

2025 Final Report: HERC Funding for the Idaho Conference on Undergraduate Research (ICUR)

Submitted by Jim Fredricksen, Director of the Boise State Institute for Inclusive and Transformative Scholarship

Executive Summary

Thanks to HERC's foundational support and other contributions from partners, ICUR 2025 (July 16 and 17, 2025) successfully convened a broad statewide and cross-institutional representation with 590 attendees. The conference's core purpose – provide Idaho undergraduates a supportive, accessible forum to present research and to connect across campuses, disciplines, and backgrounds – was realized through a state-wide planning team and engaged programming. This year over 600 collaborators contributed to 218 research projects spanning more than 30 institutions. Find the link to ICUR 2025 agenda, speaker and session information, and videos of lightning talks at this link: <https://www.boisestate.edu/icur/icur-2025/>

Core Purpose and Goals

ICUR 2025 advanced these major goals:

- Offering a meaningful and supportive space for students to present to non-expert audiences and to network across the state institutions
- Reducing barriers to participation – geographically, financially, and by discipline
- Inviting contributions from STEM and non-STEM researchers
- Fostering statewide community and professionalization among Idaho's undergraduates

Participation Overview

Metric	Value	Notes
Attendees	590	(2024 = 444 attendees)
Projects (posters)	218	From 218 unique projects, many interdisciplinary (2024 = 181 posters/projects)
Collaborators	623	Includes presenters, co-authors, mentors (2024 = 550 collaborators)
Survey Respondents	161	33% response rate (2024 = 32.9% response rate)

Institutional Representation

- Boise State University: 52.3%, 114 projects
- University of Idaho: 22.9%, 50 projects
- Idaho State University: 19.3%, 42 projects
- College of Idaho: 2.3%, 5 projects

- Lewis-Clark State College: 1.8%, 4 projects
- College of Southern Idaho: .5%, 1 project
- College of Western Idaho: .5%, 1 project
- BYU-Idaho: .5%, 1 project

Note: Other and out-of-state institutions = several single-project contributors

Disciplinary Breadth (218 projects)

- Biological Sciences: 39.4%, 86 projects
- Physical Sciences: 25.2%, 55 projects
- Engineering: 15.6%, 34 projects
- Health Sciences: 14.7%, 32 projects
- Social Sciences: 13.8%, 30 projects
- Computer Science: 10.1%, 22 projects
- Humanities: 3.7%, 8 projects
- Arts and Design: 3.2%, 7 projects
- Business/Economics: 1.8%, 4 projects
- Mathematics: .9%, 2 projects
- Education: .5%, 1 project
- Public Service: .5%, 1 project

Note: Because projects could be interdisciplinary, the sum of percentages exceeds 100%

Special Programs and Innovations

1. **Keynote:** Dr. Eric Jankowski (Professor, Director of Micron School of Materials Science and Engineering, Boise State) led the conference through a Story Collider workshop. This advanced the integration of storytelling into scientific communication, professional development, and community building among all conference attendees. Story Collider is a nationally recognized science communication leader that aims to boost student confidence, audience engagement, and campus-community connections.
2. **MakerLab Experiences:** A new hands on experience, students were able to engage directly with innovation and technology at the MakerLab on campus. The MakerLab provides the space for participants to collaborate, build, hack, invent, share, make, and do, reflecting many of the goals of the conference.
3. **Expanded Networking and Storytelling:** Provided opportunities for participants to share their highlights and lessons learned through quick video interviews and montage shared at the conference. As in past conferences, ICUR 2025 included Meet-a-Professor roundtable conversations and Graduate Student Panel sessions.

4. **Poster Sessions and Lightning Talks:** Scheduled for accessible and varied participation, presenters showcased their work in different formats, engaging a varied audience. Participants had the opportunity to communicate their accomplishments in a more informal setting through poster presentations and in rehearsed speeches in Lightning Talks.

Financial Overview

Category	Amount	Details
Meals / Refreshments	\$24,269.18	Student Union Building (SUB) catering (breakfasts, snacks, lunches, day 0 dinner) plus Albertsons purchases
Facilities (AV, space)	\$2,652.50	SUB space (inc AV), Games Center, stadium tour
Transportation / Travel	\$14,268.00	Charter buses, campus parking
Housing	\$18,443.94	Student and faculty lodging
Salary / staffing	\$13,272.45	Event coordination, logistics, project management
Supplies / Materials	\$326.24	Conference materials, signage
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$73,252.31	

Partner Contributions:

- Idaho EPSCoR Summer Authentic Research Experience program: \$7,252.31 (travel, food, lodging)
- National Institutes of Health Southwest Idaho Bridge to Baccalaureate program at Boise State: \$5,000 (facility/space rental)
- IDeA Network for Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) program: \$1,000 (Day 2 lunch)
- In-Kind: 10 cases of soft drinks (Swire Coca Cola)

Total Partner Support: \$13,252.31

Net HERC Grant Utilized: \$60,000.00 (all grant funds spent as planned)

Impact and Feedback

- Overall satisfaction: 94% of respondents reported being “satisfied” or “very satisfied”
- Poster sessions and networking: 91.9% and 80.6% satisfaction rates, respectively
- Gains in skills and confidence: 77.7% “satisfied” or better
- Qualitative feedback showed excitement about interdisciplinary learning, supportive environment for new presenters, and networking with peers and faculty across Idaho institutions. Selected quotes include the following:

- STUDENT: *"The entire process of creating a poster in general; it was impactful to display and encourage me to think about not only what I am doing but why it matters. Not only this, but communicating it in a professional manner."*
- STUDENT: *"The lightning talks in particular were fascinating and it was inspiring to see students presenting research that matters especially in a more digestible way"*
- STUDENT: *"The most impactful part of attending ICUR was being able to discuss my research/expertise with others at the event. It was genuinely an enjoyable experience to introduce others to the project that my team and I have spent several months working on, and getting to share a slice of my expertise in the field with others."*
- STUDENT: *Walking around the poster sessions during Day 1 was the most impactful time for me because I felt like I really got to connect with student researchers like myself and learn about new topics. I approached some posters that didn't necessarily draw me in with their titles or topics, but I always left glad that I walked up."*
- STUDENT: *"Being able to speak with so many different kinds of researchers put the scope of college research into scale for me, which was really impactful"*
- EDUCATOR: *"ICUR was extremely approachable for students' first conference. They all had a wonderful time and felt that it was a valuable experience. As a mentor and educator, that was incredible to see."*
- EDUCATOR: *"My student was able to build confidence and presenting skills. It was a joy to see her shine. I also was really impressed with the various other poster presentations! Thank you for organizing this! It's such a great opportunity for undergrads across the state."*
- OTHER: *"I thought this year there were lots of students from universities other than BSU, which was cool to see. I think encouraging that is important to give undergraduates a feel for how to present and interact at a conference in other states or areas, even if they are from the area"*

