

Summary Report – AAG 2017 Conference Evaluation

19 December 2017

Contents

Executive summary.....	2
Results from the 2017 AAG Conference evaluation survey.....	3
About the respondents.....	3
Why did the respondents attend AAG’s 50 th Annual Conference in Perth?	4
What did respondents think of the conference overall?	5
Did respondents learn anything new at the conference?	6
What did respondents think of the individual sessions and activities?	7
What did respondents think of the mobile app?.....	11
Suggestions for improvements to the Exhibition and Knowledge Hub	11
Suggestions for topics to be explored in future AAG conferences	12

Executive summary

The response rate to this year's conference evaluation questionnaire was relatively high when compared to previous years (53 %). Respondents were primarily researchers, from across a variety of fields, followed by nurses, educators/teachers and then other health and allied health professionals. The most common reason that respondents identified to attending the conference was to learn more about the latest research and best practices.

The primary ageing-related areas of interest, skills and/or experience that respondents stated as their reason for participating in the conference was wide-ranging, reflecting the diverse nature of the conference program and various symposia.

83 % of respondents thought the conference overall was above average or excellent and that the quality of the content was also high. In general, respondents also felt that the practical aspect of the conference (including staffing and support) were above average to excellent.

Respondents felt that most of the activities and sessions at the conference were above average to excellent. There is room to improve with the first-time attendee's networking session, tabletop sessions and poster presentations. 64 % of respondents felt that the rapid-fire poster presentations were above average or excellent. Some practical ideas as to how to make these even better were made by respondents, including not scheduling them during the lunch break and making sure presenters kept to time. Respondents felt that the welcome reception, conference dinner, and farewell celebration were above average to excellent. However, the rating of the entertainment at the welcome reception and farewell celebration was slightly lower, suggesting room for improvement.

139 of the 180 respondents (78 %) responded that they learnt something at the conference that may influence or change any aspect of their future work in the field of ageing. The most common responses related to their knowledge had been increased across a variety of ageing-related areas and that they had made new contacts. The second most common response was that they had been inspired in their future research plans and made new contacts for future research collaboration. The remaining 41 respondents answered that they didn't learn anything that may change their future work in the field of ageing. Of these 41 respondents, nine provided free-text comments that could loosely be categorised into two categories: 1- Topics were not relevant to my work, and; 2- Confirmed that I was on right track and strengthened existing networks.

Respondents were asked "Which were the stand-out plenary sessions of the AAG 2017 Conference and why?". The plenary session that was nominated as standing out by respondents most often was Sube Banerjee (Gary Andrews International Fellow) session, followed by Billie Giles-Corti (David Wallace Address), the Radio National Big Ideas plenary and the Presidents Symposium.

A first-time for this year was the conference mobile app and it was positively received. Those that used the mobile app felt, on average, that the features were above average to excellent. Of those who suggested an improvement, the issue raised most often was that a more central location in the conference venue would encourage people to walk through (i.e. not placed the Exhibition and Knowledge Hub at the back of venue).

Results from the 2017 AAG Conference evaluation survey¹

About the respondents

The response rate for this year’s conference evaluation was higher than previous years, with 202 of the 380 attendees² responding (53 %). 163 (80 %) of the respondents to the survey were AAG members. The majority of the 202 respondents identified as primarily being engaged in the research field (43 %), followed by community and aged care services (11 %), acute and sub-acute health care (9 %), residential aged care services (6 %) and education as an educator (5 %). The remaining fields were represented by less than 4 %. The primary areas of work that respondents identified can be found in Table 1. The average number of years worked was 12 years, with a range from less than one year to 42 years³.

Table 1. Primary area of work that respondents identified. 199 people responded to this question and 3 skipped this question.

