



**The Future of Affiliate Gatherings**  
**Affiliate Survey 2023**  
Survey Report

# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Executive Summary



- Of the 88 respondents to the November 2023 survey, half are user groups, one-third are chapters, one-tenth are hub projects.
- The most common barriers to attending affiliate meetings were visa and financial restrictions.
- There is a **very high level of agreement that there should be a global affiliate-only gathering in the future** and that attending these events would be relevant to their organisations.
- Regarding the **purpose of such a future gathering** knowledge sharing, capacity building and mutual learning stand out as the most important goals. User Groups and Global South affiliates are comparatively more interested in discussing movement strategy during these events than Chapters and Global North affiliates.
- Across all groups, respondents **overwhelmingly agree that the gathering should be inclusive** in terms of geographic representation and that every affiliate should be able to participate.
- A majority believe that the **gathering should rotate locations**.
- A **hybrid format and an annual frequency is preferred by a majority of respondents**.
- A large majority of respondents see **movement funds** as a central source of funding for event costs.
- Over 40 respondents indicated a **willingness to participate in the design or organization of a gathering, primarily as part of a program or organizing committee**. A higher percentage of user groups than chapters are willing to take on a role with more responsibility (especially hosting all meetings, part of organizing committee, hosting one meeting).

# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Data Collection & Method

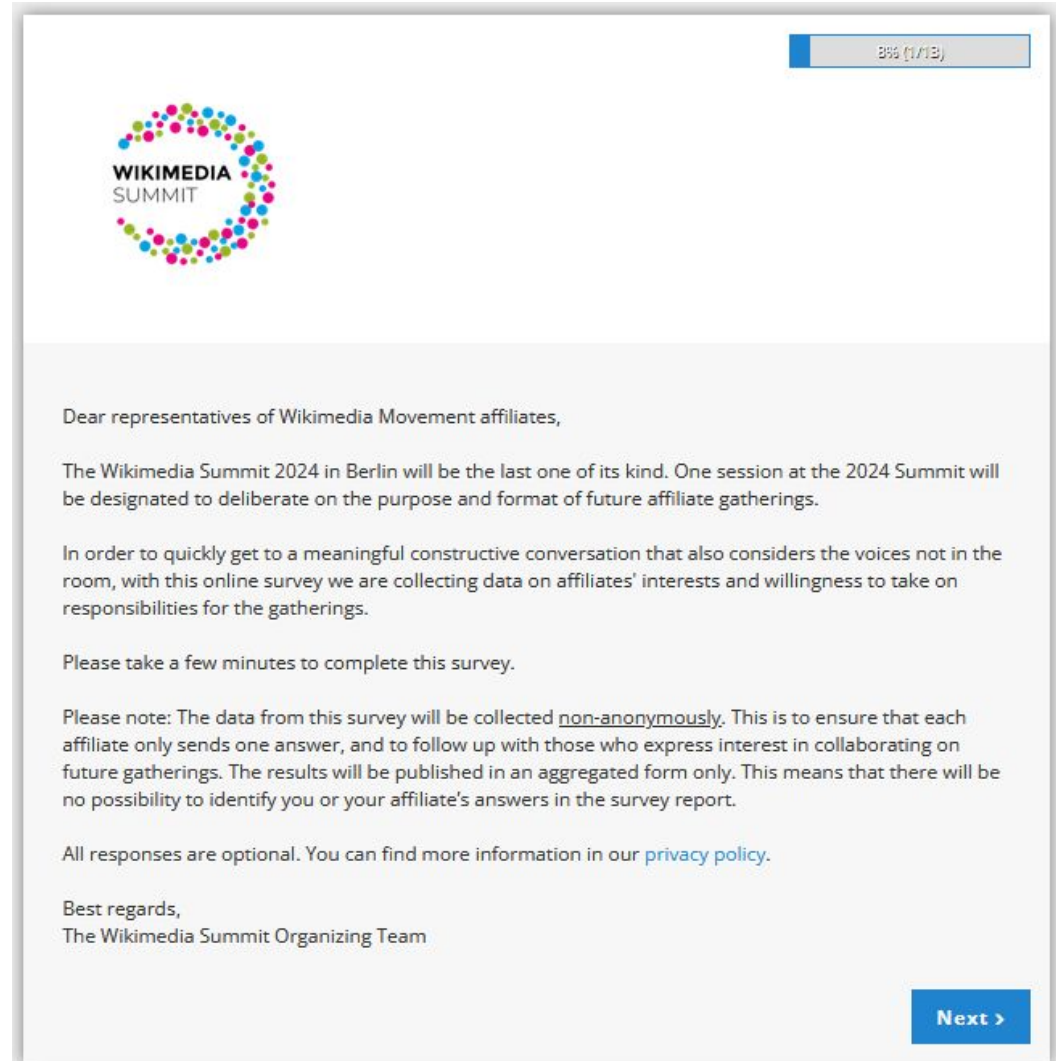


### Method:

- Online feedback survey via [LamaPoll](#)
- [Questionnaire](#) available on Wikimedia Commons

