

Climate Research Communication Network

Social Media for Research Projects



Focus session: 11 December, 2024

Save this link

Join the interactive session during the workshop



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Code: 2318 6230

“A vibrant, fair, and regenerative future is possible – not when thousands of people do climate justice activism perfectly but when millions of people do the best they can.”

Xiye Bastida
Climate Justice Activist

From *All We Can Save*. Ed. Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Dr. Katharine K. Wilkinson

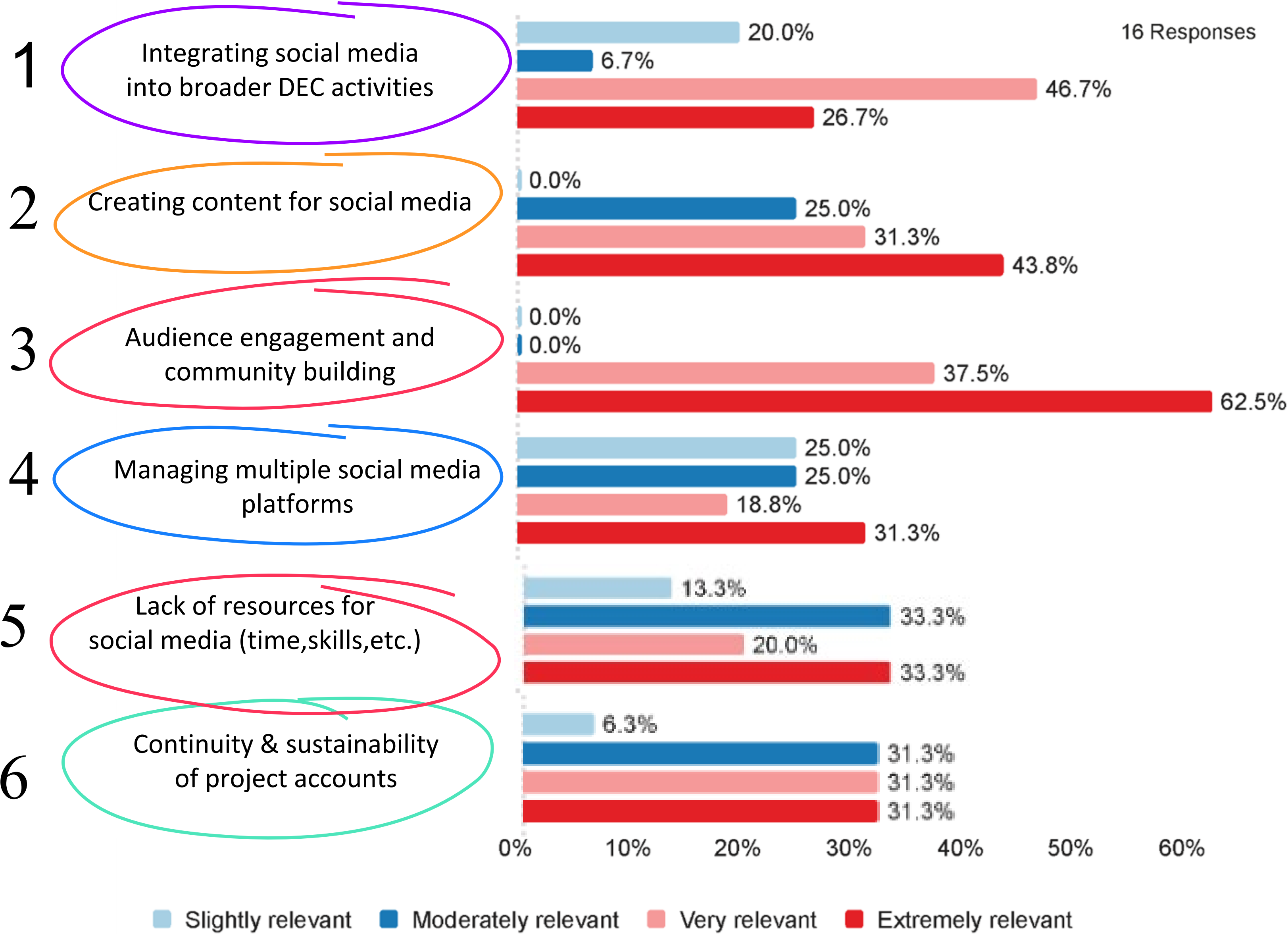
**Social media challenges:
survey results**



Survey Results

To what extent the following social media-related **challenges** are relevant to your project responsibilities?

Other (please specify):
Choice of platforms



Challenge 1

**Integrating Social Media
into Broader DEC Activities**

73%

Very & Extremely relevant

Survey Results

To what extent are the following reasons relevant to your motivation for using social media for your project outreach?

Because social media...

- Not relevant at all
- Slightly relevant
- Moderately relevant
- Very relevant
- Extremely relevant

... is essential for meeting project KPIs and reporting requirements.

... is an effective tool for engaging and building a sustained community around the project.

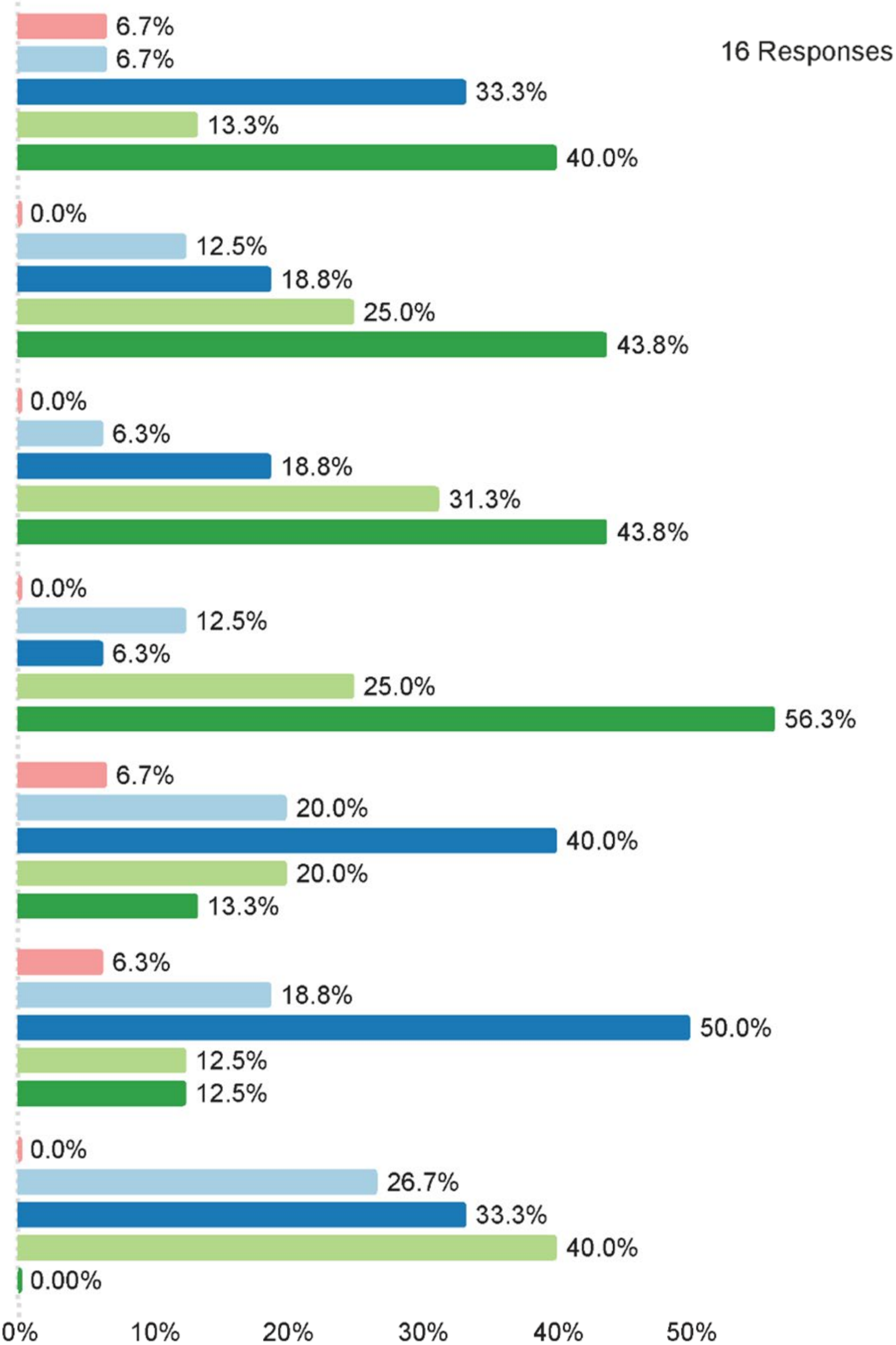
... helps share research findings and promote scientific outputs effectively.

