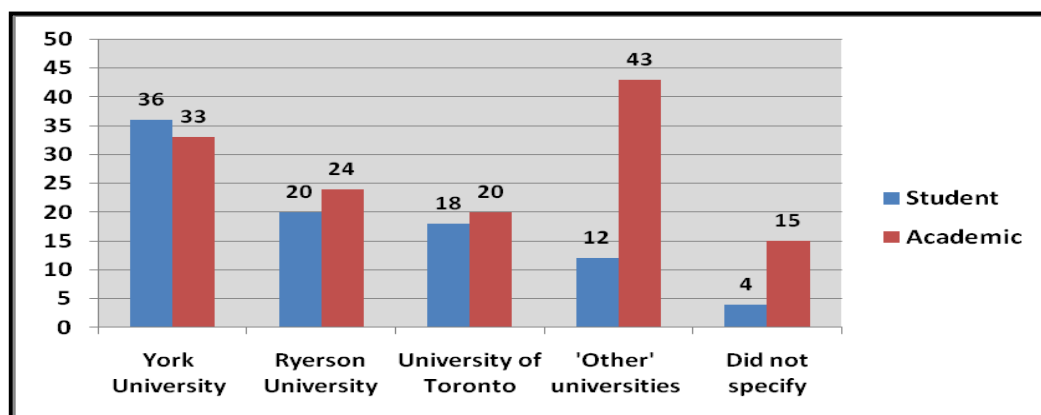
Graph 1: Which of the following best describes your work setting (specify position as appropriate)?



¹ ‘Other’ includes: 15 government, 5 independent researchers, 3 consultants, 1 editor, and 1 did not specify.

The FPS was interested in which universities participated in the survey, and although not all academics and students disclosed their affiliations, Chart 1 offers some indication of who responded. For both students and academics, the three Toronto-area universities received the highest response rate, with 31% being from York University. Almost one quarter (24%) of all respondents were from ‘Other’ universities; many of whom indicated the need for research outside the Greater Toronto Area when asked, ‘*what should the ideal CERIS do?*’

Chart 1: University Affiliation of Academics and Students (Question 2)



Of the 306 respondents, 75% stated they were affiliated² with *CERIS* in the past ten years. In question 3, affiliates were asked to indicate all the activities they attended/used/participated in. 29 non-affiliates also answered this question demonstrating that one does not need to be affiliated with the Centre to access its activities. Table 2 shows the top seven responses for activities attended/used/participated in, where seminars, use of working papers, and use of policy matters were the top three choices.

Table 2: *CERIS* has been involved in various activities. As an affiliate, which of the following have you attended/used/participated in? (Check all that apply)

Answer Options	Affiliate	Non-affiliate	Total Response	Total Response (%)
Use of Working Papers	162	17	179	72%
Seminars	158	18	176	71%
Use of Policy Matters	112	15	127	51%
National Conference	95	5	100	40%
Virtual Library	93	7	100	40%
Community Research Symposium	82	9	91	37%
Research Grants	86	3	89	36%
			Total answered question 248	
			Total skipped question 85	

² An affiliate of *CERIS* can be any individual irrespective of their work setting.

For question 4, respondents were provided with a suggested list of activities, similar to the one in question 3 and were asked, ‘*if only some of these could continue, which would be the most important?*’ Like question 3, respondents rated seminars, community research symposiums, national conferences, and use of working papers as their top activities. Although research grants were not cited as a top activity used/participated in, it was mentioned as important where 76% of all respondents wanted to see it continue in a new Centre.

Table 3: If only some of these activities could continue, which are the most important?

Please rank your top 6 items. 1 = first important, 2 = second important, 3 = third important, etc		
Answer Options	Response Count	Response Count (%)
Research Grants	215	74%
Seminars	202	69%
Community Research Symposium	164	56%
National Conference	146	50%
Use of Working Papers	142	49%
Publishing through Working Papers or Policy Matters	133	46%
		Total answered question 291
		Total skipped question 15

Respondents were then asked in question 5, ‘*what activities they would like to see a new Centre take on in the future?*’ As in question 4, research grants (76%), seminars (72%), and working paper series (72%) were among the top cited. Policy recommendations had the second highest response (74%), which was reiterated later when asked, ‘*what would the ideal CERIS do?*’ Table 4 provides responses for question 5 that received a higher than 50% response rate.

Table 4: Activities would you like to see taken on by a new Centre in the future?

