

### Summary of responses to Post-conference Survey for IBC 2018, Barcelona, Spain, July 8-13

A total of 217 people responded to the survey (this was roughly a quarter of our conference attendees). Below are tables showing the responses to various questions as well as a summary of some of the free-text responses. The survey answers will definitely be useful as we plan for IBC 2020. Note that the total numbers vary from question to question since people sometimes chose to skip some questions.

Table 1: Age group by Sex

Age Group	Sex			
	Female	Male	No Sex	Total
20 < 30	30	12		42
30 < 40	36	37	1	74
40 < 50	12	23	2	37
50 < 60	19	17		35
60 < 70	12	7		19
70 < 80	1	1		2
80 < 90	0	1		1
No age	2	4	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>217</b>

Table 2: Membership Type

Member Type	Total
Non-member	53
Member	164
<i>Regular</i>	<i>115</i>
<i>Retired</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Honorary</i>	<i>2</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>

Table 3: Region

<b>Region</b>	<b>Total</b>
Argentinean	1
Argentinian	2
Asian	1
Australasian	11
Austro-Swiss	5
Belgian	2
Brazilian	8
British & Irish	10
Central American & Caribbean	4
Chinese	3
Eastern Mediterranean	7
Eastern North American	15
French	7
German	14
Indian	1
Italian	7
Japanese	2
Korean	1
Nigerian	3
Response	0
South African	1
Spanish	20
The Netherlands	13
Western North American	7
At-Large	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>

Table 4: Professional Category

<b>Professional Category</b>		<b>Total</b>
Academic		168
	<i>Professor</i>	46
	<i>Associate Professor</i>	23
	<i>Assistant Professor</i>	5
	<i>Lecturer</i>	13
	<i>Student</i>	44
	<i>Postdoctoral Fellow</i>	25
	<i>Other</i>	11
	<i>Researcher</i>	3
	<i>Other, various</i>	8
Industry		30
Government		11
Other		11
	<i>Researcher</i>	4
	<i>Unemployed</i>	2
	<i>Non-government Organization</i>	2
	<i>Other</i>	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>220</b>

Table 5: Specialty

General Area	Total	Sub-Area	Total
Biostatistics	225	Biostatistics	156
		Epidemiology	38
		Public Health	29
		Medical Statistics	1
		Occupational Health	1
Bioinformatics	44	Bioinformatics	19
		Statistical Genetics	25
Computational Statistics	44	Computational Statistics	29
		Machine Learning	15
Agricultural Statistics	2		
Environmental Statistics	18	Environmetrics	8
		Fisheries	1
		Forestry	2
		Statistical Ecology	7
Statistics	56	Statistics	48
		Survival Analysis	1
		Functional Data Analysis	1
		Design of Experiments	4
		Spatial Statistics	1
		Statistical Modeling	1
Actuarial Science	1		

## Overall Impressions of the Conference

Table 6a: Count of responses, overall impression of various aspects of the conference

Item	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Total
City	153	42	6	2	5	202
Food & Services	53	72	37	26	16	203
Scientific Topics	65	112	20	5	0	202
Sessions	61	109	23	7	2	202
Speakers	67	104	28	3	0	202
Venue/Convention Center	113	70	9	8	2	202
<b>Mean</b>	<b>85.3</b>	<b>84.8</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>4.2</b>	

Table 6b: Percent of responses, overall impression of various aspects of the conference

Item	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
City	75.7	20.8	3.0	1.0	2.5
Food & Services	26.1	35.5	18.2	12.8	7.9
Scientific Topics	32.2	55.4	9.9	2.5	0
Sessions	30.2	54.0	11.4	3.5	1.0
Speakers	33.2	51.5	13.9	1.5	0
Venue/Convention Center	56.0	34.7	4.7	4.0	1.0
<b>Mean</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>42.0</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>2.1</b>

Table 6c: Percent of responses, overall impression of various aspects of the conference, responses combined

Item	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied
City	96.5	3.0	3.5
Food & Services	61.6	18.2	20.7
Scientific Topics	87.6	9.9	2.5
Sessions	84.2	11.4	4.5
Speakers	84.7	13.9	1.5
Venue/Convention Center	90.7	4.7	5.0
<b>Mean</b>	<b>84.2</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>6.3</b>

### Overall impression: Summary of Free-text responses

A total of 57 respondents provided free-text responses regarding the overall impression of the conference, and many respondents' responses covered multiple topics. There were 36 negative comments related to the food and coffee service (e.g. didn't like the quality or volume of food or coffee, didn't feel that dietary needs were properly accommodated, felt there was too much wasteful packaging). There were a few positive comments about the food as well. Five people provided comments related to the scientific program (days were too long, definition of "young" statisticians unclear, poor balance of topics & topics too specialized, low quality of talks,

attendees didn't ask enough questions). One person commented that venue security was too strict and one person felt that the session volunteers should have been more helpful.

