

# Analysis Sea of Faith Conference 2014 Feedback Form

## Introduction

There were 68 feedback forms returned for analysis.

The feedback form consisted of 12 questions which utilized three main response options: frequency of an item (questions 1, 2, 4, 5); items rated on a 4-point scale (questions 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11) and two questions seeking written responses (questions 6 and 12), which related to conference highlight and final comments/suggestions respectively.

The four frequency questions allowed respondents to provide more than one answer which resulted in more than 68 responses. These questions were analysed item by item and are reported below in order of frequency for each question.

The 4-point scale from 1 (disappointing) to 4 (greatly appreciated) was altered or commented on by six respondents, which might suggest some difficulty/irritation with the scale. Responses to individual items were analysed in two ways: a score from 1-4 for that item, and the percentage of respondents who rated the item the maximum number 4. The number of people who answered each item is also recorded (n).

Below are the findings from each question in order, except those for question 6 (conference highlight), which are outlined at the end along with findings from question 12 (comments/suggestions), and those for question 11 (the Panel), which are included with those from question 8 (the Papers).

## Findings

**Question 1** asked in what ways respondents were attending the conference. There were 94 ways from the 68 respondents.

		%
Member of the national network (receiving newsletter)	47	52
Member of a local group	27	29
Member of an Ephesus group	12	13
An individual with no previous affiliation	4	4
An invited guest or contributor/speaker	4	4

The majority of respondents were Sea of Faith members, but the wording of the question precludes a precise estimate.

**Question 2** asked whether respondents had home internet access or not. There were four who didn't answer.

Yes	62	(97%)
No	2	

**Question 3** asked respondents to rate how important three considerations were in the decision to attend the conference on the 4-point scale:

	n	score (out of 4)	% (score of 4)
Cost of travel	51	2.9	22
Cost of registration and accommodation	59	3.1	32
Timing ie in school holidays	63	2.6	19

This question was perhaps confusing to a number of respondents. Nevertheless it suggests the conference timing is a problem for a significant minority. 21% of respondents scored timing as a 1 on the 4-point scale.

**Question 4** asked respondents how they heard about the conference. There were 90 ways given by the 68 respondents:

	n	%
The newsletter	49	54
At local group meeting	21	23
At Ephesus group meeting	6	7
From a friend	6	7
From previous conference	3	3
At church	2	2
Relatives	2	2
Local arrangements committee	1	1
The NZ Listener	0	0
By personal invitation	0	0

Of the 90 ways respondents heard about the conference, 70 (78%) were through the newsletter or a local group meeting.

**Question 5** asked respondents what the primary reason for attending the conference was. 125 primary reasons were given by the 68 respondents.

	n	%
To meet with others of similar interest	38	30
The Theme	29	23
The Speakers	22	18
The opportunity for discussion	18	14
The Panel discussion	15	12
Location/access	1	1
Hosting	1	1
Saturday night event	1	1

The most common primary reason respondents gave for attending the conference was to meet with others of similar interest – nearly a third.

**Question 7** asked respondents to rate on the 4-point scale the conference organisation.

	n	score (out of 4)	% (score of 4)
Registration process	65	3.7	77

Reception	66`	3.8	82
Venue	67	3.6	66
Accommodation	51	3.6	69
Catering	65	3.6	66
Socialisation opportunities	66	3.6	74
Overall organisation	65	3.9	88
Overall cost/value	67	3.6	66

The organisation of the conference was highly rated, which can be summarised by the finding that 88% of respondents gave the maximum response (greatly appreciated) to the overall organisation item.

**Questions 8 and 11** asked respondents to rate the five papers presented and final Panel respectively. Unfortunately one of the speakers (Richard Egan) was omitted from the feedback form. This was announced in the final session of the conference and delegates were asked to write Richard's name onto the feedback form. However, about a third of respondents didn't rate Richard's presentation.

	n	score (out of 4)	% (score of 4)
Lloyd Geering	67	3.9	94
Reuben Johnson	67	2.4	9
Sandra Winton	66	3.6	68
Bernard Beckett	64	3.4	48
Richard Egan	42	3.7	74
Final Panel	54	3.8	85

Both Lloyd Geering's presentation and the final Panel were very highly rated by respondents, with only 6% and 15% of respondents not rating them the maximum 4/4 respectively.