### Data Collection

- November 22nd - December 8th 2023
- Wikimedia Affiliates invited to the survey via email: 161
- Two reminder emails
- Participation: n=88 → 55 % of invited Affiliates



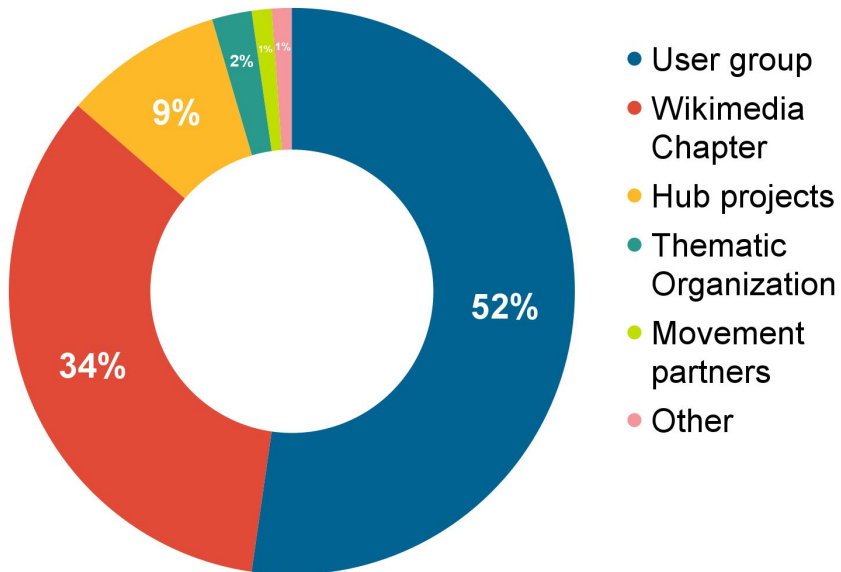
# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Background of Affiliates



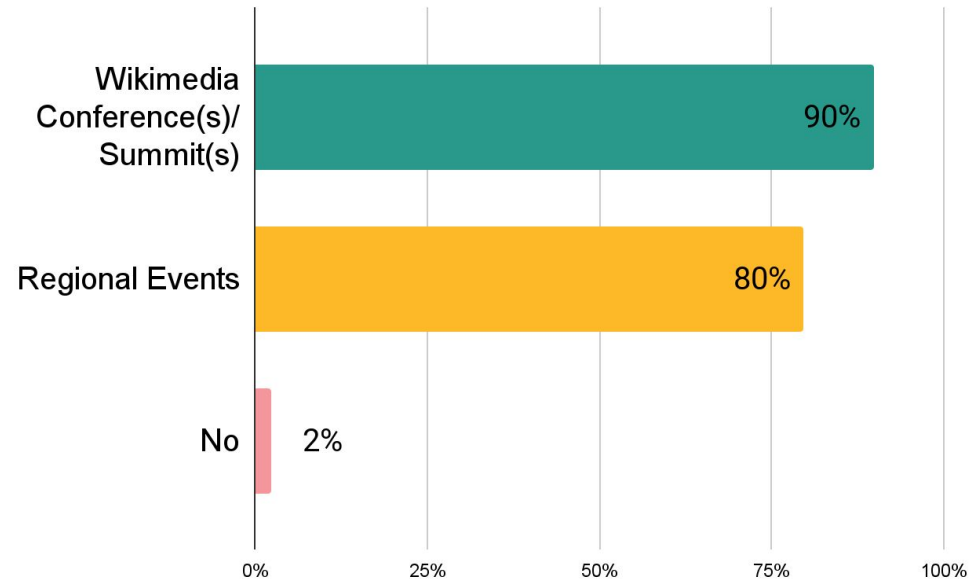
### Q1: Type of Affiliate

What type of organization do you represent? (n=88)



### Q2: Past Attendance of Wikimedia Conferences / Summits

Has your Affiliate ever participated in the following events? (n=88)



