

## 2013 EERI Membership Survey Summary

EERI conducted its 2013 online membership survey to better understand the needs and interests of its members. The survey was designed to collect information about whether EERI members value and use the Institute's many programs, projects, resources, and other offerings. EERI received 473 survey responses total, which is an 18% response rate.

Here are some highlights from the membership survey:

The survey responses conveyed that EERI is a highly valued organization. Many more respondents indicated that "EERI was more valuable" (28%-45%) or "equally valuable" (40%-53%) to other professional associations they belong to than those respondents who listed "EERI was less valuable" (14-19%).

EERI has an important role in advocating on behalf of its community. Almost 80% of respondents indicated that EERI should engage in advocacy for the adoption of better engineering practices.

As a whole, EERI's current suite of programs is working for its members, but there is room for incremental improvement. Over 80% of respondents indicated they didn't think EERI should make significant changes to its programs and publications, and less than 20% indicated EERI should make significant changes.

### Demographics

The first ten survey questions were designed to learn more about EERI members — their profession, discipline, membership type, membership payment source, chapter affiliation, membership length, age, gender, residence, and geography of work.

**Membership Type.** We learn that almost 60% of survey respondents were regular EERI members, 9% were e-affiliate members, 9% were student members, 8% were young professional members, and 8% e-student members. This breakdown of membership types means a majority of survey responses are from regular EERI members — as well as a smaller but even response rate from other membership types.

**Chapter Affiliation.** We also learned that 42% of respondents are affiliated with an EERI Regional or Student Chapter, and 58% of respondents are not affiliated with a local chapter. This information means less than half of respondents have access to regular face-to-face engagement with EERI, and more than half of respondents depend on online engagement with EERI. EERI's online communications platforms include its websites, *Spectra* online, *The Pulse* (email newsletter), email system, social media platforms, and more. It is also important to note that EERI has experienced a steady rate of increased Regional and Student Chapters over the past few years.

If we focus on **membership length** and **age**, we learn that over 60% of respondents are 40 year old or more and almost 40% of respondents are 39 years old or younger. Over the next two decades, as one generation of EERI members retire, EERI will invest more in outreach to younger members, both students and young professionals, and work at converting them to regular members in order to maintain and increase membership levels. There is strength in numbers: As EERI's network of students, young professionals, and experienced experts increases, so does its ability to advance and disseminate the knowledge, practice, and science of earthquake risk reduction. Currently, EERI supports an array of student and early-career focused programs, such as the Housner Fellowship Program, the Shah Prize, the Student Leadership Council, the undergraduate Seismic Design Competition, and more.

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### Behavior

We also asked survey questions related to membership behavior, including how survey respondents use EERI emails, social media, *Earthquake Spectra*, Oral Histories, and EERI event (face-to-face) participation.

**Social Media.** Almost 50% of respondents don't participate in social media, and 21% of respondents didn't know they could connect with EERI on social media. Most respondents who do engage with EERI on social media use LinkedIn (24%) and Facebook (14%) much more than other social media platforms. EERI should continue to implement a moderate social media strategy, focusing mainly on LinkedIn and Facebook. EERI should have a relatively strong presence on these two online platforms, because these technological innovations facilitate the consistent, immediate, and convenient connection to members, especially younger members, and the larger earthquake risk reduction community who also participate in social media.

**Earthquake Spectra.** The percentage of respondents who read *Spectra* more online than in print (39%) and more in print than online (36%) is about even. Almost 20% of respondents say that they read *Spectra* equally online and in print. Only 6% of respondents say they don't read *Spectra* at all. This information means EERI should continue to publish *Spectra* online and in print – as it is a highly valued resource by members.

From open-end responses, we learn that respondents cited “time management” more than “lack of interest” as reasons why they don't read an EERI email or publication. One idea is that EERI should send emails less frequently and with an array of content (rather than a single topic) in order to save time for members, allow them to skim the article titles, and increase the chance of piquing one of their many interests.

### Values

Lastly, we asked survey questions related to membership value — how much respondents value webinars, an assortment of EERI resources and activities, other professional associations compared to EERI, and advocacy activities.

**Webinars for Professional Development.** Almost 35% of respondents are very interested in EERI-produced webinars and about 45% are somewhat interested. Webinars are one way EERI can engage its members online; it will be important for the Institute to find its niche since there are many competitors in the market.

Survey respondents identified *Earthquake Spectra* as being the most valuable EERI resource, followed the **EERI Newsletter**, and then by the **EERI website**. As a result, EERI should start promoting a highly valued resource on other highly valued resources (cross promotion). As of now, it is more common to feature *Spectra* in *The Pulse* and on the eeri.org website than the other way around, but we should try more cross promotion.