#### Responses on the Length of the Conference

Of the 189 categorical responses here, 168 (89%) thought the length was about right/short/too short, leaving 21 (11%) thinking it too long/much too long. There were 15 respondents who provided free-text responses, and among these,

1. 5 thought the Wednesday day off was unnecessary (or could be half-day [1 respondent])
2. 4 thought the length of the day in-sessions was too long
3. 1 thought Friday should be full-day
4. 2 thought everything was fine

Responses on adding additional sessions, including additional concurrent sessions or extending the number of days of sessions

*Table 7: Increase the number of sessions or days*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
In favor	51	25.5
Not in favor	74	37.0
Unsure	52	26.0
Free-text response (below)	23	11.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Summary of Free-text responses:*

1. The general message among these 23 responses was if the conference is extended, it should be using concurrent sessions, not additional days.
2. One comment suggested that adding concurrent sessions would be useful to shorten the length of the conference day.
3. There was a suggestion to have a (strong) keynote speaker on the last day of the conference, presumably to sustain participation.
4. One comment indicated that having more concurrent sessions would provide more topics from which to choose.

Responses regarding where attendees lodged

*Table 8: Lodging preferences*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Official Conference Hotel	79	39.9
Highly-rated hotel or property	66	33.3
Hostel/student housing	30	15.2
House or apartment rental	41	20.7
Other	20	10.1
<b>Number of Respondents*</b>	<b>198</b>	

\*Note: some respondents selected more than one category

*Summary of Other responses:*

1. Most indicated preference for staying *near* the conference venue/location.
2. Some commented that it was cheaper to reserve a room oneself than to use the “conference rate”
3. Several indicated cost was a deciding factor

### Comments on the Hard-Copy Program

All responses (111) were free-text. A summary of them is:

1. 78 (70.3%) of the respondents liked the hard copy program and found it useful
2. 15 (13.5%) thought the organization of the hard copy program could be improved
3. 7 (6.3%) noted that a hard copy program is not needed because it is wasteful
4. There were several comments that attendees wanted more ready access to presentation abstracts
5. At least one respondent noted that because electronic programs (using app or web) relied on device batteries, which could be unreliable, so that hard copy programs are necessary.

More specifically, respondents were asked how they “would feel” if IBC did *not* have a hard copy program. Nearly half (99/202) of these respondents were uncomfortable dropping the hard copy program. Here,

1. Some suggested that having a PDF copy of the program to “print on-demand” (presumably at one’s own expense) would be a compromise.
2. Some noted that going without a hard copy program should make the conference less expensive.
3. Some noted that if the app were “better” the hard copy program would be less necessary.

### Comments on whether the conference met respondents’ personal objectives

A large majority (144/197, 73.1%) said that the scientific program met personal objectives, while 14/197 (8.6%) said that it did not. The free-text comments regarding what was lacking when personal objects were unmet generally focused on particular subject areas that were not covered/presented. At least one respondent suggested that the sessions were too long, so that it was difficult to choose which to attend and which to forego, but this respondent admitted no solution to this is apparent.



## Speaker satisfaction with “overall process” onsite

*Table 9a: Count of responses, speakers’ satisfaction with the “overall process” onsite*

Item	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Total
Room & facilities	90	21	7	3	1	122
Assistance & tech. support	88	23	6	2	2	121
Information & preparation	78	33	8	3	1	123
<b>Mean</b>	<i>85.3</i>	<i>25.7</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>2.7</i>	<i>1.3</i>	

*Table 9b: Percent of responses, speakers’ satisfaction with the “overall process” onsite*

Item	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Room & facilities	73.8	17.2	5.7	2.5	0.8
Assistance & tech. support	72.7	19.0	5.0	1.7	1.7
Information & preparation	63.4	26.8	6.5	2.4	0.8
<b>Mean</b>	<i>70.0</i>	<i>21.0</i>	<i>5.7</i>	<i>2.2</i>	<i>1.1</i>

*Free-text responses to this item can be summarized as*

1. There were some technical support issues
2. The uploading of presentations was “inefficient”
3. There were positive responses, with one respondent calling the conference “well-organized,” and another noting that the student volunteers were helpful
4. One respondent thought that the information speakers received about preparation of slides/presentation was too late, and another said that information “kept changing”
5. One respondent suggested that photos be taken of all speakers in a session (either as a group, or individually) “to keep memories”
6. One respondent questioned the allocation of talks to sessions, presumably miss-matched topics