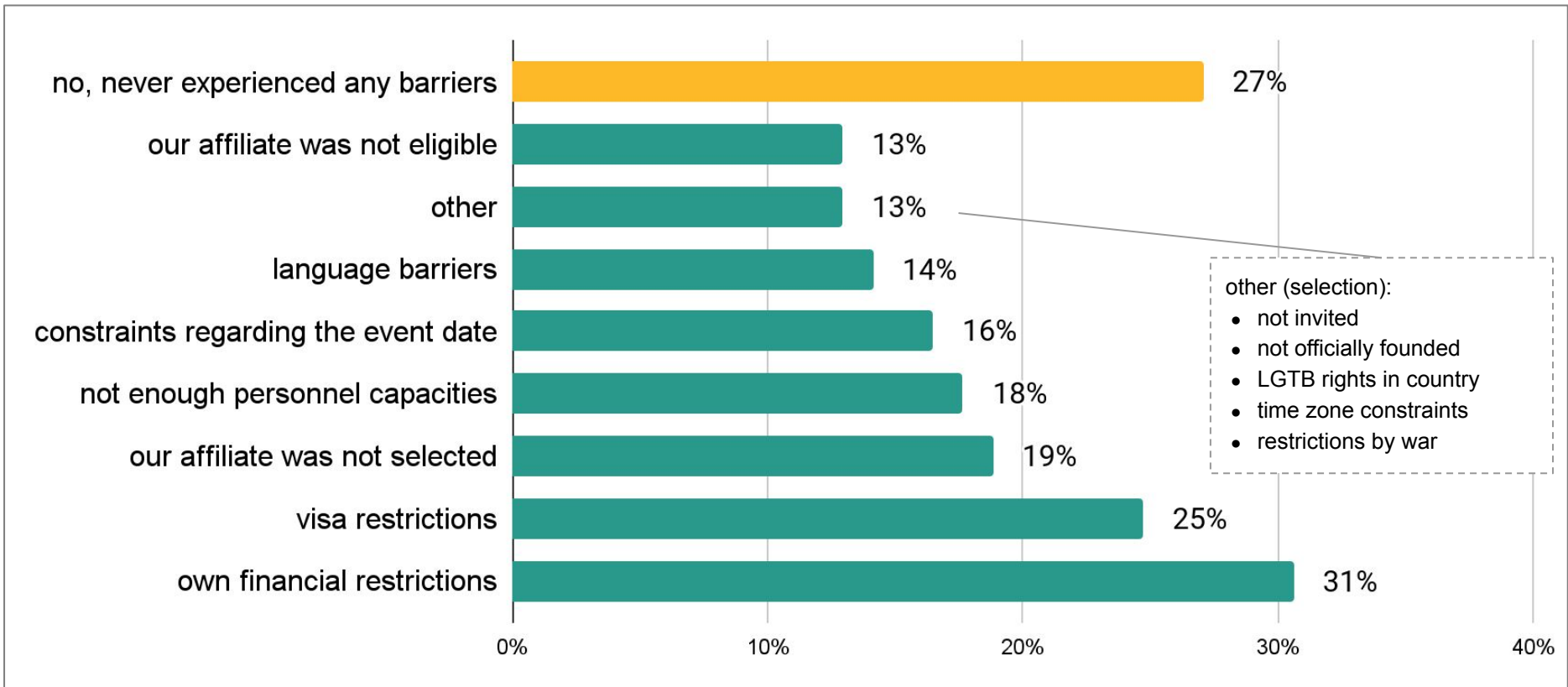
# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Background of Affiliates



### Q4: Barriers for attending Wikimedia Conferences/Summits

Have the representatives of your Affiliate ever experienced any barriers that prevented them from attending Wikimedia Conference(s) / Summit(s)? If so, what were the barriers? (n=85)



