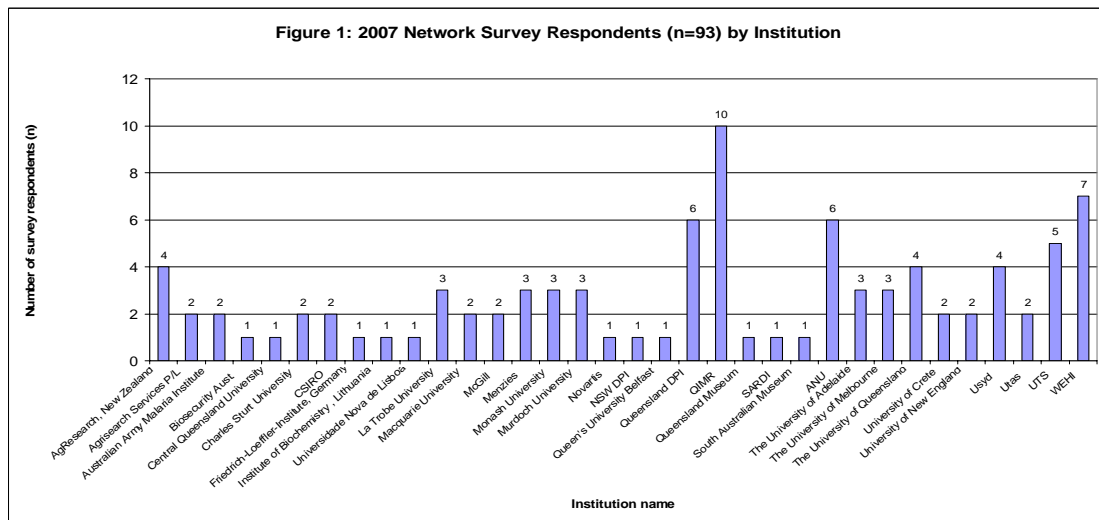


# Survey Results for the 2007 ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology Annual Survey

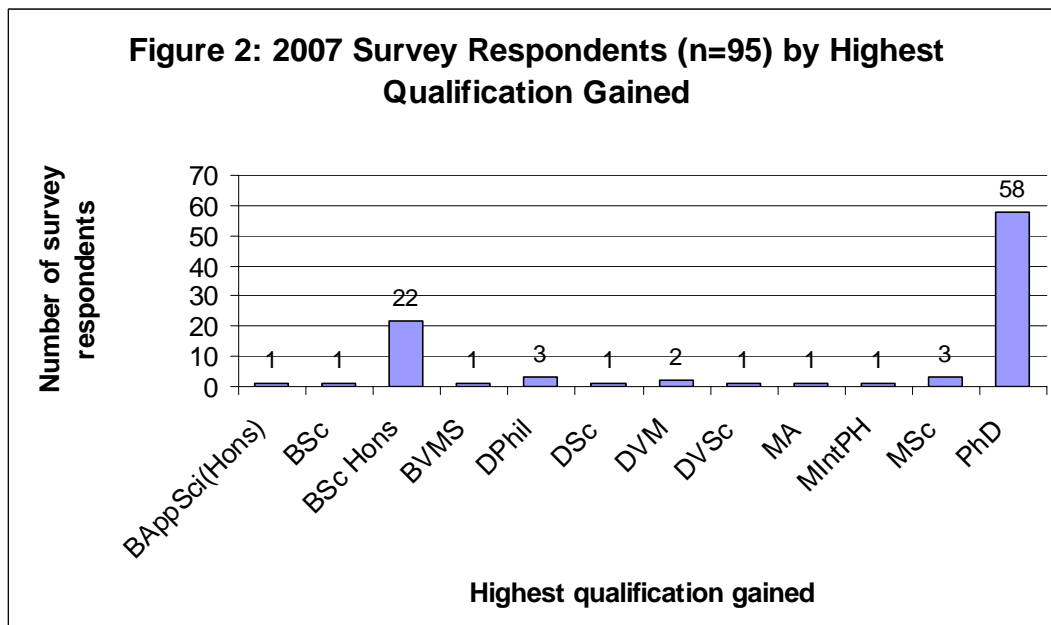
## Participant Information

This survey was made available to the Network participants to complete online. Responses were monitored over two weeks and a total of 95 Network participants responded. Respondents were self-selected.

