

CESTEMER 2015



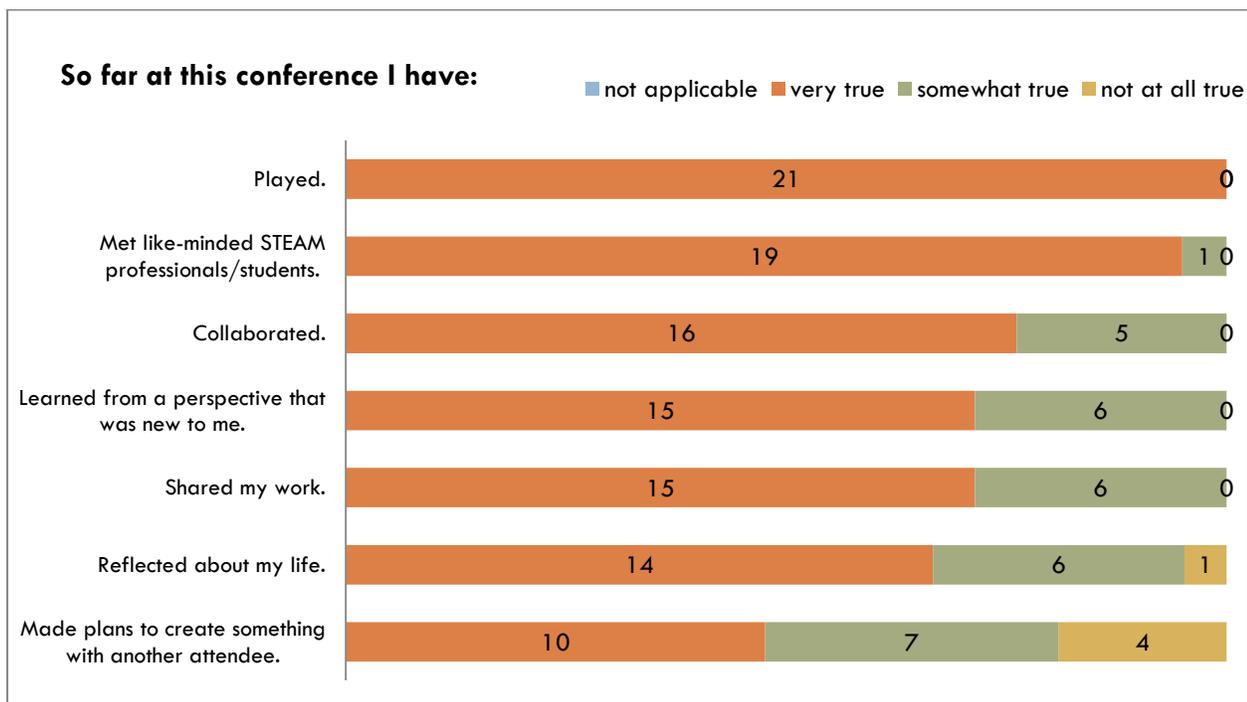
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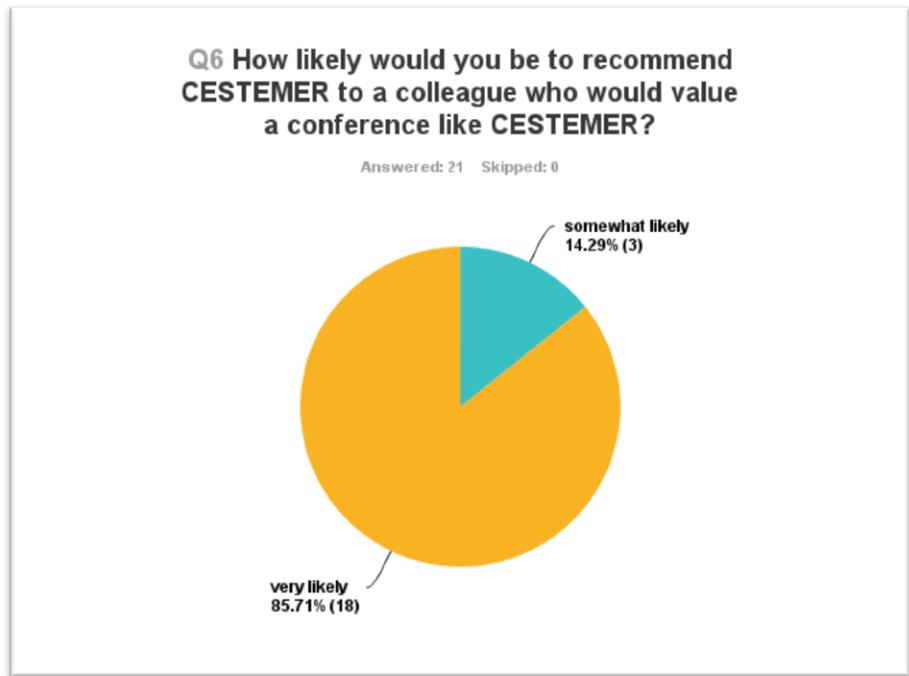
Cultivating Ensembles in STEM Education and Research