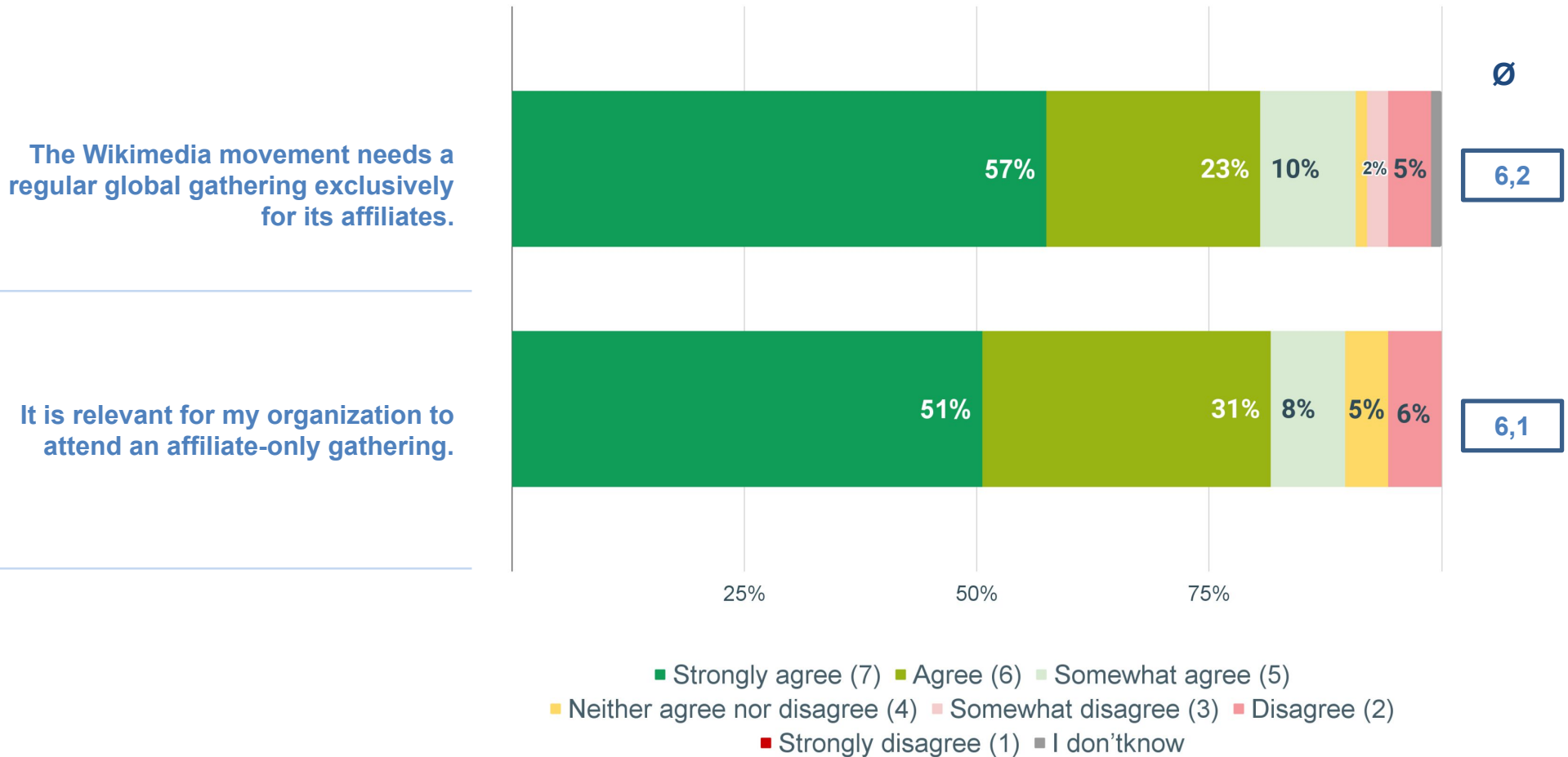
# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## General perspective on future global gatherings



### Q5: Agreement affiliate-only gathering

Does the Wikimedia movement need a regular global gathering exclusively for its Affiliates? (n=87)