... increases the reach and visibility of the project to a broader audience.

... supports attracting collaborations and partnerships with other organizations or researchers.

... humanizes the project by showcasing the people behind research.

... is where some of the key target audiences for project communications spend their time.



Challenge 1

1.1

Linking Social Media with
Overall DEC Goals

1.2

Social Media Often Seen as an
Afterthought or Add-on

**Integrating Social Media
into Broader DEC Activities**

73%
Very & Extremely relevant

1.3

Leveraging Social Media for Other
Outreach Goals

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Linking Social Media with Overall DEC Goals

Social media efforts are often disconnected from overarching dissemination, exploitation, and communication (DEC) goals, leading to fragmented outreach.

Possible Strategies:

Define Social Media Objectives

- Align social media goals with DEC goals, i.e. which goals can SM help to achieve?

Map Stakeholders

- Identify key audiences (policymakers, academics, civil society, public, etc).
- Time is precious: Tailor content to their needs, whilst linking it to broader outreach objectives like communication, workshops, training.

Integrated Planning

- Include social media actions in your DEC strategy from the start. E.g. schedule posts that align with key project milestones, dates or events.
- Make the most of each piece of content and adapt it for SM.

Social Media Often Seen as an Afterthought or Add-on

Social media is undervalued in projects, seen as secondary to other tasks, and gets little focus.

Possible Strategies:

Position as Essential

- Present social media as integral to achieving outreach and dissemination goals.

Embed in Team Culture

- Include social media responsibilities in project workflows.
- Engage project participants in specific roles (e.g., amplifying posts, sharing updates, and even content creation).

Create Quick Wins

- Show success with small, targeted campaigns that have the potential to deliver tangible outcomes, like promoting events or key publications.
- Demonstrate the impact of social media with examples and results. Track engagement analytics and traffic to your website.

Leveraging Social Media Beyond Content for Other Outreach Goals

Social media often viewed only as a content dissemination platform rather than a tool for networking, feedback gathering or building strategic partnerships.

Possible Strategies:

‘Behind the Scenes’ Access

- Use live updates, hashtags, and tagging on social media during workshops or conferences to reach broader audiences.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Tag policymakers, organizations, or influencers in posts and comments to start conversations and create visibility for your work.
- Partner with stakeholders (e.g., civil society groups, NGOs) to co-promote shared objectives.

Promote Events, Media Outputs

- Invite people to events to attract diverse participants. Direct traffic to registration pages (mind the GDPR-compliance!): expand your mailing list
- Highlight media mentions, contributions, or coverage of your project

