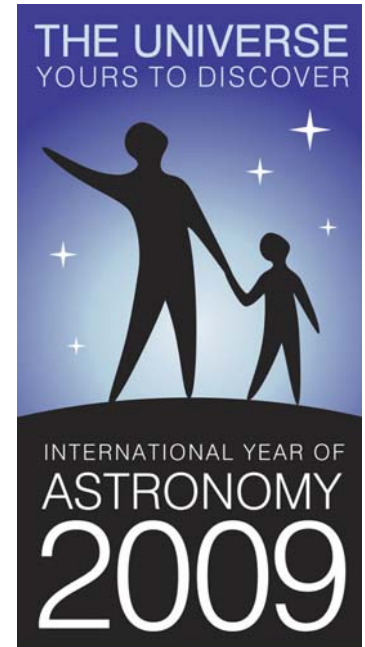


Questionnaire Report

Introduction

On 14 August 2008, questionnaires were prepared by the IYA2009 Secretariat and posted on the official website. E-mails were then sent to approximately 120 national and 20 organisational nodes, requesting their assistance in completing the forms. The purpose was to gauge thoughts and opinions on several IYA2009 Secretariat related topics, to help recognise both strengths and areas for improvement.

This report will summarise the replies gathered. Key statistics will be provided as graphs, although they should be taken within the context of all replies, provided in the appendix. Qualitative answers were also collected, and at times examples will be given in the text, reproduced exactly as written.



Overview

Although all the national and organisational nodes at the time were contacted, by late September 2008 only 54 replies had been received. This is perhaps the most telling statistic gathered. There are likely many reasons for the low number of responses but the fact remains that it is a worrying result and a cause for concern.

Of the 54 replies received, the answers provide interesting reading. Overall, the responses have been positive, with SPoCs finding the resources and opportunities presented to be valuable assets. The work of the Secretariat was also highly commended. In all areas, however, there were suggestions for improvements. Given this, it is important to take the statistical analysis alongside the qualitative data, to provide an accurate overview. Naturally, all responses in this analysis are anonymous.

1. Organising committees

The first question related to national committees. The vast majority of respondents, 90%, confirmed that their countries do have such a committee. These respondents were then asked the number of people constituting these groups. The results are shown in figure one. That only 10% of respondents' countries do not have national committees is a sign that progress has been made with organisation at national level.

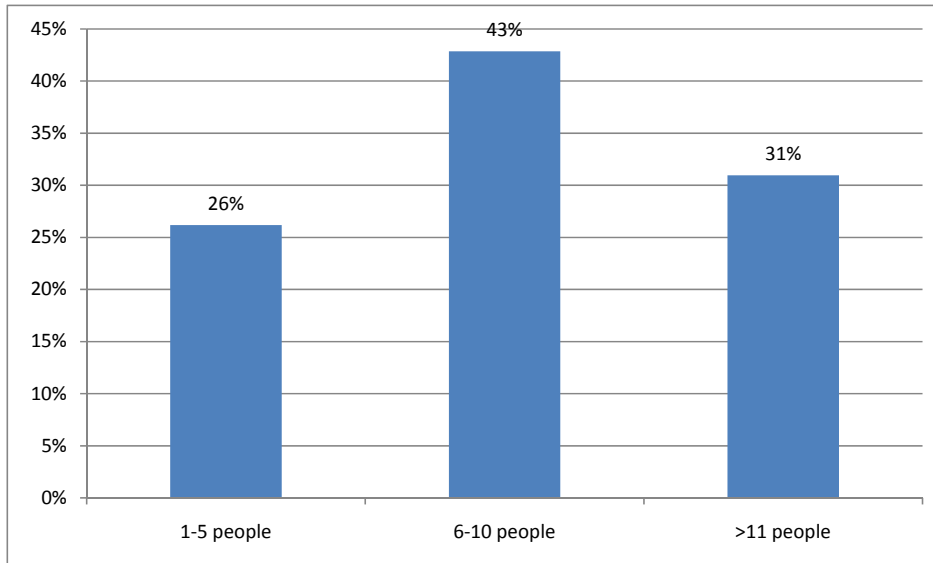


Figure one: numbers of individuals making up the various organising committees

2. E-mail newsletters

Next, SPoCs were asked a series of questions relating to the e-mail newsletters. A summary of responses is provided in figure two. Reassuringly, no-one thought that the newsletters are of no use and almost all believe it to contain the right amount of information. A similarly high rate was recorded for the frequency of the newsletters. The positive answers for the relevance of information and language level dropped a little, but were both still 70% or above. These responses show that the e-mailed newsletters are doing a good job in the eyes of the SPoCs.

