

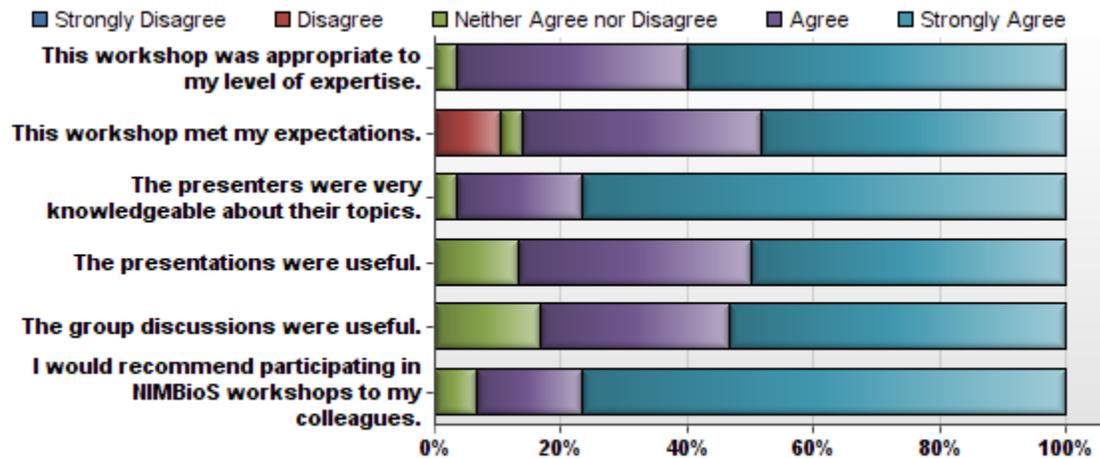


Evaluation Summary Report
Workshop: *Olfactory Modeling*

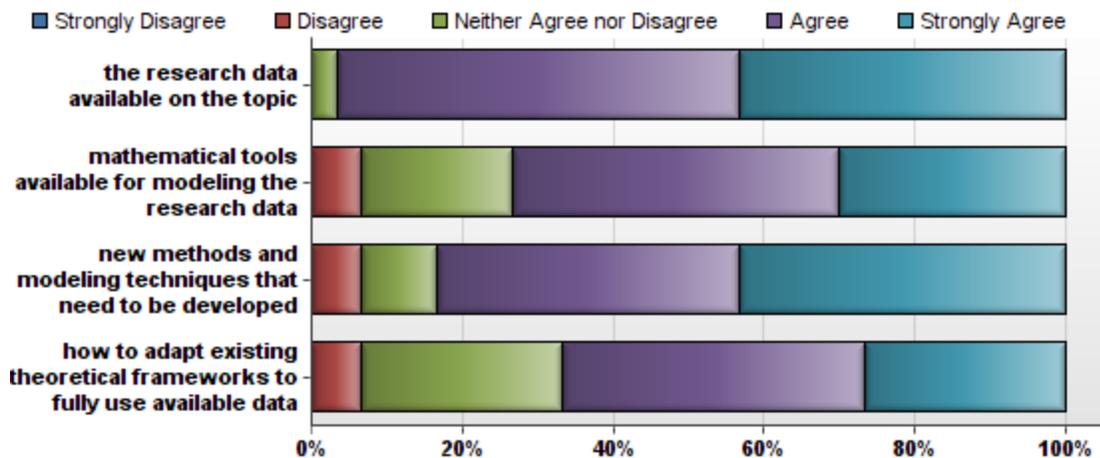
March 2-4, 2015

Pamela Bishop
Evaluation Manager
National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis

Please check the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about this workshop:



As a result of participating in this workshop, I have a better understanding of:



What do you feel was the most useful aspect of the workshop?

Small group, including researchers with different backgrounds. This was useful in gathering new information and potential collaborations because there was enough time to interact one-on-one with about half the participants.

I am relatively new to the field of olfactory research. It was very helpful interacting with new colleagues and seeing where my research can complement existing areas.

