Virtual STOC 2020: ~~Chicago~~

June 22-26, 2020

TheoryFest Chair: Tim Roughgarden

PC Chair: Julia Chuzhoy

Local Chairs: Gautam Kamath, Konstantin Makarychev, Yury Makarychev, Madhur Tulsiani

Full credits: http://acm-stoc.org/stoc2020/
(including 24 student volunteers)

Registration

regular: $50, students: $25

Participants: 353 (2018) -> 315 (2019) -> 720 (2020)

Outside US: 116 (2018) -> 100 (2019) -> 299 (2020)

Revenue: 23K (registration) + 10K (sponsors) - 15K (approx expenses)

Offered to waive registration for students if needed. Used by 13 students (12 more supported by earlier community initiative on twitter).

Format

(decided April end)

Pre-recorded videos: 20-25 mins, released 1 week prior

Slack workspace: conference info, discussion on papers and issues, social. Active 1 week prior (till July 31)

Zoom sessions: 10 mins/paper, 3 parallel sessions with 4 papers each, workshops with long talks, between 10 am - 5 pm CDT during conference
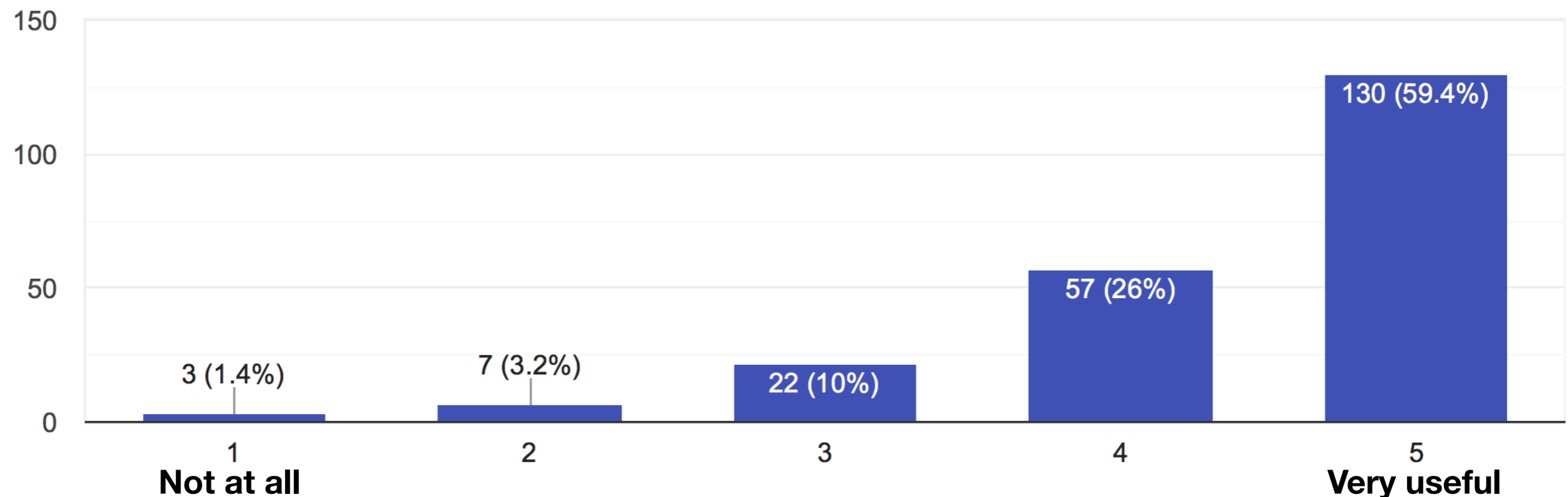
Social events: Junior-senior "lunches", break tables, gather.town virtual "hallway"

Pre-recorded talks

- Pictorial and video instructions for authors (3-4 weeks time)
- Authors uploaded 20-25 min videos via Dropbox
- 4-5 videos uploaded to YouTube by each student volunteer
- 113 talk videos, approx 10K views