The qualitative answers generally confirm these initial statistics, although they contain suggestions for improvements. Examples include:

- *Nice, but sometimes it could be a bit lengthy.*
- *It is desirable that its general layout will be changed*
- *Could it be on a periodic basis? E.g. Every two/three weeks, unless there are somethings very urgent*

A follow-up question was to ask whether different forms of communication would be beneficial. The majority of answers stated that e-mail was sufficient:

- *I think website & electronic Newsletter are adequate.*
- *I think this the best that you guys can do*
- *The present mailing list system seems appropriate*

Other replies suggested methods including posted letters, blogs and podcasts:

- *podcasts covering some relevant on-site discussions (e.g. at JENAM)*
- *News Letters by Mail*
- *I think that a blog (or similar) could be usefull to improve the direct contact between different national commissions and spocs*

The additional forms of communication could be of benefit to SPoCs, but the time, effort and resources required by the IYA2009 Secretariat may be disproportional. It is, however, something to consider, and perhaps a simple way to implement these ideas can be found.

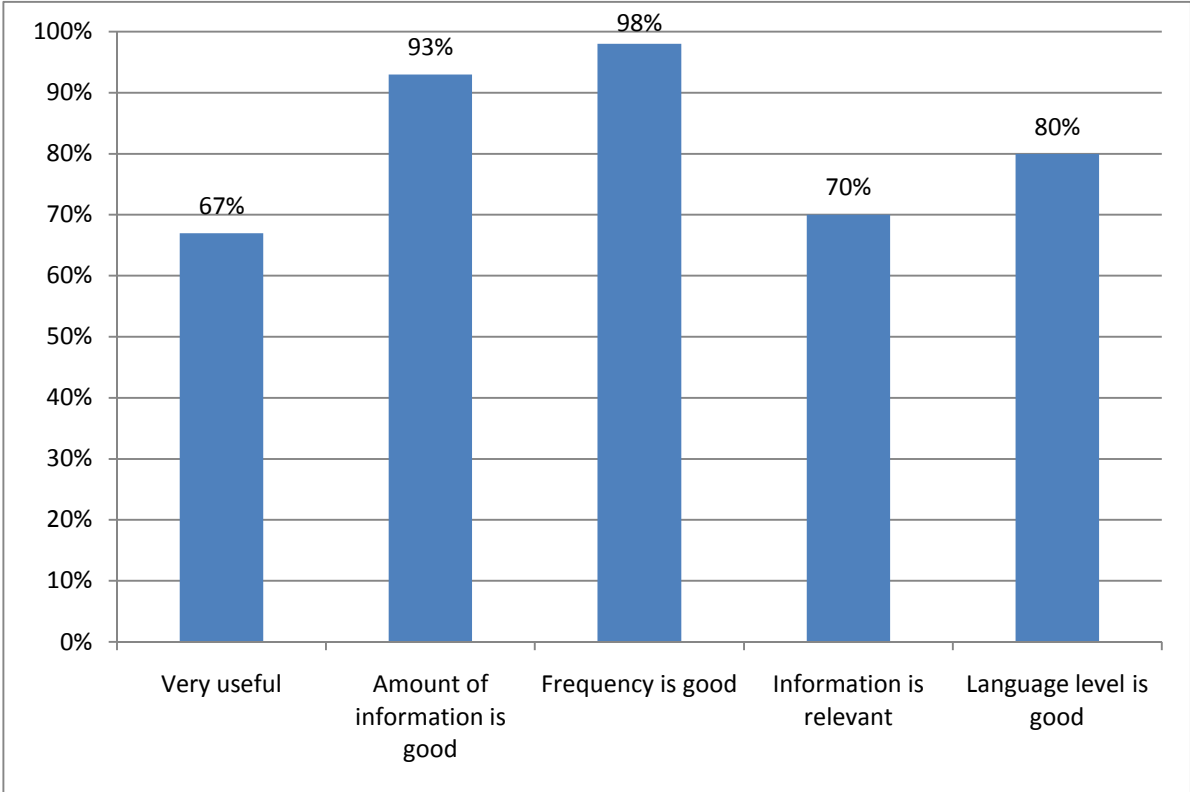


Figure two: opinions on the e-mail newsletters

3. IYA2009 website

Quantitative responses to the IYA2009 website (www.astronomy2009.org) questions were similarly positive (see figure three). It should be noted that when this survey was conducted the old version of the website was active. Since that time version two has been released. Still, the questionnaire answers should be digested as many points raised are valid for both versions. The only negative answer received related to website navigation, with 8% stating that it is “difficult”. This may link with comments that refer to search functions, including:

- *A page "Search and discovery in astronomy today" (or at least links) is needed*
- *It is very slow sometimes and it feels that when more and more information starts appearing it will be little hard to find some crucial resources ... unless we are looking specifically for it ...*
- *Some search results are not working in the new website*

These comments should not take away from the praise received, such as:

- *Excellent design, all information are well organized, extremely helpful and practical.*
- *website is simple and useful*
- *Appropriately designed*

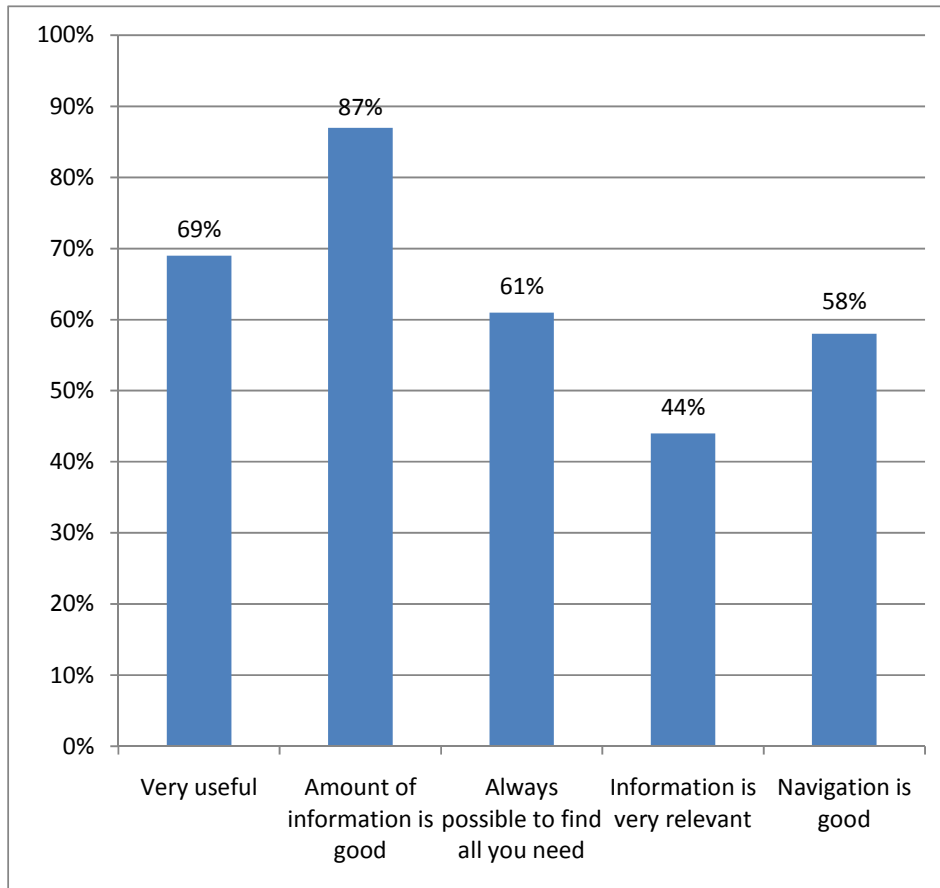


Figure three: opinions on the IYA2009 website

4. IYA2009 meetings

Question three related to IYA2009 meetings. Figure four shows that just under half of respondents have attended meetings. There is the possibility of bias present, considering that the most dedicated SPoCs are the ones more likely to complete both the questionnaires and attend the meetings. The result is still noteworthy, though.

Interestingly, a higher percentage plan to attend future meetings. Opinion is split nearly down the middle regarding the point of more meetings being desirable.