Acquire knowledge and ideas from scientists who have different expertise in this workshop.

Small group discussions focused on a single topic, rather than broad topics covering the entire field of olfaction.

Interactions with experts from different disciplines/expertise who nonetheless often shared similar approaches. For example, as a researcher with an experimental background that is strongly influenced by computation/mathematical models, to be around others with similar interdisciplinary interests was exciting.

Breakout groups

Breakout sessions and the combination of people's expertise. The organizers created a safe space for all of us to voice our ideas.

Meeting people doing different things but on the same topic

Getting a critical mass of people together on a specific topic that is in need of interdisciplinary efforts.

The intensive shake-it-up interactions, and the potential for working groups to turn these discussions into something concrete and lasting. Cross-referencing of all of our brains is the main benefit.

The group and plenary discussions.

Meeting a variety of people who do similar research and hearing their perspective on the field.

Strong interactions with other experts in the field.

Breakout discussion.

The group discussions were the most useful. The discussions allowed the exchange of ideas and thoughts on specific topics.

Many different perspectives

Group discussions.

Bringing together a good cross section of people that create models to discuss what is important.

The strengthening of the network across the disciplines.

The discussions. It was such a breath of fresh air to have very short data presentations and very long discussions. It seemed that we really made progress on understanding new ideas.

Small size allowed having close discussions with selected experts in the field. The non-lecture-based and more discussion-based activities allowed everyone to participate even though they may be senior. I think that was the most valuable part for me.

Going into smaller discussion groups and hashing out ideas we felt were important.

Opportunity to get the community together - possible commitment to working on a shared community model.

Discussions with individuals at lunch, dinner, and during breaks. This is when collaborations happen!

The organizers encouraged participants to work together to form 2 or 3 working groups that would devise a plan of collaborative research. Even if none of the working groups get funded, this exercise was very conducive to the open sharing of ideas and focused them down to a manageable course of action.

What would you change about the workshop?

I wouldn't change anything. Maybe just bring in some researchers from the food industry and vision field.

Smaller break out discussion groups (5-7 people) versus (10-15). The larger groups have too many points of view for consensus and progress.

It will be very helpful if some topics can be posted and discussed before the workshop (3 days were too short to search topics, define problems, and find solutions).

Perhaps more defined focus groups and discussion plans before the start of the meeting. Much time was spent bouncing back between very different ideas, and this was generally not productive.

The workshop could be extended for an additional day to better allow collaborators to establish working plans.

1 day longer in order to translate discussion into collaborations/community efforts

More behavioral and species diversity

The short presentations tended to kick off discussions but we didn't follow them up on the spot, hoping to take these questions and ideas into the group discussions. I think it might have been more effective to let those discussions flow even if that ruined the original schedule.

I would probably try to invite an even greater diversity of disciplines that intersect on Olfaction, i.e. beyond neuroscience.

Clearer collaboration plans moving forward.

Not only trying to define question, but also trying to answer some of them during the workshop.

I would have focused the presentation topics to address specific areas or interests.

Longer presentations

Maybe hold it a bit later in spring so that travel disruption didn't eat into workshop time. It takes time talking for breakout sessions to become useful, I am not sure that this could be speeded up, so anything that can be done to ensure maximum use of the time available would improve matters.

Find an even better balance between (pure) modelers and experimentalists that also model.

Nothing. It was fantastic.

