

SURVEY OF WELLINGTON CITY U3A MEMBERS

The survey of Wellington City U3A members was carried out from the 12th -27th September 2019. It was an online survey, using Survey Monkey for the majority of members. Thirty-two forms were posted to those not online.

Response

393 responses were received, **38%** of the total membership of 1048. It is possible, however, that this is not a true reflection of the response rate as many couples are both U3A members. It is not possible through Survey Monkey to furnish two responses from the same computer address. This is in order to avoid biasing the results. Only two people pointed out that they could not reply separately and they were sent a second questionnaire. The response rate from the postal part of the survey was similar to that online.

While all respondents replied to Question 1, there was a lower response to all other questions. The percentages for Questions 2-10 are calculated from the respondents for each question.

THE SURVEY

Question 1

Do you attend lectures regularly, e.g. at least one every two weeks unless you are away?

66% of the respondents stated that they attended lectures regularly. The others often explained their response:

My health has prevented me from getting as often as I like.

I always have another engagement on Tuesdays/Fridays.

Question 2

Do you go to at least one interest group?

Only 25% of those (378) who responded to this question attended at least one interest group, This would seem to indicate that the lecture programme is the main attraction for most members.

Question 3

Name two of the 2019 lectures that you especially appreciated.

The 360 responses are ranked according to those that were most appreciated. I have omitted those that attracted less than ten responses. Raw numbers are used rather than percentages as they seem to be more meaningful.

Craig Nicholson/Transmission Gully – 88 preferences 24%
Richard Beasley/Med research – 77

Andrew Becroft – 39
Roberto Rabel/Trump – 36
Bronwyn Kivell/Opioids -28
Nicky Hager – 28
Burton King/Shakespeare – 27
Richard Keller – 27
Kim Workman – 27
Barry Durrant/Photography-25
Fiona Kidman – 23
Catherine Healey – 22
Arthur Tompkins – 19
Max Rashbrooke – 18
Deidre Tarrant 17
Geoff Bertram – 16
Rawinia Higgins – 12
Ian Goodwin -12
Virtuoso Strings – 11
Duncan Campbell/ Terracotta Warriors – 11
David Ackerley 10

Question 4

Why did you think that?

Reasons for the responses to Question 3 were mainly related to the quality of the presentation.

354 people responded to this question – 90% of the total respondents to the survey

- 35% (122 people) stated that it was well presented or that the speaker was very good, engaging or inspiring.
- 24% (85) said that it was a very interesting topic, or an interesting presentation.
- 20% (70) learnt something new or said that it was informative.
- 13% (47) said it aligned with their interests.
- 11% (39) said that it dealt with a topical subject
- 6% (20) found the lecture entertaining
- 4% (15) said it was thought-provoking.
- 4% (15) said it was presented with vigour, passion, creativity or humour.
- 4% (14) commented on the quality of the graphics/slides.

- 4% (13) stated that the speaker was committed/working for change/ *on issues that should concern us all*.
- 3% (9) said that the speaker used sound arguments, evidence-based.
- 2% (6) commented that the lecture was at an understandable level.

Question 5

If you found any of the lectures disappointing, why did you think that?

295 people responded to this question, 75% of the total respondents. Many commented on individual speakers while others made generic comments.

Generic comments

38% (113) said that they had never found any lectures disappointing, or that all lectures were of a high standard. Some also commented that they only went to hear the topics that attracted their interest. It is also possible that those who did not respond to the questions followed the instructions, which would swell the numbers of those who were not disappointed with any lectures.

- 18% (53) of the respondents to this question were disappointed in the quality of the presentation.
- 6% (18) said that the topic was not made interesting, was boring or didn't engage the audience.
- 4% (11) commented that the speaker was poor,/spoke too fast/was muddled/didn't stay on topic/ was lightweight.
- 3% (9) said that there was too much jargon/too many slides filled with facts.
- 3% (9) said that the presentation was too complicated for a lay audience/too heavy/too academic/too long/terrible slides/*beyond my intellect*

Question 6

Can you suggest any speakers and/or topics not covered this year? Please list with speakers contact details if possible.

There was a wide range of responses to this question. Many people suggested topics that they would like to hear about again, while others suggested individual speakers. Some people were added to the list in response to emails sent after the survey. Unfortunately many will not get to hear their specific people in 2020 but the programme coordinators will attempt to select a balance from each category.

Questions 7-8 - INTEREST GROUPS

Would you be willing to lead or co-lead a new interest group? If yes, what is the topic and please give your contact details?

Only 6 people said that they would be willing to lead an interest group. Most of the respondents did not answer accurately, suggesting instead an interest group that they would like to attend.

Question 9- SPECIAL EVENTS

Do you have any suggestions for special events or visits in 2020?

There was a wide range of responses, mainly linked to places or events.

Question 10

Are you satisfied with U3A provisions in general? Please give reasons for your response.

324 people responded to this question, 82% of the total respondents.

An overwhelming majority, 80%, responded very positively.

- 63% (202) were totally/very satisfied
- 30% (97) also reported satisfaction, focusing on the speaker programme. Some are included with those who were very satisfied as they gave a general response as well as commenting positively on the lecture programme.
- 12% (37) said that they were mostly or generally satisfied. Many of this group went on to make suggestions for improvements.
- Only 2 people were completely dissatisfied. Others who did not respond to the question or to the survey as a whole may have come into this category.

Suggestions for improvement

These addressed mainly the relevance of questions as well as statements from the questioners; the speakers' aptitude or political bias; the introduction and thanking of speakers and the quality of lighting and sound at the Embassy.

CONCLUSION

This was a valuable exercise. It has given us some clear feedback on the U3A programme for 2019. It is heartening to know that there is such a high level of general satisfaction, It is also important to take note of the suggestions for improvement and also to adopt, as far as is possible, the ideas for speakers, interest groups and events for 2020.