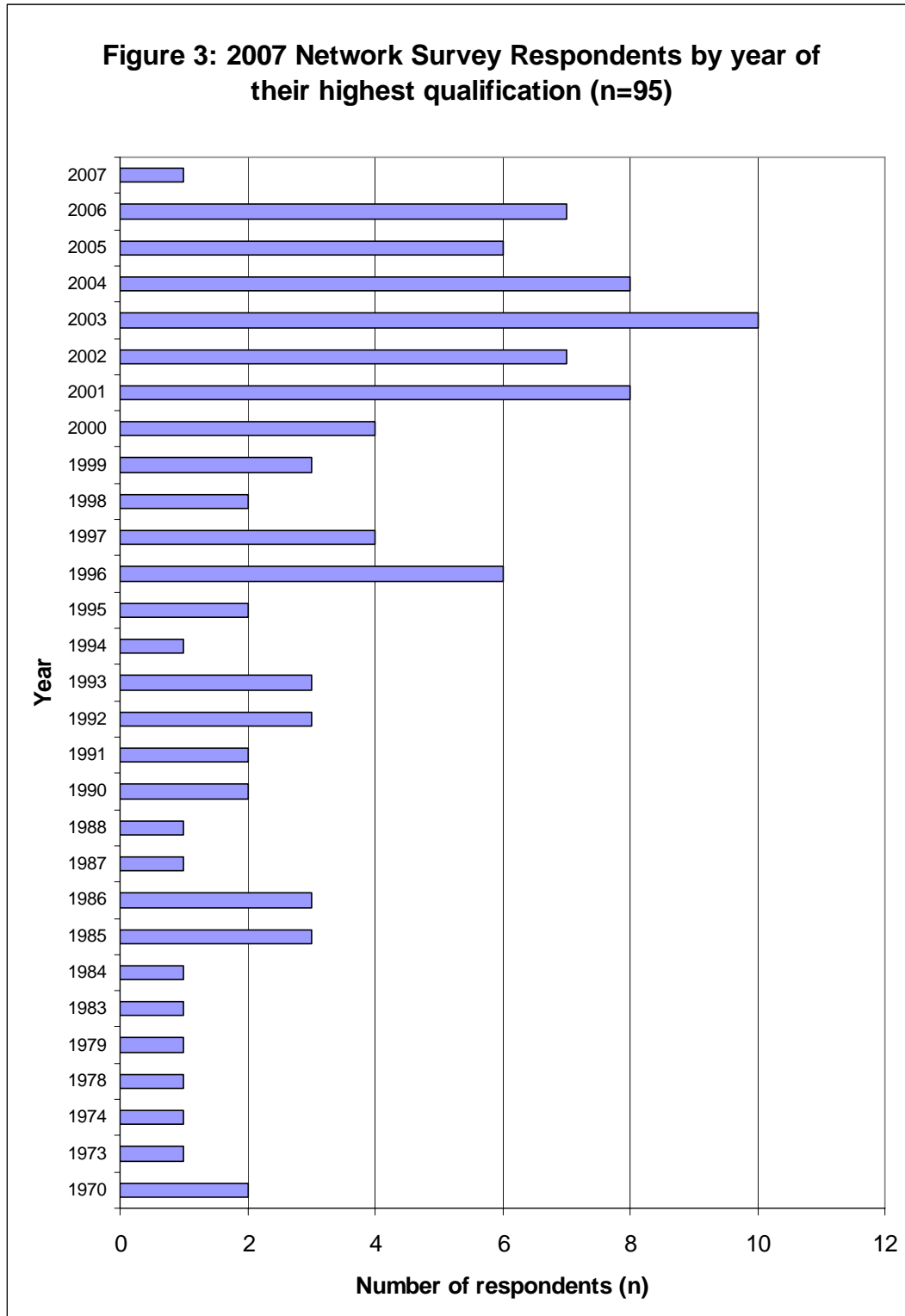
Survey respondents represented 39 different institutions with the highest number being based at QIMR 11%, WEHI 7.5%, ANU 6% and UTS 6% (Figure 1).