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Challenge 2

**Creating content for
social media***

***83%**

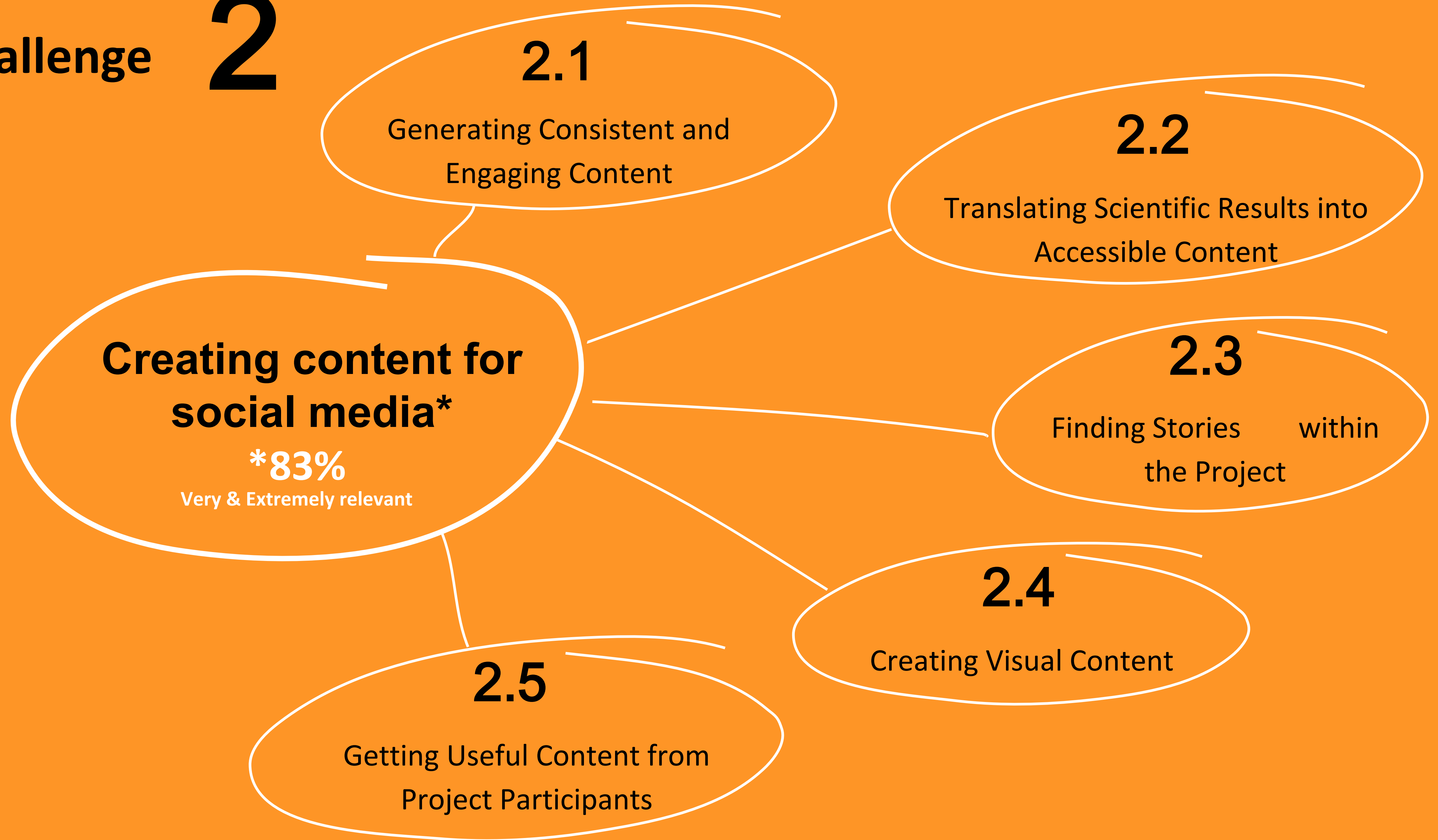
Very & Extremely relevant

Survey Results

How would you assess your level of skills in *using social media for professional purposes in outreach and DEC?*



Challenge 2



Challenge

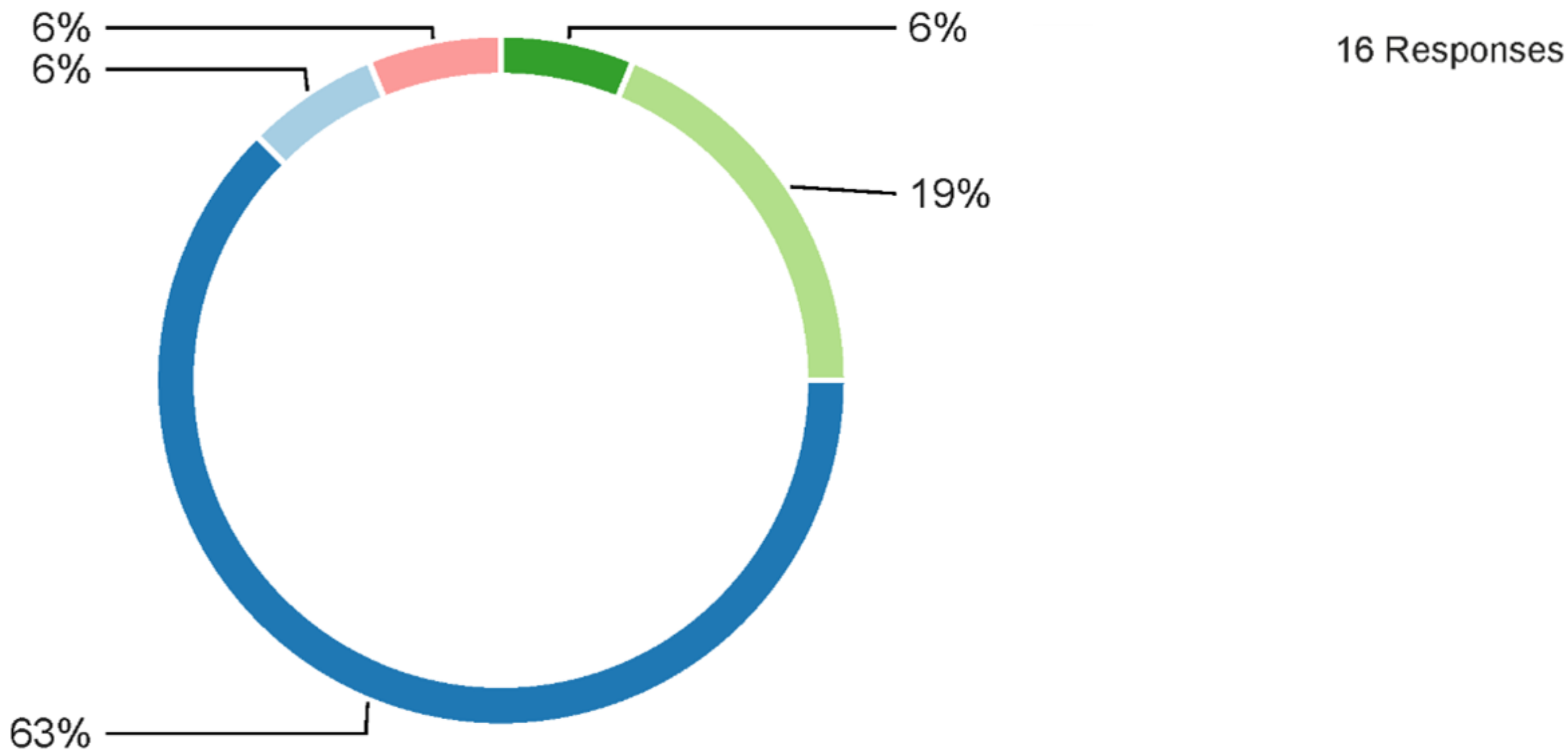
2.1

Generating Consistent and Engaging Content

Constantly needing new content to keep audiences engaged despite limited time. This is particularly challenging when balancing other project duties.

Survey Results

How would you assess your **writing skills** for creating engaging and effective content for social media?



- Expert** – I am highly skilled in writing for social media and can consistently create engaging, impactful, and concise content for a variety of audiences.
- Proficient** – I write well for social media, creating clear and engaging posts, but I occasionally need help with complex topics.
- Intermediate** – I am fairly comfortable writing for social media but could use more tips on making my content more impactful.
- Basic** – I have some understanding of how to write for social media but find it challenging to make my posts engaging and concise.
- Novice** – I struggle with writing for social media and need significant guidance to create engaging content.

Strategy A: Generating Consistent and Engaging Content



Diversify Content Types:

Go beyond posting about a new publication

Include:

- Blog articles
- Job postings
- Events
- Quotes
- Project news
- Audience engagement (polls/questions)
- or curated content (reposts/shares, etc.)
- Piggyback on trending topics, news items, etc.

Article

ARSINOE

The Project

Case Studies

News & Events

Downloads

Networking

Contact

Open Calls

Workshop for MINKA Citizen Observatory in Prespa Lakes (CS4)



The Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency (NECCA) organized a MINKA Citizen Observatory workshop in Lemos High School on 7 November 2024, in the framework of CS4 Ohrid/Prespa Lakes. The Greek part of Prespa watershed, where the school is located, is a protected area belonging to Natura 2000 Network.