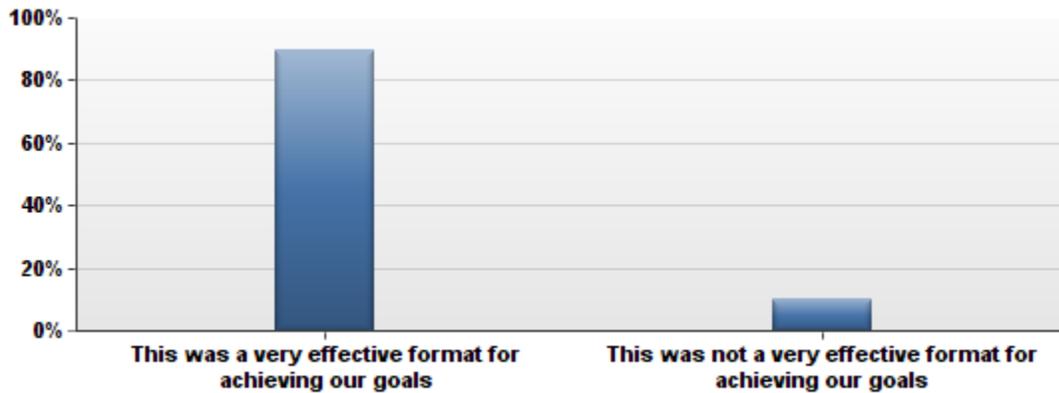
More social activities outside of the building so that there is less sitting, which got very tiring towards the end.

More time to small groups.

Some of the discussion a bit unfocused. Emphasis on inclusivity sometimes lead to less efficient movement forward.

The time was bad because of bad weather ... but this is impossible to change, or make work shop later in spring

How do you feel about the format of the workshop?

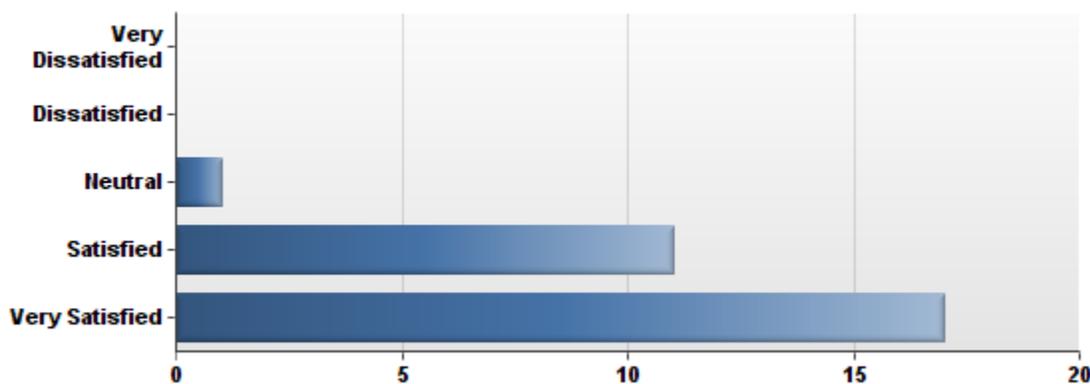


The workshop format would have been more effective if:

Discussions should probably been allowed to develop when they were sparked by presentations. The working groups also might have been better with a different method of matching people to topics. That said, the discussions in groups were reasonably successful.

There was a little bit more structure and facilitating.

How satisfied were you with the opportunities provided during workshop presentations and discussions to ask questions and/or make comments?



Please indicate any suggestions you have for facilitating communication among participants during the workshop:

I don't have any improvement; it was already proving us with lots of breaks and discussion sessions for interaction.

I am currently a postdoc. I am glad that NIMBioS give postdoc and graduate student opportunity to join this workshop and have chance to learn some ideas from senior scientists in this field.

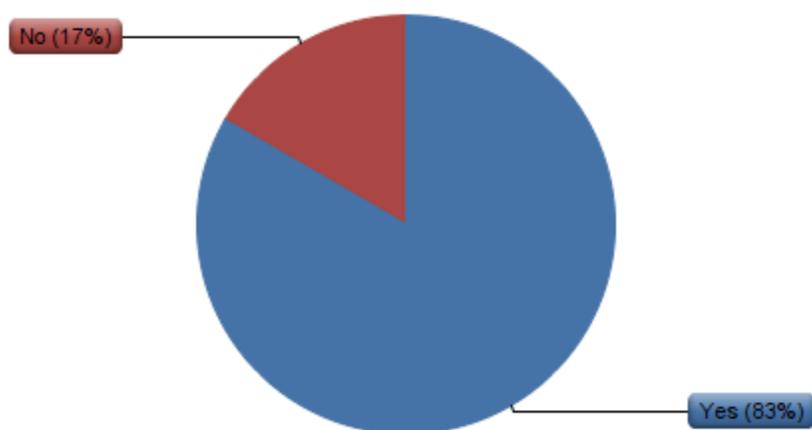
More structured posts/discussion. Have each participant provide a rough outline of potential future research endeavors.