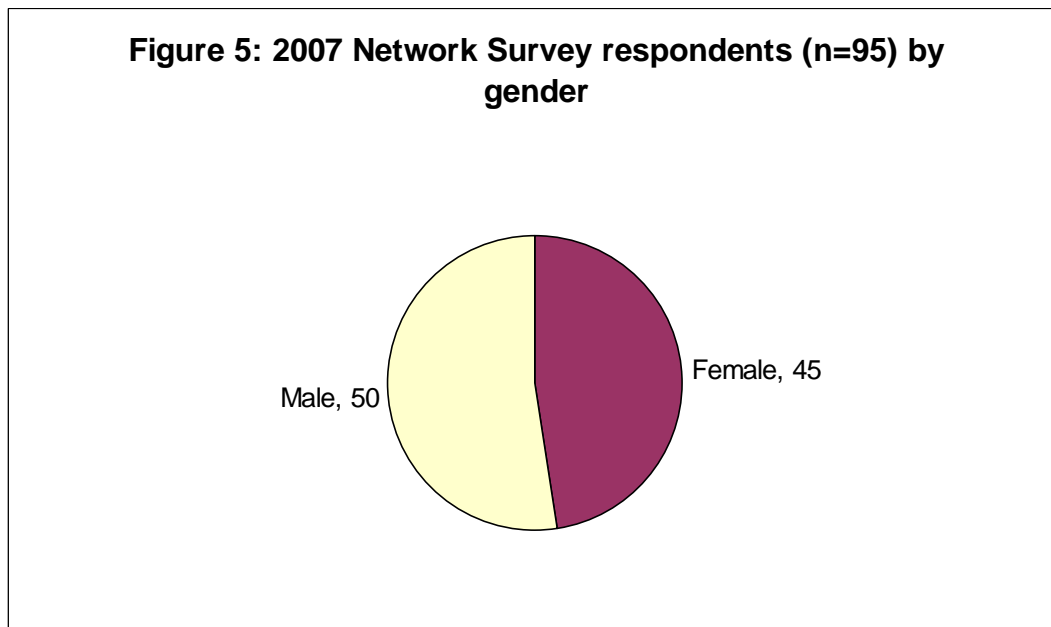
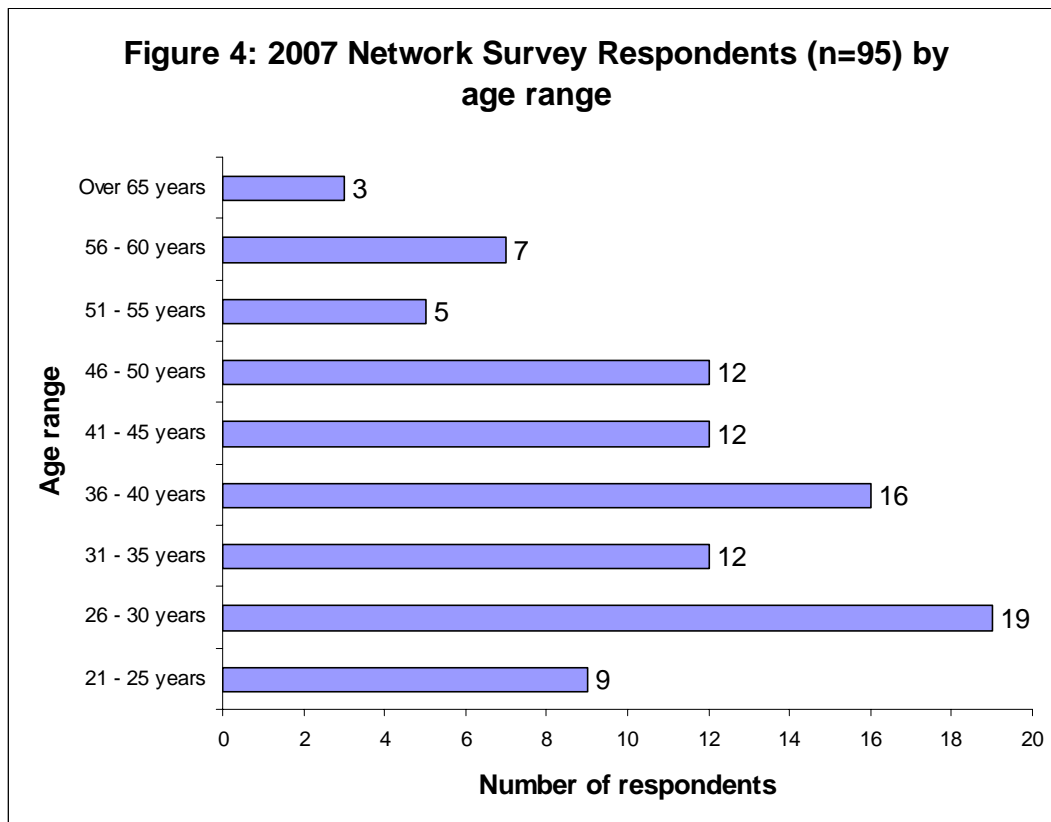
When asked about their highest qualification the majority of survey respondents reported having a PhD (61%) or BSc Hons (38%). (Figure 2)