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent (%)
Research Grants	222	76.3%
Policy Recommendations	214	73.5%
Seminars	210	72.2%
Working Paper Series	209	71.8%
Making data available	200	68.7%
Community Symposium	193	66.3%
Analyze Data and Report trends	170	58.4%
National and Provincial Conferences	169	58.1%
Advocacy	154	52.9%
		Total answered question 291
		Total skipped question 15

When prioritizing the main roles of a new Centre, question 6 asked respondents to rank their top three choices, in which they answered (1) policy relevant research, (2) academic or basic research, and (3) knowledge dissemination to community. From the list of options provided (see Table 5), advocacy ranked as the least important.

Table 5: Which do you believe should be the top three roles of a new Centre?

Please rank: 1 = first important, 2 = second important, 3 = third important				
Answer Options	1	2	3	Rating Average
Policy Relevant Research	127	55	25	1.51
Knowledge dissemination to Community	38	97	64	2.13
Knowledge dissemination to Policy Makers	22	71	105	2.42
Academic or Basic Research	75	51	24	1.66
Advocacy	29	15	61	2.30
<i>Total answered question</i>				291
<i>Total skipped question</i>				15

For question 7, respondents spoke to the challenges and/or areas for improvement of *CERIS*, which a new Centre should address. Responses were almost evenly split among—policy making (61%), research (57%), and advocacy (53%), as shown in Table 6. Although advocacy was the least important role in a new Centre for question 6, it nonetheless needs to be addressed. For question 7, respondents were encouraged to elaborate on their choices, as open-ended responses were coded into six themes (see Chart 2). Here, 19 respondents stated that *CERIS* needed to improve collaboration and support with the community.

Table 6: What are the challenges and/or areas for improvement of *CERIS*?³

What are the challenges and/or areas for improvement of CERIS that the new Centre should address? (check all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
a) Research	57%	155
b) Advocacy	53%	143
c) Policy Making	61%	164
d) Other	9%	25
e) Not applicable	11%	31
<i>Total answered question</i>		271
<i>Total skipped question</i>		35

³ Question 7: Total answered question 271; total skipped question 35

Chart 2: Challenges and/or areas for improvement. Coded themes for question 7⁴



In thinking about the forming a new Centre, a dream question was posed to respondents asking, ‘*what would the ideal CERIS do?*’ 199 individuals responded with varying answers, which are organized into the top fourteen most frequently mentioned themes, in Table 7. As in the previous questions, bridging policy with academic research was among the most important.

Table 7: What would the ideal CERIS do?

Responses by Theme	Number of Mentions
1. Bridge academic research with policy development	57
2. Be the main site for innovative knowledge formation and exchange	46
3. Greater collaboration between researchers, policy makers, and the community	40
4. Conduct, collect, and support research	37
5. Encourage and support community driven research and engagement with immigrants	36
6. Disseminate or Publish research to the Community and Policy Makers	31
7. Accessibility (i.e. to public, space, language, data, website)	31
8. Provide Funding Opportunities for Research	29
9. Best practices/Provide evidence and accountability of research to create change	27
10. Support Advocacy	25
11. Maintain what CERIS currently does	19
12. Support new researcher and graduate students	19
13. Support and conduct conference and seminars	13
14. Other (i.e. independently funded, act as an advisor, support diverse research)	11

The findings for this survey generally reveal several consistencies among academics, students, and the community, particularly relating to activities attended/used/participated in, activities that are important, and activities that a new Centre should take on. It also indicates a need for more of a community voice to understand the landscape of community-based research, and what it may look like. As an extension of the survey, the FPS hopes this and other findings can be discussed at a town hall meeting in Fall 2011, which 57% of respondents indicated an interest in attending.

⁴ Total response count: 25

Future Plans for CERIS

Introduction

In March 2012, CERIS - The Ontario Metropolis Centre, in its current form will come to an end. In an effort to shape a new Centre, a subcommittee is presently evaluating policy, academic, and community needs. This survey is intended for a wide audience including, but not limited to, those who previously and currently use various CERIS resources and participate in CERIS. Those with no affiliation with CERIS, but interested in its current mandate and/or the formation of a new Centre are also encouraged to participate in the survey.

The survey will take about 5-7 minutes to complete. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Please press 'next' below to continue.

****About CERIS - The Ontario Metropolis Centre:**

Established in 1996, the Centre is a research knowledge creation and transfer network that focuses on the resettlement and integration of immigrants and refugees in Ontario. The Centre is a consortium of Toronto-area universities and community partners. Its Governance Board includes representation from Ryerson University, the University of Toronto, and York University, as well as the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto, and United Way Toronto. The goals of the Centre include:

1. Promoting research about the impact of immigration on the Greater Toronto Area and on the integration of immigrants into Canadian society;
2. Providing training opportunities;
3. Disseminating policy and program relevant research information.

