

## Ideas and Best Practices from Survey Responses

(Expanded) from the Breakout Sessions at the NNAC 2026 Spring Social and Summit, held May 31, 2026 at Honsberger Winery in the Niagara region

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### Board Development & Volunteer Succession

A recurring concern across clubs was recruiting and retaining volunteers, particularly Executive members and Presidents. Participants noted that many clubs struggle with:

- Long-serving volunteers remaining in the same role for many years.
- Difficulty recruiting new Presidents and Board members.
- Member reluctance to take on leadership responsibilities.

*Promising Solution: Co-Chair and Shared Leadership Models*

One idea that generated significant interest was the use of:

- Co-Presidents
- Co-Chairs
- Shared Board positions
- Co-facilitators for activities

Benefits identified include:

- Reduced workload for volunteers.
- Mentorship opportunities between experienced and newer volunteers.
- Increased willingness among members to step into leadership roles.
- Improved succession planning and continuity.

This complements the broader Summit finding that successful clubs distribute responsibilities broadly rather than relying on a small number of volunteers.

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### Data-Informed Membership Care

While the membership tracking system was already highlighted in the conference notes, survey feedback provided additional detail on how clubs are using membership information.

Best practices include:

- Tracking member participation across all activities.
- Monitoring engagement trends over time.
- Identifying members who do not participate during their first few months.
- Reaching out proactively when activity levels drop.
- Using participation data to provide personalized member support.

Participants viewed this as one of the most practical and actionable ideas presented at the Summit.

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### Simplifying Administrative Processes

A few operational ideas surfaced in the survey that were not discussed in depth elsewhere.

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Examples include:

- Reviewing whether annual waiver forms are necessary.
- Streamlining member administration.
- Reducing repetitive paperwork.
- Using technology to modernize attendance and financial tracking.

Several participants expressed interest in learning more about systems used by other clubs to manage attendance, registrations, finances, and membership records.

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### **Continuing Peer Networks Between Clubs**

Participants found enormous value in connecting with people serving in similar roles across clubs.

Examples included:

- Treasurer networking sessions.
- Informal sharing of forms, templates, and processes.
- Creation of role-specific WhatsApp groups to continue sharing ideas after the Summit.

This suggests future NNAC initiatives could include:

- Role-specific communities of practice.
  - Ongoing peer networks.
  - Regular virtual discussion groups for club executives.
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### **Additional Programming Ideas**

Several activity ideas mentioned in survey comments complement the program-event ideas already identified:

#### ***Educational and Discussion-Based Activities***

- Language groups
- Community cooking classes or one off events like cooking demos
- Grocery-store-sponsored cooking workshops
- Movie discussion groups ("movie book clubs")
- Facilitated discussion groups around common interests.

#### ***Low-Cost Community Activities***

Participants expressed interest in activities that are:

- Affordable
- Easy to organize
- Accessible to most members

Examples include:

- Clothing swaps
  - Accessory exchanges
  - Community-based learning activities
  - Charity focused club activities
  - Walk-and-talk outings
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- Hobby-centred gatherings.
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### **Event Funding & Cost Recovery**

Survey respondents reinforced the Summit discussions on charging fees for activities.

Several participants highlighted:

- Clubs should not be afraid to charge for activities.
  - Members generally accept paying for entertainment and special events.
  - Small fees can improve attendance commitment and reduce no-shows.
  - Cost-recovery models can allow clubs to offer higher-quality programming.
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### **Technology Adoption**

By far the most frequently mentioned takeaway from survey participants was interest in a member-management platform such as Stack Team App.

Participants specifically cited benefits such as:

- Replacing lengthy newsletters.
- Simplifying member communications.
- Supporting registration and payment collection.
- Improving executive administration.
- Enhancing member engagement.

The degree of interest suggests that technology modernization remains one of the highest-priority opportunities for many clubs.

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### **New Topics Identified for Future Learning**

Survey respondents identified several topics they would like explored in greater depth at future NNAC events:

#### ***Managing Difficult Member Situations***

Participants requested practical guidance on:

- Conflict resolution
- Member conduct concerns
- Complaint handling
- When membership termination may be appropriate
- Board responsibilities when conflicts arise.