The importance of biodiversity and its relationship with climate change were presented to the school students and teachers, as well as the ways in which citizen science can contribute to research of local flora and fauna. The MINKA platform was demonstrated and instructions were given on the operation of the MINKA mobile app. Field work was conducted with the students in Koula area and habitat type 6260 between the two lakes, where they were separated into groups for recording biodiversity observations. At the same time, they were also introduced to local nature conservation actions and the ways in which issues such as water management are dealt with.

The workshop outcomes surpassed expectations as 109 observations were collected during the first day. The observations were uploaded in the MINKA project specifically for Lemos High School, open to future observations, and can be visited here: <https://minka-sdg.org/projects/gymnasio-lykeiakes-taxeis-laimoy-prespwn>.

November 20, 2024

Post

Quote



ARSINOE

2k followers

1d •

Local Students Become Citizen Scientists

High school students in the Prespa watershed gathered 109 new biodiversity observations with NECCA's MINKA project. Their first-hand experience linking climate change, ecology, and community action sets the stage for ongoing environmental stewardship.



Workshop for MINKA Citizen Observatory in Prespa Lakes (CS4)

ourarticleao

Like

Comment

Repost

Repost

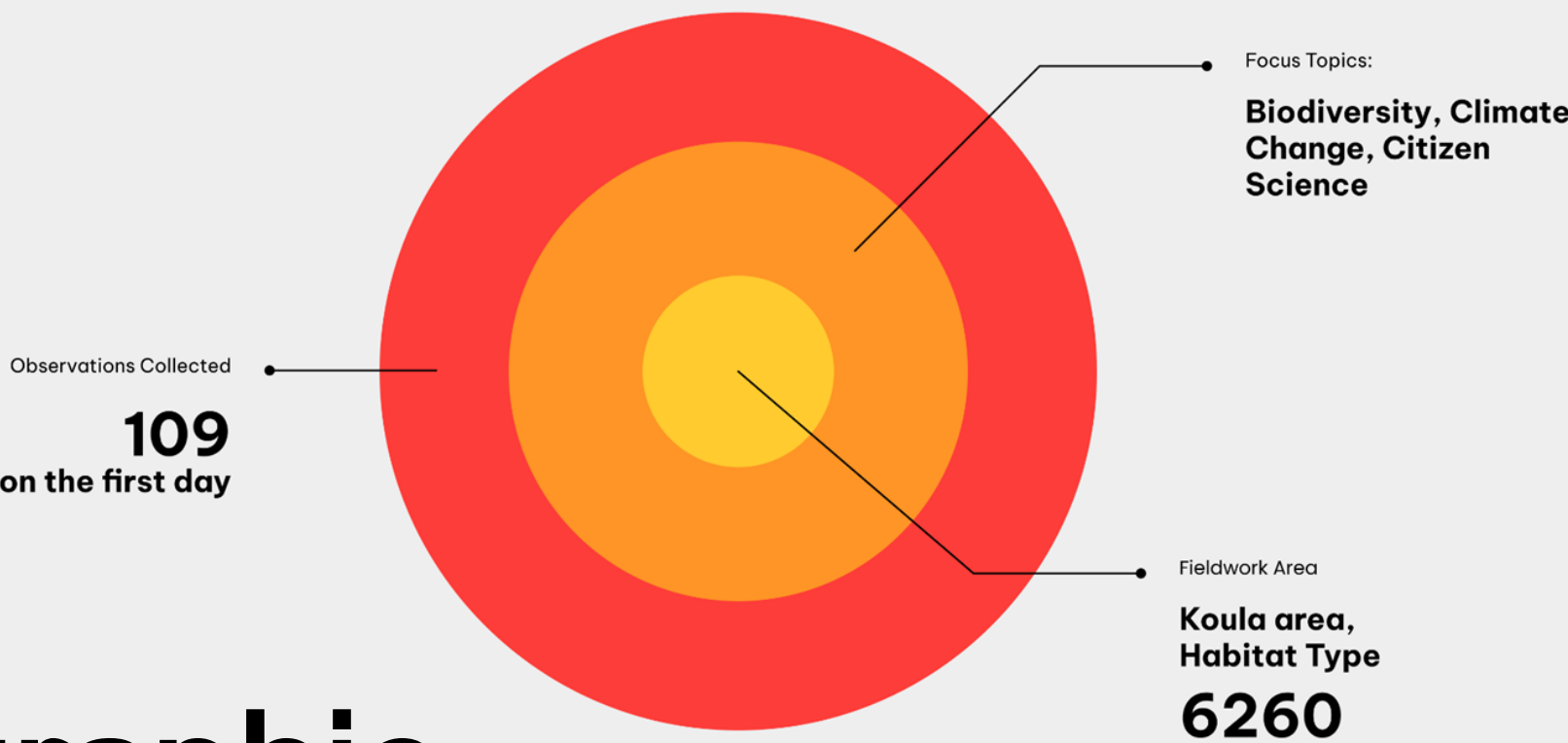
Would you be interested in learning more about how to contribute to biodiversity research in your area?

YES

NO

Poll

MINKA Citizen Observatory Workshop



Infographic

Challenge

2.1

Strategy B: Generating Consistent and Engaging Content

Plan ahead:

- Where possible, schedule your social media posts and track progress.
- Set a minimum posting goal (e.g., one post/month per platform).
If more often, use a content calendar to pre-plan posts, even simple ones like webinar reminders.

April 2020							
Week of: April 20							
	4/20 MONDAY	4/21 TUESDAY	4/22 WEDNESDAY	4/23 THURSDAY	4/24 FRIDAY	4/25 SATURDAY	4/26 SUNDAY
8:00 AM	Client A New Product Campaign	Client A New Product Campaign	Client A New Product Campaign	Client A New Product Campaign	Client A New Product Campaign	Client A New Product Campaign	Client A New Product Campaign
8:30 AM							
9:00 AM							
9:30 AM							
10:00 AM	Client D LinkedIn Post		Client D Tweet				Client B Tweet
10:30 AM	Client A Tweet				Client B Facebook Post	Client A Tweet	
11:00 AM			Earth Day Tweet	Client D Blog Post			
11:30 AM	Client B Tweet						
12:00 PM		Client C Tweet	Earth Day LinkedIn Post	Client C Tweet		Client C Tweet	
12:30 PM				Client A Tweet			
1:00 PM		Client B Tweet	Earth Day Facebook Post		Client C Blog Post		
1:30 PM		Client A Tweet		Client D Tweet		Client D Tweet	
2:00 PM	Client C LinkedIn Post						
2:30 PM			Client C Facebook Post		Client A Blog Post		
3:00 PM							Client D Facebook Post
3:30 PM						Client B Blog Post	