Primary area of work	% of responses	# of responses	Primary area of work	% of responses	# of responses
Researcher	34.2%	68	Professional Consultant	2.0%	4
Nursing	13.1%	26	Psychologist	2.0%	4
Educator/Lecturer/Teacher	8.0%	16	Health promotion	1.5%	3
Physiotherapist	4.0%	8	Public servant – State	1.5%	3
Geriatrician	3.5%	7	Professional Designer/Urban planner	1.5%	3
Management	3.5%	7	Other- Pharmacist	1.5%	3
Social worker	3.5%	7	Medical specialist other than Geriatrician	1.0%	2
Advocacy	2.5%	5	Other- Exercise physiologist	1.0%	2
Occupational therapist	2.5%	5	Dietitian	0.5%	1
Policy/advocacy	2.5%	5	Student- architecture	0.5%	1
Medical practitioner/GP	2.0%	4	Student- public health	0.5%	1
Management and administration education	2.0%	4	Student- sociology	0.5%	1
Public servant – Federal	2.0%	4	Other- Union representative	0.5%	1
Public servant – local	2.0%	4			

As can be seen in Figure 1, more people identified having their full conference participation costs (including accommodation, registration and travel) covered by their employer/organisation (32 % to 48 %) than by a research/travel grant (18 % to 25 %). When looking at the overall trends in Figure 1, it was more common for respondents to have none of their conference costs covered (purple bars) than all (red bars) or part (green bars) of them covered, except for registration costs.

¹ This year, the conference evaluation forms part of AAG’s SUBSTANCE programme funded by the Department of Health under the Dementia and Aged Care Services Fund (DACs). This survey was designed by the conference committee, AAG staff and NARI and the deidentified results will be shared with NARI and form part of their evaluation of the SUBSTANCE programme.

² The 434 people registered for the conference minus key note speakers who did not stay to participate in conference (n=6), AAG staff (n=8), those who only attended the pre-conference workshops which are evaluated using other questionnaires (n= 30), and those who were unable to attend (n=10).

³ 195 people responded to this question and 7 skipped this question.

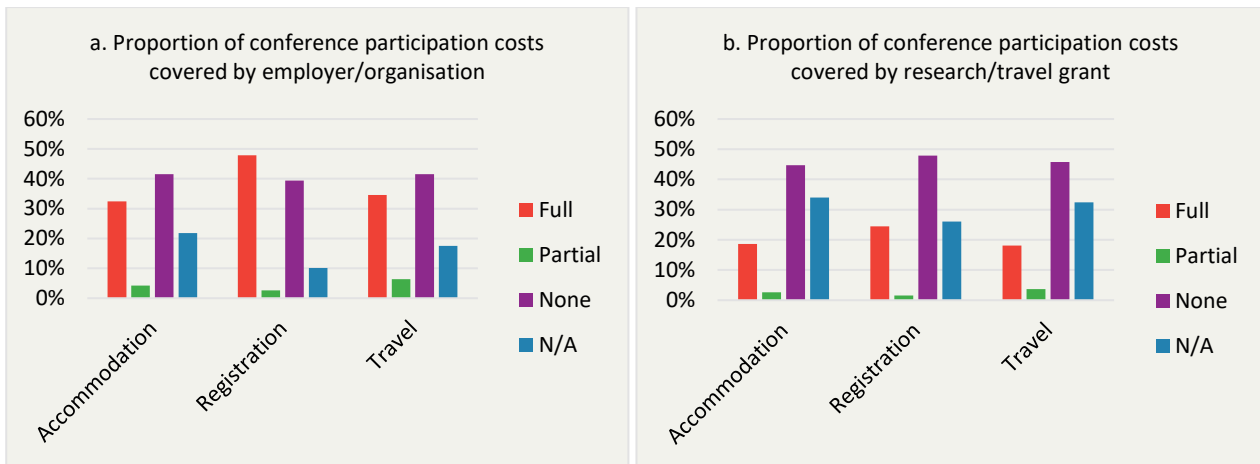


Figure 1. Proportion of conference participation costs covered by **a)** employer/organisation and **b)** research/travel grant. 188 people responded to this question and 14 skipped this question.

Why did the respondents attend AAG’s 50th Annual Conference in Perth?

The primary ageing-related areas of interest, skills and/or experience that respondents stated as their reason for participating in the conference was wide-ranging, reflecting the diverse nature of the conference program and various symposia (Table 2). The most common reason that respondents identified to attending the conference was to learn more about the latest research and best practices (Table 3).

Table 2. Respondents’ choice of primary ageing-related area of interest, skills and/or experience that led them to participate in the AAG 2017 Conference. Top 10 response categories are shown, response rates for all other categories were less than 2.6 %. 195 people responded to this question and 7 skipped this question.