#### ***Volunteer & Board Recruitment***

Participants would like additional discussion on:

- Recruiting Board members (through assistant positions; reduced membership fees)
  - Leadership succession planning
  - Encouraging volunteer participation
  - Reducing volunteer burnout (how to delegate)
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- Leadership appreciation night for leaders of activities
- Shared leadership models.

### ***Club Technology***

Specific interest was expressed in:

- Team App implementation
  - Costs and benefits
  - Member adoption strategies
  - Administrative efficiencies
  - Attendance and payment tracking systems.
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### **Areas for Improvement for Future Summits**

The survey provided clear and consistent feedback regarding future event design.

#### ***1. More Space for Discussion***

The most common recommendation was to secure a larger venue.

Participants noted:

- Tables were too close together.
- Noise levels made discussion difficult.
- Breakout groups often struggled to hear one another.
- Conversations from nearby tables caused distractions.

Recommendation

Choose a venue with:

- Larger meeting space
  - More separation between discussion tables
  - Better acoustics for group work.
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#### ***2. Stronger Facilitation in Breakout Sessions***

Several respondents felt breakout discussions could be improved through:

- More structured questions
- Clearer facilitator instructions
- Better time management
- Greater focus on keeping conversations on track.

Participants observed that some sessions became dominated by a few individuals or drifted away from the intended topic.

Recommendation

Provide facilitators with:

- Discussion guides

- Sample questions
  - Reporting templates
  - Session objectives.
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### **3. More Time with Peers in Similar Roles**

One of the highest-rated aspects of the Summit was connecting with people holding similar club positions.

Participants requested:

- Longer role-specific discussions.
- Dedicated networking sessions for Presidents, Treasurers, Membership Directors, etc.
- More opportunities for direct exchange of tools and practices.

Recommendation

Expand role-based networking sessions and consider making them a permanent component of future summits.

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### **4. Capture and Share Key Discussion Outcomes**

Several participants expected breakout groups to report back on their discussions.

Suggestions included:

- Summary presentations from facilitators.
- Shared notes.
- Consolidated lists of key ideas and recommendations.

Recommendation

Provide a formal report-back session and distribute a post-event summary package.

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### **5. Use of Audio-Visual Support**

Participants suggested greater use of:

- Microphones
- Screens
- Visual presentations
- Displayed discussion questions
- Summary slides.

These tools could improve engagement and address challenges associated with larger groups.

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### **6. Logistics and Accessibility**

Comments identified several practical considerations:

- Select a more central location.
  - Consider travel costs for attendees.
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- Evaluate accessibility features.
  - Minimize disruptions during food service.
  - Ensure venue facilities meet participant expectations.
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### **7. Continue the In-Person Format**

One of the strongest findings from the survey was support for continuing in-person gatherings.

Participants consistently reported that:

- In-person conversations were highly valuable.
- Relationship-building was easier face-to-face.
- Learning from other clubs happened organically through informal conversations.
- Networking opportunities were among the most beneficial aspects of the Summit.

Many respondents also supported supplementing in-person events with regional meetings and periodic virtual sessions throughout the year.

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### **Final Addition to the Overall Conclusions**

The survey findings reinforce that the greatest value of the Summit was not only the sharing of new ideas but also the opportunity for clubs to learn directly from one another. Participants consistently highlighted three high-impact opportunities:

1. Modernizing communications and administration through tools such as Team App.
2. Strengthening member engagement through personalized membership care, activity tracking, and inclusive programming.
3. Building stronger volunteer pipelines through co-leadership models, mentorship, and expanded peer networking among club leaders.

