2020 FPD FALL TRAINING WORKSHOP

PLANNING FOR
THE NEW NORMAL

FRI, NOV 13 | 12-4 ET | VIRTUAL | FREE
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2020 FPD Fall Training Workshop Report

Abbey Ness, FPD Vice Chair (2020-2021) and Daniel Wheat, FPD Membership Chair

8 December 2021

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Overview

- **Purpose:** To offer FPD members training focused on planning challenges related to the COVID pandemic. To test out a multi-session virtual event approach prior to the annual workshop in the spring.
- **Theme:** Planning for "the New Normal"
- **Date:** Friday, 13 November 2020 (12-4 PM ET)
- **Location:** Held via Microsoft Teams Live Event platform as a virtual event
- **Number of registrants:** ~200
- **Attendees:** Approximately 167 attended at least some portion of the workshop. The highest number of non-presenter attendees at one time was 108, and there were around 20 presenters.

Workshop Team

- **Abbey Ness**, FPD First Year Vice Chair | workshop chair
- **Andrew Wright**, FPD Chair | executive vision
- **Elizabeth Perales**, Incoming FPD Vice Chair | executive vision
- **Daniel Wheat**, Membership Chair | post-workshop survey and follow up, workshop report
- **Steve Baird** | sponsorship coordinator
- **James McMurray** | Eventbrite setup and email outreach
- **George Foster** | event production assistance
- Other support from **Celeste Werner**, FPD Treasurer, to collect sponsorship fees; and **Rena Schlachter**, FPD Communications Committee Chair, and the FPD Communications Committee, to announce details about the workshop through email blasts and social media posts

Budget Details

- The Executive Committee allocated $500 of funding for the event in order to allow for the purchase of a virtual meeting platform solution.
- Since the workshop was run using a free platform (MS Teams Live Event), there were no expenses associated with the workshop.
- FPD received $1,400 in sponsorship contributions, all of which will go toward FPD's student scholarship fund.

Lessons Learned

- **MS Teams Live Event platform**

  - Needed to find a new platform because the WebEx account FPD is using for our monthly webinars is limited to 100 participants, and we hoped to have more attendees for the workshop. Originally was going to use APA Zoom account, but they said they did not have the availability to support our effort.
  - We settled on using the MS Teams Live Event platform because it was the only option that accommodated over 100 participants for free. We thought it would be easy for people to figure out how to use since it shared some similarities with the Teams meeting interface.
  - The benefit of using the Live Event platform is that attendees cannot share audio or video, which prevents accidental interruptions to the presentations. There was a Q&A feature that allowed attendees to ask questions and get responses from presenters, but the hand raising feature was absent.
  - We learned that CVR users could not access the meeting as a presenter, which was important because you had to be considered a presenter in order to share your screen or have a video and audio connection.
  - There was a significant delay in what the presenters were saying and what attendees could hear, making it difficult to do interactive activities with the audience.
  - Using the Live Event platform for the workshop would require a lot of training of presenters and coordination in the producer role. We conducted 10 different group and one-on-one trainings for attendees in advance of the Fall Training Workshop and yet not all of the attendees attended the trainings, resulting in confusion around some of the features during the live event. It might be worth considering hiring a company to run our annual workshop in order to better coordinate the behind the scenes role.
  - Having a single link for all the workshop sessions was really helpful to allow people to come in and out of the meeting as they were available.

- **Pre-Event Planning**

  - Only decided to host the workshop 1.5 months ahead of the event, which did not leave a lot of time to plant it collaboratively.
  - Having to coordinate website updates through APA was cumbersome and resulted in confusion and frustration on the part of members who were looking for information.