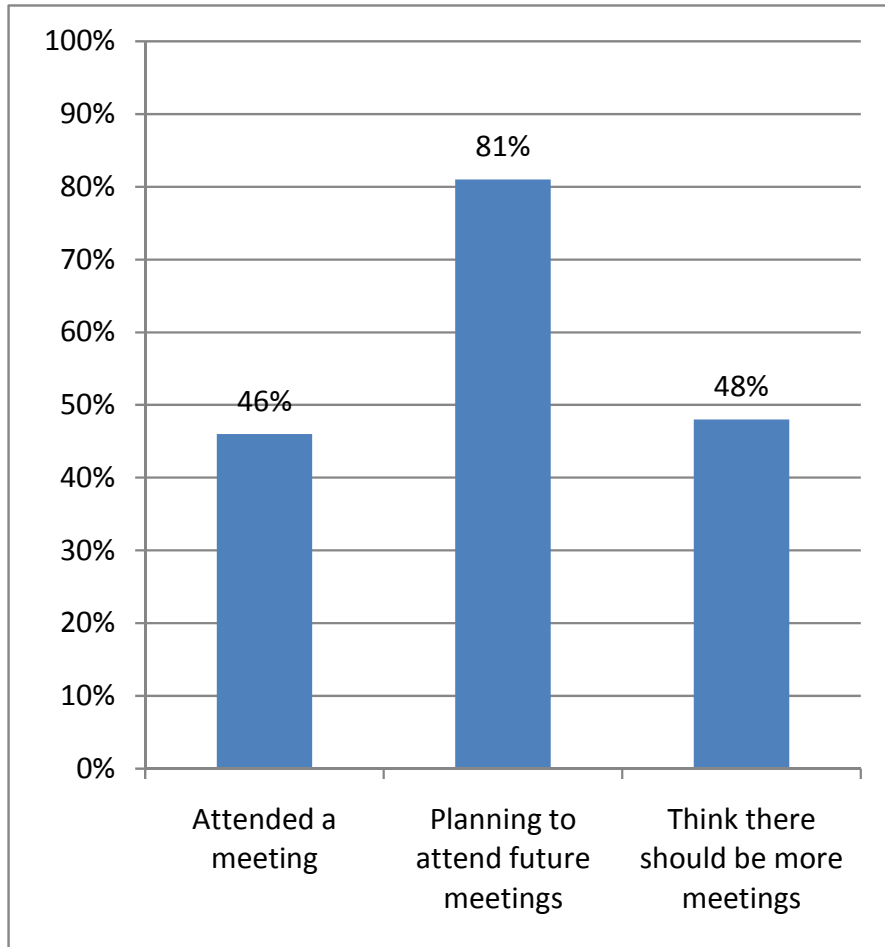


Figure four: attendance / thoughts on IYA2009 meetings

5. IYA2009 resources

Next, SPoCs were asked to rank a series of IYA2009 resources as either “not useful”, “useful”, or “very useful”. A sample of replies can be found in figure five. Some resources ranked quite poorly, such as “Funding Opportunities” and “Partnership Opportunities”, which received 28% and 19% “not useful” replies, respectively. Responses such as these could be used to identify weaker resources, with an aim to either improving or replacing them.

At the other end of the spectrum, “Logos and Branding”, “Public Brochures” and “PowerPoint Presentations” were the top three recipients of “very useful”, with 80%, 78%, and 62%, respectively. Generally speaking, IYA2009 resources provided by the Secretariat appear to be well-received and utilised by SPoCs.

Questionnaire recipients were given the opportunity to suggest additional materials that the Secretariat could produce to enhance the organisation and implementation of activities. Replies include:

- *videos, we need more videos*
- *Printable materials for the public, simple stellar maps for constellations recognition for example.*
- *T-shirts, caps,...during regional meetings.*

The suggestions present some interesting opportunities to the Secretariat, and resources permitting, action toward the most appropriate will be taken.