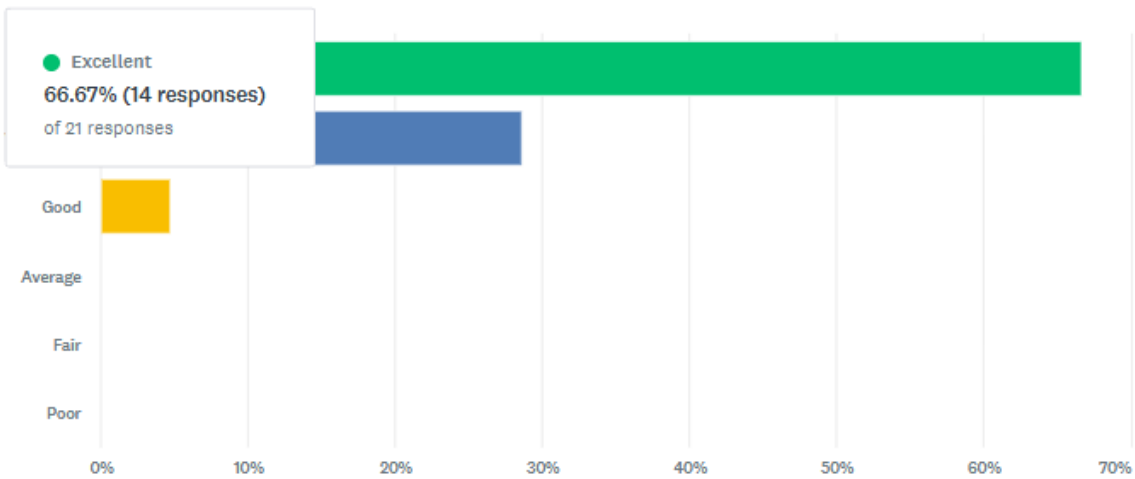
Together with the Summit presentations, breakout discussions, and survey feedback, these findings provide a comprehensive set of ideas and best practices that clubs can use to improve sustainability, increase member engagement, strengthen volunteer leadership, and enhance the newcomer experience.

## Survey Monkey Summit Survey Reponses

Q1 21 responses

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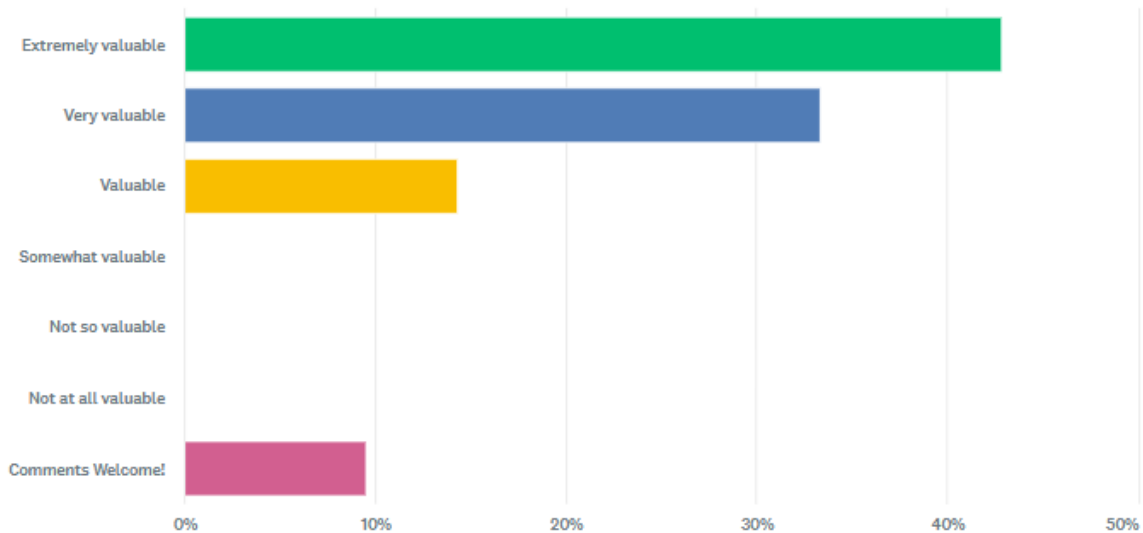
### Overall Experience: How would you rate your overall experience at NNAC Spring Social and Summit?



Q2 21 responses

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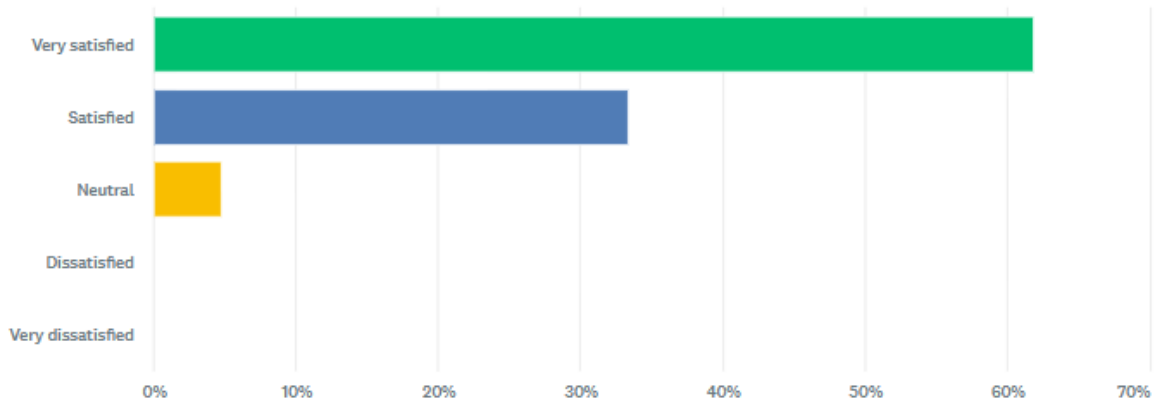
### Value of Attending: How valuable was this event to you?



