

Are conference presentations accessible?

Insights from an online survey to improve equity

#6

JL Wells, CMC Connect, IPG Health Medical Communications • Z Faulkes, McMaster University • N Hannan, Caudex, IPG Health Medical Communications • EL Messina, CMC Affinity, IPG Health Medical Communications • M Morrison, Curvenote • A Petersen, Complete HealthVizion • H Robertson, IPG Health Medical Communications • LC Strother, CMC Connect, IPG Health Medical Communications

Conference attendees with accessibility needs recommend:



Uncluttered posters with plain language



Traditional-style talks using slides with mixed text / images, accurate captions, online access



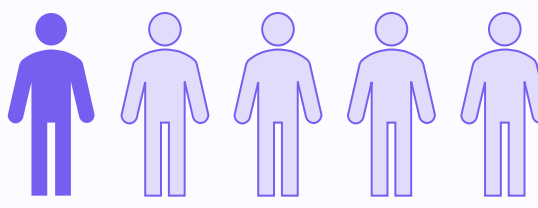
Conference spaces with better mobility access, more seating, improved acoustics

1. Introduction

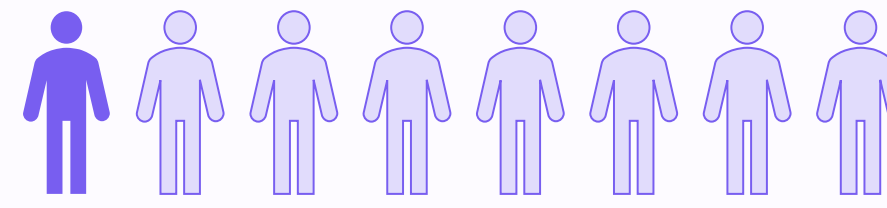
Accommodations must be meaningful, not afterthoughts

- Many disabled and neurodivergent people do not disclose their status due to discrimination, attitudinal issues, and insufficient accessibility²
- Conferences are key to sharing scientific information, but many presentations are not accessible³

Identifying as disabled¹



1 in 5 people in the UK



1 in 8 people in the US

15% to 20%

of people are neurodivergent²

2. Methods

Online survey targeting general, neurodivergent, Deaf, and disabled conference attendees of their:



- Accessibility needs
- Management strategies
- Recommended improvements
- Evaluations of presentation formats and conference spaces