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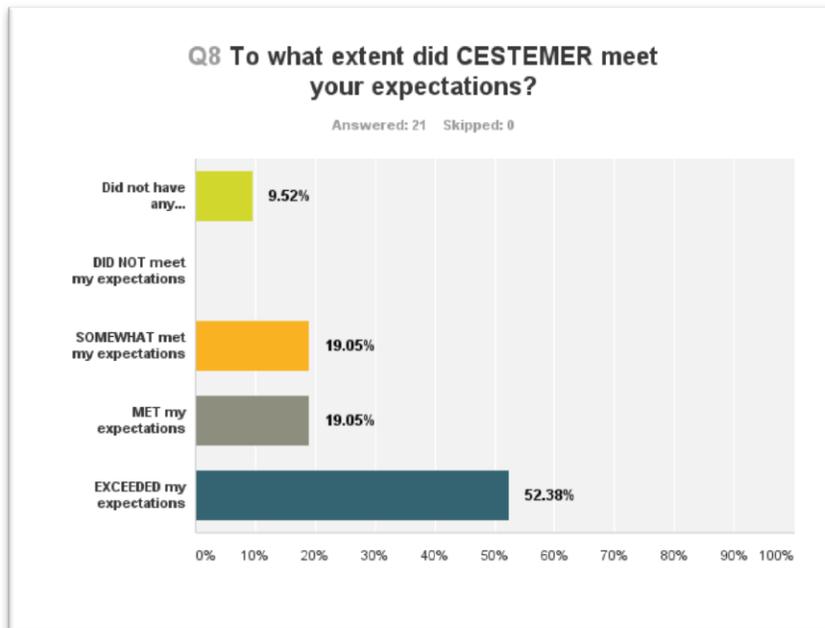
CULTIVATING ENSEMBLES IN STEM EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Conference participants were asked to describe their experiences in the CESTEMER conference, particularly regarding how they collaborated, networked, reflected, and made future plans. All survey respondents agreed they “played” at the conference, and nearly all (19 of 20) said it was “very true” that they met like-minded colleagues. To a lesser extent, though still encompassing more than 2/3rds of respondents, CESTEMER attendees collaborated, learned from a new perspective, and shared work with colleagues (16, 15, and 15 of 21, respectively). Two thirds of CESTEMER attendees said it was very true that the conference prompted reflection, while less than half (10) said they made plans to create something with another attendee. Only 2 items received a “not at all true” response- the reflection item (1) and the making plans item (4).