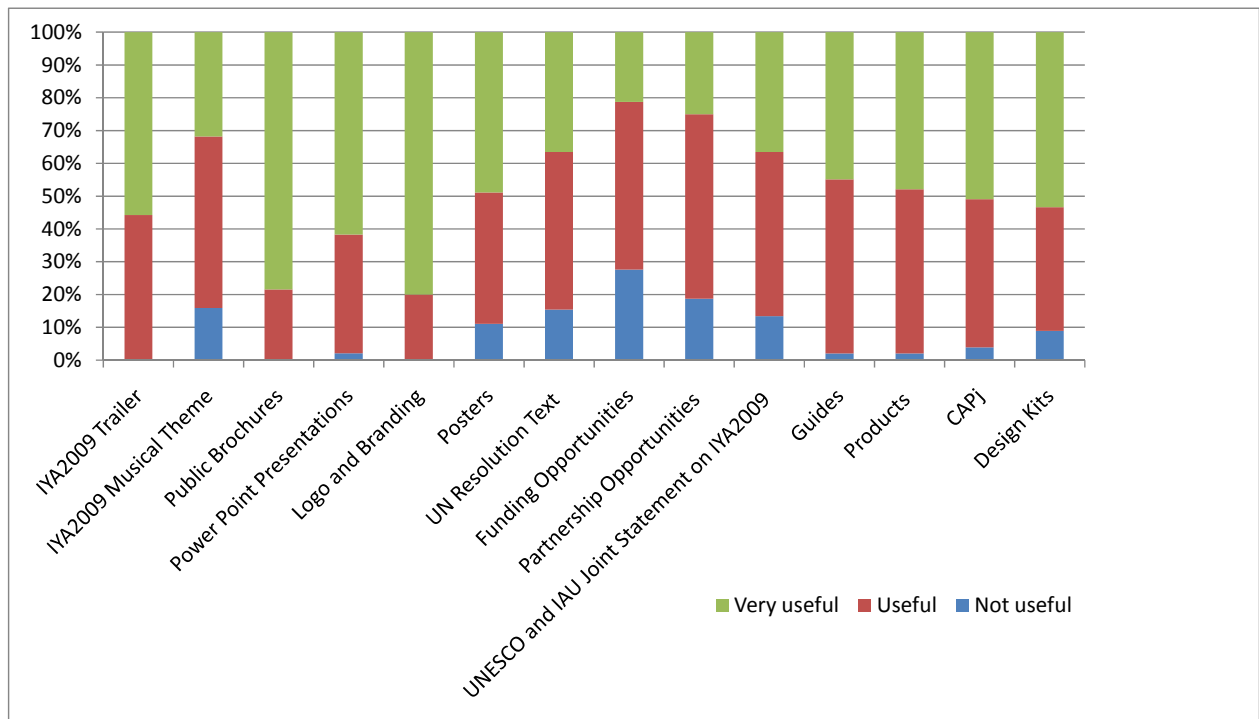


Figure five: thoughts on IYA2009 resources

6. IYA2009 Secretariat

The Secretariat is always keen to gather opinions about its performance, in order to improve its efficiency and usefulness to SPoCs. Therefore, the final section of the questionnaire was dedicated to this aim. 81% of respondents believe the Secretariat to be “very effective”, while the other 19% decided that “effective” was more appropriate (see figure six). No replies were received in which “not effective” was selected. This is obviously good news for the Secretariat, and is confirmed by the qualitative data, which includes:

- *I appreciate very much the prompt, helpful and effective answers to all the questions I asked. I also see the huge amount of work they put into the organization.*
- *Secretariat is very effective and good cooperative*
- *very positive, effective and professional team!*

The final question gave SPoCs an opportunity to suggest ways in which the Secretariat could improve its functionality. Ideas include:

- *Focus maybe somewhat more on any other form of communication than email (eg. Telephone, personal meetings)*
- *Connect the National Nodes to local UNESCO for possible funding in developing countries.*
- *Some phone call would useful*

Requests for additional forms of communication reiterate many of the comments made following the e-mail newsletter question. Therefore, it can be said with some confidence that SPoCs would appreciate contact via different means, in addition to the regular e-mails.