Did you find the pre-recorded videos useful?
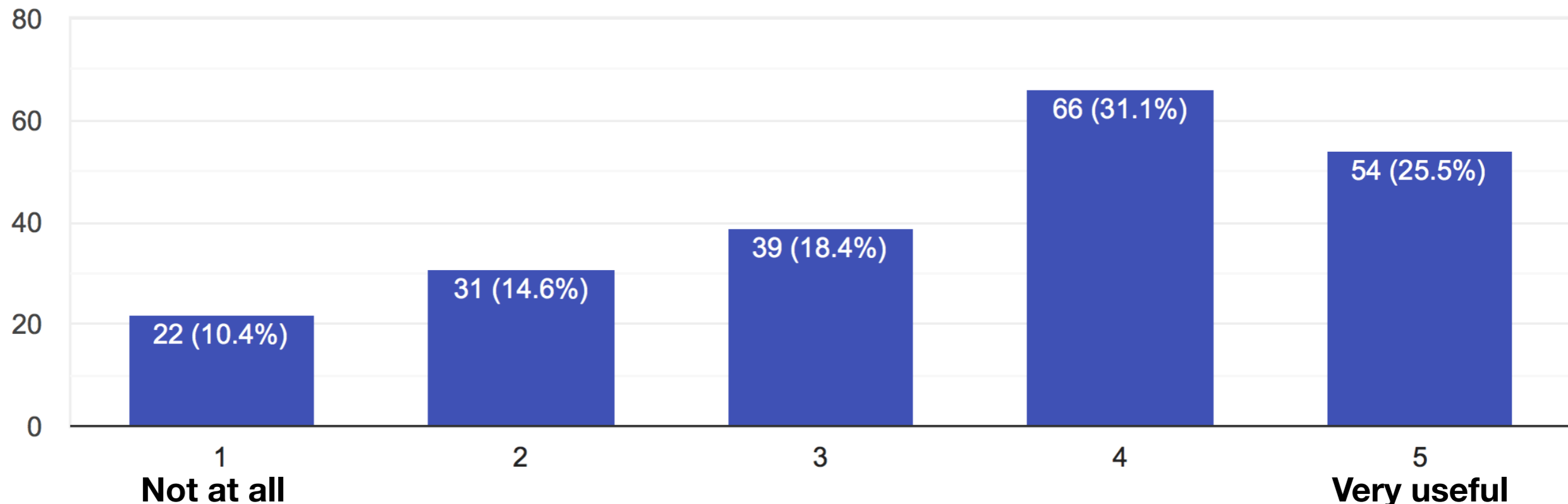
219 responses

Slack workspace

- Channels for info, social, business meeting, papers, workshops
- About 580 members, 7700 messages
- Open to community after STOC (active till July 31). Email stoc2020@ttic.edu for invite

Did you find the Slack workspace useful?