Q3 21 responses

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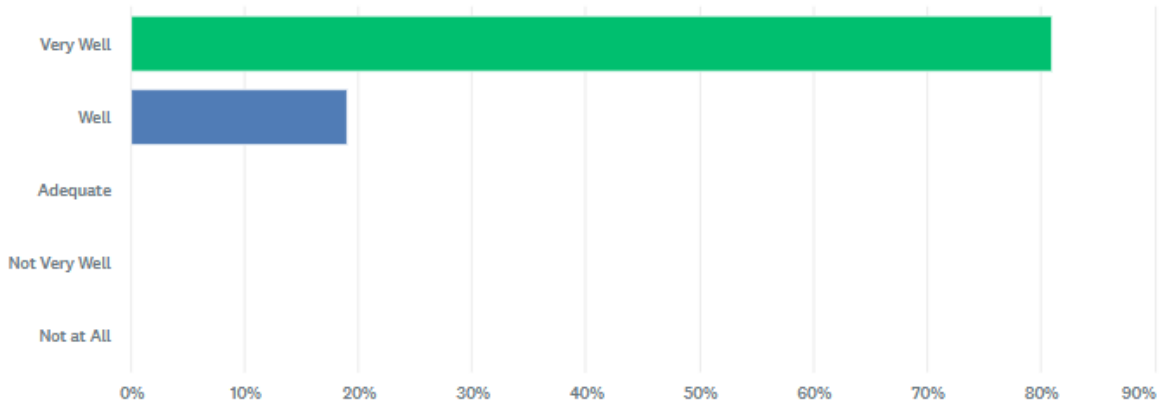
### Networking Opportunities: How satisfied were you with the opportunities to connect with others from different clubs?



Q4 21 responses

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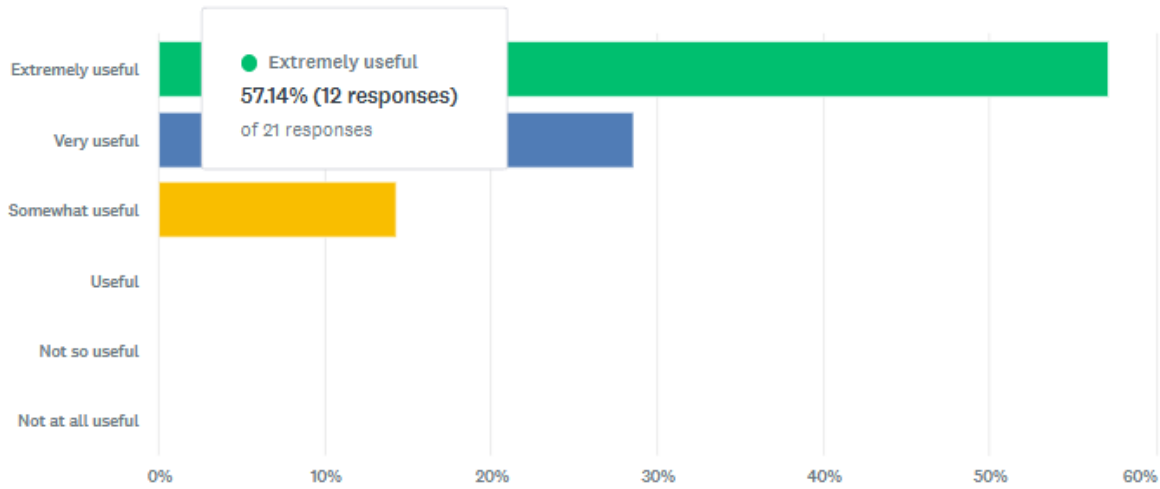
### Agenda & Structure: How well did the agenda and overall structure of the day work for you?