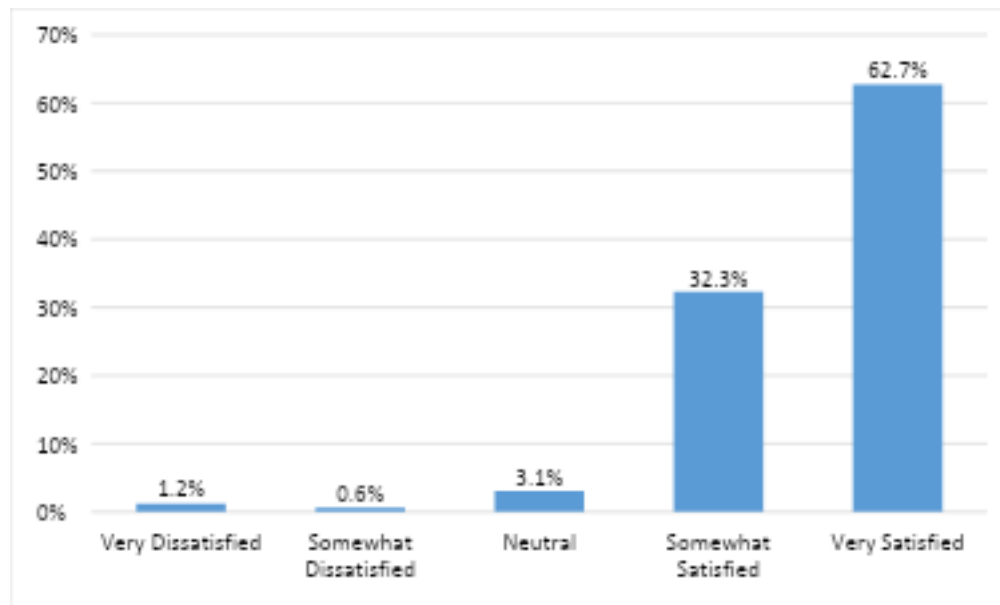
Idaho Conference on Undergraduate Research 2025

Survey Results

RESPONSE RATE: 32.9%

- 531 survey recipients (excludes 6 IFITS staff who did not receive the survey)
 - o 354 (66.7%) students
 - o 177 (33.3%) faculty/staff/other
- 161 recorded responses; 2 of these are an incomplete response
 - o Answers for the incomplete response is included where available.

Please indicate your overall satisfaction with the 2025 Idaho Conference on Undergraduate Research.

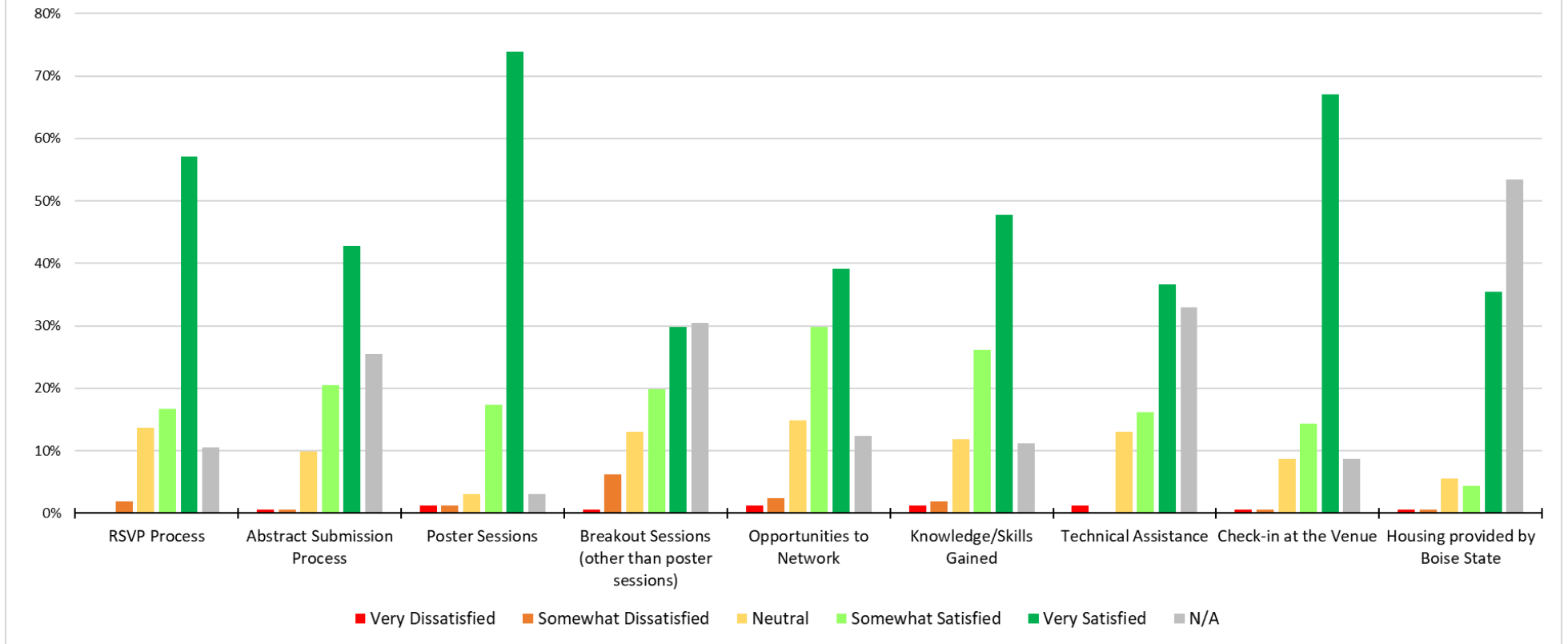


Answer	%	Count
Very Dissatisfied	1.2%	2
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0.6%	1
Neutral	3.1%	5
Somewhat Satisfied	32.3%	52
Very Satisfied	62.7%	101
Grand Total	100.0%	161

Please tell us how satisfied you were with the following aspects of the conference.

	Very Dissatisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Neutral		Somewhat Satisfied		Very Satisfied		N/A		Total	
Aspect	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
RSVP Process	0%	0	2%	3	14%	22	17%	27	57%	92	11%	17	100%	161
Abstract Submission Process	1%	1	1%	1	10%	16	20%	33	43%	69	25%	41	100%	161
Poster Sessions	1%	2	1%	2	3%	5	17%	28	74%	119	3%	5	100%	161
Breakout Sessions (other than poster sessions)	1%	1	6%	10	13%	21	20%	32	30%	48	30%	49	100%	161
Opportunities to Network	1%	2	2%	4	15%	24	30%	48	39%	63	12%	20	100%	161
Knowledge/Skills Gained	1%	2	2%	3	12%	19	26%	42	48%	77	11%	18	100%	161
Technical Assistance	1%	2	0%	0	13%	21	16%	26	37%	59	33%	53	100%	161
Check-in at the Venue	1%	1	1%	1	9%	14	14%	23	67%	108	9%	14	100%	161
Housing provided by Boise State	1%	1	1%	1	6%	9	4%	7	35%	57	53%	86	100%	161