There was room for questions but I think there could have been more.

One could provision more time for panel discussions after the short introduction talks, and instead sacrifice the time for questions immediately after the talks. This would allow the discussion to take into account the wider context of a topical session, instead of only relating to the last two slides.

A good moderator who knows many of the delegates can ask for input for less vocal members of the group when it is felt that they have something to offer.

Do you feel participating in the workshop helped you better understand the research going on in disciplines other than your own on the workshop's topic?



Comments:

Very very helpful workshop. Presentations were short but straight to the point.

Particularly the neuroinformatics field

I did not learn that much new to my surprise. That said, it was still stimulating to engage in discussions.

Somewhat, though I was already pretty familiar. The group discussions were really great; we rarely have the time to engage with one another to these extents. The best part for me

is the opportunity to get into even more detail in a productive sense with the potential for working groups.

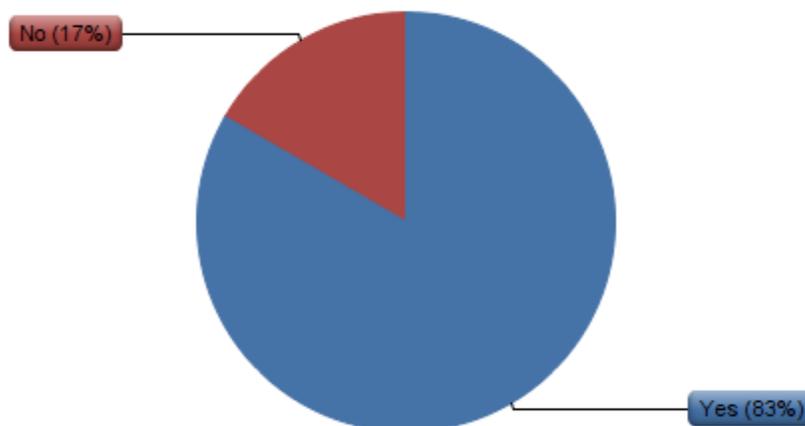
A start was made, but we are at a very early stage of creating models of the olfactory system and much more work is required to expand the usefulness of models so that they can work across disciplines.

Several people with experimental background told about their expectation of modelling. This was an illuminating experience.

I obtained a lot of valuable information and a crash-course into the mammalian olfactory field.

Four generations of scientists meet together and work the essential in order to move forward the field of olfactory neuroscience and computational neuroscience. This is the milestone meeting for all, not the waste time to repeat what was done but put the effort to combine all data of experiments with mathematical effort of computation.

Do you feel the workshop made adequate progress toward finding a common language across disciplines for research on the workshop's topic?



Comments:

Some consensus at the workshop was that some data is available in other fields and collaborations with these fields will be very beneficial to olfactory research.

I think this goal is very difficult to be reached within "3 Days".

Remains to be seen how effective, but a working group would be great

The communication between disciplines worked remarkably well from the start I would think.