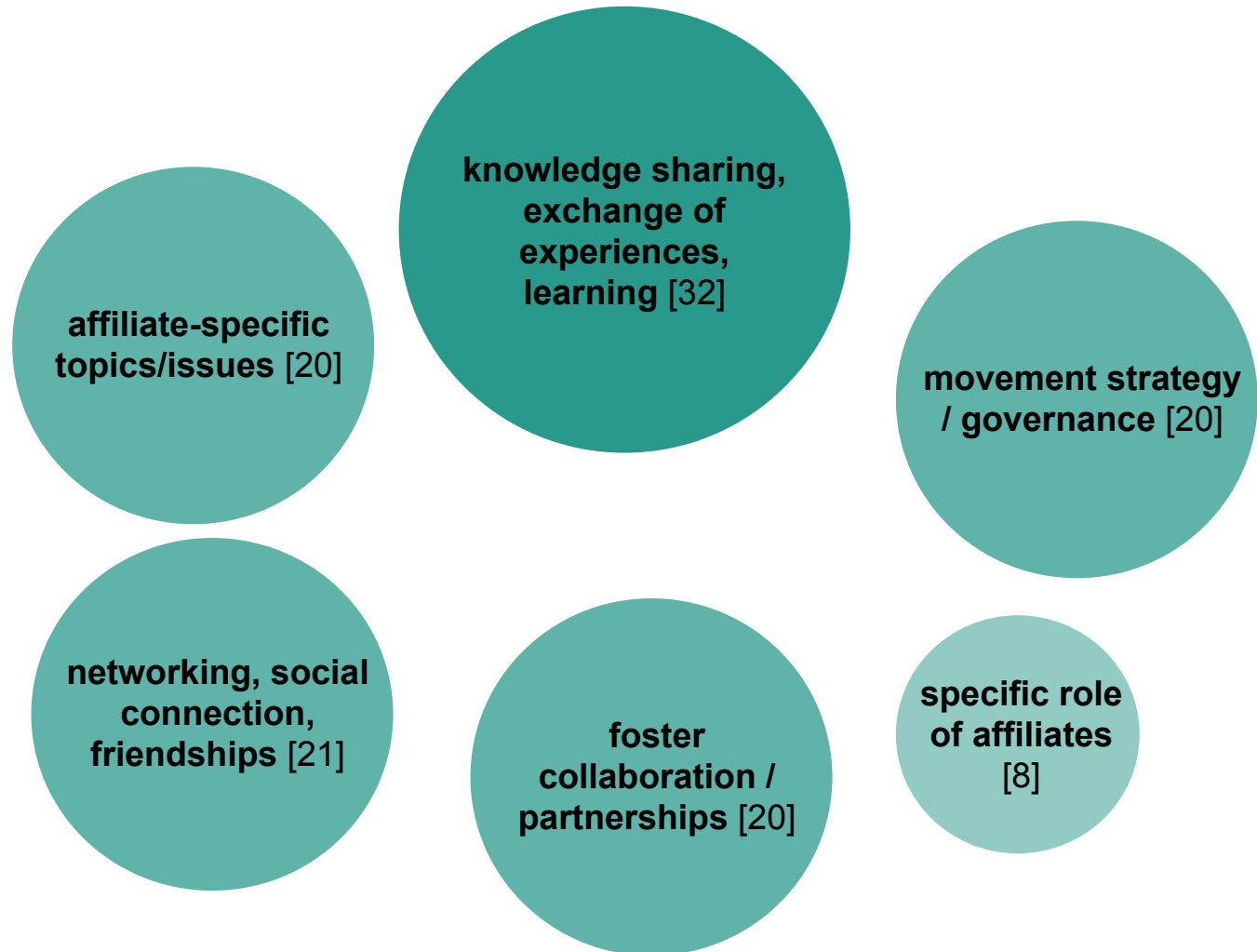


# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Reasons and purposes



Q7: You have stated that there is a need for affiliate-only gatherings in the future. What is the reason for this? Which purpose(s) should affiliate-only gatherings have? [open question, n=75, multiple answers]



Q6: Reasons against global affiliate-only gathering (n=6)

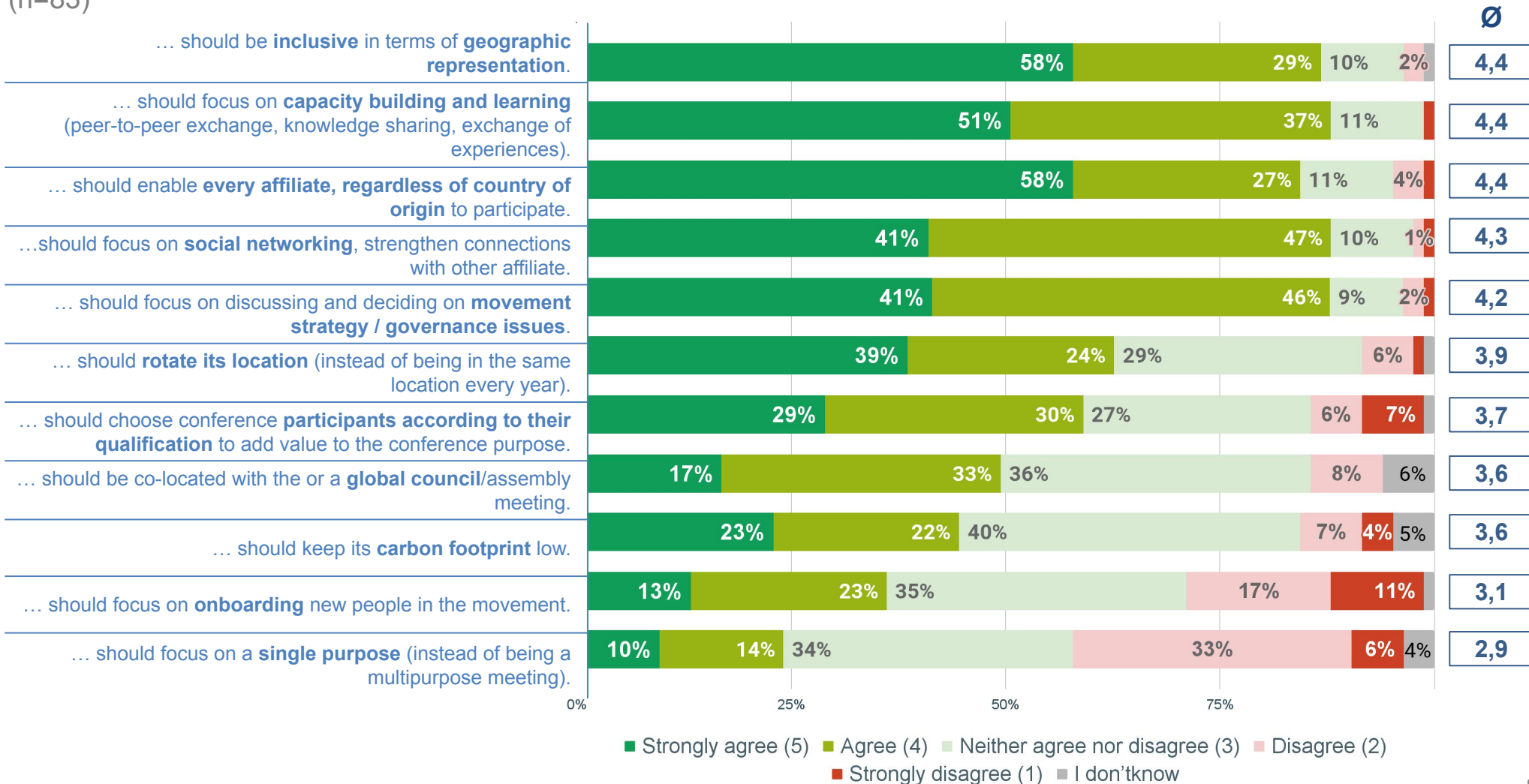
- not affiliate-only but open to wider community
- depends on purpose of gathering
- depends on other gatherings (global council)

# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Purpose and characteristics of gathering



Q8: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding a possible affiliate-only gathering?  
(n=83)





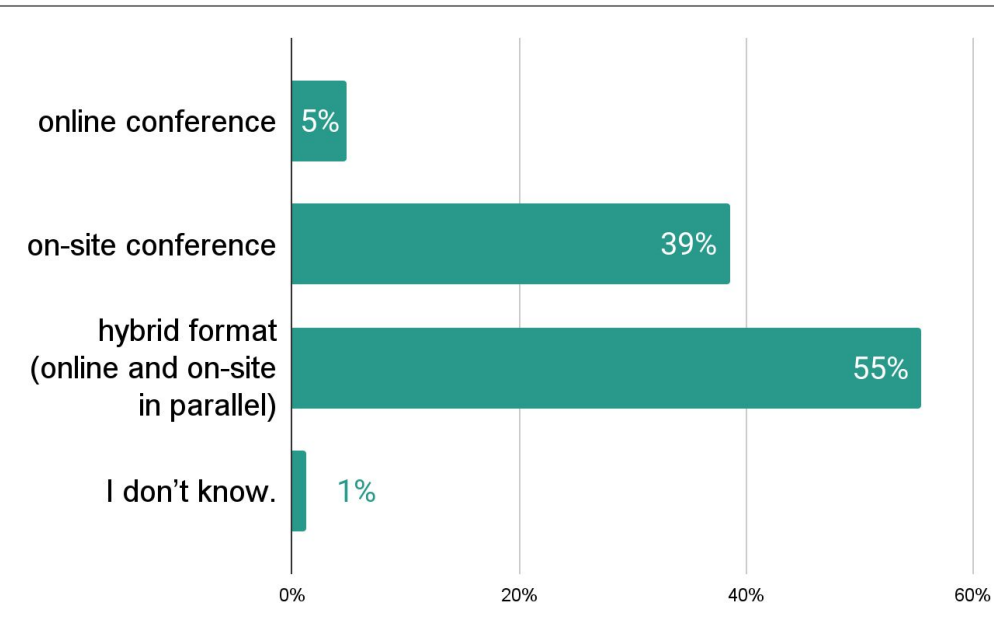
# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Conference format