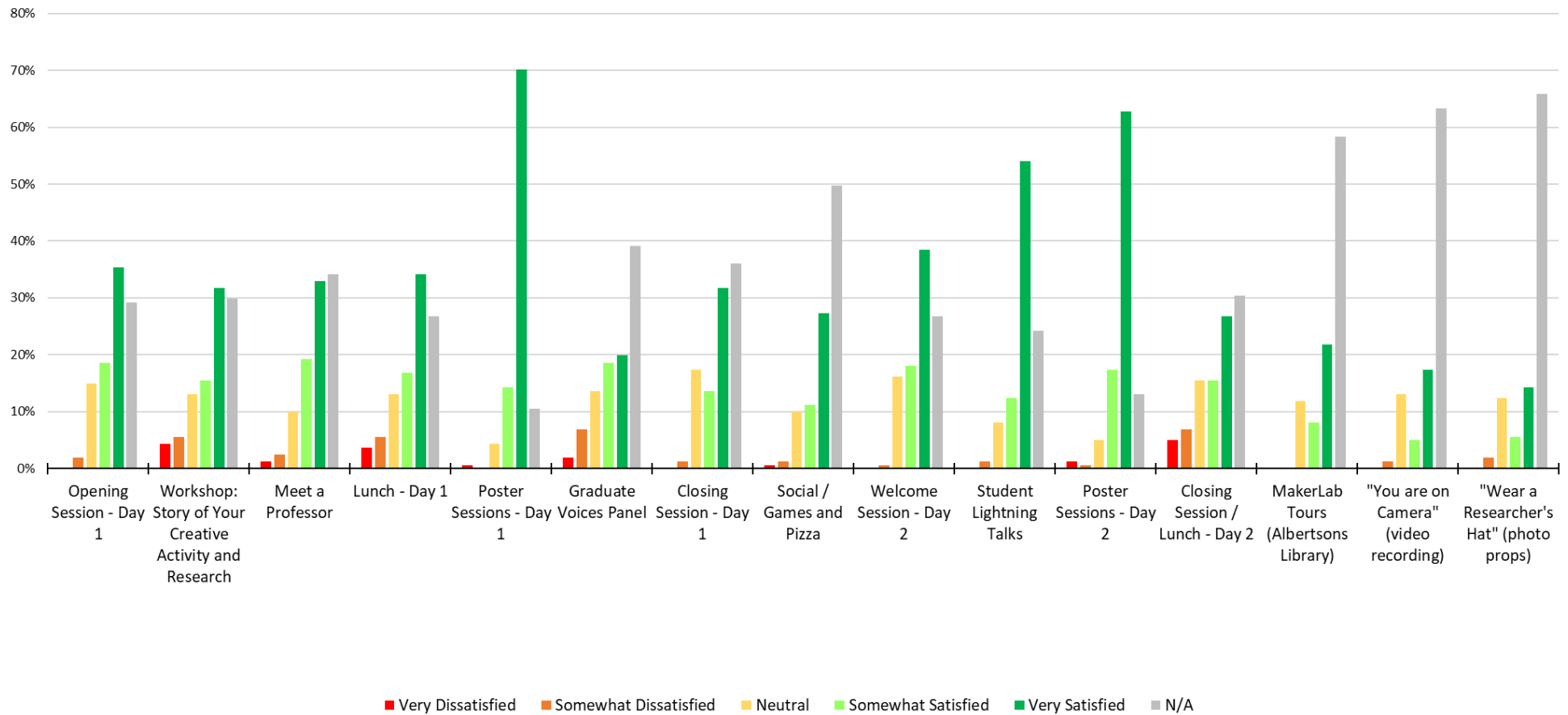
Please tell us how satisfied you were with the following aspects of the conference.



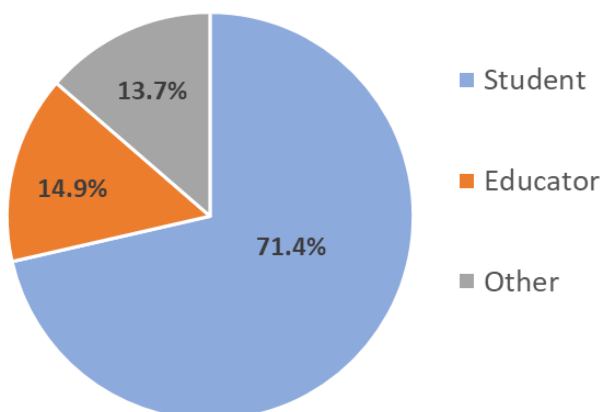
For each session that you attended, please let us know how satisfied you were with that session.

	Very Dissatisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Neutral		Somewhat Satisfied		Very Satisfied		N/A		Total	
Session	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Opening Session - Day 1	0%	0	2%	3	15%	24	19%	30	35%	57	29%	47	100%	161
Workshop: Story of Your Creative Activity and Research	4%	7	6%	9	13%	21	16%	25	32%	51	30%	48	100%	161
Meet a Professor	1%	2	2%	4	10%	16	19%	31	33%	53	34%	55	100%	161
Lunch - Day 1	4%	6	6%	9	13%	21	17%	27	34%	55	27%	43	100%	161
Poster Sessions - Day 1	1%	1	0%	0	4%	7	14%	23	70%	113	11%	17	100%	161
Graduate Voices Panel	2%	3	7%	11	14%	22	19%	30	20%	32	39%	63	100%	161
Closing Session - Day 1	0%	0	1%	2	17%	28	14%	22	32%	51	36%	58	100%	161
Social / Games and Pizza	1%	1	1%	2	10%	16	11%	18	27%	44	50%	80	100%	161
Welcome Session - Day 2	0%	0	1%	1	16%	26	18%	29	39%	62	27%	43	100%	161
Student Lightning Talks	0%	0	1%	2	8%	13	12%	20	54%	87	24%	39	100%	161
Poster Sessions - Day 2	1%	2	1%	1	5%	8	17%	28	63%	101	13%	21	100%	161
Closing Session / Lunch - Day 2	5%	8	7%	11	16%	25	16%	25	27%	43	30%	49	100%	161
MakerLab Tours (Albertsons Library)	0%	0	0%	0	12%	19	8%	13	22%	35	58%	94	100%	161
"You are on Camera" (video recording)	0%	0	1%	2	13%	21	5%	8	17%	28	63%	102	100%	161
"Wear a Researcher's Hat" (photo props)	0%	0	2%	3	12%	20	6%	9	14%	23	66%	106	100%	161
Faculty Lounge	0%	0	0%	0	11%	17	1%	1	9%	15	80%	128	100%	161

For each session that you attended, please let us know how satisfied you were with that session.

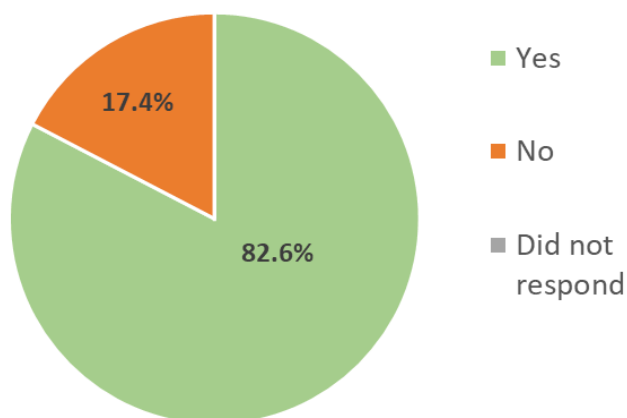


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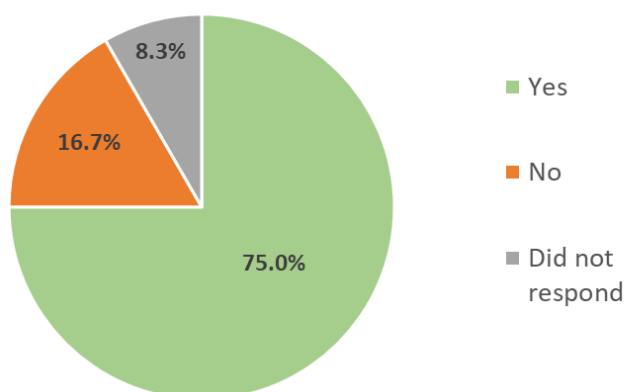
Answer	%	Count
Student	71.4%	115
Educator	14.9%	24
Other	13.7%	22
Total	100.0%	161

Did you present a poster? (This question presented only to the respondents who selected "Student" as their Role.)