### Favorite Session

Respondents were asked to indicate their favorite session (either invited or contributed). Many sessions were listed. Three sessions tied with the most mentions at 5 times (among 58 respondents): survival/multistate models; statistical methods in microbiome research; and dynamic individualized risk prediction

### Favorite Speaker

Respondents were asked to indicate their favorite speaker. Many speakers were listed. Among the 56 respondents, the top 3 places were: Peter Diggle (6), Emmanuel Lesaffre (5), and tied, Dimitris Rizopoulos (3) and Geert Molenberghs (3)

## What topics to add to future IBCs

Respondents were asked to list topics they would like to see added to future IBC scientific programs. The responses were many. Topics listed most often included

1. Medical statistics
  - a. Methods in clinical medicine
  - b. Precision medicine
  - c. Diagnostics
  - d. Deep learning in medical statistics
  - e. Analysis of personal, wearable sensors
  - f. Neuroimaging
  - g. "deeper omics"
  - h. Big data in epidemiology
2. Machine learning
  - a. Applications
  - b. Deep learning
  - c. Nonparametric/additive models
  - d. Neural networks
  - e. Information theory
3. Environmental or Ecological Statistics
  - a. Complex systems
  - b. Ecology
  - c. Systems biology
  - d. Capture-recapture methods
4. Computational statistics
  - a. Programming
  - b. Data science
  - c. Computer experiments
5. Health statistics
  - a. Public health
  - b. Health risk management
  - c. Insurance claims data/analysis
  - d. Emergency health
  - e. Big data
6. Agriculture statistics
7. Teaching statistics / pedagogy

## The Poster Session

Respondents were asked their “overall opinion” of the Poster Session(s) on the points in the table.

*Table 10a: Count of responses, overall opinion of the poster session(s)*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Location of room	57	88	14	27	6	190
Appearance	52	95	11	25	10	190
Poster content & presentation	49	101	30	11	1	190
Knowledge of Presenters	46	88	46	7	1	188
<b>Mean</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	

*Table 10b: Percent of responses, overall opinion of the poster session(s)*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Location of room	30.0	46.3	7.4	14.2	3.2	190
Appearance	27.4	50.0	5.8	13.2	5.3	190
Poster content & presentation	25.8	53.2	15.8	5.8	0.5	190
Knowledge of Presenters	24.5	46.8	24.5	3.7	0.5	188
<b>Mean</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>2.4</b>	

*Free-text responses to impressions of the Poster Session(s) can be summarized as*

1. The vast majority of respondents thought the posters were situated too close together
2. Several respondents thought that the poster session should be more accessible during breaks and should not overlap with oral presentations
3. Some respondents expected the speakers to be by their posters
4. Some respondents suggested that poster sessions be “introduced,” with presenters giving 1-2 minute “pitches” regarding their work.

## The Scientific Program

The large majority (168/198, 84.8%) of respondents were high satisfied (60/198) or satisfied (108/198) with the scientific program. Only 5 of 198 expressed dissatisfaction with the scientific program. Suggestions in free-text (7 respondents) included

1. Concurrent sessions should be sure not to overlap, and contributed sessions should more obviously have themes, at least in a few of them.
2. Not enough information on the opening and closing sessions was provided, for example that Dr. Ryan would be giving a scientific presentation, nor that there would be cultural entertainment (the local singing group).
3. Some talks appeared to be misclassified to session.

*Table 11a: Count of responses, overall opinion of the website*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Usefulness of content	57	99	10	25	5	194
Ease of navigation / completing process	39	96	14	35	10	192
Appearance	50	102	10	26	7	193
<b>Mean</b>	<i>48.7</i>	<i>99.0</i>	<i>11.3</i>	<i>28.7</i>	<i>7.3</i>	

*Table 11b: Percent of responses, overall opinion of the website*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Usefulness of content	29.4	51.0	5.2	12.9	2.6	194
Ease of navigation / completing process	20.3	50.0	7.3	18.2	5.2	192
Appearance	25.9	52.9	5.2	13.5	3.6	193
<b>Mean</b>	<i>25.2</i>	<i>51.3</i>	<i>5.9</i>	<i>14.9</i>	<i>3.8</i>	

*Free-text responses (18) can be summarized as*

1. Content, including full program appeared late
2. Hard to find information, including abstract submission and poster size requirements
3. Need links to abstracts
4. Too many clicks/menus
5. Contradicting information regarding “awards”
6. Too hard to find deadlines & instructions

## The Conference App

*Table 12a: Count of responses, overall opinion of the app*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Usefulness of content	46	65	52	20	5	185
Ease of navigation / completing process	33	52	54	39	7	184
Appearance	39	73	55	15	5	184
<b>Mean</b>	<i>39.3</i>	<i>63.3</i>	<i>53.7</i>	<i>24.7</i>	<i>5.7</i>	