Challenge

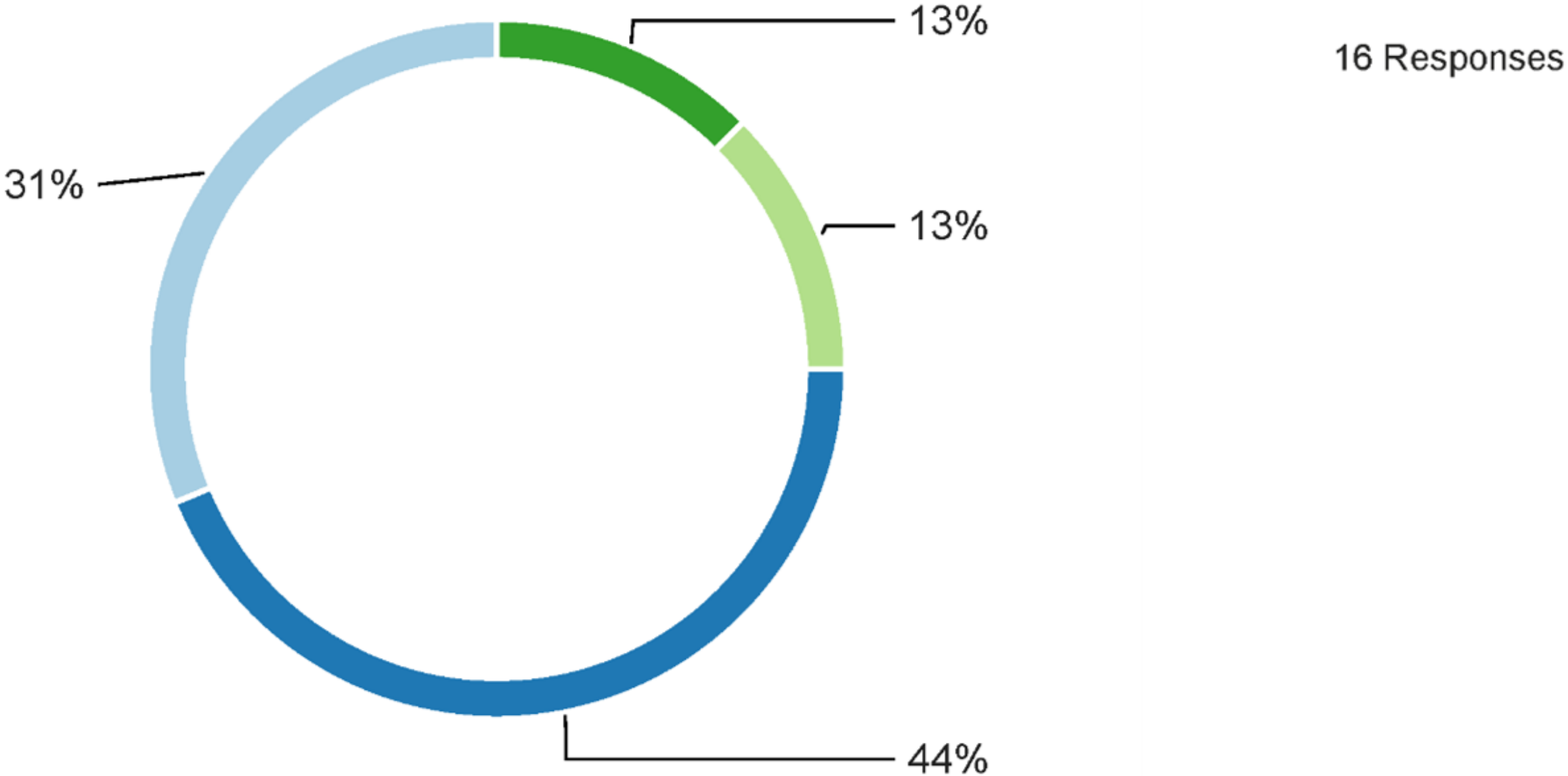
2.2

Translating Scientific Results into Accessible Content

Balancing accuracy with accessibility when explaining complex scientific concepts.

Survey Results

How would you assess your **familiarity with the science** that your project is focused on (e.g., climate science, earth system science, climate modeling, etc.)?



- Very familiar** – I have a strong background in project-related science and feel confident both understanding and communicating complex technical concepts effectively.
- Somewhat familiar** – I understand most of the science and feel relatively comfortable discussing it, though I occasionally need clarification on certain topics.
- Moderately familiar** – I have a general understanding of the science but sometimes need support to grasp or explain more complex concepts.
- Somewhat unfamiliar** – I have a basic understanding but often struggle with the technical details and scientific concepts.
- Very unfamiliar** – I have little to no background in the science related to my project and often find the concepts difficult to understand.
-

Strategy A: Translating Scientific Results



Beware:

[The Curse of Knowledge](#) vs lack of knowledge

Include:

- Tailor content to your audience
- [Avoid jargon](#)/excessive terminology, simplify language (e.g. [AGU webinar on this](#)); [maintain a table of key terms](#)
- Use metaphors to imagine/ visualize

Strategy B: Use Storytelling and Simple Concepts



What's in a Story:

- I care about this: People/personal interest
- What happens next? Suspense, mystery
- As if I'm there: Compelling, vivid details
- Ask colleagues to explain the significance of their work to spark ideas.
- Apply tools like a [message box](#) to distill complex topics into clear narratives
- Resources like [Climate Pact webinar](#)