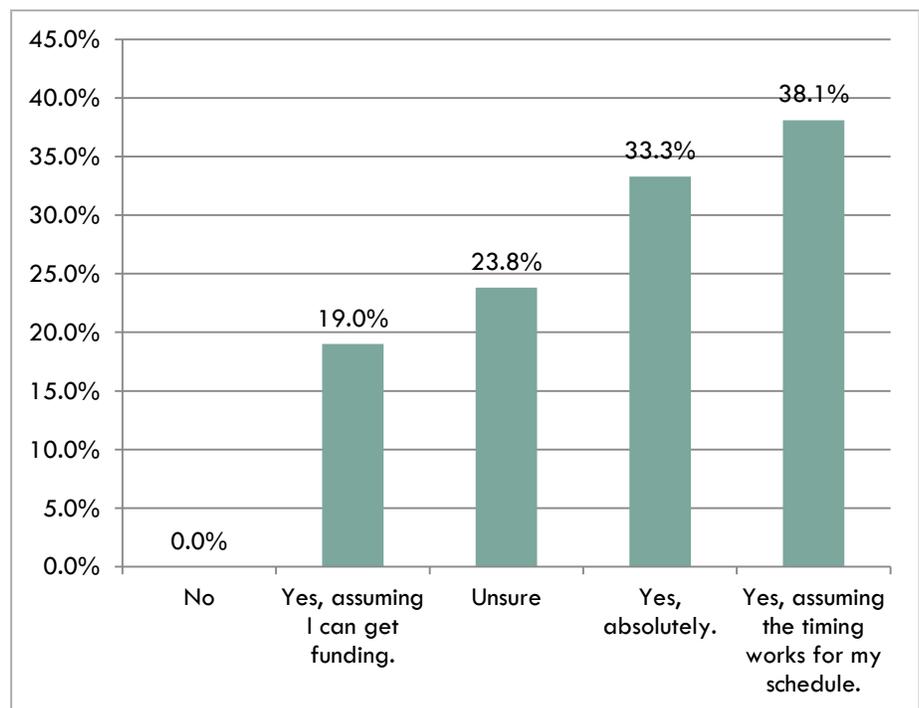


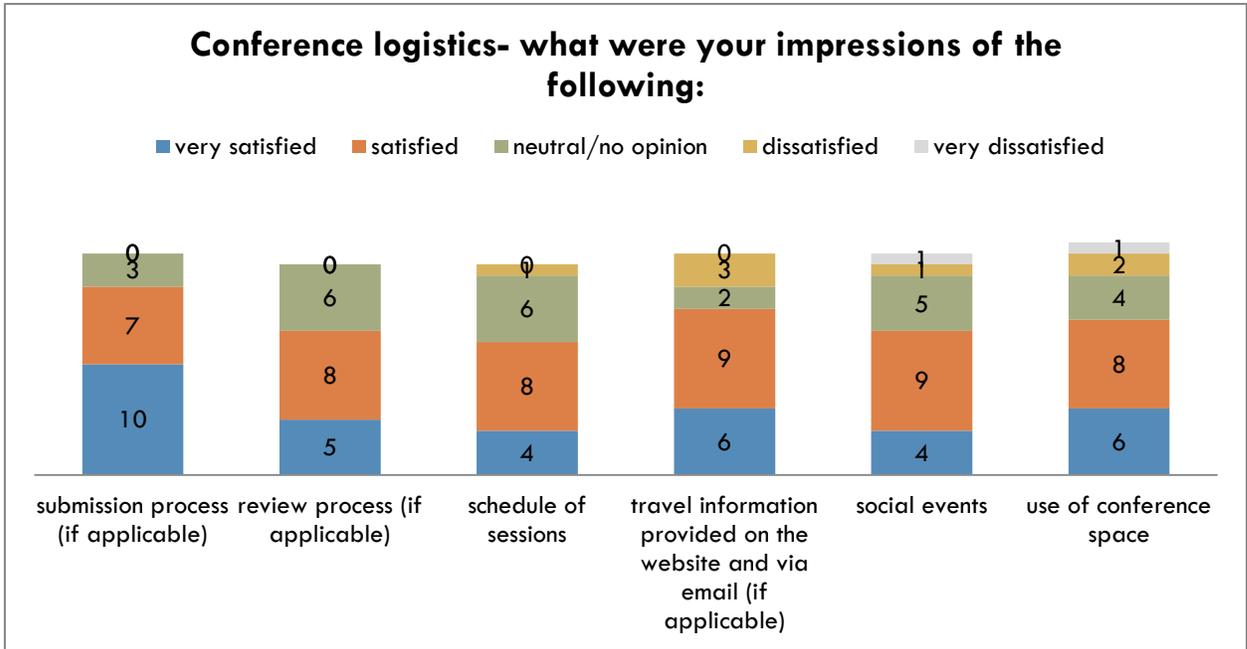
Participants are likely to recommend the conference to colleagues they imagine would value the goals of CESTEMER, with 86% feeling it was “Very likely” they would recommend the conference.



Most CESTEMER attendees who arrived with expectations found the conference met (19%) or exceeded (53%) those expectations. Nearly one in five (19%) found their expectations were met “somewhat”, while 10% had no expectations prior to attending CESTEMER in June.

The majority (16, 76%) of respondents will attend CESTEMER again, assuming no logistical constraints deter them, while 5 (24%) remain unsure of their participation in coming years.

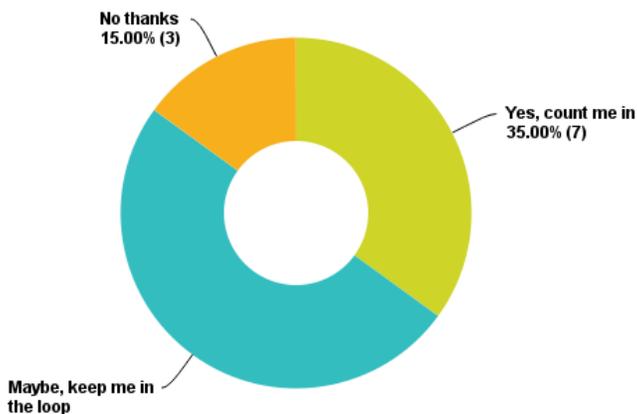




Most participants who responded to the survey described satisfaction or neutral impressions regarding the logistics of CESTEMER 2015, with the submission process and travel information receiving the most complementary responses. At the same time, travel and use of conference space received the most dissatisfied comments (3). Open ended comments described frustration with parallel sessions, travel from hotel to conference location, and lack of clarity regarding starting and ending times during the conference schedule. On the other hand, one participant noted the travel developed into an opportunity to get to know one another. Some comments noted disorganization.