The responses to “year gained highest qualification” spanned 37 years with the most recent being gained in 2007 and the earliest in 1970, the majority were gained between 1996 and 2006(Figure 3). Of the 95 survey respondents, 34 were identified as early career researchers (10 years or less since gaining their PhD, Doctorate, or Masters qualification).

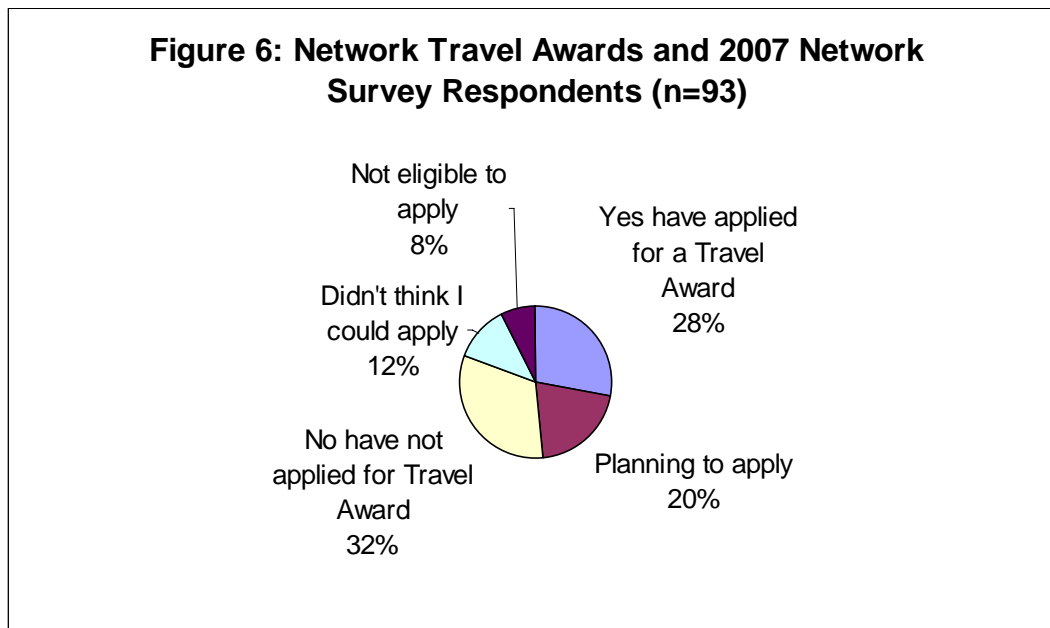


Network Survey Respondents represented a good spread of ages ranging from 21 to over 60 years, with a majority of respondents aged between 26 and 50 years. (Figure 4). Both male and female respondents were fairly evenly represented, with slightly more males (53%) than females (47%). (Figure 5)



**Network funding for participants**

48% of Survey respondents (n=93) have either applied for or are planning to apply for Network funding for a travel grant (Figure 6). To be eligible for Network funding applicants must be an Active Network Participant.