Q5 21 responses

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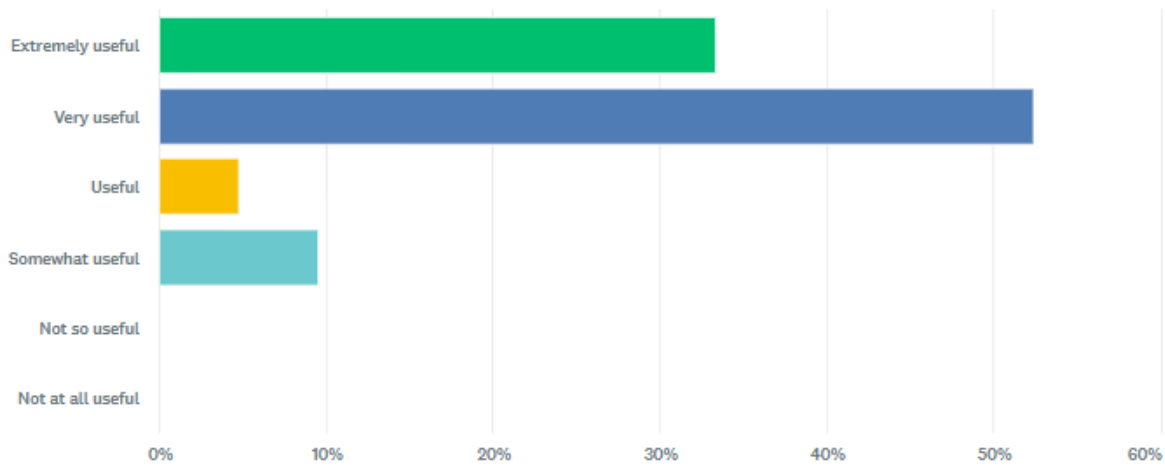
### Lunch Discussion Format: How useful was the lunch discussion format (where attendees were grouped by similar roles)?



Q6 21 responses

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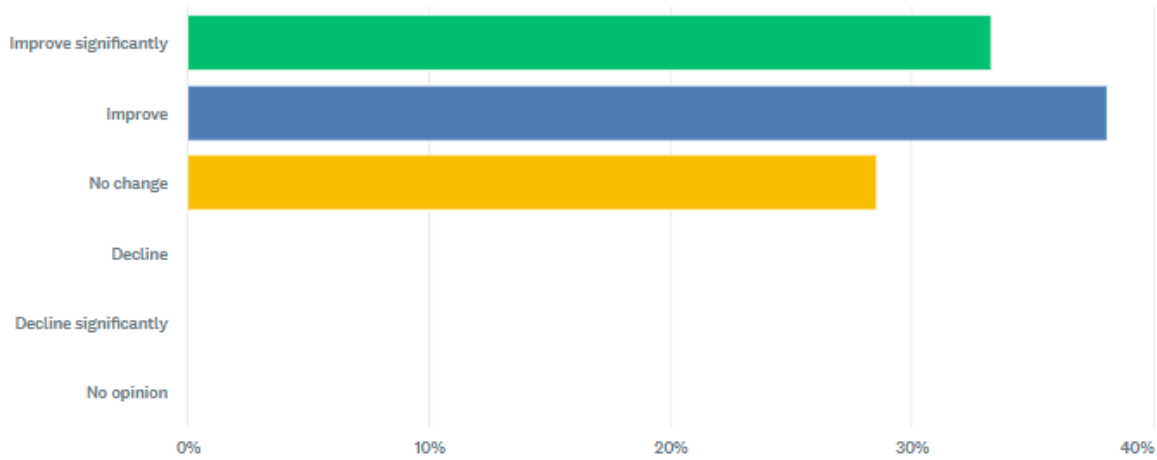
### Breakout Sessions: How useful were the breakout sessions with mixed roles and rotating tables?