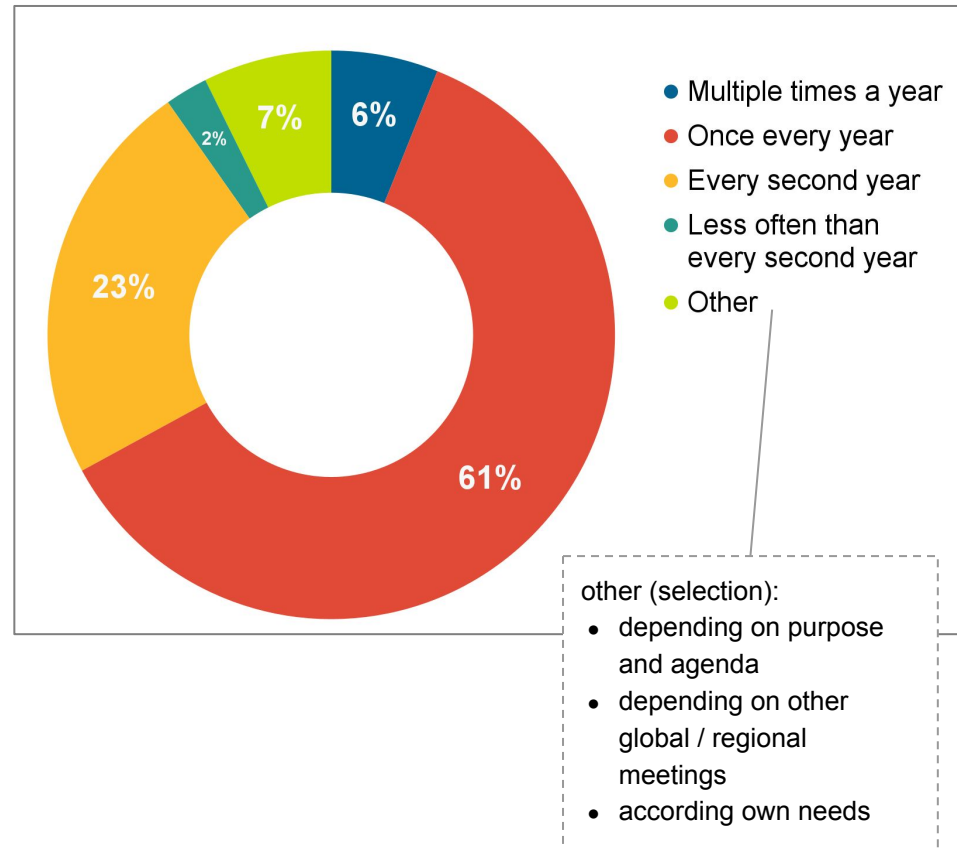
### Q9: On-site vs. hybrid format

Gathering(s) could be hosted online or on-site. What would your organization prefer? (n=83)



### Q10: Frequency

How often should affiliate-only gathering(s) take place? (n=82)



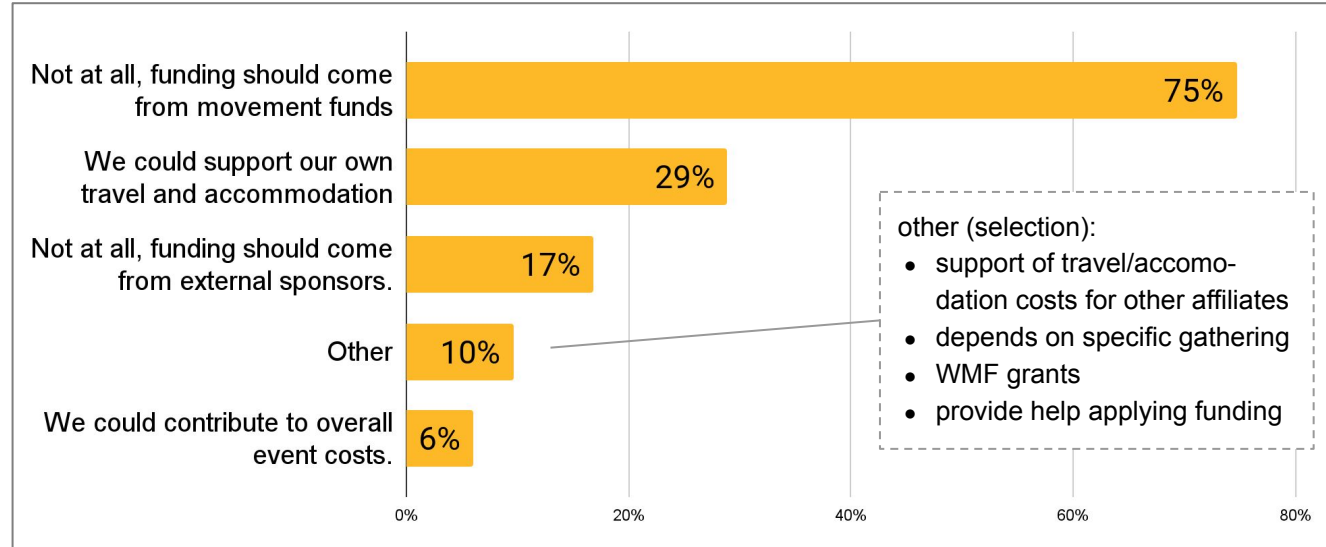
# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Participation