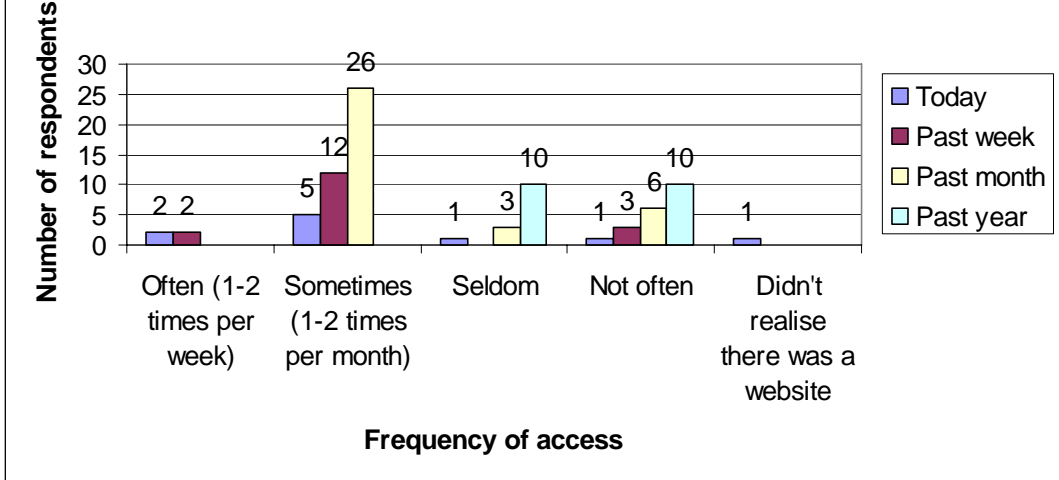


### Network website

The Network website was recently redesigned and the “new-look” site launched early in January 2007. Website content is still in the process of being updated and this is reflected in the responses to questions about the website in this survey.

Most Survey Respondents who had accessed the website sometime in the past year (n=82) indicated how frequently they accessed the website in Figure 7. Frequency of accessing the Network website probably reflects when the Network Newsletter is circulated by email and made available on the website (approximately monthly).

**Figure 7: 2007 Network Survey Participants who accessed the Network website sometime in the past year by frequency of access (n=82)**