- o Sponsors are eager to support FPD, especially in small dollar amounts. We had eight sponsors at the $50 level, two at the $250 level, and one at the $500 level.
- o Sponsorship contributions were directed to Celeste Werner, FPD Treasurer, which helped create more efficiency around collecting the funds. Recommend doing this in the future as well.
- o We eliminated gathering speaker bios because we had such a limited amount of time to pull the program together, but we had several people ask for them.
- o We also did not schedule a virtual networking event due to a lack of time.
- o We asked speakers to send their presentations the morning of the workshop in case there were any tech issues. This is also helpful because we could quickly disseminate copies of the presentations to attendees.
- o The workshop graphics and program were created with Canva. Abbey can share copies of these files with future workshop chairs so that they can use the same templates, if desired.
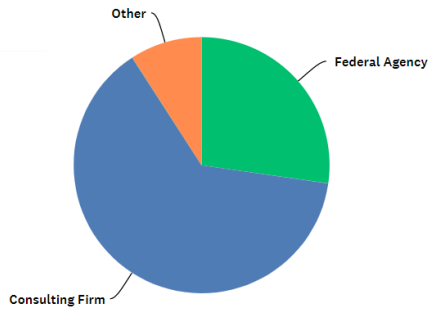
- **Event Logistics**

  - o Must have breaks between the sessions, even if just 15 minutes, to make sure that there is enough time to transfer from session to session.
  - o Was helpful to have a moderator, a facilitator, and then presenters to allow for variations in speakers.
  - o Was helpful to have discussion behind the scenes reminding people to stick to their allotted timeframe. Some presentations still went over time, which is why having a buffer time between sessions is helpful.
  - o Need to be mindful of the length of the workshop. Some people felt that even four hours was too long to sit through presentations; this will be important to consider for our annual workshop.
  - o There were a lot of presentations packed into the first session. Some presenter groups struggled with fitting their content into the 23-minute timeframe. This also led to some confusion around the part of attendees as to which presentations were part of which session.
  - o A closing session or comments would be good.
  - o We had several members reach out to ask for recordings of the presentations. We need to ensure that our annual workshop sessions are recorded so that we can offer those to our members if they cannot attend a session; we could figure out how to monetize those as well. We are still working on putting together the presentations and recordings for our members; there were proprietary issues that kept us from including a visual recording of the MURAL software.

Survey Results

Question 1

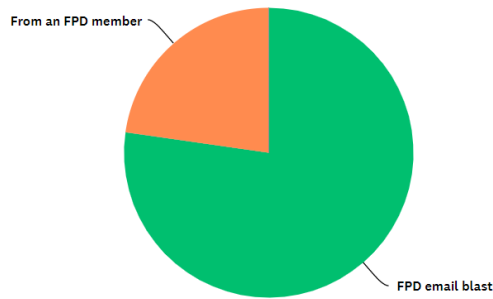Which of the following reflects your employer?

Answered: 22   Skipped: 0

Question 2

How did you hear about the workshop?
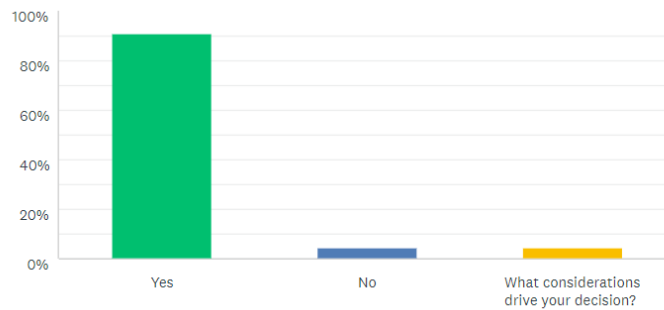
Answered: 22   Skipped: 0