### Q9: Contribution to cost

How could your organization support the costs of an affiliate gathering? (n=83, multiple answers possible)



### Q12: Type of participation

How would your organization like to participate in a possible future affiliate gathering? (n=82, multiple answers possible)

# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Summary



### Background of survey respondents

- **Type of Affiliates:** Half of the affiliates who responded to the survey are User groups, one-third are Chapters, one-tenth Hub projects.
- **Subgroups comparisons** were made for Chapters vs. User Groups and Affiliates from Global South vs. Global North.<sup>1</sup> Relevant differences between those groups are stated below.
- Global South respondents consist mainly of User Groups (73%) and only some Chapters (17%). Global North respondents consist mainly of Chapters (67%) and only to one-quarter of User Groups (24%). Hubs and others don't differ significantly.

### Attending Wikimedia Conferences / Summits

- Almost all respondents participated in Wikimedia Conferences/Summits before.
- Almost 75% did encounter barriers in attending the gathering. The most common **barriers for participation** are budget constraints, visa regulations or the fact of not being eligible/selected.
- Considerable **differences** exist regarding **barriers** for participating **between affiliate groups**. In general, User Groups and Global South Affiliates more often experience barriers. Visa restrictions are the biggest barrier for Global South affiliates (38%; also 32% of User Groups), whereas for Global North (3%) and Chapters (7%) this only a marginal concern. User Groups are more hindered than Chapters in attending the gatherings by not being eligible or selected. A higher share of Global South was not eligible, whereas for Global North it is more a problem of not being selected.

1 - The underlying classification of the two groups is only a rough approximation with limitations. It is based on the following grouping of affiliates: Global South = SSA, MENA, ESEAP, Indian SC and LAM; Global North = NA, WE, CEE.

# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Summary



### Attitude towards future global gathering

- There is a **very high level of agreement that there should be a global affiliate-only gathering in the future** and that a participation would be relevant to one's own organisation. All subgroups overwhelmingly agree in that respect. However, Chapters and Global North affiliates are (slightly) more convinced that this is the case. The most stated reasoning for having an affiliate-only meeting refers to affiliate-specific topics/issues and their specific role in the movement.
- Regarding the **purpose of such future gathering** knowledge-sharing, capacity building and mutual learning stand out as the most important goals. But also networking/social connection, the fostering of collaboration/partnerships and the discussion of movement strategy issues are frequently stated purposes and receive high agreement. Accordingly, only a minority of the respondents (24%) believe that the gathering should focus on a single purpose.
- The **subgroups differ in their ranking of purposes**. For Chapters and Global North Affiliates the most important purpose is networking, followed by capacity building/learning. For User Groups capacity building/learning is the most important purpose, followed by movement strategy/government issues. Global South Affiliates prioritize discussing movement strategy and capacity building/learning.
- Onboarding of new Affiliates is seen more important as a purpose by Global South than Global North affiliates (44% vs. 29%). On the other hand, this purpose receives comparatively strong disagreement by 11% of all respondents.

# The Future of Affiliate Gatherings

## Summary



- Throughout all groups survey participants **overwhelmingly agree that the gatherings should be inclusive** in terms of geographic representation and that every Affiliate should be enabled to participate. Especially strong agreement towards enabling every Affiliate can be found among User Groups and Global South Affiliates.
- A majority thinks that the **gathering should rotate its location** instead of being at the same location every year. That is especially true for User Groups (79% vs. Chapters: 48%).
- Keeping the carbon footprint low is especially important for Global North affiliates (61% vs. Global South: 33%).
- **A hybrid format and an annual frequency is preferred by the majority of respondents.** That holds true for all subgroups. Among Chapters the share of people preferring on-site meetings is higher than in other subgroups, whereas among Global South affiliates comparatively more respondents can imagine only-only gatherings.
- A big majority of respondents see **movement funds as central funding source**. Nearly one-third can imagine covering own travel expenses. Nearly all Global South Affiliates would rely on movement funding (92%, Global North: 52%). A much higher share of Global North Affiliates could take over travel costs (52%; Global South: 13%) or contribute to event costs (13% vs. 0%).
- Many Affiliates can imagine **taking part in conceptualizing or organizing a gathering**, mainly as part of program or organizing committee. A higher share of User Groups than Chapters is willing to take over a role with more responsibilities (esp. hosting organization for all gatherings, part of organizing committee, hosting one gathering).