Primary ageing-related area of interest, skills and/or experience	% of responses	Number of responses
Health and disease management	16.4%	32
Advocacy for ageing issues and/or older people	9.7%	19
Rehabilitation/reablement	9.7%	19
Communities- all	8.7%	17
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities	8.2%	16
Person-centred service provision	7.7%	15
Multi-disciplinary care/intersections between sectors	4.6%	9
Families and care-giving	4.1%	8
End-of-life care	3.1%	6
Environment (including accessibility, planning and climate change)	3.1%	6
Housing	3.1%	6

Table 3. Respondents’ choice of statement which best described their reason for participating in the AAG 2017 Conference. 190 people responded to this question and 12 skipped this question.

Statement that best describes reason for participating	% of responses	Number of responses
I wanted to learn more about the latest research and best practices	41.1%	78
I wanted to contribute to improving the experience of ageing	20.5%	39
I wanted to network with peers with similar interests	18.9%	36
I wanted to learn from other people in my field	13.7%	26
Other- I wanted to present my work/research	2.1%	4
It was easy for me to access/attend	1.1%	2
Other- I was told I had to attend by my employer/supervisor	1.1%	2
I needed professional development credits	0.5%	1

Other- I was invited to attend	0.5%	1
Other- to further develop knowledge, ideas, policy and/or practice	0.5%	1

What did respondents think of the conference overall?

Overall, 83 % of respondents thought the conference was above average or excellent (Figure 2). Respondents’ opinions regarding the quality of the content of the conference were also high (Figure 3). In general, respondents also felt that the practical aspect of the conference (including staffing and support) were above average to excellent (Figure 4).

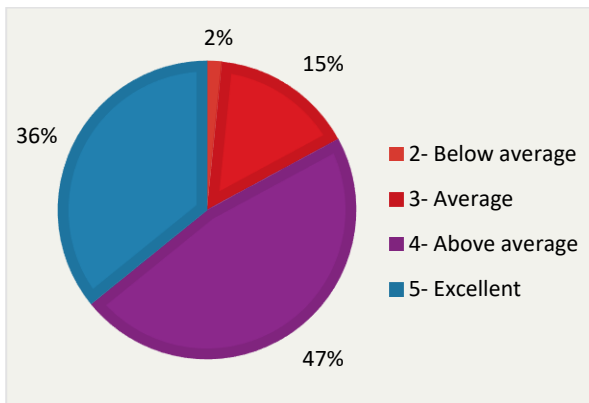


Figure 2. Respondents’ rating of the conference overall. 187 people responded to this question and 15 skipped this question.



Figure 3. Respondents’ opinions regarding the content of the AAG conference. Bars represent the weighted mean of responses to each of the five categories. 180 people responded to this question and 22 skipped this question.