Question 3

Would you recommend that FPD use the Teams Live Event platform for future workshops?
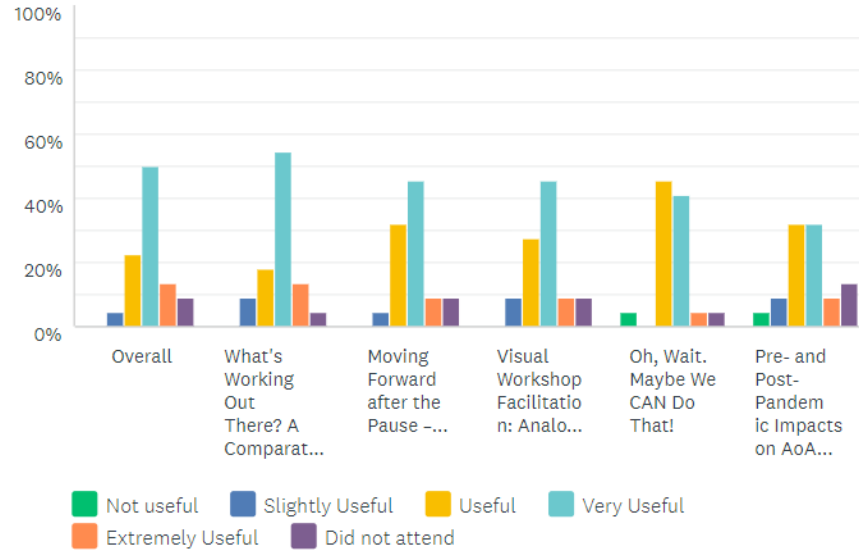
Answered: 22   Skipped: 0

Question

How would you rate Session 1: Virtual Engagement in the COVID Era
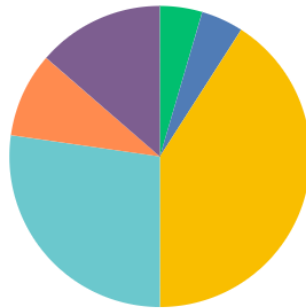
Answered: 22   Skipped: 0

	NOT USEFUL	SLIGHTLY USEFUL	USEFUL	VERY USEFUL	EXTREMELY USEFUL	DID NOT ATTEND	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Overall	0.00% 0	4.55% 1	22.73% 5	50.00% 11	13.64% 3	9.09% 2	22	3.80
What's Working Out There? A Comparative Analysis of Virtual Workshop Platforms	0.00% 0	9.09% 2	18.18% 4	54.55% 12	13.64% 3	4.55% 1	22	3.76
Moving Forward after the Pause – Give MURAL a Try	0.00% 0	4.55% 1	31.82% 7	45.45% 10	9.09% 2	9.09% 2	22	3.65
Visual Workshop Facilitation: Analog and Digital, White Boards to VR	0.00% 0	9.09% 2	27.27% 6	45.45% 10	9.09% 2	9.09% 2	22	3.60
Oh, Wait. Maybe We CAN Do That!	4.55% 1	0.00% 0	45.45% 10	40.91% 9	4.55% 1	4.55% 1	22	3.43
Pre- and Post-Pandemic Impacts on AoA Processes	4.55% 1	9.09% 2	31.82% 7	31.82% 7	9.09% 2	13.64% 3	22	3.37

Question 5

How would you rate Session 2: Installations & COVID-19 Roadmap for "Punching Back."

Answered: 22   Skipped: 0

🟩 Not Useful 🟦 Slightly Useful 🟨 Useful 🟦 Very Useful 🟧 Extremely Useful
🟪 Did not attend

	NOT USEFUL	SLIGHTLY USEFUL	USEFUL	VERY USEFUL	EXTREMELY USEFUL	DID NOT ATTEND	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
▼ (no label)	4.55% 1	4.55% 1	40.91% 9	27.27% 6	9.09% 2	13.64% 3	22	3.37

Question 6

How would you rate Session 3: Data Drives Transportation: Changing Travel Patterns and How We're Now Commuting to, and Parking on, Our Couch.

Answered: 22   Skipped: 0

🟩 Not Useful 🟦 Slightly Useful 🟨 Useful 🟦 Very Useful 🟧 Extremely Useful
🟪 Did not attend

	NOT USEFUL	SLIGHTLY USEFUL	USEFUL	VERY USEFUL	EXTREMELY USEFUL	DID NOT ATTEND	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
▼ (no label)	0.00% 0	9.09% 2	27.27% 6	18.18% 4	22.73% 5	22.73% 5	22	3.71