Q7 21 responses

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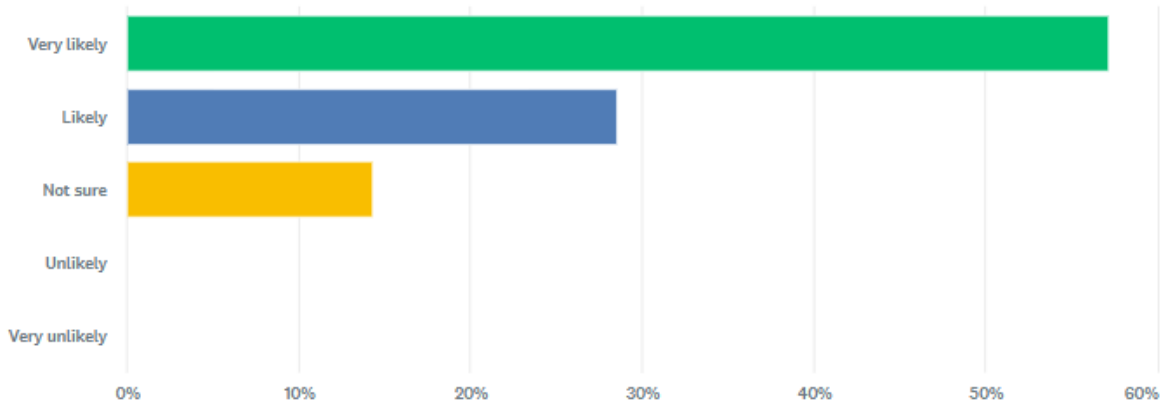
### NNAC Value: After attending this event, did your perception of NNAC value for clubs...

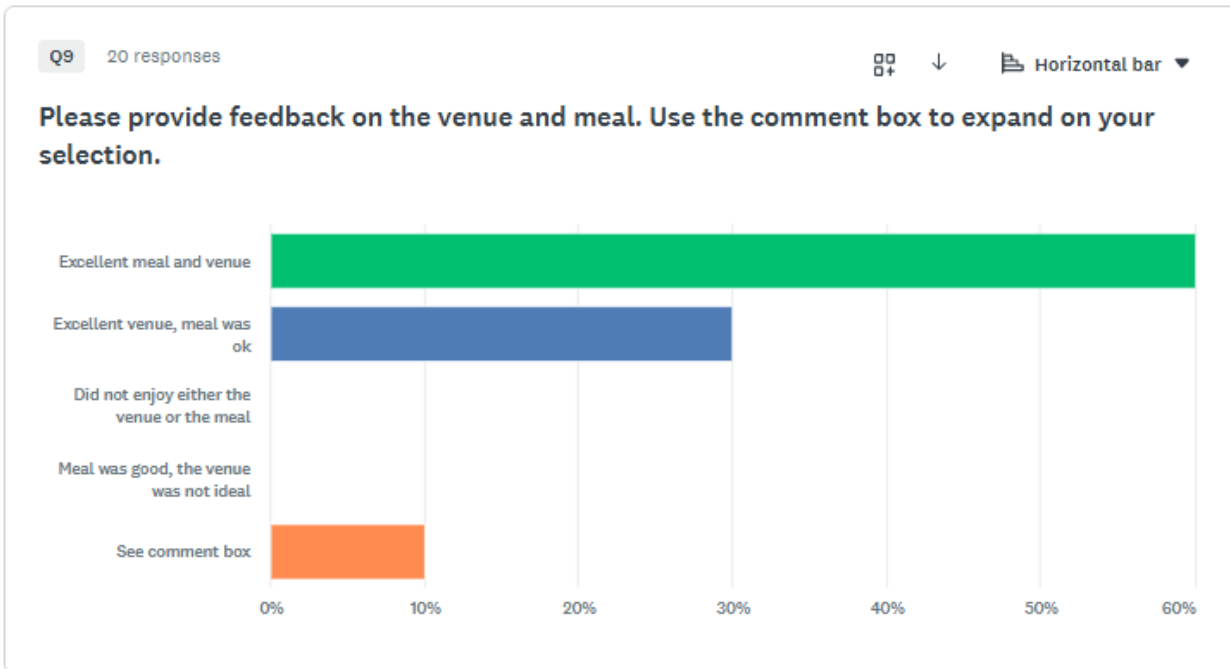


Q8 21 responses

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### Future Participation: How likely are you to attend future NNAC events (either in person or via Zoom)?