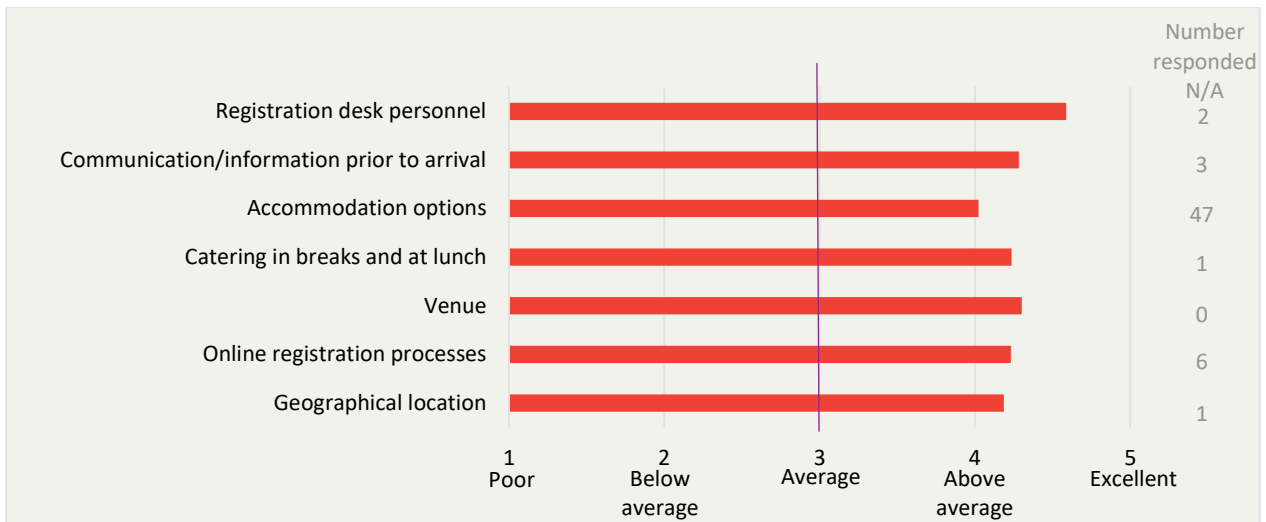


Figure 4. Respondents’ opinions regarding practical aspects of the AAG conference. Bars represent the weighted mean of responses to each of the five categories. 179 people responded to this question and 23 skipped this question.

Did respondents learn anything new at the conference?

139 of the 180 respondents (78 %) responded that they learnt something at the conference that may influence or change any aspect of their future work in the field of ageing⁴. Table 4 summarises the comments made by 94 of the respondents who answered that they had learnt something that may influence their future work. The most common responses related to their knowledge had been increased across a variety of ageing-related areas and that they had made new contacts. The second most common response was that they had been inspired in their future research plans and made new contacts for future research collaboration.

The remaining 41 respondents answered that they didn’t learn anything that may change their future work in the field of ageing. Of these 41 respondents, nine provided free-text comments that could loosely be categorised into two categories: 1- Topics were not relevant to my work (5 out of 9), and; 2- Confirmed that I was on right track and strengthened existing networks (4 out of 9).

Table 4. Categorised free-text responses made by 94 of the 139 survey respondents who answered ‘Yes’ to the question “Do you think that anything you discussed or learnt during the AAG 2017 Conference may influence or change any aspect of your future work in the field of ageing?”. 41 people answered ‘No’ and 22 people skipped this question.

Most relevant category of free-text response	Number of responses
Increased knowledge in general, including new contacts	30
Inspiration/networks for future research	19
Latest thoughts around community/urban design/housing	7
How to improve services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders	6
Need to continue to advocate for and promote rights of all older people	4
Understanding of need to include all older people in research	3
Application of specific tools in practice	3
Latest research on specific medical conditions	3
Inspiration for future teaching	3
How to implement culturally appropriate care	2
Perspectives from LGBTI elders and how to develop inclusive care	2

⁴ 22 people skipped this question.

Most relevant category of free-text response	Number of responses
Need for collaborative practice	2
Reassessing personal ageism	2
Economic implications of ageing	1
Role of technology	1
Use of language around ageing	1
Focus on reablement	1
Needs of those in remote communities	1
Questioning the applicability of research undertaken on younger people to older people	1
Need to aim to influence policy through research	1
Implementing consumer directed care	1
Total	139

What did respondents think of the individual sessions and activities?

Respondents felt that most of the activities and sessions at the conference were at least above average (Figure 5). There is room to improve with the first-time attendee’s networking session, tabletop sessions and poster presentations.