Question 7

What topics do you want to learn more about during FPD events?
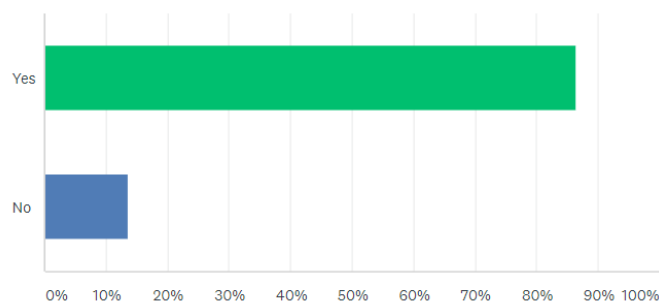
Answered: 22   Skipped: 0

- More of the same but with specifics--how to use MURAL, maybe we could walk through setting it up and using it.
- Best practices, examples that can be applied in a wide variety of situations, current projects and tools being used by Federal planners
- Would love to hear from installations about any innovative program implementation successes dealing with a range of topics include SLR, resiliency, etc.
- resiliency and working with state/local agencies
- An ethics session would be useful. Wonder if there is anything that we could tie to planning ethics during a pandemic?
- Different ways UFC for Master Planning is being interpreted by clients (government) and by consulting firms
- Climate change adaptation
- climate change
- Open to whatever - diversity in topics is good
- Transportation
- Nothing specific, I like attending for the topics I find interesting.
- climate adaptation
- Updates on Federal guidance/initiatives
- Justification of Green roofs and other LID tools on new and renovated military structures and grounds. Master planning virtually.
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Agency update. Current and upcoming trends as work from home changes space needs of federal properties. Related such as parking; need even less in the future? How does telework affect QoL providers on a DoD installation?
- What people are currently working on, innovations in the field. This fit the bill for me.
- More input on virtual collaboration and changing perceptions of in-person work impact on office designs etc.

Question 8

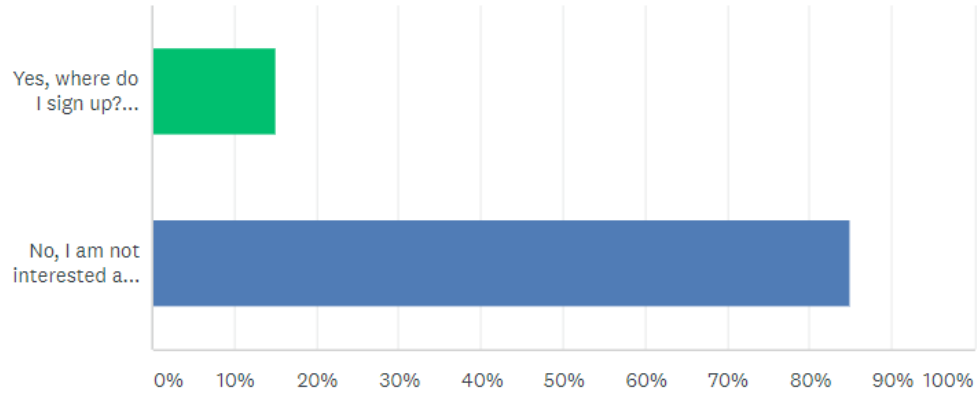## Would you be likely to participate in a FPD virtual networking event?

Answered: 22   Skipped: 0

Question 9

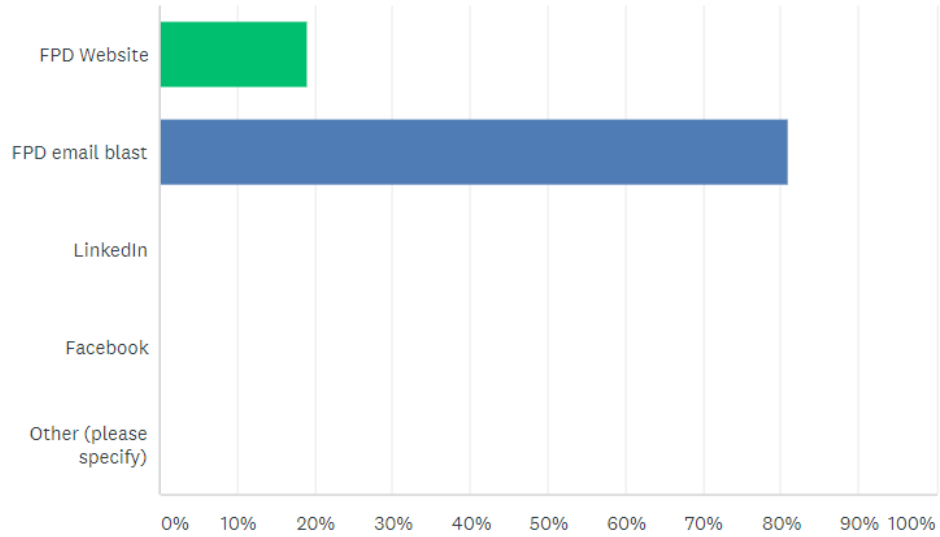## Are you interested in volunteering with FPD?