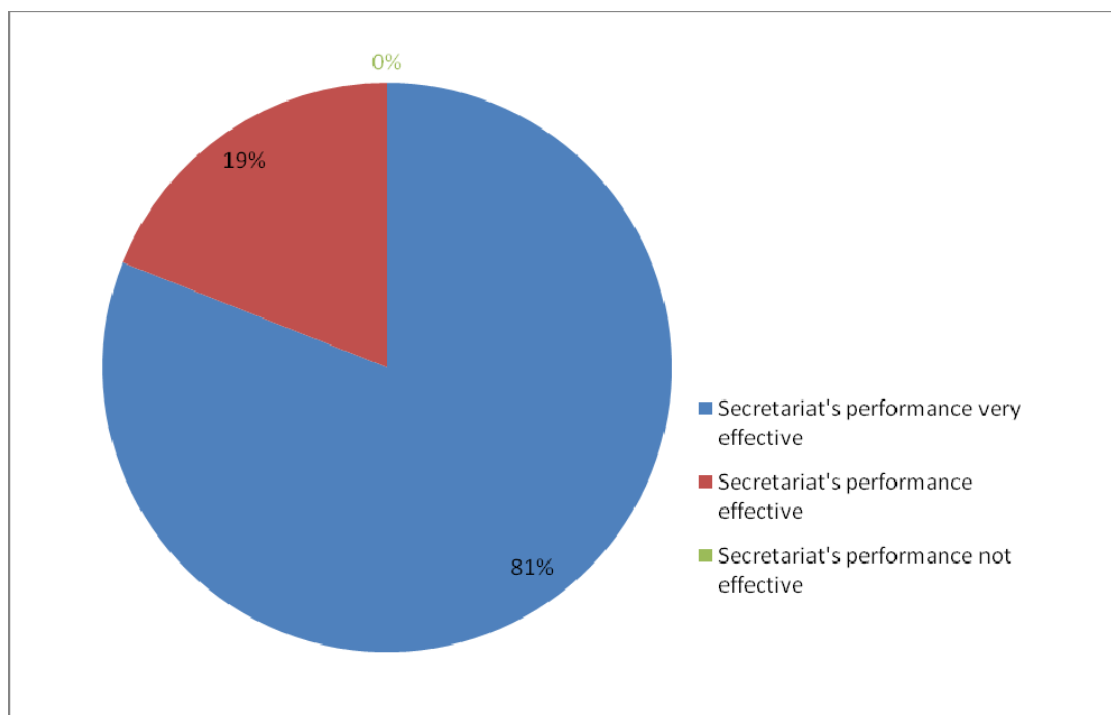


Figure six: opinions on the Secretariat's performance

Recommendations

The questionnaires have provided an overview of SPoC viewpoints, and raised some issues and suggestions that the Secretariat will try to take on board. It would appear that the general feeling among SPoCs is that the Secretariat is doing its job well, and producing valuable resources. The ideas for changes that have been raised, however, will prevent the Secretariat from becoming complacent, and ensure that fresh approaches and innovative methods will be attempted whenever realistically possible.

Appendix

1. General Information

Do you have a national committee? yes 90% no 10%

If yes, how many people? 1-5 26% 6-10 43% >11 31%

2. E-mail newsletter

Usefulness	very useful	67%	useful	33%	not useful	0%
Amount of information	too much	6%	good	93%	too little	2%
Frequency	too often	2%	good	98%	not often enough	0%
Relevance of information	very relevant	30%	relevant	70%	not relevant	0%
Language level	simple	19%	good	80%	complicated	2%

2.2 IYA2009 website

Usefulness	very useful	69%	useful	31%	not useful	0%
Amount of information	too much	13%	good	87%	too little	0%
Can you find all you need?	always	61%	sometimes	39%	never	0%
Relevance of information	very relevant	44%	relevant	56%	not relevant	0%
Navigation	simple	34%	good	58%	difficult	8%

3. IYA2009 meetings

Have you attended any of these meetings?	Yes	46%	No	54%
Do you plan to attend any of the next meetings?	Yes	81%	No	19%
Do you think we should have more meetings?	Yes	48%	No	52%

4. Resources

	Not useful	Useful	Very useful
IYA2009 Trailer	0%	44%	56%
IYA2009 Musical Theme	16%	52%	32%
Public Brochures	0%	22%	78%

Power Point Presentations	2%	36%	62%
Logo and Branding	0%	20%	80%
Posters	11%	40%	49%
UN Resolution Text	15%	48%	37%
Funding Opportunities	28%	51%	21%
Partnership Opportunities	19%	56%	25%
UNESCO and IAU Joint Statement on IYA2009	13%	50%	37%
Guides	2%	53%	45%
Products	2%	50%	48%
CAPj	4%	45%	51%
Design Kits	9%	38%	53%

Do find them easy to adapt to your language and needs? Yes **84%** No **16%**

5. Secretariat's performance

Do you consider the Secretariat... very effective **81%** effective **19%** Not effective **0%**

Would you like to comment on the electronic/e-mail newsletter?

The newsletter is very inspirative, it makes you tireless in IYA2009 actions! Remarkable!

No, this is too early for me I guess but I really have no complaint so far.

Nice, but sometimes it could be a bit lengthy.

Electronic newsletters are very important and useful for all

As precise as possible

Make then shorter. Put the info on the web instead

Prompt, instructive and revealing

It is desirable that its general layout will be changed

As the IYA website grows, the value of the e-newsletter in alerting us to changes is growing rapidly. It's the key to knowing when I should go to the main website to read something new. The level and amount of information have been just what I needed so far. Immediately upon receipt I forward it to our Executive Committee (7 members) and our Advisory Board (~12 people), as well as to my system of university & college department liaisons (~30 people)

Useful, but difficult to follow due to general high email traffic of the 2000s epoch

No

The newsletter is very useful. It updates the SpoCs on what is going on.

It's ok

Could it be on a periodic basis? E.g. Every two/three weeks, unless there are somethings very urgent

Appropriate as it goes to the essential points

Would you like to comment on the website?