**Question 9** asked respondents to rate the Core Groups on the 4-point scale.

	n	score (out of 4)	% (score of 4)
The amount of time given to Core Groups	63	3.6	70
The number of Core Groups	55	3.6	69
Leadership of the Group	57	3.5	61
Participation of the members of the Group	63	3.5	56
The quality of the discussion in the Group	62	3.4	50

Overall, Core Groups were rated highly. More than two-thirds of respondents rated the amount of time devoted to Core Groups in the conference a maximum rating of 4/4.

Low numbers (four groups were represented by less than 5 respondents) preclude a comparison of the 10 Core Groups.

**Question 10** asked respondents to rate the Saturday afternoon workshops and events.

	n	score (out of 4)	% (score of 4)
Orokonui Ecosanctuary	18	3.4	61

Otago Settlers' Museum and Chinese Garden	7	4.0	100
Tom Hall: A thoroughly Modern Mary	12	3.1	33
Leo Hobbis: Consciousness and Reality	16	3.3	38

The Otago Settlers' Museum/Chinese Garden outing was maximally rated (although there was only a small number of respondents).

**Question 6** asked respondents to say what the highlight of the conference was. Many respondents chose to give multiple highlights totalling 120, which were clumped into the following groups in order of frequency:

Panel/panel discussion	15
Lloyds talk/comments/presence/final comment "God is love"	12
Core groups/Core group 3/Core group 7/Core group 8/Core group 10	12
Venue/general atmosphere/Dunedin/Premises/View/Beautiful view	11
Saturday reading/play/entertainment	11
Discussion/where and whenever/valuable/stimulating/thought provoking/ the good connection between the sciences/"adult minds"/ being with others of like mind/realising that one is not alone in one's search	10
Sandra Winton	10
Richard Egan	9
Speakers or presentations generally	9
Socialising/meeting talking with good people/acquaintance with older versions of the membership/meeting two people – retired minister/retired professor/ meeting other SoF members/meeting old friends I haven't seen for years	9
The whole programme/whole conference experience/just enjoyed everything/ so many interesting people in one place/wonderful work by arrangements committee	8
Other – Leo Hobbis/Bernard Beckett/Tom Hall's workshop/Ecological wisdom referred to	4

**Question 12** asked for final comments or suggestions.

Comments:

Overall thanks/superb as usual/wonderful/enriching experience as usual/thoroughly enjoyed whole experience/couldn't fault a thing	16
Top marks to Marjorie and arrangements committee/thanks for hospitality of local Dunedin SoF group	3
Brilliant brainy lecturers like Beckett and Johnson should realise they're talking to lay people talk slower, less information, too much ground covered/using big words to impress	2
Showering difficult	2
Acoustics difficult for hard of hearing	2
Breakfast too early	2
Venue a little overcrowded/a little too congested	2
Noel's facilitation outstanding	1
Panel led too much by Noel's introduction	1
Thank you for sound system	1
Extra towels appreciated	1
Appreciated happy hours	1
One person dominated core group	1
Lack of Reuben Johnson's summary	1

Very good YouTube preconference suggestions	1
First SoF conference, very good, enjoyed meeting SoF members	1
Suggestions:	
Protein for breakfast/marmalade for breakfast	2
Put year joined SoF on name tags	1
Would like to know other Saturday afternoon options on the registration form	1
Can we come back to this venue again	1

### Ten Summary Points

- The majority of the 68 respondents to the feedback form were Sea of Faith members
- Virtually all respondents had internet access
- Although a majority indicated satisfaction with the timing of the conference, a significant minority (21%) expressed the strongest dissatisfaction score
- 78% of the 90 ways by which respondents heard about the conference were by newsletter (54%) or local group (23%)
- The most common of the 125 primary reasons given for attending the conference was to meet with others of similar interest (30%), following by the theme (23%) and speakers (18%)
- The organisation of the conference was highly rated – 88% of respondents gave the maximum appreciation response to the overall organisation question
- Lloyd Geering’s introduction and the final Panel received very high ratings with 94% and 85% ratings respectively in terms of being rated with maximum appreciation
- Core groups were generally highly rated in terms of time devoted to them in the conference, leadership and participation
- There were a range of highlights identified by respondents; the top five being the Panel, Lloyd Geering, Core Groups, the venue and the Saturday evening event.
- The most common final comment was a big thanks to the organisers for such a worthwhile conference, while two suggestions stood out – to put the year of joining SoF on the nametags and having all the Saturday events on the registration form

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