However, since Olfaction is such a diverse topic, and touches on so many different disciplines (Chemistry, Physics, Psychology), this workshop faced a huge challenge bringing researchers from all relevant disciplines together, especially given the limited number of participants. However, in my opinion the workshop found a good balance

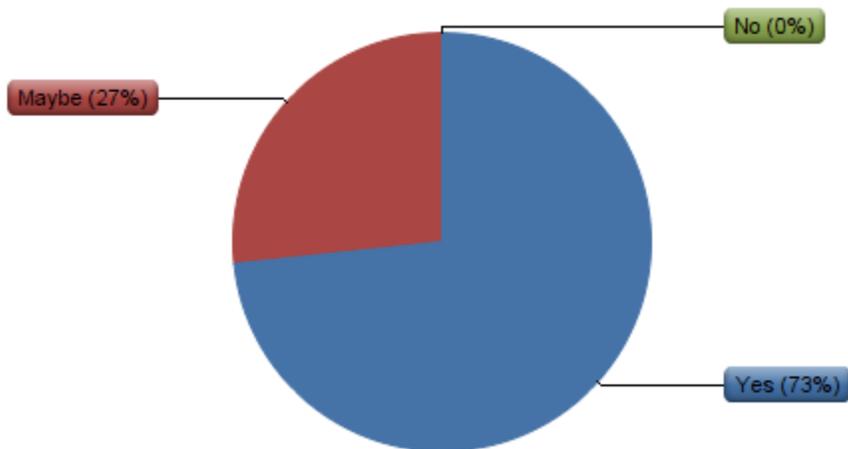
between focusing on a tractable subspace of olfactory modeling, and providing diversity to stimulate thoughts beyond disciplinary boundaries.

Again early days, more work needed.

This part was extremely valuable as we all learned each other's terminology and concepts.

Depending on the success of the follow up workshops

Do you feel that the exchange of ideas that took place during the workshop will influence your future research?



Comments:

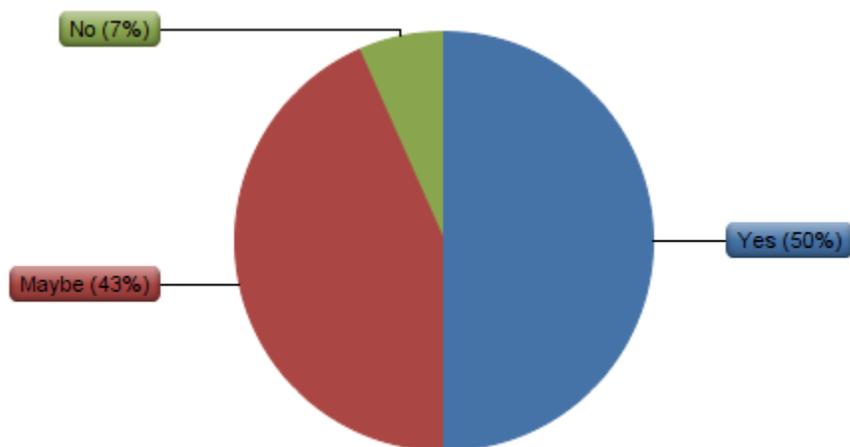
I so hope.

Definitely a step along the route to developing more collaborative models.

I have already met and started correspondence with a couple of people with whom I will probably collaborate on new projects.

The working group discussion was especially useful, as it encouraged consensus and a free sharing of ideas.

Did you develop plans for collaborative research with other workshop participants with whom you had not previously collaborated?



Comments:

In progress.

Trying to get the plans off the ground, but yes it was a good place to network.

These plans are still in their infancy, but I look forward to working on these planned collaborations.

Please use this space for any additional comments:

I've enjoyed the Olfaction workshop very much. My hat off to the organizers.

Thank you. This was an excellent experience!

I believe that efforts like this are very important and think overall, while stressful, the trip to Knoxville was time well spent.

Thanks for a really great experience. I'll be applying with several colleagues from this event for a NIMBioS working group!

I wish to thank NIMBioS and the organizers for letting me take part in this workshop. It was a great experience, and I hope to participate in similar endeavors again in the future.

Reimbursement could be provided in the last day of the workshop for foreigners.

Many thanks to all at NIMBioS for giving the olfactory system research community the opportunity to discuss the development of models and allowing me to be part of this project.

Thanks for a great workshop and opportunity to network with experts!

Overall, an excellent workshop - most of the success however, will depend on the follow-up group efforts.

Thank you. Especially for local scientists participated in the workshop.