Q10 Are you interested in planning the next conference?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 1



Nearly all participants who responded to the survey were interested in planning the next CESTEMER, at least to some degree. Seven responded yes, they would like to be included in future CESTEMER plans, and 10 replied “maybe.”

WHAT SURPRISED YOU?¹

I had not anticipated having as much fun as I did. (Duh.) –Bruce Corson

How willing and generous the participants were with one another. –Stephanie Pulford

The diverse workshop offerings and diverse individuals with interest to extend their knowledge using the tools shared. –Loretta Cheeks

I was surprised to learn how NEW this all is. How we're all kind of still finding our way into changing the realm of science communication and science BEING. It was invigorating and astounding! –Ben Taylor

How friendly people were! –Neil Bardham

The willingness to jump in, try improv games, share –Melissa Wyman

How much an open environment with people who are willing to play and learn changes the dynamic for the better. Being able to walk into a room where people are open-minded and willing to step out of their comfort zone allows the safety to fail. –Susan Walsh

I realized that I already have a connection to improv, and I learned new games to use in professional development workshops. –Jean Hertzberg

How many people from very different areas of expertise with whom I already shared a connection. So we reconnected! –Amy Shutkin

How much I learned about the content that others taught and the things that early career researchers have in common across the disciplines. –Jim Martinez

The diversity of attendees. So many different sciences represented! It's nice to know that I'm not the only scientist thinking about how to enact change in the way we think about STEM education in university and collegiate settings. –Jeremy Hoffman

¹ Quotes that appear here are quotes from survey respondents who expressly consented to their quotes being attributed to them.

How would you describe CESTEMER to a colleague who did not attend?

A blast that they should have not missed. – Jeremy Hoffman

It was the most fun and intimate conference I attended this year. The intimacy is in part because of the small size and in part because everyone has someone else at the conference they invited. –Jim Martinez

CESTEMER is a fun and engaging conference that has the serious intent of improving science education, communication and collaboration. –Nick Gross

Too much fun to pass up. And fun is critical to everyone's work. –Jean Hertzberg

A safe environment to explore new ideas and tools for communication. –Susan Walsh

A conference that is more focused on networking and generating a community rather than on specific programs. Also, the conference highlights projects in their early stages, similar to hearing about unpublished data at a scientific conference. Finally, that the individuals that attend the conference are incredibly kind, open and welcoming, which allows for easy sharing and collaboration. –Shaila Kotadia

A place where people working in STEM fields get together and communicate ideas through personalized and artistic avenues. Improv meets science. A friendly and open (and open ended) opportunity to present work. –Melissa Wyman

I think Raquell put it best when she said that this conference is about allowing yourself to stop being such a scientist and start being a whole person. That's what I would tell a colleague who was interested: that this conference helps you be a professional person in science. –Ben Taylor

CESTEMER is a dynamic conference for exploring diverse approaches at the intersection of Improv, STEM, and Art for igniting passion in STEM fields and gaining deep understanding of STEM related information. –Loretta Cheeks

I have been describing it as a highly interactive conference that involves all participants in finding new ways to build/foster collaborative groups within STEM ed and research. –Stephanie Pulford

A community exploration of strategies for engaging as whole people on Day One of a collaborative endeavor. –Bruce Corson

RECOMMENDATIONS:

For organizers:

- Continue to consider ways to extend participation across all events, such as through single versus parallel tracks. While attendees wished at this conference to attend multiple sessions, continuing to juggle total time at the conference with opportunities to contribute to all offerings will be important as the conference grows.
- Creating promotional materials as well as firm “start” and “stop” times greatly in advance of the conference may improve recruitment, organization, and decision making for future CESTEMER events.
- The Share Faire would benefit from greater structure, including time for Share Faire presenters to circulate without responsibilities for presenting their own artifacts/ideas/art.
- Creating new, generative ways to sum up what was learned individually and collectively could improve closure and/or movement towards next steps.

For presenters:

- Ensure presentations of all types create opportunities to connect, talk, and develop ideas throughout. Adhering to some specifics regarding proportion of time given to direct instruction and play/interaction might clarify the expectations for the conference to all submitting authors.
- Providing guidance to authors and audience members regarding what each type of submission would entail could be useful for all participants. Highlighting the purpose of each session via short video clip could provide additional information for attendees wanting to choose the activity with the best “fit.”
- Sessions differed in the extent to which they concretely linked the content of the session to the theme of the CESTEMER conference. While CESTEMER may not choose to become too prescriptive in this way, creating multiple avenues for leaders to choose to connect their work to CESTEMER could improve audience members’ experiences. For example, choosing one of many statements to address at some point in the session could make relevance more clear to all participants, such as: “How do I (the author) connect my work to CESTEMER?” “What connections do you (the participants) see with this work and CESTEMER?” “How could this performance work be infused with science in a richer way?”.