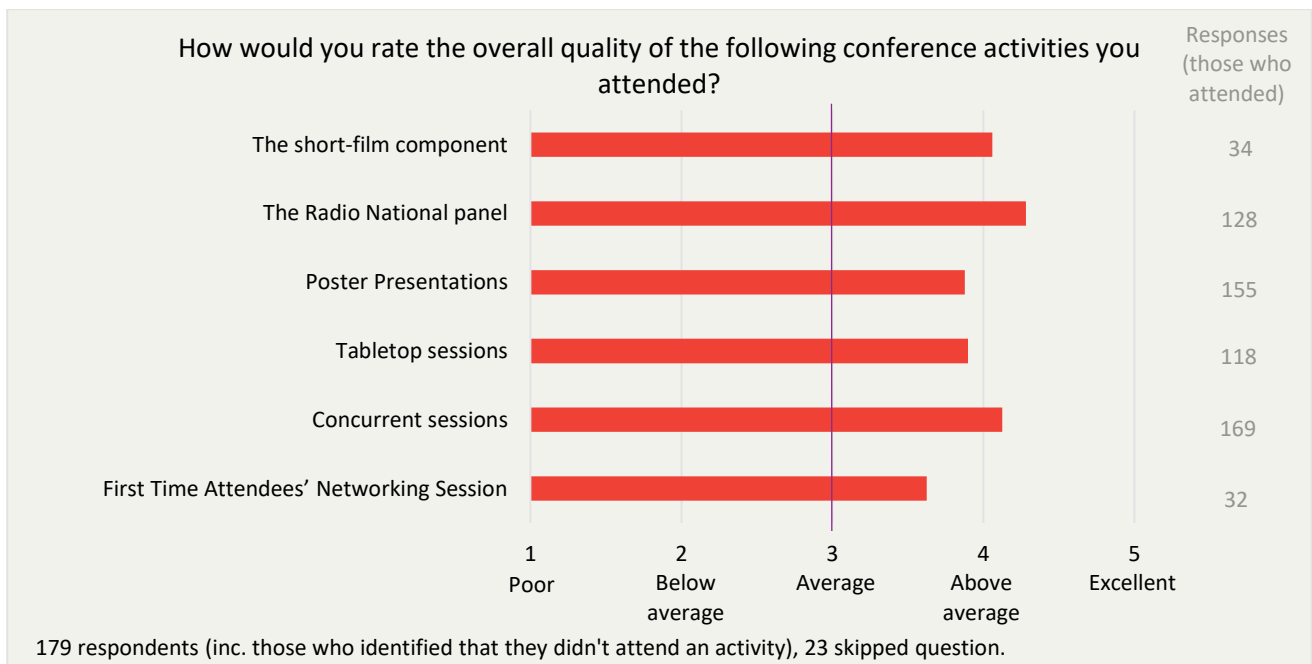


Figure 5. Respondents’ opinions regarding the different activities and sessions at the conference. Bars represent the weighted mean of responses to each of the five categories. 179 people responded to this question and 23 skipped this question.

64 % of respondents felt that the rapid-fire poster presentations were above average or excellent (Figure 6). Table 5 summarises free-text feedback given by 36 of the respondents regarding the rapid-fire poster presentations. Some practical ideas as to how to make these even better were made by respondents, including not scheduling them during the lunch break and making sure presenters kept to time.

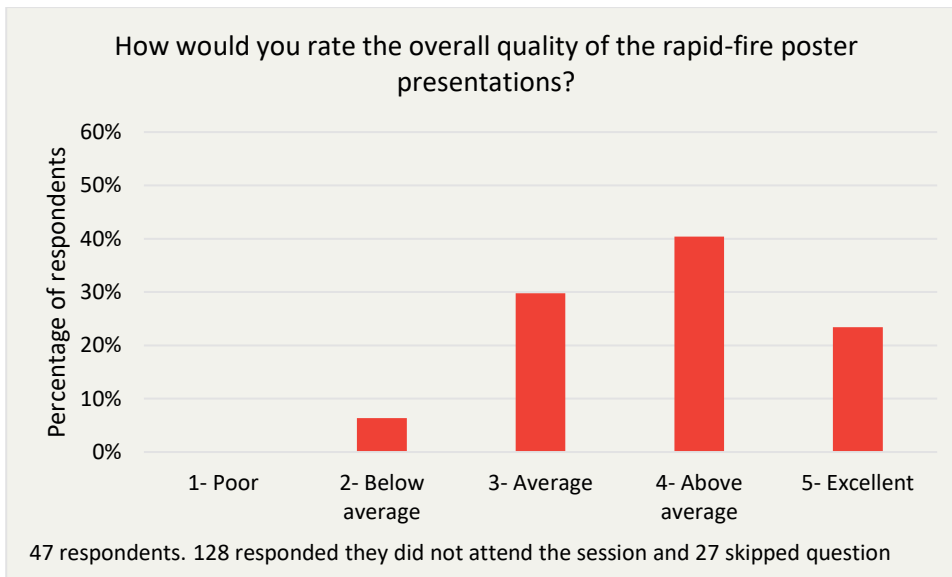


Figure 6. Respondents’ rating of the overall quality of the rapid-fire poster presentations. Bars represent the weighted mean of responses to each of the five categories. 47 people responded to this question, 128 people responded that they did not attend the rapid-fire poster presentations and 27 skipped this question.