In addressing the ongoing issues of immigration, CERIS has six domains of emphasis - citizenship and social, cultural and civic integration; economic and labour market integration; family, children and youth; health and well-being; policing, security and justice; welcoming communities - within each of which it intends to stimulate and support macro- and micro-level research. The Centre fosters research collaboration among universities, between universities and community agencies, and across disciplinary boundaries. The Centre emphasizes interdisciplinary research and recognize the contribution of different methodologies including archival study, ethnographic investigation, statistical analysis of existing data sets, case studies, epidemiology and community surveys

For more detail on CERIS, please visit: <http://ceris.metropolis.net/>

1. Which of the following best describes your work setting (specify position as appropriate)

- a) Academic (include: department and institution)
- b) Student (include: degree, department, and institution)
- c) Community (include: position and organization)
- d) Other (please specify)

Future Plans for CERIS

***2. Have you been affiliated with CERIS in the past ten years? (If no, please skip to question 4)**

- Yes
- No

3. CERIS has been involved in various activities. As an affiliate, which of the following have you attended/used/participated in? (check all that apply)

***Policy Matters: a series of accessible and concise research reports focusing on key policy issues affecting immigration, settlement, diversity, and integration in Canada. Reports are based on Working Papers and/or other publications by authors linked to CERIS.**

****Working Papers: one of the primary ways recent CERIS research is disseminated in a timely and accessible fashion. Papers are available on the CERIS website and distributed to Metropolis funders, Metropolis Centres, university and community partners, policy-makers and media.**

	Attended/Used/Participated
a) Seminars	<input type="radio"/>
b) Student Request for Proposals (RFP)	<input type="radio"/>
c) Research Grants	<input type="radio"/>
d) Funding to attend national conference	<input type="radio"/>
e) Community Research Symposium	<input type="radio"/>
f) National Conference	<input type="radio"/>
g) Use of Policy Matters*	<input type="radio"/>
h) Use of Working Papers**	<input type="radio"/>
i) Publishing through Working Papers or Policy Matters	<input type="radio"/>
j) Virtual Library	<input type="radio"/>
k) Data Provision	<input type="radio"/>
l) Open House	<input type="radio"/>
m) Advocacy	<input type="radio"/>
n) Other	<input type="radio"/>
o) Other	<input type="radio"/>

Future Plans for CERIS

(please specify for n and/or o)

***4. If only some of these activities could continue, which are the most important? (please rank your top 6 items. 1 = first important, 2 = second important, 3 = third important, etc).**

	1	2	3	4	5	6
a) Seminars	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Student RFP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Research Grants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Funding to attend national conference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) Community Research Symposium	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) National Conference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g) Use of Policy Matters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h) Use of Working Papers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i) Publishing through Working Papers or Policy Matters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j) Virtual Library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
k) Data Provision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l) Open House	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
m) Advocacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
n) Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(please specify)

Future Plans for CERIS

***5. What activities would you like to see taken on by a new Centre in the future? Below is a partial list of potential activities. (check all that apply)**

- a) Seminars
- b) Advocacy
- c) Policy Recommendations
- d) Community Symposium
- e) Graduate Student Conferences
- f) National and Provincial Conferences
- g) Working Paper Series
- h) Analyze Data and Report trends
- i) Managing CERIS
- j) Research Grants
- k) Training
- l) Making data available
- m) Other

(please specify)

***6. Which do you believe should be the top three roles of a new Centre? (please rank: 1 = first important, 2 = second important, 3 = third important)**

	1	2	3
a) Advocacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Policy Relevant Research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Academic or Basic Research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Knowledge dissemination to Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) Knowledge dissemination to Policy Makers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g) Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(please specify)

Future Plans for CERIS

7. What are the challenges and/or areas for improvement of CERIS that the new Centre should address? (check all that apply)

- a) Research
- b) Advocacy
- c) Policy Making
- d) Other
- e) Not applicable

Please elaborate on your selection(s)

8. Dream Question: What would the ideal CERIS do? (one sentence)

*9. As an extension of this survey, CERIS intends to conduct a town hall meeting in the Fall of 2011. Would you like to attend?