3. Study population

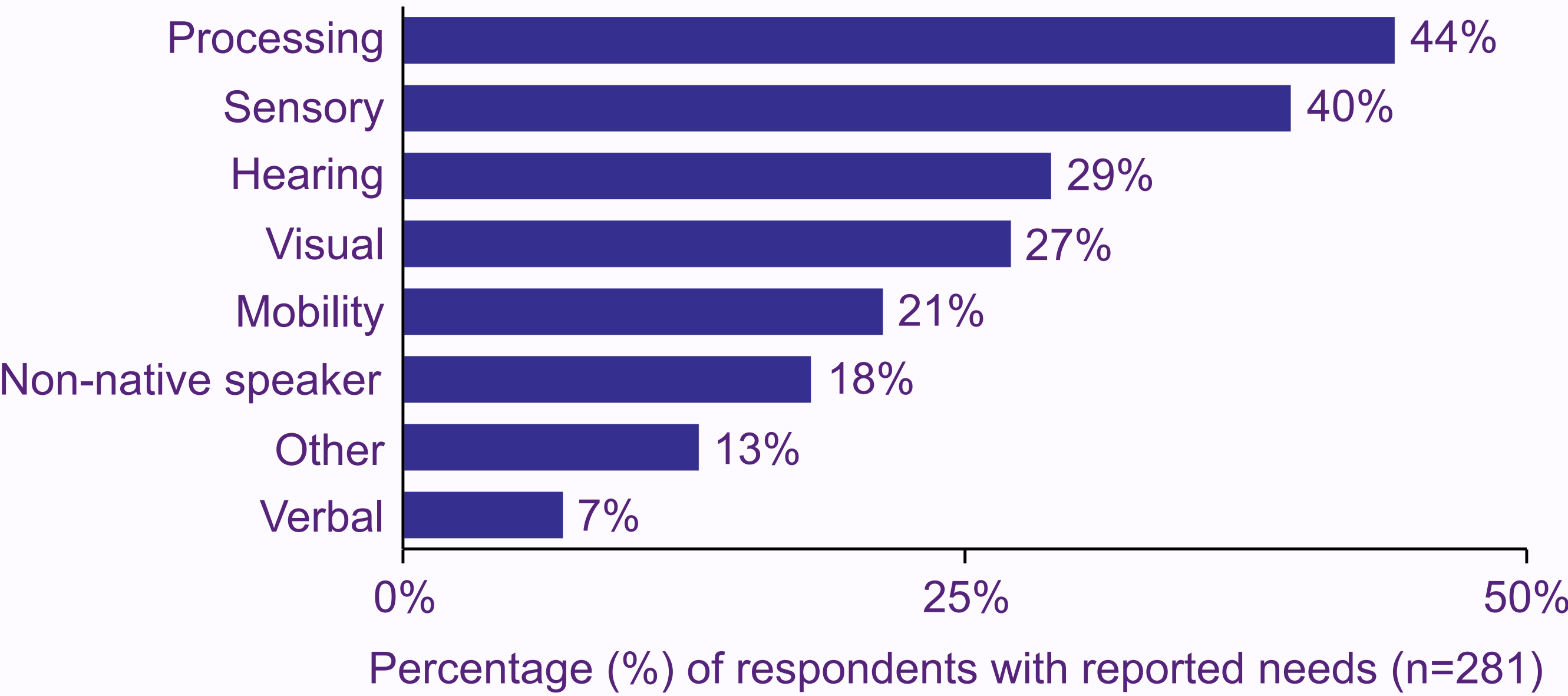


493 total respondents; 73% completed survey



57% report ≥1 accessibility need / disability (n=281). Of whom, 54% report >1 (n=151)

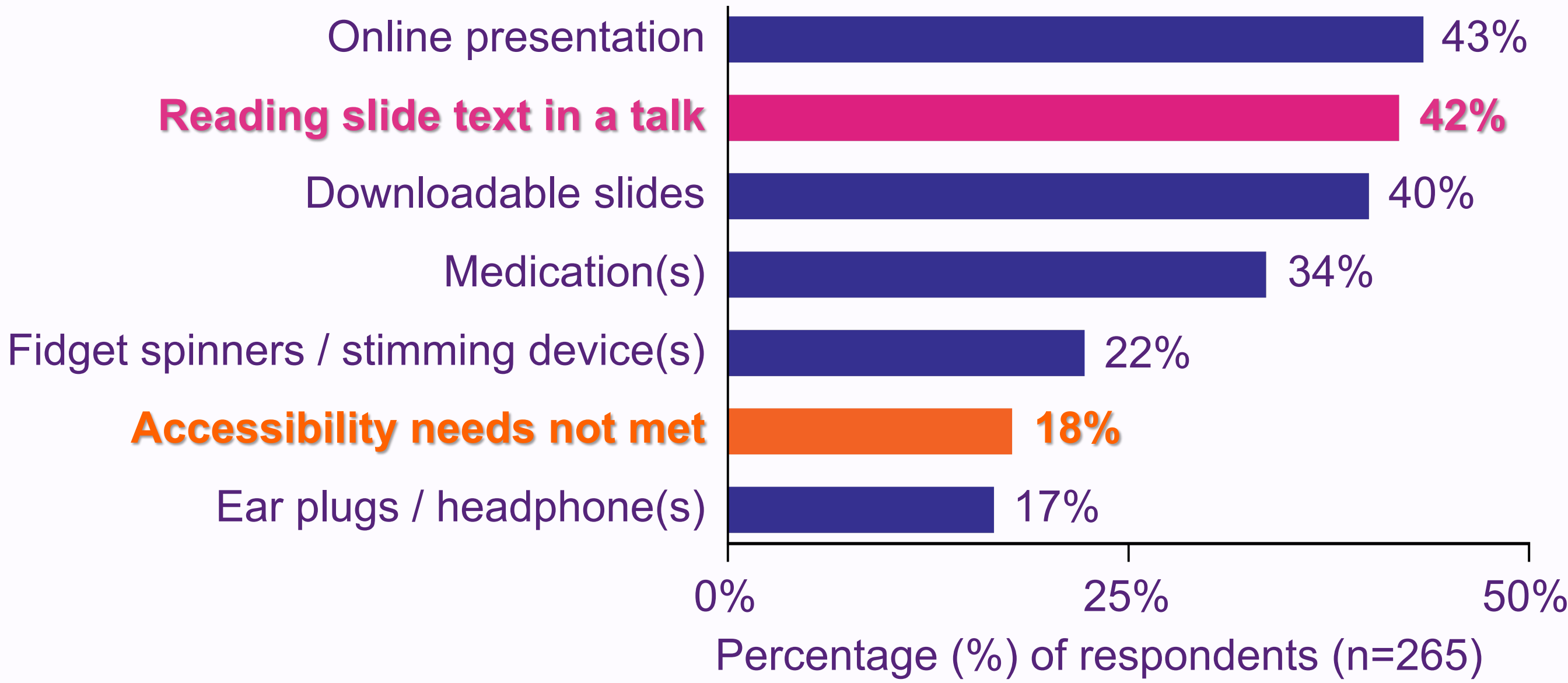
Reported accessibility needs / disabilities