Table 5. Categorized free-text responses by the 36 survey respondents to the invitation “The rapid-fire poster presentations are new to the AAG Conference- we'd really appreciate any further feedback you can give us!”. 166 respondents skipped this question.

Most relevant category of free-text response	Number of responses
Positive response to concept, timing (during lunch) and implementation	11
Stricter guidelines for presenters may help it run smoother	7
Location and timing (including when individual people would speak) needed to be better promoted to delegates	6
Thought timing (during lunch) wasn't ideal	6
Wondered whether rapid-fire format provided sufficient depth of information	2
Thought the location (large ballroom) wasn't appropriate	2
Powerpoints should be added to program	1
Thought there were too many presentations in one session	1
Total	36

Respondents were asked “Which were the stand-out plenary sessions of the AAG 2017 Conference and why?”. The responses to this question are summarised in Table 6. The plenary session that was nominated as standing out by respondents most often was Sube Banerjee (Gary Andrews International Fellow) session (26 %), followed by Billie Giles-Corti (David Wallace Address) (19 %), the Radio National Big Ideas plenary (14 %) and the Presidents Symposium (13 %).

Table 6. Survey respondents’ responses to the question “Which were the stand-out plenary sessions of the AAG 2017 Conference and why?”. 131 of the 160 people who responded that they had attended any of the plenary sessions provided free-text responses nominating stand-out plenaries. Some respondents nominated more than one ‘stand-out’ plenary sessions. 14 people responded that they did not attend any of the plenary sessions and 28 people skipped this question.

Plenary	Number of responses	% of responses
Sube Banerjee, Gary Andrews International Fellow "Multimorbidity in dementia- a 21st century challenge"	47	25.97
Billie Giles-Corti, David Wallace Address "Creating healthy liveable communities to improve health and wellbeing and health equity"	34	18.78
Radio National "Disrupting ageing" session with Paul Barclay, Jenny Davis OAM, Sube Banerjee, Sue Pieters-Hawke, Penny Flett	26	14.36
Presidents symposium "The economic opportunities of an ageing population - how much do we value the golden goose?" with Helen barrie, Julie Byles, Briony Dow and Barbara Squires	23	12.71
Opening plenary with the Hon Key Wyatt, Mark Elliott, Graham Aitken, Dawn Bessarab and Gail Daylight	14	7.73
Penny Flett "Old age from a helicopter"	12	6.63
Barbara Squires "What does the goose think? Reflections on growing older in the AAG"	5	2.76
Enjoyed all plenaries	5	2.76
Leon Flicker "Assessing people with Dementia"	3	1.66
Michael Preece "What does it really mean to place seniors at the centre of their care?"	2	1.10
The Hon Ken Wyatt keynote address	2	1.10
Graham Aitken Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Elder issues in South Australia	1	0.55
Helen Grinbergs Department of Health Address	1	0.55
"none"	1	0.55
Not sure or didn't attend any	3	1.66
N/A- not a plenary	2	1.10
Total	181	100

Respondents felt that the welcome reception, conference dinner, and farewell celebration were above average to excellent (Figure 7). However, the rating of the entertainment at the welcome reception and farewell celebration was slightly lower, suggesting room for improvement.