- a) Yes (please send me more details)
- b) No (I cannot attend but send me more details)
- c) No (further details not required)

include email if you answered a or b

10. If you would like updates on the future of CERIS, please provide the following contact information.

Name:

Organization or Institution:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Appendix B: Survey Responses by 'Work Setting'

1. Have you been affiliated with *CERIS* in the past ten years? (If no, please skip to question 4)

Answer Options	academic	student	community	other	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	120	59	28	18	76.5%	225
No	18	28	16	7	23.5%	69

2. *CERIS* has been involved in various activities. As an affiliate, which of the following have you attended/used/participated in? (check all that apply)

Answer Options	academic	student	community	other	Response Count
Seminars	90	46	22	15	173
Student Request for Proposals (RFP)	11	18	2	2	33
Research Grants	68	15	2	2	87
Funding to attend national conference	13	9	7	2	31
Community research symposium	43	14	19	13	89
National conference	55	18	14	11	98
Use of Policy Matters	56	34	20	15	125
Use of Working Papers	82	57	24	14	177
Publishing through Working Papers or Policy Matters	30	5	4	2	41
Virtual Library	54	24	10	11	99
Data Provision	24	4	9	4	41
Open House	28	4	4	6	42
Advocacy	12	3	3	2	20
Other	10	8	4	4	26
Other	7	3	1	2	13
(please specify for n and/or o)					31

3. If only some of these activities could continue, which are the most important? (please rank your top 6 items. 1 = first important, 2 = second important, 3 = third important, etc).

Answer Options	academic	student	community	Other	Response Count
Seminars	84	65	27	17	193
Student RFP	47	29	8	3	87
Research Grants	104	66	28	7	205
Funding to attend national conference	28	30	10	4	72
Community Research Symposium	77	40	26	14	157
National Conference	63	45	20	10	138
Use of Policy Matters	37	36	19	12	104
Use of Working Papers	55	50	19	14	138
Publishing through Working Papers or Policy Matters	68	37	13	9	127
Virtual Library	54	34	23	11	122
Data Provision	57	17	16	13	103
Open House	8	5	2	1	16
Advocacy	39	32	18	5	94
Other	4	3	2	2	11
(please specify)					6

4. What activities would you like to see taken on by a new Centre in the future? Below is a partial list of potential activities. (check all that apply)

Answer Options	academic	student	community	other	Response Percent	Response Count
a) Seminars	99	60	29	16	73.1%	204
b) Advocacy	68	52	23	7	53.8%	150
c) Policy Recommendations	93	63	33	19	74.6%	208
d) Community Symposium	84	52	33	18	67.0%	187
e) Graduate Student Conferences	62	63	5	7	49.1%	137
f) National and Provincial Conferences	77	52	24	13	59.5%	166
g) Working Paper Series	98	65	23	18	73.1%	204
h) Analyze Data and Report trends	75	44	30	16	59.1%	165
i) Managing CERIS	39	17	10	9	26.9%	75
j) Research Grants	113	64	25	10	76.0%	212
k) Training	52	48	20	9	46.2%	129
l) Making data available	87	59	31	17	69.5%	194
m) Other	7	3	4	1	5.4%	15
(please specify)						19

5. Which do you believe should be the top three roles of a new Centre? (please rank: 1 = first important, 2 = second important, 3 = third important)

Answer Options	academic	student	community	other	Rating Average	Response Count
Advocacy	2.18	2.45	2.31	2.00	2.30	99
Policy Relevant Research	1.56	1.50	1.52	1.17	1.51	200
Academic or Basic Research	1.58	1.58	1.80	2.50	1.64	143
Knowledge dissemination to Community	2.37	1.97	2.00	2.10	2.14	191
Knowledge dissemination to Policy Makers	2.44	2.44	2.36	2.45	2.43	190
Other	2.80	2.80	3.00	3.00	2.86	14
(please specify)						10

6. What are the challenges and/or areas for improvement of *CERIS* that the new Centre should address? (check all that apply)

Answer Options	academic	student	community	other	Response Percent	Response Count
a) Research	76	39	21	12	56.5%	148
b) Advocacy	64	44	22	9	53.1%	139
c) Policy Making	75	45	27	14	61.5%	161
d) Other	14	3	3	5	9.5%	25
e) Not applicable	10	10	8	3	11.8%	31

7. As an extension of this survey, *CERIS* intends to conduct a town hall meeting in the Fall of 2011. Would you like to attend?

Answer Options	academic	student	community	other	Response Percent	Response Count
a) Yes (please send me more details)	78	42	29	15	59.4%	164
b) No (I cannot attend but send me more details)	32	16	9	6	22.8%	63
c) No (further details not required)	20	25	3	1	17.8%	49
include email if you answered a or b						95