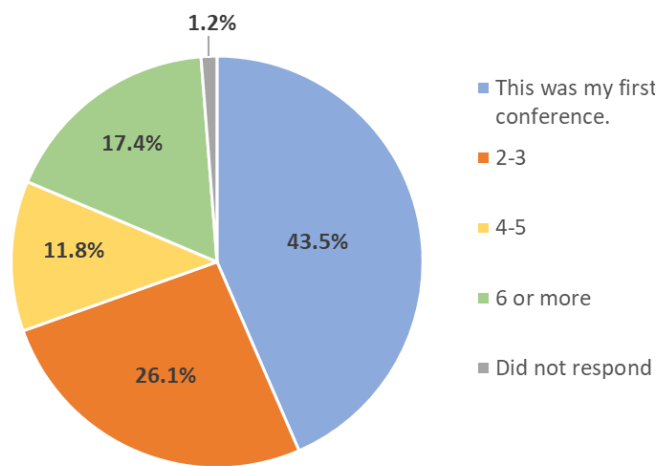
Answer	%	Count
Yes	82.6%	95
No	17.4%	20
Did not respond	0.0%	0
Total	100.0%	115

Were you a mentor of a student researcher who presented a poster? (This question presented only to the respondents who selected "Educator" as their Role.)



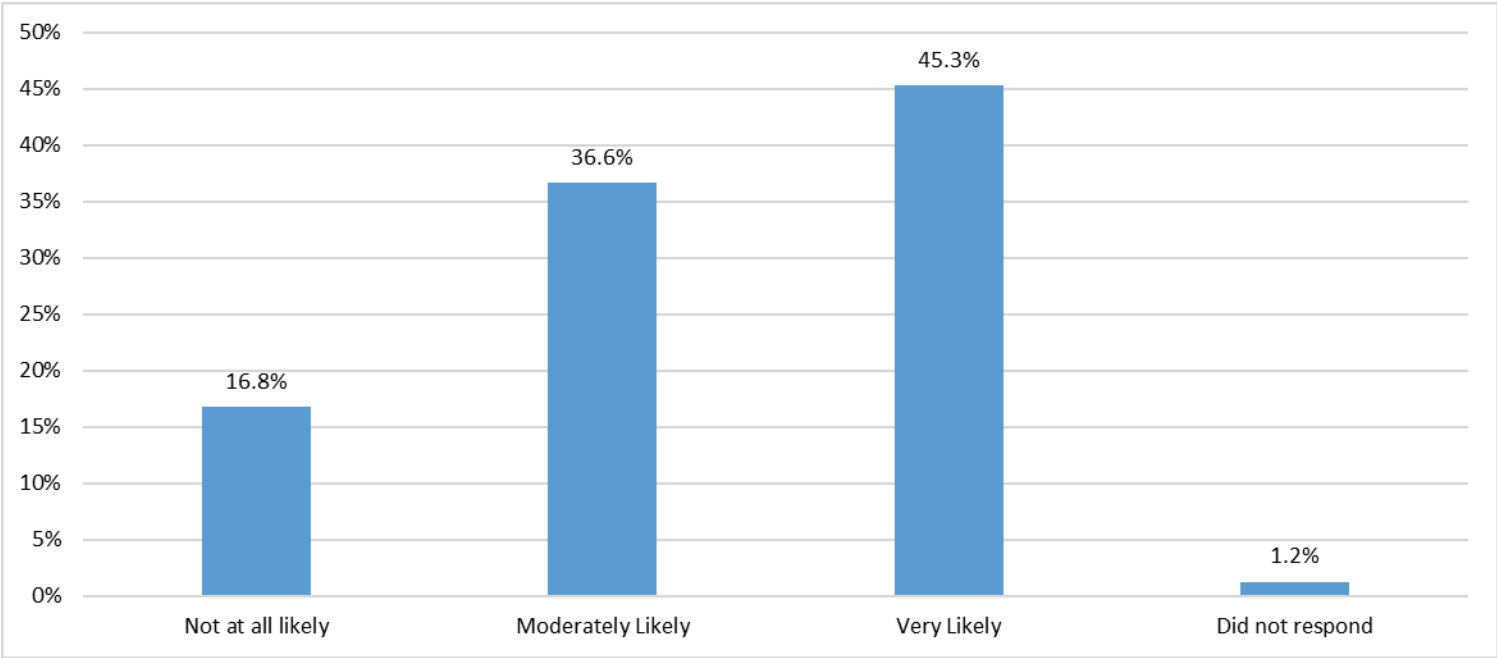
Answer	%	Count
Yes	75.0%	18
No	16.7%	4
Did not respond	8.3%	2
Total	100.0%	24

How many conferences (technical and professional conferences) have you attended including this one?



Answer	%	Count
This was my first conference.	43.5%	70
2-3	26.1%	42
4-5	11.8%	19
6 or more	17.4%	28
Did not respond	1.2%	2
Total	100.0%	161

How likely are you to attend ICUR next year?



Answer	%	Count
Not at all likely	16.8%	27
Moderately Likely	36.6%	59
Very Likely	45.3%	73
Did not respond	1.2%	2
Total	100.0%	161

How did you find out about ICUR?

The following table summarizes categories mentioned in the open-ended responses to this question and the count of respondents who mentioned them. The summary is sorted by the greatest number of mentions to the lowest. 140 respondents answered to this question.

CATEGORIES OF COMMENTS	COUNT
Specific faculty or staff member	24
Research supervisor/mentor	18
Program requirement - not specified	14
I have previously attended	9
Email	8
SARE	8
Student	8
Friend/family	7
Office of Undergraduate Research (not necessarily BSU)	7
Not specified	5
INBRE	4
McNair Scholars	4
Project SEED	4
Student research participation (not specified)	4
Advisor	3
I-CREWS	3
LSAMP	3
REU program	3
Work	3
EPSCoR	2
From the university/school (no specifics given)	2
Internship	2
SURF	2
TRIO	2
Website	2
B2B	1
Course requirement	1
From a previous ICUR attendee	1
ICUR committee	1
Lab - not specified	1
Other research event at my school	1
No response	21

What were your greatest lessons or take-aways from the conference?

The following table summarizes categories mentioned in the open-ended responses to this question and the count of respondents who mentioned them. The summary is sorted by the greatest number of mentions to the lowest. 128 respondents answered to this question; 58 mentioned more than one take-away.

CATEGORIES OF COMMENTS	COUNT
Learn about students'/others' research	26
Diversity of research	16
Interacting with/meeting students	15
Opportunity to present/practice presenting research/poster	13
Networking opportunities	12
Poster sessions	10
Exposure to research conference experience	9
Lightning talks	9
Students' enthusiasm	8
Value of research	6
Gained confidence to present/conduct research	5
Story of Your Creative Activity and Research	5
How to be a better researcher/succeed with research	4
How to present research/posters	4
Improving communication skills	4
Interacting with/meeting faculty/professionals	4
Meet the Prof session	4
Attendance/participation level	3
Different paths to research/careers	3
How to conduct research	3
Learn about fields and types of research	3
Ability/potential/growth/empowerment of students	2
How to better assist undergraduates with research	2
How to create a poster	2
Learn to communicate to a large audience/people outside my field	2
Research opportunities	2
Ability to support students	1
Criticism: Insufficient publicizing/marketing/communication about the event	1
Diversity of students doing research	1
Feedback on my research	1
Food	1
Graduate school info	1
Housing	1
Networking	1
New ways to get involved in UG research	1
Praise: ICUR in general	1
Praise: ICUR organization	1
Skills transferable to careers	1
Working/researching with grad students	1
n/a or no answer	33

Strong responses:

- STUDENT: *"The entire process of creating a poster in general; it was impactful to display and encourage me to think about not only what I am doing but why it matters. Not only this, but communicating it in a professional manner."*
- STUDENT: *"The lightning talks in particular were fascinating and it was inspiring to see students presenting research that matters especially in a more digestible way"*
- STUDENT: *"The most impactful part of attending ICUR was being able to discuss my research/expertise with others at the event. It was genuinely an enjoyable experience to introduce others to the project that my team and I have spent several months working on, and getting to share a slice of my expertise in the field with others."*
- STUDENT: *Walking around the poster sessions during Day 1 was the most impactful time for me because I felt like I really got to connect with student researchers like myself and learn about new topics. I approached some posters that didn't necessarily draw me in with their titles or topics, but I always left glad that I walked up."*
- STUDENT: *"Being able to speak with so many different kinds of researchers put the scope of college research into scale for me, which was really impactful"*
- EDUCATOR: *"ICUR was extremely approachable for students' first conference. They all had a wonderful time and felt that it was a valuable experience. As a mentor and educator, that was incredible to see."*
- EDUCATOR: *"My student was able to build confidence and presenting skills. It was a joy to see her shine. I also was really impressed with the various other poster presentations! Thank you for organizing this! It's such a great opportunity for undergrads across the state."*
- OTHER: *"I thought this year there were lots of students from universities other than BSU, which was cool to see. I think encouraging that is important to give undergraduates a feel for how to present and interact at a conference in other states or areas, even if they are from the area"*

The complete list of comments grouped by role follows, excluding "n/a" responses.

STUDENTS	
Student	All the different fields of research
Student	Being able to explore all the posters that were there
Student	Being able to present my research focus to people outside my topic.
Student	Being able to see just how many opportunities there are for student research, all across the board, and not just at larger universities like Boise State.
Student	Being able to speak with so many different kinds of researchers put the scope of college research into scale for me, which was really impactful
Student	Condensing research into an easy to read poster
Student	Confidence
Student	connecting with other students.
Student	Getting experience of presenting and networking with other students.
Student	Getting to present research I've spent most of my time working on
Student	Getting to see my classmates' and peers' research and learn about the myriad topics of Idaho research.
Student	Giving a lightning talk. Being prepared to give talks in a short amount of time
Student	Hearing others people poster and talking to professors.
Student	How large of a research community idaho has
Student	How to conduct myself at a conference

Student	I absolutely loved the research posters and I learned that so many young people are inspired to learn and innovate even in the state of Idaho.
Student	I believe getting to meet new people and realize how passionate they are about their research. How hard they worked to get to this point.
Student	I believe the greatest takeaway from this conference was learning how others present their posters and figuring out how to make mine better next time.
Student	I enjoyed getting to work with a graduate student's research.
Student	I enjoyed learning about the story collider and how much of an impact a good narrative can make.
Student	I enjoyed looking around at the different posters. I also enjoyed the lightning talks.
Student	I enjoyed the poster session the most.
Student	I got to be more comfortable with the idea of presenting a poster at a conference.
Student	I got to learn a lot about research and I thought it was very cool
Student	I learned a lot about poster presentations and conferences
Student	I learned more about getting research ready for presentation.
Student	I like hearing other people's stories and what they plan to do after ICUR.
Student	I liked being able to see the research going on in undergraduate labs nationwide
Student	I really appreciated the different food options and the chance to socialize with others in my discipline and learn about others disciplines work.
Student	I really enjoyed getting to learn about all of the different types of insights from a variety of fields
Student	I really liked talking with other researchers
Student	I really liked the workshop and the words of the speaker were very impactful.
Student	I think the most impactful part to me was presenting my poster.
Student	I want to note that I only attended the poster session on the second day within the last 30 minutes of closing, so that is why I put many NA. My greatest takeaway was that, for the poster session, students have been gaining specialized knowledge that will prepare them for graduate education.
Student	I worked a lot on my presentation and communication skills.
Student	Improving my communication skills.
Student	Improving my presentation and communication skills was the highlight of my ICUR experience.
Student	It was eye opening how diverse research is.
Student	It was great to talk to other researchers and to know of all the amazing science taking place around me.
Student	It was interesting to visualize how broad research can be.
Student	It was so cool to hear about everyone's research and learn about their passions while they present their posters.
Student	Learning about different fields.
Student	Learning about other peoples research, and seeing what college, undergraduate, and graduate research looks like.
Student	Learning from other presenters and their research, gained valuable insights into other fields. Advice from professors and current grad students.
Student	Learning how to present and network at a conference.
Student	Lightning Talks: This was my favorite aspect of the conference. The range of topics was fascinating, and I wish some of the presenters at the posters could summarize their research so clearly and quickly. Grad School Panel: I enjoyed the varied experience of the members of the panel, but waiting for them to go first to answer the questions became kind of awkward. Overall, incredibly valuable session.
Student	Meaningful, important research is on a smaller, more focused scale than media shows. Important work can (and usually is) done in a small niche of a subject most people (even in the field) haven't really heard of.
Student	Meeting other students

Student	Meeting people and being able to network
Student	Meeting people outside of my field of study
Student	My greatest take-away attending ICUR was the poster session which I was able to get an idea of what I need to be doing when I do a research project and be better prepared for a conference.
Student	My greatest takeaway was that this conferences is a great resource for Boise State students that unfortunately does not seem to be very well publicized to undergraduate students. (I've been a student here for three years and had never heard of it before until I happened to find it in a google search)
Student	Networking
Student	Networking and student researchers
Student	Networking oppurtunities were great.
Student	Networking was great!
Student	Never afraid to present your ideas and listen what others has to say
Student	Presenting my poster and the story telling session.
Student	Presenting poster and learning through other people work.
Student	Seeing all the different fields of interest being talked about.
Student	Seeing all the posters and other research being done around the state.
Student	Seeing how impactful history research can be to some people. The research I did was very focused on a small community in northern Idaho, but seeing how people related to it was very special.
Student	Seeing how important it is to give undergrads a space to talk about science.
Student	Seeing students around the state and their research
Student	Seeing the breadth of research that was being done and seeing how different disciplines went about their research.
Student	Seeing the wide range of topics covered by labs outside of Boise State and talking to all my fellow undergraduates.
Student	Talking to my fellow students about their research.
Student	That BSU has FANTASTIC dorms---that AC was a dream come true. Also, that presenting posters is more about fostering an intellectually stimulating conversation with others about your research rather than rambling an over-practiced speech at them for five minutes straight. The poster presentation session was excellent for guiding new researchers through the process of having one-on-one discussions about the merits and pitfalls of their work, without any of the scary rejection involved that often goes hand in hand with research.
Student	That there is more than one way to be involved in a meaningful area of work while remaining financially stable
Student	That there's so much about this world that we will always try to better understand.
Student	That you can present about your research at any point throughout the process.
Student	The community!
Student	The entire process of creating a poster in general; it was impactful to display and encourage me to think about not only what I am doing but why it matters. Not only this, but communicating it in a professional manner.
Student	The experience of presenting and networking
Student	The lightning talks in particular were fascinating and it was inspiring to see students presenting research that matters especially in a more digestible way
Student	The Lightning Talks were my favorite because it made me want to know more about each researcher's work throughout the summer or their previous years! It was so knowledgeable!
Student	The lightning talks were the best part, easily.