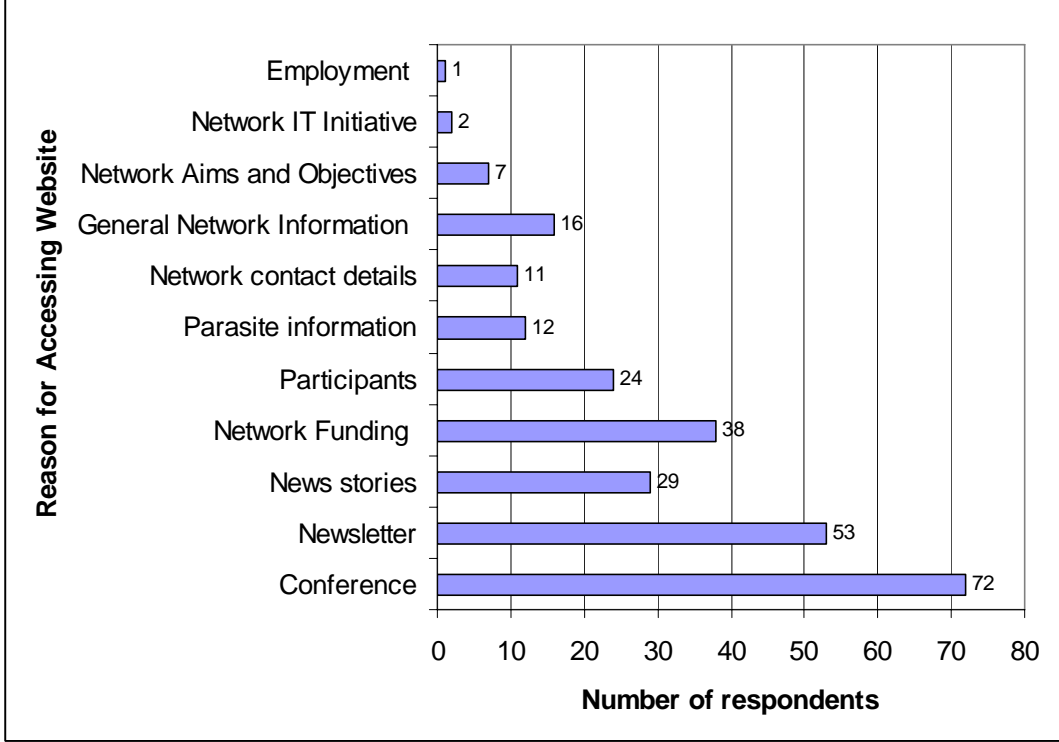


Network Survey respondents who had accessed the website (n=82) reportedly did so for:

- obtaining conference information (86%);
- reading the Network Newsletter (63%);
- finding out about Network Funding available for participants (45%); or
- finding out information about Network Participants (29%).

See Figure 8 below for a complete list of reasons for accessing the Network website, respondents were able to select more than one option and list others.

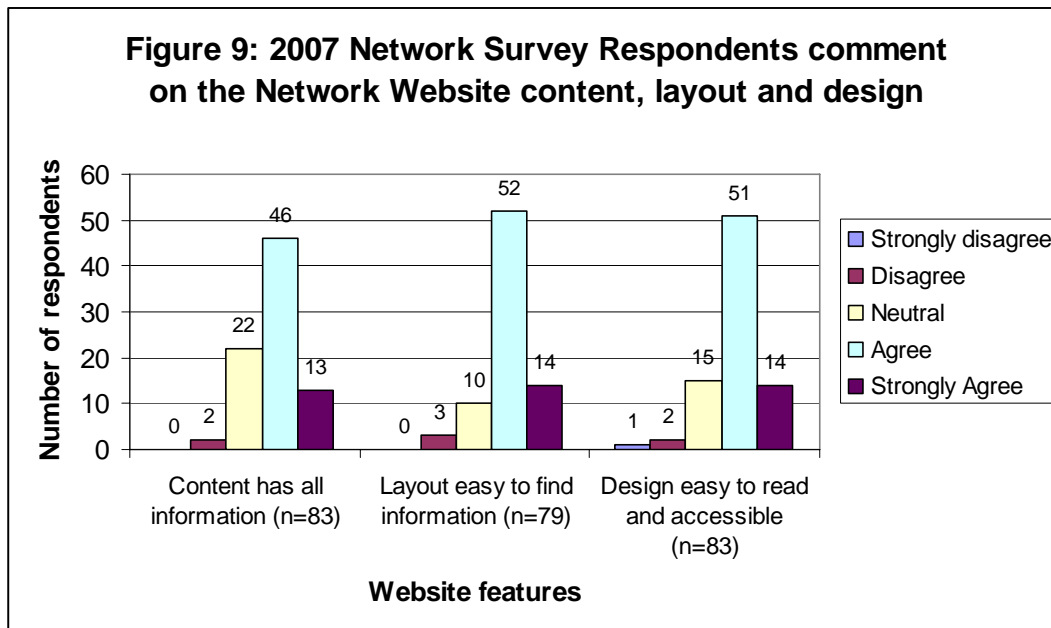
**Figure 8: 2007 Network Survey Respondents reasons for accessing the Network Website (n=84)**



Network Survey Respondents were asked to rate (on a scale of 1 – 5) how strongly they agreed with the following statements:

1. The website content has all of the information I need. (83 Responses)
2. The layout of the website enabled me to find the information I was looking for easily. (79 Responses)
3. The website design means that information is accessible and easy to read. (83 Responses)

Figure 9 shows that a majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with each statement. Additionally one respondent suggested that a search option on the website would be useful.