Challenge

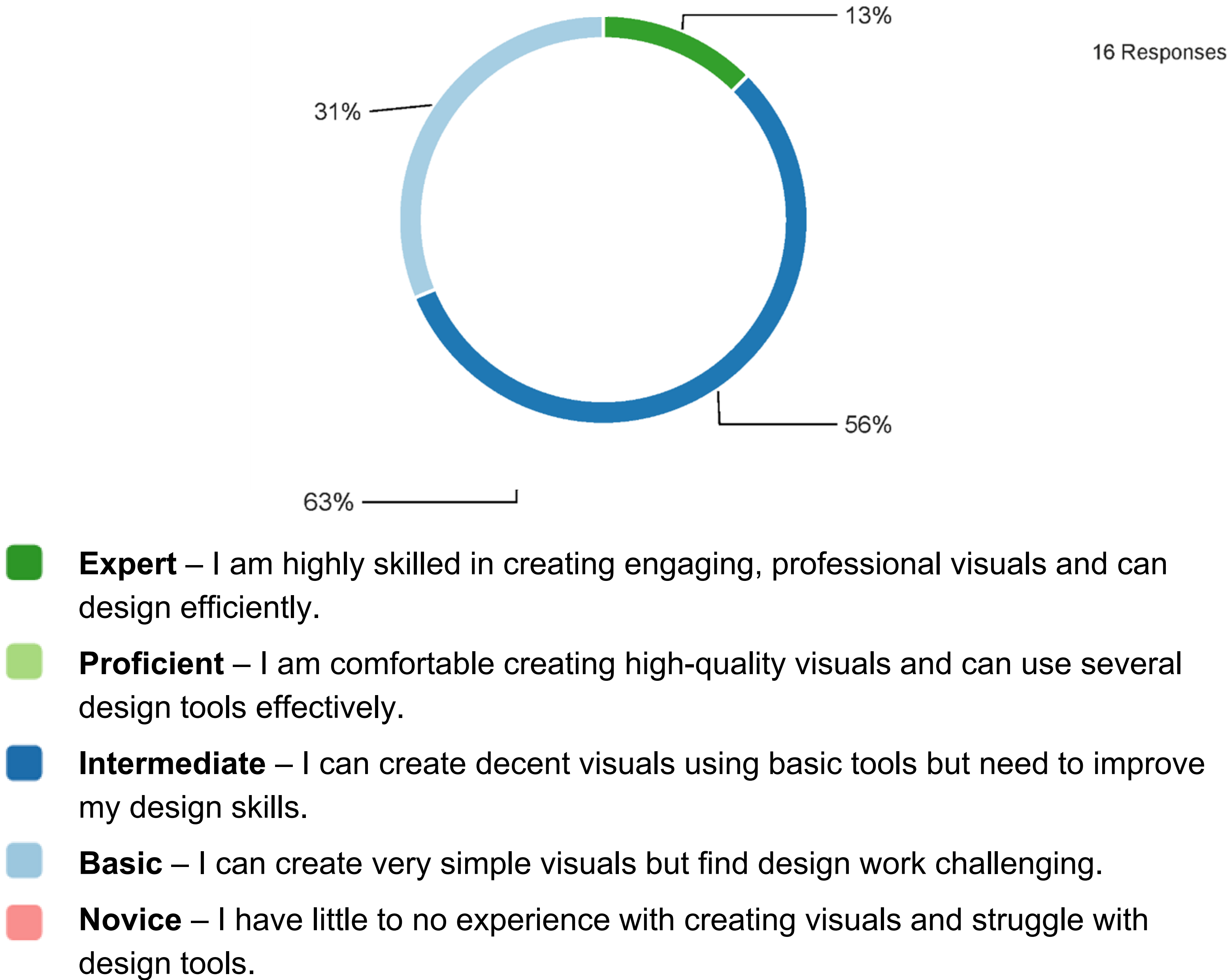
2.4

Creating Visual Content

Visuals are key to engaging content, but...

Survey Results

How would you assess your level of skill in **working with visuals/creating visuals** for social media? (Select one)



Creating Visual Content

Possible Strategies:

Use Tools and Resources

- To save time try Canva, Adobe Express – plenty of templates for any application
- Use freely available images e.g. from Unsplash, ClimateVisuals.org, or even NASA's media library.
- Free or tools at hand even like Google Slides or PowerPoint can do the job too

Learn from others

- Look at how your favourite outlets/creators use visuals (NYT, the Guardian, Nature or PostClimate)
- Use their approaches as inspiration or templates.



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Getting Useful Content from Project Participants

People are often too busy, or simply don't see the value in collaborating with you

Possible Strategies:

Collaborate Directly

- Partner with project scientists to create X (or Bluesky) threads, blogs, or visual abstracts.
- Build relationships and trust: Get involved!

Leverage Milestones

- Keep DEC Activities Plan or collect input for newsletter: events, and conferences for easy content opportunities.
- Highlight their talks, interviews, and webinars.

Be Proactive

- Reach out directly and follow up with specific requests—it's more effective than general calls for content.
- Schedule collaborations on a rotating basis.



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Challenge 3



**Audience engagement
& community building**

62.5% extremely relevant

Challenge 3

3.4

Achieving Real Engagement vs.
Formal Presence

3.3

Building a community

3.5

Leveraging Researchers' Presence
on SM

3.2

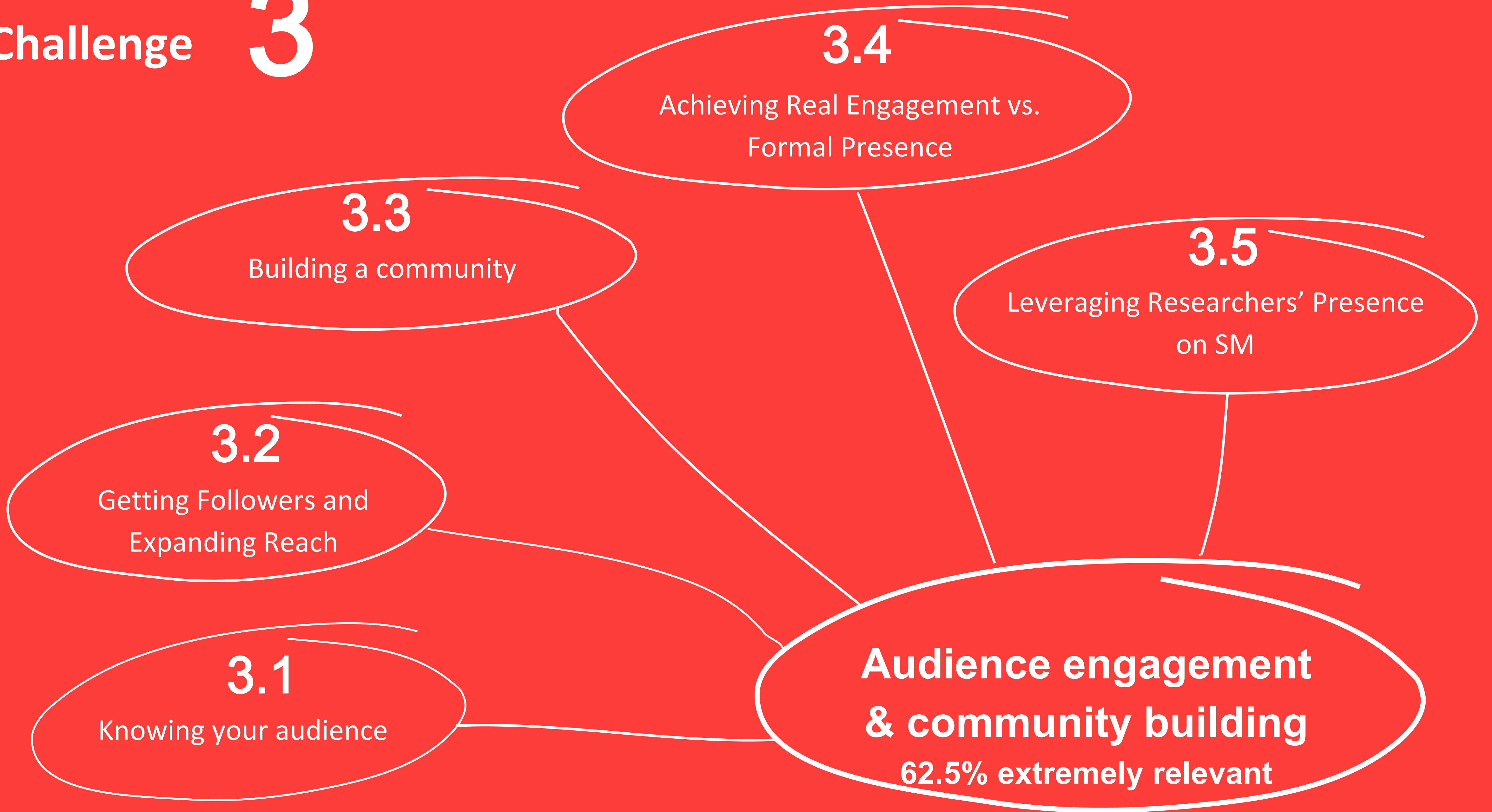
Getting Followers and
Expanding Reach

3.1

Knowing your audience

**Audience engagement
& community building**

62.5% extremely relevant



Knowing your audience

It often takes additional effort/research and awareness to understand your audience, their needs and where to find them.