Student	The most impactful part of attending ICUR was being able to discuss my research/expertise with others at the event. It was genuinely an enjoyable experience to introduce others to the project that my team and I have spent several months working on, and getting to share a slice of my expertise in the field with others.
Student	The most impactful part of attending ICUR was seeing the other student researchers and being able to hear about their research.
Student	The most impactful part of ICUR was meeting many different people.
Student	The most impactful part was just being in a room of people who all value science and research, providing a hopeful light during an insecure time for research funding
Student	The networking and connections between disciplines :)
Student	The poster session I participated in provided me with many avenues to pursue my own improvement.
Student	The poster sessions, finding out what other students are doing research on was very interesting.
Student	The posters were the best part, i loved learning about all the cool research going on
Student	The storytelling workshop was the most impactful part.
Student	The time investment and gravity of significant research.
Student	The variety of undergraduate research in Idaho.
Student	The vast amount of topics being explored was interesting
Student	There is power in engaging with a wide variety of research topics in various fields
Student	There weren't any experiences or workshops at the conference that were relevant to me or my research, the only workshop that I found enjoyable what the student lightning talks.
Student	Walking around the poster sessions during Day 1 was the most impactful time for me because I felt like I really got to connect with student researchers like myself and learn about new topics. I approached some posters that didn't necessarily draw me in with their titles or topics, but I always left glad that I walked up.
Student	When people are really interested in what they are talking about, it makes the presentation a lot better.
EDUCATORS	
Educator	Depth and breadth of undergraduate research involvement.
Educator	Getting a chance to speak with students during the Meet a Professor session was quite enjoyable
Educator	Good experience for my undergraduate mentee
Educator	ICUR was extremely approachable for students' first conference. They all had a wonderful time and felt that it was a valuable experience. As a mentor and educator, that was incredible to see.
Educator	Loved the lightning talks and meet-a-professor. The student I know really appreciated these events.
Educator	Meeting students
Educator	My student was able to build confidence and presenting skills. It was a joy to see her shine. I also was really impressed with the various other poster presentations! Thank you for organizing this! It's such a great opportunity for undergrads across the state.
Educator	narrativizing research journeys
Educator	Networking
Educator	Providing my students an experience of presenting their research and networking with others
Educator	Seeing how excited and engaged the undergraduate students were at the presentations. I will try and encourage my students to do these posters and work on them.
Educator	Seeing my student get professional experience
Educator	Seeing my students presenting and building confidence/network
Educator	Seeing the undergrads presenting their research in high level
Educator	The breadth of student research across the state, and the excitement the students have for the work they are doing.
Educator	The greatest takeaway was the high level of student participation. BSU's outstanding organization set a strong example for others hosting regional conferences.
Educator	The poster sessions were great work by the students and also really enjoyed the story workshop!

Educator	The quality of the presentations.
Educator	The students had the opportunities for research presentations.
Educator	Undergraduates really enjoyed their first conference that is only for undergraduates. Meeting professor sessions were good for my students.
OTHER ROLES	
Other	How smart the students were.
Other	I loved the lightning talks. A whole bunch of research topics packed into a short amount of time. It expands one's knowledge of what others are doing in a efficient way.
Other	I observed the students networking from the various universities. They looked really happy with a sense of belonging.
Other	I thought this year there were lots of students from universities other than BSU, which was cool to see. I think encouraging that is important to give undergraduates a feel for how to present and interact at a conference in other states or areas, even if they are from the area
Other	Integrating undergraduate students into the research environment
Other	It was astounding at the diversity and volume of presenters. Such an amazing opportunity for students.
Other	It's good to get public speaking experience as well as knowing your stuff to answer audience questions.
Other	Learning and realizing how specific a group/individual can be about they're research, and seeing how significant it is for students to be able to put out what they have been researching to the world so that they can grow a greater understanding of how to branch out their studies to others.
Other	Meeting the students and two of the professors
Other	Research being done by students is very varied and impactful
Other	Seeing all the research across many fields being conducted in Idaho!
Other	Students very passionate, confident and optimistic about their research experience and future options.
Other	The variety and depth of student work.
Other	Undergraduate student research work
Other	What amazing thing Undergraduate Researchers are doing

What changes in the ICUR would significantly improve the conference experience for you?

The following table summarizes categories mentioned in the open-ended responses to this question and the count of respondents who mentioned them. The summary is sorted by the greatest number of mentions to the lowest. 83 respondents suggested at least one change; 24 made more than one suggestion. 78 respondents either did not answer this question or indicated they had no suggestions for improvement.

CATEGORIES OF COMMENTS	COUNT
Other logistics	37
Plenary/breakout/other talk sessions	32
Poster sessions	22
Conference - general	18
Discipline focus	3
Interpersonal	1
Networking	1
No changes suggested	78

Highlights:

- Other logistics
 - 18 people suggested better/wider food selection.
 - 4 people mentioned housing issues.
- Plenary/breakout/other talk sessions
 - 10 people felt one or more sessions had presenters that did not generate interest or understanding of the audience.
 - 4 people desire more plenary/breakout/panel sessions.*
 - 3 people felt the sessions were not long enough.
- Poster sessions
 - 4 people felt the sessions were not long enough.
 - 3 people would like the posters grouped by discipline.
 - 3 people said the room was too loud.
- Conference - general
 - 4 people made scheduling suggestions.
 - 3 people said the conference was not long enough.

**Repeat highlight from last year*

Strong criticisms:

- STUDENT: *"The conference was very STEM heavy. There was some attempts to open the conference up to other fields, but it felt very minimal and last minute. I would have liked to see a more deliberate inclusion of the liberal arts."*
- STUDENT: *"Housing: My room key deactivated on its own twice. I know four people who also had this issue. I had to go to the front desk twice to have it reactivated, and it was stressful for me during the whole conference to think that my key might randomly not work when I returned. Aside from that, and the room being an unnecessarily long walk from the elevators, housing was great."*

- STUDENT: *"I'm sure you've heard this, but the lunch!!! I don't have any dietary restrictions, but both days I ended up eating a gluten free lunch because things weren't labeled properly and enough things weren't ordered. If the lunch was more clear about who should go to what tables, that would be great! Also, I wish there were more options for turkey/ham lunches on the second day as I ended up getting a vegetarian lunch, which was a bunch of soggy veggies between bread slices.*

The graduate students panel also was not super helpful, as it seemed like many of the graduates didn't want to be there and I even asked a question that I got a half-response to (why did you chose graduate school over industry?). They didn't seem super engaged, except the one student that hadn't been to graduate school yet.

Also, I understood why we did the opening packet session, but I'm not sure if it had the intended effect. If anything, I would've preferred an icebreaker type event where I could meet students from other universities.

I also was a little annoyed by the speaker repeating the schedule over and over, it just did not feel necessary to state the plan that many times.

Even with these complaints, I still had an amazing time at the conference, and hopefully I have the privilege to attend next year!"