Excellent design, all information are well organized, extremely helpful and practical.

Not sure some areas are up to date and respective relevance of the various parts difficult to understand unless you're plugged into the Exec Working Group

Nice. Thanks for the effort.

website is simple and useful

Dynamic Website is preferred

News
My problem with the website is that I don't have enough time to visit it as frequently as I'd like or I need to.

Excellent. A suggestion: I find very interesting the idea of highlighting special events related to IYA2009 in different countries on the web. For example, currently, the announcement of the Astrophotography workshop in India. I know that in many cases the websites are not in English, but if an event is important, wouldn't it be worth to publicise it anyway, provided the people responsible for it prepare a brief explanation in English for the IYA2009 webpage? My suggestion is to do this even more frequently and for many countries

A page "Search and discovery in astronomy today" (or at least links) is needed

the first page it is very busy with a lot of information thus a bit complicated on a first sight, but after the first look you realise there is a lot of information there

o far it has met my needs nor have I heard any complaints from those with whom I share it.

no

It is very slow sometimes and it feels that when more and more information starts appearing it will be little hard to find some crucial resources ... unless we are looking specifically for it ...

Some search results are not working in the new website

Appropriately designed

What other forms of communication do you think would be useful?

Maybe you can also share some templates for sponsorship application, for example. When I apply for a money (in the frame of particular global cornerstone project) in some institution, city government, ministry of science, beside detailed project description

I need few absolutely astonished sentences about project importance that should give an advantage for IYA funding. I'm sure it is complicated to supply SPoC with such templates (different one for each global project), but somehow we are lacking funds and need more professional help to get them.

None - newsletter and web should be enough else info overload and switrch-off. Maybe a different medium for others though.

SPoCs probably mostly buried with trying to get their own countries effrots up and running

I think this the best that you guys can do

Couldn't think of any.

email is ok

I think website & electronic Newsletter are adequate.

News Letters by Mail

I think that a blog (or similar) could be usefull to improve the direct contact between different national commissions and spocs

Astronomy education kits without a telescope such as softwares

For those unable to attend a regional meeting, a summary of key developments or issues distributed through the SPoC e-newsletter would be nice. For instance, as much as I would have liked to come to

the European meeting next week, I simply couldn't afford the time or travel, yet I know some really interesting things will be announced, discussed, etc.

no additional forms required

In the case of Organizational nodes it would be important to have, in some countries at least, direct information from IYA2009 on developments on certain cornerstones and efforts of organizational nodes in them (like GHOU/GTTP information to all national educational officers ... just for the sake of stressing the importance of the effort)

podcasts covering some relevant on-site discussions (e.g. at JENAM)

The present mailing list system seems appropriate

None, all electronic means are already very helpful

What other resources would you like the Secretariat to produce? Can you give us some examples?

Printable materials for the public, simple stellar maps for constellations recognition for example. Those maps could be used in the observational sessions over all the world.

At some point, I was a little confused regarding the posters as it was said that they can be used but then it was mentioned that we need permission from the owner. I only hope they can be reproduced and this will not lead to any major difficulties.

Posters sessions are very easy to set up in any remote country and not so expensive provided we have the authorization to reproduce the posters. Now, it will be very helpful if they can be arranged around specific themes like for example; the solar system, The deep sky, the universe under different wavelengths etc...

Fundraising - sponsorship and partnership template letter.

Get the cornerstones sorted out as a real focus - do not spend energy in diversification of 'stuff' - very worried about how many cornerstones are going in terms of the global aspect - not convinced the working groups are being effective

videos, we need more videos

If possible, more songs and musics, with separate tracks that we can put in the local language, for TV and radio.

posters, products that good be used to generate some added financial aid (some have just been presented)

Some file formats are with difficulty downloadable and they often require a lot of time

It would have been very relevant to produce a planetarium show on Galileo and everyone adapt it in equipment which he has. Such show would have been able to have the role of a transverse project by spreading it along year 2009

To prepare a TV program (or to produce a TV movie) about the 10 Biggest Discoveries in Astronomy
To produce and distribute worldwide a DVD film based on the film by Jean-Charles Cuillandre
""Hawaiian Starlight"", which was presented at the CAP2007 (like the ESA DVD film ""Hubble - 15 years of Discovery)

none

The largest frustration my colleagues and I have at present is the uncertainties about the business model for GalileoScope. We see tremendous opportunities on paper for this product even without any samples to show potential users, yet we cannot assume financial responsibility personally for thousands of them. The concept that the SPoCs would take responsibility for ordering for their country is a model that doesn't work for Canada. I fully appreciate that the development team is working hard and creatively on the GS, and look forward to the day when it will be announced how groups, science centres, etc. can place orders. It also would really be wonderful to have a few samples per large country that could be shipped around so people would know what they are committing to, as well, were that possible. My guess is that once a few of them are available, clubs, teachers, etc. will be clamouring to order more.