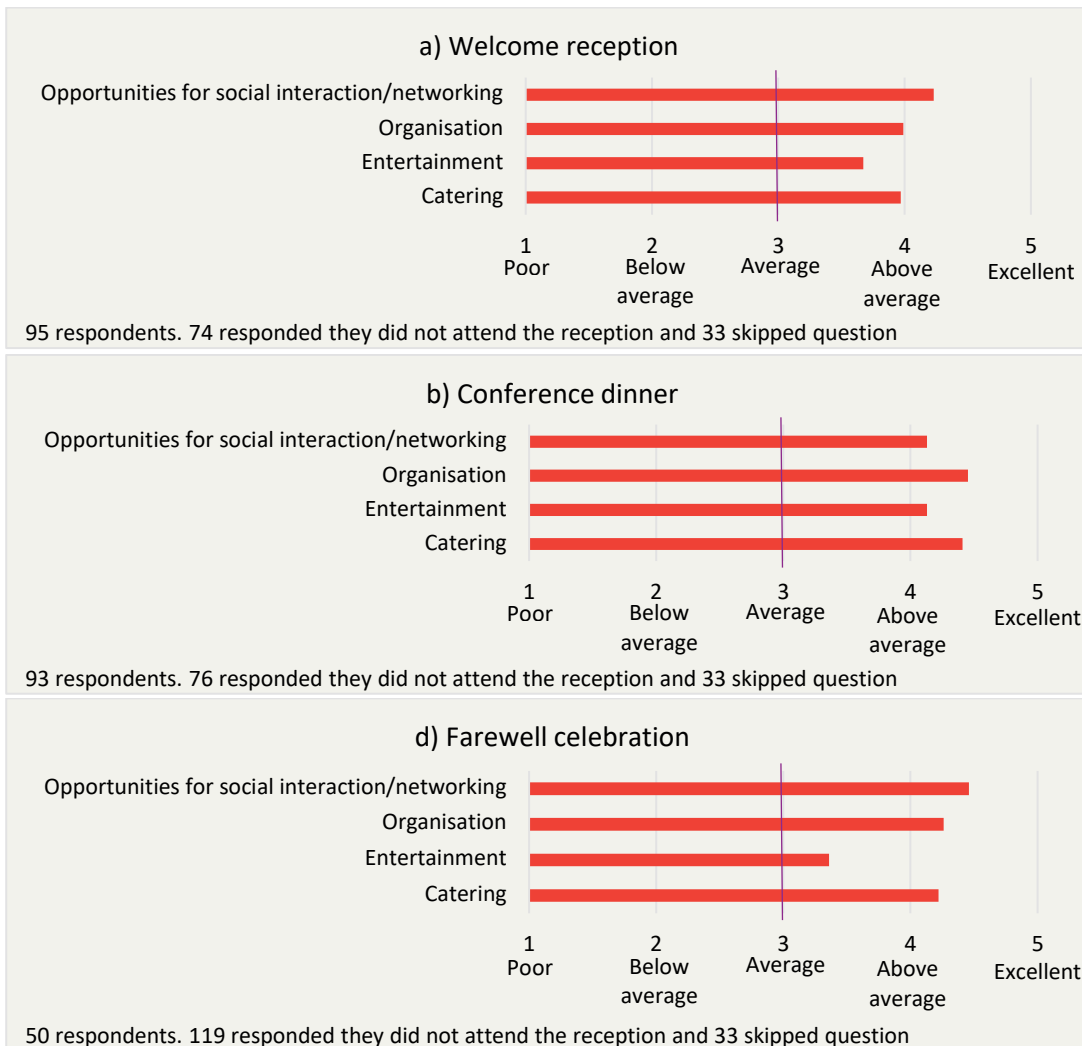


Figure 7. Respondents’ opinions of the social activities at the conference, including the **a)** welcome reception; **b)** conference dinner, and **c)** farewell celebration. Bars represent the weighted mean of responses to each of the five categories.

What did respondents think of the mobile app?

113 of the respondents said that they used the mobile app, while 66 responded they did not use the app and 23 skipped the question. Of those that used the mobile app, respondents felt, on average, that the features were above average to excellent (Figure 8).