- STUDENT: *Make the important information (i.e., dates, deadlines, times, places, etc.) much easier to find on the website—it's really buried in the conference website. I found more and better information on a third-party website than I did on the Boiestate.edu website"*
- STUDENT: *"I suggest being more aware/handling food allergies better on the catering side. The lady in charge was very kind and helpful, but the catering service did not do a great job at making safe food."*
- STUDENT: *"While the overall experience was wonderful, I believe the housing facilities could be improved. I was also a bit taken aback by a staff member's unexpectedly rude response to a simple question I asked during the closing lunch."*
- EDUCATOR: *"The registration process was very confusing. I completed at least three different forms and apparently I still missed to complete one more"*
- EDUCATOR: *"Having more professors for the ""Meet a Professor"" session. There were often 20 or more students per professor and that diminishes the value for students. If they could meet in smaller, more personable groups, that would have helped. Also, the use of generative AI in the opening speech and in the visuals was extremely disheartening and lessened my impression of BSU's values and work ethic."*

Changes/Comments by Category (sorted by the greatest number of mentions to the lowest):

CATEGORY > SPECIFICS	COUNT
<i>Other logistics</i>	37
Better food/wider selection	18
Housing issues	4
Food safety	2
ICUR merch	2
Registration/RSVP process was confusing	2
Transportation	2
Better communication of submission/registration process	1
Better signage	1
Better/more communication of sessions and details before conference begins	1
More seats/different arrangement in sessions	1
Too loud	1
Video recordings	1

Website is confusing/difficult to navigate	1
<i>Plenary/breakout/other talk sessions</i>	32
Some presenters did not generate interest or understanding of audience	10
More plenary/breakout/other talk sessions	4
Not long enough	3
More lightning talks	2
Session structure redesign suggestion	2
AI use	1
Better talks/speakers - not specified	1
More diversity of speakers	1
More enthusiastic speakers	1
More interactive sessions	1
More interesting sessions	1
More options	1
More sessions for faculty/mentors	1
More speakers from industry	1
More STEM focus	1
Too tight on space	1
<i>Poster sessions</i>	22
Not long enough	4
Group by discipline	3
Too loud	3
Scheduling suggestion	2
Session structure redesign suggestion	2
Too tight on space	2
Have a judged competition/dedicated feedback	1
Improve poster design	1
Longer/more breaks between sessions	1
More interactive sessions	1
More social science/less STEM	1
Online posters	1
<i>Conference - general</i>	18
Scheduling suggestion	4
Not long enough	3
More focus on disciplines other than STEM	2
More variety of fields	2
Change dates of conference	1
Faculty recruitment	1
Longer/more breaks between sessions	1
More info about specific grad school opportunities	1
More student involvement	1
Student recruitment	1
Too long	1
<i>Discipline focus</i>	3
More STEM focus	2

More science content	1
Interpersonal	1
Rude/inappropriate interaction	1
Networking	1
Better/more networking opportunities	1
No changes suggested	78

The complete list of comments grouped by role follows, excluding “n/a” and “none” responses that do not elaborate further.

STUDENTS	
Student	(I wish I could return to the previous page of questions on this survey, because then I could bring up the specific issues I had.) Trying to recall, I think my biggest issue was the writing-your-own-story panel. I think that as researchers, no matter the field, it should have had more of a focus on how to tell the story of YOUR research, rather than some miscellaneous story that comes to mind at the drop of a hat. I was writing about a scary experience during my first job, for goodness' sake, instead of refining the details about my research and the story I wanted to tell with it. Also, I think the summary panels at the beginning and end of every day was a bit excessive. I did like the thought-provoking questions, but after those six hours of research panel after research panel, I think we were all a bit too worn out to truly give those an effort. Maybe just doing them the next morning after we've had a full night of sleep?
Student	A better variety of food choices to tailor to more diets. Having guest speakers from different careers show up and talk about their daily work life. More, shorter lightning talks.
Student	A bigger room for posters and/or longer time. I felt like I was both yelling and rushing most of the time to see the posters and be heard.
Student	Besides the poster and the presentation on the first day, there was not a whole lot of student involvement.
Student	Better catering, lots of cross contamination worries and other food safety from temperatures
Student	Better food
Student	Better food for dietary restrictions (vegetarian), graduate student panel should be people who actually are in graduate school and want to be talking about it
Student	Better food, better panelists of the graduate talk.
Student	better lunch. Too many vegetarian options left not enough real food for the rest of us. All the good stuff was gone before the lunch even began.
Student	Bigger venue would make it feel less loud. I had crazy autism sensory overload and could barely hear anything.
Student	Choosing Graduate Students that actually wanted to answer questions to be on the panel, for the Graduate Students part of ICUR.
Student	Definitely increase the amount of non vegan option for dinner
Student	Definitely more social sciences, I was the only presenter on day 2 that had a creative work.
Student	Everything at ICUR went very smoothly for me. The staff were very helpful and accommodating.
Student	Forethought planning for housing trans/gender non-conforming students
Student	Getting rid of the story collider workshop, boring, not super applicable to overall STEM activities.
Student	Having hot chocolate available
Student	Honestly I thought though last year was busy it was much better in many aspects more panels, better food, and just seemed a bit more put together.

Student	Housing: My room key deactivated on its own twice. I know four people who also had this issue. I had to go to the front desk twice to have it reactivated, and it was stressful for me during the whole conference to think that my key might randomly not work when I returned. Aside from that, and the room being an unnecessarily long walk from the elevators, housing was great.
Student	I can't think of anything at the moment.
Student	I couldn't begin to suggest anything
Student	I don't know how easily improved upon it can be but the later sessions on the first day were harder to make and fully enjoy because of how tiring it is to present the session before.
Student	I dont know.
Student	I don't think there are any changes that I can think of that would significantly improve the experience.
Student	I found that the graduate speaker panel was somewhat of a letdown from what I was expecting. I wish that some of the speakers were more motivated to actually speak and there was more advice given.
Student	I only attended the poster session in the last 30 minutes because of time, but I enjoyed it. I would add that the poster session could be improved by interactive activities or scenarios to understand the research.
Student	I suggest being more aware/handling food allergies better on the catering side. The lady in charge was very kind and helpful, but the catering service did not do a great job at making safe food.
Student	I think it was well executed, but clearer travel signs could have helped, having more explanation of where things were located
Student	I think it would be wonderful if there could be more time allotted to viewing the posters. I was looking forward to seeing them all, but I ran out of time.
Student	I think you should add synopses. Like I feel like you should give people to attend different events at the same time. Maybe have two different events at same time, so people don't feel forced to attend. As well as I think the graduate students were disappointing when they went on stage , just make them all answer each question , so they don't look at each other
Student	I thought it was great and really well run!
Student	I would have loved to see more humanities people there.
Student	I wouldn't know, I didn't attend most of the spaces.
Student	ICUR seems perfect as it was. There was plenty of time for the students to do what they wanted, and the talks and presentations were really great without being overly long.
Student	If possible, maybe conference for more days
Student	<p>I'm sure you've heard this, but the lunch!!! I don't have any dietary restrictions, but both days I ended up eating a gluten free lunch because things weren't labeled properly and enough things weren't ordered. If the lunch was more clear about who should go to what tables, that would be great! Also, I wish there were more options for turkey/ham lunches on the second day as I ended up getting a vegetarian lunch, which was a bunch of soggy veggies between bread slices.</p> <p>The graduate students panel also was not super helpful, as it seemed like many of the graduates didn't want to be there and I even asked a question that I got a half-response to (why did you chose graduate school over industry?). They didn't seem super engaged, except the one student that hadn't been to graduate school yet.</p> <p>Also, I understood why we did the opening packet session, but I'm not sure if it had the intended effect. If anything, I would've preferred an icebreaker type event where I could meet students from other universities.</p> <p>I also was a little annoyed by the speaker repeating the schedule over and over, it just did not feel necessary to state the plan that many times.</p> <p>Even with these complaints, I still had an amazing time at the conference, and hopefully I have the privilege to attend next year!</p>
Student	Include more social science, professor, posters, ect.
Student	It was fantastic
Student	It was my first conference. I was satisfied with the arrangements. Only thing that I would suggest is there should also be a onetime use toothbrush and paste with soap like in motels.
Student	It's perfect.