212 responses

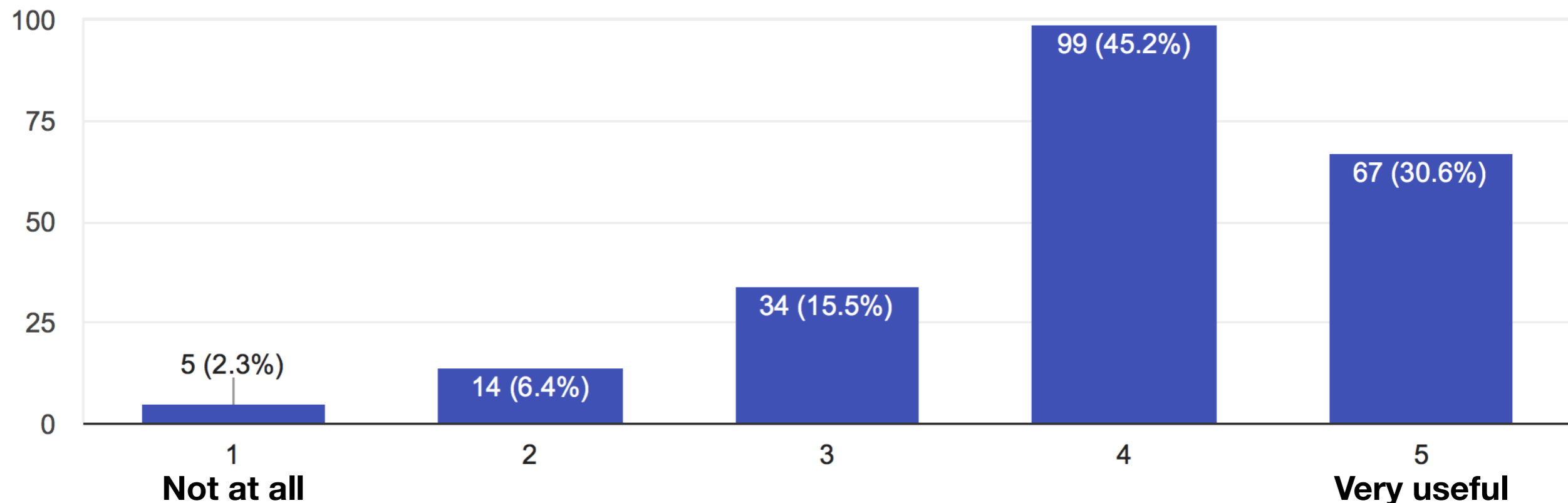|				
22 (10.4%)	31 (14.6%)	39 (18.4%)	66 (31.1%)	54 (25.5%)
1 Not at all	2	3	4	5 Very useful

Zoom sessions

- Webinars run by Technical host (student) + co-host (session chair)
- Training session for students, videos + written instructions for technical hosts, session chairs, speakers. Live updates on Slack.
- 10-11 am, 4-5 pm CDT. Workshops (12-3 pm) run by organizers.
- Recorded, live-streamed, uploaded on Youtube
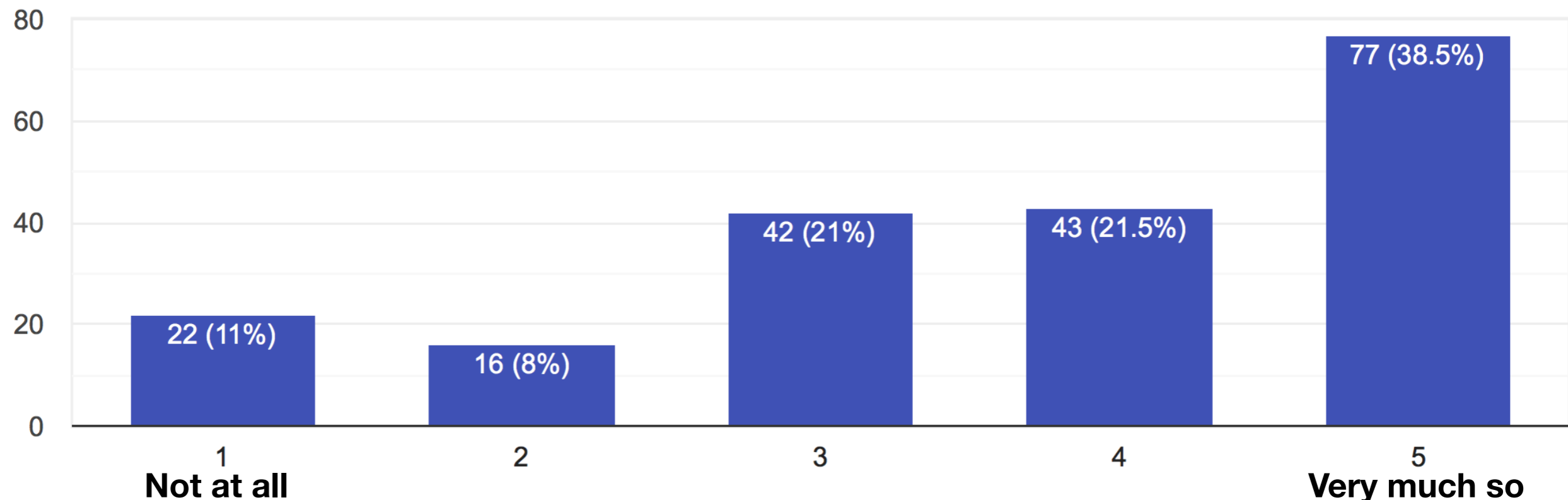
Were the live Zoom sessions useful?