Answered: 20   Skipped: 2

Question 10

From what source do you prefer to receive information about FPD?

Answered: 21   Skipped: 1

Workshop Summary

The following summary was written by Elizabeth Perales for the FPD newsletter.

FPD Fall Conference: Planning for the New Normal

Since the U.S Government proclaimed a National emergency concerning the Novel Corona Virus (COVID-19) outbreak on March 13, 2020, Americans have worked in home offices, agency or corporate office spaces, job sites and hybrids of these work place locations. Innovation in virtual work environments since this declaration has shown that the benefits of virtual engagement are here to stay. The Federal Planning Division's (FPD's) Fall 2020 Conference "Planning for the New Normal" invited agencies and the Architecture and Engineering (A/E) community to share hacks and lessons learned while executing federal projects and programs during the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Fall Conference Training sessions held on November 13, 2020 highlighted challenges and opportunities that virtual engagement presented for federal planners during national crises that may be applied in the future. Virtual meeting platforms, stakeholder engagement and design collaboration tools are common technology solutions used by federal planners to bridge the gaps created by physical distancing requirements.

To achieve optimum results, clients and A/E teams are tailoring virtual meeting, engagement and design platforms, hardware and in-person surveys to unique scope, client and stakeholder requirements.

- **Meeting platforms** (Webex, Goto Meeting, Google Meeting, Adobe Connect, DISA, Defense Collaboration Services and Microsoft Teams) are connecting federal agencies, and A/E communities in online meeting rooms to improve the quality and cyber security of communication in virtual environments.
- **Stakeholder engagement** tools (Mentimeter, Microsoft Forms, MURAL polls, Turning Point, and Survey Monkey) are empowering teams to collect focused and representative feedback from affected communities and project proponents.
- **Design collaboration** platforms like MURAL, combined with design tools (Sketchup Virtual Reality, Morpholio Trace, Procreate Art) are connecting A/E teams, clients and key stakeholders in virtual design environments to identify issues, evaluate alternatives and select preferred solutions by engaging teams in highly efficient, creative and effective ways.

Case studies and technology demonstrations helped to tell meaningful stories about how these virtual meeting and collaboration platforms, and stakeholder feedback loops provide meaningful engagement and human-centered approaches to planning and design projects and programs. Although there are common hardware and software technology tools used to execute best virtual planning practices, federal agencies and Architecture and Engineering (A/E)

communities lessons learned for navigating the "new normal" are primarily human strategies focused on establishing and maintaining effective communication and building relationships throughout project execution.

Although broad adoption of new technologies during COVID came with its own list of challenges (i.e. network failures, poor wi-fi connections, muted mics, web meeting fatigue, interruptions by kids or pets), virtual engagement or a combination of in person and virtual engagement has changed how, when and where we collaborate. After the COVID vaccine is available to all Americans, our personal relationships and projects will be more resilient as virtual collaboration empowers us to stay more connected to each other throughout project lifecycles.

Black and Veatch (Workshop Sponsor), HDR and Cardo (Session Sponsors), HB&A, KTU&A, AECOM, the Schreifer Group, JG&A, the Anchor QEA, Burns McDonnell and Atkins sponsored the FPD Fall Conference, which raised $1,400 for the annual college scholarship program. FPD members attending the training event rated the content as extremely useful (14%), very useful (48%) or useful (24%) and more than 90% would recommend using the MS Teams Live Event platform for future workshops.