Student	Longer Poster Sessions, or maybe more poster sessions with less posters in each session so that I can spend ample time getting to know each poster
Student	Make the important information (i.e., dates, deadlines, times, places, etc.) much easier to find on the website—it's really buried in the conference website. I found more and better information on a third-party website than I did on the Boisestate.edu website
Student	Maybe lunch. Chicken would be a nice addition.
Student	<p>Maybe make the 2nd day longer, since I saw a few people come by after all presentations had finished, since they thought presentations continued until 5pm both days.</p> <p>Also, maybe more seating in a quieter area for overstimulated people to calm down, or just for people to casually chat amongst friends. (I saw most people tried to hang out right in front of the poster session entrance, which meant seating was limited, and noise was an issue).</p> <p>Finally, instead of just setting up a video camera for people to approach on their own and answer a question, it would have been more fun and interactive if you had had one of us (or 2) walk around with the microphone and camera, asking people for impromptu interviews about the event. That way, it's less awkward to get video, and the interactive part makes it more fun and engaging. In my experience, people are more willing to be interviewed than they are to just approach an abandoned camera on a tripod next to a sign. Plus, it allows the videographer to get more real-time video of the event itself, so people watching can feel like they are actually walking the event themselves.</p> <p>We could even have this interviewer interview a few people standing at their own posters to talk about their research work and how they think the event is going so far. (Comic cons film videos in this way for a reason. A video shot in first-person POV with someone walking the whole convention floor and interviewing various attendees and vendors gets much more attention and online viewership than a random camera left filming in the corner of the room).</p>
Student	Maybe more time with poster presentations?
Student	More breaks in between sessions.
Student	More chances to network or meet others.
Student	More data
Student	More diversity within the professors who spoke.
Student	More faculty and graduate students that are in STEM, Public Health, and Arts & History for the panel. I would love more versatility!!
Student	More hot lunch options.
Student	More info about grad school
Student	More lunch on the second day, had run out by the time I got there.
Student	<p>More non-vegan lunch options on day 2!</p> <p>Opportunities to hear the poster presentations that were done the same time mine was.</p>
Student	More small group stuff
Student	More STEM research projects
Student	More time to discuss research.
Student	More time to do breakout
Student	more workshops to connect with students.
Student	No change, things were great!
Student	No notes, great experience overall
Student	none come to mind, though I was only present for a poster session.
Student	Not doing the story time and having a longer meet the professor session. I wish I could've talked to more than two of them.
Student	Pacing could be a bit quicker but overall it was great

Student	Please dont do the memory excercises again, that was the worst part I was so bored and i didnt feel it was important
Student	Poster sessions should have had a greater break in between. Maybe session one, lunch, then session two... Also, the location wasn't ideal. I think it might have been better in the halls where the echo of conversation would be more muffled, and questions could be heard.
Student	Prolonging time for posters or having them be in two different rooms (one STEM and other Arts)
Student	<p>The changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Have more time on the "meeting with the professors" *Also have more time on the students 3-minute presentation of their research *Have an extra day for bowling and games with students especially when we're moving into the dorms. *Create work sessions for students based on their interests *Have a graduate panel of students with their professors to talk about their relationships along with the research. *Have merchandise of ICUR which probably have more engagement. *Have multiple microphones where it would be easier for the people not having to run back and forth to students that seated at different table areas.
Student	The conference was very STEM heavy. There was some attempts to open the conference up to other fields, but it felt very minimal and last minute. I would have liked to see a more deliberate inclusion of the liberal arts.
Student	The first day was very long. I personally felt wiped by the end.
Student	The food at ICUR 2024 was much better. The food at the lunches were awful this year. The lunch day one was the worst.
Student	The food. It was not good. Everything else was great. Some of the speakers were boring but most were great.
Student	The graduate panel felt like a waste, I don't feel like i gained anything from it.
Student	The housing upgrades and check in was already a fantastic upgrade. The only thing i ask would be for the Greyhound buses to have a functional toilet and Wi-Fi
Student	The opening session of telling your story. He was not a good facilitator. Then I would love if there was a space where posters could stay up the whole weekend so you can read them on your own time!
Student	There's nothing that I can think of!
Student	This would be more of a marketing thing, but making sure that there is a strong diversity of research present. I was one of very few students representing wildlife field work, and was surrounded by people in medical/engineering/chemistry sciences who I couldn't relate with and couldn't relate with me.
Student	While the overall experience was wonderful, I believe the housing facilities could be improved. I was also a bit taken aback by a staff member's unexpectedly rude response to a simple question I asked during the closing lunch.
EDUCATORS	
Educator	A little bit later in July... I needed to hurry up to finalize the presentations in a timely manner!
Educator	Give more "how to get involved" emails 365 days prior to the conference.
Educator	<p>Having more professors for the "Meet a Professor" session. There were often 20 or more students per professor and that diminishes the value for students. If they could meet in smaller, more personable groups, that would have helped.</p> <p>Also, the use of generative AI in the opening speech and in the visuals was extremely disheartening and lessened my impression of BSU's values and work ethic.</p>
Educator	I can't think of anything specific
Educator	I need to attend more :)
Educator	I thought the whole experience was wonderful, but the meals could be better.
Educator	I was only able to attend one poster session therefore I don't feel qualified to make any recommendations. Everything I saw was great. It was organized and well-attended.

Educator	I wasn't sure how the posters were arranged; I think it would be good if they were grouped by the subjects/areas of research (e.g. physics next to chemistry and materials science)
Educator	I would like more opportunities for faculty to mix apart from their students.
Educator	It is pretty good as it is!
Educator	It was great as it was
Educator	It would be wonderful to introduce Best Poster and Best Talk awards specifically for undergraduate students, as it would help them feel more recognized—just like at other conferences. It might also be beneficial to organize poster sessions by discipline (e.g., separate sessions for different sciences and fields). Providing students with ICUR-themed T-shirts further enhance their experience. Offering certificates for the three-minute presentations was also an excellent choice. Just thought. Overall it was great experience for students and faculties.
Educator	Lunches could be a bit better
Educator	None, well done
Educator	Second day could be a bit longer with similar programs like meeting with professors.
Educator	The registration process being less complicated
Educator	The registration process was very confusing. I completed at least three different forms and apparently I still missed to complete one more
Educator	They ran out of non -veggie lunches day 2- but surprisingly the veggie sandwich was delicious! The bus did not have a functional bathroom, which would have been nice. The conference itself was well organized and fun!
OTHER ROLES	
Other	1) I would like lightning talks on both days. 2) the posters are so close together which causes a lot of conversational noise. It is hard at times to hear the presenters. A bigger room or a room with more sound absorption would help.
Other	A few things - Meet a professor was a bit crowded, so I would create a better set-up. Some had a large crowd, and it appeared they had a difficult time hearing. Also, some not all my participants failed to get back to "do you confirm" e-mails, maybe sending me or sampus coordinator a copy of the email for participants would allow for additional coordination/confirmation of participation.
Other	A standardized framework for the poster presentations could be useful, something that the students could use as a basis for what and how they present, while still encouraging their creativity.
Other	I don't have enough knowledge/experience to answer this.
Other	I think it would've been nice to have the individuals who spoke at the lightening talks to have presented their posters the same day so people could go to them if they had anymore questions
Other	I wish there was a requirement for undergraduates to submit their posters a week early so collaborators could look at it/leave comments before submission.
Other	Nothing, the experience was amazing.
Other	Opportunities to bring other, currently not involved, faculty, students, admins, and advisors...I think the positiveness was palpable and would be very contagious for those not having exposure to these students/researchers and the great BSU network of support!!!!
Other	The distribution of program for 2 whole days