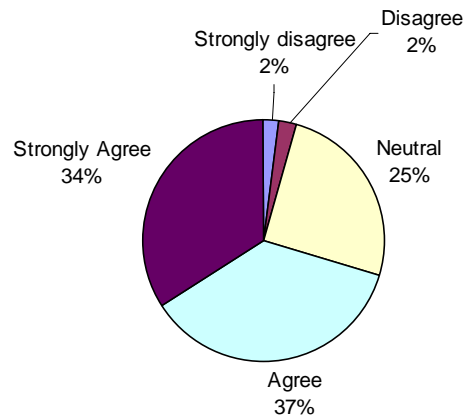


### Overall view of the Network

When asked about being part of the ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology, 70% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that being a part of the Network was beneficial for their career, while 25% were neutral, and only 4% disagreed or strongly disagreed. (Figure 10)

One respondent commented that, “The more opportunities to network at all scales (local, regional, national and international) the better – it’s who you know in this business.”

**Figure 10: 2007 Network Survey Respondents comment on the statement that being a Network Participant is beneficial for their career (n=91)**



Network Survey Respondents were asked about changes to the Network and suggestions for additional activities/schemes that the Network should be involved with; 24 respondents gave suggestions and comments which include the following:

- “Always good to see more money distributed towards research.”
- “We need more advocacy for science in general. This is key to our future as we follow US trends. We need to be more effective in communicating to the public, (our ultimate supporters) and politicians”
- “The Network could benefit by more community exposure. Taking Parasitology to every-day person and remind them that it is an interesting and important part of biology and not just ‘yiki’ worms.”
- “Funding for small scale projects that the Network helped to start e.g. For a Researcher Exchange to learn new technologies, make some money available to these researchers on their return to help set up the technology at their institute.”
- “Mentoring or workshops on grant writing. University research offices provide a lot on information but knowledge from peers who have experience with review processes etc. would be worthwhile.”
- “mentoring”
- “help in career development for early post doc's.”
- “More training workshops for early career scientists for example in grant writing, as well as technical issues.”
- “Funding for PhD scholarships, postdoctoral fellowships and sponsored chairs in parasitology.”
- “IT Initiative more effective and accessible.”
- “I think the Network at this stage is working very well and is a great thing to be a part of.”
- “After attending last year's conference and reading the outline for this year's meeting, I was and am extremely pleased with the work being done. The inclusion of the career discussion breakfast this year adds to what was already a brilliantly arranged set-up.”

- “I hope that the Network continues to improve communication between Australian and international researchers and maybe improves chances for new researchers to successfully find postdoctoral placements overseas.”
- “Contacts for overseas parasitologists.”
- “Foster exchanges with international partner networks perhaps by inviting partner scientists to attend Network annual meeting. Funding is always tight but perhaps an award toward an airfare would assist partners to attend.”
- “Discussions of continuation beyond the life of the Network.”
- “Internally funded small courses or “think tanks” on techniques or speciality topics. More support for Student/Postdoc Exchanges between labs.”

One respondent gave an insightful comment about the definition of a “parasitologist” and why this is important to the future of parasitology research and funding this research: “There are a hell of a lot of people who consider themselves “Parasitologists” at heart, but who have had little opportunity to pursue a Parasitology career, but rather work in other fields such as Environmental Management, Microbiology, Animal Health, Grazing Systems, Woodland Ecology etc. There is a huge wealth of talent and interest in Parasitology that is being lost over time as people find it necessary to pursue these other fields to maintain their employment. I am an excellent example of these “Parasitologists” who are not, in fact, “practicing Parasitologists”. It would be handy to develop innovations to tap into these people who really are a resource that is being lost, and to maintain affiliations of those who need to work in other fields but are interested in Parasitology.”