We have looked at the other products being developed (e.g., Galileo comic, planisphere, etc.) . The quality appears to be high, but the costs are such that I am not getting any expressions of interest so far.

Materials for schools --> Comics with astronomy adventures, posters , powerpoints. All the materials with blank spaces to input the text in the country language - to download

T-shirts, caps,...during regional meetings.

Ressources which are not marked above have not been received by the SPoC. So it is non possible to assess them.

popular "official"e-books on astronomy, free downloadable. One may translate this book on their own language.

Free hi-res astronomy images (sky, telescopes, observatories) that we could use for nice posters are there some resources to help bring together some African historians and Scientists to write down some short introductory guides on the history of the Astronomy in Africa (For e.g " From IMHOTEP to Driss BASRI " could be a nice title coupled with relevant posters of African and African-Americans in astronomy and Science). Indeed we are working along that direction.

Would you like to comment on the work of the Secretariat?

Just keep up the good work

I appreciate very much the prompt, helpful and effective answers to all the questions I asked. I also see the huge amount of work they put into the organization.

Just excellent.

Good job

Nice and much appreciated

Secretariat is very effective and good cooperative

very positive, effective and professional team!

Excellent, and much appreciated

Relevant work

Very active, responsive and dedicated

Excellent. Special thanks to Pedro Russo for his efficiency

I want to point out that the work carried out by the secretariat has been very useful. However, you must realize that each location has its own weaknesses and strengths. So that not all the material that has been prepared is of direct interest (or application) to us.

They have been hard working. Unfortunately, I haven't exploited this precious human resource as much as I could do.

The only disappointment is the translation of the trailer into Canadian French. I believe we provided the translation within 36 hrs of receiving the English trailer. When the work was done, the Canadian French version has the English logo at the end (while the French version as the AMA version). It cannot be shown in Quebec due to that error, which really has been a disappointment (because the trailer is brilliant).

Keep up the good work!

Very good work is being done by the IYA Secretariat

excellent on all accounts

The level and dynamic of the Secretariat is very good. The approach to all issues is very modern and the capability of promoting new partnerships and new ideas is very effective

The secretariat is trying its best. However it is failing to secure funding for more support for Astronomy in developing countries

acceptable taking into account the financial limitations

Thank you for the hard work you do!

Supportive.

Would you like to suggest some ways in which we could to improve our work?

Even we have translated posters and brochures it is difficult to convince the government, ministry or private company that our 'astronomical' projects should be given the money (in the frame of IYA2009 and international cooperation) and become useful for common people and community. For example, we obtained only 2/3 of money that we applied for from Ministry of Science. I think problem is, particular in Serbia, that most people, professional scientists at the first place, don't take public outreach seriously and important. National Node Serbia has 9 members, while only 4 of them are absolutely active on IYA projects and outreach improvement, one is active from time to time, and the rest of members (4) didn't reply on e-mails, don't share any ideas nor criticism at all. Maybe IAU Secretary could send a special invitation (some kind of reminder) to IAU members all over the world that it is extremely important to take part in IYA2009.

Focus on what really matters

all the best

If possible, short report on selected activities of certain countries so we would know what's going on in other places, which can also be encouragements to people who invested time and effort.

no comment

The IYA is for the general public, who is hardly comfortable with English language in many countries of the world. Quite a few of them, unfortunately, do not have the manpower to translate properly each of the excellent documents that you have prepared. By the way, although there are many regional meetings this year, we are missing one international meeting with almost all SPoCs, which would have allowed to put in commun, e.g., some languages resources. Hopefully, January 2009 will not be too late?

No suggestions

They are doing their duties perfectly, it is enough.

You have been doing great

Move to Canada and help me do my job :-) Overall, I think you are doing an excellent job, and I have greatly appreciated your patience with my questions and suggestions.

Focus maybe somewhat more on any other form of communication than email (eg. Telephone, personal meetings)

please continue as done in the past

It would be nice to see some more pressure to see countries collaborating with each other --> I might not be aware of ongoing efforts ... in this case ignore this comment

Connect the National Nodes to local UNESCO for possible funding in developing countries.
Some phone call would be useful

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