### Comments in response to the above questions

**Respondent #19:** The spirit of the event was excellent. The plan for the day was interesting and there was good interaction among attendees. The space was very tight for group activities with this many people. Because we were cramped, it became difficult to hear / stay on task with activity stations. Having a larger space for breakout groups would be optimal. • Not sure if use of AV was possible. There was a smart TV up on the wall across from the podium. It could have been useful to post activities, or perhaps for visuals with the keynote. However, the placement of the screen was high, and window light may have interfered with image quality. Using on-site AV may have also involved an up-charge. Having good AV (mic, screen...) with this many people is very helpful. •

It was useful to hear what other clubs are doing, and to learn more about the organization and how it works.

Time is always a constraint. It was excellent that we were circulated to be with different people and hear their ideas.

I think the plan was good, in that we had opportunities to get up, move around, and meet others. We had some challenges because the venue was crowded, making it difficult to hear and stay on track. In some cases, facilitators were challenged. Not sure if they didn't fully grasp their role, or have the skills to keep the group on task. Some groups had side discussions taking over the time.

The interruptions of food service made it challenging to keep the discussion on track. I think groups need some social time as well as planned tasking.

What is one idea or insight did you take away from the Summit that you might action with your club?: Use of an app like stack to facilitate executive functions and group communications.

I'm new to the scene, so this was a great way to see the culture and process of the organization.

What would you like to see in a future NNAC summit or regional meeting?: I appreciated the invitation and opportunity. Re: ideas for a future sumit - Perhaps have time to unpack some of the ideas / issues that came up: • Using a group management app like Stack - pros / cons, costs... • Dealing with 'problem' members (this came up at one of our table discussions). When is it OK to 'fire' a member? Conflict resolution, etc. • Recruiting new board members • Giving time for people to explain activities that have been successful for their clubs: language groups;

low cost community activities like cooking classes (offered by some grocery chains); Movie 'book clubs', where a movie is watched and discussed; clothing swap (or accessories...)

Please provide feedback on your venue/menu experience. We will share compliments and constructive criticisms.: The food delivery was awkwardly staged. The person with risotto was nearly finished their meal when our lukewarm chicken arrived. • Dessert tasted OK, but had no visual appeal - just kind of odd. • The bathrooms smelled foul. To me, that's always an indication that 'you don't want to see the kitchen!' There were steps to access the main bathroom, which may have been difficult for some. • Our servers were less than welcoming / friendly. In short, I would recommend a different venue. Something larger, more central, and less expensive than Toronto, so Guelph, Kitchener, Cambridge, Hamilton. That way, it's not too far from a major airport for those who are traveling.

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### **Respondent #18**

Organized to allow members to talk to and share information easily, I liked moving to different tables over the afternoon, getting to ask questions and compare clubs so easily.

I shared a spreadsheet I have showing every member and every activity they did over the year. This enables me to notice changes in activities done over their membership. A good way to check in with newer members who joined and didn't participate in the first 3 months, or marked differences in long time members activity levels if changed.

It was great to talk to other people in the same position and realize we all have the same issues to deal with.

What is one idea or insight did you take away from the Summit that you might action with your club?: Using co-chairs for positions on the Board as well as co-Facilitators to get more people involved and allowing them to be helped with their "jobs" with more experienced members stepping in. I think it may help to get members to step up and offer to be on the Board or be an Activity Facilitator since having an experienced person as a partner may take away some of their concerns about the level of work.

Please provide feedback on your venue/menu experience. We will share compliments and constructive criticisms.: I have food restrictions, so it was great they were able to provide me with a meal that would not cause problems for me, I usually just eat what I can and leave the rest, so a nice change. Venue was great and people were very helpful and friendly.

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### **Respondent #17**

I like the concept of the summit, liked hearing other club issues but can't say that I came away with a "WOW" idea.

Nice to see other ladies from other clubs and hear that they too basically have the same issues as we do.....getting members involved, same people in the same role for long time, recruiting presidents.

Did not seem to have enough time to connect with person(s) in same role as me. Though from what I did hear, perhaps our club is still in the stone age.

Liked the agenda but feel the tables could be further apart during the breakout sessions. Lots of voices, behind, beside, drowning out voices at own table.

For me it was hard to eat and absorb what other members with the same role as me had to share. Could not/did not make any notes. Maybe lunch could be just eat and chat and enjoy. Keep that one role unto itself too.

What is one idea or insight did you take away from the Summit that you might action with your club?: Like the idea of the breakout sessions. Time seemed to go too quickly and yet not sure would want to sit there for too much

longer with the same group. Lots of talk at all the same time. Hard to pick up something I would want to put into action. Everyone wanted to talk about their own situation/challenges but not necessarily listen to others.