219 responses

Social events

- Junior-senior "lunches" (2 days). Sign-up via Google sheet. Approx 32 seniors + 130 juniors on each day
- Break tables. Shared Google doc for adding themed tables, times, Zoom/Google-Meet links
- "Gather" virtual hallway (2 days). Significant positive feedback. 150 max simultaneous participants

Did you enjoy participating in the social events at the conference?
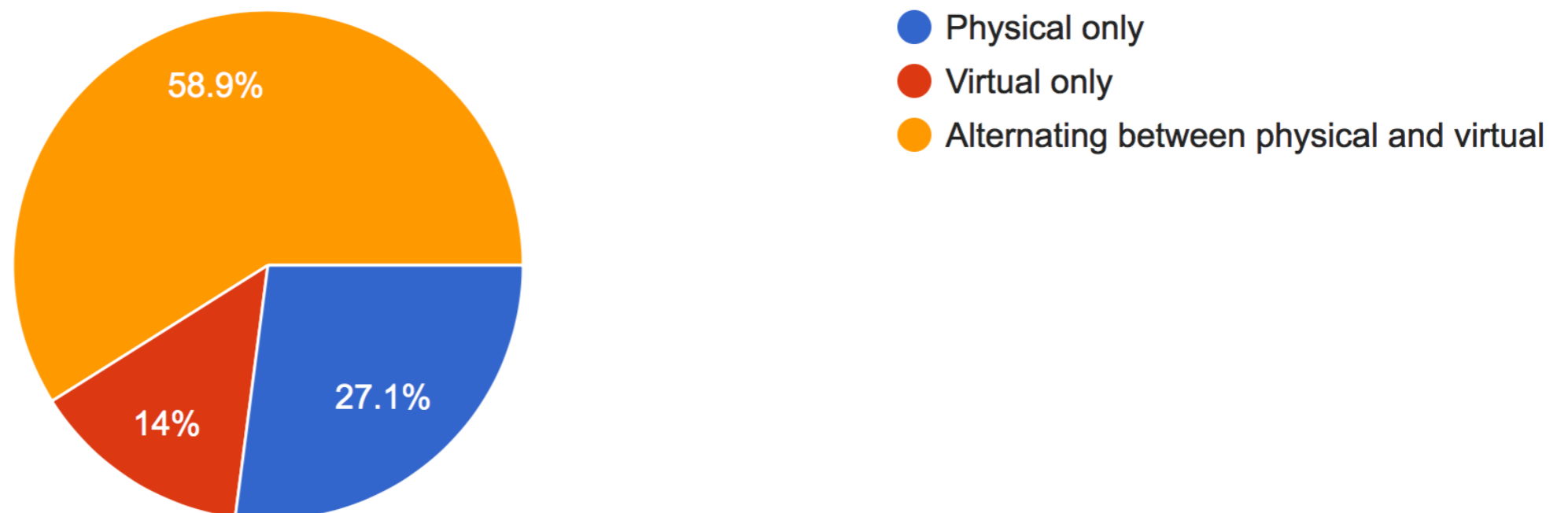
200 responses

Feedback

- Access for junior participants (registration + approaching seniors)
- Consider uploading recorded videos for all conferences
- Zoom webinar isolating - "meeting" format for smaller conferences
- Other ideas for social events

What conference format would you prefer for future STOC/FOCS?

207 responses

- Physical only
- Virtual only
- Alternating between physical and virtual

58.9%

27.1%

14%

Materials (http://acm-stoc.org/stoc2020/)

- Virtual STOC 2020: Behind the Screens (organizers' doc)
- Written and video instructions
- Business meeting materials
- Survey results to be posted soon
- Email stoc2020@ttic.edu to join Slack, or for additional questions

Thanks!