*Table 12b: Percent of responses, overall opinion of the app*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Usefulness of content	24.9	35.1	28.1	10.8	2.7	185
Ease of navigation / completing process	17.9	28.3	29.4	21.2	3.8	184
Appearance	21.2	39.7	29.9	8.2	2.7	184
<b>Mean</b>	<i>21.3</i>	<i>34.4</i>	<i>29.1</i>	<i>13.4</i>	<i>3.1</i>	

*There were several suggestions that should prove useful in the design of the next IBC app. Free-text responses (27) can be summarized as*

1. Would like abstracts, and ability to search these
2. Navigation issues, including too much scrolling
3. Calendar issues
4. Attendees list was too incomplete
5. Would like a "chat" functionality

## Abstract Submission Tool

*Table 13a: Count of responses, overall opinion of the abstract submission tool*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Usefulness of information	58	73	39	13	1	184
Ease of navigation / completing process	55	74	41	12	3	184
Appearance	55	78	41	10	0	183
<b>Mean</b>	<i>56.0</i>	<i>75.0</i>	<i>40.3</i>	<i>11.7</i>	<i>3.3</i>	

*Table 13b: Percent of responses, overall opinion of the abstract submission tool*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Usefulness of information	31.7	39.9	21.3	7.1	0.6	184
Ease of navigation / completing process	29.9	40.2	22.3	6.5	1.6	184
Appearance	30.0	42.6	22.4	5.5	0	183
<b>Mean</b>	<i>30.5</i>	<i>40.9</i>	<i>22.0</i>	<i>6.4</i>	<i>0.7</i>	

*There were only a handful of free-text comments, and these were generally not informative.*

## Abstracts (Proceedings) on USB

*Table 14a: Count of responses, overall opinion of the abstracts (proceedings) on USB*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Usefulness of information	50	43	89	1	3	186
Ease of navigation / completing process	50	37	91	2	2	181
Appearance	52	40	88	1	1	182
<b>Mean</b>	<i>50.7</i>	<i>40.0</i>	<i>90.3</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>2</i>	

*Table 14b: Percent of responses, overall opinion of the abstracts (proceedings) on USB*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Needs improvement</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Usefulness of information	26.9	23.1	47.8	0.5	1.6	186
Ease of navigation / completing process	27.5	20.3	50.0	1.1	1.1	181
Appearance	28.6	22.0	48.4	0.5	0.5	182
<b>Mean</b>	<i>27.6</i>	<i>21.8</i>	<i>48.7</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>1.1</i>	

*There were only a handful of comments, including that these should be (1) accessible from the mobile app, and (2) that it's unnecessary because a downloadable version should be sufficient.*

## Registration Tool

Table 15a: Count of responses, overall opinion of the registration tool

Topic	Excellent	Good	No opinion	Needs improvement	Poor	Total
Usefulness of information	53	97	19	18	5	192
Ease of navigation / completing process	53	86	19	28	5	191
Appearance	57	84	24	21	5	191
<b>Mean</b>	54.3	89.0	20.7	22.3	5.0	

Table 15b: Percent of responses, overall opinion of the registration tool

Topic	Excellent	Good	No opinion	Needs improvement	Poor	Total
Usefulness of information	27.6	50.5	9.9	9.4	2.6	192
Ease of navigation / completing process	27.7	45.0	9.9	14.7	2.6	191
Appearance	29.8	44.0	12.6	11.0	2.6	191
<b>Mean</b>	28.4	46.5	10.8	11.7	2.6	

There were only a few comments, including that it would be able to print the completed registration, the appearance could be “modernized,” and problems with multiple emails to validate it. There was specific concern expressed regarding the security related to password handling.

## Excursions & experience

There were many responses (114) to the question of attendance, with many “no” responses. Of the “yes” responses, comments were generally very positive. Respondents with negative responses indicated that tours were full (and so some went on their own, or through the tourism bureau), that signing up for excursions was unclear, insufficient information on what supplies were needed (the hiking), and the price was too expensive.

## Favorite Memory & Final Comments

Respondents were asked what they thought their favorite memory would be from IBC 2018, along with any final comments. There were so many answers it is hard to summarize! Favorite memories included many references to the young statistician events, walking by the sea, meeting new people and catching up with old friends. Many of the comments were repeats of things said earlier in the survey, for example related to session and conference length or the food. There were some additional negatives, including a comment that there were too many emails before the conference and also a comment that the registration fee was too high. There were many lovely positive comments provided here as well, including:

“Everything exceeded my expectations! Great job!!

“Congratulations to the organizing team!”

“Unforgettable conference in Barcelona! Thanks!

“The helpers in the blue shirts did a great job”

“Session on female statisticians was brilliant and should be repeated”

“IBC is my favourite conference to attend”