Good planning and organizing to get this all put together. Opening and closing remarks very well done. Even door prizes.

What would you like to see in a future NNAC summit or regional meeting?: Guess I would have to say just a wee bit more time at breakout session with my same role person. Other information interesting but wanted to learn how others do this particular role. Though I did hear of a more up to date version of keeping track of attendance/money but did not hear the cost of this technology. Hope to hear more about that in the future.

Please provide feedback on your venue/menu experience. We will share complements and constructive criticisms.: Portion size was good, though not happy with salad that I have to cut, not sure what the dessert was. Venue could use the whole room and space us a little further apart, especially for the moving around part and the sharing of ideas at each table.

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### **Respondent #13**

Treasurer lunch discussion was great. We have started a WhatsApp group in hopes of continuing to exchange info and ideas.

The breakouts were less useful than lunch discussion. Seemed difficult to manage the discussions. Liked the group composition changing each time.

What is one idea or insight did you take away from the Summit that you might action with your club?: Slack teams app.

Please provide feedback on your venue/menu experience. We will share complements and constructive criticisms.: Chicken was cold, Brussels sprouts were undercooked, nearly raw

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### **Respondent #10**

What is one idea or insight did you take away from the Summit that you might action with your club?: Not having a waiver signed every year.

What would you like to see in a future NNAC summit or regional meeting?: Regional meeting as well as Zoom meetings. Also enjoyed taking part in the summit format.

Please provide feedback on your venue/menu experience. We will share compliments and constructive criticisms.: We used the 407 to get to the venue which took us over an hour. It would have been twice the travel time using the 401, 427 & QEW because of volume of traffic, construction, etc. which our driver experienced the week before. We didn't realize the 407 toll cost of \$100 to be that high. With the cost of gas, transportation costs to the venue was significant for us to attend. The price of the venue was manageable.

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### **Respondent #9**

It was a great way to connect with other clubs and learn from them.

In person discussions are more valuable than over zoom

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### **Respondent #7**

What is one idea or insight did you take away from the Summit that you might action with your club?: Using an app for the club, getting rid of lengthy newsletter

What would you like to see in a future NNAC summit or regional meeting?: More insights and sharing on very specific topics such as dealing with difficult members, and how to recruit board members and members in general.

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### **Respondent #6**

Wonderful to meet with so many other club members and share ideas!

Extremely well organized! Beautifully done!

Please provide feedback on your venue/menu experience. We will share complements and constructive criticisms.: Excellent meal in general, but a cookie for dessert seemed a bit chintzy...

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### **Respondent #5**

I thought the day had a really good flow to it. We covered a remarkable amount of material in a short time. Both lunching with our peers and the breakout groups were outstanding

This was very useful. We ate and picked each other's brains. Our phones were out snapping screenshots of another's phone. Invaluable information gained.

What is one idea or insight did you take away from the Summit that you might action with your club?: While the Teams Stack app is now a goal for my group, I'm delighted with Grimsby's membership/membership renewal form and the resulting excel spreadsheet. The information, updated in real time, allows them to provide outstanding member care. There's so much more too!

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### **Respondent #4**

What is one idea or insight did you take away from the Summit that you might action with your club?: Membership App

What would you like to see in a future NNAC summit or regional meeting?: More time to get tips what other clubs find successful

Please provide feedback on your venue/menu experience. We will share compliments and constructive criticisms.: Excellent venue. Price was high. No tea available, only coffee. Definitely would appreciate more of these meetings preferably in person.

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### **Respondent #3**

Valuable conversations with other groups.

What would you like to see in a future NNAC summit or regional meeting?:

More distance between tables as it was difficult to hear with surrounding discussions

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**Respondent #2**

Thank you for the choice of such a lovely venue.

It is difficult to make solid connections in a half-day session. I did come away with some names to follow up with and some Facebook pages to check out.

I felt this was well done, but thought that the 3 table discussions would have benefitted from more targeted questions and facilitation. I also thought that the facilitators were going to summarize key points and present them at the end. I know that is a bit difficult, but it would have been useful.

What is one idea or insight did you take away from the Summit that you might action with your club?: I have 2. One was to check out the Stacked Team App. Two was to not be afraid to charge money for things, including entertainment at meetings.