Possible Strategies:

Research your audience

- Use (free) demographics tools to understand user profiles and behaviour.

Learn from others

- Look at competitors or other similar pages to see who follows them.
- Join interest groups and study the membership.

Learn from your audience

- Use polls, surveys, etc. to gather insights into your audience.

Channels Breakdown

	LINKEDIN	X	FACEBOOK	INSTAGRAM	BLUESKY
TIME	medium	low	medium	high	low
LENGTH	any	shortest	any	any	short
IMAGES	desirable	desirable	desirable	essential	desirable
AUDIENCE & DEMOGRAPHICS	professionals of all ages, organisations	peers/public, organisations	millenial & above, public, specific interest groups	all ages but mostly younger, peers, general public	researchers, but evolving
OTHER POINTS TO CONSIDER		Musk/Trump- derived exodus	may not be the right audience	effort-intensive to do it right	open-source, decentralised, more control, account portability (!)

Getting Followers and Expanding Reach

Growing an initial follower base in a saturated social media environment is difficult, especially for niche research topics.

Possible Strategies:

Go online to find others and make connections

- Spend time in groups and forums
- Being part of a larger network can help reach others.

Leverage “friends & family”

- Ask people in your networks and projects to like and follow you, then share your channels with others.
- Include a slide with a QR to your social media profiles in any materials or presentations you give.

Building a community

Establishing a loyal following that engages with your content over time is time- and-effort intense.

Interact and Participate

- Encourage participation through questions, surveys and contests.
- Invest time in 'Community Management' and making friends with the algorithm.
- Engage with groups and forums.

Engage in Small Bursts

- 10–15 min daily/every other day checking for comments, reposting relevant content, or engaging with followers.

Be Consistent

- Pick which channels you will invest time in each day/week & establish a regular schedule for engagement.

Achieving Real Engagement vs. Formal Presence

Building genuine engagement (comments, shares, discussions) is much harder than simply posting updates.

Deliver Quality

- Publish original, engaging, and valuable content (in a variety of formats) that resonates with your audience.
- Write compelling content, talking in terms of 'benefits', not 'features'
- Use #hashtags, @tags and images

Make Your Content Work Hard for You

- If you have budget, look at top performing posts and boost them.
- Reshare top performing posts from time to time. You don't need to always be coming up with new content.

Leveraging Researchers' Presence on Social Media

Scientists often lack interest or time to contribute to social media, but have active/influential presence in social media.

Potential Strategies:

- Tag people in your posts and ask them to like, comment and share.
- Reshare their content & activities.
- Educate them on the value of your actions.

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Challenge 4

4.1

Adapting content to
different platforms

4.2

Managing Multiple Channels and
Formats Effectively

**Managing multiple
social media platforms**

***50%**

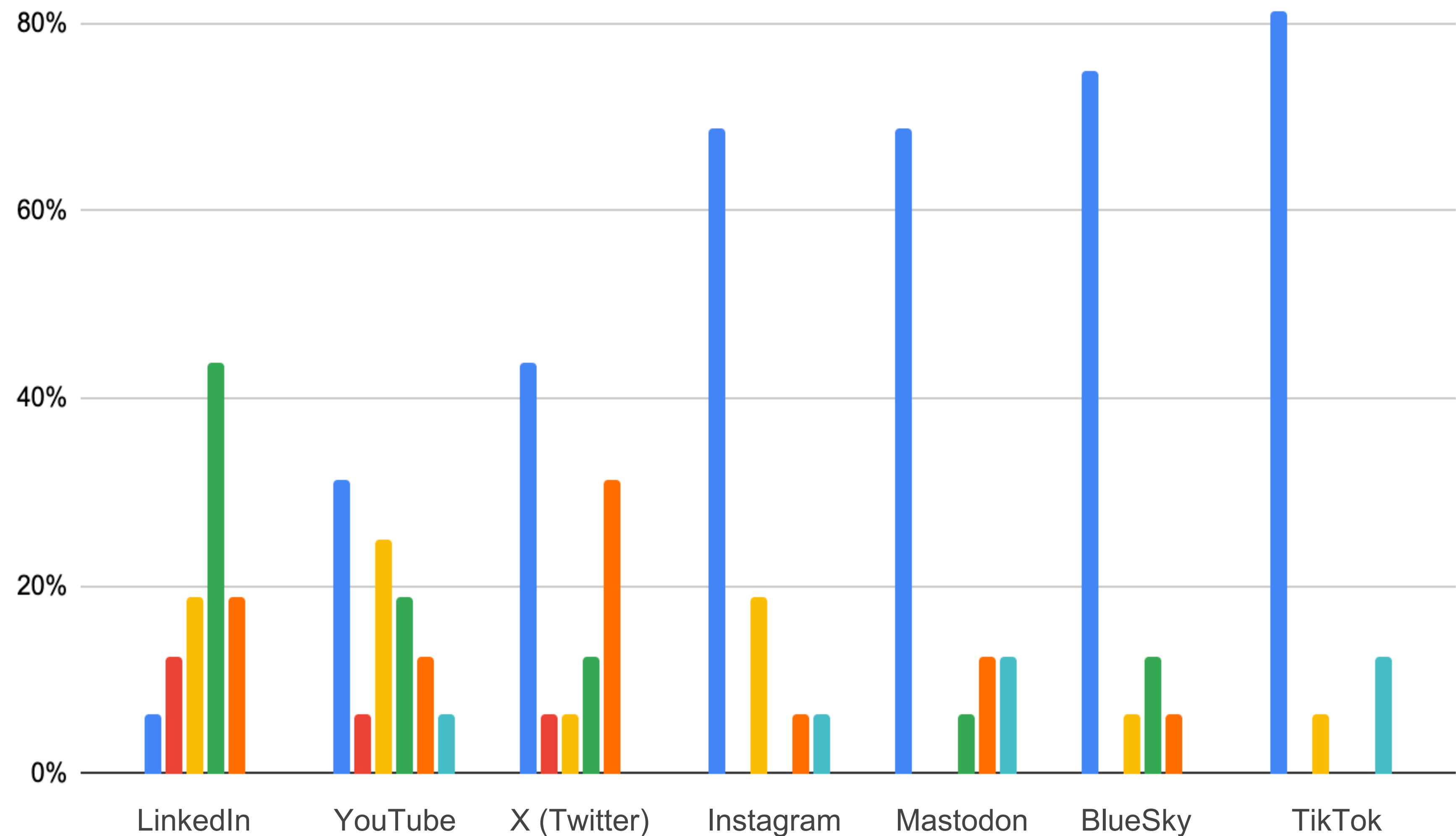
Very & Extremely relevant

Survey Results

16 Responses

For each of the following social media platforms, please indicate the **level of challenge** you face using them?