4. Reported management strategies

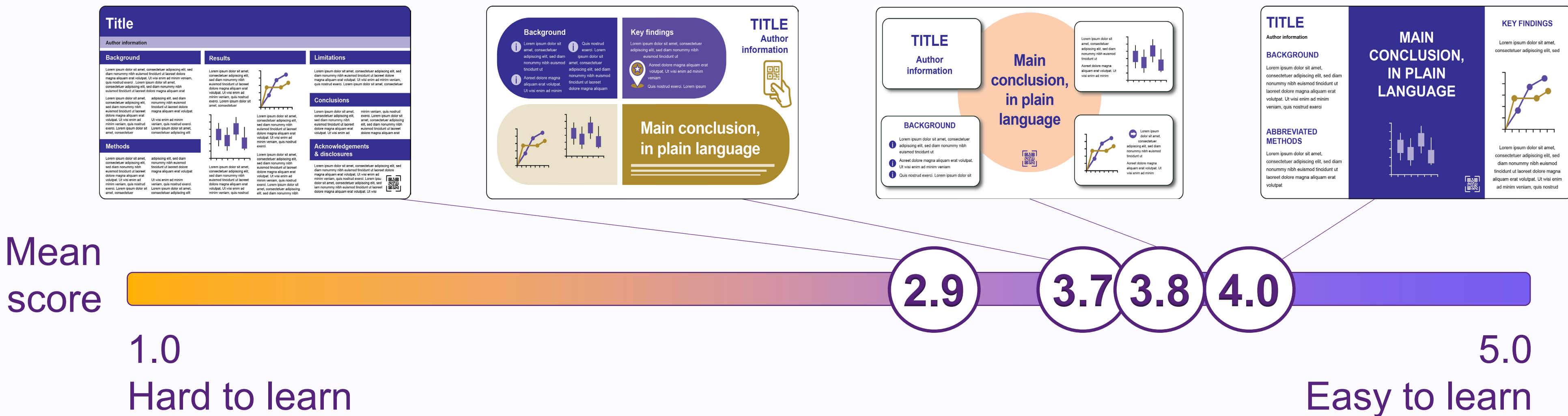
87% of respondents with accessibility needs used ≥1 management strategies / tools

Top reported management strategies / tools



5. Posters

Respondents favoured designs featuring less visual clutter



Respondents recommend:

Less clutter, 71%

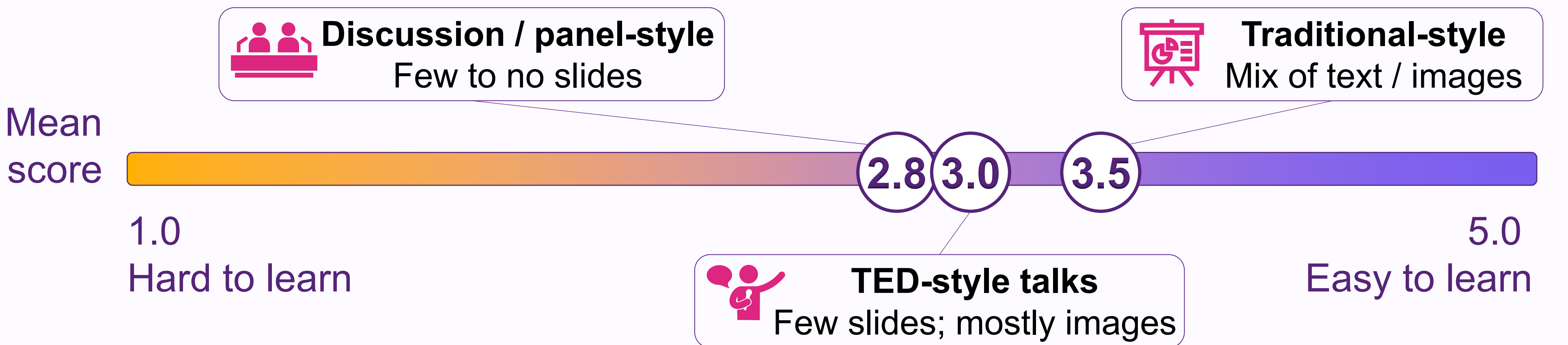
Bigger text, 48%

Plain language, 42%

Audio summaries, 32%

6. Talks

Respondents favoured traditional-style over TED-style talks and panels



Respondents recommend:

Slides available before the talk / recording available after, ≥60%

More verbal explanations of images, 50%

Bigger images, 48%

Live closed captions, 34%

7. Conference spaces

Respondents recommend:

✓ Quality hybrid options

✓ Better acoustics and microphones

✓ Closed captions as standard practice

✓ Quiet spaces for breaks

✓ Wider spaces and more seating

✓ Better signage with larger font and braille options

8. Quotes from respondents

” Include enough text so people with different languages can follow along

” For the love of god have enough chairs, and let people sit down to look at posters

” “Almost accurate” [captions] is no good. Something that looks like access but isn’t access is worse, because now nobody feels bad about the lack of access. In fact, they’re kind of proud of what they did. However, it is garbage and not actual access, and they’re angry with my lack of appreciation



Scan the QR code for audio summary, references, and supplement