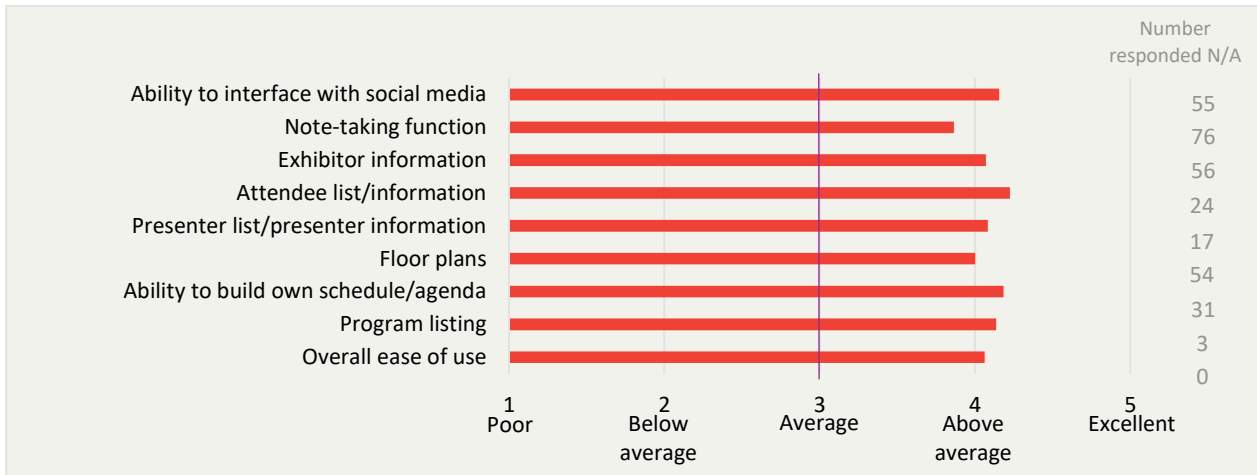


Figure 8. Respondents’ opinions regarding the conference mobile app. Bars represent the weighted mean of responses to each of the five categories. 113 people responded to this question, 66 responded they did not use the app and 23 skipped this question.

Suggestions for improvements to the Exhibition and Knowledge Hub

Table 7 summarises the suggestions for improvement to the Exhibition and Knowledge Hub. The most common response was that no improvements were needed or that they did not want to suggest an improvement. Of those who suggested an improvement, the issue raised most often was that a more central location in the conference venue would encourage people to walk through (i.e. not placed the Exhibition and Knowledge Hub at the back of venue).

Table 7. Responses to the question “Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the Exhibition and Knowledge Hub?”. 34 people responded to this question and 168 people skipped the question.

Most relevant category for free-text response	Number of responses
More central location in venue to encourage people to walk through (i.e. not at back)	6
More interactive elements/practical demonstrations	2
Provide refreshments (e.g. coffee) to encourage people to stay and chat	1
Larger venue	1
Include contributions from a broader range of stakeholders, including older people	1
Provide information in hubs in digital form (e.g. on USB sticks)	1
No suggestions for improvements	19
Unsure	1
N/A: Response not about Exhibition and Knowledge Hub	2
Total	34

Suggestions for topics to be explored in future AAG conferences

Survey participants were asked if they had any suggestions for topics to be explored in future AAG conferences. Table 8 summarises the responses into general categories.

Table 8. Survey respondents’ responses to the question “Do you have any suggestions for topics that you would like explored in future AAG conferences?”. 113 people provide free-text responses to this question and 89 people skipped this question. Some respondents suggested more than one potential future topic.

Most relevant category for suggestion for future topic	Number of responses
Housing/built environment	10
End of life issues, death and dying	7
Mental health	7
Age-friendly work/older workers	6
Technology and ageing	6
Role of nutrition and exercise in ageing well	5
Informal carers, including ageing carers	5
Interaction between health, disability and aged care systems	5
Medical perspectives on dementia	5
Workforce issues	5
International insights into accommodation/age-friendly communities	4
Ageism/positive ageing	4
Elder abuse	4
Frailty	3
Clinical issues in aged care, including nursing implications	3
Impact of aged care reforms (including consumer directed care)	3
Perspectives of a diverse range of consumers in their own words	3
More on economically disadvantaged people and ageing	2
Transport and ageing	2
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's health issues	2
Impacts of housing design/built environment on dementia	2
Dignity of risk	2
Falls prevention	2
CALD population	1
Residential aged care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	1
Consumer directed care in residential settings	1
Funding opportunities	1
Social determinants of ageing well	1
Ageing and disability advocacy	1
Medical conditions (stroke, Parkinsons, MS etc.)	1
Continence	1
Behaviour management strategies	1
Teaching gerontology	1
How to influence policy-makers (including success stories)	1
"innovative methodologies"	1
Collaborative research models, including partnering with community providers	1
No suggestion for future topic	11
N/A: not a suggestion for a future topic	10
Total	131