- Not Applicable
- Not challenging at all
- Slightly challenging
- Moderately challenging
- Very challenging
- Extremely challenging



Adapting Content to Different Platforms / Managing Multiple Channels and Formats Effectively

Knowing the differences between platforms and how to effectively adapt content specific to a social media platform (X, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, etc.)

Streamlining the process for efficiency

Potential Strategies :

Use Tools & Templates

- Use a social media management platform (Hootsuite, Metricool) to create template posts, or adapt with AI
- Create a # bank.
- Create a spreadsheet with @names
- Use visuals resources like <https://climatevisuals.org/>
- Create a Canva profile with templates

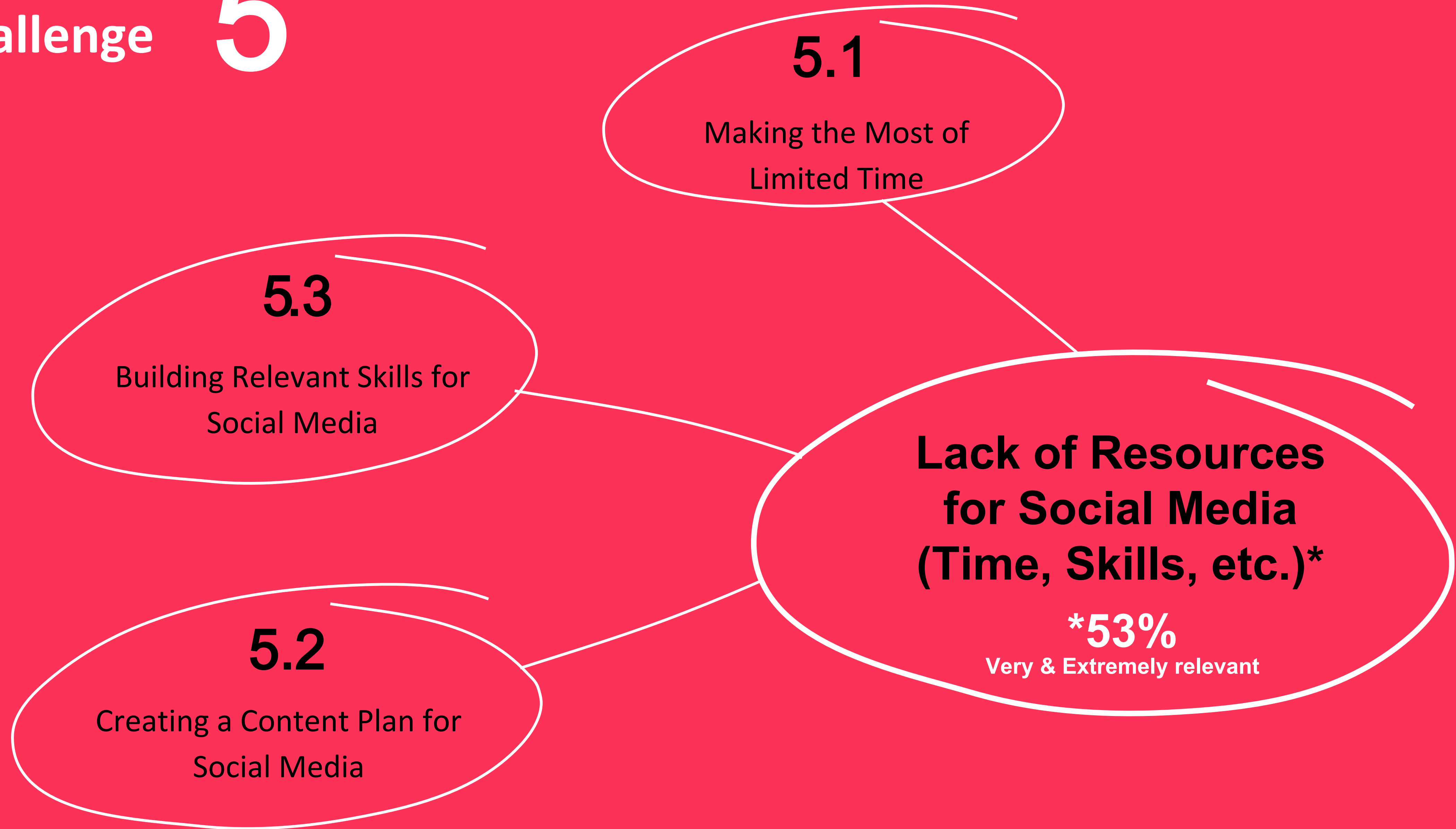
Keep up with Platform Changes

- New platforms emerge from time to time: The Bluesky debate.

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Challenge 5



Making the Most of Your Limited Time

Social media takes time, which you often don't have.

Possible Strategies:

Set Realistic Goals

- Commit to a manageable number of posts (e.g., one/week or month per platform).
- “Big moves” – what’s your one big move this week?

Batch Content Creation

- Dedicate time monthly to create and schedule posts for the next few weeks/month using scheduling tools like Buffer or Hootsuite.
- Keep an image, #, @ bank.

Leverage Templates

- Use pre-designed templates for recurring content types.
- Allocate some time & budget to branding at the start of the project.

Creating a Content Plan for Social Media

Developing a content plan takes time, which many project managers/communication officers can't spare, while it is challenging to predict when science papers will be published.

Possible Strategies:

Use a Simple Calendar

- Do you really need one? It might help.
- Plan one post per week and align it with project milestones or events.
- Start small and scale up as capacity allows.
- Use built-in or third party scheduling tools, if possible

Create content themes

- Assign monthly themes (e.g., "Climate Week" in April) to focus your efforts.

Use Ready-Made Frameworks

- Tools like Trello or Asana can help plan and track progress on content creation.

Repurpose Content

- Break down larger pieces (e.g., reports, webinars) into smaller posts (e.g., key insights, quotes, infographics).
- Plan blog posts and PRs as short posts for SM.

Building Relevant Skills for Social Media

Limited opportunities make it challenging to develop expert practical skills in social media strategies, engaging writing techniques, or creating high-quality visuals.

Possible Strategies:

Upskill with Tutorials

- Use free resources or platforms YouTube, Coursera, etc. [EU Climate Pact](#) to learn practical social media skills.

Experiment and Learn

- Test different types of posts and learn what works best.

Join Communities

- Participate in forums or online groups focused on social media best practices.

Be Proactive

- Reach out directly and follow up with specific requests—it's more effective than general calls for content.



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Challenge 6

Continuity & sustainability of project social media accounts

***63%**

Very & Extremely relevant

6.1

Lack of Continuity
Across Projects

6.2

Transferring Followers
Between Projects



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Thank you!



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